

SPECIAL REPORT

SHIRE AND SOKE VISION DAY

The first ever **Shire and Soke Vision Day** at **St Andrew's Methodist Church, Northampton** on **8th May 2010** was a great success. Many people were impressed by the speakers and inspired by the discussions and time of worship that followed. "Very moving", "Even better than a Spring Harvest workshop!" gives a flavour of the day – it was "in the right spirit" and some are already looking forward to next year! So what happened this year?

The day began with **Peter Hancock**, Methodist District Chair, talking about his "specialist subject". His definition of a **Fresh Expression** was fascinating and prompted lively discussion. If you are familiar with the words "conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary" then a fresh expression could be described as being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born out of human endeavour!



Next came a presentation on **Street Church** by **Adrian Coupe** and **Keith Dragon**. They are passionate about this project to help street sleepers, sofa surfers and those who are uncomfortable with mainstream church services. It all happens every Sunday afternoon at the Salvation Army Central and is now supported ecumenically by more than a dozen churches in Northampton. *(Powerpoint available)*



From this town centre project to the Northamptonshire village of **Flore**, where the vision of employing a **youth worker** began during Hope 08. **Jean and John Levell** talked about how this gradually became a reality through the work of the Flore Partnership of churches, with the URC and Anglicans working together to form a management committee and employ a part time youth worker in the village at last. Well done!

Finally we heard from **Charlie Keenan**, who spoke with great enthusiasm about her work in **Little Stanion**, a new development on the edge of Corby. Charlie has been appointed and housed here by the Baptists and URC working together, and is obviously enjoying the challenge of forming relationships with the residents to build a new church community.

After some lively discussions, *Rich in our Diversity* was our time of worship. We listened to **John 17:20-23**, *May they all be one*, read in three different translations including French; we prayed for our relationships with neighbouring churches, those we know and those we don't, putting them on the map, literally, before lunch.



Further information about any of the above is available from the County Ecumenical Officer Tel 01832 293535 Email teresabrown@shireandsoke.org.uk