

A GUIDE FOR CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICERS

General

It is essential that the Church Electoral Roll is accurately kept, is revised annually and that a new Roll is properly prepared when required. The Roll is used to determine eligibility for attendance and participation at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) and for election to the Parochial Church Council (PCC). It is also used to determine eligibility for election to the deanery, diocesan and general synods. In addition it is used for the calculation of the number of representatives who may be elected to each of these synods in the following year.

Revision of Roll

The Roll is revised every year (except when a new Roll is prepared - see next paragraph) in time for the annual parochial church meeting. Notices, both of the meeting and the revision have to be displayed and copies of these notices may be obtained free from the diocesan web site at www.salisbury.anglican.org. Forms of application for enrolment are also available from the web site.

The New Roll

Every sixth year, instead of a revision, a completely new Roll has to be prepared, the next time being in 2019. Notices may be downloaded from the diocesan web site. Forms for application for enrolment are the same as those used for an annual revision.

Certification

The numbers on the Roll need to be certified to the Diocesan Office each year. Information about this is sent out automatically by the Diocesan Office in the early part of the year.

Your Questions Answered

Every parish should have an up to date copy of the Church Representation Rules (the current edition is dated 2017). This provides the detailed information you require relating to eligibility for inclusion in a Roll, its preparation, maintenance, and revision. It is available from Sarum College Bookshop, Salisbury (01722 326899) or from the Diocesan Office.

In addition, there are some questions that parishes regularly ask this Office and the answers to these are set out below:

1. The Church Electoral Roll is for lay persons only. Retired clergy are still clergy and therefore not eligible for inclusion.
2. To be entitled to be included on the Roll a lay person must be:
 - a. baptised
 - b. over 16 years of age on or before the date of the annual parochial church meeting.
 - c. either - a member* of the Church of England, or a Church in Communion with the Church of England (please see attached list), and resident in the parish. (There is no requirement to go to church regularly).

or - a member of the Church of England, or a Church in communion with the Church of England, and resident in another parish, but habitually attending worship in the chosen parish for at least 6 months prior to enrolment (unless prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause).

or - a member of a Church subscribing to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, such as Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, URC, etc (in other words, most mainstream Christian churches but not, for example, Unitarians or Jehovah's Witnesses) and prepared to declare themselves a member of the Church of England, and having habitually attended worship in the chosen parish for at least 6 months prior to enrolment.

d. A person must also have signed an application form for enrolment.

3. A person can be on the Roll of several parishes if fulfilling the above criteria, but can only use one parish for the purposes of membership of the PCC, elections to synods, etc.
4. Except every 6th year, when a new Roll is prepared, the Roll shall be revised annually.
5. Names can be added to or removed from the Roll during the course of the year, with the exception as laid down in point 6, below. All such changes must be reported to the next meeting of the PCC.
6. No names shall be added to or removed from the Roll between the completion of the Roll and the close of the APCM (which must take place before 30th April each year). This means that those who miss the closing date for completion of the Roll, (14 days before the APCM), will not be eligible to attend the APCM or take part in the proceedings.
7. The number of representatives for election to deanery and diocesan synods depends on the number on the Roll in the previous year.
8. Under Data Protection legislation (GDPR) the list of those on the Church Electoral Roll may not be used as a general mailing list for church communications. If you use the version of the form "Application for Enrolment on the Church Electoral Roll (With Consent Form)" on the diocesan web site you will find it includes a Consent section. Otherwise, a separate consent form will need to be used to compile such a mailing list from the Electoral Roll.

NB - Churchwardens - The meeting to choose the churchwardens may be attended by those on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll of the parish as well as those on the Church Electoral Roll and both categories may participate.

* "**member**" is not defined by Church Representation Rules - it is enough for a person to say that they are a member of the Church of England.

Useful Addresses

Church House Bookshop
31 Great Smith Street
Westminster
London SW1P 3BN

Tel: 0207 898 1300

Sarum College Bookshop
19 The Close
Salisbury
Wiltshire SP1 2EE

Tel: 01722 326899

Salisbury Diocesan Office
Church House
Crane Street
Salisbury
Wiltshire SP1 2QB

Tel: 01722 411922

Web site: www.salisbury.anglican.org