



# Shalom in Our The Local Economy:

## *Mission Engagement with local shops and businesses*

*Local shops and businesses are vital community 'anchors' - providing activity and meeting places. Benefit cuts mean that about £1m per year coming into some of the poorer wards of our area. Those on benefit tend to shop more locally than those with more resources. Local churches can play a vital role in keeping peace / 'shalom' within their community.*

### Pray for the local economy and ways of working/un(der)employment:

**Mapping/ Prayer Walk:** Getting to know the businesses in your area, mapping who they are and what they do. Church members will also have information to share.

**How is God involved in work?** Work allows us to participate in God's purposes: unemployment / destructive work can exclude us from this. How has work served the local church community Where in the community is the The Sure Foundation at work? The Advocate? The Hidden Treasure? The Pearl of Great Price?...

**Include the local economy in church worship:** Use 'Hymns of Work'; pray for shopkeepers; Harvest worship of work that the community does; Come to worship in workday clothes.

### Direct Engagement:

**Go out for a chat with local workers/staff:** High St Shops; Corner shops; Industry; Town Centre Managers; People working from home; Libraries/Council Offices/Health/Job Centres

**Campaign/Action:** help local businesses to know/use each other; organise unemployment mutual support/skills training; reduce impact of 'money shops'; work with local partners and council

**Set up regular chaplaincy relationship with local workplace:** offer to break isolation; connect to local community; affirm their sense of God - someone praying for them;

*How to get in: Walk in; Through a staff member/warm contact; Approach to the boss*

*What to think about: Can you see if they are busy? Is there a sense of privacy for conversation? Are they used to receiving guests/customers? Working time or 'lunch' break? Discipline/regularity/variety of times? Are you contactable if they want to get hold of you? Health and Safety issues/boundaries; Confidentiality; Conflicts of interest/ challenge role / finding out things.. whistleblowing..*

### Use your Assets: Eg

**Money:** Encourage church people to use local businesses/shops; What are church savings accounts being used for/invested in?; Engage with the local credit union.

**Use building/worship:** Allow businesses to rent space; employ joint admin support with local small business; Open up the church building for coffee/breaks/ quiet prayerful space; Public Prayers for local businesses

**Use your connections with schools/colleges/community** to facilitate engagement with business - eg local skills needs, apprenticeships, community re-investment.