

## ReShaping the District - a Regrouping for Mission Agenda

### Introduction

Regrouping for mission starts by highlighting that our organisational structures developed and grew at a time when our membership and resources were very much greater, but has not been rethought as our numbers and resources have reduced. More importantly, it has not been altered to respond to the changing nature of God's world around us, and the challenges and calls He now presents to us.

### The Kairos

This is the moment when the District needs to respond responsibly to the challenge of the national Regrouping for Mission process.

After two years of a five year time-span. We have three years left to explore identify and implement the changes that we need to the way we are structured as a District.

Regrouping for Mission has been increasingly supported by the whole church: including Conference, Council and Connexional Leadership Forum. It is appropriate to have our own distinct response to the process, but we need to operate within the context of the national church, and other districts, many of whom are significantly further on with regrouping than we are.

### The Issues

We need to consider:

- a. Thinking and planning for Mission, including that of the wider Church, Methodist and ecumenical.
- b. Building cohesiveness that connects people across churches, circuits, the District, the national church and other denominations, in common discipleship as part of the body of Christ.
- c. Rationally sharing resources which are in short supply, or which could be more fully exploited on a wider platform, including ministerial and volunteer staff.
- d. Reducing the time and cost of servicing churches, circuits and districts, leading towards an invisible church structure, and releasing energy for mission.
- e. Using staff and volunteers in ways that best enables them to exploit their gifts, and minimises unhelpful and unnecessary pressures.

### The Benchmark- A starting point based on best practice and aspirations.

Churches (and staff) should expect to be organised according to the Benchmark for the District, unless they can justify a different position.

1. Circuits should have between 160 and 220 members per minister.
2. Circuits should have between four and nine ordained staff (640 to 1980 members).
3. Circuits should have a maximum drive time of 60 minutes for the journey between key centres.
4. Circuits should include more than one larger church (100+ members).
5. Circuits should have geographical and community coherence.

### Timetable

All Circuits need to be able to state their response to this agenda by June 2011, with an expectation that movement towards new shapes will be substantially in progress by September 2013, with a few areas encouraged to complete for September 2012.