



# Annual Report

2002 - 2003



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# East Midlands Churches Forum

## An overview

### **Another year of work with the Regional Agenda shows once again how this engagement continues to be an *urgent challenge and a vital opportunity for the Churches.***

This report shows the wide range of activities to which the Forum has contributed.

The Census results showed that over 71% of the Regional Population claim to be Christian. Whilst there could be debate about the strength of Religious adherence the inescapable fact is that for the majority of people in the Region this is where their roots lie. The Christian perspective on the shape of our Communities, its culture and values, laws and practices remain at the heart of our Society.

We need to speak not so much with one Christian voice in unison but together in harmony. The Churches continue to be the largest single movement that is rooted in every community. We are therefore committed to promoting the Churches role as a Partner in social and economic affairs.

We are committed to the principle of Subsidiarity and therefore welcome the steps to devolve more Government administration away from Whitehall to the Regions. We hope that the Regional debate does not become a political game. We have endeavoured to play a full part in the Regional Assembly and wish to uphold the partnership that this involves. As the Assembly becomes a corporate body in its own right we hope that the Partnership will be strengthened not weakened. It is the ability to cut across and bring together the policies and actions of different agencies and Government departments that makes the Regional dimension inherently valuable.

We are aware that our role could be more effective if resources could be found to support our engagement. In a number of other regions the tangible support of their Assembly, the Development Agency and other funders has enabled the Churches to collaborate more effectively. There remains a need for the Churches to map out the scale of their activities against which other agencies can understand more clearly our contribution. Undoubtedly we need to look afresh at our ecumenical structures and see how our own networking can be enhanced.

It is important particularly at the local level that the diversity within Christianity let alone other faiths is recognised. There may still be a desire in some places to lump Faith together without acknowledging this. However we are able to speak collectively and it remains a concern especially with some Local Strategic Partnerships that the Churches are at best consulted on the margin and not seen as a significant player. To honour the culture, to recognise the inherent spirituality of our communities and to serve the real needs of Society has to involve a costly participation at the coalface. Thankfully there are places where the Churches are invited to fulfil this role. There could and ought to be more.

A few of the issues being covered by the Forum are:

- *Re-assessment of the Regional Economic Strategy (emda)*
- *Spatial Planning and Development of Regional Planning Board (EMRA)*
- *Engagement with SSPs and LSPs*
- *Development of a Cultural Strategy for the Churches*
- *Spiritual Wellbeing in the Public Health Strategy (EMRA)*
- *Regional Environmental Strategy.*
- *New Assembly Structure & Representation*
- *The expansion of housing in Northamptonshire*
- *Affordable Housing, the Rural Economy and Safe communities are all topics that are likely to be emerging in 2003-4*

**If we accept the aims of the five marks of mission (in brief – to tell, teach, tend, transform, treasure) then it is clear that the work of the Forum relates particularly and directly to the last three. For**

a balanced fulfilment of its calling, the church must continue to take seriously the rich opportunities offered by the Regionalisation programme. This report offers many illustrations of this and the way members of the Churches Forum are creatively engaging with a challenging and complex agenda.

## Working on the issues Profiles

### **Chairman**

#### **Rt. Revd Alan Morgan Bishop of Sherwood**

Suffragan Bishop with overview of Pastoral Care for Clergy and their families. Within the Diocese of Southwell has oversight of Hospital, Prison and University Chaplains and takes main lead in Housing and Homeless issues. Within both Provinces is lead Bishop on any Coalfield matters.

### **Vice Chair**

#### **Revd Malcolm Hanson** (to October 2003)

Moderator, East Midlands Synod United Reformed Church

#### **Revd Alison Tomlin** (from October 2003)

Recently appointed Chair Oxford & Leicester Methodist District has particular interest in prayer and spiritual retreats

### **Regional Assembly Representative**

#### **Revd Canon Keith Orford**

Chairman of Industrial Mission in Derbyshire. A Transport Professional currently the Policy Officer of the East Midlands Region of the Institute of Logistics and Transport. He is the Associate Priest in the Wirksworth Team Ministry and a Recognised and Regarded Minister of the Methodist Church.

### **Steering Committee**

#### **Mr Derek Markie**

Derek Markie is nominated to Forum by the East Midland's Baptist Association and a layman who has been secretary, treasurer, deacon, and funding visitor. He is a chartered engineer and management consultant now active in economic regeneration.

#### **Mr Terry Miller**

Chaplain for Environmental Issues and Sustainable Development for Churches together in All Lincolnshire. Having worked in rural issues for the Churches for over 15 years this is now combined with a sharper focus on sustainable communities. He is also a painter and ceramic artist and has a lifelong interest in the Arts and Culture.

#### **Ms Patricia Stoa**

Social Responsibility Director – Diocese of Southwell

#### **Revd Andrew Vaughan**

Senior Industrial Chaplain in Lincolnshire. Involved with manufacturing and economic development in Lincoln City and Lincolnshire. Founder member of EMCF. Board member of Lincolnshire Enterprise.

#### **Revd Martin Wilson**

Director of Social Responsibility Diocese of Leicester.  
(retiring in October 2003)

### **Specialist Advisors**

#### **Ms Jackie Carpenter**

worked with homeless people for nearly 10 years. She is currently the Support Manager at Derby Night Shelter, working on funding, monitoring, and keywork with residents. Her area of expertise is homelessness, especially service user participation. She initiated Derby Speakouts and helped set up Derby Homelessness Forum.

#### **Revd Linda Church**

Rector Hucknall Team Ministry, Qualified physiotherapist with 25 years experience including clinical Hospital Management. Non executive director Ashfield Primary Care Trust.

**Revd Canon Richard Davey**

Canon pastor of Southwell Minster and in addition a professional art critic and curator of numerous exhibitions for Churches and Cathedrals. His particular area of expertise is contemporary visual arts.

Chair and member Culture East Midlands.

**Ms Rachel Elliott**

Community development worker employed by Ibstock Community Enterprises Ltd. She has qualifications in Building Surveying and Town Planning and is currently completing an MSc in Community Enterprise at the Judge Institute of Management Studies in Cambridge. Rachel is also a Reader in the Church of England.

## Areas of influence

### Culture and Tourism

**Culture is intimately bound up with our sense of identity – who we are and where we feel we belong, and thus with our history. Culture is about meaning and our understanding of what really matters, and why it matters. Culture is also about fun and the celebration of life. It should come as no surprise then that the Churches in the East Midlands are deeply engaged culturally and that the Churches commitment to culture is unique in the life of the nation. Having said that many Churches would not consciously say that what they do is cultural. It is normal for them to participate and be a focus of activity in the life of their communities. From music and artistic events to harvest feasts and charity fun runs the Churches offer opportunities for the community to come together. The Church building too is often a storehouse of that community's heritage and artistically significant, and therefore draws many people to visit. Church Tourism is a major growth recreational activity.**

The East Midlands Churches Forum Cultural Working Group was set up in 2000 as a response to the new Regional Cultural Consortia, so that the East Midlands Churches may have a pro-active voice in the discussions. Early resistance by the Consortia to Church involvement led to even more determined engagement, and members of the Working Group lobbied the 'Time for Culture' consultations across the Region. A substantive critique of that draft Report did result in important changes. The Group resolved to engage as fully as possible and produced a questionnaire in Spring 2001 to find out what the Churches were doing culturally, and how Churches understood the very word 'culture'. The response rate was over 30% - statistically significant, and the data illustrated the rich range of activities undertaken by churches outside the main acts of worship. For many church people this was the first time they became aware of the East Midlands Churches Forum. At the same time lobbying by the Faith communities resulted in a place on the Consortium (now Culture East Midlands) being offered and Canon Richard Davey of Southwell Minster was offered the seat. Fortuitously this data impressed East Midlands Arts (now Arts Council East Midlands) and was a springboard to a £5000 grant to fund a Churches Cultural Strategy undertaken by an Arts Consultant, Gary Churchill. This has

been completed in summer 2003 and is offered to the East Midlands Churches as a report 'Towards an East Midlands Churches Cultural Strategy'. It is hoped that further funding will be attracted by this important report to further define the Cultural Strategy and to develop pilot projects across the region working with churches and, significantly, with the other Faith communities. Culture East Midlands has been very supportive of this development and this Region is the first to undertake a Churches Cultural Strategy.

Tourism in Churches has been increasing in activity and this Region is regarded as one of the national leaders. Lincolnshire's Cascade Project has a full-time officer funded from the Heritage Lottery Fund, emda and the Local Authorities and is regarded as a model of good practice. In 2003 a Regional group has come together to develop a Region wide project for Church Tourism which is hoped will commence in 2004.

Revd Canon Richard Davey - Chair EMCF Culture Working Group

**Forum Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> October 2003**

**Keynote Speaker Revd Professor Myra Shackley**

**looking at East Midlands Tourism Strategy**

**Church Leaders Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> October 2003**

**Keynote Speaker Dean of Wakefield Very Revd George Nairn  
Briggs**

**Launch of EM Churches Cultural Strategy  
'Craftsman Art and Music's measure'**

## Environment

**Harmonising human action with environmental integrity and sustainable development is one of the greatest challenge facing humanity. Set in the context of a world divided between those who are materially comfortable and those who are very poor, the task is immense. The East Midlands Churches Forum is committed to an active engagement in the Region environmentally and determined to develop the agenda amongst the Churches and work in partnership with voluntary and statutory organisations.**

The Environment is an integral part of the IRS – the Integrated Regional Strategy and the Regional Assembly has been tasked with developing this strand through the work of the Environmental Task Group.

The Task Group has now finished its main work on the Regional Environment Strategy. The RES is in two parts – Part One the strategy itself, and Part Two is the Action Plans. The Task Group is now looking at its long term role within the reorganisation of working groups for the Regional Assembly. The EMCF Task Group member is Terry Miller who is the Chaplain for the Environment and for Sustainable Development in Lincolnshire, and who was a delegate at the World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002. The environmental agenda is held in a number of places including Spatial Planning, for which the Assembly has a statutory role, a new Sustainable Development working group, emda's own economic team including sustainable communities, the Energy Task Group, and other key groups including the Heritage Built Environment. Recent developments in the sustainable communities agenda and the work of the SSPs (Sub-Regional Strategic Partnerships) is leading to a sharpening of the work of the Task group to bring the environment into the discussion on sustainable development.

The 'Redressing the Balance' conference in Lincoln in May 2003 has set a dynamic agenda for grass roots food related environmental community action. This discussion is going forwards supported by the EMCF to the Regional Level in a conference at Stoke Rochford on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004. A number of significant initiatives are being undertaken by the Churches in Partnership on food and environment related issues. Of particular note is the Peterborough

Diocesan Food Directory arranged by the Revd Robert Barlow, the Rural Officer for Peterborough Diocese.

The EMCF Environmental Group is now engaged on a Sustainability Booklet, the core of which will be available nationally, adaptable for local circumstances. The national network of Diocesan Environment Officers is linked to the Church of England Board of Mission and Social Affairs through the work of Claire Foster, and supported by a Yahoo Group email exchange. This is useful in developing the Churches own environmental agenda in such areas as policy, Fair Trade, energy initiatives, and locally initiated sustainable development particularly through the Conservation Foundation's Parish Pumps initiative, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's Eco-congregation and the Living Churchyard Project, promoted by the Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh.

*Mr Terry Miller- Chair EMCF Environment Working Group*

## Health and Faith

The Public Health Strategy 'Investment for Health Document' was launched at the Assembly meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2003 with an official press launch at the East Midlands Public Health Conference on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2003.

We were pleased that Objective 3 named within it 'spiritual well being' as being important for the health and well-being of the East Midlands. This objective carries with it the understanding that spiritual well-being contributes to social capital. Research has demonstrated that communities with substantial social capital enjoy better health, and in poorer communities social capital functions as a buffer against deprivation and social exclusion. The report states that religious faith communities are an important and often underestimated mechanism in building social capital. I feel that this is an important inclusion in that it gives the working group a continuing remit within this public health agenda. Interestingly the East Midlands Health profile produced by the Trent Public Health Observatory as a companion document to 'Investment for Health' has a section on page 39 which the document says provides the rationale behind the objectives in Investment for Health. For objective 3 the researchers have examined evidence of how people feel about their health, their safety and their levels of 'civic engagement'. There is no faith-related question within this research.

The Assembly Task Group then allocated each of these set objectives to a monitoring body whose remit it is to oversee implementation of the objective, and also to have a monitoring role in the implementation of other objectives to ensure that the achievement of objective 3 is not compromised by their development. Objective 3 was allocated to Culture East Midlands. This is a continuing disappointment to the Health and Faith working group in that although we have a faith representative on that body there is now no working link to this group and its expertise unless we are approached on a specific matter. However our remit in the Task Group was to identify those areas where the link was not obvious and where touching places could be named.

The Regional Action Plan states that by the summer of 2003 a cross cultural and multi faith regional forum will be constituted and will develop by Dec 2003 a co-ordinated regional plan to promote and improve the mental, spiritual and social well-being of East Midlands residents. Our continuing concern is how health as a specific issue will be represented in this.

In the September of 2002 I had attended a meeting on Chaplaincy and Spiritual Healthcare hosted by Trent Workforce Confederation of the NHS at which Senior Church Leaders and a representative from the newly formed Strategic Health Authority was present. A wide ranging discussion about the value of Chaplaincy in all areas of patient service provision was debated with a resulting proposal that further time should be given to the issues of the provision of spiritual care to Primary Care Trusts, both staff and patients who are not eligible for this care in most PCT's at this time.

### ***Where to next?***

As a group we are continuing to explore the agenda of faith and health as a multi-faith working group perhaps on a regional basis, to liaise with the Regional health agenda via the Director of Public Health, and with the regional Public Health Observatory. We are at this time consulting with the Regional Director of Public Health – Lindsey Davies. We will also be writing to the Director of the Public Health Observatory – David Meechan to discuss with him the faith aspect of Objective 3.

During this coming autumn it is our intention to contact the PCTs within the East Midlands to raise their awareness of the faith and spiritual implications of Objective 3 in their local delivery plans.

Revd Linda Church Chair EMCF Health & Faith Working Group

Web site dedicated to the public health strategy  
[www.investmentforhealth.org.uk](http://www.investmentforhealth.org.uk)

### ***The Regional Housing Board***

This is part of the government's regional agenda, to delegate responsibility to the regions. It is made up of the major players: Government Office, Housing Corporation, Regional Assembly, English Partnerships, emda, Countryside Agency, Chair of the East Midlands Regional Assembly's Housing Task Group.

An issue is how government investment is channelled, and only 75% of HIP funding (the former traditional route for funding, largely allocated on a pro rata per head of population basis) will go to local authorities. They will experience this as a cut of 25%. The rest will be allocated as outlined in the housing investment strategy.

Every new housing scheme has to go to the Housing Corporation, then the RHB, then to ministers.

### ***Regional Strategy for Housing Investment***

This covers the period of 2004-2006.

Publication is expected Sept/Oct 2003.

Most monies will be allocated to the six sub regions, with priorities identified by each area. Some will be ring-fenced for small rural settlements of under 3000 population (232 new homes in 58 of the region's 900 villages), for supported housing (£6-12m, priorities to be set by next year), for BME (black and minority ethnic) communities (£6-12m), plus a small fund for priorities that will emerge later (£5-10 million to be allocated by April 2005).

There is a debate about the split between money for new affordable housing and money for bringing existing social housing up to the decent homes standard; refurbishment to bring buildings back into use seems to have been squeezed out. Council stock in the East Midlands is one of the best in the country.

The HTG will say in its response:

- Homelessness is growing in cities, and several rural areas said that they now have to make allowances for homeless people in a way that they have never had to before.

- There are fears that money is being taken from the north of the region to use in the southern growth area around Milton Keynes.
- Overall resources are not enough, especially with the huge growth in the Milton Keynes/South Midlands area – 4860 homes are now planned for Northants, compared to 3500 actually built last year and 2700 in the old structure plan
- There are several cross boundary issues, and the regional/sub-regional agenda, and housing markets, are forcing LAs into considering cross-boundary allocations.
- Market towns will struggle to find enough funds, but money for them should not be taken from the pot for small rural settlements
- In cities, rehab of derelict property is key to regeneration and is in danger of being squeezed out.

### ***Review of the Task Group***

It has strengthened its membership recently, notably to attract councillors, and to broaden the geographical spread of members. It still needs more private sector and BME representation.

### ***Other issues***

**Affordability of housing is still a key issue, with some pockets of low demand (jargon for areas where no-one wants to live, and there are substantial numbers of empty homes, eg Mansfield with 25% empty).**

**Housing seems to be moving from the social sector into the economic sector. Emda's economic strategy now includes housing, and they are employing a housing advisor in the autumn.**

**A Construction Forum was set up in the East Midlands in July. Skills shortages and MMC, modern methods of construction, are key issues.**

*Ms Jackie Carpenter, EMRA Housing Task Group*

### **Rural Challenge**

**Rural life is continuing to change rapidly and Government has shown its commitment to equality of access for services to rural and urban areas in the concept of 'Rural Proofing'. It is committed to providing a 'toolbox' of opportunities for communities to develop their own pathway to economic and community renaissance.**

The Churches have been actively supporting rural communities both by their presence and by the appointment of specialist rural officers. The East Midlands Rural Officers (EMRO) working group came into being in 1999 as part of a national structure supported by the work of the Arthur Rank Centre, the National Agricultural Centre, Stoneleigh. It has been one of the most consistently active of all the Regions. Essentially a swap shop of ideas for the officers to support each other, key pieces of work are discussed and developed. In 2001 The EMRO group engaged with the new East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum (EMRAF) and one of its members, Terry Miller, was offered a seat on the new body. This year the Rural Officers nationally have chaired the British Food Fortnight planning groups and EMRO members have been instrumental in developing the scope of BFF in its second year. The Food agenda is increasingly important in the development of new rural economies and the Rural Officers are active locally and regionally. Robert Barlow of Peterborough has produced a directory of local food, and Terry Miller is promoting a series of conferences of food and community issues, the first having taken place in Lincoln in May 2003. The second is a regional conference on April 23rd 2004 – 'Redressing the Balance – Unlocking the Market Place' to be held at Stoke Rochford Conference Centre near Grantham.

### **East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum**

Supported by a Secretariat from the Government Office of the East Midlands EMRAF has been very active developing the Rural Agenda in the East Midlands. A second conference took place in July 2003 and was an opportunity to demonstrate the scope of concern covering the Foot and Mouth Disease Working Group, the Rural Action Plan, Housing Issues, the Curry Consultation, Spatial Planning, Environmental Strategy, the Rural Charter, and the new EMRAF Knowledge Network. A major piece of activity currently involves the working groups producing the Sustainable Food and Farming Implementation Plan now out for consultation, a major contribution to the East Midlands land and food agenda. The members of EMRAF are committed to engaging with the rural agenda and devote time to studying the issues together. It is a significant group bringing together key players in the economic, environmental and social development of the East Midlands. Terry Miller also sits on the national Rural Affairs Forum Social Capital Working Group which works closely with the Home Office Active Communities Unit.

*Mr Terry Miller EMCF Environment Working Group*

#### **Redressing the Balance: Unlocking the Market Place**

**April 24<sup>th</sup> 2004  
Stoke Rochford  
Nr Grantham**

***This consultation event is for everyone working in food and community development in the East Midlands. The day will have a mixture of creative workshops where your views and experience counts, input from experts, and enjoyment of food and local products. In the global market place we are challenged to secure and develop local markets for food and food related products. Many people believe food is a key element of community development.***

**For more information contact Terry Miller through the Forum Office.**

## Social Inclusion

The Social Inclusion Task Group exists to oversee the Social Theme of the Integrated Regional Strategy. There are a number of sub-groups whose work informs the work of SITG. The Task Group has been chaired by Cllr Ross Willmott from its inception, but as Cllr Willmott has now joined the board of the East Midlands Development Agency SITG is currently being chaired by Jenny Gardiner of East Midlands Further Education Council.

The Assembly Steering Group is currently reviewing the Assembly's working arrangements, and this includes the work of SITG. The last meeting of SITG concentrated on its response to this review. SITG would prefer to see an appropriately resourced Social Board of the Assembly with a small core membership and the ability to co-opt additional expertise as necessary.

The Group has met three times during the last year on 24 September 2002, 3 December 2002 and 1 July 2003. During that time its work has included:

- scrutiny of *emda's* Economic Inclusion Development Plan;
- commenting on *emda's* emerging Regional Economic Strategy;
- discussing *emda's* Corporate Plan;
- input into the Regional Planning Guidance;
- responding to the Regional Public Health Strategy "Investment for Health";
- responding to the consultation draft of Viewpoints on Community Safety;
- noting the Cross Cutting Review of the Voluntary Sector;
- and contributing to the review of Assembly Task Groups.

In addition, the Group has received reports from the following organisations and sub-groups: Culture East Midlands; Public Health Task Group; Housing Task Group; and Lifelong Learning Task Group.

Ms Rachel Elliott EMRA Social Inclusion Task Group

## Transport

EMRA Transport Task Group has spent much of its time receiving Reports on multi-modal studies. A number of these have been looking at the priorities for investment in both road and rail strategies for the next 20 to 30 years. One of the frustrating factors has been the decision by the Strategic Rail Authority to focus on essential expenditure on the existing railway, which has created a mismatch with investment in road schemes. The widening of the M1 and the dualing of a large part of the A453 are two elements of the studies, which have been given Government approval. The East Midlands Parkway Station is expected to go ahead but other public transport priorities, roads, trams, buses are not so clear cut. The Task Group has a major task to help the Assembly influence a more holistic approach for transport investment. Such an approach has been spelt out in the draft Revised Regional Planning Guidance. The Task Group has also tackled regional airport policy and has commissioned a Regional Freight study.

Revd Canon Keith Orford EMRA Transport Task Group

These issues are also addressed at:

## Forum Meetings

October 2002

### Community Cohesion

***Dan Robertson***

***Human Relations Network***

Challenging social exclusion issues based on cultural prejudice. Promoting active citizenship and cultural dialogue and community cohesion with a particular emphasis on youth participation and cross-cultural dialogue.

May 2003

### Building Community Relations

***Professor Paul Weller***

Inter-Religious Relations  
Religious Resource and Research Centre  
Derby University

What makes a 'good/effective community', What part does 'faith' play in good community. 'Interfaith' experiences.

February 2003

### Social Inclusion

***Cathy Jones***

***Social Policy Advisor***

***East Midlands Regional Assembly***

The development of social policies and initiatives which will achieve the social objectives of the Integrated Regional Strategy

## The Forum is working with:

### East Midlands Regional Assembly

1. This year has been one of transition for the Regional Assembly. In April it became the Regional Planning Body with accompanying transfer of staff. The Assembly is now segregated from the East Midlands Local Government Association. The next step is for Incorporation as a company limited by guarantee. The process should be complete by early 2004. The Assembly will have a Board of Directors. There may be implications for EMCF as a nominating body.
2. The Assembly has also initiated an organisational review, which is aimed towards giving a much sharper focus to its work. This is welcomed by EMCF. In addition to its main Board the Assembly will operate through three functional Boards – Regional Policy, Scrutiny and Planning. The expectation is that members of the Assembly would serve on these thus strengthening their commitment. The Environmental Task Group will be retained but will absorb the Energy Group. The Housing Task Group will also remain as will the new Sustainable Development Task Group. However Transport and Social Inclusion will be absorbed into the Planning and Policy Development Boards respectively. It remains to see how the expertise the Churches have offered in these fields can be retained.
3. The Assembly has reiterated its view on Regional Governance that this region is not ready as yet to engage in a referendum on whether to have an elected assembly. The policy is to build on the 'partnership' principle that has been established. EMCF supported this position.
4. Nigel Rudd (Former Chief Executive of Corby District Council) took up his appointment in August 2003. He succeeds Barry Horne who has been Secretary to the Assembly and the CEO of EMRLGA since their inception.
5. Whilst the organisational issues have had to be addressed the ongoing work of the Assembly has continued. In conjunction with emda the first review of the economic strategy was completed, the revised draft of the Regional Planning Guidance was approved for consultation (the latter will carry much more weight as County Structure Plans are being abolished), and the public health strategy 'Investment for Health' was launched in March 2003. Details of these issues will be found under the headings elsewhere in this report.
6. The 2003-4 Business Plan and Budget appeared in March, which focussed on priorities for a sustainable future. Housing, Transport, Culture and Energy are key issues. Whilst the budget for 2003-4 amounts to £1.61k it is extremely tight and hopes that the Assembly might support a small amount of research by EMCF were not fulfilled.
7. The Assembly has been tasked with developing a more coherent approach to housing issues and is a partner on the new Regional Housing Board (see page 6). The Energy Task Group has scooped £282k from the Dti programme for new and renewable energy sources, the largest proportion of funding given to any region. This has enabled an Energy Co-ordinator to be appointed. The aim is for the East Midlands to become Britain's first sustainable energy region. The Assembly has also engaged with the work of English Nature and the Environment Agency; with European issues and made its concerns known over regional broadcasting and the allocation of lottery funds.
8. Approval has also been given to a consultation draft (launched July 2003) for the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy. This is a joint exercise by three neighbouring regions (Eastern, South Eastern and East Midlands) It is one of three Government backed growth areas for housing and envisages the rate of house build in Northamptonshire rising from 3,500p.a. to 4,860p.a. It is the biggest growth area in the East Midlands. The Church Leaders in Northamptonshire are engaging with this and the suggestion is that the Church Regional bodies across the three regions should work together.
9. The political balance on the Assembly has changed, in the wake of local authority elections it is now very evenly balanced. The Economic, Social and Environmental Partners (the non local-government members) have met regularly. The aim is to enable more bridge building between partners but of necessity much time has had to be given to the organisational issues. Nevertheless it continues to be apparent that collectively the Partners are a major driving force in the affairs of the Assembly.

10. The Assembly will be very different twelve months from now, hopefully more recognised as the identity of the Region becomes better known and understood. In the meantime the Integrated Regional Strategy will be reviewed and that gives the Forum the opportunity to highlight our concerns.

To see the issues being addressed go to the Assembly website:  
[www.eastmidlandsassembly.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlandsassembly.org.uk)

Revd Canon Keith Orford Assembly Representative

East Midlands Development Agency

The past 12 months *emda* have been very busy putting the final touches to the revised Regional Economic Strategy (RES), which EMCF contributed a number of papers to. Sadly, the criticisms made by EMCF appear to have been ignored and *emda* have persisted in talking about the Region being a Top 10 European Region by 2010. The new RES, entitled Destination 2010 seeks to place the East Midlands alongside other European Regions such as Hamburg, Zuid-Nederland, Denmark etc. As a part of this they have suggested that Sustainable Communities rather than being a specific agenda area, becomes a cross cutting theme. This could well result in developments that are unsustainable coming forward as there is no comparative work being undertaken with deprived communities to develop their capacity.

The second piece of work that EMCF has been seeking to promote is the appointment of a Churches Regional Regeneration Officer. This discussion has made very slow progress as ourselves and *emda* discuss whether this should be a generalist post, or a pathfinder post, and then what sort of pathfinder task should be set.

During 2003/2004 we will be pursuing this alongside one of the Steering Group exploring a sabbatical placement with *emda* to look at their value base. Discussions about this are at an early stage, both with *emda* and the individual's sponsoring denomination.

Revd Andrew Vaughan EMDA Liaison

## Regional Planning Forum

### ***Regional Spatial Planning – report of East Midland Churches Representative***

In this short report I have tried to set out the context of current work and describe the key issues affecting the work on behalf of our communities and our churches.

#### ***Context***

With effect from April this year the East Midland Assembly (EMRA) became the statutory Regional Planning Body (RPB) for the East Midlands. This has led to the separation of EMRA from the Local Government Association (EMRLGA) who had led on this in the past, subject to the ultimate authority of the GO-EM and Secretary of State. The Planning Forum has expanded its membership to include “Social Partners” (reflecting the make up of EMRA) alongside the Local Authority delegates and now works as the delegated Planning Board with the Assembly ratifying key decisions.

Alongside this change Counties involvement in planning is restricted to Transport Plans, Energy and Minerals, and Flood Defence, while Districts and Unitaries will maintain their “quasi judicial” role in determining planning applications and replace the Local Plans with more pro-active Local Development Plans. Even more local community development and village design statements will be encouraged, supported with new funding, and can expect to be adopted as “Supplementary Guidance” binding on planning decisions.

The first Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) for the East Midlands was adopted in January 2002 after a full public enquiry which I attended on behalf of the Forum the previous July. We have now seen the first monitoring report assessing the extent to which the targets set are being achieved and this will be an annual report.

#### ***The new RPG – a move towards Spatial Planning***

A new draft RPG in a revised form was published in April. Again rather more proactive than the 2002 RPG it is thinner and avoids duplicating the “superior” Planning Guidance which includes European Directives and England's growing list of Planning Guidance (PPGs). The officer team has moved from the EMRLGA with similar terms of reference, but the decisions

will now be made in line with EMRA's Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) rather than a lowest common compromise of inter local authority horse trading.

The scope of the Guidance is the East Midlands and Peak National Park (which spans the border with the North West and Yorkshire & Humber) and covers all aspects of Spatial Planning, geo-physical resources including energy, and transport. It should reflect the IRS areas of Social, Environmental and Economic considerations as well as being the key document of EMRA's Spatial Strategy and supports the themes (Enterprise and Innovation, Communities which Empower People, Conserving and Enhancing Natural and Built Environments, Sustainability socially, environmentally and economically).

Priorities are:

- Social inclusion through regeneration
- Conserve, protect or enhance (all aspects of heritage and environment e.g. no net loss of habitats)
- Improve health (housing, air quality, leisure and recreation)
- Economy and regional competitiveness
- Accessibility and transport choice
- Prudent use of resources, energy, water and impact on waste, climate, flood risk
- Good design, attention to aesthetics and cultural assets

Methods key to the approach include:

- Sequential testing of development sites – a preference for previously developed areas, those in existing settlements, or adjacent to them etc.
- Sustainability testing
- Improving and proven /evidence based design approaches
- Continuous monitoring and improvement

The New Plan now goes forward for Public examination in November.

### ***Consequences and Concerns***

Some concerns we may wish to monitor have come to light as we seek to safeguard and enhance the human and spiritual aspects of life in the East Midlands and protection for the least advantaged in our society.

- Concentration – the outworking of the sequential approach currently takes no account of scale so the first place for ALL development is

brown field sites in the largest existing cities. This reflects a view that even the largest cities of our region are not big enough to power the region's economy to competitive advantage. The Three Cities have resisted all pressure which would tend towards coalescence or the birth of East Midlands Airport as a super-city. Nevertheless they do not follow the logic through to seeing the region as one which could promote polycentrism – a community of communities of mutually inter-dependent settlements. This is a strong theme in Europe but as long as we see all growth as deriving from the South East we will continue to be wowed by an undeliverable and unsustainable dream. Stand back from the Golden Triangle and realise it is just one facet of a potentially far more valuable Diamond.

- Regeneration – another worthy cause which we all wish to espouse. But we must recognise that because an area has been vibrant and fully developed in the past it may not have a viable future at the same scale. There are huge industrial and mining areas that need to be given back to green as the communities they are in have shrunk and have no reason to grow back to the size of their hey-day. What is more – industrial land use has contracted significantly and is not being mopped up by offices or even services and retail, so some heavy industry land is simply not required. This has a potentially major effect on smaller towns. We must resist the pressure for high class science and office parks to cherry pick sites rather than pay to regenerate dirtier ones.
- We welcomed the move to redefine the Coal Fields Sub-area as the Northern Sub-Area allowing perceptions to begin to shift. We also noted the voices raised in favour of Sutton, Kirkby and Mansfield being seen as one community but this is not simply a planning issue.
- Affordable Housing has already come under the spotlight as the target of 30% has not been reached – only one area passed 15% - but furthermore we must ensure there is a catch-up by defining the floor target as a minimum number OR percent (30%). Phased land release can ensure the pressure is maintained, even individually on developers to deliver rather than just offer land. The Housing Task Group attended for much of the year by Jackie Carpenter from EMCF will be liaising in regard to more detailed work in this area.
- ICT is espoused as a solution for rural areas but of course it is only part of a solution and although clean not a very “sociable” one. We are already reminded too often that people and PCs in private can encourage aberrant behaviour too so need to guard healthy communities.

- Regeneration is targeted by the Strategy at seriously deprived areas and we must ensure that funding follows this.

### ***Other Themes***

Moving from urban to rural areas focus on sustainability and access to services dominate. We are arguing for research to identify a parallel model which works at all levels of concentration. To some extent this exists in the *emda*/Countryside Agencies model for Market Towns and service hierarchy. Much more objective work is needed if this is to be applicable as a planning policy tool. Policy must allow local people to find local approaches to meeting need, which safeguard the weakest but avoid imposition of a Nottingham model.

Tourism's importance and the pressures it brings to rural communities are also balanced within the plan and we have arguments to raise about creation of room and support for spiritual leisure and recreation as well as sport. The Cultural Consortiums work is recognised in the plan but more could be done for pilgrims and holydays!

**Transport is clearly another expert area and Keith Orford sits on that Task group to comment or feed forward concerns in this section but it is worth highlighting key themes and issues again:**

- Traffic growth reduction is now the aim although a bid was heard to make traffic reduction overall an aim
- Multi-modal studies are now seen as key to freight and people but research is poor and slow
- Access and peripherality are key social concerns which need to be understood before they can be appropriately addressed and undue pressure for "public transport only" solutions needed to be approached cautiously
- Although southerly routes dominate debate, the A628 Mottram-Tintwhistle bypass is recognised as a vital challenge. We need a safe high capacity route, protection for environment, and contiguous routes for wild-life
- Airports, Rail and ICT are all large influences on our futures. Finningley just outside our region now has approval and is destined to be the Stansted of Yorkshire. Meanwhile the Strategic Rail Authority continues to slow the rate of rail investment.

South Midlands developments are rising to dominate thinking following the publication of the **Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (MKSM)**. This spans 3 regions and the Public Enquiry will impact all three Regions Spatial Plans but none more than ours. The huge high density and suggested "high quality" developments need to be examined with care and the framework for both human leisure and spiritual space must be addressed now. Bp of Brixworth. Revs Alison Tomlin and Helen Wordsworth of the Central Baptist Association are engaging with this with Keith Orford and myself.

Our work can be tracked through the new EMCF web-site and its links to EMA Planning Papers and I would welcome comments and questions at any time.

Mr Derek Markie Member RPB

### **Engage East Midlands & Regional SuperNet**

Engage is the Voluntary & Community Sector "Infrastructure" Body for the East Midlands and invites regional organisations and larger local groups into its membership along with relevant funding and statutory bodies. Under the Chairmanship of David Hughes who also became Vice-Chair of the East Midlands Assembly Engage has taken a lead in "working positively with change, to strengthen the role and working of the Voluntary and Community Sector and contribute as an equal partner to the development of the Region". The new chair Dr Graham Bennett and Chief Executive Wynne Garnett are equally enthusiastic workers for the sector.

Like EMCF Engage sponsors Members of the East Midland Assembly and seeks to develop relationships with other sponsoring partners. Further Members derive from other voluntary sector groups. During 2001, to further its overall aims of partnership across the wider voluntary sector, it sought to establish the Regional SuperNetwork to involve other Networks, notably Volunteer Bureaux, Councils of Voluntary Services, Rural Community Councils and specialist regional bodies such as VOICE representing Black & Minority Ethnic groups, the region's Gay & Lesbian Network, and Sport England. We were welcomed as a similar, "specialist, large and regional network".

Like any umbrella the task is to do together what we can and recognise the points at which we have to work alone. But we all share concerns for people and are struggling with issues of how to engage and keep pace with emerging government processes, tapping into funding, and communicating our message to “opponents”, statutory bodies and the general public. Its Terms of Reference can be summarised as:

- *To assist the dissemination of Information on national and regional developments to the people that need it by “digesting and structuring” information, reducing the risk of overload, and encouraging commitment from organisations tasked with passing it on.*
- *Signposting members of the Voluntary Sector to useful contacts, via links including the Engage East Midlands’ website and the expertise of SuperNetwork members.*
- *Identifying funding sources quickly and overcoming the perceived bias in local authority funding.*
- *Assisting dialogue and lobbying by the sector with key regional and national debates affecting the sector*
- *Widening opportunities for collaboration and progress especially in relation to the sectors impact on the regeneration agenda*

The SuperNetwork has already proved valuable, as a source of information, similar thinking in several areas, and as a potential means of making some economies of scale. Seminars, displays and consultations often parallel our own and, because of the huge number of Christians active in the Voluntary sector, reach some of the same people.

We are nevertheless wary of becoming another “alternative bureaucracy” and are trying to ensure government understands our diversity as well as our value as an efficient channel for communication and consultation.

Major Funders are also very close to Engage and we are keen to point out that too much streamlining by them could damage innovation and the essentially human face of the Voluntary and Community Sector.

In the last 12 months the Network has:

- Supported the initial work on Voluntary Sector Clustering as a key to improved support, quality, efficiency

- Entered into extensive discussions at Ministerial Level with the Treasury Cross-Cutting Review and the resulting policy initiatives which allowed EMCF to state its own case clearly
- Maintained and developed close working relationships with GO-EM and *emda* as the key regional players – to the point where it considered them almost as members, but stepped back and now welcomes them as observers for half of their meetings!

Like EMCF itself they have shared the frustration of debates around funding and Engage’s own main funding stream ends this year. *emda*’s equivocation over support funding for the sector frustrates us all but reflects the wider government debate on whether the infrastructure should be funded or whether delivery at community level can be funded more directly.

A similar parallel relates to lobbying where the SuperNetwork seeks to lobby on behalf of the sector whilst it consists of groups with varying individual agendas. Does it therefore lobby for Voluntary and Community mechanisms as a multi-faith group might for their influence in society, or does it purport to represent a “combined way” as the inter-faith dialogue groups sometimes appear to do?

The future of the SuperNetwork in the coming year will depend on Engage and its stability of funding but ultimately must emerge as a mutually beneficial organisation with a sustainable basis in its wider membership.

Meanwhile:

- There are occasions when projects can be combined.
- There are cases when voices of at least some groups can ally to strengthen lobbying.
- We have things to learn from one another and a contribution to make to joint thinking.

I commend the work of Engage in general and the SuperNetwork in particular to your continued support.

Mr Derek Markie Engage Liaison

## Churches Regional Network (Regnet)

**REGNET** is the network of the key officers engaging with the Regional Agenda on behalf of the Churches. Meeting three times a year there is a full exchange of experience and progress. The notable features of the past year have been that a number of Church/Faith groups have undertaken mapping surveys to quantify and illustrate how the churches and others contribute to society. This is proving to be a vital tool in terms both of influence and collaboration with Assemblies, Development Agencies and other regional bodies.

**REGNET** has included **FAITHWORKS** as an agency that is working directly with central Government and Local Authorities on behalf of Churches.

The Regional Assemblies Preparations Bill sets out the powers and constitution of directly elected Regional Assemblies. There is still much debate to be had on how effective Partnerships will operate. In the meantime the Boundary Commission is tasked to look at the options for Unitary Authorities in the three Regions chosen for the first round of Referenda, namely NE, NW and Yorkshire & Humberside. **REGNET** is a channel to gauge how this is shaping up within those regions and to assess how the principles will impact on the other English regions who will retain their current Assemblies on a Partnership basis.

The question of how relationships operate between Government and faith communities is under review. This in turn may affect how the Churches operate at the Regional level.

REGNET is serviced through Churches Together in England but of necessity on a limited basis. One ongoing concern is that whether those directly engaging with the Regional Agenda are adequately linked to those who speak and advise Churches at a national level or relate on their behalf to Central government.

Revd Canon Keith Orford Chair Regnet

## Inter-faith agenda

The East Midlands Regional Assembly has two places for Faith sector members. EMCF nominates one and the other was drawn from a multi faith constituency . Mr Raj Bali , President of the Hindu Temple in Derby holds the seat alongside Canon Keith Orford. However there is no cohesive multi faith body that exists to support Raj Bali . Under the new Articles of the Assembly it is likely that a properly constituted body will be needed .

Proposals have been made to set up an East Midlands Faith's support and guidance group drawn from –

Leicester Council of Faiths  
Loughborough Council of Faiths  
Derby Open Centre  
Wellingborough multi faith group  
Northampton Faiths Forum  
Nottingham Interfaith Council  
Lincoln Interfaith group

This would be the nominating body to the Assembly and would promote the voice of faith groups in the East Midlands.

It has become clear that in the absence of any formal structures little is known about the Regional activities within the various faiths but to a large extent the same criticism has been raised by Christian representatives within the multi-faith bodies; they appear to know little of EMCF. This has to be remedied.

Revd Canon Keith Orford

## East Midlands Consortium for Training & Education in Ministry

There was a concern expressed in the Consortium that whilst we deemed ourselves to be ecumenical, there was very little (and often no) input from the black led Churches in our region. In response to this, earlier this year, a forum was held to which was invited as many representatives of the black led churches with which we had contact.

The meeting divided into four groups and were asked to speak to each other about: ~

What we do already

How we seek to make disciples

How we train ministers and congregational leaders.

At the end of the day we agreed: ~

To send an invitation to participants of this meeting to attend next Consortium, with an offer to them of becoming full partners of the Consortium or observers, as they wished

CONTRAST to be invited to be a full member of Consortium

At all Consortium meetings to ensure that relevant information was received from networks, so that communication of events etc. could be as wide as possible.

We not only had a very productive time of sharing information together, but good links were made between those who attended, some of whom had never met each other before.

At our forthcoming meeting we will be hoping to take these things further.

Also at that meeting we shall be looking at what contribution we want to send to the 'Formation for Ministry Within a Learning Church.', so that our practical comments can be useful to the whole issue.

We continue to grapple with the issues that concern us all in theological training, in an attempt to share our experience and expertise and move forward together.

Revd Wesley Blakie

### **Key to Abbreviations**

<b>CRN</b>	<b>Churches Regional Network</b>
<b>CTAL</b>	<b>Churches Together in All Lincolnshire</b>
<b>DEFRA</b>	<b>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</b>
<b>DTI</b>	<b>Department of Trade and Industry</b>
<b>EMCF</b>	<b>East Midlands Churches Forum</b>
<b>emda</b>	<b>East Midlands Development Agency</b>
<b>EMRA</b>	<b>East Midlands Regional Assembly</b>
<b>EMRAF</b>	<b>East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum</b>
<b>GO-EM</b>	<b>Government Office of the East Midlands</b>
<b>IRS</b>	<b>Integrated Regional Strategy</b>
<b>LSP</b>	<b>Local Strategic Partnership</b>
<b>PCT</b>	<b>Primary Care Trust</b>
<b>RA</b>	<b>Regional Assembly</b>
<b>RES</b>	<b>Regional economic Strategy</b>
<b>RHB</b>	<b>Regional Housing Board</b>
<b>RPB</b>	<b>Regional Planning Board</b>
<b>RPG</b>	<b>Regional Planning Guidance</b>
<b>RTS</b>	<b>Regional Transport Strategy</b>
<b>SSP</b>	<b>Strategic Sub Regional Partnership</b>

### ***Sources of Information***

EM Assembly	<a href="http://www.eastmidlandsassembly.org.uk">www.eastmidlandsassembly.org.uk</a>
EM Development Agency (emda)	<a href="http://www.emda.org.uk">www.emda.org.uk</a>
Govt. Office of the East Midlands (GO-EM)	<a href="http://www.go-em.gov.uk">www.go-em.gov.uk</a>
EM Regional Local Govt. Assoc. (EMRLGA)	<a href="http://www.emrlga.gov.uk">www.emrlga.gov.uk</a>
Engage East Midlands	<a href="http://www.engage-em.org.uk">www.engage-em.org.uk</a>
EM Observatory	<a href="http://www.eastmidlandsobservatory.org.uk">www.eastmidlandsobservatory.org.uk</a>
Trent Public Health Observatory	<a href="http://www.trentpho.org.uk">www.trentpho.org.uk</a>
East Midlands News Source	<a href="http://serch.eastmidlands.net">http://serch.eastmidlands.net</a>
East Midlands Business	<a href="http://www.emnet.co.uk">www.emnet.co.uk</a>
East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum	<a href="http://www.ruralaffairs.org.uk">www.ruralaffairs.org.uk</a>
Social Exclusion Unit	<a href="http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/seu">www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/seu</a>
Going for Green	<a href="http://www.gfg.iclnet.co.uk">www.gfg.iclnet.co.uk</a>
Urban Forum	<a href="http://www.urbanforum.org.uk">www.urbanforum.org.uk</a>
Joseph Rowntree Association	<a href="http://www.jrf.org.uk">www.jrf.org.uk</a>
Gov. information & services	<a href="http://www.ukonline.gov.uk">www.ukonline.gov.uk</a>
Monitoring poverty & social exclusion	<a href="http://www.poverty.org.uk">www.poverty.org.uk</a>

### ***Administration***

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### ***Office Hours***

**Monday Tuesday Wednesday 9.00-17.00**  
**Thursday 9.00-13.00**

### ***FORUM DATES FOR 2003-2004***

16<sup>th</sup> October 2003

24<sup>th</sup> February 2004

10<sup>th</sup> May 2004

4<sup>th</sup> November 2004

***Church Leaders Meeting***  
***Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2004***