

## **Sustainable Circuit – Sustainable Church – All Saints**

The Circuit is made up of Local Churches, so considering the sustainability of the Circuit requires the consideration of the Local Church. Nearly all the things we need to consider will overlap to some extent. What I offer is a starting point for conversations within All Saints.

### **Context**

1. **Abingdon.** All Saints does not stand alone. The Circuit has two other churches in the same town, Trinity and Peachcroft Christian Centre. Of these, Trinity and All Saints are in many ways more aligned to each other than to Peachcroft, which operates as a LEP very differently to Trinity.
2. **Circuit Ordained Staff.** Currently, 3 Presbyters are funded through Circuit Assessment, and 1 Deacon is funded largely by the sale of churches. Circuit membership is now less than 450 (across 8 churches): nationally the average number of members per Presbyter is 200. Given the shortage of ministers to appointments in recent years it's possible that even if the Circuit wished to retain 3 Presbyters, it would not succeed.

### **Vision for Mission and Ministry**

1. What is your group's vision?
2. How are you currently pursuing this?

### **Challenges**

1. Do we think we can continue as we are?
2. What can we do together with Trinity &/or Peachcroft as part of our mission and ministry?
3. Do we need to re-group for the sake of the Gospel?

### **All Saints – particular challenges**

1. **Volunteers.** Every year it has proved difficult to recruit Stewards. In 2021/22 we have not succeeded in recruiting a Named Treasurer or a Chair of Property, and all our current four Stewards wish to stand down. We don't know how we will fill these positions this year, let alone in 3-5 years' time.
2. What do you think are the reasons people are reluctant to fill these roles and how might we better encourage people with the gifts and graces into the various roles and ministries required?

### **If ...**

1. **What if ...** the Circuit reduced the number of Ordained Staff?
  - More of the local Church Mission and Ministry would rely on Local Lay Leadership – where might this come from and how do we resource it?
  - Clearer realistic expectations/roles of/for Ordained Staff would be required.
  - Could we look at models of having Local Lay Pastors – assuming we can find a local volunteer?
2. **What if ...** We stopped doing some things, to do fewer things well. What would they be?
3. **What if ...** All Saints chose to re-group with Trinity (for example). What would we lose/gain?

### **Looking Back and Forward**

How might our Future Focus Document help us to consider all these things?