



## Diocese of Bristol | Self Supporting Ministry

### Guidelines for Selection, Training and Initial Deployment

The Diocese of Bristol benefits from the ministry of a number of self supporting clergy, both those whose ministry is based in parishes and chaplaincies and those Ministers in Secular Employment acting as a focus for the articulation of the presence of God in the workplace. The following guidelines are intended to help develop this ministry as an integral part of the diocesan team of clergy. Self Supporting Ministers are those ordained ministers whose main financial income comes from sources other than their work as ministers, and who receive no direct salary or stipend for their ministerial work.

1. All Self Supporting Ministers (SSM) should be aware that they are available to be deployed in the service of the Diocese. In the selection process and during training, SSM candidates are encouraged to expect that the Sponsoring Bishop may invite them after ordination to minister in a parish other than their sponsoring parish. OLMs will normally serve in the parish or benefice which sponsors them.
2. SSM candidates should usually be aged 55 or under at the point of ordination.
3. The title will be approved by the Bishop's Staff in consultation with the Training Course/College, the Adviser for Initial Ministerial Education (AIME) and the candidate. Area Deans may be consulted over the deployment. Title posts will be served in a parish context and not a Deanery context.
4. All SSMS should have a learning agreement drawn up by the incumbent of the parish in which the minister is to be licensed or by the supervising minister in the case of Ministers in Secular Employment (MSE). This agreement should set out clearly the amount of time they shall devote to parochial activities, as well as any ministry they exercise in the context of their paid employment. Ministerial specifications must be approved by the relevant Archdeacon or Sponsoring Bishop and drawn to the attention of the PCC of the parish in which the minister is to be licensed.
5. All SSM training curates are expected to attend IME 4-7 sessions provided by the Diocese and this is considered to be mandatory.
6. Licences for SSMS who see the primary focus of their ministry in their paid employment should include reference to their place of work as well as the community in which they are located.
7. At the end of the title post (normally 4 years) a review of ministry will be conducted by the AIME and Sponsoring Bishop to decide what ministry is appropriate for the candidate. This review will be conducted after consultation with the Area Dean and Archdeacon.
8. It is not possible for an SSM to be redeployed until the National training criteria have been met.
9. It is possible for a review of ministry to be requested by the SSM curate, training incumbent or Diocese at anytime during the training curacy but will happen automatically at the end of the curacy.

10. We would not normally support a change to Stipendiary Ministry for those selected for SSM ministry. The only exemption to this policy is where there were exceptional circumstances or it had been agreed at the point of selection. This is a Bristol Diocesan Policy.
11. Any change of status is to be made through Candidates Panel.
12. Area Deans should ensure that at least half their deanery chapter meetings in any year are arranged at times when SSMs can attend.
13. All SSMs are part of the Ministerial Review scheme. The review should include consideration of the deployment of SSMs.
14. All SSMs are full members of the diocesan CME provision.

Issued as of 1 February 2009