



The Open Door  
Annual Report  
**2010**

# Open Door

## Annual Report for 2010

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## **Constitution**

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

Open Door – Colchester was registered by The Charity Commission on 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

In carrying out our activities during the year, Open Door 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 objectives). 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.

## **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 2010 was:

- Fiona Prentice, Chair
- Ted Drake, Treasurer
- Graham Courtier, Acting Secretary
- William Butcher (Appointed October 2010)
- Billy Campbell
- George Hay (Resigned July 2010)
- Isobel King (Resigned September 2010)
- Nick Lear (Senior Minister of Col. Baptist Church)
- Rob Urand
- Nicola Wickenden (Resigned April 2010)
- Robert Woodcock (Appointed July 2010)

No corporate trustees have been appointed.

## **Chairman's Report – 2010**

The last year seems to have passed very quickly with several changes taking place to the work of Open Door – Colchester.

Our main change is the fact that in February this year Anna Marsh stepped down as Director. Anna has been the Director of Open door since 2007 and we have valued Anna's input over the years and I know she has been loved and respected by volunteers and visitors alike. Anna's main aim has been to show God's love to all who come through the door and to try to encourage them to change from their lifestyles and to move on to one which is more fulfilled and ordered. Anna will stay on as a volunteer and will help with some of the administration, and we would like to say thank you to Anna for all her dedication and hard work for Open Door over the years. We are at present looking for someone to replace Anna as Director.

The work continues with 40-50 people coming through the doors each day, showing the need for this type of centre. There is still a core of visitors who look on Open Door as a refuge and support where they are accepted for who they are, and given help as required.

Special thanks must go to the Team Leaders and their teams of volunteers for the dedication they show for this work and for the love and care they show to the visitors. We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, but we always have enough for each day's needs, and we thank God for that.

Our thanks must once again go to Essex Fairway Charitable Trust and Essex Community Foundation for their continued support over the last year, allowing us to remunerate our Director.

We continue to work alongside the Police and Community Support Officers in the Town Centre, both appreciating the help of the other.

My thanks must also go to our Acting Secretary, Graham Courtier, for all his work in fundraising, and our Treasurer, Ted Drake for looking after our finances, as well as the other Trustees on the Executive Committee, all of whom give up their time so willingly to help oversee the work of Open Door. Two Trustees have moved away from the area during 2010 but they have been replaced with others from within Colchester Baptist Church, for which we are grateful.

We have a special anniversary in August this year – we will be 25 years old! Open Door was started by two members of Colchester Baptist Church to help those who had problems and needed a listening ear. It started in the vestibule of the church, but such was its popularity that it moved to the church lounge where it still meets today. We are holding a special service to commemorate our anniversary on September 18<sup>th</sup>, but there will be more publicity about that nearer the time. It would be good if some people reading this report would be able to join with leaders, helpers, visitors and supporters past and present for this happy occasion!

I would like to thank all those who have supported the work of Open Door in any way throughout the past year and I look forward with anticipation to what the future holds for this important ministry.

Fiona Prentice  
March 2011

## Director's Report – 2010

Dear All,

*As you will have already read in the Chairman's Report, I have resigned my position as Director of Open Door and have returned to my role as one of the volunteers – a decision that has left some people 'jumping for joy', whilst others have been kind enough to express a certain amount of initial sadness & regret that has since been replaced with, I hope, understanding & respect.*

*Before I ever became a Christian, my family & I were going through a bad patch & facing problems that we had never anticipated experiencing! It was through talking to an acquaintance (who has since become a dear friend) that I made use of an organisation called 'Open Door' whose advice proved a stepping stone to an eventual solution & a gradual recovery.*

*When I eventually acknowledged Jesus as my Lord & Saviour nearly eight years ago & started coming to Church at Eld Lane, I was handed a 'Welcome Pack' & read the Open Door leaflet included – it seemed such an obvious place to volunteer my time & gifts, and in the process serve God!*

*Over the course of those first 3 years I was privileged to work at different times alongside three out the then four teams. During all that time I encountered such love, care & acceptance by the daily teams that strengthened me as a Christian, and enabled me to understand God, my fellow man, & myself a little bit more!*

*However, one of the things that I have always found strange is that I personally find that I can be more honest & open within the remit of 'Open Doors' – with the volunteers & customers – than I can be anywhere else in life (except with my Counsellor)! What do you think it is about our society that keeps the majority of us hidden behind either masks or tasks? Why do we love to label & pigeon-hole people? Why do we judge people as relevant & embrace them – or irrelevant & reject them?*

*Time & again, in response to an invitation to come & see what really does go on when we 'Open the Door', have been replies such as: 'I have nothing in common with your customers'... 'We shouldn't be allowing those sorts of people onto our premises'... 'That place is not for me'... 'I'm not a drug-addict/homeless person/alcoholic'... 'I'm afraid I might say the wrong thing'...*

*Whilst some of these reactions are understandable, I have been very frustrated that people don't seem to understand that you are just as likely to encounter a woman at the school gate who cannot cope without her daily anti-depressant tablet ... a friend down the pub who goes home & abuses his wife/her husband... a pensioner in the 'Luncheon Club' who has money problems ... & it's just as easy to say the 'wrong thing' – the reason being that **that's real life** – like it or not we all live in a broken society, made up of imperfect people, making poor decisions, living lives that we are sometimes ashamed of, or if we are not, other people think we should be! How many of us can truthfully hold up our hands & say we have NEVER made a mistake in life?*

*So should we just hide our head in the sand & pretend that everything's OK... hold our hands up in the air & say there's nothing we can do... close our doors... our minds... our hearts?*

*Therefore, even though I am no longer officially the Director, I would still like to invite you through the Open Door. Please do not stay away because you feel you would not be made welcome... nor because you think the people who visit us are not worth it... nor because you yourself do not have any problems in your life... Open Door welcomes everyone... is open to everyone!*

*I would also respectfully ask that you don't dismiss us JUST because we are a Christian Organisation!*

*It was always my hope to see people from ALL walks of life sitting side by side sharing their joys, sorrows, concerns & dreams over a cuppa, regardless of their faith or lack thereof - & that is still my hope!*

*As Open Door looks forward to the appointment of a new Director who will no doubt bring a fresh approach that will be as unique to their time in office as it has been for all those who have been before – still the work will largely remain unchanged!*

*Because unfortunately there will always be problems in life & people will always need somewhere to go to find help & comfort. I know that the new Director will face challenges but I also am confident that they will have the unconditional support of the most fabulous group of volunteers & trustees whose commitment, patience, wisdom, & love is truly inspirational – it has been a privilege!*

***Thank you & God Bless!***

***Anna Marsh***

## 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.

## The Open Door Drop-in Centre

### Opening Times

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday ..... 10am until 2pm  
Tuesday, Thursday & Weekends ..... Closed

### Prices

Tea & Coffee ..... 10p  
Squash ..... 5p  
Cereals ..... 15p  
Donated Foodstuff ..... FOC  
Fresh Fruit (per item) ..... From 10p (subject to availability)

### Staff

Last year the Staff consisted of the following:

Director \*  
3 Team Leaders  
Senior Support Worker  
8/10 Befrienders working one day a week  
3/4 part-time Befrienders working half a day a week

\* denotes paid, all others are volunteers

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the two volunteers who left our organisation during 2010: Doreen Black and Lucy Bridges. We wish them both every blessing & acknowledge their continuing support for our work. Whilst overall team member numbers appear to have increased since last year, several staff went from being full time to part-time Befrienders. As ever, we are extremely thankful for the dedication of, & genuine affection between, the volunteers.

We are also deeply grateful for the teams of interns from eMI for their enthusiasm, reliability, & hard work during the last year - despite their other responsibilities. Their friendly, easy-going natures proved to be a valuable asset to us & a credit to their own ministry.

## 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 & Welfare Assistance
- Use of Telephone

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. We believe that one of our organisation's greatest strengths is our ability to put at ease most people who come through our doors.

Some of our customers simply require a refreshing cup of tea... others may need help with dealing with 'officialdom'... others may need appointments made with other organisations... We continue to respond, help, & support in whatever way will benefit our customers.

Over differing periods of time, trust & friendship is established to the point where most feel comfortable enough to share aspects of their lives with staff. Some respond positively to suggestions of change, whilst others are resistant to any suggestions. Whatever the response, we endeavour to journey with them through the ups and downs of their life, encouraging & persevering whilst continuing, we hope, to convey God's love.

## Christmastime Festivities

The family spirit that is fostered throughout the year was again evident at Christmas – a traditional Christmas dinner was enjoyed by about 80 people in a lively but peaceful atmosphere at the beginning of December. A '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 nearer Christmas, time was again set aside to sing Carols and hear seasonal Bible readings.

Our sincere appreciation is sent to ***The Mothers' & Ladies Union of All Saints Church – Maldon*** who again generously donated gift parcels for those of our customers who are homeless, or who have no family or friends with whom to share Christmas time.

Christmas 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.



## **Selection of Case Studies**

Whilst the majority of our work is carried out discreetly, the following examples are intended to show the diverse situations in which our organisation's help and advice has been sought during 2010:

Mrs A: A disabled lady who was mentioned last year after we had negotiated with her creditors and instigated a repayment plan. Whilst she has still not gained the necessary skills to manage her finances independently, she continues to be monitored by us & has adhered to the plan rigidly.

Mrs B: A disabled lady who was unable to keep her home in a tidy & hygienic fashion. We helped her dispose of the accumulated rubbish, tidied up, and are continuing to encourage basic housekeeping tasks.

Mr C: An elderly man, admitted to hospital on an emergency basis. We contacted his elderly sister, accompanied her on a hospital visit, & kept her informed of his progress both during his hospital stay & his homecoming, regularly visiting him & bringing him meals.

Miss D: A widowed mother with one child, who had left her new partner (after experiencing domestic violence) with few possessions. We purchased emergency supplies for both mother & child, offered a place to go during the day & advised on housing options & other matters. We continue to support this family where necessary & when needed.

Miss E: A pensioner who had again succumbed to the temptation of alcohol to the extent that nearly all her pension monies were being spent on drink to the detriment of her health. We continue to encourage drink-free days & alternative methods of occupying her time.

Mr F: A 30 year old man serving a 3 ½ year term in prison for drug offences. We contacted various appropriate agencies when fears were raised concerning the whereabouts & welfare of his partner. We continue to regularly correspond with him, encouraging & supporting where necessary.

## **Networking**

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

## **In Thanksgiving**

Once again Open Door was the grateful recipient of harvest produce from various schools and churches. Special mention is given to North Primary School of Colchester, 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, and Bures 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.

In addition to those previously mentioned, our thanks also go to Essex Community Foundation – Grassroots Grant, Essex Fairway Charitable Trust, The Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre, Plume Avenue URC, Maldon Road Chapel, Kingsland Church, Maldon Baptist Church, 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 continued to touch as many lives as we did – we pray that God will continue to bless you for your generosity!

## **Final Thoughts**

As we await the appointment of a new Director, the important & unique work that is done by our organisation moves forward. We have produced new leaflets for distribution & there's a new website: **[www.opendoorcolchester.co.uk](http://www.opendoorcolchester.co.uk)**

As mentioned there is a special service on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2010 to mark our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary – we hope that you will join us for our celebration!

At Open Door, we still believe that our God-given purpose is to enhance the life of ALL those who come through the door, regardless of their past or what the future seems to hold, and, D.V., we will continue with this important & well-appreciated ministry.

## **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 2010 was rather 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 2010 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 anticipated. 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 2010 with the receipt of a fourth grant from that source. Open Door is very thankful for this generosity. The two substantial grants from the Essex Community Foundation were also very much appreciated. So 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.

Thanks are also due to the generous sponsors of the Walk held in the Summer of 2010.

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

E A Drake  
Honorary Treasurer  
February 2011

## OPEN DOOR – COLCHESTER

Accounts for the Period 1st January to 31st December 2010

### 1. Receipts and Payments: General Fund

<b>2009</b>		<b>2010</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
	<b>Receipts</b>	
	<b>Donations and Grants</b>	
1000	Colchester Baptist Church	1000
1032	Other Churches	882
8450	Other Bodies	6714
967	Individuals	905
2000	Bequest	0
<b>13449</b>	<b>Total Donations and Grants</b>	<b>9501</b>
	<b>Receipts from Activities</b>	
1611	Refreshments	1664
368	Saturday Coffee Mornings	160
0	Fund raising: Sponsored Walk	1708
438	Loans refunded by Visitors	416
0	Miscellaneous	10
<b>2417</b>	<b>Total receipts from Activities</b>	<b>3958</b>
<b>259</b>	<b>Interest on Deposit and Current Accounts</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>790</b>	<b>Income Tax refunded on Gift-Aided Donations</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>16915</b>	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>13830</b>
	<b>Payments</b>	
	<b>Direct costs of supporting Visitors</b>	
606	Payments and loans to or on behalf of Visitors	914
1368	Food and Refreshments	1395
0	Counselling Fees and supervision	0
<b>1969</b>	<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	<b>2309</b>
	<b>Costs of running Open Door</b>	
9796	Director's remuneration and National Insurance	10240
456	Staff travelling expenses refunded	681
0	Staff training costs	0
468	Telephone line rental and calls	401
464	Insurances	461
0	Annual Report, etc.	0
59	Administration materials, etc.	182
401	Miscellaneous costs	244
<b>11644</b>	<b>Total Running Costs</b>	<b>12209</b>
<b>13613</b>	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>14518</b>

<b>3302</b>	<b>Increase in Funds over the Period</b>	<b>-688</b>
<b>11214</b>	<b>Balance brought forward from previous year</b>	<b>14516</b>
<b>14516</b>	<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>13828</b>

## **2. Receipts and Payments: ASK Friendship Club**

<b>2009</b>		<b>2010</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
	<b>Receipts</b>	
12	Donations	15
198	Payments by Members	169
262	Receipts from Saturday Coffee Mornings	203
36	Tax Refund on Gift-Aided donations	0
<b>508</b>	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>387</b>
	<b>Payments</b>	
59	Food and refreshments	0
345	Net cost of outings	31
173	Craft materials	183
0	Miscellaneous costs	79
<b>577</b>	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>-69</b>	<b>Increase in Funds over the period</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>325</b>	<b>Balance brought forward from previous year</b>	<b>256</b>
<b>256</b>	<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>350</b>

## **3. Loans from Visitors**

<b>2009</b>		<b>2010</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
	<b>Receipts</b>	
7102	Loans received from or on behalf of individual Visitors	9553
<b>7102</b>	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>9553</b>
	<b>Payments</b>	
5134	Payments made on behalf of individual Visitors	9263
30	Expenses incurred	0
<b>5164</b>	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>9263</b>
1938	Net increase in Loans over the period	290
<b>0</b>	<b>Balance brought forward from previous year</b>	<b>1938</b>
<b>1938</b>	<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>2228</b>

## OPEN DOOR – COLCHESTER

Accounts for the Period 1st January to 31st December 2010

### 4. Statement of Assets and Liabilities at the end of the Period

<b>Assets at the end of the Period</b>		
<b>2009</b>		<b>2010</b>
<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
2665	CAF CafCash Account	1058
163	Co-operative Bank Community Directplus Account	312
13736	Deposit with the ADFC	14906
146	Cash/cheques held	132
<b>16710</b>	<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>16406</b>
	<i>Less</i>	
1938	Outstanding Loans from Visitors	2228
<b>14772</b>	<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>14178</b>
<b>Representing</b>		
Balances on Receipts and Payments Accounts:		
14516	General Fund	13828
256	ASK Friendship Club	350
<b>14772</b>	<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>14178</b>

## **Notes on the Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2010**

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 £1000 from Colchester Baptist Church (2009: 1000), £5000 from the Essex Fairway Charitable Trust (2009: £5000), and a "Grass Roots" grant of £1700 (2009: £3300) from the Essex Community Foundation. At the end of the year, there were three individuals making donations on a monthly basis (2009: three).
4. **ASK Friendship Club** 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 2009 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.

E A Drake  
Honorary Treasurer



## **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 2010 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 *5 February 2011*

M G Baker FCCA