



Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Handbook 2016

Produced by the Board of Religious Education



Diocesan Handbook

	Page
Introduction	2
1. Rector's guidelines	3
2. General Vestry	4
3. Select Vestry	5
3.1. Secretary	7
3.2. Treasurer	8
3.3. Glebe warden	9
3.4. Churchwarden	10
4. Diocesan Synod Rules	11
5. Parochial Nominators	12
Appendix i Sample Vestry Agenda	13
Appendix ii Sample Vestry Minutes	14
Appendix iii Outgoing Clergy Check List 1	15
Appendix iv Outgoing Clergy Check List 2	16
Appendix v Diocesan Contacts	18
Appendix vi Graveyard Rules	19
6. Contact the board of R.E.	24



Introduction

The local parish is the 'engine room' of God's kingdom on earth and it is here that worship is offered and disciples are made and grown through the ministry of word and sacrament.

To support this vital work in the parish, there are structures at parochial, diocesan and national level which regulate and resource parish ministry. The aim of this handbook is to clarify those structures, in particular the functions of Select Vestries and Church Officers as well as the Diocesan Boards, Committees and Officers. It should be read in conjunction with the Diocesan Directory produced each year.

Hopefully this handbook will be of benefit to new and established members of clergy, as well as to those who serve on Select Vestries. To all of these we offer our thanks for their dedication and service.

This handbook has been published by the Diocesan Board of Religious Education. Please check the diocesan website for any updates.

With every blessing,

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

Archdeacon David Huss
Chairman, Board for Religious Education



1. Guidelines for a Rector

On taking up duties in a new parish

- The Diocesan Office should provide you with the following:
 - › Diocesan Handbook
 - › Diocesan Directory
 - › Diocesan Rules
 - › Copy of last year's Diocesan Synod Report
- The Rural Dean should provide you with the following:
 - › List of all parishioners
 - › List of housebound parishioners
 - › Details of current pattern of services
 - › Details of any forthcoming marriages, baptisms or burials
- Please consult the clergy section of the Diocesan website for further information and updates (password available from Diocesan Communications Officer).
- The Diocesan Directory has details of useful contacts such as Registrar, Director of Ordinands, Diocesan Communications Officer, Youth Officer, Children's Ministry Officer, Magazine editor, Secretaries of Charities, Protestant Orphan Societies etc.

Please also:

- Ensure that a Safeguarding Trust Panel exists in the parish and that Safeguarding Trust policies are being adhered to.
- Ensure that necessary annual diocesan returns are made promptly.
- Ensure that parish registers, old and present, are kept fully up to date and that they are stored in a safe and sympathetic environment. Entries should be made in black ink and not biro. Registers must remain in the custody of the Rector.
- Ensure that all church plate is stored in a place of safety and is available when the Rector is out of the parish.
- Ensure that the Rector's personal effects are fully insured.
- Be familiar with the diocesan scale of fees and travelling allowance and ensure they are paid when use is made of retired clergy and diocesan readers.
- When planning holidays, be aware that the norm for holidays is 4 Sundays during the summer and one week including a Sunday after Easter and Christmas. It is the responsibility of the rector to arrange for cover for holidays.



2. General Vestry

NB The points below and on following pages are a summary. Full details of parochial organisation are found in the Constitution of the Church of Ireland and in the Diocesan Rules.

- The registered vestry members of the parish constitute the General Vestry. The list of registered members is revised annually, but the method of revision varies from diocese to diocese. In this Diocese the Select Vestry is the revising authority; in others it is the General Vestry; and in one it is the Rector and Churchwardens. The list of registered members must be revised in February each year.
- In order to be registered one must be a member of the Church of Ireland; must be 18 years of age; and must be either (1) a resident, or (2) an accustomed member of the congregation for the previous three months. Any person claiming to be registered must sign a declaration setting out his/her qualifications. A cleric who is beneficed or licensed in the diocese may not be included in the register.
- The General Vestry, known as the Easter Vestry, shall be held each year not earlier than 27 days before, and not later than 20 days after Easter Day and this meeting may be adjourned from time to time to any day or days not later than the 6th Monday after Easter Day: Provided that the Easter Vestry Meeting may not be held on, or adjourned to, a day within the period from the Sunday next before Easter (Palm Sunday) to Easter Day (inclusive).
- The Rector appoints Rector's Churchwarden, Glebewarden and Supplemental Glebewarden. The Easter Vestry elects the People's Churchwarden, People's Glebewarden, Supplemental Glebewarden, Select Vestry, and triennially, Parochial Nominators, Diocesan Synod Representatives & Supplementals



3. Select Vestry

The Select Vestry consists of the Clergy, the Churchwardens, the Glebe Wardens and the elected members of the Select Vestry who must be registered and not be more than 12 in number.

The Select Vestry meets at such times as are fixed by itself or by Diocesan Synod. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Rector or other officiating cleric or failing them by the Churchwardens or by either of them.

Meetings are chaired by the Rector or by the Curate-Assistant. In the event of no officiating cleric being present, the chair must be taken by one of the Churchwardens.

The principal duties of the select vestry can be summed up as follows:

- Furniture
- Fabric
- Finance

Among its responsibilities are the following:-

- To appoint an Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer who need not be members and will have no voting rights if so appointed, but must be registered.
- To provide all the requisites for Divine Service including two copies of the Book of Common Prayer, a Bible; copies of The Church Hymnal; a reading desk; Holy Communion linen; surplice for each officiating cleric; bread and wine and appropriate registers.
- To keep the church and other parochial buildings in a proper state of repair and cleanliness and fully Insured. Much of this function is of a routine nature, e.g. seeing that broken panes of glass are replaced; stone work round windows is watertight; be on the watch for wet rot, dry rot or woodworm infestation. To see that churches are inspected on a regular basis in accordance with Diocesan regulations. It is the responsibility of the Select Vestry to find funding for any repairs.

In carrying out repairs, renovation or redecoration care should be taken to see that work is carried out properly – expert advice may need to be sought. In the case of alterations to the structure, ornaments, furnishings or monuments of a church the Select Vestry should consult the Diocesan Registrar. The necessary faculties, Diocesan Council and Central Church permission must be obtained before commencing any work. No work costing more than £10,000 (NI) or the equivalent in Euro (RoI) should be undertaken without the express permission of the Diocesan Council. The Secretary, on behalf of the Select Vestry should apply for permission from the Diocesan Finance and General Purposes Committee.



- To ensure that Notice Boards are provided, giving details of Church Services and that such Notice Boards are kept both up-to-date and in good condition.
- To appoint all church and parochial officers and provide for their payment including responsibility for making deductions required by law for income tax and National Health Insurance contributions. To authorise the Treasurer to make all such payments as laid down by the Diocesan Council.
- To provide from the funds at its disposal an adequate safe for the custody of the Communion Plate and the registers in the church vestry. It may also be desirable to have a safe in the rectory for storage of parochial records, documents etc.

Rectories – carpets and curtains to be provided for the hall, lounge, dining room, study, stairs, landing and one bedroom. The Vestry should also provide a cooker plus any two of the following:- refrigerator, dishwasher, washing machine, tumble dryer or freezer.

Property – All property should be vested in the Representative Body. This avoids trouble and expense on the death of local trustees or loss of title deeds. The Incumbent, Churchwardens and Select Vestry are the controlling authority with regard to Church Halls. The Select Vestry may decide that in letting such property the Incumbent and Churchwardens make decisions. Although the Select Vestry includes specific officers with specific duties the Select Vestry as a whole is charged with collective responsibility as all property is held in trust for the Representative Body/Parish.

Divine Service – the ordering of such lies solely with the Incumbent.

Sexton – The Sexton is paid by the Select Vestry. The Sexton is under the control of the Incumbent with regard to duties in connection with Divine Service. In other respects the Sexton is under the control of the Select Vestry. Here the Select Vestry should decide that only one or two specified persons may give directions as unsatisfactory conditions may arise if too many people give directions.

Organist - is appointed by Select Vestry and paid from Church funds. The Select Vestry is responsible for the upkeep of the organ. The Organist is under the control of the Incumbent.



3.1. Role of the Secretary

- The Secretary should write up the minutes from notes taken at the Select Vestry meeting and read the said minutes at the next meeting of the Select Vestry - if they have not already been circulated with the agenda calling the meeting. In preparing the agenda the Secretary should consult with the Rector.
- Minutes, as a rule, should only be the decisions recorded at a meeting, preceded possibly by a short narration dealing with the essential points leading up to the decision. The Secretary is responsible for recording votes taken. The purchase of minute books is the responsibility of the Select Vestry. If typed a permanent copy must be affixed to the Minute Book. Minutes that are clear, concise and legible help the Select Vestry to run its business smoothly and efficiently. It is worth noting that minutes written today will be of historical interest to future generations. Draft minutes may be photocopied and could, with advantage, be circulated beforehand so that members can check on tasks/jobs which they undertook to oversee/complete. The agenda can help to direct members thoughts prior to the meeting. Both minutes and agenda are useful for those who were not present.
- The minute book index should be kept up-to-date as this makes it simpler to turn up minutes relating to a specific item.
- A record of members' attendance and apologies should be kept. The back pages of the Minute Book can be used as a register of attendance.
- The Secretary should inform the Chairperson, prior to Select Vestry meeting, of any correspondence received. They should also discuss any new business.
- The Secretary writes letters as instructed by the Select Vestry. The provision of headed notepaper and of postage stamps is the responsibility of the Select Vestry. It is advisable to have a filing system and to keep copies of important letters.
- The Secretary should provide members of the Select Vestry with any material circulated from Diocesan Council (e.g. Council Digest).
- Honorary Secretaries, unlike Churchwardens, do not have any executive powers, yet the role they exercise is a very important one.
- The Secretary acts as Secretary to the Easter Vestry Meeting. See Appendices (i) and (ii) for sample Agendas and Minutes.



3.2. Role of the Treasurer

- The Treasurer is responsible for the lodgement of all monies received from -
 - › Weekly envelope scheme
 - › Annual contributions
 - › Offertories - ordinary or special (which should be counted after the service)
 - › Other funds received from any source

- The Treasurer is also responsible for -
 - › Financial planning and budgeting
 - › Prepare up-to-date figures for each Vestry meeting

- To issue payments for all items agreed by the Select Vestry. Direct Debit and Standing Orders in the bank make life easier for recurring expenses.

- To ensure that all diocesan demands are met by monthly banker's order. (Diocesan Rule 118)

- To see that all Insurance premiums are paid promptly on demand before the specified renewal date.

- Prepare an annual statement of accounts for presentation to a meeting of the Select Vestry prior to the Easter Vestry. (Parish accounts should be audited by an external auditor on a regular basis.)

- Submit to the Diocesan Office, on the appropriate form provided, a certified copy of the parochial accounts not later than one month from the date of the Easter Vestry. Failure to do so may result in an increased assessment for the following year.

- To pay the Rector the annual payment due for expenses of office allowance.

- To pay the Rector the figure agreed by the Select Vestry in respect of heat, light and other expenses incurred in respect of residence in the Rectory.

- To pay visiting clergy, retired clergy and diocesan readers the Diocesan Scale of Fees and Travelling Allowance for holiday duty, harvest etc.

- Good financial record keeping is essential. Keeping books and figures up to date prevents unnecessary anxiety when figures are required. Make good use of columns in Analysis Book so that there is not an endless list of miscellaneous figures.



3.3. Role of the Glebe Wardens

The Constitution of the Church of Ireland clearly outlines the duties of a Glebe warden:

- To assist the Rector and the Diocesan Glebes Committee in the care and management of the house and lands.
- To ensure that the Rectory is painted externally at least every five years.
- To be present at Inspections arranged by the Diocesan Glebes Committee every five years or at a vacancy inspection. If unable to attend, the Glebe warden should arrange, in the first instance, for one of the Supplemental Glebe wardens to attend as deputy. In the event of a Supplemental not being available, a member of the Select Vestry may be appointed to deputise.
- During a vacancy to see that the Rectory is properly maintained, supervised and fully insured.
- Where the rental income from Rectory lands goes to the parish, both the Select Vestry and Diocesan Glebes Committee must approve the letting.
- Such letting, if carried out privately, shall be accompanied by an auctioneer's valuation of the glebe land as required by Diocesan Synod.
- Glebe wardens, in conjunction with the Rural Dean and Rector, should carry out an annual inspection of the Rectory, report their findings to the Select Vestry and have any matter requiring attention rectified forthwith
- The recommendations in the Diocesan Architect's quinquennial or vacancy report must be put in hand with the minimum delay.
- The Rectory and outbuildings must be insured for their full replacement value at all times.
- All parishes within a group or union are responsible for their proportionate share of Glebe expenses.



3.4. Role of the Churchwardens

One is nominated by the Rector or other officiating cleric; the other is elected by the registered vestry members. If the Rector's Churchwarden is not nominated at the Easter Vestry such churchwarden shall be elected by the registered vestry members at the same meeting or at some adjournment. To qualify for election a nominee must be a registered vestry member of the parish.

Duties

- To keep a record of registered vestry members with the rector.
- During a vacancy in the cure to allow free use of the church to such cleric or diocesan reader as shall be authorised by the Bishop to officiate in it.
- To maintain order during Divine Service, and to see that the church and churchyard are not used for any profane purpose.
- Jointly with the Rural Dean to hand over to a new Rector the church plate and parochial documents.
- The Churchwardens and Select Vestry should ensure that all churchyards and graveyards are adequately fenced, and that the fences are maintained in good order.
- The control and management of graveyards is vested in the Churchwardens and Rector as provided by the Constitution of the Church of Ireland.
- The permission of the Churchwardens and the Rector must be obtained before any headstone, flagstone, kerb, vault or other structure is erected, and the appropriate fee must be paid. (See Appendix vi for further details)
- The Churchwardens and the Rector shall have the responsibility of defining the duties of all church officers.
- Be familiar with the Diocesan Scale of Fees and Travelling Allowance and apply same when use is made of retired clergy and diocesan readers covering holiday duty etc.
- The Churchwardens should welcome visitors and show them to seats
- Where a parish own articles, e.g. ladders, garden implements, lawn mowers, etc. it is advisable that a list be compiled and filed. Churchwardens should check the list each year at the time of the General Vestry.



4. Diocesan Synod Rules

- The election of lay members takes place triennially, the voters being the registered members of the parish. The Diocesan Synod may make regulations concerning the method of voting, disputed elections, and the proper conduct of elections generally.
- Any lay member of the Church of Ireland, aged 18 or over and a communicant, is eligible for election, whether residing in the parish or not.
- When a vacancy occurs through death, or resignation addressed to the Bishop in writing, or any other cause, the place of the Synod member is filled from the supplemental list elected by the Easter Vestry.
- The Diocesan Synod determines triennially the number of synod representatives to be elected for each parish, the number being in a proportion of not less than two, nor more than five, representatives for each cleric normally officiating in the parish. An identical number of supplemental members should be elected.
- Each synod representative and supplemental is supplied on election with a form of declaration to sign. If this is not returned within one month the seat falls vacant.
- When a representative is unable to attend for any cause, the Bishop may direct that a supplemental be summoned, but such supplemental is not eligible for election to any office which is confined to members of the synod. Where voting papers are issued before or after the Diocesan Synod, diocesan regulations determine the circumstances in which such a supplemental may vote.



5. Parochial Nominators

- To be eligible as a Parochial Nominator, a person must be at least 18 years old, a member of the Church of Ireland and a communicant. There is no residential qualification, and a nominator need not be a registered member of the parish. The registered members should give careful consideration to the matter before electing parochial nominators, bearing in mind that those whom they choose will be the representatives of the parish on the board of nomination if there should be a vacancy in the incumbency during the next three years.
- A Supplemental Parochial Nominator is summoned if one of the Parochial Nominators is unable to attend the Board of Nomination, and in this event the Supplemental Nominator continues to act until the work of the Board is completed. If a vacancy occurs among the Parochial Nominators, through death or other cause, it is filled from the supplemental list.

Nominators who are in office when a vacancy occurs, or when the Bishop informs them that he has accepted the resignation of the Rector, continue to act until the Institution of the new Rector.

- If the registered vestry members for any reason fail to elect Parochial Nominators, the Diocesan Council has the power to elect nominators who will hold office until the next ordinary meeting of the General Vestry.
- Each Parochial Nominator and Supplemental is supplied on election with a form of declaration to sign. If this is not returned within one month the seat falls vacant.



Appendix I

Sample Agenda

Dear Vestry Member,

The next meeting of the Select Vestry will be held on at 8.00 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

Hon. Secretary.

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last Vestry Meeting
4. Matters arising not listed below
5. Finance update
6. Correspondence - if any
7.
8. New business
9. Any other business
10. Closing Prayer



Appendix II

Sample Minutes

A meeting of the Select Vestry was held on

Present:

Apologies:

The Rector opened with prayer.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read/having been circulated were taken as read.

Changes, if any noted.

Adoption of minutes proposed by seconded by

Matters arising from the minutes included:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The Treasurer reported

It was proposed by..... and seconded by..... that..... .

The Secretary read letters from

It was decided to proposed by..... seconded by..... .

The Rector/convenor of working party introduced the subject of other new business.

Under Any Other Business raised the matter of

Closing Prayer



Appendix III: Outgoing Incumbents Check List 1

Parish Name of Church Incumbent

Incumbents check out form

To be completed and forwarded to the Diocesan Secretary at least 4 weeks prior to departure

Sunday Services

	Time of Service(s)	Type of Service according to BCP	Psalm - said or Sung	Who reads Lessons, Epistle etc.	Processional Hymn Y/N	Recessional Hymn Y/N	Hymns Announced Y/N	Sunday School Times	Other relevant notes
1st Sunday									
2nd Sunday									
3rd Sunday									
4th Sunday									
5th Sunday									



Appendix IV: Outgoing Incumbents Check List 2

Additional Information

- Weekday Services:
- Other regular services e.g. Hospitals/ Nursing Homes:

Home/Hospital:			
Day and time:			
Type of Service and Book used:			
Hymn Book used:			
Arrangements for music: organist/pianist/CD:			

- Other Names and Telephone Numbers:

Churchwardens	Secretary of Select Vestry
Glebewardens	Treasurer of Select Vestry
Safeguarding Trust Panel	Sunday School Superintendent(s)
Parish Reader(s)	Leaders of Organisations
Church Organist(s)	Youth Leaders (uniformed/non-uniformed)

- Private Communion List (Housebound only) – *please attach*
- Orphans: Attach list of children receiving orphan money and state method of payment, e.g. cash, cheque or other (include also to whom payment is made)



The Rural Dean will arrange

- To collect from you a register of all parishioners
- To check whereabouts of church plate and parochial documents
- To have access to all parish keys

Other helpful information

Please add any other helpful information, e.g. prearranged future dates of events/special services, special orders of service, e.g. Remembrance Sunday/Carol Service etc.

Date of event	Name of event	Notes

Other useful information:



Appendix V: Diocesan Contacts

For a complete list see: www.derryandraphoe.org/about/structures/office-holders or the diocesan directory.

Diocesan Accountant Administrator:

Mr Gavin Harkin
Diocesan Office, London Street, Londonderry
BT48 6RQ
Tel: (028) 7126 2440
Fax: (028) 7137 2100
Email: office@derry.anglican.org

Co Donegal Diocesan Board of Education

Honorary Secretary:
Mr Des West
Carrickbrack, Convoy, Co Donegal

Diocesan Glebes Secretary:

The Reverend Canon David W T Crooks
Taughboyne Rectory, Churchtown, Carrigans
Lifford, Co Donegal
Tel: 074 91 40135
Email: dcrooks@eircom.net

Diocesan Communications Officer:

Mr Paul McFadden
Diocesan Office, London Street, Londonderry
BT48 6RQ
Tel: (028) 7126 2440
Email: press@derryandraphoe.org

Diocesan Registrar:

The Reverend Canon David W T Crooks
Taughboyne Rectory, Churchtown, Carrigans
Lifford, Co Donegal
Tel: 074 91 40135
Email: dcrooks@eircom.net

Diocesan Youth Officer

Mr Martin Montgomery
Diocesan Office, London Street, Londonderry
BT48 6RQ
Tel: (028) 7126 2440
Email: martin@derryandraphoe.org

Diocesan Director of Ordinands:

The Reverend Canon Sam McVeigh
49 Killane Road, Limavady, Co. Londonderry
BT49 0DJ
Tel: (028) 7776 2680
Email: mcveigh_family@yahoo.co.uk

Diocesan Children's Ministry Officer

Miss Kirsty Lynch
Diocesan Office, London Street, Londonderry
BT48 6RQ
Tel: (028) 7126 2440
Email: kirsty@derryandraphoe.org

Diocesan Architect:

Miss C Dickson
34 Clarendon Street, Londonderry

Diocesan Representatives for Bishops' Appeal:

Derry: Mr Albert Smallwoods
"Shalom", 43 Deanfield, Londonderry
Raphoe: The Reverend Canon David W T Crooks
Taughboyne Rectory, Churchtown, Carrigans
Lifford, Co. Donegal

Derry Diocesan Board of Education

Honorary Secretary:
Mr William Montgomery
25a Castlegore road, Castlederg, Co Tyrone
BT817RU

Derry and Raphoe "N-Vision" Editor:

Rev Katie McAteer
27 Northland Road, Londonderry, BT48 7NF
Tel: (UK) 078 1388 5145
Email: kmcateer51@gmail.com



Appendix VI: Graveyard Rules and Regulations

Dioceses of Derry & Raphoe

Parish of

The care of all burial grounds vested in the Representative Body is hereby entrusted to the clergy and churchwardens of the several churches to which the same are respectively annexed, but subject to the control of the Representative Body; and in order to protect the same, the officiating member of the clergy and churchwardens may prevent trespass or other unlawful use of, or interference with, the same, and act on behalf and in the name of the Representative Body in any proceedings requisite for the purpose.

(Chapter 12.1 Constitution)

Graveyard Regulations

1. The interest in a burial plot may only be registered in one name, but such registration is not to be deemed to exclude the interest of other members of the family. No transference of burial rights can be made or recognised.
2. Each person having a grave plot registered in his or her name shall keep any erection thereon in good order and repair. Should any such person fail to do so, the Incumbent and Churchwardens may have the same put in good order and repaired at the expense of the party so neglecting.
3. No burial (whether in a grave or a vault) may take place without the prior permission of the Incumbent and Churchwardens. The Parishioners (including any member of the Church of Ireland dying in the Parish) have a general right of burial in a post 1870 Graveyard subject to the direction of the Incumbent and Churchwardens as to the place of sepulture. An exclusive right of burial in a particular grave plot can only be granted by obtaining a faculty from the Bishop.
4. No burial service may take place while a service or Sunday School is being held in the church, or within half an hour before or after.
5. Clergy and ministers of other denominations are entitled to officiate only when the plot has been granted by faculty or, in the case of a pre-1870 Graveyard, when the plot has been granted by faculty or prescription or when the person has died within the Parish. In any other case the consent of the Incumbent is required.
6. Each grave plot shall be at least 8 feet long by 3 feet wide. The depth for opening a new grave shall be 8 feet, except where the nature of the ground makes this impossible; but in no circumstances shall this depth be less than 6 feet 6 inches (1.98 metres). No coffin shall be laid in a grave nearer to the surface than 36 inches (0.91 metres), measured from the top of the coffin, and no grave in which a coffin has been laid at that depth shall be opened within 14 years after same has been so laid.



7. No new grave shall be allocated within 12 feet of the fabric of a church. (Chapter 12.5 Constitution)
8. Plans for all erections on graves must be submitted to the Incumbent and Churchwardens for approval, together with the appropriate fees, and proposed inscriptions thereon can only be allowed with the previous permission of the Incumbent. All such approvals must be given in writing before any work is started. (Chapter 12.7 Constitution)
9. Foundations to headstones must be at least 2 feet (0.61 metres) in depth and consist of reinforced concrete and should not impinge on the actual grave plot.
10. Wreaths, artificial flowers, or moveable tablets may be permitted on graves with the consent of the Incumbent and Churchwardens, but they shall be removed when they become unsightly, or after three months.
11. The surface of graves must be kept level with the surrounding ground, and no digging of any kind may be carried out except with the consent of the Incumbent and Churchwardens. Any unauthorized digging will be rectified at the discretion of the Incumbent and Churchwardens, and any cost incurred must be borne by the person in whose name the grave is registered. Generally, grave surfaces should be sown in grass. If covered with stone chipping, the base must be of concrete slabs, hydraulically compressed 2 in. thick and adequately to the satisfaction of the Incumbent and Churchwardens.
12. Bushes, trees or large shrubs may not be planted on graves.
13. Containers for flowers should be secured against the effects of weather by being fastened to the ground by means of galvanised wire pins or otherwise.
14. No work may be done in the Churchyard during the time of Divine Service.
15. Urns used for the burial of cremated ashes must be made of material which will ultimately disintegrate (such as wood or some other quickly perishable material) thereby allowing the contents to return to the soil as "ashes to ashes, dust to dust". In no circumstances shall containers made wholly or partly of plastic be admitted.
16. A corpse may not be exhumed except on order of the coroner or other authorised officer or on a faculty issued by the Diocesan Court.
17. Subject to the provisions of the above rules, in vacant benefices the Rural Dean shall be deemed to be the Incumbent for the purposes of these Regulations.
18. The Select Vestry appoint the grave-digger.



Notes

Rules

Graveyard Rules should be displayed in a prominent position in the graveyard. They should also be distributed to Funeral Undertakers and Monumental Sculptors in your area. To comply with Regulation 15 it may be necessary to have consultation with the crematorium or undertaker as ashes are sometimes sent for burial in plastic containers. If the undertaker is advised of the Regulation he may take any action necessary.

The sub-committee endorse the above guidelines for Graveyard Regulations passed by the Council in 2001 and circulated to Parishes. These are recommended for implementation in all parishes of the Diocese although small alterations may be necessary in individual parishes.

The Irish Churchwardens Handbook (1979), available in the Diocesan Centre, has a very informative chapter on Graveyards and Burial Rights and much of this is summarised below.

Recording: Section 5 of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1926 requires the burial of a stillborn child to be recorded in the Register of Burials.

The names of individuals whose cremated remains have been interred and other relevant details shall be entered in the Register of Burials.

Parishioners: Care must be taken in the definition of a "Parishioner" as this may legally vary depending on the date of Consecration of the Graveyard. In general today a "Parishioner" is any person living within the bounds of the parish who declares himself or herself to be a member of the Church of Ireland. Accustomed members of a congregation may also be considered parishioners and, with the present day movements of population and ease of travel, it would seem that many parishes have members who still consider themselves "parishioners" whilst living outside the traditional parish boundaries.

Pre-disestablishment Graveyards: Those graveyards vested in the Representative Church Body in 1869 are held in trust for all "parishioners" no matter to what religious denomination they belong. In this context a "parishioner" would include *any person* dying within the parish boundaries. The common law before Disestablishment gave parishioners the right to be buried without payment of a fee. These rights are preserved in the Constitution of the Church of Ireland and must be respected provided space is available. . As regards rights of burial it must be understood that the "parishes" are the ancient parishes, and that any changes made in boundaries by diocesan councils since 1870 are not to be considered.

Post-disestablishment Graveyards: Graveyards, and portions thereof, which have been vested in the Representative Church Body since 1870 are usually consecrated giving a right of burial to any member of the Church of Ireland dying within the parish, although in certain cases that right is extended to members of other specific denominations. In these graveyards burial fees may be charged provided the scale of fees is authorised by the Diocesan Council.

Closed Graveyards: Graveyards which are overcrowded may, after inquiry, be closed on the grounds of public health by the local authority, who may reserve rights of burial to individuals.

Burial Fees: Fees must be fair and equitable, if they are excessive or not in accord with State or Church law, it is the duty of the Diocesan Council to withhold consent. There is a wide variation between parishes, in general all parishioners and their families should be treated equally with no



distinction made on the grounds of attendance at worship or other contributions to the parish. A scale of fees should be set by each Select Vestry and approved by the Diocesan Council. In the case of others the fees shall be set by the Select Vestry and approved by the Diocesan Council. In the case of pre-disestablishment graveyards the right to burial without fee applies only in cases where the relatives are prepared to allow the corpse to be buried in any burial plot designated by the Rector and Churchwardens; it does not apply in any case where the burial plot has been "selected either by the deceased during his life, or by his surviving relatives and acquiesced in and permitted by the Rector and Churchwardens".

Non-parishioner: Persons with no personal connection with a parish but whose family formerly had connections with the parish may, at the discretion of the Rector and Churchwardens, be buried in the graveyard. This is a very sensitive area and needs to be considered carefully. Persons with no connections with a parish would not normally be given space in the graveyard.

Registration of Graveyards: Right of burial resides only in the name of the person to whom the plot is registered and is not transferable. Parishes must create and keep an accurate map of all plots and an accurate record of all burials which take place in a graveyard. Parishes are encouraged to re-register their graveyards on a regular basis (i.e. every 10 years).

Headstones: Fees for the erection of headstones and surrounds should be set by the Select Vestry and approved by the Diocesan Council. These fees may be charged even if the person concerned is entitled to free burial in a pre-disestablishment graveyard. We recommend that headstones should not exceed 4 feet in height by 2.5 feet in width for a single grave plot. Parishes should note that in most modern graveyards surrounds are not permitted.

Maintenance: All fees received for the registration of plots and erection of headstones etc. shall be in the hands of the Rector and Churchwardens, or any person they shall authorise, and must be expended in keeping the Church and graveyard in good order and repair. We advise all parishes to keep a separate bank account.

Ashes: In a graveyard ashes should only be buried in bio-degradable containers. The normal permissions must be obtained but a separate scale of fees may apply.

Disinterment: If a Rector and Churchwardens have given permission to bury in a particular grave a body can only be disinterred by faculty from the Bishop, or by Coroner's order, or order of "other authorised officer".

Plots: Normally plots are only allocated at the time of death and by the Incumbent and Churchwardens. If the person in whom the plot is registered is deceased permission should be sought from all members of the family before further burials take place. If no family agreement can be reached a decision must be taken by the Rector and Churchwardens. The committee recommends that a maximum of two single plots should be registered to any one person. Each single plot should measure 9ft. by 3.5 ft. We have ascertained that local Councils normally open graves to a depth of 1.8 metres (approx. 6 ft.). The upper coffin in any grave must be not less than 3 ft. from the finished surface of the ground.

Plans: The proposed layout of new graveyards or extensions to existing graveyards should be approved by the Bishop and the Glebes and Properties committee before work commences.



Other denominations: Clergy of other denominations may conduct a burial service in a parish graveyard provided they have the permission of the Incumbent and subject to the place of burial being approved by the Rector and Churchwardens. All burials should be recorded in the Parish Registers.

Note: Please note that in most cases the responsibilities lie with the Rector and Churchwardens (not the Select Vestry).

Burial Costs:

	Parishioner	Non-Parishioner
New Registration		
Opening fee		
Burial recording in registered grave		
Erection of headstone/base		
Up to 3ft wide		
3-6ft wide		
Interment of ashes in registered grave		
Re-registration of family plot (2 gravespaces)		

The above fees can be altered according to each Parishes circumstances.



6. Contact

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Diocesan Office
24 London Street,
Londonderry,
Co Londonderry
Bt48 6RQ

Tel: (028) 7126 2440

Fax: (028) 7137 2100

Email: office@derry.anglican.org