

Where will you be based?

SHOLING | A large suburb on the eastern side of Southampton, Sholing is home to around 20,000 people, with young and middle-aged families making up three quarters of the local community. Sholing has several large parks, open spaces, and a wooded valley through the middle of the parish, as well as seven schools (four primaries, two secondaries, and a sixth-form college), many of which we have close working relationships with. Although most of the parish is made up of comfortable owner-occupied housing, Sholing is also includes an area of significant deprivation on the edge of the city – a large estate which is home to our new ‘community hub’.



St Mary's is a growing, family-friendly church at the heart of Sholing. Our aim is to be a diverse church which is fun and attractive; a creative community expressing love in practical ways; a multi-generational family offering a place of friendship and belonging to



all people. We have a rich variety of Sunday services (including traditional, liturgical, Messy Church, contemplative, alternative, hands-on, and more) and midweek groups (including homegroups, youth clubs, family fun days, toddler services, and groups for older members of our community). We also host a food bank for the local area. At St Mary's we have a real focus on children and families; most of our recent growth has been among unchurched young families, and we hope to build on this as we continue to welcome new people into our church family and serve others in our local community.



Pioneer ministry is high priority in Sholing; our team includes a pioneer minister, a pioneer ordinand, a Church Army evangelist, and a growing pioneer team. We have recently established 'Monty's Community Hub', a community development charity based in the most deprived area of the parish, where we are developing a number of projects alongside local residents and seeking to see a fresh expression of church emerge from within the community.

We are also exploring prayer spaces in schools, school spaces in the church, church services in the pub, creative spaces in the community, and have recently established our Pioneer Mission House (a growing community of people in their 20-30s gathering around a shared meal table rather than a church building).

You will be given opportunities to explore and participate in all the different areas of mission and ministry in Sholing, as well as being encouraged to explore and develop your own gifts and calling within an accepting and enabling community.



Your Placement Supervisor will be Greg Bakker, who has been the vicar at St Mary's for six years, and a very encouraging and experienced training supervisor.

