

What is a Churchwarden?

It can be daunting or mystifying to contemplate the task of being a churchwarden.

A Churchwarden is:

- **The Bishop's officer.** When the Archdeacon admits you as Churchwarden, they are formally appointing you to this office on behalf of the Bishop. The Bishop may want to consult with you about the parish during the year, and you may need to consult with him. If you need to resign in the course of the year, it is the Bishop you write to!
- **A support for the vicar/ rector/ priest-in-charge.** Clergy look to their churchwardens to be dependable colleagues and supportive friends in their shared responsibility for the life of the parish. 'Cooperating with the incumbent' is required of wardens (Canon E1)
- **'Foremost in representing the laity' (Canon E1).** Lay people will often follow the example and lead of their churchwardens both in the PCC and more generally in the parish. They will sometimes come to a churchwarden with their concerns about the church. A churchwarden's wisdom and common sense are great assets for a church.
- **Responsible for some church property and for order in church services.** Churchwardens have responsibilities concerning the safekeeping of certain items of the church and often for the maintenance of the building, though this can be delegated. The managing of church services is often shared with the sidespersons and the welcoming of newcomers.

So it does take commitment to do justice to the task of serving the church as a churchwarden. A 'deputy warden', though not an official position, can in practice greatly ease the responsibilities of the churchwarden.

Archdeacons see their Churchwardens as key partners in mission and ministry, together with good governance and administration. Throughout the year, opportunities are arranged for churchwardens to meet with their Archdeacon, and training and information are provided on a wide range of topics. The Diocesan Registry team and Insurance Consultants are also drawn into these meetings.

Your Archdeacon, Rural Dean and Deanery Lay Chair are all available to resource and support you throughout the year.