

Newsletter Autumn 2023



Thank you for your donation

We would like to say a very big thank you to all of our donors, some of whom have donated £10 a month for over 10 years – your support has been important in covering our day-to-day expenses. Thank you also to those of you who support our centre with donations via our CAF donation site. The Charity Aid Foundation handle your donations and collect Gift Aid on our behalf.



Baking by students from Bridgwater & Taunton College



Food donated by a local church

Thanks to those of you who bring food and clothes to the centre. We have a list of items we need that can found on our website.

Last year we provided over 6,500 meals to people attending Open Door, and we engaged with 127 different clients.

Parkfield Primary School pupils go the extra mile

We have been generously supported by pupils from the Parkfield Primary School. We are happy to share their achievements from the school newsletter. In July "the Year 5 children had their final Civic Award assembly to receive their certificates and to celebrate their achievements over the last year. We invited the representatives from The Open Door (our chosen charity) so that we could give them the money we raised to the charity. After the success of the fundraising event in May, Year 5 raised a whopping £814, which will go towards repairing the roof at the building. Our fundraising means that Parkfield have made the very first donation to this important project. Well done Year 5!"

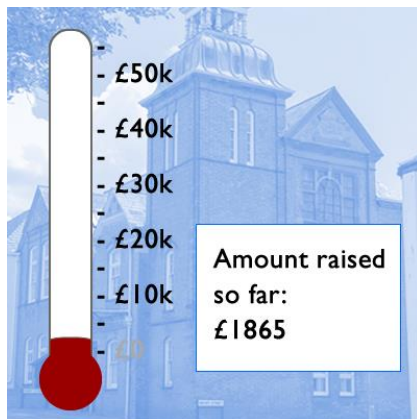


Help us to raise £50,000 to repair our roof

Open Door day centre is housed in a grade 2 listed building that dates back to the 1880s, and the Charity is responsible for the good repair of the building. A recent building survey has revealed that we need to make major repairs to the roof of the building. After carrying out emergency repairs, we need to raise £50,000 to complete the major structural work including structural timbers, chimney repairs and replacement roof membrane.



The roof of Open Door showing traces of ingress



Our campaign thermometer showing the latest results

How you can help

We are working hard to find sources of grant funding to enable us to plan for a complete overhaul of the roof. Many grant-giving trusts require match funding from our own donors. Every pound we raise internally will potentially generate twice the amount through external grants. With your help we can complete these necessary works to the roof.

If you would like to support our Roof Appeal Campaign, you can help in a few ways. We can take donations securely online, so you can give anytime by visiting our website www.tauntonopendoor.org.uk Alternatively, you can support us by organising a sponsored event (such as a coffee morning, cycle ride or walk). Please contact charity manager Emma Busby to discuss your initiative at emma@tauntonopendoor.org.uk or 01823 271996.

Team Changes



Congratulations to Emma Busby who has been promoted to Manager in July, having been part of the Open Door team since 2021. She has a team of 2 staff and 30 volunteers with whom to share the load. Prior to joining Open Door Emma helped manage the Taunton Flower Show.



A welcome to Hayley Davies who is our Client Support Worker. She has worked with people who have a background of domestic violence and substance misuse. Hayley works closely with the Council Rough Sleeping Initiative and is often an advocate for our clients with various agencies that we deal with helping with addiction, mental health, and housing.



Stories of volunteering at Open Door



Having retired from her role as a lawyer, Shirley was looking for a new challenge and decided she would love to help with something worthwhile. She had heard of the name Open Door but really didn't have any idea about what we did but she decided to get in contact and now helps out twice week. She loves getting to know the clients and has found our volunteers lovely and very funny to work alongside. Thank you to Shirley!

Have your ever thought about volunteering?

Our volunteers come from all walks of life and help out in varying roles throughout the centre. We are always looking for people to help sort our donations, serve food and drink, look after the laundry, chat to our clients, wash up, cook meals and generally help keep the centre tidy. Whilst the majority of our volunteers help from 8.45am until 1.00pm, we are happy for whatever hours people can offer, from one day a week to once a month, just a couple of hours help or the whole shift it's entirely up to you!

Trustee vacancies

There are 2 Trustee vacancies. If you have skills which could help to run the charity, please contact Jonathan Sladden at chair@tauntonopendoor.org.uk. In particular, we need help with Information Technology and Communications, Health and Safety, and Human Resources. If you'd like to be involved, whether front of house or behind the scenes, we'd love to hear from you. Please send an email to info@tauntonopendoor.org.uk.

Personal story about our client Peter

Last summer Peter visited us for about six months whilst he shared a tent with friends. Originally from abroad, his relationship had broken down, so Peter had left the family home. However, his English was very good, and he was eager to get out of the situation he was in.

Peter regularly engaged with the Council Rough Sleeping Initiative team who visited Open Door where they asked him to join HomeFinder, a service for applicants to bid for social housing. Peter was happy to do this as well as visiting the library to use their computers to look for jobs online.

Peter eventually found a private rental room in a shared house as well as a job in a factory. He popped by a few weeks ago to let us know how he was getting along. It was so lovely to see him in such a positive place, full of cheer. Peter introduced his girlfriend and brought along an NVQ Level 1 certificate he had achieved. We love seeing our clients when they've moved on to better things!

The name of Peter has been changed to protect his privacy.

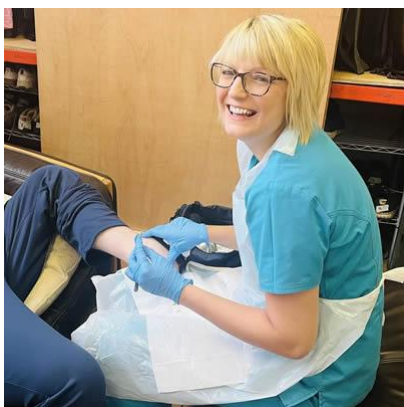


What's on at Open Door

We offer our clients a wide range of services working closely with our cooperation partners on a weekly basis. On Mondays, clients can catch up with Lesley and Mark from the **Outreach Team** for any help they need regarding housing. Also present that day are the team from **Mind** who offer a drop-in service for mental health issues. Toby who is a **Substance Misuse Navigator** from Somerset Council, is also available to offer access to services and help in dealing with the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or over-the-counter and prescription medications. Every Tuesday during the **Nurse Drop In**, nurse Justine is available to talk about medical issues. Fortnightly on Tuesdays, a team member of the **Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service (SDAS)** offers help on drugs and alcohol related issues.

Wednesdays are reserved for the **Doctor Clinic** where a doctor can be consulted about medical needs. During the **Mental Health Engagement Clinic** clients with an appointment with the mental health services in Somerset can have a chat with Rachel. The **Swish Monthly Drop In**, on every first Wednesday of the month, is there to have a friendly chat regarding contraception advice or sexual health care. For help with reducing smoking, clients can meet with Mat from **Smoke Free Somerset** on Thursdays. Fridays see the return of nurse Justine for a **Nurse Drop In** session.

We also have a monthly visit from a podiatrist and hairdresser who provide their services for free.



Our podiatrist Sarah has a regular clinic tending to our clients' feet



John Marshall kindly offers free hair cuts once per month

Open Door Newsletter revamped

As you may have noticed we have refreshed our newsletter with a new style. We would like to invite readers who don't receive our newsletter by email to switch to the online version. It saves paper, printing and postage. Just register for your free online subscription at www.tauntonopendoor.org.uk/newsletter

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