

## **Election of Churchwardens 2008**

The Churchwardens Measure 2001 came into effect in 2002 and one of its provisions is that churchwardens should normally serve for no more than six terms of office continuously and subsequently to have a break of at least two years before seeking re-election. The purpose of this is to encourage as many of the laity as possible to assume leadership roles and to ensure churchwardens remain enthusiastic and effective. Only years from 2002 count towards the six-year maximum.

Some parishes, however, may have specific reasons for retaining the current churchwarden(s) or have difficulty in finding suitable or willing candidates to take on the post of churchwarden and the Measure provides for parishes to dispense with the time limit rule. For example, there may be an imminent interregnum or the current churchwarden(s) may continue to serve enthusiastically and effectively!

If it seems that there could be a problem with electing someone else or in finding a replacement for a churchwarden in the future, the Annual Meeting of Parishioners should pass a resolution to dispense with the limit on the term.

Ideally this should be anticipated and a resolution be passed one year to address the problem next year but it is possible that some parishes have not considered this matter earlier and in 2008 are faced with the prospect of losing one or both experienced churchwardens without having willing replacements available. In such circumstances, the resolution dispensing with the time limit can be passed at the beginning of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners this year but the current churchwarden(s) should be nominated and seconded and have signified consent to serve before the start of the meeting. If the resolution is not passed, the current churchwarden(s) would not be eligible for election. If passed, the current churchwarden(s) can be re-elected.

It would also be possible to have a Special Meeting of Parishioners before the Annual Meeting to deal with the resolution.

The resolution could be as follows:

*“This Annual (or Special) Meeting of Parishioners resolves that Section 3 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 shall not apply in relation to the parish of ....”*

Once passed, such a resolution has immediate effect and applies to all churchwardens in the parish but may be revoked by a subsequent meeting of parishioners.

Owen Carew-Jones  
Registrar

10 January 2008