

Listen, observe, act – in step with God

A Community Sketch Map

Practicing your observation skills in church!

Why draw a map?

Sketching where we live helps us look at our community and listen to each other – discussing what is important to each of us and potentially identifying what we might do to build community. It's also a visual tool to help us pray together as a group.

How to start

Draw a very simple sketch of the main roads/footpaths of the local community you want to focus on. Ideally use flip chart paper (just one or several sheets, whatever you feel comfortable with), so that there will be space for others to add things to it. You might want to do this in advance, or you can draw it at the meeting. Gather up some coloured marker pens that people can use.

Invite people to draw on the map the various things they consider to make up that local community. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' things to draw! People might draw churches, schools, care homes, community centres, housing estates, parks, shops, their favourite takeaway, waste ground, traffic lights – anything they are aware of that is part of the local community.

Reflecting together

Encourage people to look at the map and discuss what they see. What thoughts come to mind? Each group discussion will be unique, but people might comment on both what is and what is not there, on sources of support within the community or issues that drawing the map has identified. The following questions may be helpful to start your discussions:

- What have we drawn – and why?
- Are there things we haven't drawn? Does that tell us anything?
- What have we learnt together through drawing this map, about ourselves and our community?
- Has this map helped us identify ways that we could explore to engage with and support our community?

Praying together

The map is a visual representation of the community. Use it as a focus of prayer:

- To give thanks for the people who form that community and for all that happens within that community
- To intercede for those who are in need, who are lonely or isolated, who are vulnerable
- To reflect on how God may be calling us to engage with our local community.

