



Inspired North East

# Advice for the Lead Person

## Rural Churches for Everyone

### Buildings Review Toolkit

The Lead Person is chosen by a group of churches to coordinate their Sustainability Planning Process: arranging meetings, collating group scores, and sending results to the Area Dean and Archdeacon.

#### Useful Skills:

- able to confidently use simple Microsoft Excel spreadsheets
- good organising and communications skills
- can chair group discussions, to make sure everyone feels comfortable and able to contribute, and a few voices do not dominate

#### Time needed (approximate):

- 1 day to read these notes; arrange, prepare & attend a group meeting; & collate summary to circulate
- 1 day (depending on number of churches involved and distances travelled) arrange (and attend?) site visits to each church by the group to complete sections A-C of the O&S 101 Checklist
- 1 day (depending on number of PCCs) supporting PCCs to complete sections D & E of the checklist and checking their calculations; collating the results from all the churches in the group; calculating the overall score for the group; then sharing with PCCs, Area Dean and Archdeacon.

These are the tasks you need to do:

### 1. Creating a Shared Understanding

- Arrange a meeting** - You will need to convene a 2hr meeting where your clergy and at least a few members of PCCs and volunteers from every church in your group can attend. Your venue should be central and accessible for your group. You need to be able to project Video 1 so that everyone can watch it together, and provide bold pens and a flip chart, or large sheet of paper stuck on the wall, to record people's ideas for your SWOT analysis. You might also want to provide light refreshments. Think about how you want people to sit, e.g. in their PCCs or mixed together, at tables or in rows of chairs.

- b. **Before the meeting** watch Video 1 yourself. Notice that part way through the group are encouraged to pause and ask themselves questions about the characteristics of a flourishing church. Think about how you want to manage that discussion – will you need to record people’s thoughts? Will the discussion be more open if you don’t?

## We want our churches to flourish, so pause now to ask ourselves:

### Presence:

- ⊕ How are we already actively and visibly present out in our communities?
- ⊕ What other organisations could we join with to multiply our efforts?

### Perseverance:

- ⊕ How could we invest in our community over the longer term?
- ⊕ Who has unmet needs we might help to reduce?

### Hospitality:

- ⊕ How welcoming are we to everyone, whoever they are, wherever they’re from?
- ⊕ How might we become more generous with our churches’ assets?

### Adaptability:

- ⊕ How have we successfully adapted to change in recent times?
- ⊕ What new challenges are we likely to face and how can we rise to meet them?

### Participation:

- ⊕ How well do we invite new of people to join in?
- ⊕ How might we make it easier for different types of people to take part?

- c. **Before the meeting** you will need to prepare a data table collating scores from the <https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/> for your group’s parishes (see instructions below). Think about whether you are going to print this out for people to keep on their tables or just show it on the screen. During the RCfE sessions, people spent a long time studying the data for their parish, and it held many surprises for them, so give people enough time to understand what they are looking at. It is important for people to realise that this data is benchmarked nationally for the UK and is regularly updated. One of the key metrics is the **range** of scores within your group for each criteria as this describes the inequality experienced in your parish – the larger the range, the greater the inequality. The community wellbeing index website allows interested people to drill down further to find out how the scores were measured, so if people are curious refer them to that. There are suggested questions in the video to guide your group’s discussions.

- ⊕ Are there other organisations already working locally to address these which you could support? What help might they need?
- ⊕ Could your church building or church yard be used more creatively to help meet these needs?
- ⊕ Does your church have its own needs which could be met by another local organisation?

- d. **SWOT Analysis** – the final part of the meeting should be asking people to think about the Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats (SWOT) for your group of churches. You will need to lead this discussion to make sure that dominant voices give space for other people to contribute. Before asking for opinions from the floor, give everyone a pen and paper and ask them to jot down their own thoughts for a few minutes. This allows time for people to reflect on what they've learnt and organise any points they want to make. The reason for doing a SWOT for the group as a whole, rather than for each church individually, is it encourages collaborative thinking and sharing of responsibility. For example, one church's strength might mitigate another's threat, or several churches might have similar opportunities they want to explore together rather than in competition.
- e. **At the end of the meeting** – after the recap and next steps, you have a good opportunity to organise the dates for the site visits while everyone is together. You can also gather some feedback from your group. Here are some suggested questions:

## Feedback :

- ⊕ What was good about this meeting?
  - ⊕ What do we need to bear in mind for the site visits?
  - ⊕ Is there anyone missing we should invite to join us?
  - ⊕ What will you tell other people at your church about today?
  - ⊕ What benefits do you think there are to working together as a group of churches?
  - ⊕ What are you looking forward to for the rest of the process?
- f. **After the meeting** – you should write up a short summary of the meeting which includes the SWOT analysis, and send it to each of the PCCs and clergy involved. Don't forget to include the dates of the site visits.

## 2. Becoming More Open and Sustainable

- a. **For the site visits** - Make sure that every church in the group is visited by at least one person from somewhere else, and that a churchwarden or volunteer is also there to give a brief introduction about their church building and its particularities. Make sure there is a master copy of the O&S 101 checklist with the agreed results for each church.
- b. **For the PCC working meeting** – make sure they have a sight of the SWOT and a **copy** of the part-completed checklist to fill in. They will need internet access to complete part D and may want to look at some of the resources suggested in part E.
- c. **For calculating the scores and rankings** – individual churches may want to complete their own calculations, which will help them to understand how it works. The lead person’s role is to check the calculations are correct, and that the scores have been given honestly and are applied equitably across all churches in the group.
- d. **A Journey not a Judgement** - During RCfE there were one or two individuals, who hadn’t involved themselves in the early parts of process, who objected strongly to the ‘current traffic light ranking’ they were given, worrying that it earmarked them as failing and at risk of closure. You may need to check that everyone understands that the current ranking is a benchmark from which to measure change from and, where necessary, to demonstrate the need for external support. A church which has a low value for their current score and ranking, now has objective evidence of need. This will bolster any funding applications needed to achieve actions in their plan which help them become Open and Sustainable.
- e. **Collating the scores for the group** This is useful if your group is a benefice, deanery or working under the same member of the clergy, or you want to make a joint action plan, or collective approach to your Area Dean or Archdeacon for support. Once the PCCs have completed their O&S 101 Checklist – one for each church building, and you have checked that their answers are equitable across the group, and the calculations are correct, you can use the RCfE Toolkit Group Average Spreadsheet to produce a report. See below for instructions.

## 3. Developing an Action Plan

- a. **PCCs** - When you have collated and checked the individual church checklists, and calculated any averages, these need to be shared with the relevant PCCs to see if they will adopt the results and proposed actions.
- b. **Local Partners** - If a particular action is relevant to a local partner – e.g. the village school, business (e.g. café, music tutor, or therapists), or community group (e.g. choir, knit and natter, leek club), it is worth opening discussions with them at an early stage so you have a good understanding of each other’s views and can shape your plan accordingly.
- c. **Area Dean** - it is a good idea to share the results and the Aspirational actions with the relevant clergy and your Area Dean and Lay Chair. It is likely that this information will prove useful to them in their Deanery Development Planning, and that they will be able to advise

on appropriate actions to support your PCCs in their action planning. In RCfE this meant that the Deanery Development Group adopted the action plans or formed working groups to address common issues (like Net Zero).

- d. Convene a meeting of the people who will be taking forward the action plan – this may be at a Deanery, Benefice or clergy level. At the meeting the mechanism for delivering the action plan should be agreed, e.g. this might be through your Deanery Development Group.
- e. **Archdeacon** – The Church Buildings Council has recommended that every Diocese conducts a review of their church buildings every 5 years. By sending your report to the Archdeacon, your voices can be included in this review process. In some RCfE clusters, the Archdeacon became deeply involved in supporting the churches to develop licensing arrangements with community groups. She also encouraged churches to explore part-time champing and heritage uses for church buildings. The Archdeacon will also be able to suggest external partners who might be able to help with social enterprise support etc.
- f. In your action plan, make sure you include the next review of the process in five years' time!

**At this point the Lead Person's work is done for this iteration of the review.**

The delivery of the Action Plan is separate, outside the scope of the RCfE Buildings Review Toolkit.

## How to calculate your Community Wellbeing Index scores for your group of churches

1. Use the RCfE Wellbeing Index Template spreadsheet to calculate what are the greatest needs and where there are the greatest inequalities in your patch. Have a look at the spreadsheet, especially the worked example on the second tab at the bottom left.
2. Familiarise yourself with how to generate a postcode report from <https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/>
  - a. If you put in the postcode of your church, the wellbeing report for the area around your church will show. It has the overall Community wellbeing score, plus nine other scores, one for each of the indicators. You will see that these are compared to the UK average.
  - b. Record the scores for each of the nine indicators in column G of the template spreadsheet, put the name of the area in the purple box at the top of column G
  - c. There should now be numbers in columns C and D, these will change as you add more of the areas within your parishes
  - d. You need to repeat this in adjacent columns for each of the Wellbeing Index reports for all of the areas which are in the parishes of your group of churches.

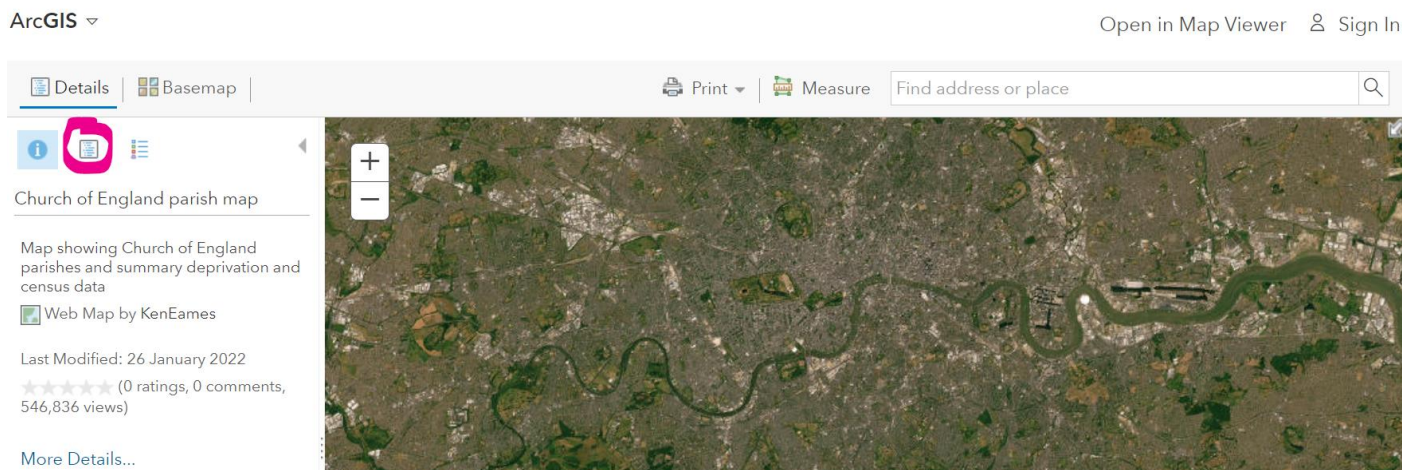


3. Adding the remaining reports for all the areas of your group's parishes
  - a. On the Wellbeing Index report webpage, there is a small map of the area on the left. Below this is a list of adjoining areas. If you recognise any of these as being within your parishes area, right click on them and open in a new tab
  - b. If you are not sure of your group of churches' parish boundaries, you can use the CofE interactive mapping tool.

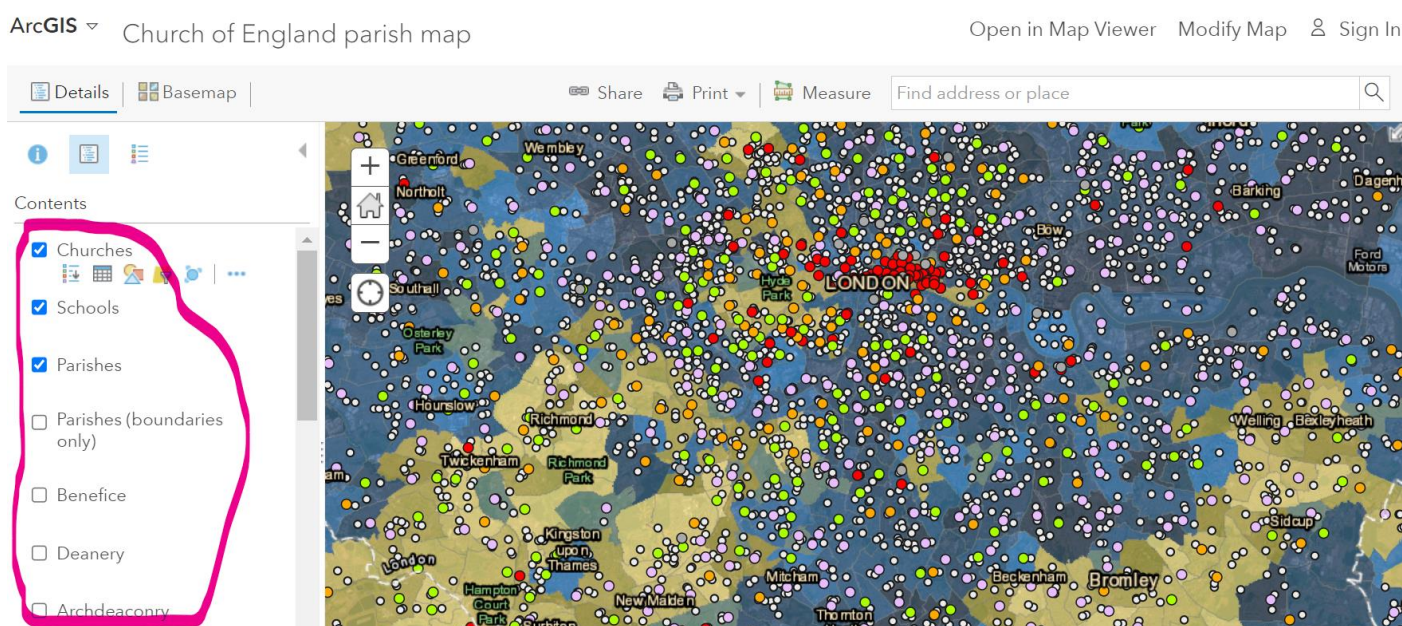
<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=67bce0ed36dd4ee0af7a16bc079aa09a&extent=-0.4317,51.313,0.1986,51.5945>

You will need to alter the data the map shows, like this.

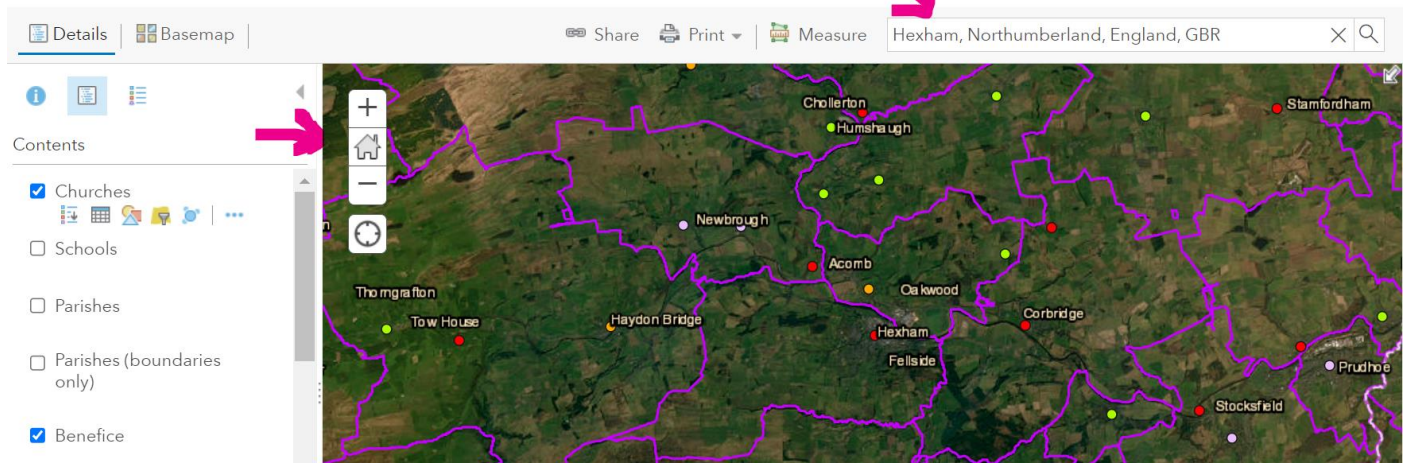
- i. Click on the blue and white box, circled in pink



- ii. Untick 'Schools' and 'Parishes'. Tick 'Parish boundaries', 'Benefice', or 'Deanery' as appropriate for the group of churches you're working in.



- iii. Use the search bar to find your area, and then use the + and - buttons to zoom in or out until you can see your group of churches' whole area.



- c. Use the map to check you have found the reports for all the neighbourhoods in your group of churches' area
  - d. Put the figures from each report into consecutive 'Neighbourhood' columns in the template spreadsheet. Check that the total number of columns you have filled is the same as the number in cell B20. This means the calculations should be correct!
  - e. As you add in more data, the information in columns C, D, E and F should alter automatically. Any areas of high need and high inequality will be highlighted in red. Look along the relevant rows to see which areas are below the average UK figures to inform your planning for sharing with the group meeting
  - f. Consider how you want to share this information with the group meeting – print outs or on screen? During the RCfE sessions, people wanted to refer back to this spreadsheet to remind them of which areas and indices were the best places to focus their energies.
4. Notes (during the RCfE sessions, some people were very keen to drill down into the data):
    - a. Metrics that The Co-op researchers used to create a score for indicators are described here [https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/media/1027/community\\_wellbeing\\_index-final.pdf](https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/media/1027/community_wellbeing_index-final.pdf)
    - b. You can search for the scores that were awarded to each neighbourhood for every metric here: <https://geolytix.xyz/coopwellbeing/desktop>
    - c. Each of the neighbourhood areas they have measured have on average 2,230 residents, 973 homes and cover 8.7 square kilometres. Their boundaries were created using travel and shopping patterns, and are not exactly the same as civil or ecclesiastical parishes. For more detail see their technical report here: [https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/media/1026/the\\_community\\_wellbeing\\_index\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/media/1026/the_community_wellbeing_index_full_report.pdf)



# How to calculate your average current and potential scores and traffic light rankings for your group of churches

1. Use the Traffic Light Rankings template spreadsheet to calculate the group average by church and by Open and Sustainable Criteria – there are the headline results that your Area Dean and Archdeacon will want to see. Have a look at the spreadsheet, especially the worked example on the second tab at the bottom left.
2. After you have checked the results and calculations on p9 of each church’s O&S101 Checklist, enter the results in columns B and C (purple title boxes). Make sure you use the Weighted totals for the last row of each church. Name each church as you go along. As you enter numbers the colours of the boxes and the information in the whole group results tables should change automatically.

Church building	Current score	Potential (total) score	Whole group	Current score	Potential (total) score
Church 1			Whole Group by O&S Criteria		
O1			O1	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
O2			O2	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
O3			O3	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
O4			O4	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
S1			S1	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
S2			S2	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
S3			S3	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
S4			S4	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
weighted OVERALL score			OVERALL group by criteria	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Church 2			# group church buildings	0	
O1			Whole Group by church		
O2			Church 1	0	0
O3			Church2	0	0
O4			Church3	0	0
S1			Church 4	0	0
S2			Church 5	0	0
S3			Church 6	0	0
S4			Church 7	0	0
weighted OVERALL score					

Church building	Current score	Potential (total) score	Whole group	Current score	Potential (total) score
St Cuthbert's			Whole Group by O&S Criteria		
O1	78	89	O1	73.0	83.5
O2	56	78	O2	50.5	67.0
O3	45	65	O3	47.5	70.5
O4	56	76	O4	54.5	71.5
S1	58	80	S1	40.5	72.5
S2	45	67	S2	49.5	63.0
S3	65	80	S3	60.0	79.0
S4	28	74	S4	36.5	76.5
weighted OVERALL score	54	76	OVERALL group by criteria	51.5	72.9
St Ebba's			# group church buildings	2	
O1	68	78	Whole Group by church		
O2	45	56	St Cuthbert's	54	76
O3	50	76	St Ebba's	49	70
O4	53	67	Church 3	0	0
S1	23	65	Church 4	0	0
S2	54	59	Church 5	0	0
S3	55	78	Church 6	0	0
S4	45	79	Church 7	0	0
weighted OVERALL score	49	70			

3. There are entry blocks for results for up to 20 church buildings. This should be enough to complete at a Deanery level. **Do not enter any digits, even a zero, in surplus entry blocks** as this will create errors in the automatic formulae. The ‘# group church buildings’ figure should be correct.
4. When you have finished entering the data from every p9 from each of the churches in your group, the spreadsheet should look similar to the worked example. If you save the file with the name of your group, and then ‘save as’ a .pdf file type, you will then be able to share the pdf with the rest of the people in your group, your Area Dean and your Archdeacon without them being able to alter the figures by mistake.