

Ministerial Development Review

Introductory Information

God has called each one of us to be disciples of Jesus Christ, and, as God's people, we seek prayerfully to fulfil that vocation and to bear fruit in the contexts where we live and work. In this Diocese we are seeking to Grow in God – in depth, number, influence and younger.

As we work together to make this vision a reality, the Ministerial Development Review (MDR) plays its part in enabling Clergy, Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers to deepen their understanding and develop the practice of the ministry to which God has called them. It is designed to nurture the personal flourishing and well-being of those in ministry and is one element of the Bishop's commitment and responsibility for the pastoral and professional care of those who hold his license. In preparation and in discussion with a Reviewer, ministers review what has been and look forward to what might lie ahead, celebrating and giving thanks for where they see God at work and seeking to discern His hand and direction where ministry appears less fruitful or the way ahead is less clear.

Who has an MDR?

MDRs are for all Clergy in the diocese licensed under Common Tenure, whether Stipendiary, Self-supporting or House for Duty, Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers. Clergy on Freehold are also invited to take part. There is an optional Review scheme for PtO clergy and chaplains.

Who Reviews?

Reviewers are lay and ordained people appointed by the Bishop for their wisdom and experience. They offer skills in listening, summarising and feeding back the information they receive, helping ministers to set realistic goals and deepen reflection on their ministry. They act, in effect, as a 'critical friend' to the minister. Reviewers receive training to develop their understanding and confidence in the MDR scheme, and meet annually with senior staff for ongoing support and review. They undertake this ministry in a voluntary capacity.

Ministers are sent the name of their Reviewer by the Bishop's Office, and usually see this Reviewer in Years One and Three of the scheme (see below). There is always the option of changing the Reviewer if there is good reason, for example if the Reviewer and minister know each other socially which might create a blurring of boundaries. Either the Reviewer or minister may request a different person by contacting the Bishops' Ministry Officer.

What is the Review Process?

It is a four-year cycle.

- Year One – The minister meets with an appointed Reviewer.
- Year Two – Clergy meet with an archdeacon. Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers meet with their Assistant Warden of Readers.
- Year Three – The minister meets with an appointed Reviewer.
- Year Four – Clergy meet with a bishop. Readers and Licensed Lay Ministers meet with a bishop or archdeacon.

How does the Process Work?

- The minister is sent the relevant forms and the name of their Reviewer by the Bishop's Office and is asked to make an appointment with the Reviewer.
- **Setting the Context Form (MDR/2/Context)** The minister completes a short 'setting the context' form which simply paints a broad picture of the minister's context. This is helpful for both the minister to reflect on any factual changes, and for the Reviewer to gain a basic understanding of what the minister does. Once completed, it will probably need little change in subsequent years.
- **Personal Reflection Form (MDR/3/Personal Reflection/Clergy or MDR/3/Personal Reflection/Readers)** The minister also completes a Personal Reflection Form which looks back over the previous year and forward to the next. The minister will gain most from this if a significant amount of time (perhaps up to two hours) is set aside to complete it. It is both an opportunity for the minister to stand back and prayerfully reflect, which is helpful in itself, and to form the basis for discussion at the review.
- **External Perspectives Form (MDR/4/External)** (Year One only.) The minister asks between *four* and *six* people amongst whom s/he works and ministers to give some feedback to provide the minister with a more rounded perspective on their ministry. S/he additionally fills the form in for themselves. Ministers are encouraged to choose people with a range of perspectives on their ministry rather than just those with whom they always agree. The forms are returned to the minister who forwards them to the Reviewer. The minister should aim to include:
 - someone with whom they share leadership in their parish/benefice/work context e.g. Clergy colleague, Reader, Church Warden;
 - someone from the regular congregation;
 - someone from the wider community e.g. school teacher, ecumenical partner and/or someone from another parish in the benefice
- The minister sends in their completed Context Form (MDR/2), previous MDR Summary (or summary of previous MDR goals), Personal Reflection Form (MDR/3), External Perspectives forms (MDR/4 - year One), Role Description or Working Agreement (years Two and Four) to the Reviewer (or the Archdeacons' PA or Bishops' Ministry Officer as directed) at least 10 days before the review.
- At the review, which usually lasts between 60-90 minutes, the Reviewer will encourage the minister to reflect further on what they and others have written and help the minister to set some specific goals for the coming year. The conversation is confidential to the Reviewer and minister. Goals should aim to be SMART, though we recognise that this will not always be possible:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Achievable
 - Realistic
 - Time-bound
- **Summary Form (MDR/5/Summary/Clergy or MDR/5/Summary/Readers)** After the review, the minister completes the relevant Summary form, which is agreed between the Reviewer and minister and sent to the Bishops' Ministry Officer. Receipt of Summaries will be acknowledged and concerns followed up where appropriate. The Summaries will be filed for Clergy in their personal blue file at the Bishop's Office and for Readers/LLMs at the Diocesan Office.
- The minister is encouraged to continue to reflect and act on the outcomes of the review and, if they wish, to contact a bishop or archdeacon for further discussion.
- Any feedback on the process from the minister is always welcome and can be sent to the Bishops' Ministry Officer, The Revd Jeanette Gosney, jeanette.gosney@cofesuffolk.org; 07710 479497.
- Please contact Mrs Terry Atkins for any admin queries, terry.atkins@cofesuffolk.org; 01473 252829.