

**Self-Supporting Ministry  
in the Church of England  
and the Anglican  
Churches of Wales,  
Scotland and Ireland**

**Report of the National Survey 2010**

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## 1 Introduction

This report presents a snapshot of the state of non-stipendiary or self-supporting ministry in the UK in 2010.<sup>1</sup> It is based on a national survey of SSM clergy which was carried out in September-October 2010 by the Revd Graham Lewis and the Revd Dr. Teresa Morgan, with the support of the Ministry Division.<sup>2</sup>

The survey was conducted by means of a questionnaire using the internet survey tool Survey Monkey; a hard-copy version was also available.<sup>3</sup> It was publicized over several months. Diocesan offices throughout the UK and Europe were asked to circulate SSMs with information about it. Where dioceses had an NSM officer or similar, or more than one, these too were asked to circulate the information. The survey was also advertised for six weeks in the Church Times.

892 complete responses were collected from England, representing 29% of serving SSMs.<sup>4</sup> This is an excellent response rate, high enough to generate credible and useful statistics. Warm thanks are due to all those who took the time and trouble to complete the survey, to the NSM officers and diocesan offices who helped to

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<sup>1</sup> No one description of unpaid clergy commands general acceptance. 46% of respondents to the survey preferred to be called SSMs; 23% preferred NSM, while 23% called themselves OLMs. Only 8% chose to call themselves 'associate priest', a title which is coming increasingly into use by dioceses. 'Associate priest' is unacceptable to most SSMs because grammatically 'associate' qualifies 'priest', and the idea that anyone is a priest only in a qualified sense is theologically indefensible. The North American term 'priest associate' is preferable, because the order of words makes it clear that priesthood itself is not being qualified; the person is a priest who is an associate of another minister (such as the incumbent of a parish). Almost all respondents to the survey were priests, but a handful were permanent deacons; for most purposes this made little difference to their responses.

<sup>2</sup> Graham Lewis is Managing Director of IPF Ltd. and SSM curate responsible for St. Peter's Church, Bredhurst. Teresa Morgan is Fellow and Tutor in Ancient History at Oriel College, Oxford, and SSM priest in the parish of Littlemore.

<sup>3</sup> About 5% of respondents replied in hard copy and their results were transferred to the internet database.

<sup>4</sup> See further below, p. 9. In 2009, the Ministry Division records 3,100 SSMs in England, forming 27% of a total of 11,658 clergy. Figures throughout this report are rounded up or down to the nearest percentage, with the exception of .5 percentages.

publicize it, and to the Church Times who published the first results in April 2011.<sup>5</sup> Responses from Wales, Scotland and Ireland were relatively low, so the bulk of this report is based on responses from England; responses from Wales, Scotland and Ireland are analysed separately towards the end.<sup>6</sup>

The survey's questions are attached as Appendix 2. They covered selection, training and continuing ministerial development; posts respondents have held since ordination; what they are doing now and for roughly how many hours per week. We asked whether respondents' ministry had changed over the years, and if so, how and why, and what review processes were followed. There were questions about ministerial development reviews and respondents' relationships with their closest clerical colleagues, deaneries and dioceses. We asked what other commitments respondents had, whether they exercised a significant ministry outside formal church structures, and if they did, how they ministered and where.

At the end, the survey invited people to make their own comments or write something about their experiences, and over half did. Otherwise, the questions were designed to collect facts rather than opinions. The aim of the survey was positive and practical: to generate an exemplary profile of the resources currently available to the Church in the form of non-stipendiary clergy, and on that basis to suggest ways in which SSMs might best be developed and deployed in the coming years.

According to figures released annually by the Ministry Division, non-stipendiary clergy presently form about 27% of all clergy in England, as well as a significant proportion of those in Wales, Scotland and Ireland. This figure is expected to increase in the next ten years, as around 40% of stipendiary clergy currently in post retire. The role that SSMs can and should play in the Church in the short and medium term is therefore a matter of obvious interest. The way they are deployed is certain to affect significantly the ways in which we can sustain and develop our corporate ministry and mission in the years to come.

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<sup>5</sup> 1 April 2011, pp. 22-3, with leader p. 12, and 8 April 2011, pp. 22-3. Full versions of the Church Times articles and data from the survey, together with this report, can be found at [www.lpf.co.uk/SSM.html](http://www.lpf.co.uk/SSM.html).

<sup>6</sup> pp. 24-5. There was only one response from Europe, which to preserve anonymity is not discussed here.

That being the case, it is surprising that both anecdotal evidence and the results of this survey suggest that SSMs are not, in general, being actively developed or deployed by their dioceses, and in some cases are being actively hindered in their ministry. Many SSMs are aware of this and unhappy about it. Some have tackled the problem in their own ministry, but it seems clear that the Church as a whole would benefit from a strategy to use SSMs better.

This is not a new observation. The last report into the situation of SSMs nationally was *Non-Stipendiary Ministry in the Church of England* by Mark Hodge, which was published by the Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry in 1983. Dr. Hodge investigated the historical background to the ordination of NSMs, contemporary approaches to selection, training and ministry, NSMs' everyday experience of ministry and relations with stipendiary colleagues, rates of transfer to stipendiary ministry, and procedures for licensing and deployment. He made a number of recommendations based on his findings, several of which are echoed at the end of this report.<sup>7</sup>

Hodge observed that the growth of non-stipendiary ministry to date had taken place with 'very limited central direction and consensus', and argued that it was time there was more.<sup>8</sup> He noted that although non-stipendiary ministry had been developed in large part as a tool of mission, in practice, dioceses nearly always placed NSMs in their local parishes and left them there indefinitely. He raised the question whether this was the best use of NSMs in the late twentieth century. He was concerned by the perception (and possibly in some cases the fact) that standards of selection and training for NSMs were lower than those for stipendiaries, leading to a widespread view among stipendiaries that NSMs were an inferior class of clergy, not to be trusted in positions of responsibility or leadership.

Hodge found that most dioceses made little effort to include NSMs in post-ordination training, or to develop them in other ways. He observed significant tensions in relations between some NSMs and their stipendiary colleagues, which sometimes led to the disempowerment and marginalization of NSMs in their own parishes, and recommended that these be addressed by the development of more formal working agreements. Thirty years later, non-stipendiary ministry has changed

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<sup>7</sup> Hodge (1983) 86-90.

<sup>8</sup> Hodge (1983) 87.

a great deal in some ways, and we shall see that much of the picture emerging from the survey is very positive and promising, but all the above points are still raised repeatedly as problems or issues that need further thought.

Since Hodge's report, several smaller, unpublished studies of SSMs have been undertaken or are in progress, but there has been no published attempt to look at the national picture or to recommend ways in which the Church as a whole might make better use of non-stipendiaries.<sup>9</sup> At a time when the reliance of the Church on SSMs is steadily increasing and may soon become critical, this seems an appropriate moment to revisit Hodge's recommendations and suggest some new avenues for exploration in the twenty-first century.

That this project developed at this time was also in part serendipitous. Early in 2010, I wrote an article for the *Church Times* in which I argued that self-supporting Anglican clergy are being neither treated nor deployed as well as they might be, despite the fact that SSMs now form a significant proportion of English clergy, the parish system in particular depends on them, and they have qualities and skills which, if properly used, could strengthen every aspect of our common life and mission.<sup>10</sup>

I received a large number of responses agreeing with my views. Most came from SSMs, some of whom described their own experiences of being neglected, disempowered or marginalized in ministry in ways ranging from the comic to the shocking. One email came from Graham Lewis. My article had called for a national survey to establish what SSMs are actually doing, as a basis for future planning. That's a good idea, said Graham: why not do it?

I had not by any means intended to do it myself. A little investigation established, however, that no such survey was being planned elsewhere, so with the help of Prof. Loveday Alexander and the Dr. Lynda Barley, and the blessing of the Ministry Division, Graham and I set about designing one.

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<sup>9</sup> These studies have not usually been widely distributed, but they include an unpublished qualitative study of NSMs by Geoffrey Squire in the 1980s and a study of NSMs in the diocese of Worcester in 2010 by Jane Fraser, Dean of Associate Ministry, on behalf of the diocese. Pamela Pencof and Alan Jesson are engaged in doctoral research examining aspects of non-stipendiary ministry, while Tom Keighley is researching the ecclesiological implications of worker priesthood.

<sup>10</sup> 29 January 2010, p. 12.

Designing the survey proved to be relatively straightforward. Publicizing it was more difficult. We hoped for the help of diocesan NSM officers, but no list of these exists, so the only recourse was to ring all 67 UK diocesan offices, and that of Europe. Most of the calls went something like this:

‘I’m Teresa Morgan ... survey of SSMs ... do you have an NSM/SSM officer, Dean of Associate Ministry or similar?’

‘A what?’

‘Someone with special oversight of unpaid clergy.’

*Long pause.* ‘The Bishop’s in charge of training.’

‘Not people in training, unpaid clergy.’

*Long pause with confidential muttering.* ‘I’ll put you onto X.’

After I had spoken to everyone in the office, the Bishop’s PA and an archdeacon or two (all of whom were usually very friendly and keen to help), we generally concluded that the diocese had no SSM officer. Eventually, I ascertained that 25 dioceses did have a serving officer (a few more than one), and that two shared one (though one of them seemed not to know it). Across the UK, only three offices knew immediately what I was talking about, that they had an officer *and* who it was. Any doubts I might have had about the institutional invisibility of SSMs were firmly dispelled.

Once a list of SSM officers had been compiled, both they and their diocesan offices did a great deal to publicize the survey, and the response would have been much less good without them. In the course of analyzing responses by diocese, however, I found that not only did dioceses with an SSM officer tend to have a higher response rate than those without, but respondents tended to report themselves as happier. SSM officers, it seems, even if often below the radar, make a real difference.<sup>11</sup>

In total, 1003 people responded to the survey. A few were retired stipendiary clergy who are still working, or former stipendiaries in house-for-duty posts. These

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<sup>11</sup> This observation is based partly on the survey and partly on anecdotal information. Respondents reported being relatively happy in dioceses where SSM officers exist and are known to be active and/or SSMs are well integrated into diocesan processes like CMD and MDR. Of the 22 dioceses with a response rate around or above the national average, only 3 do not have an SSM officer. Of the 12 dioceses with a below-average response rate, 4 reported that they had no SSM officer, 4 were unsure whether they had one and 2 did not respond to either phone calls or emails.

groups highlight the difficulty of defining ‘SSM’ precisely, and both should no doubt be included in any discussion of the deployment of unpaid clergy in general. For the purposes of this survey, however, they were excluded as not being non-stipendiary in a narrow sense. 34 respondents were SSMs holding house-for-duty appointments, and they too were excluded from the bulk of the analysis, as being in effect part-stipendiary.<sup>12</sup> 33 responses came from outside England, and a few contained insufficient data to analyse. This left 858 responses to form the basis of most of the analysis which follows.

Below are presented what seem likely to be the survey’s most significant and useful findings. I have kept the analysis short, rather than presenting all the observations which the data could yield, because the survey was conceived as a practical contribution to the Church’s thinking about its clerical resources rather than an academic exercise. Based on its findings, and on what I believe to be our common aims in ministry and mission, the report concludes by proposing a number of ways in which SSMs might be developed and deployed to best advantage in the future.

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<sup>12</sup> See below, pp. 23-4.



## 2 Selection, training and continuing ministerial development

Some of the most encouraging data to emerge from the survey concern selection, training and ministerial development. In many respects, in these areas, the picture is strikingly different from the one described by Dr. Hodge thirty years ago, and almost entirely for the better.

Respondents overwhelmingly reported being selected for the kind of ministry they offered.<sup>13</sup> Just two aspects of selection caused concern. Several respondents observed that the cutoff age of 50 for those being ordained into stipendiary ministry is interpreted differently by different dioceses, which they feel is unfair.<sup>14</sup> And about 2.5% of respondents reported being given odd, and sometimes frankly discriminatory reasons for being turned down for stipendiary ministry.

‘We need people like you in the world,’ was cited several times as a reason for not ordaining someone to stipendiary ministry. (What kind of people do we need in the world - the able, committed, caring and charismatic? Do we not need those in stipendiary ministry?) ‘Your husband has a stipend, so you don’t need one,’ has been used several times to bar women. (No man reported being turned down for stipendiary ministry because he had a wife in paid work, though I have since heard of one such case.) Other women were barred on the grounds that they were married to clergymen. (No man reported being turned down because he had an ordained wife.) ‘Your husband isn’t a believer,’ was another reason given for not ordaining women as stipendiaries. (No man reported being turned down for having a non-believing wife.) A few women were even told, ‘We have no suitable stipendiary posts for women.’ For a bishop not to wish to ordain women at all is understandable, but there is no obvious rationale for being prepared to ordain women only as non-stipendiaries. It

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<sup>13</sup> This probably exaggerates the fit between vocation and selection to some degree, since what people offer at selection has often been pre-negotiated with their diocese. The survey did not ask what kind of ministry respondents had originally felt called to, nor whether what they offered had changed during discussions with their Bishop or DDO. One or two respondents did report such changes in the comment section.

<sup>14</sup> Already noted as a problem by Hodge (1983) 90.

seems clear that a certain amount of non-theologically-based sexual discrimination is still being practised in the selection process.<sup>15</sup>

A significant number of other respondents were turned down for stipendiary ministry as non-deployable (most of these also women), and we shall return to this below.<sup>16</sup>

Increasingly, stipendiaries and non-stipendiaries are being trained side by side, on both residential and non-residential courses. Many respondents commented on how stimulating and enjoyable their training had been. Since ordination, 87% of respondents have been offered more than a year's continuing ministerial development. (Among those ordained since 2003, the figure is nearly 100%, a dramatic improvement since 1983).

In most dioceses, CMD is organized for stipendiaries and SSMs together. While it is ideal that both groups should be offered the same resources, many SSMs cannot attend sessions held during the working day. Some dioceses recognize this and schedule some meetings in the evenings or at weekends. Others still seem to decide at this point that SSMs do not fit their system, and effectively cease to offer them further development.

Increasingly, SSMs receive regular ministerial development reviews alongside stipendiaries. 63% report being reviewed annually or biennially, in line with national guidelines. A discouraging 23%, however, claim that they are never reviewed at all. Here too there are particular problems for those in paid work. One respondent reported being sent a list of review times by her archdeacon. She replied apologetically that they were all within her working hours. Could they find another time? She never heard from him again. No doubt the archdeacon also wanted to keep his reviews within normal working hours, and perhaps he thought that this person should take a day's holiday to come and see him. In a church, however, which relies so heavily on SSMs, many of whom have paid jobs, there surely needs to be a little more room for negotiation.

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<sup>15</sup> Most of the cases of discrimination against women described dated from before 2000, which suggests that it may be waning.

<sup>16</sup> pp. 16-18.

### 3 Relations between SSMs, deaneries and stipendiary colleagues

94.5% of respondents reported being kept informed of deanery matters, and 93% being invited to meetings, though a few were invited to deanery synods but not chapters. A large number of respondents, however, noted that deanery meetings were still often or always held at times when SSMs with paid jobs could not attend - often despite repeated requests that at least some meetings be moved to evenings or weekends.<sup>17</sup>

In one respondent's former deanery, all clergy were invited, but the Rural Dean would record only stipendiaries as present. Literally, SSMs did not count. There is evidently still some work to do to integrate SSMs into deanery structures, but overall the picture is very encouraging.

The same is true of communication between colleagues within parishes or chaplaincies. The survey received a few sad stories of complete non-communication, but nearly all SSMs reported meeting stipendiary colleagues regularly for prayer, business meetings, reviews and just for pleasure.

All this is very good news and indicates that there has been a great deal of progress in recent years in integrating SSMs into the structures in which they serve. On other fronts, however, the picture is less encouraging.

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<sup>17</sup> The same problem was noted by Hodge (1983) 75-6.

#### 4 Ministerial development in practice

71% of all respondents described themselves as assisting in ministry. Only 13% are responsible for ministry in their parish, chaplaincy etc., and nationally, less than 1% are responsible for a team. Just 0.6% have acted as Rural Dean, and no-one reported having held any higher office.

Even more strikingly, 41% of respondents reported no change in their ministry since ordination. Only 14% have acquired extra responsibilities. Only 12.5% of the great majority in parish ministry have changed parish. 2.5% have fewer responsibilities now than when they were ordained (some due to personal circumstances; others because stipendiary colleagues have prevented them from exercising parts of their ministry).

I thought it likely that these findings were skewed by the fact that 51% of respondents were ordained in 2003 or later, so I re-calculated the figures using only those ordained before 2003. The results, however, are less divergent than one might expect. 20% reported no change in their ministry. 16% that they have more responsibilities, 3% that they have fewer. Only 13% of those in parish ministry have changed parish and only 6% have made any other change.

One could view this as a praiseworthy picture of stability. In principle, it could be the result of a deliberate and carefully thought out policy by dioceses. Such a policy might make sense and would certainly have supporters, but I have not been able to discover that it exists. Meanwhile, the trend in recent years has been for stipendiaries to change post every few years. This, of course, is partly because most clergy have no longer had tenure, and this pattern may change again with the introduction of Common Tenure. But the pattern of recent years has also been justified as good both for clergy and for those they serve. If it can be good for stipendiaries and their congregations to have a change every few years, the same could surely be said of non-stipendiaries.

The lack of any policy, and the often-repeated comment by respondents that they feel ignored, overlooked or under-used, suggests strongly that the current picture is not one of stability but of stagnation. Far too often, it seems, dioceses train ordinands - at considerable expense - ordain them and place them in a parish or chaplaincy, and then simply forget about them. This surely cannot be the best use of

resources at a time when the Church has so many projects and aspirations for mission and ministry, and never enough clergy to lead and help enact them.

The impression that most SSMs are placed in a post and then simply left there indefinitely is strengthened by the reports of those whose ministry has changed. 70% said they themselves initiated the change - usually because they felt called, sometimes because their circumstances had changed, and sometimes because they were unhappy where they were. Only 10% reported that a positive lead had come from somewhere else in the Church. In less than half of all cases did the change involve a review with a bishop or archdeacon. The picture is inescapably one of dioceses, once SSMs are trained, taking little or no practical interest in how they might be further developed or deployed.

One profoundly sad theme to emerge from stories of both stagnation and change is the number of SSMs who feel they have been badly treated by stipendiaries, most often incumbents in parishes. A clear pattern emerges from these accounts. An SSM has a good experience of ordination training and a happy relationship with his or her training incumbent. Then the incumbent moves on, or the SSM changes parish, and relations with the new incumbent are much more difficult.

Respondents report not being allowed to take services; not being allowed to preach for years on end; not being allowed any pastoral role; not being consulted or kept informed of what is going on; being given permission to develop new initiatives which are then shelved without explanation.<sup>18</sup> 'I did more when I was a layman/LLM/curate in training' is a common refrain. 'Why did God bother to call me if I wasn't going to be used?' asks one. Some people have taken their difficulties to their bishop or archdeacon and been allowed to move. Others have been told to stop complaining. No-one reported a case where their bishop or archdeacon had taken up the problem effectively with the stipendiary.

A few SSMs suspect that stipendiaries feel threatened by them, especially if the SSM is the older or more experienced priest, or has a high-flying secular job. Some blame the training of stipendiaries, which does not seem, even nowadays, to equip them to work effectively with colleagues. ('As a professional in - ,' comments one respondent, 'I am used to talented people with little in common having to work together, and I am appalled by the inability of some clergy to do so.') But most of the

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<sup>18</sup> The same problems were observed by Hodge (1983) 56-8, 65.

trouble is thought to stem from stipendiaries' low opinion of SSMs as a class. 'I do feel that paid clergy do not take SSMs seriously,' comments one respondent, 'and view us as amateurs not to be trusted.' 'Since moving from stipendiary to non-stipendiary,' says another, 'I have become aware of the disdain with which some stipendiary clergy view SSMs.' Several have been asked, 'Are you a proper priest or an NSM?' 'I have been ordained for three months,' says one person sadly, 'and am already beginning to feel second class.' Almost all SSMs are used to hearing themselves denigrated as hobby priests, weekenders or volunteers. (To describe unpaid clergy as volunteers or hobbyists is not only condescending but theologically indefensible. All clergy are *called* to their vocation. No ordained person is a volunteer.)<sup>19</sup>

Without hearing from both sides, of course, one cannot know for certain what goes on in any working relationship, and if stipendiaries were surveyed, a very different picture might emerge of their relationships with SSMs. But so many SSMs report having difficult relationships with stipendiaries, with such obvious pain and frustration, that the issue cannot be ignored.

The most positive responses came from those who have created a unique package of activities for themselves (which might, for instance, include teaching, writing, spiritual direction or acting as some kind of adviser to a diocese or division), and those who are in charge of a parish (generally as part of a group). Some, but not all dioceses currently allow SSMs to look after a parish within a group (on which more below); it is a model which surely deserves to be more widely tried. One respondent captured the mood of many: '[W]orking as a full time associate vicar with day to day responsibility for a parish has been a huge joy.'

Creating one's own package is fine if one is that kind of person and has a particular ministry, but it is not for everyone. Moreover, dioceses which want to make the most of their clerical resources are not serving their own interests best by leaving it to SSMs to come up with their own ministry. They would fulfil more of their ministerial needs by thinking strategically about how best to use non-stipendiary clergy alongside stipendiaries.

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<sup>19</sup> The same problems were noted by Hodge (1983) 73-4.

When the best use of SSMs is discussed, four difficulties are regularly raised. SSMs are disproportionately over retirement age. They do not give enough hours a week to the Church to be really useful. They lack leadership potential. And they are not deployable. The evidence of the survey is that not one of these supposed difficulties is based on fact.

25% of all respondents report that they work more than 30 hours per week for the Church: nearly or actually full-time. 20% work 20-30 hours per week and another 20% work 15-20 hours. Only 16% work 10 hours per week or fewer for the Church (most of whom have full-time jobs elsewhere).

Most respondents were not over 65 (to invoke that decreasingly relevant retirement age). Nor were most of those who work full-time or nearly full-time for the Church over 65. 80% of all respondents were under 65. Of these, 22% reported working over 30 hours per week for the Church. Just under 20% work 20-30 hours and 20% work 15-20 hours.

This means that almost 18% of all respondents under 65 work nearly or actually full-time for the Church. Over 40% work more than 20 hours per week for the Church. To put it another way: 32.5% of all respondents are under 65 *and* work more than 20 hours per week for the Church. This is a very significant resource and one which deserves to be much better used.

Moreover, only 24% of those under 65 have a full-time paid job, while another 24% report a significant caring commitment. This suggests that if dioceses had a cogent plan for making use of non-stipendiaries, they might be able to persuade some SSMs to offer even more hours per week than they currently do.

Are these figures likely to be skewed by low rates of return from those over 65 or in full-time work? There is no reason to think so. This was a web-based survey, but the web is hardly *terra incognita* to over-65s these days. The paper version was available to anyone whose technology failed or was non-existent.

It is possible that some SSMs with full-time secular jobs were too busy to fill in the survey. The same applies, however, to those working full-time for the Church. (One respondent commented that her husband, also an SSM, was too busy to fill in the survey because he was running two parishes single-handedly.) Overall, there is no

reason to assume that these figures for those working significant numbers of hours a week for the Church are unrepresentative.

Are SSMs, though, ‘not leadership material’? Respondents found it hard to take this idea seriously. The majority of SSMs do or have done a paid job. They work in everything from banking to teaching, medicine to the armed services, accountancy to the law, scientific research to the civil service, business to the aviation industry... and many of them are leaders in their professions. In addition, SSMs - especially if they are ordained later in life - often have very extensive experience of Church life outside the priesthood. They have done anything, and sometimes everything, from church planting to fund-raising, teaching to leading retreats and pilgrimages, organizing the music to everyday administration. They are exceptionally well prepared for the practical aspects of leading a Church community.

They are equally well prepared for the distinctively priestly aspects. SSMs are increasingly trained alongside stipendiaries, so theologically and spiritually they are formed in the same ways. A substantial minority of SSMs have run parishes during interregna, which are frequently up to two years long and sometimes more. A number of respondents commented wryly that when an incumbent left their parish or group, the diocese was happy to leave them to run it single-handed for months or years - only to go back to treating them as ‘not leadership material’ when a new stipendiary incumbent was appointed.

It will be interesting to see how, if at all, new selection criteria affect this picture. Ordinands will be classified as potential incumbents (who will have strong leadership qualities), assistants or local clergy. In theory, people in any category will be able to serve paid or unpaid, and if this works in practice, the absurd assumption that anyone who is unpaid is incompetent will disappear. SSMs will wait with interest to see whether this happens, or whether selectors will find it difficult in practice to relinquish the association between having leadership potential and being paid.

It seems likely, if there were no other reason to differentiate between SSMs and stipendiaries, that it would still make a decisive difference to many dioceses that SSMs are, in their view, non-deployable.<sup>20</sup> However, the binary classification ‘deployable/non-deployable’ is almost certainly inappropriate these days, and more

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<sup>20</sup> Hodge (1983) 70-72 shows that the assumption that SSMs will be licensed to and remain indefinitely in their home parishes has been strong since the first SSMs were ordained.



unhelpful than helpful to dioceses. Granted that many SSMs do not want, at the point of ordination, for personal or family reasons, to change diocese in the foreseeable future: the same is true of many stipendiaries.<sup>21</sup>

It is worth remembering that although the Church holds a theory of stipendiary deployability, in practice it rarely deploys anyone after their first curacy. Almost all posts are advertized and clergy are invited to apply for them. Many stipendiaries choose, in practice, to deploy themselves within quite a small geographical area for years at a time - for many of the same (wholly understandable and appropriate) personal and family reasons as SSMs.

(Non-)deployability is in practice a sliding scale rather than a polarity. Some clergy, both stipendiary and non-stipendiary, do not want to move far. Some are happy move certain distances but not hundreds of miles. Some will move almost anywhere.

The difficulty with SSMs is not that they are not deployable; it is that dioceses do not include them in their planning. If, as part of an overall strategy for clergy deployment, dioceses identified the places where non-stipendiary hours were most needed, they might find that SSMs were very willing to transfer their ministry there. If that happened, it would also create more opportunities for SSMs to develop their ministry. Dioceses would be making better use of their human resources, and deployability would not be an issue.

Even in cases where SSMs do not want to move from where they are living, they can still, in the age of the car, be effectively deployable across quite a large territory. In practice, this already happens to some extent with both SSMs and stipendiaries. When, for instance, a stipendiary friend of mine was priest in charge of a city centre church in one of our biggest cities a few years ago, the house that went with the living was several miles away. Incumbents with twelve parishes can only live in one of them, and the others may be widely scattered. Although the stereotype of SSMs is that they minister in their home parish, many, in practice, live some distance from where they are licensed.

It may be that some SSMs will feel they can minister best by staying in their local area, perhaps for many years at a time. If that is the right thing for them to do, however, it should surely be as part of a diocesan strategy, and not just because the

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<sup>21</sup> 13% of those ordained before 2003 have changed diocese at some point.

diocese never thinks to do anything else with them. At the same time, that model of local ministry - which has many virtues - needs to be weighed up against what the diocese as a whole most needs its clergy to be doing now, and where.

One of the most surprising and, to the designers, saddening results of the survey was how few respondents saw themselves as having much, if any ministry outside the formal structures of the Church. This has some claim to be one of the survey's most significant findings, and one which, if it prompts a response, has the potential to make a substantial difference to the future of the Church.

59% of respondents said that they had no ministry outside the Church. Of those who did, 32% said their ministry was primarily church-based; only 20% that it was primarily non-church-based. Only 12% would call themselves an MSE or worker priest. Less than 1% reported that they had ever been involved with fresh expressions of Church (though this number may increase as fresh expressions grow and gain momentum).<sup>22</sup>

Those who did report ministering outside church did so in many different ways, including at work, through personal contacts and social networks, via the internet, by serving on committees, and through volunteering. Their ministry was equally varied, from sharing the gospel in groups or one-to-one, to praying with and for others, formal or informal counselling, or taking regular and occasional offices. MSEs, in particular, see every part of their lives and work as witnessing to the gospel.

This list gives just a taste of the great opportunity which is currently being almost entirely missed by the Church. Most SSMs spend much or most of their time outside formal church structures. They are, together with lay people, the natural missionaries to our society. They have far greater opportunities than most stipendiary clergy for spreading the gospel in the secular world.

The Church, however, does almost nothing to prepare SSMs and lay people for this ministry, to support and encourage them in it, or to provide resources for their development. A number of respondents attested what anecdotal evidence also suggests, that it is rare for any stipendiary to ask what the ministry of an MSE is at work, or how it is going. 'For all the emphasis there was on "kingdom theology"

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<sup>22</sup> This picture seems to have worsened since the 1976 survey of NSMs by W. S. Smith for ACCM (*An Honorary Ministry*, ACCM Occasional Paper no. 8 (1977) 13, quoted in Hodge (1983) 56), which found that that NSMs in paid work saw their ministry as well-balanced between their place of work and (normally) their parish.

when I was doing my training,’ writes one, ‘the ecclesiastical establishment seems not to be particularly interested in the agenda of the world and using it as a starting point...’ ‘Selection was a nightmare,’ says another. ‘The selectors didn’t understand MSE ... weird really as [his professional colleagues] understood it straight away and were fully supportive.’

Both SSMs and the Church as a whole have to take responsibility for this missed opportunity. It is a great pity that more SSMs do not think of their ministry as extending beyond the formal bounds of the Church. It is also a sad omission that the Church does not encourage them.

If the Church cares as much about mission as it regularly claims, it is time it started recognizing, supporting and equipping the missionaries it could already have. A good start would be to commission some of those SSMs and MSEs who do see a large part of their ministry as lying outside formal church structures, to produce some resources for both clerical and lay use.

On the same subject, it was also sad to see how few respondents belonged to any society for SSMs (only 18%), or to CHRISM (only 4%), the society for all those, ordained and lay, in secular ministry. More than one respondent observed that they did not know support groups for SSMs existed until the survey asked about them. Local groups are no doubt one of the best ways for SSMs to support each other. The mission statement of CHRISM, ‘To help ourselves and others to celebrate the presence of God and the holiness of life in our work, and to see and tell the Christian story there,’ will resonate with anyone who has a ministry in the secular world, and CHRISM’s annual conferences and quarterly journal offer perhaps the best and most creative support available in the U.K. for ministers in secular employment.

The absolute numbers of SSMs in different dioceses, and their numbers as a proportion of diocesan clergy, vary quite widely. It seems likely *a priori* that the ways in which dioceses are able to deploy SSMs will depend to some extent on how many they have, and the hours their SSMs can offer. I have therefore broken down some of the responses to the survey to give sample figures for dioceses with different numbers and proportions of SSMs.

Absolute numbers are less significant than proportional ones. Sodor and Man, according to the most recent figures, has only ten SSMs - but they form 43% of all diocesan clergy. Oxford has 249, forming a surprisingly similar 39% of diocesan clergy. Across England, there are 10 dioceses in which SSMs constitute less than 20% of all clergy, 20 in which they form 20-29%, 10 in which they form 30-39% and 3 in which they form 40% or more. In 22% of dioceses, therefore, SSMs form less than 20% of clergy. In 60% of dioceses, however, SSMs form what we might regard as a typical 25-40% of clergy.

I sampled, at random, Chester (where SSMs form 16% of diocesan clergy), Rochester (19%), London (22%), York (26%) and Oxford (39%), to see how far results from these dioceses were in line with national statistics. The results are set out in Appendix 1. As one might expect, the figures in each case bracket the national figure, but in most cases they do not diverge so significantly as to make the national figure unuseable.

For example, 71% of SSMs nationally assist in ministry. Across the sampled dioceses, the figures range from 44-73%. (The figure of 44% comes from Chester, but an unusually large number of respondents from Chester did not fill in this question, so that figure may be less reliable than some; across the other sampled dioceses, the figures range from 57.5-73%.) Nationally, 14% of SSMs are responsible for a parish or a team; across the sampled dioceses the figures range from 9-20%. Nationally, 41% of SSMs reported that their ministry had not changed. Across the sampled dioceses, the figures range from 30-46%.

Nationally, 25% of SSMs work more than 30 hours per week. Across the sampled dioceses, Rochester was an outlier with just 7%; the others ranged from 20.5%-33%. Nationally, 20% of SSMs work 20-30 hours per week; across the

sampled diocese the figures were 10-33%. Nationally, the largest number of SSMs are in the 55-65 age range: 48%. The same was true for the sampled dioceses, most of whose 55-65-year-olds formed 39-52% of SSMs (Rochester was again unusual with 77%).

These examples suggest that although no diocese will conform exactly to the national profile, in most respects, they will be similar enough to be able to profit from comments and suggestions based on national statistics. No diocese in England, at least, seems to be so different in profile from the English Church as a whole that the observations and proposals made in this report are irrelevant to it.<sup>23</sup>

Another factor which might make a difference to dioceses' deployment of SSMs, is whether most SSMs are based in towns or in rural areas. This was not a question the survey asked, but the information would be easily collected by individual dioceses.

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<sup>23</sup> This is more true than it was when Hodge reported, as diocesan policies towards ordaining SSMs are now less varied.

As noted above, for the purposes of the main analysis, only the responses of SSMs serving in England were used.

Of the remaining responses, a handful, as noted, were from retired stipendiaries. This is a significant group for the maintenance of parish ministry in particular, in which many retired stipendiaries continue to work many hours a week. It is also, though, the group to whom the proposals at the end of this report are perhaps least relevant. Retired stipendiaries have typically spent many years in hardworking service, often in increasingly difficult conditions. It is surely appropriate that they be supported in continuing to minister wherever and in whatever form they are called, but it would presumably not be appropriate for dioceses to seek to deploy them as they might current stipendiaries or SSMs under retirement age.

This raises the question whether SSMs over the normal retirement age for stipendiaries should be treated the same as retired stipendiaries, or as younger SSMs. This is no doubt a matter for negotiation within individual dioceses or between bishops and individual clergy.

About 25 respondents (whether out of choice or because technology failed them) gave too little information to make it possible to include their responses. 64 respondents, however, were in house-for-duty posts. For the purposes of the main survey, it was decided to regard holding a house for duty as being part-stipendiary. This group, however, is important as holding posts which are not only increasingly useful to dioceses, but which are often - and might appropriately be more often - open to SSMs.

Of the 64 house-for-duty respondents, 34 were selected and ordained as SSMs and had only previously served as SSMs, while 30 had previously served as stipendiaries. The SSMs were concentrated in a few dioceses: Oxford (6), Bath (5), Gloucester (5) and York (4). Two responded from Salisbury, and one each from several other dioceses.

It is surely worth encouraging more dioceses to allow more SSMs to take up these posts. It was noted above that some of the happiest and most fulfilled respondents to the survey were those who were in charge of their own parish, whether as part of a team or as a single-parish benefice. SSM house-for-duty priests were

similarly content with their situation, and were working hard in it. 17 (50%) reported working more than 30 hours a week, and another two more than 20 hours. All but two were under 65, which means that (of this very small sample), 47% of SSMs doing house-for-duty work over 30 hours per week *and* are under 65.

Of the whole house-for-duty group, 40 (66%) said that it had been their own idea to take up this form of ministry. Only 6 people said the idea had come from somewhere else in the church (from their bishop in each case).

As noted above, there were only 32 respondents to the survey from Wales, Scotland and Ireland (only three of whom would call themselves MSEs or worker priests). These respondents tended to be older than their English equivalents: 14 (47%) were over 65. Even so, 20% were both under 65 and worked more than 30 hours per week for the Church. Here too, then, SSMs are offering a substantial number of hours weekly to their dioceses.

Respondents from Wales, Scotland and Ireland also align well with English SSMs in the kind of posts they hold and the extent to which they have changed role. 66% assist in a parish. 12.5% are responsible for a church or chaplaincy. 6% have no formal role. None is engaged in a fresh expression of Church.

19% have lost responsibilities over time (mostly, however, due to age). Only 9% have acquired more responsibilities. Only 6% have changed parish, and only 12% have made any other change (though here again, the sample is extremely small).

In a few respects, the treatment of SSMs in these provinces seems, on the evidence of the survey, to be lagging behind that of SSMs in England. Two-thirds said they had never had a ministerial development review. Nearly half said they never met their closest colleagues for a business meeting, and hardly anyone met their colleagues for any purpose more than quarterly. On the other hand, respondents from four of these dioceses reported that they had an SSM officer and heard from them occasionally or regularly. This is mysterious, since according to their diocesan offices, no diocese in Wales, Scotland or Ireland has an SSM officer or similar. (When ringing their diocesan offices, I was told in every case that the diocese did not have enough staff to have an officer for SSMs.)

From the information generated by the survey, the rate of ordination of SSMs in Wales, Scotland and Ireland looks rather flat compared with that in England. 2 respondents were ordained in the 1950s, 1 in the 60s, five in the 70s, four in the 80s, eight in the 90s and nine since 2000. This is strikingly different from the response



pattern in England, where the large number of respondents ordained since 2000 reflects the steadily increasing numbers of SSMs ordained. Is ordination to non-stipendiary ministry less encouraged in Ireland, Scotland and Wales than in England? The figures, however, are so small that they may not be significant.

One or two of the questions asked by the survey proved less interesting in the event than the designers hoped, or proved difficult to analyse. The great majority of respondents were selected, trained and ordained in close succession; in the few cases where the process took longer, it was nearly always because events in their own or their families' lives had intervened - illness, or the loss of a job, or the need to move house and diocese. Respondents trained in all the ways one might expect: most often over two or three years on part-time courses but sometimes (especially in the early days or in the last few years) at residential colleges.

Respondents were asked to fill in a large table listing all the different posts and responsibilities they had held since ordination and in what order. At the end there was a comment box for people to add activities not listed in the table. A number of respondents found this complicated and did not fill it in, or did so in a way which made doubtful sense (such as listing a title curacy as anything from their second to tenth post). Others did not manage to find and mark all the categories relevant to them (several complained that there was no way of marking that they had worked for the diocesan administration, which in fact there was in the table, as well as via the comment box). Of those who did answer the question successfully, a large proportion were ordained relatively recently, so had only one post to report. It was therefore difficult to derive anything more than limited and broad-brush conclusions from this question. Among the trends which did seem detectable, I have already noted how few people have held a chaplaincy at any point, acted as the lead minister in their parish, fulfilled a diocesan role or been involved with fresh expressions of Church.

Respondents were also invited to list how many services of different kinds they have taken in the last year, and how many sermons they have preached. The results for England as a whole and for some individual dioceses are listed in Appendix 1, but I have not been able to make much of them. As one might expect from the number of hours respondents work for the Church, coupled with their usually assistant status, they take, on average, quite a large number of communion services (45), and preach quite a large number of Sunday or festival sermons (34). On

the same basis, however, they take a perhaps surprisingly small number of home or hospital communions (9). Respondents tend to say the daily offices in church either many times a year (100-150), or never, depending on whether they are in charge of a parish and whether they also have a paid job.

The most striking figures here are perhaps the low average numbers of baptisms (6), weddings and wedding blessings (4), funerals (8) and memorial services (1) which SSMS take annually (these numbers would be a good deal lower still without a handful of individuals who reckon their annual baptisms, weddings and funerals in dozens). These are perhaps offices which incumbents, whether stipendiary or non-stipendiary, feel that it is appropriate for them, rather than their assistants, to perform.<sup>24</sup>

A number of respondents to the survey had been ordained as stipendiaries, and moved into non-stipendiary ministry later. The group this survey did not catch, was the significant number who, having been ordained as non-stipendiaries, have subsequently become stipendiary. This group has been studied recently by Lynda Barley for the Ministry Division, and it will be interesting to set the two studies side by side, and see what causes non-stipendiaries to move into stipendiary ministry and what their experience is of the change.<sup>25</sup>

It has been suggested that this quantitative survey might be supplemented by a number of qualitative studies based on in-depth interviews. This would certainly be desirable if it were primarily a piece of academic research. It would, however, take considerably more time, and although it might illuminate further some of the survey's findings, it would not be likely to change them. (The most interesting qualitative research to be done, on the basis of the survey's findings, might be a series of studies of relationships between stipendiaries and non-stipendiaries within parishes, to

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<sup>24</sup> I have not, however, compared these figures with national average numbers of these offices per annum.

<sup>25</sup> On the basis of the first decade of non-stipendiary ministry, Hodge (1983) 62-8 forecast that c. 36% of those ordained as NSMs below the age of 57 would become stipendiary within 8 years, most because they were dissatisfied with various aspects of non-stipendiary ministry and/or they wanted to become more involved in parish ministry. Barley's study, 'Understanding clergy patterns of service 2007/8', research paper for the Ministry Division (2008) finds that recently the proportion has been around 22%.

examine when such relationships work well, when they do not, how problems are solved and what happens when they are not.)

The aim of this survey, as I have noted, was to offer a snapshot of the activities of current SSMs and the time and resources they give to the Church, in order to corroborate or qualify what Hodge's 1983 report and more recent anecdotal evidence suggested, that SSMs have a great deal to offer their dioceses and might, as a group, be better used than they tend to be at present. Thanks to the excellent response rate, and the time and care respondents took in filling in the questionnaire, this aim has, I believe, been well fulfilled. My hope is that dioceses will find in the survey a sound basis for reflecting on the way they deploy SSMs in the near future. I doubt that the survey would form a better basis for such reflection by the addition of case studies, so I have not included any here.

It may sound from parts of this report as if the predominant tone of responses to the survey was grumpy. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. The words which recurred most often in the final comment box were ‘privilege’ and ‘joy’. One respondent speaks for many: ‘I feel passionate about my ministry and how privileged I am to be able to draw alongside people and minister to them in a wide variety of contexts.’ It was heartening to find that despite the difficulties many experience, nearly all respondents had a powerful sense that they were working out their vocation.

It was equally clear, however, that nearly all respondents thought they could answer their call better if their diocese took more account of what they had to offer, in time, gifts and expertise. One of the commonest observations from people who were senior in their secular professions was that the way the Church handles its human resources would not be acceptable elsewhere. ‘My experience is that HR issues are badly handled.’ ‘[S]tructures of support, challenge and accountability are either non-existent or astonishingly bad.’ ‘I have been disappointed to discover the extent to which the Church of England is reluctant to admit to the gifts which mature SSMs can bring to their ministry from their professional backgrounds....’ Surely the time has come to look to some of the better practices of the secular professions to help us make better use of our clerical resources.

## 10 Conclusion: the way forward?

If non-stipendiary ministry did not exist today, we should probably be discussing whether to develop it. It is a tribute to the Church that it already exists and that so many non-stipendiaries are in service, wanting nothing more than to use their time, energy and talents to further every aspect of our shared life and mission. The need now is for a strategy to use them better, to enable the Church to fulfil more of its mission more effectively in the years ahead.

This, to work well, needs a certain amount - but not a prohibitive amount - of thought and planning. As a starting point, some proposals under various headings are set out below.

### **a) Information**

i) Every diocese could usefully conduct an audit of its non-stipendiary clergy. How much time does each person offer to the Church in their present post? What qualifications and experience do they have? Who would be willing to move to another post if a need were identified? Who might be prepared to give more time if they knew it would be well spent? Who could head up a new initiative or develop new resources?

ii) Most, if not all dioceses now keep a register of SSMs and where they are licensed.<sup>26</sup> It would also benefit dioceses to keep a record of how long SSMs have served in their current post, how many hours per week they serve, and what distinctive skills they have that the Church might be able to use.

### **b) Selection, training, CMD**

i) Hodge (1983) 90 recommended that all dioceses should apply the cutoff age for being ordained to stipendiary ministry in the same way. They still do not, but it is surely desirable that they should. Not only would it be fairer to those seeking

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<sup>26</sup> Noted as a desideratum by Hodge (1983) 87.

ordination; it would prevent for the future those difficult situations, reported by several respondents, which arise when an individual accepted for stipendiary ministry in one diocese moves to another in which they are not eligible to serve as a stipendiary, or vice versa.

ii) Revised selection criteria which have recently been adopted, refer to the leadership and other vocational qualities of candidates rather than to their proposed stipendiary status. This creates a significant opportunity for the better training and deployment of SSMs. If selectors recognize that leadership qualities do not necessarily go with the need for a stipend, we may get rid at a stroke of the unjustified and unhelpful assumption that all SSMs lack leadership potential, and begin to train appropriately gifted and qualified SSMs for a much wider range of roles. It is vital that selectors recognize the implications of future decisions in this area for ministry as a whole.

iii) The new selection criteria should automatically allow both potential stipendiaries and non-stipendiaries with 'incumbent potential' to train full time. It will be important at the same time to continue to ensure that part-time courses give all future clergy the best possible training, not least because some of those who train part time while in paid jobs, may in the future become available for full-time ministry and may have leadership potential.

iv) Common Tenure obliges all clergy to participate in continuing ministerial development. All dioceses will therefore need to make it physically possible for SSMs to do so - in particular by holding some CMD sessions outside normal working hours.

**c) Development and oversight**

i) There is a significant correlation between dioceses in which SSMs are relatively well developed and deployed and relatively happy, and dioceses with NSM/SSM officers *vel sim*. Every diocese would therefore benefit from having at least one SSM officer.

ii) Anecdotal evidence suggests that the most active and effective SSM officers are those who are, or have been, SSMs themselves. At least one SSM officer in every diocese should ideally have personal experience as an SSM.

iii) There has been in the past a bishop with special oversight of SSMs nationally, an office which seems to have lapsed. It may be helpful at this point to reinstate it.

iv) Since Common Tenure obliges all clergy to participate in regular ministerial development reviews, all dioceses will need to make it possible for SSMs to do so - if necessary by holding some MDR sessions outside normal working hours.

v) Among those who conduct ministerial development reviews with *both* stipendiaries *and* SSMs, there should be some with experience of non-stipendiary ministry and/or ministry in secular employment. It may be also appropriate to involve the employers of those ordained as MSEs.<sup>27</sup>

vi) The introduction of Common Tenure offers an opportunity to put relationships between SSMs and the stipendiaries they work with on a more professional footing. In particular, SSMs should have an agreed written statement of the terms of their service, which is appropriate and enforceable. Stories of stipendiaries preventing non-stipendiary colleagues from fulfilling core aspects of their vocation like teaching and pastoral work, or keeping them uninformed or uninvolved in the day-to-day running of their cure, cannot continue to be acceptable. Agreements will need to be reviewed and renewed, for instance when a new stipendiary arrives in a parish where a non-stipendiary is already serving.

**d) Deployment**

i) Hodge (1983) 79 noted that dioceses did not include NSMs in their planning, pastoral reorganizations etc. They still do not, but the twenty-first century Church can

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<sup>27</sup> NB only a small proportion of those who regard themselves as MSEs were ordained as such, and it is the employers of these who might appropriately be involved in their reviews.

no longer afford not to take account of its non-stipendiary resources when planning for future ministry and mission.

When dioceses are planning the distribution of clerical posts, they might, for instance, include the unpaid hours they would like in any particular place or initiative, alongside the paid. Suppose, for example, that a diocese can afford to fund two-and-a-half stipendiary posts in a town centre with four churches. It might identify an additional need for, say, two full-time non-stipendiary posts, or one full-time post and two of 20 hours each. The scope of such posts could be defined, described and advertized, and SSMs invited to apply. If that process did not lead to an appointment, the diocese could identify potentially suitable SSMs from their existing resources and call them to fill the diocese's need.

Such a process would take a certain amount of time and work to design design, but it would have three significant benefits. It would enable dioceses to make better use of all their clerical resources. It would enable SSMs to develop their ministry by moving periodically between well-defined posts. And by giving SSMs posts and roles defined as stipendiary posts are, it would help to foster respect and good working relations between SSMs and stipendiaries.

ii) A number of respondents to the survey thought that SSMs should be able to apply for the same vacancies as stipendiaries and that parishes etc. should be 'stipend-blind' when making appointments. This would clearly be difficult, if not impossible to enact systematically, given that there must always be enough posts available, of enough different kinds, to support and develop the ministries of stipendiary clergy. There might, however, be room at the margins for some posts to be designated either stipendiary or non-stipendiary. It may be, too, that the underlying concerns of respondents who made this point would be met if there were other opportunities among non-stipendiary posts for SSMs to develop their ministry.<sup>28</sup>

iii) Instead of the current model which assumes that stipendiaries are deployable and non-stipendiaries are not, dioceses should recognize that deployability is variable

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<sup>28</sup> A number of respondents also expressed frustration that their expenses were never paid and that, unlike stipendiaries, they were not allowed to keep fees from occasional offices (this was also a cause of unhappiness when Hodge reported (198 3) 75-6).



and relative. Many SSMs who cannot move outside the diocese may be able and willing to move or travel within it.

For their part, SSMs must be prepared to be deployed where they are most needed around their diocese.

iv) SSMs should be able to develop their gifts and skills and test their vocations periodically in new ways. In particular, they should, if appropriately qualified and experienced, be allowed to run a parish within a group, or a group, single-handedly; to act as priest-in-charge or team rector; to take a house for duty post or lead a chaplaincy or fresh expressions initiative.

Some SSMs might be prepared to specialize - for instance, in running interregna in parishes where there is no-one locally to hold the fort. (Anecdotally, I understand that at least one diocese has trained some SSMs to manage interregna.)

v) There is no reason in principle why SSMs with appropriate qualifications and experience should not serve in more senior positions: as archdeacons, cathedral deans, bishops or archbishops. Increasing numbers of SSMs are likely to have such qualifications and experience in the years to come.

**e) Resources**

i) The Church nationally could usefully commission and distribute more resources to enable people (both ordained and lay) to minister beyond the institutions of the Church. SSMs and MSEs are likely to be better placed to produce such resources than stipendiaries.

To implement these proposals would take some practical commitment on all sides. If, however, dioceses want to sustain and develop their ministry and mission, making more creative use of SSMs is one of their best hopes. If, at the same time, SSMs aspire to be better used and integrated into their dioceses' thinking, they must be willing to serve the needs of the Church: to go where they are needed and to do what is needed.

Above all, if all parties were prepared to move forward on a basis something like that which I have outlined, the presence and work of the Church in every part of the country, and in every area of life, might be strengthened, widened and enriched beyond our most optimistic current projections and hopes. It is surely a vision worth working for.

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## Appendix 1: Some statistics and graphs drawn from responses

Question	England	Chester	London	Oxford	Rochester	York
<b>CURRENT POST?</b>						
assist	71%	44%	60%	67%	73%	57.5%
responsible	13%	15%	13%	12%	20%	9%
resp. for team	1%	0	1%	1%	0	0
chaplain etc.	11%	7%	9%	12%	7%	9%
fresh expressions	1%	3.5%	1%	0	0	0
rural dean etc.	0.5%	3.5%	0	2%	0	0
no formal role	3%					3%
<b>HAS YOUR MINISTRY CHANGED?</b>						
No	41%	30%	41%	31%	40%	46%
more responsib.	14%	22%	6%	25%	13%	12%
less responsib.	2.5%	0	0	2%	7%	0
changed parish	12.5%	30%	10%	16%	20%	12%
changed diocese	4.5%	0	4%	4%	0	6%
parish-chapl.	2.5%	0	3%	4%	0	3%
work-parish	2%	0	9%	1%	0	3%
SM-SSM	7%					
SSM-SM	1%					
other	9.5%					
<b>WHAT CAUSED YOUR MINISTRY TO CHANGE?</b>						
my lead: called	12%	33%	9%	28%	20%	32%
my lead: circs	6%					
my lead: unhappy	3%					
my lead: other	6%					
lead from Church	10%	11%	7%	11%	27%	21%
other						
<b>WAS THERE A REVIEW?</b>						
dioc/suff/archd	40%	37%	25%	30%	20%	36%
none	27%					
<b>AGE</b>						
under 35	England	Chester	London	Oxford	Rochester	York
	0.5%	3.5%	0	1%	0	0
35-45	6%	11%	18%	5%	0	12%
45-55	20%	22%	26%	11%	27%	24%
55-65	48%	52%	40%	42%	77%	39%
66+	25%	11%	15%	40%	7%	27%

#### HOURS WORKED FOR THE CHURCH

up to 10	16%	7%	20.5%	17%	13%	12%
10-15	19%	18.5%	38%	14%	27%	27%
15-20	20%	18.5%	12%	23%	40%	15%
20-30	20%	33%	10%	18%	13%	15%
31+	25%	22%	20.5%	26.5%	7%	33%

#### HOURS WORKED BY THOSE UNDER 65

30+ hours	18%	18.5%	19%	13%	7%	15%
20+ hours	40%	44%	30%	23%	27%	22%

#### SIGNIFICANT MINISTRY OUTSIDE FORMAL CHURCH STRUCTURES?

Yes	41%	41%	45.5%	31%	40%	42%
No	59%	59%	44%	65%	60%	51%

#### IF YES TO ABOVE, IS MINISTRY PRIMARILY

church-based	32%	27%	7%	38%	33%	18%
non-church-b.	20%	27%	29%	19%	17%	3%
mixed	47%	45%	61%	35%	50%	15%

#### CONTEXT?

Work	66%
personal contacts	26%
social networks	16%
internet	3%
other	27% (very varied)

Most people skipped this question; It was not possible to extract meaningful data for individual dioceses.

#### IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU EXERCISE MINISTRY?

	England
Share	29%
gospel in public share	37%
gospel one-to-one	
eucharistic prayer	24.5%
prayer with others	46%
prayer for others	45%
formal counselling	10%

informal counselling	62.5%
absolution	15%
occ. offices	31%
practical work	46%
admin.	34%
other (spiritual direction, school assistant, work, pastoral, post-bereavement counselling)	