



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

SUFFOLK

Transition into retirement - for stipendiary clergy



Are you planning to retire
from stipendiary ministry in
the next few years?

Answering key questions
may help with the
transition.

Firstly, a thank you for the ministry you have offered and the support you have given to so many, probably in lots of unseen ways as well as the formal, licensed ways.

Here are some handy contacts for you:

1

Firstly, head over to the Church of England national retirement planning support website pages:

www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/church-england-pensions-board-0

2

For information about housing and moving please email:

housingservices@churchofengland.org



Have a think about:

- Do you have your own house? If so, will you live there, sell and move?
- Will you buy your own house? Will it be in this diocese or elsewhere? Unless there are exceptional circumstances and as a courtesy to your successor clergy are expected to move away from their benefice.
- Choosing where to live. Will it be near family, friends? In a village or town? Think about what will work for you, consider if you can no longer drive or the type of local amenities (shops/doctors) or entertainment (theatre/sports clubs) you may like.
- Where will you worship?

If you don't have your own house, contact the Pensions Board at least three years before retirement if you think you may want to part-rent through CHARM housing (i.e. a house part provided by the CofE: Clergy Housing Assistance for Retired Ministers). The sooner you contact them the better.

Please note:

- Moving costs are not normally paid by the diocese.
- Give yourself time (at least two weeks) after your last service to tidy up loose ends work-wise and to sort the house ready to move (time to go to tip, get rid of some books etc!).
- Remember you can stay in your clergy house for up to a month rent free.

3

For information about finance please email:

pensions@churchofengland.org

- Start planning well in advance – how much will you need?
- What do you want to do in retirement?
- Seek advice from the Pensions Board or your own financial adviser.
- About a year before – check what pension you will get from

www.churchofengland.org/about/pensions/clergy-pensions

- Check your State Pension forecast and other pensions you may have and give the providers the date of your intended retirement.

www.gov.uk/check-state-pension

- Apply for your clergy and other pensions about three to six months before retirement.

4

Resigning and letting go:

- Write to the Bishop to inform him of your date of retirement. In certain cases, particularly where you are the incumbent, the diocesan register will send you a formal resignation deed. You usually need to give three months' notice.
- Deciding the date – do you want to retire at a major festival? In the summer?
- How and when will you tell 'the parish'? Who will you tell first – churchwardens? Ministry Team? Public announcement in church? Things to think about include succession planning – which might determine who needs to know more in advance than the general public announcement. It may be 12-18 months before you leave.
- Start to 'let go' and 'hand over' responsibilities to others.

Help your parish to move forward – they need to let go of you.

The booklet 'Guide to Parish Vacancies and Appointments' has a useful appendix which will help you and the benefice with the handover.

www.cofesuffolk.org/for-parishes/parish-administration/parish-vacancies

Your archdeacon or the Bishop's office will be able to send it to you. You normally plan the service rota for the first three months of the vacancy.



5

Thinking about yourself pre-retirement:

- You might like to go on a pre-retirement course about two to three years before retirement. Courses are regularly advertised in eNews or contact the Mission and Ministry team.
- Mental preparation for a new life! Start to visualise what you would like to do – make a list, talk to others. What will give you joy? Pleasure? Take up a new hobby? Do what you've always wanted to do and not have time for? Visit friends/family?
- Think about where your support will come from – social? Spiritual?

6

After moving:

- How will you feel not to be 'needed' – great or bereft?
- Expect it to feel 'odd', frustrating or difficult, even 'just' sitting in the pew and not leading. Or it might be a delight!
- Be prepared to be exhausted after you retire – moving itself is tiring, and you will be tired from busy ministry.
- Be gentle, learn to pace yourself.
- What will your daily/weekly pattern look like? Begin to imagine it and put some fixed points in such as a book club, gym class or maybe a new course.
- Enjoy settling into your new home. It is yours – it is not 'public space'.



Getting Permission to Officiate (PTO):

- Most dioceses expect you to have at least three to six months 'off' before PTO is granted.
- If you have moved to a new diocese, they won't know you unless you contact them. You can of course choose to be anonymous.
- If you want PTO, contact the relevant Bishop's office. If you are in a new diocese, they will also ask for your clergy 'blue file' from your previous diocese and you will need to complete a DBS and safeguarding training.
- Beware of saying 'yes' to everything and feeling under pressure to do so – do what gives you life!

Retired clergy support in the diocese:

- Once a diocese knows you 'exist', they will usually inform the Retired Clergy Officer who will visit and/or put you in touch with the retired clergy network.

Financial support:

- In this diocese, Suffolk Clergy Charity can offer some financial support in cases of need:

www.cofesuffolk.org/for-ministers/ministers-wellbeing-and-support/suffolk-clergy-charity

- The CofE pensions board also offers some help:

www.churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/retirement-housing/welfare-and-housing-support



**We hope and pray that you will enjoy the
next phase of life, whatever you do!**



 THE CHURCH
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**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

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