

# Mapping Our Stories

*Rough guide for local churches to capture their stories moving forward*

## OVERVIEW:

The following 5 steps are a suggest approach for local churches and circuits to work on their stories for the next five years. The steps listed below are each defined to encourage discussion and challenge where we are as a church against the fabric of our local context. Following these steps through as a local team within a church or circuit can aid the development of five year plans for local groups, encouraging all of us to reflect on where we currently are, how we got here and where we now need to consider focusing our efforts on in the coming months and years ahead. This is only one of several sources of information available, others are listed on the district website ([www.MandSmethodists.org.uk](http://www.MandSmethodists.org.uk)).



The steps are defined as:

Step 1: Our Headlines

Step 2: The Characters in our Stories

Step 3: Our Stories So Far

Step 4: 'What if....'

Step 5: Our Next Chapters

# Mapping Our Stories – STEP 1

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Circuit:	Church:	Date:
<b>Step 1: Our Headlines</b>		Ref:
<p>Capture here any current mission statements or church statements about what we are about, our priorities, our beliefs, our purpose <i>[If no current documents exist then as a group discuss what we currently understand our purpose or mission is based on current work, focus etc in the local area]</i></p>		
<p>Reflection Points:</p> <p>Given the information provided above, are there any points for reflection that we see (e.g. areas that concern us, points that need further discussion) <i>[this is an opportunity early on in the discussions to start to capture where we see concerns, niggles or just simple questions that people have and need to be considered at some point within the discernment process]</i></p>		

## Mapping Our Stories – STEP 2

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Circuit:	Church:	Date:			
<b>Step 2: The Characters in Our Stories</b>					Ref:
<p>The Characters in Our Stories are in one of three groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our Selves – the membership and wider church community we currently engage with</li> <li>2. Our Neighbours – those who live in our local communities</li> <li>3. Our Partners – existing and potential partners for mission in the local area</li> </ol> <p><i>[If no current documents exist then as a group discuss what we currently understand our purpose or mission is based on current work, focus etc in the local area]</i></p>					
<p><b>OUR SELVES: Describe our current church community in the following groupings,</b>  <i>(JUST based on those who currently worship with us or who we are actively engaged with)</i></p>					
Households of current church members/associates	<i>For example: 'white collar urban households'</i>				
Age Ranges of church members/associates	% Under 15s	% Aged 16-29	% Aged 30-44	% Aged 45 - Retirement	% Retired
<p><b>OUR NEIGHBOURS: Refer to District recent mapping exercise data and other local sources to populate the following tables for our local community</b>  <i>(neighbourhood profiles available on district website 'members area' or can be obtained via national statistics site)</i></p>					
Households in Local Community	<i>For example: 'white collar urban households'</i>				
Levels of Deprivation	IMD Ranking:	<i>e.g. 1245</i>	% Unemployment		<i>e.g. 7.9%</i>
Age Ranges of church members/associates	% Under 15s	% Aged 16-29	% Aged 30-44	% Aged 45 - Retirement	% Retired
BME Community	% White	% Mixed	% Asian or Asian British	% Black or Black British	% Chinese or Other
Religions within Local Community	% Christian	% Hindu	% Jewish	% Muslim	% Other or none

**OUR PARTNERS: Who else is 'out there' already engaged in the community? Define if they are current or potential partners for us to work together where appropriate**  
 (partners divided into three subgroups: faith groups, statutory bodies and community agencies)

Christian and other Faith groups	Name of Partner Organisation	Reason for Partnership	Established or Potential
Statutory Bodies (e.g. local councils)	Name of Partner Organisation	Reason for Partnership	Established or Potential
Community Agencies (e.g. Age Concern, Connexions, Surestart)	Name of Partner Organisation	Reason for Partnership	Established or Potential

Reflection Points:

Given the information provided above, are there any points for reflection that we see (e.g. areas that concern us, points that need further discussion)

*[this is an opportunity early on in the discussions to start to capture where we see concerns, niggles or just simple questions that people have and need to be considered at some point within the discernment process]*

## Mapping Our Stories – STEP 3

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Circuit:	Church:	Date:
<b>Step 3: Our Stories so far</b>		Ref:

**Our stories should be celebrated!**

Stories about our worship, our working within our community and our development of space (inside our existing buildings, or utilizing facilities elsewhere). Fill in descriptions of your stories in the boxes below. We should also capture here other organisations' stories where work is currently underway (even if we are not currently involved).

*[if unsure where to place an item, place it in 'Stories in our Community']*

	Title of Story	Description	Who is it aimed for
<b>Stories about Our Worship</b>  <i>(e.g. Café Church, alternative worship, new hymnbook, weekday services, etc)</i>	<i>e.g. Messy church</i>	<i>e.g. Creative play and worship mixed together with lots of crafts on a Christian theme</i>	<i>e.g. Aimed at under 7s and their families, mainly those not currently attending church</i>

	Title of Story	Description	Who is it aimed for
<b>Stories about working with Our Community</b>  <i>(e.g. Coffee mornings, Cafes, shops, social events, training/advice workshops, summer schools, etc)</i>	<i>e.g. Pre-school</i>	<i>e.g. local group rent space for under 5s to play as part of pre-school scheme. Good relationship – often involve them when we organize Messy Church days</i>	<i>e.g. aimed at under 5s (pre-schoolers)</i>

Stories about Using our Space creatively	Title of Story	Description	Who is it aimed for
'Looking Beyond the Wood & Stone'  <i>(e.g. new build or extension of existing buildings, or development of an offsite youth drop in centre, renting an alternative space to a church building)</i>	<i>e.g. Youth Drop In Centre</i>	<i>e.g. partnership with XX local council to provide signposting services for local young people, linking them with counselling and advice services. Ran by Churches Together as a partnership project</i>	<i>e.g. aimed at young people 13-25yrs, on fringe of society mainly.</i>

Stories of Other Organisations in the area	Title of Story	Description	Who is it aimed for
<i>(e.g. other projects in existence that are we are not currently connected with)</i>	<i>e.g. Age Concern base</i>	<i>e.g established group meet through Age Concern project, in the Catholic Church hall next door. About 100 come for lunch twice a week and have chance to meet and share conversations</i>	<i>e.g. aimed at the retired community, especially those living alone or in sheltered housing.</i>

Reflection Points:

Given the information provided above, are there any points for reflection that we see (e.g. areas that concern us, points that need further discussion)

*[this is an opportunity early on in the discussions to start to capture where we see concerns, niggles or just simple questions that people have and need to be considered at some point within the discernment process]*

## Mapping Our Stories – STEP 4

*Rough guide for local churches to capture their stories moving forward*

Circuit:	Church:	Date:
<b>Step 4: ‘What if.....’</b>		Ref:

**‘Wouldn’t it be good if?.....’ A Chance to Dream the Dreams!**

Read back over the previous steps answers then take time to reflect and explore potential further ways we can ‘be church’ in our local communities. Write down here some key suggestions, ways we think we can further our stories in our local communities through doing more or less of what we do now – and perhaps by doing some things differently or complete new!

*[in this section, there is no such thing as a daft idea so capture everything! It can be filterd later if needs be. Focus on what can be done immediately, in the next 2 yrs and in the next 5 yrs]*

Our Ideas and Dreams	Description	Who is it aimed at involving	Timescales
<i>e.g. Set up breakfast church</i>	<i>e.g. First Sat of every month, set up breakfast church – chance for young families to have breakfast together and then share time of light praise</i>	<i>Young families involved in current brigades and poss pre-school held on premises. Church members to provide breakfast on a rota.</i>	<i>Straightaway</i>

## Mapping Our Stories – STEP 5

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Circuit:	Church:	Date:		
<b>Step 5: Our Next Chapters</b>		Ref:		
<p><b>Prioritising our Dreams.....</b>          What are our priorities moving forward, based on who is in our church and community, current work underway and the dreams we would like to see become reality. Capture here an action plan, including any revisions to mission statements etc, - ensuring we focus on the key areas that need to be our priorities in the next few years.  <i>It is important that there are actions both for immediate response and ongoing, longer response. This will ensure the more immediate work can be done in advance of some of the longer and larger schemes that may require further planning and resources to realize.]</i></p>				
<b>Part A: Projects/Actions for Immediate Development/Implementation</b> <i>(including existing schemes to continue)</i>				
Project Title	Summary of top 3 actions needed for this item	What resources are needed (people, facilities, equipment, funds)	Owner	Times cale
<i>e.g. establish coffee shop in entrance to church</i>	<i>1. Agree the times to open, funds needed and staff (volunteers from church)                  2. Send out flyers and posters to advertise opening times                  3. Run 3 month pilot and see what the take up is, report back</i>	<i>Volunteers (numbers to confirm but minimal)                  Funds for coffee and cake, plus some décor change in entrance hall                  Facilties – need nice coffee machine and couple of comfy 2<sup>nd</sup> hand sofas</i>	<i>Mr Jones</i>	<i>Within 1 month</i>

**Part B: Projects/Actions for delivery within 2 years**  
*(including existing schemes to continue)*

Project Title	Summary of top 3 actions needed for this item	What resources are needed (people, facilities, equipment, funds)	Owner	Times cale

**Part C: Projects/Actions for delivery within next 5 yrs or beyond**  
*(including existing schemes to continue)*

Project Title	Summary of top 3 actions needed for this item	What resources are needed (people, facilities, equipment, funds)	Owner	Times cale