

Diocesan parish boxes

In 1850, the Diocesan Registrar fitted pigeonholes in his offices and started the practice of filing Diocesan papers relating to individual parishes under the name of the relevant parish instead of the particular type of record. This means that long-standing series of Diocesan papers came to an end, and instead one or more boxes exist with all the records relating to each individual parish.

These were called the parish boxes and the name has stuck, although it is now inaccurate. They are actually benefice boxes; when they were first created a parish was usually a benefice, but with the increasing bringing together of groups of parishes to form a single benefice in recent years the boxes often now contain papers relating not to a single parish but to a linked group of parishes. New papers are still being added to the boxes.

The following types of record exist in the parish boxes:

Orders in Council (formerly Records of Benefices)
Presentations (formerly Clergy Records)
Nominations (formerly Clergy Records)
Faculties (formerly Church Courts)
Consecrations (formerly Church Courts)
Mortgages (formerly Records of Benefices)
Grants from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners who had taken over the assets of Queen Anne's Bounty (see Records of Benefices)

Other papers include Property Records and resignations.

Where to find records

The Diocesan records are all with the Oxfordshire History Centre, including those after 1836 relating to Berkshire and those after 1845 relating to Buckinghamshire. The records themselves are not online.

Catalogue

The Diocesan catalogue is unfortunately not on the History Centre's Heritage Search online catalogue, but an overview catalogue exists on [A2A](#) . You will need to visit the History Centre to look at the full catalogue in printed form.

[Visiting and contacting the Oxfordshire History Centre](#)