

B3 ORDAINED LOCAL MINISTRY

The ordained local minister is a priest within the universal Church of God. Together with all priests, the OLM is a reminder of Christ's ministry and the ministry of the whole Church, called to encourage, enable and challenge the church to be a priestly people. Like all priests an OLM exercises a public ministry by presiding at the sacraments, teaching and preaching God's word and being a pastor.

The mark that most distinguishes OLM from other ordained ministries is its concentration on a particular locality and benefice. The OLM emerges locally, is recommended by a national Bishops' Advisory Panel on Selection, is trained mainly in a local context and practises locally. OLMs are licensed to a parish or benefice under the leadership of the benefice priest and their responsibilities and areas of work are carefully defined by a working agreement.

Ordained local ministry is part of the ministry of Christ that he shares with all baptised members of the local church. OLM requires the local church's commitment to shared ministry, including the collaboration of local church leaders ordained and lay. (See B1 Introduction to Ministry.)

The OLM is part of the Episcopal Review and Continuing Ministerial Education schemes.

These guidelines complement nationally agreed regulations on diaconal and priestly ministry in the Canons of the Church of England and the Ordinal.

Licence and Renewal.

The bishop's initial licence to an ordained local minister is for five years. After review the licence can be renewed for successive five year periods. Review takes place during Year 4 after ordination. It is facilitated by a person appointed by the bishop. Review involves the ministry team and takes account of the current ministry needs of the benefice/parishes. After serving five years in one benefice redeployment to exercise local ministry in another (nearby) benefice may be considered with the permission of the bishop. The proviso is that the new benefice, if not already mandated for local ministry, demonstrates its understanding of, and commitment to, local ministry and team working. (See also below)

Retirement.

The bishop's licence is granted until the priest reaches the age of 70. After the age of 70 the bishop's **permission to officiate** may be sought. A PTO will normally apply to the same parishes/benefice, and is subject to the goodwill of the ministry team and of the incumbent or priest in charge.

Responsibilities

Fees and Expenses.

Ordained local ministry is a voluntary ministry. The minister is not entitled to any fee income. All statutory fees applicable to the minister (e.g. for funerals or marriages) form part of the stipendiary incumbent's, or priest in charge's, stipend. Out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of duty (e.g. travel as mileage allowance) may be claimed from the PCC, if not reimbursed from another source. Local arrangements for the reimbursement of these out of pocket expenses are a matter for the PCC. (see F7 Parochial working Expenses)

Child Protection.

Since Canon Law does not allow ordained local ministers to be in charge of parishes, they cannot be designated responsible persons under the terms of child protection procedures. The priest in charge or incumbent of the benefice carries this responsibility under the diocesan procedures. (See E9 Child Protection)

Changes

Change of ministry category .

Normally there is no consideration of change of the category of ministry (e.g. from ordained local ministry to non-stipendiary/ stipendiary ministry) until the end of the 4th year after ordination. The process for change of category must be supported by the Bishop on the advice of the Director of Ordinands. The process will involve the incumbent or priest in charge, the local ministry team, the Director of Ordinands, the bishop, and the Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council. The Ministry Division uses a panel of interviewers and sends a report to the bishop. It is a recommendation for change of category, with or without conditions which the bishop will affirm, or a recommendation that the category remains as it is.

Change of Benefice.

If an ordained local minister moves home within the diocese and settles in another benefice, the following procedure operates. Before any new licence is granted a period of six months is required for the discernment of need and the acceptability of this ministry in the new setting. The PCC and the incumbent's support in the accepting benefice is sought, and the benefice has to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the bishop that it understands local and collaborative ministry. A benefice may already have the bishop's Mandate for Local Ministry. This will be sufficient, with the provisos above for discernment and acceptability.

Age of candidates before selection and training.

The training of candidates selected for ordained local ministry takes three years after selection. The bishop will not therefore normally sponsor candidates for training if they cannot begin training before their 62nd birthday. This is to ensure a full five years of ministry before retirement from licensed ministry and the transfer to permission to officiate.

Extra-parochial and diocesan exercise of ministry

The bishop's licence for the ordained local minister is focussed on the locality (benefice). It does not extend to other parishes of the deanery or the diocese. Therefore before accepting an invitation to preach, to celebrate the sacraments, or to undertake pastoral duties outside the benefice of the licence, on one or more occasions, the ordained local minister must consult their benefice priest, and then seek the written permission of the diocesan bishop. If the invitation comes from a parish in another diocese for a one off occasion, the diocesan bishop will also seek the permission and goodwill of the bishop of the diocese in which the invitation originates.

Support

Support for the ordained local minister is offered by the diocesan NSM/OLM Officer.