

ST ALBANS DIOCESAN SYNOD

10 MARCH 2018

DIOCESAN READERS' ASSOCIATION DRAFT CONSTITUTION

1. Objects

The Readers' Association exists to provide support for all Readers in the Diocese of St Albans. Its aims are to:

- encourage the ongoing development of a distinctive, flourishing ministry that is both lay and licensed, and that helps people across our diocese to worship and join in God's mission.
- enable the development of a strong and positive sense of Reader identity and purpose, formed through selection, Initial Ministerial Education (IME) parts 1 and 2, Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD), and various opportunities for Reader fellowship, formation and encouragement.
- support the pastoral care of Readers through effective Statements of Arrangements, Ministry Development Reviews and other forms of specific assistance as may be required.
- enable Readers to have a clear and articulate voice that can engage distinctively with different diocesan bodies such as chapters, synods and diocesan boards and structures.
- increase Reader engagement with Living God's Love at diocesan and deanery levels.

2. Links

The Diocesan Readers' Association is an associated body of the Central Readers Council, which co-ordinates and supports Reader ministry nationally. It also works with the Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council, which moderates Reader training and advises on Bishop's Regulations. The Association sends three representatives (normally Warden, a Secretary, and one other) to meetings of the CRC.

The Diocesan Readers' Association Committee is linked to the Diocesan Board for Mission and Ministry, having oversight of Ministry in the Diocese (the Board). The Association receives an annual grant to finance its work from the diocese.

The Diocesan Readers' Association reports to Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod through the Board, giving an account of Reader ministry in the diocese, and Reader involvement with the aims, objectives and activities of Living God's Love.

3. Membership

Full members of the Association are:

- All those who have been admitted as Readers and are licensed or have Permission to Officiate in the diocese.
- Readers with Emeritus status.

Associate members are:

- Candidates for the Office of Reader who are training in the diocese.

Honorary members are:

- Those appointed to serve the Readers' Association in specific roles, who are not otherwise qualified for membership.

4. Definitions

- a) The **President** of the Association shall be the Diocesan Bishop.
- b) The **Warden of Readers** is appointed by the President. The Readers of the diocese are under the care of the Warden, who is responsible to the President for their selection, training and supervision, and for the appointment of officers.
- c) The **Joint Secretaries** of the Association are appointed from among the Readers of the diocese by the President on the advice of the Warden. They serve for a term of five years, which may be renewed for successive terms of five years. Some of the duties of the Secretaries may be delegated to other members of the Association if approved by the Association at the AGM.
- d) The **Lay Ministry Officer** is an officer of the diocese and is responsible for assisting the Warden by recruiting tutors and pastoral supervisors, and providing a training scheme (RTS) which meets the requirements of the Church of England Readers' Certificate.
- e) A **Deanery Adviser** for each deanery is appointed by the Warden from the clergy and licensed Readers of that deanery, after consultation with the Rural Dean and Readers of the deanery. Appointments are made for a period of five years, renewable for successive terms of five years. Deanery Advisers meet with candidates for Reader ministry before selection, undertake pastoral care of Readers within deaneries, undertake Ministerial Development Reviews, and oversee the completion of Statements of Arrangements.
- f) The Warden may make other appointments to assist in the work of the Association as required (e.g. Archdeaconry Sub-Wardens, Selection Advisers, Training Officers).
- g) A **Treasurer** of the Association is elected by the Association from among its members for a term of five years, renewable for successive terms of five years.
- h) A **Representative to the CRC** is elected by the Association from among its members for a term of five years, renewable for successive terms of five years.
- i) An **Archivist** for the Association is appointed by the Committee from among the members of the Association.

5. The Committee

- a) The management and administration of the Association is vested in the Committee which usually meets twice a year to:
 - i) maintain links with CRC;
 - ii) maintain links with other boards and committees of the diocese;
 - iii) arrange conferences and training days for Readers and trainees;
 - iv) foster relationships with lay ministers of other denominations;
 - v) do such other things which will promote the objects of the Association.
- b) The members of the Committee are:
 - i) the Warden.
 - ii) the Deanery Advisers.
 - iii) the Joint Secretaries.
 - iv) the representative of the Association to CRC.
 - v) the Treasurer.
 - vi) others who shall be co-opted onto the Committee as required.

In attendance are the Lay Ministry Officer and the Director of Ministry (ex-officio)

- c) The Committee will be subdivided into three groups:
 - i) A **Standing Committee** comprised of the Warden, the Joint Secretaries and the Treasurer, plus two Deanery Advisers from each archdeaconry (six in total). The Lay Ministry Officer is in attendance. This will meet twice a year and will oversee the ongoing business of organising Reader CMD, the annual licensing service etc.

- ii) A **Selection Subcommittee** comprised of one of the Joint Secretaries (chair) plus up to five Deanery Advisers. This group will support the cycle of Reader selection.
- iii) A **Training Oversight Subcommittee** comprised of up to six committee members and charged with oversight and governance of Reader training, including IME parts 1 & 2 and CMD.

6. The Annual General Meeting

- a) A General Meeting (AGM) is held annually which all members and associate members are invited to attend.
- b) Full members may vote on any matter raised at the AGM, but associate members may not vote.
- c) At the AGM, elections are held for the third representative to the CRC and the Treasurer. Nominations shall be invited in advance, and should be given in writing to the Joint Secretaries not less than two weeks before the AGM.
- d) Notice of the AGM will be given in writing to all full and associate members not less than 21 days before the General Meeting; the notice will give the date, time and place of the AGM, details of the business to be transacted, and invite nominations for any election which is to take place.

7. Funds and Finance

The work of the Association is supported by an annual grant from the diocese. It holds special funds, financed by legacies, from which grants may be made to assist the development of licensed Readers and those in training.

No charge is made to parishes for the duties undertaken by Readers, although parishes are expected to reimburse expenses incurred by Readers in performing their duties. The Association has authority to open and operate bank accounts, and hold funds in such form as it thinks fit. The Treasurer reports to each Committee meeting and to the AGM on the finances and funds of the Association.

8. Other Meetings

The whole Association is invited to meet together on at least two occasions each year **for purposes of study or spiritual development**. The AGM takes place during one of these meetings. A Service of Admission and Licensing takes place **once a year**. Welcome and licensing to this diocese can also take place at other times.

9. Co-operation

The Committee has the authority to invite representatives of other denominations to join in any activity of the Association as participants or observers (provided this is allowed by Canon Law) and may request such representatives to act as consultants.