

Church and Community Working Together



Civic Conference

Some of those gathered at the Autumn's Civic Conference, which drew together those from Civic life.
More on page 3



Carols in the Harvey Centre

Our thanks again to BB's who have been hosting us for the Good Friday Walk with the Cross and Carols in the Harvey Centre for several years.

Review of the Year

God has a heart to bless the whole community of Harlow. In and through its partnerships, Heart 4 Harlow seeks to express through words and deeds the love of God shown to us in Jesus Christ.

We pray and work for the well-being of the town through Commerce; Civic Authorities; Art Culture, Education & Sport; Health and Wellbeing & Churches & Chaplaincy.

We work together with all people of goodwill for the benefit of others, to the glory of God in Jesus Christ's name.

This year has seen a focus on strengthening Christian witness to all sections of the community, helping the church to engage through Prayer, Partnership and Participation.

1. Commerce (Shops, Agriculture & Business): Robert Findlay headed Harlow Showcase to raise awareness of Business, Agriculture and Commerce to show that Harlow is a great place for work, education and to call home.

The aim of the Commerce link is to pray for businesses and seek to build relationships with business men and women and discover ways we can work together. If you are interested in getting involved please contact Trevor Stanesby. We hope to have a Commerce Conference in the Autumn.

2. Civic (Local Authority & Councillors, MP, Police and Fire Services) Ian Beckett and Tom Newens are encouraging the churches to get involved. Turn to page 3 for a report



"Harlow Showcase", in the Town Centre

of the Civic Conference.

3. Art, Culture, Education & Sport (ACES)

 Sarah Mitchell is facilitating ways that churches can work with schools and share good practice. Her report in on page 4

4. Health & Wellbeing (Charities & Community Groups, NHS & the care sector)

 Ron Kingsmill leads this group to support the NHS, Charities and Voluntary sector. More on page 2

5. Churches and Chaplaincy The group headed up Carols in the Harvey Centre. The group is led Alison Taylor.

 To get involved please contact one of those mentioned above or Robert Findlay; or you can visit our website and complete the online form to join a mailing list.



Heart4Harlow Awards

Some of those who received Awards this Autumn at the Manor of Groves Hotel



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"For me - it's more about people from God's church in Harlow meeting, worshipping, sharing, praying together and the unity that brings across the town with shared purpose. I believe it has had an impact on ministries across the town and informs individual and group prayer as well as when we meet on the 4th Sunday." - Jane Carrington

It has been encouraging to see both an increase in numbers coming to pray and also in the number of churches represented.

Health & Wellbeing



Over the past year we are pleased to have had the opportunity to be involved in a number of areas that impact the Health and Wellbeing of the residents and workers of Harlow and to show that the church is interested, engaged and involved.

Harlow Frontline is the key database used by professionals from the NHS, the Council and a whole host of charities and community groups to inform and refer residents to services which might help them. Residents may also self-refer.

We encourage all Churches to register on this database, including prayer support and spiritual wellbeing, as well as listing the various other things we offer (e.g. Parent and Toddler Groups, groups of the elderly, children and young people groups). It is also a useful resource to use to help people we have contact with.



Visit harlowfrontline.org.uk to register or search the local services available.

Permitted Development Rights (PDR) Properties

These converted business premises have received a lot of publicity recently. Ron represents Heart 4 Harlow on a number of groups which are looking at how we approach this issue as a community and how we support those who have been moved from other authorities to live here.

A bid is being prepared by charity/voluntary groups to coordinate 'buddies' who could welcome new residents and help introduce them to the town and connect them with appropriate services - this is something that church volunteers will have an opportunity to be involved with.

Mental Health First Aid Training

Following publicity from the Health & Wellbeing Group, we were delighted to see that over half of those attending at this event in September were from the churches and a very informative morning it was.

Hope 4 Harlow

We give thanks to God for the 7 churches which provided facilities for those without homes 7 days / week in January & February 2019; for all those from the churches and wider community who got involved; and for the advice and day to day time, effort and support of Streets2Homes which enables this to happen.

New Initiatives

The One Health & Care Partnership

Ron represents Heart 4 Harlow in this important new initiative which brings together NHS services (Primary and Secondary Care, Clinical Commissioning Groups etc.), the Care Sector (Including Harlow, Essex and Hertfordshire Councils), and the large number of charitable and community groups engaged in health and wellbeing in order to break down barriers to patient care and support

Addiction & Debt

At our last Health and Wellbeing Core Group meeting the need for improvement in support for those wrestling with addiction and those who are struggling with debt was raised. We believe it is important that we pray about these issues which have such a significant impact upon individuals, families and the wider community. We will be asking the question 'what, if anything' should the church in Harlow be doing to respond to these areas of great need?'

Heart4Harlow Meetings and Forum

Heart 4 Harlow Forums

All Christians in any form of leadership - whether in your employment in the community (including civic and church) or the voluntary sector.

All are warmly welcomed.

Monthly prayer gatherings

are normally on the 4th Sunday of the month from February to November.

These are at 6.30pm at St Mary's Churchgate Street, Old Harlow. This coming year we are planning that every other gathering engages with the "Community Links".

There is further opportunity for **weekly prayer** 8-9am

every Thursday in the St Paul's chapel (entry is via the Terrace door, facing College Square).

Do come!

Please see insert for diary for the year.



Community Cornerstones: Building relationships within our civic community

In November the Civic Group met with representatives of churches from across the town and villages in Roydon to discuss strengthening relationships and working in partnership to respond to our collective challenges, and to contribute to realising the wonderful potential that Harlow has.

The event set out to explore our hopes and dreams, our fears and concerns, and how by strengthening our relationships between those working for or appointed to Civic office we can improve opportunities and, at the very least, reduce risks and threats to social cohesion.

George Irving delivered an Opening Talk: "Finding & Serving God in the Civic Arena". George said afterwards, "I sought to give something of the Biblical and Theological basis for our engagement with 'Civic' society and to keep things as practical as possible. I think there is still much work to be done ~ not all Christians are convinced about the importance of Civic engagement or even its relevance. We need to go on explaining our call as Christians to be involved in 'politics' in the general sense as distinct from the call of some to be involved in 'party politics' (which can put a lot of people off!). The importance of the pursuit of 'truth' is also something I wanted to emphasise."



Cllr Frances Mason provided the conference with insight into her personal journey in terms of faith, work, health and politics. Frances was clear that whilst she held strong political convictions, she set out to serve the community of Harlow without bias and with equality and fairness at the fore.

PC Rob Hance spoke about the challenges Harlow faces in terms of community policing, including lack of resources, high turnover of police officers, and the varied levels of experience at an operational level.

Rob also spoke about the huge challenge and opportunities posed by social media. These can be useful communication tools for keeping people informed. On the downside, social media can be weaponised and provide a biased, limited or distorted version of information or events. Such distortions often make the work of the police harder and the community can play a useful part in not engaging with negativity and promoting the Truth.

Headlines from the final plenary included: the importance of personal testimonies; quashing unhealthy rumours; improving access to the Truth; a strong desire for the end of "shouty politics" and a commitment to aim to strengthen Civic relationships. A number of areas for action or consideration were agreed upon.



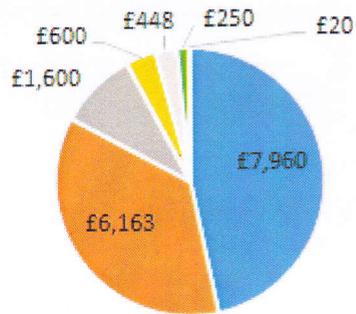
The Heart 4 Harlow Civic Link Group is Ian Beckett (Chair), Robert Findlay, George Irving, and Tom Newens.

Ian Beckett

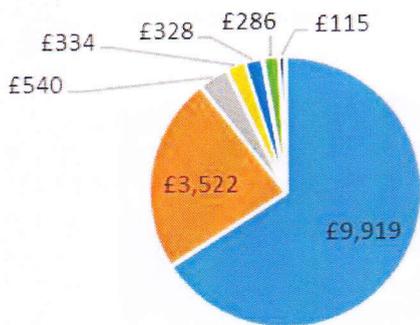
If you would like to receive updates on one or more of the Core Group areas listed above, for yourself or as a representative for your church, then please visit our website and choose 'Contact>Mailing Lists' from the menu, there you will be able to subscribe to updates from the Core Groups you are interested in.

"We need to go on explaining our call as Christians to be involved in 'politics' in the general sense as distinct from the call of some to be involved in 'party politics'" -
George Irving

H4H Income 2019



- H 4 H Awards (Sponsorship)
- Heart 4 Harlow Awards (Tables)
- Church Donation
- Charity Donation
- Individual Donation
- Marquee Donation
- Anonymous Donation



- Heart 4 Harlow Awards Costs
- Payrol
- Insurance
- Misc
- Annual Review
- H 4 H Office including IT
- Publicity

Finances

We received a total of £17,041 in the year (down 28%) and spent £15,044 (down 19%). Balances at the end of the year were £24,763.

All figures are subject to Independent Examination.

We are thankful to God that again we covered costs. We recognise, however, that funding has been subsidised by the Awards.

This will no longer be the case as changes are made to the way we show appreciation to those serving our town. We see 2020 as a transition year as we will no longer receive the income from the awards and will need to raise most of our funds from individual and church donations.



Arts, Culture, Education & Sport

The core group have met several times over the year and have been grateful to God for all that he has done in the sphere of education. We try to catch up on news and prayer requests from Great Open Door, the Gideons, the chaplains at Harlow College. We also seek to work towards our bigger vision of putting into place a system to enable schools and churches to work together for the good of the children and young people of our town and surrounding villages.

We are thankful for

- The work of Great Open Door and the positive impact their assemblies and other activities have on the children and staff.
- The numbers of Scriptures the Gideons have given out this year and the access to most of our secondary schools.
- The ongoing relationships between churches and schools and the opportunities to lead assemblies and lessons.

We are praying that

- There will be enough volunteers in the Great Open Door team to continue to put on their amazing assemblies, that God would continue to bless and inspire them and that many seeds will be planted in the lives of our school children.

- The Gideons will continue to be faithful in prayer for opportunities to go into all our secondary schools and give out God's Word and that these would be used.

- The database will be completed so that we can map the churches to schools which do not have any Christian input and as a result more of our children would have the opportunity to hear about Jesus from believers.

- Our education conference planned for 18th April will be a celebration of all that God is doing education wise in Harlow and that we can make more cohesive plans according to His will to develop and strengthen the relationship between schools and churches.

Sarah Mitchell