



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2012**

**THE OBJECTS OF
OPEN DOOR - COLCHESTER
ARE**

- 1 Advancing the Christian Faith; and
- 2 The provision of facilities, resources, and practical support, with the object of improving the conditions of life for those in need in Colchester.

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 began and has grown into what is today known as 'Open Door'. 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.

OPEN DOOR _ COLCHESTER
ANNUAL REPORT
2012

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As announced in last year's Annual Report, in February 2012 we appointed Simon Heard as our Director. He has settled in to his role well and has built up good relationships with our visitors, and has gained their trust – an important requirement of the job. As with previous Directors, Simon's desire is to show God's love in both practical ways and spiritually, to all those who come through the door, to those who are hurting, lonely, afraid and have never known God's love for themselves.

Each day we are open we welcome 40-50 people who value the help and support we offer. There are those who still have difficulty in coping with alcohol problems and in Open Door we can help and support as required. Managing money is increasingly difficult for some and once again we can offer advice and help in this situation. We offer food parcels for those who are homeless and to tide people over until their benefits arrive. We do hold vouchers for the Foodbank and the Team Leaders issue them when necessary, but as this is for short term help only not many of our visitors are eligible for that.

During the year our needs have been met in many ways. We have had enough helpers for each day coming from various denominations and churches in the area. Once again we have valued the input from the interns who work with EMI (Engineering Ministries International) based in Colchester Baptist Church who help in the teams. The Team Leaders continue to work enthusiastically among our visitors and we value their input and dedication, through many years of experience.

My thanks must go once again especially to Essex Fairway Charitable Trust who provided funds for the Director's salary. I also wish to thank the many other people who give regularly to the work of Open Door, including Colchester High School, Kingsland Church, Inner Wheel, and also Colchester Baptist Church for the free use of their premises and for their generous donation to our work. Thank you.

I am privileged to be the Chairman of a dedicated and loyal team of Trustees who have real concern for the people of Colchester and the work of Open Door, and I wish to thank them for their support over the last year. The Trustees include Ted Drake, our Treasurer and William Butcher, our Secretary who both work hard on behalf of Open Door.

As a result of requests from the visitors, two new meetings have been started – Wednesday@One and Sunday@One. The latter is an alternative service held after our morning service, for those who would find it difficult to cope with a traditional church service, and we offer soup and a roll after the service. Wednesday@One is for those who want to learn more about the Bible and the Christian Faith in an informal and relaxed setting. Both of these meetings are proving to be popular.

I want to thank everyone who has supported the work of Open Door in any way in the past year, and I want you to know how much that support is appreciated and valued by all those involved with this work.

Fiona Prentice

March 2013

CONSTITUTION AND MANAGEMENT

Open Door- Colchester was constituted as a charity separate from Colchester Baptist Church on 25 November 2003 and registered with the Charity Commission on 22 January 2004 (registered number 1101675)

Open Door - Colchester is managed by an Executive Committee of between 5 and 12 members, including

- Honorary Officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) elected at each Annual General Meeting.
- Ex Officio, the Senior Minister for the time being of Colchester Baptist Church.
- Nominated members, who are practicing Christians, and the majority of whom are members of Colchester Baptist Church, appointed by the Deacons of that Church..

Membership of the Executive Committee during 2012 consisted of

- Fiona Prentice, Honorary Chairman.
- William Butcher, Honorary Secretary.
- Ted Drake, Honorary Treasurer.
- Nick Lear, Senior Minister of Colchester Baptist Church.
- Gill Balfour .
- Billy Campbell.
- Graham Courtier
- Rob Urand.
- Bob Woodcock.

These are the Trustees of Open Door - Colchester.

The day to day work of Open Door is controlled by the Director, Simon Heard. Currently, Open Door opens three days a week with groups of helpers led by Team Leaders, Graham Courtier, Rob Urand and Anna Williams. A short service is held on Sunday afternoons.

During 2012, the Staff consisted of the following:-

Director **

3 Team Leaders

Senior Support Worker

Counsellor

12 Team Members working 1 day a week each

6 Interns from EMI(UK) - Engineering Ministries International

** denotes paid, all others are volunteers

DIRECTORS REPORT

Being Director

What a fabulous honour and privilege it is to be appointed as Director of Open Door. I am truly grateful to those who have encouraged and supported me in my role. I know I can safely speak on behalf of all the members, trustees and visitors of Open Door, that we are eternally grateful to all of the charities, churches and individuals who have supported us financially, especially the Essex Fairway Charitable Trust, who have provided a considerable amount of support to us over the years. Without this support we wouldn't be able to function.

As a follower of Jesus Christ, I feel so blessed that He has laid love and compassion on all of our hearts, for the people in Colchester and beyond. For the broken, the lonely, the rejected, the addicted, the afflicted, the homeless, the abused, the suicidal and the weary. The list goes on and on. Visitors at Open Door, are not necessarily in any adverse situation through fault of their own. Being abused as a child is not something we plan in life, neither is losing a job something that we would welcome. Realistically, without any form of continual income we all run the risk of losing our home. Homelessness has become a real problem in Colchester and has gotten worse since last year. Although we cannot produce accurate statistics for the number of people living in fields or on the streets, I have had many opportunity to go out and speak to those who are homeless. One gentleman I spoke to in town, has been living in a tent for six years. He told me that there are at least fifty people living outdoors, in tents and shop windows throughout Colchester. We have gotten a small team together to go out in the evening and encourage some of these people in need to come and see us at Open Door and hopefully those who do come, we will be able to help and support them. Whether it be for food, clothes, a tent, direction, a listening ear or just friendship.

This is what I love about Open Door, it really is open to all who would come in, a safe haven, a place where the visitors will not be judged and a place of peace and tranquility, they can call home. A place where they can drop in and be pointed in the right direction. Whether they are homeless looking for housing, whether they need counseling or if they just need someone to talk to, Open Door is open for all.

My first role as director was to build up a relationship with each of the visitors, to gain their trust, and that is something that the members have always done. We can call them dear friends, and they us. When listening to the testimony of each visitor, I was shocked to hear, that many said that they wouldn't be alive if Open Door wasn't available to them. For over twenty five years Open Door has been helping people with various issues and I am so thankful for the work previously done by these saints and the love and compassion they have shown to all. My prayer is that we can follow in their footsteps and reach out to those in need throughout Colchester and beyond.

I have taken a little time to get some comments of the visitors, who wanted to express their gratitude and very much wanted to be a part of this report.

“Without the help of Open Door I would still be hooked on alcohol. I am so grateful to have the support of those who really care for me. They even helped me when my washing machine broke down and couldn't wash my clothes”. Sue Rouse

“The Open Door is there to help me, especially with organising my finances. Also the staff are extremely helpful and friendly and always have time to talk, listen and help. I would be lost without them.” Lynn Jones

“Open Door is a great place to relax, I enjoy the service on Wednesday, the talks and the music. I bike all the way from Clacton to get here.” Marco.

“In the year 2000, I had an argument with my father, I was kicked out of my house and was then on the streets. I started going to Open Door soon after and then my life changed. I will say if it wasn't for Open Door I would be dead. They have taken me in, showed me love, and helped me with any problems I have. I am eternally grateful.” Richard Pickles

“Anna Williams is one of the team leaders and has really helped me, she is there for everyone and has supported me every step of the way.” James Woodley

The first year has been a blessed one. I would say up to a hundred people visit us each day, with a broad range of needs, and Open Door is always a place where they can feel wanted, safe, warm and welcome. At the moment we are well staffed with volunteers and are able to sit amongst the visitors and interact more now than ever. We have a wonderful opportunity to get to know each person and find out the deeper issues in their lives. For those who have these deeper issues, we have been blessed with a new counsellor, Shirley Sinclair, who offers free counselling to those in need and a chance to get to the root of their problems. She has joined us on the Monday team.

The visitors know that Open Door is a Christian Charity, and they always have respect for us and also for each other whilst on the premises. You may well know that every member at Open Door has a faith in Jesus Christ and it is our faith that produces a willingness to serve Him, with only one motive; to magnify the love of God and to love those around us, no matter who they are. I understand that not everybody wants Christianity and never will, and we certainly wouldn't like to push our views on anyone. However we have had many people come to Open Door that show an interest in Christianity. For this reason we have set up two events in the week to cater for those who want to know more about the Lord Jesus Christ, thus distinguishing the practical needs from the spiritual.

We have a small service on Wednesday at one o'clock. This is a wonderful time for the visitors to join in with hymns and we also give a small talk and use this time to answer any questions the visitors may have. This has proven extremely successful and is always well attended. For those who want to feel a part of the Church community, we also have provided a service on Sunday, which is at one o'clock. It is designed to cater for those who are frightened or maybe a bit apprehensive to walk into a larger church. Both of these services are held in the same lounge at Open Door with which the visitors are extremely familiar and feel comfortable with. A relaxed atmosphere where they can feel part of a family.

At Open Door, we really have seen lives changed and I hope that this year will be a fruitful one for those in need. A chance for people to get back on their feet. We are in this for the long haul and I realise that sometimes this cannot happen over night. Whatever problems people may have or whatever the situation they are in, we have the resources and willingness of the volunteers to help. For that I am truly grateful to all who support Open Door and enable us to reach out in this community.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the two volunteers who left our organisation during 2012: Elizabeth Fitt and Andrew Beaumont. We wish them well in their endeavours and every blessing in their daily lives.

We are extremely grateful for those who joined us from EMI. Even though they have a big responsibility in the work they do for such wonderful causes, they have shown such enthusiasm, loyalty and devotion to the work here at Open Door. Every member has made a huge impact on the lives of the people who visit us.

Christmastime Festivities

We gathered together as usual for Christmas dinner on the 11 December 2012. Over fifty people join us for a wonderful roast dinner, where we sang carols and pulled crackers together. This is something the visitors always look forward to and we have had wonderful response.

We held a sponsored Carol service to raise money for Open Door, where the visitors themselves would become the singers. We rehearsed every week, starting months before the event. We all went out in the rain on Saturday 23 December to perform to the people in the town of Colchester and afterwards we enjoyed cake and tea together.

We raised over £300 for the event and we very much appreciate all those who participated and supported us.

Case Studies

The following examples are intended to show the diverse situations in which our organisation's help and advice has been sought during 2012:

Mr B: A disabled man, who is severely disabled, partially blind with a damaged spine had lost his Disability Living allowance as the benefit date expired naturally. We helped him fill the forms out in anticipation of the expiry date, however we had to chase DLA and had to refill out the forms, as they said they never received the forms that were sent. We also offer moral support to the gentleman during this time.

Miss L: A young lady of 17 years old, was made homeless, as her mother told her to leave home. She ended up hanging around with the wrong people, older men who were using drugs and taking alcohol. We managed to help her get housed at Korban, a Christian run charity in Colchester, who houses people under the age of 24.

Mr S: A young vulnerable gentleman came in to open door, after getting mixed up in drugs and petty crime, because of this he was made homeless with no income and debts to pay. At Open Door we were able to talk openly about his issues, provide him with food and a tent, and encourage him to start sorting out his life. This included helping him with JSA, helping with housing applications and helping him to find work. All of these were achieved and he now lives comfortably. During this time he had shown an interest in Christianity so we were able to share our faith with him which hopefully will lead him to a more fulfilling life.

Mr Y: A young gentleman of 19 years old, not long out of prison, was unfortunately left homeless. He was mixing with the wrong crowd and getting into drugs and alcohol. We managed to find him a place to live. He was also summoned to the County Court in Colchester as he missed his parole, so we attended the court with him to give him support. Fortunately the decision, went in the gentleman's favour.

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, Sanctuary Housing, 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 Hawthorn Ave.

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 Maldon Baptist Church, Maldon All-Saints Church, Aldham Parish Church, Brightlingsea Baptist Church, St Mary the Virgin Parish Church of West Bergholt, Bures Baptist Church and Colchester Baptist Church. We have been able to provide generous food packs to countless numbers because of your generosity, and we would like to sincerely thank you on their behalf.

Our thanks also go to those who have provided us with regular financial donations; Essex Fairway Charitable Trust, Kingsland Church, Bishops Ward School, Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre, Maldon Road Chapel, Colchester High School Lower School and also very sufficient donations from individuals who wish to remain anonymous.

Final Thoughts

At Open Door, we believe we are called to be Gods hand in benevolence to lighten the burdens in Colchester whenever we are able. I am very excited to see what the future will bring, with all the support that we have. What I see, is lives being changed and I am so thankful to the Lord Jesus Christ for it. I am so thankful for the love that the volunteers show towards everyone who come in, and I am absolutely certain that the visitors are thankful too.

Jesus told a parable in the Gospel of Luke, saying that it is very easy in life to invite family, friends and wealthy neighbours when you are giving dinner or supper, because you will always be invited in return. He then said, when you give a meal, invite the poor, the disabled, the lame and the blind. Further on it says; go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, so that the house may be filled. Yes we may not get invited to a big banquet in return, but what we do get in return is wonderful friendship and the chance to see a little smile on someone's face who has not felt like smiling in such a long time. That's worth more than a million pounds to me.

Whatever the problem of each visitor, it is our job to reach out to those in need, for those who come in and those who are outside, regardless of who they or what problems they may have. To bring them into our house so that they feel welcome and loved.

Simon Heard
March 2013

Visitor Needs : the View of a Team Member

While there have been no major changes to the range of visitor needs, and the reasons for them coming to Open Door, there have perhaps been some differences in the relative significance of these needs, and the following examples illustrate this:-

We are conscious that there are a number of regular visitors on Benefits who alternate between having funds and sliding into debt - and several of these have spoken of concern at the increased cost of energy for heat and cooking. Small temporary loans can sometimes help until the next payment day, and this can be coupled with encouragement and advice on how to budget their spending and keep 'out of the red' - this, though, is likely to be an increasingly frequent challenge as pressure to contain expenditure on Benefits takes effect.

One of the Team has continued her support of some young Parents, where parenting skills are poorly developed. This can entail attendance at Court or at Social Services Review Meetings, where the family situation is under consideration - the personal knowledge from frequent contact with the client at home or at Open Door is appreciated by those involved in such cases. Apart from these parenting issues, such personal support is valued by some just by being present in Court hearings, and also by prison visits, and subsequent advocacy after discharge, when delays in re-starting Benefit, and in getting housing are stressful situations.

We encounter a worrying number of men, and some women, who are homeless and unable to find employment, or to hold down any other than the most menial work (and such jobs are few and far between). Open Door offers warmth and virtually free refreshments but the Team are also called upon to provide tinned food, occasionally a blanket or sleeping bag, and even a tent has been made available on occasion for the basic protection it offers in cold weather. Accommodation continues to be one of the needs most often met with our visitors - a few of these are ex-Army men who wish to remain in Colchester after discharge, but find independent living a challenge - they may find housing support from Army welfare organisations, but joblessness remains a problem for them.

Graham Courtier

THE PUBLIC BENEFIT

In carrying out their duties throughout the year, the Trustees of Open Door - Colchester have always considered the Guidance of the Charity Commission on public benefit (particularly the specific guidance for charities with the advancement of religion as part of their objects).

Open Door has always welcomed newcomers and our services have always been available to all who wish to use them, regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof.

A number of our visitors are very regular in their attendance, thus demonstrating that our services and facilities are valuable to them. The warmth of the welcome they receive and the loving interest in their welfare shown by all the helpers is much appreciated. A number of “case histories” are given on page 10.

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. These funds are placed in an account with the **Affirmative Deposit Fund for Charities** (ADFC) operated by Epworth Investment Management (associated with the Methodist Church) in order to obtain as high a rate of interest as practicable in current markets. .

No other investments are held.

A current account (which earns nominal interest) is held with the CAF Bank and a further current account to facilitate loans and other payments to Visitors is held at the Co-operative 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 2012 was rather higher than this.

No reserves for particular contingencies are held.

Grants and Loans

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 Team Leaders and of the Director to assist with living expenses, travel costs, etc.. Exceptionally, during 2012, a loan of £400 was advanced to one Visitor to enable him to re-establish himself in business. The loan was fully documented and is due for repayment in 2013.

A loan of £450 was advanced to the Director to assist him in the leasing a flat in central Colchester, thus facilitating his work with Open Door. This loan is due to be repaid by monthly installments during 2013.

Treasurer's Report

The Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2012 follow this Report and should be read with the accompanying notes.

The decrease in funds over the year arose because a new Director was appointed early in the year. The substantial grants received from the Essex Fairway Charitable Trust have had a major impact on the finances of Open Door. While no grant was made in 2012, a further grant has been made early in 2013. Open Door is very thankful for this generosity. The continuing support of Colchester Baptist Church (through a donation and allowing the use of their premises without charge) and other Churches and organisations in Colchester and District is much appreciated.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E A Drake'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'E' and 'D'.

E A Drake
Honorary Treasurer
March 2013

Open Door - Colchester: General Funds

Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2012

1. Receipts and Payments: General Fund

<i>2011</i>		<i>2012</i>
	Receipts	
	Donations and Grants	
1000	Colchester Baptist Church	1100
470	Other Churches	465
7200	Other Bodies	1155
1510	Individuals	1709
10180	Total Donations and Grants	4429
	Receipts from Activities	
1825	Refreshments	1824
0	Fund raising	299
161	Loans refunded by Visitors	922
101	Miscellaneous	20
2087	Total receipts from Activities	3065
232	Interest on Deposit and Current Accounts	232
224	Income Tax refunded on Gift-Aided Donation	188
12723	Total Receipts	7914
	Payments	
	Direct costs of supporting Visitors	
455	Payments and loans to or on behalf of Visitors	1975
1397	Food and Refreshments	1441
1852	Total Direct Costs	3416
	Costs of running Open Door	
1165	Director's remuneration and National Insurance	9553
0	Loan made to Director	450
673	Staff travelling expenses refunded	858
509	Telephone line rental and calls	535
475	Insurances	471
100	Payment to Colchester Baptist Church re History	0
0	Training for helpers	225
0	Purchase of equipment	395
206	Administration materials, etc.	357
170	Miscellaneous costs	86
3298	Total Running Costs	12930
5150	Total Payments	16346
7573	Increase(decrease) in Funds over the Period	(8432)
13828	Balance brought forward from previous year	21401
21401	Balance carried forward	12969

Open Door - Colchester

Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2012

2. Receipts and Payments: ASK Friendship Group

<i>2011</i>		<i>2012</i>
	Receipts	
<i>0</i>	Donations	<i>0</i>
<i>75</i>	Payments by Members	<i>58</i>
<i>75</i>	Total Receipts	<i>58</i>
	Payments	
<i>2</i>	Food and refreshments	<i>0</i>
<i>31</i>	Miscellaneous costs	<i>0</i>
<i>33</i>	Total Payments	<i>0</i>
<i>42</i>	Increase in Funds over the period	<i>58</i>
<i>350</i>	Balance brought forward from previous year	<i>392</i>
<i>392</i>	Balance carried forward	<i>450</i>

3. Loans from Visitors

<i>2011</i>		<i>2011</i>
	Receipts	
<i>10013</i>	Loans received from or on behalf of individual Visitors	<i>5375</i>
<i>10013</i>	Total Receipts	<i>5375</i>
	Payments	
<i>10423</i>	Payments made on behalf of individual Visitors	<i>5708</i>
<i>10423</i>	Total Payments	<i>5708</i>
<i>(410)</i>	Net increase/(decrease) in Loans over the period	<i>(333)</i>
<i>2228</i>	Balance brought forward from previous year	<i>1818</i>
<i>1818</i>	Balance carried forward	<i>1485</i>

Open Door - Colchester

Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2012

4. Receipts and Payments: Sunday@One Expenses

	2012
Donation received	1000
Expenses incurred	51
Balance carried forward	949

5. Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2012

2011		2012
	Assets at the end of the Period	
1071	CAF CafCash Account	1393
313	Co-operative Bank Current Account	685
21635	Deposit with the ADFC	13365
592	Cash/cheques held	410
23611	Total Assets	15853
	less	
1818	Outstanding Loans from Visitors	1485
21793	Net Assets	14368

Representing

Balances on Receipts and Payments Accounts:

21401	General Fund	12969
392	ASK Friendship Group	450
	Sunday@One Expenses	949
21793	Total Funds	14368



E A Drake, Honorary Treasurer
March 2013

OPEN DOOR – COLCHESTER

Notes on the Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2012

- 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 £1100 from Colchester Baptist Church (2011: 1000), £595 from Colchester High School. An anonymous donation of a generous £1000 was received to defray expenses associated with the new venture “Sunday@One”. At the end of the year, there were four individuals making donations on a monthly basis (2011: three).
- 4. ASK Friendship Group** This group was started in May 2008.
- 5. Loans from Visitors** These have been provided by individual Visitors as part of assistance with their personal budgeting and are expended entirely for the benefit of those Visitors.
- 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 2011 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 and Legal expenses. Insurance for risks associated with buildings and contents is held by Colchester Baptist Church, in whose premises Open Door operates.



E A Drake
Honorary Treasurer
March 2012

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 2012 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 17/03/13.

M. G. Baker

M G Baker FCCA

118 Chapel Road, West Bergholt, Colchester, CO6 3EZ