**Support**

It is essential that you are able to establish and maintain support systems that will sustain you in ministry. This may include, but is not limited to:

**Spiritual Accompaniment**

The diocese holds a list of those who are trained and accountable in this ministry. Contact Jane Hood for the list: jane.hood@chester.anglican.org

**Pastoral Supervision**

Supervision outside of your immediate context may be available. If you are interested in this please contact the Head of Counselling Services, Peter Mackriell: peter.mackriell@chester.anglican.org

**Diocesan Counselling and the Inter-Diocesan Counselling Service**

Counselling is available free of charge to clergy and members of churches within the diocese.

[For information on the Diocesan Counselling Service click here.](https://www.chester.anglican.org/outreach/counselling/counselling-1637.php)

[For information on the Inter-Diocesan Counselling Service click here.](https://interdiocesancounsellingservice.org.uk/)

**Clergy Support Groups**

The Diocese run a series of confidential and supportive groups for clergy. For more information [click here](https://www.chester.anglican.org/clergy-support-group.php).

**Financial Support**

The [Clergy Support Trust](https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw3f6HBhDHARIsAD_i3D-eo2AO01yLIvXO5yD8NUwU4SL1AP3dXR1btfjaS5mifgxK9k1N2C4aAvYoEALw_wcB)supports clergy households in times of hardship or need, seeing their mission as being to “promote and sustain the wellbeing of Anglican clergy and their dependants, so that those called to ordained Anglican ministry can flourish as they seek to serve their communities”.

The [Churches Mutual Credit Union](https://churchesmutual.co.uk/)offers savings and loans to clergy.

All licensed clergy may claim a CMD grant from the Diocese of up to £250 per year, subject to the funds being available. This can be used towards the cost of courses, retreats, etc. Full information is available on the [CMD pages of the diocesan website](https://www.chester.anglican.org/ministry/continuing-ministerial-development/continuing-ministerial-development-8641.php).

**Other support**

[The Sheldon Hub](https://www.sheldonhub.org/)is a safe place for people in ministry to meet, share and support one another. They have a bank of great resources “across the whole range of doing healthy ministry together”.

The Diocese of Chester has partnered with [Health Assured](https://www.chester.anglican.org/support-services/employee-assistance-programme-/)to provide an Employee Assistance Programme for all clergy and Church House staff. The programme provides a free 24-hour confidential helpline, as well as proactive advice on matters such as family issues, legal information, medical information, financial information, stress and anxiety, bereavement and addiction issues.

[The Faith Workers’ Branch of Unite](https://www.unitetheunion.org/what-we-do/unite-in-your-sector/community-youth-workers-and-not-for-profit/faith-organisations/)is open to all employees and office holders of faith organisations. They campaign on behalf of faith workers and run a large network of union reps who have been trained to support their members through difficult times.

**When things get tricky**

Misunderstandings and conflict within curacies can often be addressed successfully with early intervention, honest conversations, and a mutual commitment to working with difference. Sometimes curates and training incumbents need help to navigate this – this is not a sign of failure, and in most cases we can resolve problems successfully.

Curate or training incumbents who are struggling with an aspect of the curacy may wish to draw on the support of one of two independent IME 2 Chaplains. The Reverends Lesley Bentley and Andrew Tawn are both experienced priests who have worked in diocesan Ministry departments. They are available to listen independently to curates or training incumbents, or to work with a curate and incumbent together to resolve difficulties.

Lesley and Andrew work confidentially, and will not feed back to the bishop or Ministry Team staff unless they are asked to by the curate or training incumbent. Their role is primarily one of listening and advising independently of the IME 2 structures.

Curates and training incumbents are able to contact Lesley and Andrew directly:

**Lesley Bentley**

lesley\_bentley@btopenworld.com

**Andrew Tawn**

revandrewtawn@gmail.com

Sometimes a member of the Ministry Team or Bishop’s staff might refer a curate or incumbent to a chaplain, or suggest that the curate or incumbent makes contact themselves. Confidentiality will be maintained in the same way unless there is a different agreement at the point of referral.

**When things don’t get better**

Very occasionally, it becomes clear that a curacy placement is not working, and that a move of a curate to a new context is necessary. When this happens it is usually for complex reasons where it would be inappropriate to attribute blame to one or other party. This can be a painful and anxious time for both curate and training incumbent, and we will seek to work closely with all parties to bring the curacy in one context to a good ending, and find a new context for the curate to continue their training.

There is no ‘one size fits all’ to this process, and it is always a last resort. However, if either curate or training incumbent feel that a curacy placement is not working, this will be taken seriously by the bishop and Ministry staff, and we will work together to find a solution for all concerned.

**Extensions to Curacies**

Extensions to curacy length, particularly for stipendiary curates, will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The final decision for extending a title post rests with the Bishop or Suffragan Bishop, and if the curate or training incumbent deem an extension necessary then advice should be sought from the BACDACT in the first instance.

**Sickness and other absence**

If a training incumbent or curate takes a period of absence, then in addition to following the appropriate Diocesan Procedures, the BACDACT must be notified. In the event of the absence of a training incumbent, alternative supervision for the curate may be arranged.