

Celebrating the church in
Norwich



Transforming
Norwich



Churches Together in Greater Norwich

Annual Report '06

Where are we going?

If last year's AGM was the big bang this year has seen the growth of some areas of our corporate life. Our vision is to see the body of Christ in Norwich functioning together in new and exciting ways in order to see transformation come to Norwich. To this end, we are seeking to engender an atmosphere within which it is easy for individuals and congregations to move from isolation and independence to the joy of fellowship and working together.

Our speakers last year talked of the need for change in order to meet the challenge and opportunity of the twenty first century. There are new congregational expressions emerging in Norwich which are changing the church landscape. They may not suit all but they are certainly touching many and extending the Kingdom of God. Enhancing the variety and diversity of the church amongst us and this is encouraging.

One aspect of the change taking place is self evident whenever you log on to www.networknorwich.co.uk. Here we are all equal, people, congregations and organisations. Everyone has access to the latest news of the church; job opportunities, exciting events and the things being done by other people. To me this project is a brilliant example of the free flow of the life of the body and offers support and encouragement to all. I for one want to thank Keith Morris for his vision and faith in launching this project.

Street Pastors (see next page) is an emerging City wide project. The need and opportunity which the weekend "evening economy" affords, calls for a response and requires that we do it together. Progress is under way and by this time next year Street Pastors should be up and running. The intention is to release Christians from every walk of life and background into the fulfilment of their personal calling, and in so doing,

see people cared for out on the streets, the Kingdom of God advanced.

The spirit of the age is producing ever growing isolation which is breaking down our society. This in turn leads to personal, family and corporate dissolution. The Church is God's model of the opposite. Every congregation knows itself to be called to outreach in the name of Jesus. We have a mission to fulfil. However if we are to effectively reach out to our City we will need to do it together in the openness of Christian love and fellowship. The Kingdom purpose of God is more important than the growth of any individual part of the Church. It is also more important than my seeking to defend the faith against contamination, a task of which the Holy Spirit is well able to take care. For this to happen we shall need to embrace one another in deeper ways than before, being willing to review our views and our plans, seeking opportunities to fellowship and work together at every opportunity, without compromise.

That may sound risky! It will raise all sorts of questions and queries concerning real issues but, unless we venture in faith we are condemned to repeat the cycle of past generations, when all the time the world around us is calling for the love, care and leadership which the Holy Spirit will release through the Church.

The outcome I believe will be the release of our people to their work of service, the extension of the Kingdom and the growth of a relevant, inspiring church which results in our city being transformed in the name of Jesus.

If you are not already a member of Transforming Norwich please consider joining us as we work for these goals.

John Betts
Chair, Transforming Norwich

The www.networknorwich.co.uk website has now been online for eight months.

Its primary aim is to act as a first port of call for anybody wanting information or news about the Norwich Christian community and to be a two-way channel of communication and connection. It is branded on the home page as Transforming Norwich and a large amount of positive feedback has been received since launch.

Some 75 greater Norwich churches are listed in the directory alongside 20 Christian projects. Over 350 news articles are now on the site and forum posts and poll votes number several hundred.

Partner sites within Network Norwich are being developed for: Transforming Norwich, NCCT,

Dreams & Visions, Alpha Norfolk, Norwich FG-BMFI, Call to Prayer and several city churches

Visitors to the site have been growing steadily and page views have increased to around 30,000 a month or 1000 a day. Over 600 people are receiving the weekly e-news bulletin and the site is well ranked by search engines such as Google.

In May, the website was named as a finalist in two categories in the Churches Media Council national awards for radio, TV, press and websites. The winners are announced on June 13

If you would like to submit any news or information for the site or to sign up for the free e-newsletter simply email web@networknorwich.co.uk with details.

Keith Morris

Communications Officer

**Network Norwich and Transforming
Norwich**



City/Church Dialogue

This group was born out of the research initiative in 2003 when we found that the Church in Norwich puts in the equivalent of £650k resources into the social action in the City each year, that is 155,000 volunteer hours, or the equivalent of 79 full time workers. Since then, the City Council has been extremely open to meeting with us to further areas where our agendas overlap. This year all the City's Community Development Officers arranged meetings with church leaders in their 'patches' and thus opened up a communication route which many didn't know about. Church members also featured disproportionately high in the Council's 'e-helpers' initiative because they were able to publicise it through our network. Right now, the Council are fully behind the emerging idea of having Street Pastors on duty during the busy weekend evenings. In addition, the City/Church Dialogue group also have representatives on the Social Issues Round Table, and Norwich Strategic Partnership Steering Group. We are very appreciative of the good will shown by Bob Cronk, our lead contact in City Hall.

Howard Green

Money Matters

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN GREATER NORWICH TRANSFORMING NORWICH

SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/3/06

(rounded to nearest £)

	£	£
INCOME		
Subscriptions from Churches in Membership		1530
Subscriptions from Christian Organisations in Membership		650
Interest from Bank Accounts		37
Share of income from two Pre-Election Meetings		48
June Conference delegates fees	1460	
June Conference sponsorship from Bishop	500	
June Conference sponsorship from Dreams & Visions	1000	
June Conference Total Income		<u>2960</u>
TOTAL INCOME		5225

EXPENDITURE

FUNDING FOR EVENTS

June Conference Hotel Hosting	3200	
June Conference Administration + Speakers Expenses	367	
June Conference Total		3567
November Conference Admin / Drinks / Interpreter		92
One World Week		52
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity		50
Good Friday Witness mailing & posters		51
Milawee Link		54

COMMUNICATION & ADMINISTRATION

Together Newsletter		61
Pilgrim Post, Churches Together in England Journal		60
City / Church Dialogue Web Site		453
Secretarial / Treasurer / Office / Meetings / Web updating		418

AFFILIATION FEES & Gifts

TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>5037</u>
Surplus of Income over Expenditure		188

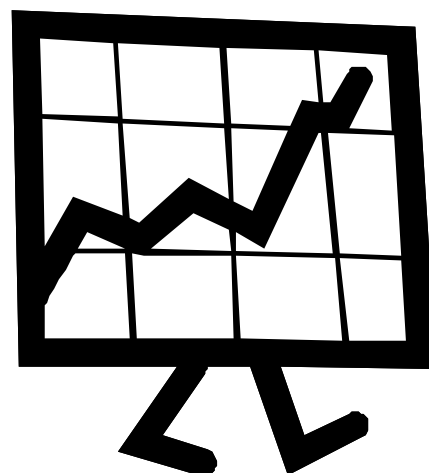
Balance of Funds on 31/3 05	1914
Balance of Funds on 31/3 06 (based on rounded figures)	2102

Graham Fletcher Treasurer

Thanks

The Executive wish to express their thanks and appreciation to

Graham Fletcher
for his years of service,
as treasurer to Churches
Together in Greater
Norwich. Graham is retir-
ing from this post and is
succeeded by John East-
on of St. Luke's.



Soap Box

If everyone who's regarded as being in church membership in Norwich tithed their income through their local congregations, what kind of resource would this release?

Assume the number of church members to be that declared in the research done with the *City/Church Dialogue* in September 2003 (11,037). Assume that equal numbers of male and females have average earnings for males (£23k) and females (£18k) in Norfolk in the latest government statistics (ONS). Assume one third of our members are pensioners (a 'finger in the air') earning the average for a pensioner in Norfolk (£10k). Assume that the non-pen-

sioners are unemployed at the Norfolk rate (of 3.7%) and exclude their income. Under these assumptions, Church members earn £181m a year. A straight tithe of this amount is probably not realistic with fixed expenses like mortgages. So for the sake of argument, let's half it: 5% of this amount is **£9m a year**...enough to pay for all the congregation's expenses, and have a bit left over for our fellow Christians who are already working with the "poor and needy" in our City community: the drug addict, the prostitutes, young people late on Friday and Saturday nights, those who wish they weren't pregnant, those looking after ex-prisoners with nowhere to live, etc., and who currently spend weeks and weeks every year worrying about grants, and sources of funding to maintain their projects...

Anon

Street Pastors

Christian street pastors could be patrolling the pavements in Norwich after a meeting in Norwich with the national founder of the scheme backed the idea.

Project founder **Rev Les Isaac** met with around 25 church and Christian leaders on March 14 to explore bringing the idea to Norwich.

Street Pastors is an inter-denominational Church response to urban problems, engaging with people on the streets to care, listen and dialogue.

A steering group has been set up with representatives from a number of local Christian groups and churches.

The Street Pastors scheme is one of the most exciting things that the church has been doing over the last few years to contribute to community life. Trained Christians go onto the streets and help make sure that people get home safely. It is the Gospel in action, Good Samaritans helping people in need.



The scheme has had a very good press and the police have attributed a decrease in certain areas of crime to their activities.

We have felt some concern about Friday and Saturday nights in Norwich and what the church can do about the problems. We now have a group of people committed to making this happen.

Les Isaac said: "This is not about heaven and hell and preaching to people on the street. We go out because we have a heart and compassion for our communities. It is about caring, listening and helping people.

Each city project is set up by the Ascension Trust and run by a local coordinator with support from local churches and community groups, in partnership with Police, local council and other statutory agencies.

It was pioneered in London in January 2003 by Rev Isaac, Director of the Ascension Trust, and has seen some remarkable results, including drops in crime in areas where teams have been working.

Projects are already working in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leicester and Southend among other places with over 400 pastors on the streets.

Transforming Norwich

There are three classes of Membership

M E M B E R S H I P

1 Congregational members. Membership is open to any congregation within the Greater Norwich area which affirms the basis and objectives within the constitution.

2 Christian Organisations. Membership is open to any Christian organisation within the Greater Norwich area which affirms the basis and objectives within the constitution.

3 Individual members. Membership is open to any individual worshipping in one of the congregations, or working in one of the Christian organisations in the Greater Norwich area, who affirms the basis and objectives within the constitution.

Associate membership. Any congregation, organisation or individual which cannot subscribe fully to the basis of the constitution may be an Associate member at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Membership fees apply.

Industrial Mission Reviewed and Renewed

The work of industrial/workplace chaplaincy and mission in this country has always been undertaken and arranged ecumenically, as is well illustrated by our own team of chaplains. The work comes, therefore, under the oversight of the local ecumenical structures and leadership. The honest truth is that, through nobody's design or fault, the Norfolk and Waveney Team has in recent years been rather left to get on with things on their own and with relatively little reference back to the ecumenical structures. This was one of the reasons behind the review that I undertook on behalf of the Church Leaders during last year; another factor being the retirement of Howard Cooke and the consequent need to consider how this work should be led and overseen.

The outcome of this was that Norfolk and Waveney Churches Together re-affirmed Norfolk and Waveney Industrial Mission (though perhaps in time with a new name) as the churches' principal arm for engaging with industry, commerce and economic life across the Norfolk and Waveney area. It was also agreed that we would re-establish a Management

Norfolk and Waveney Churches Together re-affirm NWIM as the churches' principal arm for engaging with industry, commerce and economic life across the Norfolk and Waveney area

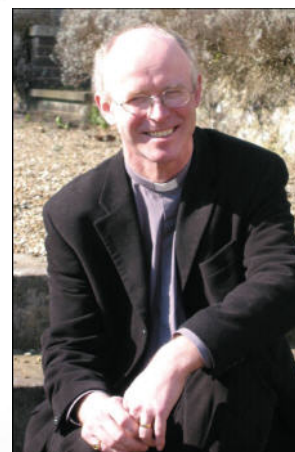
Committee as an effective structure for support, oversight and strategic decision-making; this Committee is in the process of being recruited and it will operate in effect on behalf of the ecumenical Church Leaders. We also hope to continue to recruit lay and ordained chaplains (almost certainly part-time) for specific pieces of work and to encourage those already doing this kind of work to become part of the NWIM network.

The Church Leaders have invited Chris Warner to become the new Team Leader and the consequent redefinition of his role is in the process of being negotiated with his own denomination. Until the new Committee is in place I will endeavour to keep an eye on things on behalf of the Church Leaders.

This area of work has already moved a great deal in its thinking both nationally and locally. Many people's image of industrial mission may well still be of pastoral chaplaincy to industrial enterprises employing lots of people on one site.

But things have changed: the work now encompasses pastoral mission and ministry in many kinds of workplaces as well as community development around economic and employment issues. Opportunities for pastoral ministry abound in such settings, often with people who might have little or no contact with a local congregation; there is also the opportunity to bear witness to Christian values and insights in relation to issues and concerns in the economic and public life of our communities.

All this is a vital aspect of the Church's calling and it is good that we are putting in place the structures for this work to continue and develop in the coming years.



James Langstaff
Bishop of Lynn

John named as new Sheriff of Norwich



We extend our warmest congratulations to John on his appointment as Sheriff.

John said, "I am absolutely honoured to be entrusted with this privilege and I will endeavour to fulfil the responsibilities of this office. I thank the Council for their recognition of the 150 years service rendered by the YMCA across Norfolk."

We pray the Lord's blessing upon John and trust his year in office will be a time not only of representing the City and Church of Norwich but also of much enjoyment.

Christian Aid This Year

The focus for the second half of 2005 was very much on Trade Justice. Eldred Willey, the area organiser, reported that two coaches had gone to Edinburgh for the major demonstration that co-incided with the G8 summit, and that over 200 had gathered in the prayer room at Bank Plain. The booklet Act Justly 2 with an accompanying video was launched in October, and taken up by a few churches, notably in the evangelical charismatic sector. It was subsequently used by Transforming Norwich itself for its Lent course. Eldred also organised a day on "teenagers and development issues" in December. A further meeting was organised for all for the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January in January on the theme of Justice, which was reasonably well attended.

A great deal of the work of the Commission itself centres around Christian Aid Week. Our area organisers ensure that churches have the necessary materials. The church representatives and their helpers do the rest, until the money floods back to our treasurer on it's way to the central office. We are pleased to report that, despite the increasing difficulties which many churches have in finding enough collectors, the 2005 week once more showed an increase in the Norwich area on the previous year, this time from £44,803 to £45,604. Efforts are being made to find more churches prepared to help. Final figures for 2006 are not yet to hand.

Each year we organise a meeting shortly before Christian Aid Week designed to enthuse collectors. In 2005 this was a joint meeting with Cafod and Tearfund and recognised as a huge success. This year, when we were back on our own, proved to be an anti-climax. We need to look again at our publicity for this event, but even more fundamentally to look at what is needed in this regard. However one new initiative which did succeed was a publicity stall outside St. Stephen's church on the Saturday before Christian Aid Week, which attracted a good deal of attention.

We have seen rather more turnover than usual in the membership of the Commission in the last two years. This year in particular has seen the resignation of Mrs Diana Cooke after many years of service in a variety of roles, and the arrival of Mrs Christine Hay as our new secretary. We are grateful to both these ladies. We would benefit from the recruitment of new members with positive ideas, and volunteers and/or suggestions would be welcome

Derek Gill

MEMBERSHIP

43 churches were paid-up members in the financial year under review

Two extra churches came into membership during the year, namely: Proclaimers, Kings.

These gains was partly offset by the demise of Wensum Chapel.

At the June 2006 Conference and AGM it was agreed to invite Christian Organisations other than churches to become members.

The result was that 13 Organisations responded to the initial invitation and of those, the following have now formalised and confirmed their membership.

Christian Aid
Community Action Norwich
Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship
Healing Rooms of Norwich
Norwich Youth For Christ
Open Youth Trust
Pregnancy Crisis Norfolk
The Magdalene Group
The Matthew Project
The Salvation Army (Social Action)
YMCA Norfolk

EVENTS ORGANISED DURING THE YEAR ENDING 31/3/06

28th /29th April 2005 **PREPARATION FOR GENERAL ELECTION**

An opportunity was provided for members of the churches to meet and question the Candidates from the main political parties in preparation for the General Election. The meeting for Norwich South was held on 28th April at Holy Trinity and was chaired by David Ingham. For Norwich North the meeting was held at Norwich Central Baptist Church where the chairman was Rev John Marsh

23 rd June **THE CONFERENCE** at Sprowston Manor Hotel

This was the largest and most wide ranging conference ever held by Churches Together in Greater Norwich.. The conference included challenging speeches by Chris Erskine of the Shaftesbury Society and Mike Love of Leeds Churches Together plus a question time with a panel drawn from the top level of the local council, police, and businesses.

The new web site www.networknorwich.co.uk was launched by Keith Morris.

At the **AGM** held in the afternoon, a revised Constitution was approved which changed the way in which members of the executive committee are elected, placing the emphasis on nominations from individual congregations rather than on denominational structures.. The revision also opened up the opportunity for Christian Organisations that are not 'churches' to become members. A further change allows for individuals to become members.

Serving the City

What has a Christian discovered about the application of his faith to the work of the City Council over the past 6 years? Two things initially come to mind:

1) In spite of theories to the contrary, politicians have amazingly little power. More often than not they lose out! I am not just referring to elections but to most aspects of Council life. Seldom is an idea put forward that gets implemented...it is changed, watered down, amended and improved. It finishes looking like something quite different. And then brave new ideas based on the best principles are thwarted by a combination of factors, such as budgets, health and safety, planning restraints. But accepting such a losing habit as a mark of Council life is probably how Christians best follow their crucified Lord.

2) The one policy that grew out of my Christian concern for the City and which was implemented was the Civic Pride Initiative. It was based on the principle that all residents and organisations in the City have a full part to play in its well-being, and cannot leave it to "them", being the Council or City Care to do for them. When everybody accepts their responsibility for their part of the City, the Kingdom of Heaven in Norwich will have arrived. Community life, the environment, neighbourliness, education, the economy, self-help etc will all be affected to make Norwich the best place in which to live.

Hereward Cooke

City Councillor since 2000

This Year continued from page 5

16th November **CONFERENCE** follow up at St Luke's Church. Chis Erskin continued his challenge to the churches. The emphasis was that of identifying where the churches should be using their resources to make a difference in our communities.

18th to 25th January 2006

WEEK of PRAYER for CHRISTIAN UNITY

This year a special service was held at Mount Zion Family Life Centre on Monday 23rd January when the speaker was Roger Allen and the offering was dedicated to the Act Justly campaign. It was a truly ecumenical occasion involving church leaders from all the denominations.

The **Chain of Prayer** for Christian Unity was held on Thursday 19th January in Norwich Cathedral, on the theme "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am with them". Some 109 worshippers from 28 churches signed in to form the chain and many added their own prayers in the book. They were supported by many more who dropped in during the day, but who did not sign in.

14th April **GOOD FRIDAY**

A March of Witness through the city centre, was held on Good Friday. Starting out from Chapelfield Road Methodist church at 4.45pm, the marchers moved through the city, stopping for a brief service at Millennium Plain before proceeding to the Norwich Cathedral.

The Ecumenical service at the Cathedral was very well attended and included a dramatic presentation by the Thorpe / Heartsease group, musical items by the Cathedral Girls Choir and the Salvation Army Citadel Band. The address was given by Major Ray Begley.

CTiGN continued to be represented on the Norwich Area Committee of the Norfolk County Council, however the only matter under consideration has been that of the responses to the Northern Distributor Study.

St Martins Housing Trust

Norwich rough sleeping under control...but single homelessness numbers keep rising.

The Trust continues to work hard in order to keep the number of rough sleepers in the city as close to zero as possible. Working from their new office in Upper Goat Lane our CAPS team (Contact, Assessment and Prevention service) see on average about 10-15 new people every week who have no roof over their head. Some are accepted by Norwich City Council as "unintentionally homeless" whilst others are found temporary beds in supported housing projects in Norwich and elsewhere. These strategies have led to relatively low numbers of rough sleepers in the city - on average two per night throughout the winter months. However, the pressure on temporary beds in the city, such as the Trust's own 30-bed direct access hostel (Bishopbridge House), continues to gradually increase.

In addition to Bishopbridge House the Trust continues to manage just under 60 beds in 16 houses in the community. The aim is to help people stabilise their

lives after a period of homelessness whilst they seek a tenancy for themselves.

The biggest news within the Trust is that the planning work for the re-development of St. Martins House (our 33 bed registered care home on Westwick Street) is nearing its conclusion. Building work for a purpose-built 22-bed registered care home for single homeless people with dual diagnosis (mental health and substance abuse problems) is due to start this summer.

St. Martins Housing Trust, May 2006
www.stmartinshousing.org.uk

Derek Player,
General Manager of St. Martins Housing Trust
(Norwich's charity for the single homeless)