

Annual General Meeting of COIN held on 27 April 2013 in St. Mary's Church Room, Chiddingfold, near Guildford.

Thanks to the generosity and hard work of Peter Muir and Jeff and Lynne Lowndes, we enjoyed an hour of tea, coffee, luscious cake and lots of catch-up chat before the meeting began.

Present: Ian Clark, Susan Cooper, Andrew Foulsham, Gordon Giles, Dave Hall, Liz Jennings, Alan Jesson, Andrew Leach, Peter Lear, Sandra Lear, Jeff Lowndes, Lynne Lowndes, Peter Muir, Ron Newsham, Patrick Whittick, John Winterbotham, Chris Wright, Jill Wright and Sheila Wright.

Apologies for absence had been received from Ann Barrett, Richard Barrett, Mike Beasley, Peter Bowes, Stephen Carter, Martin Dale, Sarah Douglas, Julia French, Peter Furber, Meg Gilley, Nick Gomersall, John Green, John Hartley, David Instone-Brewer, Simon Kershaw, Clem Lewis, Andy McQueen, Bryony Morrison, Sally Mullock, Roland Orr, Ryk Parkinson, Roy Parsons, Brian Poulson, Carolynn Pritchard, Ian Robinson, Roger Stokes, Mike Todd and Tony Whatmough.

Ron Newsham told the meeting that he would be tweeting through the day and passed on good wishes from the Bishop of Dudley, Stephen Carter and Carolynn Pritchard. Others gave updates on the health of Ian Robinson and Ian Cardinal, who remain in our prayers.

1. **We were welcomed by Chairman Andrew Foulsham.** Opening Worship was led by Andrew Leach, using an extended form of Mid-morning Prayer (Terce) from the Roman Breviary which used the invitatory and included intercessions from other Hours. This is available on the website.
2. **The Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting** had previously been published. It was proposed by Peter Lear, seconded by Jeff Lowndes and agreed *nem con* that they were a correct record of that meeting.
3. **Matters arising:** None
4. **Report from the Chair** for the year ending 31 December 2012. Andrew Foulsham's Report can be found at Annex A.
5. **Financial Accounts** for the year ending 31 December 2012. A copy of the Accounts can be found at Annex B. The Treasurer, Gordon Giles, circulated the accounts, noting that they included hiring charges for two Annual Meetings (2012 and 2013). Other than that, there had been very little activity. The Accounts had already been examined and approved online by the Executive Committee, so they were simply to be received by this meeting. The Chairman thanked Gordon for his continuing good work and the Accounts were received with acclamation! The Accounts have not been examined independently; Susan Cooper volunteered to do this for 2012, 2011 and 2010 and her offer was accepted.
6. **Other Reports:**
 - 6.1 **The Membership Secretary,** Alan Jesson reported that two members had resigned and two new members have joined. He had been able to check the addresses of some members, but he still had in excess of 100 "bounces" because members had not informed him of a change of email address. As a result of his move, he has a lot of paper records of membership going further back than 7 years which he asked permission to dispose of in a secure fashion. Peter Lear proposed that this should go ahead, Gordon Giles suggested that it be an annual operation and the majority of the meeting agreed. There are 479 members though very many are not active; if we were to re-apply a subscription, we would lose quite a lot. We also have a considerable number of contributors who are not members!

6.2 Technical Report: The text of Chris Wright's Report can be found at Annex C.

The Chairman thanked Chris for his work, not just during the year but in past years also. Peter Lear asked what the fee for domain registration was presently and Chris suggested it was in the region of £10 per annum. Jeff suggested that when reactions are asked for, we respond rather more proactively, particularly since a variety of responses, including the "technically inept" are what is required! Patrick asked what would happen to those whose addresses "bounce" and Chris said that these would be sent to the Membership Secretary, who would then make strenuous efforts to contact those members by other means. One problem may be that some old data has crept in. John Winterbotham suggested that the Exec might be able to assist in following up those addresses. Access to members' only pages is available to all signed-in members of COIN. There are currently no pages on the site – but information such as the defunct email addresses could be shown there for members to try to identify. Email Chris Wright for your log-in access.

Andrew Leach asked about different levels of access and suggested that, apart from the standard "editor" access, it should be possible to set up pages restricted to members of the Executive as well as those for members only. Chris said that this would be possible – it just needs a bit of thinking out how!

There had been some online musing about recognising Rob Pickering's contribution to COIN. We agreed that a card should be sent and a small gift had been suggested. There is a precedent to this and we agreed that he has given us, in monetary terms, far more than we are suggesting we spend. It was proposed by Gordon Giles and seconded by Jeff Lowndes that we give Rob a token of some kind for £25, the nature of which would be determined in discussion with Simon Kershaw. Agreed unanimously.

7. Election of Officers:

Election of Treasurer: Gordon Giles has decided to stand down as Treasurer after acting as such for the life of COIN, though he has offered to act as Assistant to aid the handover period (!). Peter Muir had been nominated by Andrew Foulsham and seconded by Sheila Wright; there were no other nominations and he was elected *nem con*. Andrew thanked Gordon again for the length and strength of his service.

It was agreed that the signatories for the bank should be changed from the present three *viz* Gordon Giles, Simon Kershaw and Chris Wright. The meeting resolved *nem con* that the new signatories should be any two of the following: Peter Muir (Treasurer), Gordon Giles (Assistant Treasurer) Andrew Foulsham (Chair), Jill Wright (Sec) and Simon Kershaw.

8. Election of one third of the Executive:

Jeff Lowndes, Mike Todd and John Winterbotham had reached the end of their three year term. There were five nominations for the three vacancies: Brian Elliott had been nominated by Alan Jesson and seconded by Jeff Lowndes, Meg Gilley had been proposed by Jeff Lowndes and seconded by Roger Stokes, Jeff Lowndes had been nominated by Sheila Wright and seconded by Andrew Foulsham, Mike Todd had been nominated by Jeff Lowndes and seconded by Roger Stokes and John Winterbotham had been nominated by Jeff Lowndes and seconded by Roger Stokes. Gordon Giles and Jill Wright were appointed as tellers. After a secret ballot, Brian Elliott, Meg Gilley and Jeff Lowndes were declared elected.

At this point, the meeting adjourned for a splendid lunch, prepared for us by Peter Muir. There then followed the traditional photo call for this year's meeting – one element of which involved us ascending the roof! (Look at the website!)

10. The Chairman had prepared a very useful session on "Spring Cleaning for Computers" with some really practical advice. The text can be found at Annex D. Andrew's talk was followed by a general discussion which featured many handy hints and examples of good practice gleaned from the accumulated experience of members.

11. What next?

The 2014 AGM will be in Inverness on 31 May, hosted by Jeff and Lynne Lowndes. The consensus was that we would prefer it to be in Fochabers. Exec was tasked with processing the details. We were encouraged to get plans completed in good time so that economical travel plans can be made.

12. Any other business

- The Exec would meet online after the AGM to arrange co-options.
- Sources of software John Winterbotham commended CTX (Charity Technology Exchange). This offers huge savings on software, but the criteria for registration are quite restrictive and therefore unlikely to be of much use to many parishes.
- Parish Buying is a purchasing scheme for members of the Church of England and the Church in Wales. This is well worth investigating. They give great savings not only on IT software but also energy (gas and electricity), photocopying systems, office products, fire safety equipment and church supplies.
- In response to a question about a successor to Parish accounting software, Data Developments was mentioned.
- Use of attachments and HTML: This is not available on most COIN mailing lists, though some members want to have the ability to share documents or pictures. It was suggested that there were already facilities to upload these to various sites: DropBox for all sorts of files, Flickr for photos and YouTube for videos (it was pointed out that you can upload these to a private area on YouTube, not available for general viewing). We will also soon have the facilities to save some documents (.pdf, .jpg, .gif and .png) for this purpose on the COIN website. Members will be able to register and be enabled to upload. The likelihood is that the document will remain on the site for a limited time – 28 days is suggested. The uploads can then be referenced in emails. This facility will also be used by others, so it's not extra work.
- The point was made that if COIN is to be useful to the wider church, we need to make sure that what is there is available to others to work on collaboratively.

There was no other business and the Chairman invited the Revd Alan Jesson to close the meeting with prayer.

Annex A: Chairman's Report

Firstly, can I thank everyone for coming today – it's so good to see so many familiar faces, and to hear news from the rather excellent gathering yesterday evening! I believe that Jeff & Lynne again hold the record for the longest journey to attend the AGM – it will be different next year, Jeff!

I think that we need to begin by thanking Peter for finding us this excellent AGM venue, and his wonderful hosting of yesterday evening's listmeet meal and the proceedings today. Also I want to thank Andrew Leach for leading our prayers today.

It's traditional in this report to say that not very much has changed... but this year I think we do need to acknowledge that we have come a long way. At the AGM last year I encouraged members to look at the new COIN website at its temporary home. Well, the site is now at its proper, permanent URL and we have seen a number of incremental improvements in its operation thanks to Chris's regular updates to the underlying system. Also, we have recently moved the lists to the same host that the website uses – and I must pay tribute to the hard work undertaken by Simon and Chris getting the lists moved over in the course of one hectic Friday evening and Saturday. I was there on the sidelines merely offering encouragement and what I hope were helpful suggestions! The only thing that remains from our old setup is control of the nameservers, and that will be changing shortly – it's an administrative change which will have no impact on the day to day running of the website or mailing lists. I think it's important that we should acknowledge the contribution of Rob Pickering & the Society of Archbishop Justus who have provided facilities for us over many years. You may have already seen the card that has been circulating – I would encourage you to sign it and we will ensure that it gets sent on to Rob.

Much of the role of Chair is in keeping things on the road, and here I must acknowledge the contribution of my fellow officers and exec members. Our Secretary, Jill, has kept me on the straight and narrow and ensured that all our decision-making is properly conducted and minuted. Gordon, our Treasurer, is I believe, our longest-standing officer and has done sterling work in the stewardship of our resources for as long as I can remember. As members will note, he's standing down this year and taking a well-earned rest! As membership secretary, Alan has the unenviable task of keeping our membership records up to date, reconciling the ever-changing list of contributors to the email addresses that they may have used when joining – in some cases many years ago. The technical team that I mentioned earlier – in particular Chris and Simon – have worked tirelessly keeping the infrastructure that we rely on in tip-top condition. And I really must acknowledge the contribution of the other exec members as well - John Winterbotham, Jeff Lowndes, John Hartley, Peter Muir, Peter Lear, Andrew Leach and Meg Gilley. There have been occasions when I have emailed a draft response or a suggested course of action to the Exec and asked for a quick response - and I must say I have never been let down. I have been amazed by the comments from these “wise heads” - and everyone's willingness to make time to respond in the middle of busy days. Thank you all – I really couldn't have done it without you all.

At the AGM in 2012 I encouraged members to try out some of the new social media services – and it has been encouraging to note that we have seen some new contributors who we have contacted through twitter. I also spotted a well-known COIN regular reviewing her chosen Lent book on Twitter this year – she slated it, described it as nearly unreadable and then offered it for sale, without a recommendation!

Can I also reflect on the nature of COIN as a community for a moment? I've noticed the increasing number of requests for prayer as well as advice from our regular list membership. I'm pleased and deeply moved to report that both have been forthcoming on a regular basis. And I would pay tribute to the many list members who interrupt busy schedules to chip in with “I'm praying for you in...” which I know brings comfort and reassurance to those who have asked. I often see studies from eminent sociologists quoted in the press debating whether or not an “online community” can exist – can there be such a thing as a community of choice but not of location. Well, to those academics I would say “look at COIN”. To my mind we have here a real community, experiencing caring, sharing and support, and to be honest one or two squabbles or “frank exchanges of views” - and we don't need to be a group of twenty-somethings permanently wired to our smartphones and drinking from a firehose of data to do it!

This year for our “lightning talk” we are going back to our roots – where we provide advice that every member can benefit from - with an outline of how to go about “Spring Cleaning” a computer.

Later in this meeting we will be discussing where COIN goes next, and I am really looking forward to hearing everyone's opinions. I was rather shocked this year to realise that I now have a teenage daughter – who first met at least one Exec member at one of the CRE stands when she was carried round in a sling as a baby! She has now started competing with me for the sheer number of connected devices, with eReader, media player, smartphone and laptop. That's a salutary reminder of the speed at which the technology environment has changed, and should encourage us to see how best we can make use of technology in the church environment. Combined with this, there is the question of how best we should use our new facilities to pass on our expertise. If I was in the habit of writing sermons I could start talking about lights and bushels... but I will leave that to those who are much more qualified!

I will conclude now by thanking the Exec, the membership and all the contributors to our lists – it's you that makes COIN the wonderful combination of resource and community that it is. A comment that came up on the meeting list last week really made it for me - “COIN – it's better than Google!”

Annex B: Accounts

CHRISTIANS ON THE INTERNET (COIN)

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS for the Period from

January 1st 2012, up to and including December 31st 2012

<i>Income</i>		<i>Expenditure</i>	
<i>Subscriptions @ £5</i>	<i>£10</i>	<i>2012 AGM Hall Hire</i>	<i>£50</i>
<i>AGM Income</i>	<i>£0</i>	<i>Flowers</i>	<i>£40</i>
		<i>Woodchip Hosting</i>	<i>£35</i>
		<i>2013 AGM Hall Hire</i>	<i>£55</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>£10</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>£180</i>
<i>Assets:</i>			
<i>Bank Balance b/f 31/12/11</i>	<i>£1315.54</i>		
<i>Income</i>	<i>£170.00</i>		
<i>Expenditure</i>			
<i>Total</i>	<i>£1315.54</i>		
<i>Cash in Bank 31/12/12</i>	<i>£1145.54</i>		

- 2 new subscribers in 2012.
- This year COIN made a loss of £170.
- Any members who have incurred approved expenses are advised to approach the Reverend Treasurer.
- These accounts have not been examined but they represent the total assets of COIN, and in the current climate there seems little point in pursuing any investment.
- At AGMs the expenses are now met by those present, although there is always provision for subsidy.
- It will be noticed that in 2012 we paid Hall hire for both the 2012 and 2013AGMs.

- The Bank Balance as at the last statement of 22 April 2013 is £1150.54.

The Rev'd Dr Gordon Giles, Hon. Treasurer

Chiddingfold – 27th April 2013

Annex C: Technical Report

At the last AGM I spoke, mainly, of hopes for the future. It is great to be able to report that most of these hopes have happened. The future is here!

A lot of the technology behind the running of COIN – its mailing lists and website – have been hosted freely for us on a server called Justus1. That runs in the stable of IPCortex, a facility that owes a lot of its technical expertise to Rob Pickering. It has been provided for us freely – including the registration of the COIN domain, ever since the founding of Coin all those years ago. For that, we owe Rob and SOAJ a great debt of gratitude.

The problem with this has been one of access. Quite rightly, Justus1 is carefully protected against intruders. That was a great comfort – but it did mean that there was very little that we could do to look after ourselves. So we have moved.

All of COIN's activities are now hosted on Gabriel, a server located in Salford Quays and looked after by a little firm called WoodChip Computers. The move has taken us from a really secure reliable server to a rather smaller one-man-band. However, I like to think that we are still hosted on a very adequately secure system – and the fact that three officers of COIN have all the access codes to the whole server (not just to COIN's corner) is of great mutual advantage. Coin has full control and Gabriel has a vital backstop should anything untoward (like a 57 bus) happen to me.

The new website was set up before last year's AGM (albeit at a temporary address) and that became properly “live” at its correct address on Wednesday 28th May.

The design and planning for this site works on the KISS principle. It is not a showcase for all the latest technology – rather, it is a place where basic good design and functionality provide an attractive, easily updated site. No, there is no WIKI – but there is a “comment on this page” button, so that your input will arrive on the page (after moderation)

From my perspective, it is also useful because it is from COIN that I get most of the requests for new facilities. There is already an online voting system that can be made available if required. I am writing a new module that will allow signed-in members to upload images and documents for linking with emails and I keep promising a Gallery facility for photos. The good thing about this is that, once it is developed for COIN, a facility is then available across all of the sites (including all the Sudanese dioceses) so your requests are of benefit to all.

It is interesting to note that the “comment” button was another module that I wrote in response to a COIN request. It has proved very popular on several sites but (with a few exceptions) it has been unused on the COIN site!

Moving the mailing lists was a greater challenge. Gabriel is running just the same Mailman software as Justus and so setting up the new lists was a trivial process. The difficulty lay in transferring all of the list archive and making the transfer as transparent as possible. The process didn't go quite as smoothly as I had hoped – but it did go a great deal better than I had feared! There are still some issues with the details of the configuration of the lists and I hope that we'll have a little time to discuss today how we would like the lists to be set up.

Announce Probe. As mentioned by Alan, we are trying to correct the Announce list. I am shortly going to create a clone of Announce and use it as a probe which will give instant feedback of all email accounts that are failing. You can safely ignore the message when it arrives.

There are still a few loose ends to tie up. The COIN domain is still registered through Justus and all traffic passes there – and then on to Gabriel. The way that Justus is set up means that, while requests for www.coin.org.uk pass through to the website, those to plain coin.org.uk fail. We're getting there!

Annex D: Lightning talk – “Spring Cleaning” for Computers

First of all – this isn't all about using Mr Sheen and a duster to keep things all spick & span... well, I might mention that in passing, but it's not something to dwell on!

Hardware

Let's get the physical side out of the way first. Here's a 1 – 2 – 3 of physical cleaning of a computer.

1. The screen – I can really recommend a glasses cleaning cloth for keeping TFT screens on laptops and desktops clean and smear free. I have a couple of extra-large cloths that came from Zeiss who make some of the big microscopes at work, and if anyone knows about keeping things optically clean, it's them!

2. The keyboard and the mouse. Thankfully we don't have to take mice apart these days to clean the ball and the rollers (remember them?), but a quick wipe with a damp, soapy cloth should make it look and feel better. Keyboards are best treated by turning them upside down over a piece of newspaper and giving them a good shake, then wiping the keys with a damp cloth. With both these, if they still look too grubby for words, just bite the bullet and replace them – they are not expensive.

3. And now for the fun bit – the base unit / tower or desktop, whether it's a PC or a Mac – it doesn't matter which. First of all, I'm going to suggest that you open it up (unless it's an all in one such as an iMac). There are two sorts of computer users – those who open the machine up within hours of getting it, and those who never do. I would suggest that you have a go – they are designed to be opened, and these days you will find a sliding catch or at most a couple of screws to undo. Leave the machine plugged in, but switched off for reasons we will get to in a minute.

I promise you that you will be amazed – firstly by the amount of dust! Hold on – resist the temptation to reach for the vacuum cleaner hose! Vacuuming tends to build up static charges, and that doesn't mix well with microelectronics. I use a can of compressed air to blow the dust out, but lungs or a bike pump or balloon pump will work just as well. You could even just turn the system upside down and let the biggest dust bunnies just fall out. Leaving the computer plugged in during all this will mean that the case is earthed, and you're much less likely to have problems with static. Now put the lid back on the case – you might find that the system is quieter and fans run more smoothly – there's nothing worse than the sound of a fan grinding whilst you're trying to work! As there's less dust blocking things up, it will run cooler too, so the fans will not need to run as fast to cool the system down.

Operating System

Before I get onto operating systems, can I talk about why systems seem to get so much slower over only a couple of years? I hear this so often: “My system cost a fortune – it was the top of the range when I bought it 3 years ago, and now it barely crawls along. I try to get it to do something and I have to go off and make a cup of tea...”

The truth is, it comes down (mostly) to two factors. The hardware and the operating system may be 3 years old, but it's quite likely that the programs that you are trying to run are much newer than that. Software companies give their newest computers to their developers, as they are working on what they will try to sell, and so they want them to be the most productive. Programmers are only human, and so most will want to make the best use of their shiny hardware and will want to show off, making their code do things in as flashy a way as possible. So, for example, a wordprocessor written today will in all probability be quite a bit slower than one written 5 years ago, when running on the same hardware. It may look nicer, though...

The other – and almost certainly the more significant problem – is down to something called temporary files. I like to refer to this as the spare room problem. I don't know if it's just me, but in our house it is often nearly impossible to get into the spare room. This is because we have lots of piles of “stuff” that has been put there temporarily – boxes of books, bags of clothes on their way to the charity shop... you know the sort of thing I mean. Computers are just like that - they use something called a temp folder to keep files that they need to work on at the moment, and are supposed to come back and clear up after themselves when they have finished. We're talking about program installations, temporary copies of open files and the like. The fact is, just like children, computers aren't very good at tidying up after themselves! These files are by their very nature temporary, and almost all of them can be got rid of without any untoward consequences. But having lots of them will slow a system down, as each time Windows or a program wants to write a temporary file it has to list what's there to check that it isn't going to create a file with the same name.

So, for Windows users, I'm going to give you a couple of easy ways to clean these files out. Keep the instructions and use them the next time your computer seems to be running like a geriatric snail!

The easy graphical way

- Go to the start menu, click on run and type %temp% and press return.
- You will see a Windows Explorer window pop up, listing a whole lot of files and folders.
- Select a few at a time.
- Press shift-delete.
- It may ask for confirmation about certain files marked as system files. Press OK.
- If the files are in use, just skip them.
- Don't do them all at once – it will take forever!

The command line way

- Go to the start menu, click on run and type cmd and press return.
- Type cd %temp% and press return.
- Type dir and press return.
- You will be amazed at the files that scroll by!
- Type del *.* and press return. You will be asked if you really want to – say yes.

When you have done this, you should notice a marked increase in speed. However, it won't have done all the job – you can download a very nifty utility called Ccleaner from <http://www.piriform.com/ccleaner> that will clean up all sorts of temporary files from many different areas of your system. It's free, has simple instructions and there's even a version for Apple Macs at <http://www.piriform.com/mac/ccleaner> – what's not to like?