

**To Diocesan Secretaries**  
Copied to Diocesan Registrars

David Williams  
*Clerk to the Synod*

13 October 2006

Dear Secretary

## **PREPARATION OF NEW ELECTORAL ROLL**

As you know, the Church Representation Rules require a new church electoral roll to be prepared for each parish in 2007 and every succeeding sixth year. (The Church Representation Rules were last published in a new edition in January 2006 (CHP, £7.99) and are also available on the Church of England National Administration Network.) Thus new rolls need to be prepared next year.

### **Diversity monitoring**

In July 2003, General Synod established the principle of ongoing diversity monitoring. Following this mandate, an audit of clergy diversity was carried out by the Research and Statistics Department, Archbishops' Council in 2005 and reported to General Synod in July 2006, GS Misc 833. The most recent diversity monitoring at a national level across the parishes and dioceses was the 2002 Collection of Statistics of Ethnic Origin, GS1502. With the preparation of the new electoral roll comes the opportunity to revise these statistics. A similar exercise is consequently planned for the autumn 2007 to monitor the newly formed electoral rolls. Whereas the 2002 exercise adopted a census approach with mixed success, the 2007 exercise will take the form of a structured sampling approach overseen by the Research and Statistics Department. The exercise will enable every diocese to understand better the profile of its parishioners. The Research and Statistics Department has already been in contact with every diocese to establish lines of direct communication. It intends to be in contact again with the proposed form of questions and the sample of parishes to be contacted.

I would be grateful if you could indicate your support of this exercise to parishes and remind them that they may be directly involved in this monitoring requirement which will follow the revision of the electoral roll.

### **Electoral Roll revision process**

The details of the procedure are contained in rules 2(4)-(7) of the Church Representation Rules. The form which must be used to give notice of the preparation of the new roll is set out in section 3 of Appendix 1 to the Rules. Three copies of this form (Form SG3) are available as part of the Annual Meeting pack of forms which is published jointly by CHP and SPCK and is available from church bookshops.

The date which governs the timetable for the preparation of the new roll is that of the annual parochial church meeting ("the annual meeting"). Under rule 2(4) the form of notice for the preparation of the new roll must be completed and affixed, by the minister or under his/her direction, on or near the principal door of every church and every building licensed for public worship in the parish. This must be done at least two months before the date of the annual meeting and the notice or notices must then remain in position for at least fourteen days. At every service on the two Sundays within the 14 days after the notice has been affixed, the person conducting the service must inform the congregation of the preparation of the new roll. If no services are held in a particular church on either of those Sundays then this requirement is complied with by informing the congregation of the preparation of the new roll at every service on the first Sunday when services are held in the church after the affixing of the notice.

The PCC must take reasonable steps to inform those on the existing roll (other than those whose names could have been removed in any event in accordance with rule 1(9)) that the new roll is being prepared and that if they wish to be entered on it they must apply for enrolment. Such a person will not be disqualified from entry on the roll solely by reason of the fact that he/she has not habitually attended public worship in the parish during a six-month period prior to enrolment if he/she was prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause.

Under rule 1(2) a person who wishes to have his or her name entered on the new roll – whether or not his/her name is on the existing roll – should apply for enrolment by completing the application form set out in section 1 of Appendix 1 to the Rules. Packs of these forms are published jointly by CHP and SPCK and are available in church bookshops. A copy of form SG1 is attached (and a specimen copy has been posted on the Church of England National Administration Network website). The requirements which a person must satisfy to qualify for entry on the roll are set out in rule 1(2).

Rule 2(4) provides that the new roll is to be prepared once the notice or notices required by that rule have been fixed (see above). Under rule 2(6), the new roll must be completed not less than fifteen nor more than twenty-eight days before the annual meeting. Rule 2(7) requires that upon completion of the roll, a copy must be exhibited on or near the principal door of the parish church, in such manner as decided on by the PCC, for a continuous period of at least fourteen days before the annual meeting. During this period any errors or omissions in the roll may be corrected, but – subject to that – no names may be added to the roll until after the end of the annual meeting.

As soon as the copy of it is exhibited under rule 2(7), the new roll comes into effect and the previous roll ceases to have effect.

As in any other year, the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary or electoral roll officer of the PCC must, pursuant to rule 4, inform the secretary of the diocesan synod before 1<sup>st</sup> June of the number of names on the roll as at the date of the annual meeting. (There is no statutory form for this notification.) A copy of the notification sent to the secretary of the diocesan synod must be affixed at or near the principal door of each church and each building licensed for public worship in the parish and must remain there for at least 14 days.

I should be grateful if you would remind parishes of these requirements.

Copies of this letter, a specimen electoral roll form (SG1) and the material relating to diversity monitoring will be posted on the Church of England National Administration Network.

If you have any questions about the procedure outlined above, please contact Robert Wellen in the General Synod Legal Office (Tel: 020 7898 1371; e-mail [Robert.Wellen@ce-of-e.org.uk](mailto:Robert.Wellen@ce-of-e.org.uk)).

Questions about statistics on diversity monitoring should be addressed to the Revd Lynda Barley, Head of Research and Statistics. If you have any general questions about the overall process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

DAVID WILLIAMS

DC (E-R) Oct 06

## CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

### Notes on preparation and revision

1. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for ensuring that the parish has an electoral roll, which is to be kept and revised under the Council's direction (Church Representation Rules, 1 (5)).
2. The PCC must appoint a church electoral roll officer to act under its direction for the purpose of carrying out its functions (Rule 1 (7)).
3. Anyone resident in the parish who has the qualifications set out on the form of application (SG1) is entitled to make application to have his/her name entered on the roll. A non-resident must additionally show that he/she has habitually attended public worship during the six month period prior to enrolment (Rule 1 (2)).
4. As the occasion arises, and not necessarily waiting until the next annual parochial church meeting, a person's name shall be removed from the roll if he/she:-
  - (a) has died; or
  - (b) becomes a clerk in Holy Orders; or
  - (c) signifies in writing the desire that his/her name should be removed; or
  - (d) ceases to reside in the parish, unless after so ceasing he/she continues, in any period of six months, habitually to attend public worship in the parish unless prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause; or
  - (e) is not resident in the parish and has not habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months, not having been prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause; or
  - (f) was not entitled to have his/her name entered on the roll at the time when it was entered.
5. Except in a year in which a new roll is prepared (2007 and every six years thereafter) the roll of the parish shall be revised annually by or under the direction of the PCC. All enrolments or removals from the roll which have been effected since the date of the last revision shall be reviewed, and such further enrolments or removals from the roll as may be required shall be effected. On completion of the revision the revised roll shall be exhibited continuously for not less than 14 days before the annual parochial church meeting.
6. Set out on the inside is a specimen page from an electoral roll suggesting the kind of information which should be included.

**Resident or Non-resident** This breakdown is no longer an official requirement but will be useful for maintaining the roll and other general purposes.

**Reporting to the PCC** Under Rule 1 (8) the electoral roll officer is required to report any additions to or removals from the roll to the next meeting of the PCC.

**SPECIMEN ENTRIES FOR ELECTORAL ROLL**

entry	surname	christian names(s)	address	resident or non-resident	date of entry	Reporting to the PCC	date of removal	Reporting to the PCC
1	<del>SHROVE</del>	Mrs. Ruth N.	13, King St.	R	6.3.97	25.3.97	(See entry no.6)	
2	<del>SHROVE</del>	Mr. Winston	13, King St.	R	6.3.97	25.3.97	ditto 26.7.99	14.9.99
3	SHROVE	Mr. Clark A.	232, Goldwell House, Curwen Rd.	NR	6.3.97	25.3.97		
4	TATHAM	Ms. Antonia	47, Underhill Way	NR	6.3.97	25.3.97		
5	<del>TATWORTH</del>	Mr. Daniel G.	4, Bridges St.	R	25.6.98	4.7.98	check in Holy Orders 29.9.00	15.10.00
6	<del>TATWORTH</del>	Mrs. Rachel B.	4, Bridges St.	R	26.6.98	4.7.98	Viewed 2.0.00	15.10.00
7	SHROVE	Miss Leticia	232, Goldwell House, Curwen Rd.	NR	14.1.99 (aged 16)	3.2.99		
8	SHROVE	Mrs. Ruth H.	27, Cocher Close, Basset St.	NR	28.10.00	27.11.00		

Synodical Government Measure 1969

**APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT ON THE CHURCH  
ELECTORAL ROLL OF THE PARISH OF:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Full name \_\_\_\_\_

Full address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that

1 I am baptized and am aged 16 or over  
(or, become 16\* on \_\_\_\_\_ )

2†

A I am a member of the Church of England (or of a Church in communion  
with the Church of England) and am resident in the parish.

or

B I am a member of the Church of England (or of a Church in communion  
with the Church of England) and, not being resident in the parish, I have  
habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of six  
months prior to enrolment.

or

C I am a member in good standing of a Church (not in communion with the  
Church of England) which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity  
and also declare myself to be a member of the Church of England and I  
have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the period of  
six months prior to enrolment.

I declare that the above answers are true and I apply for inclusion on the Church  
Electoral Roll of the parish.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* Those who become 16 during the next 12 months may complete the form, and  
become eligible to be entered on the roll on their sixteenth birthday.

† Tick one only of boxes 2A, B or C.

## Notes

1. The only Churches at present in communion with the Church of England are other Anglican Churches and certain foreign Churches.
2. Membership of the electoral roll is also open to members in good standing of a Church not in communion with the Church of England which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity where those members are also prepared to declare themselves to be members of the Church of England.
3. Every six years a new roll is prepared and those on the previous roll are informed so that they can re-apply. If you are not resident in the parish but were on the roll as an habitual worshipper and have been prevented by sickness or absence or other essential reason from worshipping for the past six months, you may write 'would' before 'have habitually attended' on the form and add 'but was prevented from doing so because ...' and then state the reason.
4. If you have any problems over this form, please approach the clergy or lay people responsible for the parish, who will be pleased to help you.
5. In this form 'parish' means ecclesiastical parish.

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## What is the Church Electoral Roll?

### Why have one?

It is your parish church's register of electors; it is the list of those qualified to attend and to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting where the elections take place for:

- a) the parochial church council;
- b) the parish's representatives on the deanery synod.

Any person entitled to attend the Annual Parochial Church Meeting may raise any question of parochial or general church interest.

Renewal of the electoral roll takes place in 2007 and every six years thereafter. In a year of renewal, no names are carried over from the old roll and everyone must make a new application to be included on the new roll.

### What difference does it make?

By enrolling you become a voting member of the Church of England and so help to ensure that all the synodical councils of the Church – the parochial church council, the deanery synod, the diocesan synod, and the General Synod – are fully representative of its members.

Synodical government gives an opportunity for partnership between bishops, clergy and laity in the life of the Church:

First, the system is intended to enable church people at every level to be in touch with the Church as a whole and to play their part in decision-making. Secondly, the system is intended to ensure that the laity have their place in every aspect of church life, including its doctrine and services.