



# Counselling support for clergy, licensed lay workers and members of their families





### **Counselling support for ministers and their families**

The Diocese of Norwich has well-established counselling provision for clergy, licensed lay workers and their families. This supplements pastoral care provided by bishops, archdeacons and rural deans and support from colleagues, spouses and friends.

**Ministers whose role is to care for others may find it difficult to ask for help**

Public ministry can be immensely rewarding. However, exposure to the distress of other people's lives, the tensions and conflicts which may arise in parish life and the difficulties of living 'on the job', all make costly demands on ministers and their families. Knowing there is additional support available can make a big difference. The diocesan counselling service provides an accessible, professional and flexible service. It is confidential and there is no charge.

### **When to ask for help?**

Clergy, licensed workers and their families, like anyone else, may face relationship problems, bereavement, anxiety, depression, illness or other challenging life events. Difficulties in parish relationships or with colleagues can also cause profound distress. It can be hard for those in public ministry and those with whom they share their lives to know where to turn for confidential support, especially if they are new to the diocese or to ministry. Those who are long established can also feel lonely and isolated.

Ministers whose role is to care for others may find it difficult to ask for help, or to judge whether an issue justifies contacting a counsellor.

If there is a dilemma, issue or situation which troubles you or a member of your family, then our diocesan counsellor would be glad to arrange an initial meeting to explore whether she could help.

Counselling is not only for crises, but also has a valuable role in fostering personal and spiritual growth and ministerial formation.



### **Safety and trust**

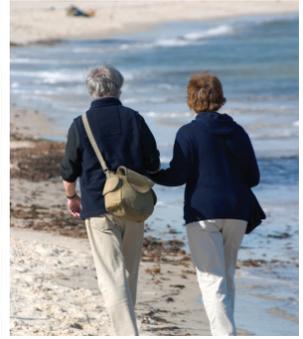
Counselling depends on a relationship of trust within which the person seeking help can safely explore personal and/or ministerial issues.

Confidentiality is a concern for those in public ministry and their family members. Our diocesan bishop and his senior staff recognize that confidentiality is essential. They do not know who sees a counsellor and the counsellor does not report to them, unless the person seeking help specifically asks for this. Confidentiality is agreed at the outset of counselling and would only be reviewed or altered in exceptional circumstances and after discussion.

## **Knowing there is additional support can make a big difference**

**Jane Keeton** is the Diocesan Counsellor & Adviser in Pastoral Care. Jane has worked in counselling since 1998 and qualified as a Counselling Psychologist in 2001. She has wide and varied experience including the NHS, the Prison Service, Higher Education, a hospice and private practice, and has worked with individuals and groups of all ages, including children, teenagers and families. Jane is trained in person-centred counselling and cognitive-behaviour therapy, and draws on these and on other approaches depending on need.

Jane has been an active member of the Church since childhood, and has known the Church from a variety of perspectives; including as a novice Sister in the SLG Community at Fairacres, Oxford; and as a Virger in St Paul's Cathedral, London. She is married to John, a priest who took early retirement in 2009, and so has first-hand experience of clergy family-life.



**A good experience of counselling can deepen a minister's insight into their own life journey and enhance sensitivity in offering pastoral care to others.**

**How to contact the counselling service**

Jane works from her home in Sprowston, Norwich, and can be contacted by phone or e-mail. Offering privacy and safety is a priority. All communications are confidential and no other person has access to her answerphone or email. Counselling sessions last an hour, usually at weekly or fortnightly intervals at first, in order to build up a relationship and maintain continuity. However, length and frequency of meeting are negotiable. Sometimes 2 or 3 sessions may be sufficient, but 6 to 12 sessions are more common and counselling can also continue for much longer. The initial meeting is an opportunity to explore the issues and to agree together whether counselling would be a helpful way forward.

Please contact Jane if you feel that she could be of help.

**Jane Keeton**

Counselling Psychologist (HCPC and BPS registered)

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