



## **Northern Synod.**

### **Guidance note for the Part Time Paid Youth Opportunities Programme.**

This guidance note is for the use of those local congregations who wish to apply to Synod for support in offering a paid part time youth opportunity as one element of their local mission.

#### **Why?**

The purpose in developing this programme is twofold, one to offer some work based opportunities to young people to experience working in and with a local church community, and two to give stimulus, encouragement, and an additional resource to local congregations to fulfil their mission.

#### **Where?**

The Youth Opportunity Programme is open to all churches in the Synod who can create an opportunity to develop some area of their mission with the help of a young person on a part time paid basis of up to one year's duration.

#### **Who?**

The young person should be in the 16-23 age range and can be, a student, an unemployed young person, or a young person in part time employment and preferably someone who is interested in working in a faith setting. (N.B. 16-17-year olds will need additional care as they are not classed as adult until 18.)

#### **Who and how will we recruit the young people?**

The recruitment process is still to be agreed but it will be developed with those applying to join the programme so that their local situation can be catered for. Synod will identify contacts with the local universities and colleges, ecumenical links and other youth organisations. Hopefully some local congregations will

have a young person associated with the congregation who could be interested in this opportunity.

### **How long?**

The length of the work opportunity can be determined locally but we would normally expect the offer to be for no less than six months and no more than twelve.

### **Who with?**

The opportunity can be to work within one local congregation, in a group or ecumenical setting or with another partner organisation where this is deemed locally to be most appropriate way forward.

### **Models for the activity.**

There are two main models in this programme. One would offer paid work to a young person for 15 hours per week for up to twelve months and the other would offer paid work of five hours per week. Both allow a young person in full time education to continue with their studies while taking part in the programme. Other hourly models up to a maximum of 15 hours per week will be considered.

It is likely that in some instances the activity may require flexibility in the use of the hours available, with some weeks requiring more hours and others less. This is acceptable but will need to be monitored.

### **Which pay rate?**

The young person will be paid the national living wage rate in accordance with URC national policy.

### **What activity could a young person be engaged with?**

This is up to the local congregation to decide but some examples of activity could be to: -

- Work alongside a Minister, CRCW, Church Secretary or group of Elders
- Work under supervision say from the Synod Children's Advisor.  
developing children and youth work for those in the local community;  
and creating links with local schools
- Develop a churches capability to engage effectively and meaningfully on social media.

- Develop a churches overseas work, creating good and regular links with projects in the Third World.
- Create an arts project involving the community; or helping set up meetings or a café to combat loneliness, or some other social ill.
- Provide some technical support to enable the housebound in a congregation to join the Sunday church service and other events they miss so much, via skype or something similar; so that they still feel a sense of belonging and do not have to rely on Songs of Praise for their only spiritual input.

### **What is expected of the local congregation that wants to join this programme?**

Local churches will be expected to: -

- Identify a work opportunity, within the life of the church, which would be both beneficial to a young person's development and help meet the aspirations the congregation and/or the local community.
- Provide an identified support group/person (DBS cleared as applicable) who will have: -
  - regular contact with the young person and be responsible for the well-being (spiritual and physical), and interaction with the young person(s) to ensure that they are well supported in their work.
  - direct contact with the Synod placement overseer.
  - Be involved in the induction and regular monitoring of the young person(s) and highlight to Synod any short-term training needs.
- Provide all expenses not covered by Synod. (for those see next section).  
**N.B.** Where these would place a prohibitive burden on the local church, Synod will try to advise on a way forward.

### **What support will be offered by Synod?**

Synod will: -

- Provide overall supervision of the young people in tandem with those providing local management/supervision.
- Hold up to three residential weekends over the duration of the programme to provide group support and interaction, reflection time, and some skills development. It may also prove beneficial for all or some of the young people to attend the annual URC Youth Assembly. Synod will bear all of these costs.

- Pay the salary costs for one young person engaged for 15 hours per week or up to two young people for 5 hours per week and give support with any HR issues that arise. Synod will also provide guidance for local monitoring and review of the activity.

### **How does a local congregation apply to join this programme?**

This programme is being run from the Synod Mission Fund and application forms can be found on the Synod website under Resources, Grants.

It is expected that the **local congregation** will develop and provide the following in its application: -

- The purpose of the proposed activity, the hours and work pattern required (max 15 hours per week).
- The benefits to the local congregation/community; and **as importantly**
- The benefits to the young person(s) undertaking this activity.
- What is the legacy that is hoped for from this activity?
- All costs associated with the activity, excluding those provided by Synod (see Synod support above) and how these will be met.
- An identified local support group/person(s) who will have
  - direct contact with the Synod supervisor
  - responsibility for the wellbeing (spiritual and physical), and interaction with the young person to ensure that the young person is not isolated but well supported in their work.
  - responsibility for the regular (4-6 weekly) review of the activity.

All applications **must be endorsed by the local church meeting** before submission.

### **Timetable.**

Fully developed applications should be sent to the Synod Office by the end of December and a decision on them will be given by the end of January.

Following discussions with the successful applicants a recruitment process and local plan will be agreed with Synod by the end of March. The aim of recruitment process will be to have identified a suitable young person by June to begin their work at a time that suits the local situation.