

Parish

A **parish** is a geographical ministry unit with its own ordained minister/priest (usually the Vicar), which operates under the authority of the Bishop and Synod.

The **Vestry** is a board which manages the parish. It includes clergy and elected lay representatives. The two senior members of the vestry are the **churchwardens**, who assume responsibility for the parish in the absence of the vicar.

Vestry members and churchwardens are elected annually by parishioners at the Annual General Meeting. Two parishioners are elected to represent the parish at Synod. To be eligible to stand or to vote within a parish, you must have been on the parish roll for two months.

The **Churchwardens** are the lay leaders of the parish. They are spokespersons for the vestry to parishioners, and spokespersons for parishioners in most matters. In the absence of the vicar, the churchwardens are responsible for the operation of the parish.

Synod

The Diocesan Synod governs the Diocese. It meets for two days each September, with local regional meetings held in June or July each year to consider matters to be raised at Synod in a more informal context.

For a decision to be passed at Synod, it must have a majority vote of the three 'houses', laity, clergy and bishops.

Synod also elects a new bishop when there is a vacancy.

Four parish nominators are appointed by the vestry following the AGM. Should the parish find itself without a vicar, the nominators work with the Diocese to find and appoint a new one.