



PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST

MANSE POLICY

All property of the Uniting Church in Australia serves God's mission. If it's not being used for mission then retaining it needs to be seriously considered. All property of the Uniting Church in Australia either serves God's mission or is excess to its purpose. The prime and only purpose for the Uniting Church owning a manse is so that it can be used as a manse.

In the Induction Service for a Minister coming into a congregation the congregation promises to provide "all that is needful" for a Minister and the Minister's family. This includes provision of a manse which meets the standards set by the Synod. While it is the congregation's responsibility to keep the manse in good order and to annually inspect the property and then, or at other times requested by the Minister, to attend to the major maintenance of the property, members of the Congregation and the Church council must always respect the privacy of the Minister and the manse family. Visits to the manse property therefore need to be negotiated with the resident minister before being undertaken.

The Minister is expected to handle the normal day to day needs and be responsible for routine/minor maintenance. It is expected that there will be continual consultation between the Minister and Church Council concerning any issues that arise.

If at any point in time it is temporarily not required for the purpose of housing a Minister the 'beneficial user' (the congregation) with the approval of the Presbytery may lease it. However the terms of such lease are required to be such that its prime use may be resumed with as little delay as possible.

When a manse becomes vacant it shall be inspected by the Presbytery Property Committee and any identified repairs or renovations required to maintain the manse to the accepted standard, will need to be completed prior to a new ministerial settlement.

If the congregation wishes to offer the manse for lease the requisite Synod Form shall be filled in and submitted to the Presbytery. Congregations are reminded that the only body which is competent to sign a Lease Agreement is the Synod Property Trust. The terms of the rental to be sought for the Lease if there is a Minister in placement shall be sufficient to pay the Manse Allowance AND an amount (normally 10% of the rent) to be set aside and accrued for the normal maintenance of the manse.

The length of the lease that is to be preferred and the conditions to be attached to the lease depend on whether there is currently a Minister in placement in the congregation or not and whether or not it can be reasonably assessed when the manse might be needed again for its prime purpose.