



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

This Report sets out the key areas of work for Churches Together in Herefordshire over the past year. Anna Nugent, the County Ecumenical Officer (CEO), was employed by CTiH for 45 hours per month in 2022 (until her retirement from the role); and for Emma Wright, the CEO from January 2023.



Churches Together Groups

Many of the Churches Together Groups around the county are continuing a process of self-evaluation and a rethink about how they will operate post-pandemic. The following is a snapshot of some of the groups' activities.

Christians Together in Ewyas Harold went through a process of self-evaluation and review last year, changing their name to *Christians Together* to better reflect the group. They have been looking at ways to work together for joint mission in their area, with all individual church activities being considered as opportunities for partnering and working together.

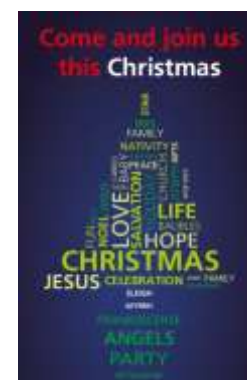
Their activities have included a very effective Christian Aid week collection and ecumenical service; regular Taizé services and online Night Prayers for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, regularly attended by Christians from different churches. There is a Messy Church that takes place once a month. There is also a Tea Time Club that takes place every Thursday. This club grew as an extension alongside regularly providing low-income families with food boxes. Open the Book takes place a few times during a school term. The Baptists in Ewyas Harold have started up a bible study group and all denominations are welcome to join.

- **Christians Together in Orleton** are sharing services, alternating Sundays between the Anglican and Methodist churches. They are working together towards becoming an Eco Church and have an after-school 'Eco Group'. They run a regularly well-attended Messy Church and have created a welcome leaflet summarising their activities for newcomers to their community. They also undertook a review of their work, chaired by the County Ecumenical Officer in 2022. They also ran a Lent study group which was insightful and gives people an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of their faith. Open the Book and CTiO coffee shop are good witnesses for the people of Orleton.



Churches Together in Ross & District have

continued to meet regularly, and Churches are talking with each other. They produced a Christmas flyer inviting their community to their Christmas services and met daily for prayer during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity <https://www.ctrd.org.uk/>. Vennture are circulating 200 questionnaires in Ross to determine whether people feel safe on the streets of Ross and how they can support people in feeling safe in partnership with CTIRD.



Churches Together in Hereford have been looking at new ways of working and continue to encourage churches to come together in witness for the Good Friday walk around the city centre. City Praise has brought together multiple churches and large numbers of Christians in worship and praise in the Cathedral several times throughout the year. There is fantastic ecumenical work going on between Methodists and Anglicans, Archdeacon Derek has invited Rev Phil Warrey to preach at the Civic Remembrance service instead of himself this year. Vennture are also circulating questionnaires to gather data on whether people also feel safe on the streets of Hereford.

Churches Together in Leominster have held their annual celebratory 'Christmas Lights



Service' as usual which is followed by the switching on of the Town Lights in Corn Square, Leominster. They also held daily prayer around the churches in the town for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. There is a

yearly Lent course which is attached to the Lent lunches and a Good Friday Walk of Witness that took place over Easter. The CEO recently had a meeting with Father Guy Cole who mentioned how there was a bi-annual Passion play that happened every Easter. This died out before the pandemic which would be good to look at starting it up again. They also ran a stall during the Dementia Action Week in May. There is a newsletter that CTL puts out which increases further contact amongst the churches.



Churches Together in Weobley continue to work well together, worshipping together at Harvest Festival; providing a Christmas Lunch for their community; organising Carol singing in the village on Christmas Eve and joining together again for an Epiphany Service.

Churches Together in Kington & District are working together and continuing to meet and

discuss the needs of their community. They produced a Christmas Leaflet detailing all the church Christmas services. They also produced a travelling Crib that visited shops and schools around the town in the run-up to Christmas. They are also helping out with the food bank and are receiving many generous donations. Pentecost Praise is being held by the Baptists this year at the end of May.

Organisations with whom CTiH works

LEAF – Ledbury churches



LEAF in Ledbury - 'Locally Encouraging All to Flourish'. This charity, was set up to manage the existing and future social action projects that are run ecumenically already in Ledbury, overseen by Rev Tony Hodder, the ecumenical minister. These activities are thriving and growing. These include pastoral and marriage counselling, a Christians Against Poverty money course and debt counselling service, Alpha, Messy Church, Family Fun days, Open the Book and a chaplaincy service in the local GP Health Centre. The warm spaces that were created by the Baptists and the Catholics which closed at the end of January, they want to find somewhere more central and create more awareness of warm spaces. You can find out more information at <https://www.leafledbury.com/>



Vennture

CTiH continues to support, publicise, and actively work with this ecumenical organisation, including publicising their need for more Christian volunteers and Link Workers from all churches.



This year they have taken over running the emergency support for the homeless through the

winter, as well as continuing with Street Pastors and Street Ambassadors. Family Pastors also support troubled families across the county; find support for individuals and young people needing someone to walk alongside them through a time of challenge or crisis. www.vennture.org.uk

Herefordshire Houses of Prayer

The CEO has joined Christians from all over the county and beyond, for an hour of online open prayer 'Zooming for Revival'. It is a supportive group which continues to meet every Tuesday night to pray for current issues and for the Holy Spirit to move in Herefordshire. Zoom link for this prayer group available from the CEO herefordshireceo@gmail.com



Church Leaders Together - Hereford

The CEO joins with Church Leaders of Hereford monthly for a lunch meeting and prayer time. The time is used to share news about individual and joint projects as well as offering support and prayer for each other's ministries. They started 2023 with a visit up the tower of Hereford Cathedral, praying together for the needs of the city.



Work with individual denominations

The Methodist Church

The CEO is happy to facilitate meetings between Methodist and Anglican clergy more in the future to encourage co-operation and discussion between Churches. This was started by the previous CEO which I am very happy to continue doing.

The Anglican Diocese of Hereford

The CEO was happy to attend the licensing services at the Diocese. Anna, the previous CEO attended the Licensing & Installation Service for Rev Jae Chandler as Team Vicar in the West Hereford Team and welcomed her on behalf of CTiH. Steve Sully welcomed Rev Mark Melliush as Diocesan Mission Enabler at his licensing, on behalf of CTiH.

The CEO has a co-opted place on Hereford Diocesan Synod and has attended meetings on behalf of CTiH.

The current CEO attended the installation of the new Vicar Rev Philip Miller at St Peters Church, Bromyard. It was very well attended by the community with Bishop Richard talking about the unity that will come out of this, giving Bromyard the opportunity to press forward in creating more Church events and spreading the Gospel further.

Hereford Cathedral

The previous CEO Anna represented both CTiH and Hereford Cathedral (as a Lay Canon) at the annual Anne Frank Memorial Service in Hereford at the invitation of the 3 Counties Liberal Jewish Community, via Zoom. She also represented CTiH at the County Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the reign of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Church in Wales / Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff

The previous CEO was invited to a Church in Wales Ecumenical Officers and Interfaith Network meeting in Builth Wells in September, by Rev Ainsley Griffiths, National Ecumenical Officer, Church in Wales, to speak about where God was working in Herefordshire and how churches and Christians were joining in together: "Ecumenism and Mission: Discerning what God is already doing in Herefordshire". The talk and subsequent discussion was well received and the group closed the Network meeting with a call to their respective churches to create an 'Ecumenical Nation' for Wales (like Cumbria's Ecumenical County).

Churches Together in England (CTE)

The previous CEO attended the CTE Ecumenical Officers' Consultation, held at The Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire in September (for Denominational Ecumenical Officers, County Ecumenical Officers, CTE staff and National



Ecumenical Officers). The theme was 'Exciting, Relevant, Loving Church?' The current CEO attended the New County Ecumenical Officer conference in January. We looked at flexible frameworks and what receptive ecumenism looked like. We talked about the importance of prayer and worship which create a unity of purpose within our different context. The beauty of engaging with all traditions helps us become unified and engaged as one body of Christ as it is mentioned in John 17, which is the underlying core of CTiH.

Churches Together in Herefordshire

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee of Churches Together in Herefordshire meets 4 times a year, receives a report from the CEO and reviews her activities and initiatives (including recruiting and employing the new CEO from January 2023).

The Committee is made up of representatives from each of the sponsoring denominations and has been chaired by Steve Sully, of Challenge Community Church, and Trustee at Vennture.



Open Meetings

Churches Together in Herefordshire holds two Open Meetings a year – November and May.



Robert Thomas MBE spoke at the November meeting, held in person at the Bishop's Palace, Hereford. The meeting was recorded

and can be found here:
<https://youtu.be/EU4zphZaNfM>

Website

CTiH has an online presence in the form of a website with an 'Upcoming Events' diary that is constantly updated with events, worship and meetings of Churches Together Groups and anything where Churches and Christians are coming together. Visits remain steady (with some people accessing the

newsletter this way). Most visitors access the site via a search engine, a third of visitors via Facebook, then from links on local denomination websites.
<http://www.ctih.org>

Facebook

The CTiH Facebook page has 517 followers. The page is regularly updated with events and news and sharing where Christians and Churches are working together.

<https://www.facebook.com/churchestogetherinherefordshire>



Newsletter

CTiH publishes a newsletter 11 months of the year, sent electronically via MailChimp to 197 recipients (from whom permission has been explicitly obtained). [here](#)

Anna Nugent (to Jan 2023) / Emma Wright (from Jan 2023)

herefordshireceo@gmail.com
