

## Directors' Report 2013-14

**Introduction.** Hope 4 (Rugby) Ltd. is a Registered Charity (no. 1126487). It is also a Private Company, limited by guarantee, (Companies House no. 06614898). We seek to relieve the plight of homeless and badly-housed people in Rugby and those experiencing food poverty. We operate a number of services to achieve this aim: The Hope Centre, Hope4U, the Rugby Food Bank and the Rugby Winter Shelter.

The **Directors /Trustees** are Michael Bochenski (Chairperson), Lilian Francis (Company Secretary), Barbara Coleman (Treasurer), Brian Coleman, Peter Davies, Cathy Hemsley, Diana Mansell and Richard Phillips. The Directors have met at least monthly over the course of the year. At their meetings they review, inform and take decisions concerning the charity's present and future activities, funding and policies. A summary follows.

**Personnel.** At the AGM Barbara Coleman, who had been co-opted to serve as the charity's Treasurer in April 2013, was formally appointed as a Director and Treasurer for three years. Diana Mansell and Richard Phillips were also re-appointed at the AGM, this time for a three year period. Over the course of the year Georgina Washington resigned as a director for family reasons. The Revd Michael Haighton, because of other commitments, also gave notice that his much appreciated service as our honorary Chaplain would end in April 2014. Support Worker Joanne Cheshire left the charity's employment in October 2013, after three years valued service, to work with Solent Mind. She was replaced by Will Solomon who began work with us in November 2013 working alongside our Senior Support Worker, Pete Wayman. In February 2014 a paid, part-time Specialist Fund-Raiser, Farai Mutsambiwa, began work for our charity. His brief is to raise the £300k we need to fully purchase and refurbish a new Hope Centre. His job description also includes helping to consolidate the charity's revenue funding for the next decade.

**Hope 4U.** The "open welcome" work of Hope 4U – providing food and shelter in the early evening - continues three times a week in the town centre parish church with 30+ guests attending these sessions most evenings. Once again this year some 5000 hot meals have been served to our many guests in this way.

**The Hope Centre** has continued to develop over the course of the year. We have been privileged to serve some 119 newly referred guests over the course of the year from April 2013 to March 2014. The following statistics demonstrate how we have been able to help them. Over the course of the charity year our guests visited the Centre on 6916 occasions. They were served with 6471 meals and 6672 pack outs. The Centre's showers were used 1371 times and the laundry facilities 291. 1342 signposting interviews were held. And 23 guests were helped to find housing. Links with support organisations and referral agencies have continued at the Centre over the course of the year with the Hope Centre sometimes serving as a meeting point for our guest with those who are seeking to help them.

**The Rugby Winter Shelter.** Following a review of the 2012-13 winter shelter, the Directors decided that we should again oversee, during the winter of 2013-14, an interchurch winter shelter on much the same basis as before using several local church halls in a partnership with the national Housing Justice Coalition. Around 200 volunteers, mainly from churches across the Borough, looked after our guests between 19.30 – 08.30 seven nights a week, for the entire duration of the project. Over the four months of this year's winter shelter project, we served 53 registered guests. Our seven venues provided 1381 bednights for these guests. This number of bed nights represents a 21% higher figure than for the 2012-13 project. Among the things this has meant is that the RWS was full to capacity for many more nights of this year's project.. For the first time we found ourselves having to turn some guests away from the shelter. Though this was a

mild winter, the extreme heavy rain and gales. early in 2014, added to the misery of those unable to secure one of our 15 bed spaces on a given night . An attempt, through calling an emergency meeting of the Council's Homelessness Forum, to find solutions to this worrying problem regrettably failed, and this remains a pressing concern for the Directors as we look to the winter of 2014-5. 30 of the guests were British, 21 came from EEA countries of whom 10 were Polish. We also welcomed 1 Irish and 1 African guest. 6 of this year's guests were female. 13 guests were helped towards more permanent housing with the help of the RBC housing team and other housing agencies. The average age of the guests was 32. The help Hope 4's Senior Support Worker Pete Wayman provided to Coventry City Council in establishing a winter shelter of their own meant significantly less external referrals this year.

**The Rugby Foodbank**, which opened on March 19th 2012 had, by its second anniversary, given vital food assistance to 4284 local people (38% of these were children) in the town and distributed nearly 57 tonnes ( equating to 63000 meals) of food with the support of supermarkets and schools, churches and businesses as well as many individuals. The Food Bank - based at New Life Church, Rugby Methodist Church Centre and Christ Church, Brownsover – is directly helping those in our community experiencing food poverty each week.

**A New Hope Centre.** During this financial year we continued to raise and consolidate funds - as can be seen in the restricted funds in the accounts – to purchase a property for the charity's work. in January 2014 we put in what has since proved to be a successful bid to purchase the former Engineering Club at 8 Newbold Road as our new Hope Centre. As, however, this purchase was completed in the 2014-5 charitable year, further details will appear in next year's annual report.

**Volunteers.** With the Winter Shelter and Foodbank volunteers as well as Hope 4U and the Hope Centre ones, over 300 volunteers from across Rugby now help us to provide all of these services. Much of the necessary volunteering administration here has been undertaken by the Support Workers as well as by Ruth Johnson, who agreed to co-ordinate this work from January 2014. Without these volunteers the ongoing charitable ministry of Hope 4 (Rugby) Ltd each year, through the Hope Centre, at Hope 4U, in the Food Bank and at the Winter Shelter would not be deliverable.

**Finances.** Over 2013-14 the income of Hope 4 (Rugby) Ltd was £115,806. Its expenditure was £64,967. As at the end of March 2014 it had £226,393 in reserves and assets. Of these £134,427 is in restricted funds. Full accounts are included with this report. We have again been greatly encouraged by the generosity of people from supporting churches, from other faith communities, and from schools, organisations, charities and companies across Rugby.

As part of their Christian and humanitarian concern, the Directors and Support Workers have then again worked hard this year – as these statistics demonstrate - at fulfilling the Charity's stated aims of improving the well-being of the town's homeless and badly housed people as well as, more generally, seeking to relieve poverty in the town.

**Reserves policy.** The directors have maintained the reserves at a level to cover six months running costs, which is currently estimated at £40,000. Any surplus reserves held over this amount will be utilised when the Hope Centre moves to its new premises in the next financial year.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

**Revd Dr Michael I Bochenski (Chairperson Hope 4 Rugby Ltd).**

web site: <http://www.hope4.org.uk/>

**Agreed September 2014**