

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF ‘DISTINCTIVE DIACONAL’ VOCATIONS
FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION WITHIN THE COMMON AWARDS FRAMEWORK:
A CASE STUDY OF THE DIOCESE OF YORK, 2015-16**

Aim

This report summarises a project which aimed to explore the implications of ‘distinctive diaconal’¹ vocations for theological education under the Common Awards framework. The project did this through a dialogical project that brings together partners involved in one pilot area (the Diocese of York). This allowed different perspectives on this ministry and their implications for the Common Awards curriculum to begin to be explored in dialogue with each other, starting within this geographical area.

“What might the experiences of distinctive deacons in dialogue with Theological Education Institutions serving the Diocese of York tell us about the implications of ‘distinctive diaconal’ vocations for theological education within the Common Awards framework?”

Background and Process

This project emerged from initial conversations with various partners in the area, and particularly from the insights of a group of vocational deacons within the diocese who had identified issues of initial and continuing ministerial education for distinctive deacons as an important area for further consideration. Based on this, and with the support of the respective partners, Dr Andrew Orton of Durham University² agreed to put in a small funding bid to the Common Awards Seedcorn Fund. This was subsequently awarded funds, enabling a project which aimed to:

1. Identify different stakeholder perspectives on how Theological Education Institutions currently respond to those within the pilot area of the Diocese of York with distinctive deacon vocations within denominations who are part of the Common Awards scheme.
2. Bring together these stakeholders to discuss their respective perspectives and experiences in light of their theological and practice expertise and the changes brought about by and opportunities now available under the Common Awards scheme.
3. Through the resulting facilitated dialogue, consider what practical implications and actions might arise for the Theological Education Institutions involved from taking into account the developing collective understanding of the initial and continuing ministerial education and development needs of ‘distinctive deacons’ in their ministry.

This was achieved with the particular co-ordinating support throughout of Rev David Mann, the Diocesan Director of Vocations, and Deacon Chris Peel, via three stages (with participants at each stage detailed further in Appendix A):

¹ The deacons consulted through this project preferred the term ‘vocational deacons’ to describe their permanent focus on diaconal ministry throughout their lives; the term ‘distinctive deacons’ is more prevalent in the wider literature, and was what was used in the bid when the project was initially designed. They are used synonymously throughout this report.

² Andrew is a Lecturer at Durham University and has a track record in researching and publications on the diaconate, as well as a broader background in church and community work engagement and research; see <https://www.dur.ac.uk/sass/staff/profile/?mode=staff&id=3292> .

1. Initial interviews with key stakeholders, including national, diocesan and theological education institution representatives, regarding the current position.
2. An initial consultation event held in York on 8th March 2016 with 9 local vocational deacons/those in initial training (trained in various places through different routes from 1990 to current students), also attended by David Mann as Diocesan Director of Vocations.
3. A wider participative event on 7th May 2016, which brought as many of the different stakeholders together as possible, to explore in dialogue together:
 - a. Issues relating to the current curriculum in terms of how it addresses vocational deacons' needs.
 - b. Underlying theological understandings of relationships between ministries that may be contributing to this.
 - c. Alternative responses and opportunities for curriculum development to address any issues identified.

Having this dialogue at this point was considered important because the work of deacons at the interface between churches and wider communities can stimulate and incorporate innovative missional engagement. Their contribution to equipping and sending out laity to engage in this work therefore reflects key priorities of the Church in a time of transition in her engagement with wider society, and hence preparing people for this ministry in an effective way is crucial. The diaconate has a diversity of expressions globally which share common foundations³, but remains an often contested ministry which highlights important underlying differences in understandings of mission and ministry within and between denominations that inform this engagement. For partner churches in Common Awards, for example: (i) several dioceses in the Church of England have appointed 'distinctive deacons' who seek to remain in this role as their permanent primary focus, and significant reports have been published on this⁴; (ii) Another partner in the Common Awards scheme, the Methodist Church, sees deacons as embodying a permanent role that is equal to but distinct from the role of a presbyter.⁵ These conversations also have strategic importance in ecumenical working, as conversations on the diaconate remain central to moving forward the Anglican-Methodist Covenant dialogue.⁶ Hence, developing common understandings of the implications of this diversity for shared structures such as formation and training within the Common Awards framework is vital. Furthermore, in contexts such as the Diocese of York where the various different partners in the process were willing to explore practically how formation and training processes might better reflect this particular ministry, this project provided a process to bring them together to consider the best ways to do this.

³ Diakonia World Federation Executive Committee (1998) *Diaconal Reflections: How We Experience Our Diaconal Calling in Our Diversity*, <http://www.diakonia-world.org/files/theologiepapier98english.pdf>, accessed 29/1/15.

⁴ E.g. Renewed Diaconate Working Party of the House of Bishops (2001) *For Such a Time as This: A Renewed Diaconate in the Church of England*, London, Church House Publishing; Church of England (2007) *Mission and Ministry of the Whole Church*, Faith and Order Advisory Group, GS Misc 854, London: Church House Publishing.

⁵ See Methodist Church in Britain (2004) *What is a Deacon?*, available at: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/879666/dev-perwhat-is-a-deacon-2004-15062012.pdf>, accessed 29/1/15.

⁶ *The Challenge of the Covenant: Uniting in Mission and Holiness*, Report to the Methodist Conference and the General Synod of the Church of England, 2014, <http://www.anglican-methodist.org.uk/JIC-14-09-Report-to-GS-and-Conf-July-2014.doc>, accessed 29/1/15.

Summary of Vocational Deacons' Perspectives

The initial consultation with deacons highlighted significant concerns with their initial ministerial education, which they had completed in a wide range of different settings over a period of around 25 years. For the deacons, including those with recent experience of current initial ministerial education, their vocation had often seemed invisible and little acknowledged within training processes. The training that they had received was not considered to be well oriented to their particular vocation and role, and they had done little that was specific to their diaconal calling during their formation and training. In response to this, the deacons' initial ideas on how this could be improved included the following:⁷

1. Fundamentally, it was considered important that **vocational deacons were made more visible throughout formational and training processes**, including (for example) in the paperwork and websites (nationally and locally) and at vocational events as a possible vocational route.
2. That **all those in training (not just vocational deacons) need to know the basics of all ministries** (including to understand what the ministry of vocational deacons is, and how this might relate to other ministries). Furthermore, given the threefold understanding of ministry in the Church of England⁸, it is important that all ordained clergy are prepared for this foundational aspect of their role.
3. There also needs to be some **dedicated content** within initial ministerial education to develop this understanding in more depth for those who are engaging in vocational diaconal ministry as their main ministry focus. Whilst diaconal ministries are diverse, it would be helpful to include (for example) a balance of material relating to being with those on the edge, making connections, community building, working with people's behaviours and particular social issues, seeing the church from the outside and engaging with people from a practical perspective. Programmes should "retain a generic core but develop a strand of diaconal studies that gives attention to historical roots and to today's needs, with a focus on social sciences and community development such as Christianity in public life, ecological responsibility and management of change".
4. In terms of delivery:
 - a. **Those teaching classes needed to be aware of vocational deacons** being amongst those in the room, and hence ensuring that they explicitly link and relate their teaching to different ministries (for example, in their use of varied examples).
 - b. That **placements are crucially important** as learning experiences for this ministry, and that those training to be deacons should do placements in places that would understand their role and support their formation as deacons (which might include wider community contexts as well as churches).

⁷ Many of these were also reflected in the conclusions and recommendations from one deacon's dissertation research conducted in 2014 based on interviews across denominations, which provided further supporting evidence in favour of this approach; these were shared and well received at this event. See Carrington, M. E. (2014) *A Survey of Good Practice in Diaconal Formation in Ecumenical Perspective*, MA Dissertation, University of Sheffield.

⁸ E.g. Croft, S. (1999) *Ministry in Three Dimensions: Ordination and Leadership in the Local Church*, London, Darton, Longman and Todd.

- c. That **library provision** (including key texts on diaconal ministry) is important, but at present was often insufficient.
 - d. That **part-time training patterns** – and the distances involved – are important practical issues to take into account when designing timetables and programmes. Making effective provision for distance learning support is particularly important for students when shortened courses and group contact time are offered.
 - e. That the impact of **group dynamics** within learning processes shouldn't be underestimated, particularly when those training to be vocational deacons are often in a small minority and hence can easily feel excluded or left out when their particular needs are neglected, or they are asked to not participate in particular elements. One example given was of the taught sessions on the Eucharist – rather than excluding student deacons from this, or giving them separate tuition (as had happened to some of the deacons in this group), incorporating them in the group session and including consideration of both priestly and diaconal roles in the liturgy may be preferable.
5. In terms of **assessment**, tutors should reflect on the applicability of assignment titles to vocational deacons' ministries, and ideally have some assignment titles that might enable deacons to relate and engage the taught content more easily to their own ministry.
 6. Underlying these practical issues, there was considerable discussion around:
 - a. **the relationship between calling, religious orders, and roles**, with one deacon commenting that 'my role is to focus my diaconal calling';
 - b. **the relationship between formation, training and education**; one contributor commented, for example, that 'the harder curriculum question is how to support the development of spirituality and character' through formational processes.
 - c. **the important role of other deacons in this process**, including (for example) in supporting placement reflection and supervision, and in being part of a peer cohort. This had not always been available for the deacons contributing to the consultation, and was considered to be a significant issue when absent. (Structurally, this might also involve connections in the Methodist context with the role of the Methodist Diaconal Order; in at least one Anglican diocese, there is involvement with a College of Deacons, etc.). Including ecumenical engagement with deacons within other church traditions and denominations was helpful for learning as part of this.

Summary of Wider Stakeholder Dialogue with Deacons' Perspectives

At a national/denominational level, the resources available related to distinctive diaconal ministry vary considerably:

- **Nationally in the Church of England**, the existing 'Formation Criteria with mapped selection criteria for ordained ministry in the Church of England' (2014)⁹ include mention of specific criteria for ordained pioneer ministry, but not deacons. However, these are currently under review, and as part of this, the Diocese of Exeter has proposed more specific 'Formation and Selection Criteria for Vocational/Distinctive/Diocesan Deacons' as part of their submission to this consultation. These were presented by Rev Deacon Gill Kimber, Warden of the College

⁹ Available at: https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2139103/formation_criteria_for_ordained_ministry_approved_hofbps_dec_2014.docx

of Deacons in the Diocese of Exeter, and universally welcomed and supported by the group. The practice of this diocese in having a College of Deacons which included providing support to their peer was also considered good practice.

- **The Methodist Church** has generic agreed Learning Outcomes for initial ministerial formation which apply to both student and probationer presbyters and deacons; the distinction between the two ordained ministry roles within this church is separately defined in the Methodist Conference papers ‘What is a Presbyter?’ and ‘What is a Deacon?’. In the 2015-16 Connexional year, the Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist Church is undertaking a major piece of work on ‘The Theology and Ecclesiology Underpinning the Diaconate’.¹⁰ The substantial national reorganisation of Methodist theological education institutions begun under the ‘Fruitful Field’ consultation presented to Conference in 2012¹¹ has resulted in all Methodist student deacons now taking a programme based at Queens Ecumenical Foundation in Birmingham. However, there are no specific learning outcomes for deacons, although there are generic ones for ordained ministers. The programme for student deacons at Queens Ecumenical Foundation includes a ‘denominational ministry’ module which is where considerations of different ministries are introduced. For Queens staff, it is important to be aware of diverse perspectives and traditions, and be conscious throughout the different modules of the different people training for different ministries in the room, including offering different assignments (e.g. in the preaching module) where appropriate. Having two deacons on the staff team is a demonstration of the Foundation’s commitment to diaconal formation. The deacons’ programme of study includes a compulsory sixteen session module specifically on diaconal ministry, but this is not currently part of the Common Awards programme. At present, this module does not carry any credits towards a higher education qualification, although it is hoped that this might become part of the Common Awards programme in future. Ideally this would be a 10 credit module (as it had previously been in at least one institution under previous award structures), but they had understood that the Common Awards structure didn’t easily enable this, preferring 20 credit modules and not having a suitable Common Awards module to select. Deacons have to do this non-credited module on top of their full programme of other credited modules, as the shortened nature of ordination training means that there is no room, with all of the other material also being considered essential. A few Church of England student deacons had come to a few of these sessions, but had been struggling to fit this within their timetable. Numbers do affect the groupings – typically they currently have 3 or 4 student deacons per year, and sometimes group across year cohorts. Patterns of delivery vary between a part time distance learning model (typically 8 residential weekends per year over 3 years) and a full time resident/commuting model (typically over 2 years). Including more specific content at levels 5 and 6 would be good, and there might be Common Awards modules to support this, but at present, they haven’t looked for these. Queen’s has mapped several options (including a BA, MA or PhD) which are available as part of probationer studies, with the nature of their probationary studies being a shared decision by the student and others reflecting on the student’s continuing development. In addition to taught content, all deacons are allocated to one of two diaconal tutors who are full time members of staff at Queens, and a separate Diaconal Oversight accompanist. Deacon Eunice Atwood acts as their diaconate oversight tutor, who is also involved in stationing conversations

¹⁰ Faith and Order Committee Report to Methodist Conference 2016, p.4, available at: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-2015-38-Faith-and-Order-Committee.pdf>.

¹¹ Available at: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf2012-pc-57-fruitful-field.doc>

about where student deacons will eventually be placed when they become probationer deacons. Having a dedicated deacon member of staff overseeing this is considered important. The Methodist Diaconal Order also plays an important role as a religious order and therefore formational community of practice, with student deacons encouraged to attend the local area group and participating in the life of the order, including at the annual Convocation, as well as an occasional assignment within this, and a compulsory annual student deacon conference arranged by the Order. The students' placements all involve a deacon (either in the placement setting or as a 'conversation partner'), and they typically do a five week full time block placement and a longer part time placement for one or two sessions per week. Student deacons sometimes use the independent research module to support related research.

- **The Roman Catholic Church** has established and substantive 'Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons'¹², but capacity to deliver these near the region was significantly affected by the closure of Ushaw College near Durham, including the loss of its online resources. A new collaboration across several dioceses in the North of England is now beginning to offer a four year non-accredited programme, based on a part-time model of distance learning and gathering together six times a year.
- **Related roles in the Church Army, ordained pioneer ministry and other denominations**, such as the Church-Related Community Work programme within the United Reformed Church¹³, were also acknowledged as helpful to consider.
- **The Common Awards structure** offers multiple options for introducing alternative routes to gain higher education qualifications which could suit different ministries for participating denominations including the Church of England and Methodist Churches. This includes options for particular centres to use existing modules from other centres and to propose new modules if necessary. These work alongside Ministry Division oversight of the formational process. Within the Common Awards structures, there are several options for sharing good practice, including the Staff Conference, the Theological Education Institution forum that meets twice a year, as well as informally sharing throughout the network. There is likely to be increased flexibility for introducing smaller 10 credit modules if necessary in the coming year.

Within the Diocese of York and surrounding area:

- From the perspective of **several senior diocesan stakeholders** in the Diocese of York and neighbouring dioceses, deacons had the potential to play a significant role in a complimentary and collaborative way with other ministries, lay and ordained. The increasing diversity of ministries, including pioneer ministries and distinctive deacons, offers opportunities for responding to the strategic priorities of the diocese, but a key issue will be clarity over the different contributions these different ministries might respectively make, and how these fit together. There are particular opportunities for deacons to suggest the contributions that they see themselves as making within these strategies (e.g. primarily pastoral, and/or proactively reaching those individuals and groups who the church currently isn't connecting with). A related issue will be matching resources with identified need, not

¹² Available at:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_31031998_directorium-diaconi_en.html

¹³ See: <https://urc.org.uk/discipleship/church-related-community-work.html>

least given the tendency for existing distinctive deacon roles in the Church of England to be non-stipendiary, and cuts to existing funding from the Church Commissioners.

- The presence and increasing profile of a **substantive group of vocational deacons** within the Diocese of York has begun to build interest in this ministry, and support at several levels in the diocese has led to others coming forward to explore vocations. In practice, this has resulted in these deacons following a general initial ministerial education programmes, with minor tweaks being decided on an individual case-by-case basis in conjunction with the Yorkshire Ministry Course.
- **The Yorkshire Ministry Course** currently offers programmes to distinctive deacons, typically having between one and three in training each year; each of these would typically do 2 years' training with them. These would follow a programme where the vast majority of the course is taught alongside those training ultimately to become priests, following the same structure and timetable without any particular content for distinctive deacons, but with placements organised with their vocation in mind. Distinctive deacons typically do two placements – a parish placement (in which they do their utmost to send students to a parish where there is a deacon, with opportunity to do a lot of work in the community) and a chaplaincy style placement (e.g. in a secular agency). This contrasts with pioneer ministers, for example, who have a specific route with some distinctive taught content each week on contextual ministry. For all those preparing for ordination, YMC offers some practical training outside of the Common Awards credit structure; this module has included reading the ordination rites together, including considering the deacon as an ambassador, the connection with mission, and considering the role of the deacon in liturgy. Their dissertation/independent learning is often focused on their diaconal ministry.
- **The Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership** supported this seedcorn project, and offered to facilitate any curriculum changes that might be proposed, including in drawing down any additional modules required from the Common Awards framework to use locally, as part of their ongoing curriculum development.
- **The Diocesan Training Team** was responsible for continuing training. This team open to reflecting further with the vocational deacons on what they offered that might relate well to the emphases within vocational deacons' ministries, recognising that to date they had not offered much in the continuing training programme that was specific to these ministries.

In the resulting dialogue, the opportunities and challenges of the context from the perspectives of the different stakeholders were acknowledged, with broad agreement to the principles of what the deacons had highlighted as areas for further development.

Rev Canon Rosalind Brown offered a balanced paper¹⁴ which considered the implications of theological understandings of diaconal ministry for the formation of deacons and raised questions about ways in which this could helpfully be reflected in formation and training processes. This was considered very helpful in raising important questions. This may include a greater focus on reading the local context and engaging with wider communities and other agencies as enablers of mission on the margins, and a particularly high level of pastoral skills. Their work might helpfully be informed by wider disciplines, including (for example) sociological understanding of structures and communities, and understanding local contexts, whilst also being able to think theologically about their context. They might benefit from developing skills in engaging with particular groups such as young people or those with particular needs. Equipping deacons to do this might also involve

¹⁴ Reproduced at: <https://deaconstories.wordpress.com/2016/05/25/rosalind-brown-on-diaconal-formation-and-training/comment-page-1/#comment-536>.

considering issues of ethics and power, including engaging with the complexities of controversial personal, political, medical, social, and ecological issues, including leading churches in intercessions over these and supporting them in responding effectively to local needs and speaking truth to power.

There was a detailed discussion between the deacons and other stakeholders over how the content of the initial ministerial education should be balanced. Whilst existing content was generally considered helpful, the questions about it being raised by the deacons were ones of respective proportions – i.e. whilst a basic foundation might be important, less time spent on advanced study on some aspects (e.g. church history) might enable more time to be spent on content that was particularly appropriate to their ministry as vocational deacons. There was also a need to ensure that generic aspects such as placements incorporated specific learning outcomes linked to their particular ministry.

Common issues deacons indicated they may have to engage with included engaging with a wide range of particular needs/issues, e.g. asylum/immigration, mental health issues, drug and alcohol, family breakdown, etc. This meant they felt they needed at least a basic grounding in understanding and interfacing with the systems within local services (e.g. social services, health, etc.) as part of knowing where/how to help, including where to go to/refer people to. This wasn't about needing to "know all the answers" about every issue, but instead needing to know some basic principles about how to engage, find out, refer, etc. when offering pastoral care, building communities, and connecting these issues with the life of the church. Modes of teaching this might vary, including some basic principles and case studies in the classroom (which might include inputs from some specialist services e.g. social services, mental health, etc.), and/or some learnt in context (including in the importance of placements engaged with other agencies). Professional courses in related disciplines might offer helpful approaches to doing this in a manageable way (e.g. in introducing issues around boundaries, ethics, dealing with conflict, dealing with difference, safeguarding, as well as the social context, social policy changes, and the dynamics of social exclusion and inclusion, for example), if integrated with theological reflection in the process. These debates over the balance of material linked into the sorts of places and teams that deacons will typically end up working in – acknowledging that different ministries and professions may have different specialisms but can work together in particular contexts if they understand each other's roles sufficiently.

Actions Agreed as a Result of the Project (*with the name of the person who agreed to take these forward*):

<p>Within the existing discernment programme, consider what more can be done to build in the consideration of distinctive diaconal vocations more intentionally.</p>	<p><i>Lynn Comer</i></p>
<p>Within the initial ministerial education programme, adaptations for diaconal ministries involve something broader than introducing specific modules. Helpful responses would be more about enhancing the profile and awareness of vocational deacons across the programme content for all those involved in lay and ordained ministries taking these programmes, including enabling improved understanding of vocational deacons’ ministry by others. This includes the need for diaconal students to be more visible, and all tutors aware of their presence and that they bring a distinct perspective on the whole curriculum, and the need for tutors to engage with this. This will affect a wide range of aspects of initial ministerial education, which will mean YMC looking particularly at aspects including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ what happens in the classroom across all modules, for all students (e.g. encouraging tutors to remember the different types of ministry within their teaching, examples used, etc., as part of annual tutor training events/gatherings), etc. ○ placements (e.g. in the choice of placement and the support available within them). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of the sending incumbent was considered important in terms of providing support and enabling understanding in the home parish; existing approaches to engaging with these sending incumbents throughout the process could helpfully be reviewed to ensure their role is clear and they are engaged in the process fully with a clear role. ▪ The role and significance of the placement in a secular agency had particular importance for vocational deacons. Diaconal placements may benefit from having distinctive learning outcomes linked to diaconal ministry, which may point to advantages in developing a ‘Deacon in the World’ specific placement module or similar to acknowledge and encompass these within the learning process. ○ Personal tutors’ understanding of this ministry. ○ Residential programmes. ○ Looking at what specific content can be offered within the programme structure for vocational deacons, including for example the importance of modules in community development, and exploring content from other routes (e.g. contextual training) that might be particularly useful for deacons to access. 	<p><i>Stephen Spencer</i></p>
<p>On continuing training and ministerial development, the York School of Ministry will work with the Yorkshire Ministry Course to explore what they can do further together on this topic, including talking with the regional group of deacons about the role of the training team and what might be offered (and how) to address their continuing training needs. (A date has now been set for this discussion to take place).</p>	<p><i>Gavin Wakefield</i></p>
<p>For deacons in their ongoing informal learning, (building on informal exchanges to date and clear interest from other denominational representatives) ecumenical learning across denominations was recognised as</p>	<p><i>Chris Peel, as convenor of the regional deacons’</i></p>

<p>having considerable potential in terms of working together further in future, and those organising programmes of activities will actively look for ways to encourage this.</p>	<p><i>group programme.</i></p>
<p>At a national level, having clear learning outcomes recognised by Ministry Division that are specifically focused on distinctive diaconal ministry would be a significant step forward. The draft learning outcomes to fulfil this that had been drafted in the Diocese of Exeter were fully supported by this group. Hence, informing Ministry Division of the support of this group for these draft specific learning outcomes will be important as part of the national review currently underway.</p>	<p><i>Gill Kimber to highlight more clearly within the draft diaconal learning outcomes where these are similar to/different from those for other ministries. Andrew Orton to report back to Ministry Division on this event, including support for the draft learning outcomes.</i></p>
<p>At a diocesan level, holding some formal marker service for vocational deacons at the end of their curacy would be helpful to recognise the completion of this stage of their learning, which is particularly significant for vocational deacons. (As all ordained ministers have to be relicensed at the end of their curacy, this may provide one opportunity to do this).</p>	<p><i>Liz Carrington to speak with diocesan staff about this for the next deacons to reach this stage.</i></p>
<p>For other theological education institutions, feedback the results of this small project via the Common Awards national conference in July, to encourage them to consider how their programmes respond to the needs of vocational deacons in their area. (Andrew has since also applied to feedback these results more widely to an international diaconia conference in the autumn, to widen this conversation across a broader range of traditions of diaconia.)</p>	<p><i>Andrew Orton to present findings</i></p>
<p>For curriculum development under Common Awards curriculum development, use the discussions above to feed these findings into continuing discussions over how the Common Awards curriculum responds to diverse forms of ministry, and share any flexibilities, developments and/or resources that might allow programmes to respond more directly to the needs of vocational deacons.</p>	<p><i>Mike Higton</i></p>

Appendix A: Detailed List of Contributors

Stage 1

Informal interviews in person were conducted with Rev Dr Stephen Spencer, Vice Principal of the Yorkshire Ministry Course (the main provider of initial ministerial education programmes for distinctive deacons within the Church of England within the area), and via telephone with:

- Deacon Eunice Attwood, the Methodist Deacon responsible for training pathways for deacons in the Methodist Church at the Queens Ecumenical Foundation in Birmingham, which is where prospective Methodist deacons candidating from the area covered by the Diocese of York would be sent.
- Right Rev John Thomson, Bishop of Selby (whose role includes oversight for mission and ministry in the Diocese of York) and Peter Warry, Chief Executive of the Diocese of York, Church of England.
- Rev Barry Miller, Co-ordinator of Quality Assurance and Academic Administration, Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership.
- Rev Canon Dr Ian McIntosh, Head of Formation, Ministries Division.

A wide range of people including staff across several dioceses, Yorkshire Theological Education Partnership board members and Sarah Evans from Ministries Division were also supportive in accessing appropriate contacts, resources and preparing for the events; thanks are due to Rev Dr Gavin Wakefield, as Director of Ministry for the Diocese of York, who has responsibility for deacons during their post-ordination ministry and was supportive of exploring implications for continuing ministerial education throughout.

Stage 2

An initial consultation event held in York on 8th March 2016 with 9 local vocational deacons/those in initial training (trained in various places through different routes from 1990 to current students), also attended by David Mann as Diocesan Director of Vocations, and facilitated by Andrew Orton.

Stage 3

A wider interactive workshop held in York on 7th May 2016 was facilitated by Andrew Orton, with contributors including:

- 6 local Anglican/Methodist deacons/those currently in training.
- Prof Mike Higton, Common Awards, Durham University.
- Rev Canon Rosalind Brown (Canon Librarian, Durham Cathedral; former Chair of the Diocese of Salisbury Working Party that produced *The Distinctive Deacon* report).
- Rev Stephen Spencer (Vice Principal, Yorkshire Ministry Course).
- Rev Deacon Peter Warren (from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough, where he is responsible for deacons' formation and training)

- Rev Dr Gavin Wakefield (Director of Training for Missional Ministry, York Diocese) and Lynn Comer (Director York School of Ministry and Reader Studies, York Diocese) from the Diocese of York (with apologies due to illness from David Mann on this particular day).
- Rev Deacon Liz Carrington (a member of the Executive of the Diaconal Association of the Church of England, who is based in the Diocese of York and has been part of the group of deacons from which this proposal has grown.)
- Rev Deacon Gill Kimber, Warden of the College of Deacons, Diocese of Exeter.
- Rev Canon Elaine Bielby (Training Adviser responsible for Phase 2 of Initial Ministerial Education and the East Riding Archdeaconry; Dean of Women's Ministry, Diocese of York).
- Rev Beverley Lock (Diocese of Carlisle, attending as an observer due to sabbatical involvement in related research).