



CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORK (CRCW) MINISTRY IN THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

HANDBOOK FOR CRCWs

This handbook contains all relevant information about the training and ministry of Church Related Community Workers in the United Reformed Church.



Creating Change in Communities and the Church

There is also a companion handbook for local pastorates planning to seek accreditation for CRCW ministry. This and further information can be obtained from the:-

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1. CHURCH RELATED COMMUNITY WORK MINISTRY

1.1 Definitions and explanations

Church Related Community Work in the United Reformed Church is an important and distinct ministry within the ministry of the whole people of God. This is exercised by individual Christians, congregations, elders, ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers. People who train and are commissioned as CRCWs accept and fulfil a call from God to serve in local communities across the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom. Their task is to enable the local congregation or designated project to engage with community development in the neighbourhood, to reflect on and develop that work and to enfold community work goals and processes within its own life – its order, outreach, worship, spirituality, theology and mission.

What is Community Development Work?

Community Development is a set of values and practices which play a special role in bringing about social change. It is the deliberate intervention in how people organise themselves on issues of shared concern. Community Development Workers act as change agents, service developers, access facilitators and capacity builders. They work in the background, so that members of the community can build confidence and skills and take ownership and leadership of groups and achievements.

The key purpose of their work is to bring about social change and justice collectively, by working with communities and enabling people to organise and work together to:

- identify their own needs and aspirations;
- take action to exert influence on the decisions which affect their lives;
- improve the quality of their own lives, the communities in which they live, and societies of which they are part.

The Community Development profession is defined by the National Occupation Standards in Community Development Work. There are seven Key Areas that between them contain twenty-five standards for Community Development Workers that are summarised as follows:

Key Area 1: Understand and Practise Community Development

Key Area 2: Understand and Engage with Communities

Key Area 3: Take a Community Development Approach to Group Work and Collective Action

Key Area 4: Promote and Support a Community Development Approach to Collaborative and Cross-sectoral Working

Key Area 5: Support Community Learning from Shared Experiences

Key Area 6: Provide Community Development Support to Organisations

Key Area 7: Manage and Develop Community Development Practice.

The 5 key values and principles that underpin those standards are:

- **Equality & Anti-discrimination:** ensuring that everyone can participate equally and not be prevented from contributing due to prejudice or any other reason.
- **Social justice:** working towards a fairer society which respects civil and human rights and challenges oppression.

- **Working and learning together:** valuing and using the skills, knowledge, experience and diversity within communities to collectively bring about desired changes.
- **Community empowerment:** empowering sustainable communities to develop their independence and autonomy while making and maintaining links that affect their lives.
- **Collective action:** everyone has the right to fully participate in the decision-making processes that affect their lives by working together on common issue.

Two others could be added:

- **Self determination:** individuals and groups have the right to identify shared issues and concerns.
- **Reflective practice:** effective community development is informed and enhanced through reflection on action.

Community development workers interweave professional, community and personal lives in a way that makes it difficult to identify its boundaries and its specialist role in society. They need to:

- be aware of the potential tensions between the policies and practices of public and private institutions in neighbourhoods and the wishes of people in those neighbourhoods.
- be able to balance and moderate seemingly opposing viewpoints in the long-term interests of all parties.
- keep an eye on the bigger picture whilst empathising with people's immediate and detailed problems.
- encourage and support people who are isolated, marginalised and depressed, to work together to change the social and economic conditions which has led to their conditions, which impair their lives.
- enable people for whom public authorities are seen as a threat, to become skilled and confident in dealing with these authorities.
- keep hold of a long-term sense of optimism whilst working with people who feel overwhelmed by immediate short-term obstacles.
- reconcile the exploratory aims of a group in a state of development with the pre-set demands of some funding schemes.

What is *Church Related Community Work*?

In common with the vast majority of community workers, Church Related Community Workers have a passion for justice and will encourage both the church and those involved in the community project that change is necessary. Change and doing things differently can be threatening and CRCWs will have received training, and have experience, in managing change and encouraging others to share the vision for change.

Values that mark the ministry of Church Related Community Work include integrity, honesty, inclusiveness, recognising all people as valuable and equal as made in God's image, love for one another

as for ourselves, respect of and dignity for others, the integrity of all creation and the inter-dependence of all creatures of the earth.

Increasingly, as part of their initial training, CRCWs will be taught how to identify issues of injustice that exist within society and their local communities, and with others explore how the Bible and our Christian tradition can help people engage with those issues in a creative and challenging way. A CRCW, therefore, has a significant role to play within the life of a local church and community and within the wider Church. It is a role that is about building bridges between church and community; it is about challenging injustice; facilitating community projects and challenging churches to become more actively involved in what God is calling them to do.

Church Related Community Workers are in a unique position. They are trained in community work, so have the skills as well as the passion for working with other people on specific community programmes and projects. Such projects can have a significant impact on the local community. CRCWs are, though, significantly different from community workers employed by secular organisations. The difference is that part of their training has included learning about subjects like the Bible and the Church. They are trained to work in the community but also within a church context and they are ideally placed to develop links between, and facilitate change, both in the church and the community.

A CRCW will need to be:

- A practical theologian
- An agent of local church transformation and change
- A community development worker
- A social analyst and cultural researcher
- An interpreter of power relationships
- An effective manager
- An educator and storyteller
- A facilitator of and participant in worship
- A collaborator
- A companion and listener
- An effective communicator.

Fundamental is the ability for contextual theological reflection linked to community development and the ability to enable others to theologically reflect. A URC Church Related Community Worker is a community worker and theologian who works with the church to work for change within its local neighbourhood, rather than someone simply employed by the church to act on its behalf.

1.2 History of CRCW Ministry

In 1980 the General Assembly agreed to recognise a new form of ministry in the United Reformed Church. A training and appointment programme was set up and the first CRCW was commissioned in Bradford in 1981. Other developments followed.

In 1987, the URC General Assembly approved the following resolution:

“Assembly acknowledges that in Church-Related Community Workers, 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.”

With precise recommendations about training, setting up of community work posts and financial support, Church-Related Community Work was formally recognised to be a distinctive ministry on a par with the ministry of Word & sacraments.

In 2003, Church Related Community Work ministry was fully embraced within the structures of the URC ministry and the Basis of Union was altered to include the following:

“Some are called to the ministry of Church Related Community Work. After approved preparation and training, they may be called to be Church Related Community Workers in posts approved by the United Reformed Church, and are then commissioned and inducted to their office to serve for a designated period. They are commissioned to care for, to challenge and to pray for the community, and to discern with others God’s will for the well-being of the community, and to enable the church to live out its calling to proclaim the love and mercy of God through working with others in both church and community for peace and justice in the world.”*

*** CRCWs are normally appointed for a five-year period. Following a review after four years, a further five-year appointment may be made.**

1.3 The Structure of the CRCW Programme

- Church-Related Community Workers are officer holders of the United Reformed Church. They serve in accredited projects with the agreement of the local church (or groups of churches) and Synod.
- The work of the project is managed locally by a Local Steering Group (LSG).
- The Local Steering Group will have regular review conversations with the CRCW Development Worker, Synod representative and a member of the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee, which is part of General Assembly Ministries Committee.
- The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee (PSC) is responsible for the oversight and development of the CRCW programme and will maintain contact with all accredited projects. The Programme Sub-Committee has the right to intervene locally where serious problems emerge but in the main, responsibility for local management of the CRCW project rests with the Local Steering Group.

1.4 The CRCW Development Worker

In order to assist with the oversight, support and development of Church-Related Community Work ministry in the URC, General Assembly established a post for a CRCW Development Worker. The post is currently held by Steve Summers. His role is to support, advise and encourage all CRCW ministries in the UK which includes assisting churches and Synods considering CRCW ministry in a consultancy role, to develop their proposals and to offer ongoing support to projects and CRCWs. He reports to the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee which approves all applications and which is part of the General Assembly’s Ministries Committee within the Discipleship team. The Development Worker can be contacted at United Reformed Church House, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 2RT ☎ 020 7916 8653, E-mail: steve.summers@urc.org.uk or rcw.admin@urc.org.uk.

2. CALLING & RECRUITMENT OF CRCWs

2.1 Entrance Qualifications (also see Section K13 of the URC Manual)

Candidates must have been a member of the United Reformed Church for at least two years. They should be able to provide evidence of the ability to undergo specific training in preparation for this ministry. Normally this can be established through the following:

- (i) A recognised professional qualification in community work.
OR
- (ii) A minimum of 5 'O' levels (of C grade or above), or GCSE (at grade 4 or above), or their equivalent.
OR
- (iii) Completion of Training for Learning and Serving (TLS) Course.
OR
- (iv) Some other evidence of the ability to cope with the study programme. (*General Assembly 1987*)

Synods arrange at least two Enquirers' Conferences each year to assist those thinking about ministry in the URC. Church-Related Community Work is explored at these Conferences and those thinking about CRCW ministry are encouraged to attend.

2.2 Relevant Experience

It is not essential that candidates are professionally trained but it is certainly important that they have some significant insights into and experience of community development and work. This may have come through involvement with a tenants' group or community association, a campaigning group, voluntary organisation or self-help group.

Candidates without the necessary experience may be encouraged to become actively involved with a relevant community group or community project before applying. All candidates will be expected to spend time 'shadowing' a CRCW-in-commission and to meet with the CRCW Development Worker.

2.3 The candidating and assessment procedure. (Also see Section K13 of the URC Manual)

There is a four-stage assessment procedure for CRCWs, similar to the procedure for ministerial candidates:

1. The candidate's local church and minister will be asked to recommend them to Synod testifying to their faith and character, and their aptitude or potential for the work of this ministry.
2. The synod Moderator may meet the candidate. The Synod's Pastoral Committee or equivalent will arrange an interview and will commend the candidate on the grounds of known character and sense of call.
3. The candidate will attend an Assembly Assessment conference organised by the Assembly Ministries Committee, who will forward a report on the candidate's suitability to the Synod, together with recommendations about an appropriate course of training.
4. The final decision will be made by the Assembly Assessment Conference.

2.4 The accreditation of CRCW Ministers from other denominations. (Also see Section K14 of the URC Manual). *Please note this route takes time and may not always be available.*

The United Reformed Church's Mission Council has agreed that appropriate CRCWs from other denominations can be accredited as URC CRCWs. Such denominations would be those in membership of the Council for World Mission, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

Applicants from another recognised denomination would need to demonstrate:

- they are in good standing with their own denomination (this could be done through the taking up of references from appropriate people).
- they will subscribe to the Basis of Union of the URC.
- their course of training was at least equivalent to that for Church-Related Community Workers of the URC and/or they have special gifts or qualifications which would be of service in the URC.
- they have understood the terms of remuneration for URC CRCWs.
- they will agree to undertake any additional training required by the Ministries Committee.

All CRCWs from other denominations seeking accreditation by the URC will have their applications considered by the Assembly Assessment Conference on behalf of the Accreditation Sub-Committee.

Once accredited, such candidates would be eligible to apply for any vacant CRCW posts for the following 3 years.

3. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT FOR CRCWs

3.1 Training Programmes and options for CRCWs

CRCW students normally follow a specially-devised four-year full-time pathway at Northern College, Manchester with both community work modules and modules shared from the wider 'palette' at Luther King House. It is possible to qualify with a Diploma or BA in Contextual Theology from the University of Manchester. The community work pathway through these programmes is recognised as a professional qualification in Community Development Work by the English Standards Board for Community Development Education, as well as being the required qualification for URC's ministry of Church Related Community Work. Our course has been revalidated and described as innovative, creative and a benchmark for other providers.

The CRCW course is timetabled to produce more integration between the ministry of CRCW and minister of Word and sacrament students; a number of MWS students now choose to take CRCW courses too. These courses include:

- Introducing Reflective Practice
- Enabling Inclusion
- Communication in Text and Community
- The Value and Values of Community Work
- Theologies of the City
- Facilitating Participation
- Public Theology and Cultural Engagement
- "Toolbox" – practical skills for CRCW ministry.

It also involves:

- Two placements, each lasting two years, to enable participants to put learning into practice and develop reflection and evaluation skills. Appropriate supervision and support will take place during placements.
- College attendance of between 30 and 40 days per year, often at weekends
- Assignments throughout the course for which time will be allowed.
- Wherever possible, participants will visit other projects in the United Reformed Church and overseas.

Those who have relevant experience and qualifications either in community work or theology will have decisions about their education and learning made through the assessment process.

3.2 Financial arrangements for CRCW Education for Ministry (1) training

If a candidate is accepted by the Assessment Conference, the URC will pay the course fees and a grant. Further details are available on request, and are made available at Enquirers' and Assessment Conferences. Potential candidates are advised to read the document 'Financing your Training' available from the URC Education & Learning Committee at URC Church House, London.

3.3 Continuing Ministerial Training

The URC encourages and makes provision for CRCWs to be included in the programme of Education for Ministry (EM), and recommends undertaking two weeks' training each year. Details of courses and funding are available through Synod EM/Training Officers or from the URC Education and Learning Committee.

All CRCWs are encouraged to take a sabbatical term of up to three months every ten years in order to engage in further study, reflection and spiritual development. Permission must first, however, be sought from the Local Steering Group and appropriate Synod to ensure that sufficient cover is available. Grants to cover some of the costs of the sabbatical are available on application to the Synod EM/Training Officer, and she or he can also offer useful advice regarding the study itself. Stipends for the CRCW minister are continued over this period, and some costs for cover may be recoverable from the URC Finance Office.

Sabbatical leave is to be negotiated between the CRCW, local project and the Synod as to whether a CRCW remains at the Project to have a sabbatical after 10 years service (with the resulting housing costs paid locally), after 9 years 9 months service (and thus with no additional local housing costs) or within the first 3 years of her or his following post. This will be a period of reflection and benefit for the new project as well as for the CRCW. A project should be informed at the calling stage about the possibility of sabbatical leave if a prospective CRCW is nearing 10-years service. Projects ought to be aware of this expectation at the application stage.

3.4 The List of URC Accredited CRCWs. (Also see Section K13 of the URC Manual)

The List of United Reformed Church Accredited CRCWs contains the names of CRCWs who:

- have gone through the assessment procedure and been accepted as a candidate; and
- have satisfactorily completed the prescribed training; and
- have been appointed to a project approved by the URC.
- are retired.

The URC Accreditation Sub-Committee keeps the List under review, removing the names of those who have not served in post for more than 5 years, after due consultation with the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee and the individual concerned. A note to this effect is placed in the URC Year Book. Names can be restored to the List at the commencement of fresh deployment in a URC approved post.

A record of those who have been on the accredited List, or who are eligible for accreditation, and are still available for a post in the future is also kept. (*General Assembly 1990*)

4. CALLING A CRCW TO AN ACCREDITED CRCW PROJECT

4.1 Calling and appointment procedure

Once a CRCW ministry project has been accredited, all serving CRCWs and those in their last year of training will be notified of the vacancy. If interested, CRCWs will notify their own Synod Moderator who will contact the receiving Moderator and ask the church to send its profile of church and project to the CRCW. If a CRCW then wishes to find out more she or he will contact the Synod Moderator who will make the necessary introductions.

Vacancies are discussed at the monthly Moderators' meetings. To this extent, the procedure is the same as the one applied to the call of ministers of Word & sacraments where one minister is introduced at a time. From an introduction being made, the process is similar to that of calling a minister of Word and Sacraments. The Synod should appoint a CRCW interim moderator to oversee this process and the CRCW Local Steering Group should be formed. The CRCW candidate should be invited to the project for an informal visit in the first instance to meet people, get to know the area and learn more about the project and its hopes and dreams. The next stage is an invitation to the candidate for a formal interview and discernment whether or not the CRCW is right for the project and vice versa. *Appendix 1 outlines a good process to follow and is recommended reading when you get to this stage.*

If a call is offered and accepted, the appointment will need to be given concurrence by the Synod, which the Moderator can arrange. Once Synod has given concurrence a starting date can be set. The Moderator will then inform the Finance Office at Church House so that the stipend and housing allowance if appropriate can be paid. An enhanced DBS check is necessary before the CRCW takes up the post.

All CRCW engaged directly in the service of the United Reformed Church are members of the Synod. CRCWs are also entitled to attend the Elders' and Church Meetings of the United Reformed Church in which the project is located.

4.2 Commissioning and Induction Service

CRCWs are *commissioned* once and in their first appointment after training (similar to ordination of ministers). Thereafter, CRCWs are *inducted* into new appointments.

The Commissioning/Induction of a Church-Related Community Worker takes place at a service which is an act of Synod. The Synod Moderator (or her or his appointed deputy) should preside and where possible, the service should be held in one of the churches within the local community where she or he is to work. Representatives of civic bodies, local community organisations and other churches and faith communities should be formally welcomed. The CRCW should be involved with the planning of the service and choosing significant people to play a part.

The Order of Worship may follow that to which the particular church is accustomed. It should begin with a Call to Worship and include Scripture Reading(s), Prayer(s), Hymn(s), and Sermon or Charge; and it may include Communion. A suggested Order of Service is within the URC Service Book.

1. Preface

2. Statement and Affirmations

3. The Commissioning/Inducting Prayer

4. Declaration

5. Right Hand of Fellowship including welcome by community representatives

6. The Signing of the CRCW Covenant (See Appendix 2)

7. The Blessing

4.3 What comes next?

Once the CRCW is in post, it is important that she or he is given time and help to get to know the church(es), their role and other organisations or agencies doing similar or related work. Too often churches forget the importance of this, with a common complaint from new workers that they have not even been given a tour of the relevant neighbourhoods. This time of introduction should not be rushed or avoided and could be planned with named individuals doing specific sessions.

It is best if one person has responsibility for co-ordinating the process, ensuring that everyone involved knows what they are supposed to do and suggesting additions and changes as appropriate. It is recommended that the introduction period should last at least four weeks.

Before the CRCW starts, the Local Steering Group should make up an Introduction Pack which would include:

- the introduction timetable.
- a list of key church members, workers and volunteers and what they do.
- a list of the Local Steering Group officers and members.
- a list of Synod and CRCW personnel & contacts including a visit to Synod Office.
- information about URC 'cluster groups' and their involvement with the CRCW project.
- contacts for local community organisations and key personnel.
- the latest annual report, current leaflets and other basic written materials.
- essential policies, such as equal opportunities, health and safety, confidentiality.
- essential procedures, such as timekeeping, petty cash, claiming expenses, office facilities, making drinks, procedures when ill and notice required for holidays.
- minutes of the most recent management committee meetings.
- the CRCW Post Profile Application Form (including a map of the area) and budget.
- dates and times of Elders' and Church Meetings.

By the end of this period the CRCW will not know everything about their work, but should have a fair knowledge of the church, local communities and of other agencies working in the area. She or he should feel welcomed and accepted and who to ask for further information.

It should be noted that some CRCWs may wish to use the term 'CRCW minister' or 'community minister'. This is permissible, but should be discussed with the Local Steering Group and Elders to ensure that this is appropriate in the local context and that there is clarity of understanding about the roles and responsibilities of a CRCW as distinctive to those of a minister of Word & sacraments.

4.4 Support

Each project is encouraged to ensure that the CRCW is adequately supported. This may take the form of a support group, which is not the same as the Local Steering Group, or an individual support person. Ideally, the CRCW should be consulted about what form the support will be most helpful to her or him.

The CRCW should meet regularly with their support group or person. Details of those meetings are confidential and are not reported to the Local Steering Group or CRCW Programme Sub-Committee.

4.5 Membership of Synod/attendance at Elders' and Church Meetings

All CRCWs engaged directly in the service of the United Reformed Church are members of the Synod and are entitled to attend Elders' and Church Meetings if the project is located in a United Reformed Church.

5 THE CRCW COVENANT (shown in Appendix 2)

The CRCW Covenant is a document signed during the Commissioning Service. It sets out the values and vision of Church Related Community Work and the relationship between the Project and the wider Church. It represents the relationship between local and wider Church and the CRCW. All CRCWs should study it carefully!

6 THE PLAN FOR PARTNERSHIP AND CRCWs

6.1 Main terms of service

Stipend:

CRCWs are paid the same stipend as ministers of Word and sacraments. It is reviewed annually. The General Assembly agreed in 1987 that from 1989 the stipends of a limited number of URC accredited Church-Related Community Workers, working in approved posts, would be paid from the Maintenance of the Ministry (MoM) fund. Details of the entitlements of ministers and CRCWs are set out in the Plan for Partnership available on the URC web-site. The amount of stipend is reviewed annually.

Local Costs:

Although the stipend is paid from the MoM fund, the local costs of this ministry e.g. housing, travel, project costs and other out-of-pocket expenses will have to be met from local resources.

Housing

It is expected that CRCWs-in-commission will live in the vicinity of the project in order to experience fully and engage with the life of both church and community. The provision of housing or a housing allowance is the responsibility of the local project and needs to be available for the duration of the project and guaranteed by the project and Synod Finance Committee.

If a manse is available, it should be the size and standard recommended for ministers by General Assembly. The project will pay for:

- Council Tax (or rates where applicable).
- Water Rates.
- Interior and Exterior Decoration.
- Repairs and property insurance.

If a housing allowance is paid as an alternative, the above items should be grossed up to make up the allowance. If a manse is not available, the project may rent a property, Synod purchase a property for the project or housing may be provided by another denomination if the project is ecumenical with appropriate remuneration by the URC.

There can be a problem of providing short term accommodation for someone who wants to buy a house but is currently unable to do so. There is no obligation on the pastorate to provide 'bridging finance' prior to the current home being sold. Indeed, it might be more 'normal' to delay the start of the new post until this has happened. This does not prevent the pastorate coming to an arrangement with the individual if it wants to - e.g. over a short-term rental - but this is, of course, rental money that will come out of the housing allowance in that particular year. Some Synods may have special arrangements and Synod's advice should be sought.

Office

It is anticipated that the CRCW will work from a church or community base rather than from home. Consequently, an office will need to be made available and properly equipped including:

- desk and chairs
- filing cabinets
- telephone with answering machine
- mobile phone
- computer with broadband access and printer
- photocopier
- first aid equipment
- fire extinguishing equipment
- secure storage provision

The office itself should allow 11 cubic metres per person, and should be properly decorated, heated, lit and ventilated to conform to health and safety regulations. It should be accessible to wheelchair users and conform to relevant legislation e.g.

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Other expenses:

Commissioned CRCWs are entitled to the same expenses and financial support as ministers of Word and sacraments, therefore it is essential to refer to the URC General Assembly 'The Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration' which is a unified scheme that applies to CRCWs- in-commission (available from the Finance Office at URC Church House or on the URC website – www.unc.org.uk). Rather than detail everything here, Local Steering Groups should have a copy and financial implications worked through before completing an application form for accreditation.

6.2 Fixed Car Allowances

As the rates of reimbursement of mileage do not adequately reimburse the costs incurred, the expectation is that a fixed car allowance should be paid in addition (presently £1200 per annum) to a CRCW-in-commission. This needs to be budgeted as a local church expense. However, in exceptional circumstances, for CRCWs living in the neighbourhood, needing to meet local people and mainly working in the local area, car use may not be essential and therefore the fixed car allowance may not be

relevant. However, if the minister at the same church receives a fixed car allowance, then there must be good reason why the CRCW does not also receive this allowance.

6.3 Travel expenses

All CRCWs are also expected to attend regional and Synod events plus CRCW gatherings, but public transport can be used and full expenses claimed or mileage rates will be paid at the appropriate amounts. Project's annual budgets need to allow for these amounts. Details about the Fixed Car Allowance and travel expenses are in paragraphs 6.3.4. of the Plan for Partnership.

6.4 Education for Ministry

CRCWs are required to undertake in-service training and the project should ensure that both time and finance are made available for this. See para 4.3 for more information.

The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee will want to be assured that all financial and housing commitments are promised and secure before approving any application for accreditation.

7 REVIEWS and EVALUATION

7.1 Project Visits

About 6-months into the first term of appointment, the CRCW Development Worker will visit the project and meet with the CRCW and a representative of the Local Steering Group. This is an opportunity to check that arrangements are in place, the CRCW is settling in and the project is under way. Obviously, this is a very early stage and it is recognised that not everything will be in place.

At 18 months and 3 years into the project, a visit will take place. The CRCW Development Worker, a representative of the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee and a representative of Synod will come to meet the CRCW, Local Steering Group, users group and any other interested people to learn how the project is progressing. It is an opportunity to share successes and joys, difficulties and disappointments and reflect together on how the project will go forward from that point.

It is recommended and expected that the Local Steering Group produces an annual report, attractively set out for the information of church members, project users, Synod and the wider URC in the area, funding bodies, local councillors, etc.

Before the beginning of the 4th year of the project, the Synod will be asked to create a small 1st-Term Review Group whose task will be to undertake a major review of the project in all aspects of its life. The review group should be independent of the project and will be supplied with a list of relevant questions to ask. They will meet a wide range of people connected with the project and after deliberation, will recommend either a second term of accreditation, or not. While this may seem a little premature, if the project is not to continue, personnel, funding and other matters will need to be taken care of from the beginning of the 5th year.

If the project continues, it will hopefully be visited on two occasions within the 2nd term by the CRCW Development Worker, CRCW PSC member and a Synod representative.

Towards the end of the 2nd Term, or once the project has concluded, a final CRCW project report is expected to be written by the Local Steering Group (LSG) and submitted to the CRCW committee. This should describe the achievements and challenges faced during the time that the LSG, CRCW and CRCWs Handbook: January 2108

significant others were working alongside local communities and congregations and include illustrations and participant feedback and data. While the CRCW committee recognises that this will take time and resources to be completed, the intention is that everyone involved will be able to feel satisfied that the project has been faithful and worthwhile, and that it has had a significant impact on local individuals, groups and communities. It will also provide an appropriate record of the work and ministry for wider reading. It should supplement any other document or end-of-2nd-term report that may be produced for the public and we hope that this process will be helpful in taking stock of your situation. There may also be learning points for the local church(es), synod and CRCW ministry generally.

Accredited Projects who are in vacancy will be contacted after 1.5 years and then reviewed after 3 years in vacancy, to ascertain if the conditions for accreditation remain.

7.2 Evaluation:

It is good professional practice to evaluate the progress of the work being done from time to time, to recognise growth and development, and identify areas of weakness or new potential. This ensures that time, effort and planning are being directed to the aims of the project. During CRCW training, the CRCW should be introduced to a variety of methods which will provide an objective assessment. It may be appropriate to include the Local Steering Group in the evaluation process, but the results should be shared with them for their information and guidance.

7.3 Theological Reflection

CRCWs-in-training will be introduced to theological reflection methods and will be encouraged to make these a part of personal everyday life. It can also be appropriate to bring theological reflection into the Local Steering Group's agenda since Church Related Community Work is rooted in scripture and concerned with faith expressed in action.

APPENDIX 1: GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES FOR CRCW MINISTRY

Meeting a candidate:

A CRCW candidate will inform the church-in-community of interest in the post via the Synod Moderator. She or he will have a personal profile which will be available. She or he will also have seen your church profile.

The synod should appoint a CRCW interim moderator and the project should form the CRCW Local Steering Group. The next step is to arrange an opportunity for the CRCW to come informally, to see the area, church premises and manse, meet the Local Steering Group members and other key people, and get a feel for the project. This also gives you an opportunity to gain first impressions of the CRCW. Assuming this goes well, the CRCW should be invited to a formal interview. This is the equivalent of a minister “preaching with a view”.

Preparing for the interview:

Normally, the interviewing panel will decide after the interview if a call is to be offered or not and the candidate contacted at the earliest opportunity about the decision. However, the Local Steering Group may determine that a wider group of people should make that decision, e.g. the congregation(s) and Church Meeting(s) or a larger representative group. This should be decided *before* interviews take place so that the process runs smoothly and without disagreement and the candidate notified of the decision as soon as possible.

Choose the interview panel carefully. It should be no more than 6 people. It should represent local church, community, ecumenical and others who are relevant to the project’s vision. The minister would normally not be part of the panel. All panel members should have a copy of both CRCW and project profiles in advance. NB The CRCW profile is a confidential document.

The panel should meet for at least an hour before the interview to discuss and decide which questions are to be asked and by whom. This ensures that all relevant points are covered. Questions should not be sexist, ageist or gender specific as this is both unfair and illegal. Questions should be “open” questions e.g. when, how, why, what, rather than “closed” questions which only bring a “yes/no” response. Open questions enable the candidate to share more freely.

Getting ready for the interview:

- Has the candidate all relevant information including the time, place and duration of interview, with directions if necessary?
- Is the interview room prepared? It should be a room free from interruption by other users, warm with comfortable seating and lighting. A table for everyone to sit round can be a barrier, but it does provide a place to put paper and take notes.
- Is someone other than a member of the interview panel, available to greet the candidate on his/her arrival, offer refreshments, show where the bathroom is and generally make him/her welcome?
- Is a note-taker present at the interview to take a detailed record of the interview in case of queries afterwards? The record should be typed up and made available to panel or candidate if requested.

The interview:

The Chairperson, normally the Chairperson of the Local Steering Group, has a key role in setting the tone of the interview. Ideally, this should be as relaxed as possible to give the candidate every opportunity to be her or himself.

The Chairperson should bring the candidate into the room, introduce everyone, ensure that meeting is opened with prayer, make that all the questions are asked and the candidate given time to answer and to ask her/his own questions. The meeting should be closed with prayer.

After the interview

The Chairperson should show the candidate out courteously and the panel take a short break before re-convening to discuss all they have heard, express views and decide whether or not the candidate is ‘right’ for them. While first impressions can be powerful, these should not be the basis for deciding. It is vital that the panel believe that the candidate is *called* to the project. Age, gender, race and disability should *never* be factors in deciding. The panel should also guard against choosing “a bird in the hand” i.e. going for a candidate regardless because they have come.

After the decision is made, the Chairperson should contact the candidate by phone to relay the decision. If it is a call to the project, the candidate should be given time to think what her or his response will be. If the panel has not felt able to issue a call, the candidate may want to talk through the interview. In this instance, the Chairperson needs to be ready to listen. The Chairperson should also notify the Synod Moderator of the decision.

The Chairperson should collect all CRCW profiles after the interview and ensure these are destroyed. The Chairperson should also ensure that arrangements are in hand to reimburse the candidate’s expenses.

APPENDIX 2:



CHURCH-RELATED COMMUNITY WORK

THE COVENANT

1. This Covenant is an agreement between the partners responsible for the United Reformed Church Church-Related Community Work ministry in a particular situation.

2. The partners are:

- (i) The Church-in-Community which has requested CRCW ministry.
- (ii) The Synod which has requested CRCW ministry.
- (iii) The Church-Related Community Worker
- (iv) The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee, a sub-committee of the Ministries Committee of the United Reformed Church.

3. We, the partners, agree that:

Our commitment to Church-Related Community Work arises out of:

- Our faith in God, whose love for all people and whose desire for justice and peace was demonstrated in the giving of his Son to live among us in the world.
- Our belief that we are called to share that love and to work for justice and peace with all people.

And that:

- Church-Related Community Work is about change, in society, in the church, in groups and in individuals; it is about the process by which change is brought about.
- it is about the relationship of community work to the whole ministry of God's people.

4. THE CHANGES WE SEEK TO BRING ABOUT

- (i) Church-Related Community Work is built on a vision of the Church as an agent of social change. This implies repentance and a call for renewal within the total life of the church as a way of working for change in society. We aim to develop our work in the context of the search for justice and peace throughout creation.
- (ii) Church-Related Community Work is centred on an awareness of the Gospel as it illuminates everyday conflicts and struggles. It is fed by an understanding of the inexhaustible truth of God that draws us into the battle with structural, as well as personal, sin, and into political action.
- (iii) Church-Related Community Work brings fundamental challenges to existing church congregations. Engaging with the community opens us to the possibility of hearing good news from those around us, especially from oppressed and marginalised people, allowing that good news to enter our own community life.
- (iv) All community development work aims to tackle the causes of prejudice and discrimination and to build local structures where power is justly shared; we work to fight discrimination against others (whether because of race, nationality, belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender, disability, age, class, or any other reason) within ourselves, our organisations and wider society.
- (v) All community development work seeks to bring about the sharing of power with the powerless in local communities. As we undertake community development work we need to understand both our vulnerability and our power, so that, in dialogue, we can help to make power and resources, including decision-making, available to the wider community.
- (vi) Church-Related Community Work 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 though they themselves may not use the name of God.

5. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT 'PROCESS'

A Church-Related Community Worker will work in accordance with the following principles:

- (i) Community development is undertaken in partnership with communities and their groupings, seeking to enable people, groups and communities to develop according to their own needs, wishes and strengths, where this serves the common good.
- (ii) Community development starts with people's experience as they tell it, going on to develop self-help and mutual aid, activating each group's own resources, including leadership, and helping them to identify, acquire and use resources from outside.
- (iii) Community development is a process of learning by doing, so that, together, people develop skills to achieve their shared objectives and to reflect on what they are doing.

- (iv) Community development is a process which encourages the building of participatory, democratic structures, encouraging groups and organisations to work together to achieve greater effectiveness over a wider area.

Church-Related Community Work seeks to employ these community development processes within the life of the church itself as well as in the local neighbourhood.

6. MINISTRY

- (i) Church-Related Community Work is part of the ministry of the whole people of God and it is exercised by Church-Related Community Workers, ministers of Word and sacraments, elders and congregations.
- (ii) A Church-Related Community Worker is called by God, trained and commissioned to a specific situation (the Church-in-Community project) and recognised by the wider Church.
- (iii) A Church-Related Community Worker's task is to enable the Church-in-Community to engage with community development in the neighbourhood, to reflect on and develop that work, and to develop community development work goals and processes within its own life - its order, outreach, worship, spirituality, theology and mission.

7. RELATIONSHIPS

- (i) All partners to The CRCW Covenant are encouraged to maintain regular contact with each other in order to support and develop CRCW ministry.
- (ii) The Church-in-Community will be expected to submit regular reports to the CRCW Programme Sub -Committee and Synod, as laid out in the CRCW Handbook.
- (iii) The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee will maintain contact with situations where a CRCW post is vacant.

8. WHAT THE CHURCH-IN-COMMUNITY WILL DO

- (i) The Church-in-Community will, with the CRCW, seek to develop its commitment to community development in its life, order, outreach, worship, theology and mission.
- (ii) The Church-in-Community will receive regular visits from representatives of the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee.
- (iii) The Church-in-Community will seek opportunities to further its own education and learning about community development.
- (iv) The Church-in-Community will adhere to the agreed Terms of Settlement for the CRCW, as required by the URC's Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration.
- (v) The Church-in-Community will appoint a Local Steering Group. This Group will:

-oversee the community development work before, during and after the period of service of the CRCW minister.

-develop the direction of this work in consultation with the CRCW and reflect theologically on what is proposed and what transpires.

-ensure that this work is appropriate to local needs, wishes and strengths.

-ensure that the work is based on community development principles.

-If necessary, negotiate a way forward when there are conflicting demands between the church and other community groups.

(vi) The Church-in-Community will enable the CRCW to be involved with the wider mission initiatives of the Synod and wider church.

9. WHAT THE CRCW WILL DO

(i) The CRCW will encourage the Church-in-Community to apply community development principles.

(ii) The CRCW will normally work in partnership with the minister(s) of Word & sacraments, elders and congregation(s) of the Church-in-Community.

(iii) The CRCW will help to promote a community development approach in the local and wider church

(iv) The CRCW will keep up-to-date with developments regarding CRCW ministry and fully participate with CRCW's gatherings and generally be involved with wider mission initiatives of the Synod and the CRCW ministry (while acknowledging that it should not disproportionately impinge upon local responsibilities).

(v) The CRCW will adhere to the agreed Terms of Settlement as required by the URC Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration.

10. WHAT THE SYNOD WILL DO

(i) The Synod will be fully involved with the calling, commissioning, induction and pastoral support of the CRCW and to ensure that the requirements of the URC Plan for Partnership in Ministerial Remuneration will be met by the Church-in-Community and Synod. The Terms of Settlement Agreement should be negotiated with the CRCW, seeking advice from the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee if necessary.

(ii) The Synod will be asked to appoint two or three people with knowledge of community development to undertake the 1st Term Review and, if appropriate, the 2nd Term Review and to submit a timely report to the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee.

(iii) Synods should exercise effective duties of care, oversight and responsibility for a CRCW.

11. WHAT THE CRCW PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE WILL DO

The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee is a Sub-Committee of the Ministries Committee through which it will be accountable to the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.

- (i) The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee will advise on and approve CRCW ministries and will maintain contact, reviewing the work and considering requests for further Terms.
- (ii) The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee is responsible for ensuring that there is appropriate support for CRCWs throughout their ministry
- (iii) The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee will advise the URC Education and Learning Committee on matters pertaining to initial and continuing ministerial education for CRCWs.
- (iv) The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee will support individual CRCWs in their ministry and CRCW students in training and encourage the longer-term development of their ministries.
- (v) The CRCW Programme Sub-Committee will advocate CRCW ministry throughout the wider church.



The
United
Reformed
Church



Church Related
Community Work
*Creating Change in Communities
& the Church*

CHURCH-RELATED COMMUNITY WORK

THE COVENANT

Signature.....

Date.....

Name
(The Church-Related Community Worker)

Signature.....

Date.....

Name
(For the Church-in-Community)

Signature.....

Date.....

Name
(For the Synod)

Signature.....

Date.....

Name
(For the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee)

APPENDIX 3: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CRCWs

Church Related Community Workers are commissioned to care for, to challenge and to pray for the community, to discern with others God's will for the well-being of the community, and to endeavour to enable the church to live out its calling to proclaim the love and mercy of God through working with others in both church and community for peace and justice in the world. Their service may be stipendiary or non-stipendiary, and in the latter case their service is given within a context approved by the Synod.

CRCWs make promises as laid out in SCHEDULE F (see clause 22 in the Basis of Union), in particular they promise: to live a holy life, and to maintain the truth of the gospel, whatever trouble or persecution may arise; to care for, to challenge and to pray for the community, to discern with others God's will for the well-being of the community; to take their part in the councils of the Church and to enable the church to live out its calling to proclaim the love and mercy of God through working with others in both church and community for peace and justice in the world, and as a Church Related Community Work of the United Reformed Church to seek its well-being, purity and peace, to cherish love towards all other churches and to endeavour always to build up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Disciplinary and grievance procedures may involve the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee but will be initiated by the Synod Moderator according to the agreed guidelines of General Assembly (Section O of the Manual).

Standards of Professional Behaviour

a Personal integrity and health

- To live a Christian life as a person of prayer and integrity.
- To be aware of the need to have appropriate boundaries that safeguard personal health and welfare and which promote healthy relationships with others.
- To maintain strict confidentiality of all matters shared with them in that manner, except when required by law to do otherwise, e.g. with regard to the safety of children.
- In seeking counsel from colleagues care and sensitivity will be exercised and the identity of the person shall not be revealed unless permission has been granted.
- To recognise the need for and have concern for a healthy lifestyle, to balance availability and accessibility to ministry demands with time for family and friends, personal renewal and rest and spiritual growth.
- To attend meetings, respond to correspondence and keep appropriate records efficiently and effectively, having regard to the Data Protection Act.
- To account carefully for expenses and any funds held on behalf of others.
- Not to undertake duties whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs or when medically advised not to do so.
- Not to use privilege or power for personal advantage or gain, whether financial, emotional, sexual or material.
- Not to do anything to undermine the spiritual health of another.

b Relationships with colleagues

- To support the ministry of other CRCWs and ministers of Word and sacraments and not interfere with the conduct of ministry or the direction of church life of other pastorates.
- To strive to protect colleagues from prejudicial discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, disability or sexual orientation.
- To sever all professional ties with a previous post and refer any requests or enquires of previous posts to the interim moderator or new CRCW.
- To respect the work of predecessors and successors and deal honourably with their record.
- To consider carefully the location of retirement housing and try to avoid living in the immediate area of past posts.
- To welcome retired colleagues as members of the Church-in-Community.

c Relationship with elders, members and others

- To regard all persons with equal love and concern.
- To work collaboratively and safeguard the contribution of the whole church in decision-making processes.
- To share leadership and pastoral care with others called to these purposes.
- To seek advice from colleagues if in doubt about one's competence to deal with any issue or situation.
- To consider very carefully taking any position of responsibility in a Project served by another CRCW or a minister of Word and sacrament and to support the direction of church life initiated through the leadership of the Project.
- To consult with colleagues, Local Steering Group and others as appropriate when considering taking on extra work.
- Not to seek to influence a Project in the call of a new minister.
- Not to be with a child or children or young people in a place quite separate from others.
- Not to enter a sexual relationship with anyone within a professional relationship.

d Relationship with Councils of the Church

- To be active in the councils of the Church.
- To accept the oversight of Synod and pastoral care of Synod Moderators.
- To submit to disciplinary procedures when initiated by the councils of the church and to inform as soon as possible the Synod Clerk and Synod Moderator when involved in legal proceedings (civil or criminal).
- To participate in accompanied self-appraisal and review as appropriate.
- To work to the agreed terms of settlement
- To follow guidelines for on-going training issued by ministries committee.