



Minutes for HCT Forum with Annual General Meeting –Web version

Date: Thursday 9th July 2026 **Time:** 7pm for 7.30pm start
Venue: Cornerstone Methodist Church, London Road, Horsham, West Sussex. RH12 1AN
Chair: Clive Urquhart (Moderator)

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS HAD BEEN CIRCULATED PRIOR TO THE MEETING:

1. [Meeting Agenda](#)
2. [Minutes of previous Forum \(13th May 2026 - Web version\)](#)
3. [Development Co-Ordinators Report](#)
4. [Horsham Matters Report](#)
5. [HCT Finance Report](#)
6. [Membership Application, from Bethel Church of God](#)

- **Worship**

There was a time of worship with a music lyric video "And can it be", a hymn written by Charles Wesley one of the founders of Methodism, and fitting that in 2026, Cornerstone Methodist Church is celebrating 250 years of Methodism in Horsham and the surrounding area.

- **Opening Prayer**

Opening Prayer by PD.

- **Welcome**

CU welcomed everyone and urged delegates to carry the heart of who we are together back into their respective churches and to share what is pertinent and relevant from the evening.

There were no new HCT Delegates.

- **Minutes of last Forum (Tuesday 13th May 2026) and matters arising**

Draft Minutes - circulated prior to meeting. There were no comments and no matters arising. CU signed the draft Minutes as approved and as an accurate record of that meeting.

- **Moderator's Report – Clive Urquhart (CU)**

CU shared highlights from the past 12 months in the life of Horsham Churches Together.

Relationships between ministers have continued to deepen through regular meetings, worship and prayer, fostering stronger friendships across the churches. Relationships between churches have also continued to grow through opportunities to worship and serve together, including the Town Centre's Christmas and Good Friday services, quarterly Worship & Prayer evenings, and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. These gatherings provide valuable opportunities to worship together, pray for our town and nation, and publicly proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

CU also highlighted the wide range of community outreach undertaken by member churches throughout the year. Much of this ministry happens quietly behind the scenes. While the Church does not seek recognition, it is important that our communities know where help and support are available. CU expressed sincere gratitude for the many volunteers who faithfully serve week after week without public recognition. Their love for Jesus, for Horsham, and for the surrounding villages is demonstrated through their compassionate service.

The meeting recorded its thanks not only to church delegates but also to everyone serving across the churches and through Horsham Matters. Without the commitment of these volunteers, many people in our town would be in a far more difficult place practically, emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually.

Alongside this practical ministry, CU celebrated the spiritual fruit seen over the past year. Many churches have continued to run Alpha courses, through which people have come to faith in Christ. There are also increasing accounts of people—particularly those under the age of 30, many with no previous church background, no Christian contacts, and little or no knowledge of the Bible—coming into churches, encountering Jesus, and committing their lives to Him.

CU concluded in prayer by thanking God for all that He is doing across Horsham through the churches, Horsham Matters, and many others who have a heart to serve the town and its people. God continues to draw people to Himself, often in unexpected ways, and there is much for which to give thanks.

- **Horsham Matters Report – Kelvin Glen (KG)**

The Horsham Matters (HM) report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

KG reflected on his first year as CEO and noted that 2026 marks the 20th anniversary of Horsham Matters. He thanked the churches for their continued support, recognising that HM was founded through churches working together to meet local food poverty and remains committed to serving the district in close partnership with the local church.

KG acknowledged that, whilst no community should require food banks, the ongoing cost of living challenges mean there continues to be significant need. He expressed gratitude for the generosity of churches, schools, businesses and the wider community whose donations of food and funds enable HM to continue its work.

HM currently operates 15 food bank sessions each week across the Horsham district, serving both urban and rural communities. Beyond providing emergency food, HM seeks to understand each client's individual circumstances, offering practical support and signposting to services including debt advice, counselling and other specialist support, many delivered in partnership with local churches.

KG also highlighted the success of the two Connecting Cafés, based at St Andrew's Roffey, and at Pulborough, which provide warm meals, friendship and support for those experiencing loneliness or financial hardship. Feedback from attendees demonstrates the significant positive impact these cafés are having on people's lives.

The meeting heard that HM continues to see increasing demand, particularly from older people who had carefully planned for retirement but are now finding that their pensions are no longer sufficient to meet rising living costs. HM are also seeing those affected by bereavement, poor health and people that are struggling with the cost of living.

KG encouraged churches to continue praying for the work of HM and expressed confidence that, by working together, the needs of the community can continue to be met.

On the flip side, although donations have reduced as many households face financial pressures themselves, KG noted some encouraging developments through increased Government support, including the lifting of the two-child cap and the planned expansion of free school meal eligibility later this year, enabling more families to qualify for financial assistance.

KG thanked all churches, volunteers and supporters for their ongoing partnership and encouraged churches to act as ambassadors for Horsham Matters by raising awareness of the support available and referring people before they reach crisis point.

PD reminded delegates that a five-minute video marking Horsham Matters' 20th anniversary, featuring Linda Emery (Chair of Trustees) and KG, is available for churches to show during services or share with their congregations <https://youtu.be/4gRcKMYVdcg?si=-X1xaSw7febevF8a>

Questions:-

In response to a question about current food bank needs, KG advised that the weekly list of what is most needed is available on the Horsham Matters website, and also via the BanktheFood app which provides real-time updates. He also encouraged churches to continue supporting HM through donations and volunteering. See the HM donation page <https://www.horsham-matters.org.uk/donate/>

• Presentation from DFam – Alex Ede

The meeting received a presentation from Alex (Senior Bible Study Leader), Cathal "Crump" (Director of Moderation) and Riley (Senior Regional Leader) on the work of DeadlyFam, a non-denominational Christian online video gaming ministry. Founded by content creator DeadlyDill, the name reflects the biblical principle of being "dead to sin and alive in Christ."

DeadlyFam is a Christ-centred online gaming community that uses gaming as a platform for evangelism, discipleship and fellowship. The ministry currently serves an international English-speaking community of around 16,000 members through the Discord server, with the vision that "every gamer hears the gospel". The presenters emphasised that DeadlyFam is a ministry and is not a replacement for the local church.

The ministry provides a safe and welcoming online environment where members can participate in Bible studies, prayer meetings, discipleship, fellowship and gaming, while encouraging Christians to be effective witnesses within gaming culture. The presentation highlighted digital mission as an opportunity to engage people where they already gather online.

The presenters explained that many members have no connection with a local church. For example, within the Euro-region of 2,500, around 1,200 members are not currently attending church. DeadlyFam's vision is to work collaboratively with local churches to help these individuals become connected and rooted in a local Christian fellowship.

The presenters also offered their services to HCT member churches, including Horsham Matters, by providing support to develop their digital presence, drawing on the expertise of their dedicated Content Team. The presenters also confirmed they are available to visit churches to give presentations, share their ministry, and explore opportunities for collaboration.

They shared a PowerPoint Presentation and [this can be accessed at this link.](#)

DeadlyFam flyers, including a QR code linking to the online community, were distributed <https://horshamct.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/DeadlyFam-flyer.jpeg>. Churches were invited to display the flyers on their noticeboards and to share them with anyone who may be interested, particularly those involved in gaming.

In response to questions:

- the presenters explained that the Discord server is an online communication platform enabling users to connect through text, voice and video within community groups, in their case for gaming, fellowship and Bible studies.
- They confirmed that the current ministry is for adults aged 18 and over, although there are aspirations to develop a youth-focused community sometime in the future.
- When asked how they intend to interact with churches, the presenters explained that they would offer church members somewhere to come on line and to their members offer somewhere to actually go to church and to become established in a local church.

At the end of the Forum, DeadlyFam offered an optional demonstration of the Discord platform for those who were interested, showcasing its various features and explaining how the ministry engages with its online community.

• Development Co-Ordinator's Report – Pete Dibdin (PD)

The Development Co-ordinator's report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

PD reflected on the past 12 months, highlighting the many opportunities for churches to work together in worship, witness and community engagement. These included the Good Friday Service in the Carfax with

Rt Revd Ruth Bushyager, Bishop of Horsham sharing a memorable Gospel message, Prayer & Praise in Horsham Park, quarterly Worship & Prayer evenings at Kingdom Faith, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with several HCT churches hosting services, Christmas 2025 at the Carfax Bandstand with the Slinfold Concert Band, and the recent Funday Sunday in the Park. Despite the exceptionally hot weather, around 400 children and their families attended the HCT stall at the Funday Sunday, enjoying garden games and it provided valuable opportunities to engage with the local community, to distribute sweets, Christian literature, and talk about local churches and making connections with different groups. .

PD also highlighted the successful relaunch of the HCT Notices Newsletter, which is now integrated with the HCT website, making it easier to share news and events across member churches. Delegates were encouraged to submit outreach events and other news items and to promote newsletter subscriptions within their congregations.

Over the past year, PD has continued to develop relationships with community organisations on behalf of HCT. He particularly highlighted attending the Council's Community Support Network Marketplace, where around 100 voluntary, community and faith organisations came together to network and share their work. The event demonstrated the significant contribution that churches and faith-based organisations make to the wellbeing of the local community.

PD also reflected on the conclusion of the Spurgeons Family Hub pilot in the Spring and welcomed the continued work of the Family Hubs in supporting local families. He highlighted St Mark's ongoing involvement through its Special Educational Needs family cafés and drop-ins, together with St John's, Broadbridge Heath, which has been running parenting classes in partnership with the local school. These initiatives continue to provide valuable support for families while sharing resources across churches.

Questions:-

In response to a question about the greatest challenge in the role, PD said that communicating promptly and effectively about the wide range of activities taking place across member churches remained the biggest challenge. He encouraged churches to share news and events regularly and to make full use of the HCT website and Community Pages which has a lot of useful information on Community Groups and what's going on.

The meeting expressed its appreciation to PD for his commitment and the significant contribution he has made during his two years in the role. CU advised that the post was originally offered on a two-year fixed-term contract, which has now been changed to a permanent contract.

- **Horsham Eco Churches (HEC) – Karen Park (KP)**

HEC is about working together, sharing information, ideas and encouraging churches of all denominations on their Eco Church journey, using resources from the award scheme provided by Christian charity A Rocha UK, while discovering practical ways to care for God's creation.

KP gave a PowerPoint presentation and has kindly provided copies of the [PowerPoint slides](#), | [her speaker notes](#) | and [the HEC Report for the AGM](#), | which includes relevant links for further information and for delegates to share within their churches and congregations.

- **Appointment of Officers**

Moderator: CU advised that, having served as Moderator for the maximum constitutional term of six years (three consecutive two-year terms), he will be stepping down from the role at the end of August. Discussions are currently taking place with a prospective successor, and it is anticipated that a decision will be reached within the next month and hopefully starting from 1st September 2026.

Deputy Moderator:

CU also advised that the position of Deputy Moderator has been vacant since Michael Hogg stepped down Summer 2025. Mark Lavender, Leader of St John's Church, Broadbridge Heath, and a member of the HCT Executive Team, has been nominated for the role of Deputy Moderator. CU noted Mark's heart for both the local church and mission.

Proposed by: Tom Murray

Seconded by: Carol Howard and Clive Phillips

RESOLVED: That Mark Lavender be appointed Deputy Moderator with immediate effect. The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands.

- **Church Membership Application - Bethel Church of God**

The application for church membership had been circulated prior to the meeting.

PD advised that Horsham Churches Together had received an application for membership from Bethel Church of God (BCOG). BCOG is a multilingual Pentecostal church that meets at Brighton Road Baptist Church on Sunday afternoons. Services are conducted in two or three languages with translation. PD noted the church's heart for Jesus, commitment to outreach, and desire to work alongside other churches in serving the town.

Michael Hogg spoke in support of the application, confirming that BCOG has been meeting at Brighton Road Baptist Church for several years. He described the congregation as welcoming, mission-focused and authentic in its Christian faith. Although currently a small congregation, he noted its potential for growth and commended its warm, friendly and personable nature.

PD advised that, in accordance with the HCT membership process, existing HCT member church leaders had been notified and no objections to the application had been received.

There were no questions from the meeting.

Proposed by: Michael Hogg

Seconded by: Anna Pisani

RESOLVED: That Bethel Church of God be admitted to membership of Horsham Churches Together with immediate effect. The resolution was carried unanimously by a show of hands.

- **Finance report**

Apologies were received from Veronica Horvath (HCT Honorary Treasurer).

CU presented a summary of the HCT finances

Firstly, the total cash balance, as at 30 June 2026, stood at £14,672.81, comprising £10,628.36 in the Free Fund together with designated funds of £44.45 (Eco Churches), £1,000 (Evangelisation Activities Fund) and £3,000 (Space Art Trust Legacy).

PD explained that the Space Art Trust, a Christian visual arts organisation based in Broadbridge Heath, had closed earlier this year and distributed its remaining funds to several charities, including HCT. The legacy was provided without usage restriction, and the Executive wishes to use it creatively to support gospel outreach. Although no specific proposals have yet been agreed, churches were invited to submit ideas for consideration.

Secondly, CU advised that church contributions remain an important part of HCT's income. For 2025, budgeted contributions totalled £17,093.00, of which £15,112.48 was received, resulting in a shortfall of £2,072.95. It is anticipated that some of the outstanding contributions will be received during the current year.

For 2026, budgeted church contributions total £17,681.00, of which, as at the end of June, £9,443.40 has been received leaving £8,622.15 outstanding. It was noted that churches make their contributions at different times, with some paying annually, others twice yearly and some by monthly instalments. The figures will therefore continue to be updated as contributions are received.

Lastly, CU reported that the 2026 budget projects total income of £17,681 against planned expenditure of £17,860, resulting in a small projected budget deficit of £179.

Questions: -

A question was raised regarding the continuing balance of £1,000 in the Evangelisation Activities Fund. PD explained that recent outreach events, including Funday Sunday, had required relatively modest expenditure. He encouraged churches to share ideas for future evangelistic initiatives that could make effective use of the fund to support gospel outreach across the town.

- **Future Dates**

Future HCT Forum Meeting Dates (Time: 7PM for 7.30PM start)

- Thursday 8th October at Brighton Road Baptist Church, Horsham, RH13 5BD

- **Any Other Business**

- **Vote of Thanks:** As CU will be stepping down as HCT Moderator at the end of August 2026, the meeting expressed its sincere appreciation for his loyal service and significant contribution during his six years in the role.
- **Thanks to the Hosts:** The meeting recorded its thanks to Cornerstone Methodist Church, London Road, for hosting the Forum.
- **HCT Executive Team:** CU advised that there are currently vacancies on the HCT Executive Team and encouraged churches to suggest suitable candidates. The Executive comprises the officers (Moderator, Deputy Moderator and Treasurer), together with church leaders and lay representatives, supported by the Development Co-ordinator, Administrator and CEO of Horsham Matters as ex-officio non-voting members. Executive members are appointed for an initial two-year term and may be re-elected for up to two further terms. There are currently vacancies for a couple of church leaders and 3 or 4 lay representatives following recent resignations. CU explained that Executive members help shape the vision and direction of HCT and therefore should have a heart for the churches across Horsham and the wider community. Ideally, they should hold a leadership role or an area of responsibility within their church, and younger leaders were particularly encouraged to consider serving. MH reminded the meeting that, where possible, the Executive should reflect the breadth of Christian traditions and denominations represented within HCT. Churches were invited to submit suggestions for potential Executive Team members to PD.

- **Time of Prayer**

The Forum meeting divided into small groups to pray for areas discussed at the Forum.

Meeting ended approximately 21.35

Minutes taken and typed up by AP.

There were 24 attendees, representing 15-member churches.

Attendance: Attendees' names have been omitted from the published version of these minutes for privacy reasons, but retained in the official minutes.