

West Smethwick Church planting/Revitalisation Profile

Close to Junction 1 of the M5, West Smethwick is a multicultural community at the heart of the West Midlands Conurbation. 55% of the population are from a South-Asian background with the rest of the population including 29% White British and 8% Afro-Caribbean. The local Community includes significant Muslim (29.7%) and Sikh (22.5%) populations and as well as mosques and temples, the neighbourhood boasts one of the largest Sikh Gurdwaras in Europe.

This is an area in desperate need of the Gospel. Whilst the focus is likely to centre on West Smethwick Congregational Church, it should be seen more as an opportunity to plant or replant rather than a revitalisation project. Although a congregation has sought to be faithful to the Gospel and maintain a witness, it is sadly dwindled to about half a dozen elderly members. They are however keen to see a Gospel witness continue.

We are looking at the possibility of a congregation re-plant through collaboration with several churches under the initial oversight of Bearwood Chapel's elders.

There are opportunities for week day outreach and the area would lend itself well to ESOL classes, youth and children's work and door to door outreach.

The Commonwealth Games Swimming venue is due to be developed on a site just 20 minutes walk from the current building. Galton Bridge, a Grade 1 listed structure spans the Telford Canal nearby.

The neighbourhood is well connected for transport links with 3 railway stations within easy walking distance as well as the M5 motorway. Smethwick and Langley Green provide nearby high streets and there is also a local park. Schools include George Betts Juniors and Holly Lodge High School.

We are looking for:

- A possible lead planter to work full time in the community
- Individuals, couples and families who might be willing to move into the immediate neighbourhood
- Other individuals, couples and families who may not live in the immediate vicinity but who are reasonably close by and willing to commit their time to the church plant for at least 2 years.

The aim is to launch by September 2020.