

Research Assignment in advance of Session 3

At our forthcoming Church Planting 101 session we will be exploring the HOW of Church Planting. And I'd like to get you to plan a church plant in that session. On paper. You be pleased to hear that you don't need to do it in practice. But I need you to do some research ahead of our meeting.

To get the most from that time together, it would be terrific if you were able to investigate your context. I have found the following website to be a helpful tool on UK demographic research: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>. It distillates the Census data. A slightly different way to access the data, with lots of colourful maps is <https://datashine.org.uk/>. But you may be able to find some more recent stuff that's helpful. It's worth looking at Estate Agents' websites for area guides or even the property section of your local/city newspaper.

- Imagine that your church was going to plant a church. Where do you think it should do that? Find out about that neighbourhood / electoral ward / borough or the social network your church is trying to reach (e.g. Spanish speakers or young workers). It may be harder to find data for a particular group, but the internet is a wonderful (and terrible) place and it's out there somewhere so go looking.
- What's the area like? Who's there? What are they like?
- Ideally, if you have time, have a walk around the area (e.g. How many skips are there? Where are people hanging out?) or have a conversation with someone from the group you're seeking to reach.
- Can you express what it's like to live in this place (the vibe?) in a sentence? Can you express it so well that someone who's lived there for decades would say, 'That's exactly it; I hadn't thought of saying it like that but you've nailed it!'

We'll spend the session together applying the principles of HOW to plant to a particular location. So come prepared with where you're planning a plant, who lives there and what they're like as best as you can. Don't spend hours on this. But do enough to feel like you've got a handle on the location of your church's next church plant. Thank you.

Yours in Christ,

Richard Perkins
Director of Church Planting, Co-Mission