



Archdeacon's Newsletter for Ewhurst with Okewood & Forest Green

December 2023

Dear Friends

The purpose of this newsletter is twofold.

Firstly, I wish to say a huge thank you to you all for all that you are doing to ensure the mission and ministry of God's church is continues during this time of vacancy. I recognise that it has taken a little while to agree the next model of ministry but am delighted that we can now move ahead with the appointment of a House for Duty Priest-in-Charge.

Secondly, this newsletter will explain how the vacancy will be managed and how a new appointment will be made with a timeline of the important meetings.

Please be assured of my care, prayers, and support during this time.

Best wishes

Martin

Martin Breadmore

Archdeacon of Dorking & Acting

Archdeacon of Surrey



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What happens now?

Who is In Charge during the Vacancy? Following Clare's departure, the formal running of the parish is the legal responsibility of the Area Dean (Rev Canon Roy Woodhams) and Churchwardens (the Sequestrators).

How does the parish function without an Incumbent? Whilst the Area Dean will provide oversight and support, he is also a busy incumbent and will not be able to be present very often. Most of the work, therefore, will be coordinated by the vacancy management team who are accountable to the PCC. This will consist of the churchwardens, administrator, treasurer, and others who share in ministerial and administrative support. It will meet regularly to ensure things continue as normal. For good reason, the Area Dean will ensure that no strategic decisions are taken during the time when there is no incumbent in the parish.

What if I have any questions during this period?

Please speak to the churchwardens in the first instance. They will be able to direct you to the right person.

How is our new Incumbent chosen?

Who decides on our new House for Duty Priest?

There are six people who will be on the formal interview panel:

The Joint Patrons Mr J P M H Evelyn and Bishop of Guildford (Rt Rev Andrew Watson)

The Archdeacon of Surrey (The Venerable Catharine Mabuza)

The Area Dean of Cranleigh (Rev Canon Roy Woodhams)

The two Parish Representatives (elected by the PCC)

Will there be consultation?

Yes. The most important work that needs to be done now is the putting together of a parish profile and person specification. This is, in effect, the document that lays out our priorities looking forward and the gifts that we seek in a new leader. The compilation of this document will be done by a small *Parish Profile Team* but following a process of wide consultation which will be facilitated by the diocese. There will also be an opportunity for the PCC and officers of the parish to meet shortlisted candidates and offer feedback.

What is the Timescale for all of this?

We attempt to be as efficient as possible. We do, however, need to go through a process that is laid down by the Patronage (Benefices) Measure (1986). We have already started to prepare for this process. The dates that have been set are below:

<i>Archdeacon's meeting with the PCC (to explain the process)</i>	5 th December 2023
<i>Vacancy Vision Workshop</i>	January 2024
<i>Final Draft of Parish Profiles completed by (stage at which most of the work is complete)</i>	Early March 2024
<i>Section 11 Meeting (profile formally agreed and parish reps chosen)</i>	Mid March 2024
<i>Advertise Post: House for Duty Priest of Ewhurst with Okewood & Forest Green (on Diocesan website and in Church Times)</i>	12 th , 19 th , 26 th Apr, 3 rd May 2024
<i>Closing date for applications (final date on which applications submitted)</i>	8 th May 2024
<i>Shortlisting via zoom (interview panel meets to shortlist candidates)</i>	14 th May 2024 4.00pm
<i>Interviews (held in the Parish over two consecutive days)</i>	3 rd & 4 th June 2024

The Bottom Line...

So when can we expect to welcome our new Incumbent?

As soon as possible... but the process can't be rushed! If we are successful in appointing a house for duty priest in June, we might expect an induction during October. The average time between an appointment and an institution is approximately 4 months. It must also be remembered that a panel can decide that God's person for the post is not amongst the shortlisted candidates. This can be disappointing. It is, however, important that the right person is appointed, even if it means re-advertising and waiting a little longer.

How can I help during the Vacancy?

You may be thinking that this information is not for you. This is, however, a time when the prayers and efforts of all the church are important.

Prayers

Please be faithful in praying for the church during the time of vacancy. Please remember the churchwardens, area dean and vacancy leadership team; those working on the parish profile and all who have additional responsibility during this time. Please also pray that God will call the right person to be your new incumbent and for wisdom in discerning this.

Efforts

There will be increasing responsibility on many during this time of vacancy. It is helpful if people continue with their duties as much as possible. If you find that you have some spare time on your hands, then it may be worth asking your churchwardens whether there is anything additional that you might be able to do to support them during this time.

Reflections

Very soon, there will be consultation about your perception of priorities going forward that will feed into the building of a person specification for the new incumbent. Please pray and reflect upon this and pass any ideas to the churchwardens.

Prayer for Vacancy

God our Father, you have welcomed each one of us in Jesus and called us to be His body in this place:

Send us your Holy Spirit at this time of uncertainty and change, to fill us with vision and energy and faithfulness in prayer, that we may be true to our calling to bring new life to our community.

Give your heavenly wisdom to those who are to choose a new incumbent for this parish, that she or he may be a wise and gentle shepherd of your people, ready to serve us with joy, to build us up in faith and to lead us by example in loving obedience to your Son, Jesus. Amen.