

West Swindon & the Lydiards Ecumenical Partnership Meeting of ECC on 26th March 2008 at Toothill Church

Present:			
Chair	Chris Scarisbrick	Holy Trinity	Jane Skinner
Treasurer	Dick Gray	St Mary's	Lesley Franklin
Secretary	Ed Poole		
Ecumenical Team Leader	Stephen Skinner		
All Saints	John Halstead David Ratnam Tudor Roberts David Tapscott	Toothill	Anne Carter
		Westlea	Julie Scarisbrick
In attendance	Pam Ray (Minutes)		
Apologies	Mark Dowling, Peter Gilder, Angela Mak		
Not Present	Debbie Fleet, John Ridsdale, Pat Watson		

1. Welcome, Opening Prayers

Chris Scarisbrick read a poem, 'The Dreamer', which had been part of the final week study on the Lent course recently undertaken, and followed this with prayers.

2. Apologies for Absence

Given as noted above.

3. Elections

The following officers were nominated as noted and elected unopposed, there being no more than one nomination for each position.

Position	Nomination	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chair	Chris Scarisbrick	Stephen Skinner	David Ratnam
Vice-Chair	Stephen Skinner	Chris Scarisbrick	Jane Skinner
Treasurer	Dick Gray	David Ratnam	Chris Scarisbrick
Secretary	-	-	-

The position of secretary was unfilled, and will be held in abeyance pending a defining of the role. Ed Poole was not prepared to stand again at the present time.

Lesley Franklin was welcomed to the standing committee as a representative of St. Mary's.

4. Duties & Responsibilities of ECC (explained and defined by Chris Scarisbrick)

- Members of ECC not otherwise barred by law are also trustees; employees cannot normally be trustees, which would exclude Ann Carter. It was suggested that Anne Carter be recognised as a trustee, however this may require special dispensation from the Charity Commissioners and/or Baptist House. Dick Gray to investigate.
(action Dick Gray)
- Regulatory Duties** explained as covering all legal issues such as Child Protection, Data Protection, Health & Safety, Copyright Law, policy & procedures, and reporting to parent bodies. Tudor Roberts offered to supply a useful list of PCC responsibilities, as prepared by the Archdeacon, electronically.
(action Tudor Roberts)
- Duties of Oversight** explained as usually being issues dealt with in conjunction with or by the staff team. This would include issues dealing with ministry, prayer and worship, staff appointments, appointments of school governors, and the general Christian life of the area. It was noted that although much of this is often undertaken by small groups

such as the standing committee, treasurers group, youth leaders etc., all were responsible for these duties.

- **Duties of Governance** were explained as covering such things as planning and development, administration and finance, communication and external partnership issues.

Anyone requiring further explanations/training should contact Chris Scarisbrick.

5. Treasurer's Report (given by Dick Gray)

No formal report was prepared, however it was noted that the Partnership was in reasonable shape at this point in the year, with churches contributing as agreed. A 'minor protest' was being made with contributions to the diocese being £300. short per month. All quotas for the previous financial year have now been met in full. ECC members were reminded that a deficit budget had been set for this year, but that funds were available to meet this if required.

An income survey has been arranged, to take place in individual churches before the end of April '08.

6. Co-options: ECC/PCC (discussion led by Chris Scarisbrick)

Some discussion took place over the requirements of decision-making under the terms of Anglican Canon Law. It is customary that PCC ex-officio members are co-opted to ECC. It was pointed out that some deanery synod representatives do not want to attend ECC meetings, although they should attend PCC meetings. ECC meetings are not obligatory although PCC meetings are. Chris Scarisbrick will contact each ex-officio member to confirm.

(action Chris Scarisbrick)

Ed Poole queried how PCC members can be fully representative if they do not attend ECC meetings. It was felt Church Wardens should attend by virtue of their position. All Saints standing committee have recently identified a requirement for Church Wardens and are in the process of writing a job description for this. They will ensure that membership of the ECC is included in this.

Dick Gray pointed out that ECC members also have formal responsibility to be on the Methodist Synod.

David Tapscott and Lesley Franklin, attending as ex-officio members, were willingly co-opted without objection.

7. Partnership Goals

Prayer & Spirituality (spoken to by Stephen Skinner)

The Partnership Lent course had been very well received and enjoyed by those who had attended. Attendance had been high, with 20+ attending weekly. Many thanks to Janet Gray for her organisation and setting up of the course. Praises were echoed by other members who felt it had been especially challenging and enriching because of the different leaders each week. Stephen Skinner is awaiting an evaluation report from Janet before making any decisions on future direction. Possibilities include another spiritual direction course, a retreat either mid-week or week-end, a counselling skills/pastoral care course, and a listening prayer group.

It was queried whether the way forward was for individual churches to work to this goal then build together, or for partnership groups to work towards this. Stephen felt both would be beneficial and necessary. It was felt a cohesive approach was required, which Stephen will progress although he would prefer if others would join him.

(action Stephen Skinner)

Equip & Encourage (spoken to by Anne Carter & Tudor Roberts)

Due to the pressures of preparing for the AGM and Easter this has been on hold recently. John Hardwick has been booked for the last week-end in November, and will run training for adults working with children (age range 5-11 years) as well as being involved in the joint service the same week-end. A START course for smaller groups is also being organised.

All Saints have a men's group which meet on 1st Saturday of each month at 8am for breakfast/bible study/prayer. It is held at a venue away from the church and covers both evangelism and the equip & encourage goal. Perhaps this could be opened to the partnership.

'Puzzling Questions' was a course run at Abbey Meads Baptist Church recently, incorporating Alpha-style hospitality, looking at 6 questions such as "Who am I?" and "What happens after I die?". Perhaps it should be considered for West Swindon for autumn.

Emerge (spoken to by Julie Scarisbrick)

The management group have been meeting regularly and have collected a range of information and ideas from young people in various situations. The steering group are meeting later this week, and will be discussing various proposals submitted by the management group. Watch this space!

Jane Skinner stressed the need to be ready when 'needs' are made obvious to us.

8. Update on Constitution (spoken to by Ed Poole)

Since the publication of the annual report, all external reviewers have agreed the tweaking. It is now 3 years since ECC had sight of the work and the group are now ready to come back to ECC and share with the staff team and church leadership teams. Members of the constitution group will make themselves available for further discussions as required. The new constitution would then be sent to parent bodies for formal adoption. It would be in the best interests of the partnership if this was done ASAP, although it was felt unrealistic to expect it by the next ECC meeting. It was agreed the individual churches should reply directly to the standing committee on 23 April, or by next ECC 19 May.

(action Leadership Teams)

9. CRB Clearances Received (Ed Poole)

Letters have been received noting CRB clearances for Rev Tricia Roberts, and for Phil Heads, Angela Carter, Diana Shepherd, Joy Booth and Simon Belcher as volunteer helpers.

All churches need to report to Rebecca Kershaw giving the date of formal adoption and implementation of the Partnership Safe to Grow Policy. This needs positive confirmation, and will not be assumed by default.

(action

Church Secretaries)

10. Team Leaders (given by Stephen Skinner)

- **Team Consultancy:** Stephen's report should have now been read by everyone. He recommended the worthwhile use made of the trainer's experience and queried the possibility of re-employing him in the future. It was noted that for the future the consultant needs clear terms of reference to avoid drifting. Although various points were made in the external review recommendations the team have moved on now in terms of make-up and looking at the past was not necessarily beneficial other than to avoid making similar mistakes; rather the aim now is to look at the individual persons and how they can best work together. It was suggested that the consultant should be invited back in 3-4 months time with clear aims, and decide then on further action. In the meantime the team should review together the work already done. Perhaps next time the staff members could have the opportunity to meet the consultant individually.

(action staff team)

- **Hope 08:** Stephen had prepared a handout detailing this campaign and the progress being made. Although progress is being made the local group working on this is months behind where they should ideally be.

11. Update on Partnership Administrator (given by Ed Poole)

The standing committee have met and prepared a job description and person specification for the position. It is planned to advertise in the May issue of *The Link* magazine, copy being required by April 4th for this. Thanks were expressed to Ed for the work he has done on this so far; it was felt imperative that progress is maintained in order to fill the role at the earliest opportunity. Dick Gray undertook to review the job specification and place the advert in *The Link*.

(action Dick Gray)

12. Partnership for Missional Church (spoken to by Stephen Skinner)

As it was getting late it was felt there was not time for detailed discussion on this issue. Some discussion took place, with the general feeling that although the idea was wonderful and the programme first class, do we have the time necessary to devote to this now? Is this programme sufficiently important to drop a Partnership goal to pick this up, or does it fall under the 'equip and encourage' goal? Could a few lay people be found who would be prepared to take this on and investigate it further, or would it be best postponed to '09 and beyond. **This to be put on the Agenda for the next meeting.**

13. Approval/Noting of Minutes

Minutes of the Partnership Council meeting January 14th were approved as amended. The Standing Committee minutes of January 24th were noted with no discussion. The Health and Safety group have met, documentation will follow. Minutes of meetings held January 10th and March 3rd re appointment of administrator have been circulated amongst members. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held March 12th were noted with no errors of fact noted. It was agreed these should be approved and circulated in order to take any action required.

14. Matters Arising/AOB

The Standing Committee members were noted at Lesley Franklin, Jane Skinner, Anne Carter, Chris Scarisbrick, Dick Gray and Stephen Skinner. All Saints to notify the name of their representative.

(Action

All Saints ECC reps)

A report on the talk given by Bishop Mike at the Deanery Meeting held March 12th has been summarised for *Partnership News* by David Tapscott.

Meeting closed with prayer at 10.05pm