

October 2006

To PCC Secretaries

Dear Secretary

PREPARATION OF NEW ELECTORAL ROLL

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. Copies can be obtained from Church House Publishing – telephone 0207 8981451 or Wesley Owen bookshops – telephone 0800 834315. There is a Wesley Owen bookshop in Derby at 48 Queen Street – telephone 01332 345936.) Thus new rolls need to be prepared next year.

Diversity monitoring

In July 2003, the General Synod of the Church of England established the principle of ongoing diversity monitoring. Following this mandate, an audit of clergy diversity was carried out by the Research and Statistics Department of the Archbishops' Council in 2005 and reported to General Synod in July 2006. The most recent diversity monitoring at a national level across the parishes and dioceses was the 2002 Collection of Statistics of Ethnic Origin. With the preparation of the new electoral roll the Archbishops' Council wishes to take the opportunity to revise these statistics. A similar exercise is consequently planned for the autumn of 2007 to monitor the newly formed electoral rolls. Whereas the 2002 exercise adopted a census approach the 2007 exercise will take the form of a structured sampling approach overseen by the Research and Statistics Department. The exercise is intended to enable a better understanding of the profile of parishes. Some parishes in this diocese will therefore be asked to participate in this monitoring exercise 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 again these are available in church bookshops. 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 1st 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 but, as usual in this diocese, we shall ask for that information via the annual ‘Blue Card’ in which we also ask for a count of attendances during Lent. 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. We suggest that this is done via a locally produced certificate of Electoral Roll only, signed by one of the officers detailed above, although a photocopy of the Blue Card would suffice.

If you have any general questions about the overall process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Secretary

Copy to: Incumbent/Priest in Charge