

HOLIDAY AT HOME PROJECT: THE FUTURE

The Holiday at Home project first got off the ground, under the Churches Together in Harborough banner, in Summer 2008, and has been a feature of the CT calendar ever since. In addition, a one-day Winter special has been held in January for the past three years.

What is it? The project is based around putting on varied workshops, giving a choice of activities ranging from flower-arranging to watercolour painting to computer technology. There is also a daily “all-together” time giving the opportunity to hear an interesting speaker, join in a singalong or maybe watch a video. Food and time to talk and socialise are other vital ingredients, so we have provided both light refreshments and a mid-day meal. Another important part of the programme is a whole day out together.

Who is it for? The focus has always been to serve those, mainly older, people who are unable to get away for a break because of limiting circumstances. In practice no-one who wants to participate is turned away, except only that we have capped the numbers at 50 per day for practical reasons. Mostly around 30-40 people have come each day.

Who pays for it? The funds are a ring-fenced part of CT finances. Participants pay a daily charge (This year, £5, which includes the meal) and grants have been obtained in the past from a variety of sources including the Tesco Community Fund and the Harborough & Bowdens charity. These are mainly to subsidise the day out. More funds will be needed in the future if the same pattern of activities continues.

Who runs it? A planning group, volunteers drawn from the churches, has organised and helped deliver the programme. From its inception, the coordinator has been Brian Kennard, minister of the Methodist Church and the Methodist premises has been used as the venue. Those involved feel this continues to be the best equipped premises available to CTiH for the purpose.

What's the problem? or “This is where you come in.” At least three basic issues need to be addressed, four if finances are included:

- (1) Brian Kennard is moving on from Harborough in Summer 2015, and will therefore be unable to lead the Summer programme.
- (2) The planning group needs additional people from all the churches - up to now it has comprised mainly Methodists and Catholics plus individuals from some of the other churches.
- (3) The direction and purpose of the project, while successful in terms of numbers, needs careful examination. For example, are we mainly a service for those connected with our churches or an outreach to the community? Are we reaching those who most need our help?...and so on.

Action needed: If CTiH are continue with the project, a renewed planning group is needed, and someone found to take on the coordinating role from early in 2015.

-Brian Kennard. Nov 2014.