

Registered Charity no. 249726

Minutes of the Council Meeting: 30th April 2025; 11.00

Coddenham Village Community Centre, Mary Day Close, Coddenham, IP6 9SR

Present: There were 32 members present in person. There was no zoom link at this meeting

Item		Action
1.	Apologies: Caroline Abbott, Mandy Alderman, Janice Brett, Christine Christian, Alison Alder, Ruth Dennigan, Margaret Goldstone, Eleanor Goodison; Beryl Mee, Rose Savage, Claire Thomas.	RA
2.	Conflict of Interest/Safeguarding/Domestic Violence: none declared.	RA
3.	Minutes of Council Meeting 23rd April 2024: proposed by Amanda Langan, seconded by Jane Leung and agreed by all. Signed by Jeanette Appleton. No matters arising from the minutes.	JA
4.	Treasurer's Report: Amanda's report is attached with these minutes. A very generous Legacy of £12500 had been received from the estate of Patricia Brown, a past member of Martlesham branch. Mrs Brown had expressed a wish that the overseas MU project should be included in the projects that her legacy funds. Trustees have voted for £5,000 to be designated for a new overseas project, 'One more Step'. 'One More Step' builds on the Literacy and numeracy project with the set-up of Savings and credit for agribusinesses. Members were made aware that they could apply for funding from this legacy for new MU projects in their communities, that further the aims and objectives of the MU. The report was proposed by Reverend Catherine Forsdike, seconded by Jane Whyte and agreed by all.	AL
5.	DP Report: Jeanette's report is attached with these minutes. Its key issues were summarised in a PowerPoint presentation. Proposed by Amanda Langan, seconded by Jane Leung and agreed by all. Signed by Jeanette Appleton. The theme for the past year had been, 'Transformation Now' with members encouraged to think outside the box for future fund-raising. The DP highlighted two initiatives undertaken by other branches in England: • 'Knicker Nights' (Liverpool): an evening event to receive donations of knickers, including period knickers to be given to the local women's refuges. • 'Evening Mothers' Unions (EMU)' meetings have been started to enable working women to attend MU meetings and events. Under any questions, Christine Ward asked if members would pray for ongoing work in modern slavery and for survivors of domestic abuse.	
6.	Jane Sheat (Diocesan Director of Education): 'Supporting our C of E Schools: Mrs Sheat leads a team of six in the Diocese's Education Team. 87 of the 320 schools in Suffolk are Church of England schools (85 primary and 2 secondary). The vision of the Education Team is to 'Enable schools to flourish'. A key approach to achieve this aim is to support headteachers. School-funding is very tight and this is likely to remain the situation for the foreseeable future. She presented some practical initiatives where Mothers' Union members could support their local C of E School. • 'Open the Book' (which many members are actively involved with) • Providing books, games, toys and some sports equipment for schools • MU Trustees are looking to partner with the Christian sports charity, 'KICK', to run holiday camps for pupils of C of E schools located in areas of deprivation.	

	Council members highlighted projects that they have run in schools for a number of years: 'bags of love' for children on their first day of the new academic school year; knitted angels and stars for Christmas trees; taking nativity cribs around schools	
7.	Xerxes Maghanoy: 'Mothers' Union Enterprise': Mr Maghanoy has recently joined the MU as its 'Retail and E-commerce Manager', a key member of its marketing team. Part of his role and remit is to review current, and also introduce new products for MU. • He began by showing members a new dress which has been designed and made in Oxford by the charity, 'Dorcas Trust'. This charity supports under-privileged women and women forced to leave their country for fear of persecution, abuse or imprisonment. The dress is made in only one size, and is said to fit sizes 6-24. The cost is £99. Its design, material and colour cannot be changed. It has been produced in time for the 150th anniversary of the MU in 2026. The dress was modelled by one of the members, Sarah Nicholson. Members' unanimous response was that the price was excessive. There was also considerable doubt that one size would fit all sizes and shapes and also that it would not be worn at MU events. A couple of members asked if there could be something for men to wear, such as T-shirts or polo-shirts with the refreshed MU logo. Other suggestions included a tie, waistcoat and cufflinks. Members were told that a collared shirt will be available. • Mr Maghanoy requested feedback on other products sold by MU – many of which were on sale at the 'pop-up' shop at the meeting. Most members were very happy with the range of Christmas and Easter cards; however, it was clear that there was a preference for designs to have a Christian theme to reflect the Christian ethos of the MU. The scripture verses (inside the cards) were popular although a few members felt that there should be a range of cards which should be blank, as not all recipients of the cards would have a faith or be 'religious'.	
8.	Midday Prayers: led by Reverend Catherine Forsdike.	
9.	Feedback from MU branches and groups: some branches gave advance notice of upcoming events which include: the A Coffee Morning at St Mary Stoke, Ipswich (17 th May), a garden party at the home of Jane Leung (Cathedral branch) (7 th June) and 'Tea by the Sea' (12 th July). Full details of venues, dates and times will be circulated soon.	
10.	AOB: none	All
11.	Any questions: none.	LG
12.	Closing comments by DP: Jeanette ended the meeting by showing a video from the Mothers' Union Facebook page 'I am not Nothing' which highlights the issue of domestic abuse. Members are encouraged to view the video themselves and to consider its use in worship in their Churches. The video highlighted the serious aspect of the work that Mothers' Union members are undertaking with the Rise UP campaign. Jeanette thanked all members for their attendance and for Jean Sheat and Xerxes Maghanoy for their presentations.	
13.	The Grace: the meeting closed with members sharing the Grace together.	
	The Council Meeting closed at 12.25pm.	

Signed: Date: