



**Welcome to the third electronic newsletter from [IBEX](#) -  
the Churches Working with the Economy, Central South Coast.**

We are here to help the churches to relate our faith to daily life, to tackle issues of social justice and to take action to serve our local communities more effectively.

In this edition you will find items on:

- The Real Meaning of Christmas?
- A summary of the recent IBEX AGM
- Transforming our Buildings for Mission... Your invitation to a day to help you develop a funding strategy for your church building project.
- Stick to the Knitting - Charities and Politics
- What is #GivingTuesday?

Please continue to let us know what you think of the newsletter, what you want to learn about or how you think we can help you in your own activities on email [newsletter@ibexsouthcoast.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@ibexsouthcoast.org.uk).

[Val Potter](#) (Chair)

[David Wrighton](#) (Team Leader)

[Cliff Bembridge](#) (Church and Community Officer)

**The Real Meaning of Christmas?**



As the 1970's pop group, Slade, often bellow, "It's Christmas"...

And it seems to get earlier every year. When I was a boy, my parents ran a shop in Worthing, and I can remember in the late 1960's going to an exhibition in a poky little room in the basement of the Hotel Metropole in Brighton of Christmas stock and goodies. This was in early September, and people used to think that was a bit early to think about Christmas. How times have changed.

We had a corner shop in the days when supermarkets were still fairly rare but beginning to threaten. In the late 1960's in our residential part of Worthing, we had a fish and chip shop next door, another grocer's shop opposite, a butcher's shop on another corner about 100 yards away, and another grocer's shop on a corner a couple of hundred yards away. Ironically, we seem now to be moving back to far more local shops— we have three small co-op supermarkets within 10 minutes walk of where we live, and Tesco are mothballing superstores before they are open.

And I was Grenville to my dad's Arkwright. He wore a brown coat, like Ronnie Barker in Open All Hours. On Saturday mornings I did the deliveries, on the trade bike, but only on Saturdays, mind, because I was still at the local grammar school.

And Christmas? I write this towards the end of November. It is the first Sunday in Advent in 6 days time. All the local Town centres have switched on their Christmas Lights, the Christmas adverts are all over the television. John Lewis spent £7,000,000 on theirs, and it

is vying with Marks and Spencers and Tesco, apparently, to be seen as the best.

Friday last was Black Friday, when Christmas Shopping on-line peaks. We will have spent £6,000 per second on that day. We have come a long way since the corner-shop, where Christmas just meant a few extra things in stock. It's make or break time for the major retailers, and all that matters is that we get caught up in the commercial roller-coaster that is Christmas.

#ThisiswhatChristmasisallabout!

Oh,... hang on ... Let's just spare a thought for a few people:

- The latter-day Bob Cratchit's and Tiny Tims of this world, who can't afford Christmas.
- Street Pastors, who will presumably be out in force picking up the pieces from over-zealous Christmas Celebrations.
- Those in the retail trade, under enormous pressure before Christmas.
- Those in the retail trade working over Christmas preparing for Boxing Day and January sales.
- The Homeless, those who are alone, those recently bereaved or with unhappy memories at Christmas
- All those people beyond these shores affected by war, terrorism, ebola, famine or whatever else the world can throw at you.

And remember that Jesus came in to the world..... oh, yes, that's what Christmas is really all about! You know the rest.

[David Wrighton](#)

## **Planning for Mission and Service - The IBEX Annual General Meeting**

It was good to celebrate all that IBEX has achieved in the past year at the recent AGM held at Buckland URC in Portsmouth.

We heard from Gary Edwards about the Southampton Advice and Representation Centre and the valuable contribution that David Wrighton makes to that. We were given encouraging statistics about the electronic newsletter by Lynda Nel who produces it, and a moving tribute from Kerry McPhail about the depth of welcome that Buckland offers to her community writing group. In the business meeting the financial report showed a healthy improvement in the past year and an impressive range of activity was listed in our [Annual Report](#).

We are grateful to all those who made the effort to attend, including those in senior positions in our sponsoring denominations, and look forward to developing further ideas for action in the coming year.

[Val Potter \(Chair\)](#)

## **Transforming our Buildings for Mission... ... rather than our own comfort!**

**A day to help you develop a funding strategy  
for your church building project.  
Saturday, 31 January, from 10am to 3pm, at Buckland URC,  
174 Kingston Road, Portsmouth, PO2 7LP**



Do you have a vision to develop your Church premises, to make them more useful for your

community?

Are you struggling with the question of funding? Don't know where to start? Or where to turn next?

Why not join us for a day to help you develop a funding strategy?

How it will work:

- register adding a basic summary of your project so we can tailor the day to your needs
- the chance to see how the plans for Buckland are developing
- on the day you will be given individual feedback and support on your project
- ideas and guidance on fund-raising – what to look at, what to be careful of, or where you might be wasting your time.

The day will be led by -

[Cliff Bembridge](#) is IBEX's Church and Community Officer and the Minister at Buckland URC in Portsmouth, where he is currently leading a major redevelopment programme, raising funding to develop the Church in ways that will serve the local community. He has significant experience in raising funds for church based projects of all sizes.

[David Wrighton](#) has worked locally for IBEX/SHIM for over 20 years, has worked with local Churches on how best to relate to their community , worked with the Voluntary Sector and Local Authorities around Community Development and has extensive experience on fund-raising both as applicant and grant-giver.

Cost: **Free – yes, you heard right the first time – FREE.** We are funded by the Baptists, Methodists and URC locally to do this (but individuals from other denominations are welcome too!)

Refreshments: Tea and coffee will be provided through the day, but please bring your own lunch.

To register, please contact David Wrighton by email: [tl@ibexsouthcoast.org.uk](mailto:tl@ibexsouthcoast.org.uk) giving:

- your name and contact details
- the name of your Church or organisation and basic information about your project

Please note: If the date does not suit or you haven't got to the fundraising stage yet, Cliff or David would be happy to meet with you at another time to support you in developing your plans for mission.

## **Stick to the Knitting - Charities and Politics?**



**"Stick to the Knitting" was the expression used comparatively recently by the Charities minister, in defence of the lobbying bill, where he was saying that Charities should just carry on doing their good works i.e. "sticking to their knitting" - and not get involved in asking questions, campaigning and to stay out of politics.**

Herewith a [link to an article](#) from the Independent about it. Perhaps you'd like to let us know your thoughts on this?

## **Stick To The Knitting - Part 1**

**navca**  
E S S E N T I A L S

I attended the AGM of Action Hampshire earlier in November. The keynote speaker was Kevin Curley, who used to be the Chief Executive of NAVCA - the National Association of Voluntary and Community Associations. He was, at the same time, both challenging and inspirational.

One of the issues he tackled was the recent lobbying legislation, which other speakers also considered in the final panel session. All agreed it is part and parcel of the Voluntary Sector DNA to challenge what we think is wrong, and that this is enshrined in legislation. There do occur gagging clauses in Government contracts, and pressure can be put on in other ways. But when it comes down to it, if research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation or similar shows something is wrong, then they have a duty to publish it.

Kevin even quoted Archbishop Helder Camara - "If I give bread to the poor, they call me a saint. If I ask why the poor have no bread, they call me a Communist." A link to a transcript of Kevin's speech can be found at the bottom of the report in the [Action Hampshire Annual Conference link](#).

[David Wrighton](#)

## Stick To The Knitting - Part 2



The Chief Executive of ACEVO - The Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Officers - has had some harsh things to say about the concept of the "Big Society" and how the Government's treatment of the Voluntary Sector in seemingly trying to shut them up does more harm than good to Society as a whole.



Sir Stephen Bubb's article in the Times can be read [here](#).

## **What is #GivingTuesday?**

#GivingTuesday (2nd December) is a global day of giving. After the sales of Black Friday and the on-line shopping boom on Cyber Monday, #GivingTuesday is an opportunity to come together to show the world why it's good to give.

Whether it's making a donation, volunteering your time, or just spreading the word at the start of the Christmas shopping season, #GivingTuesday is a call to action for everyone who wants to give something back.

The UK has joined this global movement, launched by the Charities Aid Foundation. The simple idea behind #GivingTuesday is to encourage people, charities and businesses to donate time, money or their voice to help a good cause.

### **Ideas for Charities?**

- Organise a fundraiser
- Start a social media campaign
- Launch your Christmas appeal
- Sign people up to direct debit giving
- Announce a partnership with a company or secure matched funding

### **Ideas for Businesses?**

- Announce a matched funding scheme with your chosen charity
- Encourage employees to raise funds
- Organise an employee volunteer day or create a special product and give a percentage of the proceeds to your chosen charity.

## **How can IBEX help your Church?**



IBEX works by identifying and strengthening your Churches mission to your Community. Through a unique network we help you to integrate the Church with the local Business and Voluntary Sector, support your church in transforming buildings for Mission or provide help to develop strategies around Fund-Raising opportunities.

IBEX is involved in Retail Chaplaincy in Bournemouth, Poole, Portsmouth and Southampton.

IBEX can help to develop Workplace visiting, a committed observer/critical friend, Pastoral support, or long term engagement.

Can we help you? [Contact us here](#) – we'd love to visit with you and your team to see how we can help you!

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