

## Wales Synod Policy – Local Preachers on Trial / Extensions

### Background

It is a longstanding fact, reaching back before “Faith & Worship”, that Local Preachers on trial should spend a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 5 years before being finally admitted as a Local Preacher. [S.O. 564B (1)]

Although in Unit 1 of “Faith & Worship” they have been asked to consider what other commitments they might have to give up in order to answer the call to preach and the training required, it can still be the case that circumstances create a slower rate of progress than is desirable ideally. What happens to someone who is approaching the five-year mark?

Firstly, the Circuit should be aware already that things are not moving on at the desired rate and discussions should have taken place to determine why this is so. At this point, the following questions should be addressed:

- How many appointments per quarter is the person on trial being given and what other responsibilities in the life of the circuit and local church does the person have?
- Is the circuit or local church being unfair in asking the person to fulfil these responsibilities as well as training to become a local preacher?
- Have personal circumstances changed?
- How much of the “Faith & Worship” course has already been completed?
- What time lapse was there between coming on trial and completing the first section of the course?
- What evidence is there that the person is making a serious attempt to complete in the proposed timescale?

Based on the answers to these questions, the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting will decide if the period of training should be extended beyond 5 years.

If the decision is “No” then there needs to be sensitive handling of the situation and attention given to the pastoral needs of the individual concerned.

If the Local Preachers’ Meeting decides that an extension is warranted, then the provisions within Standing Order 564B (3) come into play:

*Applications to extend the period on trial beyond five years must be to the district Policy Committee. Such applications should be granted only in very exceptional circumstances. The Superintendent and the person on trial have the right to be present and speak to the case.*

## Policy

One of the foundation principles of Wales Synod is of “the Synod going to the people”. With this in mind and recognising that “*Such applications should be granted only in very exceptional circumstance*” persons representing Synod shall meet the Local Preacher on trial and the Superintendent Minister in their locality. The representatives shall come to a mind on the issue, explain their thinking to those involved and report, in written form, to the next meeting of SPC. SPC would then either make its own decision or ratify the decision recommended by its representatives.

- the representatives of Synod shall be drawn from:
- the Synod Chair or the relevant Assistant Chair,
- the Circuit Superintendent of the Circuit in question,
- the Synod Local Preachers’ Secretary
- the SPC representative of the Circuit in question (or if this is the Superintendent, one of the Circuit’s representatives to Synod),
- the Local Preachers’ Secretary of the Circuit in question,
- the Circuit Superintendent of a neighbouring Circuit,
- the SPC representative of a neighbouring Circuit. (or if this is the Superintendent, one of that Circuit’s representatives to Synod),
- the Local Preachers’ Secretary of a neighbouring Circuit.

### **At its meeting on 19th June 2010 adopted the following resolutions:**

1. The policy of Wales Synod with regard to Local Preachers on-trial is to encourage Circuits to work with sensitivity and understanding within the guidance of Standing Order 564B(1) & (3)
2. That in all cases where a Circuit desires an extension this is communicated to the Assistant Synod Secretary.
3. That where a person wishes to speak to their case that they meet with a local panel constituted as above.
4. That in reaching its decision the panel, and SPC in considering that conclusion, will pay heed to the information and notes contained in the relevant Connexional paper (see Appendix 1).

Agreed by Synod Policy Committee (SPC) 19th June 2010  
Reviewed and amended by SPC 11th October 2014