

Minutes of Manresa Link Core Group meeting
Thursday 2nd November, 2017

Prayer	Led by Maria
Present	Max Jourdier (Chair), Juliet Fletcher, Maureen Slattery-Marsh, Sandy Hewatt, Maria Price, John Price.
Apologies	Simon Bishop, Linda Hills (Mary Quinn on "leave of absence")

Minutes of last meeting were approved.

Matters Arising

1. New Core group members (Maureen and Sandy) welcomed.
2. The position of Chair was duly handed over to Max at the last AGM in September.
3. BTC 2018 progress – Margaret Brittan had supplied an update report. Plans are confirmed for it to take place at St Mary's Convent, Handsworth because Manresa House not available because of planned major renovations/rebuilding.
4. Further training – update from Juliet. One member has asked for training on how to work with retreatants from different faith backgrounds with different "languages" and approaches to spirituality. Also use of art is another possible topic. Quiet day being planned for 17-2-18 (1st Saturday of Lent), but still very much in planning stages. Thoughts as well about doing something more frequently, perhaps on Saturday mornings. All such events help members to maintain contact with each other. **Juliet will be taking ideas forward.**
5. Liaison with the Epiphany Group – feedback from Max. They are quite different to us - more structured. They have a safeguarding policy in place and members have to sign up to that. Like us they have RIDLS in conjunction with them, and RIDLS arranged independently by members. The name of Epiphany Group can only be mentioned in a RIDL if all guides sign up for that. Only then are they covered by the Epiphany Group public liability insurance. Max has copies of their ethics and code of practice.

Reports sent to Core group prior to meeting:

1. BTC 2018 and 3 Parishes (South Birmingham) update from Margaret Brittan
2. Feedback from conversation between Max and Epiphany Group
3. Upcoming RIDLS
4. Potential email to membership re 2018 subscriptions
5. Summary of feedback from members at AGM

Items discussed

1. **Safeguarding.** We need to produce a formal policy. Jane Jones, a Manresa Link member, but also the Birmingham RC diocese safeguarding rep, is willing to meet and discuss ways forward. John is willing to be involved in such discussion, but would prefer to have a third person (Core group member or not). Suggestion was that to ensure an ecumenical approach, it would be good if that third person was not RC. A question was raised about whether any disclosure raised could simply be dealt with under the auspices of whichever denomination the RIDL or the retreatant was based in, but input from the Epiphany Group suggests this would not be so. **Decision made that John will seek out a third person, preferably from a non-RC background, then meet with Jane Jones to develop plans, and report back to Core Group.**
2. **Feedback from members at the AGM.** A number of themes emerged linked to the nurturing of the membership, in terms of their own spiritual growth, further training, and moving into experiencing and giving the Spiritual exercises. Recognition that in the past, members have moved into leading the 19th Annotation based on their own experience of doing it, but also that Manresa Link has facilitated training for this. **No specific decisions made about this issue, but earlier discussion in Matters Arising, highlighted plans/thoughts for nurturing/further training generally.**
Supervision was a major issue. A number of Manresa Link members are indicated as able to offer supervision, but especially with large RIDLS, providing one-to-one supervision would be problematic. However there are wide variations in the experience of group supervision. Following much discussion, **Maureen offered to take a lead on this whole issue, possibly linking with Simon &/or others, and report back to next Core Group meeting. Offer accepted.**
3. **Local groups** – these used to exist quite widely, but no longer so. Max felt that they answered some of the needs for nurturing and training, combining local gifts and talents. Also recognised they could be springboards for activity. The group in Max's area still exists. Juliet and Sandy also belong to local groups, although these are not specifically based on Manresa Link. **Suggestion was to use the newsletter to**

encourage people to look at the database to identify who is in their area, and to consider forming a local group.

4. Logo – decision to again roll this subject forward to the next meeting.

5. Annual subscriptions. Discussion took place re the proposed email to be sent out in January, with some alterations agreed. **A key decision was to not continue to publicise the offer to subsidise first residential retreats for new members,** because funds are dwindling, and we want to focus on providing ongoing training/nurturing for all members.

6. March 2018 meeting – Sr Morag has had to withdraw from her offer to present at this meeting. Max suggested approaching Sr Anna O'Connor. We could also consider doing something other than having a “speaker” – and if anyone has such ideas they can contact Max. **It was not actually stated, but the implication was that in the absence of other suggestions, Max would ask Sr Anna.**

7. AGM 2018. Given that the invited speaker for the 2018 AGM day will be charging a fee, we can either pay that fee out of Manresa Link funds, or attempt to cover it by extending/advertising an invitation to non-members and charging them. The concept of inviting others was basically accepted. Some ideas for advertising were suggested, **but Core Group members were asked to contact John with specifics.** Decision reached to charge non Manresa Link members an entrance fee of £20.

8. Constitution issue. Because time ran out, agreement made to leave this to next meeting.

9. Membership fee. This arose as an unscheduled discussion. The annual fee has been £10 for some time. This is immediately wiped out by the free attendance at the spring meeting and the AGM day. **Decision made that for 2018 we will just invite members to pay more than £10 to invest in what we are doing, and to consider an increase for 2019.**

10. Opening prayer at Core Group. This also arose as an unscheduled discussion. John queried the need for formal arrangements for opening prayer, as opposed to time for spontaneous prayer. Quick discussion – **decision to try at the next meeting to have a time of open prayer at the beginning.**

11. Communication between Core Group and membership. This also arose as an unscheduled discussion. Based on an early document by Gerry Hughes that the role of the Core Group was to listen to the membership and respond, John had previously emailed the membership that a Core Group meeting was about to take place, and asked if they had any issues that they wanted us to look at. Some members responded. But that practice has not been continued, and John suggested it should be resurrected. **This was agreed.**

It had also been planned earlier that the Core group meeting minutes should be put on the website (in the members only area) but some minutes named people, so that this has not been done yet. **Suggestion made that we could just publish bullet points, and this was accepted.**

Max spontaneously led us into praying The Grace!

Next Core Group meeting agreed to be 1-2-18, 7.30pm, at Manresa House, opening prayer to be just that – open.