

# Church Profile for Sholing Baptist Church

Agreed by the Church Members' Meeting - March 2025



[sholingbaptist.org.uk](http://sholingbaptist.org.uk)

## 1. Introduction

People who visit our church often describe us as being very friendly and family oriented. Our size allows us to know each other quite well and we enjoy sharing and celebrating life together. We are well represented in the lower and upper age ranges but wish we had more in the middle. We are encouraged by the friendliness we receive from visitors and the community and hope that with God's help we will be able to draw them in to a personal relationship with him.

## 2. Our Church as it is now

### A. The People

We have a regular Sunday Morning attendance of about 40 to 50 adults (equal split male/female) plus up to 20 children (mostly girls)  
20% of the adults are in full-time employment and about 60% are retired.

Our pastor has been full-time with us since 1987. He is currently on 2/3rds pay, working towards full retirement in the next year or so. His family are very much involved in the life of our church. We employ 2 Children and Family workers on a part-time/job share basis.

Our Leadership Team consists of 5 men, supported by an Engage Planning Group of about 10 people (male/female).

Amongst the fellowship we have some who hold differing views on certain aspects of Christian teaching, but we would all hold to the authority of the Bible as the basis for our faith.

## **B. The Services**

Our Sunday morning service, live streamed on YouTube, starts at 10:30. It has an informal, relaxed and family friendly feel to it. After about 30 minutes the Children and Creche go downstairs. Our sung worship is led by three separate music groups (with differing styles) on a rota basis. We encourage others to take part by leading, praying or sharing a children's talk etc. Bible teaching and its application is the main emphasis of this service. On the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays we include Communion. We usually finish before 12:00. At the end of each service, we have tea, coffee and biscuits, sometimes cake, and lots of people stay around and chat.

About a dozen people meet on Zoom Sunday Evenings, except occasionally when we organise an in-person, informal worship/sharing time. Once a month we have a "Whole Church" Prayer Meeting.

## **C. The Activities**

We have 5 Life Groups which meet on a fortnightly basis, some in people's homes and some at the church. We also have a fortnightly Tuesday morning Zoom Bible Study led by the Pastor.

On Wednesdays about 10 mums plus kids come to our Mustard Seed Toddler Group. We have mid-week children's and youth meetings, which between them attract 35 kids. We need more helpers and would like to be able to separate into more appropriate age bands. We are trying to invest more in our teenagers as we have struggled to keep them in the past.

Our Pastor and Children's Workers occasionally visit local schools for assemblies or lessons. The whole of Year 1 from one school visits the church annually as part of their curriculum.

We run a fortnightly Wednesday Evening Craft Club, mainly ladies but not exclusively so.

Every other month about 20 to 30 people enjoy a meal together at the church. This is particularly appreciated by those who usually eat alone. And on the alternate months about 15 to 20 adults eat out at a local restaurant.

For a week in August, we organise a Church Family Holiday for 80/100 people.

We usually run a Children's October Holiday Club as well as Family events at Christmas and Easter.

We have five trained CAP Money Coaches and intend to regularly run budgeting courses.

## **D. The Buildings**

Our church building is old but reasonably well maintained. The ground immediately drops away from the pavement level, which unfortunately means that both our two levels must be accessed via a ramp or steps. The top floor is mainly used for our Sunday Services, but the moveable 80 Church chairs do allow additional use. On the lower level there are 3 different sized rooms. The largest has a baptismal pool beneath the floor. On this level are also ladies, gents and disabled toilets, a small kitchen, and access to a private car park. (We do not have toilet facilities on the upper level.)



We own the ground behind the church, a green valley with a small stream, which is very useful for games, picnics, family fun days and fireworks, though the various levels mean that it is not suitable for all.

There is a small 2 bed house, attached to the church, currently let out to a church member, providing a valuable source of income. The church facilities are also used occasionally for birthday parties and charitable causes.

## **E. Wider connections**

We are a self-financing, self-governing, independent Baptist Church, though for historical and practical reasons the Baptist Union are the legal trustees of the building.

We have informal, friendly links with local churches.

We prayerfully, and in varying degrees financially, support about 15 organisations and individuals in their Christian Ministries.

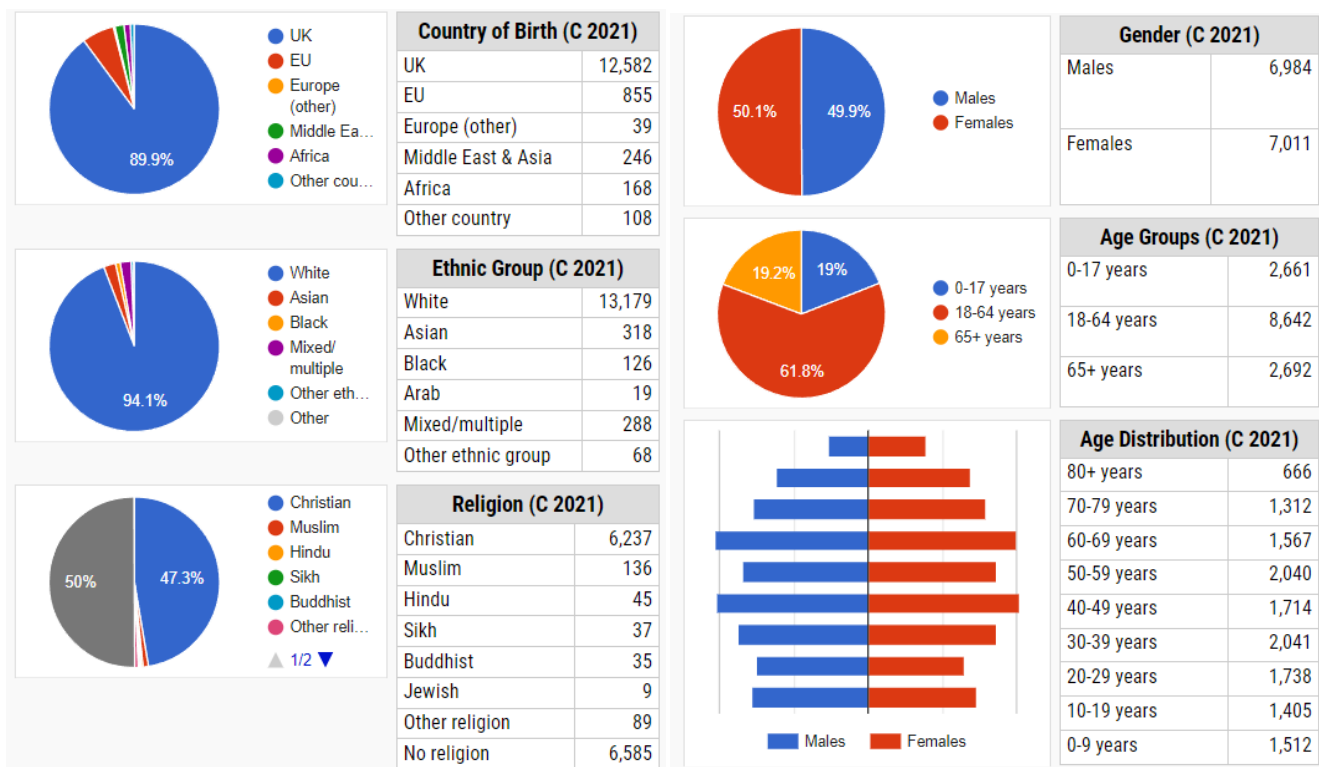
Some musicians from the church regularly play and sing at a couple of Residential Care Homes.

## **3. The Area**

Sholing is a residential area comprising mainly private housing near the church but with some social housing slightly further away. There are local shopping areas in nearby Woolston and Bitterne, and easy access to the City Centre.

Within a 10-minute walk of the church we have Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary Schools, plus a 6<sup>th</sup> Form College. We have stronger links with the Infant and Junior Schools.

Various Churches in Sholing serve the local Community with Coffee Mornings, Meals, Toddlers Groups, Youth Clubs, Food Bank, Money Coaching and Family events and activities.



Sholing: district on the eastern side of the city of Southampton, in Hampshire, England  
[https://citypopulation.de/en/uk/southeastengland/wards/southampton/E05002468\\_sholing/](https://citypopulation.de/en/uk/southeastengland/wards/southampton/E05002468_sholing/)

## 4. The Church we would like to see

Following the metaphors given in the Bible we would like our Church to be

**A Branch** – where everyone in our Church is primarily connected to Jesus and secondly to one another. To realise our dependence upon him, feeding on his word, responding to his teaching, growing and bearing fruit. We need to be more intentional as to how we can draw those who are just resting in the branches to become part of the vine.

**A Body** – recognising that though we are all different we are also all equal. Where every person knows and feels loved, cared for, appreciated and needed. Where those who feel weak also feel supported. Where everyone, regardless of age, is given the opportunity and encouragement to serve, as enabled by God's Holy Spirit. We are conscious of a lack of organised nurturing, mentoring and training in these areas.

**A Building** – living stones shaped and fashioned by God to fit together. Supporting and strengthening one another, enabling us to grow individually, and collectively, and numerically. Visible within the community displaying God's wonderful light. We would like to increase our contact and influence with our neighbours. We recognise our need to be more prayerful.

**A Bride** – beautiful, spotless, bringing glory. Humbly hoping to be a church that God rejoices over. Loving and following God out of devotion. Prepared to meet our coming King.



## **5 The Minister we believe that we need**

In view of the imminent, planned retirement of our current Pastor we are looking for a person to join our Leadership Team to work together with them in the spiritual oversight of our church; encouraging us all to live out our faith and lovingly serve others both within our church and our community.

We believe this person should have a strong personal belief in the authority of the Bible and its relevance today; to be able to teach, encourage and nurture others in the Christian faith; recognising, developing and using the differing gifts and abilities of those within the church.

Whilst all age groups are important, we feel particularly that we need to address the shortage of young adults in our church. Consequently, our new minister should have a passion and an ability to communicate well with this age range, and a strong desire to see the church grow.

To work well within the ethos of our church we consider this person should be male, baptised, believe in Creation, and hold traditional views on sexuality and gender.

## **6. A brief history of the church**

In 1871 a small Mission Hall was built in Sholing. In 1878 several young men came across from Southampton's Carlton Baptist Church and the current congregation is the continuation of their work. In 1887 the Mission Hall was replaced by the present Chapel. Subsequent additions and alterations, including a ramp at the front, have been undertaken as the need arose.

The Baptist Church congregation was severely depleted during the Second World War, not just by war service but by the evacuation of large numbers of children. Some of the members from a neighbouring church, whose own building was destroyed, transferred and became a major force in keeping the work going. When others returned to rebuild their own chapel, some remained, and the fellowship was built up once more.

Like many fellowships, numbers have fluctuated over the years, but we thank God that he has enabled Sholing Baptist Church to continue as part of the Gospel witness in this area.

## **7. Practical Matters**

We are looking to fill a full-time position and can offer a stipend in the region of £32,000 - £44,000, dependent upon age and experience. We remain open to the possibility of part-time ministry if appropriate.

We are not able to provide housing but happy to discuss personal circumstances at interview.