



course to take up posts in the Church of England in spite of the impact of

The number of stipendiary – paid - curacy posts is forecast to match the number of candidates due to leave theological training next summer.

Around 300 posts will be funded by dioceses. The Strategic Ministry Fund will support an additional 110 stipendiary posts.

This reflects the commitment across both dioceses and the national church to maintain curacy numbers.

There will also be curacy posts for 150 people training currently for self-supporting roles, according to figures released by the Ministry Team of the Church of England.

The Strategic Ministry Fund was set up last year to help ensure that dioceses are able to fund additional curate numbers, part of the programme of Renewal and Reform to increase the number of candidates for ordained ministry.

The announcement comes after General Synod members raised the issue of stipendiary posts and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in written questions to the General Synod.

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Martin Seeley, who is chair of the Ministry Council, said: "At a time when many are fearful about the impact of Covid-19 on the economy and jobs, I am really pleased that we can give assurances that the number of stipendiary curacy posts being offered in 2021 matches the number of people due to be ordained next summer.

"I thank God for the hard work, prayers and generosity of our parishes and dioceses – this announcement is a reflection of their commitment to ensure that vocations to ordained ministry continue to flourish."

The funding is separate from posts created through Strategic Development Funding to dioceses for mission and evangelism.

