How clergy experience preparing to move jobs in the Church of England

This item was submitted to Loughborough University's Institutional Repository by the/an author.

Additional Information:

- A Doctoral Thesis. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University.

Metadata Record: https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/2134/16924

Publisher: © Christine Blackie

Rights: This work is made available according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) licence. Full details of this licence are available at: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

Please cite the published version.
How clergy experience preparing to move jobs in the Church of England

by

Christine Blackie

Doctoral Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

30 September 2014

© Christine Blackie 2014
ABSTRACT

This research project sought to find out more about how clergy experience preparing to move jobs in the Church of England. This is important and timely for several reasons. First, there has been limited theoretical and empirical attention paid to the process and tasks of preparing for a career transition. Second, clergy are contemplating job moves in a dynamic institutional context which is affecting how they perceive and construct their future career trajectory. Third, I set out to investigate clergy as members of a workforce facing some of the same issues and concerns as those in other occupations rather than viewing them as being in any way special by virtue of their ordained status. The study is framed by career theories which attend to transition, turnover and the determinants and antecedents of career and job mobility.

A total of 31 clergy from three Church of England dioceses were interviewed as part of a qualitative study. A social constructivist method was adopted and thematic analysis applied to the data with attention being paid to the reflexive research process.

The findings indicate that a religious context is an important site for enhancing our understanding of the complex relationship between individual agency, structural constraints and the antecedents to preparing to move jobs. Following structural changes to how clergy are recruited, selected and appointed to posts participants are found to be experiencing cognitive dissonance as they anticipate a move. This is explained by a shift in the delegation of authority to individual clergy and the erosion of strategic ambiguity as a mode of communication between different parties. These are changes which undermine value systems rooted in history, tradition, custom and practice and calling which clergy rate highly. The study identifies facets of calling and vocation which clergy correlate with preparing to move jobs rather than an original call to ministry.
The church was locked, so I went to the incumbent –
the incumbent enjoying a supine incumbency –
a tennis court, a summerhouse, deckchairs by the walnut tree
and only the hum of the bees in the rockery.
‘May I have the keys of the church, your incumbency?’
‘Yes, my dear sir, as a moderate churchman, I
am willing to exchange: light Sunday duty:
nice district: pop 149: eight hundred per annum:
no extremes: A and M: bicyclist essential
same income expected.’

Extract from *Exchange of Livings*, John Betjeman
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication and Acknowledgements</td>
<td>v - vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents, List of Tables, List of Figures</td>
<td>vii - xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Rationale for this Research Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Background and Context to Ministry in the Church of England</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1 Church – Public – Media</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.2 History and Context of Ministry</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.3 Organization and Governance of the Church of England</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 How Clergy are Organized and Managed</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1 Polity</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.2 In Practice – Background</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.3 In Practice – Professional Development and Well-Being</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.4 In Practice – Accountability</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 How do Clergy do Career in the Church of England?</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.1 Becoming a Priest</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.2 Next Steps</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.3 Past the First Post – Uncharted Waters</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.4 Navigating the Terrain</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Summary</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Defining Career</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Career Theory as a Framework for Investigating Preparing to Move Jobs</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Career Theory in Relation to Transition, Turnover and Embeddedness-</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Theories of Transition</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Theories of Turnover</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 Theories of Embeddedness</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4</td>
<td>Summary of Theories of Transition, Turnover and Embeddedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Career Theory in Relation to Job or Career Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1</td>
<td>Models of the Determinants of Job and Career Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2</td>
<td>Models of Boundaryless and Protean Careers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3</td>
<td>Where Structure and Agency Meet in the Career Mobility Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4</td>
<td>Empirical Research into Job and Career Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.5</td>
<td>Summary – Career Theory in Relation to Job or Career Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Theological Perspectives on Clergy Transition and Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1</td>
<td>Comparative Contexts of Mobility in Relation to the Clerical Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.2</td>
<td>Summary of Theological Perspectives on Clergy Transition and Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Theological and Career Perspectives on Clergy Calling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.1</td>
<td>Defining Calling and Career – Theological Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2</td>
<td>Defining Calling and Career – Career Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2.1</td>
<td>Agency and Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2.2</td>
<td>Proactive Behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2.3</td>
<td>Vocational Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2.4</td>
<td>Disillusionment, 'The Dark Side'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.3</td>
<td>Summary of Theological and Career Perspectives on Clergy Calling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Rationale for the Research Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1</td>
<td>What reasons do clergy express for seeking a move?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>What sense do clergy make of the job moves available to them in the Church?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ3</td>
<td>What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move, and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ4</td>
<td>What, if any, is the significance of calling in how clergy prepare for a career move?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Method – Studying Clergy, the Research Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>A Qualitative Study – Paradigmatic Considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>A Qualitative Study – Rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Social Constructivist Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Research Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1</td>
<td>Gaining Access to the Research Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2</td>
<td>Pilot Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3</td>
<td>Main Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3.1</td>
<td>Selecting the Research Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3.2</td>
<td>Semi-Structured Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3.3</td>
<td>Ethical Considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3.4</td>
<td>Main Study Refinements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.4</td>
<td>Reflexive Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Analysing Quantitative Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.1</td>
<td>The Case for Thematic Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.2</td>
<td>Techniques of Thematic Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.3</td>
<td>A Phased Approach to the Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter 5  Findings and Initial Discussion**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part One</th>
<th>Analysis of the Data Across Three Themes</th>
<th>142</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1</td>
<td>A Tale of Two Systems</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1.1</td>
<td>Background</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Background</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1.2</td>
<td>Temporal Considerations</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Temporal Considerations</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1.3</td>
<td>Opaque Processes and Covert Practice</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Between a Rock and a Hard Place</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1.4</td>
<td>Gatekeepers</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Closing the Gate Behind Them</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1.5</td>
<td>Shock and Demands</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Shock and Demands</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1.6</td>
<td>Conclusion to Section 1</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2</td>
<td>Exercising Agency</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.1</td>
<td>Throwing your Hat into the Ring</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Throwing your Hat into the Ring</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.2</td>
<td>Time and Taking Control</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Time and Taking Control</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.3</td>
<td>Making Connections</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Ties</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Ties</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Making Connections</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.4</td>
<td>Information-Seeking Behaviours</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.5</td>
<td>Job Content Innovation</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.6</td>
<td>Fighting Talk</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary – Fighting Talk</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.7</td>
<td>Conclusion to Section 2</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 3</th>
<th>Calling or Career?</th>
<th>215</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3.1</td>
<td>When God is Calling an Individual to Move and/or Move to a Particular Role</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3.2</td>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3.3</td>
<td>God and Personal Fit</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3.4</td>
<td>God and System Tension</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3.5</td>
<td>Summary: Calling or Career – When God Can’t Find You a Job</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part Two</th>
<th>Findings and Initial Discussion</th>
<th>234</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1</td>
<td>RQ1 - What reasons do clergy express for seeking a move?</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ1 - Summary</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2</td>
<td>RQ2 - What sense do clergy make of the job moves available to them in the Church?</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2.1</td>
<td>Part 1</td>
<td>What is your understanding of how the appointment process works?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2.2</td>
<td>Part 2</td>
<td>What is your understanding of the types of job move available to you at this time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.3</td>
<td>RQ3 - What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move, and why?</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.4 RQ4 - What, if any, is the significance of calling in how clergy prepare for a career move? 249

Chapter 6 Discussion including Limitations, Implications for Practice and Suggestions for Further Research 253

Introduction 253

6.1 Section 1 254

6.2 Section 2 259

6.3 Section 3 260

6.3.1 Strategic Agency 263

6.3.2 Strategic Ambiguity 264

6.3.3 Cognitive Dissonance 268

6.4 In Brief 272

6.5 Study Limitations 275

6.6 Implications for Practice 277

6.7 Suggestions for Future Research 278

Bibliography 280

Appendices 321

Appendix 1: Example Letter to Primary Gatekeeper 322

Appendix 2: Example Email to Secondary Gatekeeper 323

Appendix 2a: Attachment to Example Email to Secondary Gatekeeper 324

Appendix 3: Invitation to Pilot Study Participants 325

Appendix 4: Informed Consent Form (Pilot and Main Study) 326

Appendix 5: Biographical Data Form 327

Appendix 6: Confidentiality Agreement between Researcher and Transcriber 328

Appendix 7: Example Letter of Invitation to Main Study Participants 329

Appendix 8: Interview Questions 330

Appendix 9: Extract from Mastercode List 332

Appendix 10: Extract from Coding Structure – Mastercodes, Sub-Codes, Lower Order Codes 333

Appendix 11: Example of Reviewing Themes 335
List of Tables

Table 1  Ages of participants……………………………………………………… p. 117
Table 2  Types of ministry ................................................................. p. 118
Table 3  Criteria for participation ...................................................... p. 119
Table 4  First- and second-career clerics .......................................... p. 120
Table 5  Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)........... p. 133
Table 6  Script analysis ................................................................. p. 135
Table 7  Generating initial codes ....................................................... p. 137

List of Figures

Figure i  Organization of the Church of England ......................... p. 12
Figure ii Governance of the Church of England ........................... p. 14
Figure iii Determinants of Job Mobility – Theoretical Framework
(Ng et al., 2007)........................................................................... p. 44
Figure iv Conceptual Model of Career Mobility (Forrier et al., 2009)... p. 48
Figure v  Thematic Map ................................................................. p. 139
Figure 1  Conceptual Model 1 ......................................................... p. 262
Figure 2  Conceptual Model 2 ......................................................... p. 263
INTRODUCTION

This introduction is structured as follows:

1.1 Rationale for this Research Study
1.2 Background and Context to Ministry in the Church of England
1.3 How Clergy are Organized and Managed
1.4 How do Clergy do Career in the Church of England?
1.5 Summary

1.1 Rationale for this Research Study

This research has arisen from wanting to know more about how clergy in the Church of England experience preparing to move jobs. This is interesting and important for several reasons. First, work transitions have been described as ‘the most significant yet least understood forms of social change’ (Nicholson & West, 1988, p. i), with implications for the career development of individuals and how organizations manage the process. This lack of understanding is borne out in the limited theoretical and empirical attention paid to preparation as part of the process of a work-role transition in different occupational, organizational and cultural settings. It has been noted that preparation is ‘difficult to study directly since the onset of many work-role transitions is unpredictable’ (Nicholson & West, 1989, p. 184). Another reason is that the determinants or antecedents of mobility are inexorably bound up in the duality of individual agency and structural forces which is inclined to be neglected by careers researchers (Ng, Sorensen, Eby & Feldman, 2007) as it is difficult to study (Arnold & Cohen, 2013). Furthermore, preparation tends to be overlooked in
favour of the encounter and adjustment stages of a career transition cycle (Nicholson & West, 1988) when mutual benefits exist for both researcher (a captive research population) and sponsor (an organization keen to know more about their employees’ behaviours with implications for the bottom line). Yet to overlook the potential of psychological readiness, anticipatory behaviour and preparatory tasks risks undermining an individual’s capacity to influence career outcomes during the later stages of transition (Nicholson & West, 1988, p. 98, p. 184; Kidd, 2006, p. 38). Consequently, from the perspective of career theory informed by vocational psychology, social psychology, organization studies and practical theology, this research will pause and take stock of how clergy in the Church of England anticipate and prepare for the transition from one role to another during the course of their ministry.

Second, I am interested in asking some outstanding questions of this particular workforce arising from my MSc research which examined what sense clergy made of their career paths (Blackie, 2005). That study adopted a discourse analytic methodology which highlighted how clergy discursively construct and negotiate their position in relation to themselves, the institution and each other as they pursue a particular career trajectory. During the research interviews certain issues arose which were not part of the final analysis. The issues encompass objective and subjective concerns such as a lack of internal career support from the institution when considering a job move. There were inherent tensions when attributing agency whereby clergy gave strong expression to their independence and autonomy in terms of influencing career outcomes but only up to the point which they, as subjects, are determined by the organization in which they work (Billig, Condor, Edwards, Gane, Middleton & Radley, 1988; Willig, 1999). There were consistent expressions of anger and distress by participants about the lack of coherent or consistent career development. Finally, the significance and absence of God and calling in the majority of narratives was notable. These issues are particularly interesting because they also manifest themselves on a regular basis in my work as an independent
career counsellor working with clergy clients. The majority of clients are seeking support with making a job move and the focus of the work between myself and the client is on anticipation and preparation in advance of making a job application. Nearly a decade since the MSc research project there is consistent evidence during my encounters with clergy clients that the issues and concerns outlined above contribute to a sense of confusion, ignorance and frustration when they contemplate moving jobs as part of their career trajectory.

Of particular interest is the fact that clergy are contemplating job moves in a dynamic institutional context which is likely to affect how they perceive and construct their career trajectory. The Church of England is currently experiencing many of the same issues as secular organizations when it comes to worker mobility (Webster & Beehr, 2013). These include an ageing workforce, more vacancies than candidates, problems recruiting individuals with appropriate talents, and competition for certain posts. Changes in demographics and shifting employment patterns are having a marked effect on clergy deployment and development at all levels of ministry (Church of England, 2011a). Church of England statistics show the demographic changes and challenges relating to full-time stipendiary clergy in the decade 2002-2012 (Church of England, 2013d). These include an ageing workforce where in 2012 the average age was reported as 52 years with 23% of clergy aged over 60 years. The decline in the stipendiary clergy headcount continues with 40% of mainly male clergy set to retire by 2022 (Church of England, 2013d; 2011a). The number of candidates recommended for ordination training is largely stable, ranging from 464 in 2011 to 595 in 2007 and 510 in 2012. There have been significant efforts made to recruit and train younger candidates for ministry with 22% of recruits aged under 30 in 2012, although this was a particularly good year compared to previous years where rates of 15% (2002 and 2007) were typical. Of those recommended for training in 2012, 60% of males were under 40 years of age and 72% of females were over 40 years of age. There has been a rise in the number of ordained second career clergy, i.e. those who have decided to
train for ministry following a previous career in a different industry, profession
or occupation. These recruits offer a direct challenge to age-related norms such
as progression into certain posts and the sequence of job transitions (Nesbitt,
1995). For example, in contrast to someone who embarked on a career in the
Church in their early- to mid-20s, individuals entering ministry aged 45 years
after a career in a particular profession or industry are likely to experience
limited attainment in terms of upward mobility and more posts during their
ministry up to retirement age (Nesbitt, 1995). Furthermore, the number of lay
(non-ordained) and ordained self-supporting or non-stipendiary licensed
ministers (65%) far exceeds stipendiary clergy. In addition the Church is finding
it increasingly difficult to find clergy willing to be flexible about ‘where they will
serve’ (Church of England, 2011a, p. 10). The problem is particularly acute in the
North of England where the number of vacancies outweighs applicants (Davies,
2014).

Those responsible for ministry are responding to these challenges by
endeavouring to make information relating to recruitment, selection,
appointment and development more accessible, transparent and consistent.
This includes greater responsibility being placed upon clergy for managing their
own career progression and the use of a ‘talent pipeline’ (Peyton & Gatrell,
2013) to manage senior appointments, both features of secular organizations
regarding how people are recruited and retained (Webster & Beehr, 2013). Yet
certain features of the new terrain do not sit so easily with the clerical
workforce. For example, clergy can expect to change jobs several times during
the course of their working life, often at the behest of others and ostensibly
their calling. Such moves usually take place within the same institution with a
flat organizational structure. They can include ‘lateral transfers, changes in
discipline or career focus, and promotions and relocations to different
geographic areas’ (Ostroff & Clark, 2001, p. 425). The opportunities for
hierarchical progression in the Church are limited, with lateral moves within and
across diocesan boundaries the more common type of transition. Although the
The number of clergy leaving ministry has increased in recent years, this is primarily due to retirement, often on the grounds of ill-health (Church of England, 2009), rather than an individual seeking to transfer their skills and knowledge into a new work environment other than the Church. An exception to this is clergy who work in secular communities such as hospital, school or prison chaplaincy where they are employed by the organization in which they serve, but for the majority of those in ministry, intra-organizational moves are the primary source of career transition. For example, Barley (2009) reports that 43% of clergy serve in the same diocese for their entire ministry. Consequently, inter-organizational moves in pursuit of advancement (Webster & Beehr, 2013) are unlikely. Furthermore, even if a cleric makes an internal move it is unlikely to be for significantly higher financial rewards, unlike workers in many other organizations where internal mobility frequently brings increased pay and prestige (Webster & Beehr, 2013).

For those employed in such constrained circumstances across different types of career, the possibilities for movement are shown to be bound up in various approaches to balancing individual aspiration and progression with objective career opportunities (Guest & Sturges, 2007, pp. 316-319). The response of those leading the Church to these issues of recruitment, deployment and retention has been a flurry of reports, initiatives and literature which aim to support the recruitment, deployment and development of clergy (Church of England, 2007a, 2007b, 2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2013a, 2013b; Ling, 2013). These documents are well researched and wide ranging in their scope and scale, yet criticism exists within and outside the Church from those who regard such developments as ignoring distinctive features of the clergy role. This criticism forms part of a wider debate surrounding what many regard as the creeping ‘managerialisation’ of Church practices and processes at the expense of faith and tradition (Roberts, 2002, p. 162). This raises the issue of whether the Church should be viewed as an organization or an institution. The structural distinction is important in this study of clergy and their career trajectory because
of its effect on how clergy are led and managed, compared to secular organizations. A more comprehensive explanation of this nuanced dimension to how power and authority is exerted in the Church of England can be found on p. 16. Some regard the Church of England as an organization aligned with voluntary and non-profit organizations, where complex issues such as identity, service and spirituality (Harris, 1998) compete with some of the more conventional concerns of business organizations such as leadership, administration and management. Yet an organization carries with it notions of ‘management’, suggesting rationality, efficiency, conformity and a focus on goals and outcomes (Torry, 2005), activities which many within the Church argue amount to ‘an uncritical incorporation of managerialism within the Church of England’ (Roberts, 2002, p. 64), where an organization is ‘expendable’ once its utilitarian purposes have been fulfilled (Percy, 2012, p. 161; Selznick, 1957). Yet the Church possesses distinctive features which differentiate it from an organization. These features include historic roots embedded in society across generations (Selznick, 1957; Zucker, 1977; Percy, 2006); resilient social structures (Scott, 2001); ambiguity in relation to leadership, power and authority (Torry, 2005; Percy, 2012); simultaneously resisting and yet undergoing change (Jepperson, 1991; Scott, 2001) and operating at multiple levels, e.g. internationally and locally (Scott, 2001). Acknowledgement of this structural distinction between the Church as organization or institution allows for profound cultural assumptions in relation to clergy career such as education, formation, vocation (Percy, 2006) and ambiguous authority structures dating back to Anglo-Saxon England (Russell, 1980) to be acknowledged and explored in the course of this research.

Finally, I set out to investigate clergy as regular members of the workforce facing some of the same issues and concerns as those in other occupations. McCullough (an economist) and Fichter (a Jesuit priest), writing just over 100 years apart, suggested this was possible. They regarded clergy as ‘members of an establishment of human institution’ (McCullough, 1854, p. xi), ‘engaged in a
full-time profession or occupation which can be submitted to sociological comparison and analysis’ (Fichter, 1961, p. 7). Yet these are people who are recruited on the basis that they can ‘discern God’s activity in their life’ (Church of England, 2011c, p. 13) and are likely to do so for the remainder of their ministry and I can find no other occupations that have this entry requirement. So whilst we can only hypothesize at this stage, it is likely that calling will be a factor in the research design and final analysis of this study given that this is a population ostensibly called to serve God. Research into calling and career is a growth area across a range of disciplines, i.e. vocational psychology, organizational behaviour, management and sociology. Recent calls for greater understanding of how calling might link to work-related behaviours amongst more diverse research populations (Duffy & Dik, 2013) suggest that an investigation into how clergy negotiate having a calling with anticipating a career transition is timely.

1.2 Background and Context to Ministry in the Church of England

This section introduces the wider context of the Church of England in relation to the clergy role from different perspectives. It consists of: first, a brief overview of the issues inclined to dominate public perceptions of Church and clergy; second, the history and context of ministry in the Church including the evolution of the occupational role of a cleric; third, the organization and governance of the Church; finally, how clergy are organized and managed. These are important background to a contemporary study of clergy career. Notwithstanding their significance for the design, analysis and outcomes of any enquiry, these different perspectives allow for any cultural assumptions made about the Church by society to be addressed. Furthermore, they help ensure that certain norms, values and behaviours in this particular context are not taken for granted (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 29).
1.2.1 Church – Public – Media

In this century (and it was ever thus), the Church continues to wrestle with matters of praxis and conscience which divide opinion and create schism within and external to the institution. Media interest in the latest scandal, misdemeanour or misunderstanding, e.g. ‘Wonga: Church of England advised by ethics review to keep its stake’ (Quinn, 2014) is always rife. More enduring concerns include the recent resolution to allow women to become bishops following years of debate and strife; opposition to the legalization of same-sex marriage; a crisis of confidence in extreme positioning between traditionalists and radicals on matters of theological doctrine; the decline in church attendance and traditional Church functions such as baptisms, weddings and funerals; mishandling of Church finances; an ageing workforce; and concern at the secularization of structural processes and practices. These are just a few of the more public ecclesiastical wrangles and dilemmas reported in the media. Furthermore, the evolution of the status and occupational role of clergy in the Church of England has long occupied the minds of academic theologians and those parish clergy working within a society that is benignly indifferent towards religion and the Church (Russell, 1980; Fox, 2004; Osborne, 2004; Percy, 2006). Beyond the headlines, these tensions may well have implications for how clergy view a potential move within the Church.

1.2.2 History and Context of Ministry

Prior to the Reformation, the status and role of clergy was legitimized by virtue of the fact that religion and religious institutions exercised supreme power, charisma and authority in society where clergy occupied a separate, almost ‘pre-professional’ position. During the next 300 years, this position was re-negotiated in response to political, economic, cultural and social developments which saw clerical power and influence decline. Towler and Coxon (1979) draw on the notion of ‘secularisation’ at three periods in history to explain how Church and clergy have responded to these developments. Secularization is
defined as the Church relinquishing control ‘of some aspect or aspects of the non-religious affairs of a society’ (Towler & Coxon, 1979, p. 191), rather than an anti-religious narrative. The first period of secularization was during the English Reformation in the early 16th century, when clergy were stripped of their significant powers in relation to the majority of national institutions such as the judiciary, parliament and finance, leaving them to concentrate on religion and education.

The following 200 years saw a period of decline not only in religious practice but also in ecclesiastical discipline as parish clergy struggled with low social status, poor education and financial hardship. By the late 18th century many clergy were beginning to enjoy a steady improvement in their fortunes due in part to the Enclosures Acts which increased the wealth of benefices and attracted educated clerical candidates from the minor gentry. The gap between clergy and gentry was closing, and by the end of the 18th century a clergyman was likely to enjoy reflected status and position, particularly in rural society, through close association with his landed neighbours.

The second period of secularization occurred in the mid to late 19th century. Clergy were ill-prepared for the maelstrom of social, cultural and theological developments arising from the industrial revolution and the extent to which these developments would impact upon their role and identity. For example, clergy were now viewed as too closely entrenched within the landed gentry. Many of the additional roles they had performed as part of their ministry – teacher, doctor, civil servant, law enforcer – were now being undertaken by an emerging professional class, clergy membership of which was unclear. Paradoxically, clergy found that their sphere of influence was limited to religious calling! Furthermore, certain occupations had established themselves which were defined as ‘professions’ because they conformed to a particular model, i.e. practitioners who possessed specialist skills, undertook prolonged training and were part of a reward structure and career pattern. These occupations had self-
regulating mechanisms with regard to entry and expulsion, and a fiduciary relationship between practitioner and client was established and professional ethics rooted in service were encouraged (Russell, 1980). It can seem that clergy were reduced to mere bystanders as these new bodies encroached on their terrain and the old certainties of knowing ‘what he was doing; why and for whom’ (Percy, 2006, p. 7) disappeared. As a consequence of this diffusion or contraction of their role, clergy began to construct a new and separate professional identity. During the Victorian era churches and clergy responded to the environmental hiatus created by the industrial revolution by ‘specialization’ (Percy, 2006, p. 57). For clergy this meant creating a professional identity across distinct areas of ecclesiology and doctrine (Percy, 2006, p. 58). They focussed on the spiritual functions of leading public worship and developing liturgy. They adopted a distinctive form of dress, organized themselves into self-serving committees and associations and published specialist journals and periodicals. Standards of conduct and performance were improved and changes to the governance of the Church were implemented at local and national level. The establishment of specialist theological colleges to train and initiate ordinands reflected the practice of other mainstream professions (Russell, 1980).

By the early part of the 20th century the Church of England’s status as the Established Church had diminished to one denomination amongst many. Post Second World War brought the third period of secularization (Towler & Coxon, 1979), where rose-tinted views of clerical life are seen as anachronistic and where the scope, content and pace of ministry has changed beyond all recognition. This is due to the marginalization of the Church in an increasingly pluralist society and where Anglican clergy find themselves working to establish an identity and role defined more by contradictions than the relative certainties of the past: Professional or employee? Specialist or generalist? High church or charismatic evangelical? Traditionalist or entrepreneur? Ecumenist or orthodox? The implications of such ambiguity for both organization and individual has taken the revisionist debate surrounding what a clergyman is
actually *for*, beyond theological and ecclesiological narratives into the fields of sociology, anthropology and psychology (Towler & Coxon, 1979; Hastings, 1987; Russell, 1980; Warren, 2002; Percy, 2006; Padel, 2009).

There is a view that clergy remain separate from the mainstream of professional society, ‘a man apart’ (Russell, 1980, p. 235). Some of the reasons for this marginalization are clear, i.e. the increasingly ambivalent attitude of society towards religion and the Church of England, the devolution of ordinal tasks to laity, diverse ministries, fewer recruits, an ageing workforce, fewer theological colleges and a legacy of low salaries. All of these, it is argued, have resulted in clergy being ‘*partially professionalized*’ (Torry, 2005; Percy, 2006, p. 112). Less obvious is the contribution of clergy themselves who are inclined to perceive themselves as specialists possessing specific skills and expertise whereby their autonomy and agency are guaranteed (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013). There is also the fact of their call to ministry and subsequent ordination which some argue makes clergy ‘*special*’ (Lee & Horseman, 2002, p. 3). Furthermore, an acknowledged resistance to being regulated with regard to such matters as patronage, freehold and job performance for fear that their distinctive independence will be undermined (Russell, 1980; Percy, 2006) only perpetuates the sense of clergy as set apart from other workers. The extent to which this position is tenable in today’s society other than to clergy themselves is likely to be a consideration during the course of this research.

### 1.2.3 Organization and Governance of the Church of England

The Church of England is the English State church, part of the Anglican Communion comprising churches from more than 160 countries worldwide. It consists of two provinces, Canterbury and York, with origins dating back to the 6th century. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primate of All England and senior bishop, along with the Archbishop of York, has formal jurisdiction over 43 dioceses in England and one in Europe. Each diocese is led by a diocesan bishop, supported by one or more suffragan, or assistant bishops. The two archbishops
and 24 bishops have a constitutional right to representation in Parliament as Lords Spiritual in the House of Lords. All Episcopal appointments have to be approved by the Sovereign on the recommendation of the Prime Minister (Village & Francis, 2009; Church of England, 2007b).

Each diocese within the Church of England is divided into parishes. A parish may be a subdivision of a county or town with its own church and clergy serving the local community. However, unlike 160 years ago when a community’s members could expect the vicar to take his place amongst them indefinitely and ideally focus his energies solely on their moral and spiritual well-being, these days a parish rarely operates in isolation. It is often one of a number of adjoining parishes which make up a rural or area deanery, overseen by a rural or area dean. The deanery in its turn will be one of a group of archdeaconries, usually only two or three within a diocese, which are overseen by an archdeacon (Osborne, 2004).

**Figure i: Organization of the Church of England**

Governance of the Church of England is dominated by two bodies, the Archbishops’ Council and General Synod. The Archbishops’ Council is a
centralized executive body of elected and appointed clergy and laity, charged with providing strategic direction, leadership and management of policy and resources nationally across the Church. General Synod is a self-governing, legislative body with powers to pass legislation by measures and canon, to deliberate upon matters of religious or public interest, to approve liturgy and doctrine, and regulate relations with other churches. It has 467 members at any one time and a tricameral arrangement of the House of Bishops, and elected Houses of Clergy and Laity.

Diocesan bishops are responsible for a structure of boards and councils relating to different aspects of the Church’s work, e.g. ministry, mission, finance, education and social responsibility. The archdeacon has authority in relation to clergy induction and disciplinary supervision, and responsibility for the administration of Church property and the appointment of churchwardens. The main forum for conducting diocesan business is Diocesan Synod which, like General Synod, consists of three houses including a diocesan and suffragan or assistant bishops where appropriate and clergy and laity, the latter two groups elected by members of the Deanery Synod. Deanery Synod, comprising archdeacons and rural/area deans responsible for the support of parochial clergy, is a focus for discussion and action on issues of concern within the local area and elects clergy and laity from the parishes to serve on its assembly. The work of a parish is governed by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) chaired by the vicar, associated parish clergy and elected lay representatives.

Financial accounting and accountability falls within the remit of distinct units. These are: the Church Commissioners, technically a secular Government department which manages the Church’s financial and other endowments; the Church of England Pensions Board; the Archbishops’ Council and individual dioceses and parishes.
How the Church of England as an institution is organized and governed reveals complex structural relationships between state, bishops, clergy and laity, rooted in a shared belief in Christianity and arrangements dating back to Anglo Saxon England. It is argued that no other organization is able to claim such a distinctive relationship between individual and institution with implications for how clergy are organized and managed within these structures (Village & Francis, 2009).

1.3 How Clergy are Organized and Managed

In 2012 there were over 20,000 ordained and lay ministers in the Church of England (Church of England, 2013d). The focus of this study is on the 7,798 full-
time stipendiary clergy in the Church of England and 1,018 chaplains of whom many are hospital/healthcare (35%) and school (16%) chaplains. The majority of stipendiary clergy, 95.4% (7,440), are parish priests, team rectors, team vicars and rural or area deans and diocesan clergy with 4.6% (358) holding senior posts, i.e. archdeacons, residentiary canons, cathedral deans, assistant and suffragan bishops and diocesan bishops. A significant feature of clergy working arrangements is that they are office holders rather than employees, so not subject to the terms and conditions of an employment contract. Yet whilst recent employment legislation (see p. 18) has sought to put clergy on a more equal footing with secular workers in terms of rights and responsibilities in employment, they remain exempt from much of the Equality Act 2010 designed to protect people from discrimination at work. Application of the Act to office holders is ‘not straightforward’ (Church of England, 2013a, Annex B, emphasis mine), with a number of caveats and restrictions including the fact that appointments may be made within the Church that discriminate against individuals on the grounds of gender, sexuality and marital history.

The nature of ministry is such that clergy are engaged in a range of different jobs which carry different responsibilities and terms of service. An individual accepted for ordination as a priest is first ordained as a deacon. After a period of one year, he/she is ordained priest. Those ordained priest or deacon are in receipt of a stipend or salary. A curate is a newly-ordained individual working under the supervision of an experienced vicar. Ordained local ministers are trained, ordained and serve within their local parish. Non-stipendiary ministers are ordained ministers who receive no direct salary for their ministerial work but are licensed to officiate as a priest. Readers and licensed lay ministers are volunteers who are trained in theological understanding, and licensed to undertake a restricted number of duties alongside ordained clergy.

The majority of clergy work in rural and urban parish ministry, including cathedrals and diocesan offices. Some are engaged in team or group ministry
sharing responsibility for a number of parishes. Many are employed in secular contexts as specialist chaplains within the armed forces, prisons, hospitals, industry, education and minority groups. Others are engaged in professional, managerial and administrative roles within the National Institutions of the Church of England including the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners, the Church of England Pensions Board and Lambeth Palace (Church of England, 2010a). The arrangements for how clergy are organized within these different contexts varies across different dioceses and parishes. This is because ministry at a local level is framed by historical, legislative, organizational and professional measures, overseen in most instances by the local diocesan bishop whose formal powers are inclined to focus on mission, worship and stewardship internal and external to the Church rather than in exercising direct authority over how clergy go about their working lives. The implications of the nature of episcopal authority in relation to how clergy are managed is now discussed.

1.3.1 Polity

The issue of how clergy are managed is rooted in the relationship between power and authority as vested in the diocesan bishop and a culture of independence amongst clergy (Percy, 2006; Peyton & Gatrell, 2013) when it comes to being told what to do. Whilst an ordained minister is subject to the authority of the local bishop, the bishop’s power in relation to the management of clergy is historically constrained, in part to protect against abuses of power but also to ensure that the relational aspects of a bishop’s role, such as those of servanthood and mission, remain the episcopal focus. The preference here is for ordering and influencing the Church and its people, rather than direct management control (Cundy & Welby, 2000; Evans & Percy, 2000; Torry, 2005; Percy, 2006). This authoritative framework extends beyond the relationship between bishop and cleric to relationships with a wide range of other parties, e.g. congregations, civic leaders and the local community where clergy are required to exercise influence rather than power (Torry, 2005). At the same
time (as suggested previously, p. 7), clergy have always had a highly developed sense of their own autonomy and independence whereby they will resist being ‘rationalized or organized into a properly hierarchical or accountable body, in which their right to freedom and dissent is jeopardized’ (Percy, 2006, p. 73). The result is an ambiguous relationship between minister and bishop, encompassing ecclesiological and theological traditions and a clerical population operating from an essentially contested power base (Torry, 2005). How this works in practice is examined below.

1.3.2 In Practice – Background

As suggested earlier in this introduction, how clergy are managed is part of a wider debate that has rumbled on for at least 50 years between those willing to embrace management methods within a theological context (Gill & Burke, 1996; Pattison, 2000), and those who experience these developments as a process of ‘managerialism’ intent on undermining clergy identity (Roberts, 2002; Roberts, 2013). This is a debate that has implications for the process of moving jobs, for during this time there have been several initiatives which have attempted to revise how clergy live and work in response to the changing nature of ministry in an increasingly secular society. These include The Paul Report, 1964 (The Deployment and Payment of the Clergy); The Morley Report, 1967 (Partners in Ministry) which further examined clergy terms of employment in relation to the freehold; The Tiller Report, 1983 (A Strategy for the Church’s Ministry); The Hind Report, 2003 (Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church: The Structure and Funding for Ordination Training); Talent and Calling, 2007 (A review of the law and practice regarding appointments to the offices of suffragan bishop, dean, archdeacon and residentiary canon). In such cases the consultation and debate has been lengthy, recommendations have been resisted and compromises reached as clergy seek to guard their distinctive security and autonomy. Despite this protectionist approach to how clergy go about their work with no formal line management and the seeking of advice, guidance, support or direction largely at the discretion of the individual, there is evidence
of clergy being managed in two particular domains which are explored below. The first is current and involves the introduction of legislation to rectify certain inequalities in how clergy are employed. The second is historic, rooted in over a century of custom and practice and concerns the accountability clergy have to their work community.

1.3.3 In Practice – Professional Development and Well-Being

In January 2011 the rights and responsibilities of the majority of ordained stipendiary clergy were regulated under section 23 of the Employment Relations Act 1999, with implications for both the organization and individual in terms of how clergy are managed. Terms of service known as Common Tenure, derived from the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009, is a legislative framework which would have been imposed upon the Church of England if they had not taken action to improve the security of employment and professional development and well-being of clergy in the 21st century. After a decade of extensive consultation the Church arrived at a set of measures that aims to reflect current employment best practice, e.g. the right to appeal to an employment tribunal and greater clarity relating to remuneration and holiday entitlement. Furthermore, the terms of service under Common Tenure include addressing inequalities in how clergy are housed. Until recently, some clergy held the freehold to a benefice including the rectory or vicarage for life in contrast to ‘unbeneficed’ clergy who did not hold the freehold and could be removed from the property without notice (Church of England, Diocese of St Albans, 2010). Under Common Tenure, unbeneficed clergy transferred to the new arrangements and all new recruits with a few exceptions are now appointed under Common Tenure. Existing clergy were given the opportunity to ‘opt out’ of the freehold and enter into a Common Tenure agreement. Those who did not opt out remain in post under their existing terms. Furthermore the general responsibilities of clergy have been clarified and an obligation placed on the diocesan episcopacy and clergy to participate in a formal Ministerial Development Review (MDR) scheme. Whilst there has been an established
Ministerial Review scheme in place for many years, clergy participation (as reviewer or reviewee) has never been a formal requirement of their ministry and no mechanisms exist to link a review discussion to future career development plans (Osborne, 2004). The new MDR scheme has a broader remit, focussing on personal and professional growth and development, a requirement for input from senior diocesan clergy and external practitioners (unpaid volunteers), specific timescales and scope to link outcomes to future career development needs (Church of England, 2010, 2014a, 2014b). The extent to which this scheme and other changes to clergy terms and conditions of employment will influence the management of clergy working lives has yet to be established. At present it would appear that as with the national strategy for learning and development, Continuing Ministerial Development, each diocese will be entitled to organize its own arrangements to reflect local practices and preferences (www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/ministry/cmd). Common Tenure has now been implemented nationally and there is a clear sense of anticipation amongst Church leaders and policy makers that these reforms, of which MDR is a significant part, will ‘have the potential to deliver big cultural change’ in relation to the performance of clergy (Church of England, Diocese of St Albans, 2010; Church of England 2011a).

1.3.4 In Practice – Accountability

Clergy enjoy considerable autonomy in what they do and how they do it within a structure that exercises a benign authority over their activities. However, closer scrutiny of how this operates in practice indicates that whilst contact with the bishop will be limited, clergy are in fact accountable to the wider network of relationships within their particular work context, a network which some would argue includes God (Torry, 2005). This is a situation that has evolved over the past 200 years in conjunction with changes in clerical identity and role (Russell, 1980; Osborne, 2004; Percy, 2006). In the case of a parish minister their network is likely to include, amongst others, the archdeacon, the PCC, churchwardens, a congregation, civic leaders, civic institutions and fellow
ministers. For those working in cathedrals and diocesan offices it is likely to be members of the Cathedral Chapter, civic authorities and other groups of lay and church managers. All these individuals bring different ideas, opinions and perspectives to how the parish/cathedral/diocese should be run by the ministerial team and some would argue that it is they who are managing the clergy, rather than the other way around. Clergy working in secular communities, such as hospital or prison chaplaincy, face a particular dilemma because they are employed by the organization in which they serve. This gives rise to a dual accountability (to the organization and to the Church), which puts clergy under pressure to conform to organizational practices and processes which do not necessarily resonate either with their particular definition of ministry or with religious tradition (Hicks, 2008, p. 425; Trotter, 2010).

The Church of England is an enigmatic institution inclined to confound all efforts, internally and externally, to clarify the reality of ministry (Percy, 2006). No other institution can claim such provenance or recruit employees on the basis of discerning a transcendental call to serve God whilst being exempt from some laws of the land. Consequently, its organization, governance and the management of its primary resource, clergy, are found in authority and compliance structures that are complex and ambiguous. The process of managing clergy internally has been likened to herding cats, whilst it has been argued that ‘society wants a messiah, not a manager’ in the bishops who lead Church communities (Percy, 2006). Efforts to introduce change and development within the institution involve argument and debate that frequently results in well-researched, wide-ranging, astute and eloquent policies. Yet how those policies translate into practice appears bound up in a combination of internal resistance and external expectations indicating that the status quo in relation to how clergy are organized and managed is likely to remain largely unchanged for the foreseeable future.
1.4 How do Clergy do Career in the Church of England?

This section outlines a structural framework defined by the Church in relation to the recruitment, selection, appointment and development of individuals engaged in full-time stipendiary ministry. At the same time it examines some of the contextual issues that exist for the organization and the individual arising from the establishment of these processes and policies.

1.4.1 Becoming a Priest

The decision to become a full-time stipendiary priest in the Church of England involves an individual in a process of discernment and training which can take several years before they are ordained. Applicants for ordained ministry are accepted from a diverse range of backgrounds and traditions with a few caveats. These include age restrictions where the minimum age to enter ordination training is 18 and the maximum age to enter full-time ordination training is usually 53. The earliest an individual can be ordained priest is 23 years. The Church also states that, ‘In principle, ordained ministry is a graduate profession,’ suggesting an expected level of academic ability to be demonstrated prior to ordination. Anyone thinking seriously about ordination will be required to read, study, discuss and reflect with a wide range of people both internal and external to the Church before being recommended to a Bishops’ Advisory Panel by the diocesan director of ordinands (DDO) and sponsored by the diocesan bishop. If successful, the individual will then be accepted for theological training, the nature, duration and location of which will be discussed and agreed with the DDO. The training lasts for two or three years dependent upon age and previous academic education and experience. Theological training has traditionally been the preserve of theological colleges in England and Wales offering full-time, residential courses. Whilst the majority of individuals continue to be trained in such establishments there also exists a network of flexible learning options including part-time, non-residential courses, ‘mixed-mode’ and diocesan training
schemes that are offered across the country by individual dioceses usually in conjunction with Regional Training Partnerships (Church of England, 2013c).

This early theological training and socialization (Towler & Coxon, 1979; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Berry, 2004) is acknowledged to have a significant influence on which particular theology, e.g. anglo-catholic, ecumenical, liberal evangelical, an individual is likely to identify with for the duration of their ministry, with implications for their future career trajectory (Ranson, Bryman & Hinings, 1977, p. 44). Research by Towler and Coxon (1979) demonstrated that educational background determines ‘not just the course of ordination training but the whole career which awaits a man’ (p. 170). This observation is based on findings during the 1960s and early 1970s that despite only 3.5% of the population attending public schools, 87% of the bishops in the House of Lords received a public school education. Furthermore, although 51.2% of those ordained came from grammar and other secondary schools, just 13% of ordained clergy reaching the episcopate had attended a grammar school. It has also been noted that ‘archdeacons are products of parish and organisational work; bishops are products of educational work in public schools, theological colleges and universities’ (Ranson et al., 1977, p. 34). These early studies suggest that a clergyman’s career trajectory is pre-determined from the outset, and that ministry in particular contexts is the only way to secure certain posts later in their career. However, the research was conducted at a time when the status and role of ministry was changing significantly and signs that clergy were being recruited from a wider cross-section of the population were in evidence (Towler & Coxon, 1979). To what extent this trend has continued is not within the remit of this research although it has been indicated that inclusion in a ‘talent pipeline’ is a possibility for those in certain roles, e.g. area/rural dean (Church of England, 2007b, p. 30; Peyton & Gatrell, 2013). Anecdotal evidence suggests that many bishops have retired during the past decade, many of whom held either a Masters or PhD qualification. Of the bishops who have replaced
them only one has a similar qualification, and yet the Church is seeing more graduates entering its ranks than at any time in its history.

1.4.2 Next Steps

Dependent upon an individual's background and progress, they will be ordained after two or three years first as a deacon and usually after a further year ordained priest. The distinction between the two roles is to be found in certain duties that only a priest can undertake such as solemnizing a marriage or celebrating the eucharist. Following ordination as a deacon (and later priest), an individual begins work as a trainee minister or curate for between three and four years dependent upon the diocese whilst being supervised by the incumbent or experienced vicar of the parish to which they have been appointed. The process for securing a title post (curacy) at the end of the formal training period involves the individual, the DDO from the sponsoring diocese and theological college staff, with individuals expected to keep an open mind as to where, or even if, they secure a title post. The lack of choice and of a guaranteed placement is made clear to potential applicants, for example:

   Each year there are a small number of stipendiary candidates who complete their initial training successfully yet for a variety of reasons do not find a title post. Some of them take a break or pursue further studies and are among the first to find title posts the following year; some choose to take a non-stipendiary title post in order to continue directly towards ordination, others decide that ordained ministry is not for them. (https://churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/ministry/deployment/placement-of-deacons/faq%27s.aspx)

The potential for uncertainty at this early stage in an individual’s ministry raises the issue of how the experience of seeking a title post affects their view of applying for future roles (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994; Kidd, 2006).
As curate the individual continues with their training ‘on the job’ as part of a process of *initial ministerial education* (IME) for up to four years. At the end of a curacy the individual is free to apply for a new post (http://www.callwaiting.org.uk/jobs.aspx) in parish ministry, diocesan roles or chaplaincy. At this stage, the process of moving is likely to involve discussion with the incumbent, the diocesan bishop and the individual’s wider personal and professional network as to the type of move that would be most appropriate.

### 1.4.3 Past the First Post – Uncharted Waters

Having secured a first post, the timescale for remaining in a particular role is not made explicit by the Church. Anecdotal evidence suggests that an individual will typically remain in a first post for between four and seven years before moving. Regularized career progression thereafter becomes increasingly opaque as the clear transition points (Hall & Schneider, 1973), experienced during early training, ordination and curacy, dissipate. It would seem the route a clergyman’s career might take once they have secured a first post is subject to individual understandings and expectations rooted in custom and practice rather than any clear plan or trajectory. In fact, the lack of a formal career structure is readily acknowledged by academic theologians: ‘Adherence to the ancient patronage system has prevented the emergence of a formal career structure.’ (Russell, 1984, p. 272; Kuhrt, 2001a) However, it is not entirely accurate to suggest that the Church has no career structure, because it does; it just happens to be a very flat one with simple hierarchical arrangements (Baruch & Hall, 2004), resulting in limited job and development opportunities. Yet it can seem that the ‘flat structure’ argument has become embedded in Church narratives such that there may be instances where it is used by Church leaders and clergy alike to avoid actively managing career development issues such as career planning. For example, a typical parish priest can expect to move jobs several times up to retirement at the age of 70. The timing of such moves is not made explicit by the Church and yet clergy know that a future move is a possible, even inevitable, ‘part of the deal’, so to speak. Louis (1982) believes such a forward-looking
approach to work, where one job is another ‘stepping stone to the next’ may be detrimental to an individual’s commitment to the job and organization. Whilst there is no evidence for such a lack of commitment amongst the ranks of clergy, a preoccupation with the future may have wider implications for how individual clergy negotiate their personal career trajectory.

1.4.4 Navigating the Terrain

Having decided to move, the formal processes for finding and applying for a new role can be approached in a variety of different ways dependent upon the type of post and the patronage arrangements that accompany it. On the one hand, anyone applying for a parish, team rector, team vicar, rural or area dean or minor cathedral role may liaise with colleagues, peers and superiors whilst applying direct for a particular post. They may also decide to draw on a specific resource in the form of the Clergy Appointments Adviser (CAA). The primary aim of the CAA is to assist clergy throughout the Church of England in finding new jobs and advise those involved in making new appointments. Clergy can request a personal interview with the CAA as part of their decision-making. The CAA also advertises vacancies online and maintains a list of clergy seeking a new post which is circulated regularly to dioceses nationwide and overseas. Information and basic advice relating to moving jobs are clearly laid out on the CAA’s web pages. Here clergy are encouraged to actively search ‘on Diocesan websites, adverts, Church Press, personal contacts, etc.’ (http://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/clergy-appointments-adviser/procedures-for-clergy/working-in-the-uk.aspx). The Church Times, The Church of England Newspaper, diocesan newspapers and, dependent upon the role, the mainstream media, all remain an important source of job information for clergy preparing for a career transition. On the other hand, whilst all parishes have a patron who is responsible for presenting potential candidates to the bishop and the PCC of a parish before an appointment is made, a different arrangement exists for those individuals applying to a parish where the patronage arrangements fall under the auspices of the Crown, the Lord
Chancellor and other independent patrons. In these cases applications are submitted to the Prime Minister’s Appointments Secretary and the Church Appointments Secretary respectively for consultation with the diocesan bishop and parish representatives.

Alternatively, the process for those individuals seeking promotion or ‘preferment’ to a senior role, i.e. archdeacon, residentiary canon, cathedral dean and suffragan bishop, is the responsibility of the Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments (ASA). The ASA also acts as secretary to the Crown Nominations Commission which oversees the appointment of diocesan bishops following representation to the Prime Minister and finally the Queen. Process and practice in relation to senior appointments have been reviewed in recent years (Church of England 2001, 2007b) and outcomes relating to such issues as the need for greater consistency and transparency of the process are reflected in guidelines published on the Church of England’s website, e.g.: ‘The Church adopts an integrated and consistent method for making of appointments to senior ecclesiastical office and that all appointments are transparent and encourage the confidence of the Church in the procedures.’ (http://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/asa/senappt.aspx)

There is an implicit sense of hierarchy and even privilege contained within these complex reporting lines and procedures in relation to appointments and career development. The extent to which this gives rise to anticipation or expectation in clergy ministering at the grassroots or those with aspirations to a more senior role is not known, but it resonates with aspects of Louis’s (1982) description of the limitation of ‘linear assumptions’ in relation to career transition, i.e. for a move to be good it can only be ‘up’ (p. 70).

1.5 Summary

This introduction has sought to establish why research into clergy experience of preparing to move jobs in the Church of England is important and interesting.
The study aims to enhance our understanding of the anticipation and preparation stage of a career move, a neglected dimension of the literature and empirical research relating to career transition and mobility. This is not simply due to difficulties with predicting those circumstances which prompt a move (Nicholson & West, 1988). It is also because the antecedents to moving on can only be fully understood when viewed as a dynamic between individual cognition, behaviour and affect and the structural forces which enhance or constrain such movement (Ng et al., 2007; Arnold & Cohen, 2008; Forrier, Sels & Stynen, 2009; Dany, Louvel & Valette, 2011; Arnold & Cohen, 2013). Scant attention has been paid theoretically or empirically to how clergy in the Church of England anticipate and prepare for regular moves. The dynamic context in which mobility is currently being managed by those leading the Church highlights a number of tensions and uncertainties for both Church and cleric. Research into the antecedents of how clergy prepare to move jobs is therefore timely. Discussion of the history and structure of the Church of England has established its significance as an institution rather than an organization in terms of how it is governed, organized and led. How the mobility of clergy is managed within that structure is rooted in centuries of tradition whereby individual and institution have enjoyed an ambiguous relationship when it comes to anticipating a move. Yet a number of 21st century recruitment and retention challenges have been identified which the Church is addressing through changes to process and practice. On paper and online these changes are cogent and clear. However, formal and informal reports suggest that in practice, clergy are finding such developments unhelpful and disturbing. Second, the evolution of the clergy role is such that clergy find themselves with a contested professional identity in today’s increasingly secularized society (Russell, 1980; Percy, 2006). Yet distinctive features of the clergy role, such as having a religious calling combined with a strong desire for autonomy, prevail. To what extent clergy privilege a call to serve God and personal autonomy when anticipating and preparing for a move, given structural changes which reflect secular models of managing mobility, is likely to be a significant feature of this research.
Consequently, when thinking about whether, when, where or how to move jobs, it may be dissonance rather than decisiveness that is brought into play by this particular workforce.

This thesis is organized into six chapters. Following the Introduction a comprehensive Literature Review (Chapter 2) explores literature, theory and empirical research from career transition and mobility and theological perspectives which address how individuals prepare to move jobs. Chapter 3 contains the rationale for four Research Questions. The decision to adopt a social constructivist method for this research and how it was applied to a pilot study and the main study are presented in Chapter 4, Method. The Findings and Initial Discussion (Chapter 5) provide detailed analysis of data from 31 interviews culminating in a summary of what the data indicate in response to the research questions. Finally, Chapter 6, Discussion, introduces a variety of issues which advance our understanding of individual experience of preparing to move jobs. This chapter also reflects on the limitations of the research, implications for practice and suggestions for future research enquiry.
LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to examine literature, theories and empirical evidence relevant to how clergy might experience preparing to move jobs. Consequently the review is structured as follows:

2.1 Defining Career
2.2 Career Theory as a Framework for Investigating Preparing to Move Jobs
2.3 Career Theory in Relation to Transition, Turnover and Embeddedness
   2.3.1 Theories of Transition
   2.3.2 Theories of Turnover
   2.3.3 Theories of Embeddedness
   2.3.4 Summary of Theories of Transition, Turnover and Embeddedness
2.4 Career Theory in Relation to Job or Career Mobility
   2.4.1 Models of the Determinants of Job and Career Mobility
   2.4.2 Models of Boundaryless and Protean Careers
   2.4.3 Where Structure and Agency Meet in the Career Mobility Models
   2.4.4 Empirical Research into Job and Career Mobility
   2.4.5 Summary – Career Theory in Relation to Job or Career Mobility
2.5 Theological Perspectives on Clergy Transition and Mobility
   2.5.1 Comparative Contexts of Mobility in Relation to the Clerical Role
   2.5.2 Summary of Theological Perspectives on Clergy Transition and Mobility
2.6 Theological and Career Perspectives on Clergy Calling
   2.6.1 Defining Calling and Career – Theological Perspectives
   2.6.2 Defining Calling and Career – Career Perspectives
2.1 Defining Career

It should be said from the outset that the notion of ‘career’ is problematic for this research population. Bagilhole (2003) claims that the ‘differentiation between Ministry (self-denial, service, duty) and Career (self-fulfilment, achievement and reward) has always been an issue in the Church of England’ (p. 371). Furthermore, academic theologians cannot seem to agree on whether clergy are engaged in a vocation, a career, a job, a profession or a hobby (Russell, 1980; Osborne, 2004; Percy, 2006, p. 27). For the purposes of this discussion of the literature relating to career and clergy the following definition of career will apply: ‘The evolving sequence of a person’s work experiences over time.’ (Arthur, Hall & Lawrence, 1989) For this study is less interested in what job, role or position that clergy aspire to or hold (Arnold, 1997) than how their specific experiences of preparing to make a move are played out within a particular context.

2.2 Career Theory as a Framework for Investigating Preparing to Move Jobs

Career theory allows for the study of work situations by different disciplines, i.e. vocational psychology, organization studies, social psychology, psychology and sociology (Gunz & Peiperl, 2007; Arnold & Cohen, 2013). These include different levels of analysis such as individual, organizational and societal (Peiperl & Gunz, 2007) and the notion that a career can have an objective and subjective
dimension (Hughes, 1937). For example, how the structure, systems and processes within a particular organization impact upon the workforce (objective career) and how an individual makes sense of their personal career situation (subjective career). Career theory also considers the role of emergence or time (past, present and anticipated future) in how individuals experience and respond to career situations (Khapova, Arthur & Wilderom, 2007, p. 115) and the significance of relativity or social space for the individual within the context of their non-work and work roles (Arthur et al., 1989; Kidd, 2006). These are not necessarily separate activities and career theory allows for the relationships within and between these different dimensions to be explored and understood. For example, structuration theory (Giddens, 1976, 1984) provides a helpful basis from which to think about the interdependence between social structures and individual agency in careers. Rather than viewing the two concepts as dichotomous (Arnold & Cohen, 2013), Giddens’ theory highlights how individual action which is informed and constructed by certain structural arrangements, i.e. informal and formal rules and regulations, has the capacity to reinforce those arrangements (Arnold & Cohen, 2013) in positive and negative ways. This was established in a study of the careers of research scientists which identified the reciprocity between social structures and individual action (Duberley, Cohen & Mallon, 2006; Arnold & Cohen, 2013). Given that clergy function within an institution with historically embedded organizational practices that have evolved over time, the suggestion that structural elements rooted in custom and practice be viewed as a form of rules and regulations guiding an individual’s career thinking and action (Arnold & Cohen, 2013) is likely to be an important consideration in the course of this study. These are dimensions of structuration theory which are rarely scrutinized in relation to career mobility or transition.

Furthermore, such perspectives inform adult development theories (Kidd, 2006; Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007) that address the interdependence of the individual and organizational processes that are experienced during a career. They encompass dimensions which address psychological growth and personal
development (Erikson, 1959; Vaillant, 1977) and career and life development (Super, 1957; Gould, 1978; Levinson et al., 1978; Driver, 1982; Holland, 1985).

To put it more simply, an individual may be contemplating moving to a new role but is unsure about how to proceed. At this point their subjective experiences of early vocational choice, previous socialization experiences, capacity to make career decisions and certain personality factors will have a direct influence on their approach to looking ahead to making a change (Kidd, 2006). Equally significant will be the quality of the career development support available to them from the organization. This is frequently lacking in organizational career structures and processes to the detriment of individual career outcomes such as career success or well-being (Nicholson & de Waal-Andrews, 2005; Kidd, 2006).

A subjective dimension of adult development theories which remains largely unattended to in the careers literature relates to how people feel about their careers (Kidd, 2008, p. 166, 1998). A qualitative study by Kidd (2008) examined the positive and negative emotions arising from different career experiences as reported by individuals (N = 89) working in a wide range of UK occupations. She reported on the relationship between emotion and experience for respondents reporting on emotions relating to two specific career issues; 1) internal or external career transitions involving a new role or change in career pattern and 2) interpersonal difficulties or lack of support in a career context. Findings indicated that emotions relating to a career move ranged from elation, delight and excitement (positive emotions) to anxiety, worry and nervousness (negative emotions). Emotions relating to interpersonal difficulties or lack of support included feeling sad, dejected, miserable, frustrated, angry, annoyed, guilty, irritated and depressed (Kidd, 2008, pp. 178-179), clearly all negative emotions.

Recently, there have been calls for a more realistic perspective on the structural constraints that exist for individual careers with implications for career mobility (Ng et al., 2007; Arnold & Cohen, 2008; Forrier et al., 2009; Arnold & Cohen, 2013) and career paths (Dany et al., 2011). The view is that the field is
dominated by voluntaristic perspectives which overlook the interplay between organizational constraints embedded in structure and voluntarism, where individual autonomy prevails (Peiperl & Gunz, 2007). Much of this debate is taking place in the context of boundaryless and protean career concepts where boundaried careers, as opposed to careers with no boundaries, are posited as a more realistic way of viewing the interplay between individual and organization (Mayrhofer, Meyer & Steyrer, 2007; Arnold & Cohen, 2008, 2013; Tams & Arthur, 2010; Dany et al., 2011; Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh & Roper, 2012). In the context of clergy career transition it is anticipated that an appreciation of this debate will improve our understanding of the affective, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of an individual’s psychological readiness for change, e.g. how do clergy feel and what action do they take as they contemplate a career move? They will also address the structural issues that constrain or enhance transition for this particular population, e.g. what do clergy understand of the recruitment, selection and development processes defined by those leading the church? A helpful concept in this respect is that of career boundaries (Gunz, Peiperl & Tzabbar, 2007). Career boundaries are the caveats and realities of life that limit or hinder an individual’s capacity to move from one work role to another. For example, the selection policies of an organization may be such that only certain candidates are eligible for certain roles due to the trajectory of their path having been defined by early success in the tournament of career mobility (Rosenbaum, 1989; Gunz et al., 2007, p. 486). On the one hand the permeability of these boundaries is argued to be privately, subjectively constructed by the individual and as such is ‘as real as the actors experiencing or managing them make them’ (Gunz et al., 2007, p. 475). Consequently individuals will differ in their views on what makes a transition attractive or achievable. On the other hand once these subjective perspectives form a set of common beliefs held by a range of interested parties or ‘social entities’, an objective career boundary is created that becomes increasingly impermeable as the original divergent views dissipate (Gunz et al., 2007, p. 479). A recent development in the careers literature (Gunz et al., 2007; Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009) and empirical
research (Duberley et al., 2006) is how this interplay should be regarded as a duality defined as ‘two sides of the same coin’, rather than a dualism or ‘two separate entities’ (Duberley et al., 2006, p. 282), in relation to how an individual perceives and experiences job mobility and transition.

Another dimension to career theory which is significant for this study is the concept of culture (Derr & Laurent, 1989). Schein, 1985, identifies ‘basic assumptions’ as the fundamental tenet of how an individual constructs their personal reality in relation to career. On one hand, Derr and Laurent (1989) suggest that these are deep-rooted beliefs found in national cultures. Here early experiences of language, family, education, religion, work and life are embedded in an individual’s career identity or internal career with direct implications for organizational culture. This research is interested in clergy who work within the Church of England, the English State church serving England’s Christian community. As such, clergy are part of an institution whose doctrine and practice still inform the national culture of this country. Furthermore, there is evidence which demonstrates that early relational experiences arising from the mores (Merton, 1957; Towler & Coxon, 1979) of that very culture inform and influence how they construct and conduct their career (Gunz et al., 2007, p. 489). On the other hand, Stead (2004) suggests that culture should be viewed in less monolithic terms, i.e. ‘as a social system of shared symbols, meanings, perspectives, and social actions that are mutually negotiated by people in their relationships with others’ (p. 392). This definition of culture at the level of a group or local socialization (Merton, 1957; Towler & Coxon 1979) within a ‘home’ nation (Stead, 2004) seems more congruent with the institution and individuals under scrutiny in this research. It emphasizes the role of individuals in constructing culture, how individual beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours are shaped by relational experiences rooted in class origins, family structure, education and community (Mayrhofer et al., 2007; Sullivan & Crocitto, 2007).
2.3 Career Theory in Relation to Transition, Turnover and Embeddedness

2.3.1 Theories of Transition

The theoretical rationale for this study is rooted in early perspectives on career and work-role transition (Louis, 1980a, 1980b, 1982; Nicholson, 1984; Nicholson & West, 1988) which offer some explanation for how individuals might experience the preparation stage of a transition. The focus is on career transition as a period of time during which a process of job-related change is taking place (Louis, 1980b), rather than job change as an isolated event. For example, anticipatory experiences and pre-entry expectations are regarded by Louis (1980a) as fundamental to how an individual makes the transition from one job to another. She draws on theories of organizational socialization (Louis, 1980b; Merton, 1957; Schein, 1968; Feldman, 1976; Van Maanen, 1976) to explain how these prior experiences and expectations influence an individual’s transition as they pass through different stages from ‘outsider’ to ‘newcomer’ to ‘insider’. Organizational socialization is fundamental to the internal career definition of clergy and has long term implications for work and life goals (Brooklyn Derr & Briscoe, 2007). Clergy encounter intense socialization experiences at theological college where training for ministry is an all-encompassing, lengthy process, described by some as a ‘boot camp’ (Berry, 2004). Here, early attachments and identities are replaced by new loyalties and perceptions of self (Towler & Coxon, 1979; Berry, 2004). Subsequent ministry, frequently lasting a lifetime, exposes clergy to further socialization dependent upon where they work. It is anticipated that cumulative experiences of previous moves over time will have a direct influence on clergy behaviours and decision-making as they prepare to move jobs akin to the social learning approach to career decision-making (Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1996). Here, cumulative learning experiences contribute to an individual’s capacity to bring together a degree of self-awareness and task-approach skills (Kidd, 2006) thus forming a basis for negotiating a future move. Secondly, the notion of individual self-efficacy
(Bandura, 1997) or the belief in one’s capacity to get things done, linked to anticipating probable outcomes (Lent et al., 1994) is also expected to be an important dimension to how clergy manage their career trajectory (King, Z., 2004; Ng et al., 2007).

The period prior to moving is also addressed by the career transition cycle (Nicholson & West, 1988). This is a recursive cycle of interdependent stages beginning with preparation and anticipation and moving on through three further stages, each defined by different experiences and tasks, i.e. encounter, adjustment and stabilization, before entering a new stage of preparation. The cycle may be short-circuited at any time as someone misses or repeats a stage in the process. For example, an anticipatory period that is defined by factors such as an unplanned move, high expectations of a potential role that is under-researched or lack of confidence in skills and knowledge may result in an unwelcome surprise (Louis 1980b) or hiatus in the early days of settling into a new role (encounter). This could affect how confidently an individual approaches the tasks of getting on with the job (adjustment). The fact that the final stage (stabilization) may be short-lived or bypassed altogether means that individuals could find themselves preparing for a further move without having much confidence in their anticipatory abilities either consciously or unconsciously, based on previous experience (Louis, 1980a; Kidd, 2006). Kidd (2006, p. 45), notes that there is a lack of evidence for the different stages and it does seem that the preparation and anticipation stage has received considerably less attention in the literature and empirical research than that of encounter, adjustment or stabilization. Yet to overlook anticipatory behaviour and preparatory tasks risks jeopardizing an individual’s capacity to influence career outcomes during the later stages of transition (Nicholson & West, 1988, p. 98; Kidd, 2006, p. 38). Put another way, neglect of the preparatory stage of the career transition cycle evokes the old proverb ‘for the want of a nail’ where ultimately the kingdom was lost. As previously noted, Nicholson and West (1988) view the unpredictability of a work-role transition as one reason why the
preparation is difficult to investigate. This may explain why the preparation stage of their career transition cycle gets considerably less coverage than the other three stages.

The main finding in relation to preparation is that pre-transition anxiety is something of a myth (Nicholson & West, 1988). In their investigation into industry managers Nicholson and West found that rather than anticipation of a job change generating high levels of stress, the opposite is often true as individuals look forward to the opportunity for growth and development in a new role (Nicholson & West, 1988). However, evidence suggests that unwelcome transitions, i.e. redundancy or retirement, are disruptive and stress levels increase (Cobb, 1974). To what extent clergy are any different in their experience of pre-transition stress is not known at this point. Another dimension to the study of industry managers investigated how effective individuals were at predicting a job change in different environments, i.e. stable and unstable. It was found that those operating in volatile environments who regarded themselves as ‘self-directed’, i.e. having the potential to move on by being promoted or moving to a different employer, were less accurate in their prediction of a move compared to their counterparts operating in more stable environments. This finding has interesting implications for clergy career transition. On the one hand, it can be argued that for clergy, a career transition is rarely unpredictable in the sense of an unanticipated event, suggesting a level of stability and continuity which gives rise to confident career planning. On the other hand, the nature of ministry is such that future moves are always possible and often inevitable and clergy do not always know exactly when or where their next move is going to be. This suggests both the ‘externally-directed and impeded’ and self-directed career types identified by Nicholson and West (1988, p. 93), the latter of which they found were ill-prepared to predict a job move.

The career transition cycle could be viewed as a response to Louis’s (1982) concerns in relation to what she described as the ‘missing link’ in career
development. Louis argued that there was a gap between career development that identified career paths that match individuals, and career development in the context of finding a job. She believed ‘that the critical middle range between finding a job and moving along a career path has not been adequately addressed in career development – especially lacking is guidance in adapting to the new job and organization’ (Louis, 1982, p. 69). The significance of preparation in the cycle of interdependent stages which address this ‘middle ground’ seems to have been overlooked in the research literature in favour of the encounter and adjustment stages.

These theories and empirical research establish the importance of the preparation and anticipation stage of the transition process for this research, albeit with one caveat. That is, if the individual has decided to move this may have implications for research into pre-transitional attitudes, for certain adjustments have already taken place which moderate against the affective and cognitive experiences previously faced by the individual when anticipating a move (Nicholson & West, 1988; Bruce & Scott, 1994; El-Sawad, Arnold & Cohen, 2004; Ng et al., 2007; Chudzikowski et al., 2009). For example, research into managers who had made a job change (Nicholson & West, 1988) found that individuals looked forward to the opportunity for growth and development in a new role. Yet these were retrospective reports when certain adjustments to a new reality had taken place and may overlook some important adjustments, for example in dealing with anxiety prior to moving in relation to how they might perform in a new role (Nicholson & West, 1988).

2.3.2 Theories of Turnover
Voluntary turnover theory, with its traditional emphasis on the antecedents, causes or reasons ‘why’ someone leaves a job, is relevant to a study of the antecedents of job change albeit with some caveats. Traditional turnover considerations, such as unrealistic expectations at point of entry (Wanous, 1977; Louis, 1980a), are generated prior to joining an organization by both individual
and organization via recruitment practices that tend to idealize the job and the company rather than providing factual information (Ward & Athos, 1972; Wanous, 1976, p. 227). The nature of clergy expectations early on in the process of moving has the potential to provide useful insights into their understanding of, and engagement with, Church employment systems. *Unmet expectations* describe the gap between initial expectations and actual job experiences and are likely to be most helpful at the level of how previous expectation and subsequent experience in a particular role influences a cleric’s decision to move again. More recently, *met expectations*, i.e. an individual’s perceptions and expectations of what the organization is likely to offer in the future, have also been posited as influencing turnover behaviour (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand & Meglino, 1979; Aquino, Griffeth, Allen & Hom, 1997; Holtom, Mitchell, Lee & Eberly, 2008).

Unrealistic and unmet expectations are one factor of voluntary turnover theory that has been studied in relation to transition at the point of entry. More recently, three concepts from turnover theory (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) have informed studies of job mobility examining the dynamics between individual agency and structure (Forrier et al., 2009). This is of particular interest to this study and will be discussed later in this chapter. A recent review of the turnover literature (Holton et al., 2008) identified a wide range of factors, some of which resonate with the transition and mobility literature and may therefore offer useful insights into how clergy experience moving jobs. These include withdrawal behaviours (Mobley, 1977; Hom, Griffeth & Sellaro, 1984; Hulin, 1991), individual differences, including personality (Barrick & Mount, 1996), decision-making orientation (Maertz & Campion, 2004; Hom et al., 2008) and job embeddedness or ‘staying’ (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski & Erez, 2001). Further suggestions for new lines of enquiry include the role of social networks and interpersonal ties in individual decision-making (Holton et al., 2008, p. 256) and temporal considerations in relation to how turnover decisions ‘progress’ in the mind of an individual (p. 258).
These wide-ranging dimensions to voluntary turnover are important and interesting, offering explanations for why, and to some extent how, people go about leaving jobs. However, turnover theory is focused on people leaving or ‘quitting’ a job, which sits uneasily with the aims of this research. This is because the emphasis on turnover in relation to management practices which will improve market value, competitive advantage and organizational success (Pfeffer, 2005; Holtom et al., 2008) is likely to be met with some resistance within the Church. This is due to internal sensitivities to the notion of wealth creation (Rayment-Pickard, 2012) and where the concept of secular management process and practice is viewed by some with scepticism and even hostility (Grundy, 1996). There is also the fact that clergy rarely exit the organization with the aim of transferring their skills and knowledge to an alternative work environment. Given that clergy are also likely to regard their ministry as a personal commitment to serve God, combined with evidence which suggests that religious calling has a negative effect on intentions to exit ministry (McDuff & Mueller, 2000), the notion of clergy ‘quitting’ in the context of turnover theory is difficult to sustain. As discussed in Chapter 1, they regularly move around within the Church for much of their working lives experiencing intra-organizational moves. Schein (1984) noted how an individual’s motives and values with regard to career legitimacy were dependent upon their evaluation of internal/external values and the extent to which they were prepared to claim or deny their particular position. For a cleric in possession of a calling, issues of legitimacy and propriety might be a serious consideration if they sought to leave the Church.

The notion of quitting within ministry seems more applicable when clergy leave a parish for another post unexpectedly having planned, but not widely discussed, their departure with certain members of the parish community, e.g. the parish council or congregation. The traditional turnover literature would suggest that this is an example of how individual job attitudes (satisfied,
unsatisfied; committed, uncommitted) combine with perceived job alternatives as an antecedent to turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001, p. 1102). Yet this still doesn’t paint a complete picture because anecdotal evidence indicates that individual clergy are inclined to think very carefully about the impact their moving might have on the community within which they work rather than just their personal needs. There is also further anecdotal evidence that both individual (clergy) and institution (Church) expect that there will be a period of time when the institution will be without an incumbent until someone new is appointed irrespective of the circumstances surrounding a departure. This period of time is known as an interregnum and seems an accepted part of custom and practice rather than a cause for concern in the context of voluntary turnover.

2.3.3 Theories of Embeddedness

Another side of the same coin in relation to turnover is the concept of job embeddedness (Mitchell et al., 2001) which focuses on why people stay in their jobs. Likening embeddedness to a ‘net or web in which an individual can become stuck’ (Mitchell et al., 2001, p. 1104), the authors identify certain dimensions which influence employee retention. They include ‘links’, ‘fit’ and ‘sacrifice’ which connect to how an individual relates to their organization (on-the-job) and community (off-the-job). The research demonstrated how embeddedness is associated with a reduction in intent to leave and turnover, although my study is more interested in how the different dimensions clarify and expand upon those factors relating to not moving. This is because tensions may exist for a workforce committed to operating in the same institution often for the whole of their working lives, where intra-organizational mobility is the norm, where the boundary between work, family and community is frequently blurred (Lee & Horseman, 2002; Hoge & Wenger, 2005; Lewis-Anthony, 2009) and where leaving certain roles or the institution is likely to be viewed as difficult.
2.3.4 Summary of Theories of Transition, Turnover and Embeddedness

These theories of career and work role transition, turnover and embeddedness alert us to the significance of certain antecedents to preparing for a job move, e.g. early socialization or the reason for a move. However, they have some limitations. First, the transition literature focuses on someone intent on and involved in a job move. It is strongly oriented towards explaining organizational experiences in situ and the effects of that unfolding experience on an individual’s confidence in relation to future moves. As such it does not always address the antecedents of preparation and anticipation. Second, theories of turnover focus on someone who has left a job, and have been criticized for their emphasis on predicting turnover rather than understanding the complex reasons for why people leave via narrative accounts likely to reflect individual behaviour and value systems (Morrell & Arnold, 2007, p. 1695). This criticism could also be levelled at the job embeddedness construct which excludes affective commitment, i.e. how people feel about their job and organization, across the different dimensions it identifies as predictive of turnover. This is at odds with this study which is interested in the affective, as well as cognitive and behavioural, processes that clergy engage in as they think through their potential moves. It has been pointed out that turnover theory emphasizing prediction is inclined towards a process of ‘steps’ or ‘stages’ which lead to a decision rather than addressing the inherent complexities of decision-making (Morrell & Arnold, 2007) or subjective experience. Interestingly, Nicholson and West (1988) also distinguish between turnover and intra-organizational mobility arguing that a ‘promising avenue for future research exploration would seem to be closer attention to the relationship between organizational career systems and how different transitions – principally turnover versus forms of intra-organizational mobility – are perceived and enacted’ (p. 192). Finally, theories of transition, turnover and embeddedness are limited in helping us to understand the context in which such experiences are taking place, the factors
that influence individual preparedness and the role of the organization in that process (Nicholson & West, 1988, p. 15).

2.4 Career Theory in Relation to Job or Career Mobility

Whilst career transition theories are a helpful dimension of the research literature, theories of job or career mobility offer a more comprehensive framework from which to explore how clergy experience the anticipatory stage of moving jobs. Job mobility is defined as ‘patterns of intra- and inter-organizational transitions over the course of a person’s work life’ (Ng et al., 2007, p. 363). Different types of job mobility have been established across two mobility dimensions, status and employer, i.e. internal-upward; external-upward; internal-lateral; external-lateral; internal-downward; external-downward (Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009). In this study of clergy whose working lives are largely played out within one institution and where opportunities for movement are limited, it is envisaged that their mobility is likely to be dominated by internal rather than external moves. Conceptual models of job or career mobility which specifically explore the antecedents, determinants and constraints involved in a career move are posited by Ng, Sorensen, Eby and Feldman (2007) and Forrier, Sels and Stynen (2009). Their contributions are important to the aims of this study because they encompass objective and subjective career perspectives in tandem which is a rare occurrence (Ng et al., 2007). Both models possess an agentic tone in terms of how different dimensions relating to movement interact with each other such as individual perceptions, attitudes, motives and behaviours. They also seek to understand the reasons why and how individuals do and don’t move jobs. Other theories and empirical research exploring these and other dimensions to job mobility in the context of intra-organizational moves include Landau & Hammer, 1986; Brett & Reilly, 1988; Noe, Steffy & Barber, 1988; Landau, Shamir & Arthur, 1992; Noe & Barber, 1993; Stilwell, Liden, Parsons & Deconinck, 1998; Ostroff & Clark, 2001; Otto, Dette-Hagemeyer & Dalbert, 2010; Webster & Beehr, 2013.
This is particularly significant for this study of clergy where opportunities for movement are limited. Consequently, theories of job and career mobility are well placed at the forefront or preparation stage of a career transition to expand our understanding of what clergy think, feel and do prior to making a job move, as distinct from those who know what they want and are already engaged in the transition process. These models and theories will now be discussed.

2.4.1 Models of the Determinants of Job and Career Mobility

Ng, Sorensen, Eby and Feldman’s (2007) framework of job mobility (see Figure iii) explores the determinants and constraints of job mobility. Acknowledging the potential significance of different job mobility experiences through an individual’s career (resonant of the recursive career transition cycle discussed earlier), they suggest that individual job mobility can be considered across different dimensions including structural factors and individual differences.

**Figure iii – Determinants of Job Mobility – Theoretical Framework (Ng et al., 2007, p. 367).**
Structural factors are economic conditions, societal characteristics, industry differences, and organizational policy and practice (Ng et al., 2007, p. 368). On the one hand, these are important considerations for a study of how clergy prepare for moving jobs because they move us beyond the insular considerations of ministry and Church to provide a wider context from which to view the antecedents to clergy movement. On the other hand, some of these factors may seem counter-intuitive in the context of a non-profit making, faith-based institution where individuals are ostensibly called to serve God. For example, how relevant are strong or weak economic conditions which ‘influence the expansion or downsizing of firms’ (Ng et al., 2007, p. 368) upon the clergy labour market? It could be argued that clergy options are neither enhanced nor constrained by the vagaries of economic performance leading to organizational growth or contraction due in part to the relative stability of the workforce. Yet, when considered in conjunction with societal characteristics such as growing secularization which is contributing to the economic decline of the Church and the effects of that decline on the recruitment, retention and deployment of clergy in different parts of England, then economic conditions can be seen to be influencing clergy mobility. Furthermore, Laughlin (2000) notes the ‘secular and secondary’ nature of financial matters within the Church vying with sacred concerns (p. 64). That money and ministry are incompatible is suggested by an ongoing pension crisis within the Church which has been rumbling on for over 20 years, clear evidence of the consequences of economic mismanagement on how clergy are recruited and deployed (Jones & Cohen, 2010). A financial scandal in the 1990s devastated much of the Church’s wealth resulting in the establishment of new bodies and practices to protect clergy pensions. In recent years further losses have been sustained and the shortfalls are being borne by individual dioceses who in some cases are not replacing clergy, dissolving posts and offering fewer curacies (training posts) (Jones & Cohen, 2010).

A further societal characteristic from Ng et al.’s model that resonates with the Church of England is that of legislative change whereby the Church has recently
implemented changes to the terms and conditions of ministry. The implementation of Common Tenure (see Chapter 1), with its legally binding framework has implications for both institution and individual in how movement of clergy is viewed and managed. Finally, the significance of the staffing policies of an organization is identified as another structural feature likely to influence mobility. A study of the Church of England is interesting in this respect because of its internal labour market where a high value is placed on lateral moves, commitment to the organization and seniority. These are likened by Ng et al. (2007) to organizational ‘clubs’ (Sonnenfeld & Peirperl, 1988). They suggest that in such circumstances the main focus of any staffing policy is likely to be on internal competition. Internal or ‘cohort competition’ is aligned with competition for internal rewards which, given the limited reward structure within the Church, means that Ng et al.’s claim that in such circumstances an organization will ‘reward seniority instead’ (p. 370, emphasis mine) is an interesting proposition. This discussion of the structural factors is likely to influence how individual clergy perceive opportunities for movement (Ng et al., 2007, p. 368) are theoretically relevant to the aims of this study and resonant with many of the current developments within the Church of England likely to affect how clergy anticipate moving jobs.

Ng et al. (2007) also identify how individual differences such as personality traits, career interests, values and attachment styles are likely to affect job mobility options (p. 372). Each of these dimensions has been found to contribute to individual career choice and decision-making in different ways (Kidd, 2006; Wu & Parker, 2012; Zimmerman, Boswell, Shipp, Dunford & Boudreau, 2012). For example, personality at the level of the Big Five traits (Costa & McCrae, 1992) of neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience is acknowledged to be an influence on job mobility and career change (Crockett, 1962; Ng et al., 2007; Carless & Arnup, 2011). Kidd (2006) notes how extraverts are more likely than introverts to ‘take steps to improve their jobs to suit themselves’ (p. 18). Recent evidence suggests that approach-
avoidance personality traits influence job search behaviour (Zimmerman et al., 2012). Career interests such as those in Holland's typology (Holland, 1985) have been identified as predictors of job mobility, i.e. social types may be more inclined to explore new possibilities and thus experience greater lateral mobility (Larson, Rottinghaus & Borgen, 2002; Ng et al., 2007, p. 373). How someone relates to others may depend upon the extent to which their attachment style is secure or insecure (Bowlby, 1977). This could have implications for levels of proactive behaviour (Wu & Parker, 2012) and consequently the type of job move they try to facilitate, e.g. internal-lateral or internal-upward (Ng et al., 2007).

Finally, the values dimension of individual differences resonates with one of the aims of this study which is to find out what role calling plays in how clergy experience preparing to move jobs given the fact that this is a population called to serve God rather than self. Hall and Chandler (2005) posit that clarity in relation to personal values is an important tenet of having a calling and so it is anticipated that value and self-belief systems in the context of job mobility will be important here. Personal values are posited by Ng et al. (2007) as 'internalized beliefs' which influence behaviour. They take Schwartz, Melech, Lehmann, Burgess, Harris & Owens’ (2001) classification of personal values and relate them to different types of mobility, e.g. achievement and power values evoking ambition are likely to be aligned with mobility that is internal- and external-upward. The suggestion that the benevolence value is less likely to predict job mobility other than in circumstances where it is 'employer-requested' (Ng et al., 2007, p. 374) is an interesting proposition given that clergy have chosen work that is benevolent in nature and their career trajectory is bound up in notions of obedience and service to God.

Forrier, Sels and Stynen’s (2009) work-role transition cycle (see Figure iv) also acknowledges the structural and individual dimensions to career mobility. They do this with reference to the boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) and protean career (Hall, 2002, 2004) literature which, they argue, overlook the
structural and institutional constraints that impact upon individual career behaviour (Forrier et al., 2009).

Figure iv – Conceptual Model of Career Mobility (Forrier et al., 2009, p. 741).

Components such as individual skills, knowledge and competencies, how an individual connects with others, their levels of self-awareness in relation to personal belief and value systems, strengths, weaknesses, goals and the extent to which they are able to adapt and change are classified as movement capital. Movement capital is central to individual agency in relation to career mobility and likely to be exercised with varying degrees of volition or self-directed behaviour (Forrier et al., 2009, p. 744). For example, an MSc study by this researcher (Blackie, 2005) found that clergy draw on different types of ‘talk’ such as conversation, gossip and speculation within their social network when discussing career development. This suggests that how clergy exercise social
capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002) as part of their movement capital is likely to be an important consideration in this study.

Forrier et al. (2009) identify the following structure of risks and opportunities likely to influence mobility in tandem with how movement capital is perceived and valued by individual and organization alike. Like Ng et al. (2007) they posit that the types and availability of jobs within internal and external labour markets will affect mobility opportunities. More specifically they identify how certain mechanisms act to ‘segment’ employment opportunities thus influencing supply and demand. For those individuals considering a job move within the Church this may mean that promotion or development opportunities such as being assigned to ‘critical tasks’ are dependent upon being incumbent in a particular role or are only open to those individuals with certain attributes (Lawrence & Tolbert, 2007, p. 402; Forrier et al., 2009, p. 746). The roles of gatekeepers and recruiters are also noted for their capacity to prevent an appointment or be biased in their assessment of potential recruits. Another source of structural influence on an individual’s capacity to move is values and norms. Here Forrier et al. (2009) differ from Ng et al.’s perspective on personal values by defining it as shared perceptions or judgements of ‘socially acceptable behaviour for (groups of) individuals’ (Forrier et al., 2009, p. 746, emphasis mine) within organizations and wider society, e.g. attainment of career stage and retirement age. The fact that clergy are exempt from certain aspects of employment legislation (see Introduction), presents an interesting dimension to Forrier et al.’s (2009) view of institutional measures likely to stimulate or inhibit supply and demand in the labour market. Collectively these mechanisms constitute risks and opportunities that are outside an individual’s jurisdiction and ‘are barriers to transitions’ (Forrier et al., 2009, p. 745). Finally, one aspect of the structural features of the two career mobility models under discussion (Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009) which is difficult to reconcile with clergy and the Church relates to reward structures. Both sets of authors consider that industry wage levels will have an influence on mobility. This might be where high wages...
across an industry constrain movement because there is little incentive to move or individuals become embedded due to high salaries, or where older, highly paid workers are disadvantaged when it comes to selection and retention by organizations. As discussed elsewhere in this study, clergy salaries are low, benefits are few and opportunities for progression to a better paid job are limited, therefore it is anticipated that wages are unlikely to have a significant impact on how clergy anticipate preparing to move jobs.

In their qualitative study within two French universities (N = 75), Dany et al. (2011) identified different promotion models which define the criteria to recruit university professors and the processes through which an individual needs to navigate their trajectory to link them to different roles within academia, e.g. a ‘star scientist’ with an international research reputation (Dany et al., 2011, p. 981). It is only a small step from this approach to thinking about how different clergy might anticipate their next move in the context of promotion models. For example, senior clerics (archdeacons, suffragan and diocesan bishops); middle-ranking clerics (diocesan officials, team rectors, rural deans) and parish clerics, each of whom are recruited in different ways. Next, adopting the method of promotion scripts, i.e. ‘individuals’ interpretations and reconstructions of the promotion rules and models applied by those in charge of selecting and promoting academics’ (Dany et al., 2011, p. 976), the authors identified the conditions necessary for a promotion model to become a promotion script in the words of the individual, i.e. credibility of the model, legibility of the model and legitimacy of the model. Finally, the study establishes different ways in which individuals enact promotion scripts, i.e. actively complying with the script, rejecting a strong promotion script, ignoring a weak or missing script and relying on one’s own resources. Their findings established that individual agency in the form of career choices is enacted via different and very personal scripts regardless of whether an organizational environment is regarded as strong or weak (Dany et al., 2011, p. 990).
So far this discussion has focused on the features of individual agency and structural forces likely to act as antecedents or determinants of a career move. Before considering those aspects of the career mobility models which address how and why the interaction between these might be manifested, it is helpful to consider the relevance or otherwise of the boundaryless and protean career concepts to how clergy prepare to move on. As evidenced in some of the career theories and models discussed so far these concepts have permeated the careers literature during the past two decades and cannot be overlooked in this discussion of career mobility. The following section discusses the concepts in more detail and their implications for this study of clergy mobility.

2.4.2 Models of Boundaryless and Protean Careers

The boundaryless (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) career concept emphasizes the ways in which inter- and intra-organizational mobility need not be defined by a single organizational setting, job function or set of skills (Arnold, 1997). It posits that individuals can transcend an infinite number of physical and psychological barriers in their pursuit of career (Briscoe & Hall, 2006a). More recently the concept has been challenged in the careers literature for its over emphasis on the permeability of boundaries and that for many workers employment opportunities are constrained and bounded (Kidd, 2006; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009; Rodrigues & Guest, 2010; Dany et al., 2011; Inkson et al., 2012; Arnold & Cohen, 2013). The protean (Hall, 2002) career concept describes an independent attitude to career whereby an individual is motivated by autonomy, a desire to be in control and internal values relating to how they manage their career trajectory and career performance (Briscoe & Hall, 2006b).

On the face of it there seems little to suggest that clergy in the Church have either boundaryless or protean career trajectories, most likely due to a common perception that the Church is a traditional institution with a bureaucratic approach to career involving ‘hierarchy, accountability, achievement and [organizational] membership’ (Gowler & Legge, 1989, p. 2; Arnold & Cohen,
This does appear to largely be the case, for during the course of their career trajectory clergy are trained, they get a training post, they apply for a first post, they go on to apply for other posts; some, if they are lucky (given the lack of available roles) are promoted to a senior post. Yet, when undertaking a discourse study of what sense clergy made of their career paths (Blackie, 2005), this researcher found that there were ‘echoes’ of the boundaryless and protean concepts in clergy narratives but at the time they didn't quite fit with established thinking. For example, the most common definition of Arthur and Rousseau’s (1996) primary proposition in relation to boundarylessness is that an individual can move around at will and external to the organization regardless of institutional boundaries or constraints. This clearly didn't (and still doesn't) apply to clergy as their moves are predominantly internal to the organization. Yet clergy move several times during their career such that their career trajectory can bear more resemblance at times to that of Ladkin & Riley’s (1996) hotel managers, bound up in a hybrid of two career models, the bureaucratic and one where opportunity structure and self-directed activities operate in tandem. Furthermore, in a study into clergy career paths (Blackie, 2005), clergy gave strong expression to agency and independence reflecting the protean emphasis on individual empowerment and personal freedom and growth rather than organizational dependency (Hall, 2002). Yet, at the time, clergy appeared to a struggle with feeling they have independence and autonomy in what they do, but in the same breath they would defer to the authority of certain gatekeepers.

This tension is highlighted in two studies of careers in academia, one conceptual and one empirical, framed by boundaryless and protean career concepts. These explain and challenge the relevance of these concepts in relation to the interaction between institutional structure and individual agency in career mobility. On the one hand, Baruch and Hall (2004) regard university careers as increasingly protean and boundaryless due to a weakening of old rule-based norms under which academics have traditionally operated. The new rules
include a high level of freedom to function, with transactional contracts between universities not unusual; learning cycles which reflect continuous learning from developments in teaching practice, research and the peer review system; and limited opportunities for promotion which mean that a CV rooted in research output and teaching skills is the basis for movement. Features of this new world where career environments are weaker (Dany et al., 2011, p. 972) include fewer tenure appointments, less involvement and influence in faculty decision-making, flexible employment contracts in the face of economic constraints and competition, and the outreach of university activities into consulting and professional services (Baruch & Hall, 2004, p. 257). Some of these developments resonate with structural changes reported within the Church of England in recent years as clergy anticipate moving on under different circumstances, i.e. where certain rules and customs are disappearing.

On the other hand, empirical research into academic careers also examined the limitations of the boundaryless career concept for academic careers (Dany et al., 2011). Of particular significance to the aims of this study into how clergy might be contemplating a move was that the authors endeavour to distinguish cognition from behaviour in terms of individual agency, i.e. how individuals represent or explain an activity or behaviour rather than the behaviour itself (Dany et al., 2011, p. 976). The authors challenge the view that certain career environments are weakening (Dany et al., 2011, p. 989). They argue that careers are both boundaryless and bounded and that relying on one or other concept fails to address alternative forms of academic career. For example where ‘top researchers’ (Musselin, 2009), i.e. those who can normally transcend organizational boundaries, find that the pressure to publish in order to remain amongst the academic elite can feel bounded (Dany et al., 2011). Alternatively, for certain employees constrained by intra-organizational careers, i.e. ‘the good citizen’, a range of different career options within the one institution can be liberating (Dany et al., 2011, p. 974; Musselin, 2009). Interestingly, this wider definition of other boundaries within the concept of boundarylessness, i.e.
Hierarchical status, was also posited by Arthur and Rousseau in their original work but is often overlooked (Inkson et al., 2012, p. 326; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) – they include occupational, role and industry boundaries, as well as constraints bound up in community and work/home (Inkson et al., 2012).

### 2.4.3 Where Structure and Agency Meet in the Career Mobility Models

At the point where structure and agency interact, both Ng et al. (2007) and Forrier et al. (2009) posit new constructs from the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), career self-management (King, Z., 2004; Van Dam, 2004), self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) theories which may help explain why and how people are able or unable to move jobs. They focus on the collective influence of factors likely to facilitate the occurrence of a job move or transition. This is an important consideration in this study of how clergy prepare to move jobs as it takes us beyond the reasons for and causes of someone thinking of moving to the internal and external dynamics likely to promote or prevent a move. In other words, how and why do clergy approach moving jobs in the way they do and what things do they take into account as part of their decision-making? The job mobility models are helpful in this respect because they focus on the interaction between structure and agency. For example, Forrier et al. (2009) draw on three concepts from the turnover literature: ease of movement, willingness to move (March & Simon, 1958) and shock events (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) to help explain how and why people make, or do not make, a career transition (Lee & Mitchell, 1994, p. 747). These address both agency and structure, although with those caveats detailed earlier in relation to the nature of ministry and turnover theory.

*Perceived ease of movement* is a key element of the interplay between structure and agency (Forrier et al., 2009). It encompasses the visibility of certain work roles for an individual and how qualified they feel they are to do them. Furthermore, the role of others, e.g. family or peers, are likely to influence a
person’s ‘ego’ sense of whether the role is achievable or not (Gunz et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009). A further element of the interplay between structure and agency is that of willingness to move, an important dimension of motivated behaviour or volition (Forrier et al., 2009). Drawing on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), it is highlighted how individual motivation varies along a continuum dependent upon influencing forces, e.g. internally versus externally imposed pressures leading to compliance or introjected regulation that might be rooted in a sense of pride or self-worth or, alternatively, guilt or shame (Forrier et al., 2009, p. 749). Both features have the potential to be significant for how clergy exercise volition when preparing to move jobs given recent changes to policies relating to the recruitment, selection and development of clergy and the fact of their calling which may be associated with value systems and feelings of self-worth. For those within ministry who have experienced a ‘shock event’ (Lee & Mitchell, 1984), e.g. two senior clergy at St Paul’s Cathedral who publicly resigned in response to the Occupy London protest, neither left the Church of England and both secured new posts.

Ng et al. (2007) focus on decisional factors drawn from the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) to explain the interplay between structure and agency. Here subjective norms, desirability of mobility and readiness for change are identified as predicting and understanding an individual’s decision to move. For example, subjective norms describe the popularity of a particular option or opportunity which is bound up in current trends. In the case of clergy transition, these may include options which are reflected in wider society, e.g. where certain types of geographical mobility are regarded as the ‘norm’. This is certainly the case in the Church, where the demand for posts in the South East appears to reflect a societal desire for many to be based in the south of England. In terms of readiness for change, Ng et al. (2007) identify how an individual’s self-efficacy beliefs arising from a sense of personal control over a situation are likely to influence their readiness to make a job move (Bandura, 1986; Bell & Staw, 1989; Ng et al., 2007).
A nuanced take on readiness for a move is found in a study of the career transitions of US military personnel who had been invalided out of the service (Haynie & Shepherd, 2011). Here, researchers identified a number of antecedents to career change. Individuals were forced to confront previously held frames of reference in relation to their career identity, in effect looking at a blank page as far as their future career trajectory was concerned. The study set out to understand how ‘foundational assumptions’ such as identity, values and general world view (Haynie & Shepherd, 2011) could be reconstructed to enable future employment. The criteria for selecting the sample included identifying ‘the impetus for the transition’ thus capturing the wider ‘career and psychological implications of the traumatic event’; that the transition be ‘important and ongoing’; and that individuals needed to have engaged in a ‘career-transition strategy’ which in this instance involved some vocational training (p. 502). Here impetus and action are acknowledged as components of the immediate antecedents to career change.

Self-directed action in relation to career management is reflected in another of Forrier et al.’s (2009) dimensions of the interplay between structure and agency. They argue that an individual’s willingness to engage in career management activities cannot solely be viewed from an individual perspective and that it is inexorably intertwined with the structural forces of organization norms and social context (Forrier et al., 2009, p. 751). Likewise, an individual’s personal attitudes and motivations are bound up in career self-management behaviours (King, Z., 2004) which are, in effect, an extension of an organization’s career management policies (Sturges, Guest, Conway & Mackenzie Davey, 2002; Forrier et al., 2009). In an examination of the nature, causes and consequences of career self-management, Zella King (2004) identifies behavioural dimensions to the process which include positioning behaviour, influence behaviour and boundary management likely to help the individual gain some control over their career. A career self-management behaviour that clergy are likely to engage in
as part of a career strategy involving contemplating a career move is to consider how a move will affect the boundary between their work and non-work domains (Sturges, 2008). The overlap between individual work and non-work lives and the implications for work-life balance are well established in the literature (Barley, 1989; Sekaran & Hall, 1989; Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000; Sturges, 2008) and clergy working lives are no exception. For example, the majority of clergy work from home where their spouse or partner and children are also based, and where they are significantly more accessible to the local community than clergy operating from a diocesan office or cathedral. Many are likely to be perceived as being available to take phone calls or receive visitors without prior notice at all times of the day and night (Osborne, 2004). If uncontained, such demands can be disruptive and damaging to the individual and their families with evidence that living ‘above the shop’ becomes a contributory factor to clergy stress (Francis & Rutledge, 2000; Osborne, 2004). Increased attention to work-life balance in society in general over the past decade or so has foregrounded both the problem and potential solutions (Sturges, 2008). This trend is reflected in literature and research which acknowledges the psychological, pastoral and practical problems that clergy experience as a result of a range of stressors (Francis & Rutledge 2000; Warren, 2002; Osborne, 2004; Lewis-Anthony, 2009). Consequently, the extent to which a future role or career goal will impact the boundary between established, and possibly hard-won, work and non-work interests is likely to generate career self-management behaviours amongst clergy that seek to directly influence the balance between the two domains.

A further dimension to the structure/agency debate is that of career agency (Tams & Arthur, 2010). Career agency is defined by Tams and Arthur (2010) as ‘a process of work-related social engagement, informed by past experiences and future possibilities, through which an individual invests in his or her career’ (p. 630). In their discussion, they review the contribution and limitations of four established features of career agency; adaptation to changing markets or
economies, identity and adaptability, resistance as manifested through power and politics and interacting with institutions. They go on to propose a framework of agency ‘features’ which they suggest ‘conceptualizes agency more broadly’ than other theories (p. 636), e.g. Giddens’ (1984) theory of structuration. The features are: individual variation, social referencing, practice, outcomes (of which job mobility is one), contexts and learning. These constructs are helpful for two reasons. First, they complement those aspects of Forrier et al.’s (2009) model which address the interdependence of structure and agency directly, e.g. ease of movement, willingness to move, and willingness to maintain or enhance movement capital (Forrier et al., 2009, pp. 747-751). Second, they extend the model as far as this research is concerned by paying close attention to how culture and context contribute to career agency; dimensions which are likely to be considerations in how clergy experience moving jobs. For example, culture means where assumptions exist relating to education, formation, authority structures and symbols (Derr & Laurent, 1989; Russell, 2000 (cited in Kurht, 2001b); Percy, 2012), a feature of career agency reflecting the shared values, beliefs and social identity (Tams & Arthur, 2010), encompassed in this instance in the work of ministry. Context means where the status and role of clergy is constantly being re-defined in an institution often at odds with secular society, a feature Tams and Arthur (2010) explain as ‘multilayered’ and ‘changing over time’ (p. 636).

2.4.4 Empirical Research into Job and Career Mobility

The overarching frameworks of this study, i.e. Ng et al., 2007 and Forrier et al., 2009 are conceptual models. Empirical research into some of the determinants of job and career mobility studies have been identified which alert us to other considerations (Landau & Hammer, 1986; Brett & Reilly, 1988; Noe et al., 1988; Landau, Shamir & Arthur, 1992; Brett, Stroh & Reilly, 1993; Noe & Barber, 1993; Stilwell et al., 1998; Ostroff & Clark, 2001; Otto et al., 2010; Carless & Arnup, 2011; Webster & Beehr, 2013). Some general observations include the fact that all but two of the studies focus on intra-organizational moves. Two are
longitudinal in scope, thus identifying certain developments over time. All are quantitative in their methods which on the one hand is helpful in the identification of a range of different variables or factors likely to influence thinking about a move, e.g. demographic characteristics, personality traits, work attitudes, family influences. On the other hand a quantitative approach may not always explain the variance between certain outcomes (Noe et al., 1988, p. 61) and does not address the subjective nature of this enquiry, which seeks to understand how and why clergy prepare to move as they do in this particular context.

Landau and Hammer (1986) investigated the determinants of perceived ease of movement within an organization amongst young clerical employees seeking a better job. Whilst positive feedback from supervisors increased their perception of opportunities for mobility, the clerks were disinclined to use career networking as a means of creating job opportunities compared to managers (Gould & Penley, 1984). Several studies have identified the antecedents to an individual’s willingness to relocate and their effects upon an individual’s decision to accept or reject an internal move. Brett and Reilly (1988) identified a number of predictors of the attitudes towards a willingness to relocate for a more favourable job amongst families in US corporations where the husband’s job dictated a move. They found the number of children at home, job involvement and a positive attitude to relocation were important factors in this respect. Interestingly at the time, a spouse’s attitude was not found to be significant in terms of an employee’s willingness to relocate (see also Veiga, 1983, p. 80), although it was significant in predicting the decision to accept or reject a move (Brett & Reilly, 1988, p. 618). Yet a later study by Brett et al. (1993) found ‘the single most important variable was the spouse’s willingness to relocate’ (Stilwell et al., 1998), indicating the effect of societal changes over time. These relational dimensions of a potential move are consistently significant in the mobility studies reviewed here. Noe et al. (1988) and Noe & Barber (1993) also examined willingness to relocate but across different types of job change, i.e.
lateral moves, promotion, demotion or relocation within the same organization. They found that attachment to a community amongst professional and technical employees was a significant consideration for an employee required to relocate, whilst a lateral move without the need to relocate was influenced by job tenure and specialization (Noe et al., 1988; Stilwell et al., 1998). Further support for the importance of community and family connections in terms of willingness to relocate across different types of job change is established in studies of personnel in a US Fortune 100 company (Ostroff & Clark, 2001) and managers in three US manufacturing and financial institutions (Stilwell et al., 1998). These are interesting perspectives which resonate with the nature of ministry. This is because the majority of clergy and their families are located at the heart of their local community. Consequently, the loss of friendship ties, family support and social interaction at different levels is likely to be a major consideration when contemplating a move.

A study less congruent with the nature of ministry is one which identified that concerns in relation to relocation are mitigated when the move has certain benefits, e.g. an increase in salary, greater responsibility and improved prestige (Ostroff & Clark, 2001). However, this cost-benefit perspective on mobility (Turban, Campion & Eyring, 1992; Bretz, Boudreau & Judge, 1994; Ostroff & Clark, 2001) is likely to have limited appeal for the majority of clergy who receive low salaries and have limited opportunities for promotion. The salaries and benefits system within the Church of England offers limited scope for clergy to improve their financial lot and many are dependent upon their partners for a second income or earnings from additional work.

More recently, two studies looked at the determinants and outcomes of those individuals who make the decision to change career or occupation (Otto et al., 2010; Carless & Arnup, 2011), i.e. ‘the readiness to work in an occupation other than that for which one qualified and/or in which one has worked to date’ (Otto et al., 2010, p. 263). Whilst career change as defined above is not the focus of
this research study some of the findings are a helpful steer in terms of dimensions to consider as this study progresses. They include a 12 month period from when an individual first thinks about leaving a role to making a change; that engagement in job search behaviours raises awareness of alternative careers (Carless & Arnup, 2011, p. 88) and that tolerance of uncertainty, i.e. the capacity to tolerate situations that are ‘ambiguous, complex, and difficult to manage’ (Otto et al., 2010, p. 265; Budner, 1962) is an important element of willingness to change occupations. A specific measure of occupational mobility self-efficacy was also very significant in the willingness to change occupations (Otto et al., 2010, p. 270). Given the significance of self-efficacy beliefs in the context of career decision-making, i.e. ‘people’s judgements of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action’ (Bandura, 1986, p. 391; Kidd, 2006), these are likely to be an important factor in clergy thoughts of making a move and subsequent behaviours such as job search.

Age as a demographic variable was highlighted in several of the studies as an antecedent to the willingness to relocate or change career. Given the current demographic situation within the Church, i.e. 73% of clergy are aged between 45 and 64 (Church of England, 2013d) it is likely that potential participants for this study will largely be in this age range. Consequently, it is helpful to note what has been written about age as an antecedent to moving jobs. In some cases the older the individual is, the less likely they are to want to relocate or change career (Landau et al., 1992; Stilwell et al., 1998; Carless & Arnup, 2011). Some studies noted that age predicts willingness to accept only certain types of mobility opportunity, e.g. older workers were happy to accept a lateral move with no relocation (Ostroff & Clark, 2001) whereas age (young or old) did not predict relocation to a community if that community differs in ways which mean the individual will have to make ‘significant adjustments’ to their existing lifestyle (Noe & Barber, 1993, p. 171). Finally, Otto et al. (2010) and Otto & Dalbert (2012) focus on the fact that personality and work and social attitudes
consistently outweigh demographic characteristics such as age when it comes to explaining willingness to change occupations. All this suggests that perhaps age per se is not as important as we might think when determining models of career stage and mobility.

Finally, research explored the extent to which career-related factors predicted the rate and propensity of movement of manufacturing industry managers at different career stages (Veiga, 1983). The rate, pace and timing of movement (Veiga, 1983, p. 65; Becker & Strauss, 1956) in terms of individual progression is of interest to this research project as initial discussion with gatekeepers and other informants have suggested that the timing of moves is significant when clergy contemplate moving on. Furthermore, given that this study will endeavour to interview a range of clergy likely to be at different career stages, it is of interest that Veiga’s work accounted for the moderating effects of three work and career stages identified in the managerial career: corporate learning (age 29-37); corporate maturity (age 38-55) and pre-retirement (age 56-64) (Veiga, 1983, p. 66). Factors likely to predict movement fell under the following three headings: barriers to moving, i.e. personal marketability and community ties; career path determinants, i.e. the length of time and success of a first job; and motives for moving where career anxiety or impatience and fear of stagnation prevail. Veiga’s findings suggest that when it comes to intra-organizational moves, frequency of movement expressed in average time spent in a role is more predictive of mobility than the propensity or willingness to move. This suggests that past behaviour is a better predictor of future behaviour than current attitudes.

2.4.5 Summary – Career Theory in Relation to Job or Career Mobility
This section has explored and discussed careers literature, theory and empirical research likely to inform our understanding of clergy career mobility, in particular the antecedents to preparing for a move. First, two conceptual models with a tripartite approach to understanding how and why individual mobility is likely to occur, i.e. structural forces, individual differences and the interplay between the two, were discussed. These identify a wide range of factors likely to be considerations when anticipating a move (Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009). They include societal forces such as legislative change (structural), an individual’s capacity for exercising and exploiting their social capital (individual) and, finally, those features of the interplay between structure and agency likely to facilitate the occurrence of a move, e.g. knowledge about and the attractiveness and availability of future job roles (Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009). Next, the ongoing debate surrounding the boundaryless career and protean career was highlighted not least because of the prominence of these concepts in a number of career mobility studies and the emerging view that careers should be regarded as both bounded and boundaryless (Baruch & Hall, 2004; Tams & Arthur, 2010; Dany et al., 2011; Inkson et al., 2012). The notion of career agency (Tams & Arthur, 2010) which attends to culture and context and change and complexity offers a basis from which to consider the current career terrain of clergy in the Church of England and the steps they might need to take to navigate it. Finally, a range of empirical evidence from research into intra- and inter-organizational moves extends our understanding of the interplay between structure and agency, e.g. how job tenure and age affect someone’s willingness to move or relocate.

2.5. Theological Perspectives on Clergy Transition and Mobility

The aim of this section is to establish what has been written about clergy transition and mobility from perspectives rooted in clerical studies. In the
beginning there was a body of early writing and research originating from the USA which examined the notion of the clergy role and clergy career amongst priests and clergy from different religions (Fichter, 1961; Holmes, 1971; Hall & Schneider, 1973). These studies are important because they investigate the relationship between the individual cleric and the external influences and organizational conditions affecting clergy working lives, including their career trajectory. This was in contrast to a previous reliance on studies of personality and pastoral issues in relation to ministry (Hall & Schneider, 1973). Whilst the contexts in which these studies take place in terms of churchmanship and organization do not always compare directly with that of Anglican clergy, they still provide us with parameters for research into clergy mobility. For example, Fichter (1961) was an early proponent of clergy as purveyors of religion being ‘engaged in a full-time profession or occupation which can be submitted to sociological comparison and analysis’ (Fichter, 1961, p. 7). To that end, Hall and Schneider’s longitudinal, multi-method study of Catholic seminarians is framed within a general career development model which aims to identify the conditions under which priests experience psychological success in their careers over time. They reject any suggestion that the role of a priest can be viewed as ‘supernatural’, arguing that his daily involvement with human society means his career can, and should, be evaluated against those organizational criteria affecting the occupational identity of those in other careers and professions, such as the nature of particular jobs, relationships with colleagues, support systems and negotiation within Church boundaries. Furthermore, the study provides valuable insights into the theoretical and practical dimensions of designing a research study into an organization with unique and sensitive working practices and where the number of factors under consideration are wide-ranging. When investigating features of the conditions and outcomes required for psychological success, Hall and Schneider do so from the perspective of the individual and the organization. For example, the amount of autonomy an individual feels they can exercise with regard to work and personal goals and activities; the significance of a first role and first year of employment
in the organization on positive or negative attitudes towards a future move; the influence of authority structures and supervision on the career development process; and finally, how issues of trust, emotion and self-esteem amongst those responsible for change and development within an organization can undermine efforts to implement such changes (Hall & Schneider, 1973).

US researchers remain active with regard to clergy career studies, seemingly not too concerned about any kind of distinction between notions of career and religious vocation or calling. In fact, they are inclined to tackle it head-on or simply ignore it amidst perspectives which scope the terrain, e.g. clergy job-search (Wildhagen, Mueller & Wang, 2005); intentions to leave (McDuff & Mueller, 2000); occupational socialization (Hicks, 2008); first and second clergy careers (Malony & Hunt, 1991; Nesbitt, 1995); and the role of bishops in influencing the recruitment of priests (Yuengert, 2001). So, stereotypical perceptions of clergy career behaviour are that clergy make certain job-related choices based on criteria rooted in faith rather than temporal labour market considerations (McDuff & Mueller, 2000; Wildhagen et al., 2005). These assumptions have been challenged in studies involving US protestant clergy and a distinction found between clergy attachment to their employer (Church), where leaving intentions are based on rational considerations such as economic and human capital investments, and clergy attachment to their profession (ministry), where intentions to leave are bound up in a sense of a ‘professional service value’ or calling (McDuff & Mueller, 2000, p. 90). Research which examined the occupational socialization of American prison chaplains (Hicks, 2008) found that chaplains were able to reconcile the religious and correctional dimensions of their role in the face of strong institutional regulations. This suggests that clerics have a capacity for reconciling their faith with other job- or career-related demands cognitively and behaviourally.

Empirical research found that career progression amongst Catholic seminarians could no longer be related to pre-specified, age-related, life-span position (Hall
& Schneider, 1973). Such research resonates with changing employment patterns within the Church of England, i.e. the increase in older, second-career clergy that defy certain age parameters. For although keen to increase the number of young people training for ordination, the Church of England remains relatively unbiased towards older recruits who regard a move to ministry as a viable second career option and bring valuable skills and experiences, as well as certain expectations, to a diverse range of ministries. This was observed in a study of protestant clergy in the USA where second-career Episcopalian priests in particular were highly regarded for their ‘resource value’ (Nesbitt, 1995, p. 169). Interestingly, Nesbitt (1995) noted that certain prejudices may arise for second-career male clergy. These include first-career male clergy holding positions of influence with regard to selection for posts; myths surround second-career clergy as having failed in a first career and they are thereby viewed with some suspicion; and as a potential threat to first-career clergy. This is despite the fact that the wide range of experience and skills that second-career clergy bring are acknowledged as positive – not, however, in the context of providing advancement opportunities. The tasks, choices, decisions, experiences and psycho-social adjustments (Cytrynbaum & Crites, 1989) across the life- and career-span may well be the same for both first- and second-career clergy and these are likely to be experienced at different stages and different times such that certain age parameters in relation to when to move become less distinct. Hall and Schneider (1973) in their study of Catholic priests approached their analysis of role transitions by the length of time someone had been ordained into particular posts, rather than age. This approach resonates with the current clergy career terrain in the Church of England because it allows for greater flexibility of movement regardless of chronological age.

Salaries and formal and informal (discretionary) benefits have been investigated in the context of the determinants of US clergy job searches such as willingness to search for a job (Wildhagen et al., 2005). The study examined those operating in an open market system (McDuff & Mueller, 2000) where movement
within two particular denominations follows neoclassical labour market lines ‘involving supply and demand, economic rationality, and human capital characteristics’ (Wildhagen et al., 2005, p. 381). In this structure, clergy move around from congregation to congregation unconstrained by the organization which means they are able to seek out new posts based on different salary levels. It found that, contrary to the original hypothesis that searching for a job would decrease once a certain pay level had been reached, ministers were inclined to continue searching as a result of increased pay, something the researchers suggest is attributable to feelings of increased worth and financial aspiration (Wildhagen et al., 2005, p. 392).

Given that socioeconomic status has been shown to be linked to career mobility (Stilwell et al., 1998), these effects are likely to be in stark contrast to those experienced in the closed market structure operated by the Church of England. Here the deployment of clergy, low salaries (stipends) and formal benefits such as holidays, sick pay, pension and housing provision are established and managed centrally. An interesting dimension to the constraints on pay and benefits for Anglican clergy is the effect on what has been termed ‘fear of falling’ (Wildhagen et al., 2005, p. 384; Price, 2001). This describes how US male clergy are endeavouring to hold on to their status as middle class professionals despite significant changes in the nature and role of ministry and the pay and conditions under which they work, which are undermining their ability to provide a middle-class lifestyle for themselves and their families (Price, 2001). The extent to which Anglican clergy in the present research study are compensating for a lack of income and some displacement from the professional ranks by seeking out moves that provide other perceived benefits may be an important consideration for some as they contemplate moving. For those on lower incomes in the US clergy study, justice theories (Hegtvedt & Markovsky, 1995) help explain how those who feel they are not receiving fair pay for the work they do are more likely to seek out alternative employment (Wildhagen et al., 2005) than those who do. It was also found that neither formal benefits, i.e. those made explicit
in a contract of employment, nor informal or discretionary benefits, e.g. gifts or food given at the discretion of members of a church congregation, had a significant effect on an individual’s decision to seek out an alternative role. Whilst these studies have certain limitations in relation to the present study, i.e. US versus UK models of ministry, they offer up perspectives on one particular set of structural factors, salary and benefits (Ng et al., 2007, p. 369), that clergy in the Church of England may, or may not, take into consideration when preparing to move jobs within the Church.

Finally, an intriguing study was conducted amongst 215 Catholic bishops (Yuengert, 2001). It investigated how two characteristics, year of ordination to the episcopate and theological attitudes, related to the bishops’ role in recruiting priests. This was because traditional research into the decline in numbers being ordained into the priesthood was inclined to focus on the characteristics of potential recruits and social and cultural factors rather than the process and those involved in it. Controlling for diocesan effects such as population and income, it was found that the year of ordination to the episcopate had a significant positive effect on ordination rates. This finding was attributed to changes in the selection criteria for bishops following the appointment of a more conservative papal representative to the United States in 1980. The second characteristic of bishops posited as having an effect on rates of ordination was theological attitudes. These were measured by a bishop’s contribution to certain religious magazines and found to be higher or lower dependent upon the magazine’s editorial position. The author defends this indirect measure, arguing that such attitudes are difficult to measure directly. This is due to the tendency of bishops to be seen to ‘maintain unity with each other and with Rome’ (Yuengert, 2001, p. 309) rather than declaring their views in public. This research alerts us to a) the significance of senior gatekeepers in terms of their influence on the recruitment and subsequent movement of clergy across the institution; and b) how the management of mobility is contingent
upon changes to the selection criteria for those appointed to such roles, i.e. theological stance and leadership style.

The pattern of UK research into the careers of Anglican clergy and their attitudes towards the notion of career has been erratic. Despite work in the late 1970s which considered the career or occupation of clergy from the perspective of the status and identity of the clergy role including research into the influences upon the career trajectory of clergy, there has been a near 30-year absence of literature and empirical research relating to clergy transition until very recently, when new studies and writing have emerged.

The early studies, two empirical (Ranson, Bryman & Hinings, 1977; Towler & Coxon, 1979) and one conceptual (Russell, 1980) examined how the wider context of society, organizational setting and certain features of a clergyman’s (as it was then) background, e.g. education, were an important consideration in the final analysis. Using a mail questionnaire, Ranson et al. (1977) compared how Anglican clergy perceive their role and the organization in which they work alongside those of Roman Catholic priests and Methodist ministers. The study found that whilst societal change was having a direct influence on how all the clerics perceived their role in society and the wider world, it was the Anglican clergy who found it hardest to agree on their internal role within the Church of England. Ranson et al. (1977) conclude that this is due to the diversity of different theological viewpoints or churchmanship held by Anglican clergy leading to differences in how clergy define the professional nature or otherwise of their role. This finding was linked how clergy viewed the power and authority systems within the Church of England. It was found that whilst episcopal authority was a significant feature of how they perceive power and influence being exercised in the Church, it was the fact that at the time, the majority of clergy possessed the freehold which gave them not only physical security but considerable ‘ideological and decision-making freedom’ in their work (Ranson et al. 1977, p. 133). It will be interesting to see if the legacy of that independence
given the recent abolition of the freehold for many clergy, has any bearing on anticipatory thoughts and preparatory behaviours amongst the current research population.

A second early sociological study which adopted a multi-method approach explored the historical, theological and practical reasons for the identity crisis facing clergy as they endeavour to establish their role and status in a society where they are simultaneously marginal and highly visible (Towler & Coxon, 1979, p. 54). As part of that research the authors investigated the recruitment and training of clergy and the trajectory a clerical career might take over time (Towler & Coxon, 1979) which provides helpful insights into the career structure of clergy. *The Clerical Profession* (Russell, 1980) was pivotal in explaining the evolution of the clergy role, and his identification of the factors which influence the constant re-appraisal of clergy identity and occupation remain pertinent today. Nearly 20 years later, Harris (1998), undertaking research into the congregational challenges faced by ministers of different religious institutions, concluded that the Church was a *special* organization.

Following these early sociological enquires, most UK research into clergy working lives falls into two camps. The first concentrates on extrinsic concerns, such as how churches should be organised, led and managed by clergy (Nelson, 1996; Jackson, 2002; Adair & Nelson, 2004) and how career systems in the Church operate (Kuhrt, 2001a). Of particular relevance to this study is the relationship between the clergy role and power and authority structures within the Church (Torry, 2005) which have been discussed in some depth in Chapter 1. Others aim for wider appeal in their discussion of structural and pastoral issues (Osborne, 2004; Lewis-Anthony, 2009). The second camp examines intrinsic issues affecting the well-being of clergy such as gender, sexuality, stress and relationships (Robson, 1988; Coate, 1989; Fletcher, 1990; Furlong, 1998; Walrond-Skinner, 1998; Warren, 2002).
Some of the latter work is relevant to the present research study because it alerts us to the tension between authority structures and the fact that clergy are ordained. For example, in a practical manual of suggestions for preventing clergy stress (Lee & Horseman, 2002), the authors reflect on the ‘specialness’ of clergy. That is, those individuals who unlike other workers find themselves the focus of certain expectations from individuals, communities and wider society due to the fact of their ordination. It is argued that for individual clergy those vows of ordination give rise to certain expectations of themselves which set them apart. Another study adopted a psychodynamic analytical approach to understanding how parish clergy (N = 60) are inclined to view authority and accountability within the Church (Warren, 2002). Criticized by some for its negative outlook (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013), the study contains interesting data about how clergy experience the Church’s ambivalent authority structures. For the majority of clergy interviewed the ultimate authority lay with the bishop, followed by God and scripture, parishioners and themselves (Warren, 2002, p. 50). Of particular note was how clergy perceived the pastoral role of bishops in relation to the clergy in their diocese as undermined by a shift to a more ‘national’ role for bishops (Warren, 2002, p. 71). They also expressed a lack of trust and confidence in engaging with the hierarchy when anticipating changing jobs (Warren, 2002, p. 50).

A more substantial historical and cultural assessment of clerical identity aims to challenge ‘interiorized accounts’ (Percy, 2006, p. 3) of ministry and clergy identity which focus on the sacred and spiritual. Rooted in a number of social science viewpoints it is argued that only by taking account of wider definitions of culture, context and environmental factors will the complexities and ambiguities of the clergy role be clarified and understood. In 2007 the Clergy Appointments Adviser to the Church of England reported on how the Church might support those clergy embarking on their last decade of ministry. This was due to increasing concern at the numbers of clergy aged 55+ experiencing frustration, a lack of fulfilment and feeling ‘stuck’ due in part to a lack of opportunities for
career development and growth at this stage in their ministry. The author also notes how the current appointment system and review processes leave many older clergy feeling alienated, marginalized and radicalized (Church of England, 2007a, p. 17). Whilst the current study is interested in behaviours arising from personality rather than personality factors per se in relation to how clergy experience preparing to move jobs, a study by Village and Francis (2009) contains some insights into Anglican clergy attitudes towards their role based on personality measures. Whilst not exploring job mobility specifically, the authors assessed the psychological profiles of 863 male and female Anglican clergy in England using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to assess differences, strengths and weaknesses amongst ministers. They found that both sexes differed significantly from UK population norms with implications for clergy development and formation and professional practice. For example, a clergy preference for intuition over the sensing orientation of Anglican congregations may be the cause of potential conflict between priest and parishioner (Francis, Craig, Whinney, Tilley & Slater, 2007). Given that parish representatives who are often drawn from congregations play a significant role in the recruitment and selection of new clergy, this finding highlights how personality differences might affect clergy experience of the recruitment process. Whether that experience is positive or negative is likely to inform how clergy contemplate a future move.

Whilst my doctoral research has been in progress a small body of literature and empirical research relating to the movement of clergy within the Church of England has been published. This development has been important and interesting for several reasons. First, the discussion is located in a wide range of theoretical perspectives, i.e. social psychology, practical theology and career theory. Second, the empirical research is qualitative in method and consequently highlights some of the more subjective elements of clergy experience. Third, it indicates that issues relating to clergy mobility are rising up the Church agenda. Finally, it suggests a concerted effort to communicate some of these issues to the clergy population. Four studies will now be discussed.
First, the Church of England’s Ministry Division has established a longitudinal ‘Experiences of Ministry Survey’ (2011-2015) in conjunction with academic researchers which aims to understand more about what will engage and sustain clergy during their ministry. Theoretically framed by a model of work engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010), participants are invited to respond to an online survey. The only available outcome at the time of writing is a very short ‘Respondent Findings Report’ (2011) which is inconclusive in its findings and offers no insight into clergy experience of transition. More helpful is the original research note (Church of England, 2010b) which preceded the online survey and considered how clergy might be better developed and supported in their ministry. Two of the four themes identified as being significant to engagement with ministry have some relevance to this study of clergy transition due to their focus on career development. The first is that a ‘laissez-faire culture’ exists in relation to learning and development for clergy despite learning and development being identified as a key driver of engagement. Clergy report being wholly responsible for their own training and development needs beyond initial training and having difficulty in admitting those needs where necessary. Second, the report suggests that clergy are inclined to feel unsupported and remote from their leadership teams including in some cases bishops who have the authority to influence those opportunities for development likely to enhance engagement. There is a sense of a lack of tangible career support in these findings which suggests that clergy might perceive the management of movement in general in similar terms.

Specifically related to clergy mobility is a guide to the appointment of clergy to parishes (Pedrick & Blanch, 2011). Written by two non-ordained career coaches it addresses the practical, logistical and emotional dynamics of making appointments when the vicar moves on. Written for those responsible for making appointments and discerning vocations to ministry, it is also aimed at providing clergy candidates with insight into how the recruitment and selection
process works and what they can do to help themselves as they prepare for a move. What distinguishes the book from secular career-related guides, even those written for the general market by ordained clergy (Lees, 2011), is that the authors position God and prayer as central to the process. Theological reflection is a constant theme as the authors guide readers through the Church of England recruitment process. This, and the fact that the book reflects recruitment and selection best practice and is full of common sense advice based on the authors’ extensive experience of coaching clergy, may explain the very positive reception that the book received from ordained and lay ministers.

Empirical research into the lives of 46 rural or area deans within the Church of England examined a range of perspectives relating to modern clerical life (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013). The research explored how clergy balance a commitment to their ordination vows involving obedience, sacrifice and personal relationships with partners, friends and family alongside the demands of modern ministry including managing their career trajectory (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 100). Rural or area dean is a voluntary ‘middle management’ role that clergy can take up in addition to their primary role as priest. The authors describe the role as having evolved from ‘the pastoral care of clergy colleagues’, with responsibility for maintaining communication links between the local church and the bishop, to responsibility for strategy, policy and planning at a local level (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 13). Interestingly, the majority of participants (74%) were aged between 40 and 59 which reflects the age profile of those coming forward for my study (77%). Although I was not exploring gender differences, the gender split was also almost identical, i.e. 69.6% male (my study, 68%), 30.4% female (my study, 32%). The research used qualitative methods to explore the subjective experiences of a particular group of clergy alongside a comprehensive analysis of the structural forces of the institution which constrain and enable them as they go about their work. Findings relating to career aspiration or ambition and potential career mobility resonated with the data I was analysing from my own research. It is important to note that only
eight interviewees commented on this dimension of their ministry with the authors noting the ‘reticence’ of clergy in this respect (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 100). Consequently, the issues identified here were often reported by just one cleric. They included how taking on the role of area or rural dean raised an individual’s hopes of being appointed to a senior post despite the reality of a lack of senior roles within the Church, and the subsequent disappointment and frustration that can cause. Lateral transfers were identified as the most common move and those often provided unexpected fulfilment and development when other opportunities had evaporated. Furthermore, the role of bishops emerged as significant in two ways. First, the emotional impact of being approached by a bishop to apply for a role, regardless of whether it was in the best interests of the individual or not, was reported on. Second, some clergy regarded direct intervention via ‘a phone call’, usually from the bishop, as preferable to a competitive recruitment process. Influences upon mobility were identified as children’s education, a spouse’s career, and marriages where both individuals are ordained and the opportunities for achieving a mutually satisfying career outcome are likely to be met with ‘institutional resistance’ (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p.75). The authors do not expand on what this resistance might be, although anecdotal evidence suggests it lies in the Church’s inability to reward and house both partners satisfactorily within the current system.

Finally, a collection of short essays by different authors, the majority of whom are ordained, was published by those responsible for continuing ministerial development in the Church (Ling, 2013). Having been invited to ‘reflect theologically on transitions’ (Ling, 2013, p. xiv), each author explores a different perspective on how clergy might move on in ministry. Of particular interest to this study were three essays. The first, based on theories of attachment and exploration (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1965; Bowlby, 1977) discusses the importance of a secure base from which to approach a transition (Harle, 2013). This resonates with Ng et al.’s (2007) view that attachment styles are a determinant of career mobility. Harle (2013) discusses how such security in transition can be
achieved by highlighting the significance of consistency, psychological safety and trust, the latter developing ‘not through grand pronouncements, but through the relentless consistency experienced in everyday interactions’ (Harle, 2013, p. 13). A second essay (Aveyard, 2013) draws upon empirical research (Aveyard & Barley, 2011) into why the Church’s training process was not producing the quality or calibre of parish minister required by senior clergy. It suggests that the individual call to ministry can become a ‘controlling narrative’ which creates a narrowing of perspective when it comes to growth, development and mobility, e.g. into a different type of ministry. It also identified a gap between high levels of confidence amongst curates completing their training and disillusionment at the realities of leadership amongst those who had experienced incumbency for two years or more. Yet the author takes no prisoners, placing responsibility for understanding and managing their psychological well-being firmly with individuals. He challenges clergy to ‘attend to the cognitive dissonance’ evoked by remaining open to a range of different theological viewpoints whilst managing the day-to-day reality of their working lives as they contemplate moving on. Notable is scant reference on the part of Aveyard to the institution’s responsibilities in this respect (Aveyard, 2013, p. 35).

Last but not least in this collection is research by a non-ordained academic (Sturges, 2013) which draws on career orientation (Schein, 1996) and career success theories (Sturges, 1999) to examine the meaning of career success to Church of England clergy and those factors likely to help or hinder its achievement (Sturges, 2013, p. 49). Career success is not the focus of my study because my experience of working with clergy and the clergy literature indicate that notions of success are likely to sit uncomfortably with those of calling and vocation. Yet anticipating a successful transition as part of preparing to move is acknowledged to be bound up in notions of objective and subjective career success (Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005; Forrier et al., 2009). Key findings from 36 qualitative interviews highlight the barriers to career development that might lead to career success. They include discrimination, inadequate
appointment systems and an inconsistent approach by the institution to career support where career advice, guidance and help with finding a job was not always forthcoming from senior clergy. Clergy reported feeling uncomfortable with having to promote themselves as part of managing their own career. Positive career support at the outset of ministry was seen as important to future career development, thereafter personal and spiritual support in the form of friends, family, clergy colleagues and spiritual directors were identified as the main enablers in terms of how clergy regard their career success. Sturges (2013) concludes that having a calling influences how clergy perceive career success, yet there is no real evidence for this in the essay. The main findings relate to clergy perceptions of career success, e.g. ‘a desire for influence, development and recognition within the Church’ (Sturges, 2013, p. 60). These reflect career success factors found in earlier secular studies (Schein, 1996; Sturges, 1999). Finally, the author suggests that the Church of England could do more to support the development and affirmation of clergy in their career and work.

2.5.1 Comparative Contexts of Mobility in Relation to the Clerical Role

A feature of these empirical studies is how the subjective experience of clergy highlights certain structural issues relating to preparing for a move within the Church, e.g. recruitment and selection practices and processes. Research into how career systems operate within academia, the civil service and medicine suggests that rather than ministry being a career that sits apart from other occupations (Percy, 2006), the careers of clergy have some similarities with those in other contexts. First, Baruch and Hall (2004), drawing on a study by Caplow and McGee (1958), identify a number of features of the traditional academic career model which resonate strongly with those of ministry. These include the fact that academic careers have traditionally been conducted in institutions rooted in historic rituals with simple hierarchical structures and a distinctive national role (Caplow & McGee, 1958; Baruch & Hall, 2004, p. 243; Richardson, 2009). Furthermore both workforces are engaged in a diversity of
tasks and have a degree of flexibility in terms of role content and geographic mobility (Caplow & McGee, 1958; Baruch & Hall, 2004, p. 243; Richardson, 2009).

Baruch and Hall (2004) identify some of the changes in academia and posit several arguments and ideas for a revised career model based on recent developments. Some of these suggestions are congruent with the current status of career systems in the Church of England in terms of changes and developments in how clergy are recruited and developed. For example, Caplow and McGee studied ten US research universities and identified the avowed process of evaluating job and tenure candidates alongside the ‘reality’ of inter-departmental tensions, a lack of openness within the system and the emotive nature of peer review, prestige and reputation. Baruch and Hall note how university career information systems have changed in recent years with technological advances. However, what has not changed, in their opinion, is the subjectivity in relation to how career decisions are made: ‘the judgement process, decisions about who participates in the hiring process and the inter-unit negotiations within the university would all be quite familiar to Caplow and McGee’ (Baruch & Hall, 2004, p. 247). Given the ambiguity and ambivalence that exists within the Church in terms of how clergy are organized and managed, the academic model offers helpful insights into some of the tensions that may exist for individual clergy as they endeavour to negotiate a career trajectory within the Church.

Other changes which compare to ministry include systems of governance which are inclined towards a ‘management’ model; commercial considerations that have to be balanced with research interests; how the sociological background of academics is changing; the tensions between structural forces and individual priorities and values; and where identity or self-concept is challenged or even undermined in the face of institutional demands (Baruch & Hall, 2004, p. 246). All these features of change in academia can be related to those in ministry, e.g.
the changing profile of those coming forward for ordination or the pressure to pursue ministry that is ‘mission based’, i.e. bums on seats at the expense of pastoral skills. As part of their quest to promote the academic career model as a ‘prototype’ for corporate careers, the authors identify features of academia which they believe might translate well into different career systems. Many of these are likely to resonate with those in ministry, e.g. the knowing whom dimension of the ‘intelligent career’ at the level of personal and professional networks (Arthur, Claman & DeFillippi, 1995); taking sabbaticals; lateral and downward career moves at certain career stages; the need for resilience in the face of setbacks and challenges. Those aspects of academia likely to be less transferable to corporate contexts but quite transferable to ministry careers include job tenure; lack of enforced exits from the institution; and a closed-market structure in relation to pay and benefits.

The second career model that is comparable with the Church is discussed in the context of the career civil service which the author defines as a ‘distinctive career’ due in part to the fact that being promoted internally is the route to career progression (Ridley, 1983). The study examines the essential elements of promotion within the civil service i.e. ‘a profession apart, following its own path through life because it requires special qualifications, employs special skills and expects its members to hold special values’ (Ridley, 1983, p. 179), all of which resonate with clergy career. Ridley describes the highly formalized procedures (pp. 186-188) that exist for selecting individuals at different levels, i.e. administrative or graduate ‘high flyers’ within the service and how different approaches to appointment decisions are played out within those procedures. For example, the discretion, political interference and personal predilection exercised in relation to who is recommended for promotion to ‘top posts’ (p. 184, p. 188) often involving the Prime Minister’s office, whilst staff seeking progression via ‘promotion boards’ (p. 187) may also face discretionary decisions which can seem secretive or lack ‘open reporting’ (p. 187). These processes resonate strongly with how the Church goes about appointing individuals to
senior posts via a process that is highly secretive and opaque to all but a few key personnel at a senior level in Church and Government. Such an approach could contribute to uncertainty for those involved with implications for morale and confidence when it comes to deciding whether or not to make a career move.

Insights into the dilemma of engaging with a recruitment process that is purportedly neutral is found in a study by Van den Brink (2011) who reported on how gender inequalities are perpetuated in academic medicine because of ‘dominant methods of informal recruitment’ (p. 2034). This study focussed on the treatment of senior female academics by ‘scouts’, senior academics who are influential in identifying and recommending potential candidates for a short-list. It was noted how female academics are overlooked for promotion due to closed procedures and the biased perceptions of scouts of both sexes in relation to desirable qualities such as leadership and commitment. Here, staff were inclined to accept and collude with recruitment and selection practices embedded in the institutional culture.

What these three studies have in common is the fact that the ‘rules of engagement’ (Baruch & Hall, 2004, p. 246) when it comes to making a move are often bound up in a lack of transparency or secrecy generated by those in control of career systems. A recent book about Bletchley Park, the decoding organization operated by British intelligence during the Second World War, describes how it operated during the height of its powers (Grey, 2013). It explores how activities in the organization were structured and organized alongside the ‘personalities, career histories and leadership styles of different managers’ (Land, 2013, p. 1567). So whilst the focus of the book is not entirely on career systems at the level of recruitment practices, it seeks to address the duality of agency and structure in an organization where secrecy was paramount and control of the movement of staff was closely managed. Consequently there are aspects of Grey’s account of how the organization was led and managed that echo with certain practices within the Church of England. For example,
Bletchley Park functioned highly successfully in spite of, or because of, the ‘creative anarchy’ (King, A., 2012) that reigned across almost 9,000 employees at its peak. This was because a very small (Oxbridge), very densely networked group of competent leaders knew and understood each other socially, culturally and intellectually and their leadership was underpinned by a solid, traditional administrative structure. Whilst the Church is no longer led entirely by Oxbridge recruits the dominance of social capital as a source of personal networks remains in enabling mutual understanding between senior clerics and Church administrators of how the institution functions. Furthermore, secrecy kept Bletchley Park together; it was likened to the ‘specialness’ of a monastic order where everyone believed in something higher than themselves. It functioned with ‘chiefs’ (Taylor, 2012) who understood the purpose of the work and ‘Indians’ (Taylor, 2012) who knew very little. There was no shared sense of purpose as individuals got on with what they were doing without knowing what anyone else was doing, or thinking that what they were doing was the only ‘secret’ part of Bletchley Park. It could be argued that comparing the Church with such a clandestine and long-defunct organization is anachronistic. Yet how agency was exercised by both chiefs and Indians resonates with the ambiguous authority relationship between Church leadership and individual clergy, the fact that clergy regard themselves as independent and autonomous in their daily work and that clergy are likely to experience preparing to move jobs in circumstances that are bounded or constrained in complex and powerful ways.

Another career which has been identified in the sociological literature as being similar to clergy is that of doctors (Towler & Coxon, 1979). Empirical research establishes that clergy and medics make their career choices at an early age and are strongly influenced in that choice by similar factors such as familial role models. Whilst their respective socialization experiences during training are very different, such as the acquisition of the cognitive and technical skills of a doctor versus the affective and pastoral skills of a priest, they have other factors in common which go to the heart of their chosen occupation. These include ‘a
trained incapacity to perform other roles’ (Towler & Coxon, 1979, p. 118) with consequences for the individual and work which involves them at first hand in matters of life and death, ‘the most humane of contact’.

2.5.2 Summary of Theological Perspectives on Clergy Transition and Mobility

This discussion of theological and sociological perspectives from the literature and empirical research in relation to clergy transition and mobility has mapped some of the developments in the field. These include US conceptual and empirical studies in the early 1960s through to a growing body of literature and research in the UK today. It has established how US researchers have regarded clergy with a vocation or calling as functioning in the real world as opposed to conducting their lives in a spirit of divine guidance or intervention (Fichter, 1961). Consequently, their use of vocational perspectives and career models to help explain individual and organizational influences on the careers of clergy (Fichter, 1961; Hall & Schneider, 1973), gave me confidence in this respect as the present study progressed. Recent US studies continue to address the realities of career mobility in the context of ministry, i.e. searching for a job and remuneration. In contrast to activity in the US, the focus of early UK literature on clergy occupation is inclined to be more sociological, i.e. the evolution of clergy identity, the marginalization of the clergy role and, more recently, clergy well-being. This has provided important context for the present study. Also reviewed was a growing body of UK literature and research into clergy careers and career mobility. This alerts us to a range of different career development issues and tensions likely to arise for clergy who are anticipating a career move in the Church at the present time. Finally, navigating careers in comparable contexts to ministry highlighted common issues, e.g. career systems that can appear confusing and opaque for potential recruits.

2.6. Theological and Career Perspectives on Clergy Calling
Whilst we can only hypothesize at this stage, the concept of calling emerges as significant in the final analysis of this study. The following discussion will compare how academic theologians are inclined to view clergy calling in relation to work and career against the burgeoning organizational literature which attempts to address different dimensions of calling in relation to individual and organizational careers.

2.6.1 Defining Calling and Career – Theological Perspectives

With a view to later discussion of whether clergy vocation and career theory and practice can, or do, intersect, it is both helpful and important at this point to make clear the distinction between calling or vocation and the notion of spirituality in relation to clergy. This is because clergy unequivocally regard their earliest call to ministry as a call from God, to do God’s work within a spiritual context. That spiritual context is defined as the practice of engaging in private and public prayer and worship and personal reflection ‘to sustain and energise them in daily life and future ministry’ (Church of England, 2011c, p. 1). Academic theologians view a religious vocation as work driven by a calling from God, and as such use the terms calling and vocation interchangeably. They distinguish calling or vocation from a temporal sense of fitness for a particular occupation or profession, a state, i.e. marriage, or context, i.e. vocational training. They emphasize the supernatural, spiritual and sacrificial aspects of vocation, the mystery which discerns God’s presence and a faith which puts Christ at the forefront of clergy commitment (Fichter, 1961; Martineau, 1981; Hall & Schneider, 1973; Towl & Coxon, 1979; Church of England, 2011c). These transcendent perspectives are a fundamental tenet of Christian calling whereby those who feel they are called to priestly work are equal to being ‘transformed into a transparent medium of godly action’ (Goldman, 1988, p. 42; Christopherson, 1994, p. 233).

The theological literature on calling and vocation and spirituality is extensive and beyond the remit of this study. However, helpful perspectives on how an
individual might view a personal calling within a spiritual framework by identifying different dimensions of a calling to Christian ministry are offered by Dewar (2000) and Niebuhr (1956). For example, Niebuhr (1956) highlights a difference in emphasis between four components of calling: i) the call to be a Christian, ii) the secret call, iii) the providential call and iv) the ecclesiastical call, noting their relative importance and relationship to each other. Dewar (2000), still within a spiritual context, also distinguishes between three ‘senses’ of calling; the calling to be a Christian; being called to undertake the role of a minister; and a unique, inner personal calling that is bound up in an infinite variety of activities that challenge and transcend the expectations of the individual and society. So, whilst one person might take up the call because a particular set of talents would be advantageous to a certain church or role (a providential call), another might feel called because of an ‘inner conviction’ or secret call, which is a basic tenet of their churchmanship, i.e. evangelical ordinands within the Anglican Church. This literature demonstrates the complexity of the reasoning behind an individual’s understanding of their particular calling and that a calling assumes different forms and varied meanings for each individual (Towler & Coxon, 1979).

To what extent the calling and spirituality of clergy is relevant to how they go about preparing to move jobs during the course of their career has not been widely explored in theological writing on clergy career and occupation. A helpful contribution from sociological and theological perspectives is Peyton and Gatrell’s (2013) reflections on the obedient and sacrificial nature of ministry evoked by Foucault’s ‘Panoptican’ metaphor. This is based on the 18th century architectural design of Jeremy Bentham’s Panoptical prison. The Panoptican prison subjected inmates to continuous surveillance from a central point. As a result, it was anticipated that the prisoners would demonstrate greater compliance with the rules and, more importantly, that they would self-regulate their behaviour. Peyton and Gatrell posit that for clergy, such surveillance extends beyond the mere physical:
The ordination of a priest disciplines and governs body and soul during every waking hour from the moment of their ordination, until death. (p. 53)

The panoptical guard in Bentham’s prison, however, could have jurisdiction only over inmates’ bodies. He could know nothing of their innermost thoughts. The panoptical gaze of God by contrast, is believed by priests to see into the reaches of their very souls. (p. 84)

The obedient and sacrificial narrative attributed to clergy by Peyton and Gatrell is a powerful motivator which leaves ‘limited room for manoeuvre in personal matters’ (p. 44). It also highlights what for many clergy is a lifelong struggle to achieve personal authenticity or congruence between the public self, encompassing a requirement to function in the real world, and the private self, embracing vocational sacrifice. The point here is that clergy function within the disciplinary framework of ordination and as such they face inherent tensions between personal agency bound up in the sacrificial nature of their calling whilst pursuing freedom and choice in matters earthly (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013), e.g. preparing to change jobs.

Alternatively, and as previously discussed, a number of studies have identified and clarified the interdependence of individual and organizational perspectives which acknowledge calling, that exist for clergy as they negotiate a career within the Church. For example, views of clergy as selflessly pursuing a calling regardless of the demands and realities of everyday life and work have been challenged in the theological literature as outmoded and unrealistic for some time (Fichter, 1961; Towler & Coxon, 1979; Christopherson, 1994; Wildhagen et al., 2005). Some scholars are unambiguous in locating calling within the established organizational processes and systems of the Church, emphasizing the functional nature of the clergy role (Fichter, 1961; Towler & Coxon, 1979). They argue that it is comparable with other occupational roles in the work and career domain where corporate obligations exist and clergy are engaged in ‘a
branch of economic activity’ comparable to those in secular occupations (Fichter, 1961, p. 8; Martineau, 1981; Hall & Schneider, 1973; Sowerby, 2001; Bagilhole, 2003). Matters of denomination, Church structure, Church ideology, personal psychology and societal influences all contribute to the decision to pursue a particular type of calling within the Church (Towler & Coxon, 1979; Dewar, 2000). A more recent Protestant study demonstrated how clergy take into consideration many of the same factors as any other employee when deciding to search for a new job (Wildhagen et al., 2005). In a quantitative study which drew on theories of job search propensity (Halaby, 1988), Wildhagen et al. devised a ‘push/pull/human capital’ framework from which to examine how clergy go about seeking a new job. They concluded that calling was a secondary consideration in relation to clergy job search (Wildhagen et al., 2005). Hankle (2010) also notes that in discerning a vocation to the Catholic priesthood, ‘men are using mental faculties’ as they contemplate their decision, a psychological process common to all members of society (p. 202). These findings indicate a capacity amongst clerics for temporal career development tasks involved in preparing for a career move such as career self-efficacy and career decision-making that can be legitimately explored with reference to the organizational literature, including organizational literature dedicated to calling.

To what extent these wider perspectives will apply to clergy calling we don’t know at this stage, but some empirical research has begun to address the complex levels of meaning associated with calling in different contexts. For example, Bunderson and Thompson’s research (2009) into US zookeepers is interesting because the zookeepers share some occupational similarities with clergy; often degree educated, with low pay, poor prospects and difficult work whilst attributing significant importance to work and identity. Researchers found that whilst meaningfulness in the zookeepers’ work was central to their experience, the way they thought about calling was broader than those secular perspectives which emphasize self-actualization and individualistic ideals. They propose a neo-classical view of calling, rooted in Lutheran, Calvinist and
Webberian thinking whereby ‘calling is that place in the world of productive work that one was created, designed, or destined to fill by virtue of God-given gifts and talents and the opportunities presented by one’s station in life’ (p. 33). The emphasis is on duty and destiny, on a holistic approach to the relationship between individual, occupational territory and work role. This model addresses the complexity of ‘deeply meaningful work’ and may offer an alternative framework from which to view clergy calling and career by achieving a balance between the spirituality and religiousness and functionality of clergy work and career.

2.6.2 Defining Calling and Career – Career Perspectives

Growth in the volume of research into calling in relation to work, career and well-being has burgeoned in the last decade with some 40 studies emerging in the past seven years (Duffy & Dik, 2013). Scholars from within the fields of organizational behaviour, vocational psychology, sociology and management science have explored a range of career development constructs associated with calling, spirituality and religiousness. As previously discussed, the Church makes a clear distinction between calling or vocation and spirituality and religiousness in material aimed at individuals wishing to explore the basis of a possible vocation (Church of England, 2011c). Careers literature which distinguishes between calling, ‘work that a person perceives as his purpose in life’ and which may or may not involve religious belief (Hall & Chandler, 2005, p. 160); spirituality, ‘a personal state or manner of being’ (Lips-Wiersma, 2002a, p. 385) and ‘an individual’s level of private prayer and relationship with a higher power’ (Duffy & Blustein, 2005, p. 430); and religiousness, a social phenomenon, where an individual has a relationship with an ‘organized faith community’ involving a specific religion and church (Duffy, Reid & Dik, 2010, p. 210; Duffy & Blustein, 2005; Duffy, 2006) are relevant to this study. Career scholars have begun to make these distinctions explicit in relation to career development although it is acknowledged that findings are tentative (Duffy et al., 2010, p. 212) and that there is little unanimity on conceptual definitions particularly in relation to
calling (Hagmaier & Abele, 2012; Duffy & Dik, 2013). What consensus there is in relation to calling encompasses three components: an external summons or being called by a higher power to a particular type of work; that a person’s work has a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives; that the work contributes to the lives of others or the greater good (Duffy & Dik, 2013).

Interestingly, given that this is a study of individuals for whom spirituality and religiousness are likely to be significant factors in the experience of moving jobs, religion and religious calling is inclined to be viewed as a constraint or limiting factor in calling and career research as scholars endeavour to locate it within the career domain. For example, religion has been described as having a ‘divisive role’ in workplace studies (Lips-Wiersma, 2002a, p. 2002); it is also argued that religious connotations exclude individuals who may be called to a career from other sources (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007). Along the same lines, Elangovan, Pinder & McLean (2010) note how, even if someone is responding to a transcendent or divine call, ‘the nature of the activity inherent in the calling itself is not considered to be necessarily religious in nature’ (p. 431). Other researchers emphasize the internal origin of a call, one which is bound up in matters of personal conscience, passion, values, gifts and self-actualization rather than divine inspiration, where ‘a set of [religious] beliefs is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for having a calling’ (Hall & Chandler, 2005, p. 161; Dobrow, 2004). Finally, there are those who consider ‘the spiritual connotation of calling has fallen away’ in relation to meaningful work (Conklin, 2012, p. 298). These are arguments for a more expansive, secular notion of calling in career that is directly related to purpose, meaningfulness and personal fulfilment in work and organizational behaviours (Hall & Chandler, 2005; Dik & Duffy, 2009; Elangovan et al., 2010).

Numerous studies and empirical research conceptualize and measure calling, spirituality and religiousness in relation to career concepts and well-being. For some, the situation has reached the stage where calling is commonly privileged
as ‘the idealized career form’, whilst career is ‘the site for fulfilling one’s transcendent calling’ (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014, p. 2). Those studies which have investigated the dimensions of career likely to influence how clergy prepare to move jobs identify the influence of calling on different dimensions of career maturity amongst college students (Duffy & Dik, 2013). Career maturity is defined as ‘the readiness to deal with the developmental tasks appropriate to one’s career stage’ (Kidd, 2006, p. 20; Super, 1974; Crites, 1978). Calling has been found to relate to career maturity tasks such as career planning and career self-efficacy, vocational self-clarity, vocational identity, career choice comfort and career decidedness (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Steger, Pickering, Shin & Dik, 2010; Hirschi & Hermann, 2012, 2013). All these studies use quantitative methods using two measures, the Brief Calling Scale (BCS) and the Calling and Vocation Questionnaire (CVQ) to assess the various dimensions of calling in relation to these career constructs (Duffy & Dik, 2013). Research into calling and career decision-making in a longitudinal study found that young students who experienced an early calling to a particular career domain, although they had yet to establish themselves in that career, were more likely to ignore career advice that might be helpful when making career decisions compared to those experiencing a weaker early calling (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2012). Furthermore, it was established that this mindset persisted at least until the individuals were 24 years old.

Of particular interest are studies which investigate spirituality and religiousness in relation to career development not least because this is a research population with a religious calling. Furthermore, the historical origins of calling as a religious concept are widely acknowledged in the calling literature (Duffy, Borges & Hartung, 2009; Steger et al., 2010; Hernandez, Foley & Beitin, 2011). Career decision self-efficacy amongst college students was found to be positively linked to spirituality, i.e. an awareness of God in someone’s life and religiousness with implications for how confident an individual is likely to feel navigating the tasks of career development in later adulthood (Duffy & Blustein, 2005). Steger et al.
(2010) found that meaningfulness in life as part of the broader concept of calling was both secular and sacred in orientation amongst students. Regardless of whether an individual viewed their calling as intrinsically religious or as less religious, i.e. the meaning or purpose in their life, both perspectives were related to calling and psychological and career variables such as positive affect, well-being and more focussed career decision-making. A qualitative, longitudinal study examined how college students (N = 10) view the relationship between spirituality and their career development (Royce-Davis & Stewart, 2000). Findings highlight tensions between spiritual ‘struggles’ and spiritual ‘growth’, both of which relate to how personal value systems are integrated or denied in relation to career choice and decision-making (Royce-Davis & Stewart, 2000; Duffy, 2006). Another qualitative study reports that students (N = 12) regard God as a direct influence on career planning and career choice (Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor & Lewis-Coles, 2006). A small, qualitative study amongst adults (N = 7, all non-clerics) from a Roman Catholic Church in the USA examined the process by which an individual follows a religious call to a career (Hernandez et al., 2011, p. 82). The study identified different themes which describe and explain the process, experience and resources individuals employ in pursuit of their calling to a particular career, e.g. having a mutual relationship with God, struggles with faith arising from doubt or particular experiences and the support of other people whilst deciding how and where to pursue a calling. An interesting finding was the ambivalence that pervades the process of discerning a faith calling which can exacerbate career indecision (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007). Participants were found to take an ‘indirect’ path over a long period of time, partly due to a lack of clarity about what the calling might be and other constraints such as resistance from family or conflicting values (Hernandez et al., 2011, p. 83). This final study is notable because it involves a research population other than students and contributes to a field dominated by quantitative methods which are inclined to rely on a few measurement scales, i.e. the BCS and the CVQ (above) and small sample numbers. The lack of diversity amongst research populations on calling has been noted along with
calls for more investigation into: whether the source of a calling is relevant; longitudinal research into calling; and links between calling and behaviours (Duffy & Dik, 2013).

From this extensive body of literature and research different theoretical perspectives have emerged which offer potential explanations for how, why or if clergy with a religious calling respond in the same way or differently to other workers when faced with the preparatory tasks of a work role change or transition (Nicholson & West, 1988; Kidd, 2006). These perspectives, agency and structure; time; vocational identity; proactive behaviours; and disillusionment or ‘the dark side’, will now be discussed.

2.6.2.1 Agency and Structure
Some studies have highlighted the interplay between the spirituality or calling of an individual and the organizational environment in which it is enacted (Lips-Wiersma, 2002a; Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). Lips-Wiersma (2002a) noted that spiritually orientated workers who can no longer exercise or fulfil their sense of a meaningful life as a result of workplace changes will generate both intra- and inter-role transitions. One conceptual paper adopts a discourse framework in order to analyse and problematize how calling is invoked as either careers-as-calling or calling-as-career (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). Careers-as-calling reflect a calling which is enacted in a career; calling-as-career means career is privileged as the site for pursuing a calling. Five sub-discourses are suggested as having the potential to encourage or disrupt the agency fundamental to an individual’s pursuit of a calling (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). Of interest to this research into clergy mobility is whether or not there is any distinction between how clergy might perceive or manage their careers-as-calling and calling-as-career; and how three of the sub-discourses, e.g. necessity, agency and control and temporal continuity reflect some of the issues likely to arise between individual clergy and the institution in the context of anticipating a career move.
It is suggested that making *career*-as-*calling* (my emphasis) ‘necessary’ or obligatory puts undue pressure on individuals to fulfil the notion of a calling when there are very real financial, personal or familial constraints on why that might not be achievable (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). This is likely to resonate with clergy functioning in an institution where having a calling is a fundamental requirement of ministry. Whether *calling*-as-*career* (my emphasis) is a possible state for this population is an interesting consideration. Berkelaar and Buzzanell regard calling as a site of both individual agency and social control and suggest a number of ways in which individuals and employers might exercise both, often to the detriment of the individual, for example when an individual is the ‘author’ of their personal calling (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014, p. 11) and an intrinsic call results in career indecision, failure to engage in career development tasks or even foreclosing on certain career options (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Dobrow, 2013; Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014).

It is suggested that a calling rooted in an external call from whatever source, secular or divine, is a ‘likely site for domination and control’ (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014, p. 10) manifested in managerial control or the values of an occupation or organization. For example, qualitative research which attended to calling in the objective career domain investigated how the employer/employee relationship is affected when calling work was deemed to involve a level of personal sacrifice such as long hours and physical suffering (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). Zookeepers regarded themselves as exploited by management through such terms as poor pay and working conditions, but accepted the ‘perceived mistreatment’ as a further sacrifice for what they believe is a moral duty at the heart of their calling to work with animals. The employment relationship was also defined by a level of vigilance and suspicion as keepers held their employers morally accountable for the work of the zoo.

What is interesting here is the structural aspect of a troubled employer/employee relationship, at least as far as the employees are
concerned. We do not know if, or to what extent, the Church is exploiting clergy with a calling in the way that management appear to be taking advantage of the morally driven zookeepers. But it alerts us to the structural processes that clergy are operating under which may influence an individual’s decision to move jobs. For example, it is argued that in instances of clergy stress or burnout, blaming the problem on a range of psychological, failing spirituality- or personality-driven factors lets the organization ‘off the hook’, when in fact it is the negative or ‘bad situation’ which should be the source of scrutiny (Maslach, 2003; Lewis-Anthony, 2009).

Finally, calling research has identified the role of other people as both enabling and constraining in how individuals might perceive and pursue their calling and career. For individuals who might wish to adapt, change or even reject their calling the response of others in their support system might be viewed as a constraint on their agency (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). This also links to temporal perspectives on calling, i.e. the assumption that calling, once established as part of individual identity and a given career domain, is consistent across a lifetime (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). Given the intense socialization that clergy experience as part of their early training and formation and the likely significance of personal networks of support, the idea that they might face opposition to any kind of re-thinking of calling in relation to a career move during the course of their ministry is an important and interesting consideration.

2.6.2.2 Proactive Behaviours
Calling has an action orientation which emphasizes tasks and activities (Elangovan et al., 2010). It suggests that those with a calling are more likely to engage with career development tasks such as career exploration and networking (King, Z., 2004; Hirschi, 2011). An addition to this external perspective on a self-directed approach to a calling is found in the protean
career model (Hirschi, 2011, p. 11). With its emphasis on an internal sense of self-direction and action rooted in personal values and beliefs, an extreme form of which it is argued could constitute a calling (Hall & Chandler, 2005), it may be that clergy are exhibiting a protean mindset when contemplating a transition (Briscoe & Hall, 2006b, p. 6). Blackie (2005) found evidence of a sense of agency and self-directed mobility amongst Anglican clergy in response to the structural constraints that existed for them in pursuing career development opportunities within the Church of England. Given earlier reflections on the protean qualities in a clergy career and the ambiguous authority structures that exist between individual and institution, this resonates with Briscoe and Hall’s assertion that a protean career ‘can be clearly seen as an adaptive response to the volatile, uncertain and ambiguous work environment’ (Briscoe & Hall, 2006a, p. 2).

Calling can also contribute to an individual’s capacity for emotional self-management and self-confidence in relation to career tasks and career success (Bandura, 1997; Treadgold, 1999; Hall & Chandler, 2005). Studies which have investigated how clergy are inclined to self-manage in the face of occupational stress provide some insights into the support strategies that they might draw upon when contemplating a move where both calling and career are considerations. Research into clergy occupational stress and role ambiguity addresses the dimension of religious calling by investigating the role of religion as a coping strategy, where God is the source of the calling (Fletcher, 1990). Watts, Nye & Savage (2002) suggest that it can contribute to helping people make sense of a particular situation, i.e. ‘How is God speaking to me in this?’ Multi-method research into stress and strategies for coping with stress amongst New Zealand clerics identified spiritual commitment as a support strategy which was manifested in prayer and creating time for solitude during the working day (Dewe, 1987). A US study assessed whether religious coping strategies could predict burnout but the results were inconclusive (Rodgerson & Piedmont, 1998). A further dimension to the New Zealand research was the identification of other strategies which were employed by clergy to ease stress, e.g. social
support (talking to others and seeking advice) and postponing action (through relaxation and distraction techniques). The author concluded these strategies were largely ‘palliative (emotion focused)’, thereby easing any discomfort, rather than directly addressing the source of the stressors that may or may not be within the individual’s control. Strategies which rationalized the problem via cognitive approaches such as analysing or re-thinking the problem existed alongside those which were action-oriented ‘(problem focused)’ (Dewe, 1987, p. 361). Finally, personal and community relationships bound up in spirituality and religiousness have also been found to be valuable sources of support for those facing career development tasks or struggles (Duffy & Lent, 2008; Duffy et al., 2010).

These subjective career perspectives suggest that clergy are likely to possess useful self-knowledge and personal resources as a result of having a calling. However, they may not necessarily rely on religious calling to negotiate life’s challenges or transitions but, as suggested above, and further supported by previously discussed research into clergy job searches (Wildhagen et al., 2005), they are likely to draw on a range of strategies common to all members of society. I think these findings are significant because they resonate with a career development perspective on coping during different types of career transition (Latack, 1989) and theories of career self-management and career support (King, Z., 2004; Sturges, 2008), all of which are relevant to a study of preparing to move jobs.

2.6.2.3 Vocational Identity

As part of the ongoing process of career development, an individual develops a self-concept that leads to an integrated self-identity (Super, 1957, 1990). Career scholars regard calling as bound up in the authenticity and growth of an individual’s identity (Hall & Chandler, 2005; Elangovan et al., 2010), its presence linked to a level of self-awareness or self-clarity about the centrality of a calling
to one’s life (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007). Recent work has hypothesized that spirituality and religion are also linked to identity (Duffy et al., 2010). Self-clarity in the form of exploration about self and the world of work is acknowledged as an important task of career development and career decision-making in particular (Kidd, 2006). Hirschi (2011) explored calling and vocational or career identity and found that a sense of clarity and commitment to career decisions and goals was linked to intense self-reflection and exploration as part of discovering a sense of calling (a parallel process to that of discernment when contemplating a religious calling).

A study of medical students investigated the relationship between career calling as ‘a transcendent summons to a meaningful career that is used to serve others’ (Duffy, Manuel, Borges & Bott, 2011b, p. 1), vocational development and well-being over time (p. 5). Whilst clergy are recruited on the basis of their religious calling with the intention of serving God, the nature of ministry is such that service to others is a fundamental part of the role. Consequently, it was interesting to note that for medical students their commitment to a career calling grew over time having been preceded by high levels of vocational development and a sense of meaningfulness in life. This highlights two areas of interest for this study of clergy calling in relation to career: a) that the nature of career calling can change over time; b) that other factors relating to career development and psychological well-being (Duffy et al., 2011b, p. 5) may affect how clergy view their calling in relation to the roles that allow them to fulfil the work of ministry over time.

2.6.2.4 Disillusionment, ‘The Dark Side’

Researchers argue for more research into the negative effects of calling for individuals and organizations. Elangovan et al. (2010) posit a situation where an escalation of commitment (Whyte, 1986) by those with a calling may be disproportionate to the chances of success, thus risking the opposite effect for both individual and organization. Duffy, Reid & Dik (2010) note how individuals
with a sense of calling may set such high standards for their employer (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009), that any sense of the organization falling short may leave them disillusioned and vulnerable. Another perspective on the implications for organizational commitment is that unless an individual feels able to pursue tasks within a context which is sympathetic to or supportive of the meaningfulness associated with calling they are likely to seek out alternative organizations and opportunities, the latter of which might be in a non-career domain such as family or community (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003; Elangovan et al., 2010; Duffy, Reid & Dik, 2010; Hirschi, 2011). It has been suggested that for those who have a calling yet face obstacles to pursuing that calling in paid work, negative effects such as frustration and depression may be experienced (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). Such feelings might also be experienced by those individuals for whom a calling remains unanswered due to a lack of congruence between their fundamental values or belief systems and those of the organization or workplace (Lips-Wiersma, 2002a). Finally, Christopherson (1994) introduces the idea that a calling could be regarded as an avoidance strategy or ‘safe haven’ for clergy as they contemplate the implications for their role and identity arising from the fast-moving, complex and diffuse changes in society (Russell, 1980; Percy, 2006). In view of the challenges the Church of England faces in the recruitment, retention and well-being of clergy (Towler & Coxon, 1979; Warren, 2002) these studies pose interesting questions for the study of the antecedents to a clergy career transition.

2.6.3 Summary of Theological and Career Perspectives on Clergy Calling

This section has identified theological and career perspectives on calling, spirituality and religiousness and their relationship to career and occupation. It has highlighted how calling, spirituality and religiousness relate to career development concepts likely to influence how clergy anticipate and prepare to move jobs in the Church of England. Theoretical perspectives from within the
extensive careers literature on calling have offered insights into how calling might be enacted between individual and institution. It is a study of a population who happen to have a personal and particular calling but who share occupational similarities with a range of different professions such as doctors, zookeepers, academics and civil servants (Ridley, 1983; Baruch & Hall, 2004; Bunderson & Thompson, 2009; Duffy et al., 2011b). These are working lives in which clergy are engaged in the same work-related decisions and developmental concerns experienced by those in secular employment. However, the fact that they are required to ‘discern God’s activity in their life’ (Church of England, 2011c, p. 13) provides an opportunity to establish whether a calling, from whatever source, informs clergy thinking when contemplating a career move. This will add a dimension to this research that goes beyond simply exploring career transitions in a new context. Collectively, these perspectives provide a basis for the primary research questions posed by this study which will be discussed in the next chapter.
RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary research questions for this study have been devised following an extensive review of the career and calling literature drawn from a range of academic disciplines, i.e. career and vocational psychology, sociology, organizational behaviour, theology, practical theology and management studies. The questions are also mindful of the broader institutional context in which this research is taking place, i.e. ongoing structural changes within the Church to recruitment, selection and career development systems and the fact that my research population is ordained clergy with a calling to serve God. The questions are designed to elicit findings that contribute to and expand our understanding of the cognitive, behavioural and affective dimensions of how clergy experience preparing to move jobs in the Church of England.

RQ 1 – What reasons do clergy express for seeking a move?

Cumulative evidence from transition, turnover and mobility literature and research indicate that why people change jobs is more than a combination of push-pull factors and the possession of a set of skills and experiences (Wildhagen et al., 2005). Reasons for moving are bound up in a complex mix of individual motives, volition and constraints combined with structural forces that can inhibit and facilitate mobility (Nicholson & West, 1988; Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009). Capturing these complex dynamics at a stage in the mobility process where musing about what the future may hold has yet to give way to the practicalities of searching for a new job is likely to be achieved in part by establishing the reasons why participants are anticipating a move (Nicholson & West, 1988). Furthermore, the question will also apply to clergy experience of anticipation and expectation (Louis, 1980a; Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1996) in relation to previous moves so the cumulative effects over time of different reasons for moving will also be captured by this question. For example, how
well prepared clergy feel when anticipating a move dependent upon their degree of control over the circumstances surrounding moves past, present and future (see Nicholson & West, 1988, p. 36).

RQ2 – What sense do clergy make of the job moves available to them in the Church?
This question aims to: a) establish what clergy know of how the system in which they are preparing to move operates; b) find out about their understanding of what moves might be available to them; c) find out what they believe they are qualified to do. The three dimensions to this question are informed by career mobility models which have identified a number of determinants of career mobility (Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009). First, structural considerations relating to Church systems which specify how clergy are recruited, selected and appointed to jobs and the mechanisms likely to enhance and constrain individual movement within those systems. Understanding how clergy interpret and make sense of these systems or models will provide important perspectives on the strength of the organizational environment and the capacity of individuals to negotiate and enact certain career choices within the context of Church structures (see Dany et al., 2011, p. 50). Second, the interplay between the clergy’s understanding of Church systems and their perception and understanding of their individual movement capital (Forrier et al., 2009). That is, the capacity of clergy to assess their skills, knowledge and abilities and relate them to the criteria necessary for certain roles (Landau & Hammer, 1986; Forrier et al., 2009). It will also require a level of self-awareness in relation to the individual strengths, weaknesses, beliefs, values and goals (Forrier et al., 2009, p. 743) likely to motivate clergy to identify appropriate opportunities within the system. These are career development perspectives which are gaining prominence amongst those responsible for the management of clergy movement (see Chapter 2:2.5, Theological Perspectives on Clergy Transition and Mobility). Consequently, it is anticipated that this question will highlight the
barriers and bridges to transition (Nathan & Hill, 2006) as seen through the eyes of individual clergy.

RQ3 – What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move, and why?

This research question focuses on how clergy exercise agency through behaviours likely to facilitate a potential move and why individuals behave in a certain way, e.g. pursuing one option over another as they anticipate a move. It seeks to differentiate between behaviour, i.e. a particular act, and the cognition behind the act, i.e. the explanation for the behaviour (see Dany et al., 2011, p. 49). The question is informed by those dimensions of the career mobility models which help explain how and why clergy behave in certain ways when contemplating a move. For example, the extent to which clergy might employ career self-management behaviours (King, Z., 2004) as part of their activities to facilitate a move (Forrier et al., 2009) alongside the Church’s career management systems. This is important and interesting for two reasons. First, the introduction of more regulated appointment systems within the Church at both parish and senior levels have been criticized by scholars as the secularization of ministry (Roberts, 2013). This suggests there may be those within ministry who share that view, prompting resistance to participating in the new process. Second, until the recent Ministerial Development Review (MDR) scheme, prompted by the legislative changes affecting clergy employment conditions, was introduced, there was no legal requirement for the Church to provide any kind of formal career development for clergy. Whilst a review or appraisal process was encouraged centrally by the Church it was left to the discretion of individual dioceses whether any such process was implemented. It is early days as far as MDR is concerned and it will be interesting to establish from this research question whether clergy regard themselves as having some behavioural control over their participation in these new recruitment and career development systems (Bell & Staw, 1989, Ng et al., 2007). Consequently, this
question is likely to establish whether clergy are applying the same tried-and-tested means of negotiating a career move as in the past, i.e. waiting for a tap on the shoulder. Or, are they participating in the career tasks associated with job search and career development as mandated by those responsible for the new systems?

RQ4 – What if any, is the significance of calling in how clergy prepare for a career move?

A review of the literature established how calling is enacted in relation to people’s working lives, the problems it solves and creates and the perspectives it brings to the role of individual and organizations in the process of transition and mobility. To ignore the presence or absence of calling when inviting clergy to talk about career moves would be to deny a fundamental tenet of ministry and the institutional context in which their ministry is normally conducted. Yet the question of whether or not calling contributes to how clergy anticipate and prepare for a job move was deliberately asked of participants at the end of the interview unless it came up prior to that time. This is because a theological perspective privileges the calling and subsequent ordination vows of clergy above all other considerations in their lives, i.e. work, family, friends, interests, health and well-being, community and career. If we are to believe the posited irrefutable fact of all clergy having a calling then that is a consideration in this research study that has to be taken seriously. For example, there may be those participants who will wish to deny the juxtaposition of calling and career, arguing that God transcends individual desire or need and as such they are prepared to place responsibility for a transition into the hands of others regardless of the outcome. Yet, I know from my previous research (Blackie, 2005) that clergy rarely evoked calling when discussing the internal and external factors that had influenced their career path over time. Furthermore, evidence in the literature indicates that clergy can and should be viewed as functioning under the same conditions and facing the same workplace realities as any other
worker (Fichter, 1961; Towler & Coxon, 1979). It has also been established that they do not necessarily rely on a sense of calling when dealing with the realities of occupational life, e.g. job search (Wildhagen et al., 2005) or work-related stress (Dewe, 1987). These perspectives suggest that there may be participants who demarcate calling and career in their minds, and approach anticipating a move from the objective reality of engaging with career systems and processes. Consequently, I decided to leave this question until last to allow clergy to raise the issue of calling voluntarily when answering the earlier research questions. It is hoped that by approaching the question in this way neither career nor calling will be privileged in the research interviews.
METHOD - STUDYING CLERGY

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

4.1 Introduction

4.2 A Qualitative Study – Paradigmatic Considerations

4.3 A Qualitative Study – Rationale

4.4 Social Constructivist Method

4.5 Research Strategy

4.5.1 Gaining Access to the Research Population

4.5.2 Pilot Study

4.5.3 Main Study

4.5.3.1 Criteria for Selecting the Research Sample

4.5.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

4.5.3.3 Ethical Considerations

4.5.3.4 Main Study Refinements

4.5.4 Reflexive Researcher

4.6 Analysing Qualitative Data

4.6.1 The Case for Thematic Analysis

4.6.2 Techniques of Thematic Analysis

4.6.3 A Phased Approach to the Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a comprehensive account of the research process adopted for this study. Sections 4.1-4.4 outline the theoretical and methodological terrain. Section 4.5 describes the research strategy including detail of a pilot study, the main study and my decision to incorporate reflexivity in research as part of the process. Section 4.6 provides a detailed account of the method used to analyse the data.
4.2 A Qualitative Study – Paradigmatic Considerations

The decision to adopt a qualitative approach to this research project is driven by research questions designed to throw light on clergy experience of preparing to move jobs. Qualitative research allows for entities, processes and meanings to be explored and explained rather than measured or quantified (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 14). One focus of the qualitative researcher is on the social construction of reality, how processes are played out between parties, on situations that constrain and enable agency and where value systems are made explicit. The relationship between the researcher and the individual and context under scrutiny is also part of the inquiry. This is in contrast to quantitative approaches to research which ‘emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p.14) and which ultimately lead to the development of generalizations of findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Flick, 2002).

Qualitative research has undergone several metamorphoses in the past century (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The common factor at each transition is political and procedural opposition (within both the qualitative and quantitative camps) to what is regarded as an impure or unscientific approach to verifying the notion of truth (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, pp. 10-11). It is therefore important to be clear about the philosophical underpinnings of this research study. These include the overarching paradigm or ‘net’ within which ontological (nature of reality), epistemological (nature of knowledge generation) and methodological (nature of finding out) beliefs function (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 31).

For example, ontology sets out to establish the nature of reality. It is concerned with ‘the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them’ (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2005). These realities can be perceived from different perspectives. On the one hand, realist assumptions about social reality emphasize its independent status devoid of subjective perceptions. On the other hand, a relativist ontological position (the one
adopted by this researcher) assumes that the world in which this research is being conducted is ‘real’ and that multiple constructed realities in relation to that world exist for participants and researcher alike and may be equally valid (Cromby & Nightingale, 1999).

Epistemology, or ‘knowledge about knowledge’ (Duberley, Johnson & Cassell, 2012, p. 16), is bound up in truth claims. That is, what evidence (knowledge content) is there for claim X being true or false? In this research, I reject positivist assumptions that it is possible to observe the world objectively or impartially. Instead, the focus is on how accounts of truth or knowledge in relation to preparing to move jobs emerge or are constructed. In this respect the roles of the researcher and ‘significant others’ are viewed as equally important as that of the participant. This is due to discoveries or findings being jointly created and value mediated by all parties during the course of the research process (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These are paradigmatic considerations which inform the rationale for adopting a qualitative approach to this research project.

4.3 A Qualitative Study – Rationale

The focus on clergy experience of preparing to move jobs is likely to manifest itself through individual accounts of an acquaintance with certain facts or particular events in relation to moving as well as how those events or processes have made them feel (OED, 1978). Based on previous experience of interviewing clergy for an earlier study I believe that in accounting for their experience of moving jobs, clergy are more likely to respond to the dialogic and dialectical methodologies found in qualitative practice than other approaches such as surveys or critical incident technique (Cassell & Symon, 2004). This is because their working lives are steeped in conversations, narrative, confidences, rhetoric and text (Jasper & Jasper, 1990), discursive mechanisms that extend across a panoply of social relationships, where they encounter birth, sickness
and death on a regular basis. To deny this population a ‘voice’ (Guba & Lincoln, 2008, p. 263) in such a context would only tell part of the story.

Another reason for adopting a qualitative approach was the fact that this researcher is an independent career counsellor who works with clergy clients. The chance therefore of this being a ‘value-free inquiry’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. viii) in the positivist tradition was small. For one, a positivist paradigm assumes an ‘objective external reality’ at the expense of organizational context (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109, p. 111). As this study seeks to understand the interplay between individual and institution in relation to preparing to move jobs it would be negligent to overlook contextual concepts likely to affect that interplay such as organizational structures, culture and the environment (Mayrhofer et al., 2007, p. 215). For example, formative experiences of institutional socialization which inform the fundamental values and belief systems of clergy (Towler & Coxon, 1979) are to be found in what Mayrhofer et al. (2007) regard as the context of origin in career research. Second, the role of the researcher is viewed as a ‘disinterested scientist’ (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 112) which is at odds with the constructivist aims of the study in terms of the research relationship. Finally, the methods associated with a positivist paradigm tend to focus on quantitative techniques that will simply produce reductionist and deterministic outcomes (Hesse, 1980; Guba & Lincoln, 1994) that tell us little about the cognitive and affective dimensions of clergy experience of moving jobs.

The debate in relation to the challenges of delineating and evaluating qualitative research (see Duberley et al., 2012) shows no sign of easing, as evidenced in the proliferation of book chapters and journal articles devoted to the issues. For some, the case for qualitative researchers to be located in a social world where wider issues are observed, attended to and described whilst capturing the individual’s point of view (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) is rejected as simply ‘common sense’ (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium & Silverman, 2004). For others, the criteria
traditionally applied in quantitative research such as reliability, validity and
generalizability do not translate to the subjective, interpretive world of
qualitative research and that to attempt to do so risks enacting ‘power relations
that tend to subjugate qualitative research’ (Symon & Cassell, 2012, p. 204).
Having said that, there are widely cited qualitative texts which, in seeking to
address the evaluation issue head-on, are positively positivist in tone and
terminology, e.g. Miles & Huberman (1994). The researcher is encouraged to
concentrate not just on the process of collecting data, e.g. how interviews are
conducted, but in particular on how the data are analysed. This might include
the use of rigorous content analysis techniques and relevant qualitative
software, e.g. NVivo, as well as performing intercode reliability analyses, all
approaches to help demonstrate that the data is not simply ‘eyeballed’ by the
researcher. Distinguishing between these different stances, i.e. the rejection of
evaluating qualitative research in the same way as quantitative research;
qualitative research denounced as interesting yet obvious; and the challenging
range of paradigmatic and analytical approaches on offer (Duberley et al., 2012,
pp. 15-16) can leave the novice researcher feeling confused about how best to
approach the task.

In the case of how clergy experience preparing to move jobs, I have selected an
interpretive paradigm which means I am interested in the ‘human
interpretation’ (Prasad, 2005, p. 13; Duberley et al., 2012) of certain phenomena
within a given social situation. I am seeking ‘verstehen’ (Outhwaite, 1975) or
‘meaningful understanding’ at the level of the individual actor or agent. An
interpretive paradigm is also informed by the personal beliefs of the researcher,
be they overt, covert, assumed, taken for granted or plain invisible (Denzin &
Lincoln, 2008, p. 31) with implications for the research design and final analysis.
Moving beyond the ‘catch-all’ definition of interpretivism I propose to approach
this study from a constructivist perspective. Constructivism originates in
developmental and cognitive psychology (Kelly, 1955; Piaget, 1969). It is
concerned with how the individual mind constructs a particular version of reality
(Gergen, 1999). Constructivism has a functional quality rather than simply being a trait or ‘innate characteristic of the mind’ (Mascolo & Pollack, 1997, p. 1). The emphasis is on internal cognitive dynamics which enable the integration of knowledge ‘into pre-existing schemes (assimilation) or changing the schemes to fit the environment (accommodation)’ (Young & Collin, 2004, p. 3; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). I believe this is the most appropriate way of understanding the relationship between what participant and researcher regard as knowledge (epistemology) and what they might experience as reality (ontology) (Herrnstein Smith, 2005). More specifically, I propose to adopt a social constructivist stance to knowledge investigation, the defining features of which I discuss below.

4.4 Social Constructivist Method

A constructivist method which attends to individual mental practices and resultant actions is pertinent to this research population, the majority of whom work in an individualistic and often isolated way. However, this approach risks overlooking those contextual factors that might contribute to how clergy behaviour is affected by their understanding of the organization in which they work. One approach which has emerged from within the wider constructivist family (Young & Collin, 2004), and which addresses this issue, is that of Social Constructivism. Social Constructivism reflects the influence of social relationships and social conventions on an individual’s mental construction of reality. Vygotsky (1981) defined the capacity to think, plan, attend and remember as ‘higher mental functions’ which inextricably embody and reflect social relationships (Gergen, 1999, p. 126). Social constructivism also attends to the ‘socio-cultural practices or norms’ which shape such functioning (Fletcher, 2006, p. 426) and which are particularly pertinent here given the intensely socialized nature of ministry. My previous discursive study into the career paths of clergy in the Church of England hinted at a co-created ambivalence and ambiguity between individual and institution in relation to career progression (Blackie, 2005). I was therefore conscious at the outset of this project that
relationship norms between cleric and institution might be manifested in a similar way during the process of preparing for a job move. Furthermore, the institution’s structures and processes in relation to a career transition have emerged as increasingly significant in terms of how clergy exercise their higher mental functioning as they prepare to move jobs. On the one hand, clergy are part of an institution whose doctrine and practice, notwithstanding ecclesiastical wrangles and a benignly indifferent public (Fox, 2004), still inform the national culture of this country. Experiences of ministry arising from the mores (Merton, 1957; Towler & Coxon, 1979) of that culture inform and influence how clergy construct and conduct their careers (Gunz et al., 2007, p. 489). On the other hand, the Church has endeavoured to replicate some secular systems in relation to recruitment, selection and career development so clergy may be experiencing something of a paradigm shift themselves when preparing to move jobs. This suggests a research terrain where the complexities of the organization such as ambiguity, ambivalence and negotiated goals in relation to the individuals involved in its functioning may need to be acknowledged as part of the process of knowledge generation (Weick, 1979; March, 1988, 1999, 2008; Tsoukas & Dooley, 2011, p. 730).

Another reason for adopting a social constructivist method is that the data can be analysed using an epistemologically flexible technique called thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I believe this is an appropriate analytic strategy for this project because: a) it will bring structure to the process of interpreting large amounts of rich data; b) it allows me to focus on individual accounts of the interplay between subjective experience and objective institutional factors such as career structures and systems; c) it offers a flexible approach to the process of induction, development or disruption (Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011). This is distinct from a social constructionist approach to data analysis which is inclined to focus on language and rhetoric as meaning is ‘made’ or created between parties. So, whilst I wish to hear individual accounts of experiences of moving jobs, I am interested in how they make sense of those experiences in the context
of institutional structures that are established and known (albeit from a relativist perspective where multiple realities are likely to exist) rather than dialogically constructed or created between different interest groups. Consequently, a social constructivist method which locates individual understandings in the social world (Guba & Lincoln, 2008, Part II) is a helpful framework for this research project allowing me to investigate the affective, cognitive and behavioural dimensions of how clergy anticipate a career move within the Church of England.

4.5 Research Strategy

Section 4.5 is a comprehensive explanation of the design and implementation of this research study. It is structured as follows:

4.5.1 Gaining Access to the Research Population

4.5.2 Pilot Study

4.5.3 Main Study

4.5.3.1 Criteria for Selecting the Research Sample

4.5.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

4.5.3.3 Ethical Considerations

4.5.3.4 Main Study Refinements

4.5.4 Reflexive Researcher

4.5.1 Gaining Access to the Research Population

During the past five years I have established a helpful network of contacts within the Church of England during the course of my career counselling work. These contacts include clergy at national, diocesan and parish level as well as from within the theological academic community. They have provided me with valuable insights into the views of those responsible for managing the
movement of clergy and more general views from clergy about how they regard moving on. Discussions arising from those encounters have highlighted an interesting paradox, namely that research into clergy career is to be encouraged yet the subject of career in the Church of England is not to be overtly discussed or examined. Consequently, my first steps in the process of gaining access for this particular project involved approaching those contacts who could put me in touch with diocesan bishops likely to be supportive of the aims of the study and who would allow me access to clergy in their dioceses to talk about how they go about preparing to move jobs. That is to say I never took it for granted that being given access by the primary gatekeepers would secure co-operation ‘on the ground’ (Sampson, 2004, p. 392). Two further criteria for selecting certain dioceses were i) to ensure a spread of urban, suburban and rural ministry which would mean a greater likelihood of attracting clergy from different types of parishes and ii) that the locations were accessible within a day’s travel. I began by talking to the secretaries of three bishops to ascertain how best to proceed. In one case I was invited to meet with the assistant bishop; a second bishop replied to a written request; a third asked me to work through his chaplain. Examples of correspondence (anonymized) relating to these negotiations is attached as Appendices 1, 2 and 2a. I then worked with each bishop’s recommended contact or ‘secondary’ gatekeeper within their diocese to agree the parameters for selecting and contacting individuals who may wish to participate. One was the chaplain identified above, the other two were diocesan clergy responsible for the training and development of clergy within their diocese. These discussions took place in a series of meetings and in exchange of email correspondence.

4.5.2 Pilot Study

Following discussion and communication with both the primary and secondary gatekeepers the decision was taken to conduct an initial pilot study. I was keen to do this for several reasons, not least as a trial run in terms of process and best practice in advance of the main study, e.g. the logistics of the interview process,
managing time and expectations, maintaining co-operation from participants. More specifically, I wanted to assess the effectiveness of the interview questions to ensure they elicited responses which addressed the cognitive, behavioural and affective aims of the research. I also wanted to re-locate myself (Reinharz, 1997) following my earlier experience of researching this population. This would help minimise any assumptions or bias that might arise and be a reminder of the benefits of researcher ‘innocence’ when faced with a new environment for the first time (Sampson, 2004, p. 389).

The secondary gatekeeper from the pilot diocese was enthusiastic and helpful from the outset of our discussions which was very encouraging. Five individuals participated in the pilot study, having received some background information in advance (Appendix 3). Interviews (see Semi-Structured Interviews, p. 120) lasting an average of 48 minutes took place in a range of living rooms and home-office environments. High standards of ethical practice and professionalism were observed throughout (see Ethical Considerations, p. 122) including participants being asked to read and sign an informed consent form before proceeding with the interview (Appendix 4). Biographical data were then gathered (Appendix 5) and a general explanation of the semi-structured nature of the interview provided in order to allay any concerns about the nature of the research and encourage maximum participation.

During the pilot study a number of valuable lessons were learned. First, with regard to managing gatekeepers and participant expectations. This was because the pilot gatekeeper, following what I had regarded as preliminary discussions and albeit with the best of intentions, emailed clergy without my knowledge inviting them to contact me direct if they wanted to participate. Notwithstanding the fact I found myself receiving unexpected and unsolicited emails, the information they received was flawed in two ways. First, the gatekeeper contacted parish clergy in only one archdeaconry (a division of a diocese) which immediately limited the likelihood of being contacted by a mix of
post-holders as the posts were restricted to parish roles and one archdeacon; second, I was positioned as a researcher and a career counsellor with the emphasis on the latter role. This was not my intention as I was highly conscious of maintaining appropriate boundaries between my client work and work as a student researcher. Consequently, I found that when I came to the interviews, some of the individuals who contacted me were consciously or unconsciously seeking some advice and guidance as part of a ‘trade-off’ for participation. Having realised there was a problem I began to explain to each interviewee when I arrived where the boundary lay between my researcher and counsellor role.

Another issue that arose was that the only criterion for participating in the study was that the individual was anticipating moving jobs which, given the aims of the research, was correct. However, having completed the pilot study interviews I felt that this criterion was too narrow for several reasons. First, because people had come forward who were either: a) angry and frustrated with the process and wanted to vent those feelings to someone; or b) seeking direction as to their future trajectory (sometimes both). Second, demographic features relating to age and location dominated the accounts, e.g. the average age of pilot participants was 55 years which generated strong age-related narratives plus there was a sense of job embeddedness (Mitchell et al., 2001) in ministering to what was an affluent part of the diocese. Whilst these were important initial insights into some of the barriers and frustrations experienced by clergy seeking to move, I knew from my encounters with clergy that these interviews in one district of one diocese were not necessarily representative of wider clergy attitudes towards preparing to move jobs.

So, I decided to widen the criteria for the main study. Consequently, individual clergy from the other two dioceses were invited to participate if they fulfilled criteria which placed them theoretically: a) exploring the possibility of moving;
b) making preparations to move; c) having moved in the past 12 months; d) having decided not to move (Louis, 1982; Nicholson & West, 1988).

Furthermore, despite the small sample size, I decided to proceed to the main study with the original research questions intact having made some minor amendments to the wording of some of the secondary research questions after the first couple of interviews. This was because I did not find that any of the questions were giving me significant problems at this stage and any minor reservations that I had about whether the questions were working in terms of participant response or research focus could be easily addressed in the early stages of the main study (see Section 4.5.3.4).

More general insights arising from the pilot include the fact that clergy are generous with their time and talk. They are also loquacious and articulate interviewees which is very helpful to a novice researcher and yet, as will be discussed later in this study, I felt at times that performativity (Goffman, 1959; Cohen & Duberley, 2013) and authenticity were competing with each other.

Finally, despite some of the issues described above, the pilot delivered useable data (Sampson, 2004), that I was able to integrate into the main study because it constituted a body of material that answered the research questions posited by this research.

### 4.5.3 Main Study

Armed with insights from the pilot study and having gained appropriate access to interview participants in two further dioceses I was able to embark on the main study. Before discussing some of the developments that arose during that process I will explain the criteria applied for selecting the research sample; the rationale for adopting a semi-structured interview process and the ethical framework for the study.
4.5.3.1 Selecting the Research Sample

Judgemental sampling (Hussey & Hussey, 1997) was applied to ensure that I would attract as many clergy as possible who had experienced the phenomenon under scrutiny, i.e. preparing to move jobs. Paradoxically this also involved being specific about the criteria for participation in advance. For example, it was not enough to rely on age and status to select participants because clergy enter ministry at different ages and stages during the life cycle (Super, 1957). The fact someone is 34, 47 or 59 and a parish priest doesn’t tell us enough about where they are in terms of career trajectory. Even if you included date of last appointment it still reveals very little – a 47 year old appointed as vicar in 2007: is that a first post following a curacy or a third posting in a 20-year ministry? What was more helpful was combining status, age and date ordained to the priesthood. Hall and Schneider (1973) used date ordained as a criterion for analysis because they found that by sorting participants into intervals of tenure since ordination, e.g. 0-5 years, 6-10 years, etc., they were able to find out what was special or particular or different at certain priestly transition points during those intervals, e.g. from curacy to a first post or from the ‘pastorate’ to retirement. It is worth noting that this was a study of the Catholic priesthood whose career paths are more regulated and they make fewer career moves than Anglican clergy are likely to do today, so arguably it was easier for Hall and Schneider to organize it this way. In this study, date ordained determined how many posts an individual will have had, e.g. a vicar aged 52 and ordained in 1988 is more likely to have held more than two posts (curacy and parish) than a vicar aged 48 yet only ordained in 2009. Date ordained also enabled me to distinguish between first or second career clergy which I anticipated could be a significant factor in the final analysis and knowing broadly in advance what we had in the mix was helpful.

Clergy coming forward to participate in the pilot and main studies amounted to 31 full-time, male and female stipendiary (salaried) clergy in the Church of England; 21 (68%) of the interviewees were male, 10 (32%) female; aged from
33 to 64 years, the average age of the interview population is 52 years; five individuals aged between 50 and 58 years participated in the pilot study (see Table 1 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age bands (years old)</th>
<th>Male clergy interviewed</th>
<th>Female clergy interviewed</th>
<th>Total clergy interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>11 (3 pilot)</td>
<td>7 (2 pilot)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>21 (68%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>10 (32%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>31 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 – Age of participants

Table 2 (below) shows 28 (90% of the sample) working within the Church of England as full-time, ordained stipendiary priests engaged in parochial, diocesan, cathedral and episcopal roles across all three dioceses. Three participants (10%) were employed as chaplains in healthcare and education sectors and retain a licence to officiate as an ordained priest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of ministry</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parish</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diocesan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathedral</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplaincy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 – Types of ministry

Participants were distributed from across a range of participation criteria (Table 3, below) which had been adapted following the pilot study. Four individuals who were contemplating a move into retirement are included in ‘anticipating or exploring moving’ although they all described themselves as ‘not moving’. Two of the three individuals who had decided not to move at this stage came forward because they wanted to tell me about their experiences; the third was aware of the project and wanted to be helpful.
One other consideration was identifying how many of the participants were second-career clergy, i.e. those who had trained for ministry after having worked in another profession or series of jobs since leaving school or university. This was because I anticipated that the different skills, experience and perspective a late entrant to ministry might bring to the process of moving jobs would be a consideration in the final analysis. The Church does not readily distinguish between first- and second-career clergy because to do so is complicated. This is because clergy enter ministry at different ages and stages in their lives and it is difficult to compare the 30-year ministry of a cleric ordained in their late 30s who is now 60 years old with the ministry of a cleric ordained at 21 years who has also served 30 years, both of whom might regard themselves as first-career clerics given that the majority of their working lives have involved working for the Church. Nonetheless for the purposes of this study I set some

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for participation</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anticipating or exploring the process of moving</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About to move</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved in the last 12 months</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking about moving but no direct action taken (ambivalent)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not moving</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 – Criteria for participation
parameters to distinguish between first- and second-career clergy. For example, the majority of females are second-career clerics because they could not be ordained prior to 1994 and most had experienced other careers prior to this date. Two women are recorded as first-career clerics because they are younger, i.e. under 40 years of age, and have always worked in ministry. One woman had been a full-time deacon prior to the ordination of women. Amongst male clergy first-career ministries ranged from those who entered theological college straight from university at age 21 years to those who had a series of jobs and non-professional roles prior to entering training in their late 20s. Those male clergy who had held down other jobs or careers for more than 10 years or who entered ministry after the age of 30 years were identified as second-career clergy.

Table 4 (below) details data on first- and second-career clerics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First career</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second career</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the final sample was an encouraging spread of men and women of different ages and not untypical of Church demographics in general from a range of different ministries. Given the imbalance between senior and parish jobs as previously discussed and the potential reticence of clergy to talk about career-related issues (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013), it was encouraging that 26% of senior post-holders (drawn from Senior (n4); Cathedral (n3); Diocesan (n1)) came forward to be interviewed from the two dioceses in the main study.

4.5.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Within the framework of a social constructivist method, the semi-structured qualitative interview has been selected as an appropriate method to gather the necessary data. This is for two reasons, both of which are congruent with the
social constructivist aims of this study. First, the semi-structured interview offers a flexible approach in terms of structure and the opportunity to ask open questions whilst remaining focussed on specific phenomena (King, 2004a). An open question technique with the option of follow-up questions or prompts is likely to produce more uninhibited answers than closed, directive or leading questions. Quite simply, it offers the opportunity for individuals to talk. Through talk, an individual can begin to make sense of what they experience and how it influences or guides their behaviour (Wuthnow, 2011). From the researcher’s point of view listening and talking to people has the potential to mine a rich vein of ‘experiences, feelings, contradictions, processes and complex layers of meaning’ (Smith & Denton, 2005, p. 118). Second, talk as a method in the context of religious research has been identified as offering greater insights into the religious aspects of social life than early religious research which relied upon quantitative techniques such as surveys and polls focussed on religious affiliation, participation and belief (Wuthnow, 2011). Alternatively, ethnographic studies examined the significance of religion for different communities without analysing discursive references to God or religion, such as ‘The doctor says it was prayer and nothing else did it’ (Lynd & Lynd, 1929, pp. 334-335).

Whilst I regard this as a career study rather than ‘religious research’, the fact remains that Church of England clergy are occupied within a religious context having committed themselves to the service of God. This suggests they are likely to hold certain beliefs and values of which religion is a fundamental component as, consequently, are ‘the subjective mental and psychological functions’ it fulfils (Wuthnow, 2011, p.4; Parsons, 1964; La Barre, 1972; Shepherd, 1972). Understanding the extent to which these ontological and epistemological assumptions influence individual action in relation to the research questions is bound up in the ‘cultural work’ of talk (Wuthnow, 2011, p. 9). This means that what is said and how it is said arises from the cultural repertoires that every
individual constructs for themselves, one aspect of which is a religious orientation where applicable.

It is suggested that resistance by religious scholars to investigating talk is due to a range of different reasons; one argument being that religious thought is such an unconscious process that it is unfathomable simply through virtue of talking (Vaisey, 2008, 2009). Given the interpretivist aims of this study, I do not subscribe to this view and neither does Wuthnow, arguing that ‘the unconscious cannot be known until the subject speaks’ (2011, p. 6; Swidler, 2008; Vaisey, 2008). For example, it is unlikely that Schmalzbauer (2003), in his study of journalists and academics from evangelical and Catholic faith traditions, would have been able to explain the connection between an individual’s understanding of their career in the context of their personal faith (Wuthnow, 2011) without having conducted qualitative interviews that allowed participants to talk widely and at length about these issues in a face-to-face interview.

Consequently, the interview guide was designed to reflect these aims. It contains open-ended questions and appropriate prompts which, it was anticipated, would generate extended discussion with participants, thus developing existing themes or producing new ones (Wichroski, 1997).

4.5.3.3 Ethical Considerations

Mindful of the importance of ethical and professional standards in research and the potentially sensitive nature of the research material, guidance notes issued by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee (www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/) were consulted throughout the process. Consequently all participants were accorded appropriate levels of respect, confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, participant rights and access to information at each of stage of the research process (Appendix 4). Following legal advice a separate confidentiality agreement was drawn up between myself and the independent transcriber of the interview recordings.
and signed by both parties in advance of the work being undertaken (Appendix 6). The agreement included reference to the transcriber’s responsibility for maintaining the confidentiality and security of the data. Researcher safety was also considered given that all the research interviews were conducted off-campus in a one-to-one situation. I therefore ensured that someone always knew where I was going, the planned duration of the interview and when I had completed the interview. Storage of the primary data, i.e. interview notes, biographical data, transcripts and digital recordings, has been of paramount importance throughout. All written data are held in files in locked cupboards in a private study; the digital recordings have been downloaded on to a memory stick and are also locked away. Further discussion of the ethics of reflexivity relationships in research is contained in section 4.5.4.

4.5.3.4 Main Study Refinements
Letters of invitation (Appendix 7) were sent to clergy in two dioceses (East and Midlands). The East diocese provided some administrative support in terms of mailing out the letters. The Midlands diocese provided the names and addresses of potential participants whom I mailed direct. Twenty six interviews took place in a variety of locations across both dioceses. Apart from living rooms and home offices I also interviewed in diocesan offices, a garden, school offices and in one instance an empty hotel dining room although ironically that was the one place where I wasn’t offered a cup of tea or coffee. Building on learning from the pilot study, further refinements at this stage in the process related to boundary management and refining the research questions. In terms of boundary management, apart from being clear about my role as a doctoral researcher, I also wanted to manage any expectations or concerns amongst participants that I had accessed information about them or their career history via the internet or social media which I had become increasingly aware of as I proceeded with the pilot interviews. Given that clergy lives are often in the public domain via parish and diocesan websites and the media, as well as Facebook, Twitter, blogs and other emerging forms of social media, I wanted to
reassure clergy that I had not actively sought out any personal information about them in advance other than that supplied by the diocese, in order to maintain an independent and unbiased approach to the discussion.

As indicated above, insights from the pilot into the effectiveness of the research questions and their relationship to the theoretical framework for this research led to some refinements in advance of the main interviews (Appendix 8). These included re-ordering the questions because it was clear some worked better than others as the next question in terms of research focus. For example, when talking about the job they might do next and what they would bring to the role in terms of skills, traits and abilities – ‘What sort of move are you seeking and why?’ – clergy were inclined to discuss the challenges of the new recruitment system which were related to a pre-planned question designed to find out more about their experience and understanding of structural forces (Forrier et al., 2009). Another refinement was to move a subset of questions relating to ‘Why do clergy engage in certain career behaviours?’ to a holding position. This was because the questions ‘How strongly do you feel about moving at this time?’ and ‘How ready are you for this move and why?’ seemed to cause a degree of hiatus in the interview process. Participants were confused and confounded into giving a wide range of answers which, when asked to expand upon them, did not add anything to the data that I couldn’t gain via questions less likely to disrupt the flow of the interview. I tried using a scaling technique (O’Connell, 1998) which worked slightly better than the open questions but decided in the end that understanding ‘why’ clergy adopt certain anticipatory behaviours was not being helped by questions relating to volition and impetus. There was also the fact that having opened up the research to clergy who had recently moved or after some consideration had decided not to move, the question was less relevant.
4.5.4 Reflexive Researcher

From the outset of this study I was keen to address the issue of reflexivity in research at a level that went beyond simply checking for bias (Etherington, 2004). Researcher reflexivity has been defined as ‘the capacity of the researcher to acknowledge how their own experiences and contexts (which might be fluid and changing) inform the processes and outcomes of inquiry’ (Etherington, 2004, p. 31). This definition is congruent with the relativist ontological and epistemological stance of this study where no one truth exists and the researcher is an active participant in the process of knowledge generation. It also fits with a desire to see the potential of the reflexivity dimension of this research to influence career practice (Etherington, 2004, p. 31) in the final analysis.

Having conducted research with clergy for an MSc study (Blackie, 2005) I was aware of the potential for rich data at the interface between researcher and participant but more importantly a number of issues had arisen during that process which were bound up in the concept of reflexivity in research and which I had not anticipated or addressed the first time around. For example, there was the issue of how clergy used talk and language during the interviews. The MSc was a discourse analytic study so there was a strong focus on how clergy used talk to construct and negotiate accounts of career paths. One of the findings was that when discussing career this population draw on a rich and colourful spectrum of discourse whilst simultaneously employing discursive devices, e.g. laughing or deflection, which enable things to remain unsaid (Foucault, 1972, Hudson & Wong-MingJi, 2001). The extent to which this researcher’s position was part of this paradox, i.e. between openness and noisy silence, remained unexamined.

This prior knowledge and experience bothered me for several reasons. At a practical level it could help in anticipating some of the issues that might arise in the forthcoming research interviews and managing them appropriately.
Alternatively, my perception of these insights might only serve to reinforce and distort future findings, thus undermining the ‘new knowledge’ I was seeking (Etherington, 2004, p. 21). There was also the fact of my work as a career counsellor which locates some of my theoretical assumptions within career counselling and psychological perspectives which are well established as important sources in reflexivities development (McLeod, 1994, p. 21; Etherington, 2004). This work includes skills training in reflective practice (Kidd, 2006) which some regard as interchangeable with reflexivity (Etherington, 2004, p. 28). It was therefore important to be clear about how I positioned myself within the study, not least to avoid being seen as navel gazing or narcissistic given the debates surrounding the legitimacy of qualitative research versus more positivist approaches (Etherington, 2004, p. 19, p. 31).

A further reason for ensuring clarity was because being critically aware of ‘whose interests the research serves’ is another dimension of ethical standards in research extending beyond the practical (Mackenzie Davey & Liefooghe, 2004). For example, the significance of power relations and who is in control (Etherington, 2004) was evident in the MSc study when I found myself feeling challenged or managed, or at least very uncomfortable, during some of the interviews. As Mearns and Thorne (1999) comment, ‘power games can be played with tables and chairs as much as with words and tones of voice’ (p. 109). It has also been suggested that by asking to interview participants the researcher is projecting a degree of self-importance or aggrandizement on to them which can affect the balance of power relations (Etherington, 2004).

Finally, I have been conscious of a strong ‘duty of care’ towards participants in the current study for two reasons. First, previous experience of interviewing clergy who reflected deeply on the questions posed highlighted the extent to which a research interview is akin to a counselling interview, where powerful responses and strong emotions may be elicited in both the interviewer and interviewee and that an awareness of the role of non-verbal communication,
active listening skills and psychodynamic processes are important if a climate of trust and sensitivity is to be established (King, 2004a). Second, there is the fact that the research interview is a moment in time, initiated by the interviewer, when the participant chooses to tell certain stories in response to particular questions. The fact these stories are then written up as transcripts or part of a larger study or report remains largely in the control of the researcher (unless the participant requests to see the material) with no ongoing relationship between the researcher or participant to clarify, amend or develop the stories (Etherington, 2004). These perspectives were fundamental to how I chose to, a) locate myself in relation to the research population, and b) address the process of doing the work, both of which will now be discussed in more detail.

**Locating the Researcher**

Different dimensions to how the researcher is positioned are suggested by Reinharz (1997) as contributing to how the research relationship is framed and what knowledge is subsequently obtained. She describes three different ‘selves’ that inform the process: research-based selves (as an academic researcher, being sponsored), brought selves (attributes such as gender, age, life experience) and situationally created selves (those personae created in the field as part of the research situation) (Reinharz, 1997; Guba & Lincoln, 2008). I found this framework helpful in thinking about my role in the research process for the following reasons. First, it addressed my previous experience of having researched and worked with this population and the fact the study was being endorsed by senior clergy in each diocese (research-based self). This experience meant that on the one hand I could anticipate some of the issues that might arise, e.g. power distribution, whilst using my knowledge of how clergy use language when constructing the research questions. On the other hand the insights gained and knowledge obtained might lead to some bias on my part (Wichroski, 1997).
Second, the notion of a brought self was helpful not just because of awareness of the attributes I brought to the interview, e.g. white, married, middle-aged female with Waitrose bags in the back of the car, but equally significantly the fact that I am not an ordained minister. Whilst it was never expressed as a barrier or otherwise, I was conscious of the fact that much research into the Church and clergy is organized and implemented by ordained clerics, leading me to think that my non-ordained status may lead to certain assumptions about me regarding my position on faith, theology or the Church.

Finally, when reflecting on the situationally created self I found myself adapting to each interview situation at a variety of different levels, e.g. physically, adjusting to a wide range of environments in order to help the interviewee feel comfortable; managing expectations as more than one individual expressed hope that the research was going to make a difference; intellectually, by adapting how I followed through or asked questions of a particular interviewee. This has echoes of researcher experience among communities of Roman Catholic nuns where ‘verbal aggressiveness and probing’ as part of the interview gave way to ‘learning to rely upon and trust my own emotional reactions as sources of potential data’ (Wichroski, 1997, p.279). Emotion on the part of participant and researcher is acknowledged as part of reflexive practice (Haynes, 2012) and given that this research seeks to understand more about the affective experience of clergy when preparing to move jobs I was alert to this aspect of the research relationship.

**Locating the Process**

Hibbert et al. (2010) take a recursive view of the reflexivity process describing four steps: *repetition, extension, disruption* and *participation* whereby ‘basic assumptions and values are challenged and ultimately, potentially transformed’ (Haynes, 2012, p. 75). The extent to which this was the case in this study is discussed as part of the findings. When carrying out the research I drew on a range of practical and procedural strategies regarded as contributing to good
reflexive practice (King, 1996 Haynes, 2012). Practical, such as keeping a diary or notes of observations, interactions, feelings and incidents, and listening to personal performance on interview recordings. Extracts from the diary notes and recording performances are detailed below. The recording performances showed me, a) the effectiveness of waiting for an answer beyond what felt comfortable and b) the messiness of closed and leading questions which the respondent (to his credit) worked through to some extent.

- **Diary Notes** – selected because they demonstrate how I tried to question my reactions: ‘Found gatekeeper meeting very unsettling. BA very neat, ordered, orderly, overtly feminine? Also a creeping (creepy?) sense of superiority that clergy in non-parish roles or positions of seniority and are “in-the-know” have when certain issues are discussed. Made me think about how biased my study may become towards the anti-establishment mood that exists? Might need views from the other side?’ ‘Found FF interview unsettling due to amount of info she was providing. I was trying not to take advantage of her frankness/openness (honesty?).’

- **Recording Performance 1** – selected to show the effectiveness of deciding to wait for an answer beyond what felt comfortable:

  R: You had to seek that help for yourself.

  P: Yes, but then it was willingly given when I sought it. Yes.

  R: Yes.

  P: Erm, and, what else. Erm ... ... (12 seconds) what else, what else, what else? I think there is, the, the, you know, my, I haven’t found it easy to get to the point of preparing for interviews and, erm, I got there simp–, I suppose that’s where doing several at least said there’s no choice in this so I might as well try and work out how to get into it. But certainly early
on, I did feel, you know, why should I particularly talk to other people about the things I’ve done because that’s not the way I work.

- **Recording Performance 2** – selected for the mess of closed and leading questions which the respondent (to their credit) worked through:

  R: Do you think it’s getting, or it’s, um, er, I appreciate the traditional way of doing things, [P: Yeah.] the sort of the tap on the shoulder and [P: Yeah.] the thing about being sent, and that has changed and is [P: Yes.] continuing to change, but do you, do you think there’s still yet further change, do you think it is getting tougher, in terms of the competitive nature of posts, or only at certain levels, or?

  P: I don’t know if it’s getting tougher. I think it’s the right, probably the right thing because I think it is, the problem with the old system is that, you know, you had to know somebody and whatever and all of that and you, it’s, you know, there’s always a selection process, it’s probably just more discreet that way, whereas this is more open, so I think if we know that’s how it is and we’re prepared for it, I think then it’s, it’s probably easier and I think for me it wasn’t really, not really being experienced about how that appointment was made, really, and how you enter into that process.

Having embarked on the interview process with a range of presumptions about how clergy might behave during the interviews and the views they might express, the procedural part of the reflexive process involved monitoring and managing assumptions and presuppositions as I went along. I found the most helpful way of monitoring these was by involving other people. This involved the occasional sharing of select data and discussion with my supervisor and, secondary supervisor and other academics where appropriate. As the project developed I presented some of the findings to interested groups where appropriate in order to gain feedback on my interpretation of what I thought I
was hearing. During all these exchanges I was mindful of the terms of the informed consent between myself and the participants which guaranteed the anonymity and confidentiality of all material used as part of the research study.

4.6 Analysing Qualitative Data

4.6.2 The Case for Thematic Analysis

The challenges of analysing qualitative data are well documented in the literature. These include making explicit the researcher’s ontological and epistemological stance in relation to how they choose to approach the data; managing the high level of subjectivity involved in deciding what data to include or exclude; acknowledging the risk of a loss of context and non-verbal data by the process of simply reading texts; establishing the extent to which participants have been consciously or unconsciously selective in what they have chosen to talk about (an issue I discuss as part of the findings of this study). There is the issue of researcher bias, tunnel vision or self-delusion (Miles & Huberman, 1994, Chapter 10, Part B) and the not-insignificant problem of data overload where interviews lasting between 45 minutes to one hour are transcribed into 20 or more pages of written text, as well as additional data from field notes or other sources. Underpinning all these considerations is the debate surrounding the appropriate assessment criteria for qualitative research and the need for qualitative researchers to be able to defend not only the ‘why’ but also the ‘how’ of their analytical process.

Various stalls set out a range of analytical wares and for this study I decided to analyse the data using thematic analysis, a method ‘for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thematic analysis helps organize data, allows for detailed or ‘thick’ description of the text (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 241; Geertz, 1973) and interpretation of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). It offers epistemological flexibility in line with the paradigmatic aims of this study as ‘a contextualist method, sitting between the two poles of essentialism and constructionism’ (Braun & Clarke,
2006, p. 81), the latter of which allows for individual meaning-making whilst theorizing ‘the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85). As discussed earlier in this paper, the boundary between definitions of constructionism and constructivism are increasingly blurred and I believe the epistemological stance of thematic analysis is entirely congruent with the social constructivist aims of this study.

4.6.2 Techniques of Thematic Analysis

Techniques relating to the application of thematic analysis are not always clearly defined or demarcated (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A review of different techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994; King, 2004b; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Richards, 2009) indicates that most of the differences between them lie in terminology, for they all aim to impose some structure on what could become an unwieldy set of material and they all take a similar approach to the initial analysis using coding structures. For example, Miles and Huberman advocate a ‘start list of codes’ as devised from ‘the conceptual framework, list of research questions, hypotheses, problem areas, and/or key variables that the researcher brings to the study’ (1994, p. 58). King (2004b, 2012) is more specific with the process of template analysis. His ‘a priori’ (2012, p. 430) themes are tentative ideas based on the initial reading of the data and the generation of codes which provide a conceptual hook upon which to hang new and additional findings. Furthermore all six authors espouse the iterative and flexible nature of coding data in terms of checking and re-checking, revising, modifying and auditing the analytic process (Miles & Huberman, 1994; King, 2004b; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Richards, 2009). Where things begin to diverge is when it comes to the step up from initial or descriptive coding to inductive or theoretical levels of analysis which lead to hopefully rich interpretation rather than inference. This has influenced my decision to draw on and adapt Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-phase approach to exploring data, and the work of Miles and Huberman (1994). Between them these authors balance epistemological, theoretical and reflexive rigour with
practical advice and guidance in relation to organizing and explaining the data. The process will now be discussed in more detail.

4.6.3 A Phased Approach to the Analysis

Table 5 is based on Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-phase approach to exploring data, with the addition of a preliminary phase labelled Bio Coding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description of the Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bio coding of data (preliminary phase)</td>
<td>Storage of what is known about data items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Familiarization with data</td>
<td>Reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Generating initial codes</td>
<td>Coding interesting features of data in systematic fashion across data set, collating data relevant to each code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Searching for themes</td>
<td>Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Reviewing themes</td>
<td>Checking if themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and then the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Defining and naming themes</td>
<td>Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Producing the report</td>
<td>Selection of compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts. Relating back of analysis to RQs and literature, producing scholarly report of the analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87).
• **Phase 1 – Bio Coding**

Having advocated a six-phase approach, I decided to introduce a preliminary phase based on Richards (2009) who recommends storing *what is known* about the data items. In the case of my study this included respondent gender, age, status, date of ordination, first- or second-career status and family data; information about context and setting, location. Timings, e.g. length of interview etc., were also noted. I felt this step was an important addition to my analytical process because it was clear from the outset of the interviews that although clergy had responded to my request to interview them based on a particular set of criteria, they were a very diverse population which may well impact upon the final analysis. Confusingly, Richards (2009) calls this stage of the process ‘descriptive coding’ (p.96, emphasis mine). Alternative phrases are initial coding or topic coding, terms which are usually applied when judgementally selected codes are assigned to features of the data that are interesting in relation to the phenomenon being studied (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63; Braun & Clarke, 2006), so in the case of this study it might be ‘lack of clarity about skills’. In terms of what is known about the data items, these are analysed to see if they offer up any patterns or explanations which link to later findings (Richards, 2009), e.g. does Group A perceive the job search process differently from Group B? I have decided to call this information *bio coding* because of the fact that the first 15 minutes of each interview conducted as part of this research study involved gathering biographical and contextual data from each participant, which fits well with Richards’ (2009) definition of ‘what is known’ about them.

• **Phase 2 – Familiarization with the Data**

Even before I reached this stage of the analytical process I was clear that I wanted to analyse the data manually rather than by using data software such as NVivo or Atlas. This was for several reasons. First, the earlier research project I conducted into clergy career paths produced rich, revelatory data bound up in
florid and emotive expression. Anticipating a similar response this time around I believe such responses would have been lost in the mechanics of a software package. Second, capturing what is important in the data and then defining its significance or lack of significance are highly subjective and interpretive assessments. Consequently, I felt I was more likely to be able to defend these in the final analysis than if I relied on those produced by data software. Finally, I knew from some of the interviews that certain issues were likely to be important in relation to the overall research question but had only come up infrequently. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 82) argue that the prevalence of a theme is not necessarily indicative of its importance and that the qualitative researcher should consider whether or not data software is likely to capture those singular themes that might otherwise be overlooked. Having decided to analyse the data manually, I made several attempts to get into a routine as I familiarized myself with the material. It was an iterative process and remained so throughout all the phases of analysis. I finally settled on the following approach, which involved reading the 31 transcripts in conjunction with the tape recording; listening again and making extensive notes on what I heard. I then read and re-read the data from 21 scripts noting down initial ideas in right hand margin (see Table 6 below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Script extract</th>
<th>Initial ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erm, it was clear when it was advertised, in the job spec when I, when I got it, erm, that’s the sort of expectation and you know, you’re following on a tradition of people who have stayed for about that sort of length of time.</td>
<td>secular recruitment language, i.e. job spec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hesitant re success at getting job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tradition in terms of timing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘people’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>whose expectations? Church? Sig others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>uncertain timings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 – Script analysis
I stopped at 21 scripts because I noticed I had ‘heard it all before’ (Edley, 2001, p. 198) with issues being consistent across the accounts. I chose to do this stage of the analysis in some depth, almost akin to what Braun and Clarke classify as ‘generating initial codes’ (2006, p. 88). As a result I found that I had broad categories of data which suggested some initial codes.

- **Phase 3 – Generating Initial Codes**

Having organized the margin notes from the 21 scripts into categories across 3 tranches (7, 7, 7), each category was given a label. So, for example Tranche 1 was composed of 46 broad categories arising from 7 scripts and labelled accordingly, e.g.

- Calling
- Affirmation Seeking
- Learning from the Process
- Ambition
- Old Systems v New Systems
- Wives

Table 7 (below) illustrates how Tranche 2 was composed of a further 7 scripts and where the same categories were in evidence they were listed alongside those from Tranche 1. For example Calling, Affirmation Seeking and Systems were clearly duplicated in the Tranche 2 data whereas Learning from the Process was not in evidence. New categories in Tranche 2 such as Barriers to Moving and Timing were added. And so on through Tranche 3, listing repeat categories where appropriate and creating new ones as necessary, i.e. Ambition and Emotions.
Next, I collated and refined all the data items within each category with a view to allocating them an appropriate mastercode, e.g. Calling, Timing, Barriers, and establishing new definitions where appropriate (see Appendix 9). Having defined each mastercode, e.g. SYSTEMS, I created sub-codes, e.g. SYS-LOP (Systems, Lack of Professionalism) and lower order codes (LOC), e.g. SYS-LOP-CONF (Systems, Lack of Professionalism, Confidentiality), see Appendix 10. Each master, sub- and lower order code was established with reference to theory, the research questions and general hypothesizing arising from clergy narratives. This was to ensure it remained congruent with the ontological and epistemological aims of this research study (King, 2004b) and because it helped clarify my thinking in terms of the next phase – searching for themes. Throughout this process the relationship between the codes was constantly under review. Whilst the majority were retained, some were merged with other codes, e.g. some items under Working It Out were merged with Behaviours and vice versa; most were incorporated into new sub-codes or LOCs; a few others were discarded where necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tranche 1</th>
<th>Tranche 2</th>
<th>Tranche 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calling</td>
<td>Calling</td>
<td>Calling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning from the Process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmation Seeking</td>
<td>Affirmation Seeking</td>
<td>Affirmation Seeking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Systems v New Systems</td>
<td>Old v New Systems</td>
<td>Old v New Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Barriers to Moving</td>
<td>Barriers to Moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ambition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 – Generating initial codes
Having finalized the coding structure I applied it to the left hand margin of the 21 scripts. This was helpful at several levels. First, it double checked that the codes were working and relevant; second, any changes (King, 2004b, p. 261) to codes could be made as appropriate; it also meant that the scripts were being reviewed for a fourth time.

I then coded the remaining 10 scripts using the coding scheme just described whilst remaining alert to any new dimensions to the data not previously included in the coding structure. For example, Diocesan Differences were more evident amongst these scripts so they were allocated a lower order code within Barriers although they were not significant enough to warrant re-coding the earlier scripts. I did however keep extensive notes on any differences so that when I moved to the next stage (4) I could incorporate them if necessary.

- **Phase 4 – Searching for Themes**

By now I had some clear ideas about how codes combined to form primary or overarching themes. The map overleaf illustrates how some of the relationships were developing between themes:
• **Phase 5 – Reviewing Themes**

A final set of themes were then arrived at by checking the frequency of each code across all 31 scripts (King, 2004b) (see Appendix 11). The distribution of the codes helped to confirm the strongest themes, e.g. Seniors and Systems. Yet I was also alert to variations across the codes which needed to be given equal consideration. For example where the theme was absent in only one interview, e.g. Emotion; where frequency gave way to consistency, i.e. everyone mentioned the theme but only once, e.g. Calling; and those themes which were not strongly featured but had resonated throughout the interviews for one reason or another, e.g. Resources.
• **Phase 6 – Defining and Naming Themes**

The final themes were established as follows:

*Barriers* – the perceived and real institutional or self-imposed constraints when anticipating a move.

*Behaviours* – behaviours associated with career self-management and the reasons why clergy draw on such behaviours. Links to *Working It Out* (below).

*Calling* – how the nature of calling is manifested as clergy anticipate and prepare to move jobs.

*Language Use* – how clergy use talk to communicate sensitive and emotive information during the interviews.

*Resources* – the importance of certain types of support such as those found in social structures.

*Seniors* – how senior clerics, specifically diocesan and suffragan bishops, archdeacons and other significant gatekeepers, are influencing how clergy experience preparing to move jobs.

*Systems* – how different appointment systems in the Church are being negotiated by clergy; how clergy perceive these systems operating, i.e. as covert and impaired.

*Time* – the significance of timing and timescales as a reason for moving on.

*Tolerance* – how expressions of tolerance are employed and expressed.

*Working It Out* – linked to *Behaviours* (above) but with a focus on intrinsic factors which contribute to an individual’s understanding of how their skills, knowledge, attitudes, traits and values might fit with certain mobility options.

• **Phase 7 – Producing the Report**

The final stage of this phased approach to the research process involves comprehensive analysis of the data gathered from participants. The analysis
is informed by the theoretical framework for this research study and is mindful of the research questions which are addressed in a separate discussion. The analysis draws upon data extracts to demonstrate the prevalence of certain themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93) whilst interpreting their significance in relation to a wider set of considerations. For example, how the themes relate to each other; how they relate to existing literature; can certain claims be justified in terms of the assumptions that underpin it; what conditions are contributing to these themes and how are they positioned within the overall context of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 93-94). This analysis and answers to the Research Questions follow in Chapter 5, Findings and Initial Discussion (below).
The Findings and Initial Discussion chapter is structured in two parts. Part One provides comprehensive analysis of data from all 31 interviews organized around three dominant themes: Structure, Agency and Calling. Drawing upon these themes, what the data indicate in response to the four Research Questions is summarized in Part Two. The decision to organize the results and answer the research questions in this way was made for two reasons. First, the themes of structure, agency and calling were so distinctive in their own right that to have relegated them to discussion as part of the research questions alone would be a missed opportunity. The findings are such that they provide a rich, holistic account of what is going on in this institution at a time when temporal practice and legislative process are encroaching upon the historically protected employment status of clergy. In addition, they have the potential to contribute to the ongoing debate surrounding the iterative or dichotomous relationship between social structures and individual agency (Arnold & Cohen, 2013). Likewise the data on calling have much to offer the current interest in work and careers informed by secular or sacred callings (Berkelaar & Buzzanell, 2014). Yet the interplay between structure, agency and calling informed the research questions at the level of the complex dynamic between individual experience and institutional forces. The answers provide rich insights into the cognitive, behavioural and affective experiences of clergy when preparing to move jobs. These are empirical findings which provide new perspectives on the activities and constraints which inform the preparatory stage of career mobility.

Key to participant roles: R = Researcher; S = Senior; P = Parish
PART ONE: ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

ACROSS THREE THEMES

Section 1 (Structure): A Tale of Two Systems (pp. 144-179)

Section 2 (Agency): Exercising Agency (pp. 179-215)

Section 3 (Calling): Calling or Career? (pp. 215-232)

Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of interview data which tell us how clergy perceive certain dimensions of the Church appointment systems following changes to how they are recruited, selected and appointed to a post. Organizational systems and the individuals who influence access to job opportunities are important structural factors when transiting between jobs (Forrier et al., 2009). The strength of views expressed and vocabulary used by both parish and senior clergy when describing their perception and experience of the current systems suggest they are finding the process problematic when preparing for a move: ‘Inhumane’, ‘It’s odd’, ‘Demoralising at times’, ‘Triffid-like’, ‘Disingenuous’, ‘An appalling system’, ‘Fundamentally confused’, ‘It’s still quite quirky’, ‘Total pot luck’, ‘A very strange animal’, ‘Horrible, really horrible’, ‘It’s very confused, very confused’, ‘Like chooses like; I think that is a disaster’, ‘Worst of both worlds’, ‘Chaos’. Scrutiny of the data arising from the research questions which elicited these responses indicates that few had anything positive to say about the process. Those who refrained from saying anything negative were inclined to describe how they perceived the process working, although of the 14 who did so, eight were ambivalent in their comments.

Section 1 draws on evidence from across the data set to explain why clergy are responding to these changes with such discomfort and unease. It examines the
background to the current situation and discusses four contributing factors. These are: temporal considerations; the nature and effects of opaque and covert recruitment practices; third, the role of significant gatekeepers and finally, the impact of shock and demands. A summary of these findings completes Section 1. In Section 2, I discuss features of this analysis that extend our thinking to other concepts which throw further light on how clergy experience preparing to move jobs.

**Section 1: A Tale of Two Systems**

‘You see the laugh gives it away, it seems the most bizarre and opaque thing there ever is.’

5.1.1.1 **Background**

Those responsible for the appointment of parish and senior clergy have gone to some lengths in the past few years to make current recruitment and selection systems explicit via well-presented website material offering guidance and advice. Notwithstanding the availability of this information, to what extent clergy have understood the changes or elected to change with them is a moot point. The majority of clergy are conditional in their acceptance of the new approach to parochial and senior appointments compared with the old way of doing things. Their reservations encompass both objective and subjective concerns. *Objectively,* it would seem that the move to more formal recruitment and selection methods embodying a secular approach including transparency of information, formal applications, competitive interviews and the involvement of a wider range of personnel than in the past are not necessarily regarded as any more effective than the previous systems:

S1: Apart from that, the, there is a sense around, that by and large the people who are being appointed are the people who would have been
appointed under the old system. [...] Er, but there have been no surprises. Or maybe one surprise so far ... [pause] ... Everybody else who’s been appointed, erm, was somebody who might have been expected to be a [role].

P17: And therefore by this democratic process yes everyone has a lot of say, it doesn’t necessarily guarantee that the system works any better. I do remember some years ago a former bishop, erm, one of my first, first dioceses who sort of said, the system at that time was undemocratic, all right and in some respects, erm, untenable in one sense. Yet, he said, in practice it often worked. And, erm, therefore that you could move clergy around much easier.

Responsibility for producing a parish profile, i.e. a job description, lies with parish representatives. The majority of clergy interpreting this document in order to gain a realistic assessment of a potential role viewed it with antipathy:

P19: I think there’s a lot of wasted effort in trying to work out from a profile, a), whether this is worth applying for, b), how am I going to use this profile to help me prepare for the interview and write the application and erm, a lot of the profiles are not good.

P20: If you’ve never been a vicar, trying to work out what a parish is saying ‘We’re an inclusive church, and, erm, you know, we, we, we value tradition’ and also ‘We want the elderly of the parish to be ministered to but we would quite like, you know, the, an all-age service’ and all those code words that seem to, and the, and the, I’ve discussed it with parish clergy colleagues and friends and they say ‘Oh you have to read this, it’s like, it’s like ancient Greek, you just have to.’ They say, ‘A traditional parish but open to new ideas,’ they mean, you know, ‘Stuffed full of pensioners, but we’d quite like, you know, if you could somehow drag the local C of E school down.’
These comments highlight scepticism amongst clergy in terms of weighing up how much effort to expend on analysing the profile for the purposes of applying or not. This seems to be grounded in three main concerns: first, variation between dioceses in terms of how profiles are written and presented; second, doubt about the integrity of the profile; third, a trend towards producing such comprehensive profiles that clergy feel overwhelmed by the job requirements:

   P16: You kind of get this feeling that people are really wanting you to put diamonds on their spire, whatever, they really want it to be rather de-la-la-la-la-la.

Subjective concerns also contribute to clergy doubts about the systems change. There is a sense of regret for what they see as the loss of the relational aspect of the old appointment process. Relational in this context refers to clergy encounters resulting in a connection likely to facilitate a future move, primarily the bishop. This can mean a serendipitous encounter with a senior cleric which results in a job move as experienced by S4 and P9 below:

   S4: And then just by chance I’d finished a, a funeral at [name] crematorium and [archdeacon] came in for another funeral to represent his parents, and I said, ‘Oh any, any more news about the job because I haven’t seen it advertised,’ and he said ‘Ooh I’ll send you the details.’

   P9: I can’t remember exactly now, but I was heading towards Victoria. Erm, and sitting opposite was a clergyman with a black shirt on with a pectoral cross (a bishop). [...] He says ‘I’ve got a vacancy for a [role], would you be my [role].’ So I was offered a job on the London Underground.

More often, clergy refer to the process of dialogue and discernment between the individual and the bishop about what the next move might be. Discerning a vocation or call to be a priest with the support and encouragement of those responsible for recruitment of ordinands is one of the first tasks a potential candidate for ministry undertakes. The process of dialogue and discussion
involved in discernment remains a deeply embedded concept for clergy throughout their ministry and is highly valued. Seeking such counsel from the bishop when considering moving jobs was a major consideration for clergy, many of whom now regard that relationship to be compromised with the advent of the new systems:

P17: And then the archdeacon, or soon after that, had to phone and said what was my future, they hadn’t quite talked at that moment, and was obviously thinking of wanting me to go elsewhere, and that sort of system where you’re half expecting a phone call or tap on the shoulder, or that sort of invitation, ‘Have you considered this,’ all that’s gone and changed.

S7: So I think that, in a way that’s the sort of, the slight loss in the, in the new system is that, erm, it’s that sense of vocation and being someone being sent to somewhere and the bishop saying, ‘Yes, you’re the right person for this post and this is the challenge,’ erm, I think that’s, that can be slightly lost, erm, in the new system.

P19: In the old−, you know this idea of a place you go and look and the poor old Church had no say in the matter, the bad old days, clearly that’s gone, good for that, but they’ve sort of I think, thrown the baby out with the bathwater...

S7: So that’s the, sort of, the new model that’s emerging. Er, the old model was very much erm the bishop saying, you know, ‘You go there,’ and you find a reason for saying no, or the bishop having a chat with you and it happening more informally, so, erm, but I think that, that method is pretty much dying out now I think, so it’s going much more to this, the newer recruitment sort of model really.
Summary – Background
Clergy are unhappy with the introduction of new appointment systems modelled on secular methods of recruitment and selection. First, they regard the policies and processes of the new systems as no more effective in finding the right candidate than the systems employed in the past. Second, they regard the new processes as opaque and time consuming. Third, these developments appear to undermine the affective and social interactions of their early socialization into the role of a priest (Towler & Coxon, 1979). That is not to suggest that this discomfort is simply a nostalgic desire for the days when a chance encounter with a bishop in a crematorium or on a train was all that was required to obtain a new post. For many there is a sense of loss for that aspect of the appointment process reflecting the affective involvement of their earliest experience of training for the priesthood (Towler & Coxon, 1979). This tension is giving rise to dissonance and disaffection amongst clergy as they endeavour to understand and engage with the new systems whilst acknowledging the loss of the special relationship with senior clerics which gave them the opportunity to exercise some personal autonomy or agency as part of negotiating a move. Other factors which are contributing to this conditional support for the new systems are discussed under the following headings: Temporal Considerations; Opaque Processes and Covert Practice; Gatekeepers; Shock and Demands.

5.1.1.2 Temporal Considerations
Effective management of the pace of change in an organization, e.g. allowing time for effective communication and consultation, is acknowledged as an important factor in achieving acceptance of that change (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). It could be argued that the Church has introduced the system changes gradually rather than imposing them upon clergy without any warning. Yet, the changes have been introduced in a piecemeal fashion over such lengthy periods of time that most clergy still regard them as a recent innovation to be discussed and rationalized:
P17: Whereas these days I know that ... erm, you have to apply, and you have to learn tricks about, erm, application forms, and interviews, shortlisting, and all that, and obviously, even seeing profiles, and all those sorts of things. And now of course they’re electronic ones. And therefore learning new tricks of being interviewed alongside with your colleagues, was something totally new which er, which wasn’t there before.

It has been nearly 30 years since the 1986 parish legislation which devolved more power to the parishes for recruitment and selection. Yet the parochial system has lagged behind the senior system in terms of process and practice. This is mainly due to a reliance on implementation by individual dioceses, parishes and a complex system of patronage without any direct authority from the Church hierarchy. These factors are reflected in the recently produced Appointment Guidelines published by the Church’s Terms of Service Implementation Panel 2013 which state: ‘These are some of the reasons why, both structurally and culturally, it was traditionally thought to be problematic to produce anything authoritative within the Church of England on how parochial appointments should be conducted’, (Church of England, 2013b, p. 1). An additional reason for the delay has also been attributed to the tension between vocation and career practice (Church of England, 2013b, p. 1).

There is also evidence that despite clear guidance in reports and on the Church of England website (Church of England, 2001, 2007b) with regard to how the senior appointments system operates, for those clergy who aspire to an appointment within the ranks of the Church hierarchy aspects of the process appear to remain elusive despite the fact that seven years has elapsed since the guidance was published. One of the best examples of this is the phenomenon of ‘lists’, a reference to the historical use of two mechanisms, the Preferment List and the Fielden File (Church of England, 2007b, 3.2.1) both now incorporated into the Preferment List (Church of England, 2007b, 3.4.2), which identifies clergy suitable for, or with the potential for, appointment to a senior role.
Guidelines relating to the Preferment List were clearly defined in the Pilling Report (Church of England, 2007b) and yet the issue of lists engenders speculation, authority and derision in almost equal measure:

P16: I, I think there is somebody at Lambeth Palace whose name I can’t remember, who, who has this list of if they’re thinking of preferment for somebody then they’re kind of on that list. And I believe a couple of years ago it was being talked about that there was one that was being formed for women, erm, but I’ve never put anybody’s name on the list and nobody’s ever asked me if my name can go on the list [little laugh].

P11: And another one I was told that I was on, on long lists and, er, the bishop, previous bishop told me that. Because if you get on a long list, they will consult and they will phone up and, and all of that.

In the context of indirectly discussing his own preparation for a move to another senior role, S3 explains in ambiguous terms the different sources of ‘lists’ which clergy refer to when talking about the parochial appointment system:

R: You mentioned lists.

S3: Mm. There are lists. I’m told there are lists. Who knows.

R: Do you know what these lists are?

S3: Lists of possibles, probables, I mean yes, each diocesan bishop puts forward people, we have to do it on bishops’ staff, who might be considered worthy or preferred ones, and then you have to do paperwork, and, well it’s just HR practice and it’s all run out, it’s all run from the washhouse in Lambeth by the Archbishops’ Appointments Secretary. And then there are, there’s … you know, the, the Clergy Appointments Adviser, he has lists and it’s all very wonderful I’m sure but […]

150
Summary – Temporal Considerations
So, whilst the most recent incarnation of the Preferment List and other ‘lists’ have been part of the Church’s selection practice for several years and the parochial appointments system has been undergoing change for the last three decades, the antipathy that clergy express towards the new processes appears to symbolize conditional acceptance and a degree of resistance to these changes over an extended period of time. It would seem that the delay in formalizing practice and process (whereas some time pressure can be facilitative (Amabile, 1998)), belated and ineffective communication, limited consultation and a lack of leadership, all factors likely to interfere with the acceptance of change (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006), have allowed clergy to ruminate and reflect upon these developments over time without any clear sense of leadership or support. Consequently, this has created a climate of ambivalence and distrust amongst clergy which is compromising their willingness to engage fully with the shifting terrain.

5.1.1.3 Opaque Processes and Covert Practice
A further explanation of why most clergy in this study are unhappy with the system changes across the parochial and senior appointment processes is that they regard them as impaired and lacking in integrity. Evidence suggests there is a duality within the new system, i.e. old practices continue to operate alongside the move to secular recruitment methods via opaque and covert means. Given that the new methods are espoused by the Church hierarchy as being fair and transparent, many clergy are experiencing difficulty with what they regard as transgression from the official line. The criticism from parish clergy points to the opaque nature of these breaches being twofold. First, the old system embodying a lack of transparency is still in evidence:

P9: I mean, I’m not, I’m not convinced that the, the current attempt to make the process more transparent, er, and more equal, actually is working. Erm, so therefore you don’t get the best of that particular world where there is open access, transparency, erm, monitoring,
evaluation, erm, because the other world still creeps into that process, which I think then is dishonest.

P6: Well I think there are two elements to it, one is this sort of chatting with bishops in corridors side and the other is, is this very kind of professional HR, you know, quite carefully delineated process which, er, gives the illusion, and it does, I suspect it is an illusion really, which gives the illusion that it’s all kind of transparent and fair...

P7: I think if you’re going, for me, if the Church of England is going to say, ‘These need to be competitive, transparent, fair interviews,’ then they need to be competitive, transparent and fair, because currently it feels like they are competitive, but actually they are not. The idea of what is fair and transparent is, is not realistic.

Second, the systems are perceived as operating in parallel or as a hybrid of the two which makes it difficult to understand what the steps in the process might be:

P12: It gets cloudier, because it seems to me that they’re, that they’re actually working, there are elements of two systems [R: Mm.] running side, side by side.

P7: But I think that senior people need to acknowledge what we’re doing so that we don’t end up in the situation that I was in where a bishop says ‘I want you to go here,’ but actually it’s a competitive process so, those two things are at odds, erm, and I was effectively being asked to work in both systems at the same time. Erm, which actually is not very fair.

Speculation and distrust was evident amongst senior clergy on the preferment list or those aspiring to a senior role due to not fully understanding how the process works or where they were in the process:

P2: I did dip my toe into the water over one or two archdeacons’ jobs, but [sigh], I’m not quite sure what happens over those, because in theory
they are now being advertised which of course is a fairly recently [sic] development, but, the, again the, the sort of word on, on the circuit is that if you aren’t on somebody’s list, you’re, you’re very unlikely to get looked at. [R: OK.] So I think, I don’t fully understand what happens now over those sorts of jobs.

Coming to terms with the fact that being on the preferment list is no guarantee of being appointed to a senior role combined with being left waiting in a vacuum gave rise to ambiguity and frustration for several participants:

R: Did you hear anything else after that? [An interview five years previously with the Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments (ASA).]
S8: No, no, they said, you know, just wait and see.

R: OK. […] And what – what I’m trying to get to is how long are people left, left, not knowing whether there’s going to be an outcome.
S3: Oh forever, forever, forever, you don’t know if you’re on a list or not, you’re not, I mean in the old days you were never supposed to know you were on a list. [R: So you leave that meeting.] And you’re thinking, ‘I might be on a list, I might not.’ [R: You never know–] But if you’re not asked to fill out the paperwork, which I haven’t been, then you know you’re not on a list.

This lack of understanding about what is happening can be traced to covert practices which fly in the face of espoused policy. Candidates report instances of posts not being advertised, unhelpful interference by senior clergy and managing prejudice and discrimination in a covert manner. This latter finding is notable for the fact that for homosexual clergy, female clergy and older clergy anticipating prejudice when preparing to move is not about the prejudice per se which is often implicit and accepted, but that it has to be managed covertly as explained by P11, an openly gay cleric; P7, a female cleric expressing aspiration to a senior role in the future; and P19 who was nearing 60 years of age when applying for a new post:
P11: I gave him a ring, and said, ‘Where does the bishop stand?’ and he said, ‘Well you know he’s generally supportive in a fairly typical sort of bishop way …. Erm, and it’s definitely worth you applying, you know you should have a good chance.’ So I got a kind of amber light there which encouraged me to go for it.

P7: I mean, I say I don’t talk about [senior role] very often. I think if I said to people actually I’d quite like to do that, people would be shocked and horrified and that would sit very uncomfortably with a kind of, there’s a sort of sense that you shouldn’t send [say?] these things, which is really interesting.

P19: In fact, quite often I probably was the oldest so, you know, I think probably that comes into it, and obviously they don’t like to do it, they don’t say very much about it but I’m sure those sort of factors come into it. Especially if churches, if parishes say, we’re looking for a long term thing here and this guy can only really offer you six years at the most, or you could stay on to 70, whether they say that sort of thing. But you don’t know, but maybe we were struggling a little bit there.

Of all the covert practices described by participants, the biggest complaint across the data set was reserved for the ‘set-up’, i.e. where a preferred candidate is already lined up and clergy realise they are participating in a form of beauty parade:

S6: I mean you’d probably have had to be the Archangel Gabriel or Jesus himself, and even then you might not have got it. Erm, so that’s kind of annoying. Erm, and I wish they wouldn’t advertise if they’ve decided who they want, you know. I don’t mind if they decide who they want, but they should stop pretending it’s an open field.

P2: But I think as well there’s a sense of, there might be a sense of frustration that what might appear to be a transparent process, where a post has been advertised in the Church press, but may actually happen
that the appointing body may have had someone in mind but it had to go through the appearance of having an open and transparent appointment system.

On closer examination, the duplicitous nature of this practice in the eyes of participants is weakened by evidence of some clergy adopting a Janus-like approach to the process, i.e. participating in the very practices they are complaining about either as candidates, recruiters or both. I came to this conclusion for two reasons. First, some of those responsible for recruitment openly acknowledge that such breaches occur when it is considered judicious to do so (S3 below), whilst P14 only seemed to realise as he was speaking that the appointments were made outside the normal system:

S3: Let’s, if there’s somebody, somebody who wants to, if there’s a good curate, somebody we want to keep, you know, we think they, we know our parishes well, we know our people well, that might work. And when you say to parishes, ‘Would you like to see—, we’ve got someone we think is good, let’s interview them, you don’t have to have them if you don’t want them, but, you know, it will save you 1500 quid advertising,’ they seem very keen to, at least. And we’ve made some good appointments that way.

P14: What is interesting though that is actually all three of the jobs I’ve had, none of them came through the normal interview process. [...] None of them, that, I didn’t get anything through that, it was all, all three times it was through, it was, well, it was through bishops or archdeacons and interviews in that way.

Second, inconsistencies exist in some of the accounts where having expressed certain views about their treatment at the hands of the ‘system’ whilst anticipating a move, participants went on to describe being appointed via the very practices that were the source of their anger and distress:
S6: Um, but I, I went in without any expectation that I was a particularly favoured candidate or anything like that, although I subsequently learned from four different people that they’d heard before it was advertised that I’d got the job. [Laughs.]

In another case I was asked to switch off the recording equipment in order that the participant could explain indirectly about the informal process they were involved in at that time. They reflected on this further when I turned the tape on again:

P2: It may well be that some of those more network sorts of posts are still being spoken of more priv–, more privately or covertly before they appear in the Church press [R: Sure.] but I think that the, the, those sorts of old boy network type posts still appear.

Summary – Between a Rock and a Hard Place
What is causing clergy concern is that as things stand within the structural terrain of the appointment processes at parish and senior level, they are aware of being caught in a contradictory stance, i.e. where organizational policy is not always borne out in practice (El-Sawad et al., 2004). Their discomfort is further exacerbated by having to directly and indirectly, consciously and unconsciously participate in those practices as part of preparing to move jobs. What is interesting about this tension is not that clergy are seeking to change the situation because the barriers and prejudice to moving are often implicit and accepted and some of their behaviours demonstrate tolerance of the actions of those responsible for the rules and regulations. What seems to be happening is that they are holding the Church to account. They expect the Church to keep its word. They want to believe in shared values with regard to these new processes which they are finding difficult because the Church has been found wanting:

P17: But I’m not, I think as a, as a caring, as a Christian organization, I’m not, I’m just not entirely convinced that all the, er, the way the Church
has gone with this is always entirely right and best, and it can produce a bit of resentment.

Consequently, they have little trust in the integrity of the systems. In the majority of cases these are conscious and simultaneous concerns which leads me to suggest that they are experiencing some cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1964), see P11 below.

P11: So I think it’s not what it seems and it’s neither one thing nor the other, it’s neither the open recruitment process that it presents itself as being, nor is it the old system of, you know, bishop knows best and will tell you where to go. But it seems to be somewhere in between but never quite acknowledging all that.

Cognitive dissonance is a psychological state where inconsistencies in particular thoughts or attitudes cause discomfort, i.e. frustration or distress which the individual will seek to resolve (Festinger, 1957). At this stage in the analysis the concept appears to offer some explanation for how participants are accounting for their reaction to current circumstances.

5.1.1.4 Gatekeepers

Responsibility for the disaffection relating to process and practice is largely attributed to a range of institutional gatekeepers with responsibility for organizing and managing the appointment of clergy to posts. Gatekeepers, those individuals ‘who influence the progress of a career’ (King, Z., 2004) are acknowledged as a significant feature of the context in which careers unfold. Three categories of gatekeeper dominated accounts of preparing to move jobs and as such form an important part of the systems rhetoric in this study due to their perceived capacity to act as a structural barrier as well as a bridge to moving (Nathan & Hill, 2006; Forrier et al., 2009). How participants regarded their treatment before, during and after the selection process by these different gatekeepers was a significant finding in terms of contributing to their ambivalence with regard to the system changes. They are: i) senior clerics such
as diocesan bishops and suffragan bishops, archdeacons and college principals; ii) central Church of England personnel with a remit to advise on the appointment of clergy to parish and senior roles; iii) parish representatives.

An overview of the role of these different gatekeepers is followed by a discussion of the contradiction between how clergy seek them out in preparing to move whilst simultaneously expressing scepticism and distrust in their capacity to help. It examines the reasons why they persist in seeking direction and affirmation from senior clerics and other significant gatekeepers despite acknowledging the constraints on episcopal authority and a lack of professionalism manifested in delays, game playing and breaches of confidentiality by those concerned.

*Senior clerics,* particularly *bishops,* are viewed as a fundamental source of authority and influence by the majority of clergy when contemplating a move. The act of seeking advice, guidance and encouragement from the bishop as part of the preparatory process is not new as clergy have always looked to the bishop for guidance in this respect:

S3: Well in those days one was guided very much by the bishop, and the bishop suggested various vacant livings, er, to me.

An important gatekeeper for those clergy aspiring to a senior role in the institution is the *Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments* (ASA) who is not ordained and has a background in industry. This individual is viewed as the single point of assessment for entry into the senior appointments process and regarded as wielding significant power and influence:

S1: She does wield power, yeah, she does wield power, we’ve contracted her to do that job, as a Church.

P6: I had an initial conversation with [the ASA] about potential for senior leadership, and, erm, she, as you probably know, has a kind of set of criteria and models for the kind of jobs that people might do and what
the qualities are that are needed for them, and, erm, her initial feedback to me was, erm, ‘You’ve got the gifts and skills ready to go into a, straight into [a senior] post, now.’

The other category of gatekeeper that clergy can turn to for advice and guidance in relation to parochial moves includes the *Clergy Appointments Adviser (CAA)* and the *Church Appointments Secretary*. Of the nine individuals who spoke directly about their experience of meeting with these particular gatekeepers, five were ambivalent about how helpful they had found the experience whilst the remainder were positive about their encounter, regarding it as a useful source of information and advice even if it didn’t result in a new appointment.

Under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 power was devolved to PCCs (parochial church councils) with regard to the recruitment and selection of clergy. This means that *PCC representatives*, i.e. lay personnel, play an active role in the appointment process and have the right to refuse to approve recommended candidates should they wish.

For the participants in this study the gatekeepers with most influence were the bishop and the ASA although several clergy acknowledged the role of the archdeacon as increasingly influential in the parish system. How clergy regard the role of the bishop as a gatekeeper appears to have changed little from in the past when a tap on the shoulder was all that was required or desired to facilitate a move. Accounts of acts of deference, reverence, obedience and respect for the authority of the bishop are consistent across the data set. This indicates that clergy continue to place a very high value on episcopal influence and flattery when it comes to moving:

S3: So I would talk to him [suffragan bishop], and, and seek his wisdom as to what the future might be and, erm, and I, you know, I think the bishop, I think the bishop of the diocese also wants to have a conversation with me sometime about the future, he was no, he was no

159
more specific than that. And it may be to say, you know, ‘You’re doing a
good, I think you’re doing a good job here, knuckle down and get on with
it and you know, look forward to the next 10 years.’ If that’s what he
says then I shall endeavour to do that.

P16: You know, if it were the archdeacon who were to phone me up and
say, or the bishop who were to phone me up and say ‘There’s this, dah-
la-la,’ I think there’s a bit of me that would be quite excited and think
‘Mm-mm-mm-mm-mm.’ Possibly even flattered, depending on what the
post was [laughs].

P14: I wanted to look at that and explore that so, the pro– I went to see
[suffragan bishop], he, and they essentially, they weren’t sure what to do
with me, I think, [laughs] because I didn’t fit a category a neat category,
so he, he said, he was encouraging, saying ‘Yeah, do hospital chaplaincy,’
and that was fine so [I] then had the permission to look.

P15: Yes. I was getting more, I was getting fed up with filling in the forms,
they’re quite lengthy, the forms. Erm, and I wasn’t sure this was quite
right, erm, we’d been, we had had a look round but we weren’t sure
about it, but then the archdeacon wrote to me and said ‘Look we’d like
you to apply for this.’ So my wife and I thought ‘Well perhaps we should
take this more seriously.’

P22: I sought my own bishop’s advice, [suffragan bishop], and I went and
had a cup of tea with him and walked down a country lane and talked it
through and he agreed and thought it was a very good post and
couraged me to apply.

S2: I have a very high view of the episcopant [sic], which comes with my
churchmanship, and I may not like the bishop personally but if the bishop
says ‘Will you please consider that,’ it comes, it gives a very, very strong
nudge in that direction.
On the one hand, these extracts demonstrate how clergy continue to seek out direction and affirmation from bishops and others in relation to a potential move and that for some the actions of the diocesan bishop on earth are manifestations of ‘God’s will’. Most participants clearly understood the objective nature of the ASA’s role, regarding an interview with her as a source of explicit information, advice and feedback on suitability for a future post.

On the other hand, there is also evidence of a fundamental lack of trust in the role of the ASA and bishops to influence any outcome. For there is evidence that even for those who profess to understand the parameters of the ASA’s influence, there is an expectation that support and affirmation of a more subjective nature will be forthcoming. Given the reactions of some participants it seems this is not always the case. For P6 the feedback from the ASA appears inconsistent and S3 regards the ASA as having a rigid view of those individuals who fail to fit the established person profile:

P6: I was interested that, erm, one of the things that she said to me was that she didn’t think that I, erm, would be successful if I were to apply for a senior role in a cathedral, because I have no direct cathedral experience, but actually that’s not what she told one of my colleagues, so, erm, you know one of the interesting things about having conversations with others has been trying to unpick, erm, how these threads will play out for individuals.

S3: And ... I think the Appointments Adviser has a certain, there is a certain style to which, to which she is looking and it’s very much HR driven. I think it’s a sort of tick thing. Erm, and anyone who has ... anyone who has gifts and abilities that are slightly e-centric [eccentric?], off centre, or, erm, don’t fit into a sort of rigid, job descriptive mould, I believe she just writes off as unsuitable. But, but, who knows because it’s all shrouded in secrecy. There’s no, there’s no, erm, er, there’s no debrief
or anything after this meeting, there’s no come back. I mean it’s an appalling system, in my opinion.

P3: I mean I had conversations, I’ve had conversations with two bishops now [R: Sure.], erm, in the past, and I went up to see them at Church House, sorry Lambeth Palace, and also went to see, er, [ASA] at, erm, I presume that was Church House, but it was not in Church House itself, erm, and I kind of, I didn’t, I didn’t get the sense of you know, which way you should be going, it was a dialogue, but then from [ASA] it was definitely: ‘Well, I’m sorry you haven’t got the experience in this or that to be able to do this or that,’ and you think … ‘You’re very narrow minded on your selection criteria.’

The paradox that has the bishop as the source of authority and influence whilst at the same time being distrusted when it comes to moving jobs can be explained as follows. First, all clergy are aware that expectations of a bishop’s influence in helping them secure a new post are disproportionate to what bishops can actually deliver. This is because episcopal power and authority have always been constrained by the fact there is ‘no relationship of compulsion between the leader of the church and the led’ (Percy, 2006, p. 166):

S2: Bishops are very, very weak legally, which makes their job impossible. They can’t fire anybody. [Laughs.] Well they can but they need a really, really good reason.

P6: I know absolutely that, you know, your diocesan cannot get you a job in another diocese. I think sometimes people forget that. I think sometimes bishops forget that, frankly, erm, you know, that where there are open processes, that’s what’s going to happen.

So, whilst bishops might endeavour to exercise authority in any number of ways, e.g. traditional, rational, negotiated, symbolic (Nesbitt, 2001, p. 161), clergy, colleagues and congregations within their domain are under no compunction to accept that authority (Percy, 2006, p. 166). This is illustrated in the case of S3
(below) who despite being the bishop’s preferred candidate was finally told he would not be interviewed by the parish; also, P13 who exercised his own authority when he was unhappy with how his trajectory was being managed:

S3: The [bishop], who, who was feeling pretty sore about the parish in [town], I mean he said ‘They’d behaved badly and I’ve told them they’ve behaved badly, but there’s nothing much I can do about it,’ erm, which may or may not be the case, perhaps nor there wasn’t, but he was feeling pretty bad about it.

P13: One of the thoughts that, erm, was at the back of my mind was, ‘Well, really, they, they can’t just place you somewhere. You can be shortlisted, maybe, um but I don’t think it’s in the bishop’s power to sort of say you will go to such and such a parish,’ and, er, so I thought I might as well start applying.

And yet, there has always existed an understanding that the bishop as a legitimate source of authority had the right to influence the movement of clergy in a diocese. This understanding has been undermined by the recent appointment system changes resulting in bishops being required to adopt a form of executive authority (Percy, 2006) bound up in strategy rather than support or succour. This situation is generating frustration for both clergy and bishops:

P7: And I had coffee with [diocesan bishop], I had about half an hour with him. [...] Interestingly, he expressed some of his frustration at the, he didn’t use the words ‘Lack of powerlessness’ [sic] but that’s effectively what he was verbalizing was a change in a system that meant that actually he could do nothing to ensure, or, or even to help me to get a job.

P19: It just, it’s just made me just sort of very conscious that you are probably on your own, and better to work on that perception, and, er, and go from there. Er, but it was just one of those erm, you just went away, thinking, ‘Are the bishops really in the end quite powerless,’ er, ‘or
is it just a way of thinking well maybe it’s probably better to look further afield.’

The second reason why clergy distrust bishops and other gatekeepers when negotiating a move is their experience of what many regard as a lack of professionalism by senior clerics and parishes relating to the management of the process of making appointments. Evidence of poor practice involving delays in responding to applications and lack of information during the recruitment process; expedient behaviour in relation to moving people between posts; breaches of confidentiality and inconsistency with regard to feedback and follow up were found across the data set. Interestingly, as the present study progressed two publications sought to address many of the issues clergy had raised during the research interviews (Pedrick & Blanch, 2011; Ling, 2013) reinforcing the findings from this study that further changes to current practice are overdue. In the interests of balanced reporting of the findings, several participants spoke of their experiences of good practice yet in all cases the individuals concerned also spoke of poor experiences reflecting the views of the majority of the data set. These concerns are reflected in the following extracts which cannot do justice to the extent of clergy experiences across the data set of unprofessional practice by institutional gatekeepers:

S6: Fine. Go along to that, hear nothing for a bit, then maybe two weeks later, ‘Oh you’ve been shortlisted, well done.’ Nothing for a bit, go to a shortlisting meeting and then just silence for weeks, um, and then cryptic emails from the archdeacon saying: ‘Don’t worry you’re still in the running,’ thinking ‘What does that mean?’

The delays and lack of information experienced by S6 during the recruitment process are notable not just because individuals are left second-guessing but also because of the distress they cause participants:

P7: Yeah. The, the not getting the two was awful. Erm, it was really difficult, erm, and because the feedback wasn’t good and there wa–, there wasn’t really anyone around to, to help me to pick up the pieces,
erm, it was really difficult and I did feel like I was in pieces after, you know, I felt actually it was all kind of falling apart.

P15: So that might have been partly my choice [R: OK], because I think it is pretty humiliating, I mean I find the whole process humiliating, actually. Erm, [R: Can you say more about that?] er, well, erm, well you’re given such inadequate reasons for being declined.

Several clergy likened seniors’ efforts to manoeuvre them or others into particular jobs via ‘cunning plans’ and ‘lining people up’, often expressing these efforts in terms of playing games. Game playing in this context is used to suggest forethought, forward planning and problem solving (Unterrainer, Kaller, Halsband & Rahm, 2006) by gatekeepers, rather than having fun:

P6: As I discovered subsequently, erm, the senior staff had already decided this would be the right place for me to come, but my predecessor was having difficulty finding the next job, so we had to wait for the dominoes to fall, and in the end the dominoes fell really well, erm, but the parish here wasn’t offered anyone else, it was a, ‘We think this is the right person, could you have a conversation’ process.

P11: And there’s still that thing about really we’re still pieces on the chessboard, and if you’re not applying for the right job at the right time, you’re actually messing up the plans and probably blotting your copy book in the process.

Yet this game playing, whilst acknowledged and accepted, has an expediency about it. To continue with the games metaphor, it implies an element of teasing or being dallied with by gatekeepers which is generating irritation, wariness and unease. For many clergy this comes in the form of unsolicited input which does not have the best interests of the individual at heart:

S7: Somebody told me, rather cynically, you know, beware of episcopal flattery when it comes to this, you know, because they’ll say and this is the same person I’ve applied to, ‘Oh yes, you’re the right, I’ve been
speaking to so and so, you’re exactly the right person,’ of course they may be saying that to somebody else as well. And I think that’s where it’s a bit sort of tricky. [Laughs.]

P22: We’re fitted for solving problems rather than for what we can do creatively, that is usually my, my experience of bishops, even friendly bishops, is that they offer you jobs informally to solve their problem rather than anything else.

P13: I think you’ve got to be sensible, you have to listen to, um, the advice of the hierarchy, um, but equally I think if you find that you have an unease with how that conversation is developed or goes, um, listen to that unease, don’t assume that, um, because somebody in a senior position, er is full of benevolence, they will want what is the best, I think you do have to sort of be fairly sort of realistic, and have a sense of what might be, you know, protecting your family, as well.

This expediency was well illustrated in episode 2, series 2 of the BBC TV comedy series, *Rev.* (http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00lrzss). The story revolves around a Church of England priest ministering to an inner-city London church and his relationships with family, community and the Church hierarchy, in particular the archdeacon. What is particularly well observed in the episode is the informality of both the context, i.e. the kitchen of the vicarage and how the archdeacon is using flattery and seductive language to introduce a new curate to the vicar and his wife via images on his iPad. Of particular interest is the vicar’s surprise at learning that he is regarded as having the potential to be a good trainer of curates through the use of the statement, ‘*We’ve all been saying,*’ a skill which he clearly had no idea he possessed until being told by the archdeacon.

Participant accounts demonstrate the extent to which clergy anticipate and experience expedient behaviour by the bishop when preparing to move. Yet, clergy continue to move jobs and the impact of those expedient behaviours was
expressed through varying degrees of anger, frustration, disappointment and upset. The following extract is not untypical of the care with which some clergy in this study expressed their concern at the behaviour of significant gatekeepers when preparing to move jobs within the Church. S5 gives a very carefully constructed response to a question from this researcher which sought to elicit his feelings about having been put forward for different roles for which he did not feel he was particularly well suited:

S5: There’s a sense of, if a bishop writes, and, erm, then you sort of respond. And I said this to, erm, the [diocesan bishop], had a good conversation with him, and, erm, and he said, ‘Well,’ he actually said, well, he said ‘I recognise some of what you’re saying, but we want the best person here.’ [Little laugh.] So, had, so I sort of understand that, but I’m not, it doesn’t feel completely a controlled system of, ‘We’ve discerned this about somebody, so these posts are more s−, suitable than those posts.’ It’s still, the local scene saying ‘Who can we get and who’s the best person we can get.’ So there’s a bit of a mismatch there.

This discussion of the perceived importance of certain gatekeepers when preparing to move jobs highlights the ambivalent relationship clergy have with senior clerics in this respect. On the one hand, clergy will seek out their bishop as a source of advice and affirmation about their next move despite being aware of the constraints on their power and authority and experiencing a lack of professionalism in many cases. On the other hand, they express profound distrust of episcopal involvement that is unsolicited and expedient and which can be experienced as disruptive, coercive and often misleading and where expression of the impact of this tension is made with care:

S5: Yes, it opens up a degree of expectation even if you know that’s not true and therefore there’s that bit of your brain that’s imagining all sorts of scenarios. And so it does affect you, erm, and when you don’t get one or two things, actually, you begin to, the danger is that you begin to
devalue yourself because you think ‘Well, what am I achieving?’
Particularly if you’re that sort of person.

The next section in this discussion of the lack of professionalism shown by
gatekeepers towards clergy who wish to move jobs examines evidence of
breaches of confidentiality by those in positions of leadership. To confide is
defined as ‘to trust wholly; to impart knowledge with reliance on secrecy’ (Percy,
2006, p. 168). As part of their ordination vows clergy are required to observe
the confessional seal, a priestly task which involves maintaining appropriate
boundaries between the confidences and secrets of their communities and
congregations and the wider public interest (Percy, 2006, p. 168). This suggests
clergy have always had a particular understanding of the notion of
confidentiality rooted in their early socialization as a priest which carries certain
expectations of themselves. The boundaries therein and the inherent tension
clergy face when asked to cross them are illustrated by senior clerics S1 and S5
on the effects of being instructed to maintain strict confidentiality during the
process of moving jobs:

S5: I think I’m by nature a fairly sort of compliant person. So if the
Church says ‘You don’t talk about this,’ you don’t. And actually that
made it, I, I was fortunate that there were one or two people who were
sort of in the inner circle and I did talk to. But actually when [senior
cleric] said, well, ‘Go off and see [professional career coach],’ I found that
quite hard, I was talk−, no it was good to talk to [coach] but it wasn’t,
wasn’t quite sure how to take this up into a slightly closed process, it
was, I got into a slightly funny mental state, so I probably ought to use
more of [coach]. But wasn’t quite sure of status, I’m not quite sure what
it was, and, and didn’t−

S1: First of all it took 10 days to get a letter, from, erm, the interview,
having been phoned that night to say ‘We’d like to offer,’ it took 10 days
to get the letter, [...], erm, and saying ‘You may talk to no-one except
your [partner] and your spiritual director.’ [R: OK. Was that in the letter?]
Mm. Meanwhile, the rest of the Church of England was happily gossiping away.

There was plenty of evidence that when it comes to moving jobs most parish clergy are very conscious of trying to keep the process private whilst balancing it with consideration for their parishioners and wider community who are inclined to view the vicar very much as their own:

P5: And, erm, the type of comments that erm, that I’ve had on moving before: ‘I thought you were happy here.’ [...] Erm, and I hear a bereavement almost of loss of relationship with the vicar who’s left. So I think that places ... an accountability upon the person leaving for handling that.

P19: And also, you don’t really want to advertise round I’ve applied for this job and I’ve not got it, ‘cause you know, it’s not helpful for our purposes. So we kept it all close to our chest very much. We didn’t tell anyone in the parish, for example, we managed to, it was amazing, how we managed to sort of, I don’t, and then people had no idea, when we actually said we’re going.

So, whilst clergy can retain personal autonomy and control over the process of confidentiality all is well. It becomes problematic when that expectation is extended to the institution in which they work. Clergy appear particularly indignant because the new processes espouse transparency and fairness which is not borne out in the blatant breaches of confidentiality clergy observe and experience. The following accounts are typical of many in the data set. The first two extracts relate to parish appointments where criticism extended to those involved in the wider recruitment process such as parish representatives and members of the congregation:

P13: But er confidences were broken, erm, I had er, I was given a lift back after the interview by er somebody who wasn’t on the interview panel, um, whose last words to me, ‘Well, best of luck in your search for
jobs.’ And I thought, ‘Oh, OK, obviously [laughs] it won’t be here then.’ And I thought, ‘Well, OK, I mean, that’s just actually how the whole place was organized,’ but I thought, you know there should be a degree of professionalism, and one of the candidates, one of the interviewers, fell asleep, and I thought ‘This is, er, I, I, do they really know what they’re doing?’

P1: I didn’t get it and it turned out that the bishop’s mother, erm, was in the congregation of the church next door to me, and, er, I was at a deanery event and she came up to me and said ‘I’ve got a message from my son. Erm, don’t be disappointed, you were one of 40 candidates, you were lucky to get shortlisted and you came second.’

P7: Erm, frustration about the process was that I, there were things like I, at the lunch, they toured us around and then they brought us the lunch and they said, ‘Ah,’ the lady serving the tea, ‘You’re [name], I was talking, they said [name] was applying, I was talking last night at a, erm,’ and you kind of think ‘This was meant to be a professional pro–, you know, of a,’ and I think my frustration with the process was that being told on the one hand that this was professional, above board, like the rest of the world does it, and then actually knowing that that wasn’t the way that was being done.

Those involved in the senior appointments process are equally aware of the lack of confidentiality and discretion exercised by those in authority when it comes to managing movement. For those clerics identified for appointment as a dean, suffragan or diocesan bishop, negotiation takes place between representatives of the Church, Downing Street and the Crown. Despite the fact that the negotiation of these appointments is supposed to be highly confidential such confidentiality is routinely broken according to a senior candidate:

S1: Erm, and I think that has to be better than this pretend stuff about secrecy, which doesn’t work. Within three weeks of my interview, one of
my staff here was telling me I’d been appointed. [They weren’t] meant to know, and I certainly hadn’t said anything.

The experience of S1 is reflected in the comments of the late Dean of Southwark writing publicly of internal ‘leaks’ about senior appointments to the press from Church sources:

The problem is endemic, it is essentially created by a system of overwrought confidentiality which no commercial organisation would use for the very simple reason that most confidentiality creates its own difficulties and because ‘candidates’ are treated in a more grown up way.

(Slee, 2010)

It would seem that based on accounts of personal experiences in recent years, there is almost no expectation amongst parish and senior clergy that confidentiality will be maintained by certain gatekeepers when preparing to move jobs. However, there is an important point to be made here with regard to the ambivalent role clergy play in this dilemma. Whether or not confidentiality with regard to moving on has ever existed at a level near to the ethos of the confessional discussed above is not the focus of this study. The fact that clergy regard both appointment systems as opaque and secretive rather than confidential in nature suggests it has not. What causes most clergy difficulty is that they regard those with direct influence on the appointment processes as not upholding the best practice methods based on secular human resource models, i.e. fairness, transparency and consistency, which are espoused by the hierarchy. The following extracts illustrate how this tension in relation to confidentiality is influencing clergy morale and job search behaviours. S1 had recently experienced the senior appointments process first hand; P5 would be meeting a local senior cleric in a few months’ time for a review; P18 was responding to a follow-up question from the researcher about clergy confidentiality:

S1: And you can’t say anything, it’s supposed to be completely secret, it’s absolute twaddle, but it’s t−, it’s supposed to be secret, and I decided by the end, that it was good training to be a spy, because [little laugh] you
had to keep the different worlds completely separate, and you had to know who knew what.

P5: Yes, yes, yes. [Whispers: ‘[Senior cleric] isn’t very confidential.’] So I shan’t be saying anything I don’t want him or anybody else to know.

R: OK.

P5: Bless him. [laughs.]

R: Right.

P5: I don’t know if you know him, sorry if you do.

R: OK.

P5: [whispers: ‘Put that one aside.’] Makes a difference though, makes a difference.

R: Can you say any more about what makes a difference –

P5: Personally, I think if I know something is going to be treated in confidence and with care, then I’m more likely to be more open.

P18: There are some significant, er, let’s say individuals, who have a key role in the process, I don’t feel it’s the case [sic], and for me that blocks a route to advice and support in the hierarchy. [laughs.] Yes, yeah, that is a factor in the, where I might go to seek support, I, yeah, someone by their own admission isn’t totally trustworthy. Confidentially.

Summary – Closing the Gate Behind Them

This section has examined the significance of certain gatekeepers for clergy who wish to move jobs. It has established how important clergy perceive the roles of bishops, archdeacons and the Archbishops’ Appointments Secretary to be in helping them to facilitate a move. It has identified changes to the appointment systems whereby the authority of a bishop to influence movement at a parish level has been curtailed and the Archbishops’ Appointments Secretary operates more along the lines of an executive search consultant than a career counsellor. It has also examined different aspects of the lack of professionalism many clergy experience as they anticipate moving jobs. Yet, clergy persist in seeking
direction and affirmation in relation to a potential move. The fact that anticipating or receiving support from senior clerics and other gatekeepers can no longer be relied upon strategically or practically is creating levels of dissonance for clergy as they endeavour to reconcile the conflicting beliefs and emotions they are experiencing in the face of these changes. This is leading to an undermining of their confidence in how they have traditionally exercised agency when contemplating a job move.

5.1.1.5 Shock and Demands

A factor which is contributing to the reluctance of clergy to embrace the new systems is the shock and demands they report experiencing when faced with the new regime. There are several elements to these concerns. First, clergy perceive that greater practical and emotional rigour is required to navigate the bureaucracy involved when preparing to move jobs. This includes the time and energy needed to research different jobs, make multiple applications, write CVs, complete application forms and participate in competitive interviews. These tasks are often described in physical terms:

S7: But it was, I think because we’re not really used to that way of doing it, erm, it’s, it’s, it is quite hard and draining I think, that process.

P17: I can’t stay here ‘til retirement, I must move on, no matter how hard or easy or how painful or how bruising it’s going to be, I’ve got to find something else.

P19: And, you know, is, is, it can be demoralising because you feel if you were looking, um, I mean, I, I, as I say, this was the fourth interview, and I found it exhausting, you know, just the whole process, I mean, looking for jobs, is is, exhausting, but, er–

Second, the new formalized systems require all clergy to manage their way through a more visible recruitment process than in the past which exposes them to greater public scrutiny from a wide range of Church and lay leadership. The
The competitive interview process is causing particular difficulty not least because so many clergy report being unprepared for the interview process:

S6: I’m not sure I was ready or prepared particularly for the process. Erm, you know, I’d never been interviewed for a job before. Erm, you know and all of that was a bit sort of a shock to the system. Erm, and you know you learn by doing, so, you know, interviews are fine now. [Laughs.]

S5: I haven’t found it easy to get to the point of preparing for interviews and, erm, I got there simp–, I suppose that’s where doing several at least said [sic] there’s no choice in this so I might as well try and work out how to get into it.

What is not made explicit in the above extracts is the fact that an uneasy relationship now exists between exploring the nature of the job during an interview which was the expectation in the past, and having to deliver a performance as part of the new way of doing things, a balancing act that neither S7 nor S5 (below) found easy to do:

S7: The process itself was, was OK. I think, I think for me it was an eye opener because that was the first time I really experienced that sort of competitive interview process and the sense in – I suppose I’d always thought that when you’re looking at a post it’s a mutual exploration and that’s what it’s supposed to be but it, it’s very difficult. When you get into interview mode you have to be sparky and saying ‘I want this job because –’ and I think that way, we’re not used to doing it that way I think, in the Church, so I think, you know, the mutual thing you probably have to work out beforehand what you really feel about this post and my problem was that I’d not really, I didn’t really know what I thought about it in the interview so it was actually quite draining.

S5: But certainly early on, I, I did feel, you know, why should I particularly talk to other people about the things I’ve done because that’s not the
way I work. Erm, and yeah I have sympathy for those who find it really hard, and I think there is a, a, an issue there. [...] I need to meet people two or three times, to build a strong relationship, and then we can change the world. I’m not going to do that on a soundbite first meeting.

The dilemma expressed here evokes a fundamental tension for clergy which is how to reconcile the requirement in the new system to actively promote their skills and talents and compete openly with their peers, with an inherent sense of humility bound up in the origins of their call to ministry.

Whilst the majority of participants found the application process difficult, it would be inaccurate to suggest that all clergy view competitive interviews in a negative light. For those with previous experience of such interviews in secular employment this aspect of the system was less problematic and even some first-career clergy regarded it as a positive development. However, all the participants who fell into this category were conditional in their comments:

S1: Erm, and perhaps because I had been through a series of competitive interviews previously, it didn’t worry me as much as it has some people, and I think the least, [sic] the process has been refined so it’s slightly more just than it had been right at the start.

P7: And I mean, I came [from another system] where everything was open, competitive interviews and that. So they don’t frighten me, it doesn’t bother me and I’m not doing this whole change that lots of other clergy seem to be doing about how it just used to be about being appointed and now it’s interviews, well I’ve never known anything else so for me it, it’s not complex. Annoying sometimes but not complex.

P19: The good thing is that, I know I’m used to competitive interviews for anything, and it focuses the mind to think, well, we’ve got all these people here, over two days, one and a half days, we’re all part of that, I
can see that that is a good, quite a good way, and you get put on the spot, there’s usually a task to do. Erm, er, but it’s quite a bruising thing.

Another reason why clergy find the new developments so demanding is the lack of formal career-related advice, guidance and support available to them when it comes to navigating their way through the new terrain. For both senior and parish clerics, working out how their skills and experience might fit with a specific role is problematic due primarily to the disappearance of the bishop as the arbiter of a future move, in effect matching priest to parish. The new formalized systems of recruitment, selection and development require clergy to take greater personal responsibility for their decision to change jobs than they did in the past. They are now accountable for discerning their skills and talents and matching them to a particular role or situation as part of the recruitment and selection process. The majority of participants report doing this in a vacuum with limited, inadequate and at times no support from those in authority with career development planning or tasks:

P5: I also speak, have spoken to, er, my bishop and, erm, team rector, erm, expressing, you know, expressing the type of work, the sort of places I’m looking, what I’d like to develop, where I’d like to be. And asking their, erm, guidance and, erm, wisdom on, on what might be the right move.

R: What sort of response have you received?

P5: [Laugh.] Er ... not very helpful really. Erm ... I think neither the team rector nor the area bishop with whom I deal, er, see themselves as career advisors, shall we say.

R: So how did you go about finding something this time?

P23: That was just in the Church Times and, erm, I suppose I was hoping for a bit more support from [location] Diocese, given how they’d [little laugh] let me down but, erm, no, no support at all was offered to me from that point of view.
P13: Er, I think there are people, there are some really good people who work in the dioceses and do their level best in terms of actually supporting and helping people in their ministry but I think they’re less skilled in actually helping and supporting people in moving.

P20: And what I discovered was that when I wanted my bishop he wasn’t there, and, erm, I found that you know, there were calls, repeated calls, and you know the only person who really took an interest in me was the area, assistant area dean who came round repeatedly, and he encouraged me to take parishes so I found there was a real lack of support.

P6: Erm, I’ve had a session, erm, I had a, I had a single coaching session, erm, which the diocese paid for, which I did find interesting and helpful, particularly in terms of just, er, doing the paperwork for everybody, that was very useful. Erm, one of the things that I will be negotiating over the next six months is more of that sort of professional development, partly to help me understand what might work for me, and partly to be able to communicate that clearly to other people, so a big kind of network of stuff really.

Summary – Shock and Demands
This section has highlighted the extent to which clergy were unprepared for the advent of the new appointment systems. They report feeling shocked at what they are being asked to do and experiencing discomfort and distress at how demanding the process can be physically, psychologically and emotionally. It would be inaccurate to suggest that these issues are unique to the new system of appointments because some of the data suggest that clergy have always experienced problems with the process of moving jobs. The distinction here is that the Church has formalized the appointments process thereby changing how clergy have traditionally exercised agency in relation to a career move. The nature and integrity of these changes are creating unease and uncertainty for
the majority of a population used to being called to a role by someone in authority rather than being responsible for their own progression, and for whom self-promotion is the antithesis of humility.

5.1.1.6 Conclusion to Section 1

This discussion of the structural conditions affecting how clergy experience preparing to move jobs has highlighted significant tensions for clergy as they navigate their way through changes to the appointment systems. First, clergy are not embraceing the system changes wholeheartedly due to the length of time it has taken Church leadership to implement them. Second, most clergy are confused and irritated by what they perceive and experience as opaque and covert practices operating in the midst of systems espoused to be open, fair and transparent. Third, clergy are feeling the loss of the relational dimension to preparing to move jobs in favour of formalized recruitment and selection processes espoused by Church leadership. Dialogue and discernment with significant gatekeepers is rooted in the custom and practice of how clergy have gone about moving jobs in the past. The new system is providing a challenge to that practice which all clergy in this study reflected upon at different times. It is creating an ambivalent relationship with two significant gatekeepers in particular, the bishop and to a lesser extent the Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments. Clergy appear simultaneously reliant upon yet dismissive of the capacity of these individuals to help them in preparing to move jobs. They persist in seeking out affirmation rooted in their earliest socialization into ministry whilst knowing that the new systems and leadership style of many new bishops is unsympathetic to the old way of doing things and cannot always be trusted.

Finally, being asked to participate and perform in a recruitment process for which they feel ill-prepared is challenging how clergy have traditionally exercised agency when preparing to move jobs. Cumulative evidence indicates clergy are experiencing cognitive dissonance as manifested in their efforts to
express and rationalize the discomfort they are experiencing in the face of conscious, simultaneous and opposing beliefs in relation to the systems changes. The result is conditional acceptance for these changes rather than outright support or rejection. In the next section I will discuss the clergy response to these structural conditions by examining how they are exercising individual agency in order to manage the situation and alleviate the discomfort they are experiencing.

Section 2: Exercising Agency

‘You know, once you’ve let the genie out the bottle it’s quite hard to go back to Plan A really.’

Section 2 provides an analysis of interview data which highlights how clergy exercise individual agency when preparing to move jobs. The data reflect how they are responding affectively, cognitively and behaviourally to recent changes to the appointment systems. It posits that profound tensions exist as clergy endeavour to reconcile individual autonomy and agency with a desire to co-operate with the new rules and regulations. This is despite the fact that the majority of clergy are sceptical about the integrity of many aspects of the current systems.

How clergy are choosing to exercise agency in this context is explored from the perspective of individual self-directed career management behaviours (Hirschi, 2012). This is distinct from career management in the context of a reciprocal relationship between the individual and a coherent organizational development system. This is because evidence from the systems data suggests that there is limited organizational career management activity (Sturges, Conway, Guest & Liefooghe, 2005) to support clergy when preparing to move jobs. Self-directed career management behaviours serve to facilitate a move in ways which are
widely acknowledged in the career mobility literature (Forrier et al., 2009). They include the planning, decision-making, exploring and problem-solving skills of career adaptability (Savickas, 1997, 2005; Hirschi, 2012), or the positioning and influencing behaviours of career self-management (King, Z., 2004).

The different dimensions of these and other behaviours identified as relevant to how clergy prepare to move jobs and how they are being enacted are discussed under the following headings: Throwing Your Hat into the Ring; Time and Taking Control; Making Connections; Information-Seeking Behaviours; Job Content Innovation and Fighting Talk.

5.1.2.1 Throwing Your Hat into the Ring

Concern is expressed at making any potential career move public. Going public means applying openly for a role either because the individual has decided to do so independent of any influence other than their own desire to make a move; or because the individual has been encouraged to make an application by a significant other, e.g. gatekeeper or colleague. In either case, the evidence suggests that most clergy perceive publicizing their desire to move as a risky business. This was sometimes expressed in terms of concern for their parish community who are likely to become unsettled by the prospect of their priest moving on (S6). Although for most clergy it was about their working relationship with their parishioners (P17 and P4). Consequently, maintaining confidentiality around a potential move is important:

S6: ..... and, and, you know, it’s unsettling for a parish or whatever if [R: Sure. Yes.] they find out you’re looking, especially if you don’t get something straightaway [R: Yep.] because, you know, they’re constantly thinking, you know, have we got them or haven’t we?

P17: Well you know that if it’s known that the vicar’s on the move, parishioners, parishioners how they work and how they perceive, er, can, can change quite a bit, and I think in general it makes it more difficult
because they know that you’re getting restless, they can get restless and either, the ones who would wish you, wish you, if they’re not keen on you, wish you’d go as soon as possible.

P4: I mean, I don’t think anybody here except my immediate clergy colleagues and the two people who are my referees who are very carefully chosen, has any idea that I’ve been applying for posts, um, and my reasoning for that is that I think if people, every time they looked at me thought that I was thinking about going it would just diminish [R: Yes.] my ministry appallingly.

Other participants (S1, P11 and P2) are more explicit about the anxiety felt as a result of your name being ‘out there’, where fear of rejection or getting it wrong prevail. P4 and S6 show how clergy regard themselves as learning new skills in order to navigate their way through the process:

S1: [...] and so I was then approached by various people about [...], people who said ‘Had you thought, are you considering’, erm, and having been approached by, if you like, the headhunters in the system, for [role], I knew that they were likely not to reject my name at the first hurdle. Erm, so I decided to throw my hat in the ring which means a formal application these days.

P11: Because that whole process of kind of−, because of where the Church is at about the whole gay thing, and therefore there’s a certain vulnerability attaching to all of that anyway, because you never quite know, you know, how accepting is the parish going to be? Are there going to be issues there? Am I doing the right thing? All of those issues were very live at the time, so I was feeling very kind of tentative and slightly nervous about the whole thing.

S6: And you know I’d been – when I’d mulled over in the past, is it time to start looking, is it not, I’d always been quite cautious about throwing my hat in the ring just because once your name’s out there, it’s out there
[R: Yeah.], and I’d wanted to be sure that that’s what I, you know, I was sure, you know, wanted to, to be looking to leave.

P4: Um, but I also learned how to negotiate the whole confidentiality thing, um, because I applied within the same team, and that’s, that was quite useful learning and how you chose what you said to people.

S6: Erm, you know and all of that was a bit sort of a shock to the system. Erm, and you know you learn by doing, so, you know, interviews are fine now. [Laughs.] But the first one, yeah, I just didn’t know what to expect.

P2: [...] and that is in many ways a much more public approach to thinking about moving ‘cos [gatekeeper] work goes in two prongs, first of all there’s his vacancy list that he publishes and sends out to bishops, but he also sends out a list of clergy who are looking for a move and that can be a bit of a double-edged sword because then the word gets out that person X is looking for a job and simply because of the networks of the Church, that then can end up coming back to, to haunt...

For P2 (above) publicizing preparing to move is potentially damaging ‘because of the networks of the Church’ which suggests these networks are unreliable or unhelpful. We can only speculate whether or not P2 would have said the word ‘you’ when breaking off the sentence at the word ‘haunt’, having used the third person throughout the sentence. Either way, the account illustrates the care with which clergy explain balancing their own desires alongside those of the parish. One explanation for this is that some motives for moving, e.g. being seen as aspirational or ambitious, carry a threat. S7 (below) who occupies a role which is viewed as a potential stepping stone to a senior appointment reflects on this when asked about what the next role might be:

S7: We don’t have a career structure in the Church of England but, you know, I suppose, if you had one, that’s what, that would be the expectation so I think there is that sense in which, erm, you know, there
may be expectations of what next, which may or may not happen, erm, and I think it’s dangerous to say you know what might happen, really.

P7: When I look at the kind of senior posts the only thing that I’d kind of really like to do would be archdeacon. I really would love to do that, erm, for that mix of organization and pastoral and, actually is a mix that I find quite appealing. [Whispers.] Daren’t say that very often though.

Summary – Throwing Your Hat into the Ring

Whilst clergy have always had to weigh up a range of different issues when contemplating a career move, the new systems require them to make their moving intentions known in a more public way than in the past. This is giving rise to caution and some resistance amongst clergy who perceive a number of different risks associated with going public. Those risks include upsetting the parish, personal fear of failure or rejection, being perceived as ambitious and retaining some internal locus of control over future events, the loss of which might undermine their professional standing and personal well-being (Hirschi, 2011). This suggests individual agency is compromised and constrained due to the perceived risks in engaging with the current recruitment process.

5.1.2.2 Time and Taking Control

Many clergy exhibit strong planning behaviours as part of anticipating a career move:

P6: So suddenly my kind of portfolio looked very different, erm, and in adjusting to that part of me thought, erm, ‘OK, I need to just do this for two or three years, because there’s a, you know, there’s a job of work to be done here,’ erm, and that had been the background game plan.

An intrinsic part of these planning behaviours involve matters of timing and timescales which dominated participant responses to research questions exploring motive and action, e.g. ‘What reasons do clergy express for seeking a
move?’, ‘What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move, and why?’ The extent to which clergy evoke the notion of time when contemplating a career move will now be examined.

Clergy across the data set are very conscious of organizational timescales relating to when they should move jobs. Some of these timings are clearly defined, e.g. a first curacy lasting between three and four years, after which the individual moves on to an initial incumbency, usually a parish role. The duration of parish and diocesan roles are explained in terms of the optimum time to stay with an average of seven years as the perceived norm (10 years for senior roles):

S1: Erm, and it was clear that six years was probably about enough as a [role].

S4: Yeah the competing priorities were, I’d done seven, eight years, it was probably reasonable to, to, to think of a move somewhere else, erm–

P16: I think in my first post, they say – they, whoever ‘they’ are [laugh], that it’s good to have done, you know, at least seven years somewhere, erm, because otherwise people can think, ‘Well why have they left so soon?’ Or, ‘Why have they stayed so long?’

The source of these ill-defined timings is difficult to establish, as one respondent (P5) said ‘It’s in the ether.’ When asked about it, two clergy spoke of the work of Bob Jackson, a clergyman writing about Church strategy who has suggested that optimum growth is likely to be achieved if the vicar stays in post for between seven and 13 years (Jackson, 2002, p. 160). However, some interviewees seem to have operated on the seven-year model for some time prior to Jackson’s analysis of Church trends, so his work appears not to be the only basis for the focus on seven years. Only one individual regarded seven years as too short, whilst the few who had stayed in a post for 13 years or more had done so because it had taken so long to move rather than out of choice. A more robust explanation is found in the consistency of reports of personal readiness for a
move after six or seven years in post. Furthermore, the legacy of a now defunct institutional time norm also seems to prevail. Time-limited posts were contractual roles for set periods of time, e.g. a five-year cathedral post, although these were often extended dependent upon the circumstances. Time-limited posts were abolished following the introduction of common tenure in 2011 yet still exert some influence over how clergy think about timescales. Evidence for these and other features of time narratives which relate directly to how clergy exercise agency through self-management behaviours when preparing to move jobs are now discussed.

Many clergy describe their personal readiness for a move after six or seven years in post as a time when they feel the job has become repetitive and cyclical in nature. These attitudes are consistent across accounts of moves going back some 20 years or so and demonstrate how individual agency continues to be bound up in timing and making plans:

P19: So, just, things take, it seems to be a sort of cycle, five years to sort of get some things done. And then I think there is a sort of potential for plateauing, a sort of plateauing, where you think well everything is running quite well, erm, there are small things I could do, er, and changes I could make, erm, but do I really want to or am I getting itchy feet. And I think seven years seems about right to me.

P13: Er, I, when I went into [role], erm, the contract with the Diocese of [location] for being at [location] was five years, um, renewable to another eight, erm, so we ended up doing sort of seven and a half and at that stage, the [children] and their schooling, um, it seemed the right time, at the beginning of the seventh year, to start sort of actively looking for jobs.

P11: Yes, it’s, it’s that seven year itch thing. It’s—, I think it’s nothing to do with that’s the figure, well consciously it’s not to do with that’s the figure
people seem to talk about, it is to do with the fact that that’s when
instinctively I kind of feel I get that itch to move on.

Furthermore, deciding on the right or wrong time to move is presented as a
complex negotiation between fulfilling personal development needs and the
optimum time to make a move in the eyes of the Church and/or their
colleagues, partner and congregation:

P14: Erm, I have in, in, in a sort of backward way started thinking a little
about it because I look at, I, I, do look at the Church Times adverts from,
on Fridays, you know. Not, just to see what’s around places, erm,
because having been here six years that’ll be then eight years at that
point and that’s, that’s a decent length of time really in the parish and,
and I don’t feel that I would want to be here in, in the long, long term
anyway, erm...

P4: I have been in my primary post for eight years, and I have achieved
what I came here to do, [...].] When I first came here I said to the
congregation a−, and those who interviewed me that I wouldn’t
contemplate leaving until I’d done five years, and that I would start
looking after I’d done seven, and that feels about right.

S1: Erm, most [senior role] reckon their jobs are about a 10-year span.
There’s a 10-year job to be done in most of our heads. And I knew, by
the time I’d got to the things that were being planned for the beginning
of this year, I’d probably done, I’d ticked the boxes that I thought I ought
to tick before I left.

Another reason why clergy continue to draw upon these old time norms is
bound up in the introduction of common tenure in 2011. As a result of changes
which mean many clergy are no longer entitled to the security of the freehold of
the parish and time-limited posts have been abolished, clergy can no longer rely
on these institutional time norms to facilitate or legitimize a move (S4 below):
S4: When you’re a [role], erm, your, your, erm, your leasehold, this has all gone now, under common tenure, but you had a leasehold of seven years. So it’s a natural point to begin to think, because, er, there was never a foregone conclusion that your leasehold would be renewed. So in a sense you could have found yourself out of a job.

Interestingly, the evidence paints a mixed picture on how clergy are inclined to view the current situation. There are those who emphasize the importance of holding on to the freehold because it creates certainty and security for them and their families:

P13: One of the, uh, advantages of coming here is I have the freehold, [...] You know, um it’s, it’s, it’s an interesting experience not having the pressure of er, um, having to look for a move, um.

Whilst others (S4) highlight how a career defined by time-limited contracts didn’t feel secure and contributed directly to a sense of having to adopt a proactive approach to moving on:

S4: I mean I’ve never had the security, until I came to this job, I’ve never had the security of what, er, is called the freehold. [...] Erm, so there’s always been that sense of ‘I’ve got to do something about this.’

Despite some ambiguity, these timescales serve as a benchmark or guide for how long to stay or when to leave a role based on institutional norms, e.g. people usually move at this stage. I also believe they serve an equally important purpose, which is to validate an individual’s reason for staying or leaving which may be bound up in other motives for moving, e.g. a desire for progression or leaving an unsatisfying job. S6’s fractured account was not unusual, with many participants discussing time and timescales in the first instance before discussing other reasons for wanting to move later in the interview:

S6 [at 21 seconds]: It’s a sort of second curacy position, so I mean I suppose that sort of three to five years was the sort of average people stayed, I’ve actually done six. [R: OK.] Erm, but I was, yeah, so I’ve been
looking since I’d done four, just because I knew it was coming to that point and there was no pressure from here to go, but you get to the point where you think: ‘I’ve given what I can to the role and I’ve got what I can from it, and for everyone’s sake it’s probably good to have a change.’

S6 [at 12 minutes 57 seconds] ... but nothing happened and I just thought: ‘That’s typical of this place, I’ve had enough.’ [Laughs.] Um, you know, ‘It’s time to go because I’m starting to feel cross and thwarted and like, you know, the place is moving in a direction that I’m not happy about going along with.’ Um, I think that was probably a harsh judgement in retrospect. Um ... but that’s what kicked it off.

For most clergy, perceived time-norms in relation to moving jobs is bound up with certain life-stage concerns, particularly family and late adulthood (Levinson, 1978). Both of these exert a strong influence on how clergy think ahead to the next stage of their ministry. Such concerns, i.e. families and coming to terms with ageing and the end of working life, are applicable to workers in all occupations. Yet both have dimensions which highlight the distinctiveness of such timings in terms of clergy agency. For example, the retirement age for clergy is now 70 and most participants within two or three years of reaching age 60 or older expressed a desire to continue working. The accounts suggest this was because they felt they still had the energy and enthusiasm for the job rather than any sense of lifelong calling. Whilst this was not explored with any of the participants at the time of the interview, recent media coverage in the Church Times from stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy describes priestly ministry as ‘a life-long call’ from God rather than the Church of England which offers freedom to minister beyond retirement in a range of different contexts (Church Times, 2013b). However, those in this study nearing 60 years of age were wary of making an application and some had abandoned these aspirations altogether for two reasons. Most common was a perception or experience of recruiters being biased against candidates nearing 60 years of age:
P19: I was going to tell you, that we felt that 59 was an important thing rather than 60. If there was going to be difficulties due to age, that we wanted to be sorted before I turned 60 which is, thank the Lord, what has happened.

P4: If – if – if one is recognisably over 60, you’re not likely to move on to a senior appointment, erm, and possibly not – younger than that, however good you might be. [R: OK.] Um, so that’s probably – so, so that’s why I kind of feel that there’s quite a short window.

The fact that bishops are being appointed at a much younger age than in the past is also sending a signal to older clergy that the options for movement are limited to younger applicants:

P12: You know I mean archdeacons are being appointed now in their 40s, and bishops– [R: Is that, is that new, do you think?] I think it is, yes, yes, it is. Erm, the, I mean I haven’t got the actual factual evidence but I mean my sense is that, that, that these posts are going, going to younger people now.

Furthermore, older clergy are aware of changes to House-for-Duty arrangements (unpaid, part-time or occasional parish work in exchange for a free vicarage) which have been traditionally offered to retired priests. The perception was that nowadays House-for-Duty means the same level of responsibilities in an unpaid role as they have experienced in a lifetime of parish ministry which is compounding some very mixed messages around the final decade of ministry:

P15: And I mean other people I’ve spoken to about, about this have told me that it’s not really House-for-Duty it’s House-for-Exploitation so that’s put me off it a bit really. [R: Can you say any more?] Well they want you to do what I’m doing now, erm, but do it free. [Laughs.] In other words they want you to work full time really. And this non–, this, they may say they only want two days a week but do they really mean that, and you’ve got to sort of try and work out whether that’s true or not.
P5: I think when I’ve discussed what my next move might be and, you know, where I might be from now to retirement, erm, comments I have received from the team rector, from, erm, other colleagues that I’ve had the conversation with, is: ‘Well, you know, you could, once you get over 60 you could think about House-for-Duty. Have you got enough money to keep yourself? Do you have private income that you could keep yourself and do House-for-Duty?’ and very much the, uh, I don’t know, the flavour of the conversations, is that you’re winding down because you are, you will be over 60. Don’t think that’s how I see it, I think that’s, erm, how others would see it.

On the one hand, the retirement age has been increased suggesting the Church wants stipendiary ministers to work on as long as possible; on the other hand for those who see their calling as a lifelong commitment, the Church does not seem to be making it easy for them to extend that call in terms of active ministry that is sustainable either physically, emotionally or financially.

For the majority of clergy, life-stage concerns bound up in the timing of a move are dominated by family. Across the data set wives or partners, children and grandchildren feature as fundamental considerations when anticipating moving:

P11: I think families, in terms of your children and also your spouse, um these days are quite critical in this whole question of moving.

P23: Er, so it was on that basis that we moved to [location], that at that stage had, erm, state-of-the-art autism education facilities, so, er, that was nothing whatever to do with my career development.

Regular mobility is a somewhat overlooked feature of ministry and any change of job is likely to involve relocation. Relocation is acknowledged as an important factor in intra-organizational mobility decisions due to the fact it can be disruptive to both family and community (Noe & Barber, 1993; Ostroff & Clark, 2001) whilst frequent mobility has been identified as a contributory stressor on
the health of ordained clergy (Blanton & Morris, 1999; Arnold (1997)) established that the support of a partner, the absence of a partner and ‘no or few children’ (p. 170) were defining characteristics of individuals willing to move, a factor supported by P12 below:

P12: Incidentally I mean I think it’s much easier for a single man to do that than, because you’re not, you’re not, you’re doing it only for yourself. [R: Right.] You know you can say if I feel God’s called me there, you’re not having to say, ‘Well, what does that do to my children’s schooling or my, or my spouse’s job?’ So it is easier for a single person to be deployable, to use the word.

Given that the majority of clergy have children, deployment is a carefully negotiated process. Most clergy cannot afford to be selective in the choice of schools for their offspring and so they actively seek posts in areas which have a high standard of state school provision or as in the case of P10, deciding to go unpaid during the curacy:

P10: And I wa–, I did do my curacy as a non-stipendiary minister, as my youngest child was just about to start A levels at about the time I was ordained, and within the [name] diocese, which is rather large – I could have been placed anywhere – which would have meant a move for her, just in time of starting A levels […]. So I chose to go non-stipendiary.

It has also been found that relocation concerns are mitigated when the move has certain benefits, e.g. an increase in salary, greater responsibility and improved prestige (Ostroff & Clark, 2001). However, this cost-benefit perspective on mobility (Turban et al., 1992; Bretz et al., 1994; Ostroff & Clark, 2001) offers only a partial explanation for clergy experience due to the extent of the structural constraints on clergy moves. For example, clergy relocation takes place in an institutional context where the opportunities for promotion are limited; the move is likely to be lateral, e.g. as vicar to a different parish, or involving a function change such as moving from parish ministry to a diocesan post. Furthermore, pay and benefits remain largely the same for each type of
role regardless of where individual clergy relocate, with some clergy relying on state benefits to supplement their income (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 107). Consequently, the contribution of partners who have jobs and careers which they wish to maintain and which provide a much-valued second income is also a significant factor for any clergy family contemplating a move:

P8: Erm, the other thing I think is, is more often than not, if, erm, a wife is in employment somewhere, is only, you know, people can only move within distance of the wife’s work. Erm, or husband or whatever, you know, and that, that, that I think has become a major, a major issue. [...] R: And do you think that’s because clergy either are unable or are less prepared to live on the basic stipend? 
P8: Yes, oh absolutely. I, I, I think it’s, it’s, I think the reality is if you’re bringing children up on a, just on a stipend, I mean you’ll be so heavily relying on benefits. Erm, so, so I think it’s, it’s, you know, it’s critical really, pretty much.

PP03: If my wife were to stop working ... erm ... then there would be a considerable drop in salary coming into the house [R: Mm], erm, so it’s not really – there is no job in the Church of England that could pay me enough to counter that.

P07: With the training that my wife is doing for the [role] that, that will finish in two years, so at that point she will need to find a [role] somewhere so that will obviously be a time when we may be required to, to think about moving if there is nothing in this area.

They are also required to live in allocated Church housing which offers some financial benefits but can vary enormously in terms of style and standard. I am currently unaware of any instance where a clergy partner earns enough for them to live independently of clergy housing although it is likely that some spouses earn significantly more than their clergy partners whilst still claiming clergy housing benefits.
Finally, an additional dimension to this discussion of economic factors likely to influence clergy agency is the fact that most clergy do not enter ministry for financial reward. This is borne out by an absence in the data of references to either earnings or the economic sacrifices most clergy are forced to make. However as P8 and P18 indicate (below) there is an inherent tension between the practical realities of raising a family on a single stipend and the sacrificial nature of vocation (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013) which has implications for clergy agency:

S5: So I went down to [location] for a meeting with the [external] head hunter. Er, which was an interesting experience, you know, he said ‘Well, what do you want to be paid?’ Well that floored me, I had no idea how to answer that sort of question. [Laughs.]

P8: … I don’t think it’s so much to do with the standard of living, because in general clergy, you know, by the nature of the case are not, you know, [they] make a big sacrifice anyway so they’re obviously not particularly driven by that. So, you know, they gladly welcome, accept the sacrifice, but I think it’s, it’s just really the, erm, practicality of bringing a family up, actually. [R: Yeah, the reality of it.] That’s right, I think it’s erm, and I just think, you know, I think very very many clergy in that position. So I think that has really changed the, the nature of clergy moves I think. That’s been a big change I think.

P18: You, you do feel slightly, er, all the time, well, you know, you look at the gospel [Laughs.] and we’re, you know, meant to be putting others first or we’re not meant to be seeking money, you know, go out without shoes and staff and bag, and so there’s always that thing kind of nibbling away at you, thinking ‘Well, am I being too assertive, too, well, you know, too hard-nosed, or’, erm, and you can end up being too overly sacrificial I think.
Summary – Time and Taking Control

This discussion of how institutional time norms influence clergy agency is important and interesting for the following reasons. As in the past, clergy evoke notions of time in order to rationalize how long to stay or when to leave a role. In occupational lives defined by transience and insecurity this has allowed individuals to exert some personal control over their career trajectory. The data in this study also indicate that timing can serve to legitimize an individual’s reason for staying or leaving which may be bound up in less socially desirable motives for moving such as expressing a lack of job satisfaction or aspiring to a bigger role. It would seem that changes to the appointment systems which require clergy to account more explicitly for their motivation for moving than in the past, where traditional sources of authority and support have diminished, time-limited posts have been abandoned and age discrimination is an increasingly complex constraint to be negotiated, these historically embedded timescales are more important than ever as reassuring criteria by which to judge the timing and legitimacy of a move.

5.1.2.3 Making Connections

When asked to describe what action they were taking in preparing to move, clergy talk about their network of social ties (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Knowing-whom competencies (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994) or networking, i.e. building up and maintaining contacts (King, Z., 2004; Kuijpers & Scheerens, 2006) are acknowledged as an important feature of job mobility (Forrier et al., 2009). Evidence indicates that clergy draw consistently on internal social structures or a network of social ties as a source of social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002) to facilitate career moves. Social capital has long been identified as helping people to find jobs. It is defined as the goodwill found in an individual’s social relations which generate ‘information, influence and solidarity’ for the individual actor (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 18). How clergy draw on social capital to facilitate a move across professional and personal domains is now discussed.
Professional Ties

Most participants talked openly and unselfconsciously about the professional connections they rely upon to prepare for and facilitate a move. These are individuals operating within the formal structures of the Church, such as patrons and patronage societies, a career coach, work supervisor or mentor, the Clergy Appointments Adviser and the Church Appointments Secretary as well as senior clerics and other gatekeepers who, as discussed in Section 1, are perceived as influential to an individual’s career progression. On the one hand, this reflects how clergy continue to exercise agency as they have in the past when preparing to move. It involves information-seeking behaviours restricted to a limited number of contacts from within their theological, denominational and congregational work environment, a ‘closed system’ (Wicks, 1999, p. 209). It can also involve making connections by seeking information through established career self-management behaviours such as self-promotion, ingratiation and upward influence (King, Z., 2004). The extracts below reflect how clergy use these and other professional contacts, e.g. colleagues and peers, as a source of direct and indirect information when preparing to move:

P4: And also you know, you, in the bar at General Synod you hear people talking about people in their dioceses who might move so that gives you those sort of, um, in-the-back-of-your-mind triggers about things that you might just be thinking about and know might be happening. [R: Sure.] [...]. So, and people, some of those people in both cases were people that I knew from Synod. So there’s something about just, um, being interested and being known, I suppose, that at least helps you to know what’s coming up.

P8: But then, this is a typical Church of England thing, what actually happened with this was, erm, [senior cleric] who was at the cathedral here, erm, had been one of the selectors for me at my selection conference, years and years ago. So anyway eventually he wrote in one of these, [journal], I saw his article, and I thought ‘Right, I’ll get him to
come and preach for me at [location],’ you see, which he did, very kindly, and, and over supper I was saying about time, just getting ready to move now, erm, and he said ‘Oh well there’s, you know, there’s two parishes in [location] Diocese, erm, which might well suit you.’

P14: The person who was employed [...] at the [location], [...] she knew [bishop], she said, she said, er, anyway she said [he] had come for supper to them recently and she said ‘[Location] is going to become available, I think you should write to him to enquire about that, I shall, I shall have a little word with him about you [Laughhs.] to say how good you are.’ So she did, and I did write to him.

Another dimension to these connections was the fact that 17 out of the 31 participants spoke of the role that meals, food and drink play in the clergy experience of preparing to move jobs. For some these encounters were perceived as an unavoidable part of the selection process ‘trial by lunch, by tea, by dinner, by everything’ (S6), whilst for others they played a more facilitative role in progressing a move:

P22: I knew him [archdeacon] by reputation as being sort of not friendly towards [churchmanship], he was very hospitable, he and his wife and we sat up late drinking Irish whiskey. Er, and then there was a formal interview next day.

S2: Erm, and bumped there, because it’s a pretty well-known place, bumped into a bishop from, who I knew from [location]. And who wanted to know what I was doing, we were having a gin and tonic together and I said [explanation]. Erm, and he said ‘Oh, right, are you thinking about moving?’

R [to P16]: Can I just stop you there? You said you had lunch with [bishop]. [P16: Mm.] As part of that recruitment process or you happened to have lunch?

P16: Yeah, no no, as part of that because he interviewed me for the job
in [location] and [...] when he phoned to tell me that I hadn’t been offered the job, erm, he said, ‘You know, if you want to talk about the interview, if you want to talk about future possibilities, happy to do that,’ and so we met for lunch, kind of as part of the outfall of that interview.

There is no evidence to indicate that clergy attribute a direct link between these acts of hospitality and a successful job outcome. Yet I believe they are notable because of the oblique role they play in the affirming relationship that clergy seek out with senior clerics as part of their networking activity when preparing to move.

Supported by evidence from the Systems data, Chapter 5, Section 1 of this study which established that clergy place a high value on episcopal influence when it comes to moving, I believe the motivation for seeking out these connections is more than just keeping an ear to the ground at General Synod. They serve to affirm, encourage and endorse any potential move because clergy are seeking to self-legitimize their plans whereby their actions ‘must be perceived as “desirable, proper, or appropriate” within a wider system of social norms and values’ (Suchman, 1995, p. 574, cited in Maclean, Harvey & Chia, 2012, p. 22). For clergy, that legitimization has traditionally been based around a process of social exchange (Herriot, 1984) with the bishop and other senior clerics, involving communication, negotiation and perhaps most significantly, affirmation.

For clergy that social exchange is rooted in their early socialization into a career in ministry where they learn the importance of discernment which invariably involves discussion with others. Consequently they regard the bishop as someone with the direct authority in relation to career outcomes and so a conversation with him is a source of influence and direct and indirect affirmation. Furthermore it allows them to talk to someone with a mutual understanding of calling within the context of the norms and values of the
Church, a supportive relationship that has been posited previously as a career development outcome of religiousness and spirituality (Duffy et al., 2010). Finally, given the itinerant nature of ministry where clergy can expect to move on several times during their career, the nature of this social interaction gave many clergy an important sense of personal control over what was happening to them. For even if the decision to move somewhere was not entirely to their liking, the fact of having had the opportunity to exercise a degree of agency through discussion and discernment with the bishop was seen as helpful.

On the other hand, in this era of formalized and overt recruitment systems, clergy are finding that they can no longer rely on discreetly networking with senior clerics and other gatekeepers with inside information and influence to help them discern where the next move might be. For the majority of clergy making connections has shifted from a discreet and affirming tap on the shoulder to the requirement for independent agency that is causing considerable discomfort:

P16: I’m not – I mean some people do, you know, i– when they’re thinking of moving, they’ve got their, you know, 15 people in all their dioceses and they’ve got it all sorted and I just haven’t got that.

P3: I just – I despair at the lack of proper care of resources. ... And, you know, the attitude of: ‘Oh well you’ve got to go and sell yourself for another job’ to me is completely the wrong end of the spectrum.

**Personal Ties**

One response to this change in the dynamic between job seeker and gatekeeper is the significance of personal connections. Clergy across the data set spoke of the importance of partners, friends, family, spiritual directors, churchmanship networks, therapists, cell groups, work mentors and close and trusted colleagues and ex-colleagues in this context. Whilst some of these contacts had led to identifying job opportunities, most clergy were inclined to regard them as a vital
source of personal support before and during the process of preparing to move, a feature which resonates with the notion of solidarity as a benefit of social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Solidarity describes strong ties within groups which reflect mutuality of norms, compliance with internal customs and rules and less need for ‘formal controls’ (Adler & Kwon, 2002). This is encapsulated by S2 (below) who describes the importance of the support group he belongs to which is dedicated to his particular churchmanship:

S2: Erm, I think we are exceptional in [support group], and probably the conservatives in [support group] as well, because we meet very regularly, we have very clear boundaries of confidentiality, and we, well we know each other and help each other. That’s what it’s set up as, it’s a support group, we pray for each other and so if I want, if I need any help the obvious people I ring up are my, my chapter colleagues from [support group], but that makes it exceptional because in deanery chapters you don’t have that kind of relationship. Certainly not. Certainly not. Erm, but we do and we are used to talking to each other in confidence. And in many cases we are confessors for each other when you find somebody you relate to.

Such collectivity suggests individuals are inclined to work together to create opportunities yet evidence from this population suggests that solidarity manifests itself in emotional and psychological support whilst preparing for a job move rather than the mutual co-operation implied in collectivity of purpose:

P4: The people who know things would be my husband, my sister, my children, the group of women, the small group of, close small group of women with whom we worked in – in smaller groups within the [training] course [R: Right, OK.] who’ve been a really good resource.

P18: And, er, you need somewhere where someone will really support you and you can be, you know, warts and all, you can just say it all and we have frailties and doubts and, er, yeah you need someone safe and
fortunately I have someone very safe nearby, physically nearby, and a good friend.

P2: I’ve used, uh, another, one, one of my referees is a very good and close friend and we kind of act as peer partners. [R: OK.] In the sense of spiritual direction I suppose, yes, but also in the sense of mutual support and encouragement [R: Yeah.] and have spent a lot of time, we meet for lunch every couple of months [R: OK.]

P9: Erm, in one sense not really but in another sense there have been people that I have identified in the Church whose honesty and integrity and ability and intellect I trust. And so those people have become friends and consequently become valuable and helpful. But I have never exposed my soul to others.

P20: Erm, I think personal, the whole kind of network of people who I have conversations with, so friends, colleagues, all of that, and you know, quite long conversations with [partner] about, you know, what she needs in order to flourish as well.

Further evidence highlights community ties at the level of friendship, family support and social interaction which have a direct influence on transfer decisions (Noe & Barber, 1993; Ostroff & Clark, 2001), the loss of which is clearly a significant contributor to how clergy approach moving:

P3: Well, I mean, I could go to another parish, but what’s the point? Going to another parish means that your, erm, connections with other people, all the things you’re involved with would be, erm, refashioned and it would set you back in your ministry for about a couple of years.

R [to S2]: What sort of potential issues were there from that point of view?

S2: From moving? [R: Mm.] Hugely [sic]. Erm, means taking children out of school, moving house, building new circles of friends, losing friends,
it’s usually a disruptive affair because we’re not just moving [number] miles away or [number] miles away but halfway down the country.

P19: Because I think [partner] in particular has found, um, sort of, the moves at times, and some of the ways in which the moves have been handled, you know are very upsetting, you know, in terms of actually, you know actually making a home somewhere and feeling as though you belong.

Whilst one would expect belonging to a community in this respect to be as important to clergy as any other individual, there are some distinctions to be made. First, the nature of ministry is such that the majority of clergy are embedded in their parish or diocesan community because of the job that they do, not simply because they have chosen to live there and commute to work elsewhere. The growth of team ministries may mean that the vicar serves a wider geographical area than ever before but their presence, and that of their family where applicable, in the local community is still likely to be viewed territorially by that community. Nor does it equate to the local solicitor or accountant who sets up practice in a local community because they do not expect to have to move on within the next few years. In addition, apart from possibly the local GP who is also engaged in work of ‘the most humane of contact’, frequently working on the boundary of life and death, ministry brings clergy into close contact with the community at every level, bringing with it certain responsibilities and expectations of both the individual and, where applicable, their family. This has implications for the boundary between work and non-work which can be opaque and make it difficult to forge real friendships. Consequently, clergy are likely to value highly their ‘personal community’ of family and friends as potential sources of care and support (Osborne, 2004, p. 171).
Summary – Making Connections
The terrain associated with making connections when moving jobs is changing. First, the professional connections based around a process of social exchange (Herriot, 1984) that clergy enjoyed in the past are having to be re-evaluated and re-negotiated which is causing clergy some pain. Second, strong personal connections are emerging as increasingly important mainly because they provide psychological and emotional support for clergy as they negotiate a career move. This is likely to influence those core self-evaluations linked to career exploration and career decidedness such as self-efficacy, self-esteem and internal locus of control (Hirschi, 2011). Third, it is notable that information on these connections was often elicited after some probing by the researcher. It suggests a hidden dimension of clergy social capital which they are uncomfortable discussing. It was not evident from the data whether that applied to people in general or entrusting the information to this researcher. It is posited that such connections are assuming increasing importance to clergy because the current appointment systems are viewed as lacking integrity and have left clergy feeling exposed and unsupported by those in authority.

5.1.2.4 Information-Seeking Behaviours
Another dimension to this discussion of clergy agency relates to how clergy employ practical sources of information when preparing to move. These include print and web versions of the *Church Times*, *The Church of England Newspaper* and websites advertising vacancies across the Church of England, those within individual dioceses and the Clergy Appointments Adviser’s website. In the past clergy relied on the *Church Times* and/or *The Church of England Newspaper*, printed weekly, to find out about job vacancies. Clergy across the data set continue to regard the *Church Times* as the primary source of information about the majority of job vacancies and all have used it for this purpose at some point in their ministry. Familiarity with and enthusiasm for the various websites was a less consistent part of an individual’s preparatory process dependent upon the age, stage, interest and skill levels amongst clergy for computer technology.
Whilst the majority of clergy were endeavouring to engage with the resources available to them, there was a sense of distrust in processes which make applying for a job more overt, e.g. the legacy of attitudes from the past to job advertisements; a perception that not all jobs are actually advertised and being able to research potential roles covertly:

P12: I mean, jobs simply weren’t advertised when I, when I started out, and if a job was advertised the, the reason it was advertised was because nobody wanted it, and they were getting desperate.

P7: It was more difficult than I thought it would be on the web, I have to say, erm– [R: Can you say more about that?]. Just trying to find the places where, diocesan websites are quite difficult on the whole to, to manoeuvre around. Finding where they have put job vacancies I found took a little bit of doing, and, and I was strongly under the impression that not every vacancy was on the websites, etc. Erm, so just finding the information was more difficult. *Church Times*, in terms of getting a good spread of what people were looking for, was brilliant, erm, and, you know, most things seemed to appear in there, erm.

P19: Yes, we obviously started to look at the *Church Times* and see what’s out there, erm and see the different types of jobs and different Church ministerships and so on, fairly easy to get a picture of that and these days to get things like profiles and [...] and download them without necessarily making applications, and find out quite a lot without anyone else knowing really that we’re interested.

It can be argued that clergy are no different from any other worker in applying for jobs via such routes. Yet I believe the recent changes are giving rise to an interesting tension. This is due to clergy having a raised awareness of the significance of these resources as part of a formalized recruitment process which includes a requirement to research the internal job market more independently than previously. Their discomfort stems from two perspectives. First, a study on the information-seeking behaviour of pastoral clergy noted that when clergy are
engaged in administrative tasks and decisions rather than preaching or pastoral activities they were more likely to use interpersonal sources which reflect their denominational role to gather information as part of a closed system of information seeking (Wicks, 1999). Whilst the Wicks study is vague about what constitutes an administrative role, for the purposes of this discussion I posit that it could include those career-related tasks and activities that extend beyond the theological world of a minister. Given the earlier discussion of how clergy employ social capital to facilitate a move it would appear from the data that clergy have a preference for a particularly closed system that is rooted in close personal connections compared to an open system which extends beyond the individual’s normal points of reference. Second, in the past clergy were information-seeking in a way that meant they did not perceive a need to take any particular steps in relation to the information they discovered because the expectation was that the authority needed to act would come from elsewhere, i.e. the bishop. Furthermore, despite technological advances which have opened up the opportunities for researching job opportunities online, the majority of clergy continue to regard formalized processes which encourage more explicit forms of application as incidental to the main source of finding a job which is found in a closed system of social networks:

P12: Virtually every priest in the Church of England looks at the jobs page of the Church Times, every week [laughs]. You all look and think ‘Mm’.

5.1.2.5 Job Content Innovation

P12: I mean I’ve done all sorts of bolt-ons.

An established career self-management behaviour in the literature is job content innovation (King, Z., 2004) or ‘stretchwork’ (O’Mahony & Bechky, 2006). This involves changes to the scope, scale and operation of an individual’s work tasks (Graen, 1976; King, Z., 2004) as a means of securing employment opportunities. Whilst some clergy were explicit about exercising agency in this respect as part of their career development (P6), there were many who take on new
responsibilities for no extra pay often to ease the frustration of unsuccessful attempts to move (S7, P12):

P6: I have to say, deciding factor for me, was, was the experience of, erm, being on the panel for the [senior] post, because I realised that one of the things when people were shortlisting, the shorthand for ‘This person can do leadership’ was area dean jobs. So that was a pretty much ‘OK now I don’t particularly fancy this but actually I need this on my CV.’

S7: I mean even when I was asked to be [additional role] I did say to the archdeacon, ‘Look, you know, erm, I can’t guarantee I’m going to be here for that long, er, because I’ve been here for 10 years,’ and he knew that and that was fine, so, but yes that in itself gave me a new impetus to sort of, a new motivation to keep on [Phone ringing], keep on going. [Phone … noises.]

P12: Erm, and that was, because I, yes, that’s right, because I did apply for the [senior] job here [R: Right.] at the time that the present [senior] got it and, and didn’t get anywhere with that, and said, ‘Look, you know, can I come and talk to you,’ [the bishop] and out of that came one or two things, I mean, that, that, he asked me to do one or two additional things that, that’s when I got my second term as a bishop’s adviser.

5.1.2.6 Fighting Talk

So far this discussion of how clergy exercise agency when preparing to move jobs has focussed on behaviours with a defensive tone, i.e. being cautious about entering the recruitment race; applying time norms to justify and legitimise any desire to move; drawing on social networks to provide advice, guidance and support when navigating the current systems and employing bolt-ons in part as a means of staying motivated whilst waiting to move. Yet it is important to reflect evidence which establishes that clergy are not entirely in thrall to the structural conditions in which they operate even though there is counter-
evidence which supports some of the structural concerns discussed earlier in this study. ‘Fighting Talk’ highlights evidence of autonomous talk and action by clergy when anticipating a move which contrasts with the defensiveness evoked above. This is talk which reflects clergy efforts to be assertive, take the initiative and be resourceful as they seek control and influence over their plans to move jobs. Given the retrospective reporting in this study it is evident that clergy have always drawn on such behaviours when preparing to move jobs and so arguably there is nothing new to say about how clergy exercise agency in this respect. Yet the following discussion offers fresh insights into how they are applying these behaviours in the current climate.

First, it is notable how preparatory behaviours and attitudes change at different stages of ministry, e.g. how negotiating a curacy fresh out of theological college can give way to vengeful thoughts in relation to moving in the later stages of ministry. It was typical to find assertive behaviour across the data set when clergy are negotiating a curacy following their theological training. On the one hand responsibility for finding a curacy lies with the individual which imposes a sense of urgency as they try to find somewhere by the end of their training. They also have autonomy for the first and perhaps only time in their ministry, to choose where they go. Consequently most clergy seemed confident to take the initiative when embarking on the process of looking ahead:

P6: Erm, but the process of them deciding to let me go was slow and torturous [sic] and included, at one point, me being rung up by the DDO and asked to go and look at, erm, a curacy in [location], that’s Costa Geriatrica complete with palm trees, and I just remember saying to him, you know, ‘I’m going to, if I say yes, this is going to just waste the time of the incumbent, I have no intention of doing my curacy in [location].’

P13: And, er, I travelled up to [location], um, to look at the parish, and I really did like the vicar, he was, he was a nice guy, and I don’t know, I probably could have worked with him, he was a bit, bit of a, perhaps a bit
of a maverick, I can see looking back on it, but er [some adjustment to equipment or papers here], he erm, part of his insistence was, you had to go round dressed in a cassock all the time, and I thought, ‘I’m not really sure if that, if I’d feel completely comfortable with that,’ and so I ended up not going.

P11: So I went off to look at that parish, and of course there is this rule that you can only look at one at a time. In the meantime, I’d decided that I wasn’t going to sort of let the bishop have the last word really, [laughs] so I’d decided I was actually going to write back and say, ‘Well OK then, but here are the actual reasons I turned the job down and this is why I didn’t want to tell you.’ I thought, well, I’ve got nothing to lose now really.

On the other hand, it should be noted that despite the self-confidence contained in these narratives, these are retrospective accounts where the benefit of hindsight and experience is being enacted. For every assertive extract there are others, some contained within the same interview, which detail poor practice on the part of college principals and potential training incumbents with implications for the future career trajectory of a cleric in terms of morale and trust in the system (Aveyard & Barley, 2011):

P6: And at the end of it I hadn’t found a curacy, erm, so I went to the principal and said ‘Well you find me a curacy, because you’re blocking every curacy I apply for.’ And he said, ‘Oh I’d go to [diocese], they can cope with a person like you.’

After completing a curacy the focus of clergy agency for the majority of the participants in this study shifts from where the next job will be to the timing of a move and of equal importance where there is likely to be a good fit between a prospective role and their skills and abilities. The following extracts highlight the clarity which many clergy bring to bear on their decision to pursue certain jobs or not:
S6: Um, I was asked on three occasions to look at college chaplaincies, but I knew I didn’t want to do those, um, because I knew – lots of friends have done college chaplaincies, and I think it’s a hugely important role but I know that it’s not one for me...

S1: Yes, and it was a three, plus two-year contract, which –. Erm, and the [senior] said ‘Would you like to stay another year?’ and I was beginning to think ‘Nah, I’m beginning to see problems rather than people’. Time to move on, er, what do I do?

P11: I think I would kind of work out and be very clear about what the next job, what kind of job the next job should be, what kind of parish was I looking for, so it wouldn’t be a case of looking on the website or opening the Church Times and thinking, oh yes, that looks interesting, I’ll go for that. It would be much more about well, I’m going back into the city or, yes, I’m staying in rural ministry or going into suburban, or whatever. I want another multi-church benefice, no I don’t, I want, you know, a minimum number of buildings or whatever.

P14: I was said [sic], yes the chap said, the [gatekeeper] said to me ‘This is available’ [a parish threatened with closure]. The impression I got was that obviously he couldn’t say ‘You will get this’ but he, he was saying, this is available [...]. Erm, and I did, and I, and I didn’t go. Because I didn’t feel that was quite, er, I didn’t feel that would have been quite a good fit really.

These extracts reflect how the majority of clergy were self-aware about the skills, knowledge, experience and abilities they can offer a new role. The most articulate and confident tended to be existing or potential senior post holders who had enjoyed early promotion and subsequent career success in their ministry (Rosenbaum, 1989). Parish clerics were often more ambivalent in how they expressed their abilities despite being equally clear in most cases about what they could offer a post. This is partially explained by the fact that unlike
upwardly mobile senior clerics who have more experience of making applications and development opportunities, many parish clergy have limited experience of situations where they are required to explain their suitability for a role. For example, whilst some were clear about the nature of certain jobs, their content and the implications for their future career trajectory, others were less clear as they struggled to articulate where they might fit:

P1: I don’t get invited to preach in different places that often but when I do I physically enjoy it. Which shows me that I’m much better when I’m rooted in a place, I’m not the sort of person – actually – I think – but I don’t know – would I greatly enjoy worrying about two things in different places? I don’t know. [...] And I’m sure, well again when I try and think about it realistic [sic], bishops and archdeacons spend a lot of time sorting out the rubbish of the Church. And that’s not me either.

For older clergy contemplating a move before retirement or retirement itself there was evidence of moving on being played out in different ways. Both P12 and S4 had expressed surprise and regret that their ministry was coming to an end and were giving the situation considerable thought:

P12: So, you know, I thi- so my feeling is that, that there really aren’t many options at this stage, and better to begin, I mean I’m looking for a house now [?]. Better to put things into place for, for retirement almost, not in the sense of not working hard the last five years, but, but, I’m thinking of going back to my own diocese of [location], and would be thinking of offering some of those skills in, in retirement now, but keeping, retaining this job [R: Yeah.] until, until I retire.

S4: And I deliberately haven’t really, erm, I haven’t told the bishop when I intend to retire, because it might change, but also, I think if you tell too many people they [begin] immediately just automatically to write you off and they begin, understandably, they begin to think beyond you and, er, I don’t mind that but I don’t want it just yet.
Neither were openly challenging the circumstances surrounding what was clearly a time of significant transition. Instead they were endeavouring to retain some control of their situation by negotiating outcomes they regard as potentially favourable. An interesting dimension on the theme of control is found in the accounts of P15 and P17 (below) who see themselves as regaining (rather than retaining) control over a final move before retirement:

R [to P15]: How does it, erm, how do you see it working now with this next potential move that you might organize, erm, for these, the remainder of your ministry?
P15: Well I think that’s so different to the others that [R: Can you say a bit more.] I can be much, yeah, I can be much more selective. [R: Right.] I will decide, totally, wh– you know if I don’t like it I won’t take it, you know, whereas I wasn’t in that position before. I think I felt I needed to move, for one reason or another, because I don’t think it’s desirable for one person to stay in a, one place for a l–, for a long, long, long, time. I don’t think that’s good, but I’m not in that position now. I will stay here ’til I retire if necessary, but that won’t be too long, if I move to a House-for-Duty, well that will be because that place is really appealing to me, and if it isn’t I won’t, I won’t do that.

P17: Er, there’s a bit of me who will be thinking, ‘When I get retirement, erm, I will be in the driving seat.’ And I won’t necessarily, and therefore when people ask you to do things as a retired clergyman, the answer may well be no. Erm, I’m in no mood to be told, erm, what I’m going to do, when I’m going to do it, and do this, this and this, it’ll be, I may and I may not, and obviously priorities will change, because obviously things like family will come more into place.

These ‘tyranny of the weak’ narratives suggests the kind of game playing found when a boundedly rational or weaker player (the cleric) tries to exploit (in this instance) an unboundedly rational or stronger opponent (the Church) who up until this point has held all the cards (Gilboa & Samet, 1989). They highlight a
sense of personal autonomy in a minority of accounts which was uncompromising and indicated deep disillusionment with the Church of England when it comes to moving on:

P3: I had one comment back from a job saying: ‘Well, we know the job that we want to be done, and that doesn’t seem to be what you’re wanting to do.’ Fine. So, fine, if that’s the way they want to do things. Then I’m not the right person to do it, because I probably wouldn’t do it, I wouldn’t take instructions in that sort of way. [Little laugh.]

P9: I mean I suppose, I suppose if I was honest with myself I feel a degree of sadness that I’ve come to this point where part of, only part, part of the attraction of retirement is not having to play the game any more, in the way that the game is now being played.

P20: [...] I kind of stood there and said ‘I’m a [role] chaplain, that’s what I am.’ [...] I wasn’t in, I wasn’t kind of excited by parish ministry in the way I was by [role] chaplaincy and I, and I thought, you know, ‘Do you want to inflict on a parish a person for whom it is second best?’ So that was, that was my, my thoughts and that’s exactly what I said to the bishop.

On the one hand these extracts suggest that when examined through the lens of assertiveness or taking the initiative there is evidence that participants in this study are actively challenging those responsible for the new appointment systems. Furthermore P9, P7 and P6 all take issue with how they are being managed during the recruitment process:

P9: But there was a job in this diocese, not a senior job but a [role] that I was very interested in, and that was when I was, I said to the bishop, erm, ‘I’m on holiday during the process, erm, but I’m not going to change my holiday arrangements unless I know I’m going to be interviewed for it. Otherwise just forget it.’
P7: Erm, and what I got back was, erm, ‘If you want to do this you’ll have to make a special case to the archdeacon that you’re able to move early.’ At which point, I mean I know [office staff] exceptionally well, and I just sent an email back to [office staff] saying, ‘Right at this moment in time I do not have the time to put into proving that I can do the job they paid me to do for six years before I started this.’

P6: I thought [R: How did you feel about that?], I thought, erm, a little bit more indication of what kind of conversation this is I’m being summoned to have, might have been nice, erm, and it was even at the point at which I’d emailed back and said ‘I could be available for X [sic], can you give me some indication of, you know, is this a formal interview, is this an informal conversation, you know, do I come in a suit, you know, whatever.

Yet I think the evidence for such challenges having any real impact on how clergy are negotiating their way through the current systems is weak. For example, a darker side to how clergy are choosing to react to the changes in the appointment systems is by applying indiscriminately for jobs with no real understanding of a) what is required by the process and b) how their skills and abilities might fit with a particular role. Consequently the process can be protracted and demoralising as in the case of one individual (P17) who applied for 12 roles in less than 30 months (calculated from the transcript). In many cases clergy were feeling under pressure because they were angry or anxious or upset or a combination of all three, at changes which left them having to take the initiative and for which they felt ill-prepared. P23 (below) was given notice to leave a role due to cuts in funding and felt particularly vulnerable, whilst P15 was shocked to discover how much things had changed since he had last moved:

P23: That was just in the Church Times and, erm, I suppose I was hoping for a bit more support from [diocese], given how they’d [little laugh] let me down but, erm, no, no support at all was offered to me from that point of view. [...]
R: OK. And did you, did you apply for some posts?
P23: Yes I applied for, for, loads of, loads of, of, of jobs to be honest. I was probably a bit, in fairness I was probably a bit undiscriminating, when things came up that I could remotely do I tended to just–

P15: ... and, erm, I said ‘What do you suggest? I was told when I was ordained that, erm, I should be guided by, by you, by the bishop.’ Erm, and he said, ‘Oh well, that’s all changed now. Erm, you, you, you just got to look in the, look in the paper, and talk to the Clergy Appointments Adviser.’ So I said ‘Right, that’s all the help you’re going to give me, is it,’ and he said ‘Yes.’ ‘OK,’ I said, ‘fine.’ Er, I was pretty irritated to be honest, I was angry beyond all belief I think really because I thought the way of handling it was just incredible really. But, erm, so anyway I went away and we, I applied for hundreds and hundreds of places [...] and it became clear to me that really, the whole system had changed and really you had to apply for e–, virtually everything, so I applied in a fairly indiscriminate way I think, looking back on it.

Summary – Fighting Talk
Evidence of autonomous talk across the data set indicates that most clergy have an inherent confidence in their own ability to make certain choices when it comes to moving jobs. It highlights the cognition clergy apply to the tasks of career decision-making and how this shifts dependent upon the stage of ministry and their exposure to recruitment, selection and development opportunities. Yet the accounts also contain narratives of disillusionment, verbal gestures of assertiveness and acts of minor rebellion which highlight the dissonance clergy are experiencing as they try to reconcile what they know about themselves and where they might fit with navigating their way through appointment systems they largely distrust.
5.1.2.7 Conclusion to Section 2

The aim of this section has been to examine, through the lens of self-directed career management behaviours, how clergy exercise agency when preparing to move jobs amidst changes to the appointment systems. It has focussed on a range of different features of clergy agency. Some of these features reflect how clergy have prepared to move jobs in the past, e.g. seeking information and affirmation from colleagues and superiors about potential job opportunities, and engaging in activities likely to enhance their job prospects. Other features have established that the processes involved in the new appointment systems require clergy to behave in ways that are counter to how they have traditionally exercised that agency. These include a degree of resistance to having to make their intention to move more public than in the past, and seeking out personal connections for support and encouragement due to the dissipation of authority and affirmation from senior clerics that was the bedrock of clergy mobility.

Examination of autonomous talk by clergy indicates that they are willing to assert themselves and take the initiative when contemplating their next move albeit with varying degrees of skill and confidence dependent upon their status and stage of ministry. There is also evidence to suggest that clergy in general are not openly challenging the process by trying to circumvent the constraints on their agency, but choosing to exercise it in a covert fashion. I believe these responses are bound up in the unique nature of ministry which finds clergy experiencing a sense of being free and unfree at the same time (Willig, 1999) as they endeavour to retain a hold on agency bound up in sacrifice and calling whilst pursuing personal freedom and choice in matters earthly (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013).

These are discontented narratives arising from general distrust in the new systems and the fact that the institution appears oblivious to clergy experience of those systems. Furthermore clergy are responding with actions and behaviours that suggest they are experiencing cognitive dissonance. For example, they are endeavouring to minimise the discomfort caused by such dissonance by behaving in ways which allows them greater control over what
happens next in their career trajectory, e.g. speaking up in the face of poor appointment practices, or being more vigilant about the timing of a move. These and other features of how cognitive dissonance is giving rise to certain behaviours in relation to preparing to move jobs are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Section 3 presents findings from the data which highlight the significance of vocation and calling for clergy. It is posited that insights into preparing to move jobs for those with a religious calling will clarify how that calling and the social context in which that calling is enacted influence clergy as they contemplate moving jobs.

Section 3: Calling or Career?

‘Do you actually think that there’s a God out there that’s, you know, got a megaphone and is using it to say “Come on up,” or “Come on down”? ’

This section provides an analysis of interview data which reflects how clergy regard the significance of calling when contemplating a job move. The data relate to the research question which asked, ‘What, if any, is the significance of calling when contemplating moving jobs?’ Given that this is a calling evoked by God, insights into this dimension of clergy mobility have the potential to clarify the influence of a religious calling on the relationship between individual agency and structural forces.

As ministers of religion, clergy have a self-concept, i.e. a way of perceiving themselves and their environment (Super, 1957; Arnold, 1997) that encompasses a particular calling. That calling is a fundamental tenet of ministry, a complex dynamic of work driven by a call from God bound up in a life of obedience and service (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013). A religious or transcendent
calling embodies private, personal insights and illuminations which give meaning to an individual cleric’s sense of self and self-concept (Maslow, 1964; Treadgold, 1999). Amongst other things, calling is informed by personal value systems which are at the heart of an individual’s self-concept, such as goodness, honesty, competence and morality (Cooper, 2007). For most clergy there is also an expectation that those leading the Church of England share those value systems and that they extend to how individual clergy welfare and development are managed.

Spontaneous references to calling in these interviews were few. Some would assert that is because clergy focus on job characteristics rather than ‘faith-based criteria’ when moving jobs (Wildhagen et al., 2005, p. 381). There was some support for this argument because all the participants chose to discuss issues other than calling, e.g. the timing of a move, until asked the calling question towards the end of the interview. Furthermore, the question seemed to take most of the participants by surprise, evoking a mix of responses. Some individuals were clear about its significance whilst others were more circumspect. Yet when asked, all participants, often with some care, discussed calling, with 28 of the 31 evoking God and the Holy Spirit as an important and integral part of the preparation and process of moving. The fact that participants didn’t raise the subject of calling sooner may be because I simply hadn’t asked the question and so it wasn’t at the forefront of their minds. It would also be reasonable to suggest that clergy were expecting to be interviewed about moving jobs and most were keen to talk about their recent experiences of the appointment systems. I also believe most participants found it difficult to answer this question because it disrupted their calling narrative. What I mean by this is that the question challenged them to think about their personal calling from a divine source in relation to worldly concepts such as jobs and careers, often for the first time. Their responses are a rich source of data which describe the complex interplay between the individual, God and the institution when contemplating a calling and a career.
When asked, the majority of participants spoke about calling in several different ways:

1. When God is calling the individual to move and/or move to a particular role.

2. Where prayer is an integral part of the process of thinking about moving, preparing to move and the process of moving.

3. Where a clear tension exists between what the individual believes God is calling them to do or to consider, versus what the individual thinks will be a good fit for their skills or individual circumstances.

4. Where clergy perceive a tension between what they regard as a Godly calling and Church systems which give little or no space for priestly vocation to be part of the process.

**When God is calling the individual to move and/or move to a particular role**

Congruent with the literature on religious vocation as work driven by a calling from God bound up in obedience and service (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013), God’s influence when contemplating a job move informs the thinking of most clergy albeit viewed in different ways. The first way is a familiar call from God which echoes the original call and commitment made to the priesthood when the individual was first ordained:

P10: I firmly feel I’m here because God wanted me to be here, not because I was just lucky but because I was the right person to be here. So in any thoughts or contemplations about moving, or where I’ve been, it’s always surrounded by prayer and my faith in the eternal God and what He wants me to do. Erm, it has to be right for me and for my faith otherwise I would fear that I’m not listening to God properly.
P18: [...] and as I said the curacy was tough and I had to fight and um [pause], I might have been daunted, I might have taken longer to go about it, but I still can’t get away from the fact that I do truly believe God called me to this and there are times when I feel so perfectly placed and very fulfilled in what I do.

P17: I suppose in the end all you can say is that you felt called to a life of stipendiary ministry, and therefore there’s a s–, variety of types of jobs or types of parishes which you could minister, and therefore you’re hoping that at some point one of them will come up, erm, and therefore you can go there. You’re not, and yes, and yes you are a servant of the Church, and if you’re going where the need is, and where the Church wants you to go, but the Church is not always making it that easy [...].

Second, God as someone leading the individual in a particular direction:

P4: And – you know I – I believe God calls you to do things in all kinds of ways, so I – I took the, lots of people asking me as being something that I should take seriously so I applied.

P2: I think it is actually very significant because we – as a minister I am called to the work that I’m doing here, um, I think to some extent it is part of the development and role of the minister to try and be aware of what God might be saying at each stage of ministry [R: OK.] and is, is, is, the calling that comes from God to continue with what you’re doing or to begin something new?

P20: I feel very strongly called to this ministry [...]. And I see that as, as the work of God. God does not want me to go to [location] so I didn’t get it. God does want me to come to [location], so I did. [...] So calling is everything.

Third, God as someone who is ‘working through’ the ups and downs of the process alongside the individual:
P1: Well I think God works through the way that one has to think through these things and through the little pointers, coincidences, whatever they are, therefore I think it is a calling in a sense of God working through the processes in the end of the day.

P19: [...] well all the time you’re feeling that it isn’t a two way thing, there’s a three way, there’s the God dimension, and God has called, and therefore He continues to call. He doesn't just call you just to ordination, but He calls you, there’s a feeling of wanting to be called to each post and to discern that, and they’re obviously looking at that as well, erm, so when there’s disappointment, you’re sort of wondering, you know Lord, [little laugh] I know you’ve got it in hand, but [little laugh]...

P8: I think what I’m saying is, erm, I think you deep down know when it’s time to go from somewhere. [...] But you know I think so often these things work through, erm, they just run with the grain of one’s life I think don’t they, quite often, you just get a sense, you know, ‘I’m just beginning to see this is beginning to dip a bit now, or I’m beginning to dip, you know, one thing or the other.’ Something begins, a picture begins to build so you actually think ‘It’s time now.’ And through that the Lord, I think, is saying ‘Yes it is time.’

Finally, God’s ‘will’ manifested through the actions of the diocesan bishop on Earth:

P12: So that was definitely a feeling of, yeah, if my bishop calls me and asks me to do something like that, [R: Mm.] then there’s a sense of not so being under discipline, but yes, I, under God and under my bishop.

S2: I don’t want to put it that sort of high and religiously and spiritually. The sense of calling comes for me very clearly, possibly because I’m an Anglo-Catholic, if my bishop says ‘Would you please consider going there,’ I need a pretty big reason not to say yes. That is a very strong
thing. Erm, [R: Is it about authority?] yes, and it’s more. Because it’s, it’s the bishop. And the bishop is God, more or less. [Laughs.]

S3: The conversation with the suffragan bishop, erm, led me to believe that I should at least allow the, I should allow, I should keep open the possibility if it might be God’s will.

These four different perspectives were not necessarily exclusive from each other. Collectively they serve to demonstrate how important and influential the fact of an intrinsic call is to clergy thinking and the complexities of how that call is evoked in each individual, e.g. denying the religiousness and spirituality of being called in favour of a bishop’s authority (S2). This seems paradoxical given the spiritual responsibility which lies at the heart of a bishop’s role. These accounts suggest that clergy primarily experience the transcendental nature of God’s call as an external locus of control (Rotter, 1966). Yet some of the accounts (P1, P19 and P8) describe how personal motivation comes into play suggesting that variations in how calling is interpreted are also influenced by an internal locus of control.

**Prayer**

The practice of prayer, a ‘conversation with the Creator’ (Meakin, 1990, p. 26) was referred to by a third of participants as part of the process of discerning what they might be called to do next. The following accounts also suggest prayer is an important resource which clergy draw upon during the process of trying to move. For some it is a guide (S3), for others it also provides a rationale or is a source of comfort at times of disappointment, despair and uncertainty:

R [to S3]: Can you say more about saying your prayers?

S3: Yes. Erm, well looking for guidance really. I mean being an [role] is never something ever I thought I would do, I can’t, I can’t think of many clergy when they get ordained and, you know, as the years of ministry go by, thinking ‘Oh, what I want to be is a [role]’. There are some, I think,
but not many. [...] So, I was just seeking God’s guidance as to whether
this is, this was a calling.

P5: Erm, I approach moves and jobs prayerfully, with prayer, however
one wants to describe that, and I do have a personal understanding that
there is, erm, guidance of the Holy Spirit within that decision-making
process. [...] I was not offered the job which gives one a bit of a, you
know, an initial personal feeling of rejection and what was wrong with
me, but then on a little more distance and analysis, erm, I do believe
that, erm, I don’t know how best to express it, that the Holy Spirit was
involved in that decision-making and that it was the best thing, it was the
best decision.

S6: [In tears.] I think it’s really important. Erm, you want to be obedient
to what God wants, erm, and so, you know, all the way through I would
try and keep the process open to God. You know, praying for
discernment and clarity. [Little laugh.]

R [to S5]: OK. And what— S5: Not straightforward.] No. What sustained
you?

S5: Two things. Well, two or three things. I, very early on said, a) I’m not
going to regret who I am, so I’m not to going to, sort of, re—, you know,
erm, and b) I’m not going to let this get me down. That was one side of
it. Some of it was working it through, was, I think prayer and spiritual
director, and just reflecting on it and taking it as a time of waiting.

In the final two extracts P1 and S5 are almost apologetic about making space for
prayer in the midst of a process that they acknowledge as ‘worldly’ and ‘logical’,
suggesting such concepts do not sit easily with prayerfulness:

P1: But I do believe that I finished up in the right place at the right time.
And it was God’s will, but no, I’m sure I did pray about these things, I do
pray about them of course. I should have prayed enough about them
and so I feel, yes I do, I am aware of dealing with these things in a rather worldly way I suppose.

R: Is that a bad thing?

P1: Well I mean one has to use the processes and the discernment and so on that is available [laughs]. So not entirely a bad thing, could do better I suppose but not an entirely bad thing.

S5: Erm, but in the end it is, you know, it, there’s something more than just how you’ve ticked the boxes or scored individual questions, it’s a, it’s about, it is discernment, and there is, and that is prayerful as well as erm, er, logical and, er, and so, just need to make the space for that, and to hang onto that. Yeah. I can’t put it any other way really.

God and Personal Fit

Data which highlight a particular dimension of the calling construct were how clergy articulate a sense of congruence between what the individual believes God may be calling them to do or consider and how that might fit with what they regard as a future role. Whilst most participants were keen to acknowledge the importance of calling (13), there were those (11) who were more circumspect, and some (7) who viewed it as important and less important at different times when describing the inherent tension between God’s call and what they thought would be a good fit for them professionally and personally. One participant, P21, rejected the idea of a call to ordained ministry, explaining that the original call had been to a particular role which was now under threat and causing some anxiety:

P21: Yes, because I suppose I start off from the point my calling was to [role] and it wasn’t to be ordained and that was something the bishop I first saw struggled with, that actually, erm, I had to be ordained to be a [role], and, erm, that was the reality for me and I knew I wanted, I knew my calling was to [role], and, yes, now it’s less clear, much less clear in terms of what direction that might actually take, take me.
A second participant regarded their primary vocation as being a strong marriage which took precedence, ‘The secondary vocation is ministry and the Church.’

The following extracts reflect how the majority of participants go about making sense of what a good fit means to them and the relationship with calling:

S1: Erm, and you will be well-versed in how people talk about, if you like the internal and the external. Er, and I suppose in each of these I’ve needed to make sure that there is at least some coherence there. Erm, have I ever felt a complete disjunction? Well I think when I felt there, there’s been a disjunction I’ve said no, er, in other words I couldn’t see myself in that place, erm, for all sorts of complicated reasons that were probably mostly unconscious. Erm, so, erm, I think there has been a sense that I have felt God is calling through the processes.

P6: I think it’s quite strong but it’s not, er, I wouldn’t express it, perhaps in terribly, er, overtly religious or spiritual language. Erm, at the end of the day, er, I’m called to serve God and serve the Church, er, and, er, I believe quite strongly that I will do that best in a situation where I can flourish and in order to flourish it needs to have, it needs, you know, it’s got to be [my name]-shaped, I mean God’s made me this way, to, you know do the stuff, to do the things that God’s calling me to do.

P16: I think that there is that strong sense of knowing what I know about myself and the gifts and skills that I believe that I have, and that God has given to me, where am I going to be able to serve God best? Whatever best might – but you know, to, to my fullest potential but also for the people that I serve, there, [...] and I think it’s about seeking that place which may be hard work but it’s really the place for you to be and to live and to thrive and for you to serve fully the people where you find yourself. And there are those places where actually it’s just not right for
you to be, and you end up killing yourself inwardly, erm, as well as just not serving the people well.

P14: [...] you know, I’ve been in a range of parishes, really, and have been able to be, because you know it’s this, it’s this thing of you know, you are called, I am called, to be the unique priest God has called me to be, and that can be in a variety of contexts, you know, erm, obviously it doesn’t mean applying for somewhere that is so much at the other end that I would be unh—, I wouldn’t, it’s somewhere where there’s this feeling that the gifts that God has given would be able to be used by God, erm.

What is striking about these confident accounts of serving God and vocation is how participants actively seek out roles that are congruent with their skills, knowledge and aptitudes, happiness and well-being. Far from being an external locus of control in these extracts, God appears more akin to a conduit through which individuals can exercise their internal locus of control in achieving the best fit for themselves whilst reconciling it with their calling.

As suggested by P6 (above), some participants avoided spiritual language altogether and were inclined to use more pragmatic terms as they discussed motives, temperament and gut feeling at the same time as being called. It could be argued that this is evidence for clergy focussing on job characteristics rather than their faith-related criteria when moving jobs (Wildhagen et al., 2005) as suggested in the introduction to this chapter. Yet I don’t believe this is the case because the evidence suggests that the majority of clergy are highly conscious of their faith with regard to moving on. The challenge is how they interpret that faith in relation to professional identity and career-related tasks:

S8: Yeah, I mean, they, I, yes, I, my faith plays a high and significant factor in what I’ve, what I’ve chosen to do and how I feel led, erm, so, erm, in every case it was not only a sense of trying to discern what was a good career option, but also did I feel that’s where God was, in a sense, leading, through all the variable ways that one tries to discern that. I’m
fairly pragmatic about it. Erm, so, as opposed to having some sort of, erm, you know, voice, or, you know, I’m very pragmatic that, er, if all the doors seem to be opening, and not shutting, then that’s how God leads.

R [to S6]: Mm. And so rather mysteriously and seamlessly this post materialized. [S6: Yeah, yeah.] And what made you decide to take it? S6: Erm, I liked what I saw when I [visited location], erm, and that, you know, very intangible, gut feeling [R: OK.] told me it would be right. And I, you know, I’d prayed about it a lot and it still seemed right and it felt ... yeah, I mean, sort of called to it.

S5: It’s, I don’t think it, it’s not so much the level, it’s quite testing, it was interesting, there was a real sense of ‘Do I want to be a [senior role], am I called to be a [senior role]?’

S5: There was a moment of prayer because [location] was about the only job in the [diocese] it was right for me to move to, and it came up at the right point, and I got it, so, that was good news.

Some participants discussed how their calling in relation to moving jobs has been affected when what they perceived as a call has not resulted in the offer of a new post (P15, S6 and P4 below):

P15: No well I have felt called, but often it didn’t work out, for ex—, that one, awful situation at [location], I felt called to try and sort that out, but in the end it wasn’t going to be, didn’t happen, erm, so I’ve rather watered down my expectation, the consequence of it is, that you water down your sort of sense of calling a bit so, so it’s just a sort of general call.

R: OK.

P15: That may be a disappointing thing to hear but I’m afraid that’s a real—, there’s no other thing you can say that won’t absolutely tear you apart every time, you know if you go into it thinking, ‘Oh I’m called to this place,’ and then someone says ‘Actually no you’re not, we don’t want
you.’ Erm, so what do you do with that, you know. [...] It is a self-protection, [R: Protect yourselves.] yes, yes, it is, mm.

S6: It’s tricky, I mean having got the job I’ve now got to move to, I understand it when people say to me: ‘Oh, you know you see, you had to not get the other jobs.’ And I just sort of think I don’t really know if God works like that, um, I mean I think, you know, I mean I’m glad I’ve got the job I’m going to. Um, I don’t think that means all the other ones would have been wrong. So, yeah, but it does, I mean, you know, I got to the point where I thought I’m just going to give up ministry [In tears.] um, and doing something else, because, you know, even if God’s calling you, if the Church won’t find you a job then you can’t do it. So ...

P4: Possibly one exception, you know I don’t think I learned anything except disappointment through one of – one of the things I did and I felt genuinely called to apply. Um, but then disappointment is not a bad thing to have to face. [Small laugh.]

For P12 (below), the painful nature of a move that was calling-inspired is comparable to one that is blocked:

P12: And, and there was a very real sense of bereavement. I mean I was going into an urban area which, and, and, and taking up a situation which was in many ways quite a bit of a mess, so yes, I have, I have always tried to sort of look at it in terms of calling. [R: Mm.]

Finally, another factor arising from data examining God and fit relates to the notion of personal ambition when it comes to wanting to move on. For many clergy in this study the interview gave them the opportunity to reflect on their hopes and aspirations past, present and future. Yet any sense of ambition was frequently explained in oblique terms suggesting that being explicit about seeking a bigger or better job is problematic. The reasons for this reluctance to discuss future plans in ambitious or aspirational terms is partially explained by clergy themselves. First, there is evidence of negativity and denial associated
with being ambitious in the following accounts from individuals who already hold senior roles or are on the preferment list:

S2: ‘You are ordained as a parish priest’, if that doesn’t fulfil you and if that doesn’t make you happy and you want purple things, erm, you’re in the wrong job, you should not be ordained.

S6: Um, I also worry that the fact that you now have to apply for jobs will put off candidates and you’ll only get sort of self-seeking, ambitious ones that are going to be deans and bishops.

P6: So I would say I’m not ambitious but I do have a very low boredom threshold, so it’s about finding the right place, erm, rather than, you know, the right title or the right job in that sense.

To what extent these opinions reflect possible guilt at having achieved a certain status within the Church in spite of the system may be explained by the following accounts from parish clergy. These reflect concerns at having to deny a personal sense of wanting a bigger or better job because it might be regarded as being unchristian or not fulfilling a true calling.

P7: I think it’s partly about this kind of fear of a, of talking about career, I think it’s about fear of, of saying that you would like to do something that is clearly a senior job, people sort of interpret that as being kind of power hungry, erm, and so there’s that kind of pull away from that, that that’s somehow unchristian to say, ‘I’d like to do, X [sic].’

P2: You know we are called to be ministers of God, um, but it has always been held that, um, one is meant to be ambitious but you can’t talk about the ambition [R: No.] um, and I think particularly towards posts of much more senior responsibility there is a sense in which it is considered wrong to want talk about ‘yes, I’d love to be a bishop’, but actually, um, for it to be said ‘this is what I want’ is considered to be not seeking a sense of calling.
P5: On reflection I think I’d just like to add that I think there is a bit of a tension between calling and being called to serve in a particular place and ideas of career structure and progression and ambition, erm, they’re the ... they’re a bit in tension with an understanding of calling to priesthood which is understood as calling to servanthood and service. Erm, how does one accommodate ambition and career development and promotion [R: Mm-hm.] within that. I think we all get in a knot about it.

This section has explored the different responses to how clergy reconcile God, vocation, calling and humility with the kind of hopes, aspirations, desires and ambitions common to any other worker. On the one hand their accounts reflect an intellectual confidence in the role of God in the process which for some contributes to a strong internal locus of control; on the other hand, that calling could be interpreted as providing a controlling narrative (Aveyard, 2013) or external locus control which either undermines or aggrandizes an individual’s desire to find congruence in their working lives. This means that for some clergy their desire for progression or further development can be undermined in different ways. This might arise from pressure to respond to a bishop’s suggestion to move to a particular role when it doesn’t feel a good fit. Alternatively when an individual’s desire to progress contradicts the expectations of others such as a congregation with a vested interest in how their cleric’s calling may manifest itself, e.g. not wanting them to move on. Equally, the strength of a particular call can sometimes lead to misplaced confidence by an individual in their ability to fulfil a certain role. This can lead to considerable frustration and disappointment if this is not recognised or managed by gatekeepers.

**God and System Tension**

This section highlights how the emphasis shifts, often in the same interview, from talk of calling that encompasses the spiritual and sacrificial, to how clergy regard that call as being challenged by the requirements of new recruitment and
selection systems. The first two extracts (S1 and P2) reflect the pragmatism that some clergy bring to their thinking on the issue:

**S1:** Erm, erm, it’s a process of conflicting power blocks, erm, erm, grinding against one another, erm, and if you’re a candidate, erm, if you’re sharp enough, you perceive what’s going on and can operate those power blocks to your own end. That is being very cynical, but I think that’s what’s going on. I think vocation is not much in it. [Laughs.]

**P2:** I think it’s much harder [pause] it’s much harder to speak coherently about the sense of calling with, um, a more formalized approach to, um, post applications, I think because there is the process of writing a CV, writing an application, writing a covering letter, applying, talking about referees and so on. [R: Mm.] It’s much harder to see a sense of calling in that but I think that is, the putting together of a CV is part of the process of working out whether God is calling you to move. If that makes sense.

Others observe and experience a sense of loss for the fundamental call from God to a particular role. They regard it as subsumed by assessment processes and decision-makers far removed from understanding calling as the cornerstone of clergy identity:

**P17:** So, er, I did, overall I’m glad I won’t have to do it again, I don’t really enjoy it, erm, and to me it just seems rather foreign because, erm, vocation and calling, and you’ve actually got to put it down on paper, and trying to explain to someone else, where you’re putting your heart and soul and you think God is calling you to that place, then that committee has got to decide whether that really is the will of God for you to go there, erm, and therefore by this democratic process yes everyone has a lot of say, it doesn’t necessarily guarantee that the system works any better.

**S5:** Erm– [R: Do you think that reflects a sort of Church shift towards wanting a more competency-based, erm, group of ministers?] I think
there’s a tension in there somewhere, [sigh] it’s about finding the right language to speak of vocation, rather than just application, erm, and erm, I’m trying to think of a sort of concrete example, but it can feel a bit cold and calculating, erm, erm … and it seems to me, yes, how do you keep that sense of vocation and … and calling and fit for a particular post alongside, yes, obviously, checking it but I think it’s, there’s, there’s more to it than a list of competencies.

P15: Right well I think that’s an absolutely core question, because lots of people want you to say, erm, ‘Why are you called to come and serve in this place?’ and I want to be able to say why I’m called to serve in a particular place. But I feel this system, er, of competition, means you can no longer say that. Because what do you say? ‘Well I was called to serve those 11 churches that I was turned down for,’ you know, what, what happened to calling there? You know, I felt called but they didn’t feel called to call me. [...] So I find that quite difficult to get my head around really, I find that a really odd feeling. Whereas when the bishop asks you to go to a place, there was a sense that you had been called. OK it was his idea, but it was still, you experienced it more as a calling. But now, you don’t really experience it as a calling, you think, you experience more of, ‘Oh well I got through that then,’ erm, and I don’t think that’s a good development really.

Although P18 and P13 (below) reflect the concerns expressed above, their accounts also strike a balance between calling as ‘not much in it’ and regret for how the significance of calling feels undermined in the new process. In both cases the individuals concerned are acknowledging the fact that whilst calling or the Holy Spirit are part of their personal process, it is equally important to recognise the realities of a process which needs to take account of whether or not you are capable of doing the job:

P18: I suppose I came to the application process after reflecting prayerfully, is this a place where I can serve God, and will I be the right
person for them, not just is this the right job for me. [...] Erm, I think it would be wrong to put that aside and just say, ‘I’m called to this, for which I’m totally ill-equipped, and God will provide,’ I think you have to be realistic.

P13: I, I do trust in the Holy Spirit, I do trust in, erm, a sense of God’s vocation and calling, I don’t think the Holy Spirit plans its day around me, er, I think there is an element of, er, sort of searching, sometimes learning from mistakes, erm, sometimes being surprised by doors opening that were completely unexpected, and er, and I think there has to be an element of trust, but, I’m, I’m conscious probably more, that the Church is, um, as flawed as any organization when it comes to these type of things, and er, and I think sometimes, other organizations might be a bit more honest when it comes to talking about their flaws, er, I – that is not meant to sound, um, cynical, I, I, I think it’s just how it is really.

P13’s comments are also notable for being one of only five explicit references from participants to how the Church as a Christian organization doesn’t care about clergy when it comes to moving jobs. The absence of overt criticism of the Church in this respect could suggest that support and encouragement from Church leadership is implicit and the majority of clergy are content with the current situation. Yet the following comments suggest otherwise:

P17: But I’m not, I think as a, as a caring, as a Christian organization, I’m not, I’m just not entirely convinced that all the, er, the way the Church has gone with this is always entirely right and best, and it can produce a bit of resentment.

S5: Erm, so I haven’t, it’s not really a comp–, a complaint, although, an awareness of just sort of, I, I think the Church have probably responded, there was just a sort of, just an element of mismatch between, and why isn’t there a bit more help to help understand what’s going on.
S6: Um [pause] and I think probably most dioceses could learn about appointments processes, human resources, those kinds of things. Um, I think they’re amateurish in a bad way, a lot of the time. Erm, and don’t treat people well, and, you know, the Church should, should be treating people better than other organizations do. Erm, but, you know, you learn. [Laughs.]

It seems these few clergy who spoke explicitly of a Church culture that is perceived as unhelpful, uncaring and unchristian when it comes to supporting individuals with the process of moving are tapping into the unease, anger and frustration expressed across the data set. It supports evidence from the Structure and Agency sections of this thesis which indicate that most clergy are unhappy with a) how the appointment systems are being managed by Church leadership and b) the lack of support and guidance available to navigate their way through the changing terrain. For given the nature of ministry as a calling where service and sacrifice reflect a certain type of value system (Schein, 1984), clergy find themselves having to function within an appointments system which many see as deficient and which defies their trust in an institution which they believe should uphold those norms, values and moral agency rooted in Christian ministry which treats people better than other organizations. Furthermore it indicates that for many clergy, their interpretation of a calling in this new context is being undermined compared to the old way of doing things where calling was not overtly scrutinized when moving jobs. Instead it was a benign feature of the mobility process which all parties concerned could draw upon as part of their personal decision-making.

Summary: Calling or Career – When God Can’t Find You a Job

Data arising from this research question focus attention on four dimensions to the interplay between individual, God and institution. These are the original call
from God; the supportive nature of prayer; trying to achieve a fit between calling and career; and institutional structures which overlook priestly vocation. They highlight the complexities between the nature of a religious calling and how clergy have negotiated that calling when preparing to change jobs now and in the past. Evidence from the calling data indicates that changes to the appointment systems are interfering in two different ways with clergy expectations of self as framed by the calling dimension of their self-concept, i.e. serving God. First, the majority of participants in this study were unequivocal about the significance of calling when contemplating a job move. Less clear were their explanations of how that call is manifested at such a time. That is not to say the fact of their calling is in question, for it is not. A possible explanation is that clergy are having to reinterpret their calling for one or more of the following reasons: their original call to ministry has changed over time and they feel guilty about this in some way; that they never did draw on that original call when moving jobs, relying instead on the authority of the bishop; that they are being thrown back on their original call where the process of prayer and reflection is a source of internalized affirmation that reflects the original summons. Second, clergy find themselves being challenged to account publicly for their calling when applying for jobs which most are finding difficult to do. They are required to participate in the new processes and behave in ways that many feel undermine and violate their expectations of the institution of the Church and its leadership in this matter. These are conscious and opposing views which indicates that clergy are experiencing cognitive dissonance in relation to how calling has been traditionally enacted within the occupational domain of ministry.
FINDINGS AND INITIAL DISCUSSION

PART TWO

This section of the Findings and Initial Discussion chapter brings together insights from the dominant themes of Structure, Agency and Calling and the interplay between them to provide answers to the four research questions which underpin this study. Part One has demonstrated how structural forces in the form of institutional change, temporal practice and legislative process are encroaching upon the historically protected employment status of clergy. It has also established how clergy are responding to these issues in the ways they enact agency as workers with a calling. The interplay between structure, agency and calling provide new perspectives on the activities and constraints which inform the preparatory stage of career mobility and will now be discussed in the context of the research questions.

RQ1: What reasons do clergy express for seeking a move?

This research question sought to find out about an individual’s personal motivation for considering a job move or why they had decided not to move at the time of the interview. Two further research questions, ‘What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move?’ and ‘Why do clergy engage in certain career behaviours?’ included follow-up questions which asked clergy to reflect on the circumstances surrounding previous moves. The responses to these questions included an explanation of reasons for moving on. Consequently this discussion draws on evidence from the data from all three questions.
Of the 31 participants interviewed, 23 were taking steps to facilitate a move into a new role or retirement or had been appointed to a new post in the past 12 months. Three clergy who were experiencing difficulty due to a mix of personal and structural constraints were ambivalent about their future plans. Two clergy who came forward were taking the long view and contemplating opportunity structures and personal fit at least two years in advance of a move. A further two had no plans to move in the immediate future because they had not been in their jobs for an appropriate length of time. A fifth individual said they would not move again because of the impact of previous moves on their family. All five of these immediate non-movers were encouraged to explore past and future motives for moving. Interestingly, their insights were consistent with the range of different reasons for moving given by those in the data-set who reflected on present as well as past and future moves.

However, what was really striking about this question was how clergy responded to it. Their explanations of the intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for anticipating a move as described above were frequently embroiled with emotive talk of particular circumstances based on current and previous experience of moving. These were complex narratives describing a range of features which act as a force and a constraint in relation to executing a future move. As such it was sometimes difficult for participants (and this researcher) to disentangle intrinsic reasons for moving from more dominant external constraints.

Regardless of whether an individual planned to move on or not, the following features which are directly linked to how clergy rationalize a move are drawn from the body of data on structure, agency and calling. The data indicates that many of the reasons clergy give for changing jobs reflect those for other workers, e.g. business managers (Nicholson & West, 1988). Specifically, they are driven by a mix of different motive forces (Nicholson & West, 1988) which were not exclusive from each other. The most dominant was future-oriented, e.g. looking ahead to a more challenging and fulfilling role or meeting career
objectives, including retiring. A minority (three) were driven by domestic factors. Some thinking was affected by avoidance motives, e.g. disillusionment with the leadership of the institution. Barriers or constraints identified within the data that are familiar to people in other occupations support existing propositions in the literature relating to the permeability of career boundaries (Gunz et al., 2007, pp. 486, 487). These include institutional constraints such as the impact of direct and indirect discrimination towards applicants who were female (Greene & Robbins, 2011; Greene 2012) or homosexual.

Whilst it was not always made explicit by female participants in this study, the constraints women clergy face in terms of moving jobs were implicit in some of the accounts: women have, until very recently, been prevented from applying to become bishops; also implicit were those measures which allow women to be discriminated against in certain dioceses, i.e. parishes which refuse to accept women priests and those bishops who are not prepared to ordain them. Evidence of positive discrimination towards women being recruited as archdeacons suggests that in some quarters the deployment of women in the Church is being carefully managed. With regard to sexuality, two participants were open about this with one explaining how they had negotiated a move in the full knowledge that an application was likely to be met with prejudice and discrimination by both senior leadership and certain parishes.

Clergy were highly conscious of age and the limited opportunities for movement after age 60. Given that just over 50% (22) of the participants were aged 50+ this was unsurprising. The majority of clergy were realistic about the fact that their final two decades required self-management and they were exercising agency in ways that allowed them to retain some control over the unfolding situation. Personal factors that can simultaneously inhibit and facilitate an individual’s efforts to move (Gunz et al., 2007, p. 483) such as a partner’s job, the needs of children or wanting to live near grandchildren were relayed as fundamental reasons for moving. This suggests that clergy place a high priority
on personal, internalized values such as benevolence and security, two motivational values identified by Schwartz (1994) bound up in the stability of personal relationships. On the one hand, these are values which Ng et al. (2007) suggest ‘predispose people towards different types of job mobility’ (p. 374); on the other hand the participants in this study often discussed them in terms of constraining forces to be negotiated. Some clergy saw themselves as handicapped by their particular brand of churchmanship or when personal circumstances do not fit the ‘norm’. Examples include trying to return to parish ministry from an overseas posting or a period of time working outside the Church of England either in secular employment or chaplaincy. Relocation in general is a major preoccupation for clergy contemplating a move due to the physical and emotional disruption for them and their families.

However, there are exceptions to the argument that clergy are no different to other workers. First, changes to the appointment systems which are perceived and experienced by clergy as opaque, covert and unprofessional despite claims by Church leadership that the systems are open, fair and transparent. Furthermore, clergy are uncomfortable with the paradox of being encouraged by a bishop or archdeacon to apply for certain jobs as has been the tradition yet knowing that they can no longer rely on the affirmation and authority of the bishop or other senior clerics to help secure them a future move. Finally, clergy are wary, even frightened, of having to participate and perform in selection processes for which they feel ill prepared and unsupported. Consequently, any rationale for moving jobs is bound up in a lack of trust and confidence in the current appointment systems to help them facilitate a satisfactory move.

Second, the ambivalence or decision not to move was influenced by a desire to retain the freehold, a feature of employment unique to those in ministry which some clergy regarded as giving them a greater sense of job security. Improving one’s standard of living is a reason for change that features highly for male business managers (Nicholson & West, 1988). Yet the facts are that clergy
operate in a flat opportunity structure with an average stipend of £23,000 and little confidence in the Church’s housing provision or pension arrangements (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013). Consequently maintaining a standard of living which supports a clergy family with children, let alone improving it when some clergy are reliant on the benefits system is largely dependent these days on a second salary. A partner’s job prospects are therefore an increasingly crucial factor when contemplating a move. Another dimension to clergy remuneration in relation to moving jobs which distinguishes them from business managers is that most clergy do not enter ministry for financial gain. This is due to the nature of a calling where notions of service and sacrifice carry few tangible rewards in terms of money, benefits, bonuses or status (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 105). The fact that only three participants spoke of salary or financial circumstances in relation to reasons for moving lends support to this argument. Interestingly, the Peyton & Gatrell (2013) study also notes how despite not being the main topic under discussion, concerns relating to financial security permeated the research interviews. Their findings attest to the ‘subtle economic opportunity cost of being ordained’ on clergy (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 104), highlighting the complexity of clergy attitudes to a range of issues relating to personal finances. Unsurprisingly perhaps, those clergy who were less dependent on the basic financial package offered by the Church felt more financially secure than those who were not. Evidence from the present research of the importance of a second income in order to maintain an acceptable standard of living dependent upon personal circumstances is therefore likely to be an underlying motive for moving.

Of particular significance to this discussion was the fact that the reasons given for moving were subjugated by talk of time and timescales which point to an internalized pressure on clergy to be vigilant in terms of exercising judgement about when to move jobs. The majority of clergy chose to talk about the impact and importance of timing either in the first instance, or alongside discussing more specific reasons for wanting a move. Time norms dominated clergy
rationales for moving on in several different ways. First, time norms relating to how long to stay or when to leave a role in the eyes of the Church and/or colleagues and/or congregation. Notable here was the seven-year rule. It would seem that staying in a post for an average of seven years is deemed to be an acceptable length of time before moving elsewhere. The provenance of this timescale is difficult to establish despite my further enquiries beyond the dataset amongst senior clergy and academic theologians. Responses support a consistent finding in the accounts which is that it is the cyclical nature of ministry and how personally clergy feel ready for a move after seven years in post which has established this particular timing as an institutional norm. Just two clergy explained the seven-year rule based on the work of a Church strategist (Jackson, 2002) who has suggested 7-13 years as the optimum time for an incumbent to achieve church growth. Yet my data indicate that many clergy have been working to this timescale for at least 20 years. Despite the abolition of time-limited posts following the introduction of Common Tenure in 2011 these were often mentioned in terms of the timing of a move in the past which suggests they remain a relevant benchmark for clergy. In occupational lives defined by transience and insecurity I believe these timings play an important role in enabling clergy to exert a sense of personal control over their career trajectory as they anticipate and prepare for a move.

Second, clergy evoke time and timescales in relation to preparing to move jobs in order to legitimize their reasons for staying or leaving. Clergy across the dataset talked about the importance of getting the timing of a move right in the interests of the parish whilst meeting their own development needs. Closer scrutiny of the data points to efforts to legitimize the desire for a bigger, better or different job within a time narrative. I believe this is partially an avoidance strategy strongly embedded in the socialized nature of ministry whereby to give voice to any form of ambition or aspiration is regarded with suspicion and where a narrative of humility is privileged. Consequently, I posit that talking about
wanting to move because of a personal desire for progression or fulfilment seems more palatable when explained in the context of institutional time norms.

**RQ1: Summary**

When asked about their reasons for moving on, clergy draw on complex narratives bound up in a range of features relating to structure, agency and calling. What was so striking about these narratives was the complex interplay between cognition and affect as clergy tried to rationalize and legitimize their reasons for preparing to move on. Whilst some of the reasons are no different from those in other occupations, e.g. seeking a more challenging role; others are bound up in tensions unique to ministry, e.g. retaining the freehold or the sacrificial nature of calling. Extrinsic constraints common to other occupations are also evident, e.g. sex and age discrimination. Yet there are no other mainstream occupations in the UK which are exempt from discrimination legislation. This is creating uncertainty and ambivalence in the minds of many clergy which complicates their rationale for moving. One way in which they are trying to alleviate these conflicting concerns is with reference to historically embedded timescales which provide them with a sense of control over what happens next. These also serve to legitimize a personal desire for progression or fulfilment which may be perceived as contrary to values bound up in service and sacrifice. Collectively, these findings provide new perspectives on the reasons clergy express for seeking to move jobs beyond individual motive to the contextual factors and the tensions arising from trying to do it.

**RQ2: What sense do clergy make of the job moves available to them in the Church?**

**Part 1: What is your understanding of how the appointment process works?**

As indicated in earlier discussion of RQ1, ‘What reasons do clergy express for seeking a move?’, both parish and senior clergy talked about how the Church appointment systems affect their anticipatory behaviour in relation to moving
on. In fact, the range and ferocity of views and the language used to describe the appointment systems were striking. I believe there are two dimensions to this outcome. First, clergy are upset and confused at changes to the appointment systems. This is because in the past they could exercise a particular form of agency and autonomy as part of a relationship with Church leaders which reflected the shared norms and values of ministry. The new systems are eroding that agency and those relationships in ways that are leaving many clergy feeling frustrated, disillusioned, uncertain and isolated. Second, for the majority of clergy being interviewed this was a rare opportunity to speak out about their experiences of preparing to move jobs. Many used the interviews as an opportunity to vent their frustration, bewilderment and anger at experiences of systems past and present. For others it was regarded as a chance to reflect upon and explore recent experiences of the new systems with varying degrees of confidence and enthusiasm. Finally, contemplating the task of navigating their way through the current terrain in pursuit of possible futures was bound up in a mix of trepidation, concern, anxiety, frustration and determination. In several cases hope and expectation were expressed (on and off the record) that this research study would make a difference to the direction in which the institution is going with its approach to the recruitment, selection and development of clergy:

P18: I’m just trying to tell you how it is really and I hope something trickles through. [laughs.]

P22: ‘Well I’ve moved a few times and some of them have been very interesting, erm, and, er, some of them are pretty dysfunctional [...] and some are good, and that might be interesting’, I thought it might be interesting for your research.

R [to P9]: That’s great, look, thank you. Is there any−, have, anything else you wanted to add?

P9: No, I mean I, I just think what you’re doing is excellent. My worry is
that you’ll write something that is very good, very precise. [Knock on the door, introduction to someone coming in. Interview ends.]

P9 was interrupted by a colleague entering the room. He immediately explained to the colleague who I was and what I was researching which they both laughed about. Although I cannot remember what P9 said verbatim, the gist of his ‘worry’ (above) was that any report arising from the interviews would not reflect the reality of his experience of anticipating different job moves in the Church.

Such was the breadth and depth of negative data gathered in response to this question it threatened to divert attention from those individuals who expressed tolerance or some understanding of efforts to change the systems by those involved. Yet, as demonstrated in more positive attitudes to the competitive recruitment process within the Systems data (p. 156), such tolerance is conditional, as reflected in the following extracts.

P6: And I’m sympathetic to the fact that it’s, erm, that at the end of the day it is quite a kind of instinctive process [making appointments] [....] you know, in getting the feedback from my bishop about the [role] interviews here, I felt really sorry for him because I knew that he had made, he’d made the decision, as much as anything on instinctively what would be right for the team, but somehow he had to then explain himself, and sometimes you can’t do that.

R [to S2]: Can I just stop you, do you think that’s typical, erm, where perhaps, erm, senior clergy, bishops, don’t always give you the full picture sometimes?

S2: I don’t know whether that’s typical but I think they are obliged to keep confidential information confidential, and I respect that.

P4: [...] Erm, and I – I mean I – I have frustrations with the process which I’ve expressed, but I’m not – um, they are frustrations with what I see in the process, and I’m really conscious that my, my experience, hearing people talk, my experience seems to be relatively unusual, because there
are people who, who, who express quite a lot of dissatisfaction with what’s happened to them rather than with the process as a process, so I think perhaps I’ve been really lucky.

Yet, scepticism and a lack of confidence in the appointment systems dominate the data for several reasons. Since 1986, changes to the systems have been managed in a piecemeal fashion which I believe has had a direct impact on clergy willingness to engage with the shifting terrain. It reflects deeply embedded processes in the Church of England whereby policy decisions such as those relating to changes in the way clergy are appointed have been reached following a lengthy process of consultation, research and committee work. This restraint in how change and progress are negotiated (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013) is widely acknowledged as part of the culture of the institution which has been likened to having ‘the engine of a lawn mower and the brakes of a juggernaut’ (Oakley, 2014) when it comes to making decisions. Consequently, clergy are used to the fact of change or new developments being implemented over time. Furthermore, before the advent of Common Tenure in 2011 which had legislative power to enforce changes to the employment conditions of clergy, there was little impetus for candidates and those responsible for recruitment to wholly embrace the unfolding arrangements. This relationship between time, level and future trajectory has been explored in the turnover literature (Mitchell et al., 2013). Specifically, temporal distance from an event has a direct effect on the attitudes and behaviours of an individual, e.g. if someone is anticipating a future situation then the closer the event the greater the influence on current decisions. These findings also include observations on multilevel analysis of turnover whereby group behaviours contaminate or create ‘spillover’ to individual behaviours (Mitchell, Burch & Lee, 2013; Chan, 1998). In this context where intra-organizational moves dominate and clergy rarely exit the institution, the protracted implementation of changes to the appointment systems by the Church means that until recently, clergy have had several years to contemplate the changing situation without actually needing to do very much about it. Furthermore there is evidence to suggest that collectively clergy are influencing
each other’s attitudes and behaviours based on a combination of myth, rumour and reported experience of the appointment systems. Consequently this is generating concern, ambivalence and resistance across the data set.

As indicated in the data these concerns are wide-ranging. For whilst clergy acknowledge the operation of new systems relating to parochial and senior appointments with varying degrees of understanding and clarity, they regard many aspects of these systems as impaired due to opaque and covert processes and practices operating alongside a move to more secular recruitment methods. Those features of the system which give rise to scepticism amongst clergy in relation to the espoused shift towards greater transparency include: difficulty understanding what the steps in the process might be and speculation and distrust about where you are in the process; accounts of experience where the espoused systems are clearly being breached, e.g. posts not being advertised, (unhelpful) interference by senior clergy, evidence of explicit and accepted prejudice that has to be managed covertly by candidates and the practice of going through the motions of a fair process when a preferred candidate is already lined up for the role.

Another dominant feature of the systems rhetoric was the lack of professionalism by senior clerics and parishes relating to the management of the recruitment process, e.g. delays, lack of information, breaches of confidentiality and inconsistency with regard to feedback and follow-up. Finally, the majority of clergy spoke of being ill prepared for the process and how they are adapting their behaviour in order to manage the practical and emotional demands associated with multiple applications and interviews. What was striking from the data was how isolated many clergy seemed to feel in the midst of this shifting terrain due to what they perceive as the poor, or lack of effective, career development advice or support from institutional gatekeepers such as senior clerics, parish representatives and central Church advisers. Consequently, many
clergy regard participation in the appointments process as an unpredictable and risky business and are conditional in their support of the current arrangements.

Cumulatively, these findings indicate, first, that clergy are aware that any attempt to move jobs is being undertaken within a hybrid of two systems in flux and as such they are caught in a contradictory stance, i.e. where organizational policy is not borne out in practice (El-Sawad et al., 2004). Second, they feel annoyed yet also vulnerable because exercising agency in how they have traditionally negotiated a job move has been undermined by the loss of the relational connection to significant authority figures, i.e. bishops who could affirm and legitimize their reasons for moving. The fact these thoughts are conscious and simultaneous leads me to suggest clergy are experiencing cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) in relation to understanding how the appointment process works. This means they are holding conscious (they talk about it) and opposing (‘I have to go along with the new process’ versus ‘I have no respect for or confidence in the new process’) views at the same time.

Cognitive dissonance is a psychological state where an individual seeks to resolve inconsistencies in particular thoughts or attitudes due to levels of psychological discomfort (Brown & Associates, 2002, pp. 324-325; Festinger, 1964). This is in contrast to someone experiencing double-think (El-Sawad et al., 2004) where they hold simultaneous yet conflicting beliefs whilst remaining oblivious to the duality of their stance. There were some instances of double-think in this study. However, in the majority of cases it appears that dissonance is at play as clergy endeavour to express, rationalize and explain the tensions they experience. The significance of cognitive dissonance in the final analysis is explained in Chapter 6, Discussion.

Part 2: What is your understanding of the types of job move available to you at this time?

Clergy talked about this in three ways: understanding role; understanding self; understanding fit. Knowledge of what roles are available and what they were likely to involve varied amongst participants. Some were very clear about the
nature of certain jobs, their content and the implications for their future career trajectory. Others engaged in occupational fantasies as they explored the idea of certain jobs due to a future ambition, unfulfilled desire or sense of frustration with a current role. The majority were circumspect about certain institutional barriers to obtaining a particular post, regarding them as something to be negotiated rather than breached, e.g. age discrimination, sex discrimination (positive and negative), churchmanship and prejudice against those whose circumstances do not fit the ‘norm’. Family constraints were also a serious consideration in relation to applying for certain roles. The majority of clergy were self-aware about what skills, knowledge, experience and abilities they could offer a new role. More problematic for both senior and parish clerics is working out how their skills and experience might fit with a specific role. There are two reasons why this is causing clergy difficulty. First, under the old system the bishop was the arbiter of a future move, in effect matching priest to parish, whereas the new formalized systems of recruitment, selection and development require clergy to take more personal responsibility for their decision to change jobs than in the past. They are now accountable for discerning their skills and talents, matching them to a particular role or situation and managing their way through a more visible recruitment process which exposes them to public scrutiny from a wide range of Church and lay leadership. At the same time, the majority of clergy report a lack of trust in the integrity of the new systems to support them in working out where they might fit, e.g. those who thought they understood the process but are left feeling unsure and confused when they are unsuccessful, or where the bishop is undermining an individual’s sense of autonomy by suggesting roles that they feel are inappropriate. It would be inaccurate to suggest that difficulties in working out which role to move to next are unique to the new system of appointments because some of the data in this study suggest that clergy have always experienced problems with this aspect of moving jobs. The distinction here is that the Church has formalized the appointments process thereby changing how clergy have traditionally exercised agency in relation their next move. The nature of these changes and a perceived
lack of integrity in how they are being implemented are creating unease and uncertainty for the majority of a population used to being called to a role by someone in authority rather than being responsible for their own progression and where self-promotion is the antithesis of humility. This is undermining their confidence in themselves and the system thus reinforcing feelings of dissonance and discomfort.

RQ3: What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move and why?

There is a strong case to be made for the distinctive nature of clergy agency in relation to preparing to move jobs as manifested in a range of different behaviours. Evidence from the data identified how clergy report exercising agency in this respect in much the same way as they have in the past, e.g. by drawing on established career self-management behaviours (King, Z., 2004). As part of the process of career exploration, making career decisions and influencing career outcomes (Ibarra & Deshpande, 2007; King, Z., 2004), these include looking in the Church Times for vacancies and drawing on networks of professional and personal relationships, i.e. the bishop, peers and friends. Also evident were behavioural differences between incumbent seniors, aspiring seniors and parish clergy some of which could be attributed to an individual’s success or otherwise in the early stages of the tournament model of career progression (Rosenbaum, 1989). However, clergy report exercising such behaviours in a more heightened way than previously. For example, they are having to acquire, sometimes reluctantly, a range of new skills in relation to certain preparatory tasks. These include actively identifying job vacancies in the Church press or online; having to adhere to more regulated and formal administrative processes requiring the completion of lengthy application forms, personal statements and curriculum vitae; and visibly promoting themselves into jobs via competitive interviews. Whilst there was evidence of a raised awareness of the need to research the internal job market the range of information-seeking behaviours (Wicks, 1999) was not always particularly overt
or extensive. Furthermore, some clergy have adopted an indiscriminate approach to the recruitment process by making several different types of application at once in the hope that something will come up. This is in direct contrast to those clergy who are strongly inclined to plan ahead with evidence that for many participants there is an increased vigilance associated with planning for a move now that the influence of the bishop in facilitating a transition on their behalf has dissipated (see RQ1). It was also found that for some clergy the uncomfortable, even frightening, prospect of having to participate in the new system means they have decided not to move or to retire earlier than they might otherwise have done in order to avoid the process altogether.

Collectively these findings point to the fact that clergy are experiencing levels of discomfort associated with cognitive dissonance which they are trying to minimise by adapting both their attitude and behaviour. These findings indicate that whilst clergy are engaging in certain career-related tasks as they endeavour to participate in the new systems, they are doing so in ways suggest they are experiencing cognitive dissonance. For many of their actions, i.e. resistance, avoidance and exercising control (Bell & Staw, 1989) are acknowledged behavioural responses by someone experiencing cognitive dissonance.

The reasons for these tensions are bound up in an erosion of trust in the relationship between observing episcopal authority and seeking episcopal affirmation whilst exercising individual autonomy in terms of when or where they might move next. As discussed previously in this report, whilst a cleric’s ordination vows ally the individual to the authority of the bishop and evidence has been presented which indicates that the majority of clergy acknowledge the special nature of that relationship, episcopal power is constrained when it comes to exercising authority, legal or otherwise, over the actions of an individual. Combined with the fact that until 2011 clergy were in the unique position compared to any other occupational group of possessing the freehold, a
right which gave rise to few rules, a rather vague job description (Ranson et al., 1977, p. 143) and the perception of some clergy as ‘popes in their parishes’, they were able to maintain a strong sense of autonomy and independence in relation to their ministry. More significantly, this change coincided with the introduction of the new systems amidst a weak and ambiguous environment (Bell & Staw, 1989) involving little or no consultation with clergy prior to their introduction. Along with reports of weak leadership, belated and ineffective communication, unprofessional conduct, expedient behaviour in relation to moving people between posts, bullying and a lack of support following implementation, distrust and dissonance prevail (Burnes, 1995).

**RQ4: What, if any, is the significance of calling as you contemplate moving?**

Evidence from the data indicates that calling is a significant part of how clergy anticipate and prepare for moving jobs. As previously discussed, a religious calling for this research population is manifested in the obedient and sacrificial nature of ministry where clergy function under ‘the panoptical gaze of God’ (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 83). It highlights what for many clergy is a lifelong struggle to achieve personal authenticity or congruence between the public self, encompassing a requirement to function in the real world, and the private self, embracing vocational sacrifice. This creates inherent tensions for clergy when it comes to pursuing personal choices or freedoms in the everyday world (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013). For the clergy in this study a personal desire to change jobs was further complicated by how the appointment systems are being managed amidst ongoing change. This is challenging and undermining certain strongly held value systems embedded in the career trajectory of a priest.

Clergy evoke four different narratives (a divine call, prayer, God and fit, and the absence of God) when asked to explain the relationship between their personal call and the process of preparing to move jobs. These explanations are not always mutually exclusive, indicating that clergy are inclined to hold different
views at the same time. Notable across the narratives was how clergy negotiate the boundary between God as an external locus of control and their own internal locus of control in terms of managing their future trajectory. For whilst there was no evidence (except from one participant) that their original call to ministry was undermined, the findings indicate that clergy do not privilege a transcendent calling when thinking about a move but regard the call from God as a conduit through which they can exercise agency:

a) Clergy do not spontaneously think of a call from God when contemplating a move.

b) If they do think about whether or not it is a call from God this is likely to arise due to uncertainty or indecision. For example, when the bishop has suggested a job an individual feels does not fit with their skills or their plans, i.e. to which they do not feel called; alternatively, where the individual has identified a role to which they feel called but the bishop or recruiting body does not share their view. It would seem that at this point and however it is manifested, clergy find themselves questioning their sense of calling. On the one hand this is not new, for a sense of being called or not called has always been associated with the discernment process that clergy draw upon when making mobility decisions. On the other hand, in the current climate it seems an individual’s internal locus of control is disrupted more than in the past as their call is challenged by circumstances they perceive as beyond their control, i.e. a secularized recruitment process that lacks credibility combined with the loss of authority and affirmation from the bishop.

c) Clergy draw on prayer as part of their calling to support and guide them when things are difficult or unclear when preparing to move.

d) Many clergy are conscious of how being aspirational or ambitious for another role may be perceived as unchristian or not fulfilling a true calling.
e) The majority of clergy are inclined to balance calling with a healthy dose of pragmatism when it comes to negotiating a move within the Church of England.

Collectively, these findings suggest that the significance of calling in relation to how career mobility is negotiated now and in the past can be viewed from different perspectives. A sticking plaster for when things aren’t going so well, or a more intense therapeutic intervention which helps an individual regain some sense of internal locus of control; a sense of loss for the process of discernment which included a sense of being called to a particular role or place; a constraint which prevents individuals from using their skills and talents in other roles; a secondary consideration to practical concerns such as relocation or whether they could do the job.

However, what I think is really going on can be found in the changes to the relationship between individual clergy and the bishop when thinking about moving jobs. Specifically, in order to reconcile the tension between obedience to God and personal agency and career self-concept, clergy have traditionally sought out legitimization for the antecedents to a move (e.g. particular motives or circumstances) from the bishop. Evidence from this study demonstrates that despite acknowledging the recent curtailment of their sphere of influence, clergy continue to regard bishops as the source of that legitimization and affirmation. Consequently, when asked about the significance of calling, clergy are thrown back on calling narratives that sit uncomfortably alongside engaging with career-related tasks in a system they distrust. That is not to say these calling narratives lacked authenticity or truthfulness, but what clergy really seem to be saying about calling is found in the data on Structure and Agency. That is, when it comes to anticipating a job move their calling is embodied in a deeply embedded process of social exchange with the bishop which allowed for ‘the asymmetric relations between obedience and self-identity’ (Peyton & Gatrell, 2013, p. 83) to be explored and affirmed. In other words, the bishop is the manifestation of God on earth who will guide you in the right direction:
So that was definitely a feeling of, yeah, if my bishop calls me and asks me to do something like that, [R: Mm.] then there’s a sense of not so being under discipline, but yes, I, under God and under my bishop, [R: Mm.] I’d need to have a very good reason why I would have said no.

In the current climate of change and flux where the bishop’s authority is being eroded and there appears to be no-one and no system to replace that relationship, clergy are finding their sense of calling as it has been traditionally enacted in anticipating a job move increasingly challenged.
DISCUSSION

including Limitations, Implications for Practice and Suggestions for Further Research

Introduction

The primary aim of this research study was to scrutinize clergy as members of the UK workforce in terms of their experience of preparing to move jobs. The notion of clergy being in any way special by virtue of their ordained status was a secondary consideration. Yet, in the final analysis the unique, or at least unusual, nature of stipendiary ministry as an occupation has emerged as a significant feature of that experience, albeit in some unexpected ways. Consequently, this discussion aims to explain the unexpected nature of these findings and their significance for current models of the determinants of job and career mobility and career transition in general. This is because they throw light on where we need to pay more attention when investigating individual experience of preparing to move jobs regardless of occupation or organizational context.

I wish to claim in this discussion that clergy find preparing to move jobs in the Church of England difficult. I know they find it difficult because their accounts of their experiences have two dimensions to them:

1. The different factors that they describe experiencing as difficult.
2. The emotion which accompanies those experiences.

These two dimensions will be explained in the course of the following discussion which is in three sections. First, with reference to career theories and models which have framed this research study from the outset. Second, with reference to data which highlight the significance of the emotive nature of the research interviews in relation to how clergy are experiencing moving jobs (Kidd, 2008). Third, with reference to new concepts not previously linked to career transition
or mobility. These were identified as relevant as I sought a more comprehensive explanation for data which highlighted the contested nature of anticipating a job move by participants.

SECTION 1

Career transition and turnover theories and career and job mobility models which identify the determinants or antecedents to a career move (Louis, 1980a, 1982; Nicholson & West, 1988; Lee & Mitchell, 1984; Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009) were established early on in this study as offering helpful frameworks from which to address the objective and subjective dimensions of how an individual might experience their career. These theories informed the four research questions for this study which are analysed and discussed in depth in Chapter 5, Findings and Initial Discussion. Consequently, the following discussion will focus on summarizing those elements of the theories and models from that analysis and discussion which have emerged as most significant for how clergy experience preparing to move jobs.

First, the data highlighted the dominant influence of structural factors in terms of how clergy anticipate and plan for a potential move. On the one hand, all the structural factors identified by the job and career mobility models were evident in varying degrees in the data. The following discussion explains how economic conditions, societal characteristics, industry and labour market differences, organizational staffing policies and the influence of individual and shared values and norms within an organization (Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009) are manifested amongst this research population. Furthermore, previous experiences of preparing to move jobs and many of the reasons for moving resonated with factors identified in the career transition literature as influencing preparatory experience, i.e. early socialization (Louis, 1980a; Nicholson & West, 1988). Finally, aspects of turnover theories with regard to ‘met expectations’ (Holtom et al., 2008) were also in evidence. On the other hand, the findings indicate nuanced perspectives on these models and theories reflecting the
distinctive nature of ministry and the clergy role which are discussed below. Collectively these structural factors are inclined to be perceived as a constraining rather than an enabling force for movement by the majority of clergy in this research study.

Notable is the unusual manifestation of the role of reward structures (Ng et al., 2007; Forrier et al., 2009) in the Church of England which permeate clergy decision-making with regard to a potential move. Unlike the US where there is some flexibility in relation to pay and benefits for clergy in certain denominations (Wildhagen et al., 2005) UK clergy are bound by the stipendiary salary system which offers little flexibility in terms of maintaining or improving their standard of living. Consequently the impact of any move likely to undermine a partner’s job which brings in a much-needed second salary is a major consideration for most clergy, particularly those with children. What is interesting and important here is that even if clergy in the UK could move to a better paid role, the evidence tells us that financial incentives are low down the list of factors likely to motivate clergy to move jobs (see Findings and Initial Discussion, Chapter 5). This indicates that the partners of UK clergy play an important role not only in supporting the work of the cleric and, as some might say, subsidizing the Church of England, but also act as a potential barrier to movement. It also points to the embedded nature of the value systems inherent in the work of ministry. It is also a finding that expands upon earlier research on US clergy which found that their perception of unfair pay was related to the propensity to job search (Wildhagen et al., 2005). For as long as the Church of England maintains the status quo in relation to stipends, UK clergy a) don’t have the option to search for a significantly better paid job, and b) are unlikely to do so if they did.

Societal characteristics likely to influence mobility (Ng et al., 2007) are also reflected in how clergy contemplate moving within the Church. The importance of working partners has already been discussed, whilst the attractiveness of
certain geographical locations, the desire to find good schools for their children and to be within easy reach of ageing parents are all significant considerations for clergy when anticipating a move and for many constitute real barriers to movement. Furthermore, the data indicate that legislative change (Ng et al., 2007) in the form of Common Tenure and the abolition of the freehold for new incumbents has created something of a hiatus in terms of how secure some clergy now feel in relation to deciding to move on. This is because in the past a cleric might have decided to risk initiating a move knowing that if it didn’t work out their existing position was safe. Alternatively, if they went so far as to take up a new post and the role did not fulfil their expectations or those of the appointing parish then they were safe in that post until they made a change. For some clergy, particularly those with families, retaining the freehold has become a barrier to moving, whilst for those who are no longer eligible for that concession there was no evidence to suggest that either the lack of freehold or the revised housing arrangements under Common Tenure were significant factors when anticipating a move.

There is also a point where societal characteristics and economic conditions (Ng et al., 2007) conflate in this study of clergy experience of preparing to move jobs. This is because the growing secularization of society is creating pressure upon those leading the Church to find different ways of attracting people to the Anglican faith. The result has been more complex patterns of ministry, i.e. team ministries and multiple parishes, with an ongoing focus on strategies which it is anticipated will increase Church growth, spiritually and economically. One way in which this is affecting how clergy think about moving on is in terms of expectations of future roles, the ‘met’ expectations of turnover theory where an individual weighs up what is likely to be involved in a new job. For many clergy the evidence is clear that working out what this new terrain is going to look like and where they might fit into it is problematic, i.e. for older clergy where the nature of a ‘house-for-duty’ role in retirement has begun to seem a less attractive proposition due to job advertisements which describe duties more
akin to those of a full-time priest but without the benefit of a stipend (see Exercising Agency, p.179). These concerns are also bound up in the way internal movement is managed by the Church which will now be discussed.

How internal movement is managed (Ng et al., 2007) is a significant feature of the data at different levels. First, there is the well-established fact that opportunities for advancement within the Church are limited. Second, we also know that the Church faces a number of demographic challenges, not least the fact that the majority of clergy are over 52 years with 40% set to retire by 2022 (Church of England, 2013d, 2011a). These constitute barriers to movement which are compounded in different ways. For example, it can seem that the ‘flat structure’ argument has become embedded in Church narratives such that there may be instances where it is used by Church leaders and clergy alike to avoid actively managing career development issues such as career planning. For whilst there is evidence that the Church is responding to some of the frustration felt by older clergy at the lack of developmental opportunities as they enter the later stages of their ministry (Church of England, 2007a), there is no evidence that such initiatives are being extended to other clergy who appear to operate in a vacuum in terms of career planning.

Other constraints include the fact that segmentation of this internal market is operating whereby certain roles are regarded by clergy and gatekeepers alike as stepping stones to other roles (Forrier et al., 2009). For those aspiring to senior posts, the shortage of such roles in the Church of England is inclined to disrupt Ng et al.’s (2007) hypothesis that in the absence of internal rewards an organization will privilege seniority. For even if the Church would like to privilege seniority the opportunities to do so are somewhat constrained. Interestingly, there appears to be more flexibility for those clergy prepared to accept lateral moves with evidence that many clergy are realistic about their options and recognise that extending their current role by taking on additional roles and responsibilities is an alternative approach to managing their career.
trajectory. Cumulatively this lack of opportunity structure, combined with demographic concerns and the fact that clergy are less flexible about where and when they will move jobs and what jobs they are prepared to do, has coincided with changes in the last decade to how clergy are recruited, selected and appointed to posts and how they are developed and deployed. These developments are giving rise to serious concern amongst clergy who a) regard them as a secularized approach to how clergy movement is managed which is at odds with the nature and values of ministry and b) regard the implementation of policy and practice as ambiguous and not to be trusted. Both attitudes constitute a further barrier to how clergy are likely to anticipate moving jobs.

How clergy are responding to these structural constraints resonates to some extent with Forrier et al.’s (2009) argument that certain shared norms amongst members of an organization determine socially acceptable behaviours amongst individuals, e.g. being on- or off-schedule in terms of age (Lawrence & Tolbert, 2007, p. 401; Forrier et al., 2009, p. 746). A significant norm identified from data in this study is that of timing. Clergy consistently reference historically embedded timescales when explaining their reasons for moving which are viewed as assuming greater importance than in the past. This is primarily due to changes in the appointments process which have created uncertainty, ambivalence and distrust in the minds of many clergy. Consequently evoking timing and timescales as a partial rationale for moving on helps clergy exercise a sense of legitimacy, autonomy and control over their career trajectory.

This chapter has so far been dominated by discussion of the constraining nature of structural forces on clergy as they prepare to move jobs. That is not to say that individual agency is any less significant, yet when considering how to incorporate those factors which were most relevant it became clear that they were most effectively explained in the context of the emotions associated with clergy experience of preparing to move (Kidd, 2008) and the behaviours
associated with the interplay between structure and agency, both of which are discussed below.

SECTION 2

One aim of this study was to find out about the affective or emotional experiences of clergy when contemplating a transition. A notable outcome of the research interviews was the emotional response of clergy to the fact of this study and the research questions. The nature of those emotions has been identified and discussed throughout the Results and Research Questions. What is particularly significant here is how clergy employ agency through affect and emotive language as a resource in the interviews in different ways. First, the confidential nature of the research interview is providing a safe space to express their concerns. This was evident from words spoken aside from the main conversation where several clergy checked with the researcher about the confidentiality of the discussion or where covert actions such as whispering were used to convey certain views (see Findings and Initial Discussion, Chapter 5). This suggests that to express opinions or concerns relating to a potential move outside the interview is difficult. Second, given the view that the impact of structural arrangements upon individual action is a recursive relationship (Giddens, 1976, 1984; Arnold & Cohen, 2013), there is a conscious or unconscious ambivalence to these cries of outrage whereby expressing concern within the research interview the opportunity or likelihood of being able to influence what is going on is likely to be limited. Third, some of the language used suggests participants’ endeavours to be tolerant of the current climate in relation to changes to how clergy movement is managed and any impact that is having upon their particular circumstances. Collectively, the expression of these emotions is a form of agency which attempts to alleviate the dissonance arising from holding simultaneous yet opposing viewpoints. This is discussed in more detail in the Section 3 of this Discussion.
SECTION 3

Of particular interest to this study was the interdependence between *structural forces* as manifested in social contexts and organizational structure, systems and processes and *individual agency*, i.e. the cognitive, behavioural and affective dimensions of how an individual enacts preparing to move jobs. For Ng *et al.* (2007) and Forrier *et al.* (2009) this means bringing together several different factors which help explain this interaction. These are perceived ease of movement, willingness to move and shock events (Forrier *et al.*, 2009) and subjective norms, desirability of mobility and readiness for change (Ng *et al.*, 2007). The agentic nature of these different components as manifested through impetus and action provide the basis from which individuals are able to understand and engage with their social and organizational context when anticipating a job move. For example, evidence from the data tells us that the majority of clergy were highly agentic in terms of being clear about the kind of roles that were both attractive (Ng *et al.*, 2007; Forrier *et al.*, 2009) and available to them. Many were active in identifying opportunities that reflect current trends within the internal market, e.g. those posts most likely to lead to certain roles or seeking out or accepting additional responsibilities in order to provide more stimulation in their current role. Most were self-aware about the skills and talents they could bring to a new role (Forrier *et al.*, 2009), but the majority found it very difficult to envisage how the two might fit together in the new systems where they are required to be more accountable for their own mobility than in the past (Findings and Initial Discussion, 5.2.2.2). The paradox here is that despite being given more personal control over their trajectory, a factor likely to engender self-efficacy beliefs (Ng *et al.*, 2007), i.e. a belief in their capacity to make a change, the data suggest that clergy feel unsupported and disillusioned with current policy and practice. Consequently this is interfering with two decisional factors likely to facilitate a move, i.e. readiness for change (Ng *et al.*, 2007) and willingness to move (Forrier *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, given that willingness to move has been posited as relating to intrinsic dimensions of motivation such as feelings of self-worth or guilt (Forrier *et al.*, 2009).
2009), it is notable that many clergy reported feeling that their sense of calling and Christian ministry was undermined by current developments.

Whilst it has been possible to confirm, deny and elaborate upon the relevance of some of the determinants from job and career mobility models and theories to how clergy anticipate a move, the data indicate that there are more complex explanations that extend beyond the current models for why and how members of this particular research population are experiencing difficulty as they anticipate moving on. The evidence indicates there are limitations to the models which fail to address the relationship between the Church as an institution in flux and inter- and intra-individual dynamics amongst its workforce. Therefore at this point in the discussion I introduce three perspectives on how clergy are experiencing preparing to move jobs which extend the mobility models beyond the conceptual in new ways and provide more comprehensive explanations. They are strategic agency (Clegg, 1989; Davenport & Leitch, 2005), strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg, 1984; Robertson & Swan, 2003; Davenport & Leitch, 2005; Jarzabkowski, Sillince & Shaw, 2010; Dries & De Gieter, 2014), and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957; Cooper, 2007). These perspectives are located at the interface between structure and agency, i.e. where individual behaviours and institutional forces meet and preparatory experiences are manifest.

The discussion is structured around two conceptual models (Figures 1 and 2) which contribute to our understanding of why clergy are experiencing preparing to move jobs as they are. These contribute at the level of structural risks and opportunities as played out in the context of institutional policy and practice. Furthermore, they contribute at the level of individual agency where cognitive dissonance is a restraining factor in how clergy perceive ease of movement and their willingness to move. The models are designed to reflect how authority between institution (the Church), delegated others (bishops and clergy) and God is currently being exercised in the context of clergy mobility (Figure 2) compared
to how it has been exercised in the past (Figure 1). They highlight the ambiguous and unambiguous elements of the relationship between institution, individual and God and how the outcomes arising from these interactions are enacted and subsequently undermined. The concepts of strategic agency, strategic ambiguity and cognitive dissonance are now introduced and explained in the context of the conceptual models and cumulative evidence from the data.

Conceptual Model – Figures 1 and 2

![Diagram of Conceptual Model](image)

FIGURE 1

Institution – central Church
exercising strategic agency by delegating authority

Bishops
use strategic ambiguity to lead

RULES or Custom and Practice

ambiguious relationship

unambiguous relationship

Clergy

Benefits:
- Autonomy
- Communication and discernment
- Support and affirmation
- Legitimization
- Temporal space
6.3.1 Strategic Agency

In the context of intra-organizational power relationships, strategic agency is defined as ‘the delegation of authority’ (Davenport & Leitch, 2005, p. 1608; Clegg, 1989, p. 200) between two parties, i.e. organization and stakeholders, or in this instance Church leadership and clergy (see Figure 1). Such delegation is preceded by rules which entail ‘discretion and discretion potentially empowers delegates’ (Davenport & Leitch, 2005, p. 1608; Clegg, 1989, p. 201). Rules in the case of this study of Church and clergy are also interpreted as customs, i.e. structural elements rooted in custom and practice (Arnold & Cohen, 2013) which reflect the historical and temporal nature of ministry, where norms and regulations have been negotiated and discerned rather than imposed over time.

It is posited that historically, those responsible for leading the Church have employed strategic agency in the context of power, authority and control as
described in the Introduction to this study. As this project progressed it became clear that a significant source of authority in relation to how clergy experience preparing to move jobs were bishops in relation to all appointments and bishops and the Archbishops’ Secretary for Appointments for senior posts. Most notable were bishops. For it is bishops that clergy consistently defer to in relation to moving jobs and it is bishops who find themselves in the midst of structural changes to their role in terms of how they exercise authority in relation to the movement of clergy. An example is the constraints upon their influence upon the movement of clergy in their diocese arising from a change in the line of delegated authority.

6.3.2 Strategic Ambiguity

Strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg, 1984) is defined as ‘the deliberate use of ambiguity in strategic communication’ (Davenport & Leitch, 2005, p. 1604) where individuals or stakeholders are participants in the exchange of multiple interpretations and multiple responses to multiple situations (Davenport & Leitch, 2005; Eisenberg, 2006, p. 5). Ambiguity in organizational contexts is often regarded as creating problems and dilemmas for management in terms of strategic action, autonomy and control (Robertson & Swan, 2003; Jarzabkowski et al., 2010). Consequently, the concepts of ambiguity and strategic ambiguity are sometimes portrayed as undesirable, even ‘unethical’ in organizational literature (Davenport & Leitch, 2005, p. 1606; Jarzabkowski et al., 2010, p. 221). For example, it was found that inconsistency in the information communicated to ‘high potential’ employees through the deliberate use of strategic ambiguity risked breaching the psychological contract between individual and organization (Dries & De Gieter, 2014). Yet communication theorists and researchers argue that clarity and openness in organizational and individual communication are not necessarily effective unless you want to be clear about a goal (Eisenberg, 1984, my emphasis) and that there are advantages to adopting a strategically ambiguous approach to organizing (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 7). These include strategic ambiguity as a source of creativity rather than compliance amongst
organizational stakeholders (Davenport & Leitch, 2005, p. 1604), where an organization wants to manage employee expectations (Dries & De Gieter, 2014) and as a context for generating self-discipline and loyalty amongst certain types of workforce (Robertson & Swan, 2003).

Different attributes of strategic ambiguity have been identified as generating the conditions for the communication of goals (Davenport & Leitch, 2005). First, strategic ambiguity which allows for multiple viewpoints to be expressed is posited as a ‘political necessity’ (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 9) if an organization is to uphold core values or achieve its goals. This is because it allows the workforce to believe they are in agreement with the organization’s core values or goals whilst maintaining different interpretations of the same. Second, strategic ambiguity can shield the powerful ‘from close scrutiny’ (Davenport & Leitch, 2005, p. 1606) enabling them to protect their personal credibility although this might not always be for entirely selfish reasons (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 13). Third, strategic ambiguity can be said to exist when words can be denied or interpreted as something other than they might appear (Davenport & Leitch, 2005, p. 1606; Eisenberg & Goodall, 1997). Finally, by enabling certain goals to be constructed and interpreted in different ways, strategic ambiguity can facilitate organizational change (Davenport & Leitch, 2005). The clarity or ambiguity of that communication is dependent upon the relationship between the source of the original message, the message itself and the interpretation of the receiver of the message (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 6).

So, if we acknowledge that the Church of England is a context where ambiguity exists in relation to how its workforce is organized, led and managed (Introduction, 1.3) then it is only a small step to hypothesizing that the conditions may well exist for strategic ambiguity. This is because I believe that intentionally or otherwise, Church leaders are exercising strategic ambiguity in how they communicate certain goals, i.e. changes in the way people might move jobs. For example, despite those who minister in the Church ostensibly being
there in the service of God, each holds a multiplicity of viewpoints on every aspect of Christian ministry, theological and practical, which are communicated and negotiated extensively between all parties thus allowing for divergence to exist.

Furthermore strategic ambiguity is posited as influencing organizational change through the setting of ambiguous goals which allow for gradual change whilst preserving ‘a sense of continuity’ (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 11) whilst change is implemented. This is also achieved through the interpersonal relationships between those who deliver ambiguous messages and the recipients who interpret the message. The clarity or ambiguity of that communication is dependent upon the relationship between the source of the original message, the message itself and the interpretation of the receiver of the message (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 6). Here ambiguity allows the recipient to ‘project’ or ‘fill-in’ what they regard as appropriate meaning (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 11). These perspectives draw attention to evidence from the data relating to the significance of time as part of a strategy of ambiguity when facilitating change. It resonates with how clergy as instigators or recipients of a message are responding to systems change which has been implemented over a long period of time and where time has provided space to create and develop conditional acceptance, antipathy and a degree of resistance to some of those messages. Furthermore it highlights a paradox for clergy preparing to move jobs in the way the message is being communicated by those in authority. For despite those leading and serving in the Church being competent and skilful communicators, collectively and individually, verbally and in writing, the mode of communication (Dries & De Gieter, 2014) relating to preparing to move on is deliberately ambiguous. The implications of these viewpoints are now discussed in the context of the conceptual models (Figures 1 and 2), which offer important insights into the institutional and individual dynamics of how clergy experience preparing to move jobs.
With reference to Figure 1, it is posited that the leadership of the Church have always employed strategic ambiguity in relation to clergy mobility at the level of policy and practice, an approach which, it seems from the evidence, suited both bishop and cleric. This is because clergy are inclined to be confident in their unambiguous relationship with God in terms of their original call to ministry. Any doubts or concerns in relation to calling are more likely to arise in terms of working out how that calling relates to the opportunity structures within the Church and the suitability of certain roles. It is at this point that clergy seek out a more temporal authority to discuss a potential move, i.e. the bishop. Until recently, that relationship was rooted in communication which generated certain intrinsic ‘benefits’ that clergy can identify with from their earliest socialization into ministry and through cumulative experiences with the bishop over time. These are a strong sense of autonomy and independence in relation to how they conduct their ministry, including the management of their personal career trajectory; a process of social exchange with the bishop that involved communication and discernment, support and affirmation; and a mutual understanding between bishop and cleric of the distinctive nature of ministry and calling which served to legitimize clergy cognition, behaviour and affect in relation to preparing for a move. Collectively these factors contributed to a process that was nicely ambiguous, i.e. clergy were recipients of affirmation, advice, guidance, direction that they might or might not decide to follow, thus exercising individual autonomy and personal discretion in terms of their own trajectory (as opposed to discretion associated with delegated authority); whilst bishops were able to exercise discretion as delegated authority arising from strategic agency in order to dispense affirmation, advice, guidance and direction in ways that might or might not be helpful to clergy. It also protected clergy from having to engage in certain power relations implicit in exercising strategic agency.

However, the delegation of authority has shifted in recent years as the central Church has exercised strategic agency differently in relation to how clergy mobility is managed. Consequently clergy are now the delegates to whom
authority has been delegated (see Figure 2) and bishops are now constrained in their ability to exercise strategic ambiguity. This is because their delegated authority is now unambiguous and they do not expect to communicate, affirm, support or legitimize in the previously ambiguous way. Yet the evidence suggests otherwise as clergy experience ambiguity associated with bishops who can appear capricious in their interpretation of institutional goals designed to bring consistency and transparency to the career mobility of clergy.

The impact of this shift in delegated authority and the ambiguity of the communication and interpretation of goals and interpersonal relationships (Eisenberg, 1984) is having a profound impact on how clergy are experiencing preparing to move jobs. This is explained with reference to the notion of cognitive dissonance which will now be discussed.

6.3.3 Cognitive Dissonance

Cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) has already been identified as evident in the research data (see Findings and Initial Discussion). This discussion will define the concept in more specific terms and explain its significance for the conceptual models (above) and clergy experience of preparing to move jobs in the Church of England at the present time.

Festinger (1957) considered that cognitive dissonance occurs when an individual is conscious of holding two or more opposing cognitions at the same time which causes psychological discomfort, i.e. frustration or distress, which they will actively seek to reduce, dependent upon the magnitude of the dissonance (Festinger, 1957). In other words, individuals will strive for consistency in their behaviour and attitudes. Where this is not possible cognitive dissonance is likely to occur whereby the individual will seek to minimize the discrepancy between attitude and behaviour (Burnes, 2000; Cooper, 2007). Burnes & James (1995) examined cognitive dissonance in the context of organizational change. Given that there have been significant changes to the way in which clergy
mobility is being managed in recent years, how those changes are perceived by clergy to have been implemented by the Church, i.e. well or poorly, is likely to create varying degrees of dissonance (Burnes & James, 1995). They highlight the importance for those responsible for managing change to recognise that the level or 'depth' of a change intervention is directly linked to levels of cognitive dissonance, i.e. a shallow intervention is likely to cause less dissonance than one which challenges an individual's fundamental belief system (Burnes & James, 1995, p. 18). Given that it has been established that calling is an important dimension of how clergy experience preparing to move jobs, the significance of values and beliefs on levels of dissonance can be anticipated. This is also reflected in how self-affirmation, i.e. the desire to think about ourselves as ‘good and honest people’ (Cooper, 2007, p. 90) is viewed as an increasingly important dimension of cognitive dissonance.

Evidence from the data indicates that changes to the appointment systems are giving rise to high levels of cognitive dissonance amongst most clergy as they strive to navigate and negotiate their way through the new terrain. First, clergy distrust the integrity of the appointment systems due to the fact that the espoused policies of transparency and fairness in relation to current systems of recruitment, selection and appointment are not borne out in practice in the parishes or by significant gatekeepers, i.e. bishops. Furthermore, the formalization of the appointments process means clergy are responsible for managing their own career trajectory by participating in a more visible and competitive recruitment process than in the past, for which many feel ill-prepared and regard as at odds with the distinctive nature of ministry. Collectively these developments are causing the majority of clergy to experience cognitive dissonance as they hold opposing viewpoints, i.e. not believing in the integrity of the current processes whilst endeavouring to engage with the new systems by adapting both their attitude and behaviour. Further evidence of cognitive dissonance is found in their efforts to alleviate the discomfort by trying to gain control of the situation through exercising a high level of vigilance in
relation to the timing of a move, opting out of the process altogether or through defiant behaviours i.e. making indiscriminate applications which act as a form of resistance to what they perceive as a flawed system.

Further research has identified that inconsistencies in behaviour or attitudes only produce dissonance under certain conditions (Cooper, 2007). This is particularly relevant to what we now know of how clergy experience inconsistency in their attitude and behaviours in relation to preparing to move jobs and their efforts to seek stability between the two (Burnes & James, 1995, p. 16). The conditions are: *when the freedom to make a decision is high; when there is a commitment to a particular behaviour; when unwanted consequences arise from that behaviour; when consequences are foreseeable* (Cooper, 2007, p. 73). In the context of clergy movement it is posited that clergy fulfil these conditions for cognitive dissonance to prevail because they now have more freedom to make decisions in this new world of delegated authority; clergy who want to move are making a commitment to do so; clergy are able to foresee aversive or unwanted consequences from the desire to move. Aversive consequences are those arising from negative behaviours that are irrevocable in the eyes of the individual which generate dissonance (Cooper, 2007, p. 74). It is this final condition that is most significant in terms of how the changes to policy and practice are impacting upon clergy, i.e. what are the unwanted foreseeable consequences? With reference to Figure 2 of the conceptual model, it is posited that clergy who are anticipating and preparing for a move in the current climate of change foresee the loss or at least weakening of the benefits identified previously as part of the ambiguous relationship clergy enjoyed with their bishop. Specifically, formalized processes and the shift to an unambiguous relationship are undermining their autonomy in relation to how they negotiate a move. This is due both to the loss of the process of discernment with the bishop which served to support, affirm and endorse or legitimize their motives for moving, as well as inconsistencies in the way some bishops are implicitly rather than explicitly supporting the changes.
Finally, there is a notable addition to that part of the model which highlights how the unambiguous relationship between cleric and bishop is contributing to the cognitive dissonance clergy are experiencing. That is, *exposing calling faultlines*. Calling has been established earlier in this study as a significant and complex dimension to how clergy anticipate and prepare for a career move. The evidence indicates that whilst a cleric’s *original* call to ordained ministry remains stable during their preparatory experiences, they do not necessarily privilege a transcendent call when thinking about the consequences or practicalities of a move, i.e. the transcendent call is not a controlling narrative (Aveyard, 2013). Yet calling in the sense of a conduit through which clergy can exercise agency has traditionally informed how they anticipate and prepare for a job move. What this research study has exposed is how, when asked about the concept of calling in relation to moving jobs, clergy have found themselves confronting conflicting viewpoints. These are bound up in a historical and socialized dilemma between the desire to be good and Godly and adhere to an original sense of calling whilst managing the realities of moving on, and changes in the way movement is now being managed. A key change is the loss of the bishop’s capacity to legitimize and affirm their motives for moving which in the past helped reconcile or alleviate any uncertainty, guilt or tension between being obedient to God and their more public desire to move elsewhere. Furthermore it would seem that for some clergy it is the general values of Christian ministry they consider embodied in the Church, i.e. an institution that is caring and trustworthy rather than their personal calling which they perceive as being undermined by recent changes to the appointment systems. In some cases this viewpoint is having a negative effect on an individual’s more general sense of calling to serve the Church. Collectively, these challenges to how clergy regard the concept of calling I have defined as *exposing calling faultlines* in the model. It seems that the autonomy clergy have enjoyed in relation to how they interpret and enact their calling in relation to moving on is being exposed, disrupted and challenged by recent developments. For many of the participants...
in this study this is creating feelings of cognitive dissonance as they try to reconcile opposing viewpoints.

6.4 In Brief

This discussion set out to explain how the findings from this research expand our understanding of why clergy in the Church of England find preparing to move jobs difficult and how that contributes to the wider debate surrounding the interplay between organizational structure and individual agency in the career mobility literature. At this point I detail below where I think the study makes the most significant contributions in this respect.

1. It justifies the use of career mobility models which identify the antecedents or determinants of mobility as an appropriate schema for organizing and evaluating those factors which contribute to how individuals prepare to move jobs.

2. The study offers a nuanced perspective on how certain mobility determinants which address the interplay between individual and institution e.g. perceived ease of movement and a willingness and readiness to move, are enacted in a particular context and occupation under a certain set of circumstances. That is not to say that the novelty of the context is privileged in the final analysis. In fact the consistency between the findings and different dimensions of the career mobility theories and models has been striking. Yet, it seems that a religious context cannot be easily dismissed in terms of its relevance to other workers and their careers. For this research context and research population has enabled me to discover, make explicit and understand some of the complex interactions of cognition, behaviour and affect that underpin why and how individual agency and structural forces interact or combine to influence individual experience when anticipating a job move.
3. From a structural perspective the study highlights how despite action by those exercising strategic agency, i.e. Church leaders, in relation to how clergy should approach moving jobs via policy documents and online information most of which is clear and unambiguous, clergy are at best conditional in their acceptance of the changes and at worst resisting them. This is because the decision to adopt secular-style recruitment systems has disrupted a process of delegated authority to bishops which is rooted in an almost unassailable body of history, tradition, custom and practice by shifting the authority for a transition to clergy themselves. The result of this is the curtailment of the authority and ability of bishops to support clergy through the rhetorical resource of strategic ambiguity which both bishop and cleric understood in the context of ministry. Furthermore, imposing strategic agency on clergy and weakening their relationship with the bishop by, paradoxically, making the communication process unambiguous without any consultation has created dissonance and disaffection amongst clergy.

4. The study highlights the significance of identifying subtle contextual differences when investigating how individual agency is enacted in the face of structural forces. For this is a population where autonomy exists in ways not necessarily found in other careers, i.e. this is an institution that will rarely sack you, has historically taken time to introduce change, offers protected status from some legislation and to which you have a calling, a vocation which means you are called to certain roles. Cumulatively these structural parameters send clear signals to clergy from their earliest socialization into ministry that their work has a certain protected status and distinct autonomy which sets it apart from other occupations. It also sets up clergy to be highly tolerant of ambiguity. Consequently, the new, systemized, unambiguous approach to managing movement within the Church means clergy are finding their traditional, some might say closely guarded, autonomy and agency on this issue to
be challenged and undermined which is generating emotion and dissonance.

5. Cognitive dissonance, identified in this study as a factor at the interface between structure and agency, is an important consideration not just in the context of organizational change. Any individual whose value systems are challenged in some way by anticipating a career move is vulnerable to such affect.

6. The study establishes how individual clergy are responding to the weakening of a traditionally bounded career, i.e. where certain rules or customs are being eroded away. On the one hand this gives rise to conflicting viewpoints as they try to adapt their attitudes and behaviours as part of the process of alleviating feelings of cognitive dissonance. On the other hand clergy appear unwilling to lose their grip on their expectations of the institution to provide some kind of structure that they can recognise as part of their career trajectory. In the context of the bounded and boundaryless career debate, this finding suggests that individual agency has the potential to exert a direct influence upon how careers are positioned along the bounded/boundaryless spectrum regardless of the aims or intentions of the organization.

7. The research highlights how an organization might be viewed as culpable in its own failure to implement change successfully. For there is a case to be made for complicity on the part of institutional gatekeepers which is undermining the institution’s efforts to exercise strategic agency and change the way clergy anticipate moving jobs. This is because in practice, communication across and within dioceses appears to remain strategically ambiguous, i.e. policies that are open to interpretation leading to inconsistency and confusion on the ground. Furthermore, individuals are being affected by the implicit rather than explicit behaviours by bishops in relation to how strategy is communicated and implemented. The irony here is that whilst strategic ambiguity between
bishop and cleric has, until recently, served as a supportive dimension in matters of mobility, the ambiguity surrounding the communication of strategy at diocesan level is now acting as a constraint on clergy engagement with the new terrain. This suggests that strategic ambiguity cannot be easily labelled as either a positive or negative force in how an organization communicates with its workforce.

8. Calling is established as a significant factor when clergy think about moving jobs. This study has highlighted the multiple facets of calling in relation to anticipating a job move and faultlines in the calling narrative. This is because most clergy think about calling at the level of shared value systems with the institution and as a source of personal support or resource when contemplating a move rather than their original call to ministry. It suggests that organizations cannot take calling for granted in terms of how members of their workforce with a calling will respond to the demands of the organization.

9. This research highlights the significance of time at different levels in relation to mobility. Time as a mechanism for exercising individual agency in the form of controlling events; time as part of a relationship that provides continuity, i.e. with the bishop; and the time it takes for the Church to implement anything as part of a process of strategic ambiguity which creates space for positive and negative outcomes, i.e. the gradual acceptance of change or efforts inclined to undermine change.

6.5 Study Limitations

This study has certain limitations. First, the sample would have benefited from the inclusion of more dioceses, particularly from the province of York given that there is growing concern surrounding regional differences in the mobility of clergy. Having said that, of the three dioceses who participated one might be viewed as being located in a less ‘fashionable’ part of the country. Second,
whilst it would have been helpful to have attracted more clerics to participate who were under 45 years of age, the sample was not unrepresentative of the age demographic of the Church of England at the present time. Third, there were occasions towards the end of the research process when I felt that the voices of those responsible for some of the recent changes were missing from the discussion. It would have been interesting to learn more about how they perceive the changes to how clergy movement is being managed, the effects of that change and their role in the process. Yet such insights at that stage risked distracting from the original aim of the study which was to understand individual experience of preparing to move jobs rather than the strategic views of Church leaders. Finally, methodologically this was a qualitative study which involves certain subjective analytical decisions (King, 2004a) when working with the data, some of which more experienced researchers might have approached from a different perspective. For example, behaviours found to be associated with anticipating and preparing for a move might have been analysed solely from the perspective of a cleric’s earliest experience of looking for a curacy whilst still at theological college and the effect of that experience upon later patterns of career choice and decision (Kidd, 2006). This might have resulted in different conclusions about how clergy exercise agency when thinking about moving because of the focus on early influences and experience rather than that of the current context.

It is also interesting to reflect on the retrospective reporting which formed part of the participant interviews. On the one hand it could be argued that such reports cannot be relied upon to generalize about the findings in other contexts or that the time lapse contributes to inaccurate accounts of individual experience (Morrell & Arnold, 2007; Shum, 1998; Kennedy, Mather & Carstensen, 2004). On the other hand it seems to me that how participants decided to recall their experiences, i.e. the ‘facts’ as they saw them and the affective response evoked in the telling of those facts, provided important insights into their current beliefs and behaviour (Morrell & Arnold, 2007, p.
as they contemplate moving on. Without these reports which addressed the cognitive, behavioural and affective dimensions of clergy experience, our understanding of the dynamic between individual and institution in relation to preparing to move jobs is compromised rather than enhanced.

### 6.6 Implications for Practice

This study did not set out to produce practical solutions to any of the issues that might arise in the course of the research. Yet it would seem appropriate at this stage to offer some suggestions for how those responsible for managing mobility within the Church of England and those clergy seeking a move might work together to ease some of the dissonance that is being experienced and enacted by participants in the process.

First, individual clergy likely to seek a move would benefit at an early stage in their ministry from being educated and informed about how the recruitment, selection and appointment of clergy at all levels within the institution is organized and managed. Ensuring that every trainee ordinand receives consistent and timely information, however they are being trained, would at least ensure that individuals coming through the system share a common understanding of their role in the process. Improved clarity and openness on this issue also has the potential to help clergy to ‘manage upward’ at later stages in their career if they are confronted with bad practice by those responsible for the recruitment process.

Second, those responsible for the design and delivery of career support within the Church might benefit from greater understanding of the principles of career theory and career counselling theory and practice. At the moment there is a lack of coherence in both policy and practice due to a tendency for those responsible for clergy mobility and the career development opportunities involved in clergy transition to ‘cherry-pick’ from academic theories, e.g. career
success or career engagement, rather than seeing the wider theoretical and empirical picture.

Third, the Church of England might wish to re-think how career support is organized and funded. At the current time there exists a panoply of formal and informal options that clergy can draw upon with no consistent policy across dioceses with regard to how those options or support are delivered and funded. Whilst dioceses have budgets allocated to ministerial training these are often very low at the point of individual funding. There is also anecdotal evidence of resistance amongst clergy to fund such support themselves bound up in some of the tensions identified in this study, i.e. between personal sacrifice and financial constraints – a combination of ‘Why should I?’ and genuine financial hardship.

6.7 Suggestions for Future Research

This section offers some suggestions for future research on the preparatory stage of a career transition at the interface between individual and organization. First, it has been established that a faith-based context is an important site for enquiries into how individuals prepare to change jobs. It indicates that career research amongst individuals with a religious calling should not be overlooked by investigators as a source of rich insights into individual, context and the interplay between the two.

Second, there remains a lack of research into the preparatory stages of a career transition (Nicholson & West, 1988; Kidd, 2006). Yet the present study provides strong evidence that preparing for a career move has important implications for how an individual is likely to regard and manage their career past, present and future. Future studies into this stage of career mobility might wish to consider approaching new research from two perspectives. First, by adopting qualitative methodologies which address the ‘why’ as well as the ‘how’ of preparing to move on; second, by examining individual agency and social context in tandem.
Whilst this is acknowledged as difficult to do (Arnold & Cohen, 2013), without investigating how individuals accounted for their careers in-situ, it would not have been possible to gain the breadth and depth of understanding required to answer the questions posed by this research study.

Third, cognitive dissonance has been established in the present study as a factor enacted at the interface between individual and organization when clergy consider moving jobs. It is not possible to generalize from this finding and so it will be important to conduct further research into a) the relationship between individual value systems, organizational behaviour and cognitive dissonance; and b) whether cognitive dissonance is present in workers in other occupations where certain value systems are being challenged or undermined as they contemplate a job move, e.g. bankers, professional sports players or charity workers.

There has been limited attention paid to the practical implications of calling in career with current research pre-occupied with issues of definition rather than application. Future studies might investigate how calling, religious or otherwise, are being or might be incorporated into the career development strategies of organizations.

Finally, a longitudinal study would provide more information about the effects of time on the process and tasks of preparing to move jobs. For example, investigating individuals over a 10 – 20 year period by monitoring the different dimensions to those events or moments in their trajectory which act as a spur or constraint at the preparatory stage of a transition.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A


C


285


D


E


F


H


Kavanagh, M. H. & Ashkanasy, N. M. (2006). The Impact of Leadership and Change Management Strategy on Organizational Culture and Individual...


N


W


Y


APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Example Letter to Primary Gatekeeper

Appendix 2: Example Email to Secondary Gatekeeper plus Attachment (2a)

Appendix 3: Invitation to Pilot Study Participants

Appendix 4: Informed Consent Form (Pilot and Main Study)

Appendix 5: Biographical Data Form

Appendix 6: Confidentiality Agreement between Researcher and Transcriber

Appendix 7: Example Letter of Invitation to Main Study Participants

Appendix 8: Interview Questions

Appendix 9: Extract from Mastercode List

Appendix 10: Extract from Coding Structure – Mastercodes, Sub-Codes, Lower Order Codes

Appendix 11: Example of analysis from Reviewing Themes
Dear Bishop

**PhD Research and Ministry Development**

In recent years I have established strong working links with [name] in relation to the provision of clergy career support and development. As a result of this experience and an ongoing interest in clergy career identity I am in receipt of PhD funding from Loughborough University for research into how clergy experience moving jobs within the Church of England.

Clergy experience of occupational change within ministry has received little theoretical or empirical attention. I hope to address this anomaly by exploring how clergy anticipate making the transition from one role to another during the course of their ministry. The aim is to understand more about the factors that affect the choices clergy make and the actions clergy take as they contemplate a job move. These enquiries are both timely and apposite given recent research trends within Ministry Division into clergy occupation.

Whilst [name] has given his full support to the research process from the outset, it would be very helpful to have your endorsement of the project in the letter of invitation to potential research participants. This will mean a short sentence along the following lines at the beginning of the letter:

“Bishop X has kindly given me permission to approach clergy in the diocese to see if they would be willing to participate in doctoral research that I am undertaking with Loughborough University”.

Any contact or communication with individual clergy will observe strict research protocols in relation to selection, bias, confidentiality and anonymity and it will be entirely at the discretion of the individual should they decide to participate.

I do hope you will feel able to support this aspect of a project which I believe will not only offer valuable insights into how clergy construct and negotiate a career within the Church, but also to identify areas where they may be supported in their ministry.

In the meantime, if you require any further information please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours sincerely
Dear X

Thank you for taking my call earlier today.

As requested, I attach some background to research into clergy career transition which I hope will prove useful in any conversation you may have with Bishop X.

There are two reasons for wanting to conduct a pilot study other than in the dioceses involved in the main project.

First, it will be a valuable opportunity to hear from clergy who bring different perspectives to the issue without the project becoming unmanageable by attempting to include too many dioceses. Second, clergy demographics are such that I am unlikely to be swamped with responses and so would like to maximise that opportunity within the supporting dioceses by not involving them in a pilot.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Kind regards
APPENDIX 2A

PhD Research: Pilot Study

How Clergy experience moving jobs within the Church of England

As [role] working with individuals in ministry, I have established strong working links with the Ministry Development team in the ABC diocese relating to the provision of clergy career support and development. As a result of this experience and an ongoing interest in clergy career identity I am in receipt of PhD funding from Loughborough University for research into how clergy experience moving jobs within the Church of England.

Clergy experience of occupational change within ministry has received little theoretical or empirical attention. I hope to address this anomaly by exploring how clergy anticipate making the transition from one role to another during the course of their ministry. The aim is to understand more about the factors that affect the choices clergy make and the actions clergy take as they contemplate a job move. These enquiries are both timely and apposite given recent research trends within Ministry Division into clergy occupation.

The project has received Episcopal support from two dioceses and clergy will be invited to participate in the months ahead. In the meantime, I hope to conduct a small pilot study. This would involve participants in a one hour interview at a mutually convenient date, time and location. In the interests of accuracy the interview will be recorded.

Please be assured that any contact or communication with individual clergy will observe strict research protocols in relation to selection, bias, confidentiality and anonymity and it will be entirely at the discretion of the individual should they decide to participate.

I do hope you will feel able to support this aspect of a project which I believe will not only offer valuable insights into how clergy construct and negotiate a career within the Church, but also identify areas where they may be supported in their ministry.
PhD Research: Pilot Study

How Clergy experience moving jobs within the Church of England

Thank you for expressing an interest in participating in the above project. Please find below further information which I hope you will find interesting and helpful.

The Researcher and the Research
As [role] I work with clergy in the Church of England facing career-related issues and concerns. As a result of this experience and an ongoing interest in clergy career identity I am undertaking doctoral research with Loughborough University into how clergy anticipate making the transition from one role to another during the course of their ministry. I would like to understand more about the factors that affect the choices you make and actions you take as you contemplate moving, or not moving, jobs.

The Process
The project has received Episcopal support from three dioceses and I hope to conduct a small pilot study in due course. The research will involve a 1 hour interview at a mutually convenient date, time and location. The conversation will cover a range of issues likely to inform the purpose of the project. In the interests of accuracy the interview will be recorded.

I hope that you will find participating in the project an interesting experience and one which may contribute to your own discernment. Any contact arising from this correspondence and all future conversation will be treated anonymously and in the strictest confidence between yourself and me as the researcher.
TO ALL INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

How Clergy experience preparing to move jobs within the Church of England

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this Research Project* which aims to explore how clergy experience preparing to move jobs within the Church of England.

Today’s interview is part of a (Pilot) study to gather your thoughts and views on preparing to make a move within the Church at this time. Whilst some broad questions will be asked to prompt discussion, it is your own experiences I am interested in and may explore these further with follow up questions. There are no correct or incorrect answers, nor am I seeking any particular responses from you.

The interview will be tape recorded and will last for approximately one hour. During that time if, for any reason, you would like the tape machine to be temporarily or permanently switched off please let me know.

All conversation and material generated from the interview will be treated anonymously and in the strictest confidence. The information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project. The interview will be transcribed by someone known to the researcher who is bound by a confidentiality agreement in relation to both electronic and paper copies of the final transcription. Should you wish to receive a copy of the interview transcript and/or a copy of the final report I will be happy to supply these on request.

If you have any further queries or questions arising from today’s research interview, I can be contacted on:

* a student research project supported by Loughborough University

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in this Research Project, the nature and purpose of which has been explained to me in full. I am also aware that I can withdraw from the process at any stage before, during and after the interview process has taken place.

Signed: ……………………………………………… Date: ………………………

(Participant)

Signed: ……… …………………………………………… Date: ………………………

(Researcher)
STRICTLY PERSONAL

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Date: Ref:

Name: DOB:

Marital status:

F/T stipendiary/Other: Partner’s working status:

Family:

Date of Ordination:

Length of service with the Church of England:

Current role (including dates):

Previous roles: Date:

3.

2.

1.

Theological Training:

Previous Educational institution(s)/Addition Experience gained beyond School/Higher Education:

Qualifications (general):
Address:

Dear X

Further to our recent exchange of emails and telephone conversation, I would appreciate it if you could counter-sign and return this letter to me confirming your willingness to abide by the terms of the Confidentiality Agreement outlined below and which aims to protect those individuals who have participated in this research project.

**Confidentiality Agreement**

We have agreed that you will transcribe the content of various cassette tape or digital voice recordings. As I have explained, the contents of the tapes/digital voice recordings are confidential. You have agreed that you will observe the confidentiality of the tape/digital voice recordings and the transcripts that you prepare from them. In particular, you agree not to disclose the existence or content of the tapes/digital voice recordings or transcripts to any third party and you will not make copies of the tapes/digital voice recordings. The tapes/digital voice recordings will be exchanged electronically via a secure Dropbox system. I ask that you destroy any copies of the transcripts that you retain (including copies in electronic form) within 14 days so that they cannot be accessed by anyone else. You also agree that you will continue to be bound by the confidentiality agreement recorded in this letter after the completion of the transcription work you will be carrying out.

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me, in the meantime, thank you for your help with this work.

Yours sincerely

---

*Researcher*

PhD student, School of Business and Economics, Loughborough University

I understand and agree to be bound by the terms of the Confidentiality Agreement outlined above:

Signed: ............................

Date: .................................
APPENDIX 7

IN CONFIDENCE

Dear

Re: PhD Research Study – can you help?
Bishop X, [...] has kindly given me permission to approach clergy in the diocese to see if they are willing to participate in doctoral research that I am undertaking with Loughborough University.

About the Project
Following an MSc in Career Management, University of London, I have worked with clergy in the Church of England facing career-related issues and concerns. This work has identified that little is known about how clergy experience moving from one role to another during the course of their ministry. The project will try to understand more about the factors that affect the choices clergy make and actions they take as they contemplate a job move.

I am seeking input from individual clergy who have experienced at least two moves since ordination (including the move to curacy) and who can identify with one or more of the following states:

- you have been thinking about moving roles for whatever reason
- you have moved roles in the past twelve months
- you are actively exploring making a move e.g., looking at appointments in the Church Times
- you are in the process of moving
- you have decided not to proceed with making a move

The Process
I do hope that you will decide to participate in this project which others have found an interesting experience. The research will involve a one hour interview at a mutually convenient date, time and location. The conversation will cover a range of issues and in the interests of accuracy the interview will be recorded. Any contact between you and me as the researcher will be treated in the strictest confidence.

What Next?
If you are interested in taking part please contact me by [date] at [contact details].

Yours sincerely
APPENDIX 8

VERSION V – adapted following 5 x pilot interviews and a review

1. What reasons do clergy express for seeking a move? (Original RQ)

What are your reasons for contemplating moving or not moving at this time?
(+ve or –ve reasons/affect)

What sort of move are you seeking/do you want? [and why?]
- What is it about that job that appeals to you?
- What skills and competencies do you feel you bring to such a move/role?

4. What sense do clergy make of the job moves available to them in the church? (RQ)

What is your understanding of the types of job move available to you at this time?
What is your understanding of how the appointments process works?

2. What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move? (RQ) and

3. Why do clergy engage in certain career behaviours?

When did you first begin to think about moving?
When did you first do something about moving?
What types of things have you done to move things along?
What have been the main influences on your process of moving jobs?

2. What preparatory behaviours do clergy engage in when seeking a move? (RQ) and

3. Why do clergy engage in certain career behaviours?
APPENDIX 8, CONT:

Just to recap, how many previous moves have you experienced?

What were the circumstances surrounding each move?

How has your experience of these moves affected your thinking this time around?

How comfortable are you with the process of moving jobs in the church?

5. What, if any, is the significance of calling in how you contemplate/are thinking about moving jobs?

3. Why do clergy engage in certain career behaviours? (RQ)

How strongly do you feel about moving at this time?

Not much ........................................................................................................Very much

How often do you feel like this? Tell me more.

How ready are you for this move and why?

Not ready ........................................................................................................Very ready
### MASTERCODE LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mastercode</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFF</td>
<td><strong>AFFIRMATION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Seeking or soliciting affirmation from senior clergy before making an application either directly or indirectly dependent upon confidence, networks, perceived status of bishop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMB</td>
<td><strong>AMBITION</strong>&lt;br&gt;When ambition as a notion is made or not made explicit. Difficulties of articulating ambition – ambition seen as a dirty word or not legitimate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUT</td>
<td><strong>AUTONOMY</strong>&lt;br&gt;Autonomous talk by clergy when thinking about moving, independent approach, wanting some control over the process, their situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BARRIERS</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>BARRIERS TO MOVING</strong>&lt;br&gt;Age (old and young), women (sexism, lack of role models, positive discrimination into certain posts, lack of promotion to certain posts), sexuality (gay or celibate or undisclosed), wives (working wives, involvement in decisions, positive and negative resource), ageism, retirement, family (children’s schooling, grandchildren, elderly parents), prejudice and discrimination ('dead cats', returning from overseas), minority groups???, location (geog), houses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASTERCODE</th>
<th>SUB-CODES – some codes potentially still moveable (rather than dispensable)</th>
<th>LOWER ORDER CODE (LOC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIO – SELF</td>
<td>WIO-SELF-KNOWING SKAT Those who have high levels of self-awareness in terms of SKAT in situ and when working out what next. WIO-SELF-NOT KNOWING SKAT Those who have low levels of self-awareness in terms of SKAT. WIO-SELF-LEARNING.</td>
<td>WIO-SELF-LG-REFLECT How individuals learn to reflect on the process based on experience. WIO-SELF-LG-NAVIGATE How individuals learn to navigate the recruitment process based on experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIO – FIT</td>
<td>WIO-FIT-PIGEONHOLED Where WIO is focussed on trying to change perception of recruiter.</td>
<td>WIO-AMBITION-WANTING TO PROGRESS Reflecting the desire or aspiration to progress to a new role; career development, progression. WIO-AMBITION-AMBITION MADE EXPLICIT When ambition as a notion is made or not made explicit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**APPENDIX 10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASTERCODE</th>
<th>SUB-CODES – some codes potentially still moveable (rather than dispensable)</th>
<th>LOWER ORDER CODE (LOC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIO – SELF</td>
<td>WIO-SELF-KNOWING SKAT Those who have high levels of self-awareness in terms of SKAT in situ and when working out what next. WIO-SELF-NOT KNOWING SKAT Those who have low levels of self-awareness in terms of SKAT. WIO-SELF-LEARNING.</td>
<td>WIO-SELF-LG-REFLECT How individuals learn to reflect on the process based on experience. WIO-SELF-LG-NAVIGATE How individuals learn to navigate the recruitment process based on experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIO – FIT</td>
<td>WIO-FIT-PIGEONHOLED Where WIO is focussed on trying to change perception of recruiter.</td>
<td>WIO-AMBITION-WANTING TO PROGRESS Reflecting the desire or aspiration to progress to a new role; career development, progression. WIO-AMBITION-AMBITION MADE EXPLICIT When ambition as a notion is made or not made explicit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WIO-FIT-TESTING</strong></td>
<td><strong>WIO-FIT-TESTING-SKILLS TO ROLES</strong>&lt;br&gt;Where individual is thinking through how skills match role&lt;br&gt;<strong>WIO-FIT-TESTING-A/FS AND RJPS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Where WIO is about making applications or enquiries including RJPs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WIO-FIT-LACK OF SUPPORT</strong>&lt;br&gt;Where there is a lack of support to help with fit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WIO - ROLE</strong></td>
<td><strong>WIO-FANTASY/NOT KNOWING</strong>&lt;br&gt;Where clergy imagine certain roles they would like to do&lt;br&gt;When clergy try for certain roles in an undiscerning way&lt;br&gt;<strong>WIO-FACT, KNOWING</strong>&lt;br&gt;Where clergy are knowledgeable about availability and potential suitability of roles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>P3</th>
<th>P4</th>
<th>P5</th>
<th>P6</th>
<th>P7</th>
<th>P8</th>
<th>P9</th>
<th>P10</th>
<th>P11</th>
<th>P12</th>
<th>P13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CODE</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALLING</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL ORIGINAL</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL GOD ROLE</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL PRAYER</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL GOD FIT</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL NO GOD</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYSTEM NEW</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYS DUALISM</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYS OPACITY</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYS CONFUSING</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYS SECULAR</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYS GATEKPR</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
<td>![Table Cells]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example of analysis from Reviewing Themes

**Shading represents frequency of response:**

- Light shade = reported on less than 4 occasions
- **Dark shade** = reported on more than 4 occasions