



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2014**

THE AIMS OF OPEN DOOR - COLCHESTER

- 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.

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Chairman's Report

30 years of serving the community

It is my privilege to report on the activities of Open Door Colchester during the year .

Shortly after I started in the role as Chairman I received a text from a successful businessman operating in the town:

'Open Door was a service I used to use in my twenties when I was experiencing both drug and housing issues. It's very valuable for the town' .

Comments such as these and others (See Appreciation from Open Door Visitors on page 10) are very encouraging to all those who have been directly involved in the Open Door over the years

In brief, Open Door provides ;

- Befriending
- Inexpensive hot and cold drinks, cereals and food
- A place of meeting for the lonely, sick, poor, abused and rejected
- Open minds, open ears and open hearts
- Advice about other agencies
- Support and advocacy
- Reconciliation and mediation
- Bereavement support
- Counselling by trained counsellors
- Encouragement and support particularly for those seeking to break addictions
- Form filling
- Debt advice
- Use of telephone
- Home visits
- Travel assistance

Open Door drop-in centre is open to all on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays with Saturday mornings from December 2014 aimed at folk who cannot make weekdays as well as those who mentioned that they had nowhere to go. During the year, the number of visitors remained at fairly consistent levels (50 to 60 daily) with a notable increase in the number of vulnerable people, many with mental problems. With the statutory provision declining, the trend is likely to continue.

The numbers attending Sunday@One and Tuesday@Twelve (informal service/discussion groups) has continued to expand at a fast pace and thus it was felt that the two activities would be better serviced under the oversight and support of the Colchester Baptist Church. Open Door volunteers will continue to take the major roles. I am very grateful to the large number of volunteers at Open Door which has averaged 18 in number and in particular to our three team leaders who bear the brunt of the responsibility namely Maggie Wright (Monday), Rob Urand (Wednesday) & Gail Franklyn (Friday) who fulfil the role with expertise, sensitivity and kindness.

I would like to thank the past Chairman Fiona Prentice for steering the Trustees in recruiting the very able latest Director and encouraging the team leaders. Fiona had served as an outstanding Chairman since 2006 and continues to be remembered for her people skills and pastoral heart

Finally I would like to thank the gifted trustees for their oversight to the organisation providing sound governance including funding, financial control and legal legislation who together with the very able Director provide the necessary management so that Open Door can continue to serve the community of Colchester in the most effective manner.

We are also indebted to the many stakeholders who provide the funding (Essex Fairway Trust, Essex Community Foundation and number of local churches) and special thanks to Colchester Baptist Church for the use of their premises and donations

In September we will be holding a celebration event to mark 30 years of Open Door. I do hope that you will be able to join us and share some remarkable stories of friendships and changed lives

Best Wishes

Tim Rose

April 2015

Director's Report

“It's My Open Door!” (Visitor)

It has been a busy year at Open Door. I am so thankful that we are positioned directly in the Town Centre, especially with such an increase in the need for jobs, shelter and food. We have so many amazing charities around us and it is great to be able to work with, and alongside them. Open Door however has its niche. We have around 50-60 people visit us each day and many appreciate that there is somewhere to go and get a 10p cup of coffee. Somewhere they can sit and relax with their friends. Somewhere they can feel loved and wanted. One gentleman blessed me when he said, “this is my Open Door”. I hope everyone can say the same, that this is their Open Door.

Increasing needs

Among the visitors are those looking for practical help such as; housing needs, benefit problems and help with certain applications. We have also seen an increase of vulnerable people, visitors with mental problems, anxiety issues and people that are just lonely. It is important that we are equipped to deal with such issues. All our volunteers have had DBS checks and we will be looking at giving the volunteers extra training to deal with such changes. We have a trained counsellor who is a regular volunteer, in which she offers free counselling to the visitors. We are looking at the potential of expanding this service, as we feel there will be more people willing to have counselling.

Lives changed

On a more positive note, we have seen a dramatic change in people lives at Open Door. Those that were at one time anxious have now become confident and happy. Some who were lonely, now have friends. Those who have mental problems have somewhere to feel safe, relaxed and loved. This is because of our holistic approach, to help them in every area of their life.

Body, Soul and Spirit

We believe people are made of “Body, Soul and Spirit”. People need to care for their body. It is so difficult to face problems in life, when we are physically suffering. Lack of sleep or hunger can attribute to these problems. Therefore our first approach would be to help them take care of their physical being. It's very hard to think ahead when you are tired or hungry, therefore if we can help people with their immediate needs, they will be more able to see hope in the future.

Secondly we need to care for our soul. As I have already mentioned we offer friendship, love and counselling for all who come into Open Door to help with all types of problems, whether it be anxiety or depression. Open Door has become somewhat of a community, where we reach out a loving hand throughout the week. It is an essential part of healing for our visitors to have somewhere to go and chat, and also somewhere where they feel loved and accepted. I am so thankful that the doors here have been open in the heart of the town center for nearly 30 years and I pray that Open Door will continue well on into the future.

Thirdly we are made up of spirit. Many have expressed a desire to learn more about our Christian faith at Open Door. Due to the dramatic rise in numbers at the organised discussion groups it was felt that the oversight and support should come from Colchester Baptist Church. Open Door volunteers take an active role in the two events:

- 1/ The discipleship program on a Tuesday, in which we use the Bible as our guide, to help people cope with day to day life.
- 2/ Fellowship on a Sunday in a relaxed and cafe style environment, where our “Open Door” motto still stands. People from all cultures, backgrounds and faiths join the meetings on Sunday, and it is another chance to build up relationships with each other. It also gives those who are homeless and hungry a place to come in the warm and get some food and drink.

Showing God’s Love

In the Bible, the Apostle John wrote a letter to his fellow Christians. He wrote:

“If anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth”

At Open Door we want to show God’s love, not just in what we say but how we act and how we treat others. The Apostle John saw how Jesus treated people and wanted other to emanate that love. Therefore at Open Door we too, want to show the people who visit us the same compassion that Jesus had.

Open on Saturdays

It is a joy to say that we are now open 4 days a week. As many visitors had mentioned they have nowhere to go on Saturday’s, we are now opening our doors every Saturday morning. Along with the usual, tea, coffee, cakes etc., we are now able to supply fair trade filtered coffee, and this only costs the visitors 20p. It is important that we open as much as we can. As Open Door is not just a cafe style drop in Centre, it is in fact a growing community.

Future Vision and final thoughts

We are looking forward to the redecoration of the lounge that Open Door use. The furniture used is over 18 years old and has worn extremely well. However we believe the visitors are worth it, so we want to update the room with a complete facelift.

We plan to raise the profile of Open Door in the community so that people are aware of the need in Colchester. In the coming year we plan to go to fairs and markets in the town and meeting with the public offering them Tea, Coffee and friendship. We have such a broad range of people coming to Open Door with all sorts of issues and it is important that people in Colchester are aware that there is somewhere for them to come and get help. At Open Door we want to extend our hand of friendship to all who would benefit from our service, no matter what their background.

Thank you

We are sad to see our Team Leader, Anna Williams go. Anna Williams has worked at Open Door for a number of years and has made an amazing impact. We would like to say a big thank you to her for her love and time put into Open Door. We would also like to thank Fiona Prentice for her hard work as Chairman, she did a wonderful job of keeping Open Door running especially at the time when we had no Director. Also thank you to Tim Rose for accepting the new role as Chairman. I very much look forward to working with him in the coming years.

We would like to thank all who have contributed to Open Door. A Special thank you to the Essex Fairway Trust and the Essex Community Foundation for their support financially. With this support I have been able to work full time at Open Door. I would like also to thank 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, Colchester Baptist Church, Kingsland Church and St John's Church for their support.

Networking

The council have been very proactive in getting all agencies together, especially with the issue of homelessness. However this area has been tackled extremely professionally by the Council and other agencies such as Beacon House. It is great to be a part of the wider community and we have a great sense of unity with the other charities in Colchester.

We continue to have links with agencies such as the Night Shelter, Beacon House and the April Centre. They are doing such an amazing work in helping people get back into homes.

Special mention is included for Needas, Open Road, One Support, Shelter, Matrix, Colchester Borough Council (Welfare and Housing Depts.), Colchester Borough Homes, The Korban Project and Essex Police. I would encourage any agency who wants to come and visit Open Door to contact us by email opendoorcolchester@googlemail.com, or just pop in to see us.

Simon Heard
March 2015

Appreciation from Open Door Visitors

Annette

“I have been coming to Open Door for the past 25 years. I was homeless and was addicted to alcohol and drugs. I initially came to Open Door to call my parents who were living in Canada. Open Door also allowed my mail to be delivered to their address. It was also a place where I could get sandwiches and coffee. I had been coming to Open Door for many years. I was housed by the council and finally 3 years ago I manage to come off alcohol and drugs. Now I volunteer at Open Door on Saturday and also help setting up things on a Tuesday and Sunday. I am so thankful to Open Door for all their help throughout the years”.

Ian

“I have been coming to Open Door for a number of years. I was in the Army and fought in the Falklands war. I was also injured in a motorbike accident. Open door have helped me get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and have helped me with many different type of applications throughout the years”.

Jeff

“I have been coming to Open Door since 1985. A Dr. told me to come to Open Door because I recently had a divorce. I had no self-confidence and was very sad. I held regular counselling here for 10 weeks. I learned to see myself as a human being and this took away my need for counselling. However the Open Door provided me with the missing element of human company. The Open Door staff, without exception all have ingredient “X”. Open Door has become “My place of safety”. Now I have retired from work, I use the Open Door facilities full time. Even though I have no faith, I do attend the Bible studies provided. Currently I have also been attending a series of talks for “Lent” and they provide lunch afterwards. I do get pleasure hearing the stories but also being within the community of Open Door. My view is that the Open Door is the best thing since sliced bread. In my 20 years of attending, I have always been treated with respect, kindness and patience”.

Joan

“I have had epilepsy most of my life and I also have learning difficulties. I do have a support worker, however she encourages me to come to Open Door as it is a good place to go. It is a place where I can keep calm and relaxed. When my stress levels are down it helps with my Epilepsy. If I didn't have Open Door, I would be at home doing nothing. I have found the Bible study on Tuesday to be very helpful to me, where I also can enjoy singing and friendship”.

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. Some appreciations are given on page 10.

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 2014 consisted of

- Tim Rose replaced Fiona Prentice as Honorary Chairman at the Annual General Meeting in May.
- William Butcher, Honorary Secretary.
- Ted Drake, Honorary Treasurer.
- Nick Lear to October when he resigned as Senior Minister of Colchester Baptist Church to become a Regional Minister with the Eastern Baptist Association.
- Gill Balfour .
- Billy Campbell.
- Graham Courtier
- Mark Skull (appointed in December)
- Sandra Stockwell (appointed January 2015)
- 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, Rob Urand and Gail Franklin. Anna Williams was a Team leader until her retirement in March. A Saturday Coffee Morning was started towards the end of the year. Open Door works with Colchester Baptist Church in Sunday@One services and Tuesday@Twelve Bible Study/teaching sessions.

During 2014, the Staff consisted of the following:-

Director (the only paid member of staff, all others are volunteers)

3 Team Leaders

Senior Support Worker

Counsellor

A Team of 17 Volunteers working 1 day a week each

Interns from EMI(UK) - Engineering Ministries International - also helped until EMI moved to Oxford in the Autumn

Financial Policies

Investments

The funds possessed by Open Door – Colchester are relatively small and it has been considered appropriate for 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 Executive Committee consider it to 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. Though the balance of funds at the end of 2014 was a little over a year's expenditure, no explicit action was considered necessary..

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 was repaid in 2014.

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. Repayment of this loan was completed in 2014.

Treasurer's Report

The Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014 follow this Report and should be read with the accompanying notes.

The main result is a doubling of funds over the year. In great part, this stems from a generous bequest from the estate of the late Richard Bairstow (who had received practical help from Open Door and help with his financial affairs from a Team Leader). The substantial grants received from the Essex Fairway Charitable Trust (£6000) and the Essex Community Foundation (£5000) have also had a major impact on the finances of Open Door. 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.

These sums enabled the Executive Committee to increase the number of paid hours worked by the Director and to plan for the refurbishment of the premises.

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
January 2015

Open Door - Colchester: General Funds

Accounts for the Period 1 January to 31 December 2014

1. Receipts and Payments: General Fund

<i>2013</i>		<i>2014</i>
	Receipts	
	Donations and Grants	
3070	Colchester Baptist Church	1100
690	Other Churches	400
6000	Other Bodies	11561
0	Bequest from Richard Bairstow Estate	13194
1193	Individuals	1478
10953	Total Donations and Grants	27733
	Receipts from Activities	
1776	Refreshments	1810
147	Fund raising	1050
573	Loans refunded by Visitors	492
385	Other Loan repayments	465
10	Miscellaneous	98
2891	Total receipts from Activities	3915
125	Interest on Deposit and Current Accounts	111
234	Income Tax refunded on Gift-Aided Donations	0
14203	Total Receipts	31759
	Payments	
	Direct costs of supporting Visitors	
1040	Payments and loans to or on behalf of Visitors	1540
1594	Food and Refreshments	1693
2634	Total Direct Costs	3233
	Costs of running Open Door	
11466	Director's remuneration and National Insurance	12674
1231	Staff travelling expenses refunded	656
106	Staff training costs	326
557	Telephone line rental and calls	500
494	Insurances	498
72	Purchase of Equipment	2729
261	Administration materials, etc.	360
100	Miscellaneous costs	193
14287	Total Running Costs	17936
16921	Total Payments	21169
-2718	Increase in Funds over the Period	10590
12969	Balance brought forward from previous year	10251
10251	Balance carried forward	20841

Open Door - Colchester

Accounts for the Period 1 January to 31 December 2014

2. Receipts and Payments: ASK Friendship Group

2013		2014
	Receipts	
0	Donations	0
68	Payments by Members	43
0	Receipts from Saturday Coffee Mornings	0
0	Fund raising: Sponsored Walk	0
0	Sales	0
0	Tax Refund on Gift-Aided donations	0
68	Total Receipts	43
	Payments	
0	Food and refreshments	0
0	Retreats	0
0	Net cost of outings	0
0	Craft materials	144
0	Miscellaneous costs	21
0	Total Payments	165
68	Increase in Funds over the period	-122
450	Balance brought forward from previous year	518
518	Balance carried forward	396

3. Loans from Visitors

2013		
	Receipts	
4140	Loans received from or on behalf of individual Visitors	6285
4140	Total Receipts	6285
	Payments	
7885	Payments made on behalf of individual Visitors	3509
0	Expenses incurred	3
7885	Total Payments	3512
-3745	Net increase in Loans over the period	2773
1485	Balance brought forward from previous year	-2260
-2260	Balance carried forward	513

Open Door - Colchester

Accounts for the Period 1 January to 31 December 2014

4. Receipts and Payments: Sunday@One Expenses

<i>2013</i>		<i>2014</i>
55	Donation received	1045
582	Expenses incurred	1357
422	Balance carried forward	110

5. Receipts and Payments: Richard Green Special Needs Fund

<i>2013</i>		<i>2014</i>
375	Donation received	500
223	Expenses incurred	325
152	Balance carried forward	327

6. Statement of Assets and Liabilities at the end of the Period

<i>2013</i>		<i>2014</i>
	Assets at the end of the Period	
2204	CAF CafCash Account	601
720	Co-operative Bank Current Accc	411
5988	Deposit with the ADFC	21097
171	Cash/cheques held	78
9083	Total Assets	22187
	less	
-2260	Outstanding Loans from Visitors	513
11343	Net Assets	21674
	Representing	
	Balances on Receipts and Payments Accounts:	
10251	General Fund	20841
518	ASK Friendship Group	396
422	Sunday@One Expenses	110
152	Richard Green Special Needs	327
11343	Total Funds	21674

Notes on the Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2014

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 £6000 from the Essex Fairway Charitable Trust, £5000 from the Essex Community Foundation, £1100 from Colchester Baptist Church, £300 from Kingsland Church, £300 from the Waitrose Community Fund and a further £500 to the Richard Green “Special Needs” Fund. A further anonymous donation of £1000 was received to defray expenses associated with “Sunday@One” & “Tuesday@Twelve”. At the end of the year, there were four individuals making donations on a monthly basis (2013: five).

4.ASK Friendship Group This group was started in May 2008. The expenses shown were incurred over a number of years but not charged until 2014.

5.The Richard Green Special Needs Fund arises from a specific donation; its purpose is to help Open Door buy objects such as sleeping bags, tents, etc for Visitors with particular needs.

6.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. At the end of 2014, just one Visitor was being helped in this way.

7.Borrowings Apart from the loans mentioned at 6 above, Open Door does not owe money to anyone. The director and Team Leaders are provided with monetary floats out of which they make small grants and loans to Visitors. Unexpended balances of these floats amounted to some £85 at 31 December 2014. Open Door was owed no other amounts.

8.Income Tax refunded A number of individual donations have been made under the Gift Aid Scheme. A tax reclaim in respect of 2013 and 2014 will be made early in 2015.

9.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, January 2015

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 2014 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 *M. G. Baker*

Date 27 January 2015

M G Baker FCCA
118 Chapel Road, West Bergholt, Colchester, CO6 3EZ