

Devon Churches Rural Forum Meeting
8th February 2021, 10am-12 noon – by Zoom

Notes

1. Archdeacon Douglas opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Welcome and introductions

Present were: Douglas Dettmer (Archdeacon of Totnes, Chair), Janet May (curate), Ruth Frampton (rector), Jane Hayes (curate), David Curry (diocesan environment adviser), John Corrie (ret'd mission tutor & priest), Martin Beck (Devon and Cornwall Police Rural Crime Officer), Sylvia West (deanery synod secretary and DFWI), Richard Taylor (Linking Lives), Mark Betson (C of E National Rural Officer), David Ursell (farmer & minister), John Wibberly (professor of agriculture), Danny Semorad (farmer, church warden, Devon Historic Churches Trust), Elizabeth Burke (rector), Adam Bush (Special Constable), Dave Watson (Methodist leadership team, councillor), Nora Corkery (Devon Communities Together), Marisa Cockfield (vicar, police chaplain), Colin Smallacombe (Farming Community Network), Susanna Metz (rural dean, relief milker), Simon Leigh (minister & rural officer, Methodist district), Jane Skinner (rector), Howard Wilson (Learning & Development Coordinator, Methodist SW region), Carol Coslett (Archdeacon of Chesterfield, Diocese of Derby), Chris Keppie (Diocese of Exeter Church & Society Officer - taking minutes).

Archdeacon Douglas (Chair) welcomed all, particularly Ven Carol Coslett, Archdeacon of Chesterfield, joining us this meeting to understand how the Devon forum works; and Mark Betson, National Rural Officer for the Church of England (recently busy as part of the national church's covid recovery group).

Douglas updated the group on Penny Body (our outstanding Secretary). She continues recovering well from a planned operation and is now resting more for the rest of this year; however her partner, Alan, has recently had his colon removed and will be in hospital for the next few weeks. Our thoughts and prayers are with them both.

3. Apologies

Received from Stuart Wilson, Sarah Cracknell, Andy Jerrard, Jane Frost, Stephen Derges, Richard Yarwood, Simon Franklin, Mike Clark.

4. Notes from the last meeting on 2nd November 2020 were agreed.

5. Feedback from the National Rural Officers conference, organised by Arthur Rank Centre, attended by several members on 12-13th November:

- Mark Betson particularly enjoyed the very engaging session from Stuart Roberts, deputy president of the NFU, and the opportunity for questions and discussion.
- Dave Watson attended the session on rural poverty led by the Plunkett Foundation, which highlighted successful use of places of worship by community businesses (such as shops and cafes in Yarpole and Peterchurch); and a session by Prince's Countryside Fund, including challenges of rural broadband.

- Chris Keppie also appreciated the NFU talk which included positives in covid era (increased awareness of food security, and walking past farms); and positive agreed amendments in the recent Trade & Agriculture Bills (improved environmental & animal welfare standards – thanks to 1m+ people who signed petitions). He also talked about the NFU’s carbon net zero 2040 target: farmers are most exposed to flooding/drought, and talk to him about this more than Brexit even; expectation from public for farmers to be engaged positively; real opportunities to sequester carbon more, and also to increase fruit and veg production (we have more water than many countries!)
- Chris also attended the talk on Environmental Action and the Rural Church from Dave Bookless, Director of Theology at [A Rocha](#). 45 minute presentation was brilliant – see <https://youtu.be/jDcxM7Ymt2M> and summary slide on Chris’s environment presentation (slide 7) attached

6. Update from Martin Beck – Rural Crime Officer – on heritage crime on our churches (mainly metal theft) and an update on “Heritage Watch”

- Please see Martin’s presentation attached, which summarised the team’s work and priorities (agricultural, wildlife and heritage), and incidences of ecclesiastical crime (especially theft of lead from roofs). He also mentioned a new ‘Heritage Watch’



DRCF Churches
Presentation Feb 21

reporting mechanism, to come soon:

- Martin talked about a ‘metal theft risk identification form’ and requested that this is completed for all our church buildings which have lead roofs, and returned by completing individual for each church to the police email on the form. His team will use the information to identify churches most at risk, and it will help when they roll out



Operation Crucible
Risk Identification F

Heritage Watch. Form to be completed:



Church

Noticeboard Poster.

- Poster for church notice boards:
- “The link to the Heritage England information on the subject is here <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/places-of-worship/places-of-worship-at-risk/metal-theft/> . Our crime numbers are low but just one church missing it’s roof is too many. I hope we can prevent loss.”

7. Linking Lives – an introduction to the project and resources available – Richard Taylor

Linking Lives UK is a Christian charity which exists to reduce social isolation and loneliness, with a particular focus on older people. This is achieved by working in partnership with churches and Christian organisations to set up befriending projects. Core models are home visiting and telephone befriending. This contact and engagement has a significant impact on all those involved, including volunteers who engage in activities.

Richard leads Linking Lives in Devon. Since establishing in this county last year (obviously under covid restrictions), they have focused on developing phone befriending: “Two’s Company”. He summarised the church-based model, with local volunteer coordinator and befrienders undergoing national training; the referral system from local professionals; and the approach of regular, warm, active listening calls, with some signposting to other services.



Two's Company
Publicity Pack.pdf

Service summary attached here:

Please contact Richard if your church or contacts would be interested in setting up a befriending group, and receiving training and support to do so: richard@linkinglives.uk

8. Main Item – What does “carbon net zero” (and response to the biodiversity crisis) look like in a rural context – led by Chris Keppie

Chris Keppie, diocesan Church & Society / Environment Officer spoke to this detailed presentation,



environment talk
LONGER DCRF.pptx

attached: _ This included:

- 1 Context
 - Definition of carbon net zero
 - Context of covid / current exhaustion etc
 - Climate and biodiversity ‘crises’ according to world leaders and scientists
 - Theological / faith contexts from Dave Bookless (A Rocha, ++Justin Welby, Pope Francis, etc
 - Anglican General Synod resolution
 - Personal driver / involvement; Fridays For Future; Melanesian Mission; dealing with overwhelm
 - 5 Marks of Mission; Bishop Robert quote
- 2 Resources & opportunities
 - Ecochurch
 - Practical Path to Net Zero
 - Parish Buying
 - Net Zero
 - Funding
 - Living Churchyards & Caring For God’s Acre
 - CPRE competition, and Love Your Burial Ground Week
 - Offsetting
 - Fairtrade & local food projects
 - Campaign & support groups
 - Books, websites, courses
 - Worship materials
 - Sharing with each other

Detail and links throughout the presentation. Unfortunately we ran out of time for much discussion, but Chris invited the forum to share local initiatives to him chris.keppie@exeter.anglican.org or via various social media (see end slides), or to ask for any guidance / training etc.

9. Dates and themes of next meetings:

Weds 14th July 2021, 10am-12 noon, by Zoom

10. Closing Prayer led by Douglas