

Guide for

Annual Church Meetings During COVID-19

Running APCMs and AMPs safely



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Diocese of Leeds

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Background

The Bishop of Leeds has published two instruments recently regarding Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs) and Annual Meetings of Parishioners (AMPs). They:

- 1. Extend the time** for holding the 2020 meeting to choose churchwardens and holding APCMs and AMPs to 30 November 2020.
- 2. Appoint** Incumbents, Priests in Charge, Area Deans and Archdeacons to be the Bishop's substitutes in the admission of churchwardens under the Churchwardens Measure 2001 for a limited period.

If any help is required with how to carry out the admission, you should speak with your Archdeacon or the Diocesan Registrar about this.

- 3. Extend the terms of office** of the following:
 - 2017-2020 term Lay Deanery Synod representatives (membership of deanery synods and PCCs) to 31 December 2020
 - PCC members who would otherwise have ceased PCC membership at the end of the 2020 APCM, to the conclusion of the 2020 APCM held after 31 May 2020.
- 4. Set a new deadline** for the return of 2020 Electoral Roll certificates to 07 December 2020.
- 5. Allow Remote Annual Meetings of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meetings**

APCMs and AMPs can be held virtually or in person, making sure

current government social distancing guidelines are followed by any gathering of people.

There are two distinct constituencies for these meetings:

- those entitled to attend, speak and vote at the APCM: the members of the Church Electoral Roll; and
- those entitled to do so at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners: all those on the church's electoral roll and all those resident in the parish whose names are on the civil electoral roll of the parish.

In either case, the means of participating and (where necessary) voting need to be available to anyone who in normal circumstances would have the right to be there.

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Practical Guidance for virtual AMPs and APCMs

Accessibility and notice are vital to enable participation in the meetings.

- The usual notice for APCMs and AMPs must still be given. If the meeting has the option for digital presence, it's important that all parishioners who are entitled to attend the AMP and the APCM know the relevant electronic

Practical guidance

access codes prior to the meeting. We recommend using the notice of meeting as a 'gateway' for communication, giving people contact information where they can ask for the details to access the meetings. This contact information should also be shared on the church website and social media, if present. It is more secure to encourage requests for the access codes rather than to publish them.

- Meetings can be held online or in person, or in a mixed format. Online video conferencing software, such as Zoom, could be used. Zoom has provision for phone access to meetings by dialling in. Support for using Zoom in this way **can be provided by the Diocesan Communications Team.**

The usual notice for APCMs and AMPs must still be given

Running the meeting

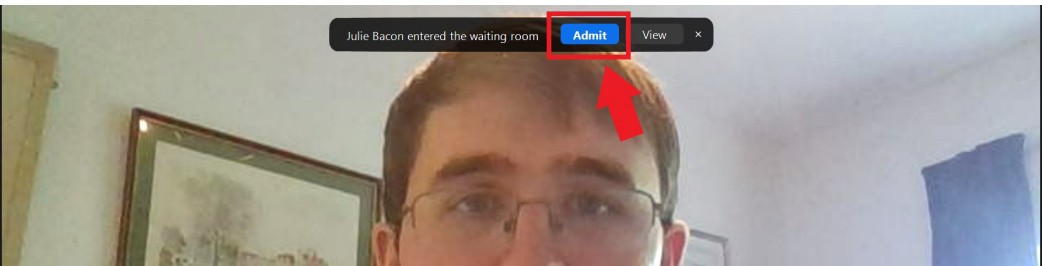
- If using a video conferencing platform in the meeting, have a designated host who is in control of the meeting. It is recommended this person is not the person who

is chairing the meeting. The 'host' will be in charge of starting the meeting, and should do so early to ensure a prompt start. Using the 'Waiting Room' feature of the video conferencing platform allows

Julie Bacon entered the waiting room

Admit

View x



the host to control access to the meeting by activating access for each participant.

- Make sure it is made clear who will be chairing the meeting.
- Make sure to establish the protocols for the meeting, and that they are designed to make the meeting run smoothly. If possible, circulate these before the meeting. This could include things such as everyone in the meeting starting with their audio muted, and only speaking when called by the Chair. The 'host' of the meeting should have responsibility for the smooth running of the meeting. This may include muting the audio of participants when they are not speaking, monitoring chat comments and letting people know when it is their time to speak.
- Make sure to have a clear method for identifying those who want to speak. You could use the 'raise your hand' feature built into platforms such as Zoom, or use the chat feature. On Zoom you must make sure to have 'Nonverbal Feedback' enabled, which can be done by logging into your account on their website and then going to settings, as pictured. The meeting 'host' should be responsible for keeping track of who will speak and when.

In Meeting (Basic)

In Meeting (Advanced)

Email Notification

Other

Remote control

During screen sharing, the person who is sharing can allow others to control the shared content



Nonverbal feedback

Participants in a meeting can provide nonverbal feedback and express opinions by clicking on icons in the Participants panel. [\[?\]](#)



Modified Reset

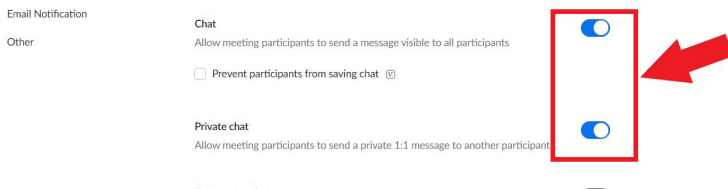
Invite

Mute Me

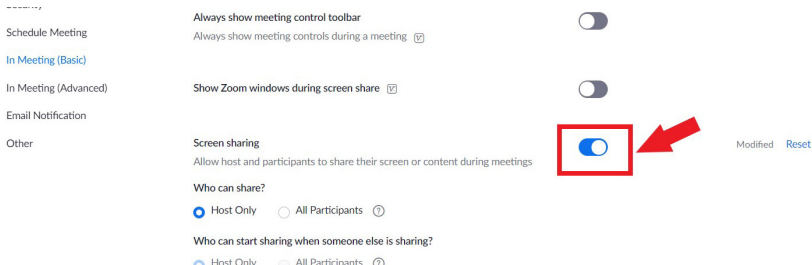
Raise Hand



- Ensure the host unmutes the audio of people when calling on them to speak.
- Make sure you have decided how the chat feature will be used; it can be disabled if it would assist the smooth running of the meeting. On Zoom this can be done through the web settings, as pictured below.



- When voting is required, you can use the polling function on your video conferencing software (for example Zoom has one, details of which can be found [here](#)), or you could use another add on system like [Slido](#) or [Mentimeter](#). **Support for this can also be provided by the Diocesan Communications Team.**
- If there are to be presentations, ask each presenter to have their slides ready to share, and that screen sharing capability is enabled to let them do so. For Zoom, this can be done in the web settings, as pictured below.



- Plan breaks if the meeting is likely to last for more than 90 minutes.

Support for this can also be provided by the Diocesan Communications Team

- Doing a rehearsal with key personnel beforehand is a good idea.
- You should agree on how the PCC Secretary and PCC Chair will communicate during the meeting, eg via the chat function or text.
- You should agree who will check who is in the meeting and have a list of those who are allowed to attend- this is a task the 'host' could do.
- Make sure to send out papers for the meeting beforehand, such as reports to the APCM, and on that basis these will be deemed 'read' at the meeting. This means the meeting time can be used to ask questions, and hear comments, not hear someone read out their report!
- We recommend you do not record the meeting, as this may raise issues of consent. Minutes are to be taken in the usual way.

Running APCMs and AMPs safely during the COVID-19 crisis is both essential and achievable. This short booklet provides some useful advice on how to ensure you are meeting your church's statutory obligations without putting people at risk.

For more resources ideas and help, please visit
www.leeds.anglican.org/covid-19

For support with anything in this document, please email
communications@leeds.anglican.org

or

covid-19help@leeds.anglican.org