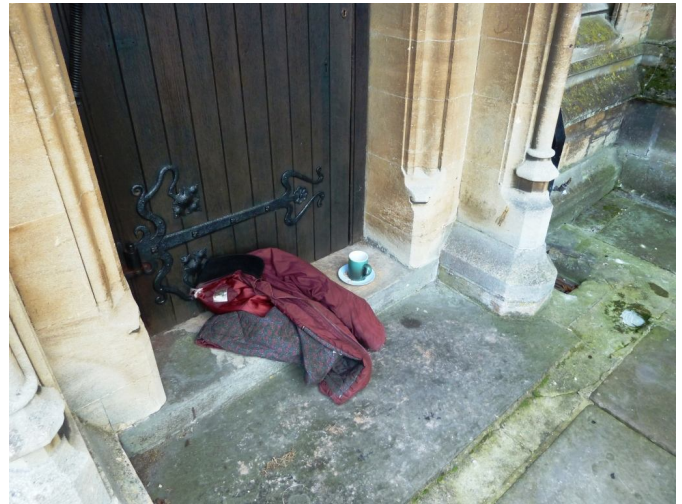


*From the Chair, Simon Tatton-Brown*

Six months ago the future of Doorway was very uncertain. The partnership between The Salvation Army and DEVELOP which had taken over from the pilot Doorway Project was never intended as a permanent management structure for Doorway. The pilot project had demonstrated the need for a drop-in centre for homeless and marginalised people in this part of north Wiltshire. The Salvation Army had the premises (and indeed embarked on a major programme of refurbishment with the needs of a drop-in centre in mind). DEVELOP offered the management structures (particularly when it came to employment law, finance and charitable status) to allow Doorway to employ paid staff. Six years on, it was time to move on from this temporary arrangement and launch Doorway as a stand-alone enterprise.

DEVELOP and The Salvation Army explored the possibility of Doorway being run by a partner organisation, but these conversations came to nothing. The trouble was there was no Plan B. That was the agenda for the stakeholders' meeting in March 2010, when seven volunteers came forward and agreed to work together to secure the future of Doorway.

The Salvation Army and DEVELOP quickly agreed to continue their partnership for as long as it took, on the understanding that the Steering Group would constitute itself as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, and in the meantime take responsibility for supervising the day-to-day work of Doorway. This we did. Doorway staff and volunteers were assured that there was a future for Doorway, and that the work would continue beyond the dissolution of the partnership. Doorway Wiltshire Limited is very grateful to The Salvation Army and DEVELOP for this support: to The Salvation Army for allowing



Doorway to continue operating rent-free at The Salvation Army Hall during this transition period, and to DEVELOP for continuing to hold Doorway's monies and employment contracts, with all their legal liabilities.

At the same time, the work of Reach Out (a charity working with young people who have issues with drug dependency) was under threat, following the withdrawal of funding. Two members of Reach Out joined the new Steering Group and the aims and objectives of the new Doorway were amended so that this work can continue.

Registering the new entity with Companies House and the Charity Commission took longer than expected, not least because the members of the new Board were all novices and finding their way the hard way through the necessary bureaucracies. At the same time they were overseeing the day-to-day management of the Project.

I would like to take this opportunity of acknowledging our debt to The Salvation Army, not least for the free staff time which Captain Mary Wolfe gave Doorway, and the free use of The Salvation Army Hall. The change in relationship between Doorway

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and The Salvation Army however presents us with an immediate challenge. Doorway is now a paying licensee of The Salvation Army, rather than an expression of the Army's focus of activity. We had to find our own office accommodation (another extra and on-going expense). And the loss of the use of a landline telephone at The Salvation Army Hall meant we had to purchase mobile phones for the use of our paid staff, at an unbudgeted cost of about £1,200 a year. These changes have substantially added to our day-to-day costs.

Because Doorway's future was uncertain, very little had been done by way of funding applications in the six months leading up to the establishment of the Steering Group in March 2010. From March to September our energies were focussed on getting our governance right, and until we achieved charity status we weren't in a position to make serious funding bids. The result is a serious backlog of funding applications to be made, which three trustees are urgently addressing on behalf of the Board. But fundraising is not entirely about applying to charitable trusts. It's about engaging with our supporters in our own community: groups and individuals who have donated so generously in the past. Last year Doorway raised around £30,000 from local events organised by ourselves and others and from donations from groups such as the churches, from individuals and from businesses. This year we are likely to

achieve only a fraction of this amount because our attention has been diverted to the practical issues associated with setting up the new charity.

Doorway remains grateful to all who contribute financially and practically to the work of Doorway. Two years after the 'credit crunch' we need this support more than ever. The needs of the homeless have not gone away; indeed we anticipate they will become more severe following the Government's welfare reforms and spending cuts. There is already more competition for funding at a time when grant-making bodies have fewer funds at their disposal. It's important that funders don't fall into the temptation of only grant-aiding new work or particular projects. Doorway needs a lot of help to cover our extensive core costs: staff wages, premises hire, utilities (especially telephony), and the day to day costs of good governance.

The work of Doorway has been secured, and a proper management structure is now in place. We have excellent staff with a superb body of volunteers, and a body of good practice established over seven years. Our friends can be confident that the challenges which face us are now the challenges of our guests. As we look to 2011 we can turn the focus away from the needs of Doorway as an institution, and focus even harder on the needs of those for whom we exist.

SIMON TATTON-BROWN

### *From the Chief Executive, Lisa Lewis*

I often liken my role at Doorway to being sat in the front seat of a rollercoaster. The last couple of years have proved to be a rather intense ride, often at breakneck speeds, but full of extreme highs and lows.

#### **Doorway has:-**

1. Welcomed royalty to the centre;
2. Won a prestigious award from the Wiltshire Health and Wellbeing Partnership for our work on the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse

3. Effectively engaged with local support services and organisations which has led to very successful signposting for our guests
4. Developed local partnership working i.e. Community 4 and New Highway etc. Doorway is just one of a number of local organisations all working towards the same goal, none of us can work in isolation and by joining forces we can all provide the very best service to our guests.

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5. Further developed our Community Engagement Programme which is designed to raise issues surrounding homelessness, reduce local prejudice and aggression towards those who are marginalised, and also to raise awareness of our organisation at a local level
  6. Embraced social media and networking through the medium of Twitter and the Community Blog. This has enabled us to reach a new national and international audience. Doorway currently welcomes 250 guests a year to our drop-in sessions. Every single one of those individuals has a life, a history and a reason for needing our service. Through social media, like the blog, Doorway is hoping to provide an opportunity for our guests to have a voice and be heard.
  7. Become a respected and credible professional organisation, within the fields of homelessness, drug and alcohol dependencies and mental health. We are now regularly being approached for quotes and information for a variety of purposes including rough sleeper forums, national magazine and newspaper articles; television production companies, local media including radio, but probably most importantly for social policy issues.
  8. Attended multi-agency meetings, medical tribunals etc to ensure that the needs of guests are met effectively
  9. Worked with local schools on research projects, diplomas, GCSE's and 'A' levels as part of the national curriculum. We have also addressed assemblies and individual classes in order to educate youngsters on the issues surrounding homelessness and very importantly on future prevention of homelessness
2. Launch the community gardening project at The United Reformed Church with the aim of producing our own fruit and vegetables for use within the drop-in sessions
  3. Investigate and research a multi-agency outreach service i.e. running a 'hub' in Calne and Malmesbury and a mobile bus/van for the outlying villages
  4. Re-establish our IT sessions in partnership with Westlea, thereby enabling guests to access both IT training and the internet during our Thursday sessions. i.e. bidding for tenancies through Homes4Wiltshire
  5. Introduce the Practical Housing Units which will enable guests to gain accredited qualifications in areas such as budgeting and debt management; finding accommodation; maintaining a healthy diet etc
  6. Continue to review, develop and implement our 'Moving On' project aimed at one to one support work with guests to achieve measurable goals.
  7. Recruit an Assistant Support Worker to run both the 'Moving On' project and the PHU's
  8. Investigate the provision of more long term projects including a community centre and a social enterprise charity shop.

Over the last 7 years Doorway has laid some very solid foundations for our new independent organisational structure. I am extremely proud of the strong, cohesive Doorway team of staff, volunteers and Directors. We have weathered some storms over the years, and each time we have managed to emerge with a fighting spirit. We are, currently, just at the very beginning of exciting times for the development of our services and I truly believe that we can get through our current financial situation and continue to provide a lifeline for a significant number of the most marginalised people in our local community.

**Future plans for 2011 are to:-**

1. Extend our activities to include the introduction of our Tuesday afternoon sessions, involving the continuation of Reach Out's mission of the provision of high level support for 16-25 year olds with drug and alcohol dependencies

LISA LEWIS

## *Treasurer's Report*

Our current financial situation is of concern. The Project now costs a minimum of £4750 per month to deliver. Though a substantial sum (£13,500 and growing, thanks to the efforts of both Lisa and Margaret) has been secured from the list of funders below, to whom we extend heartfelt thanks, most of this is "reserved" funding. That means it has been donated for a specific purpose, such as running the football facility and the "Moving On" and gardening projects (for the minds and spirits of our guests) and a food fund (for their bodies). We can't use it for rent, insurance, salaries and so on. Our reserves have been used to help us over the last nine months of development.

Without a substantial increase of cash, we will be unable to deliver the essentials to our guests beyond the end of January.

The continued support you give us by way of clothing and food now helps an even wider group of people in crisis via the new Salvation Army Food Bank, and usefully offsets a large part of our rent bill for the drop-in premises. Thank you!

## *Our Guests*

Our guests come from very diverse backgrounds and have many different and complex needs. We see rough sleepers, people who are sofa surfing (staying with friends), people with mental health, drug and/or alcohol issues. Our guests tell us the main reason for coming to us is for food. We provide and meet this basic need. For some it is their only hot meal of the week. One guest who is sleeping rough, his hands were blue from the cold describes how the cold wakes him early in the morning, so he walks around waiting for the shopping centre opens so he can use the toilets. He then makes his way to Doorway. He says he cannot describe what it means to him too have a hot meal and to be able to come in from the cold. He stays with us, in the warm, for the whole morning session and devours two breakfasts.

Our guests also come to the drop-in sessions to meet people and spend time talking to others in a safe and non-



However, it is now money, whether raised corporately through your organisation, by sponsorship of a special event (thank you, Skydivers!) or by a personal pledge using the Standing Order form, that we need....and we need it right now!

Funds have been generously given by: the Co-Operative Community Fund; Walter Guinness Charitable Trust; Comic Relief; Wiltshire Council Community Area Grant (matched funded by ReachOut) Wilts and Swindon Community Foundation; Jack Lane Trust Fund; the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

JACKIE BALL

judgemental environment. One guest explains that as a carer and as someone who has a problem with drink he feels socially isolated, and Doorway was his reason to come out and mix with others. He says that the staff and volunteers understand him. Another says that she finds the weekends very long and looks forward to coming in on a Monday to see everyone.

The guests feel that Doorway is a place where they can talk to staff and volunteers about any problems they are experiencing e.g. personal, housing, financial problems and they are supported to access the relevant agency. They tell us they find the staff and volunteers friendly and approachable and feel they can discuss their issues freely.

CLARE JONES