



Liberty Tea Rooms and Community Hub

Report for CTHH AGM 8th June 2022

Introduction:

After fifteen months of closure due to the pandemic, we were pleased to open our doors again to the community at the beginning of August. As a team we have received such amazing goodwill and encouragement from so many people. It really feels that we were greatly missed and are now a well established business and charity in the heart of the town.

The charity is supported by 22 different churches

Staff Team:

CEO and Founder: Kerry-Anne Cooper

Community Development Manager: Owen Cooper

Operations Manager: Sharon Boyall

Operations Co-ordinator: Paul McDermott

Head of Kitchen: Ray Findlay

CAP Centre Manager: Christina Bird

Trustee Team:

David Young, who has faithfully and brilliantly served the charity as Chair of Trustees from the start, stepped down in December 2021, to focus his time leading Hemel Hempstead Community Church. Martin Warner, from Northchurch Baptist Church was recruited as the new Chair. Martin is also the chair of trustees for DENS, which has really helped closer cooperation between both organisations.

There is also another eight trustees represented by seven different churches

Volunteer Team:

During the last five years of serving our community we have been abundantly blessed by those people who have joined the Liberty Volunteer Team. There is much diversity amongst the team, which ties in with our heart for total inclusion. The Tea Rooms has approximately sixty volunteers, with an age range of eighteen to eighty eight.

There are also another fifty volunteers (with some crossover) serving the CAP Centre. This includes a team of befrienders for the Debt Centre, CAP Money coaches, Life Skill Coaches, organising blessings and events and others who serve at the different courses we run.

If you would like to know more about volunteering for the charity please either pop into LTR or email sharon@libertytearooms.co.uk

Testimony: Empowering and Equipping a team member into employment

We have the great privilege and honour of working alongside and helping some of our more vulnerable volunteers. We create a space and ethos to build confidence and resilience for our volunteers to thrive.

Let us introduce Ben, who is over 40 years old and has never had the opportunity to be part of a working environment. He was signposted to us by the DWP about four years ago. He has volunteered regularly as a kitchen assistant every single week, grown in confidence, built resilience and developed some important hospitality skills. Just recently he was offered a job as a Kitchen Assistant in a Care residence. He has been warmly accepted.

When he was asked why he enjoyed working at LTR@CH, he responded by saying, ***“It’s given me another family”***.

There are many other testimonies where we have helped people back into employment and this is something we would like to develop and start the Liberty Ambassador Academy. Watch this space.

Testimony of why we started LTR@CH

A coffee and a thankyou: A young lad in his early twenties J, returned to the Tea Rooms on the 7th August 2021 to have a coffee and say thankyou to all the staff at LTR, as well as making a donation.

Prior to lockdown about two years previous he found himself homeless and living on the streets for about a year. Eventually he received a lifeline from DENS. During this difficult time he popped into LTR regularly, where he was given a PIF blessing, which consisted of tea/coffee, cake and some toast. Just importantly he was able to talk to staff and in particular, Michael, one of our team members, who gave him lots of encouragement and hope.

He is now in a much improved situation where he has been accepted at York University to study Psychology.

Principle: Give Hope and encouragement to someone going through a tough time.

The Liberty Bell:

We love the liberty bell and it is such a great way to showcase our CAP services to the community. The bell is rung, when one of the families journeys their way out of debt. They are invited into the Tea Rooms to ring the bell and share a little bit about their story.

We recently had two families ring the bell and on both occasions our guests were very emotionally moved. One particular guest responded by giving a very generous donation of £2,000, after receiving a suggested donation of £2.50 for her latte.

The Liberator Programme:

When we took out the lease for the property six years ago, it was a tremendous faith move, but at the same time a tremendous opportunity to be a beacon of hope for our community. There have been many financial challenges during this journey, but we are so grateful for many miracles and big hearted generous giving.

One of the most effective ways for us to raise funds is through our regular giving programme, called Liberators. We would like to increase the amount of people giving this way to ensure stability for the future. To find out more please either pop into LTR or email owen@libertytearooms.co.uk

Great Local Partnerships

During the many years working in our community, Owen and Kerry-Anne have built great relationships with organisations and agencies, which have led to very fruitful partnerships.

Some of these include DENS, Southill Centre, Dacorum Borough Council, Community Action Dacorum, Social Services, Turning Point, Family Support Services, Dacorum Police, MIND, Hightown and the Alzheimer's Society just to name a few.

The Blessing of Unity

Unity is at the heart of our ethos and values, Unity with one another, unity amongst the churches and unity with our partnerships.

Ephesians 4:4-6MSG ***“You were called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with oneness”***

We are so grateful for the partnership of 22 churches, who in some way are active in helping the charity to give hope and freedom to so many people in our community.

Prayer for the Future

We have many dreams to expand the work we are already doing, as well as implementing new ideas. To make these dreams a reality we need to expand.

Please pray for Kerry-Anne and the team for wisdom and continued energy.