



# Questions raised at Diocesan Conference

## Leadership and relationships

### Who will be the leaders in a Ministry Area and what roles will they fulfil?

The Ministry Area will be the single parish and we aim to sustain at least three incumbent-level posts within each Ministry Area. These Vicars will have designated pastoral responsibility for particular congregations and work together within a single team. One of them will be designated the 'Ministry Area Leader'. Technically this cleric will be a priest-in-charge though will always be referred to as the Ministry Area Leader.

Alongside the clergy there will be lay leaders including a new role of Lay Chair of the Ministry Area Council and two MA Wardens, plus the trustee leadership of the Ministry Area Council and whatever operational leadership the Ministry Area Council decides is appropriate.

### What is the process for appointing MA Leaders (MAL) - does the Diocese appoint or is it decided by the Ministry Area during its formation?

The Ministry Area Leaders will be appointed by the Bishop following conversations with the Archdeacons and the potential candidates.

### Will clergy currently in post be required to re-apply for posts within the new Ministry Area?

No – clergy currently in post will remain in post but licensed to the Ministry Area as a Vicar in the Ministry Area clergy team until such time they want to apply for another role, as usual.

### It will all depend upon good working relationships. What happens if there are not good working relationships?

High quality working relationships can be encouraged and planned for, but not controlled. It is recognised that relationships can break down within a ministry team just as easily as anywhere else.

One would hope that in the majority of cases of poor working relationships interventions can be made to at least restore co-operation and mutual respect, if not necessarily friendship. The Archdeacon will be able to offer support and suggest options for finding ways forward.

## Legal and financial

### What is the legal structure of a Ministry Area?

We are currently working on how to adhere to the Constitution of the Church in Wales, the requirements of good governance demanded by the Charity Commission as every Ministry Area will be a registered charity, and the effective working demanded by the local context.

Every Ministry Area will be a single parish in the form of a Rectorial Benefice but will always be known as a Ministry Area. The responsibility for the Ministry Area will be held by trustees, some of which are ex-officio, some elected and some co-opted. We will no longer use the terms of 'Rector', 'Team Vicar', 'PCC' or 'Sub-Wardens' but instead refer to Ministry Area Leader, Vicar, and Ministry Area Council.

### If the Ministry Area is the legal entity does that mean someone can get married in any church within the Ministry Area?

Yes. The decree for the Ministry Areas will name all churches within the Ministry Area as parish churches and will specify that the rights of marriage remain. Someone with a right to marry will be able to marry within any church in the Ministry Area. Churches that are not currently licenced for marriages will remain as they are.

### How do MAs afford positions like administrators?

A Ministry Area, with its combined financial resources from a number of churches, is more likely to be able to afford a paid administrator for a number of hours to work across the Ministry Area. Being a larger Ministry Area, your volunteer pool is also likely to be a bigger resource from which to draw upon, so it might not necessarily have to be a paid administrator.

We would encourage the creation of a Ministry Area Office or administrative support hub as part of the development of the Ministry Area Plan.

### What support can we expect particularly around the financial and practical issues involved with merging accounts?

The Diocesan Office finance team will be on hand to provide practical support and resources to assist with the issues involved with merging parish accounts. Toolkits covering financial issues will be made available on the Ministry Area section of the website.

### What is the software which may help to simplify the accounting process? And what help can we get with this?

The Diocese is looking to utilise the myfundaccounting software (*previously Finance Co-ordinator*) developed by Data Developments (church specific software provider). Assistance with the set-up of the software, training and guidance notes will be provided as part of the implementation process. Please ask the Diocesan Accountant, Mrs Jan Boyce, if you would like to know more.

## MA structure and formation

### What qualifying factors have this Diocese employed in groupings?

A range of factors contributed to the decisions about groupings, including geography, demography, historical boundaries, social and ecclesiastical history. (Sometimes these can work in opposition to each other.) In addition, as far as practicable, the aim was to ensure that each Ministry Area had at least three incumbent-status clergy and strong lay leadership to provide a collaborative team. A balanced decision was then made based on consultation with Area Deans.

Given that the existing territorial arrangements within the diocese can only be changed by decree and that such decrees must make provision and give directions concerning a substantial number of matters listed in the Constitution, how is the agreement of the existing parishes and their incumbents (Vicars in the legal sense with rights of appeal against removal) to be obtained?

Under the Constitution of the Church in Wales, the Bishop has absolute discretion as to any change in territorial arrangements, and she is supported in that discretion by the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Conference. All members of the PCC declare when taking up office that they will abide by the Constitution. PCCs will need to pass a resolution in relation to becoming part of a Rectorial Benefice, but they are obliged to comply with the terms of the Constitution in doing so. Vicars are not being removed from their posts. They will become or remain Vicars in the Rectorial Benefice.

### Why haven't PCCs been consulted about the makeup of their own Ministry Area?

The Diocese has been advocating engagement with the Ministry Area process for at least 7 years, and even employed a full-time officer to assist in the process. That officer worked tirelessly to engage with Deaneries and parishes to stimulate discussion and move the process forward with some significant success but reached a point where no further progress was being made.

Archdeacons have picked up the threads of past conversations and consulted with Area Deans and Diocesan officers in reaching the current makeup of new Ministry Areas.

With larger churches and more people and more money vs smaller churches, how will this equality of influence be managed?

Many existing multi-church parishes have faced and dealt with the same situation for many years. We hope that a basic principle of fairness, coupled with the Christian imperative for mutual respect, generosity and compassion means the Ministry Area can operate and respond sensitively.

Can't the objectives be achieved just as well by an informal cooperation without combining the PCC and accounts?

There has been much fruitful collaboration between many parishes, particularly over the last 7 years. However, such collaboration have often proved difficult to sustain or cement over a long period – perhaps because people move or because a PCC prioritises its own parish interests over wider collaborative or shared initiatives, or are reluctant to invest intentionally without long term security. Working together as one wider Ministry Area enables consistent sharing of resources and encourages a bigger vision and longer-term joint plans.

The necessity for every parish to become a registered charity in 2021 with all the responsibilities of charitable governance makes this the right and necessary moment for this change.

Do larger teams mean they require more management i.e. more chivvying and chasing?

Teams of diverse people with varied, complementary skills will mean that people are able to focus on what they enjoy and are good at doing, rather than having to fulfil aspects of a role they are not called to. We hope this will mean increased motivation and reward – and less need to be chivvied! As to wider lay teams, it is recommended that (like in Bangor or St Asaph) Ministry Areas have small special interest sub-groups, to support motivation.

## Purpose and identity

How has MAs allowed Welsh language ministry to flourish/ develop/ begin?

Collaborative ministry at its best plays to people's strengths. It should therefore enable Welsh language ministry to develop in a more intentional way. A wide variety of ministry should be available across the Ministry Area and those who are better equipped to deliver Welsh language ministry should encourage and give confidence to other members of their team.

How can we be sure that with all this bureaucracy we don't lose sight of the task of care?

Pastoral care is one of the key elements of ministry - but like all ministry it is not the preserve of the clergy. Ministry Areas are a platform upon which to build our ministry – not the end, but the means to exercise pastoral care, along with all other aspects of ministry and mission expressed by the Vision to tell a joyful story, grow the Kingdom of God and build our capacity for good. Ministry Areas will only exercise the full range of ministry and responsibilities for mission to the extent that these are seen as duties and privileges that are shared among all the baptised.

## Capacity and support

A MA is effectively like running a business, isn't that a lot to expect of clergy and laity?

Key to the formation of the MA will be the identification of the Core Team. One of their key roles is to ensure that the tasks of mission and ministry are shared. We have many skilled and gifted people in our parishes who would no doubt relish these opportunities. This will be supported by appropriate training for all involved in sharing these tasks.

What do we do when clergy are very worried about managing this process along with all the other things they are already doing?

The Diocese is working hard to ensure that clergy and parishes are well supported through this process. The Senior Leadership Team are here to give individual support to Ministry Areas to help take steps that are manageable, and each Ministry Area Leader will also have a mentor specifically to support them through the process. The new Vision resources in mission, outreach, children and young people, fundraising and lay training will also be there for Ministry Areas to use and draw on. The new role for the Director of Ministry and Discipleship has an explicit responsibility for clergy wellbeing and to provide tailored support. In addition, the new Provincial Ministerial Development Review scheme will assist with enabling clergy to reflect on the past year and set goals for the coming year that are realistic and achievable.