

Everything you need to know to lead a LPA Course

Thank you for being one of our course leaders. The success of any course is committed, flexible, imaginative teaching and we could not sustain the level of LPA ministry in the diocese without you. These notes explain the course and the different ways in which the material can be used, together with the responsibilities of the course leader.

Shape of the course

The course generally consists of ten sessions, each intended to last around two hours. In addition, there is a Taster Session to enable people to reflect on whether Lay Pastoral Assistant training is right for them before beginning the course, and a Concluding Session for those who have completed the course. This Concluding Session will assist the discernment process for ministry as Lay Pastoral Assistants.

The ten sessions are designed to be spaced at least two weeks apart to allow for some active learning and reflection in between. Some courses run using a combination of Saturdays and evenings.

Each session includes prayer, content related to the theme of the session, reflection on Bible passages, discussion around personal experience of life and ministry, and case studies. Be aware that some of the sessions could bring to the surface sensitive issues that the participants may need to work through with someone they trust. Please mention this at the start of the course so that participants are prepared.

The opening prayer for each session is one by Teresa of Avila:

**Lord Jesus, teach us that you have no body now on earth but ours;
No hands but ours;
No feet but ours;
Ours are the eyes through which your compassion
must look out upon the world;
Ours are the feet with which
you must go about doing good;
Ours are the hands with which you
must bless men and women now;
For your name's sake. Amen.**

Each session concludes with a particular prayer focus to engage with before the next session.

Course outline:

- Session 1: **Who are we?**
- Session 2: **Who am I?**
- Session 3: **Journey of life**
- Session 4: **Learning to listen (or Developing Listening Skills 4a)**
- Session 5: **Engaging with families**
- Session 6: **Coming alongside those with acute and chronic illness**
- Session 7: **Valuing later life**
- Session 8: **Why and when we visit**

CHOOSE AT LEAST 2 OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Session 3a: **Our role at a time of loss**
- Session 4a: **Developing listening skills**
- Session 5a: **Nurturing the spirituality of children and young people**
- Session 8a: **Knowing our limits**

FOLLOWED BY: **Concluding session**

A more detailed outline is available on the Diocesan website

Preparing to lead a course

The course leader is responsible for the overall delivery of the course but you may want to invite others to lead some sessions or parts of sessions. If you are a co-leading a course or session, make sure you set aside enough joint planning time beforehand. Course booklets need to be ordered in plenty of time from the Deepening Discipleship Team office.

Each session contains quite a lot of material, but you can use it in different ways. Group members could be asked to read some or all of the material before the session. Or you could look at some or all of the material together within the session. A course leader might want to draw on other material which covers the same ground but in a different way and use that instead. An experienced course leader might simply use the exercises and discussions to draw out themes and insights and leave it up to group members when and how they engage with the material. Look at the material well in advance – it might help your planning to draw up a session plan with rough timings for each section. Will there be a break at some point? Allowing space at the end of each session might be helpful so that you can discuss what needs doing for the next session. If you wish to use additional or alternative material it is up to you provide it, together with copies for the course participants if needed. The course leader may want to recommend further reading.

Session 1 refers to Parish Spotlights. The Parish Support can provide you with the relevant information on request.

Do bear in mind that your learning group may contain people who need to learn at different levels. Some people find training of any kind a bit of a challenge – they just want to get going! Others quite quickly discover that they want to go deeper and will feel short changed if there isn't enough to bite on. The material is designed to be used flexibly, enabling groups and individuals to find a way of learning that is right for them. The course leader should ensure that all members of the group are able to participate in the sessions (with no one person dominating) and that the group has covered all the sections of all the sessions in some appropriate way by the end of the course.

Course participants are asked to make notes of the material they prepare for each session and this could be kept in a file for future reference but it does not need to be seen by the course leader.

Discernment

Lay Pastoral Assistant ministry is a locally focused ministry exercised under the supervision of the incumbent. So the judgement about whether someone is suitable for LPA ministry in a particular church is for the incumbent to make, together with the PCC. The responsibility of the course leader is to note who hasn't attended every session. This is to help in the decision making process for those who go on to become commissioned as LPAs. If you have any concerns about a course participant these should, in the first instance, should be highlighted to the relevant incumbent.

There are no formal learning outcomes for the course but the material is structured in a way that indicates the areas to be covered. The acid test is not whether someone can complete a course of study, but whether they will be exercising pastoral skills effectively at the end of it. We are unashamedly looking for high quality.

After the concluding session, participants are asked to produce a single piece of written reflection on the course to be shared with their incumbent, as part of the discernment process. We advise a minimum of **six weeks** after the end of the course to allow for completion of the discernment process for those going on to be commissioned and for attendance of safeguarding. See the Diocesan website for more information.

Practicalities

Responsibility for whatever venue is being used rests with the course leader unless it has been agreed that someone else is responsible for this. If you are hoping to show a film clip or use PowerPoint, make sure that the right equipment is available and that you know how to use it. If refreshments will be provided it is a good idea to ask someone else to take responsibility for this.

There is no participating or administration fee. This has been waived by the Bishop of Sherborne.

All other costs of the course (including travel, venue, refreshments and visiting speakers) need to be negotiated and covered at Deanery level.

What you will need – resources & paperwork

- **Taster Session Booklet**
- **Participants Registration form** - to be completed by those who wish to start the LPA course
- **Lay Pastoral Assistant Training Course Booklet**
- **Concluding Session Booklet**
- **Ministry Specification form** - agreed between the participant and incumbent prior to commissioning
- **The need for every PCC Secretary within a Benefice to sign a participants application form is simplified to statement that places the responsibility for supporting the training of LPAs with the local incumbent.**

What you need to know – DBS, Safeguarding and Recruitment

DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service clearance

1. Make sure you send the registration forms to parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org so that participants can complete a **DBS Enhanced Child and Adult workforce with a check against the Child and Adult Barring Lists** application online. See step 5 on page 6 for more information.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If the applicant is on the Update Service, or has an existing DBS at the correct level with Salisbury Diocese with at least a 6 months until renewal at date of commissioning (DBS lasts for 3 years), OR will be processing their application locally with their Parish safeguarding Representative, please let us know.

2. If people do not have access to a computer, then they will need to ask someone from their parish to assist them in the application – the Parish Safeguarding Representative or Parish Secretary.
3. Commissioning cannot take place until DBS clearance is in place and safeguarding training has been undertaken (see below).
4. Some people may ask if their current clearance from either the diocese or another organisation will be OK. The answer is 'no'. For any queries relating to DBS/Safeguarding please contact the safeguarding.admin@salisbury.anglican.org.

Safeguarding Training - *****Requirement changed for LPAs in 2021*****

LPAs must do the **Basic awareness** (C0) and **Foundation** (C1) online at (<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>) or if available locally attend a face to face church focused **Foundation** safeguarding training course before commissioning - dates are available across the diocese and should be booked via the diocesan website.

Post Commissioning, the responsibility for the renewal of DBS and safeguarding training lies with the PCC and the incumbent.

Safer Recruitment requirement

Please be aware of the House of Bishops' and Diocesan requirements in relation to the Safer Recruitment of volunteers and that every person must be safely recruited if going forward for commissioning. This is the responsibility of the incumbent- see <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance> for further information.

Step by step - running an LPA course

<p>Step 1</p>	<p>Establish the dates of the Taster course, course start date and the details and date of the Commissioning service.</p> <p>Leave at least 2 weeks' notice for the taster session after informing Parish Support Team, to allow for it to be advertised (if you don't wish the Taster to be advertised please let us know).</p> <p>Leave at least 6 weeks between concluding session and commissioning service date to allow for DBS/safeguarding training and the period of reflection to be completed.</p>
<p>Step 2</p>	<p>Email parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org with the relevant information and dates. Resources and forms are available on the diocesan website https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/ministry/lay-ministry/lay-worship-leader-training-new</p>
<p>Step 3</p>	<p>Parish Support team will send your indicated number of <i>Taster Session booklets</i>, <i>Participant Registration forms</i>, and <i>course booklets</i> either as e-forms/booklet or hard copies.</p>
<p>Step 4</p>	<p>Run the initial Taster Session and give out Registration forms</p>

<p>Step 5</p>	<p>Registration forms to be emailed to parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org as soon as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is very important as this triggers the process to get the applicants DBS* processed. The Safeguarding Support Officer at Church House will email the participant with how to do this online and notify them of their local verifier, which the participant needs to know if they intend to be commissioned. • Make participants aware they will also need to complete Basic awareness (C0) and Foundation (C1) online or book themselves onto a Face-to-Face Foundation safeguarding course as soon as possible before commissioning. • Parish Support team is there to provide administrative support to you and participants.
<p>Step 6</p>	<p>Having completed the concluding session (effectively session 11) all participants to be commissioned will need to undertake a period of reflection with their incumbent concerning potential LPA Ministry. A written reflection ‘Why I believe God is calling me to the ministry of a Lay Pastoral Assistant’ would be helpful. This needs to be <i>up</i> to 2 sides of A4. For those who have literacy difficulties, their reflection can happen in any format that the participant feels comfortable with. The important thing is that they are engaged in a period of reflection with their incumbent concerning their potential ministry</p>
<p>Step 7</p>	<p>The Commissioning Service details need to be arranged directly with the relevant Area Office and confirmed to the Parish Support team if not already notified. The Commissioning will be undertaken by either the suffragan bishop or an archdeacon.</p> <p>Please confirm the names of those going forward for Commissioning. It is vital at this point they have the necessary DBS clearance and have undertaken the appropriate safeguarding training.</p> <p>The need for every PCC Secretary within a Benefice to sign a participant application form is simplified to a statement that places the responsibility for supporting the training of LPAs with the local incumbent. The incumbent is also responsible for ensuring the person has been “safely recruited”.</p> <p>The participant and incumbent to agree the Ministry Specification prior to commissioning.</p>
<p>Step 8</p>	<p>Participants to complete the checklist and feedback prior to commissioning.</p> <p>Course leaders are encouraged to share any feedback with the Parish Support team for future reference and improvements.</p>

Got more questions?

Contact the Parish Support team on **01722 411922**
or **parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org**