

South West Ministry Training Course Programme for a Local Survey

You are asked to undertake a survey of your local church and neighbourhood as part of your portfolio. The survey cannot be **comprehensive**; it is a **first step** to help you begin to explore your local church and to reflect on the nature of the relationship between the church and its neighbourhood.

Before your second residential weekend in October you should have:

- gathered some information on the congregation of your local church (a sample questionnaire is provided);
- gathered some information on the local neighbourhood;
- begun to reflect on this data;

You will be asked on the Saturday morning of the residential weekend in October to make a **short presentation** (approx. 15 min) of your findings to other students, this presentation also needs to be in a written form (no more than 1500 words) to be entered in your portfolio.

1. The Church

General information can be gathered about the Church, its activity and perception of itself and neighbourhood:

- a. Church membership numbers, typical congregation size at different services, trends in attendance;
- b. Where members live (records are normally held from membership or electoral rolls);
- c. Age distribution of members/attenders;
- d. Premises and their use;
- e. Significant church activities;
- f. Community activities the church involved is in;
- g. Other churches in the area and the relations between them;

A simple questionnaire can be used to provide some of this information or to supplement other sources. We provide an example, which you can use, or you can design your own.

2. The neighbourhood

For easy and immediate presentation of your church's neighbourhood a large map is invaluable, showing the context and setting of your church. What counts as your church's neighbourhood will often not be clear, so you need to reflect on what terms like neighbourhood, community and context mean for your church.

In order to set the church in its context you can find out basic and detailed information about your neighbourhood from the census information and other public records. You can easily access this at your local government website www.cornwall.gov.uk, www.devon.gov.uk, and www.somerset.gov.uk. You will find information given by parish wards, towns and villages. Basic population details are important, as is evidence about age, occupation and deprivation/wealth. This information can be easily presented in the form of charts and graphs.

10. What influenced you to start attending this church?

Nearest church

Warm fellowship

Preaching

Style of worship

My friends were here

I grew up at this church

Minister's visit

Literature from the church

Visit from a church member

Invitation from a friend or neighbour

Through a Baptism / Wedding / Funeral service

Other (please say)

11. Are you involved with other local organisations Yes No

If so please state which:

12. How would you describe this church?

13. What do you like best about this church?

14. What do you think is the greatest need or weakness of this church?

15. What would you say were the main needs of the community in which the Church is placed?