**Local Sabbatical Support Group Checklist**

*Experience has shown that it’s worth paying attention to details such as these:*

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| **Sabbatical start and finish dates** |
| * Have the dates of the sabbatical been agreed between the minister, circuit and Sabbaticals Advisory Group?
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| **Cover in the circuit** |
| * Has the Local Preachers’ Meeting been consulted to identify additional cover for preaching appointments and support for occasional offices?
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| * Does the circuit need to approach preachers from elsewhere in the District/ Connexion or from other denominations to provide additional cover for preaching appointments and/or support for occasional offices?
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| * Who will be the contact point for pastoral emergencies during the sabbatical?
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| * Is cover in place for local church meetings and events?
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| * Is cover in place for contacts with groups (church-based, ecumenical, and community-based)?
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| * Is cover in place for local community involvement (eg, taking school assemblies)?
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| * What arrangements are needed to deal with the minister’s incoming mail and emails during the sabbatical, differentiating between work-related and personal items?
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| * How are voicemail/ answerphone messages to be managed?
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| * Have funeral directors been informed that the minister will be unavailable for three months?
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| **Pastoral & practical support** |
| * What pastoral and practical support might the minister’s family (if applicable) need during the sabbatical?
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| * If the minister faces a substantial personal pastoral issue that will occupy the majority of their sabbatical, should a case be made for transmuting the sabbatical into a period of compassionate leave?
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| **Practical matters** |
| * If the minister is going to be away from the manse for a prolonged period of time during the sabbatical, and the manse is going to be unoccupied, have they checked with their insurance company whether any additional policy endorsement and/or premium may be required?
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| * If the minister is going to travel overseas, have necessary visas and immunisations been obtained (in good time)?
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| * If the manse is unoccupied, who will arrange and monitor security? Is there a burglar alarm and, if so, what if access to the manse is needed during the minister’s absence? Who will make regular checks on the manse (roughly every week) to check all is well? Who will have keys to the manse? Will a circuit key-holder need to notify anyone prior to entering the manse (if so, whom)?
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| * Who is the contact person, in the case of emergency (the minister or someone else)?
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| * If the manse is unoccupied, will the circuit need to carry out maintenance (eg, gardening, window cleaning)? How will this be organised and paid for?
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| **Returning from sabbatical** |
| * Have church stewards been asked to keep a diary of relevant events and changes in people’s personal circumstances, to update the minister when they return?
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| * Will churches and those covering for the minister try to ensure that the minister’s diary is not too pressurised immediately after their return?
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| **Fruits of the sabbatical** |
| * How will the minister share the fruits of their sabbatical in the circuit?
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| * How will their church(es) discuss their experience of the sabbatical?
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| Thank you to Alan Jameson and the London District Sabbaticals’ Advisory Group for inspiring this checklist. |