

Routes to Roots and Routes to Roots (Poole) CIO – (R2R) Business Plan – September 2016 to August 2019

Introduction

The purpose of this Business Plan is to describe Routes to Roots' activities and plans for the three-year period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2019. It was developed at meetings of the R2R Trustees on 13 June 2016, 27 June 2016 and 2 September 2016.

Routes to Roots (R2R) has operated for over 16 years. Throughout this time, the charity has evolved, formalised its governance and initiated various activities to meet its aims and in 2014 became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) adopting a new constitution, which continues the work of the original charity. The new CIO was registered on 26 February 2014.

Changes in delivery of homeless outreach services for Poole Borough Council became effective in April 2014; R2R is no longer directly involved with this service, but has maintained a close relationship with Poole Council and the new contractors. Separation from statutory funding has allowed R2R to re-evaluate its services and to put greater emphasis on activities and programmes that R2R finds are most needed in Poole, including actions that will promote the reintegration of rough sleepers and vulnerably housed people into society.

In 2015, in collaboration with Green Pastures of Southport, R2R has been able to set up supported housing for three of Poole's rough sleepers and will continue to provide one-to-one mentoring and assistance with a view to their independence and full re-integration into the community.

R2R's position from July 2016 is as follows:

Vision

To provide rough sleepers and vulnerably housed people in Poole with hope for the future

Mission

R2R is a Poole charity with a Christian ethos providing a personalised service to rough sleepers and vulnerably housed adults, to enable them to become rooted in the community.

Aims

R2R aims:

- To encourage participation rather than dependency
- To provide a place of security and warmth, through drop-ins, where there is immediate social and spiritual support as well as the basic necessities for life: food, clothing, a place to wash and a place to rest

- To put an end to the recycling of homelessness and to ensure that once accommodated, clients are able to access the help and assistance they need to maintain that accommodation and become rooted in their community
- To continue provision of supported housing, currently Amos House for three men, and to work towards another property for female clients
- To provide support needs on an individual basis, tailored to the client, providing clear assessment and progression achieved
- To develop client self-esteem, self-awareness, social skills, community engagement and employment skills by providing opportunities for team working, volunteering and training
- To act as an advocate for the client with other agencies, such as landlords, mental health teams, addiction teams, council officers, police, probation, etc.
- To inspire, encourage and equip the people of Poole to respond to the needs of homeless people with compassion, in ways that are creative and liberating
- To expand the provision of its services to a full-time resource centre for clients
- To collaborate with other agencies, organisations and groups in Poole, who work with rough sleepers and vulnerably housed adults

This may be summarised as follows:

“Routes to Roots is founded on Christian principles and seeks to help all homeless, newly homed and vulnerably housed adults in Poole regardless of their faith. We provide basic necessities, such as hot food, clothing and sleeping bags, at drop-ins; we assist clients to engage with agencies such as the addictions team, health workers and Citizens’ Advice; we organise indoor and outdoor motivational activities; and we assist those who are placed in accommodation to remain in their tenancy. As of December 2015 we provide supported housing for three people who were previously rough sleeping in Poole. We aim to achieve long-term outcomes for our clients through participation in motivational and well-being projects which boost self-confidence and self-worth, expand and develop skills, promote a sense of belonging and encourage integration into the local community.”

Our Core Work Includes:

1. Outreach: R2R delivers outreach at its drop-ins. We help direct rough sleepers to the appropriate agencies that can provide them with assistance in resolving the problems that are keeping them on the streets, for example introducing those with alcohol or drug addictions to the Poole Addictions Team at afternoon drop-in. We also inform rough sleepers about services and help provided by R2R.
2. Providing Basic Necessities of Life: R2R provides a hot meal four times a week, breakfast for rough sleepers during the cold weather months, clothing, sleeping bags, and practical assistance for those moving into accommodation, as needed. We also signposts rough sleepers to other support such as the Salvation Army shower facility, their breakfast provision and local soup runs.
3. Prevention and Social Inclusion: R2R works with those who are currently housed to help minimise the risk of repeated homelessness. We give support to those who are in danger of losing their tenancies through whatever means, such as non-payment of top-

up fees, etc. Additionally, we encourage and work with clients who are struggling with addictions. We also work with those who might choose to give up their housing because of their isolation and loneliness by encouraging social participation and developing their living skills.

4. Life Skills and Wellbeing: R2R has, in prior years, provided projects to develop self esteem, self-awareness, social skills, and employment skills through participation in team working, volunteering, and training and also provided creative activities including art workshops, drama workshops, cooking, etc. We plan to continue to provide these as possible. These are dependent on volunteer involvement and funding, but we plan to continue to take advantage of every opportunity.
5. Engaging the Local Community: R2R offers opportunities to groups, businesses and individuals to volunteer, support and fundraise. To inform, inspire and raise awareness in local businesses, schools, community groups, and churches, R2R volunteers give presentations and talks about the charity's vision and mission.
6. Advocacy: R2R monitors the current situation for homeless and vulnerably housed people in Poole and acts as an advocate for them with police, local government and services.

Planned Programme: 2016-2019

The scope of this business plan is three years: the plan will be reviewed annually. R2R will undertake the following activities as its core work for the duration of this business plan. Funding will be sought for the continuation of this work.

1. Evening Drop-Ins: R2R provides a hot meal at Skinner Street for around 20 homeless and vulnerably housed people twice a week. The funding for this project comes from R2R's general funds: these funds will continue to support this project and additional funding will be sought through grant applications. R2R intends to collaborate with the church organised Soup Runs, which offer open-air support for the other five nights of the week, with a view to enabling this provision in an indoor setting, as funding and accommodation allow. In addition to a hot meal, a podiatrist visits the evening drop-in once a month to care for the client's feet.
2. Afternoon Drop-Ins: R2R runs two afternoon sessions a week during which a range of activities are provided to empower and support the clients. Currently one session a week is dedicated to practical matters with the involvement of other agencies: a Community Mental Health Nurse and a Poole Addictions Community Team worker provide counselling, blood testing (for blood borne infections) and a needle-exchange service. Representatives from Poole Citizens' Advice attend to provide financial and housing advice. A hairdresser also visits twice a month. We continue to explore other possibilities as they come available. The funding for this project comes from R2R's general funds with additional funding being sought through grant applications to increase the number of afternoon sessions.

3. Holton Lee Outdoor Volunteering Project: R2R intends to continue submitting clients for Holton Lee's Project Flourish.
4. Hot Breakfast for Rough Sleepers: For several years, R2R has provided hot cooked breakfasts to verified rough sleepers from December to March. These are from The Fisherman's Café; they provide vital calories and a place to warm up in the morning. We will continue to seek funding to maintain this provision for rough sleepers to keep them as healthy as possible through winter.
5. Amos House: R2R provides supported housing for three men at Amos House. R2R is considering opportunities for the purchase of a second premise to house a further three or more people. This will probably be for our female clients as they represent 22% of our client group.
6. Acquisition of Accommodation for a Full-Time Resource Centre: In 2007, R2R identified that its current premises and facilities are not sufficient to fulfil its current work or future plans. A feasibility study was undertaken in 2009-2010. This identified that the following was required: the need to be located in Poole Town centre; at least two shower facilities and three toilets; kitchen facilities with an eating area for at least 20 people; laundry facilities; a storage area for donated items, such as clothing, bedding, and furniture; and office and meeting space for R2R staff and volunteers. An opportunity was explored with Poole Methodist Church and their Spire project but the premises configuration did not make it possible to pursue this. R2R has also been in discussion with Skinner St URC for some time with a view to extending premises on site, but to date no resolution has been reached. Plans will continue to identify alternative, suitable accommodation for R2R in order to be able to better meet the needs of the homeless people of Poole.
7. Engagement with the Local Community: R2R has developed a presence within the business and local community. However more work is planned to develop long-term relationships and sustainable support from local businesses and community. We aim to achieve this through our dedicated team of volunteers by organising community events and fundraising activities. Regular newsletters, the R2R website, Facebook and Twitter have all increased the reach of R2R into the local community and beyond. Local churches have been responsive to direct appeals.