

**Minutes of the Forum and AGM of Churches Together in Sudbury & District
held on Thursday 4th October 2018**

The Forum was attended by 29 people from 15 Churches

1	<p>Worship, Prayer Rev Chris Ramsey welcomed people to St Andrew's commenting on the history of the church and the site and the amazing history of Christianity in East Anglia. He said that St Andrew's main aims were to worship Christ and to serve the community. To do this they held bi-weekly lunch clubs, ran Messy Church, have a film club on the first Sunday of the month and holiday film sessions which have been an amazing outreach. In addition, the Porch Project runs every Friday, and numbers of baptisms, funerals and a few weddings are held. St Andrew's also worked, particularly at Christmas, with Cornard Christian Fellowship. Looking to the future, it was hoped to vastly improve the facilities at St Andrew's and to make it more easily accessible so the church could be the truly welcoming hub at the centre of the community.</p> <p>He then led the Forum with the opening worship.</p>
2	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Canon Collins, Gerry Higginson, Sue Ayres, Rev Simon Gill, Graham Gilbert and Frank Marsden.</p>
3	<p>Welcome Paul Clapham, the leader of Freedom Fellowship [the Apostolic Church, formerly Living Waters] was welcomed to the Forum by the Vice Chairman, Peter Halden..</p>
4	<p>Minutes of July Forum – Approval – Matters Arising The minutes of the July Forum were approved as accurate and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>Item 7 - Ruth Ridge reported on the visit of Pastor Peter Yuan. He had been shown some of the Christian work in Sudbury and the surrounding area and had shared information about the Church in China. It was hoped that it was a link that could be built on in the future. Ruth thanked all those who had hosted.</p> <p>Peter Halden reported that CTiS&D had been required to pay an amount of £243.20 for an infringement of copyright in respect of an image that appeared on the website. Informal legal advice had been taken and it was agreed that it would be better to pay the £243.20 straight away rather than to delay and incur additional charges. Retrospective consent for the payment was needed from Forum. The Forum approved the payment. Mr Halden suggested that churches should all check their websites.</p>
5	<p>Treasurer's Annual Report A copy of the Treasurer's annual report showing finances as at 31st August 2018 had been circulated. The Treasurer brought the following points to the meeting:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The balance in hand at year end should read £16465.70 (not £16565.70) • He recommended that the General Fund should be increased by £450.00 from £714.91 to £1164.91 to take account of an increase in the insurance premium for this year and the additional payment of £243.20 referred to in item 4 above. • It was recommended that £2000 should be allocated to Future Vision • It was recommended that £1000 should be allocated to Sam Dequemin's theological study fees • It was recommended that the Fellowship Football account should be replenished with £16.20 • It was recommended that £771.86 be allocated to the Events budget to take it back to £1500 • As a result of these recommendations, the K&F account would be reduced from £9996.05 to £5757.99

	<p>The Forum approved these accounts.</p> <p>The Treasurer was asked how Fellowship Football was financed. Mr Pullan said that members did pay subscriptions.</p> <p>The Treasurer was thanked for all the work that he does.</p>												
6	<p>Annual Reports</p> <p>Peter Halden said the reports showed the amount of work being done by CTiS&D. A great deal was being achieved. Two further reports from No 72 and about the Muslim-Christian dialogue were being circulated. Peter Halden expressed appreciation to all those involved.</p> <p>Mr Pullan said that he had been involved with the 18-35s Task Group for some time and, as suggested in his report, he felt that it would be beneficial if someone younger could take forward this important initiative.</p>												
7	<p>Chairman's Report</p> <p>The report of the Chairman, who was unable to attend, had been circulated and is appended to these minutes.</p> <p>Peter Halden expressed appreciation of all the work done by the Chairman and by the Kettle and Fish Team and all their volunteers.</p>												
8	<p>Elections</p> <p>The Forum approved unanimously the appointments en bloc of the following officers:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Chairman</td> <td>Gerry Higginson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice Chairmen</td> <td>Malcolm Offord Peter Halden</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Treasurer</td> <td>Peter Heard</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Executive Secretary</td> <td>Ruth Ridge</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minutes Secretary</td> <td>Gill Phillips</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Communications</td> <td>Malcolm Snow</td> </tr> </table>	Chairman	Gerry Higginson	Vice Chairmen	Malcolm Offord Peter Halden	Treasurer	Peter Heard	Executive Secretary	Ruth Ridge	Minutes Secretary	Gill Phillips	Communications	Malcolm Snow
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9	<p>Ratification of Appointments</p> <p>The following appointments were ratified:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Chairman of Kettle and Fish</td> <td>- Rev Ruth Ridge</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Managers of Kettle and Fish</td> <td>- Andrew and Anita Dixey</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WATCH</td> <td>- Georgina Pinches</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Friends of St Peter's</td> <td>- Gerry Higginson</td> </tr> </table>	Chairman of Kettle and Fish	- Rev Ruth Ridge	Managers of Kettle and Fish	- Andrew and Anita Dixey	WATCH	- Georgina Pinches	Friends of St Peter's	- Gerry Higginson				
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10	<p>Future Vision</p> <p>Faith Marsden told the Forum that unfortunately Lesley Mitchell was having to reduce the time she could give to Future Vision which meant that she would be unable to continue the work with schools. Faith said that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesley would be able to continue with Open the Book • It was hoped to be able to offer prayer space days in schools if required • Part of the problem facing Future Vision was lack of finance • It was hoped that someone could be found to take on the work with schools • Prayers were needed for Lesley and for guidance on the direction Future Vision should take in the future. 												
11	<p>"Update on the Work of A Rocha and the Reserve at Foxearth"</p> <p>Andy Jowett and his wife Jane were welcomed to the meeting. Andy outlined to the forum his involvement and the challenges and achievements at Foxearth. He said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He came with his family to Sudbury in order to support the work of A Rocha • He and his wife worked at Hazel Court to provide an income • He had been learning about the dragonflies and demoiselles at Foxearth [of the 50 varieties in the UK, 22 had been seen at Foxearth] 												

- In Foxearth one could see the glory of God's creation
- In March, the warden, Mark Prina, had planned a massive planting of shrubs and trees. The date planned for this had to be cancelled due to "the beast from the East". All shrubs were planted in very difficult conditions. The plants started well but were then hit by drought and several had been lost. It was hoped that possibly some might recover next year.
- In May a Rogationtide service had been held at the site. The weather was fine and about 50 people had attended. On September 23rd the outdoor service planned had had to take place in Glemsford Methodist Church due to the weather. It was hoped to have a couple of outdoor services each year.
- People would be invited to the reserve to pray
- There would be a bio-mix weekend when the opportunity would be taken to undertake species counts etc which would provide valuable data
- All Saints had held a picnic at the site
- The work was undertaken by volunteers and it had been possible to be inclusive and have help from those, for example, with learning difficulties working alongside the regular volunteers
- The regular volunteers who had helped with Friday working parties had done a tremendous amount of work – more volunteers would be welcome
- Visits by school groups had not taken off as yet, but it was hoped that these would increase. Mark Prina was very good at working with the children
- The boardwalk across the reserve had just been completed. It was hoped to create some pond dipping areas alongside the boardwalk
- Mark was interested in gardening aspects on the reserve so, for example, had cleared willows to allow sunlight to penetrate at a lower level
- Some rare breed cattle were grazing – they were not owned by the site. People's Paddock created an area that was free of cattle.
- There was a composting toilet
- In answer to the question "What is the reserve for?", Andy said
 - It was a place for nature –flora and fauna,
 - It was a place for people to enjoy – learning about nature and enjoying friendship and fellowship
 - It was a place to be a witness to a living, loving God; it pointed to the author of creation
- In answer to the question "What about the years ahead?" Andy said
 - It was hoped to increase school visits; the Children's University was interested in using Foxearth to provide extra-curricular activities; pond dipping would be developed
 - It was to be a resource for churches – a place for worship and for picnics
 - The possibility of A Rocha organising a conference at Foxearth would be explored
 - Better signage would be prepared and the provision of information boards considered
 - Prayer was needed for the site; for those who were working there and for those who visited; for more volunteers
- Members of the Forum were invited to sign up for the e-prayer list. Hard copy could be provided if required

In response to questions, Andy explained the history of the purchase of Foxearth; explained that Foxearth was the only site in the UK owned by A Rocha. A site in Southall although managed by A Rocha was owned by Ealing Borough Council. He confirmed that they were in touch with churches in North Essex.

Peter Halden thanked Mr Jowett for his most interesting and thought-provoking presentation.

12 **Future Events**

- On November 23rd there would be an opportunity to meet the new Imam following Friday prayers at the Quakers Meeting Hall. Jill Pullan asked for support for this

	<p>event. It was hoped that Colin Chapman would be coming to speak to CTiS&D at the end of November on “What do Christians and Muslims have to talk about? – The Way Forward”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was proposed to have a Christmas Trail from 23rd November until the Saturday before Christmas. It would be based on the Jesse Tree. There would be leaflets for the children. Shops were willing to participate again this year. Prayers for this project were requested.
13	<p>News from Churches and AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Lucas and the Searchlight Theatre Company would be at St Peters on 26th March 2019. Peter Halden said someone was needed to take responsibility for ticket sales • Malcolm Snow asked if anyone was available to represent CTiS&D at the CTiSuffolk meeting in Bury St Edmunds on 11th October. Peter Sebbage said he would attend. • A reminder was given about the Eden’s United Service on Sunday 21st October at All Saints • Reps were asked to ensure that Diary Dates were displayed on church notice boards • The prayer breakfast to be held at Bures on 27th October would be held not in the church but in the Bures Community Centre • Malcolm Snow recommended that all churches went to the website of “Network Suffolk” https://networksuffolk.org.uk and checked the details of their church for accuracy. • Graham Gilbert had asked that Forum was told of the Quiz at St Gregory’s on Saturday 6th October at 6pm • Malcolm Snow said that if churches wished to contribute to an appeal for Indonesia they could do so through Christian Aid – they could speak to him. Rev Glyn Jones had recommended that CTiS&D should send £200 to the appeal. The Forum approved this payment. Peter Sebbage mentioned that the Rotary Club are sending shelter boxes. • Faith Marsden said Rev Cheryl Collins and Sue Ayres had called a meeting on 4th Oct for church leaders and leaders from local community groups to discuss provision for children physically (especially in terms of food when there are no free school meals), socially and spiritually during the summer holidays. A task group has been set up to audit what is already in place and the next meeting in December is to follow this up. Ruth Ridge said that the Chairman and she would hopefully attend this meeting and feed back to CTiSD to see how we might be involved. • Rev Chris Ramsey said that St Andrew’s would be holding a Crib Festival on 7th, 8th and 9th December.
14	<p>Closing Prayer The meeting closed with prayer at 9.15 pm</p>

The date of the next Open Forum would be Thursday 24th January at 7.00 for 7.30 pm. The venue is to be confirmed.

Churches Together Chairman's Report September 2018.

There is a Chinese curse which reads 'May you live in interesting times.' With regard to Christian witness and the work of the Churches in Sudbury and district, these times certainly are interesting! This year has seen some big changes as Kettle and Fish started out under new leadership and as Eden's look to the possibility of purchasing and redeveloping their property on Gainsborough Street. The activities of many different Christian groups in the town continue to flourish though and as ever the annual report makes very encouraging reading. Our speaker at the January Forum, Revd Lee Batson commended Sudbury for the many ways in which the churches here work alongside each other to bring God's blessings our community.

As Churches Together in Sudbury and District we have continued our quarterly pattern of forum meetings and have heard some excellent updates on work, both locally and further afield. It was both encouraging and challenging to hear how Storehouse is responding to growing local need and 'Homes for Good' gave us food for thought on how churches can welcome and support adoptive and foster families. Forum speakers are very interesting, but unfortunately the meetings are not always as well attended as we would hope. We are looking at ways of making them more attractive and accessible and we would welcome any suggestions.

During the week of prayer for Christian unity we were fortunate enough to welcome Revd Dr David Cornick to speak at our United Service. We also continued the established pattern of lunchtime prayer meetings. Throughout the year we have also hosted Adrian Plass and heard Gavin Calver speak at an inspiring Pentecost Praise service. Next year we plan to host an evening with Jeff Lucas and the Searchlight theatre company. It is good to hear such inspiring speakers as they help to feed our faith and build up the Church for work in the wider community.

Outreach continues in many varied ways across the town, through support and care offered by Storehouse, No.72 and others, fellowship and friendship at Kettle and Fish, youth work through Eden's and Future Vision, outreach through sport in fellowship football and snooker and through supporting charities such as Christian Aid. We have also tried other ways of engaging the local community at Christmas and Easter through a 'spot the nativity figures' activity and leaving 200 wooden crosses sharing the message of Easter around town for people to collect. All of these groups and activities are prayed for regularly at the weekly prayer breakfasts and it is so encouraging to have a time when people from different churches can gather together in prayer.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to find churches to host Prayer Breakfasts, so please do consider whether your church would be able to help with this more often.

It is good to remember that we are part of a world-wide church and in July we were privileged to be able to host a visit from Pastor Peter Yuan, vice-principal of the Chengdu seminary in China. Pastor Peter enjoyed seeing some of the Christian work in Sudbury and surrounding area and we were able to learn from him about the Church in China. It is a link that we hopefully will be able to build on in future.

All of these activities take planning and organisation and none of the work would happen without the commitment and support of Enabling Group members, Church Leaders and the Churches Together Steering Group, all of whom deserve heartfelt thanks for their work. The next year no doubt will hold many challenges, but we face these prayerfully and in hope and expectation, knowing that God will enable His work to be done.

May God continue to richly bless you all!