

**Minutes of the Forum of Churches Together in Sudbury & District
held on Thursday 25th April 2019**

The Forum was attended by 32 people from 14 churches

1	<p>Welcome and Opening Worship</p> <p>Lieutenant Rachel Hepburn welcomed the Forum to the Salvation Army Citadel. She said that in the 8 months since she had arrived in Sudbury she had been getting to know her church family and the wider church family. She said she was looking forward to working with Churches Together in the future.</p> <p>She said that their programme of work included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day care on two days a week serving older people and those with learning difficulties • Fellowship – with film lunches and church meetings • Serving people in the community – the homeless [helping to find emergency accommodation] and provision of clothes, and toiletries • Leading God’s people <p>She then led the Forum in opening worship with a reflection on a verse from Psalm 91.</p>
2	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Judith Offord, Andrew and Anita Dixey, Jane Kohler, Rev Chris Ramsey, and Andy and Jane Jowitt ,</p>
3	<p>Speaker: Rev Mervyn Dye – Hope into Action</p> <p>Rev Canon Cheryl Collins explained the aims of Hope into Action and told the Forum that it aimed to provide housing for people who were homeless, were ready to move on, but needed some support to do so. It was hoped that it would be possible to purchase a house in Sudbury which could become a Hope into Action home. She then introduced Rev Mervyn to the Forum.</p> <p>Rev Dye introduced himself and gave some background to his dreams for helping the homeless. In September 2013 he had retired, had an adequate pension and was free to work towards achieving his dreams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2014, connections started and discussions were held with people trying to set up the charity as a franchise basis. Everything started with God in the middle. They had prayed about what they should be doing and what was needed. They had to learn to deny their own desires. • In 2019 one house had been set up in Ipswich and 3 more were being re-furbished in Ipswich. 1 or 2 were being considered in Sudbury – all aimed at helping people to get on with their lives <p>Rev Dye explained that Hope into Action was set up in 2010 to enable churches to fight homelessness – it was important to provide homes rather than just a bed for the night. The context of this decision was that 250,000 people in England are affected by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - homelessness - substance abuse and - the criminal justice system <p>with 58,000 by all three.</p> <p>The Biblical context included Isaiah 58:7</p> <p>In the past two years there had been considerable growth in the number of tenants being supported, in the number of homes, the number of churches involved, the number of investors and the number of towns and cities covered.</p>

The project works through the interdependency of investors, homes, tenants, HiA staff and church support groups.

The housing needs to be in a reasonable area and preferably near a church. The requirements of the various partners were then described.

Tenancy Facts

- In legal terms are licensees
- Each tenant must have exclusive use of 2 rooms [although in practice, many used only one room]
- A tenant is not obliged to attend church or be a Christian

Investor Facts

- 5 year business lease required
- 2½ % per annum return on capital invested in property
- Monthly property checks performed by HiA staff
- Regular reporting on property from HiA
- Knowledge that it is a social investment benefitting those in need
- Invest as individuals or a group of people

HiA Facts

The Empowerment Officer

- Has weekly meetings with tenants
- Liaises with churches
- Sorts out benefits
- Sources employment and
- Ensures that property is maintained

Church Facts

The Church commits to offer:

- Mentoring
- Friendship
- Close working with HiA staff. There is always someone to contact 24/7

The main reason for having a church partner group is because “the principal reason for loss of accommodation remains eviction by friends and family, followed by relationship breakdown in particular violent relationship breakdown”. The church partner group provides the supporting family – the unique selling point at Hope into Action.

Hope into Action can be supported by

- Praying
- Volunteering
- Investing
- Caring as only churches can

The HiA vision is “*one house, per church, per community*”.

Rev Dye the invited questions.

He was asked whether any houses provided long term support for those unable to move on. He replied that the principle was that if a person was not likely to be prepared to move on after 18-24 months, the HiA house was not appropriate for them. It was important that churches work together to ensure sufficient and correct provision is available.

He was asked whether there would be a place for a group such as Churches Together to

	<p>be a partner group. His reply was that that this would be possible. It is a shared responsibility and it is better to share than to do nothing.</p> <p>Rev Dye was thanked for his inspiring introduction to the work of Hope into Action.</p>
4	<p>Minutes of Forum held on 24th January 2019 – Approval The minutes of the January Forum were approved as accurate and signed by the Chairman.</p>
5	<p>Matters Arising The Chairman said that the Steering Committee and Enabling Group were going over the comments and suggestions made at the January Forum about the future vision of CTiSD.</p> <p>He added that following one of the suggestions made at that Forum, Faith Marsden had agreed that some of her material could be used for a future CTiSD Lent course with a shared first and last session.</p>
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Ford said that there were still 2 gaps in the prayer breakfast rota – 8th June and 6th July. He would be grateful if these could be filled but it was disappointing that there were still two vacancies at this stage. • Peter Sebbage requested prayer for a new evangelism event to be held during the week beginning Monday May 13th. [Canon Collins explained that Sudbury had been chosen as a trial area for trainee evangelists]. Peter said that there would be a prayer meeting on Wednesday 15th at the Rectory; a treasure hunt; prayer walks; an assembly at Tudor School; a singles meal; a “grill the Bishop” session; a gazebo on Market Hill; a come and sing and a café church at the Snooker Club. • Rev Malcolm Hill had prepared a paper on the challenge to save the earth. Copies were available to everyone. He emphasised that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There had been an unsustainable population increase ○ Human consumption had grown by 190% over the last 50 years ○ There had been a lot of human harm to the biosphere ○ There had been a loss of biodiversity ○ Plastic pollution was found in every ocean and sea and was damaging to sea life ○ Global warming was on course to reach catastrophic levels by the end of the 21st century <p>He said that this could be changed with God’s grace. He said that we have all enjoyed life on this earth and we must work to make this change. He suggested that in Sudbury we need to come together as churches and that EnGp needed to look at the question and contact made with all relevant parties.</p> <p>Ruth Ridge suggested that all churches should consider working towards becoming eco churches. A Rocha leaflets were distributed.</p>
6	<p>Treasurer’s Report A copy of the Treasurer’s report showing finances as at 20th April 2019 had been circulated.</p> <p>The Treasurer had no further points to make and there were no questions to the Treasurer.</p> <p>The Treasurer was thanked for all the work that he does.</p>

7	<p>Chairman's Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rev Simon Gill was about to leave and Rev John Boardman would be retiring at the end of July • He suggested that the Forum's sadness at the deaths of Patrick Kohler and Pat Ford should be recorded. • Following Pentecost Praise, "Thy Kingdom Come" - 9 days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost would be taking place. St Gregory's are doing daily prayers as part of this. There is also a plan, from church leaders in the town, to encourage people to meet after Pentecost praise (9pm) on Market Hill to pray for 15mins for the town as a visible witness. It was hoped that people would support this "Bow Down" initiative organised by St Gregory's.
8	<p>News and Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRH said that consideration needed to be given to whether the Jeff Lucas evening should be repeated next year. Insufficient tickets had been sold to cover the cost. The Chairman thanked PRH for all the work he had done in organising the evening. • The Forum to be held on July 11th would be at St Andrews, Great Cornard and would include a sit-down meal. Numbers would be needed in advance. • MS spoke about Christian Aid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More collectors were needed during the week 12th – 18th May ○ The week starts with a United Service at St Andrews on 12th May. The speaker would be Rev John Boardman ○ Clare Lodge had volunteered to take over from Ann Boardman as Christian Aid Organiser ○ Simon Snell had planned to run the London Marathon in aid of Christian Aid but unfortunately was unable to do so ○ It was hoped that the sponsored canoe event would take place again this year. If it does, funds raised will support a project in Kenya for children with HIV <p>He also invited anyone not receiving the Church News to let him know if they would like to be added to the distribution list.</p> • Canon Collins spoke about the plans to ensure that children who normally receive free school meals do not go hungry during school holidays. It was hoped to plan activities which would include food during school holidays on Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday mornings. Help would be needed with running the activities – DBS clearance would be needed for those working with children. Help would also be needed with preparing food. Offers of help could be made to Canon Collins.
9	<p>Your Views</p> <p>This item was deferred due to lack of time.</p>
11	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>The Forum closed by saying the Grace together.</p>