

# Science and Christian Faith

## Three County Borders Group

### A Vision of the Group's Future

#### Purpose

As part of the Christians in Science movement, the Three County Borders Group has been set up to fulfil three purposes:

1. To encourage a mutually enriching **dialogue** that touches our understanding of science, faith and the realities of life.
2. To facilitate a **network** of Christians (The Forum) who are members of churches (all denominations), and Christian groups in businesses, centres of learning and the community services; for mutual support in learning about and understanding science –faith issues.
3. To establish, develop and support **communities** devoted to specific aspects of science –faith issues. This would enable them to generate competence in providing 'expertise' to all Christian organisations in understanding specific science-faith issues and the sort of responses required of Christian communities.

#### Motivation

The motivation for forming the Group is four fold:

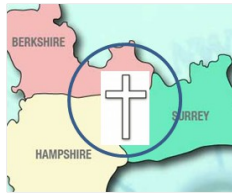
1. There is a perception, strongly promulgated by some of the media, that science and religion are rival, non-compatible, explanations for the way the world is; some people cannot understand why scientists can entertain Christian belief; most people have a very limited understanding of the scientific process and the basis of Christian belief.
2. Understandably, most churches do not have the expertise or resources to devote to science-faith issues as part of their teachings, and focus on issues related to personal faith and church development.
3. The Three County Borders area has one of the highest concentrations of science-based professions in the UK, and many scientists who hold Christian beliefs are often very much in the minority in their social and career world.
4. There is need and opportunity to provide a vehicle whereby Christians with a scientific background or a strong interest in science and technology can exchange views and experiences of science-faith issues and come to a view of what is the required Christian response to the challenges posed by scientific and technological progress.

#### Going Forward

The development of the Three County Borders Group is envisaged to take places in the following phases:

##### Phase One

During the first year, autumn 2015 to summer 2016, a series of open lectures will be held, at the end of which nominations will be obtained of representatives of each church or Christian community to serve on the Forum. Also, information will be obtained from attendees at the open lectures regarding their interests in specific themes of science-faith issues. These themes are described on the Forum's website.



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During this time the launch team will give consideration to the administrative requirements of the Forum; in particular the funding of the group and its governance, and its linkage with the Christians in Science movement.

## Phase Two

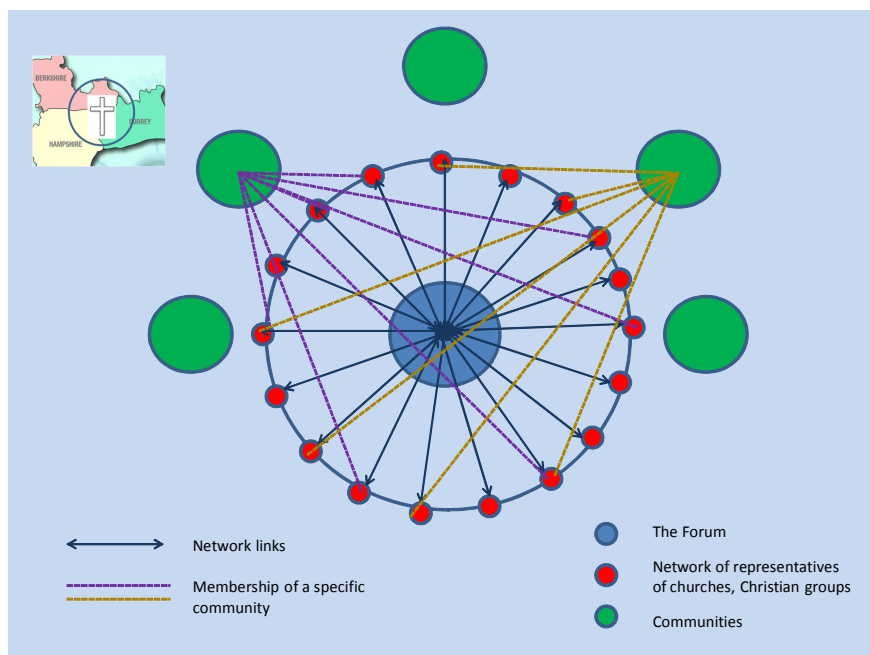
In the second year, 2016/17, further open lectures will be organised and a data base will be available for anyone who has registered their specific interests to know of other people in the Forum who share that interest. Members will be encouraged to make contact and build relationships.

Soundings will take place regarding the enthusiasm to establish communities of practice for specific aspects of science-faith issues, and training sessions/workshops will be held as and when each community is set up.

## Phase Three

In the third year, 2017/18, further open lectures will be organised, and communities of practice established. During this time the work of the communities of practice will be made known widely within the Forum and their contribution to local churches and Christian groups begin to be available.

A diagram illustrating the concepts outlined above is given below.



The basis of organisation is that of networks and group working, with freedom to develop responses in an emergent, non-controlling environment.