

## **Minutes of Doorway Wiltshire Ltd Annual General Meeting held at St Andrew's Church Hall, Market Place, Chippenham, SN15 3HT, on Tuesday 1 November 2011.**

**Present:** A list of those present is given at Annex A

**Apologies:** A list of apologies is given at Annex B. In addition Julie Allen of Charities Information Bureau tendered her apologies.

### **1. Welcome.**

Simon Tatton-Brown, Chair of Doorway Board of Directors, welcomed everyone to the first AGM of Doorway Wiltshire Ltd, with a particularly warm welcome to Lisa who was attending despite her incapacity. Simon invited everyone to take a few moments of silent reflection, as was the normal practice for all Doorway sessions, the think about the work undertaken by Doorway and those we serve.

### **2. Chair's Statement**

2.1 Simon welcomed in particular Chippenham Town Mayor councillor David Powell and Doorway guests. He asked the Mayor to take a message back to the town as to how grateful Doorway was for its support. Simon thanked May Hart for organising refreshments and Richmond Cursiter for setting up the PA system. Simon started by thanking outgoing colleagues on the Board for their work in the past year: Tracy, who stood down as secretary during the summer; Margaret who acted as vice Chair and led on fundraising applications and who would continue to fundraise whilst a successor was sought; Jackie as Treasurer who is succeeded by Chris Ballinger as Treasurer, but not as a trustee; and Emily at Develop. Simon also thanked those who were standing for election as trustees at the AGM.

2.2 Simon went on to thank Doorway staff: Lisa, who continues to be a driving spirit for Doorway and whose key role behind the scenes has been laid bare by her recent incapacity; Kevin and Helen who moved on to further education and are very much missed; Mike, originally a volunteer, who has come into the team in Helen's role as Assistant Support Worker and found himself pitched in at the deep end with an incapacitated Chief Executive and still vacant Support Worker post. Doorway would always be grateful to Mike.

2.3 Simon emphasised the importance of Doorway volunteers who were as crucial as paid staff. He thanked them for their continued support that ensured the Drop-in, football, and Tuesday sessions were a success. The work by volunteers was hugely appreciated.

2.4 Simon moved on to thank the partner agencies such as the Salvation Army (particularly May Hart) and those who work with Doorway at the Drop-in, and those who show concern for the welfare of homeless and vulnerable people and work with Lisa to support individuals. Doorway would not be much without partners. He thanked those providing funds: Wiltshire Council, Chippenham Town Council – represented by the Mayor at the AGM, town councillors, and various funding bodies. There was a full list in the accounts but Simon drew attention to Zurich, Jack Lane Charitable Trust, all members supporting by standing orders, local churches and schools with harvest festival gifts, Friends of Doorway, those who donate by bankers' orders, tin rattlers, and others.

2.5 Simon reported that it had been a difficult first year for the new company and the first year of independence. The process of putting an infrastructure beneath an existing project has largely been achieved but continues. Despite the difficulties encountered, the project had continued largely without interruption of service to guests. Some additions to the service, such as football, had been possible. The lack of progress on the gardening project had been a disappointment and perhaps some of what was undertaken was being done more on a wing and prayer than was acceptable.

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## 2.6 Simon saw the current challenges as:

Funding, where core unrestricted funding was still an issue. Most of year was spent with only 8 to 12 weeks of funding. The lack of audited accounts to give to fund suppliers had been resolved but measurement of outcomes was still an issue, although steps were in hand to address this shortfall with further training for trustees, staff, and volunteers in a few weeks time. In the short term, applications for further funding need to be made. Longer term Friends of Doorway will be built up to provide core funding for basics such as rent and insurance, relying on grants for specialist aspects of the work;

Too much responsibility on the shoulders of the Chief Executive which was a consequence of the historical way Doorway evolved and the shortage of funds. Simon explained that Trustees do not have the skills, time, or opportunity to execute many of the Board's decisions. The situation had been exacerbated by an inability to appoint a successor Support Worker, putting more pressure on Lisa and now Mike;

Permanent office accommodation for which there was no immediate solution. Last year the base at the Salvation Army Hall was lost and the current temporary accommodation might prove to be very temporary because the future tenure at the Causeway was unknown. The lack of secure funding means a 2/3 year lease is inappropriate.

2.7 Simon emphasised that Doorway would move forward with new trustees and new skills available to the Board, presenting new opportunities. He welcomed the build up of the volunteer and Friends of Doorway base as these are essential pillars to Doorway.

2.8 In conclusion, Simon foresaw that as the recession bites deeper, homelessness would get worse. Doorway was not a solution but represented those in the community who respond with compassion, roll up their sleeves and do something of which we can all be proud, instead of wringing their hands saying "What can be done?!"

2.9 The Chair's report was greeted with warm applause and there were no questions.

## 3. Chief Executive's Report

3.1 Lisa Lewis stated that the full Chief Executive report could be found in the Annual Review for the year ending 31 March 2011. She went on to summarise key points and apologised for reading her statement but her incapacity prevented her from giving her normal off-the-cuff presentation.

3.2 The 2010/11 financial year proved to be Doorway's most challenging. The first half of the year was spent establishing the new, independent, charitable company, including the formation of a new Board of Trustees. Taking over responsibility for Doorway had seemed like having an unruly teenager in the house. The second part of the year concentrated on reviewing Doorway policies, procedures, etc, and developing effective working relationships between staff, volunteers and the new Board.

3.3 In April 2010, Doorway absorbed the work of ReachOut, successfully including the vision and practical expertise. Employing Kevin as the support worker extended the service relating to substance abuse to the main Drop-in sessions and launched the very successful Tuesday Arts & Crafts sessions to provide support and diversionary activity to the 16-25 age group. Other structured activities including music workshops, IT training, creative writing and football training, enabling Doorway to provide a broad range of opportunities for guests to build on skills and develop motivation and self confidence.

3.4 Recruitment of the new Assistant Support Worker at the start of 2011 saw the re-introduction of the "Moving On" programme with the inclusion of the "Outcome Star" system. This enabled Doorway to concentrate on the needs of selected guests who wished to assess certain areas in their lives, possibly with problems, and gradually make the necessary changes with intensive one-to-one support work.

3.5 Doorway conducted a comprehensive survey at the end of 2010 which gave an insight into the issues faced by guests. A report on the findings "The Face of Homelessness", was written by the Assistant Support Worker, suggests the State and society are failing to deal with interconnected issues faced by the homeless, and that very often their complex needs are not being met. This report received very positive feedback from other organisations when it was made public in early 2011.

3.6 No organisation can work alone within this sector. Guests often have a multitude of complex needs. To enable them to address their individual issues, it is imperative that Doorway works in collaboration with other

local specialist services. Doorway has worked very hard over the past year to develop existing relationships and to establish new partnership working opportunities to achieve Doorway's aim of effective signposting. Other services are actively encouraged to attend the Drop-in sessions because guests are more likely to engage within Doorway's informal and safe environment. Over the last year Community4, Westlea, Cranstoun, New Highway, Wiltshire Criminal Justice Drugs Intervention Programme and the Specialist Drug and Alcohol Service Blood Borne Virus Team have regularly attended sessions.

3.7 A key element of Doorway's work over the year has been active community engagement, including giving talks to a diverse range of local groups, working with schools as part of the National Curriculum, our dynamic PR and marketing programme, and our introduction to the world of social networking through online media such as Twitter and our blog. This programme promotes the needs of homeless and marginalised people locally and nationally, thereby helping to reduce discrimination against them and generate support for the positive work Doorway undertakes. It also enables those who are not often heard in society to have a "voice".

3.8 Social media has proved to be the most surprising vehicle for both promotion of Doorway's work and an opportunity for learning good practice from other organisations throughout the country and abroad. Twitter has enabled Lisa to be in regular contact with an eclectic mix of individuals: rough sleepers on the streets of London, volunteers at hostels, staff at homeless services, to Chief Executives of homeless organisations including Homeless Link and Housing Justice. Twitter has replaced the need for emailing press releases since she is in regular contact with the traditional media such as newspaper and radio. BBC Radio Wiltshire is one of Doorway's biggest supporters and it regularly picks up on information she has tweeted and asks her for interviews. A very good example of the power of Twitter is her recent enquiry as to whether there were projected fuel poverty figures for this winter covering Wiltshire. Within 24 hours the CEO of Wiltshire CAB had emailed her the relevant information! Another good example is her recent rants about not having funding to buy Doorway's football team a new kit for the Oxford Social Inclusion Cup tournament at the start of October. Just 3 days later a personal donation from the Chief Executive of the Big Lottery Fund came through the letterbox!

3.9 Once again, funding has proved to be extremely stressful over the last year. Doorway continues to run on a hand to mouth basis which has serious ramifications on daily operations, including the loss of two potential new offices because we are unable to commit to a two year rental contract. Similarly, Doorway is seriously understaffed because of the inability to recruit a replacement Support Worker – this will seriously impact on providing a frontline service over the next few months. In addition, however hard it has been over the last year, it is only going to get harder over the next 12 months and other avenues need to be explored to ensure a service continues into 2012 and beyond.

3.10 Finishing on a more positive note, Lisa emphasised that one of Doorway's greatest strengths – and crucial to the success of the organisation – is the team of paid staff and volunteers who bring with them such a wide variety of skills and experience. No matter the difficulties faced over the last seven years, these people have all continued to be united by their deep commitment to both guests and community ensuring an effective service to guests without disruption of front line operations. She took this opportunity to say a big thank you to the Board, the volunteers and staff for their dedication, and the trustees who are stepping down and a warm welcome to those standing for election.

3.11 The Chief Executive's report was greeted with warm applause and there were no questions.

#### **4. Friends of Doorway**

Mary Quarmby, a trustee and Chair of friends of Doorway, explained that the Friends were a small group looking to get bigger and they needed more help to undertake the fundraising for Doorway. Activities included street collections, a spring fair, making cakes and a sleep out. She appealed for further members to sign up for the Friends and to take a leaflet or speak to her if they had a few hours to spare. The Friends had raised over £2000 in the last year and this was much appreciated.

#### **5. Resolution 1**

5.1 Simon explained that certain legal formalities were expected from the AGM. The first was a resolution to receive and adopt the Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011. Simon invited the outgoing Treasurer, Jackie Ball, to give an overview of financial situation and the accounts.

5.2 Jackie explained that the accounts gave a picture of the organisation up to the end of March but it was important to reflect on recent developments and the current financial situation. Attempts had been made to raise the profile of the organisation and the contribution of the Friends of Doorway had been much

appreciated. An increase of £500 per month in standing order donations has been achieved with £750 per month in Gift Aid, with a recent Gift Aid refunds providing £1000. The regular donations offset 30% of regular expenditure. Donations of food from churches and schools were gratefully received providing supplies for the cooks and guests in the form of food parcels. The market was becoming increasingly competitive and fund raising needed specialist skills for which training was available, although payment was required. Each month, £5000 to £6000 was required to run Doorway of which 75% was staff costs. Current staff costs were lower because, as previously mentioned, there was no Support worker. The Doorway tax bill is £900/month. Jackie emphasised that Doorway staff were worth every penny and more! The current account held £1600, with a reserve account holding £13300, sufficient for 2 months operation – 3 at most.

5.3 Jackie explained that building relationships with other organisations was vital to the future of Doorway and concluded by stating that closure of Doorway would be a tragedy. There were no questions on the Treasurer's report and Simon thanked her for her contribution as Treasurer. **Hilary proposed and Peter seconded the resolution to receive and adopt the Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011. Doorway Members voted unanimously in favour of the resolution.**

## 6. Resolution 2

Simon explained that the Annual Review produced by Lisa was a user friendly version of the Directors' Report and gave more of a feel for Doorway activities. He thanked those who had made a contribution to the Report. Simon brought to the attention of the AGM that the John Lewis Partnership had funded reproduction of the Annual Report and Review as a donation in kind, having nominated Doorway as their community charity for 2011. Doorway thanks to John Lewis will be passed on. **Mary proposed and Jackie seconded the resolution to receive the Annual Review for the year ended 31 March 2011. Doorway Members voted unanimously in favour of the resolution.**

## 7. Resolution 3

**Miriam proposed and Mary seconded the resolution to re-appoint auditors Monahans and to authorise the Board to fix their remuneration. Doorway Members voted unanimously in favour of the resolution.**

## 8. Resolution 4

Simon explained that Doorway was a charitable company limited by guarantee which meant that the company directors are also the trustees, bound by charity and company legislation. **Proposers and seconders for those seeking re-election and election were listed in the Agenda. Doorway members voted unanimously in favour of the resolution to elect the following to the Board of Directors:**

<b>Miriam Nicholls</b>	<b>Mary Quarmby</b>	<b>Simon Tatton-Brown</b>	
<b>Dominic Cassidy</b>	<b>Jan Darts</b>	<b>Hilary Dewar</b>	<b>Peter Shaw</b>

8.2 Simon advised that Alison Reed had expressed interest in becoming a Director but had missed the deadline for nominations. The new Board of Directors would consider her co-option.

## 9. Guest Speaker

9.1 Simon emphasised how good it was to have Doorway guests present at the AGM and asked Lisa to introduce the Guest speaker. Lisa explained that ideally you should not take work home with you. You are supposed to leave it behind at the office but it does not work like that in practice. Through Doorway, she has seen some 250 people a year and she has lived their lives with them, day in day out, and they have a profound effect on us. Terry first came to Doorway in March 2007 and it was true to say he has touched her and a couple of months ago she sobbed all way home. The AGM offers Terry – a real person rather than a statistic - a chance to explain his story and to see why Doorway exists. The following is a near verbatim transcript of Terry's talk:

"I do not know what you want to know. My salvation was finding Doorway, which doesn't just signpost you, pointing to New Highway, or pointing here or there, you're actually lead by the hand, which I needed because at that particular time I had a breakdown. Lisa took me by the hand and led me to accommodation – she does things like that. The staff, paid or not, do give everything they can and it's the giving of themselves that people like me appreciate. Twice since then I've had mental health problems and this lady has helped me out, picked me back up, and got me so much help in different areas. She helped me with the council - talking for me because I was not strong enough in myself. On behalf of all the people that Doorway has helped I say thank you."

“Give people with various issues and compounded by homelessness a few weeks on the streets then - even if you’re not an alcoholic or a drug user - they look a good alternative. People do not understand and how long 24 hours is when sat on your own in a doorway - you have your favourites, it’s like having a second home. When you have drug and alcohol issues, mental health problems, on your own 24 hrs a day, for days and days at a time, when you can’t have a conversation any more, you realise the value of Doorway. It’s not just the food - although the food is excellent and I recommend it to anyone - you need some form of companionship. It’s great to see other agencies because it is difficult to get access to these sometimes. I know getting funding from the Government is difficult.”

“I cannot praise Doorway enough and thank them because I’ve seen what they did for me and an awful lot of other people – it is a very humbling experience. I’m still not stable but I’m employed in a job at the moment. I started to do the only thing I could do to say thank you and started voluntary work. I go to Wiltshire Wood Recycling 3 days a week and volunteer for the National Trust on Wednesday as well. The strength to do that makes me feel I’m repaying something to people and I owe a lot of people a lot of debt. Doorway shows you where these organisations are when you are often in no fit state to seek them out yourself. I used to be quite bitter about being homeless because I’ve had money, houses, cars and things like that, but because of various things that have gone on I’ve lost them a few times. When I first met Lisa, I felt myself pumping back up – but it wasn’t me it was all Lisa. When you’re homeless you’re resentful about things and even if things are your own fault you can still be resentful, you feel sorry for yourself – we all do that.”

“On the street you live under the threat of violence 24 hrs a day, people spitting at you, calling you a tramp. I’ve got pasted a couple of times, pissed on lying in a doorway a couple of times - people want to put on you when you’re in a doorway. These are the bad things about being homeless but if you think we’re just sitting in the graveyard drinking remember it’s the only bit of companionship you get, the only respite from it for a couple of hours, you grab it especially as a lone person who is homeless and you get to know others who are homeless. I’m 51, my body is not designed for this anymore, and you take the respite of drink and drugs – they go hand in hand and people do not understand that if you become homeless you will do drugs and alcohol. You can’t eat properly and you get intensely cold. One time in the door of an optician, opposite Woolworths, in February it was absolutely bitter. Woolworths had closed down, but every bit of heating and all the lights were on. I am upset there are so many empty buildings that cannot be opened up when it’s snowing and below zero that cannot accommodate people who are homeless. I find this appalling. When we have such wealth it should be made to work. Why should we have charity? Why is everyone not entitled to some form of standard of living? Why do people back from Afghanistan and similar places end up on streets when they can’t cope?”

“Doorway has provided invaluable help to people. Thank you very much and for the opportunity of giving something back myself by volunteer work.”

9.2 On behalf of the AGM, Simon thanked Terry for his invaluable contribution and for giving something of himself to the meeting.

## **10. Questions and Answers**

With no further questions, Simon concluded by thanking all present and all those who contribute to Doorway, and invited all present to partake of refreshments and talk with Terry and other guests.

Jan Darts  
Clerk to Board of Directors  
11 November 2011  
Enc:

Simon Tatton-Brown  
Chair of Board of Directors  
11 November 2011

Annex A – List of attendees

Annex B – List of apologies

LIST OF THOSE PRESENT

	Name	Organisation	Doorway Member
1.	Simon Tatton-Brown	Doorway	✓
2.	Mae Hart	SA	✓
3.	Jon Davts.	Doorway.	✓
4.	Sian COOPE	Doorway	✓
5.	MIKE SHEPSONNE	DOORWAY	✓
6.	JACKIE BALL	DOORWAY	✓
7.	NIGEL WEBSTER		
8.	Sue Reed		
9.	CHRIS BALLINGER		
10.	Jocouette SICK		✓
11.	Eric March	Doorway	
12.	Peter Shaw		
13.	of. Quarmby.	Doorway.	✓
14.	Hilary Down	Doorway	✓
15.	Laila Symonath	"	✓
16.	Hilary Nicholls	"	
17.	T Embk	- SERVICE USER	
18.	Suzie Tyllm	NCRG	
19.	Tommy Chilly	MYSELF	
20.	Norman King.	NEW-HIGHWAY	
21.	Margaret Clewley	Doorway	

22.	David Polack	Town Mayor	
23.	Rose Hewer	Doorway.	
24.	Victoria Brown	Doorway	
25.	Auson Reed	"	
26.	Robert Lamb		✓
27.	Donna Williams		
28.	Hills & Home	Robbo	
29.	Emma Hurst	Cronstoun	
30.	Stuart Harris	C4	
31.	CBishop	emg	
32.	D Quinn	doorway	
33.	Dan Lyus	Ridgeway	
34.	LEE GIBBINGS	WASP	
35.			
36.			

LIST OF APOLOGIES

Name	Organisation
Janice Fortune	DEVELOP
Beryl Fox	Volunteer
Claire Jones	Trustee
Chris Mahoney	<del>Volunteer</del> Member
Martin Secker	<del>to</del> Member
Kate Taylor	Member
Heidi Robert	Member
<del>Dominic Leary</del>	<del>Member</del> Present
Lisa Noble	Salvation Army
Catherine Abbott	-