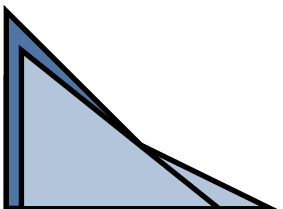




Open Door - Colchester Annual Report 2023



Registered charity number: 1101675



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1. History and Background

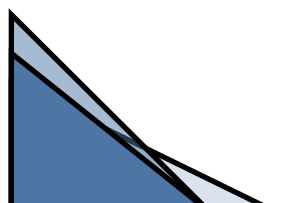
Open Door began in September 1986 when some church members invited a few young drug users for coffee and biscuits. Recognising the need for help, support, and a safe place, six volunteers opened the church vestibule for just two hours a week. The service quickly expanded from four hours a week to three hours, three days a week. The volunteers welcomed people with various needs, offering listening, support, and relationship-building.

After five years in cramped conditions, a church lounge was built, including an office for confidential conversations and telephone use. During this period, three team leaders were appointed, one for each day Open Door was open, under the leadership of the Director.

Formal and informal listening and counselling were central to Open Door's mission. It provided an informal setting where guests could come and go as they pleased, sit quietly, or talk with a team member. Grounded in prayer from the beginning, the team met each morning to pray. Many people found faith in Jesus through Open Door, and many others benefited emotionally and practically from their involvement.

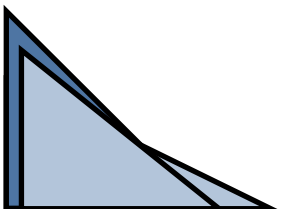
The charity faced many challenges, as guests often came from difficult situations. Several guests from the rough sleeping community passed away, and there were ongoing battles with various addictions. However, there were also many success stories of overcoming addictions. Some issues required signposting to specialist support, such as Beacon House for emergency medical assessment, Citizens Advice Bureau for legal needs, Social Services for safeguarding issues, Colchester Night Shelter and Colchester Borough Homes for housing, and Open Road, GP surgeries and rehab providers for mental health and wellbeing support.

Christmas lunch, featuring turkey and Christmas pudding, has been a joyful occasion for guests, often including gift-giving. Nine years ago, further opportunities were developed for guests to explore and express their Christian faith. Open Door opened every Tuesday for a Bible study (Tuesday@Twelve) and Sunday for a service (Sunday@One). These quickly grew in popularity, providing an accessible form of church for those uncomfortable with typical services.



Despite changes over the years, including different directors and managers, Open Door's core mission has remained unchanged. It continues to be a place where anyone can be welcomed, served affordable food and drink, treated with dignity and respect, listened to, and supported through their challenges. Guests may be homeless, unemployed, hungry, addicted, elderly, lonely, or struggling with mental illness.

Thousands have been served over the years, and the charity trusts that many thousands more will continue to be served in the future.



2. Chairman's Letter

I am pleased this year to publicly acknowledge the efforts of both central and local government in supporting the most vulnerable members of our community. Our collaboration with Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) continued in 2023, focusing on preventing and relieving homelessness in Colchester. The Open Door team, working alongside CBH, successfully supported over four hundred individuals at risk of homelessness with interventions such as:

- **Emergency Accommodation:** Night Shelter and Private Hotels.
- **Housing Support:** Practical assistance, safeguarding, and specialist advice from organisations such as CAB and Shelter, as well as loans.
- **Welfare Emergencies:** Providing food, clothing, and access to the Colchester Foodbank, along with health and addiction support.

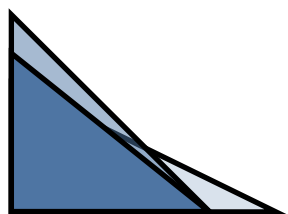
Through the Drop-in Centre, organised activities, and partnerships with local government organisations. Open Door remains committed to making a difference in the lives of our visitors, regardless of their background and circumstances.

Staff and Volunteers

The role of the Chair is made so much easier by a brilliant team of capable volunteers and experienced team leaders led by two enthusiastic and passionate staff members, Lee (Director) and Kaoru (Manager). Their dedication, kind-hearted, friendly, and welcoming personalities make Open Door a wonderful place to visit and belong. I am pleased to report that the new team leaders have settled in extremely well, and it is hard to remember when they were not here! Volunteers provide most of the support to clients on a one-to-one basis, offering a listening ear and a safe space in an environment many call home.

Trustees & Advisors

I want to thank all the trustees who play a vital role in ensuring good governance and a safe environment. I am particularly grateful to the trustees for stepping in when required so that Open Door can be fully resourced. I thank Mike Baker for his due diligence in the independent examination of Open Door's Annual Financial Accounts.



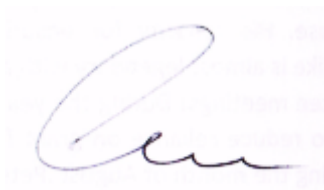
Donations

We are grateful to all our stakeholders who have generously continued to resource the running of Open Door. Your individual gifts and grants have enabled the Open Door team to make a significant difference to all the guests at Open Door Colchester.

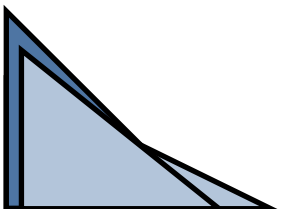
Passing the Baton

This year marks ten years since I took on the role of Chair. Dr Babatunde Soetan has kindly offered to take on the role at the AGM. Baba has a real heart for the visitors of Open Door and will provide excellent leadership and guidance to Lee, Kaoru, and the Trustee team. It has been a real privilege to serve with remarkable leaders and volunteers seeking to make a difference in the lives of those often most in need.

Keep up the brilliant work!



Tim Rose, Honorary Chair, September 2024



3. Director's Report

As I write this, I have been in post for two years as the Director of Open Door Colchester (opendoorcolchester.co.uk). It is a role that has taken me into some deep valleys, where I have also had mountaintop experiences.

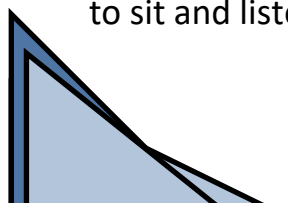
The level of complex needs and lifestyles never ceases to amaze me, and with the increase in Mental Health problems and severe addictions, our work can be very tough. This is why we meet and pray before each session; we would not even attempt to face some of the challenges in our own strength, so our small prayer time before we start each day is vital and bonds us as a team. All are welcome to pray with us before our sessions.

Folk come to Open Door for several reasons; some may come for advice or referrals, some may come for a listening ear, or they may be lonely and vulnerable. We have seen a considerable increase in folk who have complex mental health needs. Some come because they are in some sort of physical need, and others come because they know we, as a Christian Charity, also offer the chance of spiritual refreshment through Bible study or prayer, which is so important to me. Prayer can so often be a force multiplier. Our links with Beacon House (beaconhouseministries.org.uk) and the street link workers from Colchester Borough Homes (thestreetlink.org.uk) are solid as we assist each other with vital pieces of information, making sure no one gets left behind or forgotten about.

As other Directors have said, Open Door must not divert too far from our main objective: offering our guests a befriending service. Guests may find themselves at a particularly tough time in their lives due to a change in their circumstances; Open Door has always been a lifeline that has contributed to rebuilding their lives or at least walking the journey with them. We long to see peace and progress in the lives of our guests. And offer a place of rest and security.

We do not underestimate the importance of having a friend to journey with through the low times. That is why I, like other directors, am so immensely proud of our staff and volunteers. They give their time, energy, and compassion at least one day a week (some give more) to support our guests.

Their sacrifice for others is admirable and worthy of highlighting in my report. We are always in need of new volunteers, so if you or anyone you know could spare an hour to sit and listen to a weary soul, you would be most welcome to do so.



As I have said, discipleship is still a huge part of what we do here at Open Door Tuesday at 12. It allows our guests to learn more about the Bible, and we always attempt to make it applicable to our lives. It is astonishing to see those with mental health-related issues engage. It is incredible to witness those who lack confidence read aloud. It is phenomenal to hear people from all walks of life recall different stories and events from the Bible and share what each verse means to them. The Tuesday at 12 fellowship is the pearl of our week at Open Door.

The structure of each session is simple: a short time of prayer and worship, Bible study, a talk and a discussion. My style is very informal, and I try to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable and welcome. We have worship and prayers, we open the scriptures, which we discuss, and then we have a good quality devotional to finish, as well as another cup of tea and usually something sweet to go along with it! As I have alluded to previously, we long to see true peace and progress in the lives of our guests, which I believe comes through much prayer and proclamation, patience, and partnership. With the complex needs we come across, we realise that some of our guests are probably the best they are ever going to be, but we trust in the Lord, who can transform the most complicated of lives.

Foodbank

Working in partnership with Colchester Foodbank as a satellite hub <https://colchester.foodbank.org.uk/locations/> in the Colchester City centre is a privilege. Being in the centre of the town means that those who live nearby without vehicles can easily access the service. We provide food to hundreds of people who are in need every year. Post-Covid, more individuals and families find themselves on the breadline due to the rise in fuel and energy prices. We could never say that providing for so many people is a “success,” but we are grateful that we can help throughout this tough time. Working alongside Foodbank allows Open Door to further support people by offering them more than just food. By spending time with people, we can help find the root of the problem and help them accordingly to move towards a better life.

As the Director, I value your support and assistance. We give God all the glory for what he continues to do through this ministry.

Lee McDade. Director



4. Report on the Public Benefit

The aims of Open Door are two-fold:

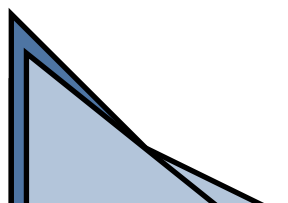
1. **Provision of Facilities and Support:** To improve the conditions of life for those in need in Colchester by offering facilities, resources, and practical support.
2. **Advancing the Christian Faith:** To provide opportunities for guests to explore and express their Christian faith.

In 2023, these aims have been central to Open Door's work.

The **Sunday@One** and **Tuesday@Twelve** ministries have been vital in advancing the Christian faith, offering informal and accessible opportunities for guests to engage with their faith. Everyone is welcome at these events and encouraged to participate as much as they feel comfortable.

Emotional and practical support is primarily provided through regular drop-in sessions, open to anyone. Guests are treated equally, regardless of their circumstances or past. We refer guests to appropriate agencies they might not be aware of, assist with phone calls and form-filling, and serve food and drink at very reasonable prices. A willing listening ear is always available.

Many people have found significant help through Open Door. For some, it is the only agency in Colchester they access. We provide a community and safe space for those who are lonely and offer crisis support for those in need.



5. Treasurer's Report

The Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 follow this report and should be read alongside the accompanying notes.

We thank the Colchester Borough Council for their invaluable grants over the past few years. We are also fortunate to have received a generous £10,000 donation from DNA Networks.

The ongoing support from Colchester Baptist Church, through both donations and the provision of their premises free of charge, is deeply appreciated. We also value the support from other churches in Colchester and the surrounding district.

We are immensely thankful for our talented volunteers who regularly dedicate their time. Additionally, due to the generous contributions from our supporters, we benefit from approximately 35 individual monthly donations, ranging from £5 to £300, averaging £600 per month. Donations from the Baptist Insurance Company and other donor grants are also greatly appreciated.

Lastly, we are again grateful to Michael Baker FCCA for his diligent work examining these accounts.

Grant Duminy
Honorary Treasurer

September 2024



6. Accounts: Open Door Colchester

Accounts for the period 1st January – 31st December 2023

1. Receipts and Payments: General Fund

	2023	2022
Receipts		
Donations and Grants		
Colchester Baptist Church	12,500	5,000
Other Churches	10,605	750
Other Bodies	26,530	38,236
Individuals	7,040	7,765
Total Donations and Grants	56,675	51,751
 Receipts from Activities		
Sale of Refreshments	1,570	891
Total receipts from Activities	1,570	891
 Other Income		
Other Income	28	0
Interest on Deposit Accounts	258	144
Total Receipts	58,531	52,786

Payments	2023	2022
Direct costs of supporting Guests		
Food and Refreshments	1,836	2,037
"Compassion" payments	1,317	1,520
Total Direct Costs	3,153	3,558
 Costs of running Open Door – Colchester		
Salaries, Pension and National Insurance	46,997	41,405
Staff training costs	1,190	236
Telephone line rental, calls and broadband	671	584
Insurances	547	547
Purchase of Equipment	879	437
Administration materials, etc.	72	87
Total Running Costs	50,356	43,295
 Total Payments	53,509	46,853
 Increase (Decrease) in Funds over the Period	5,022	5,934
Balance brought forward from the previous Period	34,168	28,234
Balance carried forward	39,190	34,168

Richard Green Special Needs Fund

Donation received	0	0
Payments made	650	0
Balance carried forward	155	805

Balance of all Funds

39,345	34,973
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2. Statement of Assets and Liabilities - 31st December

	2023	2023
Bank balances, etc., held		
CAF cash account	34,693	39,699
Deposit with the ADFC		0
Epworth cash plus	4,652	4,454
Shawbrook Bank	0	0

Liabilities

Prepayment of grant	0	-9,150
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Total Assets

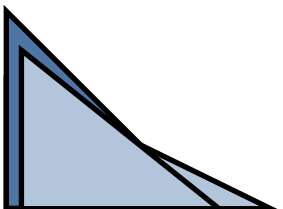
39,345	34,973
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Representing balances on Receipts and Payments Accounts

General Fund	39,190	34,168
Richard Green Special Needs Fund	155	805
Total Funds	39,345	34,973

Notes on the Accounts

1. **Accounting policy:** in view of its size, Open Door's accounts are presented on a "receipts and payments" basis in accordance with Sections 132 & 133 of the Charities Act 2011.
2. **Status:** Open Door – Colchester became a Registered Charity (No 1101675) on 22nd January 2004.
3. **Donations and grants:** large donations and grants given to Open Door are listed in the Treasurer's Report. Other Churches and bodies in and around Colchester continue to provide much-appreciated support, both in money and prayer.
4. **Gift Aid Income Tax refund:** many individual donations have been made under the Gift Aid Scheme.
5. **The Richard Green Special Needs Fund:** This fund arose from specific donations – its purpose is to help Open Door buy items such as sleeping bags, tents, etc., for guests with needs. Mr Green has generously continued these donations.
6. **Borrowings:** Open Door owes money to no one. The Director, Manager, and Team Leaders are provided with floats, from which they make small grants and loans to guests.
7. **Insurances:** Open Door holds insurance coverage for public and employer liability, trustee indemnity, and legal expenses. Insurance cover for buildings and contents is held by Colchester Baptist Church, on whose premises Open Door operates.



7. Management and Constitution

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

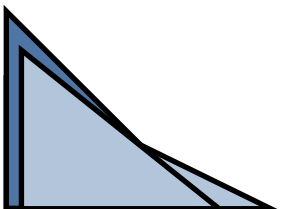
Open Door is managed by an Executive Committee of between 5 and 12 members.

- 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 practising Christians, and the majority of whom are members of Colchester Baptist Church, were appointed by the Deacons of that Church.

Membership of the Executive Committee and Trustees in 2022

- Tim Rose, Honorary Chairman
- William Butcher, Honorary Secretary
- Grant Duminy, Honorary Treasurer
- Peter Hurstell, Safeguarding
- Brenda Reade
- Sandra Stockwell
- Darren Greenfield

The part-time Director controls the day-to-day work of Open Door, Lee McDade, assisted by the full-time drop-in Manager, Kaoru Magee. Open Door continues to take full responsibility for Sunday@One (an informal Sunday service) and Tuesday@Twelve (an informal Bible Study). Open Door operates on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays with group helpers led by Team Leaders. There are approximately twenty volunteers.



8. Financial Policies

Investments

The investment funds possessed by Open Door – Colchester have been relatively small and are not held for the long term. Hitherto, the Trustees have considered it 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) and the CAF/ Shawbrook Bank to gain interest while retaining immediate access to the funds.

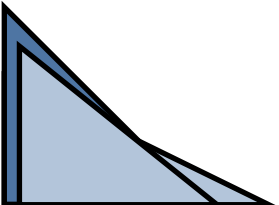
A current account is held with the CAF Bank to manage the day-to-day needs of Open Door.

Reserves

We currently have a balance of £4,652 in interest-bearing deposit accounts.

Grants and Loans

Open Door – Colchester does not make significant grants to individuals (or organisations). Small sums of money to assist with living expenses, delays in receiving benefits, etc., are provided for individual guests in appropriate cases at the discretion of the Director, Manager or Team Leaders. When feasible, these sums are provided in the form of loans and repayment terms agreed with the Guest. Otherwise, the money is given without strings attached.



9. Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

Report to the Executive Committee (as Trustees) and members of Open Door Colchester (Charity no. 1101675) on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 set out on the preceding pages.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Executive Committee is responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Committee considers that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed. Examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,

- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view, and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records by section 130 of the Charities Act.
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

20th September 2024

Signed: Independent Examiner

MG Baker FCA, 118 Chapel Road, West Bergholt, Colchester, CO6 3EZ.