



SOCIETY OF LEADERSHIP FELLOWS,
ST GEORGE'S HOUSE, WINDSOR CASTLE



WISDOM IN LEADERSHIP

6PM ON MONDAY 22ND – 12 NOON WEDNESDAY 24TH MARCH, 2027

ST GEORGE'S HOUSE, WINDSOR CASTLE



WHY THIS CONVERSATION?

We talk about nurturing wisdom. It is at the heart of what the Society of Leadership Fellows exists to do. Yet if someone asked us - what is wisdom, actually? - we might struggle to answer. We know it is not the same as knowledge. It is not the same as experience. It is not the same as intelligence. But what is it? And how do we cultivate it - in ourselves, in others, in the organisations we lead - in the forces of these times that seem to be pulling us in a very different direction.

This Conversation is an honest inquiry into wisdom itself. Not as an abstract concept but as a lived quality that we have all witnessed - perhaps in a leader who held their nerve when everyone else was panicking, or in a colleague who said the thing that nobody else could see, or in a moment of our own clarity that seemed to come from somewhere deeper than our thinking mind.

A Fellow asked recently: "Wisdom in leadership - how? How do we do that in the pace and urgency we face today?" It is a question worth staying with. The pressure to decide quickly, to know the answer, to project confidence - all of this seems to work against the conditions that wisdom requires. Wisdom asks for slowness, for silence, for not-knowing. It asks us sometimes to hold a question rather than rush to a conclusion and at others to act with calm, clear purpose when all around are hesitant. The wisdom of course lies in knowing the difference between these. In a world that rewards speed and image, wisdom may be the thing we most need and yet least protect.

Over two days, with the spaciousness that Windsor affords, we will explore what wisdom means to us, where we have encountered it, and what it would take to make it a more deliberate and conscious part of our leadership practice.



CORE THEMES

What is Wisdom?

An honest enquiry into the nature of wisdom – distinct from knowledge, experience, intelligence. What is the thing itself?

Wisdom and Source

Where does it flow from? How do we access it?

Nurturing Wisdom

*What are the conditions it requires?
How to nurture this?*

Wisdom in Practice

Wisdom in action. When have we witnessed it or felt it?

Wisdom and Pace

What is lost when we do not have capacity for depth?

Different Forms of Wisdom

The wisdom of being and the wisdom of doing...

Wisdom and Patience

Discerning the 'season' we are in; when to act, when to let be.

Collaborative Exploration

Helping each other nurture our wisdom and access a quality of insight and discernment that goes beyond what any of us could reach alone.

CONVERSATION FLOW

All our Conversations follow a robust three phase process which not only yields powerful insights but also engenders sustained shift in leadership focus and impact.



'See'

Helping each other as leaders to 'see our seeing', where we:

- Enquire into the honest reality of our own experience.
- Notice the lens through which we are viewing things.
- Grasp the full significance of what we are in.
- Identify new invitations and possibilities for our leadership.



'Be'

Helping each other embrace the deeper invitation to change, where we:

- Identify our own blocks and resistances - emotional and/or practical.
- Explore the deeper dynamics of the situation we are in.
- Access a wisdom and inner clarity that can shape new intention.
- Mobilise the energy, resources and belief to step into real change.



'Do'

Helping each other move from intention into committed action, where we:

- Find new and sustainable focus, grounded in practical action.
- Engage significant others in this.
- Ground the practical resolve to overcome old patterns that may resurface.
- Learn powerfully and positively as we step into change.



PHASE ONE:

Seeing wisdom (and its absence) in our own experience

We begin with our direct experience. In the high trust ethos of the Fellowship, we will share honestly:

- Where do we feel most in need of wisdom right now?

We will also share experiences of it.

- When have we witnessed it?
- What did it look/ sound like?
- What were the conditions that enabled it?

And equally important...

- When have we witnessed its absence?

What happens when decisions are made without wisdom, when speed replaces discernment, when leaders know the answer but miss the point?

We will also examine our own relationship to wisdom.

- How have we learned to hear the voice of wisdom – in ourselves and in others?
- What have we learned about whether and how to trust it?
- Do we value it? Or do we privately regard it as too slow, too soft, too uncertain for the world we operate in?

As we share, we will start to notice the forces - internal and external - that work for and against wisdom in our leadership practice. What limits our capacity to grow in wisdom...?



PHASE TWO:



Wisdom and Being

Having explored where wisdom lives and where it is absent, we will go deeper. This is the heart of the Conversation - the invitation to pause and enquire with a depth and honesty that will allow it to become available to us, here, now, in the room.

We will work in pairs and small groups, helping each other access and discern wisdom in relation to things that are troubling or challenging us in our leadership right now. As we explore this, we will begin to discern what wisdom asks of us as a quality of being rather than just as a facet of knowledge. As wisdom becomes present, we can also begin to notice the conditions that seem to enable this – and the implications for our own leadership and how we are with others.

We will also enquire into wisdom as a more permanent state rather than just 'in the moment'.

- What does it feel like to be in the presence of someone who is wise?
- What quality of attention are they bringing?
- How are they present with others?
- How do they handle their own reactivity without being ensnared by it?

We will look at wisdom practices – things that help us sustain the quality of presence and awareness that wisdom requires: for example, the relationship between wisdom and silence. In a world of constant noise and opinion, wisdom may live in the spaces we are no longer willing to protect - the pauses between meetings, the moment of reflection before a decision, the courage to say "I don't know" when everyone is looking to us for certainty, or to make a tough judgement call that others may shy away from.



PHASE THREE:

✓ Wisdom and Doing

As we find new clarity, we will work together to translate these insights into our leadership practice.

- What would a 'wisdom habit' look like - a deliberate, daily practice of creating the conditions for wiser leadership?
- How do we build pauses into the pace?
- How do we create space for the people around us to access their own wisdom, rather than looking to us for answers?

We will also explore the different quality of 'practical wisdom' alongside wisdom as discernment. 'What do we do now, now that we have seen things in this way?'

Practical wisdom is an essential leadership attribute that has enabled us to sense into what is possible in a particular context rather than what is desirable. It is the wisdom of connection, diplomacy, tact and patience, that recognises for example when 'less is more, and more is less'.

Working in small groups, we will help each other formulate commitments in the light of this practical wisdom. These may be about pace, about silence, about asking different questions, about holding decisions differently. We will also develop practices for how we sustain our clarity when we return to the pressures of everyday leadership.



DETAILED AGENDA

MONDAY 22ND MARCH

You are welcome to check in to St George's House from 3pm

16.30	Welcome refreshments in the Sitting Room
17.00	Evensong (<i>Optional</i>).
18.00	Vicars' Hall Introduction and Phase One: 'See' Sharing: Where are we most in need of wisdom right now?
19.45	Break
20.00	Dinner in the Dining Room of St George's House.
21.30	Private Tour of St George's Chapel.

TUESDAY 23RD MARCH

07.30	Mattins – St George's Chapel (<i>Optional</i>)
07.45	Breakfast in the Dining Room.
08.00	Holy Communion – St George's Chapel (<i>Optional</i>)
08.45	Vicars' Hall - Phase Two: 'Be' Our learning about wisdom, where we see it, what causes/enables it to arise, what inhibits it?
11.00	Break
11.30	Phase Two: 'Be' (cont) Accessing and discerning wisdom – helping each other hear the 'voice of wisdom' in relation to our own leadership. Noticing what it is like as a state and the conditions that give rise to it.
13.00	Working lunch with informal networking and continued thematic discussion.



DETAILED AGENDA

14.00	Consolidation of morning insights. Sustaining wisdom – practices that enable it and how we may cultivate these around us. Wisdom in the moment and wisdom as a state – 'being wise'.
16.00	Personal reflection time.
17.05	Evensong (<i>Optional</i>)
18.00	Vicars' Hall - Phase Three: 'Do' Different facets of wisdom. Practical wisdom alongside discerning wisdom. Where are we being invited to embody this? What will it take? Challenging and supporting each other in this.
19.30	Break and pre-dinner drinks.
20.00	Dinner in the Dining Room
21.45	Tea/ Coffee after dinner drinks.

WEDNESDAY 24TH MARCH

07.30	Mattins – St George's Chapel (<i>Optional</i>)
07.45	Breakfast in the Dining Room of St George's House <i>Please clear your luggage from your bedroom. You are welcome to leave bags in the Sitting Room or bring them to the Vicars' Hall.</i>
08.00	Holy Communion – St George's Chapel (<i>Optional</i>)
08.45	Vicars' Hall - Phase Three: 'Do' (cont) Personal reflections and group check-in: what has become clear? What practices will support us in accessing and sustaining wisdom in leadership? Where is the invitation to change and the 'step to better'?
10.45	Break
11.00	Action planning in small groups: turning insight into committed intention.
11.45	Closing reflections – gathering the wisdom that has flowed.
12.00	Close of Conversation and departures.



DETAILED AGENDA

FOLLOW-UP

- Virtual follow-up check-in within 4–6 weeks to review progress on commitments.
- Ongoing dialogue through a dedicated digital channel (e.g., WhatsApp).
- Share summary and any supplementary resources/readings on What's Going on with Leadership Today?