



is aimed at promoting the health and well-being of its community.

The Lighthouse project run by St Mary's, Andover, in the Diocese of Winchester, provides a range of social projects, and takes referrals through social prescribing made by five GP surgeries to the Primary Care Network in the town.

Services provided by the church include a course in well-being at the local further education college, debt management through a partnership with Christians Against Poverty, and the Good Grub Club, a community cooking and food programme with an emphasis on preventing food waste in the town.

The church also has a double decker bus – called the Life Bus - that visits estates in Andover for Make and Munch lunch and crafts sessions in partnership with the local public health team. The church also provides chaplaincy services to the staff at the Primary Care Network.

Since it was set up in 2020, the Lighthouse project has been able to support at least 800 people and has engaged more than 170 volunteers. Some of those who have been helped have come through referrals from the NHS.

Chris Bradish, Vicar of St Mary's, said: "There are many people who visit their GP with non-clinical needs – some may need help with debt, loneliness or they may be struggling with other issues in their lives such as food poverty.

"The partnership with the Primary Care Network has meant that their needs can be assessed and they can be offered help and time through social prescribing.

"As a church we have found our voice as confident witnesses to the gospel by the grace of God. It has deepened the faith of our congregations and we have rediscovered the relationship between evangelism and social action ministry."

*St Mary's is a resource church which was launched in 2019 with support from Strategic Development Funding*

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