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READER MINISTRY HANDBOOK 2024



This handbook contains information about the ministry of Readers as Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs) within the Church of England and how Readers work alongside other colleagues in ministry within the Diocese of Canterbury.

It is intended as a guide for clergy and Readers as well as being helpful to anyone exploring a vocation to Reader ministry.

It includes guidance from the *Bishops' Regulations for Reader Ministry* and *Canons E4-6*.

Diocesan Reader webpage - <https://www.canterburydiocese.org/readers/>

Please feel free to contact me for further information, guidance or advice.

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Welcome to the Diocese of Canterbury

Canterbury Diocese is the oldest diocese in England, stretching from Maidstone to Thanet, the Isle of Sheppey to the Romney Marsh. We have 350 miles of coastline with historic ports and seaside resorts, alongside rural communities, market towns and commuter-belt urban developments. Affluent areas often sit alongside pockets of major deprivation, offering an exciting and challenging mission context.

At the heart of all we do is a vision of transformation for ourselves and our communities: no one can encounter God and remain unchanged. In the Diocese of Canterbury, we want to increasingly become a Christian community transformed through encounter with Christ, growing and overflowing to transform and bless the families, homes and communities we serve:

Changed Lives, Changing Lives

Towards a Flourishing and Sustainable Future sets out a diocesan roadmap shaped by a period of intentional discernment and listening, and the review of missional priorities in every deanery. More details can be found here: <https://www.canterburydiocese.org/our-life/strategy/>

Our Diocesan Vision:

By God's grace we want to be a people who are...

- ...confident & creative disciples of Jesus Christ
- ...rooted in scripture & drenched in prayer
- ...living gratefully, giving generously, caring for creation & sharing the gospel
- ...growing in number & expectations – of God & ourselves
- ...motivated by justice & love, open to the Spirit & ready for adventure!

Therefore we will¹...

The Canterbury Diet for Ministry

The Canterbury Diet is well established as a way of describing the ministerial expectations for enabling ministers to flourish. It is designed to help an individual to attend to their formation as a Christian minister and to their ministerial competence. The word 'diet' comes from the Greek 'diaita' which means 'way of life,' and seeks to promote reflection on practice and self-reflection as critical components for ministry effectiveness and wellbeing.

The Canterbury Diet makes special note of three Golden Threads, fashioned as questions so the minister continually attends to their ministry practice conscious of the development of prayer and spiritual practices, their learning and reflection in the practice, and the vitality of good relationships and collaborative ministry.

The Canterbury Diet for Readers (Licensed Lay Ministers) can be found as an appendix to this handbook.

The Golden Threads: Questions to ponder...

- How are prayer and spiritual practices being developed?
- How are we learning and reflecting together on our mission and ministry practice?
- How are we attending to good relationships and collaborative ministry?

¹ **'Therefore we will...'** is a recognition that words without actions are empty. It is a commitment to taking real steps now to make this vision a reality soon. The current actions that flow from this vision - both at a diocesan level and in our deaneries - are outlined in detail in the document below. Of course, these actions will change and develop over time - and we would encourage our parishes to consider this vision carefully for themselves, to explore together what actions they will commit to take, what their local 'Therefore we will...' might look like.

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1. Reader ministry

1.1. An Introduction

The office of Reader in the Church of England was revived on Ascension Day 1866 to extend the effectiveness of the traditional parochial system to new pioneering work on the boundaries between church and world². Alongside the office of Evangelist, the office of Reader is governed by canon law³.

In many dioceses, including our own, **Readers are also known as Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs)**. Readers are admitted to a lifelong office in the church but require the Bishop's authority to exercise a public ministry. Just like their ordained colleagues they are required to make the Declaration of Assent and of Obedience to the Diocesan Bishop prior to licensing. These words of introduction are used at the Reader admission service by the Bishop:

My brothers and sisters, God has gathered us into the fellowship of the universal Church. As members together of his body, Christ calls us to minister in his name and, according to our gifts, to be instruments of his love in the world. Within this ministry, Readers are called to serve the Church of God and to work together with clergy and other ministers. They are to lead public worship, to preach and teach the word of God, to assist at the eucharist and to share in pastoral and evangelistic work. As licensed lay ministers, they are to encourage the ministries of God's people, as the Spirit distributes gifts among us all. They are called to help the whole Church to participate in God's mission to the world.

Readers are:

- Called by God to a ministry of the Word.
- Licensed by the Bishop to exercise a public and representative lay ministry in Church and the wider community.
- Theologically trained and equipped as:
 - teachers of the faith
 - enablers of mission in the everyday
 - leaders in church and community⁴

The ministry of individual Readers varies according to their own gifting and mission context. Whilst most minister collaboratively as part of a team of lay and ordained ministers some work very much on the margins of society sharing God's love and message of hope to those who may not yet know it. Readers may also be trained and authorised for funeral ministry.

1.2. Readers in our Diocese

Readers play an important role in the public ministry of the Church by leading worship, teaching and preaching, as well as in a wide range of missional and pastoral contexts. As theologically trained lay people they offer a ministry within the church and to the wider community; and are well placed to encourage people in their everyday faith. Around half of our Readers exercise a funeral ministry; some Readers assist as facilitators and tutors on diocesan-sponsored courses.

² GS1689, *Reader Upbeat: quickening the tempo of Reader Ministry in the Church today*, Archbishops' Council, 2008

³ The canons directly relating to Readers are E4, E5 and E6, the latest edition can be found at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/canons-church-england>

⁴ See also *Resourcing Sunday to Saturday Faith*, which sets out a vision for Readers and lay ministers <https://transformingministry.co.uk/publications-handbooks/#resourcing-sunday-to-saturday-faith>

As has already been mentioned, the Canterbury Diet for Readers (Licensed Lay Ministers) sets out expectations relating to the ministry of Readers and can be found as an appendix to this handbook.

1.3. Being Called to Licensed Lay Ministry in the Church of England

To be considered for this ministry a candidate must be a baptised, confirmed and regular communicant of the Church of England.

Reader ministry is nationally recognised and transferable within the Church of England, the Church in Wales, and in some other dioceses and provinces of the Anglican Communion. This distinguishes Readers from other locally recognised forms of lay ministry, such as that of authorised lay ministers (ALMs), chaplains, pastoral assistants and ‘lay’ lay leaders.

Being able to articulate a sense of calling to a lifelong lay office in the Church rather than a call to locally recognised lay ministry is an important aspect of the discernment process.

The National Framework for Discernment can be found here:

www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/llm-reader-discernment-framework-toplevel-grid_1.pdf

1.4. Training

Initial ministerial and formational training normally consists of a two-year Licensed Lay Ministry course. The course is delivered by St Augustine’s College of Theology and leads to a Certificate in Theology and Mission awarded by Durham University⁵ as part of Common Awards. Ministerial formation continues post licensing under the oversight of the Warden of Readers. See section 3 below for more details.

As lifelong learners Readers are encouraged to participate in continued ministerial development (CMD), see section 6.6 below for more details.

The National Framework for Formation can be found here:

www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/llm-reader-formation-framework-from-autumn-2022.pdf

2. Discernment and Selection

2.1 The Initial Discernment Process

At an early stage it is important for there to have been a degree of discernment within the local church setting. This may include conversations with the incumbent and other local leaders as well as exploring practical aspects of ministry (eg giving a talk, assisting with public worship or small group work). At a later stage, applicants will require the formal support of both the incumbent and relevant PCC.

To discern a calling and vocation to Reader ministry, prospective Readers are encouraged to:

- talk to their incumbent or local priest, other Readers and members of their congregation.
- talk with the Warden of Readers:

Nigel Collins, Tel: 01227 459401, email: ncollins@diocant.org

⁵ Students train alongside Chichester and Southwark diocesan trainee Readers as well as ordinands and independent students.

- consider exploring your sense of calling by attending *Deepening Discipleship*⁶ – an eight-session course which enables participants to explore their own journey of discipleship and their own unique calling.

It is important to contact the Warden of Readers in order to take the process forward. This may include meeting with a Reader Vocations Adviser, before being invited to make a formal application.

Once invited to formally apply, an application pack will be sent, consisting of:

- Application form⁷ – to be completed by the candidate.
- Nomination form – to be completed by the incumbent⁸ and sponsoring PCC/s.
- Confidential Safeguarding Declaration – to be completed by the candidate.

It should be noted that applicants will be expected to participate in a *Deepening Discipleship* course as part of the discernment process unless they have previously completed it or a similar alternative course.

2.2 The Formal Discernment Process

At this stage applicants are required to have completed a new DBS and awareness/foundation safeguarding modules (see section 6.2 for more details). They may then be invited to attend an ad-hoc discernment panel and will have a short interview with the Bishop.

The Discernment Panel normally takes place in June/July. The Panel are looking to affirm what has already been discerned locally at an earlier stage and are responsible for making a recommendation to the Bishop regarding suitability to start training.

The National Discernment Framework⁹ is used as a guide when considering applicants. The key indicators the panel will be looking for are:

- discipleship – someone who is an active disciple seeking to grow more Christ-like as they mature in the faith; this will include a commitment to individual bible study and prayer whilst being rooted in a local worshipping community.
- calling – someone who clearly feels called by God to serve in the church and wider community as a ‘commissioned’ lay minister; this calling will have been affirmed by the local church.
- encourager – someone who encourages others to grow in their discipleship and strives to make new disciples; with a focus on sharing everyday faith.
- potential – someone who has the potential for growth as their discipleship becomes shaped by their calling and formation as a lay minister/leader.
- capacity – someone who has the capacity to undertake the academic study and formational training.

It is important to note that the panel isn’t looking for the ‘finished article’ at this stage.

The Bishop makes the final decision about whether to recommend a candidate for training. If recommended, the course begins in September.

⁶ Book through Sarah Lucas, Mission and Ministry Team Administrator slucas@diocant.org

⁷ Applicants will also be asked for two referees, a CV, Reflection on their spiritual journey as well as evidence of baptism and confirmation.

⁸ The incumbent will also be asked to provide a reference for the candidate.

⁹ The Church of England Discernment Framework for Readers/LLMs can be found here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/llm-reader-discernment-framework-toplevel-grid.pdf>

3. Ministry Training and Formation

A brief introduction can be found at section 1.4 above.

3.1 Initial Ministerial and Formational Training

The Licensed Lay Ministry course is delivered by St Augustine's College of Theology and normally consists of two elements:

- Core modules (evening classes or teaching days):
 - Introduction to Biblical Studies.
 - Introduction to Church History.
 - Introduction to Spirituality and Discipleship.
 - Introduction to Christian Worship.
 - Brief Introduction to Christian Doctrine.
 - Using the Bible Today.
- Reader-specific training (study days):
 - Formation for Reader ministry.
 - Foundations for Reflective Practice in context (within your own parish/benefice).
 - Foundations for Ministry and Worship in context (in another parish/benefice on placement).
 - Practical skills (eg for theological reflection, leading worship, preaching, pastoral and mission).

Students train alongside Reader candidates from Chichester and Southwark dioceses, and alongside ordinands and independent students for the core modules.

All students will have a Personal Pathway Guide which will have taken into account any previous accredited theological studies they may have completed. They are also supported by a Diocesan LLM Tutor appointed by the Warden of Readers.

Further details are available on request from the Warden of Readers.

3.2 Post Licensing Formation

Once licensed new Readers complete further formational learning under the direction of the Warden of Readers, this includes:

- Action learning¹⁰ – being part of a supervised training group which assists in the process of transition to licensed lay ministry.
- Further study and learning – this may involve participating in blended learning modules¹¹ aimed at equipping the Reader for missional ministry and leadership in everyday life.

The length of post licensing learning will vary according to the individual rather than being pre-determined.

Readers are encouraged to participate in diocesan *equipping for ministry* events and CMD. Training for specific areas of ministry is currently available for:

¹⁰ the group is facilitated by the Warden or an experienced Reader.

¹¹ This may include use of blended learning modules provided by the Central Readers Council.

- Lay Funeral ministry.
- Anna Chaplaincy.

Training for other areas of ministry is under development.

4. Becoming a Reader

4.1 Admission and Licensing

The Admission and Licensing of new Readers takes place at Canterbury Cathedral on a Sunday in late September (see section 6.1 below for more information). In recent years this has been within the context of choral evensong.

New Readers receive a Certificate of Admission awarded by the Bishop which is evidence of their being admitted to the lifelong office of Reader in the Church of England.

They also receive the Bishop's licence to exercise a public ministry within the diocese (see section 5 below for more information). For advice on exercising the ministry of a Reader in another diocese, even for a 'one-off' occasion Readers are to contact the Warden of Readers.

4.2 New Readers Residential Weekend

A residential weekend is held annually at the Cathedral Lodge for those who are to be admitted and licensed in the Cathedral. It includes induction sessions for Readers who are new to the diocese. This normally takes place over the weekend which includes the Cathedral service.

4.3 What do Readers wear?

The formal vesture of a Reader is black cassock, surplice, blue scarf and academic hood (where appropriate). The scarf should be plain and not embroidered or otherwise decorated. This is the correct dress for such occasions when clergy also wear formal vesture (also known as 'choir dress/habit'). Local custom may suggest variations on other occasions, for instance when it is more appropriate for a Reader to wear an alb. The PCC may wish to contribute towards the cost of vestments for their Readers.

Newly admitted Readers are presented with a scarf and Bible by the Bishop.

4.4 Reader Records and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

As licensed ministers regulated by Canon law, a personal record is kept for all Readers in line with the document *Personal files relating to the clergy*¹² as approved by the House of Bishops. The Warden of Readers holds these records securely on behalf of the Bishop and in compliance with GDPR.

Files are retained for everyone who has been admitted to the office of Reader in the diocese and a new file is opened when a Reader transfers into the diocese. Unlike clergy files are not currently transferred between dioceses. The main contents of the file are:

- Application paperwork and references.
- Safeguarding documents – evidence of DBS and training.
- Copies of Certificates of admission, licenses, etc.
- Annual Ministerial review.

¹² <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/personal-files-relating-to-clergy-2021-edition.pdf>

- Further authorisations – eg funeral ministry, ana chaplaincy.
- Other relevant information or correspondence – eg change of contact details etc.

5. Reader Licences

5.1 The Bishop's Licence

Readers are licensed to the deanery in which they serve, emphasising that they are a resource for mission and ministry beyond their local parish or benefice. For incumbents this means that when requested and willing, their Reader should be supported in ministering beyond their parish/benefice when appropriate.

Licences are subject to annual ministerial review (see below) and continue until such time as:

- the Reader moves church,
- leaves the diocese or
- retires from active ministry.

Licences are automatically suspended where mandatory safeguarding requirements are not met.

5.2 Surrendering of Licences

Ill health or other changes in personal circumstances may lead a Reader, after discussion with the Warden and Parish Priest to surrender a licence. Readers must surrender their licence if it is revoked by the Bishop. This is a very rare event and in these circumstances the Reader does have the right of appeal to the Archbishop of York. However, this step should not be taken until the Reader has discussed the issues with the Warden.

5.3 Permission to Officiate (PTO)

Reader regulations state that on reaching the age of 70, a Reader should receive the Bishop's permission to officiate (PTO) rather than a licence. This regulation is no longer actively applied in the diocese, although there are some Readers who were given PTO in previous years.

There may be exceptions where PTO is granted. The most common circumstances are:

- to grant temporary authority for a Reader who is awaiting licensing at the annual service.
- Where a Reader is licensed in another diocese but also ministers in the Diocese of Canterbury (Readers are not permitted to hold a licence in more than one diocese at the same time).
- Where a Reader's ministry will be exercised on an occasional basis rather than regularly as part of the local church leadership team.

6. Good practice, policies and procedures

It should be noted that Readers exercise ministry locally under the oversight of their incumbent (except in exceptional circumstances). Readers, clergy and parishes, benefices should adopt and follow good ministerial practice.

6.1 Annual Admission and Licensing Service

This service is held annually in the Cathedral and celebrates the breadth of Reader ministry in the diocese. It includes the admission and licensing of new Readers, welcoming Readers moving into the diocese, granting of the title Emeritus and the re-commissioning of all Readers.

The service is open to the public¹³ and all Readers are encouraged to attend and bring along members of their local churches.

6.2 Safeguarding

All Readers are required to complete Safeguarding training in line with the National Safeguarding Training and Development Framework as follows:

- Basic Awareness and Safeguarding Foundation online modules – before Selection.
- Leadership module – all active Readers and those in training before licensing (a ‘PTO’ version is available for those with a reduced leadership role).
- Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse – all active Readers and those in training should complete the latest version of this module alongside completing the leadership module (this is completed through the National Safeguarding training portal – copies of certificates should be sent to the Warden of Readers on completion).

All Readers are to refresh their training every 3 years, a reminder will be sent by the Diocesan office when training is due to be renewed.

All Church of England Safeguarding training is booked through the National Training Portal:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/learning-and-development>

More information about the range of courses is available on the diocesan website:

<https://www.canterburydiocese.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-training/>

An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check against the children and adult barred lists is required for all Readers and those in the discernment process. The DBS check is completed through the Diocesan Safeguarding Administrator at safeguarding@diocant.org or 01227 459401. The process is carried out on-line. The DBS certificate is valid for 3 years, a reminder to renew the check is sent to Readers by the Safeguarding Administrator around 3 months before expiry.

Failure to follow these requirements will result in licensing as a Reader being delayed, or existing licences being suspended.

In the event of any Safeguarding concerns please contact one of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers immediately:

Fiona Coombs 07548 232395 or fcoombs@diocant.org

Paul Brightwell 07398 009951 or pbrightwell@diocant.org

6.3 Spiritual Accompaniment

Readers are strongly encouraged to have a Spiritual accompanier with whom they meet regularly as it can be a way to:

- identify and trust their own experience of God.
- discern and make good choices in everyday life.
- share their hopes, struggles and losses.

¹³ Services are now routinely livestreamed by the Cathedral on their YouTube channel.

- discern their response to God's call to licensed ministry.

Many people find that, at particular points in their ministry, a pattern of reflective companionship can be a significant help. The Diocese has a network of experienced spiritual accompaniers. For help in finding a Spiritual accompanier please contact:

Revd Susanne Carlsson susannecarlssons@hotmail.com

Or visit the Prayer and Discipleship page on the website:

www.canterburydiocese.org/spirituality-and-discipleship

6.4 Ministry Agreement

All active Readers are required to have a written ministry agreement between themselves and their incumbent. The purpose of the written agreement is to provide clarity of roles, responsibilities, expectations and supervision between the Reader, incumbent and ministry team/PCC. A copy of the agreement must be sent to the Warden of Readers to be held on file.

Readers in training will have a training agreement with their supervising minister, in preparation for licensing a new ministry agreement should be drawn up to supersede the training agreement.

A template ministry agreement is available from the Reader webpage.

6.5 Ministerial Development and Review (MDR) for Readers

An annual ministerial development and review is initiated by the Warden of Readers after Easter, but may be completed at any time during the year, the purpose is to:

- reflect on the Reader's ministry over the past year.
- identify any areas for ministerial development (especially as circumstances and roles change).
- review the ministry agreement (revised copies should be sent to the Warden).

The Reader MDR process consists of two elements:

- **Self-Review** – this should include reflecting on ministry exercised over the past year (using the *Reflection Based on Promises made at Licensing* resource), recording some statistical information¹⁴ and checking personal details. The Reader is responsible for sending the Ministry Report form to the Warden.
- **Ministerial Review meeting of Reader and incumbent** – this should include a discussion about the Reader's ministry over the past year and identify any areas for ministerial development or changes to the written ministry agreement. The incumbent is responsible for sending the completed Review form back to the Warden.

During an interregnum the Area Dean and Churchwardens share oversight of the parish. In this instance the Reviewer could be another clergy member of the ministry team, a Churchwarden or the Area Dean. Advice is available on request from the Warden.

6.6 Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD)

The diocesan mission and ministry team arrange centralised CMD events and seminars throughout the year. Unless otherwise advertised, these are available free to ordained and lay ministers alike. Events are published in the regular diocesan mailings, but particularly in the termly *Equipping for ministry* mailing. Regular events include:

¹⁴ Readers should routinely keep a record of services led, sermons preached, training attended and any other public ministry exercised.

- Bishop's Days, Preaching the Lectionary Days.
- The Creative Mission Forum.
- Various workshops and seminars.

The *Canterbury Diet* describes a range of expectations and provision for ordained and lay ministers, such as supervision, leadership and management, conflict resolution. The *Canterbury Diet* is well established for clergy and is being extended and developed to include licensed lay ministers such as Readers (see 3.3 above for more details).

6.7 Funeral Ministry

This is an important ministry in the life of the Church. Readers who feel called to this ministry undergo specific training in order to gain authorisation. To do this, they need the support of their incumbent who will act as their supervising minister during the training.

The pathway to gain authorisation is to complete the Lay Funeral Ministry course (normally offered annually). The course is also run for experienced local worship leaders and preachers and leads to a diocesan recognition.

Expressions of interest may be made at any time directly to the Warden of Readers.

Readers who are authorised to conduct funerals are permitted to claim 70% of the CDBF fee element by submitting the appropriate claim form (available from the Diocesan website or Diocesan House) to the relevant PCC Treasurer. This remuneration is on a casual ad hoc basis and does not constitute an employment relationship between the CDBF and the Reader. It is also the responsibility of the Reader to declare and return to HMRC any fee received from the Diocesan Board of Finance (CDBF) in respect of the performance of Occasional Offices.

6.8 Finance, Fees and Expenses

Readers offer a voluntary and unpaid ministry, and do not accept a fee for their services. However, they should be reimbursed for travelling and other expenses incurred through the performance of their duties, especially outside their parish/benefice. Car mileage should be reimbursed at the current rate approved and set by the CDBF.

6.9 The Wider Ministry of Readers

6.9.1 Requests to minister in another benefice

The incumbent from another parish/benefice may directly approach a Reader to take a service in their benefice. Out of courtesy the Reader should inform their incumbent of any such request especially if it becomes a regular commitment. They do not require any further authorisation unless the request is from outside the diocese.

If a Reader regularly ministers in more than one benefice or deanery, a ministry agreement should be drawn up which takes these arrangements into account. The Warden of Readers should be informed and sent a copy of the revised ministry agreement.

6.9.2 Requests to minister in another diocese

If a Reader is asked to minister in another diocese they should inform the Warden of Readers in order to seek permission of the Bishop where the request was initiated. For a one-off request this may simply be approved between the Wardens of Readers acting on behalf of the Bishop.

Requests to regularly minister in another diocese, for example where a Reader is resident in more than one diocese the advice of the Warden of Readers is to be sought. Readers are not permitted

to hold a licence in more than one diocese and so PTO may be granted by one of the dioceses involved. Other considerations include safeguarding, ministry agreements, MDR and CMD.

6.9.3 Requests to minister in churches of other denominations

In local ecumenical projects and partnerships (LEPs), Readers may, with the permission of the bishop (given after consultation with the PCC) undertake such duties in the area covered by the project as the bishop may specify.

Readers may accept invitations to take part in services in a church of another denomination to which the Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure 1988 applies provided that the duties they undertake in the services are the same or similar to those they are authorised to perform in the Church of England. Readers should obtain the approval of the incumbent of the parish where the service is to take place or, where they intend to participate regularly in such a service, of the bishop of the diocese and the PCC of the parish where the service is to take place.

6.9.4 Requests to recognise the ministry of a lay minister from other denominations

Local Preachers of other denominations may not become Readers unless they become confirmed members of the Church of England. However, their ministry as a Local Preacher may be given formal recognition by the bishop on an individual basis; requests should be submitted by the incumbent to the Warden of Readers.

6.10 Taking a Ministry Break

There may be times when a Reader wishes to take a temporary break from public ministry; this may be for a variety of reasons. They should discuss and agree this with their incumbent and inform the Warden of Readers.

6.11 During a Vacancy

During a vacancy the Churchwardens and Area Dean share legal responsibility for a parish. It is normal for the ministry of any local Readers to continue during a vacancy under the supervision of, and with the support of, the Area Dean. The Warden of Readers is available to provide advice about Reader ministry to Area Deans or Churchwardens.

6.12 Retiring from Active Ministry

Readers may retire from active ministry at any time, by informing their incumbent and the Warden of Readers (as the Bishop's representative).

The title Reader Emeritus may be accorded to Readers of any age who wish to step away from a public ministry. It will signal both to the congregation and the wider diocese that the Reader has retired from a public ministry. It should be noted that they no longer have permission to exercise the ministry of a Reader.

The title of Reader Emeritus may be formally presented during the annual Celebration of Reader ministry service in the Cathedral or, if the Reader prefers it, locally in the parish/benefice.

6.13 Moving Home and Transferring of Reader Ministry

6.13.1. Moving home

As a courtesy the Warden of Readers should be informed of any change in personal circumstances or contact details at the earliest opportunity.

6.13.2 Transferring from another diocese

When an admitted Reader moves into the diocese they should inform their Warden prior to moving, and then contact the Warden of Readers for this diocese to introduce themselves. The Reader should also contact the incumbent of the parish where he or she intends to worship regularly. After the Reader has worshipped at the new parish for a sufficient period (usually six months), the incumbent should contact the Warden of Readers to request the person be licensed.

As part of the safer recruitment process the Warden will take up references, including from their former Warden of Readers. This is to check whether there is any reason why a new licence should not be given.

6.13.3 Transferring to another benefice in the diocese

If a Reader moves to a church outside of their home benefice, then they should inform the Warden as soon as possible for advice regarding the continued recognition of their ministry.

It is common practice for the incumbent of the benefice where the Reader now worships, to require a 'settling in' period before recognising their prior ministry. It should also be noted that the support of the incumbent and PCC will always be required for them to exercise a public ministry within the benefice.

6.13.4 Transferring to another diocese

It is good practice for Readers who are moving to a new area or diocese to contact the Warden concerned as soon as possible and to discuss where they might be usefully deployed. When planning to move away from the diocese, Readers should inform their incumbent and the Warden at the earliest opportunity.

6.14 How to Resign your Licence or Permission to Officiate

There are occasions when a Reader wishes to give up their licence or PTO, for example, when they move home. Readers wishing to surrender their licence or PTO are asked to write to the Warden of Readers, enclosing their licence or PTO for cancellation, and giving the reason for their surrender.

7. Diocesan Network of Readers

7.1 Warden of Readers

On behalf of the Bishop of Dover the Warden of Readers has oversight of all matters relating to Readers in the diocese including policy, practice, planning and pastoral care. The Warden administers a Facebook group for Readers and those in training: *Canterbury Diocesan Licensed Lay Ministries Group*.

7.2 Assistant Wardens

The Warden of Readers is supported by three Assistants one in each archdeaconry, their role is to support the Warden in promoting, encouraging and developing the ministry of Readers throughout the diocese. The Archdeaconry Assistant Wardens are:

Ashford	Lynne Watson	lynnewatson3@ntlworld.com
Canterbury	Judith Andrews	judith.andrewsllm@outlook.com
Maidstone	Sue Shaw	sueshaw152@btinternet.com

They are appointed by the Warden, a role description is available on request.

7.3 Deanery Reader Representatives

Deanery Reader Representatives (DRRs) are appointed by the Warden to assist in promoting, supporting and developing the ministry of Readers in each deanery. The Warden, Assistant Wardens and DRRs meet on a termly basis. A list of DRRs is available from the Warden and their contact details can be found in the Diocesan directory. A role description is available on request from the Warden.

7.4 Reader Vocations Advisers

The Warden of Readers is responsible for appointing Reader Vocations Advisers to assist in the discernment process. Advisers meet with potential Readers and their incumbent to help them reflect on:

- The call to licensed lay ministry.
- What licensed lay ministry might look like for the parish/ministry context.
- Answer questions.

The Adviser provides a brief report on the meeting to the Warden of Readers.

7.5 Diocesan Reader/LLM Tutor

The Warden of Readers is responsible for appointing one or more Readers to support the Readers in training. The Diocesan LLM Tutor acts as a link between the students, college, supervising ministers and the Warden, a role description is available on request.

7.6 Reader Ministry Resource Group

The Warden chairs a Resource Group which is both strategic and practical. The Group assists in planning various events and activities affecting Readers. The group consists of:

- The Warden of Readers (chair).
- the Assistant Wardens of Readers.
- the Diocesan LLM Tutor.
- the Reader Vocations Adviser/s.
- the Director of Mission and Ministry.
- others as invited by the Warden.

7.7 Wellbeing in Ministry and Days of Refreshment

Resources and advice for wellbeing in ministry are currently being developed.

Advice on accessing the Diocesan Counselling service for Readers can be sought from the Warden.

The Living Well is the Diocesan Centre for Healing and Wholeness. The centre offers a range of events including Days of Refreshment for Readers. Contact them for more information:

The Living Well, Vicarage Lane, Nonington CT15 4JT
website: www.the-living-well.org.uk
Tel: 01304 842847 Email: contact@the-living-well.org.uk

7.8 The Central Readers Council (CRC) - Transforming Ministry

The CRC represents Readers in the Church of England (and Wales); it is a registered charity, with an Executive committee and various sub-committees.

Reader merchandise is available for purchase from the CRC, details can be found on their website. They also produce *The Transforming Ministry* magazine, which is a quarterly publication. The diocese funds a copy for every Reader.

CRC administer the Adams/Myland Fund which is available to licensed Readers wishing to complete further theological study. Details are available from CRC or the Warden of Readers who is required to support an application for funding support.

In 2019 the renewed vision of the CRC identified three foci for the future ministry of Readers:

- teachers of the faith.
- enablers of mission in the everyday.
- leaders in church and community.

CRC are developing a range of blended learning resources in support of these foci; these modules will be freely available as part of a suite of continued ministerial development (CMD) resources for licensed lay ministers.

Central Readers Council (CRC) Office, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ
Tel: 020 7898 1401 www.transformingministry.co.uk

8. Resources: Books, Papers and Reports

The following may be of interest to anyone wishing to know more about Readers:

- T.G. King, *Readers: A Pioneer Ministry*, Myland Fund, Central Readers Board, 1973
- Robert Martineau, *The Office and Work of a Reader*, Mowbray, 1980
- Carolyn Headley, *Readers and Worship in the Church of England*, Grove Books, 2000
- Rhoda Hiscox, *Celebrating Reader Ministry: 125 years of Lay Ministry in the Church of England*, Weidenfeld, 1991
- G. Kuhrt, P. Nappin (eds), *Bridging the Gap: Reader ministry today*, Church House Publishing, 2002
- Cathy Rowling, Paula Gooder, *Reader Ministry Explored*, SPCK, 2009
- Charles Read, Philip Tovey, *Reader Ministry Today*, Grove Worship, 2010
- Philip Tovey, *Instruments of Christ's Love: The Ministry of Readers*, SCM Press, 2016
- Philip Tovey, *The Liturgical Ministry of Readers*, Grove Worship, 2017
- Liz Shercliff, *Exploring Missional Reader Ministry*, Grove Mission and Evangelism, 2018

It is recommended that *Reader Ministry Explored* is read as part of the process of exploring Reader ministry; loan copies are available from the Warden.

The following reports relate to the ministry of Readers:

- GS1689, *Reader Upbeat: quickening the tempo of Reader Ministry in the Church today*, Archbishops' Council, 2008
- Central Readers Council, *Resourcing Sunday to Saturday Faith: Readers, Lay Ministers and Everyday Faith; the renewed vision of the Central Readers' Council of the Church of England and the Church in Wales*, Central Readers Council, 2019¹⁵.
- The House of Bishops, *Bishops' Regulations for Reader Ministry*. Archbishops' Council, 2000.

¹⁵ <https://transformingministry.co.uk/publications-handbooks/#resourcing-sunday-to-saturday-faith>

Canon law relating to Reader ministry are E4, E5 and E6, the latest edition can be found at:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/canons-church-england>

The following reports and papers should be of interest to Readers:

GS 2056, *Setting God's People Free*, Archbishops' Council, 2017.

GS Misc 1224, *Ministry for a Christian presence in every community*, Archbishops' Council, 2019.

GS Misc 1265, *A Vision for Lay Ministries*, Archbishops' Council, 2020.

The following webpages may also be of interest:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/vision-and-strategy>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/everyday-faith-portal>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/deeper-god-mission-theology>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/community-action>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/rural-mission>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/thy-kingdom-come>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/policy-and-practice-guidance>

Appendix: The Canterbury Diet for Readers (Licensed Lay Ministers)

Newly admitted Readers attend new Readers Residential weekend or Induction Day for LLM/Readers who are new to the diocese with the Warden of Readers who introduces the LLM to the Canterbury Diet	Golden Threads How are prayer and spiritual practices being developed? How am I learning and reflecting on ministry practice? How are we attending to good relationships and collaborative ministry?
Prior to licensing: the Incumbent and LLM/Reader draw up a Ministry Agreement the Warden of Readers offers Spiritual Accompaniment	
During the first 1-2 years new LLM/Readers complete Post Licensing Learning consisting of action learning groups , the funeral ministry course (if appropriate) and further ministerial formation	
Participate in the annual Ministerial Review LLM/Reader completes an annual report, meets with their Incumbent to reflect on ministry/review ministry agreement Warden of Readers, Incumbent and LLM/Reader	
Participate in ministry-specific ministerial development as offered annually: Networking Day and local networking events Quiet Day and/or Refreshment Day for LLM/Readers	
Every 3 years complete the mandatory disclosure checks and refresher training related to Safeguarding	
Attend the Annual Celebration of Licensed Lay Ministry service incorporating the Admission and Licensing of new LLM/Readers, granting of Emeritus and re-commitment	
Participate in relevant Continuing Ministry Development (CMD) Events At advertised days and times	

Notes:

1. The word '**diet**' comes from the Greek *diata*, which means 'way of life.'
2. Throughout the **Canterbury Diet** three key questions (**Golden threads**) are attended to at every stage and are crucial for ministerial development through reflective practice:
 - a. How are prayer and spiritual practices being developed?
 - b. How am I learning and reflecting on ministry practice?
 - c. How are we attending to good relationships and collaborative ministry?
3. **Residential weekend**. This is normally held over the weekend of the Admissions and Licensing service at the Cathedral Lodge. LLM/Readers new to the diocese are invited to attend sessions as part of their induction but do not stay overnight. If need arises, a stand-alone Induction Day may be arranged for those LLM/Readers new to the diocese.

4. **Ministry Agreement.** Prior to licensing the Incumbent and LLM/Reader draw up a ministry agreement on completion of training and send a copy to the Warden of Readers (also see note 7 below).
5. **Spiritual Accompaniment/Direction.** The Diocese has a network of experienced Spiritual Accompaniers and Advisors. The point of contact is Revd Dr Susanne Carlsson susannecarlssons@hotmail.co.uk who oversees the network.
6. **Post Licensing Learning.** New LLM/Readers attend a facilitated action learning group and complete further learning and workshops as appropriate to their ministry context (this may include funeral training or anna chaplaincy).
7. **Ministerial Review.** The process is initiated by the Warden of Readers to be completed annually. It involves (1) a reflection on past ministry capturing some statistical data in a report for the Bishop; and (2) a review of the ministry agreement which is then revised to incorporate changes in ministry context and/or personal circumstances. (1) normally takes place via a survey at the end of the year, (2) takes place after Easter or at any point in the year if necessary.
8. **Networking Day.** A networking day is normally convened annually for all active LLMs as an opportunity for mutual learning and updates. Networking events in archdeaconries and deaneries may also be convened from time to time as a means of mutual encouragement and support.
9. **Quiet Days and Refreshment Days.** A Quiet day is normally convened annually for active LLM/Readers. The Living Well host several Refreshment Days for LLM/Readers through the year. LLM/Readers are also encouraged to take a retreat or alternative quiet day.
10. **National Safeguarding Framework.** LLMs will receive a reminder when their DBS check or training is due for renewal; this is a mandatory requirement of holding the Bishop's licence or permission to officiate.
11. **Annual Celebration of Reader Ministry service.** This is an opportunity to gather for worship in support of the new LLM/Readers for mutual refreshment and a renewal of commitment.
12. **Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD).** LLM/Readers are encouraged to attend CMD events which are relevant to their ministry context. The **Working with Conflict** course is open to LLM/Readers as well as clergy.

Nigel Collins, Lay Ministries Adviser (Warden of Readers)

March 2024