

Report of the Bedfordshire Ecumenical Committee 2009

The Bedfordshire Ecumenical Committee (BEC) is the executive arm of Churches Together in Bedfordshire, which meets formally only once a year at its Forum. The Forum and its constituent denominations are responsible for appointing the members of BEC, which has met three times during 2009 in January, April and October at St. Andrew's, Bedford. BEC coordinates the work of Churches Together across the county.

We were sorry to have to accept the resignation of the Revd Ruth Bottoms as our County Ecumenical Development Officer (CEDO) at the Forum in 2009. Ruth brought energy and enthusiasm to the post, and since that date we have missed her enormously – and missed the services of a CEDO altogether. BEC decided that, in view of the review of our structures that we had started under Ruth's guidance, we would make the role and Job Description of the CEDO part of that process, and bring the results to the Forum at its meeting in 2010.

A small working group consisting initially of Mgr Sean Healy, the Revd Dr Colin Davey, the Revd Mike Shaw and the Revd Ruth Bottoms, with the Bishop of Bedford as Chair, have sought to slim down the structures and the Constitution in order to increase our effectiveness. There has also been a review of our finances. Local Ecumenical Partnerships, Churches Together Groups and the denominations have all been consulted in the course of this review, and the responses incorporated into the final documents.

We welcomed Peter Ormerod as our Treasurer, in April 2009, in succession to Rose Boulton. We are grateful to him for his careful attention to our finances. Our Consultant the Revd Dr Colin Davey has continued to give us helpful advice and substantial amounts of his time, and we are indebted to him in many ways.

At each meeting of the Committee, we have worked on the review and continued to keep our eyes on the developments towards new LEPs. As far as Wixams is concerned, there has been an increase in the rate of house building and the establishment of a school, and, although not properly a part of the report for 2009, it is worth recording that plans are moving forward for the appointment of an Ecumenical Church Development Minister for January 2011.

The 2009 Forum was held in May, and the speaker was the Revd Dr David Cornick, the General Secretary of Churches Together in England, who spoke of the ecumenical vision and encouraged us to learn from each other's experiences and to work together in the projects that are proving to be successful.

Our Secretary, Jocelyn Harper, is indefatigable in the work she does for us, and is excellent at keeping the Chairman from forgetting things! On many occasions, she has been able to fill the gap left by us not having a CEDO and she has ensured that the business of the Committee goes forward smoothly. We owe her a great debt of gratitude and I want to record my thanks to her for all her support.

+Richard Bedford, Chairman

May 2010