



# **Diocese of Carlisle**

## **Ministerial Development**

### **Review Handbook**

Please contact if you need any help:

MDR Administrator

Joy Barrie

[Joy.barrie@carlisediocese.org.uk](mailto:Joy.barrie@carlisediocese.org.uk)

Acting MDR Officer

Cameron Butland, Bishop's Chaplain

[cameron.butland@carlisediocese.org.uk](mailto:cameron.butland@carlisediocese.org.uk)

01768 773430

## **MDR Scheme**

### **Year 1**

1. At appointment - three objectives are agreed with the Archdeacon in line with the SOP, the role description and the Mission Community profile.
2. The MDR Officer sets up a peer to peer contact.
3. During the first year, the 1<sup>st</sup> peer to peer review meeting takes place. Within twenty-one days the member of clergy sends report to MDR Officer.
4. Six months after appointment one of the Bishops visits.

### **Year 2**

1. The 2<sup>nd</sup> peer to peer review and the member of clergy sends report to MDR Officer.

### **Year 3**

1. 3rd peer to peer review and member of clergy sends report to MDR Officer.
2. This meeting may be a time to set or change objectives

### **Visitation**

1. Visitation or visit from by Archdeacon, MDR Officer sends the reports from previous two years to the Archdeacon. No other paperwork is needed.
2. Visitation arranged by the Archdeacon's PA

### **Episcopal Review**

1. Episcopal Review, appointment made by the Bishops' Offices together with MDR Officer, who sends the reports from the previous two years and the member of the clergy completes the Episcopal Review questionnaire.
2. The Bishop's Office sends MDR Episcopal Review Form to be completed and returned prior to the meeting.

*The Visitation with the Archdeacon and the Episcopal Review are separate from the annual MDR and the annual Review Reports.*

## **Introducing Ministerial Development Review (MDR)**

### **The Bishop's MDR Scheme**

Participation in MDR is a legal requirement for those on Common Tenure. MDR can be seen as an important support and encouragement for all clergy. As part of his pastoral duty to offer individual care to each one of us, the Bishop expects all the clergy to take part in MDR. Bishops have their own MDR scheme; the Bishop of Carlisle is reviewed by the Archbishop of York.

Ministerial Review is intended to facilitate both ministerial *enrichment* and ministerial *effectiveness*. It should be good for us as ordained ministers and good for those who receive and share that ministry with us.

It is widely recognised that when people reflect systematically and regularly about their work it enables them to feel good about it and to become more confident in doing it. It is even more important for people like clergy whose work is also a vocation. This vocation is a joyful response to God, but it can easily excite expectations which are unreasonable both in the clergy person themselves and those around them. It is all-encompassing and it can seem that clergy are answerable to everybody and to nobody both in what we do and how we do it.

To be called to ministry is both privilege and sacrifice which is lived and experienced in the context of the local church, the diocese and the wider church. MDR is a process through which local church and the Bishop's senior colleagues work together to support those who are called and ordained to ministry and who exercise it with the Bishop's licence and authority. It is not conceived in the same way as 'appraisal' since clergy are not employees. It is about sharing in responsibility under God for the well-being of the clergy and the effectiveness of all the ministerial and missionary efforts.

MDR is a tool to help clergy to develop the self-awareness that is integral both to the dignity of the office they hold and to carrying out the duties of office well.

The MDR process is designed to help clergy to grow in self-awareness. All parts of the process feed into this:

- working on the preparation
- choosing people to ask for feedback
- absorbing the feedback
- meeting with a reviewer
- leading to drawing up a report with its objectives
- discussing the objectives with a Bishop and Archdeacon.

Growth in self-awareness then continues as those objectives begin to come to life in various ways over the following couple of years. All this is no accident. Being appropriately aware of who we are and how we come across to others, learning where we have strengths and weaknesses and developing the capacity to ask for help and listen creatively to criticism, are all integral to the mature exercise of public ministry.

## **How does it work?**

Every year (starting a year after you took up your present post) you should receive a reminder to arrange a peer review meeting Shortly following that meeting you will produce a MDR report (*recorded on the Report Form*).

The system of review in use in the Diocese of Carlisle is self-review, facilitated by a Reviewer. This means that you, as Reviewee, initiate the process, do some preparation and then have a structured conversation with your listener, who should help you to formulate some objectives. You produce the record of this conversation, no-one else writes a report on you and your ministry during this process.

Clergy often work in pairs, acting as reviewer for one another, but it is equally possible simply to find someone to help you without you acting as listener for them. If you need help finding a reviewer we can help match people up.

As part of the scheme you will have a regular opportunity for a conversation with a bishop and archdeacon every three years, but as you arrange the process yourself it is easily possible to do your own MDR in the intervening years.

## **Where can I find the documents?**

All the documents you will need for your review are available to download from the Resources for Clergy section on the diocesan website. You will find it helpful to refer to the summary guide of the process supplied with this handbook.

## **Feedback Exercise**

This is probably the aspect of MDR which causes people the most anxiety, but used well it can encourage your ministry and lead to areas you may not have considered for development. Asking for feedback is optional.

If you do receive any difficult comments your reviewer may be able to help you to discern whether these are realistic, or are rooted in other conflicts. You are asked to record who you have consulted on your Report Form, but not the content of your feedback.

Prayerfully identify two or three people from within your context or contexts who you can invite to give feedback. We suggest you choose people who will be positive, who will challenge but will do so in a way that is constructive. We suggest you do not choose those who have been very critical of your ministry, or who already make their opinions known to you. The purpose of this 'Feedback Exercise' is to gain useful and objective insights on your ministry or aspects thereof, from different perspectives.

When you invite people to take part in this listening exercise, we recommend that you tell them about your Review and explain that you are inviting them to give their own feedback to inform your review and reflection. You will need to arrange a date by which you will receive their completed feedback and to acknowledge their contribution when it arrives. You may want to come back to them following your review discussion and explain the ways in which their feedback has been helpful.

You may want to choose any of the following, this list is not exhaustive:

- Your curate
- A colleague within the team or area,
- One of your Church Wardens
- A member of the PCC or Mission Community Leadership Team
- Someone involved with the children's work or work with the elderly or young people
- The head of the local school
- The local funeral director
- Someone within the local community not involved with the church but with whom you have a professional relationship.

## **Personal preparation**

You will need to set aside a chunk of time for prayerful preparation. This time might include all or some of the following:

- Revisit your last review, especially the objectives (you will need to record progress on your Report Form for this review.)
- As part of your personal preparation we suggest you use the 'MDR Questionnaire'
- Look at your parish or Mission Community MAP (Mission Action Plan) or other strategic planning (but remember that one of your objectives should be about your personal well-being; MDR is different from your Mission Community strategy, but should dovetail with it.) Or, if new in role the Mission Community Profile you applied for.
- Consider the Feedback Exercise (and note carefully your strengths as well as any suggestions for further development.)
- Read your Role Description (see note below) to ensure that you have considered the key aspects of your ministry recorded in it.

You may wish to start summarising your review on your 'MDR Report' at this stage. If you start to identify objectives, remember the advice that at least one should be about your own personal well-being and development.

## **Role Description**

All those on Common Tenure should have a Role Description (RD). The RD is intended to be a broad outline of your ministry, rather than a detailed or prescriptive timetable. As part of the MDR process it would be helpful to read it through and see if it is still accurate. If it does need attention that should be flagged up on the Bishop's Report Form, for attention after the MDR process has been completed.

## Review Meeting

This is a key stage in the process, when you talk through your Review and work towards formulating objectives.

You will need to work out how to structure your time. If you and your listener are both doing a review on the same day you need to divide the time so you have half for each review. The following grid makes suggestions for structuring the meeting, depending on how much time you have available:

Standard Review Format	Suggested timings	One Day	Overnight
	Recommended time for discussion 1.5 – 2 hours	Recommended minimum time for discussion 2.5 hours each	Recommended minimum time for discussion 4 hours each
Looking Back	40 minutes	1 hour	1 hour 45 minutes
Looking Forward	40 minutes	45 minutes	1.5 hours
Agreeing Objectives	40 minutes	45 minutes	45 minutes

Some hints for using the time well:

- Use the Report to provide a structure to your discussion. Before you start, agree timings for the different parts of the discussion, (see above).
- Tell the story of the last year or two of your ministry and reflect upon it.
- Identify things about which to be thankful, to celebrate.
- Share some of the pain and difficulties of the last year.
- Avoid the temptation to get bogged down in too much detail or to try to solve problems in your review discussion, although these may become part of your objectives.
- Through your reflection, draw lessons from what has gone well and what has been frustrating or painful.
- As you talk with your listener identify a 'long-list' or 'first draft' of possible priorities for the year ahead.
- Look forward to the next 1 or 2 years drawing on the reflection in looking back and the 'first draft' of possible objectives, identify three objectives. Ensure at least one of the objectives is about your own personal well-being.
- Invest some time in giving shape to these objectives with your Listener/Reviewer, following the template on the Bishop's Report sheet.

## **Formulating objectives**

This is a key part in making your MDR effective. We suggest around three objectives. These should be about you and your ministry, personal rather than Mission Community objectives. At least one should be about your own well-being. The Bishop's report has a template to help you formulate your objectives effectively.

Good objectives should be focussed and specific (so 'Read more' would not be a very helpful objective! ); remember that in two years' time you will need to be able to work out how much of them you have achieved. The Report Form suggests some steps towards making your objectives as effective as possible, so there is space to think about how you will set about achieving the objective and to identify key milestones and the all-important first step you need to take. It might be helpful to draft this part of the Report during the review conversation, and to ask your reviewer to help you formulate the objectives effectively.

## **What next?**

You will need to find time after your review discussion to complete your report form and to send a copy (by email or post) to the MDR Administrator.

The triannual meetings with a Bishop and Archdeacon meeting is an opportunity to discuss the key issues that have emerged from your report; they will have things they wish to raise as a result of reading your report, but if there are things you particularly wish to discuss with them it would be wise to identify them in advance of the meeting on the 'MDR Episcopal Review Questionnaire'.

At the meeting you will both sign a copy of the Review Report (the document you have written) and this will be the definitive copy which will be placed on your 'Blue File' at Bishop's House on annual basis. Make sure you keep your own copy as well, as you will need it as you begin working on your new objectives. Please don't put it away in the drawer until your next MDR in two years' time!

You will be asked for permission for a copy to be sent to the officer responsible for Continuing Ministerial Development. They should be able to help you find appropriate support and training to fulfil your objectives, and grants for training events have priority if they go towards fulfilling an MDR objective. They also use objectives to help identify appropriate issues for diocesan training events. If you prefer not to give permission, the Archdeacon or Bishop should discuss with you how your training needs are to be met; for instance you might be happy for an edited copy of the form to be sent to them. Many objectives do not give rise to formal training needs, but please contact them for any help and advice if they don't receive your form and respond in good time.