

Directors' Report 2014-15

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 to relieve the plight of homeless and badly-housed people in Rugby and those experiencing food poverty. We deliver a number of services to achieve this aim: The Hope Centre, Hope4U, the Rugby Food Bank and the Rugby Winter Shelter.

The **Directors /Trustees** as at 31 March 2015 are Michael Bochenski (Chairperson), Lilian Francis (Company Secretary), Barbara Coleman (Treasurer), Brian Coleman, Peter Davies, Cathy Hemsley, Diana Mansell and Richard Phillips. From January 2015 Joyce Woodings, a widely experienced charity trustee, joined the Board with a view to serving as our Company Secretary from April 2015. 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 held in January 2015, Lilian Francis (retiring Company Secretary and now Fund-raising Team Leader) and Peter Davies (Assistant Treasurer) were formally re-appointed as Trustee/ Directors for a three year period. Brian Coleman (Hope 4 Community Liaison) was also re-appointed but, at his request, for a one year period only in order to complete the refurbishment of the Hope Centre he was then overseeing on the charity's behalf. Support Worker Will Solomon, who began work with us in November 2013, left our employment to develop his catering business in July 2014. In August 2015 Sarah Malone, whose previous work experience has included many years with the Citizen's Advice Bureau, began her work with us as a Support Worker. In February 2015 Farai Mutsambiwa's contract with the charity ended; he continues to work with us as a freelance fund-raiser, however. In February 2015 Stan Bird was appointed as the honorary Property Manger for the new Hope Centre. The Directors also agreed to seek to appoint a specialist fund-raiser, with a Big Lottery Fund application in mind, during the next financial year.

The new Hope Centre. In February 2015 the move from our rented premises at 46a Church Street to the new Hope Centre (8 Newbold Road CV21 2LJ) took place. The premises of the former Engineering Club in the town had, over the course of the previous 6 months, been transformed into a Community Centre for homeless and badly housed people, and others. The new Hope Centre incorporates two community lounges, an office with adjacent storage rooms, a state of the art kitchen – largely donated by supportive businesses, a laundry room, refurbished male and female toilets and showers, and full disabled access. The official opening of the new Hope Centre took place on March 21st 2015 in the presence of the Directors and many supporters and community leaders, including the then Mayor of Rugby, Cllr Ramesh Srivistava.

Hope Centre ministry. Over the course of the charity year 2014-5, we have been privileged to serve some **121** newly referred guests. 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 **5878** occasions. They were served with **5609** meals. The Centre's showers were used **1120** times and the laundry facilities **457**. **961** signposting interviews (conversations with a purpose) were held and **30** 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 guests and those who are seeking to help them.

Hope 4U. At a meeting with the Hope 4U team leaders in December 2014, it was agreed that, once the charity had moved into its new premises, the evening Hope 4U food ministry would also be transferred there from April 2015. Warm thanks were expressed to the Rector and Parish Council of St Andrew's CE, Rugby who had hosted this ministry for nearly a decade in partnership with the charity. The "open welcome" work of Hope 4U – providing food and shelter in the early evening – has, then, continued three times a week with 30+ guests attending these sessions most evenings. An estimated 5000 hot meals have been served to our many guests in this way over the course of the year.

The Rugby Winter Shelter (RWS). Following a review of the 2013-14 winter shelter, the Directors decided that we should again oversee, during the winter of 2014-15, 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 250 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. The Rugby Winter Shelter 2014-5 served **68** registered guests during the project period. Our seven venues were able to provide **1033** bednights for these guests. From 1st December – 31st March there were **35** nights when temperatures fell to 0c or below. **41** of the guests were British-born, **23** came from EEA countries. We also welcomed **4** guests from these countries: Portugal Ghana and Jamaica. **7** of this year's guests were female. The oldest guest we welcomed was **64**, and the youngest **18**. The average age of the guests was **32**. At least **16** of these guests were helped towards more permanent housing with the help of the RBC housing team, and other housing agencies.

Most Hope Centre or Winter Shelter guests are referred to us by staff at the Council or the Citizens Advice Bureau. There has been a noticeable increase in East European guests at the Hope Centre and Winter Shelter this year, many of whom have come to Rugby seeking work in one of the various Distribution Centres locally. Though now seeking to live locally, these guests are not eligible for any help with their housing needs until they have been in the Borough for at least 6 months, and not necessarily then. The Hope Centre is, then, often a first port of call for guests who are hungry or homeless in the town, including those from the EEA .

The Rugby Foodbank, which opened on March 19th 2012 had, by its third anniversary, given vital food assistance to 7705 local people (3280 of them in this charity year alone) in the town and distributed nearly 38891 kgs 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.

The local media remain supportive of the Hope Centre, the Winter Shelter and the Rugby FoodBank with articles or radio interviews featuring our charity's work, appearing several times over the course of the year.

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 Fleur Wayman, who agreed to co-ordinate this work from August 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 2014-15 the income of Hope 4 (Rugby) Ltd was £146,822. Its expenditure was £87,999. As at the end of March 2015 it had £285,216 in reserves and assets. Of these £3599 is in restricted funds. These figures reflect the purchase of the Hope Centre in July 2014 at a cost of £230k. 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. The new Hope Centre, in particular, caught the imagination of a number of new supporters and donors.

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 estimated at upto £40,000.

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/>