



Minutes of the AGM of 20th July, 2015 at All Saints Church

1. Welcome/Prayer/ Reading: Mark Howarth welcomed us and led us in prayer. Andrew Soman thanked Mark for the use of All Saints at short notice. He led us with a reading from John 17, Jesus praying for all believers and emphasising that all are one in Christ. We also in Churches Together do not necessarily do everything the same but we are still all one in Christ.
2. Apologies: Rosemary Clare, Barbara Sherlock, Ray Blyth, Rob Hufton, Paul Tyler, Paul Doswell, Bob & Liz Huddleston.  
34 people were recorded as present and 21 churches or organisations represented.
3. The minutes of 2014 AGM were approved after a minor amendment and signed by the chair, Andrew Soman. The minutes of the last meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March were also approved and signed.
4. Matters arising: John Parr has agreed to join the Southgate Trustees. Claire Rose is wishing to stand down from the Trustees so someone else will also be needed. See Claire ([clairerose1953@gmail.com](mailto:clairerose1953@gmail.com)) for details.
5. Passion Play: This is in hand; a new committee is being assembled and young people from local schools are also being involved. Information will come out soon and financial contributions will be asked for from Churches Together after Christmas.
6. Finance report: Claire Rose distributed copies of the accounts to those who had not already received them. Bob Huddleston will be asked to audit them. David Wakeford proposed and Regina Collender seconded their acceptance. This was passed nem. con. The present position was presented by Claire. There is a healthy balance of £3,217. She suggested that £1,000 of the balance should be donated to the Passion Play Account. Jonathan Ford felt that it would be better to rely on the churches to contribute so that they would feel part of the project. Peter Gibson suggested that a £1,000 should be split between [a] the Drop in Centre (See item 12), [b] the Passion Play and [c] BCY. A decision was deferred until the end of the meeting.  
Claire proposed that the annual subscription should remain the same. This was approved by the meeting.
7. Constitution: The draft constitution was distributed for those who hadn't already received it. This had been amended and accepted but needed formal approval. Claire proposed that we approve it and Eilish Heath seconded. It was Passed nem. con.
8. Reports: [a] Eilish told us that the Good Friday March of Witness went well and did not cost as much as expected. All went as planned and the hot cross buns afterwards were welcomed.  
[b] Malcolm Rogers reported on the General Election Hustings. Lots of people came and the views of the candidates came across well. He emphasised that the leaflets that were distributed afterwards were nothing to do with Churches Together.  
[c] Andrew Soman told us about the Come Together event at St Mary's at the end of June. It was a very encouraging celebration with 240 people present. People felt it was blessed by God. The planning group are meeting shortly to discuss the possibility of future Come Together events. Later in the meeting Howard Scott added that he thought it was a fantastic event.
9. Share & Study Groups: David Wakeford reported that these groups were attended by an average of 30 people and led by some very good speakers. Feedback was positive and there was a consensus that they should be repeated next year with possibly some adjustments (e.g. with more small-group work). Suggested themes for next year were offered and ideas for speakers were asked for. David was thanked for organising the series.
10. Brief Reports: Just Traid: Mallie Sharpe told us that it had been a difficult financial year. Traidcraft is struggling and some smaller fair trade organisations have gone out of business. More legislation will be coming in this year. Mallie has retired –Stephen Abbott will be taking over as second in command to Irene.  
Christian Aid: Howard Scott told us that Christian Aid week next year would be 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May. This year there was a £1,600 increase in collections and, in addition a market stall. raised £490. The total raised was £19,214. The Christian Aid Kenya project reached its target of £2,000 plus a small excess which went to similar projects that had not reached the target. In October a new funding project will be chosen and again supported by the EU which gives 3 times the amount raised.

In response to questions about charities annoying people by asking for donations over the phone Howard said that Christian Aid do not cold call; they only contact supporters.

BECT: Adrian Mann told us the work of BECT continues and the Centre is well used. The details of hirers is on the website.

11. Churches Together Website. Nic Wright of the Quakers has updated it and will continue to do so. The minutes of this meeting should go on it.

12. Bury Drop-In- Robert Green: A team of people have worked together on this project. It will run on Fridays between 11-2pm at Garland St. Baptist Church hall. It aims to provide a welcome, hot meal and access to advice organisations. A flyer is being prepared which will go to the churches. Volunteers will be needed and are being sought. The cost could be £6 – 8,000 per year. (some from council but most from churches and individuals) It is expected to start in September. A night shelter is being talked about for the future.

13. Prayer Breakfasts: The last one was poorly attended possibly owing to a lack of publicity. The next one is on 19<sup>th</sup> Sept St John's and the following one on 21<sup>st</sup> November at the Hyndman Centre. Publicity should be increased by the hosting church also sending out an invitation and asking for numbers. We should encourage people to come; prayer being vital.

14. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 2016: the main service will be on 17<sup>th</sup> January at ST George's. Paul Tyler is organising this. The prayer lunches will also take place as usual.

15. Christmas Fayre Service: We plan to run this in the same way as last year. Nick Alexander, the new vicar at St Peters, will be asked to organise it. An inter-church choir could be a possibility. Paul Doswell will also be contacted about the involvement again of the Salvation Army.

16. Updates on new Bury church leaders: Forthcoming inductions will be [a] Nick Alexander's on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 7pm at St Peter's. [b] Debbie Border on 30<sup>th</sup> August at Trinity Methodist at 6.00pm. [c] Elaine Colechin on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 3pm at the United Reformed church. [d] Manette Crossman at St Peter's Church, Thurston on Oct 8<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm. [e] Sharon Connell on 8<sup>th</sup> October as the new hospice chaplain.

17. New secretary: Frances was thanked for her hard work as secretary over the last 2 years and presented with flowers. We need a new secretary! In mean time Claire and Andrew will try to keep things ticking over. The Google Group will be emailed with the list of the secretary's duties.

18. Date of next Committee meeting: This will be on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October at Just Traid at 7.30pm. Mallie will check that the Centre will be free. (Since the AGM Mallie has confirmed these details.)

19. A.O.B. [a] Matt Rushby told us of encouraging happenings at BCY. Bibles were given to youngsters who had been coming regularly. Prayers were said for a teacher who was in severe back pain and a week later she was fine. A quiz in aid of BCY funds will be on 19<sup>th</sup> September at All Saints at 7.30pm. It is BCY's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and there will be a celebration on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Oct at Christ Church at 6.00pm. BCY are going 'on tour' so, if your church wants to hear what BCY are doing, email them.

[b] A memorial service took place for people bereaved in the last year. It's positive message was appreciated.

[c] We have achieved Fair Trade Town status for our town. However, the work is ongoing and fair trade input needs to keep improving.

[d] Regina Collender told us that a bill about assisted dying is going through parliament in September. (There is info on the internet-especially the CARE website) If you feel strongly write to your MP.

[e] Geoff Birkby questioned whether inter-church greetings, which have taken place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent, happen on the right day. It was generally felt that Advent was a good time It is flexible so that pairs of churches can decide on the most suitable day around then. This year Advent starts on 29<sup>th</sup> November. Geoff will go ahead with the organisation.

[f] Suffolk Churches Together AGM is at Stowmarket Citadel on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 6.30 – 7.30pm. It will include relevant discussions.

20. Donations from our funds: It was suggested that £300 be given to each of the following: Bury Drop in Centre, the Passion Play and BCY. Andrew proposed it, Mary Elliott seconded it and it was passed nem. con.

21. Closing Prayers. We prayed in small groups about the issues that have been mentioned and then Rev. Jonathan Ford said a closing prayer.