

Where will you be based?

SWAYTHLING | Located about three miles north of Southampton city centre, Swaythling is a diverse and multi-cultural neighbourhood, including over 6,000 students and significant amounts of social housing. This is a vibrant mix, but also has potential for tensions, and the local churches are seeking to be active in building community.

Swaythling Parish includes two churches – St Mary’s (a medieval building adjacent to the University of Southampton’s Wessex Lane accommodation for 2,000 students) and St Albans (a large building built in 1933, with a flexible worship space and a community room). Worship in both churches is centred on the Eucharist, exploring a range of styles and patterns of worship, while both prayerful congregations are outward-looking and committed to mission. As there are few focal points in the local area, we hope that both church buildings could play a key role in providing community focus.

If you joined us in Swaythling, you would be nurtured and pushed to get the most out of your time with us; gaining insights into the challenges faced by small churches seeking to reach out to their community. As well as being involved in the social and liturgical life of the parish and exploring outreach through the occasional offices, you would also be encouraged to get involved with Explore@8 (our embryonic alternative late service), Tuesdays Together (a weekly activity for local families), Knit & Natter, pensioners’ lunch, film nights, and schools work. We also hope you will help shape our conversations about how to grow ministry with students.

Your Placement Supervisor will be Peter Dockree, who has been the vicar at Swaythling for just over a year. Peter has had a varied background – in the Church of Scotland, the Methodist church, student days active in the Christian Union, and over a decade worshipping in a large charismatic church, and now called to a more liturgically traditional setting.