District Local Preachers’ Secretaries and Tutors perform an important role in supporting the mission and ministry of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders in their Districts. The roles are not defined in Standing Orders, but a role description for each is available on the Methodist Church website[[1]](#footnote-1).

Key to the effectiveness of the District Local Preachers’ Secretary and Tutor are good relationships with the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meetings[[2]](#footnote-2) and their Secretaries and Tutors. The better you as District Officers understand the challenges and opportunities of the circuits in your district, the better the support and advice you can offer on aspects of training and development, process and procedure.

Previously, a practice developed of District Officers requested a formal annual report from each circuit. This was then compiled into a report to the Local Preachers’ office. Completion of these reports was increasingly perceived by circuits as a bureaucratic burden, and many districts had difficulty collecting a consistent and full report for the Connexion.

This requirement (which was never in Standing Orders) no longer applies. Instead, time will be set aside in the periodic meetings for District Officers to discuss the challenges and opportunities encountered by local preachers and worship leaders in circuits and appraise the Connexional Local Preachers’ officer. District Officers are encouraged to collect supporting information in whatever manner they consider most appropriate in their district.

Possible ways could be:

1. Facilitated conversations in circuit Local Preachers’ meetings
2. Questionnaires or feedback gathered from District LP training events
3. Periodic informal conversation with Local Preachers’ Secretaries and Tutors
4. Online polls on specific topical issues

Example open questions which could be used in opening up the conversation with circuits are:

* Where have you seen evidence of God at work in your work as local preachers and worship leaders?
* What challenges do you face at the moment as you seek to follow God’s call to be local preachers and worship leaders?
* What help and support would you appreciate from the wider church to help you in your mission and ministry of worship and Word?

Some District Officers may prefer to collect information in a more formal manner. A sample form for this purpose is overleaf. This can be used or adapted as required. Collection of completed forms should not be seen however as an alternative to conversation, or presence at circuit LP Meetings.

*Bob Bartindale, Officer for Worship & Local Preachers, February 2022*

To the Local Preachers’ Secretary, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Circuit

In order for us to support you in your valuable work, I would appreciate if you could complete this form and return it to me:

District Local Preachers’ Secretary \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Alternatively, please contact me by phone or email.

Please respond to the following questions from the perspective of your circuit:

1. Where have you seen evidence of God at work in your work as local preachers and worship leaders?
2. What challenges do you face at the moment as you seek to follow God’s call to be local preachers and worship leaders?
3. What help and support would you appreciate from the wider church to help you in your mission and ministry of worship and Word?
4. Are there any other issues of concern that you would like to bring to the attention of the District, or the Connexional Local Preachers’ Office?
5. Are you aware of any local preachers in training who may need to request an extension to their 5- year period on trial?
6. How many local preachers do you currently have who are (a) Active, (b) Retired or not taking appointments, (c) On Note, (d) On Trial?
7. How many approved Worship Leaders do you have in the churches in your circuit?

Many thanks for your help in providing this information. I would be more than happy to visit your Local Preachers’ (or Leaders of Worship and Preachers’) Meeting or to discuss any issue relating to worship and preaching with you.

Best Regards,

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District Local Preacher’s Secretary

Date

1. [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The term Local Preachers’ Meeting appears in Standing Order SO 560 and is therefore used here. In some circuits the meetings are called “Leaders of Worship and Preachers’ Meetings” or similar. Please take care to use the appropriate local name for the meeting. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)