

Paper B1

Children's and youth work committee

Update March 2018

United Church 2017
Church 2018
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Basic information

Contact name and email address	The Revd Jenny Mills (committee convenor) revdjmill@btinternet.com
Action required	Questionnaire for review to be distributed, completed and returned by Misson Council members.
Draft resolution(s)	None

Summary of Content

Subject and aim(s)	To update Mission Council on the progress of the Review and the thinking of the children's and youth work committee on current and future developments.
Main points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Children's and Youth Work in the URC – progress • The Big Speak Out event • Greenbelt • Crossfire Camp • Gathering for local church children's, family and youth workers
Previous relevant documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's and Youth Work Review Terms of Reference • Children's and youth work committee minutes October 2017 • Mission Council Report from November 2017 children's and youth work committee update.
Consultation has taken place with...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The General Secretary • The Deputy General Secretary (Discipleship). • The children's and youth work committee. • Education and Learning (The Revd Fiona Thomas) • Assembly arrangements committee

Summary of Impact

Financial	Costs to be met from the CYWC budget and from Pilots fund
External (e.g. ecumenical)	Potential for improved ecumenical links. Engagement with other partners is possible, depending on the outcome of Review and actions of HCYW.

Update March 2018

Staffing

1. Dr Sam Richards as Head of Children's and Youth Work since 1 November 2017 has settled into her post well.
2. We are interviewing for a new fixed-term Programme Officer, to replace Simon Peters, as he has been appointed to the role of Walking the Way Project Manager.
3. We are recruiting a part-time Pilots Coordinator to take over the Pilots Desk and enable more proactive promotion.

Review

4. As agreed at Mission Council in May 2017, a full and wide-ranging review of Children's and Youth Work in the URC is underway, led by a core group of Dr Sam Richards, Ms Mary Hawes (CofE), the Revd Samuel Silungwe and Mr Steve Summers. The main reasons for the necessity of the review relate to the massive budget cuts agreed by Mission Council and the restructuring of the CYW Department which were implemented in 2013. The CYW Programme was not reviewed or altered as a response at that time. These factors have had an impact on the CYW Department since then and now we need to develop a clear process for moving forward with this vital area of work within the Church, aware of the limitations all these changes have had.
5. Key areas being looked at are the effectiveness of the CYDO team working arrangements and the URC-wide programme they support; the future of Pilots; the relationship between local church, synod and URC-wide priorities and work with children and young people; hearing from children and young people; and the extent to which The Charter for Children in the Church has been embraced and implemented.

Current and future developments

6. **The Big Speak Out** from 6 to 8 July is an event for all young people aged 11-18 connected with the URC, running alongside General Assembly in Nottingham. The event is organised by Pilots, and has grown out of a desire to replace the Children's Assembly and the Pilots V&N (Voyagers and Navigators) event. There will be an opportunity for the young people to make a presentation to General Assembly, and to receive visitors from General Assembly. Pilots will generously meet half the cost for every young person. We hope that further help with funding will be available from local churches and synods, and grants towards travel costs may also be available from the Children's and Youth Work small grants fund to enable as many young people as possible to attend. A gathering of Pilots leaders will take place at the same time in the same venue.
7. **Greenbelt:** Children's and Youth Work will be contributing to the URC presence at the Greenbelt Festival this August bank holiday weekend, and has contributed to the budget for this. URC Youth are planning 'cake and debate' sessions, and Pilots hope

- to contribute to the youth programme. We are recruiting a team of URC Youth ambassadors (one from each synod) to take part in the URC activities, promote Greenbelt in their areas, and have a fantastic weekend with a half-price ticket. The URC at Greenbelt project team, which involves representatives from local churches, synods, and the Mission, Discipleship and Communications teams, is being jointly coordinated by Simon Rudiger (CYDO Thames North) and Hannah Jones (Youth Assembly Moderator). We aim to involve as many churches as possible, building on the success of the knitted feast last year. URC Youth Assembly will consider a motion to encourage synods to contribute to funding for the URC partnership with Greenbelt as a key opportunity for youth development given the decline of synod youth camps.
8. **Crossfire Camp:** 25 to 28 May 2018 Stathern Lodge, Leicestershire, is for young people aged 12+. It is a weekend to explore more about faith in Jesus Christ through teaching, small groups, worship and a whole range of fun activities, organised by GEAR, for URC Youth. This is an important part of the range of events that we seek to provide for the breadth of the URC.
 9. **An autumn gathering for local church children's, family and youth workers** is being planned by a task and finish group to support, resource and network those responsible for work with children, families and young people. This will be a low-cost Saturday event, with the option to arrive the night before for a social meal. We hope that local churches and synods will be able to contribute to travel costs for any who need this.
 10. **URC Youth Assembly** is happening as this report is being compiled – they will be considering a new role of Diversity and Inclusion Officer. URC Youth are being invited to be part of a JPIT Youth Forum. They are being invited to act as stewards for World Council of Churches meeting Geneva in June.
 11. The CYW committee has developed themes for the next three years and offers these to the wider Church. 2018: Pilgrimage, 2019: One Body, 2020: Common Ground. Resources for exploring 2018's theme of Pilgrimage and developing all-age worship have been produced by Pilots for the whole URC, and will be received by every church in March.
 12. Children and Youth Work are seeking to bring an intergenerational approach to the key URC-wide focus of Walking the Way. We have contributed to groups working on WtW, the Discipleship Development Programme and Stepwise. The monthly website resources from March onwards will look at the Ten Holy Habits for children, families, young people and young adults. We seek to foster an intergenerational spirit of being pilgrims together in 2018 and beyond.
 13. Finally, as Convenor, I would like to share my joy at the developing relationships between the CYW Committee and Department and other committees and representatives. We have had some constructive conversations about WtW and Stepwise, Equalities and intergenerational Church. These set the scene for increasingly joined-up thinking. We are particularly well served by our Youth Executive in opening and prompting discussions and encouraging the wider Church to listen and participate in the conversations.
 14. I would also like to add thanks to Sam Richards as she really has 'hit the ground running' in such a positive way, and also to Simon Peters, Heather Wilkinson and Carole Sired in these months of massive change. Now that both Simon and Carole have moved onto to other departments in the URC, I am sure they will continue their valuable work for our Church, still championing the cause of our children and young people and the contributions they make to the life of the URC.