



# Annual Reports 2009

## *Kettle & Fish*

Coming to *Kettle & Fish* presented a recent visitor (on a beautiful morning, be it noted – for the significance of which, see below) with an acute moral problem, as reported to one of our Listeners. Visitor: 'I had to tell a lie to get here this morning, you know.' Listener: 'Oh. What happened?' Visitor: 'I normally come into Sudbury with a couple of friends on a Thursday. My friends prefer to have their coffee in the *Wimpy*, whereas I much prefer *Kettle & Fish*. So, I phoned them yesterday and told them that horrendous storms were forecast for Sudbury today, so it would be unwise for them to venture out – and I've been able to come and enjoy myself here!' The lengths some people will go to to join us in *K&F* Thursday by Thursday! Others go to less ethically questionable lengths – and simply travel from nearby – and not so nearby (is Manningtree 'nearby'?) - it's amazing where bus passes allow 'mature' folk to travel from!

For a month 'footfalls' at *K&F* were counted, resulting in an average of 340 visitors per Thursday. And when they get here, they find a congenial, friendly, comfortable, often music-filled atmosphere where they can relax, have a chat; if they're a young family, and they are coming in larger and larger numbers – praise the Lord! – they also find toys to play with, books to read, crayons to draw with. But above all they find a Christian environment, which we make no attempt to conceal; neither do we flaunt it inappropriately. It is a safe, loving environment, where Christian things can be talked about, where prayer can be offered, where relationships may be formed and where the love of Christ is demonstrated and hopefully experienced through the attitudes and conduct of the volunteers.

The volunteers! Praise God for them, each and every one – so many, doing so many different tasks – and growing in numbers. So an especial thanks to them and to the newcomers who are still learning the ropes. An even bigger team would be an enormous bonus. And I haven't got space to tell you about the extra activities we've been invited to participate in, by the Town Council as well as CTiS ... from Christmas Tree Lights and Christmas Tree Festival to Good Friday, Live on Market Hill – and a good many in between. If you've not been in on a Thursday, give it a try – and check us out.

Malcolm Offord

## **Marriage Focus Group Report - Autumn 2009**

Glory to God in the Highest !

The Marriage Focus Group has continued to seek to uphold and promote marriage, and particularly marriage in church, at a time when the institution of marriage is suffering terribly. We are full of sadness at the national trend



away from marriage, and the soaring divorce rate; we give thanks for the beginnings of change in governmental policy related to family stability.

This year, we have attended wedding fairs, produced a local marriage guide, arranged training for a new group of practitioners to offer the "Prepare-Enrich" scheme, held two marriage-support crisis days, and arranged the printing and delivery of thousands of postcards to the local area to let people know of our work.

We are very thankful for the prayerful, physical and financial support of many churches and individuals in this work. A summary of our income and expenditure this year can be obtained from Great Cornard PCC or the CTiS&D website. I should add that, last year, we were given a substantial donation from St Andrew's, Great Cornard, which covered our large deficit from 2008. We are grateful to Tim and Joy Ayrton who have made No 72 available for the Group's work and our meetings. There is a wonderful overlap in our purpose, and we all feel God's hand in bringing us together in this way.

We look forward, in the year to come, to a wider representation of Sudbury's churches on this focus group (said hopefully !) and our new Prepare-Enrich practitioners beginning work.

*From Jamie :* Due to our imminent move, the time has come for me to stand down from convening the Marriage Focus Group. The Revd Simon Gill has very kindly agreed to take on chairing the group. Thank you, Simon ! We also have offers from within the group of a treasurer (THANK YOU, Brian) and co-ordinating the Prepare-Enrich work (THANK YOU, Joy and Tim !)

Sharing in the vision and work of this superb ecumenical focus group has been a tremendous privilege – and I pay tribute to all those who have worked so hard in prayer and action to celebrate and promote God's gift of Marriage.

Lovingly, Jamie Allen

**Our next meeting : Monday 28th September, 7.30pm, No 72 North Street – please come and support the work of The Marriage Focus Group**

### **Men in Christ-Sudbury & District (MiC's)**

We have been meeting once a month on the last Thursday of the month and have been having on average 10/15 guys attending. As from September we will be meeting twice a month on the **second & last Thursdays**. This is to give guys another option to come along. We will be meeting at Peter Sebbage's house for an evening of prayer and reflection on the second Thursday and at Number 72 North Street on the last.

As a group we played a part in Live on Market Hill distributing 100 "The Son" newspapers and Yorkie bars to non Christian guys - as you all will know, Yorkies are not for ladies! We have also recently teamed up with the Town Pastors at The Fun in The Park day organised by the Town Council in Bellevue Park, selling burgers. It was a great success. We sold 400 burgers and split the profit between the two organisations.

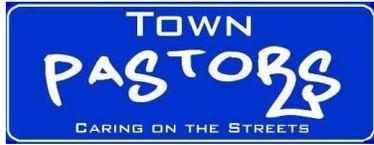
We plan to hold out-reach events in the New Year and the monies which we can raise in the meantime from various activities will go towards the funding of the said events. One of our guys is offering to run Bridge classes; the monies raised will again be split between MiC's & Town Pastors.

We would of course like to encourage more guys to come and join with us, either at Peter's or Number 72 North Street on the last Thursday of the month. The next meeting is on the 24th September a great opportunity for Christian men to meet together in a Non-Church informal atmosphere, praying-sharing-worshipping-working together & HAVING FUN, building confidences and friendships.

Most importantly we would ask that our brothers and sisters would lift Men in Christ in their prayers for our Lord's guidance in our future work for His Kingdom here in Sudbury.

Blessings to you all

Martin Sparks



Earlier this month, Sudbury saw the introduction of Town Pastors, a voluntary group of Christian men and women, supported by Churches Together in Sudbury & District, whose mission is to share their love of God in the community by patrolling the centre of town on a Saturday night between 10pm and 4am. Following its initial success in Ipswich, the scheme spread to Bury St Edmunds, Woodbridge and Stowmarket and now Sudbury.

On Saturday nights there are a lot of young people who are out in town, some of these people are vulnerable when they come out of the pubs and clubs. They can become split up from their group, be worse for wear either through drugs and/or alcohol, and as a result are vulnerable. Either they become lost and disorientated and, worse, could be involved in a fight.

The scheme's aim is to come alongside those in need and possibly help them sort out any trouble. This could involve something quite simple but by having a chat, maybe calming and defusing a tense situation, the issue can be resolved. If someone is out in the streets suffering from the cold the pastors will provide space blankets, water to help with dehydration and even 'Freddo' chocolate bars for energy. However, if a violent situation were to arise they would immediately call the police.

The scheme runs in partnership with the police and operates radio links with a prayer base as well as the local clubs and pubs via the Pub Watch Scheme. The prayer base consists of a team of people who, as well as staying in radio contact with the pastors, provide support during the night, along with others at home, through their prayers. *"The prayer team is a vital part of the scheme without which, it could not function"* Pastor Peter Avery, (the Chairman of Town Pastors explained. *"We're not there to judge, and whilst we are Christians who believe in sharing the love of God in the community through this work, we are not there to preach but to offer practical support. Our primary role is to help ensure that people out in town have a safe night,"* said Peter.

On their first night the pastors met and helped numerous people. It was explained how, by drawing alongside the confused and disorientated, the pastors helped, not only with a potentially dangerous situation, but this action helped alleviate the pressure on the police and ambulance service, thereby allowing them to concentrate on more serious issues. In fact Ipswich saw a 70% decrease in incidences within just a few months of the scheme which started three years ago.

### **Live on Market Hill, Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2009 – A Report**



Market Hill in Sudbury, usually designated as a place for shoppers to park their cars, was completely transformed, when churches throughout Sudbury and District combined their efforts to stage their third open air event in the centre of the town. So you could be forgiven if, coming into the town centre on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July, you had thought you were in the wrong place – the whole area had been changed from car park to open air festival of music, dance, theatre and food!

This was the largest annual event that Churches Together in Sudbury have staged in recent times and was aimed to provide an afternoon of free entertainment and food for everyone regardless of whether they attended church or not. The theme this year was *“What is so amazing about Grace?”* which the event attempted to demonstrate by being free and open to everyone. The message was that God’s hand is outstretched to everyone and costs nothing to take hold of.

A huge articulated truck trailer was positioned across the square; this was transformed into a central stage so that the hundreds of people who converged on the market square could hear the tremendous musical line-up on show. This included the talented *Psalm Drummers*, led by Dan Abbott and Michelle Tennens. The drummers played a selection of powerful rhythms using a variety of African djembe drums. Two highly successful bands, *Breath of Life* led by Jon Halden and *CCF* led by Brian Thake took centre stage; St Andrew’s choir and The Salvation Army Band provided additional choruses and music. Top of the bill was one of Britain’s foremost worship leaders and songwriters, Dave Bilbrough, along with his wife Pat. They led a powerful and exciting array of choruses and songs. With over three decades in full-time Christian ministry and many albums to his credit, Dave is recognised as one of the leading Christian musicians in the country. It was a great privilege to see him in Sudbury as part of the celebrations.

Along the roadside, an array of highly polished motorcycles were parked up. These belonged to the *Christian Motorcyclist Association* – men and women dressed in their black leathers. Their mission is to travel throughout the country to share the gospel. Their aim is to break down the barriers that people put up when it comes to “religion” and meet with people in the real world whoever they are, and they certainly attracted a huge audience!

Face painting, provided by the Eden’s Youth Project, and the Bouncy Castle were popular with the children. *Kettle & Fish* supplied a constant stream of free teas, coffees and squashes. *The Marriage Focus* group and *Men In Christ* group had stalls providing information about their activities and reported a high volume of interest.

The sunny weather brought out a huge crowd, and Malcolm Offord, Vice-Chair of Churches Together in Sudbury & District commented: *“One of the most exciting aspects of the afternoon was the way in which the various groups joined together to produce a fantastic variety of music and activity. People were having SO much fun expressing their faith and responding to the challenge of the theme – it was a delight to be part of such a successful event!”*

Lynda Sebbage.

### **Chilton Woods Development.**



As with many other building projects countrywide, the recession has played a part in causing a slowdown in progress. There have therefore been no meetings since last October and, although I have been in contact with Simon Butler Finbow, who is the Project Manager for Ashwells, the development company, we will have nothing to report until a possible meeting in November 2009.

For those who are not familiar with the concept of Chilton Woods, the planning for a development of about 750 houses north of the Northern Bypass and (stretching from Tesco’s in the west to Great Waldingfield Airfield in the east).has been planned since 1997 when the new Labour Government, decided on the provision of 248,000 more houses in East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk,& Cambridgeshire) over the following two decades - Chilton Woods is part of the overall plan for this area of South Suffolk.

Chilton Woods will provide a wide range of housing ('executive homes'appealing to owner occupiers, as well as social housing, sheltered housing and 'very' sheltered housing), a

community centre in a 'central Hub (where there will be shops, a Health centre and Police Station), an office park and light industrial area.

CTiS have been involved with Chilton Woods (CW) since 1997 when invited by Babergh District Council to be part of the consultation body. CTiS has been interested in the CW project as it is seen to be an area for 'mission' - so we are hoping that we will be able to be given access to a suitable building where a Church may be established in the future. We have witnessed a fairly shaky start, then in 2005 - 2006 a series of public meetings, after which a local consultative group was formed in 2007, now it seems that no progress will be made until mid 2010.

Jane Kohler



### **Christian Aid Week (10-16 May 2009)**

The Sunday evening service at St Gregory's was well attended, and more than 100 people collected door to door in Sudbury, Great Cornard and Long Melford. The total of £7,766 was a slight increase on 2008, thanks mainly to a good response in Melford. The majority of roads are covered, but more collectors would be beneficial. Groups were active in other villages. An additional collection at Tesco in August raised £600 for water projects in Africa.

Christian Aid works to help the world's poorest people with sustainable development as well as emergency relief, and campaigns on their behalf for justice in trade and other matters. December's UN climate summit in Copenhagen will shape the way the world combats climate change.

**Malcolm Snow**



### **Website and emails**

The improved website <http://churchestogetherinsudbury.org.uk/> carries permanent information about Churches Together in Sudbury & District and individual churches, together with news both current and archived, and articles about a variety of issues inviting comment. We thank the small team who keep the site lively and up to date. The News Editor is Lynda Sebbage: please send news items to her at [lseb@uk2.net](mailto:lseb@uk2.net). Other suggestions or corrections to me via [malcolmsnow@onetel.com](mailto:malcolmsnow@onetel.com) please.

Nearly 150 people receive emails about local church news; to join them contact me as above. Please make the website and email list known in your own church community.

**Malcolm Snow**



### **Eden's Project**

Our open times are still:

Tuesday and Thursday after-school for drop-in sessions, including an optional homework club for those who would like to make use of it.

Friday and Saturday evenings as a youth club including availability of hot food and optional use of the fully-equipped music room.

Sunday evening as a christian youth event.

In addition to these opening times we have also secured grants to run some extra activities. One of these was an optional art club where all materials were provided and a young artist was available to provide help. This culminated in an Art gallery event at the end of term where those young people who had made something were able to auction it.

A Grant also funded a set of workshops at the beginning of the year called Skills4Life which included things such as guitar tuition, fitness and self-esteem.

We ended the academic year with a scoffs dinner night which was attended by around 40 young people. They heard a talk by Julia Wickendon who described her time in Uganda doing christian mission work. She really held the attention of the young people who heard about the impact of the love of God under very difficult circumstances. The meal was a traditional African style meal cooked by an African couple from Suffolk Road Church.

Jude Ayling



### **Prayer Breakfast report**

Roger Pullan & others had a vision to start Prayer Breakfasts in January 2004 and God has blessed this project along with so many of Roger's initiatives. We thank God continually for Roger's commitment to CTiS&D.

Along with you, I calculate:

meeting 8-9.30 each Saturday morning (except August)  
+ 13 churches acting as hosts  
+ an average of 24 pray-ers per week  
+ deep and real friendship  
+ uplifting prayer  
= **Blessings Beyond Expectation!**

"Breks" also provides opportunity to pray over visitor's requests made at Kettle & Fish. We are aware that asking us to pray for their needs may be someone's first reaching out to Jesus. When you are hosting, please make space and time for these requests to be included.

Every blessing and many thanks – Eleanor

### **THE MARKET TOWN PARTNERSHIP**

Just a reminder that this partnership was set up some years ago to access funds which the local council are not allowed to apply for. So far they have organised the welcome boards at the entries to the town and the Town Trail and also the new information boards. More recently they were responsible for the development of Siam Gardens.  
Chris Proffitt (Now Deputy Chair)

### **THE FRIENDS OF ST PETERS**

I am pleased to continue as a member of this group who now manage this second most used property in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. This year we welcomed Malcolm Offord to the group and he is already making a significant contribution in the planning of events.  
Chris Proffitt