

Useful links:

- <https://freshexpressions.org.uk/>
- www.gloucester.anglican.org/your-ministry/pioneering-and-fresh-expressions
- www.gloucester.anglican.org/2017/mission-shaped-intro

Welcome pack

An editable welcome resource pack is downloadable from the diocesan website www.gloucester.anglican.org/parish-resources/new-housing-resource-hub . Please

order your over-printable pages from kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk It can be adapted to local needs. It is a gift of hospitality and welcome that helps those new to your community with vital local knowledge: doctors, banks and shops as well as information about local groups and activities – all things that are needed to live well. As well as community information, there is also an opportunity to signpost ways to connect with the local church, both opportunities to gather for worship, and weekday gatherings such as toddler groups.



For more information

Online resource

Churches Together have done significant work on this area: www.cte.org.uk/Groups/136071/Home/Resources/Evangelisation/Evangelisation_Archive/New_Housing/New_Housing.aspx

Further reading

Pioneer Ministry in New Housing Areas, Penny Marsh and Alison Boulton (Cambridge: Grove Evangelism 2016)

Mission and ministry in small areas of new housing

The ministry of welcome is at the heart of the Gospel: it is what Jesus does and teaches us to do. We need to be especially aware of this truth when new people move into the community. They come excited about a new house and new opportunities, but perhaps also nervous and apprehensive about finding their place in a new setting. Welcome and hospitality underpin all mission and ministry in areas of new housing, as with so much other ministry.

For life in all its abundance, which comes from relationship with Jesus Christ, it will be essential that we are also offering ways to explore this greater gift we have to share in worship and fellowship. This latter invitation needs to be expressed in ways which are respectful and gentle, listening first and acknowledging the ways in which God is already at work in people's lives, but ready to speak with confidence in the gospel when the opportunity arises.

This leaflet draws together in one place various resources that are available to churches working in areas of new housing.

Biblical references

'Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.' Romans 15.7



- Jesus ministry exemplified both the giving and receiving of welcome and hospitality:
- Jesus offered hospitality when he tended to both physical and spiritual needs in the feeding of the 5,000. Matthew 14.13-21, John 6.1-14
- The Last Supper links hospitality into the heart of the church's life of worship. Luke 22.7-20
- Jesus received as well as gave hospitality, he often ate in other people's homes (for example Matthew 9.9-13). It is good to be open to receiving as well as giving invitations.
- Food is often key to welcome and hospitality, in biblical stories as much as in the rest of life!

Ideas to get started

Each area is different but we hope that the following will provide ideas to explore. The following is mostly intended for areas that are not big enough to warrant a pioneer minister or church plant but which are big enough to need some separate consideration, though some ideas will be for medium rather than small developments.

- Make sure the new build houses get included in leafleting, such as Christmas service times, though it might be worth checking the Experian data to see whether they are a demographic that is responsive to leafleting.
- Advertise and invite to things like bereavement groups, toddler group and suchlike as well as Sunday church.
- Include the area in processions or events that travel through the community.
- Include the area in maps, information sheets, prayer diaries – paper or online.
- Develop a relationship with the school if there is one.
- Develop a relationship with community groups – or start one.
- Find out whether they have a social media presence such as a

Facebook page. If so, get involved and use it to advertise key events.

- Be creative. One church, for example, hired a van for a community trip to IKEA from a new build area. Another gathered together residents who had issues with the new builds to approach the developer together to fix the issues.
- Be creative. Link with LIFE groups working on themes such as sports, arts, engagement and flourishing.
- Are there enough people and a place for some kind of community gathering? Community BBQ?
- Think broadly about welcome packs – not just church information but useful community information as well.
- If there has been opposition to the development, there may be a need to let go of hurt and anger and to realise that any decisions made by the council and developers are not the fault of the families moving in.

Fresh Expressions and pioneering

For those considering a Fresh Expression as a way of engaging with their area of new housing, there are resources on both the diocesan website and the national Fresh Expressions website.



The **'three minute guides'** on the diocesan website are a good place to start, and if any parish, benefice or deanery would like to explore running the five week **'Mission Shaped Intro'** course locally, **Mission and Evangelism Officer Cate Williams**

cwilliams@glosdioc.org.uk 01452 835543 would be very glad to discuss this further.