

**THE ROLE OF CHURCHWARDEN - INTRODUCTION**

Churchwardens are the senior lay people in the parish, and, together with the PCC generally, are responsible with the parish priest for the smooth running of the parish. They represent the congregation to the clergy, and make sure the clergy are cared for. They are also officers of the Bishop, and attend him/her when he/she visits (usually less than once a year).

Churchwardens are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) for a term of one year, although at St Michael’s they usually stand for election in three consecutive years. There should normally be two Churchwardens in post.

A Churchwarden does not have to be an expert, or be good at everything. Churchwardens will draw on their own strengths and work with others whose strengths complement their own. It is more important to be willing to learn, and to work with others. Skills and experience you have gained in a workplace, or in a context of family or leisure activities, are transferable will enable you to make a valuable contribution.

**What are we looking for? (Some important qualities)**

<b>Knowledge and experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of being part of St Michael’s or another church</li> <li>• Experience of being part of a small team, whether in a work or voluntary context</li> <li>• Experience of leadership of some kind, whether in an informal or a formal setting</li> </ul>
<b>Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Ability to listen empathetically to people, including those who are different to yourself</li> <li>• Ability to see particular issues in the context of the “bigger picture”</li> <li>• Reasonable organisational skills, and ability to fit church responsibilities into your busy life.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A personal desire to serve God to grow in a relationship with him</li> <li>• Humility</li> <li>• Sympathy with the aims and mission of St Michael’s Church and a commitment to help it fulfil those aims</li> <li>• Flexibility – the church is made up of human beings, and sometimes things don’t happen or work out as you expected or wanted</li> </ul>
<b>Qualifications/ Training</b>	<b>No</b> formal qualifications are required for this role. A willingness to learn and gain the necessary skills is sufficient.
<b>Availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings of the PCC are monthly on Wednesday evenings, which is also the night when the Rector’s Council normally meet (this is not set in stone)</li> <li>• Most of our worship services are on Sunday mornings, and you would normally be expected to be on duty for one Sunday in two.</li> <li>• Other ad hoc meetings can be arranged at mutually convenient times</li> <li>• You will need to read PCC papers before meetings</li> </ul>

## Role Description and Person Specification – Churchwarden at St Michael’s Church Sandhurst

### What does the role involve?

The role can be summed up as assisting the Incumbent in overseeing the running of the church, much of which is done by a range of volunteers.

What this means in practice:

- **Regular Meetings:** Churchwardens are members of the PCC (which meets 9 times a year) and its Standing Committee (known locally as “the Rector’s Council”) which meets in between PCC meetings. They also meet regularly with the Rector by mutual agreement.
- **Services:** churchwardens take it in turns to be on duty each week, overseeing the smooth running of the services and making sure there is someone to open up before the 8.00 service and lock up the Pastoral Centre after the other morning services. They may give out the notices, or delegate this to others, e.g. members of the PCC.
- **Management:** Churchwardens and the Rector together authorise minor payments and deal with minor day-to-day issues that are referred by office staff, e.g. concerning activities in the Pastoral Centre.
- **Buildings, church belongings and churchyard:** overseeing volunteers who maintain the building and churchyard, and seeing that church property (including furnishings, communion ware, registers) is looked after and accounted for once a year at the Area Dean’s Inspection. Any alterations to the churchyard or the fabric of the church usually need a “faculty” or other permission from the Archdeacon, Diocesan Advisory Council or Chancellor, which is the responsibility of Churchwardens but can be delegated to a responsible person. There are several suitable people in our church with experience of this.
- **In the absence of the Rector:** if the Rector is away from the parish, on holiday or sick, or where there is a vacancy, Churchwardens work with other volunteers, the Area Dean and the Archdeacon as necessary to ensure services and pastoral care are covered.

### Other things you need to know

#### Safeguarding

The Church of England and St Michael’s Church are committed to promoting a safe environment and culture for children, young people and vulnerable adults. You will need a satisfactory **DBS check** at the appropriate level, and you will be expected to follow the relevant **safeguarding policies** and attend all required **safeguarding training**. We will also expect you to read and sign the **Volunteer Agreement**, which includes the Parish Ethos Statement.

#### Who you are responsible to

In practice, you will keep the Rector informed of any important matters as they arise, and you will report to the PCC on anything which they need to be aware of. You can also consult the Archdeacon of Berkshire on any tricky or legal issues.

#### Training and support

You will need to attend Church of England Safeguarding training, most of which is online and can be done at a convenient time.

You can get advice and help from many people who have long-term experience in our church, including ex-churchwardens. Members of the PCC and other volunteers will advise and assist you, or will take on tasks and responsibilities that might otherwise fall to the Churchwarden. Don’t be afraid to ask, and take opportunities to delegate and involve others. The Diocese also puts on optional online training for churchwardens to enhance your awareness and skills.