



# Annual Report

# 2018

## *Making connections in Christian partnership*

### **Introduction**

Churches Together in Devon helps churches in their united mission and service among the people who live and work in Devon (including Plymouth and Torbay).

It is the intermediate ecumenical body linking the national structures of Churches Together in England (CTE) with the local expressions of Christian Unity throughout Devon. Churches Together in Devon is the sponsoring body of 19 Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) and four Local Covenants, and supports nearly 30 local ecumenical groups.

Churches Together in Devon seeks to encourage all areas of ecumenical work, especially as they relate to:

- Sharing knowledge, deepening communion and creating understanding between different Christian traditions.
- Developing and supporting new initiatives in all forms of mission.
- Encouraging partnership working between denominations.

The main point of contact is the County Ecumenical Officer - Revd. Paul Snell ([ceo@ctdevon.org.uk](mailto:ceo@ctdevon.org.uk)) - or see the website: [www.ctdevon.org.uk](http://www.ctdevon.org.uk)

### **Governance**

The charity is directed by the Enabling Group and the County Ecumenical Officer is the part time member of staff who leads the work on a day to day basis. The Enabling Group is made up of the local leaders of six denominations, along with their related Denominational Ecumenical Officers (DEOs) and two volunteer members. In 2018 these were:

#### ***Church Leaders (Presidents of Churches Together in Devon)***

- The Divisional Commanders of the Devon & Cornwall Division of the Salvation Army: Major Stephen White and Major Amanda White
- The Chair of the Plymouth & Exeter District of the Methodist Church: Revd. Canon Graham Thompson (CTD Chair for part of 2018)
- The Anglican Bishop of Exeter: Rt. Revd. Robert Atwell (represented by Rt. Revd. Jackie Searle, Bishop of Crediton and CTD chair from November 2018)
- The Roman Catholic Bishop of Plymouth: Rt. Revd. Mark O'Toole (represented by Revd. Canon John Deeny)
- The Moderator of the South Western Synod of the United Reformed Church: Revd. Ruth Whitehead
- A Regional Minister of the South West Baptist Association: Revd. Carl Smethurst

### ***Denominational Ecumenical Officers***

- Revd. Michelle Parkman - Baptist
- The Ven. Dr. Mark Butchers - Church of England
- Revd. Andrew Sails - Methodist (from May 2018)
- Mrs. Mary Ann James - Roman Catholic
- Major Sue Camp-Richards - Salvation Army
- The United Reformed Church DEO position was vacant in 2018

### ***Others***

- Mr. Hugh Rodway – Hon. Treasurer
- Mr. Bruce Govett - Co-opted

### **Main Activities in 2018:**

Churches Together in Devon enabled leaders from different Churches to share their vision and approach to sustaining faith and mission in both rural and urban parts of the county, and to learn from the experience of diverse traditions. In particular, the missional aspects of each denomination have been explored with the officers appointed for this purpose.

The support of a visible Christian presence in areas of new housing in Devon was continued, both in existing areas and proposed new areas, as was the growth of chaplaincy in a range of public contexts.

Local joint working by churches in cities, towns and villages was supported through providing advice and information to local Churches Together groups. The Church Leaders made a Pastoral Visit to Torquay to explore the existing opportunities for co-operation in the area. There was involvement in raising awareness of current social concerns, particularly in the area of modern slavery and the farming community through promoting events and networking.

Revd. Paul Snell began his work as County Ecumenical Officer from January 2018. After a period of induction and training, the Churches Together in Devon website was redesigned and a new mailing list constructed, following the new legislation concerning GDPR. A redesigned monthly newsletter was also introduced and the Churches Together in Devon *Facebook* page continued to be active. All these resources provide a ready information point for ecumenical church activities throughout Devon, promoting networking and enabling churches to work together on social issues, as well as encouraging faith.

Visits were made and advice given to a number of local Churches Together groups and Local Ecumenical Partnerships throughout the county of Devon. There was also involvement in national conferences and consultations facilitated by Churches Together in England.

In its role as sponsoring body for Local Ecumenical Partnerships in the County, Churches Together in Devon undertakes periodic reviews of local churches in which two or more denominations are joined. In 2018 these were reported for Flavel Memorial, Dartmouth (follow up report) and Christ Church, Barnstaple.

Discussions were held between Church of England and Methodist Church leaders in view of the national interchangeability of ministry discussions.

The Enabling Group successfully resolved an outstanding claim on funds by the Baptist Pension Fund as a result of a cessation event relating to a past employee.

These activities achieved public benefit through the charitable objective of promoting the Christian religion; encouraging effective partnerships between different churches for public benefit in particular localities; and signposting ways in which Christians can respond to contemporary issues.

### **Financial Summary**

Income in 2018 was £ 15,099 from church subscriptions and bank interest. (2017 £13,974)

Expenditure in 2018 was £ 15,226 on staff, governance and administrative costs. Plus £17,364 payment to Baptist Union Pension fund (cessation event). (2017 £4,252)

Balance held £ 13,764 (2017 £31,256), of which £ 461 is in restricted or designated funds.

Liabilities are £9,536 planned payment to Baptist Union Pension fund.

Churches Together in Devon does not undertake any public fundraising. It has one part time member of staff and does not own or occupy any premises. Other activities were undertaken on a volunteer basis, mainly by members of the Enabling Group.

Paul Snell - CEO for Churches Together in Devon - April 2019

*Approved 30th April 2019*