

# Flourishing in Ordained Ministry

CLERGY AND THEIR HOUSEHOLDS

Guidance and support for the wellbeing of ordained  
ministers and their families and households





One of the five key priorities we have identified,  
to enable the fulfilment of our Diocesan Vision,  
is to ensure that clergy are well supported and newly energised

*“Beloved, I pray that all may go well  
with you and that you may be in good  
health, just as it is well with your soul.”*

3 JOHN 1:2 NRSV

*“Dear friend, I pray that you may  
enjoy good health and that all may  
go well with you, just as you are  
progressing spiritually.”*

3 JOHN 1:2 NIVUK

This booklet draws from similar booklets in other Dioceses and is intended to be a bit like a tree,  
gathering together the nutrients and component elements of the growth in wellbeing in one place.  
It will be available to clergy and their households in print and online.



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# Foreword

In the Bible, the Hebrew word ‘shalom’ is rich in its range of meanings. We usually translate it ‘peace’, but it can also mean prosperity and security. In some contexts, the primary sense is wholeness or welfare. So in Genesis 43.27, when Joseph is face to face with his brothers, including Benjamin, but is still unrecognised by them, he ‘enquired about their shalom, and said, ‘How is the shalom of your father?’. The best English translation is arguably, ‘wellbeing’.

The wellbeing of every person, created in the image and likeness of God, matters to God. The wellbeing of the clergy therefore matters acutely to us, as your pastors under God. We long to see you flourish in the ministry to which Christ has called you.

This booklet is a practical resource for all those exercising ordained ministry in the Diocese of Sheffield, and their households. It sits alongside and supplements the existing provision for the support and wellbeing of clergy, including Spiritual Accompaniment, Pastoral Supervision, Clergy Counselling, and the Leadership Coaching provided through Associate Archdeacons. Indeed it signposts you to these things, among others. We hope it will be a blessing to you and a deep well for your refreshment in God’s grace.

With every blessing

*Pete Sheffield*

*Sophie Duncanson*

Bishop Pete and Bishop Sophie





# Introduction

This booklet is born out of a desire for those who are ordained to flourish and grow, together with their households.

This booklet assumes that the vocation to ordained ministry is a high calling, offering huge potential for labour that is rewarding and fulfilling.

Yet we know that clergy and their households also face significant challenges, which can undermine wellbeing. Christian ministry, in all its forms, is demanding. Ordained ministry combines the challenges of a very public role with the burden of carrying matters of extreme sensitivity and confidentiality. The associated pressures are often also felt by a minister's partner, children and wider family, and friendship networks. A large part of the work is unseen by others, and it can be hard to regulate working hours and to know whether you are 'at work' or not.

The material in this booklet has been informed by a series of consultative conversations, in which we have sought to listen to clergy, seeking to understand what is most needed to support you to persevere

in the ministry to which the Lord has called you. Our aim has been to provide a resource which will empower you to be in control of your own mental health and spiritual wellbeing.

Nationwide, as well as within the Diocese of Sheffield, increasing attention has been paid to clergy wellbeing in recent years, as evidenced by the adoption at General Synod in 2020 of the Covenant for Clergy Wellbeing, endorsed by our own Diocesan Synod the following year; and by the introduction of a Pastoral Supervision scheme, in line with that Covenant, in 2019.

We believe this increased attention is assisting a very necessary culture change, and it is to support that change that this booklet has been produced. We hope it will support you in your own care for yourself, by giving you some of the resources needed and letting you know what is already available to you.

We will reference some of the written resources available to you, and give specific links to this material. There are some offers to help you discern and define your need

and we include information about different sources of help already available to you, and how to access them. The final section gives you information and contact details for other organisations.

If there is anything you expected to find here and it's missing, please let us know, or if you have tested something on offer here and have feedback, positive or negative, we would like to know. We welcome feedback at any time.

If you sense that you need help over and above what this booklet provides, please tell someone you trust as soon as possible, perhaps your Spiritual Accompanier/ Director, a friend or colleague, or contact Patricia Hunt, the Bishop's Advisor for Pastoral Care. Your archdeacons and bishops are also always available for conversations about your wellbeing. Please don't suffer in silence!

We hope that you find this booklet helpful and that, in some, perhaps small, way it enhances your wellbeing. However, the Wellbeing Steering Group recognises that change will not come about through this booklet alone. That will require a shared learning culture. To that end, we wish to inspire a full and ongoing conversation across our Diocese about the care and wellbeing of the clergy, which will lead to action across the board.

The members of the wellbeing steering group are:

- Venerable Javaid Iqbal, Archdeacon of Doncaster
- Rev Ian Smith, Rector (Oversight Minister designate) and Area Dean
- Rachel Edmonds, special educational needs practitioner, clergy spouse and supporter of Partners Together
- Patricia Hunt, Psychotherapist and Bishop's Advisor for Pastoral Care
- LJ Buxton, Director of Communications
- Ruth Dunlop, Director of HR



# 1

## THE WELLBEING OF THE CLERGY HOUSEHOLD



### Family Friendly Policies

The wellbeing of clergy households involves ensuring support is there through all the stages of life, including, for example, support in caring for elderly relatives or in welcoming the arrival of a child into the family. In November 2021 our Diocesan Synod adopted a set of Family Friendly Policies, which were introduced from January 2022. If you need to take advantage of the support these policies make available, you are encouraged to speak with clergy colleagues and your Archdeacon / Area Dean / Training Incumbent or DDO as soon as you become aware of your need.

See here for more information:  
[sheffield.anglican.org/health-wellbeing](https://sheffield.anglican.org/health-wellbeing)

### Clergy with family members in the home

The Covenant on Clergy Wellbeing invites us to 'commit together to promote the welfare of our clergy and their households'.

A whole variety of associated pressures fall on and are often keenly felt among partners, children and others, living alongside the unique calling to ordained ministry. Clergy make sacrifices, but so too, very often, do their households. It is therefore vital for clergy to reflect on roles, responsibilities, boundaries, pressures, priorities, hopes and dreams both on their own and with family members. All clergy have vocations above and beyond ordination: to be a faithful partner, parent, child or friend. These vocations require attention too!



## Exploring Wellbeing with members of your household

It is all too easy for clergy to find that we have been busily surviving and have inadvertently taken our closest family for granted at times. We can also make assumptions about, and decisions for, our families, perhaps without due care and respect for their need to have a voice and be heard.

Seeking to listen attentively to those in our household deepens the bonds of our love.

If you are in ordained ministry with a partner at home, have you asked them what it's like for them at this stage of your ministry? We encourage you to work together to acknowledge each other's needs and wellbeing.

If you are in ordained ministry with children at home, you might find it helpful to use the questions in Appendix 4 as a starting point for some relaxed and honest reflection. Just asking and listening can be extremely helpful, and potentially eye-opening.

## Singleness in Ordained Ministry

Some people in ordained ministry are called to a single life or find themselves single. We affirm the distinctive ministry you have within the whole community and encourage you to consider how others can support your wellbeing in your ministry. The varied and rich opportunities open to you will require you to show initiative and some will not recognise that you need boundaries on personal time and space as much as any colleague.

Whatever the size of your household, for many, work and home space are often shared and this can bring challenges.

## Self-Supporting Ministry

For some, ordained ministry is offered alongside other roles, and work and family commitments. We recognise that making time for all the different parts of life can involve care, sensitivity and an ability to juggle.

Self-supporting ministers working in their own community, in addition to another working life, and from their family home, bring their own valuable contribution.

We are very mindful of the importance of self-supporting ministers (SSMs) – we value the commitment you make – acknowledging the challenges of finding balance between other responsibilities and the employed world and self-supporting ministry.

## Ministry in Chaplaincy

Chaplains and those who exercise their vocation in healthcare contexts, university, schools, prisons and other institutions, sometimes undertaking on-call hours and shifts, have a different set of pressures.

Combining ordained ministry in a role outside the church can bring fulfilment. Although organising time requires great skill, at its best Chaplaincy creates an opportunity to use your gifts to be fruitful in a way which brings great joy.

The challenges facing chaplains, and all those called to exercise their ministry in other settings, are not fully explored here, but many of the resources listed will be relevant for all.

Ministers working in chaplaincies or workplace contexts, especially where they are combined with authorised parish ministry, should ensure they have working agreements with both their employer and incumbent that define sustainable arrangements and expectations in each role.





## 2 RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ORDAINED MINISTRY

### a. Pastoral Supervision

The Pastoral Supervision Scheme in the Diocese of Sheffield is now well developed, with a good proportion of the clergy in the Diocese receiving regular and sustained Pastoral Supervision funded through the Diocesan Transformation Project and through the Sheffield Church Burgesses. The groups have continued through Zoom during the pandemic, and we have discovered that this works well and has given vital support to clergy at this most challenging of times.

Pastoral Supervision is a great gift to our Diocese and we assume that over time every incumbent will be in Pastoral Supervision to enable them to reflect on their ongoing ministry.

"My last Pastoral Supervision session left me buzzing. I managed to put into words a number of issues before me, and simply saying them among trusted colleagues was such a help. It would go no further, but they would pray. Some were facing similar issues - so I wasn't alone. One had a word that was very affirming. Another gave a new perspective for me to ponder. Through the

year we care and share in confidence with one another, and our Pastoral Supervisor keeps us on track, notes connections, and asks us 'what next?' I will be buzzing throughout the coming week."

*Member of Pastoral Supervision Group,  
Pastoral Supervision Scheme, May 2021*

"Pastoral Supervision provides me with a regular opportunity to discuss ministry-related challenges and share burdens with others, and this helps to reduce exhaustion, stress and isolation. I really value these regular interventions which seem to increase my resilience and enable ministry."

*Member of Pastoral Supervision Group,  
Pastoral Supervision Scheme, November 2020*

If you are not yet in a group for Pastoral Supervision and would like to be, please contact your Archdeacon or the Bishop's Adviser for Pastoral Care:  
[patricia.hunt@sheffield.anglican.org](mailto:patricia.hunt@sheffield.anglican.org)



## b. Spiritual Accompaniment

Spiritual Accompaniment is available to clergy and their households within the Diocese. A list of Spiritual Accompaniers on the Bishop's List is held by the Diocese.

For more information please contact  
Rev Karen Colley on  
[karen.colley@sheffield.anglican.org](mailto:karen.colley@sheffield.anglican.org)

## c. Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service

Confidential counselling 1:1 for clergy or for clergy couples is available and has been recommended by many people who have used these services.

contact direct through  
[cmincs.net](http://cmincs.net)

our current area co-ordinator is  
Jane Knights  
please phone and leave a message  
(not text) 07867 009 183

## d. Resources on the Diocese of Sheffield website

A place for learning – lots of online resources available, especially for those considering and exercising lay ministry, and provides links to many more:

[sheffield.anglican.org/stpeters](http://sheffield.anglican.org/stpeters)

## e. Alleviating Financial need

A calling to ordained ministry involves significant lifestyle choices, but we believe no family should be financially impoverished because of their choice to serve in this way. We recognise that a change in financial circumstances may create an impact on wellbeing. This is a very personal measure and individuals who need financial help can contact a number of grant-making bodies for support. If you, as a member of clergy or a clergy spouse, needs financial help, you can speak with your Archdeacon or one of the Bishops within the Diocese, who will be able to direct you to possible sources of help.

If you don't wish to mention your need in the diocese, you may choose to contact CST (Clergy Support Trust) who can help in lots of different areas, from topping up loans, debt restructuring arranged through partner organisation CMCU (Churches Mutual Credit Union) to emergency grants, travel grants, health and wellbeing grants etc.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

In March 2022 Liz Graveling, author of 'How Clergy Thrive' addressed Leading Well on the subject of Clergy Wellbeing.

Liz said, "Above all, Wellbeing is about Kindness. Being kind to others as well as to self. It's about discipline and challenge as well as rest and recreation, but most of all it's about kindness."

We want to create structures that support wellbeing, reflecting the way God works in the hearts of his people, which enable you to thrive as you focus on the ordained ministry God has given to you. We recognise that many of our clergy are already working in this way some of the time.

Oversight Ministers will care for the wellbeing of their people as they nurture and develop their gifts and we as a Diocese want to care for our Oversight Ministers and create conditions to help people thrive here. Please use the parts of this booklet which are helpful to you and ask us if something is needed that seems to be missing.

*The Venerable Javaid Iqbal, Diocesan Lead for Wellbeing*

*Ruth Dunlop, Director of HR for Diocese of Sheffield and Sheffield Cathedral*





# 3 FLOURISHING IN MINISTRY



## Good practice

All clergy are encouraged to take seriously the admonition in Acts 20.28 – to keep watch over themselves as well as the flock they oversee, and to take a responsible approach towards their own health and wellbeing.

The Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy are clear: “All should guard themselves and their family against becoming victims of harmful levels of stress.”

[churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/guidelines-professional-conduct-clergy/guidelines-professional-conduct](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/guidelines-professional-conduct-clergy/guidelines-professional-conduct)

Of course, this is often easier said than done. It is also clear that caring for ourselves as ministers is an ongoing process. We encourage you who are ordained ministers to care for your wellbeing by:

- developing a healthy and sustainable rhythm of prayer, work and rest;
- acknowledging the needs and legitimate claims of your families and friends;
- reflecting on what will sustain you in your life and various roles, seeking out and making space to use appropriate resources;
- ensuring that God is honoured in the way you live your life; and
- remaining alert to the continuing invitation of God to explore your vocation.

The Bishop's Senior Staff Team is committed to modelling healthy rhythms of work and leisure. They also want to support and encourage all ministers in their self-care through Diocesan structures and resources by:

- challenging the culture of expectation of limitless availability and overwork – wherever it is encountered; and
- providing training, support, development opportunities and other resources for ministers in accessible and timely ways.

Parishes and deaneries are encouraged to support their ministers by:

- supporting, upholding and praying for them;
- understanding the dimensions of the role and the demands it places on lay and ordained ministers and their families; and
- understanding ministry as a vocation, and developing and supporting realistic expectations about workload and availability.

Please use these tools to consider and record your needs and what you want to enable you to flourish at this point in your life.

Take a moment to reflect and pray using the checklist above. What are the areas you need to pay more attention to? Who supports you already, and who could you turn to?



Spiritual Director

Counsellor

Pastoral Supervisor

Close friend

A trusted peer

Cell group contact

Pastoral supervisor

Prayer partner

Confessor

Work consultant

Leadership Coach

Mentor

Did you know that the 2002 report Affirmation and Accountability, published by the Society of Mary and Martha, suggested an upper limit of 50 hours and a lower limit of 38 hours a week for full-time clergy?

Of course, there is often no such thing as a normal week, but it is a good idea to keep an eye on how your hours average out over a week or a month.

Have you ever kept a note of the hours you work? Others have found this helpful, so if this is something you have never done we recommend that you try – maybe for a fortnight to begin with.



## Times of Rest

Depending on the formalities of a minister’s appointment, provision for regular rest and annual leave may feature in a variety of documents. Regardless of how a ministry is exercised or documented, such provision should be clearly stated and appropriate to the particular circumstances.

As far as possible, you should have a clearly agreed personal Statement of Particulars (SoP), also known as a Working Agreement, which specifies arrangements for rest periods and annual leave.

What provisions are in place for you, and are you making the most use of them?

Good practice is:

- taking at least one full day (and ideally the previous evening) of rest from ministry on a regular day each week;
- an expectation to work an average of no more than 50 hours each week;
- taking an annual retreat;
- taking the full annual leave entitlement, including 4-6 Sundays.
- taking a double rest day in a calendar month when no annual leave is taken.
- Look at the best practice points above and reflect on the past year. Which items didn't make it on to your own list? How will you ensure this year is different?

## Are changes needed?

All aspects of wellbeing are interlinked but looking at them separately can help us to focus on what might need change or adjustment.

On each of the pages that follow you will find practical ideas and suggestions, along with some questions to aid personal reflection and sources of further help and support.



## Thriving in personal relationships

Each of us needs to develop a pattern for maintaining life-enhancing, supportive relationships that works for us. Some of us are single and may have a particular need to keep in touch with friends who may live at a distance. Others may have partners who themselves have a busy working life. Some have children at different stages of life, who need different degrees of attention and support, or elderly relatives who need care. Regardless of personal situation, any of us may at one time or another struggle in our relationships.

We probably all know the feeling that we don't see enough of old friends, and if we rarely have more than one consecutive day off, it is hard to get away to do this. And we all know that relationships, whether with family or friends, can diminish or die if they are not fed with attention, presence, communication, and time.

The bishops warmly encourage stipendiary clergy to take a double-rest day in any month which includes no annual leave, so that you can go away overnight, or just to stay at home and have a slightly longer time off duty.

Here are some things other ministers do to help them develop and maintain their relationships:

- take time (including occasional weekends) away from the benefice to visit family/friends living in different parts of the country
- always take a regular rest day
- be present to those you spend time with – let the phone go to voicemail
- if you have a partner, schedule a weekly date night or day out
- spend quality time with someone you care about
- look out for destructive behaviours that can form when we're stressed.

## Ministerial flourishing

Health in ministry is sustained by a healthy prayer life. This is foundational to everything else we do. Being daily, hourly, 'in Christ' is what connects us with our calling, gives us a sense of purpose, and keeps us going when things are tough. We all need to know that we are loved by God, that we are "OK", and it is important that our sense of wellbeing does not depend on the approval or affirmation of others.

Burnout often comes not from doing too much but from doing too much that is not meaningful to us. In reality, most of us have to spend some of our time doing things which we find draining or frustrating, but if we spend most of our time in this way, we become exhausted. Making sure that we do enough of what we find life-giving is important in sustaining healthy ministry. Each of us needs to develop a pattern for ministry that works for us.

Here are some things other clergy do to care for their ministerial health and development:

- Take regular and sufficient time for study and Ongoing Ministerial Development (OMD)
- Have access to a reasonable level of competent and regular administrative assistance (paid or voluntary) in the benefice
- Set clear boundaries
- Say 'No' more often
- Learn new things
- Talk to supportive colleagues
- Be clear about time off
- Make opportunities for your ministry to be creative
- Meet regularly with a trusted person or mentor who will be honest with you
- Take a quiet day once a month and spend it somewhere out of the parish.





Making a Plan

Write down what you would like to get done in the short, medium and long term, and make sure that the urgent doesn't always displace the important. Stephen Covey's book, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" covers this issue in a helpful way. Other useful books include "Getting Things Done" by David Allen and "Do It Tomorrow" by Mark Forster.

We recognise that the key feature of Oversight Ministry is about "developing other people". What will help you to shift the balance towards developing and nurturing others?

Questions to think about:

Here are some questions which might help as you review your ministry:

Do you have a spiritual director and are your meetings fruitful and helpful? If not, what could you do to improve the situation?

When and where was your last retreat? How long was it?

Do you have a supportive, trusted and appropriate network of people to confide in? Do you know about what Pastoral Supervision offers?

Do you attend Deanery Chapter regularly? Is it supportive and helpful? If not, what could you do to help it become more supportive?

Is your pattern of prayer sustaining you? If not, what do you need to change?



How much time do you allocate each week for reading, study and self-development?

Do you have effective administrative support (paid or voluntary)?

How effective is your time management?

Are you clear about when you are on-duty and off-duty?

If you work in a team, do you meet regularly for prayer and mutual support?



# Physical and mental wellbeing

We know that physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health are closely linked. Our ability to be resilient in any kind of work context will depend on eating well, exercising regularly, and getting enough sleep. It is surprising how hard this can be to do.

Here are some things which other ministers have found helpful:

- Spending time in a place you can relax, such as the garden
- Eating well and taking proper meal breaks every day
- Practising mindfulness or contemplative prayer
- Taking regular non-work time
- Turning your phone off!
- Getting enough regular sleep
- Going for a walk and getting fresh air every day
- Spending time each week on hobbies
- Watching your food and alcohol intake
- Monitoring how much of your day you spend in front of the computer, your posture while doing computer work, and taking regular screen breaks
- Talking to a trusted person.

What would you add to the list?

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# Financial and material wellbeing

Individual financial and material circumstances vary hugely, but it's an area which has a significant impact on clergy wellbeing. Some receive a stipend while others offer ministry for no remuneration. Many live in tied accommodation. Some do, and some do not, have a house to retire to.

Other factors which come into play include:

- whether or not you have a partner with their own income;
  - the ages and needs of dependent children;
  - the ages and needs of elderly parents or other family members;
  - whether you will rely on a clergy pension in retirement, or can also rely on workplace pensions; and
  - whether you have savings, or any additional income.
- Other ministers have noted how important it is to
- claim full working expenses from the benefice
  - claim diocesan training grants
  - ask for help if you feel a problem with accommodation is affecting your health
  - know there is help available if you feel your family cannot afford a holiday
  - know how and when to access financial advice and get help with tax returns.





# 4 IN SUMMARY

## Some further questions to think about

We recommend that you look at the questions below only when you are feeling robust.

If you are experiencing difficulties at present, is there someone who could walk with you through your struggles?

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If you are experiencing struggles at the moment, and you still want to reflect on these questions, who could support you to do that, perhaps looking at just two or three questions at a time?

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Take a moment to answer honestly a couple of these questions that you want to reflect on, then make a diary note to speak with your Area Dean or Archdeacon, or return to this page in a month or two to see what has improved.

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Who in your support network (page 18) could help you to achieve any changes that are needed?

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When and how often are you able to completely shut off from work? What are the things that nurture and sustain you at these times?

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How do you feel about your ministry? Is this as you want it to be?

Are relationships with those you minister to and with your colleagues in ministry appropriate, constructive and supportive?

Do you have a long-term physical or mental health concern that affects your quality of life? What adjustments could be made to help you?

How well do you sleep, and is it enough?

Do you eat regular and healthy meals (and take time to do it), drink alcohol in moderation and take regular exercise? If not, what would help you to start?

Is your housing adequate for your (and your family's) needs?

Is your accommodation a source of stress? Are there any simple adjustments you could make?



If you live in church housing, which parts of your home remain private and are never used for ministry? Do you need to establish some boundaries?

If you live in church housing, have you started to make provision for your retirement?

Is your income adequate for you to maintain an acceptable quality of life?

Are your expenses for ministry fully reimbursed?

How is your training and retreat provision funded?

How confident do you feel in managing your household budget?

Have you got sufficient financial cover for critical illness or unexpected life events?

When did you last turn off your mobile phone for at least 24 hours?



What is your pattern for spending time with those you are close to?

Especially if you live alone, how often do you set aside enough time to visit family and friends?

Do you communicate with those you love about the things that really matter?

Your wellbeing is so important to your ministry

Is there someone you need to contact now?



# And finally ...

Church is about people, in all their wonderful variety. And there will always be times in ordained ministry when relationships are strained, when behaviours are difficult or challenging, when it seems that PCC members are at war with each other or with their clergy, when there is conflict in teams for any number of reasons. In ordained ministry we also, from time to time, have very difficult issues to deal with. Caring for ourselves when these things happen is very important. Skilled, knowledgeable outside support can also be vital.

To prevent Bullying in Churches, positive action is sometimes required. Information is available in a helpful Grove Booklet: [grovebooks.co.uk/products/p-145-challenging-bullying-in-churches?\\_pos=1&\\_sid=3e0354186&\\_ss=r](https://grovebooks.co.uk/products/p-145-challenging-bullying-in-churches?_pos=1&_sid=3e0354186&_ss=r)

The Diocesan Dignity at Work policy is relevant if further action is needed.

If you are in a situation where you feel you are being harassed or bullied, please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or the Director of HR.

[safeguarding@sheffield.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@sheffield.anglican.org)

[hradvice@sheffield.anglican.org](mailto:hradvice@sheffield.anglican.org)

Pages 38-42 of this booklet contain useful sources of support, but they can't possibly cover every eventuality. The key thing is to talk with someone you trust and not bottle it up.

We hope you have found this booklet useful. Further resources, including a Q&A section which ministers can contribute to are available at [sheffield.anglican.org](https://sheffield.anglican.org).

## Acknowledgement

Flourishing in Ministry was inspired by a similar document published in 2018 by Oxford Diocese and subsequently adapted by Worcester and St Albans Dioceses. The support of those responsible for its production is gratefully acknowledged.



# The need for resources to enable our wellbeing

One of the reasons this booklet has been produced is in response to some of the feedback we have already received.

These are some of the thoughts and feelings you may sometimes have:

- Sometimes I feel very isolated and unsupported; sometimes I feel “lonely”.
- I have serious concerns that extra demands are being placed on me and I am worried I might become de-motivated and burn out.
- I know it’s important to hold boundaries but I find it hard to hold time boundaries, work boundaries, and establish meaningful boundaries in friendships with parishioners/those amongst whom I live and work.
- I seem to put myself last far too much of the time. Because I care, it is sometimes a necessity to be able to do this, but when it is my normal practice it becomes unhealthy and feels both physically and mentally undermining.
- Too many meetings I feel compelled to attend even though I don’t really have to be there. I wonder if I am being bullied into doing what certain strong characters want.
- Having time for thinking, for study and for reflection are important components of my ministry and wellbeing but are being squeezed out by the pressure, intensity and demands of ‘doing’.
- I don’t feel I can be fully myself because of the expectations people around me have of my role and the projections put onto me.
- I am anxious about how I’m going to pay the bills next month.
- I need the psychological safety to be comfortable with my identity and be open about who I really am.
- I feel ashamed that I am feeling the way I do and think that I should be managing better.
- I have had this sense of failure that we have not had any numerical growth in our church attendance. I have internalised this and feel bad about myself and think that I am letting God down.
- My Spiritual Accompanier is very helpful, but I am relying on them for general support because my family feel I am neglecting them.



# The Covenant for Clergy Wellbeing

In February 2020 the General Synod of the Church of England adopted the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing, formally affirming and proclaiming the Covenant as an Act of Synod.

At its heart the covenant for clergy wellbeing invites us to look again at how well we care for ourselves in honour of God’s calling to each of us.

Those who worked nationally to develop the covenant say: ‘We are seeking cultural change and a new level of honesty in the Church about the impact of our practices on personal and corporate wellbeing. We have considered the realities of clergy life, for clergy themselves and their households, and reflected deeply on the ways in which clergy wellbeing is bound up with the flourishing of the whole people of God’.

The Covenant recognises that: ‘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 Holy Scripture and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in every generation. In its historic formularies, the Church of England recognises the call of God to serve as deacons, priests and bishops to build up and equip the whole People of God.

‘Conscious that such a calling is both a privilege and a demand, we as the Church

of England commit together to promote the welfare of our clergy and their households in terms expressed in the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing.

‘We undertake to work together to seek to coordinate and improve our approach to clergy care and wellbeing so that ordained ministers flourish in their service of the mission of God within and beyond the Church’.

The care and wellbeing of the clergy is crucial to the health of the Church at worship, in mission, and in pastoral care. Healthy, fulfilled, maturing, joyful clergy who feel valued and supported are an enormous gift to the Church of God. A sense of being cared for and loved will give energy and vigour when they face ministerial or pastoral challenges.

The fourth section of the Covenant (paras 27-32) seeks ‘to initiate a Big Conversation on Clergy Care and Wellbeing arising from Our Shared Commitments, with a series of questions under each heading, inviting reflection and conversation on the issues they raise, to be considered in dialogue and discussion’.

The full text of the Covenant can be found at:

[churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/supporting-clergy-health-and-wellbeing/covenant](https://churchofengland.org/resources/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/supporting-clergy-health-and-wellbeing/covenant)





# Pros and Cons

We asked some children in clergy families to explain what the pros and cons of life with a clergy parent are and they answered:

## Pros:

- The community aspect is positive
- Quicker maturity and development of social skills
- Opportunity for further insight into theological and ethical issues
- Other opportunities that church offers like extracurricular, volunteering and trips
- The area we live in and the house itself, as well as garden space is nice and comfortable to live in
- It is private with no real spaces where people can see in
- Being a vicar's son I feel that there are many people in the congregation I could trust or depend on if I needed to
- Lots of people ask how I am doing which is nice
- Always feel supported by a big family and plenty of people to provide help and support

## Cons:

- Moving around with no control of location or timeline can create a displacement and make it difficult to settle
- The responsibility of being a good representative of the Clergy household and the parish
- Built-up resentment

- Difficulty connecting with faith because of resentment and the feeling of a lack of choice
- The difficulty of having to distinguish when to treat your parent as a priest and when they can actually be your parent
- The stress and strain a household can go under with the backlash of clerical responsibility
- Communication issues in a faith centred household
- The difference between a Christian-focused home life and living in an increasingly secular society
- Teasing at school
- Feeling very different to peers
- Everyone who knows me know where I live and that's led to being egged and having unwanted guests turn up
- I was tormented, being called a 'bible basher' all my childhood
- Everyone in the village knows who I am so I wasn't free to enjoy myself without everyone knowing
- I had rumours spread about me by a past member of the congregation
- The garden is sometimes busy due to the use of the drive as a place for cars to be parked.



# Possible questions to explore with members of a clergy household

These questions are based on feedback from children of several clergy households in the Diocese and we thank them for their openness in sharing their experiences.

How do you feel about your church community?

Do you enjoy the social aspects? Do you enjoy the worship?

Are there any opportunities that have been open to you as a result of your involvement with church or as a member of a clergy household?

How do you find it being known in connection to, or as a result of, your parent's role?

How do you feel about your home and its surroundings? Are there any pros/cons?

What has been the impact on you of any major change or transition (to school, friends, settling-in period)?



Have you felt any sense of pressure of expectation or responsibility to conform from anyone, and how have you been able to deal with this?

What's your experience of the differences between a Christian household and the more secular world beyond?

What helps you feel you belong?

What brings you joy?

What brings you peace and security?

How regularly do you contribute at home to conversations about choices to do with things like church activities and holidays?

If you struggle with anything, or feel worried, who can you talk to?

What are you hoping for, and looking forward to, in the future? (Think about home, school, church, rest times and fun, as well as those big life choices)



## “Pause for thought... from one very personal perspective

“Being a vicar’s child means you are simultaneously seen and unseen. On the one hand everyone at church will know who you are. As we moved around a lot, this made it easy to integrate into a new church community as the ice was already broken. On the other hand, many people never saw past the fact that I was the vicar’s child. There was an expectation that I would get involved, I was often asked to fill in empty slots in rotas because it was assumed I would be at church and willing to help. However much I wanted to, it felt like my choice was taken away and that made it difficult to stay motivated.

Being a Christian can become routine for a vicar’s child; the danger is that it becomes a lifestyle and not faith. As I got older, this is something I had to recognise in my own life. When I left home and chose my own church for the first time, this became even more apparent and is a journey I am still on.

A Vicar’s work is never done and the job cannot be neatly compartmentalised in a 9-5 box. This meant my clergy parent would often be out in the evenings and busy on Sundays. When other parents were taking

time off for Easter and Christmas, my clergy parent was getting ready for their busier work period. However, the somewhat flexible nature of their calendar meant that my clergy parent was available to drive me to school or extracurricular activities. They were around to attend parents’ evenings and make dinner – a lot more than some other jobs allow.

Overall life as a vicar’s child was not too different. I had to get used to having a lot of people in the house and my friends not understanding a lot of things I did. Despite feeling I had little choice in getting involved, all those activities put me in situations which allowed me to mature and develop faster than my peers. I learnt to deal with a variety of different people from all ages and backgrounds. All those experiences, both positive and negative, have shaped me to become who I am today and (with a little hindsight) those are not experiences I would want to change.”



# Sources of Support

## 1. Physical and mental wellbeing

WHAT SUPPORT?	WHO IS IT FOR?	CONTACT
Individual medical consultations	All ordained clergy	St Luke's Healthcare for Clergy stlukeshealthcare.org.uk To self-refer: 020 7898 1700 enquiries@stlukesforclergy.org.uk
Health check-up	Anyone aged 40-74	healthcheck.nhs.uk
Pastoral support	All clergy and their families	Your Bishop, Archdeacon, Area Dean, Deanery Lay Chair, Deanery Chapter or your line manager (mainly for ministers employed in a parish or the diocesan office)
Retreat centre specialising in wellbeing in ministry	All clergy and their families	Sheldon Retreat Centre sheldon.uk.com 01647 252752 or smm@sheldon.uk.com
Confidential online forum for clergy	All clergy	The Sheldon Hub sheldonthub.org
Other retreat centres	All clergy and their families	The Retreat Association retreats.org.uk/findaretreat
Mindfulness and Mental health first aid training	All clergy	Check the diocesan website for upcoming learning resources and events
Counselling	All clergy and their partners	Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service cmincs.net Jane Knights 07867 009183 (please phone not text)



## 2. Financial and material wellbeing

WHAT SUPPORT?	WHO IS IT FOR?	CONTACT
CMD grants	All clergy	
CST (Clergy Support Trust)	All clergy	clergysupport.org.uk/wellbeing-grants
Trust Fund grants	All clergy	Sheffield Diocese website...
Housing maintenance	Stipendiary and House for Duty clergy	Diocese Estates Department Michael.Lindley@sheffield.anglican.org
Housing (concerns about security, suitability etc)	Stipendiary and House for Duty clergy	Your Archdeacon
Pensions advice and forecasts Retirement housing advice	All stipendiary clergy	The Church of England Pensions Board churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/church-england-pensions-board
Debt management and money advice	Everyone	Christians Against Poverty capuk.org  Money Advisory Service Moneyadviceservice.org.uk
Advice on rights and responsibilities	Everyone	Citizens Advice citizensadvice.org.uk /

### Ecclesiastical Ministry Bursary Awards (MBAs)

For more information including eligibility criteria and to download an application form please visit [ecclesiastical.com/mba](http://ecclesiastical.com/mba)

The Ministry Bursary Awards have been running for more than 30 years and are open to all members of the clergy from Anglican Christian faiths. The awards will provide financial support for sabbatical breaks and projects planned. (Applications are to be made a year or more in advance)

### The Hollowford Trust

This fund aims to assist young people aged between 10 and 25 years who are resident in, or near, the Diocese of Sheffield, to develop their physical, mental and spiritual capabilities, so that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society and so that their conditions of life may be improved. Individuals can receive up to £300 and groups up to £400.





3. Thriving in personal relationships

WHAT SUPPORT?	WHO IS IT FOR?	CONTACT
Marriage enrichment	All clergy and their spouses	Marriage Encounter wwme.org.uk
Marriage preparation	All clergy and their fiancé/fiancée	Engaged Encounter engagedencounter.org.uk
Relationship counselling	Everyone	relate.org.uk (see also CMINSP for couples counselling)
Inclusion and sexuality	All clergy	OneBodyOneFaith onebodyonefaith.org.uk  Living Out livingout.org  Inclusive Church inclusive- church.org.uk  Ozanne Foundation ozanne.foundation
Compassionate or special leave for personal crises (e.g. moving a dependent relative into care)	All clergy	Your Bishop or your line manager (mainly for ministers employed in a parish or the diocesan office)

Partners Together

A group for partners of clergy to join and to seek the support, advice and help you need from others who have a sense of your particular multiple roles. For more information see the Diocesan website. Please contact the secretary, Cathy Rhodes at cathyrhodes3@gmail.com

Grove Booklet by Matthew Caminer: grovebooks.co.uk/products/p-158-living-as-a-clergy-spouse-how-to-align-the-daily-reality-with-your-personal-identity It gets you thinking about the interlinked spectrum of your own identity, activity and vocation and encourages plenty of reflecting and talking openly.



4. Flourishing in role

WHAT SUPPORT?	WHO IS IT FOR?	CONTACT
Ongoing Ministerial Development (OMD) programme	All clergy	Ongoing Ministerial Development st peter's college
Coaching	All clergy	Coaching for Developing your Ministry Diocesan HR Director Ruth.dunlop@sheffield.anglican.org
Coaching with Associate Archdeacon Transition Enablers (AATE)	All oversight Ministers	clive.hogger@sheffield.anglican.org stephen.edmonds@sheffield.anglican.org julie.upton@sheffield.anglican.org julie.bacon@sheffield.anglican.org ian.parkinson@sheffield.anglican.org chris.stebbing@sheffield.anglican.org Director of Vocations: dan.christian@sheffield.anglican.org Director of Focal Ministry: sally.myers@sheffield.anglican.org
Clarity of expectation in working agreements	All clergy	Your Archdeacon Doncaster: Javaid.Iqbal@sheffield.anglican.org Sheffield and Rotherham: malcolm.chamberlain@sheffield.anglican.org
Extended Study Leave	All stipendiary clergy	bill.goodman@ sheffield.anglican.org
Spiritual accompaniment	All clergy	Karen.colley@sheffield.anglican.org
Racial Equality	All clergy	Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) Revd Anesia Cook: churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/our-views/race-and-ethnicity
Supporting diversity	All clergy	AMEN (Anglican Minority Ethnic Network) amenanglican.org.uk
Support about sexuality concerns	All clergy and their families	OneBodyOneFaith: onebodyonefaith.org.uk LivingOut :livingout.org/ Inclusive Church: inclusive-church.org.uk
Ministry to and among deaf and disabled people	All clergy	churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/welcoming-disabled-people Denise Teal: niseteal@gmail.com
Women's Ministry	All female clergy	Dean of Women's Ministry Revd Amanda Barraclough amanda.barraclough@sheffield.anglican.org

5. Flourishing in every context

Self-Supporting Ministers (SSMs)	Contact details for Self-Supporting Ministry Officers can be found at: Director of vocations focal ministry – Director of Focal Ministry.	
Chaplains	Archdeacon of Doncaster Tel: (01709) 309110   Mob: 07469 850723 Javaid.iqbal@sheffield.anglican.org Workplace Chaplaincy mission For information about chaplaincy networks, see the diocesan website	
Curates-in-Training	Officer for Initial Ministerial Education Phase 2 or ime2@sheffield.anglican.org	
Youth & children's work	Centenary Project (Mike North@centenary.project.co.uk) Resources to support your family and enable you to be energised	



6. When things don't go well

WHAT SUPPORT?	WHO IS IT FOR?	CONTACT
Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults	All clergy	Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser Tel: 01727 818107 safeguarding@sheffield.anglican.org
Diocesan Registry A legal question relating to your ministry	All clergy	Go through your Archdeacon (please contact the Diocesan Registrar via Archdeacon if you need personal legal support)
Trade Union Unite – faith section	All clergy	unitetheunion.org/what-we-do/unite-in-your-sector/community-youth-workers-and-not-for-profit/faith-organisations/
Media and communications support	All clergy	Diocese Communications Team sheffield.anglican.org/communications-media
Legal support	All clergy	Diocesan Registry
Conflict resolution, mediated conversations, facilitated meetings	All clergy (handbook depending on the person involved)	Dispute Advice from your Archdeacon or Bishop
Bullying and harassment (Dignity at work policy)	All clergy	Your Bishop, Archdeacon or Clergy Counselling Service
In a crisis	Everyone	Samaritans 116123 free to call. Day and night 365 days a year. sheffield@samaritans.org or telephone on: (0114) 2767277
Concerns about spiritual abuse	All clergy	Archdeacon of Sheffield and Rotherham or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser Tel: (01709) 309100 safeguarding@sheffield.anglican.org
Pastoral support	All clergy and their families	Your Bishop, Archdeacon, Rural or Area Dean, Deanery Lay Chair or Deanery Chapter or your line manager (mainly for ministers employed in a parish or the diocesan office)
Relationship counselling	Everyone	Relate: relate.org.uk
Clergy marriage and relationship breakdown	Partners of clergy following relationship breakdown or divorce	Clergy Counselling Service Including couples counselling cmincs.net 07867 009183 Bishop's Visitors See Diocesan website Broken Rites brokenrites.org
Concerns about addictive behaviour	All clergy and their families	Clergy Counselling Service Mind mind.org.uk (Search for 'addiction')
Concerns about alcohol abuse	All clergy	Alcoholics Anonymous alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
Concerns about gambling	All clergy	Gamblers Anonymous gamblersanonymous.org.uk





## We want to hear from you

There will be opportunities each year to tell us how the support in place for your wellbeing is contributing to your flourishing or where help is still needed. Please use these opportunities and also in your Ministerial Development Review, or as needs arise. Don't hesitate to ask for the help....

Even if you are not sure - get in touch with someone.

## When we're overwhelmed

Sometimes life can overwhelm us. It is certainly nothing to be ashamed of. Your bishop is able to grant a special period of leave during challenging times such as moving a parent into a care home and clearing their house or taking time to be with a child at an acute, crisis moment.

If you ever find yourself feeling overwhelmed, for whatever reason, please contact your archdeacon or bishop as soon as possible.



**THE DIOCESE  
OF SHEFFIELD**  
Renewed | Released | Rejuvenated