

Minutes of the SPAN meeting held on 12th January 2026 held by Zoom.

The meeting started with the SPAN Prayer.

Attendance: Jenny Armstrong (Chair), Paul Hayden (Secretary), Michael Barker (Treasurer), Caroline (Vice Chair) and Paul Manning, Allan Mulholland, Anne-Marie and Patrick Reddin, Jeanette Davison, Jenny Toutoungi.

Apologies: Mary and Jonathan Holden, Fr Stephen Day, Fr David Hartley, Clare Burdett, Anne and Roger Elson, Stella Lucey.

Minutes of the last meeting were circulated, approved and signed.

Matters arising: No further news from Chris Connors and CoCo's Foundation.

Summary of Correspondence: NB* means - attachment supplied for the meeting.

- **Jacqui Groves, Helping Hands Community Project ***, dated 9th December 2025. General thanks.
- **Nazlie, World Medical Fund for Children ***, dated 15th December 2025. Donation receipt and thanks.
- **Judith Bradfield, Porridge and Pens Ghana ***, dated 26th December 2025. Thanks and update.
- **Jo Squires, Young People First ***, dated 18th December 2025. Invite to AGM with Xmas card. *[Jenny and Michael hope to attend the AGM on 28th January.]*
- **Zoe Hauser, Medair ***, dated 18th December 2025. Christmas wishes and words of hope.
- **Nasreen Mohamed, Zimbabwe Educational Trust (ZET)**, dated 24th December 2025. "Please pass on our sincere thanks to everyone at SPAN. Your support makes a meaningful difference to our work.
- **Dr Robert Caracache, House of Light and Hope ***, dated 25th December 2025. Annual report.
- **Michelle Oakford, CAFOD ***, dated 17th December 2025. Thanks for £ 500 for Sri Lanka Cyclone Disaster. £ 100 for Darfur, Sudan.
- **Paul Keeley, SSG Sustainable Global Gardens ***, dated 7th January 2026. "Here is our annual newsletter describing some of the things reported to us. Have an enjoyable read! We have a visit to Kenya arranged for February after which we will prepare a progress report.
- Thanks from our **Catholic Primary Schools, Family Centres** and from **refugee family** contacts for the Christmas vouchers received from SPAN.
- Greetings and wishes from Friends of the Holy Land, CORD, Kidogo Kids, Hope House Babies Home, CAFOD, HB&O, Serendip, STAND and others.

Finance – Treasurer Report by Michael on the December 2025 Accounts

A healthy month for standing orders means we have £ 1,097 available to allocate this month.

The Christmas appeal in December was very successful with over £ 5,000 doated in the month. In total we distributed £ 5,000 in vouchers to schools and other local needy families. We also have £1,500 surplus which can be carried forward to the next appeal. A massive thank you to all of you who donated to the appeal.

We have issued a payment to House of Light and Hope of £ 2,145 which is a combination of our regular donations and some sizeable donations from a particular supporter.

A new investment account has been created, and we have sent £ 20,000 to purchase new shares. This will come out of our large bank balance and should provide some dividends in 2026.

Any shares purchased will be resold in early 2027 to meet the obligations of that year.

[£ 221.57 will be added to amounts earmarked for hospitals at Nyenga in Uganda and Ortum in Kenya.]

Appeals – * indicates that attachments with further details were sent out ahead of the meeting,

- **Amy Dickerson, Transformation Through Education ***, dated 9th December 2025. Supporting orphaned and vulnerable children in Zambia. **£ 300 Agreed.**

- **Mugwanya Abdulmalik, Mifutaahu Charity Foundation ***, dated 12th December 2025. **Agreed not to support**
- **Alice, Kidogo Kids ***, dated 4th January 2026. Supporting vulnerable school children. **£ 300 Agreed.**
- **Lamis Jamil**, dated 6th January 2026. Writing to local churches as a single woman originally from Lebanon and am currently completing a PhD at Coventry University on a fully legal student visa. Seeking **discretionary emergency hardship funding or benevolence support**. “Although my PhD thesis submission deadline is 23 January 2026, I am required to remain on a student visa through the subsequent viva period and any required corrections, during which my ability to work remains legally restricted and there is no recourse to public funds. I would be very grateful for any assistance or advice you may be able to provide, and I am happy to attend in person if that would be helpful.” **Agreed not to support financially** but to pass on links to agencies etc.
- Also repeat application from **Mugweri Trever Patrick of The Mugweri Foundation** and **Laitness Innocent, in Tanzania** as well as **Helping Hands 4 Africa**. None are registered with the Charities Commission and have previously been informed that we have limited funds, priority decisions and look to registration with CC.
- **Guy’s Gift Dec** (last supported Dec 23 and Jan 24), **£ 300 Agreed.**
- **Kiirua Mission Hospital, Kenya, £ 100 Agreed** – towards £ 1,200 over 2026.
- **CAFOD for Darfur £ 100** – towards £ 1,200 over 2026. From FG Legacy funds.

Any Other Business:

Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/1DCfZ4yYgP/> please share and follow.

SPAN Christmas Appeal: Thanks to Jeanette and Mary for preparing 125 Christmas cards.

St Patrick’s School distributed £ 600 between 10 families, St Peter’s £ 420 between 7 families, Our Lady and St Teresa’s £ 600 between 10 families, St Anthony’s £ 600 between 10 families, St Joseph’s £ 600 between 10 families, a local parishioner family £ 40, Brunswick Hub £ 250 + £ 5.99, WDC Children’s Assessment Centre £ 500 between 25 families, WDC Children & Families Centre (formerly Barnardo’s) £ 750 between 35 families, 2 refugee families. i.e. **at least 120 families.**

At Eastertime 2025, **52 families** received either £ 40, £ 30 or £ 10.

There are some unallocated vouchers will be used in the next couple of months or used in the Easter Appeal. The meeting were very grateful to Jean Feely for all her work in contacting schools, parishioners and agencies.

SPAN Quiz Night 2026 is in St Peter’s Hall for **Friday 13th Feb** – Lent starts Wed March 5th 2026. The proceeds of the Quiz night will be jointly **Young People First** and **New Chapters**. A drinks licence has been applied for by Jenny. Patrick and Anne-Marie have agreed to run the bar. Jenny asked for raffle price donations – perhaps unwanted Christmas chocolates or drinks? Please contact Jenny with any donations to bring on quiz night or have collected – jenarmstrong@talktalk.net. Tickets to be sold around Sunday 1st and 8th February. Contact Jenny if you can help with this. Paul will produce tickets and updated SPAN booklet for 2025. Caroline to produce posters and graphics for tickets. New Chapters will give some brief words at the interval, Hopefully, Young People First as well.

Lenten Alms will be for Local families with vouchers and jointly **Friends of the Holy Land** in Gaza and **House of Light and Hope** in Lebanon seeing the continued need in Gaza and the link to Easter and the Holy Land in that season.

Justice & Peace: Peace Sunday – Pax Christi prayer cards supplied.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Jan 18th – Jan 25th. **Nobody at the meeting knew of local plans.**

The meeting finished with a prayer.

The next meeting will be on Monday, 9th Feb 2026 at 7.30 pm. This will be held using Zoom with a link sent out the day before the meeting. January and February meetings are usually by Zoom.

A Zoom link will be sent out with meeting documents the day before the meeting.