

# Diocesan procedures for designating (establishing) and dissolving (closing) a chaplaincy

## INTRODUCTION

The Diocesan Procedures for designating (ie establishing) a new Chaplaincy or dissolving (ie closing) an existing Chaplaincy in accordance with the requirements of Section 3(a) of the [Diocesan Constitution](#) are set out below:

## DESIGNATING (ESTABLISHING) A NEW CHAPLAINCY

The normal procedure for the establishment of a new chaplaincy is as follows:

- A letter to the archdeacon from the congregation, requesting the establishment of an independent chaplaincy, including evidence of an extant or a potential worshipping community.
- In the case of a congregation which is part of an existing chaplaincy, a letter from the chaplain, and a resolution of the 'chaplaincy' Council, sent to the archdeacon, expressing their views on the establishment of the new chaplaincy.
- Agreement with the Diocesan Bishop of the way in which the requirements of the canons for the celebration of worship will be met in the new chaplaincy.
- Approval by the Diocesan Bishop, on the advice of the diocesan registrar, of the proposed constitution of the chaplaincy as set out in Section 2C of the [Diocesan Protocols](#).
- Acceptance by the Diocesan Board of Finance (or its Finance and Property Committee) of a report on the stipend, housing and expenses the chaplaincy intends to provide for its chaplain.
- A resolution (normally proposed by a representative of the archdeaconry) of the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod in the form:
- 'that this Standing Committee supports the proposal that the Bishop shall declare the congregation of (name) to be a chaplaincy of the Diocese from (date).'

## **The Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod normally meets in October each year**

- A formal Declaration by the Diocesan Bishop establishing the chaplaincy and appointing its first chaplain.

Congregations seeking to form a new Chaplaincy can find further information on what this entails in [Chapter 2](#) (The Ministry of the Laity) and [Chapter 3](#) (the Well Being of a Chaplaincy) of the Diocesan Handbook.

## **DISSOLVING (CLOSING) AN EXISTING CHAPLAINCY**

The need for the closure of an existing chaplaincy may come about as a consequence of a number of factors:

1. Most commonly because the Chaplain and Chaplaincy Council has concluded that the chaplaincy has ceased to be a viable entity. This may be as a result of a lack of financial support, a congregation that is too small to sustain the work of the chaplaincy or other local factors (including natural disasters or political incompatibility) – the list is not exhaustive.
2. Less commonly because the Archdeacon has determined that the chaplaincy has consistently failed to follow the Doctrine, Canons, Legal Measures or other requirements of the Church of England (as explained in this Diocesan Handbook) and is therefore not a viable part of the Diocese.

## **The normal procedure to be followed in each case is as follows:**

1. In the case where the Chaplain and Chaplaincy Council have concluded that the chaplaincy is no longer viable:
  - The submission of a proposal from the Chaplaincy Council (established by a formal resolution agreed by the Council) to the archdeacon that the council has concluded that the chaplaincy is no longer viable together with reasons for this conclusion.
  - The Archdeacon will consult with the appropriate people to determine whether the proposal is substantiated or if there are alternative approaches that should be undertaken to seek to secure the chaplaincy. The appropriate consultees are: the Chaplain, the Chaplaincy Council, any person or body who by custom has had the right to nominate (to the Diocesan Bishop) clergy for licensing to the chaplaincy and (if not the Diocesan Bishop) the Suffragan Bishop in whose nominated area the chaplaincy is located.

- Where the Archdeacon concludes that the proposal is valid, the Archdeacon will recommend to the Diocesan Bishop that, having reviewed the circumstances, there is no practical alternative approach and that the chaplaincy should be dissolved (ie closed).
- Subject to any outstanding matters to be resolved, the Diocesan Bishop will:
- Seek the consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod by a resolution (normally proposed by a representative of the archdeaconry) in the form:
- 'that this Standing Committee supports the proposal that the Bishop shall dissolve the congregation of (name) from (date).'

The Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod normally meets in October each year. And if so consented,

- Inform by letter to the Archdeacon, the Chaplain and the chaplaincy that the chaplaincy is to be formally dissolved (ie closed) from the given date
  1. In the case where the archdeacon has concluded that the chaplaincy is no longer a viable part of the Diocese:
- Having consulted with the appropriate persons, the Archdeacon has exhausted all reasonable avenues to seek to redirect the chaplaincy, the Archdeacon will submit a proposal (to include reasons) to the Diocesan Bishop that the chaplaincy should be dissolved. The proposal will normally be copied to the Chaplain and the Chaplaincy Council. The appropriate consultees are: the Chaplain, the Chaplaincy Council, any person or body who by custom has had the right to nominate (to the Diocesan Bishop) clergy for licensing to the chaplaincy and (if not the Diocesan Bishop) the Suffragan Bishop in who's nominated area the chaplaincy is located.
- Taking note of the consultations already undertaken by the archdeacon, the Diocesan Bishop will consult with such persons as they deem appropriate (and may require the Chaplaincy to make a written submission in response to the Archdeacon's proposal).

Where the Diocesan Bishop concludes that the proposal is well-founded, the Diocesan Bishop will:

- Seek the consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod by a resolution (normally proposed by the archdeacon) in the form:
- 'that this Standing Committee supports the proposal that the Bishop shall dissolve the congregation of (name) from (date).'
- The Standing Committee of the Diocesan Synod normally meets in October each year. And if so consented,

- Inform by letter to the Archdeacon, the Chaplain and the chaplaincy that the chaplaincy is to be formally dissolved (ie closed) from the given date.
- The Diocesan Bishop's conclusions are final.

### **Footnotes re the closure of a chaplaincy**

In either case, where a chaplaincy is closed there will be a number of consequential matters which will be addressed as follows:

- Disposal of Assets: Subject to local national rules as to the Ultimate Beneficial Owners of charitably-held property, the Archdeacon, in consultation with the Bishop in whose area the chaplaincy is located, will determine what approach is to be taken to the disposal of assets. This may include the sale of assets to raise funds to cover any consequential costs and any outstanding debts on the chaplaincy.
  - Arrangements, where possible, for the pastoral care of the members, by attachment to another chaplaincy of our Diocese, or to another church nearby.
  - The Archdeacon, in consultation with the appropriate Bishop, will determine what arrangements should be made for the redeployment of the Chaplain if that is appropriate. The costs resulting from the need for a Chaplain to move will be covered in accordance with the Diocesan requirements as set out in User Guide UG4.1 [here](#).
  - It is to be noted that once a chaplaincy is closed, the Chaplaincy Electoral Roll no longer exists. Any person who has been elected or appointed to any position, where being a member of the electoral roll has been a pre-requisite, will therefore be required to resign from that position forthwith.
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