



The Church of England  
Diocese of Ely

# Authorised Lay Ministry

in the Diocese of Ely



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## What is an Authorised Lay Ministry?

Authorised Lay Ministry is one way in which the diocese resources and empowers lay people to grow in their vocation to serve and minister in their communities and churches.

Authorised Lay Ministers (referred to henceforth as ALMs) are selected by their incumbent and PCC and, after training, they are authorised and commissioned to exercise a particular ministry within their local parish.

ALMs are lay people active in church life, who have been identified by their parish as having a particular gifting, vocation or calling. They will run activities and events in the area of their specialism.

ALMs work collaboratively alongside their incumbent and wider ministry teams and remain under the supervision of their incumbent. They seek to grow and nurture faith and serve the wider parish community.



ALMs are authorised for three years. After the three years, their ministry is reviewed and many are re-authorised. An ALM can be re-authorised with permission of their incumbent and after renewing their Safeguarding requirements (DBS checks and training) and after undertaking any updated training in the area of their specialism.



# Ministry in the Local Church and community

ALMs work at the interface between the church and the community. They are often the ones who engage most with the wider community as they offer their specialist gifts within and beyond the church. They focus their ministry in certain specific areas or specialisms.

Five markers have been identified as important for local churches to consider in their engagement with their own congregations and with the community and world beyond the doors of the church. ALMs engage in these marks of mission.



1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth



The Diocese of Ely aims to train and empower people to work in these five horizons. The Authorised Lay Ministry specialisms reflect these marks of mission.

## Specialisms

- Worship Leader and Music
- Preacher
- Evangelist (Church Army)
- Children and Families
- Youth and Families
- Pastoral Assistant
- Anna Chaplain
- Social Justice
- Homelessness Chaplain
- Local Leadership

In addition, we also have an **Authorised Chaplaincy Assistant** pathway for those working in a chaplaincy role in Education. Please refer to the diocesan website for more information: [elydiocese.org/school-chaplains](http://elydiocese.org/school-chaplains)

### Tell

- Worship Leader and Music
- Preacher
- Evangelist

### Teach

- Children and Families
- Youth and Families

### Tend

- Pastoral Assistant
- Anna Chaplain

### Transform

- Social Justice
- Homelessness Chaplain

### Treasure

- Social Justice
- Local Leadership



## The pathway for an ALM Specialism

It may be that the incumbent identifies someone with the potential to work in a particular area of Church ministry, or an individual who feels called to such a ministry will talk to their incumbent and offer to be considered.

The first stage needs to be prayerful consideration and conversation by the candidate and the incumbent in consultation with the PCC (on behalf of the congregation).

The incumbent and the PCC will need to agree that the candidate go forward for training. The formal consent of the PCC should be obtained and recorded.

## What is the application process?

A vocation to Authorised Lay Ministry is discerned together by the individual, the incumbent and the PCC. An application form is available on request from the Mission and Ministry Department. This is to be completed by the candidate and their Incumbent together and returned to [layvocations@elydiocese.org](mailto:layvocations@elydiocese.org).

Candidates are then advised on next steps. Applications are welcome at any time of year, although most training for specialisms run once a year.





## What does the training involve?

Candidates for Authorised Lay Ministry need to complete the diocesan Growing as a Disciple course, as well as the training for their specialism. The exception to this is the Preacher ALM specialism where there is a requirement to have completed the Foundation for Ministry Course before authorisation.

Each candidate for authorisation as an ALM will also need to complete safeguarding training: Basic Awareness, Foundation, Leadership and Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse. These courses can be completed online - please see the safeguarding page of the diocesan website for more details:  
[elydiocese.org/safeguarding](http://elydiocese.org/safeguarding)

The three components (Growing as a Disciple, training for a specialism, and the safeguarding training) can be undertaken in any order, depending on availability of courses, but all three will need to be undertaken before a candidate can be authorised. Candidates are also required to have a DBS certificate (an enhanced check with barred list for both adults and children).





## Training for specialisms

Each specialism has its own programme of 10 sessions, spread over a number of weeks or months. Generally, sessions are run in the evenings or at weekends, to fit in with other commitments that people have.

Specialism training is also open to those who are not intending to be authorised, but who are seeking training to better equip them for informal ministry in their parishes. These participants apply on the same form, indicating that they will not be seeking authorisation at the end of the training.

In addition to the Specialism 10 week training, ALMs will be expected to do either the Growing as a Discipleship course or, in the case of the Preacher Specialism, the Introduction to Theology for Ministry Course, which will begin in September.

## Safeguarding Requirements and Training

All ALMs in the diocese are required to follow diocesan safeguarding procedures and to have received clearance following a DBS check before they are allowed to exercise any ministry, even on a trial basis, in the local church or benefice. They also must complete the required training before they are authorised.





## How does the Authorisation happen?

When the Candidate has finished all the courses requirements, the tutor and incumbent complete the final forms and a final check is made that Safeguarding requirements have been fulfilled. The Diocesan Director of Lay Ministry will then agree that the candidate is ready to be authorised. At this point the incumbent will be sent the ALM commissioning liturgy, which can be used in the context of a service when the candidate is authorised. The authorisation is undertaken by the incumbent.

Authorisation for all ALMs is for three years, and will lapse unless it is renewed. At this point there is a review with the incumbent, ALM and Diocesan Director of Lay Ministry, about how things are going and whether it is right to seek re-authorisation. At this point safeguarding checks and training also needs to be updated. Throughout the process, and particularly at the point of discussing re-authorisation, consideration needs to be given as to whether the candidate should continue in this ministry, and whether they have considered a Licensed ministry.

We expect all ALMs to receive regular supervision from their Incumbent. An application for Authorised Lay Ministry would need to be supported by an incumbent, or if in interregnum, by a Rural Dean in conjunction with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands.



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## Contact us

To find out more about Authorised Lay Ministry, to request an application form, for details of the Growing as a Disciple course or the Introduction to Theology for Ministry course, please email: [layvocations@elydiocese.org](mailto:layvocations@elydiocese.org).

You can contact the Revd Dr Julie Norris, Diocesan Director of Lay Ministry on [Julie.norris@elydiocese.org](mailto:Julie.norris@elydiocese.org) or 07771984699