

The Shape of the Initial Ministerial Development Programme

In our three neighbouring dioceses of Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester, we share the following overall shape in our programme, already described:

1st year – is about learning to live in public representative ministry, the curate learning to be who they are in the new role

2nd year – is about considering priestly ministry, and developing appropriate skills for sustaining a life of priestly ministry

3rd year – is recognising and beginning to develop the unique character of each individual's ministry, and discerning their vocation for the future

These outcomes, and the Formation Criteria as a whole, are delivered through a programme which includes:

- **Peer supervision groups.** This is at the heart of the IMD programme. Each group is made up of half of the year group of curates. It will meet twice a term at a time and place agreed by the group. Curates will bring issues, events or relationships they would like to reflect on in order to develop their practice, understanding, self-awareness and theology. It will be facilitated by a trained facilitator and is a safe and confidential space.
- **Core events for the year group.** These cover the essentials of the theology and practice of mission and ministry in the Anglican Church. Over the three years, we look at baptisms, marriage, funerals, evangelism and fostering disciples, and in the third year, the ministry of reconciliation, healing and deliverance. These are held on Sundays at 4 College Green.
- **Core events for the whole curate body.** In a programme that is trying to be flexible, events for everyone are rare. The most important of these is the annual spirituality day at the start of the year.
- **A residential weekend on leadership.** Time away together is valuable, and costly. We have a residential two years out of three – the third year being the diocesan clergy residential.
- **Mornings with training incumbents.** There will be two Saturday mornings each year shared with training incumbents. One will be in the year group looking at aspects of collaborative ministry. One will be with all the year groups together looking at an aspect of shared interest.
- **Into Incumbency.** Into Incumbency is a programme of events aimed at those moving into an incumbent's post. Third year incumbent status curates will focus on this course, though they may want to spread it over two years. This course will be shared with people new to incumbency moving into the diocese, and some events will be shared with experienced incumbents. This course will help curates manage the step up into incumbency.
- **Events for Specific Sub-groups or Training Needs.** Special events for those arriving, leaving, etc. are arranged in conjunction with neighbouring dioceses, and we have also arranged specific training events (e.g. for those working in Church Schools). If a group would like a specific area of training arranged, this should be possible.
- **Church swaps.** Curates are encouraged, especially towards the end of the first year or the beginning of the second, to visit each other's churches and to take the opportunity to experience and minister in a different context and tradition.

- **Third year placements** are a valued element within the programme. These have normally taken place during the Autumn of the third year, and typically lasted for five weeks (or pro-rata for part time curates). It is quite possible for them to happen elsewhere in the year if this is more convenient. The purpose and content of the placement should be clearly agreed with the Head of Ministerial Development beforehand – an additional information sheet is incorporated in the appendices.
- **Further Study.** Curates who would like to undertake further study as part of their formational development need to discuss this with the Co-ordinator of IMD. We would usually support this, and it may be possible to provide some limited financial support.

Attendance at the peer supervision groups and core events is very important both for the sake of each individual minister and the group as a whole. If a core event is unavoidably missed one year it will need to be attended the following year. Reasons for absence need to be communicated to Julie *as soon as they arise* (a wedding is rarely booked a week before a training event!) and attendances are recorded at each session. Frequent absence will suggest the need for review of training with curate and training incumbent by the Head of Ministerial Development, to address any particular issues. Part time ministers will be expected to attend core events and peer supervision groups.

The fourth year is a time of transition. As we expect full-time deployable curates to be able to move on from the beginning of their fourth year, it is essential that the Formation Criteria have been met by then. Full-time 'incumbent' status curates will continue to attend the Into Incumbency course until they leave for their next post. If they move within the diocese they are expected to finish the Into Incumbency course in their first year of being an incumbent.

'Assistant' curates in their fourth year are not required to be present at IMD events, but should discuss their individual training pattern with their training incumbents and the Head of Ministerial Development.

Leadership and collaboration

Second year curates have become well established and respected in the church and community. So this is the time to take on areas of significant responsibility and leadership if you have not already been able to do so. This is particularly important for curates moving on to incumbent posts as you will need to be able to demonstrate your capacity for leadership in a variety of situations, but all of you have demonstrated leadership potential in the discernment process and that needs to be expressed in ministry. It will also be important for your second year assignment which is on an area of leadership. Taking a lead on a new project, facilitating a particular parish group or managing an area of work will all give you opportunities to supervise others, demonstrate skills of facilitation and mediation and explore a variety of leadership styles for different contexts. If, when you have discussed this with your incumbent, this seems difficult to develop in your community please talk this over with the Head of Ministerial Development.

Year 2 placements

There are no formal placements in the second year, but all curates are encouraged to explore the possibility of informal 'pulpit swaps' or exchanges with colleagues at some point during the second

year. Third year curates find their placement extremely rewarding but have reported that other placement experiences earlier in the curacy would be valuable. Therefore can I encourage you to talk with your colleagues and arrange to visit one another's churches and take part in worship of a style you are not familiar with. You do not need to write a formal report of these visits, but they may provide valuable evidence to include in your portfolios.