

**Minutes of the Forum Churches Together in Sudbury & District held on Thursday 24th January 2019
at Sudbury Catholic Church**

The Forum was attended by 32 people from 14 Churches

1	<p>Worship, Prayer</p> <p>Father Peter Brett welcomed the Forum to the Roman Catholic community. He said that there was a good attendance at all masses. Their main outreach was Tapalogo – a project in South Africa. A sum of at least £50,000 had been raised in the Parish over the last few years to support Bishop Kevin and the work he does particularly with children with HIV and aids and helping with education. Other than that Father Peter said it was necessary to keep focussing on the Lord. He reminded the Forum that we do not strengthen the church – Christ does everything through us</p> <p>He then led the Forum with a prayer of St Clement of Rome.</p>
2	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Rev Caroline Hallett, Rev John Boardman, Paul Clapham, Ben Troughton, Rachel Hepburn, Judith and Malcolm Offord, Sue Kistruk, Mark Prina, David and Pat Ford, and Andrew Phillips</p>
3	<p>Minutes of October Forum – Approval</p> <p>The minutes of the October Forum were approved as accurate subject to the correction of “Jowett” to “Jowitt” and signed by the Chairman.</p>
4	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>
5	<p>Treasurer’s Report</p> <p>A copy of the Treasurer’s report showing finances as at 19th January 2019 had been circulated.</p> <p>The Treasurer had no further points to make.</p> <p>The Treasurer was thanked for all the work that he does.</p>
6	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Malcolm Snow said that Ann Boardman, currently the organiser for Christian Aid, would be leaving the area in the summer. He appealed for someone to work with Ann this year with a view to taking over as organiser the following year 2. Peter Halden invited anyone who wished to join the EnGp’s New Year meal on 31st January to give their name and menu choice to Gill. 3. Peter Halden asked all churches to take handbills and one large poster advertising the appearance of Jeff Lucas and the Searchlight Theatre Company at St Peter’s on 26th March.
7	<p>Chairman’s Business</p> <p>Peter Halden and Ruth Ridge introduced the next session with the following comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was time to review the vision of CTiS&D • It was important to promote Jesus rather than promoting our churches • We are called to unity, not uniformity • We can learn from each other and strengthen each other • We should celebrate things that are happening • This evening would give us an opportunity to listen to what God is saying to us.

	<p>The meeting then divided into small groups to discuss the following points:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Group discussion - 5 pointers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What does CTiSD do well? - What would we like to give God thanks for? - What could we do differently? - What could we give up? - How could I get involved? - What do we feel God is calling us to do in the future? - Complete the sentence 'Churches Together in Sudbury and District exists to...' <p>A plenary session followed when ideas were shared. A summary is attached.</p> <p>The Forum was then given the opportunity to pray about the issues that had been raised.</p>
8	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>The meeting closed with the Grace at 9.00 pm</p>

A summary of the discussion is on the next two pages.

Feedback from the Forum held on 24th January 2019.

- **What does CTiSD do well?**

Most groups mentioned Kettle and Fish as being a good witness to the town and a valuable service. People also mentioned how much they valued communication through Church News, prayer and fellowship at the prayer breakfasts and the value of 'one off' events such as those held during Advent and Easter and speakers such as Adrian Plass. Christian Aid was mentioned as an example of service to others and the growing relationship between Christian and Muslim communities was commended as a way of encouraging tolerance and understanding.

N.B. A lot of groups mentioned work done by organisations supported, but not run by CTiSD such as Future Vision, Town Pastors, Eden's and Storehouse - important to make the distinction.

- **What would we like to give God thanks for?**

Responses included: fellowship and love, the support that comes from working together, synergy and unity, being able to do things together that churches cannot do individually. The blessing of learning about different traditions and learning from one another to deepen faith was also mentioned.

- **What could we do differently?**

The timing of prayer breakfast was mentioned as early on Saturday morning is not ideal for some. Including a variety of prayer times (perhaps linked with food?) and drawing upon existing prayer meetings in different churches was suggested.

It was suggested that forums might be more popular if they were less formal and included food, fellowship and more discussion. Long meetings are not appreciated!

More social action - preaching and acting on a social Gospel to help those in need.

We need to think bigger and step out in faith - take Eden's grant as an example/inspiration.

Would it be possible to organise a community event (pantomime or fete/fayre on the green) to reach out to the wider community?

- **What could we give up?**

This question provoked a distinct lack of response, although it is important if we wish to take on new things to address how we make time and energy to do these.

The responses that were received included: agenda-ed meetings, guilt trips, 'one size fits all' expectations.

- **How could I get involved?**

This is more a question for individuals to take away and reflect on prayerfully. However it might be worth considering how we can enable a wider group of people to get involved. Church News is listed as a particularly valuable asset here.

- **What do we feel God is calling us to do in the future?**

Whatever we do needs to be grounded in prayer. Groups also mentioned listening to God and focusing on God rather than the Church as an institution. Sharing in a time of prayer and fasting was also suggested.

Reaching out to the 18-30 age group is still a priority for many, but do we also need to consider specific outreach to other age groups or singles (the church always seems to focus on families).

Could we look at running an ecumenical Lent Group. This would need to be planned a year in advance to enable churches to put it into their diaries, but it would encourage shared study and prayer.

CTiSD exists to...

Promote the kingdom of God.

Co-ordinate and run events that are impossible for churches to do individually.

Bring Christians together to serve God and community.

Make God's love known to everyone by word and deed.

Glorify Jesus 'that the world may believe'.

Provide fellowship among churches.

Worship Jesus.

Bring the name of God into the minds of people in the area.

Demonstrate the Gospel for all

Promote tolerance and co-operation.

'That we may be one'

Help fulfil Jesus' command 'Go into all the world...'