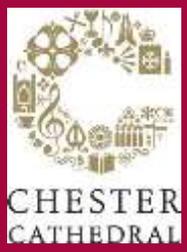




TRANSFORMING LIVES TOGETHER

Update Report
Sept – Nov 2021



As we approach the end of the year, we are reflecting on the completely different circumstances we find ourselves in compared to this time last year. After what was a difficult 6 months in 2020, it has been a delight to have worked with almost 50 churches and organisations in 2021 and to see the wonderful impact they have had on their local communities.

We have had a very positive few months since the last report including a strategy Day for the TLT Board of Trustees, two zoom gatherings for Places of Welcome and Filling the Gap and the creation of TLT Christmas resources.



We have created some resources for churches to use at Christmas. To take a look, please click on the link on our website <https://www.tltogether.org.uk/>. The resources include a service outline, two suggested talks, a TLT prayer and two videos filmed at churches involved in our projects. These videos are available to download in two different sizes. After promoting the materials, 10 churches asked us to send them a link and we are hoping many more churches will access them. The aim of these is to promote the work of TLT, to encourage more churches to get involved and to give a helping hand to church leaders preparing Christmas services.

Our Places of Welcome are continuing to re-open. We held an online meeting in November for all staff and volunteers to enable them to share their experiences



of re-opening – what had gone well and what had been difficult. We also asked them how we could best support them. In addition, we sent out a questionnaire to the Places of Welcome asking them if and when they were planning to open etc. We received 21 responses to this, 14 of which

were already open and 5 were planning to open before November this year. The feedback from both was very positive with several telling us they had changed the day, time or set-up of their PoW as a result of having time to reflect during the Covid pandemic and the results had been very encouraging.



We held an online meeting for churches delivering or interested in delivering Filling the Gap. We were very happy

that 3 new churches are interested in getting involved and grateful that Gill and Win from St. Thomas in Ellesmere Port were on hand to share their experience of delivering over the last 12 months. They had lots of important tips and ideas to discuss and the feedback from others was very positive. You can find out more about holiday provision at St. Thomas [here](#).



St. Thomas is one of the churches we were able to support financially this year.

Some encouraging feedback from people who attended either the Place of Welcome or Filling the Gap meetings:

Thank you so much for organising this webinar just now. It really was inspiring and helpful in our cautious steps toward doing this important work in Runcorn

Thanks ... for arranging this morning's meeting. Lots of ideas and experiences and huge amounts and opportunities for us here at St Michaels to think about

Thank you ... for a very informative morning

Thank you for hosting the meeting this morning, we both found it helpful

We are currently financially supporting 17 churches through our 'Steps to Recovery' programme. This is still mostly providing basic food and now Christmas hampers to vulnerable individuals and families. So far this year we have raised £14,000 and have distributed £10,423 of that to 17 churches. Based on last year's outcomes we expect to have worked with about 300 volunteers and through them supported about 2,000 people. We continue to collect stories from families and volunteers about the difference our support is making:



"An elderly man receiving food parcels was a full-time carer for his disabled wife. They 'lost' their car as benefit stopped for part of their Disability Living Allowance. The wife had a fall, was in hospital and contracted COVID 19 and very sadly passed away.

Our Pastor came alongside him and we helped arrange the funeral with a donation from Acts 435 for flowers. A Church Member then helped sort out the change of circumstances forms and helped with new benefit claims.

Our lovely chap is now doing much better and signed up to CAP Life Skills to help manage his finances better and be part of a community. In thankfulness he is making a stew and trifle to share with the group tomorrow!

He came to Church for the first time this last Sunday"



CHESTER
CATHEDRAL

We are very much enjoying being part of Chester cathedral and have been helping to re-open the Place of Welcome there. It is

well attended by both locals and visitors and we were really pleased to welcome a group with visual impairment – plus their lovely guide dog!

We also held our TLT Board of Trustees **strategy day** at the cathedral which was ably facilitated by David Primrose. David was the CEO for Transforming Communities Together, our colleagues in the Together Network. Having retired in January, he is now Canon Treasurer at Lichfield Cathedral, with a focus on environment, social justice and community outreach. It was an excellent day and amongst other things we drew up a shortlist of six issues which we feel we could support churches with. These mainly evolved from group feedback on what churches are already involved in and

what they have expressed an interest in developing. We also looked at which issues we could work on in partnership with others. An e-mail with a link to a survey has been sent to the 50-60 core churches we have worked with over the past few years. This asks the churches to rank the six issues in order of importance to them and also to answer other questions about how we can best support them. The survey can be found [here](#).



Other news - We continue to update our churches, organisations and supporters with regular newsletters, the final one for 2021 will be sent in December.

We have applied to several funders in the last few months and are waiting to hear back from them. We were very pleased to hear at the end of November that a bid to Vodafone was successful and we will be receiving **50 Pay as You Go SIM cards** that will each come with 20GB data plus unlimited calls and texts each month for a period of six months (activated on use). We will liaise with our churches to ensure these go to the people who will most benefit from them.

Finally, we are very excited to be in the process of recruiting a new team member! We are hoping our colleague will be in post in the next few months. They will be employed for 2 days a week and will focus on growing our initiatives on the east side of the Diocese.



The TLT Trustees and I would like to thank you for your support and encouragement this year. None of this would have happened without your generosity. We also thank you for keeping our work in your prayers and look forward to working with you in the future.

Wendy Robertson

Community Missioner

December 2021