

## **Trafford Methodist Circuit Mission and Ministry Strategy and Plan (1/37)**

### **Introduction**

Setting out The Trafford Methodist Circuit Mission and Ministry builds on our previous version, Trafford Circuit Mission Plan formed and embedded through 2023-2025.

This version of our strategy is a combination of the mission plan (2024), merger transition plan (2023), staffing policy (2023) and property policy (2025) and reflects continuing conversations with churches on how the circuit can support and encourage local churches in mission.

Our 2025–2027 strategy continues to set out the commitments, intentions and values we have made to meet our vision of being a welcoming, inclusive, justice seeking church. Our mission plan fully embeds the God for All – Connexional Strategy for Growth and Evangelism, Justice Seeking Church Report, Hope for God’s Future, and Our Calling Strategy and living our responsibility by supporting and enabling the work of the churches in our circuit and seeking new ways of sharing the love of God within our communities.

The Trafford Circuit was formed in September 2024 with the merger of the three circuits - Altrincham, Sale and Stretford & Urmston. As the Circuit began to take shape and planning from 2023 we held a series of conversations with churches, former circuit meetings and leaderships teams (CLTs) and lay employees about our mission and focus. These conversations continue as our world and communities change and as circuit we respond to those needs by God’s grace and seeking God in the world around us.

We reminded all our members in our transition plan <sup>1</sup>for merger that “Standing Order 500 <sup>2</sup>states that ‘The Circuit is the primary unit in which Local Churches express and

<sup>1</sup> Trafford Methodist Circuit Transition Plan 2023

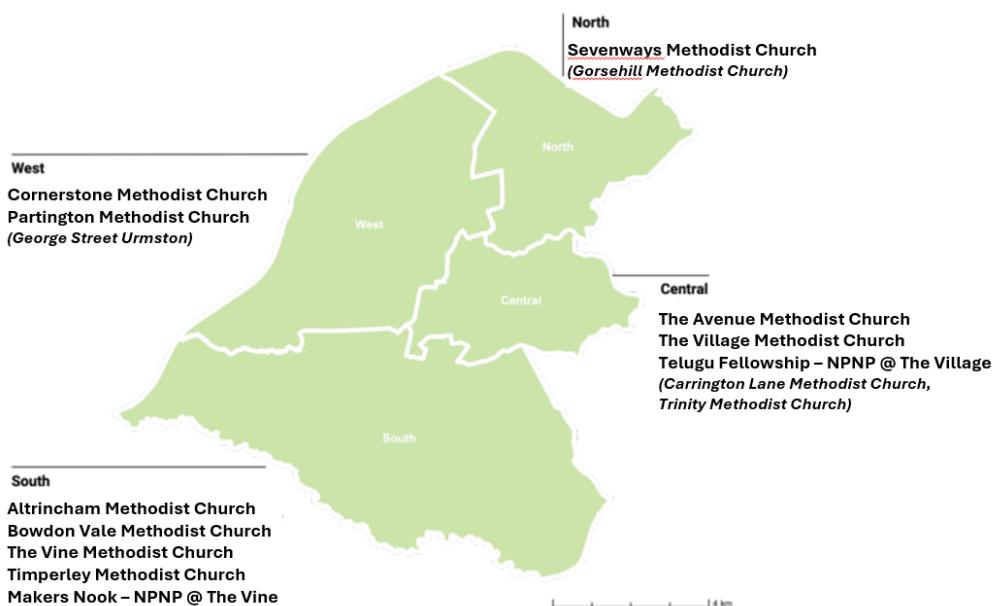
<sup>2</sup> The Circuit is the primary unit in which Local Churches express and experience their interconnexion in the Body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement and help. It is in the Circuit that presbyters, deacons and probationers are stationed and local preachers are trained and admitted and exercise their calling. The purposes of the Circuit include the effective deployment of the resources of ministry, which include people, property and finance, as they relate to the Methodist churches in the Circuit, to churches of other denominations and

experience their interconnexion in the Body of Christ, for purposes of mission, mutual encouragement, and help.”

In partnership with others where possible, we will concentrate our prayers and resources, imagination and commitment on being a welcoming, inclusive and justice seeking church.

The connexional year of 2024-2026 has allowed us to pray, listen, share and to wait upon the Holy Spirit asking God to guide and equip us as a new circuit in how we best use our resources (building and people) for mission and ministry. This seeking of God has allowed a clarity of vision in how utilise the assets as managing trustees. Conversations with all lay employees have taken place to align job descriptions with our mission focus focused on geographical areas (South, Central and North and West). With this clarity and after a pause we will seek a probationer minister for the North and West part of the circuit. Allowing this pause has allowed all churches to reflect on ministry and has encouraged lay participation and engagement.

All of our churches are committed being an inclusive church agreeing our “spiritual home pledge” at church councils in 2025 and recognise the need of meeting the challenge of carbon neutrality by 2030.



to participation in the life of the communities served by the Circuit, including local schools and colleges, and in ecumenical work in the area including, where appropriate, the support of ecumenical Housing Associations. SO 500

## Key Drivers

Our mission plan (2024) highlights our core focus and purpose and is renewed annually to ensure fresh vision and a response to the changing local context.

Our transition plan (2023) highlighted concerns of finance, resources, declining membership, loss of identity, deployment of ministers and releasing and enabling people for mission. The merger the most effective way of placing mission and ministry at the core of our circuit life.

Our property policy (2025) highlights our intention to maintain and develop our buildings where there is clear methodist mission with options to implement Model Trust 20 where applicable. “Circuit Property should be used for given purposes or rented out when appropriate. Although income raised from rentals can be useful for Missional projects across the Circuit, it is not our mission to be property agents”.<sup>3</sup> We long to see green shoots of spiritual growth. We don’t want to see all remaining time and energy being diverted to property maintenance and ‘subsistence’ fund raising – leaving little space for joy, creativity, spiritual exploration and holy risk.

We will in line with TMCP guidance and the district and connexional property team release capital from the sale of the following for the development of churches where there is growth and potential for mission growth - as identified in circuit plan.

The capital from the sale of Carrington Lane, Trinity, Gorse Hill Methodist churches and Bowling Green (Temple Road, Sale) will be ringfenced and used for mission development of premises as identified in the strategy. We will identify replacement projects – initially Altrincham (environmental, toilets, church upgrade, PA and lighting, Kitchen), Cornerstone (environmental, outside area), Partington (environmental, outside area), The Village (environmental, accessibility including toilets) The Vine (security) and Timperley Churches (new development) for missional building development.

Our **staffing policy** sought to release lay workers in responding to our key missional priorities. Throughout the 2024-2025 consultation has been undertaken and new role descriptors created to commence September 2025. (See Appendix 2)

The successful circuit merger has produced a passion for mission and ministry within our context. There is a growth through the Telugu Fellowship and New Song Café resulting in new encounters with Christ. Our brigades, children and youth ministry flourishing and embryonic Makers Nook brings an opportunity for

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<sup>3</sup> Trafford Circuit Property Policy – June 2025

inclusivity and creativity. Alongside this a growing desire for biblical literacy, faith formation for all ages and social holiness.

Community engagement and responsiveness has grown through festivals, projects working with people seeking asylum and a clear focus on being a justice seeking church. There is a sharp rise in the number of people seeking asylum - individuals and families within South and Central Trafford - and the churches at the forefront in providing support and challenging unjust systems.

Commencing September 2025 circuit training starts for local preachers and worship leaders - 6 new local preachers in training and 5 worship leaders.

We will also develop more a link with Chapel in the Fields and MHA Handsworth.

Our churches are encouraged to explore missional priorities and growth with support from the circuit and a circuit mission group has been established to coordinate church mission plans and enable collaborative and shared working.

## **Summary**

Our mission and ministry are intrinsically linked. As we journey holding the mixed economy of inherited and new ways of being church we will continue to :

- pray and seek new and inclusive ways of sharing the gospel through NPNP and Church on the Margins opportunities – using Trafford Borough demographic factors (Appendix 2).
- monitor and review our mission and ministry plans, values and intentions and respond to the move of the Holy Spirit – we will be flexible.
- facilitate local church conversations listening carefully to help identify their unique calling and gifts, to encourage a clear focus on mission potential and help with forming realistic plans for the future.
- review our ministry team (ordained and lay) to ensure churches are resourced and enabled to fulfil mission plans.
- release capital and assets for mission with the sale of churches and bowling green - developing our people and buildings for mission.
- encourage building development focused on mission, accessibility and inclusivity from capital receipts of sale of buildings.
- embed strategies to promote environmental stewardship through worship and reduce our carbon footprint. Hope for God's future.
- be a people formation circuit – coaching, mentoring and enabling all members and offer experiences for ministerial and lay development.
- pray and be open to the continual renewing of God in proclaiming the gospel in word and deed.
- embed in all we do safe practices of behaviour and ensure all churches are safer places.

# **Our Agreed Mission Plan 2024-2026 (agreed September 2024)**

## **Statement**

**Trafford Circuit aims to be a welcoming, inclusive and justice seeking church.**

We will do this by the following means: (taken from The Methodist Church's *God for All* strategy and the criteria for the New Places for New People scheme)

### **1. Being a Church for Everyone**

- Meeting people where they are
- Starting Christian Communities in new places
- Welcoming new people to new places
- Working and speaking for social justice
- New expressions of Worship

### **2. Telling our story**

- Equipping us to share our story
- Being on line as well as in person
- Being present in the community eg at Festivals
- Opportunities for gentle faith conversations
- Schools and Uniformed organisations
- 3Generate

### **3. Putting Mission first**

- Learning to lead together
- Prioritising outreach
- Coaching
- Basing all decisions for finance/ property on these Missional aims

### **4. Living as Christians**

- Studying The Methodist Way of Life
- Listening to ideas, especially from young people
- Having Prayer, Worship and Theological conversations as central to our being.
- Promote environmental awareness and carbon neutrality
- Ecumenical Witness

**See Appendix 1 for breakdown of plan**

**See Appendix 2 for Staffing Structure**

**See Appendix 3 for progress from 2024/2025**

**See Appendix 4 for Trafford Borough Demography**

## Plan for Mission and Costs – Appendix 1

A grants team has been established to help in gaining grants from the district, local authorities and other grant bodies. Local church funding and the release of funds from property sales focused on developing buildings for mission.

As our mission develops and support of churches develop so will the plan and costings.

What does it meant to be a church without walls?

### Being a Church for Everyone

Action	Who	How/ Cost
• Develop and grow NPNP – Telugu and Makers Nook – match funding district Caleb grant for staffing	Ministers oversee and management groups of NPNPs.	Staffing costs for minister 1 day a week and Lay employee 10 hours per week. £40,000 over 5 years
• Actively pursue NPNP for North and West of circuit	Lay employee and Minister	
• Develop links with Chapel in the Fields and MHA Handsworth	Ministers, CLT, Management team at Chapel in the fields South Trafford churches with MHA Handsworth	MHA Handsworth – engagement at church seasons and supporting AMC with evacuations space (see below) Chapel in the fields – develop growing understanding, funding commitments.
• Developing and embedding our Spiritual Home Pledge	Lay enabler and all churches	Cost in budget
• Carry out site visits to check “loop systems” are DDA compliant and install/upgrade loop systems in all churches.	Site visits initially then upgraded systems Contacts: tonetec Stockport	9 church site visits New systems Upgraded systems  Cost - £27,000
• Support upgrades to Audio visual and sound systems in churches. Focussed on three churches who have no/limited capacity – <b>Bowdon Vale, Partington and Sevenways</b> and upgrades to others where	Churches and circuit comms team	2 new system in small spaces. 1 review of medium space Grants for other churches to improve systems especially those aligned to new forms of worship Ensure wifi in each church. Cost - £10,000 new kit (Partington, Bowdon Vale) £20,000 for upgrading.

applicable including <b>Altrincham and The Village</b> with a main development of audio to reflect increased usage for worship.		£20,000 for Altrincham Upgrade of sound and visual.
• Support churches in disability access audits	All church councils and property stewards – 2025/2026	Grants available to upgrade and help with disabled access and toilet facilities – such as The Village. £40,000
• New church signage for all buildings in line with new circuit, circuit logo, identity and vision statement.	All property stewards and CLT Needed especially for new developments such as Cornerstone	8 churches in line with the Village new sign. £20,000 recognising church sizes and locations.
• Sensory support for all churches	Create sensory boxes as used in 4 churches – 5 more needed	£750
• Develop on the success of Partington gardens for Outdoor worship and discipleship gatherings	Lay Mission Enabler and Church team	Develop garden with outdoor kitchen – costs awaiting - £25-£30,000
• Develop outdoor space at Cornerstone for muddy church forest church	Lay Team @ Cornerstone	Develop outside area for worship – part funded and grant from circuit – grant £10000
• Training in neurodiversity, mental health awareness and LGBTQ+ inclusion training	EDI Lay worker	Staff costs covered £1250 for course fees and material
• Support Timperley Methodist in their new development in advance of selling land in line with mission and outreach plan and stakeholder engagement	Costs to support initial development plans and pre planning application processes. Sale of site proceeds to build new sustainable church.	£50,000 initially with funding for refitting as appropriate

## Telling our story

Action	Who	Cost
• Equipping members to tell their story of faith – Circuit weekend away September 2026	Circuit Leadership Team, E&G team and Learning Network	Supporting families and lay employees to attend £10,000

• Being on line as well as in person	Wi-Fi enabled in all churches, Advanced streaming kits – AMC and upgrade to tech in churches able to host circuit wide worship. <b>(Cornerstone, The Avenue, the Village and Timperley)</b>	See above for cost Streaming Kit donated for AMC – installed July 2025
• Attending local festivals, Pride, community events, BRIT Fest 2026	Lay employees and volunteers	Festival merchandise, booking space and slots. £10,000
• Create heritage centre in Timperley new development	Timperley redevelopment group	Support and advice from Heritage team received and visits to be arranged. £15,000
• Resources for schools and transition from primary to senior school	Lay employees	Staff costs in running costs and £1000 for material
• 3 Generate support for transport and attending	Lay employees	District grant applied for matched by circuit £675 plus fundraising activities through the year
• Support growth of Brigades through festivals	Brigade leaders and children and families lay worker.	Cost in festival attendance above. £1500 support to attend BB awards evenings
• Faith Development Conversations and Advent and Lent study courses	Lay employees and ministers, lead probationer minister	Resources under general budget

## Putting Mission First

Action	Who	Cost
• Shared leadership with lay and ordained team	All	Within costs
• Prioritising outreach	Lay employees and all members	Costs absorbed in telling our story. Emphasis on mission enablers. Staff costs £90,000 part funded by external grants and circuit assessment
• Coaching/mentoring lay employees	3D coaching recommended by the connexion.	12 sessions at £75 per session
• Focus and priority on mission – releasing	CLT	Within budget.

capital to support mission and building development to enhance mission.		
• See telling our story for NPNP funding		Funding noted in NPNP
• Developing established groups such as toddlers, messy churches to develop faith conversations	Group leaders, Lay employees	Support for training and resources £2,000
• Supporting theological conversation and training – developing members and our local preachers and worship leaders	Special events at The Village (October) and local preacher resources	£1500 per year

## Living as Christians

Action	Who	Cost
• Support the ministry of working with people seeking asylum at the Vine, Altrincham and developing work in Sale	Sol Diaz (Project Lead at the vine), ministers and management groups	Ensure kitchen is developed at Altrincham, The Vine and in Sale to accommodate the cooking of meals - £35,000  Setting up being a good neighbour group led by the probationer minister,
• Establish Environmental audits for all churches. Energy audit to be implemented for all churches	Ops Manager	Apply for feasibility grants 60% of cost – 40% from Circuit £10,000  Apply for feasibility funding for energy audit for all churches.
• Ensure manses and churches environmentally sustainable - seek alternative windows, heating sources and solar panels	Based on work in the Wirral – Elton.co.uk £8-12K per manse including car charging points  Church solar panels grants, car charging points with subsidy from circuit	Seek grants from source and circuit to offer grants to churches £15,000 as per church mission plans. (£135,000). Three manses to have solar panels/car charging points installed - £36,000 manses and grant for churches along with support for grant applications from Ops Manager. Heat source

		pumps to be discussed and quotes needed.
• Support Altrincham Methodist Church as a place of refuge and safe space for the community and as an evacuation place for MHA Handsworth, Adapt toilets to be fully accessible for gender neutrality (for youth events particularly) and disability	Altrincham Methodist church leadership team.	Toilets to be renovated to make three accessible toilets (gender neutral and to accessible for wheelchairs and walkers)  £45,000 quote – grants to be obtained £30,000 from circuit to support.
• Circuit to become an Eco circuit and support churches in becoming Eco churches, Inclusive churches	CLT and churches Environment Group	Environmental audit above and donation to A Rocha of £150 per building
• Host youth and children gathering to listen to the ideas of our young people.	Lay employees – challenge from 3 generate to bring together small groups of children and youth	Two activities a year – 3 generate and a gathering at the Avenue – use existing funding streams.
• Establish youth circuit meeting and also monthly youth focused worship	Lay team, ministers	Monthly worship and 3 yearly youth meeting with representation into circuit meeting. All church councils to have youth representation. Cost for updating tech as above for hosting church.
• Participate in the Passion Play in Sale - ecumenical witness	Glayne	Provide grant of £2000
• Participate in churches together – Sale, Timperley, Hale, Altrincham, Stretford & Urmston, Partington	Ministers and Lay employees	Embedded in staff and ministerial running costs
• Support Trafford Faith Network events – Live Well scheme	Ministers	Currently embedded in staff and ministerial running costs
• Reach out in peace – being a church in changing times	Ministers, Lay employees, all	Building relationships with other faith leaders, forge community relationships across divisions. Priority in relationship – cost for travel and engagement.

## **Staffing Structure (2024/2025) – Appendix 2**

Superintendent Minister – Rev Jackie Bellfield (FT) – South and North Presbyter – Rev Glayne Worgan (0.8FTE) Central, North and West Presbyter – Rev Dr Raj Patta (0.2) 1 day per week Telugu Fellowship

### **Proposed – Probationer Presbyter – September 2026 – (North and West)**

#### **Circuit Lay Employees**

Rachael Bate - Mission Enabler (North and West) with specialist area – Older Citizens and Community Engagement (FT)

Ruth Dawson – Operations Manager (20 hrs)

Jackie Davies - Mission Enabler (South) with specialist area – Schools, Children and Families (FT)

Rachel Foster - Mission Enabler (Centre) with specialist area – EDI, Inclusivity, NPNP and Youth Development (FT)

Helen Norman – Property Sales (8 hrs)

Mabel Nyazika – Church Life and Pastoral (West and Centre) (20 hrs)

Part of the Mission enabler role and mandate is to seek grant funding for their specialist area of work

## **Mission Plan Policy (2025) - Appendix 3**

The good news is that there is much we already do that meets these criteria's and the vision to do more. Our hope is that each church will add its own current events and aspirations to this list

#### Being a Church for Everyone

- Meeting people where they are: Books for Yr 6 leavers – The Village, Altrincham, HIYA outreach – The Village, the Avenue
- Starting Christian Communities in new places: Telugu Fellowship – The Village, Makers Nook
- Welcoming new people to new places. Messy Church and Story Church – The Village, The Avenue, Timperley, Lego Church – Altrincham, Breakfast Church – Sevenways/Cornerstone and Altrincham, The Café – Cornerstone and Altrincham, Makers Nook – The Vine
- Working and speaking for social justice: – Supporting Asylum seekers – The Vine, Altrincham and Sale. Foodbank – Timperley, Sevenways and The Village
- New expressions of Worship; New Song – Altrincham, Lego Church – Altrincham, Looking Deeper – The Vine, Story Church and Messy church,

## Telling our story

- Equipping us to share our story: Partington's fliers to new houses, street distribution – the Village, Christmas Angel Bombing – South Trafford Methodist Church, Nativity on the street – Churches together in Altrincham
- Being on line as well as in person: Zoom Fellowship – the Village/the Avenue/ Partington, Prayer and Pastoral Meeting on zoom – Sevenways / Cornerstone, Online Service – prepared by South Trafford Church
- Being present in the community eg at Festivals; Rachel B – Sevenways/ Cornerstone
- Opportunities for gentle faith conversations Toddler Groups – The Village, Altrincham, Timperley, Connect - Sevenways, Holiday Club – The Village, Timperley, Altrincham, Cornerstone; New Generation – Sevenways; One-off Lego, trains and Chat – Cornerstone/Sevenways Diner – the Village, The Village Café, Monday Lunch – the Vine, Coffee mornings – The Avenue, Coffee shop at Altrincham, Coffee Corner, Timperley, Coffee morning at Bowdon Vale Teas in the Garden – Partington; Monthly Eat and Meet – Sevenways; Cuppa and Chat – Cornerstone, Singalong – the Village, Musical Memories at Timperley Nursing Home Communions – Altrincham circuit team, MHA Handsworth Christmas Festival of Light – Timperley, Marathon Event - Timperley
- Schools and Uniformed organisations: Girls' Brigade – Cornerstone, Altrincham, Boys' Brigade – Cornerstone, Sevenways, Altrincham; School assemblies – Cornerstone/ Sevenways; Altrincham churches work with school resources – School visits at Altrincham, Timperley and The Village
- 3Generate – Altrincham, Cornerstone/Sevenways

## Putting Mission first

- Learning to lead together; Advent Worship resource and training session – Circuit, Faith rooted community organising courses.
- Prioritising outreach
- Coaching
- Basing all decisions for finance/ property on these Missional aims

## Living as Christians

- Studying A Methodist Way of Life; Housegroups – The Village, The Avenue, Partington
- Listening to ideas, especially from young people – Young People's group – The Village and South Trafford; Sunday Club – Timperley, New Generation – Sevenways
- Environment and Carbon neutral – themed preach on our responsibility, AMC replacing lights with LED, Cornerstone development, Timperley development
- Having Prayer, Worship and Theological conversations as central to our being. Housegroups – The Village, The Avenue, Partington, Altrincham and Timperley, Breakthrough – Cornerstone, , Ad-hoc Bible Studies –

Sevenways/Cornerstone, South Trafford (Advent and Lent) Prayer Stations – Sevenways/Cornerstone.

- Ecumenical witness and fellowship: Good Friday walk of witness – Timperley,, August Bank Holiday Prayer Walk – Sale circuit, Lent Ecumenical Bible Studies – Cornerstone, South Trafford, Ad-hoc ecumenical projects – eg Dead Good Festival (Sevenways), Ukrainian Coffee mornings (Cornerstone)

2025-2026

## Our Intentions and Our Values

We seek always to live out God's purpose and mission to our community through worship, witness, and service.

Underpinning all we seek to be and do are relationships with key partners to ensure we respond to the mission statement.

We will be an inclusive place of welcome to all at all times. We will not just be "church" on a Sunday.

We will seek to be as Christ to the very young through the generations to the more mature.

We will be a place of learning, prayer and discernment and promote a life-long journey of development in faith.

We will value the past, rejoice in the present and embrace the new.

We will care for the community and the environment and be good stewards of the earth's resources.

We will be flexible in our actions and thinking and grasp opportunities to serve and witness.

We will work whenever possible with others of great faith or none. We will celebrate partnerships in the gospel with all who seek peace.

We will step out in faith.

We believe that, if done in God's Spirit, all things are possible.



- Inclusivity - offering an equal welcome to all regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, ability, or sexuality.
- Volunteering – creating vibrant opportunities to develop skills.
- Nurturing – promoting positive, hope and grace filled relationships.
- Discipling – looking for opportunities of God-filled conversations and spiritual growth through prayer
- Serving – living the Jesus way embodying Christian hospitality
- Transforming – developing community based activities which reveals the heart of Jesus of love and

respect

- Peace making – working with partners who promote peace
- Welcoming – becoming a place of welcome and creating safe spaces

This Mission Statement was affirmed at the Trafford Circuit Meeting on Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 2024 and will be reviewed in September 2025.

2025-2026

## **Background – Trafford Borough (Appendix 4)**

### **Key findings which impact mission and ministry**

Population – 236,301 (Mid 2022) (increase of 3.7% in 10 years)

Age Profile – 25.2% (0-19), 57.1% (20-64), 17.6% (65+) – Median age is 40

Ethnicity – Ethnically diverse (22.3%) White (77.7%) - Asian 12.6% and increase of 4.7% in 10 years

Social Housing – 15% (1 in 7)

LGBTQ+ - 5,420

Trans Woman, Man, Non Binary - 778

Disability – 16.6% (limited a lot 7.0% and a little 9.6%)

Employment – 59.6% employed, retired 21.5% and 2.6% unemployed, 4.9% students, 4.3% looking after family/home, 3.7 % Unable to work through disability.,

#### **Faith breakdown (Links to telling our story)**

Christian 113,712

None 77864 - a rise of 21.2% since 2011.

Muslim 20549

Hindu - 4656

Jewish – 2408

Sikh -1984

Buddhist - 955

Other - 920

#### **Poverty Markers – (Links to Living as Christians)**

11.4% claim universal credit

11.4% children from low income families

11.8% fuel poor

**Whilst statistics portray one part of the picture – lived experience and stories tell another – we will listen to the voices of others.**