

WHAT WOULD YOU EXPECT TO DO AS A CRCW?

- A CRCW will work in partnership with a congregation(s), church members, elders and minister(s) of Word & Sacraments in order for you all to become more involved within your local neighbourhood and community organisations.
- A CRCW's task is to enable the church to engage with individuals and community groups, to theologially reflect on that involvement and to develop appropriate community work aims within it's own life; it's order, outreach, worship, mission and ministry.
- Some of the ways in which these are being achieved include working with: Credit Unions/ Residents Associations/ Carers & Toddler Groups/ Community/ Businesses/ Women's Groups/ Campaigning Groups/ Youth groups/ Health Centres/ Community Cooperatives/ Study & Prayer Groups/ Ecumenical Groups and many more.....all as part of a community development process to enable local people to organise and manage the community activity on a sustainable basis.
- URC CRCWs are commissioned to a particular church, Local Ecumenical Partnership or Group of Churches that has successfully completed the CRCW Project Application process and has been prepared to work alongside a CRCW in their local neighbourhood.

REMUNERATION FOR CRCWs

Qualified stipendiary CRCWs receive a stipend and pension and housing is either provided in a manse or a housing allowance paid. The 'terms of settlement' are equitable to those for ordained ministers of Word & Sacraments.

Non-stipendiary CRCWs may receive a salary 'from other sources' or work on a voluntary basis.

WHERE DOES URC CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORK TAKE PLACE?

At present, CRCW is concentrated in inner-city areas and vulnerable outer-urban estates where there are measurable indices of poverty and deprivation. However, appropriate seaside towns and rural areas will also be considered. Currently, URC CRCWs are deployed to;

**NEWHAM, SWANSEA, POOLE,
MILTON KEYNES, LUTON
MOLD, NEWCASTLE, BOLTON
NOTTINGHAM, NORWICH,
BRADFORD, BIRMINGHAM,
LIVERPOOL, SUNDERLAND,
NORTHAMPTON, MANCHESTER**



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact your Synod Office or;
The CRCW Development Workers;
Suzanne Adofo & Steve Summers (job share)

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COULD GOD BE CALLING YOU TO THE MINISTRY OF CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORK?

“Assembly acknowledges that in Church Related Community Workers (CRCWs), properly trained and properly employed, the Lord Jesus Christ is giving particular gifts for a particular ministry and is calling such individuals to exercise them in an office which is duly recognised within His Church.”

URC General Assembly 1987



INTRODUCTION

The United Reformed Church (URC) ministry of Church Related Community Work (CRCW) began in 1981. In 1987 it became formally recognised by the URC General Assembly as a distinctive ministry of equal recognition and status with the ministry of Word & Sacraments.

The URC Mission Councils 1998 & 2003 reviewed the CRCW programme and agreed that it should be extended to at least 26 posts across Scotland, England & Wales, with at least 2 CRCW's in every Synod. Additionally, it was agreed that Synod should have greater responsibility for the CRCW.



WHAT IS COMMUNITY WORK?

“Community Work is about bringing people together, helping them to identify their own problems and opportunities, mobilising people and resources for change, implementing a programme of action and evaluating and reforming the programme in the light of experience and reflection.”

The URC Church Related Community Work Handbook

WHAT IS CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORK?

- Church Related Community Work mainly depends on a vision of the Church as an agent of social change. It is one way for the Church to share in God's mission.

- It recognises the Gospel where it is being lived out by people and communities, even if they themselves do not use the name of God.
- It is not intended to be a means of increasing church membership or an attempt to impose any set of values on people. It is about the Kingdom of God because it is committed to justice and peace and is not afraid of costly involvement with people.
- It brings many new challenges to existing church congregations; engaging with the local community opens us to the possibility of seeing and hearing God from those outside the church and allowing such Good News to transform and enrich our own church communities.



WHO CAN BECOME A CRCW?

Anyone who believes that God is calling them to this particular ministry and has been a member of the URC for at least two years can begin the candidating process to test their calling.

They should begin by discussing the matter further with their local church and then contact a CRCW Development Worker. If their calling is eventually confirmed, they can begin the CRCW training. Once this has been completed they may be considered for a CRCW vacancy.

Alternatively, individuals who are appropriately qualified in Community Work and in Theology and who are in 'good standing' with their own recognised church denomination may be eligible to become a URC CRCW by applying for a Certificate of Eligibility.



HOW ARE CRCW's TRAINED?

- The candidates selected for CRCW training study at Northern College, Manchester, which is part of the Partnership for Theological Education, an ecumenical federation of theological colleges based at Luther King House. Although the training is organised from there, CRCWs-in-training do not have to move to Manchester to study.
- Time spent on a placement varies with a minimum requirement of 8–12 hours/week chosen by the College and Synod near to the student's home.
- There are 6 modules taught in 1 year, delivered in blocks, based around an extended weekend. Many of these have been re-designed in a creative way to combine community work with those of contemporary theological and biblical study insights, as well as drawing on the resources of Pastoral Theology.
- CRCWs-in-training normally study full-time for four years for the Foundation Degree (FdA) or BTh (University of Chester).
- The United Reformed Church normally pays the fees and provides a maintenance grant.
- The course is endorsed by the England Standards Board for Community Development Training.