

APPENDIX D

CLERGY HOUSING – CHURCH OF ENGLAND CLERGY STIPENDS REVIEW GROUP

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

- The origin of the current ‘tied house’ system for clergy lies in the middle ages when priests were provided (‘endowed’) with land on which they had their home and which they farmed or rented out to provide an income.

To secure this basic ‘remuneration package’ clergy were given freehold rights in the property for the tenure of their office.

- Previous consultations and reviews in 1994 and 1998 had not concluded that there should be any fundamental change in the practice of the incumbent living in a house ‘provided in his or her benefice’.
- Many clergy want to be able to buy their own houses and/or to build up equity in property towards the time when they will retire and have to provide their own housing.
- The main advantages of the tied house are perceived to be: a) eases mobility and deployment; b) provides a local pastoral base; c) some tax benefit and d) protects against property inflation.
- The main disadvantages are perceived to be lack of choice in where to live, expectation of constant availability, lack of privacy, no equity in housing for retirement, cost of maintenance and servicing of clergy houses.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE REVIEW GROUP

The Group concluded that there are considerable pastoral advantages to the Church of England in maintaining a policy of providing housing for its stipendiary clergy. This makes a clear statement about the commitment of the Church in every local community.

The Group made a clear recommendation “that the Church of England does not change from its existing position of providing housing for clergy as part of their remuneration package”.