



**ANNUAL REPORT AND  
ACCOUNTS**

**2012**

**Somerset Churches Together is a Registered Charity No. 1133175**

**[www.sctog.org.uk](http://www.sctog.org.uk)**

## **SOMERSET CHURCHES TOGETHER** **ANNUAL REPORT 2012**

### **Aims and Purposes**

Somerset Churches Together seeks to be a visible sign of the Churches commitment to one another, to support local ecumenism, to serve as Sponsoring Body for Local Ecumenical Partnerships and to encourage shared worship, service and evangelism.

Other aims include the facilitation of early ecumenical consultation, the development of good relationships with other faith communities and the support of the churches in their response to the needs of society.

### **Objectives and Activities**

In order to advance the Christian religion for the benefit of the public, Somerset Churches Together seeks to support the common Christian witness of its member churches, to provide ways in which they may consult with one another and work and pray for Christian unity.

In accordance with the requirements of charitable status and with its Constitution, Somerset Churches Together Standing Committee has considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning activities for the year. In particular, it has considered the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

### **County Ecumenical Officer's Report**

#### *Support of Local Ecumenism*

During the year I visited Churches Together groups in Backwell, Bath, Burnham, Castle Cary, Crewkerne, Keynsham, Langport, Paulton, Pill, Radstock, South Petherton, Weston-super-Mare and Wellington. In a few cases, these visits were in response to specific requests for help in tricky situations. In others they were invitations to meetings or to give input during AGMs, united services or Lent courses. Occasionally I have also been asked to contribute an ecumenical perspective to denominational gatherings of various kinds.

In some places there is no Churches Together group but ecumenical work is organised mainly by Ministry Fraternal or Leaders' Forums. Some of these are vibrant; places where those in local leadership positions find valuable support, meeting for prayer and fellowship over breakfast or lunch as frequently as once a week. Even where relationships are less close there is a surprising amount of united work going on. The only underlying risk with this model is that lay people may effectively be excluded from ecumenical affairs. I visited such groups in Bridgwater, Cheddar, Nailsea, Portishead, Street, Wells and Williton & Watchet.

Most of my communication is now by email and some by phone so printing and postage costs are minimal. At the start of the year the Standing Committee took the decision not to produce any more printed Newsletters. In their place each month I have put together an Update which is sent by email to over 150

recipients, most of whom forward some or all of the information to many other people in their area. It is gratifying to know that the take-up is so good and the feedback has been positive.

The SCT website continues to improve and now includes both a 'photo gallery' and a News page with links to various ecumenical reports.

Somerset Churches Together has continued to support churches in the development of shared mission strategies on some new housing developments and this is the theme of the 2013 Winter Forum.

### *Local Ecumenical Partnerships*

In 2012 Somerset Churches Together has continued to serve as Sponsoring Body for nine Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) in Somerset. We also have three Local Ecumenical Covenants. During the year I visited LEPs in Batheaston, Clevedon and Locking Castle and LECs in Combe St Nicholas and Horton.

Designated Support Groups and individuals have been available to provide some advice and support. However, this is not working very well and the Reviews of several LEPs are still overdue. We therefore held a gathering of representatives from LEPs on the morning of Saturday June 23<sup>rd</sup> at Locking Castle. Our aim was to decide together about the most useful ways in which LEPs could be both supported and appropriately reviewed over the next few years.

Although only four LEPs were represented (Brean, Christchurch Clevedon, Locking Castle and Sandford) it was a very useful morning which resulted in four proposals which are being taken forward by the Standing Committee:

1. LEP Reviews would best be done as self-appraisals with an external accompanier.
2. LEP leadership would benefit from an external facilitator.
3. Rather than using Standing Committee members for support, well-functioning LEPs should try to identify resource people for other LEPs.
4. There was a lot of energy for future gatherings of LEPs. These could include opportunities for smaller meetings of 'like with like' LEPs.

We have adopted the term 'Companion' for external accompaniers but are still seeking such people for some of the LEPs. Saturday June 8<sup>th</sup> has been chosen as the date for the 2013 LEP gathering.

During the year there has been a change of minister in Locking Castle which has generated meetings of both the Staffing Consultative Group and the Joint Council, both of which will continue into the coming year.

### *Churches and Society*

In 2012 the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics provided exciting opportunities for churches to work together and to grasp some imaginative mission opportunities. 'More Than Gold' took off in Frome and in other parts of the county and many Churches Together groups organised large public events over the summer. These included the Minehead Churches

Community Jubilee Party, the Paulton Olympics with crowning of their Jubilee Queen and the Bridgwater Community Games. There were also plenty of regular summer events such as The Big Tent in Wellington, the Watchet Festival Prayer Tent and the 'Rock of Ages' service in Burrington Combe.

All over the county, groups of churches are active in service to their communities through activities such as Street Pastors, Foodbanks and Credit Unions. Some are involved in aspects of health care, for instance Vine Counselling Services in the Mendip Vale area. Many congregations and individual Christians discover that when they work together to serve their communities denominational differences become less and less significant; it is service and mission which brings unity. When this happens, worshipping together becomes a natural next step, enriched by real friendships.

### *SCT Forum*

The first SCT Autumn Forum for three years was held on 29<sup>th</sup> September in Taunton led by the Revd. Jon Doble, Director of ISR 'Churches for Work and Social Justice' on the theme 'The Call of the Kingdom'. The event was devised in the format of the Eucharist: Gathering, the Word, Thanksgiving, the Feast, Sending out.

Two of the Presidents of SCT, Bishop Peter Maurice and the Revd Peter Pillinger, reflected on 'the Common Good'. The phrase 'there is no I without We' resonated with many people. Jon Doble called us to both be and do, taking risks and living outside our comfort zones. Representatives from the LEP in Clevedon and from Churches Together groups in Frome and Yeovil each gave inspiring accounts of different kinds of work going on in their areas.

The latter part of the morning was spent in Options Groups looking in a variety of ways at aspects of the input during the earlier sessions. We gathered again for our Thanksgiving worship and then shared the feast – lunch – before a final session where we were sent back to our churches and out into the world to love and serve the Lord.

### *Church Leaders*

Somerset Churches Together has continued to provide a meeting place for the Church Leaders in Somerset and enabled its Presidents to meet together twice in 2012. The most significant of these was a study day in Holy Week at which all the Church Leaders were present, led by Fr James Hanvey SJ on 'the Common Good'.

### *Mental Health Chaplaincy*

As many of you reading this Report will be aware, SCT has long supported Chaplaincy at Mental Health in-patient Wards and this work has developed in a number of different ways in recent years. What you may not be aware of is that, with effect from 1 August 2011, Somerset Partnership took over responsibility for the Community Health Services previously provided by Somerset PCT, including Community Hospitals all of which have Chaplains.

Currently a Review of Chaplaincy Services is being carried out and will be finalised by 31 March 2013. More of this later!

### *Hopes for the Future*

In many parts of Somerset ecumenical life is in robust health. Last year's Annual Report pointed to an increased focus on mission and this continues. At the same time I am increasingly aware that around the county there are many different kinds of groups and ways of working; these illustrate different ways in which we are called to celebrate the marvellous diversity within our unity. Some groups are still operating a 'Council of Churches' model with formal meetings of representatives from each of the participating churches; others are much looser Churches/Christians Together networks, often coming together to organise and run a one-off event rather than an annual cycle of events. In some places an activity (e.g. Street Pastors) is the main focus of ecumenical activity; in others the energy is mainly within the circle of Ministers. Bath is an example of a place where a new Christian network is emerging among the scores of initiatives already present.

To my mind this variety is more of a strength than a weakness. One size does not fit all and as long as churches and Christians are open to the movement of the Holy Spirit within and among them, I am happy to follow where it blows! We need to look at our ecumenical patterns differently without losing the values within them; the shift is around where the initiative begins. Most people outside the church are starting from a completely different place to us and are baffled by our language. We are on a journey without a clear idea of where the road is leading but we know 'we are here for the Kingdom'.

In thinking along these lines, SCT is considering a new way of organising our gatherings. AGMs will continue but rather than one Autumn Forum we might try to organise a number of more focused gatherings during the year. These could be regional (Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset, South Somerset etc) or might bring together those from around the whole county who are dealing with similar issues (LEPs, new estates, isolated communities etc).

Lastly I should mention the triennial Forum of Churches Together in England on the theme "What does Love Require of us?" which I was privileged to attend in October. It brought together over 250 Christians representing 38 different denominations for a packed 48 hours. Our Moderator was a Quaker and her influence was apparent in the way in which worship and work were constantly woven in and out of each other. We began with a reading of our key text – 1 Corinthians 12 & 13 – and extracts from it were fed in several times each day. Among our conclusions were that Love requires us to honour each other's integrity, to listen attentively to each other and to work actively in prayer and service together. We agreed that unity is a part of mission and the ways in which we 'do' ecumenism seem to be shifting from organisational to provisional, i.e. from unity first to mission first, from constitutions to covenants, from structures to relationships and from merger to partnership. This neatly summarises what I discern in Somerset.

## **Financial Review**

The Bath & Wells Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) provides financial and accountancy support services to Somerset Churches Together. Services include the preparation of the annual budget, maintenance of accounting records, preparation of the annual accounts, notification of annual subscriptions to member bodies, payment of salary and expenses to the County Ecumenical Officer (CEO), payment of all supplier invoices and other expenses. The fee for such services from the DBF in 2012 was £500 (2011 - £500).

Mr Nick May was Honorary Treasurer during the year. The Honorary Treasurer's role includes the monitoring of actual income and expenditure versus budget, also the provision of advice to the Standing Committee on any financial issue.

2012 income was £846 (2011 - £22,183) and expenditure was £17,798 (2011 - £11,011) resulting in a deficit for the year of £16,952 (2011 - surplus £11,172).

Income was significantly reduced in the year as no annual subscriptions were collected from member bodies. Expenditure increased in the year as a result of a full year's employment of the CEO compared with half a year's employment in the prior year.

Funds held at 31 December 2012 totalled £26,027 (31 December 2011 - £42,979). Funds held at 31 December 2011 represented two years' future expenditure cover. It was agreed by the trustees in March 2012 that one year's future expenditure cover would be sufficient. Funds held at 31 December 2012 represented 14.6 months' future expenditure cover.

The charity changed its bankers during the year from HSBC to Nat West. This was to access better available interest rates on the current account via the diocesan cash management scheme.

The 2012 annual accounts have been reviewed by an independent examiner whose signed report is available to members.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

Membership of the Standing Committee consists of one of the Presidents, serving Denominational Ecumenical Officers or their equivalents for the area covered by Somerset Churches Together, one representative from each of the member Churches which does not have a Denominational Ecumenical Officer, one representative of the Social Responsibility Group of the Diocese of Bath and Wells, three members elected by the Forum and the Honorary Treasurer. Members of Standing Committee are the trustees of the charity. The Standing Committee met five times during the year with an average level of attendance of 75%. The County Ecumenical Officer attends and services meetings of the Standing Committee in a non-voting capacity.

The membership of the Forum consists of the Presidents of Somerset Churches Together, representatives from each of the member churches, Standing Committee, representatives from local Churches Together groups affiliated to Somerset Churches Together, representatives from Local Ecumenical

Partnerships sponsored by Somerset Churches Together and representatives from the various Bodies in Association. The Forum met twice during the year. The meetings are open to all churches in the ecumenical area. The February Forum included the Annual General Meeting.

### **Administrative Information**

Somerset Churches Together covers the geographical area of the Anglican Diocese of Bath and Wells. The correspondence address is 3 Champford Mews, Wellington, TA21 8JW and the website address is [www.sctog.org.uk](http://www.sctog.org.uk).

Somerset Churches Together is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (Registered Number 1133175).

Standing Committee members who have served from 1 January 2012 until the date this report was approved are:

The Rt Revd Peter Maurice (President)  
The Revd Brian Milloy (West of England Baptist Association)  
The Revd Elsie Howell (South West Baptist Association)  
The Revd Peter Mortlock (Bristol Methodist District)  
The Revd Ivan Selman (Plymouth and Exeter Methodist District)  
The Revd Michael Robertson (Clifton Roman Catholic Diocese)  
The Revd Michael Whitfield (United Reformed Church)  
Ruth Jackson-Gash (Religious Society of Friends)  
The Revd Tim Richards (United Reformed Church)  
Mrs Emma Kendall (Scripture Union)  
The Revd Angela Steele (United Reformed Church)  
Mr David Maggs (Bath and Wells Church of England Diocese)  
Mr Nick May (Treasurer)

Forum Members who have served from 1 January 2012 until the date this report was approved are:

#### *Presidents of Somerset Churches Together*

The Revd Nigel Coles (West of England Baptist Association)  
The Revd Jeremy Brown (South West Baptist Association)  
The Rt Revd Peter Price (Bath and Wells Church of England Diocese)  
The Rt Revd Peter Maurice (Bath and Wells Church of England Diocese)  
The Revd A Ward Jones (Bristol Methodist District)  
The Revd Peter Pillinger (Plymouth and Exeter Methodist District)  
The Rt Revd Declan Lang (Diocese of Clifton)  
The Revd David Grosch-Miller (United Reformed Church)  
Major Martin Hill (Salvation Army) until 31 December 2012  
Major Ian Harris (Salvation Army) from 1 January 2013

#### *Representatives from each of the Member Churches*

Margaret Gibbins (Bath and Wells Church of England Diocese) from 13 September  
The Revd Nicholas Maddock (Bath and Wells Church of England Diocese)  
The Revd Dr John Emmett (Bristol Methodist District)

Mr David Parkin (Plymouth and Exeter Methodist District)  
Mr Tim Horten-Smith (Diocese of Clifton)  
The Revd David Brinn (Diocese of Clifton)  
The Revd Tim Richards (United Reformed Church)  
The Revd Peter Henderson (United Reformed Church)  
Jan Gray (Religious Society of Friends)  
Howard Wright (Religious Society of Friends)  
The Very Revd Protopresbyter Kyrillos Leret Aldir (Orthodox Church)  
Fr Seraphim Johnson (Orthodox Church)

*Representatives of Local Ecumenical Partnerships sponsored by Somerset Churches Together*

The Revd Rachel Borgars (Batheaston Local Ecumenical Partnership)  
Susan Dare (Christchurch Clevedon Local Ecumenical Partnership)  
Jan Welling (Sandford Local Ecumenical Partnership)

*Representatives of Local Churches Together Groups affiliated to Somerset Churches Together*

Julia Ratcliffe (Backwell)  
Sarah Sheppard (Bath)  
Geoff Hudd (Bath – North East)  
Revd Frank Fisher (Castle Cary and Ansford)  
Kim Anderson (Clevedon)  
The Revd Jonathan Morris (Crewkerne)  
Helen Wade (Glastonbury)  
Mr Chris Lawson (Minehead)  
Beryl Fedder (Peasedown St John)  
Eleanor Jackson (Radstock)  
Adrian Prior-Sankey (Taunton)  
Isabel Ward (Wellington)  
Gwen Cox (Weston-super-Mare)

*The Standing Committee*

*Representatives of Bodies in Association*

Roger Allen (Churches Together in Greater Bristol)  
Alistair Beattie (Faithnet.southwest)  
The Revd John Bradley (Churches Together in England)  
Lydia Nash (Christian Aid) until 31 October  
Gillian Alexander (Christian Aid) from 1 November  
Fay Wilson-Rudd (Mental Health Chaplaincy)  
David Brinn (CAFOD)

**Approved by the Somerset Churches Together Forum on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013 and signed on their behalf by Bishop Peter Maurice (Chairman Somerset Churches Together)**



<b><u>Income &amp; Expenditure</u></b>	<b>2012</b>			<b>2013</b>	
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Budget</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
<b>Income</b>					
Denominational receipts:					
Anglican	-	10,366	(10,366)	9,018	
Baptist Union of Great Britain	-	1,636	(1,636)	1,423	
Methodist	-	3,919	(3,919)	3,410	
Religious Society of Friends	-	109	(109)	95	
Roman Catholic	-	4,802	(4,802)	4,178	
Salvation Army	-	328	(328)	285	
United Reformed Church	-	545	(545)	474	
	-	21,705	(21,705)	18,883	-13%
<b>REBATE to denominations</b>	-	(21,705)	21,705	-	
Conference & other receipts	303	275	28	300	
Bank Interest	78	5	73	250	
Reimbursed Expenses	-	615	(615)	-	
Voluntary Donations	465	686	(221)	700	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>1,581</b>	<b>(735)</b>	<b>20,133</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Equipment & Insurance	267	774	507	375	
Magazine	-	960	960	-	
Publicity	-	-	-	300	
Meetings and Other Expenses	693	1,500	807	1,500	
Office, Secretarial & Administration	976	1,156	180	1,680	
Staff Costs:					
CEO Salary	13,005	13,332	327	13,200	
CEO Expenses	2,537	3,875	1,338	3,500	
Committee Members' expenses	-	-	-	500	
Subscriptions	320	320	-	320	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>17,798</b>	<b>21,917</b>	<b>4,119</b>	<b>21,375</b>	
<b>(Deficit) for year</b>	<b>(16,952)</b>	<b>(20,336)</b>	<b>3,384</b>	<b>(1,242)</b>	
<b>Funds:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>		b/f Bud	b/f Act
Brought Forward	42,979	42,979		£ 22,643	£ 26,027
Carried Forward	26,027	22,643		21,401	24,785
<b>No. of months' expenditure cover (2013)</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>12.7</b>		<b>12.0</b>	<b>13.9</b>

<b><u>Income &amp; Expenditure - Actual</u></b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Denominational receipts		
Anglican	-	10,000
Baptist Union of Great Britain	-	1,636
Methodist	-	4,036
Religious Society of Friends	-	109
Roman Catholic	-	4,802
Salvation Army	-	328
United Reformed Church	-	545
	-	<b>21,456</b>
Conference & other receipts	303	99
Bank Interest	78	5
Voluntary Donations	465	624
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>22,183</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Equipment & Insurance	267	691
Meetings and Other Expenses (incl. Forum)	693	631
Office, Secretarial & Administration	976	1,908
Staff Costs		
CEO Salary	13,005	6,481
CEO Expenses	2,537	982
Subscriptions	320	320
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>17,798</b>	<b>11,011</b>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus for year</b>	<b>(16,952)</b>	<b>11,172</b>

<b><u>Statement of Assets and Liabilities</u></b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Funds Held</b>		
Balance brought forward 1 January	42,979	31,807
(Deficit)/Surplus for year	(16,952)	11,172
<b>Balance carried forward 31 December</b>	<b>26,027</b>	<b>42,979</b>

<b>Represented by:</b>		
Nat West Current Account	26,322	0
HSBC Community Account	0	35,160
HSBC Business Money Manager	0	9,160
Creditors	(295)	(1,341)

<u>26,027</u>	<u>42,979</u>
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Although not a legal requirement, these accounts will have been independently examined in time for the AGM and approval by the Trustees on 31st January 2013.