



Meeting with a Mentor

An option to help you work through, unpack and inhabit the learning from the course is to meet with a mentor. They do not need to be a 'leadership expert' but ideally they should have church leadership experience themselves and, above all, be a good listener, able to ask the deeper questions and thus enable you to reflect and learn well. Some of you may already have a mentor but for those who have asked (or intend to ask) someone to be a mentor through Leading Well, the following are some guidelines. These may be useful as a checklist as you go into your first or second meeting to make sure you have established the relationship on a good basis. Generally, the mentee is responsible for contacting the mentor and setting up times to meet. Early on in the relationship you want to:

1. BUILD RELATIONSHIP

Get to know one another a little by sharing something of your own stories.

2. AGREE EXPECTATIONS

Most of the problems that occur in mentoring relationships are fuelled by unmet expectations. And most of these are because they are unspoken, so one person doesn't know the other has those expectations. The solution? Establish clear expectations at the start.

Be sure to clarify the following:

- **Commitment** Agree under what terms one of you can cancel a meeting. We suggest it is vital to have a high priority on these meetings in your diaries.
- **Communication** What communication will be appropriate before and after a meeting, and in between meetings? We suggest an email before the meeting to identify things that the participant would like to talk about, perhaps an email afterwards to summarise the action points from the mentor. Are you expecting to have any contact in between?
- **Time frame** How long will you meet for, and what is the best time to meet?
- **Confidentiality** Agree how you will handle confidentiality. It is important to know the mentoring relationship is a 'safe place'.
- **Challenge and affirmation** Talk about how you as the mentee best receives challenge and affirmation.
- **Evaluation** How will you evaluate the meeting? Our suggestion is at the end of each session it would be good to ask what worked well and what could be improved.

MEETING 2

In your second meeting:

- Clarify any of the above that isn't yet clear.
- Talk about your reflections on session 1, perhaps using the thoughts you had towards the end of the two days together.
- Explore any issues you face in your role at this time that you would like to talk through with an external person.



Accompanying Group

One further option as part of the course is for each incumbent to form an accompanying group of leaders drawn from the parish(es). This group would be a place for sharing the learning and ideas from the course and potentially to integrate some of the learning from the course into the life of the church(es). Such a group could also help you build on the theological and practical lessons explored during the online sessions and their application in your context. Some of you may already have such a group in place; for others, if this is something you would like to pursue, identify your next steps forward from the material below.

IF YOU ALREADY HAVE SUCH A GROUP IN PLACE

- Share with them your attendance on the course and your hopes for it.
- Invite them to journey with you through the course and discuss whether the learning can be rippled out into the group. In what ways?
- If they are happy to collaborate in this way, we have provided some very simple suggestions of areas you could explore after each session with your leadership group.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE SUCH A GROUP IN PLACE

The first stage is Identify who your accompanying group might be.

- You may like to use the existing official structures (e.g. PCC standing committee, PCC, Church Wardens), or employed staff (voluntary and/or paid), or to develop a specific leadership group for this purpose.
- The number may vary but don't let it be too large; even two or three others can enrich the course learning.
- Be very clear about expectations particularly if you primarily see this as a short-term (accompanying) group for the duration of Leading Well only.
- Obviously any new group requires an investment in developing relationships and so we suggest you only embark on this option if you have sufficient time and energy.
- Once the group is established you can begin to use the material with suggested areas to reflect on following each session.

BEYOND LEADING WELL?

It may be that you envisage this group could develop beyond the duration of Leading Well into a longer term leadership group to share leadership with you. If so here are some guideline for identifying the composition and purpose of such a group:

GUIDELINES FOR IDENTIFYING A LEADERSHIP GROUP FOR THE LONGER TERM

- Consider your own strengths and identify what you need others to bring to the leadership group that you don't have.
- Prayerfully consider who might be appropriate for such roles. A number of the books we've recommended have helpful material on what to look for in such people.
- Discuss with one or two others (church wardens?) your thoughts. It is almost always wiser to choose members of the group in consultation with others.
- Be clear about how the group relates to existing structures (we have a paper on this we can send you).
- Approach and talk it through with those you've identified, explaining clearly what you're asking of them (purpose of the group, process of how it will work), and give them time to think and pray about it.
- Once identified, work out your pattern of meetings and begin to build the leadership group.

Finally, it may be helpful to be clear what such a leadership group isn't:

- It isn't a support group for the clergy person. It is a leadership group genuinely seeking to share the leadership of the church(es).
- It isn't a group for the incumbent to delegate all the things they don't like doing, but it will be made up of people who bring what you don't bring in order for real collaboration to occur.
- It isn't an alternative leadership structure to the PCC. It needs to be clear how it relates to existing official structures if it isn't part of those structures.

Over the page there are three questions that it is helpful to work out answers to, and then a grid to use as you explore who might be appropriate to invite to join you in your leadership group.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GROUP IS:	
THE GROUP WILL MEET (HOW OFTEN, HOW LONG?):	
IT WILL RELATE TO EXISTING STRUCTURES IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:	

Possible People

NAME	WHAT THEY BRING	HOW AND WHEN TO APPROACH THEM