



????? D??p?? nnr[

? ppa?e???DnrU?

COOg?

Open Door

Annual Report for 2008

CONTENTS

Page

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1. | Constitution & Management |
| 2. | Chairman's Report |
| 3 – 9. | Director's Report |
| 10. | Financial Policies |
| 11. | Treasurer's Report |
| 12 – 13. | Accounts for year ended 31 st December 2008 |
| 14. | Notes on the Accounts |
| 15. | Statement by the Independent Examiner |

Constitution

Open Door – Colchester is governed by a Constitution adopted on the 25th November 2003.

Open Door – Colchester was registered by the Charity Commission on 22nd January 2004 and given the Registration Number 1101675.

The objects of Open Door – Colchester are to advance the Christian faith and provide facilities, resources, and practical support for those in need in Colchester.

Management

Open Door – Colchester is managed by an Executive Committee of between 5 and 12 members. The Committee includes a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer elected by the Members of Colchester Baptist Church at the Annual General Meeting, the Senior Minister of Colchester Baptist Church, and other members nominated by the Deacons of that Church.

Members of the Executive Committee are trustees of Open Door – Colchester.

Membership during 2008 was:

- Fiona Prentice, Chair
- Ted Drake, Treasurer
- Graham Courtier, Acting Secretary (appointed January 2008)
- George Hay
- Isobel King (appointed April 2008)
- Nick Lear (Senior Minister of Col. Baptist Church) (appointed September 2008)
- Rob Urand
- Nicola Wickenden

No corporate trustees have been appointed.

Chairman's Report – 2008

2008 found our organisation looking to the future as changes were made to keep pace with the changing needs of our visitors. Helpers come and go and this year has been no exception. We have said good-bye to some of them, and we thank them for their help over the years and wish them every blessing for the future. We continue to look for new recruits who are willing to help in this work.

Our Director, Anna Marsh, continues to bring new initiatives to the work which are proving very worthwhile. The team has supported several of our visitors as they faced problems with finance, housing or family. They continue to be grateful for the help given to them by the very dedicated helpers. So often the problems can seem insurmountable, but with God's help they can be overcome. This is what encourages our volunteer helpers as they see people move on in their lives and start to take responsibility for their own actions.

The numbers attending Open Door on a daily basis continue to remain at about 50, showing the need for an organisation such as ours. We have had positive comments from the Police and Community Support Officers with whom we are involved, indicating that thanks to Open Door some people who might otherwise turn to petty crime are being kept off the streets of Colchester, and are being given positive advice and role models in the Day Centre.

We have had another grant from Essex Fairway Charitable Trust for which we are truly grateful, and our thanks go to Colchester Baptist Church for both their financial support and for allowing us to use their premises free of charge. We have received donations from various organisations, groups and individuals including Kingsland Church and Philip Morant School. We realise that without these donations we would not be able to carry on this vital work in Colchester. Our thanks also go to our Treasurer, Ted Drake for looking after our finances so ably, and to our fund-raising trustee, Graham Courtier for continuing to seek out organisations who are willing to fund the work.

Our Management Committee meets several times throughout the year to oversee the work of the Centre. This is a vital role and our thanks go to all those who serve Open Door in this way. In the last year we welcomed two new trustees - Isobel King and Rev Nick Lear. As the new Senior Minister of Colchester Baptist Church Nick comes on to the Committee as an ex-officio member.

Our role continues to be to show God's love to whoever comes through the door and in whatever way that love is needed. Once again, I wish to thank you for your continued support and interest in the work of Open Door.

Fiona Prentice
March 2009

Diresctor's Report – 2008

Dear Reader,

It seems only yesterday that I was writing my first letter as Director – and yet a whole year has flown by! My time here has been mostly a mirror image of life in the wider world with few things going exactly to plan....

I had hoped to 'get out' and promote the organisation more, but the constraints of time & regulations have meant that these plans have been thwarted. Whilst the day to day running of this place can always be left to the extremely competent volunteers, we are required to have a minimum of four staff on the premises and this has been at times hard to achieve, with many opportunities postponed due to more pressing issues. Therefore the need to attract more volunteers is paramount, both for our important work to continue, but also to be more easily able to fulfil our vital role – that of being a listening ear to those whom we seek to befriend.

What should never be undervalued is the need for people to have their concerns & feelings heard and respected, without ridicule and judgement or time constraints. Of course it must be stated that once having formed a relationship, our volunteers do attempt to motivate a customer towards a more fulfilling life, but this is always in line with our Christian beliefs of unconditional love and grace. Indeed countless lives have been changed forever as a direct result of our organisation's intervention and message of support & hope.

As I write this report the economic climate is worsening by the day, so the numbers of those needing our centre should in theory rise, however, although other local organisations are already being inundated with requests for practical help, we have yet to notice a markedly significant increase in numbers – which begs the question – WHY?

Although the majority of our existing client base remains largely unaffected by the economic downturn (being recipients of state benefits) why are we not seeing our numbers swelled by those newcomers to the benefit system? Is it because they don't realise the extent and variety of services we offer? Is it because our outward appearance belies the welcoming atmosphere that awaits visitors? Or is it their pride, preconceived notions, fears or prejudices that keep them from joining our ranks? How do we reach out to those who are faced (some for the first time in their lives) with the realisation that their previously stable lifestyle is in danger of collapsing around them – leaving them confused, ashamed, frustrated and angry?

One thing's for sure – it is not the extortionate cost of a cuppa!!

I therefore hope and pray that whatever ideas are perceived and tried over the next year, Open Door, as an organisation always committed to supporting the townsfolk of Colchester, are enabled to reach out to those in need who might previously have never heard or had need of our services – because I have no doubt that there are many who could benefit from our reasonable prices and listening ears!!

With Kindest Regards,

Anna

Introduction

In 1985, two members of Colchester Baptist Church in Eld Lane befriended two young drug addicts who were begging and invited them into the Church for coffee and biscuits. From these humble beginnings, the work of Open Door began and has grown. We are now a well established befriending centre, which because of its central location, is ideally placed to extend a warm welcome to ALL people regardless of their position in society.

The Open Door Drop-in Centre

Opening Times

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday	10am until 2pm
Tuesday	10am until 1pm (Until end of March 2008)
Tuesday	ASK fc (From 13th May 2008) *
Thursday & Weekends	Closed

* For details on ASK fc see separate heading

Prices

Tea & Coffee	10p
Squash	5p
Cereals	10p (price increased to 15p due to increased costs)
Donated Foodstuff	FOC
Fresh Fruit (per item)	From 10p

Staff

Last year the Staff consisted of the following:-

Director **

3 Team Leaders

Senior Support Worker

9/11 Befrienders working one day a week

5/6 part-time Befrienders working half a day a week

** denotes paid, all others are volunteers

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the four volunteers who left our organisation during 2008: Mary Hargreaves, Mariette Woods, Mark Francis, and Jimmy Luck. We would also like to thank the two qualified counsellors who both retired during 2008. We wish them all every blessing in their continued service of our Lord.

Services Available

- Befriending
- Encouragement and Support
- Advice on Benefits & Housing Needs
- Advice on Finding Employment
- Signposting to other local agencies
- Debt Management Techniques
- Prayer and/or Spiritual guidance
- Advocacy
- Reconciliation & Mediation
- Bereavement Support
- Prison Visiting & Support
- Prison Aftercare
- Travel Assistance
- Use of Telephone

We would hope that, as in previous years, we continue to ensure that no-one enters the premises without having the opportunity to talk confidentially and unhurriedly to a member of staff, to be listened to without judgement. This, we believe is the distinguishing aspect of the work of Open Door – we can minister to our customers without the need for targets and/or time constraints – the ability to befriend and convey God’s love to those who have low self-esteem or who have suffered disappointment in their lives, by coming alongside them through both the ups and downs of their life, is at the core of our existence.

Dialogue with a visitor can simply offer encouragement, or suggestions of possible actions, but often it can lead to an advocacy role with other organisations (statutory or voluntary), e.g. to assist with negotiations for accommodation, queries regarding benefit claims, or to support applications for drug or alcohol detox. The team have continued to respond to many such instances of need during 2008.

Changes & Additions to Services

The ASK Friendship Club

Since May 2008, the ASK Friendship Club has operated on a Tuesday between 10am and 2pm (Term Time only) from the church lounge. Using the existing Art & Craft club as its nuclear client base, ASK fc has attempted to engage with our customers on a deeper level, provoking discussion on a variety of issues both in the afternoon discussion time and during the various activities arranged for the morning session. We have encouraged an honest, thoughtful and loving attitude between members, with an emphasis on breaking down the barriers between staff & customers. Everyone is asked to contribute to the group as a whole both emotionally and practically – and a growing sense of true friendship has evolved. It is stressed however, that ASK fc is totally self-funding as a subscription fee of £1.50 was levied to pay for any costs involved with the excess amalgamated with other fundraising measures for the enhancement of the club members. This culminated in a coach trip to see Lee Mead in the West End production of ‘Joseph’ in November, which was enjoyed by all attendees!

Tab Book

At the end of January, in an attempt to make a fairer payment system for all customers, we introduced a tab book system. Access to the system is gained by a customer agreeing to abide by a set of guidelines whereby credit is initially extended to cover the cost of their drinks and/or cereals until they are able to reimburse the organisation. Once a regular payment pattern is apparent, customers are then encouraged to consider not only paying for items they have already obtained, but to make provision for any goods they might shortly want to purchase. Open Door strongly believe that this has led to an appreciation and understanding for the need of everyone to pay their own way, which has in turn led to increased self-respect and tolerance of the situation in which an individual may temporarily find themselves.

Annual Activities

Retreat

We were fortunate to hold two retreats during 2008; one at Assington Hall in Suffolk and the other at St Helena Hospice in Colchester. Not only were they times for spiritual reflection but are also extremely beneficial in terms of team fellowship and strengthening.

Fundraising

A sponsored walk was held on 15th July to raise money to support the work of Open Door. Although we set off as a group to walk around the delights of Colchester Town, there were deviations to offer opportunities for those less able to complete the full route, to still take part. Our sincere thanks go not only to the walkers, but also to those who sponsored participants and to those of our customers who paid a 'forfeit fee' to exclude them whilst still contributing to the cause!



Christmastime Festivities

We try to encourage a family spirit throughout the year but obviously this takes on a deeper meaning at Christmas. It is probably the hardest time of the year for many of our customers, especially those estranged from loved ones. With everyone around seemingly enjoying the goodwill of the season, it can isolate those already on the fringes of society even further.

We had the customary Yuletide activities: about 85 people sat down together to enjoy a tasty Christmas dinner and good company, the 'Tree of Remembrance' was erected from which message tags were hung from its branches (as in previous years, this has proved both popular & therapeutic), and later in December, time was set aside to sing Carols and hear seasonal Bible readings. We were again able to hand out presents to those of our customers who are homeless or who have no family or friends with whom to share Christmas time thanks to the generous annual donations of gift parcels from *The Mothers' & Ladies Union of All Saints Church - Maldon*.

Selection of Case Studies

The following examples are intended to show the diverse situations in which our organisation's help and advice has been sought during 2008:

Mr A: allocated 'B&B' housing locally; Council later told him to leave as they did not view his medical condition as being serious enough for priority housing. We arranged for him to see a Solicitor & supported him throughout the whole process of the subsequent successful appeal. We also mediated between himself & his estranged family for the restoration of their relationship.

Mrs B: A widowed pensioner; Found to be in serious debt from catalogue purchases, aggravated by the unwarranted inclusion of 'Payment Protection Insurance' and high interest incurred. Verbal & written protests failed to resolve the problem, until court action was initiated on her behalf. The matter was settled out of court in her favour.

Mr C: A registered disabled man; was experiencing difficulties distancing himself from two former friends who were exploiting his vulnerability. Staff spoke at length to him about the advantages and disadvantages of his various options, and supported him throughout his chosen route. We continue to monitor the situation to ensure that boundaries and codes of conduct are respected.

Mr D: A homeless man & former heroin addict; suddenly died whilst sofa-surfing at a friend's home. We liaised with the Coroner until cause of death was established. We also helped his partner with the necessary formalities and attended the funeral. Unfortunately, whilst living on the streets, various personal items had been stolen from him including contact details of his family in Australia, so it was several months before we were able to inform them of his passing due to natural causes. Staff continue to provide on-going support to both his partner and other customers affected by his death.

Networking

We continue to encourage all inter-agency interaction that benefits our customers. Special mention is included for Beacon House, NEEDAS, Open Road, The April Centre, The Night Shelter, Matrix, Colchester Borough Council (Welfare & Housing Depts.), Colchester Borough Homes, Out for Good, The Korban Project, The Community Mental Health Team, CHAC, Social Services, Essex Police, The Probation Service, The Chaplaincy Teams at Chelmsford, Holloway, and Wayland Prisons, MIND, Colchester General Hospital, Fisher Jones & Greenwood, The surgery teams of: Dr. Baldwin & Partners, Castlegardens Medical Centre, and Ambrose Avenue.

I would also encourage any agency who feels that our charity may need further inspection, to contact me by telephoning 01206 769436 or by simply dropping in!

In Thanksgiving

Once again Open Door was the grateful recipient of harvest produce from various schools and churches. Special mention is given to Flitch Green Primary School of Little Dunmow, Heathlands C.E. Primary School of West Bergholt, St Mary the Virgin Parish Church of West Bergholt, St Margaret & St Catherine Parish Church of Aldham, Bures Baptist Church, and also the various youth groups from Colchester Baptist Church. We have been able to provide generous foodpacks to countless numbers because of your generosity, and we would like to sincerely thank you on their behalf.

In addition to those previously mentioned, our thanks also goes to Essex Community Foundation – Chiron Fund, The Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre, Plume Avenue URC, Maldon Road Chapel, Glover & Howe, and last but by no means least to the many individuals, schools, colleges, and churches who continue to give money, goods, time & prayer. Without your invaluable support we could not have touched as many lives as we did – I pray that God will continue to bless you for your generosity!

Final Thoughts From the Director

I have continued to be blessed with the seemingly unending love & support of the team at Open Door, from whom I have received far more than I have given – truly words cannot begin to express my feelings for you all – I can but humbly thank you! Together we have prayed and seen those prayers answered. Together I believe we have laughed more than cried. Together we have loved and served – our customers, each other, and our GOD – I know He is saying ‘Well done, good & faithful servants!’

I would hope that in the coming year more Christians feel God leading them to join our family at Open Door. I respectfully challenge the wider Christian community to avail themselves of our facilities: either to work or simply to sit with the type of person whom Jesus would have sat alongside whilst on Earth!

In an age of such despair & brokenness, never are people more in need of the hope & healing which is to be found through CHRIST!

I end by again inviting you, the reader, to come through the

OPEN DOOR!

Financial Policies

Investments

The funds possessed by Open Door – Colchester are relatively small and it has been considered appropriate to hold funds not immediately needed for current expenses to be placed on deposit. During February 2008, the account with **Stewardship** was closed as the balance had fallen below £10,000 with the consequent lowering of the rate of interest payable.

In its place, an account was opened with the **Affirmative Deposit Fund for Charities** (ADFC) operated by Epworth Investment Management (associated with the Methodist Church) in order to obtain a higher rate of interest.

No other investments are held.

A current account (which earns interest) is held with the CAF Bank.

Reserves

The question of what reserves (if any) should be held was considered early in 2005. The Executive Committee decided that it would be prudent to aim to hold a balance of funds of around six months' expenditure. This would allow for an orderly winding-down of operations should this ever prove necessary. The balance of funds at the end of 2008 was a little higher than this.

No reserves for particular contingencies are held.

Grants

Open Door – Colchester does not normally make large grants to individuals or to organisations. Small gifts and loans are made to individual Visitors in appropriate cases at the discretion of the Director to assist with living expenses, travel costs, etc..

Treasurer's Report

The Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2008 follow this Report and should be read with the accompanying notes.

The increase in funds over the year was rather unexpected and arose because grants and donations were higher than expected and through the magnificent outcome of the Sponsored Walk organised by the Director. The substantial grant received from the Essex Fairway Charitable Trust had a major impact on the finances of Open Door and this impact continued in 2008 with the receipt of a third grant from that source. Open Door is very thankful for this generosity. A large grant from the Essex Community Foundation was very much appreciated as is the continuing support of Colchester Baptist Church (through a donation and allowing the use of their premises without charge) and other Churches in Colchester and district.

We are once again grateful to Michael Baker FCCA for his work in Examining the Accounts.

E A Drake
Honorary Treasurer
January 2009

OPEN DOOR - COLCHESTER
Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2008

1. Receipts and Payments: General Fund

<i>2007</i>	<i>2007</i>		2008	2008
<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>		£	£
		Receipts		
		Donations and Grants		
1629		Colchester Baptist Church	1250	
1135		Other Churches	1169	
5100		Other Bodies	7622	
1903		Individuals -general	2748	
120		Individuals - in memory of P Hill	0	
277		Individuals - specified uses	0	
	10164	Total Donations and Grants		12789
		Receipts from Activities		
2094		Receipts from: Refreshments	1967	
468		Saturday Coffee Mornings	495	
0		Fund Raising: Sponsored Walk	941	
246		Sales	0	
113		Visitors' contributions towards counselling	0	
45		Loans refunded by Visitors	548	
	2966	Total receipts from Activities		3951
	303	Interest on Deposit and Current Accounts		609
		Other receipts		
	215	Income tax refunded on Gift-Aided Donations		395
	13648	Total receipts		17744
		Payments		
		Direct costs of supporting Visitors		
937		Payments and loans to or on behalf of Visitors	893	
1515		Food and Refreshments	1455	
135		Counselling fees and supervision	330	
318		Fruit bought under "Healthy Living" Scheme	346	
	2905	Total Direct costs		3024
		Costs of running Open Door		
9327		Director's remuneration and National Insurance	9652	
93		Staff travelling expenses refunded	449	
10		Staff training costs	100	
532		Telephone line rental and calls	504	
620		Insurances	665	
156		Publicity: Annual report, etc	12	
325		Administration materials, etc	131	
55		Miscellaneous costs	178	
	11118	Total running costs		11691
	14023	Total Payments		14715
	-375	Increase in Funds over the Year		3029
	8560	Balance brought forward from previous Year		8185
	8185	Balance carried forward to next Year		11214

OPEN DOOR - COLCHESTER
Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2008

2. Receipts and Payments: ASK Friendship Club

2007	2007		2008	2008
£	£		£	£
		Receipts		
		Donations	10	
		Payments by Members	260	
		Receipts from Saturday Coffee Mornings	490	
		Fund Raising: Sponsored Walk	313	
		Sales	50	
		Total Receipts		1123
		Payments		
		Food and refreshments	169	
		Retreats	82	
		Net cost of outing to see "Joseph"	359	
		Craft materials, etc	131	
		Miscellaneous costs	57	
		Total Payments		798
0		Increase in Funds over the Year		325
0		Balance brought forward from previous Year		0
0		Balance carried forward to next Year		325

3. Statement of Assets and Liabilities at the end of the Year

2007	2007		2008	2008
£	£		£	£
1462		CAF CafCash Account	1347	
0		Co-operative Bank Current Account	200	
6703		Deposit with The Affirmative Deposit Fund for Charities <i>[2007: deposit with Stewardship]</i>	9983	
20		Cash held	9	
	8185	Total Assets		11539
		Representing		
		Balances on Receipts and Payments Accounts:		
8185		General Fund	11214	
0		ASK Friendship Group	325	
	8185	Total Funds		11539

The accounts and statement of assets and liabilities set out above relating to the year ended 31 December 2008 have been approved by the Trustees
 These accounts should be read with the accompanying notes.

E A Drake
 Honorary Treasurer
 January 2009

Notes on the Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2008

1. **Accounting Policy** As Open Door has a low turnover, the Accounts are presented on a "receipts and payments" basis and accord with S.42(3) of the Charities Act 1993.
2. **Status** Open Door – Colchester became a Registered Charity (No 1101675) on 22 January 2004.
3. **Donations and Grants** Large amounts include £1250 from Colchester Baptist Church (2007: £1629), £5000 from the Essex Fairway Charitable Trust (2007: £5000), £2000 from the Essex Community Foundation Chiron Fund (2007: nil) and one from an individual donor of £1000 (2007: £475). At the end of the year, there were four individuals making donations on a monthly basis (2006: six).
4. **ASK Friendship Club** This group was started in early 2008.
5. **Sponsored Walk** The Executive Committee agreed that the monies collected should be split 75% to the General Funds and 25% to the ASK Group.
6. **Income Tax refunded** A number of individual donations have been made under the Gift Aid Scheme. Tax refunded relates to the year to 31 December 2007 under the current repayment arrangements imposed by HM Revenue and Customs.
7. **Insurances** As an independent entity, it is necessary for Open Door to have a range of insurances. Insurances held include Public and Employer's Liabilities, Trustee's Indemnity, Legal expenses and Professional Liability for Counsellors. Insurance for risks associated with buildings and contents is held by Colchester Baptist Church, in whose premises Open Door operates.
8. **Annual Report.** The £12 covers the cost of binding the 2007 Annual Report, the copying was kindly done by Colchester Baptist Church at no charge.

E A Drake
Honorary Treasurer
January 2009

Statement by the Independent Examiner

In accordance with the provisions of the Charities Act 1993, I have examined the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2008 of Open Door – Colchester as set out above.

This examination did not extend to a comprehensive audit of those Accounts.

I confirm that the Accounts accord with the accounting records of Open Door – Colchester and that those records satisfy the requirements of the Act. I am not aware of any matter to which attention needs to be drawn in order to obtain a proper understanding of the Accounts.

Signed

Date 1st April 2009

M G Baker FCCA

2

2