

Dean of WMS

Revd Dr John Williams
6 Stonecroft Gardens
Shepley
HUDDERSFIELD HD8 8EX
01484 608703
john.williams@surefish.co.uk

Warden of WMS

Canon Dr John Lawson
7 Belgravia Road
WAKEFIELD WF1 3JP
01924 380182
john.lawson@wakefield.anglican.org

Ministry Development Officers

Pontefract Archdeaconry

Revd Gill Butterworth
Outwood Vicarage
424 Leeds Road
WAKEFIELD WF1 2JB
01924 823150
gillbutterworth@blueyonder.co.uk

Halifax Archdeaconry

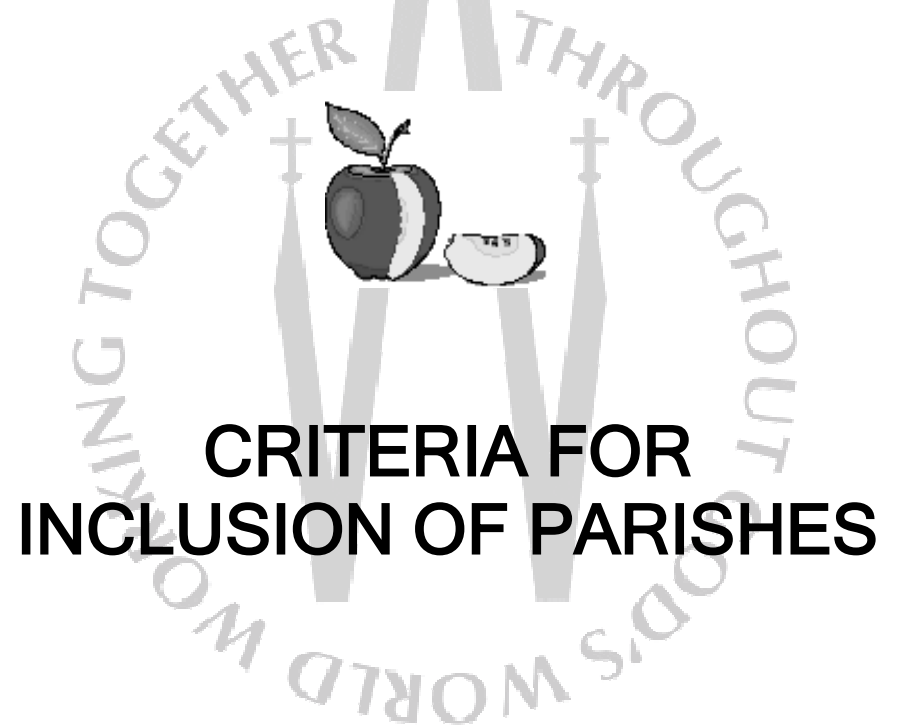
Revd Geoff Clay
St Bartholomew's Vicarage
20a Station Road
Marsden
HUDDERSFIELD HD9 6GD
01484 847864
geoff@ejclay.demon.co.uk

Secretary

Rachael Salmon
The Mirfield Centre
Stocksbank Road
MIRFIELD WF14 0BW
01924 481916
rsalmon@mirfield.org.uk



Wakefield Ministry Scheme



The Wakefield Ministry Scheme is designed to help parishes promote and practise sharing in ministry. This is a vital development in making the move from maintenance to mission. We are looking for parishes with a vision for mission, a sense of 'divine discontent' with things as they are and a desire to move on. In identifying such parishes we will have regard to the following criteria.

1. The most basic requirement for any parish hoping to enter the Wakefield Ministry Scheme is a **commitment to shared ministry**. This does not have to mean a well-established practice of it: the genuine desire to get started could be enough. The Scheme provides a resource for implementing the vision, and extending the practice.

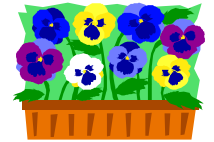
Shared ministry means that the task of the Church is understood fundamentally as a joint enterprise involving laity and clergy.

'For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them' (Romans 12 4-6a)



Another way of putting this is to say that Church is about everyone 'being the Church' rather than people 'going to Church'.

'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ ... If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together. Now you are the Body of Christ, and individually members of it' (1 Corinthians 12 12, ²⁶⁻²⁷)



Ways forward

Some parishes may not yet be quite ready to join the Scheme. In such cases we want to keep in touch, and there are a number of things that can be done:

- A 'taster course' on ministry, taken from the full programme, could be offered in the parish.
- A Shared Ministry short course could be put on somewhere nearby, which interested members of the congregation could join along with people from other parishes in the area: they could then come back and begin to enthuse others.
- The parish could be linked with another parish already in the Scheme, and arrange some meetings to hear people from that parish share how it has been working out for them.
- A member of the Ministry Scheme Staff Team could come and run an exploratory consultation or short course in the parish to get people thinking further.

Please do not hesitate to seek further advice from the Ministry Scheme staff.

upheaval foreseeable within the next couple of years it may be wise to wait! On the other hand, a parish that is just embarking on a significant reappraisal of its vision, priorities and future direction in terms of new patterns of ministry may well find the Scheme just the tool it needs to get the process moving:.

Finally manageability also means **guarding against over-stretching of individuals**. If the only obvious people for the Core Group, Ministry Team or Support Group are the ones who are already doing everything ... can they stop doing something else? Are there others who are ready to take on new responsibilities? We look for evidence that joining the Scheme will help to share the load - and the privileges and joys - of ministry more widely, not just concentrate yet more demands in the hands of the few.



4. Lastly: **relationships**. No church is perfect: every church has its awkward customers and its little areas of dissent. But the Wakefield Ministry Scheme is probably not ideal for a parish where tensions and conflicts absorb a great deal of time and energy. Nor will it work where people are thinking of the church's future only in terms of 'maintenance', and perhaps only the Vicar and a very few others have any vision for mission or new initiatives.

In other words, there needs to be in the church a decent and discernible measure of real faith: of Christian maturity, the fruit of the Spirit and genuine charity, the most excellent way of all:

Shared ministry is more than just **delegated ministry**. This is where the vicar gives out certain tasks to particular people, but retains overall control in the sense that the basic idea of what the church is about remains very much his or her own. A parish entering the Scheme with a lot of delegated ministry would need to be ready to take a further step towards genuine sharing rather than just 'sharing out'.

Shared ministry should open the way to **collaborative ministry**. This is where people do not only assume responsibility for their own areas of work but co-operate closely in developing the whole vision and strategy of the church. A parish may discover that participation in the Scheme helps towards the emergence of a more fully collaborative way of working.

We look therefore for at least a **commitment to shared ministry** in the hope that the Scheme will help this to develop further. This commitment must be present in the incumbent and key lay leaders, and be sufficiently owned by the congregation at large. It would be unrealistic to expect every member to be equally enthusiastic, but the 'feel' of the church needs to be one of support for a shared understanding of what the church's task is about: so that

'We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and builds itself up in love' (Ephesians 4, 5b - 16).



2. The necessary counterpart of commitment is **people** to carry it through. For the Scheme to run successfully in a parish at least the following are needed:

(a) Where there is an **incumbent**, he or she must have a real vision for shared ministry - this is important even where he or she is not resident in the parish in question;

(b) A **group of people at the heart of the Scheme** who will commit themselves to the whole programme and see that it is carried through in the parish;

(c) A realistic hope of **wider congregational participation** in individual parts of the Scheme programme.



The **'Core Group' of people at the heart of the Scheme** may take a different form in different parishes. For example:

- In a small parish, especially one without a resident vicar, they may be a Local Ministry Team who effectively take responsibility for the day-to-day running of the church.
- In a much larger parish, especially one with a lot of shared ministry already happening, they may be more of a Ministry Support Group with a co-ordinating, overseeing role.
- In a parish seeking to develop a new vision and practice of shared ministry, they may be the key members in taking this forward, a kind of 'Think Tank'.

But, one way or another, to participate in the Scheme effectively a parish will need some such 'core group' of people to see it through.

The wider congregational participation comes in the course units which are offered to the whole church at intervals through the programme, and the new initiatives in ministry which will hopefully be stimulated by the parish's involvement in the Scheme. Just as it is vital that joining the Scheme is not just 'the Vicar's Bright Idea', so too it must not only be the band-wagon of a small group of enthusiasts. Obviously levels of active involvement by individual members of congregations will vary, but we look for a reasonable expectation that a fair number will opt in to various parts of the programme.



3. A further criterion is **manageability**.

The Wakefield Ministry Scheme is not meant to be a heavy imposition on an already packed schedule of church events. This need not mean that only parishes with not much going on should join! It will mean, however, that a parish with a lot of activities will need to consider carefully the reasons for entering the Scheme, and any adaptations of its regular programme that may be required to accommodate it. For example, can existing home-groups be made the base for putting on the Scheme's congregational course units? Can the agenda of a Worship Committee or Evangelism Group be harnessed to issues which arise out of relevant parts of the Scheme programme?

Manageability is also about **timing**. Entering the Scheme may not be advisable where some major time-consuming project has just got under way. Similarly, if there is some great