

The Diocese of Leicester

Reader Ministry Handbook

2008

A guide for Readers, clergy and for
candidates exploring vocation

Preface

By Rt Revd Tim Stevens, Bishop of Leicester

I welcome this updated version of the *Reader Ministry Guide for Incumbents and Candidates*. As Bishop I very much appreciate the contribution that Readers make to the life of our diocese, and am aware of the expectations the Church is increasingly placing upon them. In parishes throughout the Diocese, Readers are at the heart of parochial life and are key to our frontline pastoral and liturgical ministry.

The national and local development of Reader ministry is something of critical importance to the Church. In our diocese the context of training for Readers has changed with the introduction of the Certificate in Christian Discipleship (CCD) course. Revised arrangements for the exploration of vocation, selection, licensing, and ministry review have also been introduced in the last two years. This has been accompanied by an almost complete change in personnel involved in the support and development of Reader ministry.

This Handbook will therefore be a significant resource for all involved in Reader ministry. By bringing together the major practical questions and issues that arise in the course of a Reader's ministry, from the first exploration of vocation to being active in ministry, we can offer Readers clear and consistent guidance. This handbook will also help guide clergy as they work with Readers.

I would like to thank the Revd Simon Harvey who, as Warden of Readers, has developed Reader ministry in our diocese in the last few years and put so much work into updating this handbook.

+Tim

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Introduction

Reader ministry is of great importance in the life of the Church of England. Throughout the country, Readers can be found working alongside the clergy, using their gifts in leading worship, preaching, teaching and in many other ways. As part of the ministry team, Readers make an invaluable contribution to the work of the Church in their parishes. It is precisely because the ministry of Readers in the Church is so important that there has been growing concern to ensure that Readers are properly selected, trained and supported.

I am, therefore, delighted to commend this guide to you. It is designed to answer basic questions about Reader ministry, such as:

- What is Reader ministry?
- What can Readers do?
- How are they selected and trained?
- Where are the resources for support in ministry?
- How can I find answers to practical questions about Reader ministry in practice?

I hope that this handbook will help Readers and clergy to understand something of the place of Readers in the life of the Church, and will assist those who are considering whether they are being called to share in this ministry. I am very grateful to all who have contributed to the shaping and development of our policies. I hope that in future we can maintain and extend this important document in order to better support the Readers for whose ministry we should all be deeply grateful.

Revd Simon Harvey

Warden of Readers

Copies of this document may be obtained from Church House, St Martin's East, Leicester LE1 5FX or from the Warden of Readers, St Paul's House, Hamble Road, Oadby, Leicester LE2 4NX or in electronic form from simon@sjharvey.org.uk. This document is available in PDF format on the diocesan website.

Why “Readers?”

The office of Reader (or *Lector*) can be traced back to the early church. Justin Martyr described a eucharist in which the Bishop both presided and preached but in which a Lector read the lessons and expounded the context for what was being taught. In the year 251, the church in Rome supported not only the bishop, but 46 presbyters, 7 deacons, 7 sub-deacons, 42 acolytes and 52 exorcists, Readers and doorkeepers.

This office was restored in England in 1561, in a reshaped role, to compensate for a shortage of clergy. Readers were allowed to read Morning and Evening Prayer, to take funerals but not to preach. As the supply of clergy improved, the number of Readers fell.

In the nineteenth century, at a time of great urban expansion, a need was identified for “articulate and devout men” to supplement the work of the clergy. The first Reader was licensed in 1866. The ministry of these Readers was often in informal assemblies and Sunday Schools held on the mission edge of the church, including in the centre of prisons and steelworks.

Since then, Reader ministry has increased in importance in the ministry of the Church. Reader numbers have increased and the scope of duties extended. In 1969, canon law provided that both men and women could become Readers. Today there are Readers in every diocese of the Anglican Communion, from a wide range of backgrounds and occupations. In our diocese, there are now more Readers than clergy engaged in paid parish ministry. In 2008, a major report was laid before General Synod in order to 'raise the tempo' of Reader ministry and to offer further potential for its development.

Reader ministry is lay, nationally accredited, episcopally licensed and governed by canon law. Those selected and trained are admitted to the office of Reader, and receive a licence to practice ministry from their diocesan bishop. The title “Reader” is sometimes misunderstood as referring to anyone who reads a lesson in Church. Sometimes the longer title, “Lay Reader” is used, though this has never been the canonical title. There is a move to see the name changed to “Licensed Lay Minister (Reader)” and we shall see if this gains wider support in the national church.

This document follows the widespread convention of capitalising the title “Reader” to distinguish this specific role from that of the readers of scripture lessons in services.

What Readers do

Readers are trained and authorised as public lay ministers of the Church, in a particular place.

As they share in the leadership of God's people in mission, Readers are called to lead worship that renews and inspires, to preach God's word and to teach in ways that deepen discipleship and faith.

In any one year, the Readers of the Church of England will lead or take part in many thousands of services. They will preach thousands of sermons. But vitally important as their preaching, teaching and liturgical work is, their work extends far beyond church services. Readers can be found running children's and youth groups; visiting the elderly and the sick, leading school services, taking funerals and generally helping spread the Gospel throughout the diocese.

Readers, with Church Army Officers, are the only lay ministers licensed under Church Law to preach and lead worship. The Reader's licence sets out the areas of ministry which they are permitted to do, in leading worship, preaching, teaching and a wide variety of pastoral work. But perhaps the most significant aspect of Reader ministry is its location on the boundaries of church and world. Readers are ministers of the word, lay and local theologians who offer insight to the church drawn from their experience in work, home and neighbourhood. Each Reader has a Working Agreement with their Incumbent, setting out their areas of responsibility, the amount of time the Reader has to give, and arrangements for the reimbursement of expenses and for in-service training.

Readers come from every walk of life and men and women are represented in more or less equal numbers. Those admitted as Readers must be baptised and confirmed members of the Church of England, and regular communicants.

The Reader serves within the team of ministry both in the parish and in the deanery, and brings to the ministry the insights of someone who is actively involved as a Christian in the life of the world. Readers are usually ex-officio members of the PCC (provided that their names are on the electoral roll of the parish and as the annual meeting may determine).

The Bishop's Regulations for the Diocese of Leicester, included in an appendix to this document set out the duties of Readers more specifically.

Selection for Reader ministry

The process of selection begins in the parish. Sometimes people discern a vocation during a period of study such as the Certificate in Christian Discipleship. Sometimes the trigger for a more concerted exploration of vocation is the encouragement of other church members and/or ministers in the parish. There are no blueprints for the discernment of vocation because every person is unique and every situation is different. What matters above all things is that we try to reach an agreement between parish, diocese and candidate, that God himself is calling a person towards a specific ministry.

We recognise that for most people, offering for ministry of any kind feels very risky and uncertain. The diocese has a well-planned support system to help people during this process.

Beginning the exploration of vocation

The initial exploration of vocation should happen in the parish, with conversations between the person and at least one member of the ministry team. It will be important to think about how widely the person wishes to make known their initial exploration, and wise clergy and ministry team members will remember to allow the pace to be natural with no sense of being on a vocations conveyor-belt.

It is also sensible from the outset to be aware that the process sometimes does not lead to selection for ministry.

The role of parish clergy in guiding the exploration of vocation

Parish clergy are key in the discernment and encouragement of vocation. At some point early in the process, the person exploring God's call should have a substantial conversation with their vicar. These conversations should continue, so that the whole process of the exploration of vocation is grounded in the parish. There will be issues to be considered, such as the likely shape of a Reader role in the particular local context, as well as personal gifts and family support. If the person considering ministry has other roles in the church, it should be recognised that these may have to be reduced during training and following licensing as a Reader. clergy are often best placed to consider the possibilities for deploying a Reader in more than once place in a benefice or mission partnership.

These conversations in the parish can be informal and wide-ranging. Supported by an encouraging and prayerful minister, people can make good decisions about the prospect of ministry.

The role of the Warden of Readers in guiding the exploration of vocation

A conversation or meeting with the Warden of Readers does not commit anyone to a particular ministry and the Warden welcomes enquiries from people who are ‘just looking’ as well as those who are more clear about a particular direction.

At the first meeting, the Warden will clarify the role of Readers and the process of Reader selection and allow the candidate to describe their ‘faith journey’ and vocation. The Warden will begin an informal assessment of the candidate with reference to the national criteria (see below) and prepare the selection process.

The Diocesan Vocations Day

Every year, the Diocese of Leicester holds a Vocations Day which enables people to explore a variety of ministerial roles. There are speakers and workshops as well as written guidance and people find this a very positive way of focussing their attention in a concerted way. The Vocations Day is now integrated with the Certificate in Christian Discipleship Course.

Criteria for Reader selection

Reader ministry is nationally accredited and recognised. This means that national standards for selection apply, as well as diocesan procedures. A Reader may only be admitted before the age of 70, so it is not normally possible to accept someone for training beyond their middle 60's.

Candidates must be baptised, confirmed and regular communicant members of the Church. An assessment is made of the candidate's vocation, faith, understanding of the Church of England, their approach to mission and spirituality and their potential for training. Candidates for Reader Training must have completed Years 1 and 2 of the Certificate in Christian Discipleship (CCD) course, or an approved equivalent, prior to the one-year Reader Training course. Assignments for all CCD modules must have been attempted. Finally, without the positive support of the incumbent of the candidate's parish(es), he/she cannot be considered for selection.

The selection Process

Candidates meet with the Warden a number of times before attending a selection Day. The purpose of these conversations is to assess the basic suitability of the candidate in terms of age, foundational training etc., and to allow the candidate to describe their exploration of vocation. Quite often, a candidate is not completely settled on a particular ministry at this point and the Warden of Readers will offer encouragement to consider all relevant options in the discernment process.

In preparation for the selection Day the candidate supplies at least two references (including one from their incumbent), plus supporting information. The Parochial Church Council(s) of the candidate's parish are asked to confirm their support of the candidate. During the selection Day,

which takes place within a structure of worship and prayer, four or five candidates are interviewed by selectors and give short presentations. The selectors then meet and make a recommendation for each candidate to the Bishop. Details of the selectors' recommendation are shared with the candidate and the Co-ordinator of Reader training, but not automatically with the candidate's incumbent. Of course, candidates may choose to share the report with their incumbents if they wish.

Candidates normally attend selection Days before beginning Year 2 of the Certificate in Christian Discipleship (CCD) Course.

Occasionally, candidates with extensive prior theological education and ministerial experience are exempted from some aspects of training. In exceptional circumstances, a recommendation that a candidate be admitted and licensed with no further training may be made to the Bishop.

Assessment of prior education and experience is normally made by the Head of the School for Ministry, in consultation with the Co-ordinator of Reader Training and the Warden of Readers.

It should be remembered that during Reader training, assessment of students continues and the Bishop makes the ultimate decision to admit and license a Reader.

Candidates whose parishes are in vacancy

Sometimes candidates come forward to explore vocation for Reader ministry while their parish is in vacancy. Since vacancies can be long in duration, it seems unfair to penalise candidates by requiring them to suspend their exploration of vocation. (In fact, vacancies are often times when people find themselves with the opportunity to explore ministerial roles for the first time). We are therefore prepared to consider candidates whose parishes are vacant and would often involve the Rural Dean in the process. In these situations a positive outcome of the selection process would make a recommendation for training conditional on the support of the new incumbent when he/she is appointed.

Pitfalls in Vocation

The process of exploring and discerning vocation isn't easy and sometimes rather challenging. The fact that nearly all explorations lead to a deepening of faith and a wide agreement about the possibilities of God's call, encourage us to believe that the process we have adopted is the right one. But there are certain pitfalls and it is sensible to be open about these:

- Approaching the Warden of Readers to discuss vocation usually feels like a big step, and we sometimes find that people expect to be more certain about their calling before doing so. In fact, a growing clarity about vocation often occurs as people talk through the issues, so an early approach, without any commitment other than to explore, is usually appropriate.

- The public roles in worship of Readers and clergy are similar. Sometimes people sense a possible call to ordained ministry, but begin an exploration of vocation to Reader ministry because this feels less daunting. From time to time, a Reader in the first years of ministry find that God is calling him or her to ordination. This is natural and not a problem in itself, unless it leads to a delay or avoiding of God's true call. If you sense a call to ordained ministry, be brave about this from the outset, rather than using Reader ministry as a test.
- In recent years, vocation has been understood more in terms of a personal call rather than obedience to God's call that comes through the church. This personal dimension is important, but there is a danger of losing sight of the role of the wider church in the discernment of God's will. There is a proper place for humility and obedience and it's helpful to recognise the distractions of ambition or the quest for personal fulfilment.
- Younger people can be called to Reader ministry, as well as the middle-aged! There is no reason why someone in their twenties should not be trained and authorised for Reader ministry, and clergy and others involved in the discernment process should be aware of the possibilities among the young.
- Reader ministry and training are demanding and should not be entered into lightly. It is usually inappropriate for candidates whose personal circumstances are unstable to embark on Reader ministry.
- The 'bar' for Reader ministry is set quite high, and from time to time selectors do not recommend that a candidate should be trained. This is necessary for the wellbeing of the Church and its mission, and the individual. A non-recommendation for Reader ministry is inevitably difficult to receive and helping candidates in this position is really important. It is vital that local clergy are sensitive to these issues and the Warden of Readers is always available to offer explanation and advice.

Foundation training and initial Reader training

The Certificate in Christian Discipleship

From 2006/7, the normal foundation for all lay ministry training pathways has been the Certificate in Christian Discipleship (CCD) course. The course content and arrangements are more fully described in separate documents available from the School for Ministry, so this description is limited to an overview.

The first year of the CCD course is undertaken by those preparing for Reader ministry, but also by those following other ministry pathways or just for personal development and interest. There is therefore no assessment of vocation required prior to beginning Year 1 of the CCD course.

During the first year, specific attention is paid to vocation and the course itself allows extensive consideration of the issues of ministry, mission and the possibility of God's call. This is integrated with the Diocesan Vocations Day. Very often, the experience of undertaking the CCD course clarifies the students' sense of vocation and results in applications for Reader ministry.

The CCD course includes the possibility of accreditation to Higher Education Certificate level. It is not a requirement for those going forward to Reader ministry to register for accreditation, but it is reasonable to do so.

Candidates for Reader ministry must, however, attempt all assignments on the CCD course (both years 1 and 2). We would normally expect every assignment to be graded at least at pass level (40%) or above but exceptions may be made in certain circumstances.

Candidates for Reader ministry continue into Year 2 of the CCD course (unlike those preparing for other lay ministries, who begin specific training in the second year). The CCD course is taught in regional centres and for many people it is possible to study Year 2 at the same venue as Year 1, though this is not always the case.

The CCD course is administered and overseen by the School for Ministry, who should be contacted for further information.

The Reader Training Course

The Co-ordinator of Reader Training produces a course handbook which explains the content and arrangements of the course in greater detail. This description is limited to an overview.

Since the introduction of the CCD course in 2006/7, the specific programme of Reader training prior to licensing has been reduced from two years to one year. This allows the overall training process from the beginning of foundation training to licensing to remain at three years.

In comparison with the CCD course, the learning undertaken in the Reader Training Course moves from the acquisition of knowledge to a focus on the development of understanding, skills, spirituality and the formation for ministry. The training is delivered at a central location and weekly evening study sessions include student-led worship as well as teaching from specialist tutors. Occasional study days allow subjects to be tackled in depth. Students are allocated a personal tutor to support their development and must undertake placements and assessed preaching, as well as academic assignments.

The Co-ordinator for Reader Training monitors progress and produces a report in the final stages of training for each student.

The role of the parish and incumbent during Reader training

Incumbents play a vital role in the training of Readers. They encourage and support during the course, assist with practical advice and offer a model for public ministry. It is important that they meet regularly (at least quarterly) with their Reader in training, in order to offer this support.

Incumbents should recognise that training is a demanding experience and be prepared to support the student in doing less at church.

Incumbents should also plan selected opportunities for the Reader in training to preach, lead worship and experience other ministerial roles. It's difficult to prescribe the extent and nature of these as people and situations vary enormously. However, we hope that Readers in training would have the opportunity each term to preach once and to lead worship once in their own parish. Occasionally Readers in training are so keen to get involved in ministry that their enthusiasm for practical opportunities diminishes their focus on their studies. Incumbents should be careful to ensure that balance is achieved.

Those who are training while their parish is in vacancy require particular support. A rural dean, a member of the local ministry team, or another vicar within the Mission Partnership should be designated as the person offering local support described above.

Course fees and other costs of training

Training fees for those preparing for public ministry should be paid by the local church or parish and not by the student.

We recognise that in foundation training, the exploration of vocation is usually ongoing, and that it may be appropriate for students to pay their fees while they are uncertain about their call to public ministry in the church. However, **once selected for training as a Reader, the cost of fees should not be borne by the student.**

The fees for training through both the CCD Course and Reader Training Course are set annually by the School for Ministry.

Parishes should recognise that often students face other costs of training, including transport, books and childcare provision, all of which can be significant. We ask that the generosity of time and commitment offered by the student is matched by a willingness in the parish to give appropriate financial support.

See below for CME allowances.

Training after admission and licensing

A programme of Continuing Ministerial Education (CME) for Readers is administered and overseen by the School for Ministry.

All newly-admitted Readers are asked to attend a course of Initial CME, which aims to respond to practical issues which arise in ministry.

Readers, like all other ministers, have a duty to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through personal reading, directed study and specific programmes. A programme of opportunities for training is circulated by the School for Ministry. Where possible, it is desirable that Readers undertake such study alongside other ministers, including ordained ministers.

The way that CME grants are paid for clergy and lay ministers differs. Stipendiary clergy receive no other income, so a modest amount of allowance is calculated for each clergy person. The full-time stipendiary clergy role is broader than that of Readers and it is arguable that a greater amount of ongoing training and study is required. The clergy CME allowance may be claimed upon to support training costs, but not retreats or books. Many, though not all, Readers are able to meet their own costs of CME training, which assists the Diocesan budget greatly by making more resources available for those in greater financial need.

CME training that is required of Readers, including initial CME, is paid for by the Diocese (funded in part by the Reader Training Course income). CME training that is not required, but which is provided by the Diocese, is usually offered with a substantial subsidy already built in to the standard fee. The remaining standard fee of training provided by the diocese, and training that is provided by external agencies may qualify for funding by a CME grant to a Reader, on application to the School for Ministry. Readers hoping to receive such a grant should discuss this with the Head of School for Ministry as early as possible before the training is booked.

Funeral training

Readers are not permitted to conduct funerals unless they have received specific training for this important and sensitive ministry.

It's important to recognise that funeral ministry is not for all Readers. For some, it is difficult to be available for mid-week ministry. For others, the largely pastoral nature of funeral ministry does not match their gifts. Readers interested in registering for the funeral ministry course must consult their colleagues and receive the express agreement of their incumbent before they do so.

The funeral training course is overseen by the School for Ministry and administered by Mr Michael Cleaver, a Reader. It comprises eight sessions of teaching, including a visit to the Crematorium. Completion of the course requires local supervised experience of bereavement and funeral ministry (overseen by the incumbent).

The admission and licensing of Readers

Readers may only exercise their ministry after the Bishop has admitted them to their office and licensed them to their parish(es). This admission and licensing takes place at an annual service at the Cathedral, on a Saturday in September or October. From 2007, the admission and licensing of Readers has taken place at a combined service at which other lay ministers will be authorised.

At admission, the General Secretary of the Diocesan Association of Readers sends records to the Central Reader Council of the Church of England.

Readers are licensed to parishes and normally to all parishes in the benefice in which they serve. A Readers' licence therefore lists the names of all the parishes to which it relates, rather than to the name by which the benefice is known (which may be different). If there are particular reasons why a Reader should not be licensed to all parishes in the benefice, the incumbent should discuss these with the Warden of Readers. Under the implementation of the Shaped by God report, new mission partnerships are in the process of being created. It is anticipated that in the future, Readers will be licensed to all parishes within the Mission Partnership, to allow for the possibility (but not the obligation) of offering ministry in a wider area.

The Reader licence is a formal document which gives the bishop's permission to the Reader to share in the mission of the church through the exercise of a particular ministry in a particular place. Though vital, it is not adequate to define and clarify expectations of Reader, parish and incumbent, so a Working Agreement is required of all Readers (a template for which is included as an appendix to this Handbook).

The Bishop normally issues a licence for three years. At the end of the third year the Bishop may renew the licence for a further three years. The completion of a Reader Review and the re-nomination of the Reader by the incumbent, are both required for this renewal to take place.

Contrary to some misunderstandings, *Readers are not licensed to a particular incumbent*. Rather, they are licensed by the Bishop to a parish (or parishes) on the nomination of the incumbent.

Child protection

A clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is required for all Readers as part of the Diocese's Child Protection Policy. Forms for this are issued to Readers in training before the completion of their course and to Readers who transfer into the Diocese, prior to their appointment.

The Declaration of Assent

Like clergy, Readers are required to make the declaration of assent prior to their licensing, and upon any subsequent licensing to a new parish. The text of the Declaration of Assent is listed in an appendix to this Handbook.

Readers who receive the Bishop's Permission-to-Officiate

At the age of 70, under a similar arrangement to that of the clergy, Readers must surrender their licence. Of course, this does not mean that the ministry of those over 70 is not effective or unvalued. What it does signal is a change of emphasis – the duties and obligations which come with a Reader licence no longer apply. Instead, Readers may apply for the Bishop's Permission-to-Officiate (PTO), which means that they can continue to offer their ministry to the extent that they feel is appropriate.

The Bishop's Permission-to-Officiate is valid for one year and may be renewed without limit. If PTO is allowed to lapse, for example during illness, it may be renewed when ministry is resumed.

Readers Emeritus

Readers who retire from regular active ministry may take the status of Readers Emeritus. Readers Emeritus are members of the Association of Readers and are welcome at its functions and at the annual "Called Together" service at the Cathedral.

The "Called Together" service at Leicester Cathedral

New readers are admitted and licensed by the Bishop at the annual service in the Cathedral, alongside other lay authorised ministers. The service is usually held in October and is an occasion for the celebration of ministry. All licensed Readers, Readers with PTO and Readers Emeritus are invited.

Following the licensing, a liturgy of welcome may be used in the parish of newly licensed Readers. The liturgy is given in an appendix to this Handbook.

Licensing services in the parish

When a Reader transfers to a new parish, or when additional parishes are added to their licence, a service of re-licensing may take place in the parish. This is especially helpful when waiting for the annual "Called Together" service would create a delay of many months. clergy wishing to explore this possibility for Readers moving into their benefice should contact the Warden of Readers for further information.

Ministry in other Parishes

Link parishes

In addition to serving in their own benefice, Readers are encouraged to make links with another parish or benefice, in order to offer the ministry of leading worship or preaching. This is a valuable way of:

- Allowing the Reader to experience ministry in another context.
- Allowing the linked parish to receive the ministry of another minister (especially where that parish has no Reader of its own).
- Offering support to parishes where the ministerial provision is low.

Link parishes are a semi-formal arrangement and must be expressed in the Reader Working Agreement. To establish such a link requires the agreement of the Reader and the incumbents of both parishes. It's also desirable for the Parochial Church Councils of the parishes to note the arrangements.

We would not expect a Reader to offer a link parish more than one ministerial commitment per month and not less than four times per year.

Occasional ministry in other parishes

Readers who make themselves available to take services and to preach in other parishes offer the Church a valuable resource, especially in times of ill-health, or holidays of other ministers. We encourage this kind of mutual sharing and collaboration, either through informal arrangements, or through the Area Secretaries of the Diocesan Association of Readers. However, there are some important principles and safeguards, which must be observed:

- The incumbent of the benefice in which the Reader is licensed must always be consulted *before* an invitation to minister in another benefice is accepted.
- The incumbent of the benefice from which the invitation comes must also be in agreement.
- The Reader should check arrangements for the reimbursement of expenses. Ideally, the offer to pay expenses should be made by the inviting parish and Readers should not have to ask.
- These arrangements should be considered as an occasional support to cover illness etc. If the resources for ministry in a particular benefice are simply insufficient, then the pattern of services and expectations of that benefice should be changed, rather than relying on external cover from Readers in other benefices.

- Ministry in parishes in another diocese requires the consent of the Bishop.

The Area Secretaries of the Diocesan Association of Readers offer a valuable oversight of this kind of occasional cover and they should be consulted in the event of an ongoing need or questions. clergy who want to invite a Reader to take a service should normally contact the Area Secretary of the Deanery. Contact details for Area Secretaries are included as an appendix to this document.

Clarifying expectations – the Working Agreement

A template for the Reader Working Agreement is included as an appendix.

The purpose of a Working Agreement is not to create a formal contract but to clarify expectations and enable a co-operative and collaborative relationship between the Reader and his/her incumbent and parish.

The process of making a Working Agreement begins during Reader Training. It should be revisited regularly, certainly after the first year of ministry and as circumstances change. In any event, it should be reviewed by the Reader and their incumbent at every Review of Ministry.

The agreed Working Agreement should be usually be shared with all members of the local Ministry Team and with the PCC.

Reader Review of Ministry

Regular review contributes to healthy and fruitful ministry. In 2005, the procedures for review were changed to allow Readers to undertake their review with their incumbent or other member of the local clergy team. Reviews also became a mandatory requirement for the three-yearly renewal of the Reader licence, whereas previously they had been obligatory but not enforced.

The review of ministry is initiated by an invitation sent by the Warden of Readers or Assistant Warden, most usually in the months before the renewal of the Reader licence. They may also be undertaken at any time, either by the initiation of the Reader or their incumbent, as circumstances change.

The Warden of Readers and diocesan office does not need to know the content of the review, unless specific points need to be raised for attention. However, the Reader and incumbent should confirm that the review has taken place, using the form provided.

The “incumbent”, in this context, is taken to mean the member of the parish clergy who has responsibility for overseeing and supporting the Reader’s ministry. This may mean someone other than the legal incumbent of the benefice. If, for personal reasons, the Reader does not wish to have their review conducted by the incumbent, they should contact the person named in the covering letter, who will arrange for an ‘external’ reviewer to be nominated. In the event of a vacancy, the Reader may choose to be assisted by another suitable person, e.g. another Reader or Churchwarden.

The review is based on the Reader's current working agreement. It should include reference to the Reader's progress in ministry, current areas of involvement and how ministry might develop.

The suggested list of questions is not intended to be a straitjacket but is designed to help Readers focus on the things that may be important before they meet their reviewer.

There is space in the review outline, for the Reader to consider any additional training needs to support the development of their ministry. These are collected by the Warden of Readers and responded to, usually with reference to the School for Ministry. In this way, the ongoing provision of CME training opportunities is linked with the real experience of Readers in parishes. The Head of School for Ministry monitors this feedback and plans a response to patterns of training needs which emerge.

A form for the Reader Review of Ministry is included as an appendix.

Clergy vacancies and clergy appointments

Vacancies during the exploration of vocation of a candidate to Reader ministry

Those undergoing an exploration of vocation require special support and encouragement. Often clergy preparing to leave a parish begin to look for people who would be suitable to take on ministerial roles to ‘fill the gaps’. This can be a creative process but there are obvious dangers in making hasty arrangements. Ideally, the discernment of vocation should be a priority for all clergy at every stage of their ministry.

Clergy about to leave a parish, who have likely candidates for Reader ministry, should make contact with the Warden of Readers as soon as possible. They should also identify who would be best placed to offer guidance and support in their absence, and ensure that the candidate is aware.

It is necessary for a candidate to have the support of their parish clergy in following a vocation, but a conditional selection can be made if necessary. Under these circumstances, when a clergy-vacancy is filled and once candidate and incumbent have got to know one another, the incumbent should write to the Warden of Readers to confirm that they are content with the prospect of the Reader’s licensing.

Vacancies during training

Clergy about to leave a parish in which a candidate is already training for Reader ministry, should make contact with the Co-ordinator of Reader Training as soon as possible. They should also make clear and specific arrangements for the oversight of the student’s opportunities for preaching and leading worship during training and for general support.

Involvement of Readers in the interviewing and appointment of parish clergy

Readers are key members of the local ministry team and, as such, should be involved in all major issues affecting the life and mission of the parish. In particular, Readers should be involved in the process of appointing a new incumbent or minister.

This does not mean that Readers must always be included in the formal interviewing process, though this is often appropriate. It does mean that they should contribute to the development of the parish profile and decisions about the way the appointment should be made.

Readers should normally have opportunity to meet candidates for appointment as parish clergy, prior to the appointment being decided. In many parishes, this happens informally over a shared lunch, or during a tour of the parish.

The effect of the appointment of a new incumbent on the licensing of existing Readers

A new appointment marks a new chapter in the life of the benefice. It brings opportunities for new direction, building on continuities with the past. The presence and participation of existing ministers, lay and ordained, is an important factor in this process.

The Bishop's Regulations for Reader ministry invite Readers and their new clergy colleague to work together for a period of six months during which time both should make opportunity to get to know and understand each other, and to clarify their specific roles and working arrangements in the new context. It is vital that the Reader's Working Agreement should be shared with the new clergy colleague at the outset of his/her appointment and that it should be reviewed at the end of the six month period. The PCC or DCC may be involved in the process, if appropriate.

We recognise that sometimes differences can emerge for which some external support may be of benefit. In this event, please contact the Warden of Readers. In the case of serious difficulty, the re-deployment of a Reader to another benefice may be possible. We hope that in most cases, the opportunity for mutual reflection and re-commitment will give both Readers and clergy a renewed sense of confident partnership together.

Readers with Permission-to-Officiate (usually Readers who have reached the age of 70) do not have a licence but are encouraged to make the same review with new clergy colleagues as described above.

Pastoral issues

Readers look primarily to their local ministry team colleagues, and in particular to their incumbent, for pastoral support. If there are ongoing issues related to health for example, it is helpful for these to be related to the Area Secretary of the Reader Association, who may be able to offer further support and make those in the diocese aware as necessary.

The nature of Christian ministry is that we deal daily with very important and emotionally-involving issues. It is not surprising, therefore, that occasionally disagreements between colleagues in ministry result in tension and unhappiness.

It is heartening that these difficulties are rare, but it is important that we acknowledge the possibility for disruptive and painful situations to arise. We hope that the provision for careful exploration of vocation, working agreements, ministerial review and the participation of Readers in the process of clergy appointments will foster an atmosphere of collegiality and mutual support.

In the event of pastoral breakdown between ministers in the benefice, the incumbent of the benefice is usually responsible for seeking a resolution. If the incumbent is himself or herself personally involved in the difficulty, external support may be necessary. However, it is important to be realistic about the extent to which external intervention can lead to a resolution of entrenched conflict. Often, the best that can be achieved is the offering of a listening ear and the clarification of options.

Clergy should be aware of the balance of power in relationships and that, very often, Readers feel relatively powerless to resolve an issue with a senior colleague. Sometimes the breakdown of relationships is such that a Reader will seek a move away from their parish. Where they have significant local ties and have invested themselves for many years, such a move is costly and painful.

A Reader in this position should make contact with the Warden of Readers, or one of the Assistant Wardens. The Wardens will usually urge caution and patience in reaching any conclusion about a change in benefice but will facilitate this when appropriate.

Readers transferring to a new benefice

Resignations

Sometimes the Church handles the end of a ministry much less well than the start of a ministry. When the time comes for a ministry to end, it is usually important to recognise and celebrate all the good that has come through its contribution to the life of the church. Readers and clergy should attend to this with some thought and care as the desire to “not make a fuss” sometimes denies the Church an opportunity to give God thanks and to show its appreciation of an outgoing minister.

Readers wishing to resign from ministry should talk with their incumbent first. They should then write to the Warden of Readers, surrendering their Reader licence but retaining the Certificate of Admission which they received at the end of initial training. The Warden will want to understand why the ministry has ended.

Readers who are moving to another diocese and who wish to be re-licensed should talk with the Warden of Readers in the new diocese.

Readers moving to a new benefice in the Diocese of Leicester

Readers who transfer into a new benefice for any reason need a period of adjustment and an opportunity to settle in to a new church situation. It is important for all of us that we are foremost disciples, worshippers and members of the Christian community before we are ministers.

Sometimes, incoming Readers are so enthusiastic to resume their ministry that they overlook opportunities for new ways of serving and the chance to develop relationships. However, it is appropriate for an incoming Reader to talk with their incumbent about their hopes for ministry at an early stage.

Over a period of a minimum of six months, the Reader should begin to explore the possibilities of ministry, under the direction of the incumbent, who may helpfully arrange opportunities for the leading of worship and preaching. At the end of the six month period, the incumbent should write to the Warden of Readers requesting the licensing of the Reader to the parish(es) and confirming that the PCC(s) are in agreement with the appointment.

Readers require Child Protection (CRB) clearance and this should be arranged through the Diocesan Office by the Reader in good time for licensing. Note that the supervisory body for a Reader's ministry is the Diocese, so if a Reader transfers parishes within the Diocese, no additional CRB check is required.

The Reader may be re-licensed to their new parish at the annual licensing service at the cathedral or, other commitments permitting, by the Warden of Readers at a service in the Reader's own parish.

Reader records

It is necessary to hold records of Readers for the proper support and administration of Reader ministry. The Warden of Readers maintains necessary records from the vocation process, and through licensing and subsequent contact.

The Diocese of Leicester maintains database records of all licensed ministers, including Readers, on which the Diocesan Directory and website are based. For the performance of their office as public ministers of the Church, it is expected that Readers will make their contact details available.

Records are retained of those who resign from Reader ministry, in case they wish to take it up again. Readers no longer in ministry who wish to have all their records deleted should contact the Warden of Readers.

Fees for ministry, expenses of office and training costs

The office of Reader is that of a non-stipendiary lay minister. As such, Readers may not receive any fee or payment for any duty, including funerals. Readers are, however, entitled to receive full reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Funeral Fees

Readers are sometimes concerned that when they take a funeral a charge is made by the funeral director under the heading, “minister’s fee” or similar. This is potentially misleading, as it conveys the impression that a payment is made to the person conducting the service. This is never the case for a Reader taking funeral fees.

For stipendiary (paid) clergy who take a funeral, the “minister’s fee” is handled in one of two ways. First, it may be paid to the diocese (or ‘assigned’), where it is used to subsidise the cost of ministry provision. Alternatively, it may be retained by the clergyperson, who must then declare it so that an appropriate deduction can be made from their stipend. Either way, the clergy person does not benefit from the fee.

Only retired stipendiary clergy are entitled to receive and retain any portion of the “minister’s fee”.

Where a Reader has a regular funeral ministry, it is important to agree with the incumbent and parish treasurer how fees are to be handled. If the incumbent assigns his or her fees, then the Reader should hand over any payments he or she receives (usually to the treasurer), so that the “minister’s fee” element may be paid to the Diocese. This is the most straightforward way of handling fees. If the incumbent retains and declares his or her fees, this applies to all fees for funerals in the parish, whether or not the incumbent, or the Reader, takes the service. A Reader in such a parish should ensure that the fee reaches the incumbent, who will then make the necessary declarations so that his/her stipend may be appropriately reduced.

If a Reader takes a funeral in another parish, they should determine in advance how the fees are to be handled. It is usually more straightforward for the funeral director to liaise directly with the parish concerned over fees, rather than through the Reader.

Expenses

Readers should be reimbursed for reasonable expenses which are incurred in the course of their ministry.

The best and most straightforward way of reimbursing expenses is for the Reader to make a regular (e.g. monthly) claim on which details of all journeys and expenses of office are clearly and specifically recorded.

There is no set rate for the reimbursement of mileage, though many parishes adopt the same rate as that paid by the Diocese which, at April 2008, is 40p per mile for car journeys. There is no reason why a Reader should be paid at a rate different from any other minister in the parish.

The journey that a Reader makes to their normal place of worship is not normally regarded as an expense of office, even if they have a ministerial role on a particular occasion. In other words, preaching at his/her “own church” would not entitle a Reader to claim travelling expenses if they would in any case have been worshipping there as a church member.

It is strongly recommended that parishes provide Readers with lectionaries and service books necessary for the conduct of worship. Additionally, some parishes generously support Readers with allowances for books for study, robes, and training costs. This is to be applauded but there is no diocesan policy in regard to such provision.

Funeral expenses may be claimed by the Reader from the funeral director, including loss of earnings, but these should be agreed when the invitation to take the funeral is received.

Training costs

Parishes, not Readers, should pay for the Reader Training course. For further details, please refer to the Reader Training section of this Handbook.

The Diocesan Association of Readers

The purpose of the Leicester Diocesan Association of Readers is to promote fellowship in their ministry among the Readers of the Diocese of Leicester; to cooperate with the Bishop's Officers for the ministry of Readers, and to consult with the Bishop concerning his regulations governing the ministry of Readers.

The Association of Readers is organised by Readers, for Readers. Its activities include social events as well as an AGM that includes an address by a speaker on a topical issue.

The Council of the Association considers matters relating to Reader ministry and is a key forum for the development of Diocesan policy. Among the Council's members, Area Secretaries (one per Deanery) bring perspective from the Readers and their parishes. Any Reader wishing to raise an issue for the council may contact their Area Secretary and/or the General Secretary of the Association. Contact details are included in an appendix to this document.

The General Secretary

The General Secretary administers the work of the Association and organises key events, including its Annual General Meeting. He or she works closely with the Warden and Assistant Wardens on the development of policy.

The Area Secretaries

Area Secretaries have generally served one deanery each. Their primary role is to be a source of local support to Readers in their parishes and to co-ordinate requests from clergy for cover to parishes. Area Secretaries ensure that the Council has a good perspective on the issues facing Readers in the Diocese.

The Bishop's Representative for PTO Readers

This role was created in 2006 to allow the particular issues facing Readers who hold Permission-to-Officiate be represented on the Council. The Representative also has a brief to be aware of issues affecting Readers Emeritus.

The Central Reader Council of the Church of England

The CRC is the national body which represents Readers in the Church. It produces an excellent and award-winning magazine, *The Reader*, every quarter.

The CRC holds occasional national conferences to which Readers are invited, and holds an annual meeting to which Diocesan Wardens of Readers and Secretaries of the Association of Readers are invited.

The CRC website is full of information relevant to Readers and includes a discussion forum which allows for the exchange of information.

Appendix A - Bishop's Regulations for Reader ministry, Diocese of Leicester

Reader Ministry in the Church of England is governed by canon. These Bishop's Regulations offer clarity the application of these canons in the Diocese of Leicester.

1. *The Duties of Readers*

1.1 The primary duties of Readers are to preach and teach, and to conduct or assist in conducting worship.

1.2 Readers are permitted to undertake the following pastoral duties:

- 1) to visit the sick
- 2) to undertake such pastoral and educational work as the Bishop and incumbent direct.

1.3 Readers are permitted to undertake the following liturgical duties:

- 1) to read Morning and Evening Prayer (omitting the Absolution)
- 2) to read the Scriptures
- 3) to preach
- 4) to publish the banns of marriage according to the law
- 5) to receive and present the offering of the people
- 6) to distribute the sacrament to the people at Holy Communion
- 7) to conduct funeral services in accordance with the Canons
- 8) to officiate at other services of the Word.

1.4 Readers may accept an invitation to take part in the worship of a church of another denomination to which the Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure 1988 applies, provided that the duties they undertake in the service are the same or similar to those they are authorised to perform in the Church of England. Before accepting such an invitation, Readers should obtain the approval of the incumbent of the benefice where the service is to take place.

Under Canon B43 "Of Relations with other Churches", Bishop's permission is required for a Reader to take part in the services of another denomination on a regular basis (four or more times a year).

Permission is hereby given, although the Bishop's Ecumenical Adviser should be notified by the Reader's Incumbent. Permission is also required from the incumbent of the parish in which the

service is to take place, whether on a one-off or regular basis, and from the PCC of that Parish if it is to be on a regular basis.

In local ecumenical projects, Readers may, with the permission of the Bishop (given after consultation with the PCC) undertake such duties in the areas covered by the project as the Bishop may specify.

2. *Selection*

2.1 Candidates for Reader ministry should discuss the idea of Reader ministry with the incumbent of the benefice or minister of the place where they intend to minister, and will normally enrol on the Certificate in Christian Discipleship (CCD) Course. The incumbent and the applicant should read the Bishop's Regulations concerning Readers, and in general terms explore the applicant's potential role in the benefice in the future. When the candidate and incumbent agree that it is right to proceed to selection for Reader training, the incumbent should contact the Warden of Readers and return form to the Warden, having first obtained the agreement of the PCC (or its equivalent in other contexts).

2.2 The selection of candidates for Reader training is the responsibility of the diocese, exercised through a panel of selectors, appointed by the Warden in consultation with the Bishop.

3. *Training*

A course of training is provided which appropriately prepares potential Readers to exercise a preaching, teaching and liturgical ministry in a pastoral context, as described in the Canons of the Church of England. This course of training, which is a diocesan responsibility, has due regard for the development of potential Readers in knowledge and understanding, skills, spirituality, and personal witness sufficient for their admission to the office of Reader. Criteria for courses of training are laid down by the Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council, and regularly reviewed.

4. *Admission and Licensing*

4.1 Before exercising their office, Readers must be admitted by the Bishop and hold a current licence or written permission to officiate from the Bishop.

4.2 Candidates for admission must be baptised and confirmed and regular communicants of the Church of England. The Bishop, in consultation with the Warden and those responsible for diocesan selection and training, should be satisfied that those he intends to admit are nominated in accordance with Canon E5 and are suitable in faith, learning and personal life, as described in Canon E5 paragraphs 2 and 3. At admission a Reader must make the declaration of assent and obedience as prescribed in Canon E5 paragraph 4 and receives a Certificate of Admission and a copy of the Bible.

4.3 All Readers in active ministry under the age of 70 must hold a Bishop's Licence, which is subject to renewal every three years. The licence indicates the area in which they may minister and the duties that they are permitted to perform

4.4 Readers retire, and surrender their licence, at the age of 70. Where local circumstances require it, and with the consent of the Reader concerned, Incumbents / Priests in charge may apply, through the Warden, for the Reader to be granted the Bishop's written Permission to Officiate. This Permission lasts for one year, and allows the Reader to officiate in their own benefice. It is renewable at the Incumbent's request.

4.5 Readers who wish to minister in a diocese other than that in which they are licensed must first seek permission to officiate from the Bishop of the diocese concerned.

4.6 A register of all Readers holding a licence or written permission to officiate in the diocese is kept on the diocesan database and administered by the Warden.

4.7 Readers are normally licensed to a benefice or chaplaincy. The licence should be renewed six months after the end of an interregnum, when the Reader should submit the licence for renewal, and the new incumbent re-nominate the Reader to the Warden. If at the end of the six month period, the new Incumbent or the Reader cannot agree to re-nomination, the licence should be extended for a further six months, to allow reference to be made to the Bishop.

4.8 All licensed Readers are invited, alongside their ministry in their home benefice or chaplaincy, to link with another named benefice, where they will be available to lead worship and/or preach once a quarter.

4.9 Readers must surrender their licence or permission to officiate if it is revoked by the Bishop. Sufficient opportunity will be given to the Reader to show reasons to the contrary. Where a licence is revoked summarily, the Reader should be notified in writing of the revocation and of the right to appeal to the Archbishop as laid down in Canon E6 paragraph 3.

5. *Conditions of Service*

5.1 Readers should be clearly informed of their duties rights and obligations in the exercise of their ministry by the diocese through the provision of a copy of the Bishop's Regulations for Readers and any necessary additional diocesan statements.

5.2 Readers and their incumbent or minister should make a written agreement over the duties to be undertaken by the Reader, taking into account:

- a) the particular expression of the individual's ministry
- b) the role of the Reader in the local ministerial team and in relation to the PCC
- c) the arrangements for continuing ministerial education and attendance at local Reader meetings

- d) the balance between their commitments in the role of a Reader and the requirements of their family, work and leisure
- e) the arrangements for reimbursement of expenses incurred through performance of the Reader's duties.

This agreement should be regularly reviewed, normally once a year.

5.3 Readers should always consult their incumbent or minister before accepting engagements outside their benefice.

5.4 The normal dress of Readers when officiating at Morning or Evening Prayer, preaching, conducting a funeral, or officiating at other Services of the Word, is cassock, surplice, degree hood (where appropriate) and blue scarf.

When Readers are requested to undertake other liturgical duties, but are not officiating or preaching, decisions about appropriate liturgical dress will be made by the incumbent.

6 *Finance*

6.1 Readers, who are voluntary and unpaid, should not accept any fee for their services.

6.2 Readers should be reimbursed for travelling and other expenses incurred through the performance of their duties. In the case of expenses relating to duties undertaken in the benefice where the Reader is licensed, arrangements for their payment should be clearly indicated in the written agreement over duties (See Regulation 5.2e). 1

In the case of expenses incurred through serving elsewhere, the parish using the services of Readers should ensure that they are fully reimbursed. The Reader should issue a receipt for the amount of reimbursement.

6.3 When Readers conduct a funeral, they may not retain a fee. It is normal for the Reader to collect the fee payable to the incumbent in respect of the service and pass this to him. They may receive reimbursement from the undertaker for the loss of earnings and expenses incurred through conducting the service. In a vacancy, the incumbent's fee should be paid to the Diocesan Board of Finance or in accordance with its directions. The incumbent and Board should agree to the Reader retaining a sum for expenses and loss of earnings from the fee. Any fee not due to an incumbent such as that legally payable to the officiant at a service in a crematorium must be credited to the Diocesan Board of Finance, having taken into account loss of earnings and expenses incurred.

7. *Transfer*

7.1 When Readers move to another diocese, the following procedure should followed:

- 1) The Reader must notify the Warden that the Reader is leaving and surrender the licence.
- 2) On arrival in the new diocese, the Reader should contact the incumbent or minister in charge of the church where the Reader intends to worship regularly.
- 3) After the Reader has worshipped at the new location for a sufficient period, the incumbent or minister should apply to the Warden of the diocese, in consultation with the Reader and with the agreement of the PCC to ask that the transfer is carried out.

7.3 When Readers move to another benefice within the diocese, they should inform the Warden and surrender the Licence. After a sufficient period, the incumbent or minister of the benefice to which the Reader has moved, in consultation with the Reader and with the agreement of the PCC, should apply to the Warden to ask that transfer is carried out.

Bishops regulations (last revised May 2007)

Appendix B - Canons relating specifically to Readers

The Canons of the Church of England govern Reader ministry, as well as other ministries, and those relating to Readers in particular are:

Canon E4 – Of Readers

Canon E5 – Of the nomination and admission of Readers

Canon E6 – Of the licensing of Readers

The full set of canons is available for download at
<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/churchlawlegis/canons/>

Appendix C – Criteria for selection for Reader training

1. Candidates must be baptised, episcopally confirmed and regular communicants of the Church of England, and familiar with its traditions and practises.
2. Candidates should be able to speak of their own sense of vocation to ministry and mission, referring both to personal conviction and to the extent to which others have confirmed it. Their sense of vocation should be obedient, realistic, and informed.
3. Candidates should show an understanding of the Christian faith and a desire to deepen that understanding. They should demonstrate personal commitment to Christ and a capacity to communicate the Gospel.
4. Candidates should be people of integrity with sufficient maturity and stability to sustain the demanding role of a minister and cope with change and pressure in a flexible and balanced way.
5. Candidates need to be self-aware and self-accepting as a basis for open and healthy personal and pastoral relationships. They need to show ability and willingness to co-operate with others, sometimes as a leader and sometimes as a team member.
6. Candidates must be capable of undertaking a rigorous course of study and ministerial preparation in their spare time. They need an open and enquiring mind.
7. The candidate's spiritual discipline of prayer, bible study and regular worship should underpin, energise and sustain their daily life.

Appendix D - The Declaration of Assent

Like clergy, Readers are required to make the declaration of assent prior to their licensing, and upon their licensing to a new parish. The text of the Declaration of Assent is given below.

Preface

The Church of England is part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation.

Led by the Holy Spirit, it has borne witness to Christian truth in its historic formularies, the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, The Book of Common Prayer and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons.

In the declaration you are about to make, will you affirm your loyalty to this inheritance of faith as your inspiration and guidance under God in bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making Him known to those in your care?

Declaration

I, A B, do so affirm, and accordingly declare my belief in the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness; and in public prayer I will use only the forms of service which are authorized or allowed by Canon.

I, A B, will give due obedience to the Bishop of Leicester and his successors in all things lawful and honest.

I, A B, about to be licensed to exercise the office of Reader in the parish of C do hereby promise to endeavour, as far as in me lies, to promote peace and unity, and to conduct myself as becomes a worker for Christ, for the good of his Church, and for the spiritual welfare of all people. I will give due obedience to the minister in whose cure I may serve, in all things lawful and honest.

Appendix E – A suggested template for a Reader's Working Agreement

Between (Reader):

and (Incumbent / Priest in Charge):

in the Benefice/Parish of:

Date:

This is not a contract but a positive Working Agreement, which clarifies expectations for ministry. It should be a balanced document, reflecting the particular context for mission in the locality, the gifts and availability of the Reader and the approach to shared ministry adopted by the incumbent. A copy of this template in electronic form can be obtained from the Warden of Readers, Revd Simon Harvey. Email simon@sjharvey.org.uk

For a full description of the Reader's role, responsibilities and the structures for the support of Reader ministry, please refer to the current Handbook issued by the Diocese of Leicester.

Context for ministry

You may find it helpful to briefly describe here the church/parish/benefice, the priorities for mission of the local churches, mission partnerships, ecumenical relationships, and any other local characteristics which shape the Reader's context for ministry. This may also include reference to the Reader's occupation, work or other responsibilities.

Core responsibilities:

1. Belonging to the worshipping community

The church congregation/community to which I belong as a regular worshipper and member is:

2. Preaching God's Word

The focus for my preaching ministry will be (name churches, parishes or particular services, if it's appropriate to focus in this way):

It is expected that I will preach at the following number of services per month/quarter/year:

3. Leading worship that renews and inspires

The focus for my ministry of leading worship (and assisting to lead) will be (name churches, parishes or particular services, if it's appropriate to focus in this way):

It is expected that I will lead worship at the following number of services per month/quarter/year:

4. Teaching in ways that deepen discipleship and faith

The focus for my teaching ministry will be (name courses, small groups etc., if it's appropriate to focus in this way):

5. Rest, reflection and boundaries

Readers often combine ministry with demanding responsibilities at work, in the community or in the family. It is helpful if Readers record any particular expectation in relation to the boundaries of ministry:

Further responsibilities:

6. Link parish

Readers are encouraged to offer occasional ministry to another parish as a way of extending their experience and resourcing other churches. This is subject to the agreement of the Reader's incumbent and the incumbent of the link parish. It is often appropriate for the link parish to be in the same Mission Partnership as the Reader's parish.

My link parish, and the expectation of the frequency of my ministry in that parish, is as follows:

7. Leadership in mission

Readers are usually ex-officio members of the PCC and they should normally attend meetings. Many Readers apply skills of theological reflection and make a special contribution to the leadership in mission of the church, within the oversight of the incumbent.

My contribution to the shared leadership of the church/parish will chiefly be through:

8. Other specific responsibilities

My specific responsibilities as a Reader include:

Accountability and support

9. Supervision

The following named person (usually the incumbent) will oversee my ministry. I will keep them fully informed of issues relating to my ministry and welcome their constructive feedback:

The structures for supervision include informal opportunities for advice and support and the following formal arrangements (list staff meetings, regular one-to-one meetings as appropriate):

10. Expenses of office

The cost of all necessary expenses of office will be borne by the PCC. The following rate of reimbursement for mileage to services other than my usual place of worship is:

11. Training, study and personal development

I undertake to continue to build my knowledge and skills and to be formed for ministry through the following pattern of study/reading/courses:

The proportion of course fees for training that is directly related to my ministry, which will be borne by the parish is (typically 50%):

12. Record any other agreements here:

13. Review

We agree to review this agreement no later than (date):

Signed:

(Reader)

(Incumbent)

Appendix F – Reader Review of Ministry

Suggested outline of questions for Reader review

Your present ministry

Give a brief description of your current Reader ministry including meetings.

Which aspects of your ministry do you enjoy the -

Most?

Least?

Which aspects of your ministry do you see as your –

Strengths?

Weaknesses?

Do you have skills or strengths that are not being fully used in your ministry?

Do you feel under-used? If so, in what respects?

Do you feel over-used or pressurized? If so, in what respects?

What challenges have faced you in your ministry recently (e.g. in the last 3 years)?

What, if any, disappointments have faced you in your ministry recently?

If you do not have a link parish, would you consider forming one with another Benefice?

YES/NO

Support for your ministry

Do you think your written agreement is realistic?

Which changes, if any, would you like to see in it?

Would it be helpful to have someone else meet with you and your Incumbent to discuss it?

Do you feel adequately informed and pastorally supported by the Diocesan officers for Reader ministry?

Spirituality and your ministry

How is your ministry resourced by –

Your study and reading for ministry?

Your prayer life and Bible reading?

Opportunities for discussion and sharing with others (including reflection on aspects of your ministry, meeting with a Spiritual Director)?

Your developing ministry

If you have had a review three years ago have your hopes expressed at that time been realised?

What Continuing Ministerial Education have you undertaken in the last 3 years?

What other training has helped develop your ministry (e.g through your employment, or via other Adult Education provisions) in the last three years?

What Training or Continuing Ministerial Education are you currently undertaking?

Which aspects of your ministry are most in need of development or improvement?

In what specific ways might you work on this over the next three years?

Do you have any specific training requests that are not currently provided for by the Diocesan Training Office?

Evaluation

Has taking part in this review been helpful to you?

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Reader Review of Ministry

Please use this form to confirm that the review has taken place and to raise any issue for the attention of the Warden of Readers.

Name of Reader:

Parish:

Name of reviewer:

Date review took place:

Does this Reader have a current Working Agreement? Yes/No

Please use this space to raise any issue for the attention of the Warden of Readers:

Signed (Reader):

Signed (reviewer):

Please return this form to Claire Stapleton, Church House, St Martin's East, Leicester LE1 5FX.

Appendix G – Liturgy of Welcome for newly licensed Readers

It is customary for those admitted and licensed as Readers to be welcomed formally by their congregations on the Sunday following the service and to read aloud their licences.

This form of words may be used:

The president says

I present to you N who was [admitted and] licensed as a Reader by the Bishop of N in the cathedral yesterday. Will you welcome and uphold him/her in his/her new ministry for Christ?

All With the help of God, we will.

The Reader reads out the licence, and may be invited to give testimony.

The president may pray for the new Reader.

The president may introduce the Peace in these or other suitable words

We are all one in Christ Jesus.

We belong to him through faith,

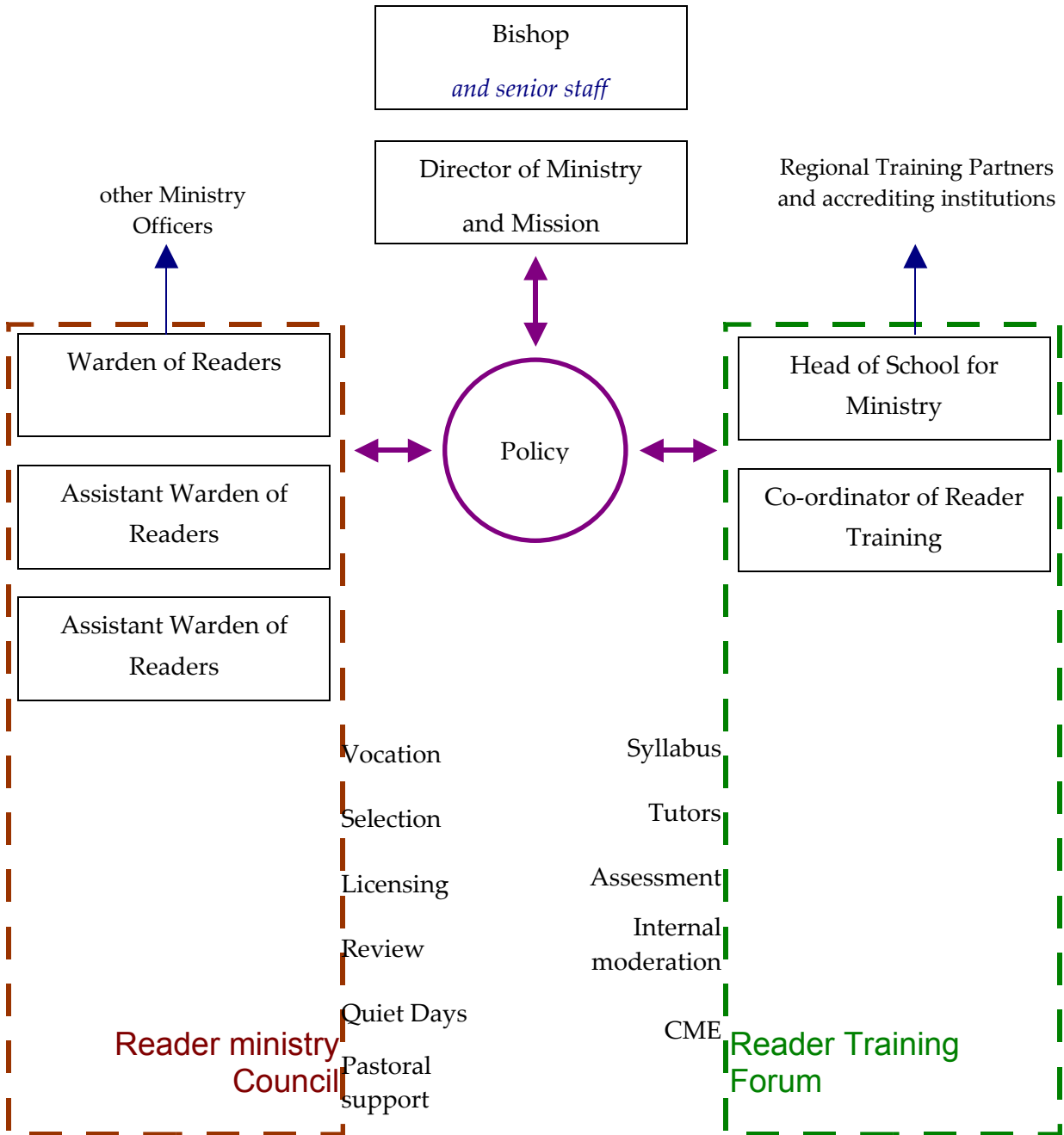
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All and also with you.

Appendix H – Structures for support of Reader ministry

Reader ministry in the Diocese of Leicester



Appendix I – Contact details

Warden of Readers

Revd Simon Harvey

St Pauls House, Hamble Road, Oadby, Leicester LE2 4NX

0116 271 0519 simon@sjharvey.org.uk

Assistant Wardens of Readers

Revd Richard Curtis

The Vicarage, Church Lane, Gilmorton, Lutterworth, Leicestershire LE17 5LU

07855 746041 rcurtis@leicester.anglican.org

Mrs Margaret Gillespie

44 Coleridge Drive, Enderby, Leicester LE19 4QF

0116 284 8684 bandmgillespie@talktalk.net

General Secretary of the Diocesan Association of Readers

Mr Malcolm Britton

34 Hall Orchard Lane Frisby-on-the-Wreake Melton Mowbray LE14 2NH

01664 434 490 mr.britton@virgin.net

Area Secretaries of the Diocesan Association of Readers

Mrs Marjorie Joyce (The City of Leicester Deanery, Guthlaxton)

201 Leicester Road Enderby Leicester LE19 2BG

0116 286 2252 mjoyce@enderby.wanadoo.co.uk

Mr Malcolm Britton (Framland and Goscote)

34 Hall Orchard Lane Frisby-on-the-Wreake Melton Mowbray LE14 2NH

01664 434 490 mr.britton@virgin.net

(Gartree 1 and 2) - Vacant

Mr Martyn Davison (Akeley East)
10 Springfield Close Loughborough LE11 3PT
01509 561 050 martyn@buzram.demon.co.uk

(Akeley West) - Vacant

Mr David Collins (Sparkenhoe East and West)
6 Brooklands Close Whetstone Leicester LE8 6NL
0116 286 1306 collins_d@hotmail.com

Bishop's Representative for Readers with PTO

Mr Michael Cleaver
37 Jersey Way Barwell Leicester LE9 8HR
01455 845 564 michael@rosewooddriving.demon.co.uk

Co-ordinator of Reader Training

Revd Amos Kasibante
290 Victoria Park Road, Leicester LE2 1XE
0116 285 6493 amosk@leicester.anglican.org

Moderator of Reader Training

Revd Canon Anne Horton
The Rectory, 157 Main Street, Swithland, Loughborough LE12 8TQ
01509 891163 rahorton@leicester.anglican.org

Assistant Moderator of Reader Training

Dr Paul Cavill

75 Belvoir Drive, Leicester LE2 8PB

0116 233 5169

Director of Ministry and Mission

Revd Canon Mike Harrison

Church House, St Martin's East, Leicester LE1 5FX

0116 248 7428 Mike.Harrison@LecCofE.org

Head of the School for Ministry

Revd Dr Stuart Burns

Church House, St Martin's East, Leicester LE1 5FX

0116 248 7454 Stuart.Burns@LecCofE.org

Secretary to the Department of Ministry and Mission

Ms Claire Stapleton

Church House, St Martin's East, Leicester LE1 5FX

0116 248 7417 Claire.Stapleton@LecCofE.org

Appendix J – Resources for Readers

Central Reader Council of the Church of England

Dr Alan Wakely, Hon CRC Secretary

Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ

crcsec@ntlworld.com

The Reader Magazine

The Editor, The Reader Magazine, Church House, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3NZ

020 7898 1419 thereader@c-of-e.org.uk

National Reader website and online discussion forum

<http://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org>

Diocese of Leicester website – Reader pages

<http://www.leicester.anglican.org/ministry/school/readers.html>

Common Worship Texts

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/index.html>