



NEW PLACES FOR NEW PEOPLE ROSSINGTON

JACK KEY

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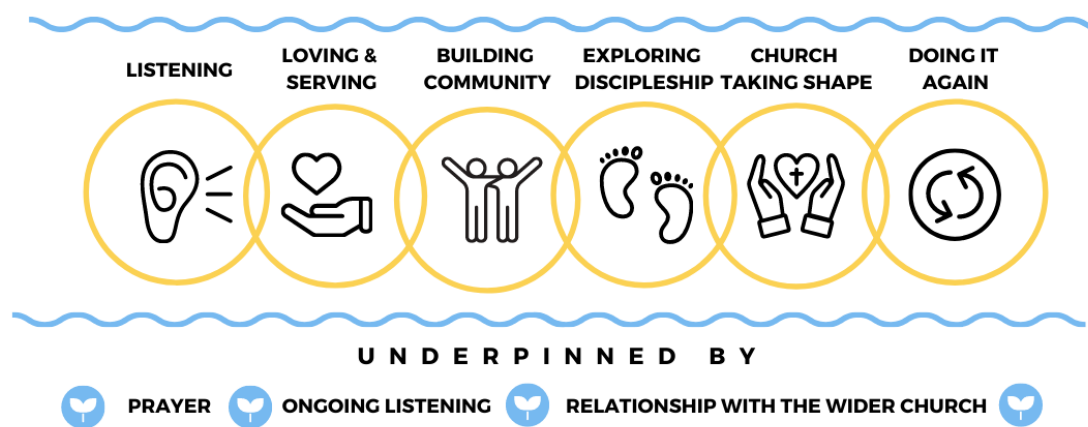
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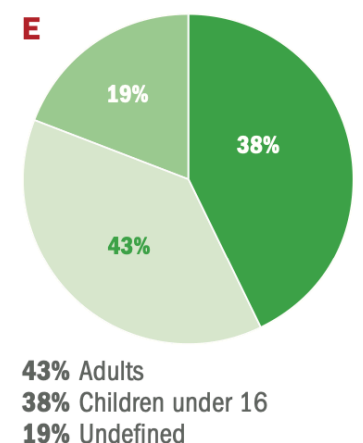
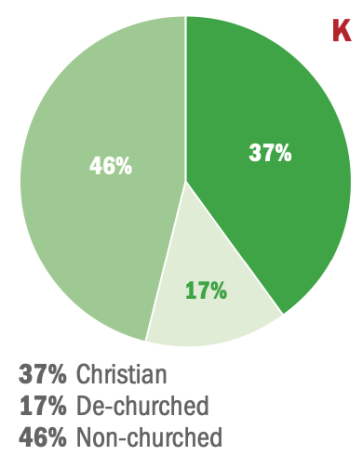
BACKGROUND

Upon moving to Rossington in mid-2020, it became a desire of mine to carefully listen to the area, and see how local people could be loved and served, and how the Gospel could be spread in new and exciting ways. Upon discovering that Rossington Methodist Church closed a few years ago, it became apparent that a different approach to mission is needed to reach people who simply do not want to go to a traditional church setting locally, but who may still desire to grow a relationship with God.



With this in mind, I started the process (shown above) of starting a New Places for New People (NPNP) by carefully listening to the Rossington area by spending the next 18 months talking to locals, looking at demographics and reports, speaking to local authorities, and noticing what God was pointing out to me. After this time-frame I then spoke to the District Mission Enabler Neil Harland about the possibility of starting a NPNP, and I started to gather the relevant info for ensuring the project be successful.

The reason a NPNP has been chosen for this project is due to the evidence of them (also known as fresh expressions) being very effective at reaching unchurched people and de-churched people. On average 63% of NPNP are non-church goers, and 38% are under 16 (see figures K and E). A traditional model of mission says 'let's get them to church', whereas a NPNP says 'let's love them and serve them and bring Jesus to them'. In a time when Doncaster Methodist Circuit has seen churches closing due to a diminishing membership, a NPNP which seeks to form new Christian communities will bring a burst of life and hope to the Circuit.

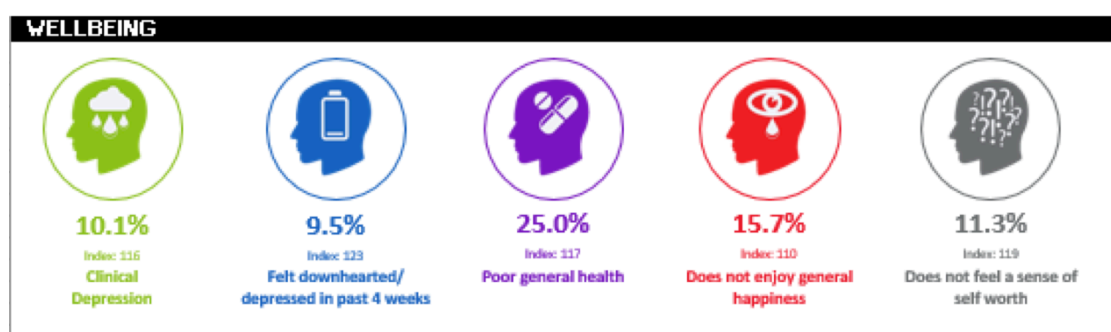


The Methodist Church is committed to growing NPNP, as it values the strong ability they have to spread the Gospel to those who do not want to go to traditional church settings. See the Methodist Church's [website](#) on NPNP.



ROSSINGTON

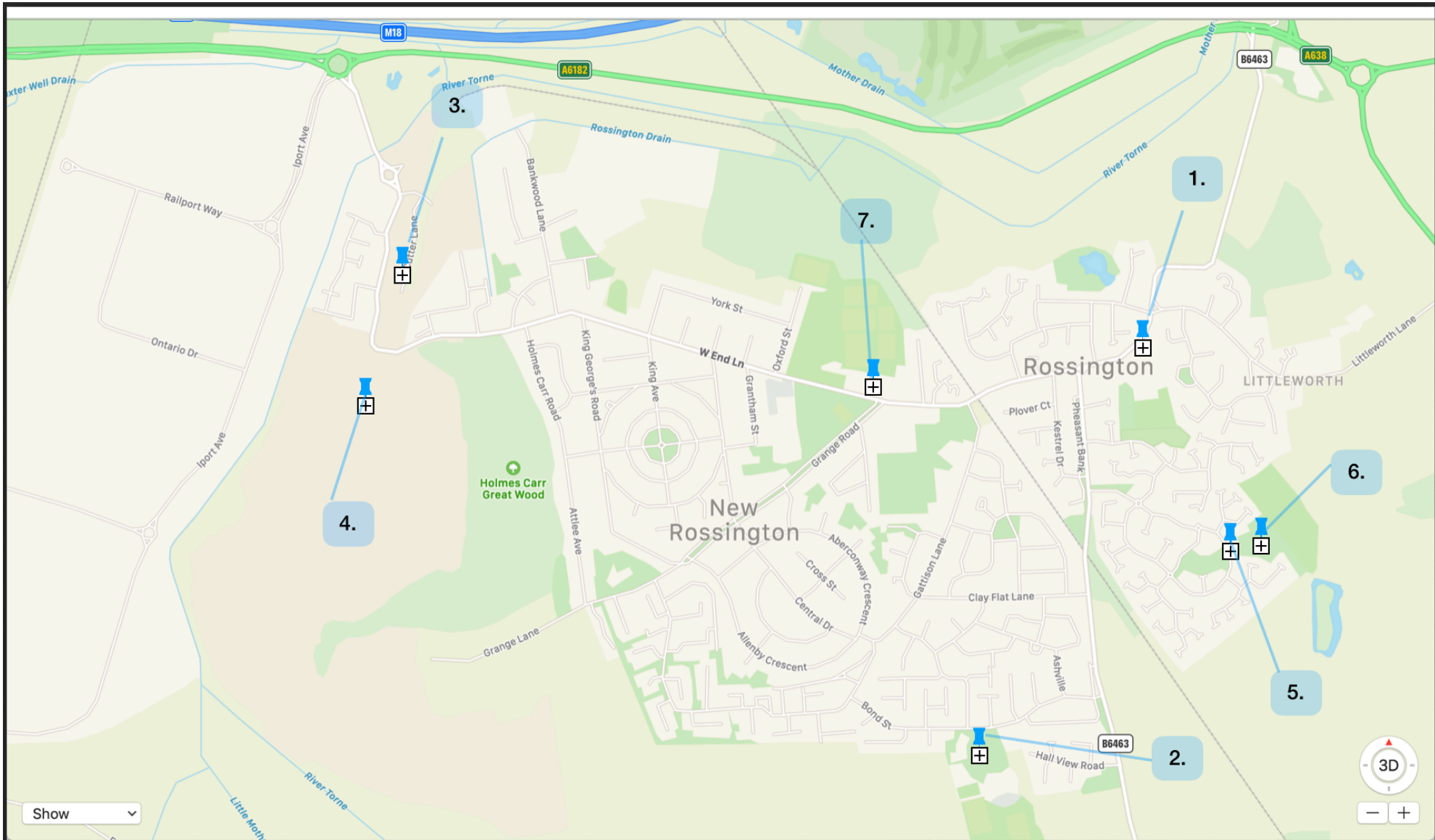
Rossington is an old mining village with around 9201 residents. A [report](#) from 2021 by *Well Doncaster* highlighted the poverty and issues in Rossington. Residents have lower education, lower income, higher hospital admissions, higher accommodation renting, higher unemployment, and physically unfit residents, and 21.6% of children are living in poverty. New Rossington is also amongst the top 10% of deprived areas in Doncaster. The figure below from the report indicates the health state of people in Rossington.



Rossington has very few outlets/resources. There are a couple of pubs, a Lidl, Co-op, Asda, small shopping area with charity shops and post office, and only one cafe. Rossington is mainly a housing area, and has been described by local councillors as being a 'satellite town' that people mainly pass through to get elsewhere.

Churches - Rossington has 5 churches: St. Michaels (CofE), St. Lukes (CofE), Rossington Community Baptist Church, New Life (Pentecostal), Christ the King (RC). Despite the various churches, membership is very minimal when compared to the local population. For example the Baptists have 12-15 attendees, and St. Michaels has around 40 regular attendees. The Baptist Church is close to closing. So whilst there are a few churches locally, a fresh missional approach is needed.

Below is a map of Rossington with pins in various points of interest...



- 1. St Michael's Primary school (CofE - Jack governor)
- 2. All Saints secondary school (CofE)
- 3. New houses - some already built. Plans for 1200 ([link](#))
- 4. New houses yet to be started
- 5. [Brodsforth Way Pavillion](#) (to hire)
- 6. Field/park - children/teens hang out
- 7. Miners club





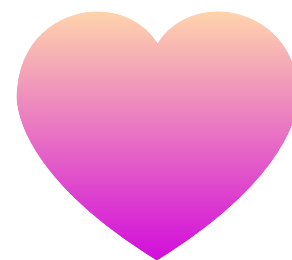
PROJECTS

Whilst I am passionate about this project, and strongly feel God calling the Circuit to move towards this serving form of mission, I am unable to be more than an active volunteer member of the team. I work almost full time in the prisons, and amongst various other commitments cannot be the main public face of this project due to the time that is required. This report follows on from the Circuit Meeting in September 2022 where I presented the project, and proposed **the circuit employs a pioneer to lead this project**. The Circuit agreed to explore the possibility, and this report is the fulfillment of all the exploring and evidence I have collated over the past 2 years to show the extraordinary potential of employing a pioneer for this project.

After listening closely to the area, and exploring what God has been pointing out to me, there are 4 primary points of interest to grow projects. Each one is a tailored response to the context of the local area and the needs of the people, to love them and serve them as Christ would. These would be started and run by the pioneer, and are as follows...



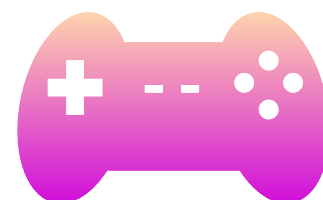
NEW HOUSING CHAPLAINCY



CHURCH ON THE MARGINS



MINDFULNESS GROUP



YOUTH CLUB

NEW HOUSING CHAPLAINCY

There are 1,200 new houses being built in Rossington (see [report](#)). Some have already been built, some are yet to be built and are in the process of being built. This project would see the pioneer being a chaplain to the new housing areas, provide welcoming baskets, organise community events (e.g. summer fayre, Easter egg hunts, family events etc.), build up a sense of community, be a point of pastoral contact, and explore other various tailored ways to serve the new community. Some of the houses have already been built, and following a conversation with Ali Boulton who heads up the National New Housing Hub Network, it became apparent that the longer a community exists, the harder it is for a pioneer to join in. So it is imperative that if we employ a pioneer, especially for the new housing chaplaincy, that this is sooner rather than later.

New housing chaplaincy is not new, it is an established fresh expression concept, which has been run in various locations. See the [New Housing Hub](#). The aim is to grow a community, and then develop it into a worshipping community.

CHURCH ON THE MARGINS

The pioneer would have the freedom to listen to the area, spend time getting to know people, and respond in a way that they feel appropriate. This may be by running a toddlers group to help parents work; running cheap/free activity groups/events for families, providing food for homeless, organising school clothes for children in poverty etc. This point of interest has intentionally been left open, in order to allow the pioneer the freedom in their role to respond in the way they feel God calling them.

Lubbesthorpe Alive is a successful example of a NPNP such as this <https://www.lubbesthorpealive.org.uk/about-us>

MINDFULNESS GROUP

In response to the poor mental health of those in Rossington, and the increasing national interest in improving mental health, this point of interest is directly addressing the report which showed the diminished mental health of those in

Rossington. The aim for this group would be to hire a room in a central location in Rossington - such as the miners welfare, the memorial hall, or the Holmescarr centre - and run a weekly mindfulness group open to anyone in the community who would like to join. In 2021 a young man committed suicide on the train level crossing, and so mental health will be on the minds of those locally.

This group would aim to start as a generic mindfulness group, advertised as having a generic spiritual element. Over time as the community builds, more and more opportunities would be given in the group to integrate Christian elements - for those in the group who wish to engage with it, with the aim of creating a worshipping community in a mindfulness context.

I would liaise with the pioneer over this, as I run various mindfulness groups, and turning a mindfulness group into a fresh expression was the focus of my Masters dissertation.

Renew 37 is a successful example of a NPNP such as this <https://www.renewwellbeing.org.uk>

YOUTH CLUB

In Old Rossington, amongst a large housing estate where I live, there is a large field with a small park for young children, a basketball/football pitch, and a small building called Brodsworth Way Pavillion which are all directly adjacent to one another. In the evenings and weekends there are many teenagers that hang out at the pitch and the park. The idea for this point of interest would be to hire Brodsworth Way Pavillion, and have a youth club that runs at least once a week in the evenings. This would aim to serve both the teenagers and local community by providing a safe space for the teenagers to hang out in the evenings. The local community often complain about the teenagers causing issues when on their own in the streets, and so this serves the community as a whole.

The aim would naturally be to run it as a standard youth club with snacks, drinks, games (and hopefully a games console), build up trust with the youth, and give them a safe space to explore faith in a relevant way to them, pray with them, guide them, and

give them hope for the future. This youth club takes Jesus directly to where the youth hang out, rather than expecting them to go to a church building that may feel irrelevant and outdated to them. This explores Jesus in a culturally relevant way, and aims to spread the love of God by serving them directly. Below are images of Brodsworth Way Pavillion. Its location is excellent for youth ministry, has various rooms and changing rooms (for sports use), and has a little kitchen.

Sorted Bradford is successful example of a NPNP such as this <http://sortedcommunity.org.uk>





Responses

In this listening process, I have been in touch with these local points of contact, and these have been their responses:

- **Local police** - Supportive of the youth club and mindfulness group. Struggled to get in touch with the local PC.
- **Local council** - The local councillor Rachael Blake was supportive of the ideas, and keen to encourage grants for the project.
- **Two local CofE vicars** - Struggled to get a meeting with either as both are so busy, but both indicated that their own churches are struggling to stay afloat, and so are very internally focused. The indication here is that none of our projects will clash with them. I'm hoping that if we employ a pioneer, and get the projects starting, they may be willing to join in and contribute in some way.
- **Baptist church Minister** - I met Eric the Baptist leader locally for a coffee. He indicated that the Baptist church would close in the near future due to low membership, and that he may return to the USA. Similarly they have no projects that we would clash with. They are not affiliated to the Baptist Union and have strongly indicated caution of working in partnership with the Methodists given the perceived liberal nature of Methodist theology, and so are unwilling to help with our projects.
- **Young people in Rossington** - I went and spoke to a group of 10-15 teenagers recently in an evening when they were hanging out at the pitch next to the pavillion.

I asked if they would use the youth club and the space in the pavillion if it were to be open to them, and they seemed keen on it, saying that they would use it. They asked questions like 'will there be sweets' and 'will there be a pool table?' So I am encouraged that they would want to actively engage with the club space. They currently have to meet outside in the open, so a warm internal communal space for them to meet in will undoubtedly be a point of interest to them.

- **Well Doncaster** - I had a recent meeting with Alexandra Mcbain and Stacey Parry from Well Doncaster (improving public health in Doncaster). They were very encouraged and supportive of the 4 project ideas. They said that it ties in well with the recent local aims of improving youth support and mental health support. They provided info on various grants, and said that due to the nature of the projects, we are in a good position to get grants (see Financing section) as they are all very relevant and priorities for Rossington. They have also invited me to be a part of the Rossington Health and Wellbeing Group to contribute to the wellbeing of Rossington.
- **Local RC priest** - I am familiar with Father Evangelist as I work with him, and am aware of the current struggles of their Catholic churches. Our projects would not clash, and again, they are focused inwards on their own church community.
- **Rossington Facebook community forum** (17k members) - I recently did a poll asking the local people if they would be interested in the youth club, and the mindfulness group (see image on right). 55 people said they would like to see a youth club, and 14 people said they would be interested in a mindfulness group. Naturally, this is not extensive as this is only those who saw the post and responded in the poll. However the results were very encouraging and people seemed interested. A couple of comments were made, such as a suggestion for an

Group participant ▸ Rossington community forum
15 October at 11:43 · 🌐

Hi all
New community projects are being explored to start in Rossington that aim to serve the people locally and enhance the community. I'd be very grateful if anyone could indicate on the poll below by voting for it if you feel like this could be something you would like to see started in Rossington:

1. A youth club at Brodsworth way pavillion in Old Rossington. A lot of young people hang out around the fields and the park there. This would be on the weekends/evenings to give them a safe space to keep them out of trouble.
2. A free mindfulness group to improve people's mental health. This would be weekly and held in in New Rossington.

Feel free to put in the comment section if you feel there are any other ideas to also enhance the community. 😊

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Youth Club	79% >	✕
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mindfulness group	21% >	✕

older people club at Brodsworth Way Pavillion, and a toddlers group. However these can be explored by the pioneer who can assess their necessity and relevance.

- **Local Primary school** - I am a Governor at St. Michaels primary school in Rossington. They have discussed the impoverished nature of the area, and the lack of interest in locals going to church. In my position at the school, I am a point of contact for the pioneer to get involved and speak to local parents/staff.
- **Rossington Parish Council** - I recently met the local parish councillors at Brodsworth Way Pavillion who showed me the inside of the pavillion. They said that they will refurbish it and expand it, and it should be available from March 2023. It may cost around £10-£15 an hour to use, with discounts for frequent hires. The hope is that the community grants will cover this (see Financing section).



PIONEER ROLE

If the Circuit agrees to employ a pioneer to initiate and oversee these projects, they will be responsible for overseeing the running of the 4 projects. Whilst I have suggested the 4 points of interest as the main focuses of the pioneer, they would have the freedom to prayerfully consider how God may be leading them to love and serve the people of Rossington and share Jesus with them in different ways than have been planned by myself. This may mean initiating all 4 projects, a couple of them, or to start other ideas instead. NPNP and pioneering are intrinsically flexible, and the pioneer is thus expected to respond to the circumstances as appropriate. Upon careful listening the pioneer may decide that Pub Church or a toddlers group is more appropriate to the local area, compared to my suggested points of interest.

Following conversations with the District Mission Enabler Neil Harland, the role of the pioneer would be contracted to half time, which would be a sensible balance between maximising presence and sustainability. The District and Evangelism and Growth team would expect a 5 year investment for this project. Initially, the Circuit would commit to a 3 year contract for the pioneer. It would be analysed after 2.5 years, and the circuit

can respond appropriately by extending their contact if the project is proving successful, or choose not to renew it if the project is deemed unsuccessful. The nature of the success will be evident by the communities that form and whether or not they are becoming worshipping communities, the financial support, and the response by the pioneer/team.

Growing a worshipping community as a NPNP is a long-term project, however due to the nature of the projects, I would estimate that the youth group and mindfulness group would be set up and established as regular groups within 3-5 months of the pioneer starting. Therefore these projects could show great potential and evidence of success within the first year.

The pioneer will have a team to support them (see Team section), and there are various other resources that they would have access to that would guide. The pioneer would be expected to continue to learn and develop their missional skills. Such resources are:

- **Methodist Pioneering Pathway (MPP):** The Methodist Church runs a free pathway for Methodists who feel called to pioneering an NPNP. They run various seminars for the pioneers led by experts, and have yearly and quarterly gatherings and weekends to encourage the pioneers. Importantly, the pioneers also get a coach paid for by the Methodist Church to regularly meet the pioneer (over Zoom) and guide them on their projects. Pioneers also gather with other pioneers and share ideas, and can meet regionally.
- **New Housing Hub:** An organisation that set up new housing chaplaincy, providing seminars/webinars, ideas, existing new housing chaplaincy projects, and books on this ministry. <https://newhousinghub.org/resources/>
- **Housing Justice:** Similarly the Housing Justice Network provides a plethora of resources for pioneers working in new housing areas <https://housingjustice.org.uk/what-you-can-do/response-to-local-housing-need#engaging-with-new-housing>
- **Church at the margins:** The Methodist Church provides resources/books/seminars for conducting church at the margins of society <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/discover-church-at-the-margins/church-at-the-margins-advocates-and-practitioners-network/>

- **Youth Ministry:** There are a plethora of books and resources equipping pioneers with youth ministry.
- **Pioneering contacts:** Other successful similar projects such as those previously listed can be points of contact for the pioneer to gain suggestions and advice.
- The pioneer would have access to the **Rossington Facebook Page community forum**, and would be able to advertise various groups/events on the page, and be a part of the community online as well as in person.



ADDRESSING QUESTIONS

After the September Circuit meeting, several questions arose about the project:

Why should a NPNP be established in Rossington compared to other areas of the Doncaster Circuit?

There is no reason at all why a NPNP cannot be established in other parts of Doncaster. The process of growing a NPNP is a very careful process that requires someone (or some people) with a strong knowledge about how to set up a NPNP, and the careful listening process that comes alongside this. As a pioneer I have been able to do this in Rossington, and have taken over 2 years to do this process leading up to this point. Having started the intentional thinking in Rossington, employing a pioneer to take it to the next stage would embed local learning that could help inform other opportunities in the Circuit. Local Methodists can then take ownership of their own projects and see new communities flourish locally to them. So whilst this project is local to Rossington, it will undoubtedly strengthen and encourage the whole Circuit.

What contacts there are “on the ground” who have indicated their support for this need (this is wider than the initial team that you have got together)?

I have stated in the ‘responses’ section the significant support from the local council, parish council, young people, local community, police, and wellbeing charity for this

project. I would like to also note that the comment has been made to me that the Connexion and Sheffield District are keen to see projects such as these happen. Therefore all of these responses show significant support beyond the immediate team. The Doncaster Circuit has also mentioned in a recent missional report the commitment of the Methodist Church to grow NPNP and grow new communities.

Whether any of these contacts are willing to be part of the team i.e. what is their level of support?

Again, I have stated the responses above from local authorities. The local council are very keen to be involved, and the local wellbeing charity (Well Doncaster), and hopefully the police and schools once we have projects up and running. As stated in the Teams section below, the pioneer will grow their own team naturally of local people, charities, organisations etc.

There is the possibility of connexional funding – what will this pay for and how much will the Circuit need to contribute financially in order for the project to get off the ground?

See finance section below.



TEAM AND CONTACTS

On the team currently guiding this process are:

- Myself
- McCauley Key
- David Robinson
- Neil Harland
- Amy Roddam

Susanna Brookes has also been a helpful springboard for ideas with her knowledge of the area, and I hope she will continue to bless the team. All the aforementioned local contacts have also been guiding the process, and will continue to support the pioneer. It may be that the pioneer can also team up with the local Holmescarr Centre (central community hub in Rossington) or perhaps the food bank to build the Church on the Margins project. The pioneer will continue to build links.

Whilst as a team we will guide the process, I was recently reminded by my coach on the MPP Tim Lea - who works for the National Fresh Expressions Team, that the pioneer will eventually form their own team of core people consisting of people they work closely with. Therefore this guiding team will undoubtedly expand to a larger team for the pioneer.

Once we have practical projects up and running, I am hoping that more local Methodists in the Circuit will be encouraged by the progress, and be keen to join in.



FINANCING

As mentioned, the Connexion and District are keen to support projects like this. They have commented on the possibility of funding **£40,000** towards this project over 5 years, pending the commitment by the Circuit first. If the Circuit approves the project, an application for the funding can be then made to the District. Following conversations with Neil Harland, these are the estimated costs:

- Pioneer salary paid at £15 an hour for 18.5 hours a week: **£14,430**
- Pension contributions and NI: **£1,168.44**
- Funding practical elements (materials, room hire etc.), an estimate per year: **£2000**

The total cost of the project each year would be around **£17,598.44**.

This will undoubtedly be a serious figure for the Circuit to commit to for 3 years, however there are a couple of reliefs available.

Firstly, NPNP are expected to become self-funding. The pioneer would be expected to incorporate ways of financing the role into the project, such as events that people pay for (summer fayre etc.), and donations from congregation members in the Circuit passionate to see the project grow. The idea here is that the projects would come to a place where the Circuit would never need to financially contribute, completely freeing the Circuit of the financial burden. This would be analysed as the projects progress.

Secondly, the application for the aforementioned £40,000 funding from the District/Connexion over 5 years.

Thirdly, it will be imperative to apply for grants related to the projects. Following recent meetings and conversations with the local council and Well Doncaster, they made the following suggestions (quoted):

VCFS - Doncaster VCFS Grant Fund 2022

A group of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations are coming together to manage a local fund established to distribute locally to help the sector address a range of community needs arising from the Covid 19 restrictions. They want to support organisations in growing and sustaining provision which tackles inequalities, social exclusion, social isolation and loneliness, and especially provide humanitarian support to the most vulnerable and the clinically extremely vulnerable in Doncaster, of which there are approximately 15,500. <https://www.voluntaryactiondoncaster.org.uk/doncaster-vcfs-fund/>

Grants available are

1. Micro Grant (up to £750)
2. General Grant (between £751 - £5000)

If you require any assistance or clarification with regards to this then please do not hesitate in contacting kate.bell@dclt.co.uk

BBC Children in Need

Their new grant programme is now up and running.

The welcome addition is the Core Costs Funding Stream – grants to a maximum of £120,000 over three years, with a simpler process for grants up to £15,000. Core Costs support essential organisational and administrative spending. These are the key expenses required to keep your organisation running, so you do not need to identify a 'project'. No deadline.

The project grants are now open again. There is only one process rather than the previous small and large grants, but the process is simpler for bids under £15,000. No deadline here either

Both schemes have a simple Expression of Interest Form to start the process

Just a reminder as well that they have a fund for emergency essentials for individual families – more important now than ever

<https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/grants/apply/>

Asda Foundation

Grants of £500 - £2,000 to support local community groups who are facing an increase in their running costs (rent, utilities and food costs) between September 2022 and February 2023.

The funding is intended for local not-for-profit community groups who are facing an:

- Increase in rent/utility bills: support to keep community buildings open to the public or increase opening times to help people stay warm (known as 'warm banks').
- Increase in food costs: support for people most affected by providing meals, support community cafes, food parcels, delivered meals, soup kitchens, etc.

Groups must contact their local Asda Community Champion to discuss their proposed project. Please note, applications cannot be made directly to the Asda Foundation. They must be submitted to the Asda Community Champion who will sign and submit it to the Foundation.

Applications will be accepted until the budget cap is reached (estimated to be February 2023).

<https://www.asdafoundation.org/foundation-grants>

Moving on Up: Young People and Employment

The latest round of this fund from South Yorkshire's Community Foundation is now open. Grants of up to £5,000 a year for a maximum of three years to support young people (aged 14-30 years) to get good, productive and rewarding jobs in South Yorkshire.

Priority will be given to organisations working specifically with vulnerable and marginalised young people

Deadline is 12 noon on Tuesday 22nd November 2022. Grants will be paid from early February.

<https://www.sycf.org.uk/grants-to-organisations/moving-on-up-young-people-and-employment-programme/>

National Lottery Community Fund - Awards for All England

A quick way to apply for smaller amounts of funding between £300 and £10,000. Suitable for voluntary or community organisations

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england>

Following these suggestions of grants, I am encouraged that we can get funding for the role, since the projects fit so many of the criteria for them. However, naturally we cannot apply for grants if we do not yet know we are proceeding by employing a pioneer here. Therefore the Circuit would need to commit to this project plan before we can apply.

Some grant funders will likely be willing to support the costs of delivering specific activities, in some cases potentially contributing towards salary costs. However we are unlikely to be certain about level of grant support available until the pioneer is in post.

Therefore the best case scenario is that grants and money from events/groups will fund the full three years of the initial contract, relieving the Circuit of any financial burden. The worst cases scenario is that we get no grants in the 3 years.



TIMEFRAME

For clarification, the recommendation this report is presenting is to have a short term, medium term, and long term plan.

Short term plan: To advertise for and employ a pioneer for a 3 year contract.

Medium term plan: To realistically expect worshipping communities to develop over 5 years. The pioneer's contract can be extended if the project is proving successful.

Long term plan: To see new worshipping communities form and reproduce in Rossington and into the wider Doncaster area into the foreseeable future. The pioneer's contract will continue to be renewed to develop the new worshipping communities. Being optimistic, we may decide to employ more pioneers in new areas!



CONCLUDING REMARKS

This project being presented to the Doncaster Circuit is a very exciting and promising concept. In a time when the Church is seeing membership in traditional churches decline, it is a time of hope when our conversations can revolve around starting new communities.

I hope the CLT and Circuit see how much time and effort has been put into exploring this project, and just how much God has been present throughout the last 2 years of this discovery period. At this point I believe I have done what I can to prepare the Circuit for this project, and I feel I have reached the point where now all that can be done is for the Circuit to make a decision based on the merits of the project. I now ask that the CLT makes a decision about this project going forwards, and for it to be presented to the Circuit meeting in December for final approval.