

## AGM Agenda Item 2.

# Hope Opportunity Trust Annual Report and Financial Statement Charity Number: 1164043 01 04 23 to 31 03 24.

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## 1. Overview

HOT is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose mission is to change lives and transform the opportunities available for young people who have extraordinary talent and potential. Our students are young people who have been denied advantage and opportunity but have risen to life's challenges in a unique and inspiring way.

We offer students fully funded bursary places at some of the finest schools in the UK. These bursaries are supported by the Royal National Springboard Children's Foundation (RNCSF) and some direct funding from the receiving/host schools. We are proud to be in partnership with the RNCSF, and since 2013, this has realised over £10M of bursary place investment for over one hundred and twenty students with minimal operating costs.

Our aims are clear and practicable, but their impacts can be incalculable. Our outputs are transformed lives: nurturing young citizens who will reach their potential and are enthusiastic about giving back to their communities and society.

*'The most significant impact of the bursary is that it has broadened my viewpoint of my future and the world. I was able to challenge myself amongst some of the brightest students in the country- something that the competitive part of me loved and continues to build on. My world has extended, and I have built a network of people I would never have met without the bursary. I couldn't be more grateful for this opportunity and what it has enabled me to do for my community.'* - **A HOT student.**

## 2. Our values and how we work

### Collaboration

In meeting our formal objectives, we balance our responsibilities to our students, school partners, and communities by working with state schools in a focused and supportive partnership. This helps the whole school and its local community to raise aspiration and achievement.

### Creating Opportunity

The student, their family and community are our most important considerations, and we do whatever is in their best interests to nurture talent that might otherwise be lost to society. We are not motivated by politics or ideology, but we were mindful of the history associated with boarding school education and the perceived culture of privilege. The chance to challenge and change that culture has been fully vindicated. We are also mindful of the obstacles and barriers that impact the outcomes for young people who live and are educated in areas of high social disadvantage. Our programme prepares the students to overcome those barriers to ensure our young people reach their true potential. It is the case that both the sending and receiving communities benefit from this initiative.

### Making a Difference

The positive impacts we have witnessed, and our students' personal stories drive us forward and inspire HOT to continue its mission.

*'As a parent, I cannot believe the opportunity that my daughter has been given, and she has seized it with both hands. Through this programme, she was guided and supported to achieve excellent A Level results and a first-class degree. She is now forging a career and has a network of friends and colleagues that she would never have met without this opportunity.'*

*As a family, this programme has changed us too. Anything is possible with hard work and the right direction. This has been life-changing for us all. '*

*'We, as a family, are extremely happy that Roya has been given such an amazing opportunity. This bursary has shown both Roya and her siblings that hard work does not go to waste, and is rewarded. Roya's siblings are inspired, and they are hoping that in the future they may be able to get similar opportunities. This scheme has also helped Roya to keep up her hard work and her good grades as she sees that it is paying off and that she is getting a rewarding feeling from it.'* – **A Parent.**

### How we work

HOT works through close collaborative partnerships with the Royal National Springboard Foundation, state schools, boarding schools, students, and their families.

The bursary students are identified in the four HOT Member schools by their teachers and Heads according to strict and consistent criteria of income, challenging family circumstances and the potential benefit to that student of a

fully funded boarding experience. More than one hundred students have seized these opportunities.

We were the first charity in the country to work with state schools in this way, and all our partner schools provide testimony to the positive impact of their collaboration with HOT. Due to the impressive resilience of the students and consistent, personalised support from the HOT team, only two have withdrawn from a place since 2013. The profile of our students demonstrates our commitment to equality, equity, and access to the bursary programme, irrespective of gender and ethnicity.

### **3. Impact**

The most powerful testimony on behalf of our work is the stories of our students. Their words, achievements, and lived experiences can be more eloquent than mission statements or measurable outputs. They validate our fundamental conviction that by radically changing prospects and opportunities for individuals, we can begin to deliver positive social change in ways we could never have predicted or imagined.

We have many stories to give, but here are just two comments from more detailed assessments of the student's experience to indicate the impact.

#### **From Marcel's story**

*"The programme has shown me that life is a box of opportunities, and anything is possible with hard work and self-belief."*

#### **From Amber's story**

*"I cannot believe what happened to me. I am following a path that I didn't know existed."*

### **4. Charity structure, status & governance**

HOT is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This legal entity is specific to the charity sector and ensures that HOT follows all charity rules and regulations and is 'safe' to invest in.

Our objective is *"the advancement of education for students from existing and emerging socially and economically deprived communities by providing ongoing support and bursaries to enable access to further education."*

#### **History**

The founding idea came from the CEO of a Cheshire-based housing association who saw no reason talented students from estates labelled as "disadvantaged" would not flourish if given access to schools such as Rugby, Cheltenham Ladies College, and Eton.

Working with the CEO of Urban Hope and the then Head of Blacon High School Chester, the Hope Opportunity Trust Charitable Incorporated Organisation (HOT) was launched at a partnership event held at Windsor Castle on 31st October 2012 with an aspiration to send at least one student to Eton College.

In 2013, two students from Liverpool attended Eton 6th form. Since then, over one hundred and thirty students from HOT Member schools in Cheshire and

Merseyside have benefited from a boarding education in one of twenty-two schools throughout the UK.

### **Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation**

In addition to established working relationships with our member schools and the increasing numbers of boarding schools, HOT is proud to have a longstanding partnership with the Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation (RNCSF) [www.royalspringboard.org.uk](http://www.royalspringboard.org.uk). Both organisations were founded around the same time and have enjoyed a fruitful and close relationship, enabling over one hundred and twenty young people to benefit from a two-year sixth form boarding experience.

### **The HOT Team**

HOT is a small team with a unique range of skills and experiences. It provides the knowledge, expertise, and networks to reach deep into northern communities and build relationships to ensure that the bursary programme delivers a positive 'ripple' effect into the wider community. This is evidenced through the outcome of our joint work in Blacon, Cheshire, and across Merseyside.

### **Trustees - Volunteers**

- **David Owen- Chair**  
Barrister 1984-2013. Consultant, Trainer, and Independent Investigator since 2011.
- **John Denny - CEO and Trustee**  
Hot founder and CEO.
- **Sue Yates - Director of Operations and Trustee**  
The former head of Blacon High School, the founding school for the HOT initiative in the North West.
- **Colette Wilkinson- trustee**  
The first project manager for HOT.
- **Marcel Aziamale**  
One of the first HOT students
- **Krysten Chantrelle**  
Alumni Support Lead, London Academy of Excellence
- **Paul Knight**  
Social Housing Consultant
- **Richard Hynes**  
Senior Consultant and former public school student

### **Colleagues**

John Denny CEO

Sue Yates, Director of Operations

Sue Tedford, Project Manager

Robin Oldman, Project Manager

Clare Hamm, Finance Manager – Part-time

## **5. Some highlights from 2023-24**

In 2023-2024, the financial contribution made by Springboard to HOT, along with the membership contributions from our member schools for the financial year, has maintained the ongoing sustainability of the Hope Opportunity Trust (CIO) to continue:

### **Supporting Students:**

HOT has supported fifty students from Years 12 and 13 / and students moving from Year 13 into university places or gap years. In addition, we support Year 10 / 11 students who are preparing to apply for places, and this is usually about twenty students.

In years 10 and 11, the support covers one-to-one mentoring, group sessions on pertinent topics, guidance on securing grades, interview preparation, liaison with key personnel in boarding schools, accompanying students on visits, exam preparation, and revision. Our programme managers have devised and delivered a planned programme in schools to support and build the confidence of our potential bursary students.

In the last year, seventeen students have secured bursary places.

In Years 12/ 13, the support includes mentoring from a student previously on the bursary programme. The programme rests on three weekly meetings focused on a carefully crafted personal development plan. The mentors and mentees are trained and receive ongoing help and guidance. They also provide feedback, informing us of changes and amendments we have made to our mentoring programme.

Sixteen students have been mentored through this programme in the last year, and eleven students have been trained to begin mentoring next year.

In addition, our programme managers contribute to the work to support students identified through the STEER process.

Our alumni are also supported. We maintain a directory of our alumni and make direct contact each year to keep our links and ensure that our students' profiles are maintained and accurate. This year, we have linked with seventy alumni and added their progress to our directory.

### **Supporting parents/ carers and families**

We offer a planned support and guidance programme for our parents/ carers. This year, Sue Tedford, one of our programme managers, led this. Sue has delivered sessions on relevant topics and led a parents' What's App group. This has been actively used to support parents/ carers with any questions or issues they have experienced. It has also been a vehicle for celebrating achievements and building resilience and confidence.

Our programme managers are the link between students, parents, and boarding schools. They provide uniform and financial information from the boarding schools to parents, and with boarding schools, they arrange travel at weekends and half term, for example, and provide support as and when appropriate to students and parents. The impact of this aspect of the programme facilitates the

student's transition from home state school to the boarding environment. It also builds bridges between the student, parent/carers, and the boarding school to improve the likelihood of a more successful bursary for all involved.

### **Supporting our schools**

This year, Sue Tedford and Robin Oldman continued to strengthen the role of the in-school coordinators of our member schools. They ensure that good practice is shared across our family of schools. From this, they continue to craft a process to ensure that all schools have a solid and efficient equitable method of identifying and supporting potential bursary students.

### **Operational restructure**

Last year, our funding and internal restructure enabled HOT to extend our staffing to two programme managers and secure a leadership structure in the charity. This has helped us implement our future development plan and build greater financial independence. It will also ensure that our students, families, and their communities are supported more directly, extending the impact of our work even further.

*John*

John Denny

CEO and Trustee

## **6. Audit Certificate**

As a CIO HOT, with a gross income above £25K but below £500K, HOT only requires an independent examination, the certificate for which is given below.

HOT's reserves policy is to hold sufficient cash in the bank to ensure that all responsibilities to our students and partners can be fulfilled for two years should the trustees of HOT find it necessary to cease operations.

Further financial details are available upon request.

Contact:

John Denny, CEO at [john.denny2013@gmail.com](mailto:john.denny2013@gmail.com)

**PRO FORMA AUDIT CERTIFICATE**

**Section 1: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PERSON AUDITING THE UNOFFICIAL FUNDS**

I have examined the records and supporting documents relating  
to the following unofficial funds belonging to HOPE OPPORTUNITY TRUST

Fund Name		Period Audited	
		From	To
1	HOPE OPPORTUNITY TRUST	01.04.2023	31.03.2024
2			
3			

I verify that they form an accurate record of the transactions  
which have occurred and the balances held

Signed



Date 14.11.2024

Please print name in full Jane Parker Bookkeeping Services Ltd

Address 5 Newry Court, Chester  
Cheshire, CH22AZ

Telephone Number 07957 858742

Qualification/Experience  
to act as Auditor Over 30 years + experience in all aspects  
of Accounts and Audit preparation

Fund Auditor's  
Comments

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