



*"Remember to entertain strangers for in so doing some have
Entertained angels unawares " Hebrews 13:2*



ANNUAL REVIEW 2014/15

THE HOUSE OF GENESIS

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Thoughts from Val Dodsworth, Trustee and Co-Founder:

As we look back on 2014 and set out on another year of Genesis' life, we have a huge amount to say thank you to God for.

Usually we send out this review in the autumn, but as we were just at the point of embarking on that long prayed for 2nd house, we decided to hold it over until the way forward became a little clearer.

We have now been at Laundry Close for 5 years and have been able to increase the accommodation there to 6 rooms and now we have been offered by Norwich City Council, a 4 bedroomed house, closer in to the city than Laundry Close, to provide move on spaces for those of our residents who are in work, but not quite ready to move on from us. Needless to say, we have accepted with enthusiasm! We expect this property to be ready for occupation in February.

Alongside this, and perhaps in preparation for this expansion, although we didn't know as we took them on just how close it was, we have been able to increase our staff to 5 part timers and an excellent volunteer helper. I have been able to hand over the financial work and oversight to David Wells who came along with just the right experience, and at just the right time. Mark & Louis, both with past "history" themselves, have joined us and are proving to be good role models and encouragements to present residents, helping them to see that "going straight" is a worthwhile aim in life

I can now put some of my time and energy into setting up the new house and working with our local prisons to establish a Community Chaplaincy, to befriend men leaving prison and offer them support and help in the hope of increasing their chances of staying out of trouble. This will also be based at our new premises.

A word from our Project Leader: Donna Myall

Another wonderful, hectic year has flown by for us at The House of Genesis. We have had new residents, including a 7 month old baby boy, who came along with his dad, and we took in a young lad and his dog who wouldn't be separated and had been living in a tent locally, we supported them until they were able to move on from us. We have also successfully supported another two men into full time work and one is now moving into his own privately rented accommodation. Both I feel have been beneficial to us, as coming to Genesis has been for them.



I have been making more new contacts, and recently met an amazing chap, Colin, who works for "Walking with the Wounded". I look forward to meeting with him again to see how we can help one another. He works to progress the life of ex-services men as they return to life in the community. They often need help & support, and sometimes accommodation.

We had a Garden Party this year and invited all our local friends and contacts to come and see the work we are doing. It was a good day and we look forward to having another one possibly next year, so watch this space. But now I am looking forward to getting my teeth into our new project and new home - and to being able to help many more lads as they re-start their disrupted life journeys.

Our New staff introduce themselves:

Louis: I began working here at Genesis as a volunteer back in February last year which was a real privilege and I settled into the role quite quickly. The main reason I wanted to work here is because I feel I could relate and empathise with many of the issues the residents arrive here with.

Half of my own life had been spent battling addiction. So I'm no stranger to the chaos, despair and the pure self-destruction that can go hand in hand with addiction. So 5 years along "recovery-street" as I call it, I felt good enough and strong enough to offer my services to help others. Unfortunately due to the harsh economic climate we are in, places similar to Genesis are fading away and closing their doors. So more houses of genesis ought to exist, not less.

David: I joined the House of Genesis in September, to help on the financial side. The first thing that strikes you is the warmth of the people involved with the community, whether that's the residents, staff or the trustees. There is a sense that we are aiming for the same things and we are all here to help each other. It's a great privilege to be part of such an affirming group of people. There is also great support from a wide range of individuals, church groups and funds that help our work.

Chelsea: I have been volunteering now since October 14 and I love every minute, the variety in the work and the rewarding feeling to see all the lads doing well and making right choices. I have been made to feel so welcome and look forward to what the future may bring for me at The House of Genesis as it's been a whole new experience for me.

Mark: I have found it to be a very encouraging and supportive team at Genesis, which will help me and support me in any way that they can on my learning journey and I really enjoy working here.

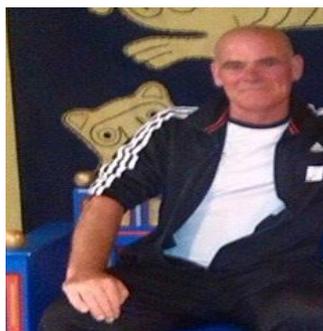
Welcome to our new part time Staff members

We would like to introduce you to colleagues who joined us in 2014

David Wells, our Finance Officer and Chelsea Clark our Volunteer.



Louis Paterson our Support Worker and Mark Lowther our House Steward and trainee Support Worker.



Paula Humphrey is still with us and proving to be great asset as she gains in knowledge, understanding and experience in the work.

Resident Comings.....

We are often asked how we choose the men who come to live with us. The answer is “With great care!” As I write this we have, most unusually, 3 empty rooms. But to match that we have 7 applications. All of these men need accommodation, some acknowledge they also need help and support, others need it, but would rather not ask for it.

Each one will be interviewed and their needs and plans for the future discussed. Their view of how and why things went wrong in the past and how living at Genesis for a while could help to change the pattern of their lives is also considered. Then we (mostly Donna) have to make a decision as to who we think might fit into the house and benefit from being part of the Genesis family

..... And Goings

R.D: Left us after 2 stays totalling 10 months in all. He had a chance of a completely new life in Lincoln. *“I will miss you all very much, your kindness and big heart. Sorry I didn’t write earlier, those last few days were hectic. Take good care of yourselves and thank you, I am forever in your debt.”*

G.M: Came straight from prison and left us after 11 months. He moved into local shared accommodation which we thought would help him to take the next step forward. His parting message was, *“Thank you for the support, it’s a bit emotional leaving you all, I’ll be in touch”*

L.G: Was only with us for 5 months. He just needed somewhere to start again. He quickly found work and took up a private tenancy.

Our 6th Room at Laundry Close is finished!



And our New House will be ready for us in mid February



“284”

**A very ordinary terrace house, but a gift from God for us,
and for those who will benefit from living there.**

Genesis' Trustees

- Jon O'Byrne – Chair
- Alan Lusher – Secretary
- Val Dodsworth
- Martin Graham
- Liliias Standage

From the Trustees.....

The House of Genesis is in a strong position going into 2015. At a time when many other charities are reducing services, we are managing to increase our offer to the homeless and ex-offenders, and ensure they contribute positively to our communities. The extra room at our main house plus the new premises mean we have doubled our capacity. We have also achieved this at minimal risk to our core assets and services, no mean achievement. Our gratitude goes to our committed staff for their work, to our invaluable supporters and funders, and to our God for His blessing on our work.

Jon O'Byrne, Chair

THANK YOU

to all who have supported us in the past year in so many ways. And especially to those whose generous donations enabled us to provide the new en-suite bedroom at Laundry Close. Without your help we would be able to do far less in providing accommodation and care to people in need of somewhere to be.