

Clergy Mentoring

# Thinking about being a mentor?

### Why mentoring?

Many clergy are excited about the opportunities for mission and ministry the Church has at this time. They can also be somewhat daunted by the increasing expectations on clergy, and some feel isolated in their role. Mentoring is one way of providing a supportive and encouraging environment in which clergy can grow and develop. The aim of the scheme is that clergy, particularly at times of transition (for example first time incumbents, or those moving from one role to another), who would like a mentor will be provided with one.

### What is Christian mentoring?

With so much written on this subject, and some of it contradictory, it helps to be clear what the Diocese mean by mentoring. Drawing on work done by CPAS, we are defining it as ‘a dynamic, intentional, voluntary relationship of trust in which one person (the mentor) enables another person (the mentee) to maximise the grace of God within their lives and develop their potential in the service of God’s kingdom purposes’. It is different to other helping roles, such as counselling, spiritual direction, or work consultancy.

### What can I expect as a mentor?

The Diocese invites potential mentors to a simple training process run by the Diocese and facilitated by CPAS. It involves a day’s training event, followed by a single day of review and training approximately eight months afterwards. Many of the principles covered will be of interest to your wider ministry.

The scheme co-ordinator will arrange for those looking for a mentor to meet with a potential mentee for an exploratory session. During the training process you will consider how to approach such a meeting. If both the mentee and mentor agree, the relationship will begin, and typically will last for somewhere between 12 to 18 months, meeting every four to six weeks for between 60-120 minutes. The relationship may go on longer than this, in which case it should be renegotiated after around this length of time.

The Diocese has some expectations for all those mentoring on its behalf

* **Code of conduct**. All mentors will need to abide by a simple code of conduct (see separate document).
* **Confidentiality**. This is a confidential relationship (within the boundaries of the law) and the content of the sessions will not normally be reported back to the Diocese.
* **Meeting place**. Normally the mentee travels to a mutually agreed place near the mentor’s home. Mentoring can take place in a home, a coffee shop, a church room, even on a walk.

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* **Availability**. Each mentor will be asked to be available for a minimum of one mentoring relationship at a time. Some may be able to offer more.
* **Support**. The mentor co-ordinator offers support to all those acting as mentors in the diocesan scheme. This support is primarily reactive to the requests of the mentors, but may also involve the occasional enquiry on how things are going.
* **Payment**. Mentoring is provided free of charge within the Diocese. The mentee is responsible for any travelling expenses which should be treated as a parish expense.
* **Review**. At the end of a mentoring relationship a simple evaluative process is conducted to review the mentoring offered by the mentor and provide helpful feedback that will enable them to reflect on their mentoring skills.

### What do you need to bring to the relationship?

Mentors offer support, encouragement, wisdom, perspective and accountability. They are not expected to ‘teach’ the mentee, but rather to help the mentee reflect and learn as they grapple with developmental issues in their own life. A mentor will draw on their own experience, but never allow that experience to be determinative for the mentee. The mentor will need to be open to learning themselves, prayerful in their relationship with their mentee, and sensitive to the individual they are meeting with.

### For further information

Please contact the Diocesan Mentor Scheme co-ordinator, Jane Chamberlain, Training Team Leader, jane.chamberlain@bathwells.anglican.org

This handout was prepared in partnership with CPAS, who are acting as facilitators to our diocesan mentor scheme.

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