



**Churches Together in Oxfordshire Enabling Group**  
**Minutes of the Meeting held at Kidlington Baptist Church**  
**on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2020**

Those present: Jason St. John Nicolle (Chair, Church of England), Martin Wellings (Vice-Chair), David Hare (County Ecumenical Officer), Chris Robbins (Treasurer), John Anderson (Methodist), Dave Llewellyn (Baptist).

Apologies: Glyn Millington (URC)

1. The Chair opened the meeting in prayer and apologies noted.
2. *Minutes of the last meeting*. Signed as a correct record.
3. *Matters arising from the last meeting*: These were included within the agenda.
4. *Financial matters*. The statement of financial activities and accompanying notes for the 2019 accounts has been circulated before the meeting. These were in draft form as they were still with the independent examiner; Chris was confident that he would be able to present them at the Annual Meeting.

Chris reported that the Orthodox denominational subscription was still outstanding, despite reminders from various sources. It was agreed that the subscription should be waived for this 2019, and be reviewed in 2020. Martin Wellings suggested a gentle word with the leader of the Orthodox church in Oxford, Father Ian Graham, may be appropriate.

As Martin Wellings was leaving Oxford in August a new signatory for the CTO account was required. John Anderson agreed to being the new online signatory.

**ACTION: JA/CR**

Chris was thanked for his work.

5. *Update on Church of the Holy Family, Blackbird Leys, LEP*. It was confirmed that the building has been 'listed' despite being condemned. The CEO was asked to make enquiries of Bishop Colin, acting Bishop of Oxford, on what funds had been raised and what attempts to 'unlist' the building were being made.

**ACTION: CEO**

[**Secretary's note:** The church's web site <http://www.holyfamilybbl.co.uk/> confirms what we already know i.e. the building had been condemned in 2018 and yet, more recently, Grade 2 listed. The web site appeals for funds but also asks for a petition to be signed to convince the Council that the present church needs to be demolished and the site redeveloped.]

6. *Reviews*

- (a) *Update on Oxford Brookes Chaplaincy Review*. The CEO had received a first draft of the report but it was currently being reviewed by Colin Thompson (URC) who was the Chair of the review team. It was hoped that the report would be finalised within the next two to three weeks. It would be circulated to the Enabling Group for comment, then to the University Chaplaincy Board and main Board.

**ACTION: CEO**

(b) John Anderson read from part of the CTE report “A Flexible Framework for Local Unity in Mission – a brief introduction” (2016/2019), which indicated that initiating LEP reviews was no longer the explicit remit of Enabling Groups but that the responsibility lay with the participating denominations. After discussion, it was agreed that this was the obvious approach in an area where the Enabling Group had ceased to meet, but it was our view that we should be looking to initiate reviews as appropriate. The CEO was asked to contact CTE and other County Ecumenical Officers to see what the situation was elsewhere.

**ACTION: CEO**

(c) The CEO and Secretary were asked to create a list of LEPs within Oxfordshire, and the date of their last review, so we could prioritise at our next meeting.

**ACTION: CEO/JA**

7. *New CTO logo and web site*

(a) The new CTO logo (in various forms) had been circulated via e-mail before the meeting. These had been produced free of charge by CTE. It was noted that the wording was now “Christians Together...” rather than “Churches Together...”.

(b) John demonstrated the basis for a proposed new CTO web site, the structure of which was provided free of charge by CTBI. After discussion it was agreed that the web site would be useful, and John was asked to continue development. It was noted that there would be a small charge for the domain name to be broadcast. Martin Wellings suggested that smaller CT groups who didn't have the resources to create and maintain a web site of their own would benefit from a page on the CTO web site. A template would be helpful if more groups wanted the same benefit. It was hoped to be able to announce the general availability of the web site at the Annual Meeting.

**ACTION: JA**

[**Secretary's note:** Currently the web site can be accessed at <https://together.ourchurchweb.org.uk/oxfordshire/>

Please note that putting “Churches Together in Oxfordshire” into Google will bring up a web site that, I assume, was created by Rev. Peter Ball in 2016 but was never linked to the list on the appropriate CTE web page. It contains some useful information and I will endeavour to capture the old web site and transfer it to the new.]

The Secretary, CEO and Treasurer were asked to liaise to ensure that the lists of LEPs and CT groups was accurate. John was thanked for his work.

**ACTION: JA/CR/CEO**

8. *Arrangements for the Annual General Meeting.* To be held at Church House, Langford Locks on 30<sup>th</sup> March, starting at 7.30pm. Bishop Colin would be the main speaker. John was asked to send out notification of the meeting. CEO was asked to organise refreshments and ensure that parking spaces were available.

**Action: JA/CEO**

Officers to be proposed are:

- Chair – Jason St. John Nicolle
- Vice Chair – Dave Llewellyn
- Secretary – John Anderson
- Treasurer – Chris Robbins

The date of Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 would be proposed for the following Annual Meeting. John was asked to write to Rev. Dr. Paul Goodliff, the General Secretary of Churches Together in England, who lives in Banbury, to seek his availability as our main speaker.

**ACTION: JA**

9. *Sharing of news*

(a) Anglican -

- Bishop Colin of Dorchester was retiring next year after over 20 years in post. His farewell would be in Dorchester on 4<sup>th</sup> October at 4.00pm.
- Prayers regarding the selection of his successor would be welcome.

(b) Methodist -

- Martin Wellings reported reorganisation of the Chipping Norton and Stow circuit, and the appointment of a new minister in the Oxford Circuit, half-time at Cowley Road Methodist Church and half-time as Methodist Chaplain to Oxford Brookes University.
- Martin will be taking up a new appointment as Superintendent of the Barnet & Queensbury Circuit as from September.

(c) Baptist -

- Dave Llewellyn reported that the recent Association Conference had gone well. He offered a number of examples where small groups had initiated projects which had grown, or where larger churches were helping to invigorate smaller ones. Botley Baptist Church was offered as an example of the former.

10. *Date of next meeting:* Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020, 1.00pm at Kidlington Baptist Church

The meeting closed with the sharing of the Grace.