

The Church of England Pensions Board

29 Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3PS

Registered Charity No 236627

PROPERTY PURCHASES

When considering where you wish to live it will be in your own interests to consider the following factors about the property you wish the Board to purchase for you: -

1. The property may be a house, bungalow, flat or maisonette of conventional brick and block construction having cavity walls but, if leasehold, the Lease must have an unexpired term of not less than 90 years. **Please note that, because of the adverse publicity and structural problems which have been associated with timber-framed properties constructed by a number of speculative building companies, the Board is not prepared to consider purchasing properties which have been erected using this technique.** The Board will only consider purchasing **modest** accommodation and will not, therefore, be prepared to buy a property having four bedrooms unless your circumstances (**in the Board's opinion**) are very exceptional. Under normal circumstances, the Board will only consider purchasing properties having a maximum of two reception rooms and three bedrooms. **The Board will not be prepared to acquire property in any area which exceeds the value of other properties in its housing portfolio for that area.**
2. If you choose to live in a flat, it should be no higher than the first floor and **under no circumstances will the Board be prepared to buy a freehold flat.** You should also note that the Board often experiences legal difficulties with the acquisition of flats that can make the purchase very protracted or even impossible. The Board has also experienced difficulties with the maintenance of flats where the Local Authority owns the freehold and has decided, therefore, that it cannot consider the purchase of a property of this type.
3. The property should be situated reasonably close to shops, public transport, church, doctor's surgery and other amenities and should be in a district that is not too hilly. It should be suitable, not only for your immediate needs, but also as a future residence for others. You also need to consider the problems of negotiating stairs, steps, and maintaining the gardens with advancing years. The Board may refuse to purchase a property in an unusual location or one that it considers is unlikely to appeal to other applicants when you cease to reside in it. **If the Board is asked to house an applicant either in or close to a parish in which they have served during their full time ministry, this will only be considered upon receipt of confirmation from the appropriate Bishop or Archdeacon that they are happy with this arrangement.**
4. When looking at a property, you should bear in mind that the Board always expects to acquire properties that are relatively easy to maintain. The property you choose should not be a listed building and, preferably, should have been built since 1920. If you choose something built between 1920 and 1960, the Board will consider the purchase providing it has been modernised to present day standards and has central heating, a damp proof course, and a modern electrical ring main.

5. Although the Board will carry out **essential** ingoing works as suggested by its Surveyor, it is not likely to provide additional facilities that you may consider desirable. If you would like additional features or work done to the property, it is possible that the Board would agree to your proposals providing satisfactory arrangements can be made with you to cover the cost of the work.
6. All essential maintenance and redecoration of the property will be the responsibility of the Board. Unless any work costing less than £250 is undertaken the Board **always** requires at least two written estimates from competent contractors before consideration is given. **The Board does not guarantee to pay for any works that have been authorised by the occupant without written consent from this office prior to them being undertaken.**
7. When you have found the property in which you would like to live, please telephone or write to Jez Willment in this office giving full details (preferably in the form of a copy of the Estate Agent's particulars) so that the Board can decide whether it is prepared to have a survey carried out to establish whether the property is suitable for purchase.
8. When dealing with the Vendors or their Agents, it may help if you mention that the Pensions Board will be a "cash" purchaser, so no mortgage arrangements will have to be made. They will normally hold the property for a few days until the Board is able to telephone them with a firm offer. **It is essential that you do not enter into any discussions with the Vendors or their Agents about the purchase price or show any particular enthusiasm for the property as this can pre-empt the Board's negotiating position to such an extent that it may have to decline to proceed with the purchase.** The Board is responsible for the surveyor's fees and its own solicitors will be asked to deal with the purchase.
9. Please note that the Board is not willing to provide carpets, curtains, cookers, and other house contents even if they are included in the purchase price. These items will be excluded from the valuation and, if required, you must purchase them separately.
10. **You are reminded that, until the purchase is legally completed, you must not occupy the property under any circumstances.**
11. You will be expected to pay a maintenance contribution, which will be calculated with reference to your gross income from all sources. This contribution, which is reviewed on 1 April each year, with reference to the rising costs and the Retail Prices Index and/or pension increases, will not normally exceed 30% of your gross income from all sources. This contribution will be payable by you from the date you are eligible to occupy the property. In addition, you will be liable for the payment of the Council Tax from that date and you should notify the local council accordingly.

Issued by: The Church of England Pensions Board

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