



# HYACT Report to Churches Together

## Annual General Meeting May 2014

### Introduction

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If 2012-13 was an exciting and busy one for the CUBE and HYACT generally, it was nothing compared to 2013-4. We feel that in the last 12 months we have reached a milestone in where we are as a charity, and the promise of long-term, sustainable, Christian based youth work in Harborough is now looking a reality.

### Staffing

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In the last year our staffing has doubled. Gary Brown continues to operate as our Youth Work Manager, but in August he was joined by Jenny Lyon as our Youth worker. The presence of two, very different, people on the staff has led to much more creativity in the youth work and a sensible sharing of the work load. Jenny's presence has also freed Gary's time to do other work, most especially in this last year with the building project.

### Premises

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#### Symington's Pavilion

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The big news for this year is that we have now got our own premises and a brand new Youth and Community Centre.

This time last year we had planning permission to rebuild the pavilion. However, we decided to completely re-work the design, which also involved deciding to completely demolish the pavilion and start again (something that gave us a better building and saved £40K in VAT). This required more planning permission, but we have been very well supported by our local councillors and council officers through the process.

Once we got planning, we then had to get the licence to do the work, and this also took quite a lot of wrangling. However, this was obtained and we appointed Rockingham Construction with Dan Hensher Carpentry Services to do the work. They started by demolishing the building in November 2013.

It instantly became apparent that the foundations were not up to the design we had in mind.

Consequently, and at fairly last minute, we elected to go for a timber-frame building instead of a brick build, and this was ordered at the end of November. This increased some of the build costs, but helped reduce some of the other installation costs (e.g. wiring, plumbing) and also gave us greater protection from the weather.

Gary in particular worked tirelessly to project manage the building, and this is very much his 'baby'. He over saw the whole design and build process, and towards the end was involved in some of the work himself. One of our tender requirements was to involve young people in the actual building, and this was realised with the creation of a large outdoor Pizza Oven by some NEET youngsters from the Prince of Wales Trust.

In the end, the building was completed on time and *under* budget on Good Friday of this year. Praise God! The CUBE Café were the first group to use it (appropriately) on 9<sup>th</sup> May, and on the 20<sup>th</sup> May we held our official opening ceremony.

Apart from the inevitable 'snagging' list, the next task is to landscape the area outside. A couple from Christchurch have a calling and skills in this area and have come up with some really creative ideas for building an interesting set of walk ways for toddlers, as well as a community garden. They have invited everyone coming to our "Pentecost in the Park" celebration to bring a plant from their garden, or a cutting, and these will go to creating our CUBE garden.

## Harborough Screen

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Last year we signed a 5-year lease with Harborough Screen. They delivered their Screen trailer in July, but found that the mechanism to open it wasn't working properly. For the next few months they worked to try and free the mechanism, and in the latter stages we also got involved bringing in our contacts and experts. Eventually, the week before Easter it was decided that the Trailer was broken beyond repair, and that Harborough Screen would have to fold. It has gone into liquidation and we have registered our debts with their insolvency agents. Happily, though, they have guaranteed to remove the dilapidated trailer from our site in the next few weeks.

This has had, and will have, a significant financial implication on the CUBE as we had budgeted for their rent this year and next, and that is a short-term shortfall we will have to overcome. However, we are already in conversation with three other groups who want to make some use of our premises, both the Centre and the grounds, so we remain hopeful of recovering an equivalent income stream over the next year.

## The CUBE

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The CUBE continues to be our main brand and major focus.

### CUBE Café

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Up until the last month, CUBE Café has been hosted for us in the Methodist Church Youth Wing. The time spent there was extremely valuable as it not only allowed us to keep the Café going when all other venues has drawn a blank, but the increased space and better facilities compared to the Settling Rooms helped us think more concretely about how to design our own space. We are tremendously grateful to the Methodist church for their hospitality during this time.

### The Cube Young Christians Together (GodCUBE)

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GodCUBE continues to meet on a fortnightly basis. Numbers have remained small, which seems disappointing considering the number of teenagers in Christian families in town. We feel that more could be done to advertise it and encourage teenage Christians to come by the churches. For a while we had a sizeable group coming from Brook House, but this stopped after a few months.

### Counselling@CUBE

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This last year we have developed our Counselling@CUBE service alongside the Bower House. We have been fortunate to obtain some PAYP funding from the Council for this. So far we have helped over 40 individuals with a wide range of problems, and this will continue to be a major focus of our efforts in the future.

## Schools Work

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### CUBE@RSA

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The Thursday lunchtime session was moved to a Wednesday, and this group has continued to form a valuable service to the youngsters at school.

### Esteem

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HYACT were able to employ Jenny Lyon on a part-time contract with the money we obtained from LCC. A private individual made her contract up to nearly full time to do Esteem work, so Jenny has trained alongside Gary to run the Esteem sessions in schools. Once again, many sessions have been run in Robert Smyth and Kibworth High, although disappointingly Welland Park have decided to run their own sessions. More encouragingly, Jenny and Gary developed a session for Year 6 pupils in the final year of Primary school, and ran this for 3 Harborough schools last year. This was so well received that all three have asked for it again and others are now showing an interest.

## Other Projects

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### After Schools Club at the Methodist Church

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HYACT took over the running of the after-schools club from the Methodist Church last year, and for much of the year it ran reasonably well. We were very well supported by volunteers from the Methodist Church, some of whom ran really creative activity sessions for the young people who came. However, a combination of our move to our new venue, and the dwindling of the group to very low numbers (typically 2) means that we have decided to close this group for now. Instead we are looking to start an after-school girls only group on a Monday afternoon.

## Management

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### Supervisory Board

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The Supervisory Board still meets once a quarter. This year our main focus has been on supporting Gary with the building project, inducting Jenny in as a new member of staff, and looking at ways to generate income to secure the future of the project. Income generation will be the major work of the board in the next year. This year we said goodbye to Suzanne, as she prepared to move on and to Neil Stacey who worked on our building design. Recently we have welcomed Simon & Karen Deacon who are going to work on the outside landscaping project.

I would like to particularly mention Angela Zemlak, who has worked tremendously hard for the CUBE this year (as well as all the work she does for Street Pastors, the Baptist Church and her own Bowls club).

### Trustees

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The Trustees have met bi-monthly to monitor the main HYACT projects, keep track of finances and monitor the building project.

We have been unable to appoint a new treasurer, so Jon Wragg has continued as *treasurer in absentia*, for which we are very grateful, and Chris Poulton has kept a handle on the book-keeping. However, the issue of a Treasurer Trustee for HYACT is of pressing importance, and we would strongly urge everyone in Churches Together to not only pray for someone to step forward, but to seriously consider whether it should be them or someone they can approach. This is especially true as our Chair, Jean Molcher, has been extremely unwell this last year, and her illness is likely to continue into this year.

On a positive note, we were able to appoint Dawn O'Connell, who is a lecturer in Youth Work at St John's College, Nottingham, as a Trustee with special responsibility for HR, Staffing and the Youth Work projects.

## Finance

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### Recurrent Budget

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This last year we have continued to be blessed by the generous grant from The Bowdens Charity. This grant expires at the end of August 2014. We have an urgent task in the next month to produce a business plan that we can present to them alongside an application for further funding.

We have also continued to receive LCC funding for the Youth Café, and this has been renewed (although slightly reduced) for another year as part of the Early Years fund. As mentioned elsewhere, the remainder of the funding has come from a private individual for the Esteem work.

This year we also worked hard to increase the base of our Friends group and maximise their regular giving, and this has been quite successful, as well as look at other ongoing fundraising activities. Even assuming we get the Bowdens grant, the main focus of our activity over this year will be to produce a business plan that ensures we can pay our Youth Worker salaries long into the future. As ever, Churches Together pray and finance support are invaluable in this respect.

### Fund-raising activities for the Pavilion refurbishment

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The building fund was created from the following sources:

- Bernard Sunley Trust
- Grant Weston
- Big Lottery

- Section 106 funding
- Local businesses in town, including Waitrose.
- Individual fundraisers and donors
- Churches Together
- Fundraising activities organized by the Supervisory Board.

We are currently £35,000 short of our ultimate target, but have paid the builders using a generous interest-free loan from a local businessman. We are keen to get this paid off as soon as possible.

## Conclusion

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Jean Molcher and I were last out of the new Centre on Tuesday after everyone else had gone to get ready for the evening event. We looked at each other with a “I can’t believe this has really happened” expression on our faces. It has been such hard slog since we took over HYACT in May 2009, and so many times we could not see our way forward. But God has sustained us, he’s always kept us convinced that this was His will and we just had to stick with it, and by His grace and provision we have a wonderful facility and an amazing opportunity to reach the young people of Harborough with the love and grace of God.

I conclude by thanking all of you in Churches Together, and particularly the members of the Forum. It was your love, concern and hard questions that resurrected the CUBE from the grave, and it has been your love, prayers and money that helped make it what it now is. We have been so blessed by your backing, and we know you will keep us prayed for, supported and accountable into the future.

## Bower House Report

The first quarter of this year has been unprecedentedly busy. We experienced the development of a waiting list which meant people were waiting for up to two months before meeting with a counsellor. To combat this a ten mile restriction zone was implemented. The situation now has eased – five new counsellors or students on placement have started and the referrals are down. Financially there is a potential deficit of £10,000 this coming year. Efforts have been made to find funding as well as economising within the organisation. Fundraising efforts include an afternoon of music and poetry on June 28<sup>th</sup> at the Methodist church when as well as ladies making music we are to have poetry and music by Malcolm Guite Chaplain of Girton College Cambridge and poet priest and musician.

Another venture is a Country Fayre to be held at Quenby Hall on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Look out for publicity as this is a huge event which if successful may raise up to £10,000.

The Friends of the Bower House has needed to be relaunched. The idea is to recruit lots of people who commit to donating a small sum on a monthly basis thus providing us with a regular reliable income. It is hoped there will be a volunteer to promote the scheme within each church.

The churches and people of the town have been very supportive of our work and we trust we will be enabled to carry on doing this into the future.

## Street Pastors Report

- **Street Pastors.** We have 17 qualified Street Pastors and 3 in training. The effect of Street Pastors on the streets of Market Harborough is clear and recognised, particularly by the police, the District Council, the CCTV team and by the many positive comments received from members of the public whilst we patrol. It is a valuable sign of our Christian service and outreach.
- **Prayer Support team.** We have 11 people who provide support to the Street Pastors on Patrol. We are very fortunate to have this team who are based at the Bower House and provide much needed and appreciated prayer and support whilst the Street Pastors are on Patrol.
- **Patrols.** We have continued to patrol on alternate Fridays (from 8.00 pm) and Saturdays (from 9.00 pm). During 2014, we are trialing two or three Bank Holiday Sundays as they are reportedly very busy.
- **Funding.** The Management Board maintains careful control of the budget and we have worked hard at promoting our work and fund-raising. We will ensure that the fundraising continues.

## Balance Sheet

Bank 31 Dec 12	£2,816.55	Expenditure	£7,269.77
Income	<u>£12,922.27</u>	Bank 31 Dec 13	<u>£8,469.05</u>
	<u>£15,738.82</u>		<u>£15,738.82</u>

Our income came from various sources:

- Donations from the various CTH events
  - Talks given to various groups and applications to local charitable groups
  - Coffee mornings, Waitrose green tokens and a sponsored patrol
  - £48 per month from several individual donors and one business
  - £50 per month from the collecting boxes in pubs, hotels, restaurants and fish & chips shops
  - Over £3,700 was raised in 2013 as a result of being the Chair of HDC's nominated charity for the year and the Great Bowden Recital Trust holding a fund-raising concert on our behalf.
- **Recruitment.** A series of talks were given at the local churches in the latter half of 2013 and we have some prospective Street Pastors as a result but we can always do with more. Each Street Pastor undertakes training in 12 modules including roles and responsibilities, safeguarding, youth, drug culture, police powers, mental health and telling the good news. Prospective Pastors can go on patrol after completing 4 core modules and complete the remainder in the following twelve months. The commitment is to patrol once a month on average. There is a requirement of funding support from the Street Pastor and their church.
  - **Support.** Contact Angela Zemplak if:
    - you would like a Street Pastor to come and talk to your church or church group;
    - you are interested in coming on Patrol as an Observer;
    - you would consider becoming a Street Pastor, joining our Prayer Support Team, making a regular donation to our work or becoming a Friend of MHSP.

### Justice and Peace (including Credit Union)

The Group meets at least quarterly and has welcomed a number of new members. Our focus for 2013/14 is The Bhopal Medical Appeal (relating to the disaster when toxic gas leaked from the Union Carbide factory in 1984. People are still chronically sick and dying; babies are still born dead and deformed or diseased and disabled; the whole area is still a toxic waste) and we are hoping to be able to show the film about their work and the current situation, as well as raise funds for them. 2014 is the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the disaster, and there is still no help from Dow Chemicals for the people who still suffer.

The sub-group concerned with Israel/Palestine issues and the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions continues to offer information and to work with the churches and the community to both raise awareness and finance, since the Group was very clear that this work must continue. We are seeking to be up to date with information about the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement.

There is still ongoing work too about Arms Limitation and the Arms Trade. Now that the Treaty has been signed, it continues to be important that we encourage the Government to implement it fully.

Our concern regarding poverty in our community has been particularly focused on issues relating to the suffering cause by the Government's policy with regard to benefits of various kinds. We have given out nearly 100 copies of The Lies We Tell Ourselves (published by the Joint Public Issues Team of some of our churches) and more can be made available, along with a power-point presentation. Another sub-group has been set up to help us continue this work. We have also been instrumental in helping the Food Bank to offer vouchers for fresh fruit and veg.

The Candlelit Peace Vigil in January is still a popular event, even though this year the Square was still full of huts, and is attended by a regular group as well as by some who stop for a short while. It is appreciated by local people.

### **Child Labour and Related Issues**

We try to keep up to date with the work to eliminate child labour in the tobacco growing industry, and other places, and we have also been concerned to work against the appalling treatment of garment workers.

We are kept up to date regarding female genital mutilation, and issues of trafficking and slavery abduction and abuse. Our thanks go to Janet Smith for this and for reminding us of possible action in these areas, as well as of local events.

### **Clockwise Credit Union**

This work continues to be very successful, and important. They are seeking new premises, and still need more volunteers, so it is important to express thanks to all the current helpers.

### **Fairtrade Town**

The town has been re-registered and there is greater awareness of that and its value in our community.

### **Thanks**

We record our grateful thanks to Donald Clinton-Smith who has decided to stand down as Chair of the Group, after many years of service. As we seek a new Chair, we are very conscious of all that Donald has given both to the Group and to our community.

## **HOLIDAY AT HOME PROJECT**

Once again we were able to arrange in August 2013 a week of activities aimed at older members of the community, and a Winter special day in January. There were workshops on art appreciation, meals for one, painting, candle-making and many more; all-together talks which included overcoming disabilities and the work of The CUBE. Last but not least our catering teams provided opportunities for time to socialise over coffee and biscuits and lunch together. Our day out was to Loughborough this year - visiting a garden centre and the Great Central steam railway. Average attendance was more than 40 per day. We were given grants to help fund the project from Tesco Community Fund and from the Late Night shopping committee.

Plans are well advanced for 2014. This years' Summer programme will take place from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> August, with a day out proposed to Stratford-upon-Avon. Funding is likely to be an issue in the future unless new sources of grants are found; at present we have a 'float' of around £500.

Beyond 2014, it is important to find a new coordinator if the project is to continue.

## **JUBILEE FOODBANK**

The Jubilee Foodbank is managed by the Congregational Church, so is not a Churches Together project in the same way as other things you will hear at the AGM. However, many volunteers are from other churches in the town, and we appreciate the support that we get from Churches Together and from individual churches, many of whom collect food for us. We are pleased to present this report of our work, covering the period May 2013 to April 2014. There is a lot to report!

In last year's report, we reported that in May 2012 – April 2013 we had received 210 referrals on behalf of 427 people. Between May 2013 and April 2014, we received 500, on behalf of 1039 people. This is a 238% increase in referrals and a 243% increase in people over the period covered by last year's report. 31% of the people referred were under 18. This percentage has fallen.

199 of the 500 referrals cited non-payment of benefits as a reason for referral (this includes sanctioning as well as delay). 205 referrals cited "money not going far enough", which will include money having to be spent on things like utility bills, debt repayment, school trips, as well as general budgeting problems. The percentage of referrals citing "money not going far enough" has risen.

We presented this graph at our annual meeting in February. It demonstrates that for most of 2013 we were getting busier month on month, with a peak of 71 referrals in October 2013.

In 2014, the figures have been:

January	– 35 referrals
February	- 23
March	- 30
April	- 24

Activity is a lot lower than for a good deal of last year, but still a lot busier than the same period in 2012. We have added more frontline volunteers, all from outside the Congregational Church, and our stocktaking team continue to meet to check new donations and rotate stocks.

Food stocks have been high and we have had to make less use of the emergency email list. Churches, schools, individuals, Curves Gym and local Lions groups have all been very generous and we appreciate it very much. We have also had monthly food drives in Waitrose, and we have used these to collect heavily used items like tinned meat and fruit juice, and seasonal items like Christmas goods and Easter eggs. We have also found ourselves with a surplus of pasta, soup and baked beans, and donated some of that surplus to Fareshare Leicester for use with other food banks and community groups providing meals, and some to St Jude's Foodbank in Kettering. We consider this a good use of resources, as the alternative may be to see it go out of date and therefore into the bin.

We have received many financial donations and these pay for our (small) running costs, for food if we are short of anything, and for shelving and boxes, although we were very grateful for a donation of wood for shelving from Ben Skinner of Skinner Brothers builders.

Leicestershire Adult Learning Services have run further "Healthy Eating on a Budget" classes, recruiting learners through referring agencies, supplying a tutor, and using food from the Foodbank. We have also helped Love Food Hate Waste to run classes to follow on from one set of LALS classes.

We continued to advise the Congregational Church in Ullesthorpe on setting up a foodbank, and then put them in touch with the new Trussell Trust foodbank in Lutterworth, who visited us before they launched. We were also pleased to advise Fleckney Baptist Church as they set up their Foodbank, and some of us attended their launch.

We have trialled a scheme to provide fresh fruit and veg to foodbank users, and are very grateful to Frutas for their support. We are about to extend the scheme, with the support of several donors.

The Foodbank would not operate without the help of its volunteers and the support it gets from so many people inside and outside the town's churches and from Churches Together. Thank you to everyone concerned. We also value the relationships we have with our referring agencies.

Thanks are due also to the new Management Committee, currently made up of Colin Sole, Jane White, Margaret Nash, Maxine Fasching and Sally Ringrose (and me!), and to Jenny Young and Debbie Chaloner for their help with training new volunteers, to Mel Stride for organising DBS checks for those new volunteers and to John Stride for putting up shelves. This will be the last report I write, because, as you may well know, the Nockels family are on the move to somewhere or other in the summer.

## **PUBLICITY OFFICER'S REPORT**

My task is to obtain media coverage for Churches Together events and activities. So, I produce news releases which go to the Harborough Mail, HFM, Leicester Mercury and BBC Radio Leicester.

### **Media coverage in 2013 included:**

Justice and Peace Group Candlelit Vigil  
Women's World Day of Prayer Service  
Lent Lunchtime Services  
40 Days of Lent Prayer  
Good Friday Town Square Service  
Pentecost Party in Welland Park  
Weekend with John Bell

## **HARBOROUGH IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

Report to be given at meeting.

## TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2013/14

The accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 have been signed by Mr Bob Perkins, the Accounts Examiner. They are covered as a specific item on the agenda of the AGM.

The latest balances in hand are:-

	£
CTH own funds	1839.74
Holiday at Home	497.78
Income from Joint Events	85.02

Since the 31<sup>st</sup> March accounts £275 was received from the Good Friday lunches at the Baptist Church and has been given to Christian Aid. £85.02 was received from the collection at the Christian Aid Service at St Peter & St Paul, Great Bowden on 11<sup>th</sup> May and will be paid to Christian Aid. The collection at the Good Friday service at the Congregational Church was £211 and this was split equally between Harborough Christian Counselling Service (Bower House), Harborough Youth and Community Trust (Cube) and Street Pastors. CTH funds are sufficient to meet immediate needs. The **accounts** will be given out at the meeting.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Three years ago, I had no vision at all about being chairman of Churches Together. Unfortunately no one else had that vision either; hence no chairman and we were faced with the dreaded prospect that the Churches Together in Harborough that we knew and loved would be no more. I then felt a calling, offered myself and a few months later was elected as your chairman. It's been a challenge but very fulfilling and enjoyable. In a little while this evening I shall be handing over the chairmanship to James, who has given me excellent support as my vice-chairman. What I would like to do in my final report to the Forum is to briefly reflect on Churches Together, as I see it, since I became chairman but particularly highlighting the last 12 months or so.

Churches Together is not just the Forum and our joint worship services, important as they are. It is also about joining together as the one Church in Harborough in mission and service for the people in our community. Indeed one of our greatest strengths is working together for people in need. We have already heard at this AGM from each of the groups reporting to the Forum - the Cube, Bower House, Street Pastors, Justice and Peace, Credit Union, Holiday at Home and the Food Bank. I shall not repeat that here. The last 3 years has been an exciting time for each group with each having its individual challenges. The opening of the excellent Cube centre for youth work with teenagers at Symington's Recreation Ground has been perhaps the crowning glory but it has been good to see each group move so positively and react so well to the challenges they face. As chairman I have tried to involve myself in what is happening as far as possible and appropriate. I must say that I am impressed and I offer my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved. On behalf of Churches Together, I would like to thank not only all the leaders of all the groups for their commitment and enthusiasm, but also everyone involved with all the activities. There must be well over 200 people involved, but more are always needed. That's a job for each one of us. Not necessarily to add to our personal workload but to talent-spot within our Churches and challenge people to get involved in a particular service that you believe they could be particularly suited.

I am delighted that prayer has become such a vital feature of Churches Together over the last couple of years. Last year there was the 24/7 prayer throughout Lent based on 2 prayer centres in the town. You may have seen in the Forum agenda this evening there is a proposal for prayer event at the Cube's new premises. Clare and Brien organised a prayer walk at the beginning of Lent and another is expected to be planned later in the year. Prayer Stations have been successfully introduced into schools and Prayer Boxes are hopefully to be sited in at least one town supermarket. We should also remember the ecumenical "Signs of Life" prayer group that meets on Wednesday mornings, the Maranatha Prayer Group meeting on the last Friday of the month and the more recently started Cube Prayer Group meeting every other Tuesday

morning. The strength of Churches Together is not only what we do together but meeting together in prayer.

Last June we were greatly blessed by John Bell of the Iona Community leading a Churches Together weekend with events at the Catholic Church on Friday evening, the Methodist Church on Saturday and preaching at the Congregational Church on Sunday. Thanks to Debbie for organising this lovely spiritual event.

Lent 2012 saw the restoration of our Friday Lent Lunch-time services which attracted on average over 70 people to each service. Thanks to our Catholic friends for motivating us to start these again, hosting the services in Lent 2012 and, as a bonus, providing an excellent soup lunch afterwards. The Methodist Church hosted the event in 2013 and the Congregational Church in 2014 with the Catholics playing a key role in providing the lunch in both years. It is good to join together in Lent for a time of devotion, the hearing of testimonies from people from different Churches, for fellowship over lunch and raising funds for overseas aid.

Finally a word about the national Churches Together scene. It has been a delight over the last two or so years to be a part of the "Gather" organisation of Churches working together in their areas, often with the civic authorities, to transform their communities. It is exciting to hear what has been happening in many cities and town throughout the country. To me one of the key messages has been the importance of Churches working together in and for their communities, placing that as a higher priority than denominational responsibilities.

That's enough from me. There is much more I could say. I haven't even mentioned Good Friday which will be coming up later. A big thank you to the Churches Together officers for their commitment and fellowship and thanks to everyone involved in the great work of Churches Together.