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| MINUTES of the **Horsforth Churches Together**Wednesday 4 Sept 20247.30pm at St Margaret’s |
| **Attendees:** | John Barnes (Treasurer), Judith Briggs, Claire Evans (Visiting Speaker), Lynne Gillions (Secretary), Jane Linley, Phil Maud, Rose McCarthy, Paul Metcalf, Deborah Pennington, Matt Powell(Chair), Laura Schubert, Nigel Sinclair, Duncan Stow, Rhoda Wu |
| **Apologies** | Margaret Metcalf, Cat Sayburn, Jill Woodman |  |
|  |  | **Action By:** |
| 1. | **Welcome**Matt welcomed everyone and opened the meeting in prayer. He read a passage from Lamentations and reminded us of God’s love and compassion and the hope we have in him. He then played Great is Thy Faithfulness. |  |
| 4. | **Food Pantry** (Item 4 was moved to the start of the meeting) Matt welcomed Claire Evans, Community Development Officer to talk about the Food Pantry. She briefly outlined its history and its association with Horsforth Community Assets Project. The building at St James is completed and open for business. A core team of volunteers run the Pantry and St James runs a café in the Parish Centre. There is a real family feel and clients are very impressed with the facility. It is currently open on Tuesday mornings. Clients pay £6 a week and choose £15-20 of food plus free vegetables. £1 of this can be invested into a savings scheme organised by Food Savers and backed by Leeds Credit Union. People can be signposted to other agencies if they require further assistance. Clients are referred by trusted organisations such as the Children’s Centre. If churches wish to make a referral they should contact Claire. It is hoped to open more frequently in due course and one ambition would be to make it self reliant within Horsforth and not dependent on grants. It was agreed to provide collection tubs in churches which might suggest specific items needed. Excess food is passed onto other organisations to avoid wastage. Claire thanked St Margaret’s for temporarily housing the Food Pantry.Nigel noted that churches should be aware that crisis funding is available through HCAP which is currently managed through St Margaret’s Church.Jonathan suggested that collection tubs could possibly be put in schools. He also talked about the positive links between The Food Pantry, Horsforth Shed and St James Church with one client starting to attend church.Matt thanked Claire for her input. | All Churches |
| 2. | **Minutes and Matters Arising**Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted. Matters Arising:* **The Hustings** – It was agreed that this was very well organised with over 100 people in attendance. It helped to promote positive politics. Special thanks were given to Cal Bailey, Jonathan Cain and St James for hosting the event.
* **Civic Service** – People appreciated the tea beforehand and the opportunity it gave for developing relationships and networking. The service, led by Phil Maud, went very well. Thanks were given to The Grove.
* **Horsforth Gala** – HCT created a lovely space to meet folk and bless families with a range of free activities. They included a quiz about the local churches. Katie White (now the local MP) met some of the asylum seekers and has since visited the hotel.

Duncan talked of his reliance on the same team of people for many years when delivering big community events. It is his intention in 2025 to take a sabbatical from the Gala and Carols in the Park. Therefore, if these events are to go ahead it will be necessary for new people to emerge who are willing to organise them. This is an opportunity to encourage volunteers from within our church communities. | All Churches |
| 3. | **Treasurer’s Report**Total in the bank £7273.25 of whichHCT £6935.90Perfectly Pitched £ 337.35John was thanked for his work as Treasurer.Deborah said that she had applied to the Town Council for a grant for one of the Perfectly Pitched concerts but was still seeking sponsorship for the November concert. Anyone aware of a potential business sponsor should contact Deborah. | All Churches |
| 5. | **Horsforth Town of Sanctuary**Laura reported that there is a very good group of volunteers who have good relationships with the hotel and individuals. New volunteers are always welcome.In July, 3 schools were awarded School of Sanctuary status and 3 more have shown an interest.Successful events included Refugee Week, The Great Get Together and monthly socials at St Margaret’s. Some of the men attend Willow Green and St Mary’s and one man is wanting to be baptised. He has also become very involved at Horsforth Shed and helped to build the Food pantry and shelving at Holy Name.The riots were obviously intimidating and volunteers messaged the men to enquire of their safety.Rose highlighted an event at West Yorkshire Playhouse on 9 Oct entitled Hospitality not Hostility. She also said that applications were being processed more quickly which was good but created the potential of men becoming homeless particularly those aged 19-35 who got less funding and often struggled to find accommodation. A charity called Refugees At Home is going to give a talk about people offering short term (3 months) accommodation to men in that situation while they get established. On 11 Oct, there is a social inviting local people to share food and friendship with some of the men. | All Churches |
| 6. | **Christmas** * **Christmas Cards –** Rhoda presented some facts about the costs and distribution of cards over the previous 2 years and projected costs for 2024. It was agreed that, as happened last year, HCT would purchase 5000 cards for distribution at local events and that Christmas services should again be advertised in The Squeaker.
* **Carols in the Park –** 4.00pm on 14 Dec
* **Christmas Market –** 7 Dec
* **Carols in the Pubs –** To be decided nearer the time
 | All Churches |
| 7. | **Upcoming Events****Perfectly Pitched –** 26 Sept, 31 Oct, 28 Nov**St James Heritage Open Day –** Sat 7 Sept 10.00 – 4,00**Spoken Word Event -** with local poets St James 8 Nov (tickets available online)**Granny’s Attic -** following their successful concert last year, they are appearing again at St James on 22 Nov (tickets available online)**Trinity University –** Prayer would be appreciated forFreshers Week (w/c 16 Sept). It includes Tea on the Landing. People are welcome to attend but please speak to Church Leaders first who are praying with the team. There is currently no Christian Union but the Chaplaincy Team are hoping to involve volunteers in accompanying people on their faith journey. Anyone interested should first discuss it with their Church Leader.**Visits to Care Homes –** Phil wants to encourage lay people to visit. He will send out a rota with dates for Bedford Court. Each church should then also make arrangements with Horsforth Manor. It was recommended to ring Horsforth Manor on the day of the visit as a reminder. | All Churches |
| 14. | **AOB**None |  |
| 15. | **Closing Prayer**Judith closed the meeting in prayer. |  |