

# *The Canterbury Diet* *for locally recognised lay ministers*

---

The term 'locally recognised lay minister' covers a wide range of lay ministry which is authorised at a local parish or benefice level under the oversight of the incumbent. These may include disciplines such as worship leading, pastoral care, children youth and families, community work. The *Canterbury Diet* provides a framework for good practice and effective ministry. You are encouraged to attend to these three Golden Threads throughout:

## **Golden Threads:**

**How are prayer and spiritual practices being developed?**

**How am I learning and reflecting on ministry practice?**

**How are we attending to good relationships and collaborative ministry?**

### **(1) Local Church Discernment**

This will involve:

- Identifying the need for a particular ministry in the local church and recognising the gifting, calling and suitability of an individual (or group of individuals) to it.
- Incumbent and PCC to follow safer recruitment process (e.g. role description, application form, references, mandatory safeguarding checks and training).

### **(2) Recognition and Authorisation**

This will involve:

- Drawing up a written ministry agreement.
- Authorisation by the incumbent and PCC for an agreed term (3 years suggested).
- Local recognition and authorisation at an appropriate local church service.

### **(3) Oversight and Supervision**

This will involve:

- Regular meetings for prayer and reflection with a named supervisor (this may be in a group setting).
- Reporting to the incumbent, PCC and wider church community.
- Providing ongoing training and support.
- Annual review of ministry agreement.

### **(4) Review and Renewal of Authorisation**

This will involve:

- Annual review (see (3) above)
- A significant review prior to the end of the term of authorisation which may consider renewal for a further term.
- If the role is coming to an end, consider ways to mark the occasion.
- If the role is to continue:
  - Obtain PCC approval.
  - Refresh and renew mandatory safeguarding checks and training.
  - Revise the written ministry agreement if required and re-enter the process at (2) above.

### **(5) Diocesan Support**

- Provide guidance on good practice and advice on request.
- Access to spiritual accompanier.
- Provision of *Equipping for Ministry* courses, workshops and networking events which may be accessed as continuing ministerial development.

# *The Canterbury Diet*

## *for locally recognised lay ministers*

---

### Notes:

1. The word '**diet**' comes from the Greek *diaita*, which means 'way of life.'
2. **Golden Threads** - throughout the *Canterbury Diet* three key questions are attended to at every stage and are crucial for ministerial development through reflective practice:
  - a. How are prayer and spiritual practices being developed?
  - b. How am I learning and reflecting on ministry practice?
  - c. How are we attending to good relationships and collaborative ministry?
3. **Mandatory Safeguarding.** The parish is responsible for ensuring locally recognised lay ministers have:
  - a. completed a DBS check at the required level.
  - b. Completed safeguarding training at the appropriate level.
  - c. Maintain records of checks and training.Advice is available from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
4. **Good Practice Guidance.** The Recognising Lay Ministry webpages <https://www.canterburydiocese.org/ministry/recognising-lay-ministry/> contain good practice guidance and suggestions for drawing up role descriptions, ministry agreements etc.
5. **Ministry Agreement.** The Incumbent should ensure there is a ministry agreement which has been approved by the PCC. This should include details of role, responsibilities, oversight, supervision and review.
6. **Authorisation.** It is strongly recommended that authorisation is time limited, but with an option for review and renewal. Three years is suggested as this would enable the mandatory safeguarding checks and training to be refreshed.
7. **Spiritual Accompaniment/Direction.** The Diocese has a network of experienced Spiritual Accompaniers and Advisors. The point of contact is Revd Dr Susanne Carlsson [susannecarlssons@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:susannecarlssons@hotmail.co.uk) who oversees the network.
8. **Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD).** The Diocesan Mission and Ministry team provide a range of *Equipping for Ministry* courses, workshops and events which may be accessed for CMD.

Nigel Collins, Lay Ministries Adviser  
November 2025