

Summary of Church Support Committee

Saturday 24th March 2018

Area Representative Reports

Area Representatives reported on church support needs which have been summarised into 6 areas

- a need for resources/materials
- help in knowing how to attract new people to the churches;
- help with the issues around safeguarding and DBS checks;
- building grants for fabric maintenance and repair;
- support with helping members and others to understand and appreciate the distinctiveness of Congregationalism and the CF.

Church Support Workers

The approach of the Team is to work alongside churches and individuals, empowering them to take a lead and to undertake work, rather than undertaking all the work themselves. A priority for the Team is building good relationships with Areas and their churches.

Discussions reference: The efficiency of the Support Boxes which had been widely distributed. A feeling that their potential use had not been quite as self-evident as had been hoped.

The need for focused work regarding children and youth. Judith informed members that there is a strategy for children's and youth work which is being rolled out this year including;

- Open Space Events
- Gifting Weekend
- CF-XTRA Challenge

Developments at Hay Mills. This had begun as a 'fresh expressions' project whose aim was to become a Congregational church within the CF. There had recently been a 'belonging and believing' day event there, where the discussion was on what membership of a Congregational church means. As a result, seven people committed to becoming members of a church, and consequently, there was a 'Membership Service'. Hay Mills had a small transition grant approved

Grants

7 Starter Grants and 6 Mini Grants have been awarded.

Applications for Impact Grants had been received from Thundersley CC and Crediton CC.

Website & Social Media Officer

Publications: The Church Support Team is aware of the need to find a way of effectively promoting and selling publications by the CF and by those who serve it as Tutors, or in other ways.

Data Privacy Notice: Thanks were given to the Safeguarding Officer for her work on this, and for the material which she has sent, and is yet to send, to churches, Committees and others in the CF. There is still a good deal of uncertainty about what constitutes 'data' and what kinds of data are permitted to be stored and used. **Action: A clear policy statement on this matter to be produced for the CF.**

ICB: Alan Kennedy was approved as new ICB chair and CF's representative on Churches Together in England.

Christian Aid: Ethiopia appeal target £5,000 met – El Salvador & Honduras as at 12th March raised £3,259 towards our £5,000 pledge.

Community Awards: There was an excellent response. Panel members have visited the three short listed churches and are now preparing their reports for review and decision.

Retired Ministers: The matter of pastoral care for retired Ministers was raised as a concern. In discussion, it was also clear that members are aware that we have a significant number of older Ministers in post. **Action: PCCs will seek to ascertain what retired Ministers live in their Areas, and they will let the General Secretary know. With their consent a central database will be kept.**

CWM Area Secretary, Wayne Hawkins (Paper N)

Wayne Hawkins outlined the various programmes which CWM offers, and how CF churches and members can engage with these. He also took members through the new initiative known as 'Hearing God's Cry', and 'Mission Support Programme 4'. The CF could apply for a grant, from a possible £80,000 fund, and members were taken through this process.

Finance: The General Secretary and the Learning & Development Manager, have been working with the Financial Controller to make the budgets more transparent and useful.

Accreditation Group: Barbara Bridges reported that the new process leading to a national interview, and in turn to possible recommendation to the national Assembly for accreditation, has now been applied successfully. Recommended that Craig James, the Minister of Ebbw Vale CC, be recommended by the CSC to Council for accreditation as Minister. **Approved.**

Safeguarding Officer: Advised the meeting that churches in Scotland had two options for engaging with their safeguarding checking requirements.

Action: Details and copies of the forms to May-Kane Logan, who will then contact the churches to ascertain their preference.

The issue of the Year Book was of particular concern reference Data Security. **Action: Those who are asked for their consent to having their personal details published in the Year Book are aware that this includes the printing of hard copies.**

Communication group – put forward a recommendation to merge the Year Book and Congregationalist – discussion took place Committee asked Group to produce a questionnaire.

CIPT Management Board: Secure members for the Quinquennial Review panel, initiating the review as soon as is practicable.

Nick Gleich reported CIPT MB have been tasked with developing new income streams for CIPT. He stated that both he and the Learning & Development Manager would be contacting Areas for their feedback on the development of the training course and the learning opportunities provided more generally by the CIPT.

Over the past six months it had become apparent that there is a sense among many Ministers that some form of in-service personal and professional development would be appreciated. Ministers can come to feel isolated and over-stretched, and a measure of ongoing care and development would be welcomed.

Action: A programme will be developed of effective CPD for those accredited in any of the recognised ministries.

AOB: The Chair's term of office comes to a close at the end of September 2018. He is entitled to put his name forward to continue in the role, but others are also encouraged to declare their interest in the role. This will be announced at the national Assembly in June.

Date of Next Meeting

The CSC will next meet on 22nd September 2018.