

## **Newsletter No 10 16<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

As you are possibly aware the Planners have refused our application to redevelop the meeting house. Their decision passed through Antrim Borough Council Planning Committee but since they have no power to stop the Planners decision at this stage, they reluctantly had to accept the refusal.

The Development Team have, however, agreed to explore an avenue which is still open and that is to take our application directly to the Environment Minister, Mark Durkan. We have been assisted in this process by Trevor Clarke MLA who requested a meeting with Minister Durkan on our behalf. Trevor Clarke has received an acknowledgement of the request. A date has not yet been finalised but it is likely to be after Easter i.e. the end of April. The exact number of attendees is not yet known either.

In preparation for this meeting Committee have agreed to engage Dr Dale Singleton as our planning consultant. Dr Singleton is currently reviewing the application and will be leading the presentation to the Minister. The Development and our architects, Kennedy Fitzgerald, are currently assisting with this exercise.

It is now just over one year since the application to redevelop the meeting house was submitted to the Planners and we explained how this would be a Journey of Faith. Did we ever dream we would be meeting the Environment Minister to argue our case? When we step out in faith on such a journey we just don't know where God will lead us.

In fact, our application is developing into a test case as we have learnt that there are several other interested parties watching closely as to what the outcome will be. One of these parties is PCI in Church House and it is possible that a representative from Church House may attend the meeting with Minister Durkan. We will of course keep you up to date with what is happening.

On a more local note it is encouraging to see around 20 – 25 people gathering on a Sunday evening for half an hour to thank God for leading us on our Journey of Faith and to pray that He will continue to lead and guide us and all the other people involved in this application. Regardless of the outcome of the planning application it is vital that we seek and follow Gods leading because we know that He has a plan for our meeting house. Please join us on a Sunday evening for this short time of prayer but if you are not able to do so, please remember the project in your own prayer time.

Details of the financial status of the project can be obtained from any members of the project team.

We thank each and every individual and the fund raisers who have given freely of their money, talents and time. Again, regardless of the outcome, this money will be needed for work on the meeting house