

Pastoral Ministry. Officiating ministers will generally be found for baptisms, weddings and funerals. However, they may not be able to offer the ministry of personal contact or visiting which may be required. The Core Group will have a valuable role in ensuring that these needs are met, either by their own members or by co-ordinating the ministries of others in the congregation (unless of course the existing structure of shared ministry in the parish already caters for this).

Leading Worship. The established practice agreed with the PCC and the outgoing incumbent sets a precedent which need not be broken in an interregnum: visiting clergy can properly be asked to fit in with the lay participation in the leadership of worship which is customary in the parish. With the PCC's approval, some new ministry might usefully be developed in the leading of non-eucharistic worship, especially if this assists the wardens in maintaining the existing provision of services. Ideally any fresh developments of this kind should be planned for as part of the preparations for the interregnum, while the outgoing incumbent is still in post.



Wakefield Ministry Scheme



VACANCY GUIDELINES Notes for Core Groups

These notes are intended to help Core Group members be aware of how their role in the parish is affected by the legal and procedural requirements which come into force during an interregnum.

Churchwardens. The administration of a benefice during an interregnum is largely in the hands of the churchwardens. They will be responsible alongside their other duties for arranging cover for Sunday services and for baptisms, weddings and funerals, and for telling undertakers whom to contact.

The Rural Dean will be responsible for helping and advising the churchwardens and PCC in carrying out their duties and maintaining worship.

It will be helpful when the interregnum commences for the Rural Dean and churchwardens to have a meeting with the Core Group to make sure that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities. Some Guidance Notes are provided for Rural Deans to help them understand the way WMS operates in the parish.

Sunday services. The normal pattern of services should be maintained as far as possible.

Role of the Core Group. During the interregnum, the Core Group continues to be accountable to the PCC, but with a particular responsibility to the churchwardens. In this respect the Core Group's position is similar to that of a curate, who does not assume any additional authority during an interregnum and is expected to concentrate on continuity and

consolidation rather than change. The model for the Core Group's activity is that of 'servant': a creative and purposeful Core Group is an invaluable resource not only for worship and ministry but also for stability and cohesion.

It is the responsibility of the Core Group to ensure that the PCC includes the fact that this is a WMS parish, complete with explanation of what that means, in any Statement of Needs they produce. A form (IL V4) is provided by the Dean of the Wakefield Ministry Scheme for Core Groups to record information about their role, to be included with the Parish Profile.

Statements of Purpose. The Core Group needs to keep before it any written Statement of Purpose which has previously been agreed by the PCC, so that there is a known and acceptable framework for its role. Like the pattern of services, the Core Group's ministry will be best continued as prior to the interregnum.

Meetings. Regular Core Group meetings will be vital to good communication and co-operation both within the Group itself and also with the churchwardens, where they are not already Core Group members. It will be helpful if churchwardens are routinely advised of dates of Core Group meetings and given a 'blanket' invitation to attend (though some may not choose to do so). The Dean of WMS will be available to attend Core Group meetings from time to time during the interregnum, especially if it is lengthy. In the case of a parish still in the initial three year Programme, the Diocesan Helper will also need to keep a close contact with the Core Group and report to the WMS staff any issues which arise needing attention.