



News update on the relationship between Churches Together in England (CTE) and the Free Churches Group (FCG)

CTE and the FCG have been involved in a strategic partnership based on a joint operating agreement for the past ten years. In terms of this partnership, the staff of both charities shared office and administration facilities based at their central London Office in Tavistock Square and were all employed on CTE contracts. This partnership has served both organisations very well over this period with CTE staff focussing on building and strengthening the ecumenical relationships of member churches (many of whom are also members of the FCG), whilst the FCG staff focused on facilitating the engagement of member churches in prison and health care chaplaincy and education matters (particularly getting members of the Free Churches to serve on Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education).

Two years ago, members of the FCG meeting in the Cotswold felt that the time had come to once again raise the profile of the Free Churches in England and Wales by recovering a distinct identity for the FCG within the broader ecumenical landscape in England and Wales. One of the key outcomes of this meeting was the appointment of a General Secretary for the FCG tasked with reviewing the relationship between CTE and the FCG to give effect to the sentiments from the Cotswold meeting. At the same time, CTE had engaged in a strategic review process and the outcome of both these reviews over the past year has culminated in the separation of the shared administration and financial arrangements between our two charities and the transfer of those staff members paid by the FCG onto FCG employment contracts.

At present we continue to share office space at the FCG office in Tavistock Square London with the view to CTE seeking significantly reduced office space with a member denomination in central London and the FCG relocating its administration to the lower ground floor at 27 Tavistock Square, London in order to rent the ground floor office space. We would like to assure all our member churches that the relationship between us remains warm and cordial and that we look forward to continuing to work together as strategic partners in the future.

David Cornick
General Secretary, CTE

Frank Kantor
General Secretary, the FCG

23rd January, 2014