

‘Exploring Curate Supervision’

Wendy Jane Edwards (Revd.)

(Student No: EDW079588950)

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Abstract

Background – From my therapeutic background I came to supervision as a curate with a set of expectations about the process. I was very satisfied with my supervision but became aware of peer's dissatisfaction.

Aim – To explore the supervision that curates were receiving, to hear their experience, to ascertain their understanding and expectations and how these were being met; to hear from their training incumbents; to reflect theologically on the issues; and to discover some practical ways forward to enable better practice

Method – Questionnaires were sent out to two year groups of curates and training incumbents in two dioceses. Additionally, 13 interviews were undertaken.

Results – Fifty per cent of curates expressed satisfaction with their curacies. A further 17% indicated reasonable satisfaction although with identifiable short-comings. A significant 33% were unhappy (37.5% of interviewees)

Key findings were lack of supervision time allocated, lack of theological reflection, lack of training for curates from their training incumbents, lack of training and support for incumbents from the diocese.

Theological reflection focused on oversight roles, relational support and accountability for the purpose of learning, transformation and growth

Conclusion – Good practice needs affirming; the choosing of training incumbents and the placing of curates needs further thought; there needs to be improved initial training and teaching of incumbents with regard to supervision, together with on-going training, support and accountability for them; curates need teaching about supervision and their responsibilities.

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I dedicate this piece of work to the curates of the two dioceses in which the research was undertaken.

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Chapter 1 Introduction – The supervision of curates in the Church of England

1.1 My Experience

Ordained deacon and commencing my title post in September 2006 within a different church tradition, I approached the first supervision session with my training incumbent (TI)¹ with eager anticipation. I had spent the first two weeks of my curacy without him, due to a holiday commitment organised prior to my appointment. I had met and spoken with various important people in the parish about their roles; I had assisted a visiting priest and a lay minister, wondering why some things were done differently and had become confused with different pieces of liturgy; I had also experienced some differing reactions to my ‘dog collar’ of which I was very self-conscious anyway. On his return, we had had staff meetings to review briefly what had gone on, and to diary plan ahead, but supervision was going to be ‘my time’, when I could bring matters for discussion and reflection.

My expectations about my supervision time were based on my experience of being supervised in a therapeutic context for fifteen years prior to ordination and of being a supervisor myself for ten years. As a counsellor and member of a professional body,² I was required to see a supervisor for a baseline minimum of 1.5 hours monthly. (Mearns, D. 2000: 229-231) Supervision was considered to be ‘a facilitative relationship which required active and intentional participation by both parties.’ (Inskipp and Proctor, 2001:10) It had agreed boundaries, was to enable the counsellor’s support and development, as well as ensure good practice. It was considered a major resource. (Inskipp and Proctor, 2001:33)

As counsellors, we were taught about the three *roles* of the supervisor – to support the practitioner in his/her professional work, to enable the practitioner’s development and to ensure professional practice. We were also taught about the responsibilities of the

¹ The initials TI will be used mostly throughout this piece of work.

² British Association for Counselling (BAC), now known as British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

supervisee – to bring one’s work and share it honestly and openly, to be clear about what we needed from supervision, to be open to feedback, prepared to monitor and change our practice in its light, and to use the time to the best advantage to support our work. (Inskipp and Proctor 2001:9)

Mearns (2000:229-231) wrote:

‘the aim is to develop a relationship in which your supervisor is regarded as a trusted colleague who can help you to reflect on all dimensions of your practice and, through that process, to develop your counselling role.’

Based on my experience and this positive understanding of the importance of supervision within a helping profession, I therefore came to supervision as a curate with a number of expectations about the conditions and process. Aware of my own responsibility to discuss things openly and hear what was being said to me, I expected to be:

- given a safe place to talk about whatever I wanted, how I wanted
- listened to and really heard
- helped to explore in greater depth whatever issue I brought
- ‘held’ but also constructively challenged

As a result, I expected to

- learn in a confidential, creative and supportive environment
- grow in understanding and discover new things
- serve God better in my calling

I was not disappointed by my TI in his supervisory role. We met regularly in his study, fortnightly for two hours. I was free to bring up whatever I wanted to, although between us we ensured certain things were covered according to CME requirements.³ We reviewed our Learning Contract regularly, adapting it slightly over the 3-4 years, and throughout that

³ Continuing Ministerial Education; now known as IME – Initial Ministerial Education. The requirements were listed in a Handbook which my Incumbent had been given by the Training Department, the relevant pages of which he photocopied for me. I had not been given a copy myself by the Training Department.

time supervision sessions continued to be helpful and honest, with reflection and mutual learning, and a deepening of respect between us.

However, I quickly became aware through the group mentoring sessions at CME that my positive experience of supervision was not being replicated elsewhere. My fellow curates had mixed stories to tell. Although some were fairly positive, others related tales of boundaries being crossed, confidences broken, or incumbents acting in strange, unhelpful or unhealthy ways. Others felt put down, unheard or unjustly criticised. For some, supervision sessions were non-existent; they felt unsupported, unwelcomed. I became quite angry; hurting for my fellow curates.

My emotional response led to thoughts and questions – why were they having such a negative experience of such an important relationship and training opportunity? What exactly was going on in supervision? Did incumbents feel threatened by having older curates with a wide variety of life experiences? Were there personality clashes involved? Were there differences of expectation about training and supervision? Might their supervisory experiences affect the curate's future ministry? Could some of the difficulties they were experiencing with their TI's be overcome and if so, how? What recourse did they have and had they taken it? Were they experiencing any benefits that weren't being expressed? Had the TI's in turn had any training themselves for this important role? Did they know what supervision was? Where was their support? And where were the checks in the system?

Overall, **how could supervision become a more positive experience for both curates and TI's?**

These thoughts and questions led to this piece of work. I decided to design some research to explore further how curates were experiencing their supervision and to answer some of the questions raised above. However, my research was being carried out at the same times as events in the national church heralded changes related to the training and employment of curates.

1.2. Recent changes in the Church of England affecting Curates

1.2.1 Assessment at the End of Curacy

The Report “Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church” (2003),⁴ commonly known as The Hind Report, was initially set up to investigate the structure and funding of ordination training. However, it looked more widely at the whole issue of initial ministerial training. It called for ‘flexibility in models of ministry and for clergy to be ongoing, lifelong learners’⁵ and proposed a restructuring whereby the 3-4 year curacy training followed on the 2-3 year ordination training in terms of formation and ministerial development. A series of learning outcome statements was approved by the House of Bishops in July 2005. A paper on the Assessment of Curates was circulated to Bishops and IME officers in June 2007. A further draft report for Consultation circulated in September 2009 – around the time I decided to commence this piece of work.

Partly in preparation for the advent of Common Tenure (see next section), Assessment Grids for Incumbent Level by the End of Curacy became available on the Church of England website during 2010.⁶ The grids define the basic knowledge that a curate should know by that point, the performance criteria, the performance evidence required and the range of situations envisaged. Forty-six Learning Outcomes are stated within seven main headings.⁷

1.2.2 Common Tenure

In addition to the changes in training, there has also been a change in the terms and conditions of clergy.⁸ Common Tenure was introduced in January 2011 as a result of

⁴The Archbishop’s Council (2003) www.churchofengland.org/media/56878/thehindreport.doc Accessed 9/1/2012

⁵ Simpson, 2011:6

⁶ House of Bishops (2010) Report “Formation and Assessment in Curacy” www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/ministry/ministerial-education-and-development/initial-ministerial-education/asp . Accessed 9/1/2012

⁷ Headings are Vocation and Ministry within the Church of England, Spirituality, Personality and Character, Relationships, Leadership and Collaboration, Mission and Evangelism, Faith and Quality of Mind. These relate to the nine areas looked for in selection of ordinands.

⁸ Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulation 2009, www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/common-tenure.aspx Accessed 9/1/2012

government pressure over employment rights.⁹ Stating entitlements such as housing, fees and expenses, annual leave, pension, etc. it also covers areas such as capability procedures, grievance and disciplinary procedures, and ministerial development reviews. As a consequence of this, a curacy becomes a time-limited post for the purpose of training, and demonstrable standards have to be achieved in order to move to a next post; hence the need for the Assessment grids.

These inter-related changes took place comparatively recently, during the period of my research and their impact on it will be noted in various ways. However, before detailing my research and its conclusions, and reflecting further, it is worth considering what is meant by the term ‘supervision’ and its use. The next chapter will consider this, identifying some issues which will be picked up during the research and theological reflection.

⁹ House of Bishops (2010) Report “Formation and Assessment in Curacy” p1
www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/ministry/ministerial-education-and-development/initial-ministerial-education.aspx Accessed 11/12/09, Accessed 29/7/2010 and 9/1/2012

Chapter 2 Supervision in context and the historical training of curates

The words ‘supervision’ and ‘supervisor’ mean different things in different settings. This chapter briefly reviews supervision in various contexts, before presenting an historical overview of curate training in the Church of England. Various themes arise out of this review which are critiqued and reflected on later.

2.1. Business/commercial/industrial

In this context, a supervisor is in charge of a group of people, directing their work, giving orders, ensuring the work is done properly and sorting out problems. Dictionary definitions reflect this understanding of supervision as they refer variously to oversight, direct, watch over, inspect, control.¹⁰ The word ‘supervision’ literally means oversight, coming from the Latin *supervidere* (*super* = over; *videre* = sight).

In these settings, the organization and its aims are of prime importance. Maximum performance or efficiency is aimed for, with accountability/evaluation as an overt part. Supervision is inherently hierarchical with a managerial focus.

Pohly (1993:19ff) describes the history and development of supervision in business/industry. Originally based on scientific management theories, controlling people for the sake of efficiency and production, this autocratic model was expanded during the 1960’s to include more democratic and human relations approaches. Pohly cites Hitt (1985, quoted in Pohly 1993:23) who analyses four leadership or supervisory styles:–

- Theory X – autocratic style (maximum concern for production, placing exclusive reliance upon external control of human behaviour);
- Theory Y – benevolent style (maximum concern for people, relying heavily on self-control and self-direction);
- Theory Z – a team approach (maximum concern for both production and people);
- Theory L (*laissez-faire*) – a hands-off style (minimum concern for both).

¹⁰ Onions (1983) *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*; Collins *Essential English Dictionary* (2003)

Hitt rates Theory Z as the most effective leadership/supervisory style across the broad spectrum of organizations and situations. (Pohly, 1993:23)

More recently within the UK, insights from the therapeutic world (see below) have been brought into the organizational world with regard to supervision. Carroll argues that the knowledge, competencies and skills of professional supervisors can be of value to organizations, enabling them to supervise individuals, groups, executive teams and themselves. (Carroll p.61 in Carroll & Tholstrup eds. 2001)

2.2 Social work/Therapeutic

Overseeing alms-giving was a fore-runner of supervision within social work. (Pohly, 1993:34) From the 1920's onwards, administration and teaching were two elements of social work supervision, with another element later defined as support, with the 'ultimate objective ... to offer the agency's service to the client in the most efficient and effective manner possible.' (Kadushin, 1976, quoted in Pohly, 1993:35)

Within a social work/therapeutic setting, the more usual understanding of supervision is of 'a formal or regular process of support and learning.' (Jacobs, 1989:21) Supervision is mandatory for any practising therapist and BACP states that the first two aims of the purpose of supervision are:

- to assist in the development of the reflective practitioner, and
- to support the therapist.¹¹ (Despenser, 2011:02)

Accountability is present in the final two aims (note 2) but not in a specifically managerial way. Despenser (2011:01) notes that in some settings, supervision may also incorporate elements of training and assessment, and (referencing the Ethical Framework, 2010, p.7 para 33) that where line management supervision is in place, access to other consultative support should be available.

¹¹ The other 3 aims are 1) to maximise the effectiveness of the therapeutic relationship, 4) to monitor/safeguard the interests of the client and 5) to maintain ethical standards as set out in the Ethical Framework.

Models of supervision in the therapeutic world abound. As an aspect of psychoanalytical training, particularly from the 1920's onward, supervision was influenced by a medical teaching model. (Pohly, 1993:28ff) The more 'person-centred' and humanistic counselling approaches of the 1960's, together with developmental, cognitive-behavioural, family therapy and systems approaches, broadened the range of models of supervision used. (Carroll, 1996:10,14)

Carroll (1996:19ff) provides a comprehensive list of models of supervision and looks specifically at the British context. He identifies Proctor & Inskipp, Hawkins and Shohet, Housten, Dryden and Thorne, and Page and Wosket as being key contributors to the literature on supervision – indeed, they are the ones who have contributed to my own professional life as a counsellor and supervisor prior to ordination.

First appearing in the mid 1980's, Proctor's apprenticeship model of supervision – now called the Supervision Alliance Model¹² – defined three functions or tasks of supervision – formative, normative and supportive or restorative. This echoes the three functions that Kadushin – working within a social work context in the 1970's – called managerial, educative and supportive.¹³ I will reflect more on this task framework in Chapter 5. At this point, we note that the framework covers primarily the tasks of learning, monitoring and refreshment.

In 1989, Hawkins and Shohet (1989:56ff) published a process model of supervision which identified two interlocking matrices and six modes or foci of supervision. (Refer Appendix I) It was briefly noted at the time that the supervisory relationship existed within a wider context but this was not developed in any significant way. (Hawkins and Shohet, 1989:75) Since then, the authors have worked in other fields including business organizations and have expanded this aspect of the model.¹⁴ (Hawkins and Shohet, 3rd Ed. 2006:193ff) Factors which are likely to have a bearing on the supervision such as family, economic

¹² Proctor, 2000:11

¹³ Kadushin (1976) referred to by Hawkins and Shohet in Dryden & Thorne (1991:111)

¹⁴ Now called 'The Seven-Eyed Model of Supervision.' Refer Appendix 1

realities, organizational constraints and expectations, the social context and ethical considerations are identified. (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006:82)

Another model developed by Hawkins and Shohet (1989:52) is based on the developmental approach of Stoltenberg and Delworth in the 1980's. They suggest four major stages of supervisee development from self-centred to process-in-context centred. (Refer Appendix 1)

Although critiquing it (1989:53), they particularly recommend it to supervisors who work with trainees.

A fourth model from the secular therapeutic context is that of Page and Wosket.¹⁵ This flexible cyclical model consisting of 5 stages¹⁶ which are further sub-divided, is an attempt to provide

“an overarching framework for the supervision process, as applied to both novice and experienced practitioners, which can encompass process, function, aims and methodology.” (Page and Wosket, 1994:33)

Hawkins and Shohet however, note that this model is very similar to the CLEAR¹⁷ supervision model which they first used in the 1980's and which they have since adopted as a model of coaching (2006:61).

2.3 Education

Education has also adopted the practice of supervision. Pohly (1993:28) notes that efforts were made in the mid 20th century to establish supervision in public schools in the USA but it was resisted by teachers who were suspicious of it. Within the UK, it is not used in a schools setting with regard to those staff with qualified teacher status (but who may have a line manager if they are in middle management) but is used in connection with support staff who carry out specified work related to teaching and learning such as learning support

¹⁵ Page and Wosket, 1994:34. Refer Appendix 1

¹⁶ Contract, Focus, Space, Bridge, Review

¹⁷ Contract, Listen, Explore, Action, Review

mentors.¹⁸ Additionally, both in the States and in the UK, it is used in Higher Education. Students are allocated research supervisors when doing a post-graduate degree, and teaching modules are available for prospective supervisors.¹⁹

Following government recommendations, health care education also uses the term supervision. Clinical supervision in this setting (for example for nurses, occupational health workers, etc.) offers support for elements of clinical governance, such as quality improvement, risk management, performance management and systems of accountability and responsibility. Training in supervision is given and the Proctor/Kadushin model is often the main model used.²⁰ The Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, for example, defines supervision as:

‘a collaborative process between two or more practitioners of the same or different professions (which) should encourage the development of professional skills and enhanced quality of patient care through the implementation of an evidence-based approach to maintaining standards in practice ... using elements of reflection to inform the discussion.’

It is to be supportive and valuing of the persona and is seen as distinct from formal line management and appraisal.²¹

¹⁸ ‘Time for Standards: Guidance accompanying the Section 133 Regulations issued under the Education Act 2002’ (2007) www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00636-2007 Accessed 28/3/12. Supervision is also used in connection with those who counsel within a school context, which some would call a form of Pastoral Counselling. See “Supervising a School Counsellor: A Case Study” by Mary O’Donovan in *Practical Theology* Vol.2.3 (2009: 359-371)

¹⁹ See for example details of the module ‘Dissertation Supervision and Guidance’ offered at Canterbury Christ Church University, together with its sister module Supporting Students and Guidance www.canterbury.ac.uk/Support/learning-teaching-enhancement-unit/StaffDevelopment/PGCLTHE/Modules/DissertationSupervisionandGuidance.aspx

²⁰ For example www.rcn.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/78523/001549.pdf “Clinical Supervision in the Workplace.” 2003. Accessed 27/2/12

²¹ The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (2005) “A Guide to Implementing Clinical Supervision”. CPD37. On-line at <http://www.queenmarysroehampton.nhs.uk/working/supervision/Supervision%20Documents/Chartered%20Society%20of%20Physiotherapy.pdf> Accessed 4/3/2012

2.4 Pastoral

2.4.1 Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

Originating in the 1920's in the USA with a view to studying 'living human documents' rather than books, and developed in the 1960's as a method of seminary education, CPE gave theological students the opportunity of doing clinical placements in hospitals and mental health institutions, with clinical pastoral supervision an integral part using case study material and 'the verbatim'.²² Pohly discusses the development of CPE in more detail, noting that CPE has existed 'for more than a half century outside the formal structures of theological education and the church' and that it was unique among the professions because it required its supervisors 'to meet particular levels of training and competence for that function.'(1993:41)

Leach and Paterson confirm that although CPE is a well-established movement in the USA, Canada, continental Europe, Ireland and Scotland, it is not so in England and Wales (2010: 197). Nevertheless, CPE together with the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) has had an important influence on the pastoral care and counselling ministry in Britain as a whole. (Lyll, 1995:17)

2.4.2 Pastoral Care and Counselling

Lyll (1995:18ff) outlines the development in Britain from the 1960's of various initiatives and organisations concerned with pastoral care and counselling – early meetings between doctors and clergy in London and Edinburgh; the publication of *Contact*,²³ the founding of the Clinical Theology Association;²⁴ the setting up of the Westminster Pastoral Foundation; the forming in 1972 of the Association for Pastoral Care and Counselling (APCC),²⁵ which went on to become a founding member BACP; the appointment of

²² This involves the practitioner writing as accurate a word-for-word account as they can remember of a live encounter from which they want to learn, and discussing this individually with their supervisor or with other in a supervised group. (Leach and Paterson, 2010:62f)

²³ *Contact: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Pastoral Studies*, now called *Practical Theology*

²⁴ Now known as The Bridge Pastoral Foundation

²⁵ Now known as the Association for Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling (APSCC), a division of BACP.

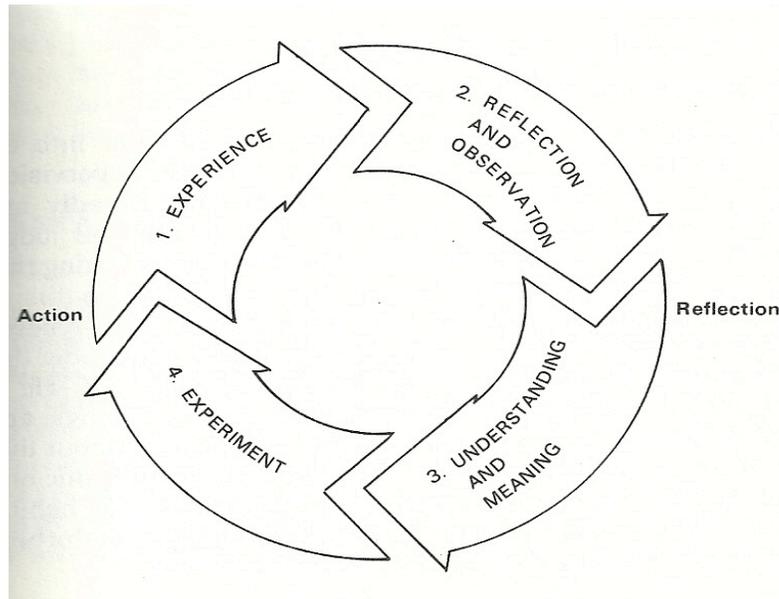
Advisors in Pastoral Care and Counselling in dioceses, and the teaching of pastoral care – and sometimes pastoral counselling as a separate discipline – in theological colleges.

Supervision was an integral part of this world, often following either a medical model or the various therapeutic models as mentioned in 2.2, with the CPE tool of Verbatim sometimes used. Foskett and Lyall wrote a key textbook on supervision and pastoral care using Verbatim to describe and demonstrate various aspects of supervision (1988:139f).

Their basic model of supervision (Fig 1) was one derived from adult learning theories (Kolb et al, 1974) which extended the simple process of action and reflection into a four-phase sequence in which each phase arises out of the one preceding it. (Foskett and Lyall, 1988:15)

Figure 1 – Learning from Experience: a Model of Supervision

(Foskett and Lyall, 1988:15)



Notably, this model is similar to the praxis model of the pastoral cycle or spiral used for theological reflection. (Green, 1990:30; Ballard and Pritchard 2006:82)

More recently, the (British) Association of Pastoral Supervisors and Educators was launched, offering an accreditation process for supervisors. Their definition of pastoral supervision is:

‘a relationship between two or more disciples who meet to consider the ministry of one or more of them in an intentional and disciplined way.’

Supervision is

‘practised for the sake of the supervisee, providing a space in which their well-being, growth and development are taken seriously, and for the sake of those among whom the supervisee works, providing a realistic point of accountability within the body of Christ for their work as (chaplains, ministers, etc.)’ (Leach and Paterson, 2010: 1)

Their preferred model is that already mentioned of Inskipp and Proctor, focussed on tasks (2010:18ff) and supervisors are expected to be supervised themselves (2010:22)

2.5 Church of England Curate Training

It is only relatively recently that the word supervision has been used in the Church of England in relation to curate training.

Russell in his seminal study on the clerical profession (1984) notes that before theological colleges were founded, the only instruction which a clergyman²⁶ received was from books specially written for the purpose (1984:7). In the late 18th and early 19th century, such handbooks as ‘Hints from a Minister to his Curate for the Management of his Parish’ and ‘Practical Advice to the Young Parish Priest’ were published to aid the new curate.²⁷

Social and economic changes during the 19th century brought increasing professionalism to the clergy which meant an encouragement to acquire more theological knowledge, together

²⁶ In this historical review, I will use the language of the time, which of course referred to men only.

²⁷ These Handbooks are two of approximately 100 found in the Bodleian Library, published between 1750 and 1875. (Russell, 1984: 7)

with pastoral, homiletical and other technical/functional skills. Heeney (1976) offers a picture of Victorian parish clergy in the example of one Ashton Oxenden (1808-92)²⁸ who, following graduation from Oxford in classics, spent a year in solitary reading preparation for his bishop's examination prior to ordination and who later wrote that a better way would have been 'to serve 'a kind of ministerial apprenticeship' under the direction of a competent and experienced parish clergyman.'²⁹ Indeed, 'supervised' parish training for ordinands of all types of churchmanship did become increasingly the case, especially for Oxbridge graduates, although it was never compulsory. Some Anglo-Catholics and high churchmen, however, favoured a seminary education, focusing on moral and spiritual growth, rather than practical. (Heeney, 1976:101)

As numbers of non-graduate literate ordinands increased in the mid-nineteenth century, so did the number of theological colleges, but again this was not compulsory. It was not until after the First World War that at least a year's residence at a theological college was a requirement for all ordinands.

Moving to post-ordination and quoting the Anglo-Catholic Walsham How (1823-97) who called it 'continued education', Heeney describes how a deacon in Victorian times 'if he were appointed an assistant curate, his pastoral labours were supervised by a senior priest.' (Heeney 1976:107) He was expected to take reading seriously and would meet other clerics to argue and discuss. Heeney says:

'The key to a successful curacy was effective supervision by a conscientious and efficient incumbent. In the view of men as far apart in churchmanship as the Evangelical Daniel Wilson and Bishop James Fraser, such supervision was a very important responsibility of the rector or vicar.' (Heeney, 1976:108)

He goes on to cite how an Evangelical, W.W. Champneys used to regularly meet with his curates individually, and once a week gather them together for a class in pastoral theology

²⁸ Bishop of Montreal from 1869-78 but who otherwise ministered in the county of Kent.

²⁹ Heeney (1976: 100) quoting from Ashton Oxenden, *The History of My Life: An Autobiography* (London 1891)

based on their current work.³⁰ However, not all newly-ordained clergy were in that privileged position. Many were isolated and never worked ‘under supervision’, i.e. apprenticed to or with advice from a more experienced priest, being forced to ‘learn by experience ... costly to others and painful to (the curate concerned).’³¹

The first half of the 20th century saw a questioning of the place of religion in society, both in general terms and specifically the established church, together with a marked contraction in clergy numbers for a variety of reasons, such as low levels of recruitment, the accelerating rate of retirements, resignations and the opting out of parish work to become ‘worker-priests’ or chaplains (Russell, 1984: 263ff).

The 1960’s saw dramatic changes in ‘the structure, economy and polity of English society’ which in Russell’s view had the most dramatic effect on the clergy since their role was influenced by professionalization in the mid-nineteenth century. (1984:284) During this decade, the Paul Report and the subsequent Morley Commission proposed certain measure – about stipend and other clergy conditions of service – which were defeated then, but have since been implemented in Common Tenure. Although referring to disciplinary measures, Russell makes the point that ‘the general lack of accountability is a feature of the clerical profession and a point of significant dissimilarity with other professions’ even in the 1980’s. (1984: 274) Furthermore, the majority of clergy continued to work in individual practice. (Russell 1984:255)

The first group of men ordained under the Auxiliary Pastoral Ministry scheme took place in 1972³² but by the end of the 1970’s, questions were being asked about academic standards and the quality of training clergy were receiving. (Russell, 1984:267) There was an increasing ambivalent attitude of society to church with a consequent marginalizing and questioning of the clergy role. (Russell, 1984:280ff)

³⁰ Heeney (1976: 108) quoting from W.W. Champneys in Parliamentary Papers 1857-58, Vol.IX *Spiritual Instruction and Places of Worship*

³¹ Henney (1976: 107) quoting from W.W. Champneys in *Parish Work* (1866)

³² Later to become Non-Stipendiary Ministry (NSM) and more recently Self-Supporting Ministers (SSM). However, it is interesting to note the term ‘sub-professional’ was used then. (Russell 1984:286)

Since then, society and church have seen even more changes. Mission-Shaped Church noted the emergence of a network and consumer society coinciding with the demise of Christendom, and proposed that ‘initial training of all ministers should include a focus on cross-cultural evangelism, church planting and fresh expressions of church’. (2004:11, 147) The first women were ordained as priests in 1994; in 2011, it was noted that self-supporting ministers make up 27% of the clergy in England,³³ collaborative working is increasingly encouraged, (Nash et al 2008:4) and other changes to training have already been noted.

In this review of supervision in various settings, I have identified various models and foci of supervision in a variety of settings – industry and business, social work and psychotherapy, education and pastoral. Some aspects to do with supervision have been noted:

- it can be seen as inherently hierarchical with a managerial focus or as consultative with a sharing and learning focus
- it can be used for a variety of functions such as support, assisting development, management, accountability, or reflecting on a clinical or pastoral encounter
- it can be used only for trainees or throughout a professional career or other occupation
- a variety of models based on function or content have been identified
- training in supervision is given

With regard to the training of curates, the term has only recently been used. Previous terms have included: instruction, advice and apprenticeship, with learning by experience being described as costly and painful. However, changes in the last 20 years have promoted life-long learning (Edmondson, 2002:90), and experiential learning and reflection (Nash and Nash, 2009:6). Incumbents have been designated ‘training incumbents and ‘supervise’ their curates. From 2011, this includes enabling curates to achieve national Learning Outcomes. (Simpson, 2011:7)

³³ The Church Times 1/4/11, p.5

This review raises a number of issues: **the understanding of supervision and the role of the supervisor, the model of supervision, the focus of supervision, training for supervision, and support/accountability.** These are issues which will be further discussed, analysed and reflected on after the next chapter which outlines my research design and methodology.

Chapter 3 Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Rationale

The majority of questions identified towards the end of Section 1.1 were clearly focused on wanting to explore further the experiences of individual curates and training incumbents (TI's). Some in-depth knowledge of a number of individuals' thoughts and feelings towards supervision could enable further understanding of the complex situations and dynamics within the process. This, together with exploring the actions of the participants themselves within the supervisory process of their specific contexts, would contribute to understanding the meaning of their experience for them. This exploratory and descriptive focus in order to gain insight would have the benefit of giving the participants themselves a voice and of potentially leading to an inductive process that could help others.

These considerations, therefore, pointed to using qualitative research methods within an overarching qualitative or interpretive methodology, underpinned by a phenomenological philosophical stance and method. This approach is consistent with humanistic psychology and to counsellors trained in person-centred or integrative models. McLeod, 1998:88) Furthermore, Swinton and Mowat (2006:43) in discussing Practical Theology research, suggest that ideographic as compared to nomothetic knowledge is 'an integral part of the experiences and situations that Practical Theology seeks to reflect upon.'

Time and resource constraints precluded a large-scale piece of research, so some semi-structured in-depth interviews were envisaged in order to help elicit knowledge that would 'create deep and rich insights into the meanings that people place on particular forms of experience.' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006:63) Seeing gestures and expressions and hearing a person's own story of their experience in their own words – their emphases, phrases, metaphors, pauses, hesitations, silences and the like – these all contribute to a greater depth of understanding and richness of meaning.

In order to gain as much initial data as possible, as well as to identify potential interviewees, it was decided to send a questionnaire to curates and a parallel one to TI's in

two dioceses. Those responsible for the training of curates in the dioceses concerned were contacted in order to inform them and ensure their approval for the research. Due to the timing of the initial research (in the Autumn), it was decided not to send to first year curates (i.e. IME 4) and their TI's. It was felt that it could be too early in the supervisory relationship for them to be able to reply in a reflective way to some of the questions.³⁴ It was also decided not to send to curates in their final year of training (i.e. IME 7) who were likely to be in the process of looking for their next job and possibly with their minds focused on moving out of diocese.

In making both these decisions, I was aware that I was narrowing the sample size, and it could be argued that to gain a fuller picture, *all* curates and TI's should have had the opportunity of responding. Nevertheless, it left a total of 41 curates³⁵ in their second and third years of their title posts (IME years 5 and 6) together with 38 TI's across two different dioceses.³⁶ I considered that a reasonably high percentage of respondents from these numbers would be a large enough sample to give a good measure of validity and reliability to the research, and add to its trustworthiness.³⁷ Possible questions to include were discussed with my research supervisor and own training incumbent, although the final decision was my own.

3.2. Questionnaires

The curates and TI's were sent the appropriate questionnaire by post with a stamped addressed envelope for reply and an accompanying explanatory letter. This detailed the purposes of the research, how they and others would benefit and what I was asking from them. It also offered the choice of an anonymous reply or to indicate their name, giving

³⁴ However, it could be argued that reflecting on some of the questions, 4-6 months into a curacy could open up further discussion between curate and training incumbent with regard to their expectations of supervision, and identify any key differences at an early stage.

³⁵ The original number given to me was 42 but before sending out the original mailing, I was informed of one who had permanently withdrawn.

³⁶ The reason for the apparent discrepancy was that 2 incumbents had 2 curates; and I was unable to trace the supervisors of 2 curates (1 of whom was a hospital chaplain and 1 who was in inter-regnum) until it was too late.

³⁷ Validity and reliability are two key factors in effective research – see Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:133). However, these are traditionally looked for in these terms within a positivist approach, 'whilst the term trustworthiness generally refers to criteria to evaluate the soundness of qualitative research.' (Mintz, 2010:06

contact details if they were prepared to engage in a follow-up interview.³⁸ Confidentiality was also assured, in line with ethical procedures.

This initial approach was followed up by email a month later with a second copy of the questionnaire attached.³⁹ The option of response by email was offered but with the reminder that if they wished to remain anonymous, they would need to reply by post. A final email reminder was sent three weeks later with a cut-off date two weeks ahead. These measures were taken with a view to maximising the response rate but without imposing undue coercion. (Cohen et al, 2007:317)

*3.2.1 Questionnaire for Curates*⁴⁰

In order to maximise response, it was designed to cover only one sheet of A4 paper. It was divided into two. The first part contained seven questions about the individual themselves and the context of the curacy. These initial questions were designed to be fairly quick to answer and non-threatening. They were designed to give some basic information about the person which could be used in statistical analysis, as well as setting the context for the more reflective questions on supervision.

Participants were asked for their age-group, their year of ordination as deacons, their previous occupation, their IME year group, the type of ministry (stipendiary/self-supporting) and the time given to the parish if self-supporting. They were also asked to provide a brief description of the context of the curacy. The purpose was to understand some aspects of the setting in which the TI or curate found themselves, as well as to ensure when it came to the interviews, that there was a spread of churchmanship, ministry and gender represented.

The second part focused on supervision. Questions 8 and 9 were designed to ascertain **whether supervision was taking place according to the requirements** laid down by the

³⁸ Refer **Appendix II**.

³⁹ Refer **Appendix III**

⁴⁰ Refer **Appendix IV**

respective dioceses in their diocesan Handbooks.⁴¹ Questions 10 and 11 were open-ended questions asking about the curate's **expectations of supervision** and their understanding of **the role of the supervisor**. Although aware it might make comparing the data more difficult, the questions were deliberately kept open and not guided in anyway, in order to avoid any personal bias and 'to catch the authenticity, richness, depth of response, honesty and candour which are the hallmarks of qualitative data.' (Cohen et al, 2007:330) Question 12 again was open-ended, giving an opportunity for them to clarify briefly whether their expectations had been met or not.

Question 13 was different in style. Within a small Table, the curate was asked to enumerate the number of times specific activities took place within their supervision. These were activities that could justifiably happen within a curate's training but not necessarily within supervision sessions. This question was designed specifically to establish **the content of supervision** and **whether the stated purpose of supervision** in the diocesan handbooks (i.e. reflection on ministerial experience including theological reflection) **was taking place**.

Before focusing on any **difficulties** that had arisen in supervision (Questions 15 and 16), a question about the **helpfulness** of it was incorporated (Question 14). This was specifically to balance any bias or assumption towards negativity.

A final opportunity was offered for the curate to make any further comments about the supervisory relationship.

3.2.2 Questionnaire for Training Incumbents⁴²

The questionnaire sent to TI's was designed to cover only one sheet. I thought a response would be more likely if the questionnaire could be designed with clarity and brevity in mind.

⁴¹ These handbooks will not be referenced in order to maintain confidentiality as part of the ethical considerations. The guidelines in question here refer to how often supervision should happen and who initiates the agenda.

⁴² Refer **Appendix V**

It followed a similar structure to the curates' questionnaire, having two parts. The first seven questions were parallel ones asking for basic information about themselves, their curate and the parish context, but with a couple of minor variations.⁴³

As before, the second part of the questionnaire focused on supervision. Questions 8 and 9 again paralleled the curates' ones but Question 10 asked for their **understanding of supervision** (as opposed to their expectations) with Question 11 focusing on the role of a supervisor. These again were open-ended questions inviting a response in their own words, rather than being led in any specific direction.

Question 12 – the Table regarding activities or **content of supervision** – exactly paralleled the curates' Question 13. Questions 13-15 on benefits and difficulties were similar to the curates' Questions 14-16, but with a slight change of wording using personal pronouns. Being a curate myself, I wanted to emphasize to the TI's that I wanted to hear their voices as well as the curates, and I decided that using 'you' in Questions 13 and 14 would help to convey this. Swinton and Mowat (2006:59) argue that reflexivity – the process of critical self-reflection carried out by the researcher throughout the research process which seeks to monitor the researcher's own contribution and response to the proceedings – is crucial for every dimension of the qualitative research process, including the selection of the questions. This focus on self-awareness is in accord with good practice in therapeutic counselling. (Egan, 1990:148, 24)

Questions 16 and 17 were additional questions for the TI's which asked about their **training in supervision** and their **support**. Finally, an opportunity was given for them also to make any further comment in their own words about the supervisory relationship.

The data collected from the two questionnaires can be found in **Appendix IX** and will be analysed in the next chapter.

⁴³ For example, omitting the youngest age group as no training incumbent was likely to be under 30. Nor was the year of their ordination as deacon seen as being relevant, unlike that of curates ordained more recently. However, they were asked the year of their ordination as priest.

3.3. Interviews

The questionnaire respondents limited themselves as to who was willing to be interviewed. Five of the TI's and four of the curate respondents indicated they did not want to be interviewed. However, due to time and cost, not all willing respondents could be interviewed.

I wanted to interview a similar number of curates and TI's, but with a slight weighting towards curates. This was because the original experience came from the curate's perspective, and I felt their voices had the potential to be the least heard. In terms of the power dynamic between curate and TI, and between curate and the diocesan structures, I perceived them as being in the weaker positions. This is supported by Leach and Paterson (2010:139). Although both curate and supervisor have the potential ability to devalue the other in an attempt to minimise the other's power, or to unconsciously 'play games', thus setting up an undercurrent of power that may not be openly acknowledged, Leach and Paterson say that 'the pastoral supervisor is always a powerful person' and that 'the dynamic intensifies when the supervisor has wider institutional power as well as the role power that comes with the supervising role and the social power that comes with being a member of a powerful group in society.'(Leach and Paterson, 2010:139) A training incumbent and curate is an example given.

Another limiting factor was personal knowledge of some of the respondents. I wanted to minimise any significant influence I could have on the interviewee, although aware that I would nevertheless have a personal impact on any interviewee, not only in terms of any unconscious transference dynamics but also in more basic terms of establishing rapport and being responsible for the inter-personal communication dynamics.(Cohen et al, 2007:362) Of course, it could be argued that having an already established relationship with an interviewee enables one to reach a deeper level of communication and understanding more deeply, and I accept this point. On the other hand, there could be the potential for either participant to feel constrained and unable to talk freely due to the other relationship dynamics.

In identifying interviewees, I wanted both genders and different age groups represented, covering a range of church traditions, including both stipendiary and self-supporting curates. I also wanted to include at least one curate whose questionnaire had indicated that their experience was a positive one and at least one who indicated they were having a negative experience. This was to enable as representative a sample as possible, but again possible interviewees limited themselves by their own availability.

Within the time frame and limitations, thirteen interviews were undertaken altogether; eight of these with curates of equal numbers of stipendiary and self-supporting ministers; five were with TI's. Two of the thirteen were a 'pair', which allowed for some comparison of the same supervisory process.

Each interviewee was given an information sheet before the interview in line with ethical guidelines and an opportunity was given to ask questions with regard to the research project. Permission was then sought for recording the interview and confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed.⁴⁴ In addition to each one being recorded, I took hand-written notes.

The semi-structured exploratory interviews were prepared in advance in line with Kvale's 'seven stages of an interview investigation' and conducted with a reflective approach to the knowledge sought. (Kvale, 1996:88)

The TI's were informed that I wanted to explore three specific areas:

- their past experience of being supervised as a curate themselves, as well as any other past experiences of supervising or of being supervised in other work situations;
- their experiences of supervising their present curate and any past curate they may have had; and
- their training for supervision and their support.

⁴⁴ Refer **Appendices VI and VII**.

I wanted to try to understand what they had brought from their past into the present supervisory situation and how influential that had been and what they were learning from the present supervisory relationship. I also wanted to establish what training they had received or would like and who they turned to for support as a supervising incumbent. My questions and responses therefore needed to be flexible to account for their varying experiences and I relied on my counselling training and reasonably well-practised communication skills to respond appropriately, at the same time being aware I was interviewing and not counselling.

At an appropriate point in the middle section, interviewees were shown a sheet of words connected to supervision and the role of a supervisor (**Appendix VIII**), and asked to identify which five words they would consider to be most important and why. The sheet contained words taken from the questionnaire responses, and was a means of confirming the important aspects of supervision for both curates and TIs.

With the curates, I wanted to explore more about their expectations of supervision and try to discover how much any past experience of supervising or being supervised had influenced these. They were given opportunities to clarify some of the answers they gave in the questionnaire, and invited to expand on what had been helpful and difficult, giving specific examples. They were also asked to identify their five most important words from the same sheet.

Additionally, they were asked to give a 'satisfaction score out of 10' for their supervision; what advice they would give to a curate who found themselves in a similar situation; what they would take from their present experience into a context where they themselves were the supervisor; and what message they would like to give to their ministry development and training department. The first two questions were designed to focus their thoughts on identifying specific learning from their supervisory experience. The third question was to identify possible future beneficial changes to the supervisory experience.

Following each interview, I typed up my hand-written notes, referring to the Voice Recorder for any corrections.

Chapter 4 Research Analysis

4.1. Questionnaire Response

The response statistics of the questionnaires (**Appendix IX Section 1**) are broadly in line with Cohen et al, who say ‘a well-planned postal survey should obtain at least a 40 per cent response rate which could be raised to between 70 and 80 per cent with 3 reminders.’ (2007:345) The initial average overall response rate, with 2 reminders,⁴⁵ reached 70%, with training incumbents (TI’s) giving the higher response.

However, three responses from TI’s said they had no curate at present. If only the responses from those who confirmed they had IME 5 or 6 curates and who could respond are considered, the rate drops to 66%.⁴⁶

The response rate of TI’s and curates added together was broadly similar across the two year groups. However, Figure 2 overleaf shows the breakdown of responses from curates and TI’s of the two year groups. There was a higher response rate from IME 6 TI’s compared to IME 5 ones. This could indicate a greater interest in training and supervision amongst this cohort of TI’s, but further research would be needed to clarify reasons for the other group’s lack of response.⁴⁷

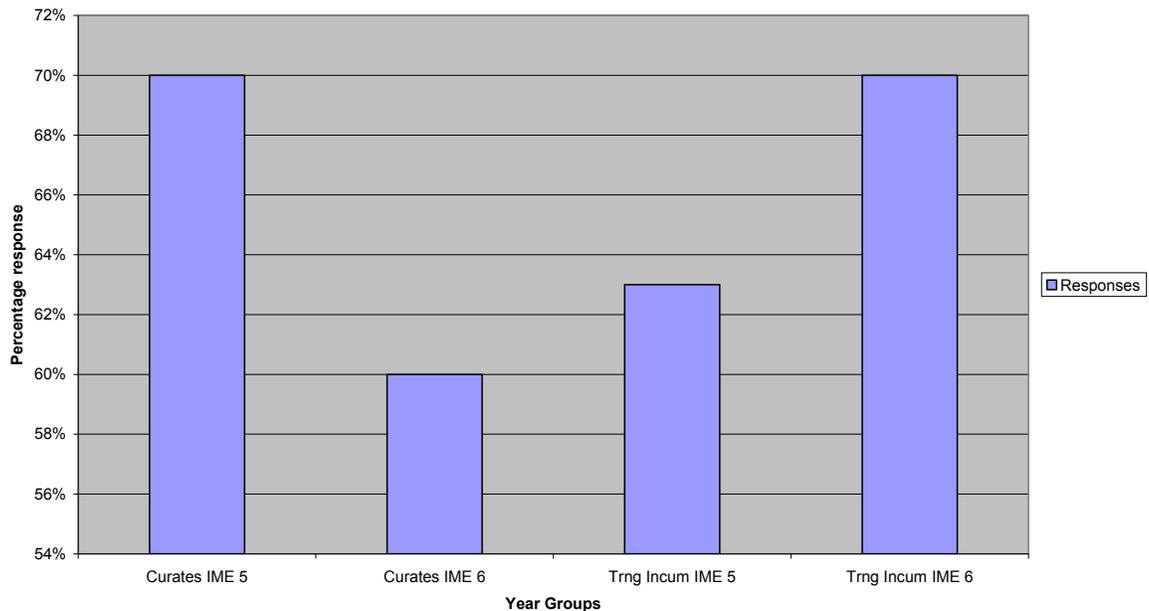
The same would be true with regard to the 10% higher response rate from curates in IME 5 over IME 6. The figures could reflect a greater interest in training amongst the curates of that year group; equally it could be to do with where the year groups found themselves in the process of their training. Further research would be needed on this issue to establish its relevancy.

⁴⁵ Only 2 reminders were sent, due to the proximity to Christmas.

⁴⁶ This figure excludes 2 other replies I received, one anonymous who stated their curate was in IME 1 (presumably 4) and one whose IME year 5 student had withdrawn but who also had an IME 4 student.

⁴⁷ For example, what other work commitments did they have? Were they individuals who hated questionnaires? A further difficulty was getting the names of the correct training incumbents. For example, one curate indicated she was with her third training incumbent; however her second incumbent had been sent the questionnaire.

Figure 2 - Responses to questionnaires



Another factor in the overall response rate to the questionnaires could be the respondents' personal knowledge of me or lack of it. Research shows that:

‘the better your respondents know you, the better your response rate. Respondents who know you by name or have regular contact will be more likely to respond to your survey than respondents you do not know.’⁴⁸

However, I also knew some who did not reply (both TI's and curates) but to avoid skewing the bias, I deliberately chose not to get in touch with them other than through the two follow-up emails sent to all non-respondents.

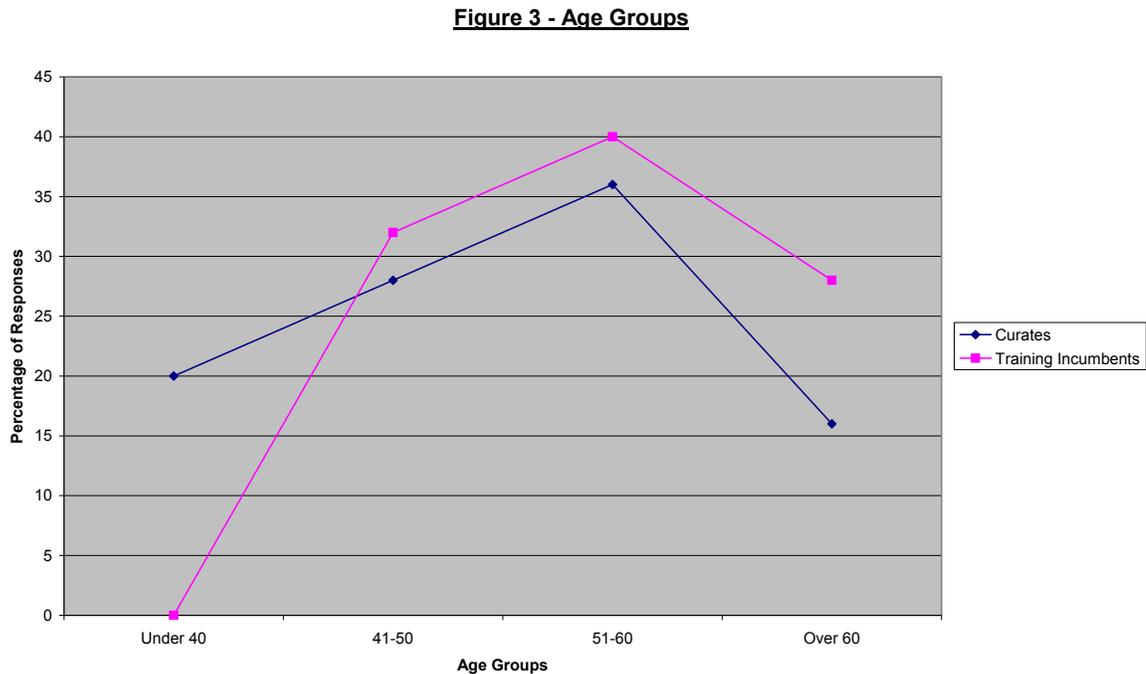
Of the respondents, 52% were known⁴⁹ paired curates and TI's. This allowed for some comparison of answers within the questionnaire research. However, not all pairs wanted to be contact for interview and only one pair was eventually interviewed.

⁴⁸ Assess Teaching Response Rates, The University of Texas at Austin, 2007
<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/teaching/gather/met...> Downloaded 07/02/2012

⁴⁹ i.e. who did not wish to remain anonymous

4.2. Basic Information - Questions 1-7

Responses to specific questions are detailed in **Appendix IX Sections 2-3**. Q1 of both questionnaires asked the respondent for their **age group** which was banded in decades. Figure 3 shows their responses.



As expected, the TI's on average are older than the curates with the majority of the TI's being in their 50's and 60's and curates in their 40's and 50's. In two paired responses, however, the TI was younger than their curate.

Lamdin and Tilley (2007:32f), reflecting on age as a factor in supervision conclude it is a significant factor, particularly with regard to influencing incumbents' expectations of curates. No TI or curate mentioned age in their questionnaire responses to my research. However, it was mentioned in the majority of the interviews.

One female curate in her 40's who stated she got on ok with her TI but wouldn't recommend him as a TI said:

‘He’s a few years younger than me, which is quite interesting. He has a thing about that, because he quite often comments on the fact that I’m older than he is’

In contrast, another older curate with a younger incumbent said:

‘I know she’s 20 years younger than me and I’ve been around the Anglican church for a lot longer than she has. But I don’t think what’s this young slip of a girl talking about and she doesn’t think of me, silly old fool, what does he know, he hasn’t been here 5 minutes.’

A TI in his 40’s, comparing his previous curate to his present curate (in his 30’s) said:

‘He was about my age, so he and his wife didn’t really want any training on how to be a ministry couple. C and W are that bit younger; I think we assumed that there were things they had worked out but I don’t think they have. We have some time to address that now. I think my wife and I have agreed that assumptions had been made that we won’t make next time.’

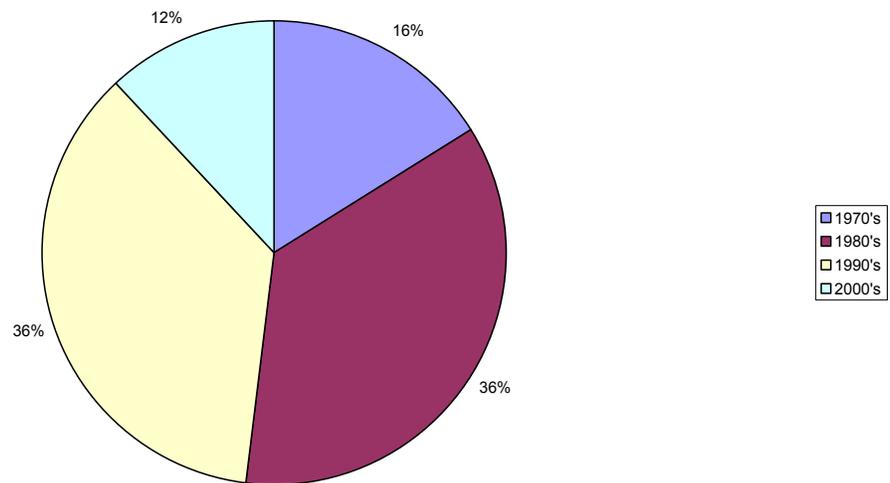
These and other comments provide evidence that age is a relevant factor when it comes to supervision.

One curate in his 40’s mentioned age in his interview in relation to the **year of ordination** of his TI. Figure 3 shows that just over half of TI’s (52%) were ordained priest during the 1970’s and 1980’s.⁵⁰ This curate speaking about the lack of supervision he received from his TI ordained in the 1970’s, said:

‘He was from a different generation from me really, just coming up to retirement age.’

⁵⁰ These, of course, were all male. Of the 5 known female TI’s, three were ordained in 1994 – the first opportunity open to women – the remaining two were the most recently ordained priests in 2002 and 2005.

Figure 4 - Decade of Ordination as Priest of Training Incumbents



Another curate in her 40's speaking of her TI in his 60's said:

'He was trained 35 years ago ... he uses mostly all the set stuff. I'm more creative but he'll come with books to lead prayers; the one I saw the other day was printed in 1970. I know there are classic books, but I just think we are on different pages.'

As already noted, questions were being asked about training during those decades. One TI who trained in the late 80's, speaking of the training that both his previous curate and present one had taken on a regional training course said:

'I thought how much more demanding their training had been than mine, they have both been better trained than I had. It certainly keeps me on my toes.'

One can therefore justifiably ask further questions in relation to this fact; for instance: are these TI's up-to-date with contemporary training processes? How far are some being unconsciously affected by their own training which took place in a different era under different conditions? These are questions that dioceses might well need to bear in mind when selecting TI's.

The responses to one seemingly minor question regarding the curate's **IME group** (Q3 in the Curate Questionnaire and Q4 in the TI's) also demonstrated 'old-style' thinking and practice, albeit of a more recent nature. Only one TI (female, 41-50, ordained priest in the last 10 years) responded with the correct IME year group numbering alone; two other TI's and three curates responded with the correct IME year group alongside the post-ordination year group such as 2 or 3; everyone else responded solely with the latter.

Previous occupations of both curates and TI's (Qs 4 and 3 respectively) are listed in **Appendix IX**. Points of note include the following:-

- the wider variety of occupations of curates compared to the TI's
- the fact that *all* curates had experience in previous occupations whereas one TI stated he had no previous occupation and a further two said they had been students prior to ordination
- the occupations stated by the curates showed more managerial experience
- the occupations stated by the curates were more people orientated. In contrast, the TI's previous occupations included an engineer, a consultant engineer, a weapons engineer officer, an industrial economist and an accounts clerk.⁵¹

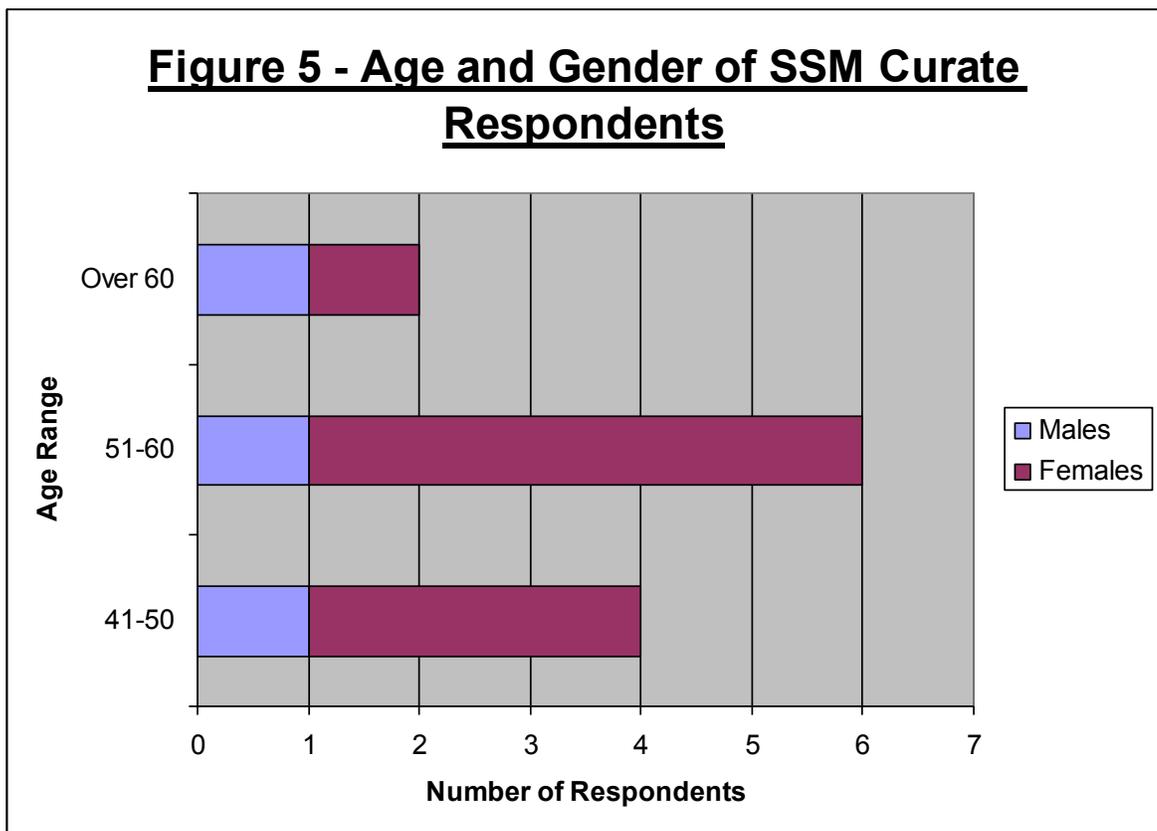
It needs to be asked, therefore, whether TI's are being trained to work with and supervise curates who have entered ministry with more life experience than they themselves had at this point. Are they flexible enough to work with those who have already gained key transferrable skills, and crucially who often have had experience of supervising others themselves and/or of being supervised in other professional settings?

Q5 of both questionnaires asked whether the curate was a **stipendiary or self-supporting minister (SSM)**. 60% of the TI's had stipendiary curates, 28% had an SSM, with 12% having one of both. Of the curates, 52% were in stipendiary ministry but only two of these (15%) were female.⁵² Only three of the 12 SSM curates were male.

⁵¹ I am not inferring that these occupations had no people contact whatsoever, but by the nature of the title, they are more technical, figure or industrial based occupations.

⁵² The anonymous curate was stipendiary and in fact had to be male.

If one puts this information from curates alongside their age-groups (Figure 5) it is clear that the majority of the SSM ministers are aged over 50, in line with Lamdin and Tilley’s comment that these ministers ‘are more likely to be offering for public ministry in the last quarter of their life.’(2007:32) However, it could also be argued in the case of female SSMs that the possibility of ordination to priesthood did not exist until 18 years ago, by which time a number of those at present in their 50s and 60s would have embarked on the vocation of bringing up a family.



The relevance of the type of ministry to the question of supervision, however, is again one of expectation. One female SSM curate talking about the lack of supportive supervision from her TI and the failure of the diocese to intervene constructively despite assurances, said:

“I think it would have been different if I’d been stipendiary, there is a very marked difference between stipendiary and non-stipendiary in this

diocese. Stipendiary's are taken more seriously; non-stipendiary's aren't. (Gives 2 examples) There is very much a 2-tier system."

It is also one of availability in the case of SSMs. One TI acknowledged:

'I was not as good at supervising her regularly as I have been with my stipendiary curate, and I guess part of that tends to be because they are around, and I could slot that time more easily into the diary.'

The 12 different responses to Q6 of the curate questionnaire demonstrated the wide variety of **hours** that had been negotiated and the range of terms used (days/hours/sessions), with a *quarter* of SSM's stating that in practice they did a lot more. One curate who responded in the questionnaire that she had agreed 'allegedly 3 days (ish)' said in interview of her TI:

'He certainly doesn't understand boundaries as far as the use of time is concerned because there are 3 days a week dedicated to St. P. and he doesn't mind which day of the week it is.'

Lamdin & Tilley (2007:83) note that frustrations can be felt where allowance has not been made for the limited time available.

The final question in the first part of both questionnaires (Q7) referred to the **context** of the curacy. It was expected that there would be a variable range of answers. A more precise knowledge could have been gained by asking respondents to tick boxes to describe their context but it is likely to have made each questionnaire longer and therefore potentially minimised the response.

4.3 Information re Supervision (Appendix IX, Section 4 onwards)

4.3.1. Frequency, length, place, instigator

Q8 was about the **frequency, length and place of supervision**. Answers regarding venue were the easiest to quantify with the majority of both TI's and curates citing the TI's study or office in the vicarage/rectory. A sizeable minority did not state the venue and a small minority cited church or hall premises.

With regard to frequency and length, there was a significantly diverse array of different answers. Responses are collated to show whether minimum IME requirements regarding frequency and length of supervision as stated in the training handbook for the respective dioceses were being met. The results are shown in diagrammatic form in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 6 - Curates

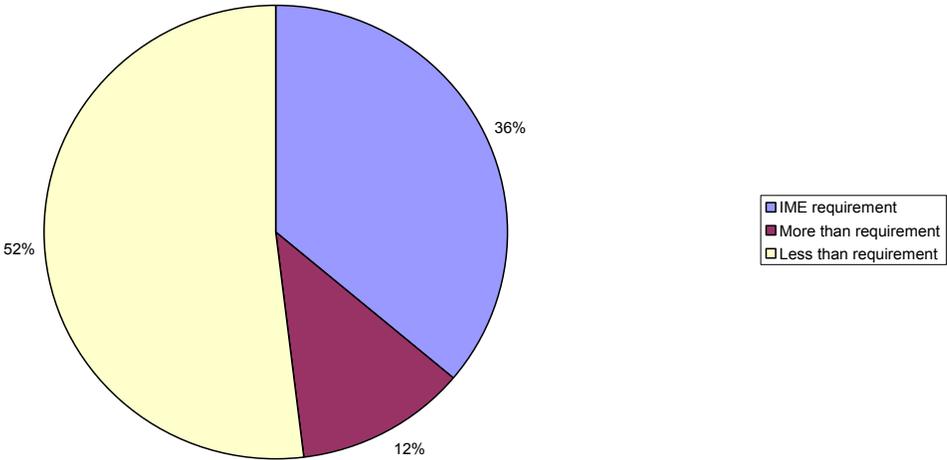
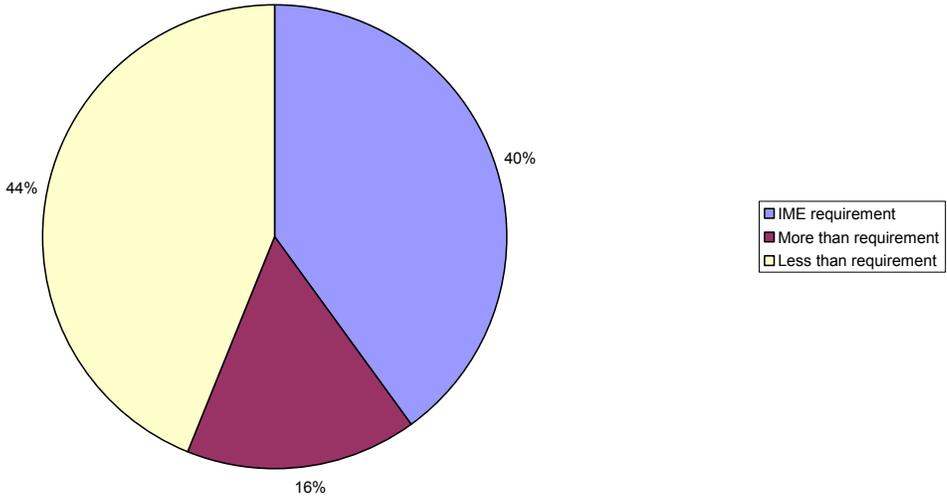


Figure 7 - Training Incumbents



In analysing these, one needs to remember that these are not all paired responses.⁵³

However, these figures raise an important issue. More than half of the curates state that they are not receiving the amount of supervision laid down in the guidelines. Breaking this down further, of those 13 curates, 6 are stipendiary and 1 a full-time SSM. Thus 7 full-time ministers (28% of the curate respondents) appear to be receiving less supervision than dioceses stipulate they should be having. However, some caution needs to be exercised because at least one curate was receiving supervision from other sources due to having a specialised ministry. Furthermore, perception of the time varies between individuals as was seen in some of the paired responses.

Nevertheless, this **lack of supervisory time** was also highlighted in interviews. An IME 5 stipendiary curate said:

‘Supervision times are bi-monthly on average; I’ve never known fortnightly.’

Another one said:

‘My supervisor had a bit of a moan (after the diocesan meeting re supervision) and said if we spent all our time meeting as often as we are supposed to, we’d never be getting on with the job.’

An IME 6 curate said:

‘There was one point when we didn’t see or speak to each other for 9 weeks on the stretch. For a supervising relationship, it was pretty shoddy actually.’

Another IME 6 SSM curate said:

‘We try to have a session together once a week, but it’s very much nuts and bolts, sometimes about the order of service for Sunday, and sometimes it’s only 20 minutes.’

The responses from the TI questionnaires show a similar pattern, if not quite so extreme, with 44% stating supervision time was less than the minimum laid down. Again, the same caution needs to be exercised as mentioned above; however, of the 11 TI’s who appear not

⁵³ Paired responses are also shown in **Appendix IX**, showing some agreement and some differences in perception of timing

to be offering the amount of supervision the dioceses are asking of them, 8 of them have stipendiary curates, half of them being in IME 5. Clearly, this is a big issue that needs to be thought about further, and I will refer to it again later. (See Ch. 6)

Q 9 asked **who sets the agenda** for supervision. The majority response in both cases (60% of TI's, 56% of curates) was 'both of us', or by 'mutual agreement'. Another quarter of both said 'the curate'. However, 8% of curates said the TI did and a surprising 16% of TI's said that they did, despite clear instructions in the handbook stating that the curate was to set the agenda for supervision. However, there are some inconsistencies when it comes to comparing the responses of the paired curates and TI's with five pairs offering different responses.

4.3.2 Content (Appendix IX, Section 5)

The **content of supervision** was asked about in Q13 in the Curates' Questionnaire and Q12 in the TI's. The majority of curates answered as requested, although two used words (such as seldom, often, occasionally) instead of numbers. However, six TI's used words rather than figures, some just putting 'yes'. Another one wrote 'as necessary', 'when appropriate', 'always doing theology' in the various columns. In addition, one TI misinterpreted the instruction, distributing 10 marks between all the categories. Another one didn't answer unsure as to whether this referred to him or the curate.

In attempting to quantify this, I omitted the last 3 TI's mentioned above from the percentages, and gave a number between 0 and 10 to words with a temporal meaning⁵⁴ in line with my understanding of their meaning. 'Yes' was allocated the number 10. Clearly, though, this is a personal interpretation and is open to challenge.

Figure 8 is a diagrammatic form of the percentages noted and shows the curates' perception on how often the various activities listed took place in their supervision sessions. Of note is the fact that **diary planning took place more often than theological reflection or review,**

⁵⁴ That is words such as 'seldom', 'often', 'occasionally'.

and that **theological reflection takes place the least often** of the activities, despite being part of the stated purpose of supervision in the handbooks.

Figure 8 - Activities Taking Place in every 10 Supervision Sessions according to Curates

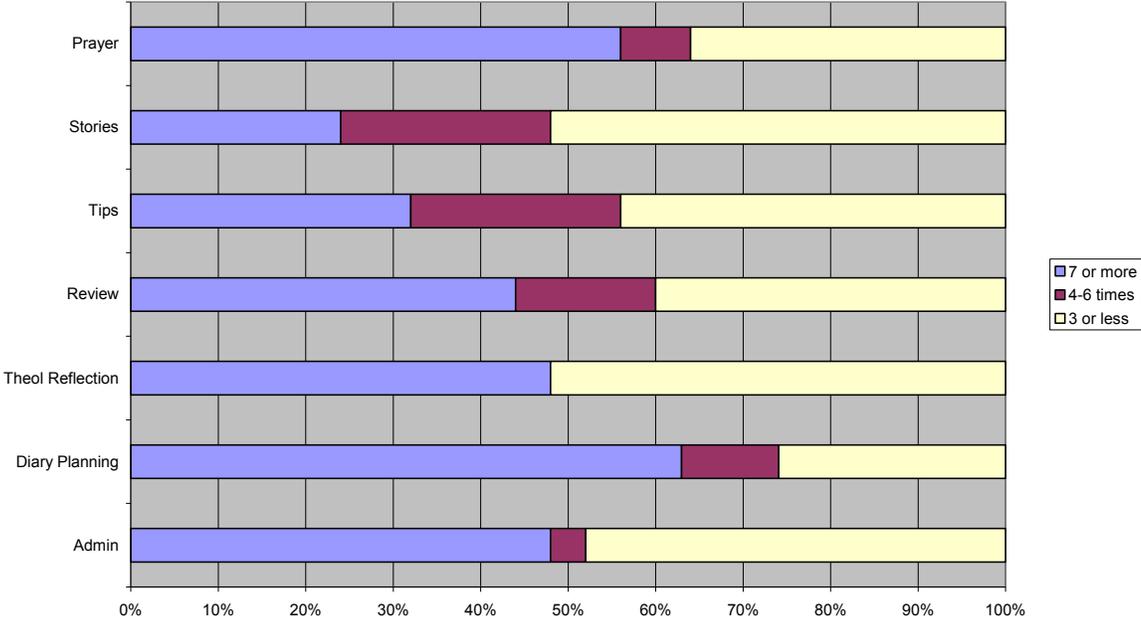
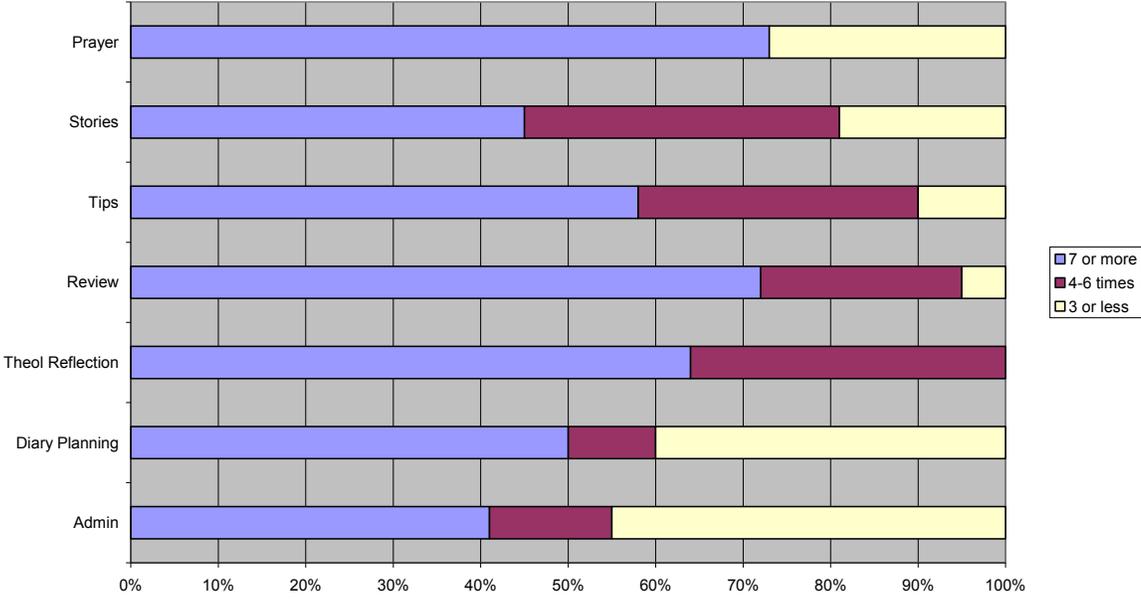


Figure 9 shows the equivalent responses from the TI's.

Figure 9 - Activities Taking Place in every 10 Supervision Sessions according to Training Incumbents



Again, this is not an exact paired response with the curates' questionnaires. Nevertheless, there is a significant difference with less diary planning and considerably more theological reflection and review. Again, there is a mismatch between what some of the paired TIs and curates say. Despite one TI writing they meet fortnightly for an extended meeting of 1-2 hours, begin with the Office and that theological reflection is integrated, his curate said in interview:

'we stopped Morning Office together for various reasons quite quickly; we stopped having supervisory meetings within 6 months, and it turned into monthly diary meetings more than anything.'

Another TI in his questionnaire, considered that theological reflection took place in 8 out of 10 sessions. His curate, who wrote he understood the role of a supervisor to be a facilitator of theological reflection and that his expectations had not been very well addressed, thought only 2 sessions. Reasons for these discrepancies need to be explored further.

Other activities were also mentioned as noted. Further research would be needed to ascertain the exact significance of these.

4.3.3 Understanding/expectations of supervision/role of supervisor

In Qs 10 and 11 TIs were asked about their **understanding of supervision and the role of a supervisor**. In their turn, the curates were asked in Q11 of their **understanding of the role of a supervisor**, and in Q10 what **their expectations of supervision** were. Individual responses are listed in **Appendix IX Section 6**.⁵⁵

A number of TIs answered the first of their two questions by referring to the second; ie. their role, using verbs rather than a descriptive definition. Thus one wrote: "*Overseeing curate's development*" as his understanding of supervision and then delineated his role as "*teacher, enabler, encourager*". Another training incumbent wrote:

⁵⁵ Note that the responses do not correspond to paired curates and training incumbents.

“Overseeing the curate’s growth in ministry, ensuring she gains appropriate experience as per Diocesan guidelines, allowing her to explore issues, offering help and advice”,

and then wrote for Q. 11 *“As in Q. 10”*. This conflation of answers could have been avoided by asking more specific questions (for Q10 How do you define supervision? Q11 What tasks are part of the supervisor’s role?) However, it does show that a number of TI’s see supervision in a functional way, which will be examined in the next chapter.

In contrast, however, a third TI focused on the relationship and environment in which certain activities took place:

‘An enabling relationship that reflects on practice and theory, theology and ecclesiology. It’s a safe and supportive environment for discussion, prayer, advice, listening and sharing.’

She went on to define the supervisor’s role with a succinct but comprehensive list of roles: *‘Listener, advisor, supporter, teacher, helper, at times challenger, encourager and learner.’* A supervisor’s role will be reflected on further in Chapter 5.

One can argue that these TI’s are using language from their own personal perspective to describe a similar process and understanding. On the other hand, it is possible that their curates experience supervision in very different ways, with the content of supervision paralleling the TI’s understanding of supervision.

This was evidenced by the curate of the first incumbent above saying in interview:

“I think supervision could have been a lot more fruitful. I would have liked to discuss but it’s nearly all on practical matters.”

In contrast, the curate of the third – although commenting in interview that they did discuss a lot of practical issues – also spoke about supervision feeling *“a very safe space”*, noting at the end of his questionnaire that the relationship is *“good, open, honest and helpful.”*

One TI of an IME5 stipendiary curate offered a definition of supervision as:

'fielding questions and making suggestions'

and saw the supervisory role as:

'fount of all wisdom! supportive, critical friend, mentor, shining example of good practice!'

The exclamation marks suggest a degree of tongue-in-cheek, but the reductive definition combined with the comment that they meet irregularly suggests that supervision may not be experienced as a helpful process by this curate. However, this could not be verified as the curate was a non-respondent.

Curates had a range of **expectations** with regard to supervision and in Q.12, had the opportunity to say how their expectations had been addressed. One SSM curate who wrote that her expectations had not been addressed, said in interview:

'I hoped it would be more than just the nuts and bolts of the rota, and of telling me who to visit. I think that's a different thing. I felt it would be about my development as an ordained person.'

Another said:

'I had envisaged more constructive criticism + feedback on work carried out rather than a planning session.'

In contrast, a third said:

'I thought it would be a necessary chore – it's not. I find the sessions helpful and enjoyable.'

Taking the qualitative data responses to Q.12 as an indicator of satisfaction with their curacy, **50% curates spoke in positive/very positive terms. A further 17% indicated reasonable satisfaction although with identifiable short-comings. A significant 33%**

were **unhappy**. (**Interviewees 37.5%**) This compares with Burgess' findings of 50% being dissatisfied with their curacies and Tilley's more recent research findings of around 25%.⁵⁶

My own figures, lying between the two, still indicate a significant disagree of dissatisfaction. I therefore considered it important to look for the reasons behind this by noting the number of times **key words** were used in questionnaire responses. (Refer **Appendix IX Section 10**) In line with Krippendorp,⁵⁷ this content analysis was to identify key themes and issues. In the TI responses to questions about definitions and role **Reflection, Support, Encouragement and Issues** were highlighted the most, whereas Curate responses to expectations and role highlight **Teach/Train/Instruct** as by far the highest followed by **Reflection, Feedback and Development**.

The analysis of words from interviews (**Appendix IX Section 10**) went some way to supporting these findings in terms of **Teach/Train** being considered the most important by the eight curates followed by **Reflection**. **Prayer, Support and Formation** were joint third with **Feedback** and **Development** lower. In contrast, **Safe Space** and **Development** were jointly seen as the most important by the five Training Incumbents with **Issues** and **Reflection** joint second. Clearly, though, this is not statistically accurate because of the difference in numbers and the small sample.

4.3.4 Benefits and Difficulties of Supervision

Responses to these questions are in **Appendix IX Section 7**. A third word analysis in Appendix 10 was done on Curate Q.14 What has been helpful about supervision? Here, **Learning** came joint third with **Support**. The most helpful aspect of supervision was **Reflection**, followed jointly by **Discussion** and **Time/Space**.

Difficulties mostly revolved around personality differences or relational difficulties with TI, irregular/lack of supervision or training, lack of structure and choice of content.

⁵⁶ Burgess (1998:74) - sample of 20 interviews. Tilley (Lamdin & Tilley, 2007:11) – sample of 94 curates. I specifically asked the 8 interviewees their satisfaction with their supervision. This showed 37.5% being dissatisfied (stating a figure of 3 or less).

⁵⁷ Krippendorp, 2004, quoted in Cohen et al, 2007:478

TI's cited mutual encouragement, learning and development as a benefit of supervision with difficulties being seen mainly to do with time and how best to challenge/help curates.

With regard to addressing difficulties, TI's identified discussion and various practical strategies. Two mentioned apology. Curates mostly cited talking, praying, patience, compliance, agreeing difference or going to others for help.

4.3.5 Training and Support of Incumbents

Refer **Appendix IX Section 8**. TI comments show evidence of very little training with 28% saying None or Virtually Nil and others making comments like 'Uhhmm there's been a handbook', 'very little' or 'one half-day'. Some clarification was given in interviews but further research could helpfully be done to establish exactly what kind of training TI's had received and would like. See Chapter 6 for some suggestions.

Informal and personal support was acknowledged, but the lack of on-going structural support was highlighted. One TI talking about a difficulty which arose with the previous curate:

'There was never a great deal of support from the training department'.

Another said:

'I have never been asked to account for how I'm training him.'

This is considered further in Chapter 6.

This research has identified a number of themes such as unclear expectations and understanding of the role and the purpose of supervision, deficiencies in meeting the needs of curates, as well as practical issues of training and lack of support with regard to both curates and TI's. These themes will be reflected on and considered further in the next two chapters.

Chapter 5 Theological Reflection

5.1 Methodology

It is my intention in this chapter to engage in a process of theological reflection on the experience and understanding I have so far gained in researching curate supervision.

To reflect on something is ‘to consider carefully’⁵⁸ in order to gain meaning and insight. To reflect theologically is to bring God into the picture in an intentional way, and to consider the interaction of one’s faith and practice. Killen and de Beer (2007:viii) in a classic definition say that:

“Theological reflection is the discipline of exploring individual and corporate experience in conversation with the wisdom of a religious heritage. The conversation is a genuine dialogue that seeks to hear from our own beliefs, actions and perspectives, as well as those of the tradition. It respects the integrity of both. Theological reflection, therefore, may confirm, challenge, clarify and expand how we understand our own experience and how we understand the religious tradition. The outcome is new truth and meaning for living.”

In order to engage in effective theological reflection, Graham, Walton and Ward (2005:6-7) follow Pattison (Woodward and Pattison, 2000:xii) in arguing both for resources and an appropriate method.

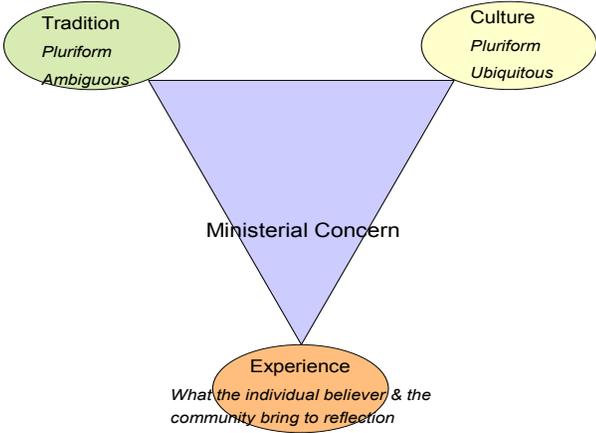
As an ordained Christian minister, the religious heritage I draw on consists of the Biblical texts, the Christian Church tradition and Christian theological understandings. Individually and together, these have deep and rich insights and narratives to offer which can be brought into the process of theological reflection. In reflecting theologically on the supervision of curates, therefore, an appropriate method to employ is the correlation method which ‘emphasizes the importance of theology’s engagement with contemporary culture.’ (Graham et al, 2005:138)

⁵⁸ Collins Dictionary 2003

Graham et al (2005:138) speaking about this particular method of theological reflection,⁵⁹ maintain that Christian tradition should be prepared to engage ‘in an open exchange of ideas and debate with different cultural disciplines, values, images and world-views.’ Thus, using correlation will enable the bringing of the resources of faith mentioned above into ‘a conversation’ with the contemporary understandings and practice of supervision in present-day culture (Chapter 2) and also with the experience of both myself and the curates and training incumbents who have helped with my exploration thus far.

The model that seems most appropriate to use within this method is that of Whitehead and Whitehead (1995), developed for a ministry context with the goal of ‘supporting reflective Christian ministers and communities as their faith finds effective expression in today’s world.’ (Whitehead and Whitehead, 1995, Preface to Part 1) The model specifically identifies three conversation partners or sources of relevant information, and through a 3-stage process then allows them to inform, interact with and affect each other.

Figure 13 – Whitehead and Whitehead’s Model of Theological Reflection



⁵⁹ Called by them ‘Speaking of God in Public’

The aim of this dynamic interplay or movement at both rational and intuitive levels is to enable more effective decision-making and action in a ministerial context, with transformation and growth being potential outcomes. The three sources are those already identified: **The Religious Tradition, The Surrounding Culture and Experience**.

In commenting on the Christian **tradition**, Whitehead and Whitehead note it is pluriform and ambiguous. The many and varied sources within the Scriptures and within Church history and tradition can be a source of confusion but also give a richness and diversity on which to draw. Due to this diversity, however, ambiguity is also present with regard to interpretation. As well as recorded responses down through history, the tradition offers scriptural ‘metaphors’ – ‘compelling glimpses of God’s mysterious presence in our past and present’ (Whitehead and Whitehead, 1995:7) with which to engage in conversation as we struggle to make sense of our lives today.

Culture is another conversation partner in Whitehead and Whitehead’s model. As we consider the ‘attitudes, values and biases that constitute the social milieu in which we live’, we note that it is pluriform and ubiquitous – always present, having both a conscious and unconscious effect, sometimes positive, sometimes negative (W&W, 1995:11). As human groupings and as individuals, we are continually influenced by the society in which we live in which the reflection takes place – ‘we know the world only in culturally-formed ways.’ (W&W, 1995:56) Culture also gives us specialised tools such as research methods or psychological models which can be part of the on-going conversation. In this model, they are not to be used to over-ride the spiritual tradition but are not to be ignored either.

The third partner in the conversation is **experience** - those ‘ideas, feelings, biases and insights that persons and communities bring to the reflection ... not only life events, but the convictions and apprehensions and hopes carried in these events.’ (W&W, 1995:43) It is important to be aware of what experience we bring, as individuals and groups, and to acknowledge that it will already have been influenced by both our culture and our tradition, as indeed they also influence one another. Whitehead and Whitehead note that within the Christian tradition, God’s revelatory self-disclosure is registered in experience and argue

that, by paying attention to experience, we open ourselves up more fully to the meaning of the Incarnation, ‘God’s continuing, disturbing presence among us.’ (1995:45)

This model aims to give space for all three conversation partners to have an equal ‘say’ in the theological reflection of the particular pastoral concern or ministerial challenge that is being engaged with, and through ‘a process of clarifying and interpreting their relevance for contemporary ministry, allow the process to lead to ‘a pastoral decision, a ministerial response to a contemporary decision.’ (Graham et al 2005:161) However, in using this particular model, attention must be paid to inherent dangers; in particular, too much attention can be given to one of the partners at the expense of the others, giving it more authority than is due, or conversely less attention paid to one, thus giving the other two undue weight by default.

The 3-stage process Whitehead and Whitehead outline involves moving from **attending** through **assertion** to **decision**.⁶⁰ Attending involves attentive listening to all three sources with the suspension of premature judgement. The second stage involves the three sources offering their contribution to the reflection ‘in an assertive relationship of challenge and confirmation’. It assumes that God is revealed in all three sources and that no one source has the complete answer by itself. The final stage is a practical, pastoral response.

We have attended to Experience, both mine and that of other curates and training incumbents in Chapters 1 and 4. We have attended in some degree both to Culture and Tradition in Chapter 2 but we need also to consider the biblical tradition with regard to supervision.

5.2 The Biblical Tradition of Supervision

The word ‘supervision’ per se is not found in the Bible. Yet it has already been noted that its root meaning is ‘oversight’, or *episkope* in the Greek. Thus there are immediate Biblical references to note which use *episkope* or its variants, some of which overlap with the word *presbyteros* or ‘elder’. In Acts 20:28 the Ephesian elders (*presbyteroi*) are charged ‘to keep

⁶⁰ This is very similar to the ‘see-judge-act’ process in Roman Catholic Practical Theology. (Graham et al 2005:183) From a counselling perspective, it is similar to the original Egan process of Listening, Understanding, Action (1994:

watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopoi*). In 1 Peter, the elders are exhorted 'to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight.'⁶¹

In both these passages, we note the imagery of shepherding, the shepherd being a familiar biblical metaphor of leadership within the Hebrew tradition. King David, once a young shepherd-boy, was called to be the shepherd of God's people.⁶² The speaker in Psalm 78:70-71, one of four so-called 'historical psalms' emphasizes how under David's kingly rule, God's people were 'tended and guided' and Israel was led with integrity of heart and wise judgement 'in the ways of trust and obedience'(Mays, 1994:259).

Moses was told by God to appoint Joshua as his successor 'so that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep without a shepherd',⁶³ the tribal leaders/judges were commanded to shepherd God's people⁶⁴ and the prophet Ezekiel condemns Israel's 'false shepherds' 'who have not strengthened the weak, healed the sick, bound up the injured, brought back the strayed, or sought the lost', but ruled 'with force and harshness' so that the sheep scattered and wandered.⁶⁵ God promises to be the true shepherd, the One who will not fail the sheep, who will nurture and give safety⁶⁶ and the promise in vv.23-24 is to restore (a descendant) of David as Israel's shepherd.⁶⁷ In the early Church tradition the link is made between David and Jesus, the Good Shepherd.⁶⁸ In John's Gospel, Jesus contrasts himself with the hired hand. The latter will not protect the sheep. He will run away rather than give up his life for them.⁶⁹

Wilson identifies the shepherd as one of four metaphors linked to the function of the overseer, with teachers, stewards and mediators being the other three.⁷⁰ With regard to

⁶¹ 1 Peter 5:2. However, as Croft notes, a small number of manuscripts omit the word *episkopountes*, presumably thought by some to be a later insertion (1999:217)

⁶² 2 Samuel 5:2 // 1 Chronicles 11:2

⁶³ Numbers 27:17

⁶⁴ 2 Samuel 7:7 // 1 Chronicles 17:6

⁶⁵ Ezekiel 34:4-6

⁶⁶ Ezekiel 34:11-16

⁶⁷ Galambush, J. in Barton J. and Muddiman, J. (eds) 2001:556

⁶⁸ John 10:11,14; Mark 11:9-10; Mark 12:35-7; Acts 2:34-5

⁶⁹ John 10:11-15

⁷⁰ Wilson, quoted in Lamdin and Tilley, 2007:144

teaching, he shows how ‘the giving and receiving of instruction is a central responsibility of those who oversee the people of God in Old and New Testaments’⁷¹ In St. Paul’s writings, teaching was seen as a gift of the Spirit but his own method was to teach, appealing to a fatherly relationship with churches and individuals.⁷² In Matthew’s Gospel, the authority given to the disciples/early Church to teach is emphasized along with obedience to Jesus’ commands.⁷³ Being an apt teacher is noted as one of the qualities required for the bishop/*episkopos* in 1 Timothy 3:2.

Noting that by this time the two terms of *presbyteroi* and *episkopos* are being separated out, in a comparable list in the Pastoral Epistle of Titus, the word ‘steward’ (*oikonomos*) is used.⁷⁴ This term, found throughout the Bible, is to do with delegated authority and running a household, as demonstrated in the story of Joseph,⁷⁵ in a number of Jesus’ parables,⁷⁶ and when St. Paul describes himself and others as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries.⁷⁷ In 1 Timothy, it is described as ‘managing the household’.⁷⁸

Wilson also describes a priestly mediatory role, although acknowledging it is not so clearly focused on overseers. God works through people such as Moses and Aaron, Jesus is God’s spokesperson – ‘a teacher sent from God’, the church is called ‘a holy priesthood’ and St. Paul describes a ministry of reconciliation.⁷⁹ Wilson argues that ‘those with supervisory responsibility have a special responsibility to establish and sustain relationships in God’s name. (Lamdin and Tilley, 2007:149)

Pohly (1993:93ff) suggests two further ‘signposts’ to the theological roots of supervision:

1) God’s intent for us as individuals and as church is that we live responsibly in relation to the natural world, as individuals with moral choices, and for each other (Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 3 and Genesis 4:8-15) ‘We are charged with responsible oversight of both life and

⁷¹ Lamdin and Tilley, 2007:145

⁷² 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

⁷³ Matthew 28:18-20

⁷⁴ Titus 1:7-9

⁷⁵ Genesis 44:1,4

⁷⁶ e.g. Mark 12:1-11; Luke 12:41; Luke 16:1-8

⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 4:1

⁷⁸ 1 Timothy 3:4

⁷⁹ Wilson in Lamdin and Tilley, 2007:148-149

things in a world ...under God's authority'. (Pohly, 1993:95) We could argue this is the basis of the Steward function noted above.

2) We live between estrangement and relationship. The problem of sin separates us from God and one another, but in Christ, there is restoration. (Ephesians 2:19)

This leads Pohly (1993:102ff) to the understanding that the biblical roots for supervision are planted in the covenant concept of Hebrew/Christian tradition, with its focus on relationship and accountability in an intentional commitment to life and growth.⁸⁰

One other Biblical reference to note before we move to Discussion is the use of the word *episkeptomai* (from the same root as *episkope*) in Luke 1:68. This refers to God 'visiting and redeeming his people,' a sense of 'watching over them in love' as a steady and reliable presence. (Leach and Paterson, 2010:11)

5.3 Discussion

The four Biblical functions or roles of an *episkopos* are taken by Lamdin and Tilley to provide a model for the roles of a TI as **manager**, **educator**, **mediator** and **supporter**, linking them to the theological metaphors shepherd/steward, teacher, intercessor/mediator and pastor (2007:6). This has much to commend it, although often in practice as well as in Lamdin and Tilley's examples, it is difficult to distinguish the mediatory role from the supportive role.

Being a mediator was not a role mentioned by curates or TIs in my research, although one SSM *curate* referring to her TI and another priest in the parish, described her own mediatory role:

'I come between them. They are different in many ways. I act as a sounding board and don't take sides. As long as they don't rant at each other, they won't split the church. There's a fragile relationship between them.'

⁸⁰ Genesis 12:2, 17:9; Jeremiah 31:31-34; 2 Corinthians 3:2-6

Prayer was also expected by several respondents, although not so much ‘prayer *for*’ but ‘prayer *with*’.

In my research, a far greater emphasis was placed on the other three roles and, particularly from the curate’s point of view, the lack of teaching, feedback, and theological reflection as noted in Chapter 4, i.e. the educative role. This is worth further reflection.

The policy of life-long learning is an accepted concept in a society that is continually changing, and transition is normal (Field, Gallacher and Ingram, 2009:2). Curacy is a transition, not only in terms of likely physically moving, but also in terms of a ‘process of becoming’ – ‘the before and after of specified learning experiences’ (Ecclestone in Field, Gallacher and Ingram, 2009:12) This immediate transition into curacy was understood by one male TI who had trained curates in a different diocese:

‘One thing I changed when I thought about curate training in my last parish – I don’t do funerals straight away with curates. I reflected they are coping emotionally with so much else.’

In contrast, the curate of a TI ordained in 1972 said:

‘On the very first supervision we had, and bear in mind I’d just been ordained and moved house and all the rest of it, the very first conversation – he got out his schedule of fees for weddings and said you need to know what these are. There was no how are you feeling after being ordained, how are you settling into the house.’

Curates need time to adjust and to process their experiences (the holistic adaptive process that Kolb refers to)⁸¹ not just initially but throughout their curacies, in order to achieve learning – the purpose of reflection. (Nash and Nash, 2009:17). The top three aspects that curates found helpful about supervision in my research were Reflect, Discuss/Talk and Time/Space. (Refer 4.3.4 and Appendix IX Section 10) However, the responses to Qs. 8

⁸¹ Kolb in Thorpe, Edwards and Hanson, 2009:148

and 13 and other comments showed that for many this was minimal or lacking. This needs addressing.

However, accepting that learning has become more reflective and experiential in nature rather than passive and received,⁸² there is still a place for being shown or taught a skill.

An IME6 male curate (previously a solicitor) said:

‘The level of training I got from him in terms of how to do practical things like prepare services, how to do baptisms, weddings, Eucharists and so on was virtually nil ... When I asked for some training on how to do my first wedding, his first response was How do you usually like to do weddings?’

Speaking about the preparation and oversight involved in presiding at worship, Pritchard (2007:20) writes: ‘Leading worship is not just a technical skill.’ Whilst acknowledging that describing leading a Service of Holy Matrimony or presiding at the Eucharist as a skill is both humanist and reductionist in nature, nonetheless there has to be an element of technique involved. Enabling a wide range of ministerial skills and techniques to be acquired is one of the duties of the TI. (Ward, 2005:77)

Another curate described what happened at her priesting retreat:

‘The Bishop’s chaplain said, “Are you all confident about celebrating your first Eucharist?” I said “No”. He said, “Well you’ve been through it?” I said, “No”. He said “What do you mean?” “Well I was told to lock myself in the church and play around with it until I felt comfortable.” So he did actually take me down to the Chapel and show me; otherwise I wouldn’t have known.’

In Biblical terms, we could cite Jesus’ Sending out the Twelve in Luke 9:1-6 as an example of instruction in ministry. But in the same way that Peter after Pentecost (and also after a

⁸² Ward, 2005:1

process of denial, loss, new hope and restoration) had to find his own way of ministering (Acts 3:1-10), so too does a curate. There is a process attached to learning

In an influential conceptualization of the skills process, Fitts suggested 3 phases:-

- 1) Cognitive – a coming to terms with instructions and developing performance strategies
- 2) Associative – refinement of the performance strategies
- 3) Autonomous⁸³

An IME5 curate demonstrated wanting to move through this process. She spoke of wanting to see different styles of ministry so she could find her style; she felt bound by just being with one TI. An IME6 curate, very unhappy with the poor supervision she had received, spoke of her frustration with her TI picking her up on small detail after presiding at the Eucharist if she did not do precisely as she had been told. This was effectively the only feedback she received.

A more effective process of learning in ministry (and theologically holding more integrity as ‘there is no one way of being a priest’⁸⁴) was spoken about by a TI:

‘My own TI was very clear that his job was to show me what he did, we would talk about it, but I was to find my own way. That is something I have carried through to my supervision with ‘D’ ... Presiding at the Eucharist, he does things slightly differently and I think good on him; it’s his priesthood, not about making a clone of me’

Chené discusses the concept of autonomy in adult education, concluding there is a necessary link between independence and norm-giving in autonomy.

‘It is to the advantage of both adult educator and the adult learner to clarify the significance of their relationship in the area of learning as well as the conditions and limits of autonomy’⁸⁵

⁸³ Fitts (1964) quoted by Speelman (2005) www.enactionschool.com/resources/papers/02-Speelman-Chap02.pdf Accessed 27/3/2012

⁸⁴ Rowan Williams, quoted in Cocksworth and Brown, (2002:4)

Clarification and discussion about the conditions and limits of autonomy is something ‘D’ and his TI have done within supervision. ‘D’ said:

‘There are differences. I would wear vestments but she has made it plain she doesn’t want me to wear them....We’ve acknowledged our differences like in presiding at the Eucharist and using oil in baptism, and talked about them. She has said this is how I do it but I’m happy for you do as you wish... But you have to be sensitive to where you are, to the parish, and within that be yourself.’

Both ‘P’ and ‘D’ spoke of being honest with each other and growing to respect and trust one another.

‘I respect her and I sense she respects me... And I trust her implicitly. I feel I can say anything...She rarely refers to me as her curate but as her colleague.’

Rogers discusses what facilitates learning, suggesting realness (authenticity), acceptance/trust and empathic understanding. (Rogers, orig.1967 in Thorpe, Edwards and Hanson 2009:230ff) Unsurprisingly, these are also the basis of person-centred counselling (McLeod, 1998:97 referring to Rogers 1957)⁸⁶ but have come to be more widely acknowledged as being important personal moral qualities of a therapeutic practitioner, with acceptance and being trustworthy seen as basic values/principles.⁸⁷ Empathy demonstrates listening and understanding, Sincerity is a commitment to consistency in word and action; Respect means showing appropriate esteem to others.

Lyall argues that these qualities are not mere counselling techniques which have been discovered empirically to facilitate growth. (Lyall in Lynch, 1999:16) He sees acceptance

⁸⁵ Chené, A. “The Concept of Autonomy in Adult Education” in *Adult Education Quarterly* 34(1) (1983) pp.18-28

⁸⁶ Called Genuineness, Unconditional Positive Regard and Empathy

⁸⁷ BACP Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy (2002:2-3) which applies to supervisors as well as counsellors

as integral to the nature and love of God with empathy pointing to – and an expression of – the Incarnation. They are relational qualities rooted in God’s relationship with us and therefore should be the basis of any relationship including the supervisory one.

This brings us back to Pohly, and Leach and Paterson’s comments referred to at the end of the Biblical Tradition Section. The Covenantal concepts of relationship, commitment and accountability for the purpose of life and growth can be seen, for example, in the Benedictine Church Tradition, a major influence of Anglican spirituality. (Tomaine, 2005:22)

The 3 vows or values found in the 6th century Rule of St. Benedict that convey its core are stability, obedience and conversion of life (*conversatio*).⁸⁸ Stability, the call to remain, speaks of commitment to the community and to the relationships within it; obedience involves listening and responding; *conversatio* is about openness and transformation. (Tomaine, 2005:43-44) Chittister (1992:15) argues along with Tomaine (2005:xiv) that we can learn from this Rule in the 21st century because ‘it offers more a way of life and an attitude of mind than it does a set of religious prescription’. We also need to bear in mind that the Rule was not only for the novice but for the community leader as well. They were told to listen to the community (Chs.3) and in Ch. 2 reminded of their accountability to God. (The Benedictine Handbook, 2003:16ff)

Taking this view, we could say that although the TI and curate have a specific ‘status’ in the church with the TI having the final authority, they are both called to commit to one another and the training process; listen and respond to one another’s needs, and be mutually open to learning and change. The TI, charged by the Diocese with the oversight of the curate will be ‘called to account’ by God; so too will the curate. However, from the research, any earthly accountability of either seemed notably lacking in many areas.

At this point, we could summarise by saying from Experience there comes the need for a Safe and Supportive, reflective Space, for Accountability and for Training. From Biblical

⁸⁸ Chapter 59. The Benedictine Handbook, 2003:81

Tradition, this corresponds to the Shepherd, Steward and Teacher metaphors, and from Church Tradition to the Benedictine vows of Stability, Obedience and *conversatio*. From Culture, the therapeutic/social work world offers a model of supervision based on function which correspond to these requirements – that of Proctor based on Kadushin, referred to on page //i.e. Supportive, Normative and Formative, covering the tasks of refreshment, monitoring and learning.

However, Christian life and ministry (including the supervision of curates) is not understood or lived in a purely functional task-oriented way but is relational. The focus on groups of three in the previous paragraph reminds us of the Trinity. Recent Trinitarian thinking has focused on ‘the relational and mutual interpenetration of the trinitarian persons’(Volf, 1998:204). Rather than seeing this ‘being in communion’ as hierarchical, Volf argues for a ‘mutually interior being’, a reciprocal indwelling ‘perichoresis’.(Volf, 1998:210) a communion which is also open to the Church (‘as you Father re in me and I am in you, may they also be in us’ (John 17.21 in Volf, 1998:195).

Therefore reflecting in closing on Luke 1:68 and the commitment of God to come and work redemption,⁸⁹ to ‘watch over’ with a steady or in-dwelling Presence, we could say that this Presence is not just understood as being God the Father involved in this oversight, nor even of the Three Persons of the Trinity with separate characteristics, ie the steadfastness of the Father, the loving obedience of the Son and the transforming presence of the Spirit – involved in an obedient hierarchy. It is more a sense of a constant dynamic interchange, of mutual commitment and trust, of listening and response, of transformative life. The supervisory relationship therefore becomes part of the ‘dance of God’ embodying ‘the creative and recreative presence of God to the world.’ (Ward, 2002:53-54 quoting Gunton)

This theological reflection has heard the 3 voices of Experience, Tradition and Culture reflecting on some of the aspects identified in this exploration of curate supervision ‘in the crucible of assertion.’(Whitehead and Whitehead, 1995:15) A pastoral and practical response is now needed.

⁸⁹ cf Psalm 111:9

Chapter 6 A Way Forward

Graham et al (2005:6) argue that relating theory and practice is at the heart of theological reflection which is ‘predominantly a critical, interrogative enquiry into the process of relating the resources of faith to the issues of life.’ Insight is not enough, transformative action is required. Whitehead and Whitehead’s critical correlation method is designed to shape practical and pastoral action. ‘The critical test of reflection in ministry ... is the quality of the pastoral response which is its fruit.’(1995:86) This might be confirmation and affirmation of present practice, or significant change. There can be a place for prayerful waiting but often ‘the community’ has to act on partial information. (1995:16)

However, discerning ‘the community’ may not be easy. This has been an individual ministerial and theological reflection exploring curate supervision. I have personally benefitted by gaining insight and am in a better position to support colleagues in the future. However, it has had the active involvement of two groups of people – curates and training incumbents – in two different dioceses, who themselves are interacting with IME tutors, diocesan training and ministerial departments, bishops, DDO’s and other senior staff, their own church ministry teams and others. These all come within the wider national context of the Church of England which in turn is part of our society and context in which we do our ministry. Thus, when speaking of action, we need to consider which community and whose responsibility.

What then is an adequate pastoral response to this exploration of the supervision of curates?

1) It must be acknowledged that some **good practice** is happening in the supervision of curates. This was evidenced by 50% of the curates speaking in positive or very positive terms about their expectations being met with regard to supervision, and by positive comments in some interviews.

- **Good practice needs affirming in some way.**

2) **Difficulties** involved in the supervision of curates must be acknowledged.

a) **Time** The demands of a parish incumbency are endless. Priests are busy people. There's a sense of being at the public beck and call for much of the time (Edmondson, 2002:23) Ministry often involves balancing demands and prioritising, but

- **having a curate must be seen as a priority of time.**

One TI said he saw preaching and teaching as his main priority, but supervising his curate came second. His curate was one of the 50% who were satisfied with their curacy. He wrote that he appreciated his TI's experience and wisdom and the opportunity for reflection and discussion.

My research showed that diocesan requirements with regard to specific supervision time were not being met. (Ch. 4:4.3.1) The only way for the Dioceses to ensure requirements are met is to teach/train/instruct and monitor/appraise/require feedback from both TI and curate, and mediate in the case of difficulties. However,

- **Questions need to be asked about the amount of time suggested.**

Is one hour a week/2 hours a fortnight too much for 3-4 years? Both TI's and curates – even those obviously offering and benefitting from good practice generally admitted to less in the later stages particularly. Might not stating an attainable target of 1.5 hours fortnightly in the first year going to a minimum of 1.5 hours monthly (in line with current therapeutic practice for any practitioner) be more attainable and useful if adhered to? In addition, 3-4 monthly reviews of learning agreements and the setting of goals/targets in line with management supervision could be set, and extra time agreed for specific practical teaching input. Lamdin and Tilley (2007:92f) make similar suggestions.

b) Difference Another difficulty is that people are very different. There are bound to be differences of personality involved, different styles of churchmanship, different learning styles, different understandings of theology (Lamdin & Tilley, 2007:40ff) The benefits and difficulties of collaborative working should be honestly discussed and help given if the difficulties are major.

- **TI's, particularly those who were ordained some time ago and who may not be up-to-date with more recent knowledge and research, need to be taught about the handling of difference and the benefits of diversity.**

c) Inter-personal dynamics. As therapists know well, there are inevitably internal psychological barriers or defences. Lamdin & Tilley comment on transference and game-playing (2007:122, 126) but awareness of other defences such as projection, displacement and rationalisation might be useful for both TI's and curates. Alongside these, **power dynamics** need to be taught. One TI highlighted this in particular saying that the church was way behind in its teaching about this and its handling of it. This issue is referred to in Leach and Paterson (2010:138ff) and by Simpson (2011:11).

- **Teaching with regard to inter-personal and power dynamics**

d) Dual roles. Another difficult aspect to draw attention to is the 'dual role' nature of the supervisory relationship. The managerial vs. pastoral hat is sometimes a dilemma which is not handled very well, according to reports from some curates. One curate spoke of being shouted at several times and how unhelpful that had been. Another curate said:

'I hoped we might be able to share a bit more but that hasn't really developed. We are very different in style. I was just blown away in my first year about the amount of stuff I was expected to do. I didn't know if it was normal. And if I said something about myself he just says Oh yes, I've got such and such. In the end, you give up.'

These different hats are being added to further by the aspect of performance assessment at the end of curacy as has been noted in Chapter 1. Therefore again,

- **TI's need teaching and support with the dilemmas this conflict of roles will be bringing.**

These difficulties, therefore serve to highlight where some focus of comment, teaching, support and accountability must be given from the Diocese in some way.

3. There seems to be a **parallel process** happening (Hawkins & Shohet, 2006:224). In the same way that curates are asking for more training and feedback from their TI's, so the TI's interviewed would all like or thought they ought to have:

- **more training from the Diocese and information from IME.** That was also the impression given from the majority of respondents to the TI questionnaire.
- **more structure/support from and accountability to the Diocese**

4. This has **implications for the dioceses** in terms of **training programmes for TI's.** **Issues of time, personnel, and training costs** have to be considered as well as the **content** of training. Perhaps training and support for TI's can be offered across diocesan borders, or in conjunction with other training and support partners. e.g. pastoral counselling services. Nevertheless, attention must be paid to this in order to fulfil national Church requirements as indicated at the end of Chapter 1. The specialist nature of supervision is becoming increasingly obvious and a half-day course could scarcely be considered enough. It also needs to be borne in mind that many curates have experienced professional supervision of some sort in their previous occupations. They are more likely to come from a recent work-place setting compared to TI's who may have left their secular occupations a number of years previously. Work-place expectations, requirements and practices have tightened up considerably, and the church is a long way behind.

- **Training should therefore be mandatory for all new and existing TI's. e.g. a 2 day residential before having a curate + 1-2 days annually for on-going training and reflecting on practice**

As well as training already identified above, other training could be given on:

- i) Learning contract
- ii) The giving of feedback.
- iii) Benefits and difficulties of supervision
- iv) Role and purpose of supervision
- v) Models of supervision as discussed in Chapter 2; models of Theological Reflection
- vi) Offering a safe space (Simpson, 2011:19)
- vii) Boundaries (Lamdin & Tilley, 2007:119)

5. Additionally in various other forms of professional supervision, **supervision of supervisors** takes place. Simpson (2011:26) says: ‘It is universally recognized good practice for supervisors to be supervised’, a practice that I found very helpful as a supervisor myself.

- **Some form of on-going supervision/support/consultancy must be thought about.** A network of mentors was suggested by two TI’s

6. **Curates** should also be taught about supervision, something Simpson also recommends (2011:23). One IME6 curate said:

‘We meet and go through the rota, making sure I know what I’m doing the following week. I bring up any issues I have, pastoral situations, awkward people. I can talk about something I might want to do. Is that supervision? I don’t really know what supervision means.’

- **IME tutors should work more with the training/ministry departments and train curates in how to receive supervision** (an acknowledged therapeutic practice)

7. **The choosing of TI’s and the placing of curates** needs further reflection. One curate said he would like to tell the Diocese:

‘Make sure your TI’s are people that are passionate about training curates and who think supervision is an exciting privilege, not something whereby a curate is just an extra pair of hands to help me because I’m busy’

Another curate asked for the possibility of a placement during the curacy to see other styles. There would need to be awareness of the danger of ‘splitting but a broader perspective and experience could result.

A TI said:

‘TI’s need to be chosen because they are the right people rather than have the right parish. They might have the right training parish by way of giving opportunities, but they may be an appalling TI because they

haven't got a grasp of their sense of responsibility in it. It's not about me telling the curate what to do, because a curate is not going to flourish under those circumstances. The church needs to decide what is the role of a curate. Another body or the development of the whole person?'

- **Those responsible for placing curates need to consider more the TI's attitude and capabilities to develop the whole person; possibly work together more in Deaneries**

The TI's who were interviewed all commented on the privilege and benefits of supervising. They acknowledged it took time but said it was worth it. The potential benefits to God's church are immense 'Supervision is the key tool for harnessing the learning potential of the whole of the curacy, to equip the curate for their future service of God, developing gifts, building wisdom and shaping Christ-like ministerial character.' (Simpson, 2011:15)

Conclusion

My own experience of supervision as a curate was a helpful one with a TI who kept boundaries of time and space for supervision, who facilitated my training and growth with instruction, feedback, theological reflection and reflective practice generally, and with whom I had a mutually beneficial and supportive relationship. This study arose out of my experience of coming into contact with peers during my curacy who were experiencing varying degrees of difficulty with their TI's. At the end of Chapter 1, I asked 'How could supervision become a more positive experience for both curates and TI's?' and I have made some suggestions. It is my understanding that the dioceses concerned have already made some changes in this area. Nevertheless I hope my research and this reflection will both confirm and challenge them and contribute towards an improved supervisory experience for the curates and training incumbents in the dioceses concerned.

I hope that future training incumbents will offer and curates will find:

- A safe, supportive and stable space
- A responsive, reflective and respectful space
- A teaching, training and transforming space

and that relating to one another in love, listening and learning together, they will find they are both supported, held accountable and encouraged to grow by the relational God Who Oversees.

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Appendix I

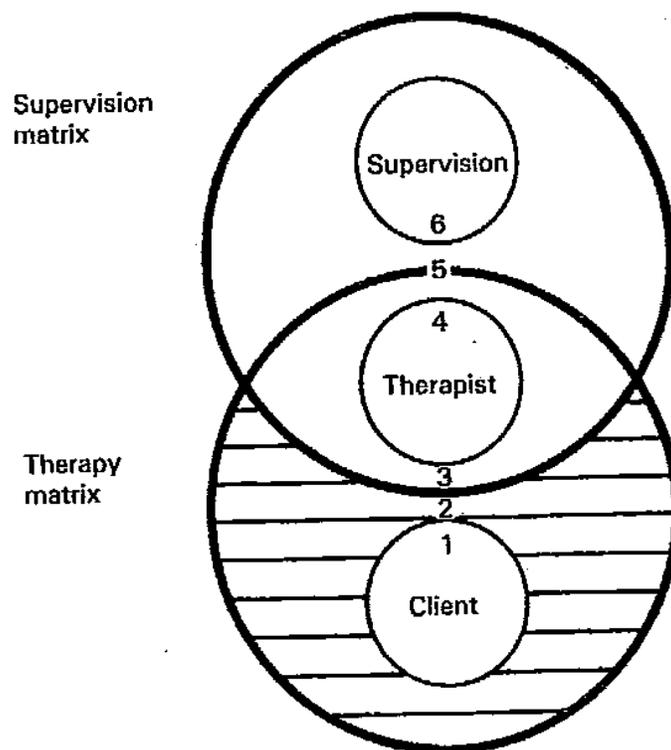
Some models of supervision from the therapeutic world

1. An apprenticeship model of supervision – now called the Supervision Alliance Model (Proctor:2000:11)

Defines 3 functions or tasks of supervision – formative, normative and supportive or restorative.

2. A process of model of supervision. (Hawkins and Shohet, 1989:56ff) Identifies two interlocking matrices and six modes or foci of supervision. These modes draw attention to the fact that there are three people involved – the client, the counsellor and the supervisor.

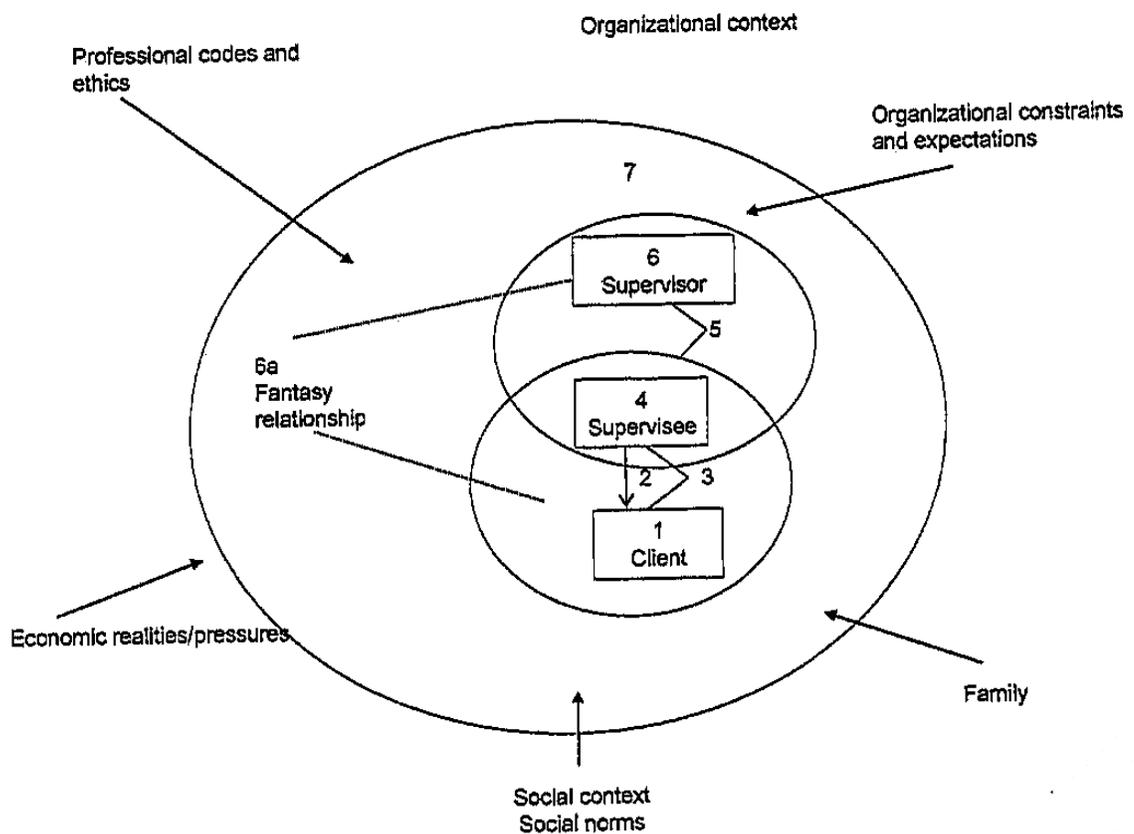
Figure 10 – The Two Interlocking Matrices (Hawkins and Shohet, 1989:57)



Supervision could focus on one or more of six connected areas (‘modes’) covering the overt communication and interaction between any two of these people, or the unconscious processes within or between any two.

The model in its latest form acknowledges the context in which supervision takes place such as aspects which are likely to have a bearing on the supervision such as family, economic realities, organizational constraints and expectations, the social context and ethical considerations. (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006, 3rd Ed.)

Figure 11 - The Seven-Eyed Model of Supervision (Hawkins and Shohet, 2006:82)



3. Another model developed by Hawkins and Shohet (1989:52) based on the developmental approach of Stoltenberg and Delworth in the 1980's. Four major stages of supervisee development are suggested:

Level 1: self-centred ('Can I make it in this work?')

Level 2: client-centre ('Can I help the client make it?')

Level 3: process-centred ('How are we relating together?')

Level 4: process-in-context centred ('How do processes inter-penetrate?')

It is particularly recommended to supervisors who work with trainees.

4. The Cyclical Model of Supervision. (Page and Wosket, 1994) See Fig over page

This cyclical model is an attempt to provide

“an overarching framework for the supervision process, as applied to both novice and experienced practitioners, which can encompass process, function, aims and methodology.” (Page and Wosket, 1994:33)

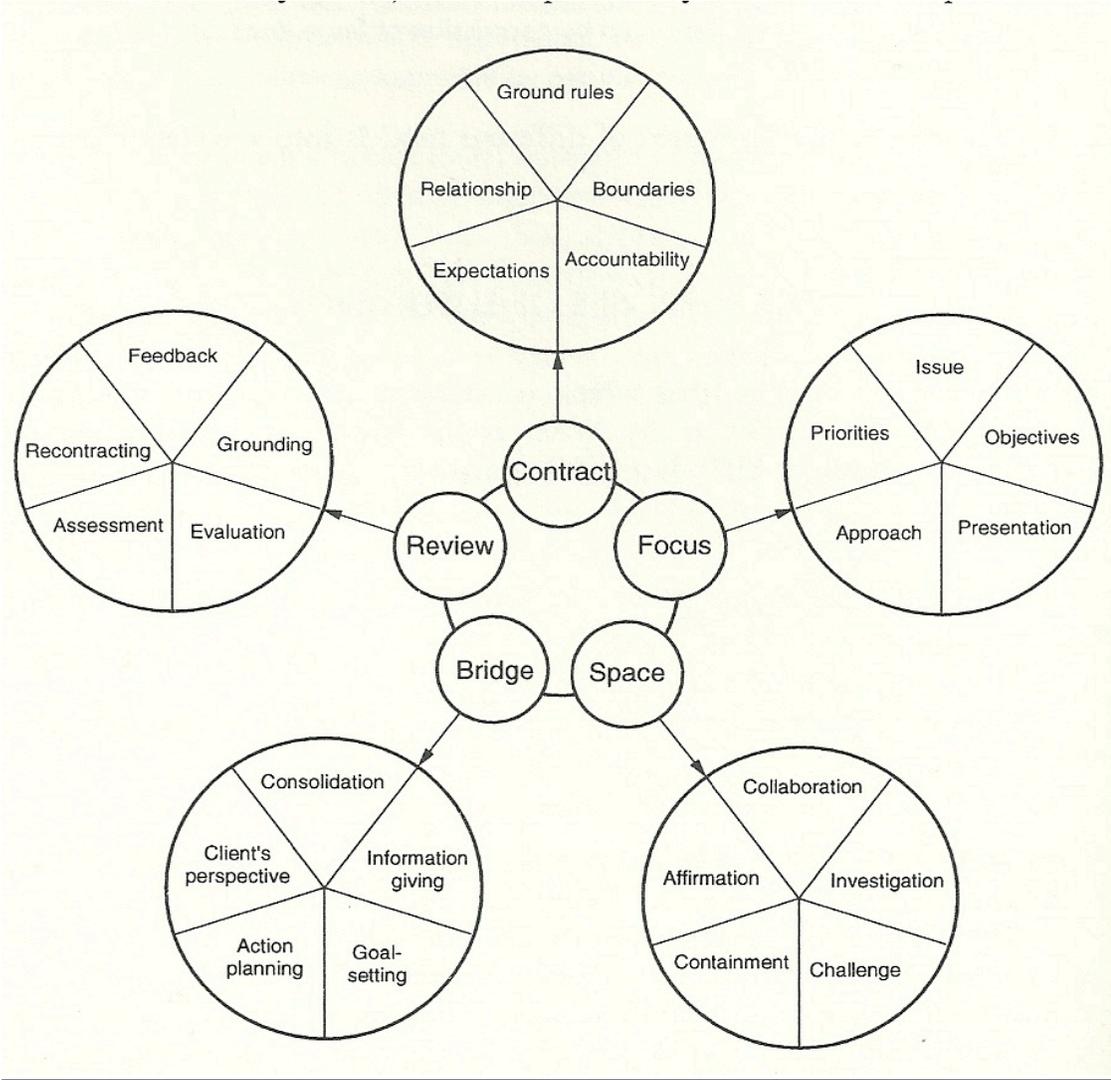
Consisting of 5 stages (Contract, Focus, Space, Bridge, Review) with each stage further sub-divided into 5, this systematic and comprehensive model is flexible, combines theory, practice and skills, and allows for a developmental approach. For the supervisor, however, the danger is that one sticks slavishly to it and try to cover all 25 divisions in a prescriptive way in a one hour session, a mode of operating which the authors themselves warn against. (Page and Wosket, 1994:42)

Hawkins and Shohet note that this model is very similar to the CLEAR⁹⁰ supervision model which they first used in the 1980's and which they have since adopted as a model of coaching (2006:61).

⁹⁰ Contract, Listen, Explore, Action, Review

Figure 12 – A Cyclical Model of Supervision

(Adapted from Page and Wosket 1994, printed in Carroll 1996)



Appendix II Letter which accompanied Questionnaire

SUPERVISION OF CURATES QUESTIONNAIRE – OCTOBER 2010

To fulfil the requirements of an MA in Ordained Ministry dissertation for Canterbury Christ Church University, I am researching how curates and incumbents in (*names of 2 Dioceses*) have experienced or are experiencing the supervision process. I would therefore be grateful for your responses to the enclosed questionnaire, also returning the bottom half of this page, indicating the Diocese you are in. I enclose a stamped addressed envelope for your reply.

In completing this questionnaire you will be contributing to future ministry and development within the two Dioceses and beyond. You will be aware that the current situation is changing with Common Tenure being introduced and a report from the House of Bishops on Formation and Assessment in Curacy has been recently published and is available on the Church of England website. Your responses and my research will help (*specific departments in both Dioceses*) to ensure that they are offering helpful and relevant training and support to both curates and incumbents, as well as meeting the requirements from the House of Bishops.

All replies will be confidential in the final work. You are at liberty to reply anonymously but I am asking whether you would provide your name in case I need to clarify any of your responses further, and also indicate whether you would be happy to be approached for a further short interview.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

(my name)

DIOCESE.....

NAME
.....

BENEFICE.....

I am happy to be approached for a further interview – YES/NO (please circle)

Email address..... Tel:

Note: Please feel free to write any additional comments on a separate sheet of paper

Appendix III

Follow-up Email

Subject: Supervision of Curates Questionnaire

Dear Training Incumbent/Curate

This is just a follow-up reminder about the questionnaire I sent to you last month by post. A copy is attached in case you've mislaid it.

Please ignore this if you have replied – and very many thanks if you have – but if you haven't, there is still time!

If you wish to return it by email, please do. However, if you wish to respond anonymously, you will need to return it by post. A stamped addressed envelope was provided with the original, but my address is below if required.

Many thanks again for your time,
Best wishes,

(name and home address)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CURATES

Basic information

1. Which age-group are you in? (please circle) Under 30 31-40 41-50 51-60 Over 60

2. When were you ordained deacon? _____ priest? _____

3. Which IME year are you in? _____

4. What was your previous occupation? _____

5. Are you stipendiary / self-supporting? (Please circle)

6. If self-supporting, how much time have you agreed to give to your curacy? _____

7. Briefly describe the context of your curacy (e.g. number of churches, churchmanship, AWA, urban/village, ministry team, etc.) _____

Questions re supervision

8. How often do you meet for supervision with your incumbent, for how long and where?

9. Who sets the agenda for supervision? _____

10. What were your expectations of supervision? _____

11. What do you understand the role of a supervisor to be? _____

12. How have your expectations been addressed? _____

13. How often, out of 10 sessions, do these activities take place? (please circle and state number)

Administration	Examples and stories from incumbent's past	Theological Reflection	Prayer
Tips and suggestions	Review (e.g. of services, pastoral work, etc.)	Diary Planning	Other (please state)

14. What has been helpful about supervision? _____

15. What has been difficult about supervision? _____

16. How have any difficulties been addressed? _____

17. Are there any other comments you wish to make about the supervisory relationship?

Appendix V

Questionnaire for Training Incumbents

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRAINING INCUMBENTS

1. Which age-group are you in? (please circle) Under 40 41-50 51-60 Over 60
2. When were you ordained priest? _____
3. What was your previous occupation? _____
4. Which IME year group is your curate in? _____
5. Is your curate stipendiary / self-supporting? (please circle)
6. If self-supporting, how much time has been agreed your curate will give to the parish?

7. Briefly describe your parish(es) (e.g. number of churches, churchmanship, AWA, urban/village, ministry team, etc.) _____

Questions re supervision

8. How often do you meet for supervision with your curate, for how long and where?

9. Who sets the agenda for supervision? _____
10. What do you understand by supervision? _____

11. What do you understand the role of a supervisor to be? _____

12. How often, out of 10 sessions, do these activities take place? (please circle and state number)

Administration	Examples and stories from your past	Theological Reflection	Prayer
Tips and suggestions from yourself	Review of curate's work (e.g. of services, pastoral work, etc.)	Diary Planning	Other (please state)

13. What benefits of supervision have you found there to be? _____

14. What difficulties have you found arising in supervision? _____

15. How have any difficulties been addressed? _____

16. What training in supervision has been given to you from either your present Diocese or a previous one? _____

17. What support do you have as a supervisor? _____

Are there any other comments you wish to make about the supervisory relationship?

Appendix VI Information sheet given before Interview

RESEARCH FOR AN MA IN ORDAINED MINISTRY DISSERTATION **BY REVD. WENDY JANE EDWARDS**

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

WORKING TITLE OF PROJECT: Exploring Curate Supervision

Since the publication of the report *Formation for Ministry in a Learning Church* (Archbishops Council, 2003), much change has taken place with regard to training ministers for the Church of England. Pre- and post-ordination training have been joined together to make IME years 1-7, and the supervision of Curates by their Training Incumbents has become an integral part of the second phase of this Initial Ministerial Education. A further report *Shaping the Future* (Archbishops Council, 2006) and other guidelines have helped to give shape to the training of Curates and to emphasize the importance of supervision by the Training Incumbent.

To fulfil the requirements of an MA in Ordained Ministry dissertation for Canterbury Christ Church University, I am researching how Curates and Incumbents have experienced or are experiencing this supervision process. This will also contribute to future ministry and development within the two Dioceses and beyond. Your responses and my research will help (*specific departments in both Dioceses*) to ensure that they are offering helpful and relevant training and support to both Curates and Incumbents, as well as meeting the requirements from the House of Bishops.

I sent out over 70 questionnaires to Curates and Incumbents in (*two Dioceses*). You are one of those who returned a questionnaire and also indicated you would be happy to be approached for an interview. The interview will be recorded in order to assist my note-taking. It will not be heard by anyone else. In the final work, all replies will be anonymised.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

(my name, address and phone numbers)

Appendix VII CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF PROJECT: Exploring Curate Supervision

(The participant should complete the whole of this sheet himself/herself)

*Please cross out
as necessary*

Have you read the Participant Information Sheet? YES / NO

Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the study? YES / NO

Have you received satisfactory answers to all of your questions? YES / NO

Have you received enough information about the study? YES / NO

Who have you spoken to? Dr/Revd/Mr/Mrs/Ms.

Do you consent to participate in the study? YES/NO

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study:

- * at any time and
- * without having to give a reason for withdrawing and
- * (if relevant) without affecting your position in the University, your church or your community? YES / NO

I give approval for a tape recording to be made of the interview and I am aware of, and consent to, any use the Revd. W. Jane Edwards intends to make of the recording after the end of the project.

Signed **Date**

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS)

Appendix VIII

Sheet used in Interviews

WORDS CONNECTED TO SUPERVISION AND ROLE OF SUPERVISOR

Reflect/reflection	Support/supportive	Encourage/ment
Issues	Critical	Develop/ment
Guide/ance	Teach/train/instruct	Facilitate/or
Discuss	Oversee/sight	Share/ing
Advice/sor	Ask questions/respond	Challenge
Enable	Explore	Formation
Listen/hear	Mentor/ing	Problems
Review	Theology/igal	Appraisal
Prayer	Companion/walk alongside	Spiritual (-ity, direction)
Accountable/ility	Feedback	Goals/targets
Learn/ing	Sounding board	Tasks
Time	Safe space	Mutuality
Permission-giver	Resource(s)	Available

Appendix IX Data gained from Questionnaires

SECTION 1 – RESPONSE STATISTICS

Curates

- 41 curates in 2 year groups sent to across 2 dioceses (16 in A, 25 in B) but one from A Diocese withdrew from curacy during survey time, so 40 taken for statistical purposes.
- 26 (65%) replied, with 1 of these wishing to remain anonymous
- 15 (37%) did not reply
- 1 of the 26 replies was not used for statistical purposes as the working context together with the dates of ordination, was very different
- A working total of 25 replies was therefore used
- The response rate from IME year 5 was 70%
- The response rate from IME year 6 was 60%

Training Incumbents/Supervisors

- 38 training incumbents of curates in IME groups 2 and 3 originally sent to across 2 dioceses (16 in A, 22 in B)
- 28 (74%) of the 38 responded with 2 wishing to remain anonymous
- 10 (26%) did not reply
- 3 of the 28 replied saying they did not have curates at that point
- A working total of 25 replies was therefore used
- The response rate for training incumbents of IME year 5 curates was 63%
- The response rate for training incumbents of IME year 6 curates was 70%

13 out of 25 (52%) were known paired curates and training incumbents

SECTION 2 – RESPONSES TO CURATE QUESTIONNAIRE QS.1-7

Q.1 Age-group

<u>Age-group</u>	<u>Total out of 25</u>
Under 40	5 (20%)
41-50	7 (28%)
51-60	9 (36%)
Over 60	4 (16%)

Qs. 2 and 3 When ordained priest and which IME group?

2009 12 (48%) – IME 6 – although all stated Year 3 apart from one who said Final
2010 13 (52%) – IME 5 – although all apart from 2 stated Year 2

Q. 4. Previous occupations of Curates

2 Chartered Accountants, 2 Solicitors, IT Consultant, HR Strategy Manager, Investment Manager, Bank Manager, New Media Manager, Charity Director, Teaching Assistant, Piano teacher and Pastoral Assistant, Lecturer, RE teacher, Support coordinator, Librarian, Administrator/Linguist, Physiotherapist/training coordinator, Director of Community Learning Projector, Cathedral verger, Occupational Therapist, Youth for Christ Manager, Part-time Associate Pastor + teaching assistant with physically disabled children, Royal Marine Officer, Police Officer

Q.5. Stipendiary or SSM?

Of the 25, 13 (52%) were stipendiary. Only 2 of these were female (8% of total replies, 15% of the stipendiary curates).

Of the 12 (48%) of SSM curates, only 3 were male (12% of total replies, 25% of SSM curates).

Q6. Time that SSM's agreed to give to curacy?

12 totally different answers:

Min. of 8 sessions, Sun + 2 days = 6 sessions, 3 sessions + Suns, 2 weekday evenings + Suns, 1 weekday + 1 study/prep day + Suns, 4 days officially but actually full-time, allegedly 3 days (ish), 3.5 days originally but actually 5, half week, 25 hrs, fulltime, all I have apart from 8 hrs.

Q7. Context?

Again, a very variable range of answers.

Urban, urban coastal, town, rural town, semi-rural, rural, suburban, village suburb of town.

- 12 (48%) in single churches, one of which was an LEP; 6 (24%) in 2 churches; 2 (8%) in 3 churches + one each (4%) in a parish with 4 churches, a rural cluster of 4 parishes with 5 churches, 6 parishes, 7 parishes, a cathedral
- Only 3 (12%) quoted AWA figures, which ranged from 150-200 and 1 other, an ER of 250.
- 9 (36%) mentioned a ministry team, 5 (20%) stated specifically clergy only; the remaining 11 (44%) did not mention a ministry team.
- 6 (24%) did not state their church tradition; 5 (20%) said MOR/central; 5 (20%) said Open evangelical or OE/charismatic; 4 (16%) said varied/mixed/broad; 2 (8%) said high/high modern Catholic; 1 each (4%) said Cathedral, Conservative evangelical, Traditional

SECTION 3 – RESPONSES TO TRAINING INCUMBENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.1-7

Q1 Re Age-group.

<u>Age-group</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Under 40	0 (0%)
41-50	8 (32%)
51-60	10 (40%)
Over 60	7 (28%)

Q2 When ordained priest?

1970's – 16% (4 - in 72, 75x2, 77)

1980's – 36% (9 - in 84, 85, 86, 88x4, 89x2)

1990's – 36% (9 - in 90, 91, 93, 94x4, 95, 98) (1994 3 f)

2000's – 12% (3 - in 00, 02 (f), 05 (f))

Q3 Previous occupation?

1 Accountant, 2 Solicitors, 2 Bankers, 1 Engineer, 1 Consultant Engineer, 1 Weapons Engineer Officer with the Royal Navy, 1 Clerical Officer with British Rail, 1 Industrial Economist, 1 Civil Servant, 1 Social Worker, 6 Teachers, 1 College Lecturer, 1 part-time Accounts Clerk, 1 Missionary, 1 Church Youth Leader. 2 were students and 1 had no previous occupation.

Q4 IME group of curate?

12 said year 2, with one of these correctly referring to 5/2, and one of these getting their curate's year group totally wrong (they should have written 6 or 3).

Q5 Stipendiary or SSM curate?

Of the 25 incumbents, 15 (60%) had stipendiary curates and 7 (28%) had SSM, with 3 (12%) having one of each.

Q6 Time that their SSM curate gives to curacy?

Two said 2 days + Sunday, with a further 2 saying 3 days. The remaining responses were: 8 sessions, 10 sessions, 2 days + negotiation, pretty much full-time, 25-30 hours, no fixed time.

Q7 Context?

Wide variety:

Rural x2, village, village ethos on edge of town, semi-rural/suburb, small town, town x2, town and village, seaside town, large estate on edge of town – deprived area, urban area x4, urban with housing estates, suburban x3, suburban village x2, shopping centre

- 13 (52%) in single churches although 1 of these (4%) had a second worship centre in a hall; 5 (20%) with 2 churches, 3 (12%) had 3 churches, 1 each (4%) 4 churches, 5 churches, cathedral, and 1 with a group but didn't state number.
- 6 (24%) quoted AWA figures ranging from 85+8 to 800-900
- 6 (24%) mentioned a ministry team, 0 said clergy only, and 19 (76%) did not say – although from the corresponding curate of 3 of these (16% of 19 or a further 12% of the whole), there clearly was a ministry team
- 5 (20%) did not state their church tradition; 5 (20%) said MOR/central/Eucharist based; 3 (12%) said Liberal Catholic; 2 each (8%) said Open evangelical; OE/charismatic; Evangelical; mixed; 1 each (4%) said Cathedral, Conservative evangelical, Low evangelical, mid/evangelical

SECTION 4 – RESPONSES TO SUPERVISION QUESTIONS 8 - 9

Q.8.How often meet for supervision, for how long and where?

<u>Place</u>	<u>Curates</u>	<u>Training Incumbents</u>
Vicarage/Rectory office/study	15 (60%)	14 (56%)*
Church/staff room/parish hall	1 (4%)	3 (12%)
Not specified	9 (36%)	7 (28%)

* One of the 14 training incumbents also stated 'or Costa' and another one said his house or mine.

How often/how long?

<u>Length and frequency</u>	<u>Curates</u>	<u>Training Incumbents</u>
<u>IME requirement</u>		
1 hr. weekly	7 (28%)	5 (20%)
2 hrs. fortnightly	2 (8%)	5 (20%)
<u>More than requirement</u>		
2 hrs. weekly	2 (8%)	1 (4%)
1-2 hrs weekly	1 (4%)	3 (12%)
<u>Less than requirement</u>		
30 mins weekly	1 (4%)	1 (4%) + regularly in touch
30-60 mins weekly	1 (4%)	
1 hr. fortnightly	1 (4%)	2 (8%)

1-2 hr fortnightly	2 (8%)	3 (12%)
1-2 hrs 3 weekly	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
1-2 hrs monthly	3 (12%)	3 (12%)
1.5-2hrs 6-weekly	1 (4%)	
Irregularly as necessary		1 (4%)
1 hr irregularly	1 (4%)	
1 hr. weekly, then fortnightly, now monthly	1 (4%)	
Cross paths frequently, but last met formally for 1.5 hrs. 3 months ago	1 (4%)	

Comparison of paired responses:

Training Incumbent

1. 1 hr fortnight
2. Regularly in touch + 30 mins weekly
3. 1.5 hrs weekly
4. 1-2 hrs fortnightly, occas. 3 wkly
5. 1.5-2 hrs monthly
6. 1-2 hrs weekly
7. 1-1.5 hrs. monthly

8. 1 hr. weekly
9. 1 hr weekly
10. 1 hr weekly
11. 1-2 hrs. fortnightly
12. Weekly, gone to fortnightly
13. 2 hrs weekly

Curate

- 1 hr fortnight
- 1 hr weekly for prayers/diary planning
- 2 hrs weekly
- 2 hrs fortnightly in general (SSM)
- 2 hrs. monthly (SSM)
- 1 hr weekly (SSM)
- Monthly but also meet with ministry specific supervisors
- 1 hr weekly (SSM)
- 30-60 mins weekly (SSM)
- 1 hr weekly
- 2 hrs. 3-weekly
- 1-2 hrs. fortnightly in 1st year
- 2 hrs weekly

Q.9 Who sets the agenda for supervision?

Training Incumbents responses:

Curate does	6 (24%)
I do	4 (16%)
Both of us	15 (60%)

Curate responses:

I do	7 (28%)
Trng Incum.	2 (8%)
Both of us	14 (56%)
What agenda?	1 (4%)
No set agenda	1 (4%)

Comparison of paired responses:

Training Incumbent

1. He does by request of KCME
2. Me
3. Both
4. Curate
5. He or I – mixture
6. We both do
7. Jointly
8. Mutual
9. We both do
10. By agreement, can be changed
11. Mutual
12. Mutual
13. We both do

Curate

- Varies
- Both of us
- Both come with issues to discuss
- I do
- Me, or we set it together
- Joint
- Both myself and supervisor
- We both bring what we need to
- Incumbent
- Both of us
- There is no set agenda
- Me
- Mostly me, but both raise issues

SECTION 5 – RESPONSES TO Q. RE ACTIVITY

Responses to Q13 in Curates’ Questionnaire

**Activities Taking Place in Supervision Sessions
(out of 10)**

Number of Sessions	Admin	Diary Planning	Theol Reflection	Review	Tips	Stories	Prayer
7 or more	48%	68%	48%	44%	32%	24%	56%
4-6 times	4%	12%	0%	16%	24%	24%	8%
3 or less	48%	28%	52%	40%	44%	52%	36%

Other Activities also mentioned:

- Strategy, hopes, dreams
- General review of ministry
- Future of benefice
- Future planning
- Project planning, sharing information

Two other comments were: We chat weekly over coffee; Staff Lunch

Responses to Q12 in Training Incumbents’ Questionnaire

Activities Taking Place in Supervision Sessions (out of 10)

Number of Sessions	Admin	Diary Planning	Theol Reflection	Review	Tips	Stories	Prayer
7 or more	41%	50%	64%	72%	58%	45%	73%
4-6 times	14%	10%	36%	23%	32%	36%	0%
3 or less	45%	40%	0%	5%	10%	19%	27%

Other Activities also mentioned:

- Exploring possible curate’s initiatives
- Service planning/sermons
- Listening and personal support
- Discuss current issues
- Equipping for ministry
- Discussion of IME
- Work/life balance, personal support

SECTION 6 – RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RE UNDERSTANDING, ROLE OF SUPERVISOR AND EXPECTATIONS OF SUPERVISION

INCUMBENTS Q10 – WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY SUPERVISION?

- *Responding from my experience to issues raised. Opening up perspective on wider issues*
- *Listening to her description of what she is doing in the area of ministry she's chosen to look at and learning how she's feeling. Offering my thoughts and feelings from my own experience and then exploring the theological and strategic context together*
- *Appraisal past and future ministry activities; study/time-off balance*
- *Discussing, reflecting, chewing over things together before/during/after they are done*
- *A window of opportunity by the curate to talk through any issue of their choice affecting their ministry, other than diary arrangements*
- *That it is an opportunity to review and consider some aspect of Christian ministry of which the curate has had recently, or expects to have soon, some practical experience; and to relate it to Biblical theology and to give the curate a secure and confidential environment in which he/she can express his/her own personal feelings about it.*
- *Overseeing the curate's growth in ministry; ensuring she gains appropriate experience as per Diocesan guidelines; allowing her to explore issues; offering help and advice*
- *An enabling relationship that reflects on practice and theory, theology and ecclesiology. It's a safe and supportive environment for discussion, prayer, advice, listening and sharing*
- *Fielding questions; making suggestions*
- *An opportunity to review the progression of ministry and talk honestly about any problems which may be occurring; to offer space to reflect on what has taken place and how that is felt, perceived and could be acted on*
- *This is my parish and I therefore oversee anyone who ministers in it. My curate has a more structured supervision programme including ensuring that certain experiences occur*
- *To help grow in practical and ministerial formation. As well as reminding them they are Christ's disciples first and ministry second*
- *Supporting and enabling curate as they face new experiences and challenges. Help them make the transition from private to public Christian*
- *Looking back and looking forward; Reflecting on ministry/issues; stretching issues*
- *Guided, intentional, critical support*
- *Short time of worship followed by guidance/formation by discussion/reflection on experiences, lessons learned, things that could be changed/improved, theoretical models enhanced etc. (More administrative issues are dealt with in addition to the supervision.)*

- *Overseeing her development*
- *Mutual sharing, theological reflection, exploration of feelings, planning, brainstorming; develop people skills; to understand themselves + their reaction*
- *Two aspects: Personal support – look at family, spiritual walk etc; Equipping for ministry – look at ministry skills, practical training etc*
- *Taking an issue/episode, reflecting together using other material, finding new approach*
- *Oversight of ministry; encouragement and self-reflection to enable more effective ministry*
- *We discuss live issues professional/pastoral etc. This may include theological/legal/pastoral matters*
- *To support my curate in her priestly formation and in fulfilling her vocation and ministry*
- *Encouraging reflection on ministry + what has recently happened in parish and developing curate's experience*
- *Supporting, guiding, showing heard, and deciding leadership together – self reflect learning and input to improvements*

INCUMBENTS Q.11 – WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF A SUPERVISOR TO BE?

- *To: Facilitate someone's learning; Listen; Direct; Encourage*
- *Friend, encourager, someone who helps person to articulate feelings and ideas, someone to offer shape and direction as well as remarking on progress and development.*
- *Help curate to mature in ministry covering all aspects – as a (Lay Church Minister) of many years parish experience, he needs little supervision*
- *Making sure supervision happens and being supporting in training and encouraging*
- *Facilitator, advisor and support*
- *To facilitate and guide the above process, giving time and space to the curate to reflect on their experience in the light of theology, drawing where appropriate on the supervisor's own personal experience.*
- *As in Q. 10*
- *Listener, adviser, supporter, teacher, helper, at times challenger, encourager and learner*
- *Fount of all wisdom! Supportive, critical friend, mentor, shining example of good practice!*
- *An opportunity to review the progression of ministry and talk honestly about any problems which may be occurring; to offer space to reflect on what has taken place and how that is felt, perceived and could be acted on.*

- *Friendly, reliable at meeting, constructively critical where necessary, able to involve curate in developing experience, able to receive criticism too*
- *To help them grow in a strategic way over the course of 4 years; to help them discover strengths and weaknesses and a joy in being a priest*
- *To listen, encourage and challenge when necessary; ensure curate is fulfilling potential and gaining as much experience as necessary for their future ministry*
- *To ensure curate's development; to ensure training continues and is as full as can be*
- *Mentor, companion, critical friend, permission-giver*
- *Critical friend and pastor/teacher*
- *Teacher, enabler, encourager*
- *To guide, share, communicate, encourage, facilitate; help curates to be themselves, to be ok making mistakes, to grow, reach full potential*
- *The supervisor enables the curate to fulfil his/her potential and helps him to fulfil God's purposes for his life and ministry*
- *Facilitator*
- *To act as the 'critical' friend, encourage reflection on best practice and be aware of any problems, professional or personal*
- *Elucidate issues, ask questions, bring to bear wider/longer experience*
- *Oops! the answer to 10 should be written here*
- *Mainly as a friend, mentor, guide and sharing one's own experience of ministry. Encouraging curate to reflect and develop*
- *a critical friend*

CURATES Q10 – WHAT WERE YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF SUPERVISION?

- *To learn practical aspects of job; reflection and learning*
- *A way of exploring ideas and developing our work as a team*
- *That my incumbent would train me to work within the structures of the Church of England and that he would also use these sessions to pastor me and care for my soul.*
- *Exploration of practical and spiritual ministry issues and relationship building*
- *Opportunity to discuss and reflect on subject/issue theologically, pastorally and practically*
- *Theological reflection, development and feedback*
- *Direction, discussion, teaching, leadership*
- *To provide feedback and guidance*
- *I thought it would be a necessary chore – it's not. I find the sessions helpful and enjoyable.*
- *Looking for critical feedback, guidance, affirmation, pastoral care re time pressures, and enabling of reflection on parish, role and self.*
- *That it would be a combination of ongoing friendly interaction + frequent dedicated meetings (maybe even once a week?) for reflection on what I have done, feedback about it, how things are affecting me, challenging me, stimulating me, discussion about areas of development, encouragement to pursue spiritual development and an interest in how my own life of prayer and study is going. I also expected a degree of clear explanation and instruction about how to do some of the main tasks a priest must do.*
- *Opportunity to share information and experiences, to ask questions, to learn and to discuss issues of concern.*
- *Accountability, opportunity to ask questions or advice*
- *Training / target setting / accountability*
- *More theological discussion + spiritual direction*
- *Discussion of work/services done; two way feedback; to get constructive criticism. assigning work/role*
- *Our meetings are hardly ever 'supervision' but concern the nuts and bolts of running the parish – rotas mainly*
- *I had envisaged more constructive criticism + feedback on work carried out rather than planning session*
- *Training, guidance, reflection, review, planning*
- *Advice, both practical and theological*
- *Imparting knowledge, answering questions, providing pastoral support*
- *Reflection on critical incidents*
- *Support and advice*
- *Opportunity to reflect confidentially on ministry, chance to ask questions, time to deal with practical issues and arrangements and place to deal with any problems, etc.*

- *For it to be regular, honest and useful. For it to be a place for me to explore experiences and to set goals and targets. For mutual support and theological reflection.*

CURATES Q.11 – WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF A SUPERVISOR TO BE?

- *Line manager and trainer*
- *Not to let the curate overwork him/herself*
- *First and foremost as an incumbent, his role is to care for the spiritual welfare of his curate; as Supervisor he is also to train and teach his curate how to work within the Church of England*
- *To teach, train, encourage, correct and learn from each other*
- *Mentor, guide, sounding board, practical feedback*
- *Mentor, encourager, trainer*
- *To provide a source of the above and to act as a general 'sounding board' for issues around my ministry*
- *To support and encourage*
- *To guide, by being a 'listening ear' and letting me reach a view – not being proscriptive; to identify weaknesses/strengths and help to overcome or live with/develop them*
- *Never been sure?*
- *Someone who is able to encourage, affirm, and challenge, and engage with me as a person, and to enable me to flourish. I think a supervisor should be able to listen and feedback, and be a competent & willing instructor.*
- *A facilitator – to enable curate to grow in confidence and competence*
- *Mentor, boss, kindly 'uncle'*
- *To support, train, encourage, challenge*
- *Nurturing, correcting (kindly) + pushing boundaries*
- *To oversee / assign work – help with problems arising, mentor and aid development*
- *To supervise my training, maybe?*
- *To give feedback on tasks set, to discuss areas of strength/weakness, to encourage and to engage with reflective practice*
- *To provide ongoing training and development*
- *Guide and training instructor*
- *An experienced priest who is able to both train and support a junior colleague in the early days of their ministry*
- *Facilitator of theological reflection*
- *To be supportive, a critical friend, to advise*
- *To train in practical aspects and equip for future ministry, help reflect on practice and provide insight from experience, to address any areas of difficulty in a constructive way, to enable the trainee to develop in their ministry as an individual and look out for spiritual and emotional welfare of trainee.*
- *To provide direction (especially in prioritising work), to oversee work being undertaken, to provide a place of accountability.*

CURATES Q12 – HOW HAVE YOUR EXPECTATIONS BEEN ADDRESSED?

- *Through regular communication*
- *Regular day off not interrupted. Study day encouraged. Permission given to miss non-essential meetings*
- *FULLY in his care for me as an individual and as a family. He has taken time to pray for and with me and has pastored us as a family in a godly and Christ-like way.*
- *Very well. I have no complaints. Our sessions are mutually beneficial.*
- *Discussion and reflection, but tends to be driven by me and tends to lack constructive feedback*
- *More learning on the job – overall fairly disappointing. Having said that I'm thoroughly enjoying/feel fulfilled in ministry*
- *To a large extent positively*
- *Not always*
- *Good open honest discussions during which mutual respect and understanding has increased hugely*
- *So far so good – this is a new incumbent arrived 3 months ago, not sure how it will evolve with his half-time role but he is a good trainer, thoughtful and reflective. I am now working with my 3rd incumbent since I began training (due to circumstances outside my control).*
- *Not at all. Most of what I expected from Supervision does not happen*
- *Yes*
- *Broadly very well.*
- *Not sure what you mean*
- *Brilliantly – I have no complaints*
- *Not entirely*
- *Workable but some areas, mainly problem discussion, could be more useful. Very useful in terms of ease of admin. Not at all in terms of constructive criticism – incumbent appears happy with everything I do!*
- *Expectations have not been met*
- *It is a learning curve for both of us*
- *Fully*
- *At beginning of curacy (June 2008) not what expected – had come from parish where incumbent and curate met daily and agreed tasks and shared fully all information. Very much left to explore on own for initial year, then incumbent moved in June 2009. New incumbent very informal and easy going.*
- *To quite a limited extent*
- *Not very well if I'm honest*
- *Extremely well*
- *Yes, although we don't pray together at supervision which I might have expected*

SECTION 7 – BENEFITS/HELPFULNESS/DIFFICULTIES OF SUPERVISION

CURATES Q14 – WHAT HAS BEEN HELPFUL ABOUT SUPERVISION?

One Curate said ‘nothing’. Others said:

- *Feedback and reflection on theological issues as well as practical matters*
- *It has been pastoral and very light touch. My incumbent is a very humble person who makes me feel like a veteran*
- *Having a wise, mature, godly incumbent who makes himself fully available to his curate has been invaluable. His honesty, humility and love for Christ and his word have been a huge inspiration to me in my spiritual growth.*
- *Time; sharing of fears and expectations; reflection; mutual support and encouragement*
- *Gives me an opportunity to talk about a situation and reflect with another person; no time constraints by supervisor*
- *Depth of discussion aiding reflection*
- *It has provided a sounding board for discussion around the way my ministry is unfolding*
- *Ability to raise and discuss parish issues – baptism policy*
- *Getting to know me and my incumbent much better.*
- *Overcoming anxieties over things that were new to me – weddings, funerals, etc.*
- *Having time for in-depth chats on baptism policy, wedding preparation and other things*
- *Feeling listened to and supported*
- *My incumbent has encouraged me to take on new challenges, to develop my skills, and to grow in confidence. He has encouraged me to develop a style of ministry which is right for me, but to give direction and guidance as required.*
- *It has been a space in which I can explore what I am doing and – most importantly – how I should focus my time and energies*
- *Chance to ask questions and to learn*
- *The accountability and the relationship we have developed*
- *It's good to touch base but it could have been much better*
- *The fact that it's weekly has meant that there is always available time*
- *Occasional use of resources for all-age worship*
- *It has been helpful to know that there is support available if needed*
- *Supervisor's experience and wisdom, and the opportunity for reflection and discussion*
- *Chance to share concerns and reflect on ministry – new avenues as well as existing areas*
- *I have learnt to be good at diary planning and rotas*
- *Opportunity to discuss key learning from curacy*
- *We get on very well. My incumbent is experienced in supervising curates. He offers advice without being dictatorial. Very supportive*
- *Opportunity to reflect on successes and failures, learning from experience of supervisor and working with someone from a different tradition to my own,*

theological reflection, being given chance to use supervision as I want, most of agenda is set by me

TRAINING INCUMBENTS Q13 – WHAT BENEFITS OF SUPERVISION HAVE YOU FOUND THERE TO BE?

- *I have gained some insights*
- *Chance to explore in some depth what is going on both for the curate and in the parish. Opportunity to review (and sometimes change) my own way of ministering*
- *Mutual support and sharing of ideas*
- *Help me reflect on my own ministry*
- *Interaction, reflection, formation, good working practice, critical friend, communication, leadership*
- *It is an opportunity for a curate to unburden him/herself, and to modify ministry where appropriate; it is also an opportunity for the supervisor to encourage and show that he values the curate and his/her ministry*
- *Refreshing for me and a discipline to be re-visiting some areas of ministry I had stopped thinking about*
- *A chance to share, trust, to grow; sometimes it's practical, sometimes theological, recently it's been about addressing spiritual matters. It's different from staff meetings*
- *We've learned from each other. I've been able to encourage my curate*
- *Particularly an opportunity to sit down in a relaxed way together and highlight any difficulties as well as identify positive developments.*
- *Building a working relationship; dealing with problems and issues*
- *We both learn from each other*
- *Compared to my curacy, a great improvement in that it is more structured and not just a 'cosy chat' (having said that my training incumbent was superb but I know others were not so good)*
- *It ensure that training is planned and that reflection takes place.*
- *Opportunities of mutual exploration and learning. reflection on theology and praxis of mission*
- *Helps to develop the relationship; mutual encouragement, etc.*
- *Mutual sharing and companionship*
- *I feel less isolated. I benefit from sharing worries, concerns, new ideas, stimulating discussion, feedback*
- *Good relationship, becomes an open relationship; addresses issues before they become problems*
- *Shared perspectives over difficult issues; team building*
- *Mutual encouragement and critical reflection*
- *Mutual development*
- *We both learn from each other, and together*
- *It means we think about the nature and direction of my ministry too*
- *Joint learning and reflection on struggles ?strategies, leadership roles*

CURATES Q15 – WHAT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT ABOUT SUPERVISION?

Five curates said 'nothing'. Other said:

- *4 churches – supervisor elsewhere in main services*
- *Occasional personal issues of the training incumbent – not major difficulty, just challenging*
- *Can be difficult to decide the most appropriate topics to raise – fear of leaving training gaps*
- *Total lack of structure and planning means I have to take initiative all the time which is exhausting. Recently agreed (will it happen?) to introduce a more structured approach: clear vicar not keen on process and sees it as a request/box that has to be ticked*
- *Inconsistency in some decisions made*
- *Trainer can dominate the conversation + being made to feel you are taking up time in an already busy schedule*
- *Coming up with an answer to a stretching question – often on something that has never occurred to me*
- *Being unsure of the supervisor's role, and therefore what issues to bring to the session*
- *The fact that my incumbent and I seem to have different ideas of what it's for. The diocese provided a training evening for Curates and Incumbents on the 'basics' of supervision, but it's as if that evening never happened. My incumbent's reflection was, 'if we had all the meetings we were supposed to have, we'd spend our life in meetings and never be getting on with the job.' Our one-to-one meetings are primarily about diary work and admin, and my incumbent does 90% of the talking.*
- *It is less well-planned and agenda'd than I would like*
- *Lack of supervision during vacancy; lack of theological reflection; length of time to meet in one sitting: not 'business-like' enough*
- *Personality problems – control freakery*
- *The fact that we are two very different people in terms of extrovert/introvert - I have difficulty knowing what incumbent thinks or his thought processes. But one of the positive aspects of such a vast difference is that it has made me less ready to jump in and to take more time to 'reflect' before action; difficult also to have frank discussion about people I find difficult and acknowledge negative emotions. Incumbent appears not to have any.*
- *My Vicar suffers from depression and has family problems. To echo the comment of parishioners – how can you take your problems to someone whose problems are far greater?*
- *Sometimes it is difficult to broach subjects or fears/anxieties with my incumbent*
- *Always had to press to get it arranged, due to diary pressures no doubt!.*
- *It's irregularity - we once went 9 weeks without meeting; lack of support in the early days; very little in the way of real training; largely left to get on with things*
- *Keeping it going on a regular basis*
- *Our time is sometimes cut short because of other situations that arise*

- *Nothing really. On the few occasions where there has been some conflict I have not found it easy raising them but they have always been dealt with fairly, although can sometimes be directive in such circumstances*

INCUMBENTS Q14 – WHAT DIFFICULTIES HAVE YOU FOUND ARISING IN SUPERVISION?

Four Training Incumbents said ‘none.’ Others said:

- *Difficult issues to be raised – only one*
- *How to deal with curate's frustration with traditional styles of ministry. Helping her to see the value in using the channels of consultation that exist*
- *Occasionally not being aware of particular pressure curate is facing*
- *Challenge dealing with conflict – not always difficult*
- *Keeping a disciplined approach to the subject, to avoid moving inadvertently onto other areas of ministry*
- *Pressures of the present moment sometimes take precedence over 'training' in specific areas*
- *Making time for it and making it different from the admin and diary planning that happens in 'staff' meetings over coffee*
- *A curate not being in a place of being able to reflect / asking too close or personal a question / pushing my own agendas*
- *Only those 2 hours - can be tiring and you need to plan them*
- *Slight disagreement*
- *Depends on what you mean by difficulties*
- *None except time*
- *The only issue we have faced is the joint supervision involved in a Pioneer Curate, which occasionally produces a tension*
- *Very gifted in many ways, my curate does not easily move from his comfort zone and I find it hard to explain this (again) without it seeming that I am being overly critical – which would be unfair because of all his positives.*
- *Sometimes it is easier to focus on the practicalities, less on the feelings about things*
- *Making sure cover what need to*
- *In this case none that are significant. Curate and I live nearly several miles apart so daily contact is difficult. He has a young family and I encourage time with them in early morning and evening.*
- *Pressure of 'daily round'! Can focus on fire-fighting but even this can be the springboard to the bigger picture*
- *None – other than 'going off on a tangent' too often!*
- *None in particular – although it's easy for busyness to tend to push it out*
- *??Confusion and conflict – differences of opinion*

CURATES Q16 – HOW HAVE ANY DIFFICULTIES BEEN ADDRESSED?

Six curates left this blank. Other said:

- *Conversations*
- *Not in our relationship as curate/incumbent because I don't perceive any. Many of my misunderstandings and confusion have been patiently ironed out by him*
- *Talking, praying, exploring options, agreeing that we are different*
- *Via annual review*
- *New structure recently agreed*
- *A degree of discussion, then compliance with the vicar's directions. However difficulties have been few and far between – so far*
- *By working on our relationship which has improved 100% in the last year*
- *Having a calm and unhurried atmosphere is a great help. If I have to reflect on something and come back to it later, I know I can.*
- *Too early for present incumbent.*
- *Difficulties arose with previous one when we disagreed about a proposed project; we eventually talked it through as both were aware of strained relationship – this had a positive outcome.*
- *Been raised with IME tutor and Diocese. Have access to some helpful and wise other people who have enabled me to reflect on ministry.*
- *By talking about them*
- *Prayer and patience*
- *We have discussed the introvert/extrovert difficulty and incumbent is trying to 'think out loud' occasionally and doing his best to express his thoughts on a variety of issues.*
- *He's a good man but should not be put in the position of a Training Incumbent*
- *Work in progress!*
- *Still hard to get meetings arranged but e-mail communication very good with new incumbent and no sense of isolation*
- *Some have been raised – but incumbent about to retire so little chance to improve things now*
- *Supervision has petered out in second year due to incumbent's sabbatical*
- *Very well – I feel I can speak freely and openly*

TRAINING INCUMBENTS Q15 HOW HAVE ANY DIFFICULTIES BEEN ADDRESSED?

Six training incumbents left this blank

- *I waited and then realised my curate had worked it out for themselves*
- *By discussion! By encouraging experiments and then monitoring their success. By revisiting issues some time later*
- *Talking together*
- *Continual dialogue and working through the issue*
- *Just by awareness and vigilance so as not to stray too far from the subject*
- *Really very few difficulties. We get on well and think alike. We learn and share together*
- *Staff meetings in kitchen – supervision in office (more formal). My curate is more organized than me – he books in time and often suggests an agenda. (I hope he finds it helpful – I'll have to ask him!)*
- *With questions, 'well what is the way forward?' 'how might we change this' and maybe confessional – 'I'm sorry not to have listened/ understood better what was happening here' (that's usually me as the incumbent!)*
- *Talking through*
- *Through discussion and prayer*
- *If serious, they would be taken to the Diocesan Director of Training. Otherwise discussed openly and honestly*
- *We have found a regular time when we can, and fit in when that time is unsuitable*
- *By including joint supervision sessions with both supervisors present*
- *I am trying a new approach, looking at both of our sermons and those of the main Reader (ie not singling out his approaches) aiming to see what techniques were employed, what was good and what could have been done differently, especially to address the needs of all age worship and the needs of a more visual era generally.*
- *By trying to be honest*
- *Regular making of list of what hasn't been addressed and needs one*
- *There is a very positive and creative relationship so difficulties are resolved as they arise*
- *Keep under review*
- *Talking, listening, saying sorry*

SECTION 8 – QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAINING FOR SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

INCUMBENTS Q.16 – WHAT TRAINING IN SUPERVISION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU FROM EITHER YOUR PRESENT DIOCESE OR A PREVIOUS ONE?

Four TI's said None with a further three saying Virtually None

Other comments:

- *Uhm... – there has been a handbook ...*
- *1 session in current Diocese; I was involved in training in my last Diocese*
- *Occasional training course plus meeting with Post-Ordination Training Staff*
- *Had training days in the past*
- *At the beginning, in preparation to receiving a curate*
- *Some input/guidance from a day spent with the Training Division before arrival of each curate*
- *3 training days over 10 years*
- *It began well but has tailed off*
- *Occasional sessions*
- *I was an associate staff tutor with a training course for 5 years and attended the Diocesan training events for incumbents and will continue to do so for future curates*
- *Very little!*
- *We have had 2 meetings which were reasonable both in terms of theory of supervision and practicalities*
- *Virtually none; in the last 2.5 years, none at all*
- *One 1-day course (half of that day)*
- *Some but only recently (not when training previous 3 curates)*
- *Two day residential with first curate in 1984. More recently at least 6 monthly reviews*
- *Reflective practice course (really useful)*
- *Several sessions*

INCUMBENTS Q17 – WHAT SUPPORT DO YOU HAVE AS A SUPERVISOR

Six TI's said None and a further two said Very Little.

Other comments:

- *Archdeacon, Bishop, to chat with*
- *Ad hoc conversations with POT staff and Bishop. POT also provide a substantial Handbook which is helpful*
- *In touch with Director of Training as necessary*
- *Nothing official*
- *Churchwardens, spiritual director, senior colleagues*

- *If I felt the need for support (as I have in a previous curacy) I turned to the Training Department*
- *Little. We worked through the Diocesan paperwork which provides a 'content' framework. I could ask a trusted colleague if I needed to for guidance and support*
- *Not nearly enough*
- *There are people I can turn to*
- *Diocese support plus personal support i.e. I have a mentor*
- *I know the Diocese, and churchwardens are there for me if and when I need them*
- *I don't use anyone or anything specific but I am sure that there would be a fund of advice from various individuals in the Diocese should I want it.*
- *I am also a trained therapist – couples and individuals. I draw on self-awareness and broad understanding. I would contact Archdeacon. I rely on him for advice and guidance. We have several priests on the team, so regular staff meetings also contribute to overall process*
- *My own spiritual director*
- *From Diocese and from Archdeacon*
- *No on-going*
- *Diocese – Archdeacon?*

SECTION 9 – ANY OTHER COMMENTS

CURATES Q17 – ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WISH TO MAKE ABOUT THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP?

Nine curates left this blank.

Other comments:

- *We informally chat several times a week. A staff team of lay and ordained people meet weekly – much admin and training naturally occurs then.*
- *What happens to the arrangements for supervision when the incumbent moves on? Mine is leaving in 2 months? Does anyone have a plan?*
- *Despite my negative comments, relationship with incumbent is very good*
- *I am extremely fortunate to have a training incumbent who takes the role seriously and who treats me as an adult colleague with whom he can share experiences good and bad.*
- *My supervisor is very willing to give of time but as one who finds conflict very difficult, it is difficult to get constructive feedback as he would find this critical and negative.*
- *It is very light handed*
- *It's good, open, honest and helpful*
- *It varies obviously with different incumbents. First incumbent was not a natural trainer and the relationship was difficult. Second – worked fairly well but incumbent tended to be rather controlling and not appreciative always of my pastoral/church experience.*
- *My incumbent is a decent man, who is clearly experienced in his job and well thought of in the diocese. He trusts me to get on with my tasks and responsibilities, which I am grateful for, and he is very keen to not to be too directive or prescriptive in any way. He is pleasant and easy to get on with in social situations, but I have found working with him to be frustrating, often disheartening, and at times very difficult indeed.*
- *I am able to speak honestly and openly with my incumbent. He is helping me learn how to train and supervise others. I feel that I am very privileged to be working with my incumbent, who is keen to enable and empower me to be all that God has called me to be.*
- *I believe it's beneficial both to myself and my supervisors ... we both learn and teach each other*
- *I have a lot more help than many I talk with*
- *In our Diocese, the 3-year Curate's training programme requires us to write up an annual 'critical incident'. As I start my 3rd year I really want to address the problem of having dysfunctional clergy as training incumbents.*
- *It is difficult to work within a supervisory relationship when the supervisor and the one being supervised work with different work ethics and have different attitudes and priorities.*
- *As we are in a rural area, I live in a different village from my incumbent and, to a large extent, I have simply been left to become the 'de fact' vicar of the village*

where I am. In the early days, this left me feeling very exposed and unsupported but I am now used to it and he is retiring soon. I actually get on with him very well but there has not been much real training!

- *Having heard other's experiences, I am very grateful for my supervisor!*

INCUMBENTS – ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WISH TO MAKE ABOUT THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

Fourteen TI's left this blank.

Other comments:

- *It is unclear to my mind how the expectation on the curate can come via IME or the Diocese*
- *As with any relationship, it has to be worked on from both sides, with a willingness to both try new things out, and compromise when necessary*
- *I have found it helpful and integral to training as an important element in formation and building a good working relationship. It builds trust and confidence and shows you are bothered.*
- *We do not address the 'check list' from the Diocese as often as we should. Apart from me agreeing to her priesting this summer, there has been no check on her progress (or my supervision of her) this year.*
- *Supervision was a central part of social work practice, so I'm happy with the concept and necessity of it. It was a varied experience as a curate – more like 'staff chats' rather than supervision. I hope we keep it more formal and dedicate the luxury of time to a particular subject that either he or I put on the agenda. I will ask him about it; what's been helpful, what could be done differently etc, because I'm here to learn too.*
- *All of what I have said is based on an ideal which I bring to supervision but may not always work out in practice! I have reflected on my own experience of 'supervision' as a curate and tried to draw the good from that for the benefit of those training alongside me.*
- *I think things are going smoothly as we have same values and vision for the church*
- *It has to be based on mutual respect and trust – disagreements may happen in the study but are not to be taken outside to the congregation.*
- *With regard to the annual reports, I believe the reports should be totally open to the training department, not just the final action points. This open honesty would lead to greater accountability and would benefit everyone – both training incumbent and curate. I believe this should apply to the final year reports from Colleges and Courses as well.*
- *The quality of the supervision does vary depending on how well the two get on generally*
- *Would be interested in exploring the interface of supervision/performance management*
- *It is a great privilege!*

SECTION 10 – WORD ANALYSIS

UNDERSTANDING OF SUPERVISION AND ROLE OF SUPERVISOR FROM QUESTIONNAIRE

Word used	Training Incumbents	Curates
Reflect/reflection	14	11
Support/supportive	10	6
Encourage/ment	8	7
Issues	8	5
Critical	7	3
Develop/ment	7	8
Guide/ance	6	6
Teach/train/instruct	6	18
Facilitate/or	5	2
Discuss	4	7
Oversee/sight	4	2
Share/ing	4	1
Advice/sor	3	3
Ask questions/respond	3	4
Challenge	3	3
Enable	3	4
Explore	3	2
Formation	3	0
Listen/hear	3	2
Mentor/ing	3	4
Problems	3	2
Review	3	1
Theology/igal	3	6
Appraisal	1	0
Companion/walk alongside	1	0
Prayer	1	1
Permission-giver	1	0
Spiritual/ity/direction	1	5
Accountable/ility	0	3
Feedback	0	9
Goals/targets	0	3
Learn/ing	0	4
Sounding board	0	2
Tasks	0	2
Push boundaries	0	1

WORD ANALYSIS ON WHAT CURATES FOUND HELPFUL (QUESTIONNAIRE):

Reflect	9
Discuss/talk	7
Time/space	7
Support	4
Learning	4
Encouragement	3
Sharing	2
Feedback	1
Accountability	1
Listened to	1
Sounding board	1
Resources	1

WORDS FROM INTERVIEWS

CURATES

- 1) **Reflect Review Train Spiritual/prayer Challenge + Respect (would have liked)**
- 2) **Guide Enable Teach Companion/walk alongside Formation (most imp and getting them)**
- 3) **Ticked mostly all of them. Asked for top 5 – 1. Teach/train 2. Formation 3. Support 4. Reflect. 5. Encourage**
- 4) **Ticked quite a number to begin with e.g. reflect, enable, listen, review, accountability, support, teach, ask questions, theology, encourage, facilitate, appraisal. 1. Listen/hear 2. Facilitate 3. Support 4. Reflect 5. Teach/train**
- 5) **1. Encouragement 2 Prayer 3. Safe Space 4. Reflect/ion 5. Available + Companion/walk alongside (most imp and would have liked)**
- 7) **Permission giver; support; train/instruct; feedback; formation**
- 8) **Reflect. Sounding Board. Safe space. Development. Tasks**
- 6) **Guidance, enable, prayer, teach/train, mentor, facilitate, challenge, goals/targets, available**

TRAINING INCUMBENTS

- 1) **encourage, develop, teach/train with facilitate, companion/walk alongside, mutuality**
- 2) **Sounding board, safe space, encourage, develop, formation of character**
- 3) **reflect, issues, feedback, sounding board, safe space**
- 4) **discuss, permission-giver, support, develop, share**
- 5) **reflect, issues, listen, review, safe space**

ANALYSIS OF WORDS FROM INTERVIEWS

TOTALS

Word	No. of curates/8	No. of incumbents/5
Reflect	5	2
Review	1	1
Teach/train	6	1
Spiritual	1	0
Prayer	3	0
Challenge	2	0
Guide	2	0
Enable	2	0
Companion/walk along	2	1
Formation	3	1
Support	3	1
Encourage	2	2
Listen	1	1
Facilitate	2	1
Safe space	2	3
Available	2	0
Permission giver	1	1
Feedback	1	1
Sounding board	1	2
Development	1	3
Tasks	1	0
Mentor	1	0
Goals/targets	1	0
Mutuality	0	1
Issues	0	2
Discuss	0	1
Share	0	1