

### Update on Deployment Targets

1. All the ministerial deployment targets agreed within the URC rest on figures for the number of churches and the number of members. With the results from the churches' Annual Returns at the start of 2023 now available and published in the 2024 Year Book, all these targets can be updated.
2. This year the statistical treatment of members in LEPs has changed in a way that benefits, in this context, those Synods with a large number of large LEPs and works to the detriment of Southern Synod by reducing the share of the total URC membership attributed to this Synod. However the rate of church closures in Southern Synod is lower than for the URC as a whole, which increases the Synod's share of the total number of URC churches. These two factors have largely offset each other this year and so the share of the total number of ministers available for deployment that the Southern Synod is entitled to use remains at 13%.
3. The rate of decline in the total number of ministers available for deployment across the URC has slowed but the number is still reducing. So our 13% share is also a reducing number.
4. Taking all these factors together, the Synod's target number for planning purposes, which is the target number of ministers four years ahead, has fallen from 35 to 33.
5. Within the Synod we have agreed to break down this target number to give a guide to each Area. Synod Council has decided to exclude from the Surrey & Sussex Synod Area (S&SSA) target the new post in Brighthelm. Sharing out the remaining posts produces the following results:

Area	Previous Target (for 2027)	New Target (for 2028)	Actual (Feb 24)
CSUA	3.5	3.5	3.0
KESSA	[8.5]	8.0	9.0
S&SSA	8.5	7.0	4.0
SLSA – West	7.0	6.5	9.0
SLSA – East	7.5	7.0	8.0
Brighthelm		1.0	
TOTALS	35.0	33.0	33.0

6. Known moves and likely retirements will take 9.5 fte of the present ministers away before the end of 2028, so there is scope for bringing in new ministers without breaching our target. These opportunities are concentrated in the S&SSA and, to a lesser extent, the new Kent & East Sussex Synod Area.

John Ellis

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