**Flora Davies – Application for YBA Regional Recognition of Ministry**

**Submitted via the Community Council Meeting on 15th July 2018**

Having worked over the past four years with the Farsi community and other asylum

seekers that come through our doors, I find myself taking the unusual step of seeking

Regional Recognition of Ministry.

For some time I have been aware that in essence I am fulfilling the role of a part time

pastor and appreciate that this is in some respects already recognised in the fact that I was offered a salaried post here at WBC 18 months ago. My role involves leadership,

discipleship and pastoral elements, alongside working towards better cross-cultural

integration in our church community.

I also attend court with any of our asylum seekers who need to appeal a refusal of their

application for refugee status here in UK. While we were in interregnum, my testimony was accepted in the absence of an ordained pastor at the church. However, in February 2018 there was a tightening of the regulations and it is now an enforced legal precedent that the main witness must be an ordained member of clergy.

This means that Kez now needs to attend court and is being treated as the main witness. Despite the fact that I am the one who works with the asylum seekers and has a better knowledge of their situation, my testimony is no longer held to carry any significant weight because I am not ordained. Our last two cases in court have been made very difficult by this new regulation and this has led me to ask whether I should be seeking ordination.

Last week I met with Graham Ensor of YBA to discuss this possibility. Graham encouraged me to press ahead with the application and seems to think my experience with the asylum seekers could be of benefit regionally to some other churches in the YBA, quite apart from my role at Wakefield.

The next step is to get a formal commendation from the church, so this will appear as an item on the July CC agenda. Assuming you are willing to commend me for Regional Recognition of Ministry, I then need to fill out the application form and return it fairly quickly to make the next formal interview panel in September. This is the group that makes the final decision.

If all goes well I could be ordained later in the year for a recognised regional ministry post within YBA only. Regional Recognition of Ministry would allow me to minister only within Yorkshire and primarily in my current role in this church. Recognition comes with the title Pastor, rather than Revd. I am not expected to do any further formal study (phew!)

My application for ordination is not to be confused with our ongoing discussion at CC about the appointment of a second person to pastoral ministry here at WBC. Ordination will not affect the terms of my contract.