

2027 dates

Induction afternoon: Thursday 4 February 2027 from 1.00 to 4.30 pm.

Main sessions on Thursdays from 10.00am to 4.30pm at Whirlow Spirituality Centre, Whirlow Grange Close, Sheffield S11 9SY.

- 11 and 25 February
- 11 and 25 March
- 8 and 22 April
- 6 and 20 May
- 10 and 17 June
- 1 and 15 July.

If you apply for the course, please safeguard these dates.

Fees

We encourage you to ask your church or supporting body to help with costs. For people in the geographical area of the Diocese of Sheffield or the Sheffield District of the Methodist Church, the fee is £200 per person. This includes lunches, refreshments, and other materials. The Church of England's Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board helps fund this through a grant.

If you live outside the Diocese or need information about grants, contact Suzanna (see below).

How to apply

- 🌐 Fill out the form at sheffdio.org/ASA (or use the QR code).
- ✉ Suzanna Upperdine, Diocesan Church House, 95-99 Effingham Street, Rotherham S65 1BL for a paper form.
- 📞 Suzanna on 01709 309 147.



Applicants will meet with ASA facilitators in December to:

- Discern if the course and timing are right for you
- Answer any questions.

The closing date for applications is Friday 6th November 2026

The Art of Spiritual Accompaniment

An experiential course in discerning listening

**February –
July 2027**



 THE DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD

The Art of Spiritual Accompaniment 2027

The course (ASA) is open to anyone (from any denomination or none) who has completed the [Spiritual Growth and Transformation](#) course. It builds on the experience of the listening groups. It is not academic.

We invite anyone of any denomination or none to apply. We embrace equality and diversity and are working to make accompaniment increasingly accessible. We especially welcome applicants with disabilities and those from minority groups.

Who is it for?

ASA is especially suitable for people who:

- Feel called to listen to others about their faith.
- Want to grow in listening to God in others' lives.
- Are exploring spiritual accompaniment (spiritual direction).

Aims

- To deepen understanding of spiritual accompaniment.
- To develop openness to God and discerning listening.
- To support growth in this ministry through prayer and reflection.

What's involved?

Developed ecumenically over 25 years, ASA has five key features:

1. Prayer and reflection practices.
2. Observed listening in small groups. This develops into the practice of responding suitably, and with discernment, to what is shared.
3. Exploring themes like Bible and theology of spiritual accompaniment, human development, and relationship dynamics in spiritual accompaniment.
4. Learning through groups, discussions and role play
5. Supervised listening with someone outside the course.

Programme

The course consists of an induction afternoon and twelve one-day sessions. All sessions are in person.

Requirements

The most important requirement is the desire for a deeper relationship with God, to grow in faith and develop the ability to accompany others on the spiritual journey.

To join, you should:

- Have completed the [Spiritual Growth and Transformation](#) course (or an equivalent from another course provider).
- Commit to attend all sessions (group learning depends on full attendance).
- Have met with your Spiritual Accompanier for at least a year.

Because this course prepares participants for a formal role within your denomination, the following are also required as part of Safer Recruitment practice:

- Evidence of current (a) Basic, (b) Foundation, and (c) Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse safeguarding training through [Anglican online training](#) or your denominational equivalent.
- Consent to references from (a) your Spiritual Accompanier and (b) church/community leader.
- Provide documentary evidence of your identity.

If the safeguarding training presents a challenge, additional support is available and that will be offered in confidence.

Not sure?

We welcome informal enquiries (without any expectation of commitment).

✉ Julian spirituality.adviser@sheffield.anglican.org.

📞 Rev Dr Julian Raffay on 07907 331 859.
(Best Tuesdays to Thursdays).