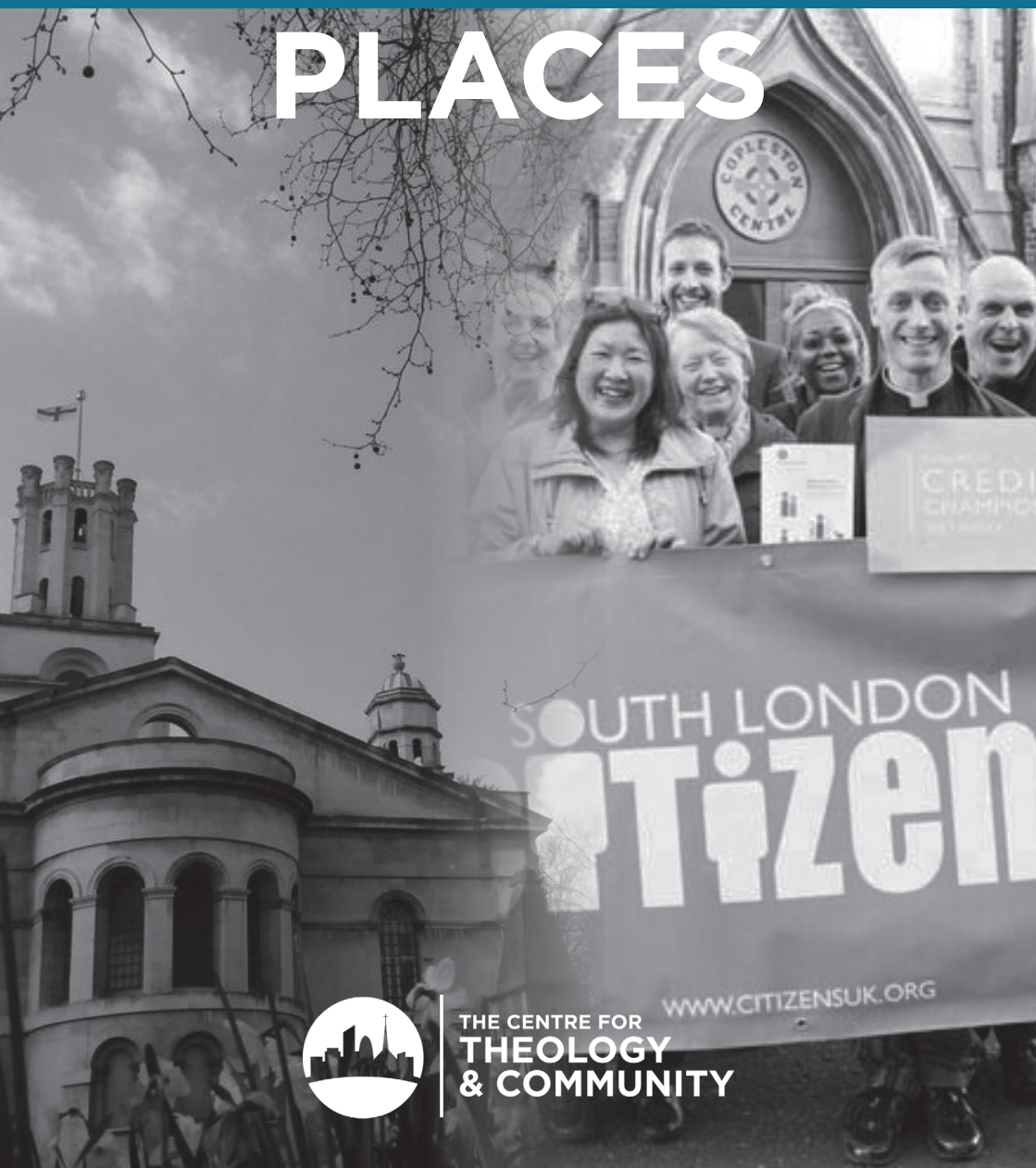


ANNUAL REVIEW 2014-15

CHANGING PLACES



THE CENTRE FOR
**THEOLOGY
& COMMUNITY**

WWW.CITIZENSUK.ORG

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The last year has seen a number of big changes for us, not least our new name – **The Centre for Theology & Community** - and our new offices in Shadwell. Both changes are motivated by our growing staff team and our increasing local and national profile: we wanted a simpler name to communicate more clearly what we do, and a space which accommodates our new staff.

One thing that hasn't changed is our mission. As we celebrate our tenth anniversary, we are focusing more and more on our central purpose. We equip churches to transform their communities through the practices of community organising, theological reflection and prayer, and we help churches to use their resources more effectively for that mission.

Our renewed focus is expressed in a number of exciting new projects:

- the Church Credit Champions Network (which is helping congregations promote good borrowing, lending and saving)
- learning communities on Church Growth and on Congregational Development through Community Organising, involving Pentecostal, Roman Catholic, Baptist and Church of England congregations
- consultancy work to help local churches use their property for mission and engage in social enterprise, including the set-up of a Living Wage cleaning company, Clean for Good, to be based in a City of London church

Running through these projects is our conviction that authentic Christian social action must be rooted in its worship, spirituality and prayer.

We at CTC do nothing on our own. All our work is done with and through local churches, and relies on the support of donors, and the many people who hold our work in their prayers. We are grateful for all that has been accomplished, and look forward to working with you in the decade ahead!

Canon Dr Angus Ritchie



A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF CTC

This is a brief summary of last year...

COMMUNITY ORGANISING

- We established a new **Learning Community on Congregational Development through Community Organising**, involving six churches. This helps churches of all denominations take the practices of community organising to the very heart of their life, and integrate them more fully with their worship and teaching. We are also running a **Learning Community on Church Growth** for the Bishop of Stepney, helping churches to grow in size, maturity and impact in ways that are faithful to the Gospel.
- The **Urban Leadership School** continues to grow. Over 100 young people have now been on CTC internships. These programmes are developing a generation of Christian leaders, many from inner-city churches, who are schooled in community organising, theological reflection and prayer.
- The **Buxton Leadership Programme** is our year-round programme involving placements in inner-city churches and with politicians in Westminster and is being put on a firmer footing through the “Buxton 180” appeal.
- We are piloting the **Church Credit Champions Network** – a project supported by the *Archbishop of Canterbury’s Task Force on Responsible Lending* and funded largely by Lloyds’ Bank – to help churches reflect and act on the issue of exploitative lending. The Network is training local leaders to support Credit Unions and other

Launch of the Buxton 180 Club





forms of affordable finance. CTC devised the programme, and is responsible for the pilots in London and Southwark Dioceses. We are supporting a pilot in Liverpool too. The Church Urban Fund hopes to roll it out across England in the next five years.

- We have played a leading role in developing Citizens UK's **Just Money campaign**, which helped to secure the first cap on interest rates in over a century, and is now in negotiations with the new Government to establish a Community Finance Foundation which will support local, responsible lending. We are also providing theological reflection and practical support to **Citizens UK's campaigns** for a Living Wage and Social Care.
- Our **SingSpire** and **eastendspeaks** projects are using the practices of community organising to help churches reach out to their communities through music and storytelling. Staff working on these projects played a key role in Citizens UK's 2015 General Election Assembly – helping some of the country's most marginalised residents find their voice.

RESEARCH AND REFLECTION

- The year saw a significant expansion in CTC's own research output, with **two reports published** in 2014-15 and six more underway. All seek to equip local churches for faithful and effective action. Two reports were published during the year – 'Heart to Heart' a storytelling resource, and a report on churches collaborating for urban mission.
- As well as equipping inner-city churches, we seek to give voice to their experience and perspective on the national stage. CTC has contributed to **reports by Christian Aid** (on tax and theology), **Theos** (on Christian humanism) and **The Children's Society** (on theology,



family life and debt), all of which have generated significant media coverage.

ENTERPRISE FOR MISSION...

- We have played a key role in developing **two new social enterprises** – an ethical, online alternative to exploitative payday lenders, and a Living Wage cleaning company for London – Clean for Good. They complement our community organising work on these vital issues, and will be launched in the current year.
- After a number of consultancy projects, we have secured grant funding for a new project to help churches harness their **Property for Mission**.
- We have raised nearly £700,000 capital through the **London Missional Housing Bond**, including the second Housing Bond which was launched by the Bishop of London in October 2014, providing Christian workers in the inner city with affordable homes.



COURSES AND RESOURCES

A number of free courses and resources are available from CTC:

- We recently launched the **Seeing Change Course** for churches. This is a well-received and much-used series of five short films which help churches to engage with their neighbours and consider how best to respond to the financial crisis. It also ensures that any social action is rooted in theological reflection, listening and prayer.
- We have a growing range of booklets, reports and reflections on how to use the practices of **Community Organising** to support the mission of local churches.
- We produce prayer and worship resources for Living Wage Week each November, and are developing parallel resources for Citizens UK's campaigns on Social Care and Housing.

Other practical courses and resources for churches, together with all of our research reports and regular blogs are freely available on our website.

We also run a full-time month-long CTC Summer Internship every July which provides training in community organising, in association with London Citizens, and a placement in a local church in east London. See our website for more information.



COMING SOON! PLANS FOR 2015-16...

- We are expanding our **Learning Community** on Congregational Development through Community Organising. In autumn 2015 we intend to launch the second year of this unique programme with a dozen churches participating, of various denominations.
- Following the release of our new report on 'churches and housing associations' we are developing a new programme of research, theological reflection and action on **London's housing crisis**.
- We have laid the foundations for a new **intentional community** of prayer and social action at St George-in-the-East (the church in which CTC's office is now based).
- We have a number of new reports to look out for:
 - Church Growth
 - Monasticism for the inner city
 - Church planting in east London
 - How community organising is practiced by different denominations
 - The theology and practice of music in mission

Fr Basic Jellicoe in Somers Town, 1920s - Leading from the front in tackling poor housing and an inspiration to churches today.



We believe churches in deprived and diverse areas have a vital role to play in the transformation of their communities and of wider society.

We equip churches through the practices of community organising, theological reflection and prayer. We also help them to use their resources more effectively for their mission.

CTC is an independent, ecumenical Christian charity based in the heart of east London. We work with a growing range of churches, from various denominations and traditions.



The best way to keep in touch with our work and to get involved is to join the **CTC Community**. You will be supporting our working in equipping local churches – we rely entirely on donations and grants.

Members receive regular news, a termly prayer letter, hard copies of all our publications and an invitation to our annual celebration.

For more information about joining our Community and all of our work:

Go to our website: theology-centre.org

Follow us on twitter: [@theologycentre](https://twitter.com/theologycentre)

Email us: hello@theology-centre.org

*Photo of crowd on front cover taken by iBRODIEfoto
Design by Max Randall*