

Upper Thames Group Council Minutes

Date: Thursday 19th February 2015

Location: Latton Village Hall

Present: Phil Bradley, Ian Warton, Stuart Dagnall, Adina Grace, Linda Tuck, Matt Smith

Apologies: Shirley Danby, Kathryn Gray

Opening Prayer – Phil lead an opening prayer.

Notes and actions from last meeting

- The Upper Thames office PC is working better now. Virus protection is Microsoft Office require installing.

Action – Phil to arrange the install of virus protection and MS office to the admin PC.

Church snapshots

- No specific comments other than as written.

Vicar's update

- Alpha courses have been running in Cricklade and Latton with 24 people attending. A daytime course in Cricklade is being considered after Easter and also a course in Ashton Keynes which Shirley is researching.
- Christmas services went well with a big thank you to all involved across all 4 churches.
- Following the APCMs Phil and Shirley would like to work with all 4 churches and the group council on how we can deliver on the Group's vision statement: "Creating opportunities for everyone to experience God's love".
- Christian Aid are organising a lobby on climate change at Westminster on Wed 17th June. They would like at least 1 person from every parish to attend. Anyone interested should contact Phil, who will ensure it is also advertised closer the time.

Safeguarding

- Kathryn Gray has agreed to be safeguarding representative for Ashton Keynes.
- Phil and Avril Fray performed an audit and have put together an action plan. The diocese has also put together an action plan based on the audit results.

Action – Adina to pass the diocese action plan to Phil and Avril for review.

Action – Shirley to speak with Kathryn regarding the role in AK and pass on the action plan.

Discipleship

- After Easter Phil and Shirley will commence a sermon series about discipleship and will spend roughly a year focusing on this subject. There will also be the possibility of further alpha courses and training events where there are needs.

Uganda Rwancherere

- At a recent Uganda Link meeting it was highlighted that the Link is intended for fellowship and not financial support and if we intended to give financially it should be discussed with the Bishop to determine the best use of the money (it was not clear which Bishop was referred to).
- Shirley suggested that we should continue to support the Kigezi Diocese water and sanitation project (KDW&SP) as this is supporting the region of our Uganda link. It is partnered by Tearfund Connected Churches through whom we can give financial support.
- Shirley also suggested the prospect of contacting lights for learning to see if we can work together.

- It was generally agreed by those present that we should continue giving financially to the (KDW&SP)but not directly to the rwancherere link.

Churches Together

- Lent courses for 2015 have been organised
- Holiday club has been running successfully to culminate in a joint service on Sunday 22nd Feb at the United Church in Cricklade.
- It has been agreed to have less joint services in future.
- Songs of Praise style service arranged for 28th June at 15:30
- Joint service at St Sampson's arranged on 17th May for Christian Aid week. Ashton Keynes are due to host this service and should be considered in future years.
- Next Cafe Theos meeting on March 2nd at 19:30. Speaker: Michael Johnson from Prospect Hospice.

Away Day

- The Upper Thames Group away day for 2015 will be on 6th June at HarnHill. The theme will be time, and how we use our time.
- Future away days should be organised further in advance to allow more time for planning and avoid calendar clashes.

Letting policy

- A draft letting policy and "information for users" document based on the Jenner Hall were circulated by Adina prior to the meeting for comments.
- It was proposed that this is used for all 4 churches and any mention of "St Sampson's" should refer to all 4 churches and the documents should be renamed for the Upper Thames Group.
- Section 3 regarding to "practices of SS PCC" should be re-worded.

Action – Adina to modify the documents as suggested above.

Shared expenses

- The current formula for sharing expenses across the Group is as follows:
56% St Sampson's, 38% Holy Cross, 4% St John's, 2% All Saints
- The group felt at the moment there was no need to change this.
- It was mentioned that not allay ministers claim their expenses and they are sometimes only claimed against 1 church.

Action – Adina to email all Lay ministers and remind them to claim their expenses and claim it against the Upper Thames Group.

Group purchasing

- This had been discussed previously as a good way to save time and money between the churches and keep a common stock of items to distribute as required (e.g. candles, wafers, etc). Pauline is willing to manage this as part of her role.

Action – Pauline Loveday to contact Gaye Horrell to organise group purchasing.

Action – Adina, Linda, Stuart and Ian to inform respective PCCs

Items for next meeting

- Lettings policy to be reviewed
- Phil to discuss more on how we deliver the vision

AOB – Reminder to everyone to send information on events to Sarah Smith for inclusion on the Website.

Location and date of next meetings – Thurs 7th May at The Vicarage, Cricklade and Thurs 9th July at Latton Hall