

## How might your church change with the Calling of a CRCW Minister?

You will hopefully become a Church that is:

- more concerned with mission than with maintenance.
- more 'outward looking' and actively concerned with local individuals & issues.
- a building used by many different groups & organisations.
- a resource for community activity & events.
- prepared to see God involved with society, not just with the Church.
- influenced by the needs and opportunities of those 'outside' the Church, not just by those already involved.
- equipped with people trained & supported for community action.
- ready for change and more culturally aware of the surrounding environment.
- trusted and respected by the local community.
- vibrant, buzzing and a place where all are welcome.

Not that this will happen overnight! A CRCW minister will work in partnership with the Church and should not be expected to be involved with the local community as a lone person working on behalf of the Church. It will probably be as much about Church development as community development!

## How much will it cost us?

CRCW ministers are paid a stipend from the URC Maintenance of Ministry fund, not from local funds. Ongoing training opportunities are available via the Education for Ministry programme. The local costs of this ministry including housing, travel, office and administration have to be met from local resources.

## What do we have to do in preparation?

- Contact your Synod office or the CRCW Office (see below) who will send you further details.
- Arrange to meet with the Development Worker who will discuss the application procedure with your church & Synod representatives.
- Complete the CRCW Application Process with the assistance of the Development Worker.
- Submit the Application to the CRCW Programme Sub-Committee for accreditation.

This process can take between 6 and 18 months depending on how quickly you can complete the Application. This includes conducting local research about your area, your Church & Synod agreeing the vision for the work; identifying funding for local expenses and forming a local steering group to oversee this process.

A vacancy for a CRCW minister will be declared once your application has been successfully accredited as a CRCW project. However, it could potentially be some time before a CRCW minister is called to your project.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact your Synod Office or The CRCW Development Worker Steve Summers

CRCW Office,  
86 Tavistock Place  
London, WC1H 9RT

crcw.admin@urc.org.uk  
0207 916 8653  
<https://twitter.com/CRCWteam>  
[www.urc.org.uk/discipleship](http://www.urc.org.uk/discipleship)



Creating Change in Communities  
and the Church



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## Information for local churches considering the URC ministry of Church Related Community Work

*“Assembly acknowledges that in Church Related Community Work ministers, properly trained and properly employed, the Lord Jesus Christ is giving particular gifts for a particular ministry and is calling such individuals to exercise them in an office which is duly recognised within His Church.”*

URC General Assembly 1987



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*“Community development is committed to working with oppressed and marginalised people and in doing this it looks to support the strengths and capacities of people... towards a goal of social inclusion.”*

**Community Development Foundation**



### **What is Community Work?**

- Community development work is concerned about bringing groups of people together to identify and work on their own issues, hopes and opportunities.
- It is about taking control of our own lives, building positive local relationships, developing community resources, healing and transforming individuals' lives and communities for the better and working towards equal opportunities, justice and peace.
- Community Work seeks to enable the transfer of power from the powerful to the powerless and aims to tackle the causes of poverty, prejudice and discrimination which affects peoples' lives.
- The context of Community Work is normally with people who are disadvantaged, disaffected or disappointed and within local neighbourhoods where there is a desire for community development and regeneration.
- This might be within inner cities, outer-urban estates, seaside towns or rural areas.

### **What is Church Related Community Work?**

- Church Related Community Work mainly depends on a vision of the Church as an agent of social change. It is one way for the Church to share in God's mission.
- It recognises the Gospel where it is being lived out by people and communities, even if they themselves do not use the name of God.



- It is not intended to be a means of increasing church membership or an attempt to impose any set of values on people. It is about the Kingdom of God because it is committed to justice and peace and is not afraid of costly involvement with people.
- Church Related Community Work is open to the tensions between being the Church and living in the faith of an incarnate God. It is, therefore, a challenge to both an insular Church and an uncaring society. It is not for those who want an easy life!

### **Who are URC Church Related Community Work Ministers?**

- A Church Related Community Work minister is a community development minister, who enables the Church to work within its local neighbourhood, rather than someone employed by the Church to work on its behalf or only with Church members.
- The United Reformed Church (URC) formally recognises that Church Related Community Work is a distinctive, exciting and challenging ministry and vocation.
- URC Church Related Community Work ministers, who are called by God, assessed, professionally trained, qualified and commissioned to an accredited church-in-community become stipendiary ministers and work as equal colleagues with ministers of Word & Sacraments.

(See the separate Information Leaflet for further information)



### **What can we expect a CRCW Minister to do?**

- A CRCW minister will work in partnership with your local congregation, church members, elders and minister of Word & Sacraments in order for you to become more involved with your local neighbourhood and community organisations.
- A CRCW ministers' task is to enable the Church to engage with individuals and community groups, residents associations, schools, housing associations, voluntary and statutory organisations, etc. to theologically reflect on that involvement and to develop appropriate community work aims within its own life; its order, outreach, worship, spirituality, mission and ministry.