

British Isles Anglican planting of fresh expressions of Church database

Help sheet for filling in the questionnaire

Thank you

The Sheffield Centre is grateful to everybody who fills in a questionnaire – either electronically or physically. It takes time to do with care and accuracy. We are convinced each one helps build a more accurate picture of what is happening and contributes to overall understanding of what is still a young discipline, in the mission life of the Church.

This sheet tries to give people a closer understanding aiding them to choose the options that most closely fit to the particular story of their fresh expression. In our desire to help, if people are stuck, we'd prefer them to make a phone call than give us inexact information. You could speak to Laurence Keith, Claire Dalpra, or George Lings on 0114 272 7451.

Questions in section 1

The name: Sometimes that is not yet chosen – if so write 'not yet chosen'.

The address: Sometimes this will coincide with a leader's house, but normally that only occurs when the fresh expression is itself house based. Normally the usual venue should be given.

Date of start: Curiously this not straightforward. We'd prefer the date when a group began meeting to plan towards the fresh expression, marking a conception point of embryonic church. Sometimes people find it easier to put the public launch date, which need not be for public worship; it could be a course or a community program.

Questions in section 2

The leader: In the past, often people put the incumbent, as the one finally responsible. However please put the day-to-day leader. Occasionally that is the vicar! Sometimes the leading role is shared; if so, decide which person to put notionally as our key contact with you.

Questions in section 3 (some subsections we think are self explanatory)

3a] Type of fresh expression of Church:

This area is not easy, both because the range of kinds changes over time and some people resist using any labels at all. Look through the whole list before making your selection(s). The book *Mission-shaped Church* chapter 4 will help with precise meanings of 2/3rds of the terms used in this section. But speak to us if you need help about any of this and what your case is mostly like.

3b] A stage towards, or fully, an expression of Church?

We want to be accurate and generous in our classifications and fair to all cases. Visit our web site www.churcharmy.org.uk/sheffieldcentre and click the tab 'database for fresh expressions' for clarification. Basically if what is happening is about making relationships and serving the wider community, we'd called that a fresh expression of developing community. If it is gathering people to explore faith, then an fx of evangelism and if it's a worship service started to draw outsiders, then an fx of worship. We think a full fresh expression of Church will have elements of all three.

3c] Geographical area

Please read the whole list before selecting the one, or two if necessary, that fit for you. Your area might contain more than one kind and here two choices help. Most designations are self explanatory, but 'Urban' means that housing in larger cities, neither at the centre nor in its suburbs, but not significantly deprived like an Urban Priority Area.

3f] Motivation(s)

We appreciate that in all cases the founders were trying to discern a call from God. We want to know how that came. 'Inadequate penetration of the parish' means spotting an area that had few church attenders, while 'physically restricted at sending Church' means the building used was getting full.

3i) Permissions

We appreciate that the choice 'reluctant' is a value judgment, but have included it from our experience.

3j) Legal status

We cannot explain here all the niceties of this wide variety. In many cases it is clear and established. Your vicar should know how to advise you, or you can phone/email us.

3l) 3 self identity

The category 'self reproducing' needs a little explaining. It covers 'producing' more Christians, more virtuous lives (fruit of the Spirit) more gifts and leaders as well as, in time, further churches.

Questions in section 4

4a and 4b) Mission Task: see MSC pp 106-107

All of the variables are valid ones - see *Mission-shaped Church* pp 36-40. We live in a world of both neighbourhood and network. See *Mission-shaped Church* pp 4-8, 18-19. But what we try to do and what happens can be different, hence the separation of intention and result.

4c) Mission resource: see MSC pp 110-111

There is overlap here to question 3a, but they are not identical. This question is about unit size and 3a about its characteristic style, values and operation.

This variable covers whether what grew was built on the opportunity of an existing strong Christian presence among the group to be reached (progression) or if it was a response to the challenge of weak existing Christian presence (pioneer).

4d] Mission partnership: see MSC pp. 112—115

'Runner' means it usually fell within a parish and had strong existing links with that sending church.

'Graft' means it crossed a parish boundary, partnered with another local church to assist, but the incomers were numerically the minor player in the resultant church.

'Transplant' is as graft, but with the important difference of the incomers being the major players.

'Seed' is when the people sent out move area and house to begin a new work elsewhere, with permission, but largely on their own.

Questions in section 5

Numbers are not everything and in early stages of a fresh expression, there can be lots of contacts though not many regular attenders at public worship. A qualitative survey would attend to this, but this more quantitative approach has to leave that analysis to others. Moreover we know that work among the non churched can be slow and a host of relationships exist that are not reflected in the figures. Reluctantly we have concluded we can only regularly measure attendance at public gatherings. We hope you understand.

Still stuck?

We are sorry if we didn't anticipate your question or unfamiliarity with the terms we use.

We would be genuinely pleased to hear from you and be happy to spend time talking about your story so that the data we end up with is as of a good a quality as we can achieve together.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours

George Lings, Laurence Keith and Claire Dalpra

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