

Working as a Churchwarden Team

With a team of 4 Churchwardens now in view, this document is intended to outline how I anticipate they will work together with me as the Vicar, and how they will connect with other structures within the life of St Stephen's.

Our work together will be guided by the 4 key strands to the Churchwarden role, namely:

1. Mission
2. Pastoral care
3. Buildings and contents
4. Order
 - Worship
 - Governance and compliance

It is anticipated that all churchwardens will come alongside the Vicar on the first strand: to discern and effect the mission of God in the church and parish. They will then each have a principal area of responsibility within the other strands outlined, while working jointly and collaboratively to ensure that all of the corresponding tasks are discharged appropriately.

Churchwardens are not called to complete every task themselves; they are primarily called to oversee. They will therefore work with other teams and individuals in the church. They do not need to act as Chair within those teams, nor do they necessarily need to be experts in their area. However, they must be willing to learn and become conversant in those areas. There is also some degree of overlap between the areas.

- The Churchwarden responsible for buildings would work with the existing buildings team and Premises Manager.
- The Churchwarden responsible for pastoral care would work with a newly formed safeguarding team comprising the Vicar, Parish Safeguarding Officers and Safeguarding Administrator, and also help develop our pastoral care support.
- The Churchwarden responsible for worship would work with the existing Duty Warden team, clergy and staff team across their different ministry areas.
- The Churchwarden responsible for governance and compliance would work most closely with the Vicar and Treasurer.

As this will be a new way of working, the best structure for meeting up will evolve, but I anticipate meeting with the team at least monthly with additional meetings if deemed necessary by the team. It is anticipated that all four would attend Standing Committee meetings, usually every 2 months.

Church law dictates that there be a maximum of two individuals appointed to the office of Churchwarden. These two individuals would be elected as ex-officio members of the PCC and Standing Committee (also comprising the Vicar, PCC Secretary and two further non-ordained PCC members). The additional two wardens would therefore technically serve as assistant wardens and would not routinely join PCC meetings. However, we would ask the Annual Meeting to elect them to these roles.

In terms of which Churchwardens are legally appointed (and therefore serve as officers of the Bishop and ex-officio on the PCC), there is not yet a definitive way forward. However, it would make sense for the governance and compliance Churchwarden to serve as ex-officio. The other might sensibly be the warden responsible for buildings.

Given the role of Churchwardens in shaping the culture of St Stephen's they are all required to complete Safeguarding Leadership training and the pre-requisite modules. They are also required to complete the Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse module. It is expected that these modules will be completed within 3 months of them starting in post, and definitely by 6 months.

Revd David Baylor
21 April 2026