

East Solent and Downs Methodist Circuit Profile for Pioneer minister

Geographically, the Circuit is triangular in shape based on the south coast from Portsmouth to Gosport and stretching 30 miles inland in a north easterly direction along the spine of the A3 road, to include much of the South Downs National Park. Whist the south of the Circuit is densely populated and includes areas of significant deprivation the north is more rural and includes the towns of Haslemere in Surrey, Liphook and the developing town of Bordon in Hampshire.

The Circuit has a membership of 1103 with 20 churches meeting on 23 sites. Church membership ranges from 120 – 14. 3 of the churches, including Bordon church are Local Ecumenical Partnerships involving Anglicans, Methodist and United Reformed Churches. The Circuit is staffed by four full time presbyters, a part time active supernumerary, a full-time deacon, a lay pastor, a circuit administrator (p/t) and a finance officer (p/t). At two of the LEPs there are Anglican staff working with us as well. This post replaces a full-time diaconal appointment based at Bordon.

Bordon is a town in transition. Once a garrison town it is developing into a new town following the army's departure with substantial new housing development. Bordon church reflects the town in that St Mark's LEP is an inherited type church with an emphasis on the Anglican tradition but there is also a church plant in the town that is Pioneering. A new lead minister has been appointed for Bordon church and a major task will be to bring the two differing strands of churchmanship into a common purpose for Bordon. The Pioneer Minister will support this giving attention to the development of the Pioneer ministry. St Mark's has a membership of 49 and there are approximately 18 people involved with The Beacon (The pioneer plant). There is committed lay leadership in both communities.

Haslemere is an outward focussed church that has recently undertaken major refurbishment in order to make the premises more attractive for community use. Included in this development is a coffee lounge which is widely used as a meeting place by the community. It has a membership of 45 and has a growing morning service. The church is the "Church on the High Street" in Haslemere and the building is widely used by community groups who share the church's vision. It is also the home of the Haslemere Food Bank that has kept going through lockdown. The church is seeking to move in mission and ministry and has planned to appoint a Mission Intern to facilitate sharing in God's Mission. This is likely to be a one-year appointment of a Cliff College student who will work with the church

Lindford is a small village chapel with a membership of 28 with a relaxed style of worship involving members. It is well integrated into the village, having good links to community activities. It is open to new ideas and fresh expressions of being church. It has a small core of committed lay leadership. The Methodist Church is the only church in Lindford

Liphook is a lively local church with good community links. Membership is 58 and Sunday attendance about 25. There are good relationships with other churches, regular courses or study groups, a prayer group and a Hall rented to a Pre-School. The building's position on the London Road is the nearest church building to the village centre and on the route for the annual Carnival Procession for Bonfire Night. There has been significant development in and around the village in recent years.