

# **Churches Together Around Ludlow**

## ***Hands Together Ludlow***

**Annual Report**

**December 2014**

Over the year, volunteers have participated in mentoring training courses (3 courses provided by Severn Hospice) and undertaken cooking and catering courses (4 sessions provided by Grow Cook Share). Of the 40 volunteers so far 8 have obtained Food Hygiene Certificates and 11 have completed DBS required checks. Since June procedures have been put in place to ensure the protection of both volunteers and referred clients. These are managed by Clive Leworthy, our professional volunteer coordinator based in Helena Lane on Mondays.

In 2015 we expect our volunteer numbers to increase more than twofold to 40 with 20 of them catering/cooking volunteers fully trained and working in pairs with referrals in their homes. Other volunteers are planned to help with mentoring and caring, transportation, DIY, IT, home management, gardening, housework etc. There are plans in 2015 are for 4 mentoring training courses plus 10 Food Hygiene tickets and 10 DBS checks and continued public liability insurance. Volunteers have met together to share experiences on 4 occasions throughout the year.

Referrals have been accepted since training of the first batch of volunteers was completed in September. Over this 3 month period referrals have been accepted from Food Parcel Scheme (Food Bank) (6), Sustain (South Shropshire Housing Association) (3) Home Start (1), Age (UK) (1) and Health Visitors (NHS) (1). Of these referrals 10 were requiring cooking and catering advice and support resulting in up to 5 home visits by volunteers working in pairs. The average time spent with each cooking referral has so far been 16 hours per client. A total of 60 hot meals have been either cooked in the home or distributed.

In 2015 we expect referrals to increase more than twofold to 30 individuals or families with increases from both our existing and newfound partner agencies such as the Alzheimers Association, Compassionate Communities, Family Solutions. It is planned to provide a further 15 food preparation, cooking and catering starter kits and facilitate referred clients purchase essential cooking equipment if needed.

As part of our plan to stimulate weekly luncheon clubs at various venues in town in the final quarter of 2014 we have initiated the following on a monthly basis to start with: a Cooking and Catering training course in collaboration with the Furniture Scheme at the Rockspring Centre reaching out to 10 families and young people per session (3 sessions completed) and a Dementia Cafe in collaboration with Shropshire Council and Healthy Friendships at Helena Lane reaching out to 30 clients and carers providing lunches and a programme of support.

In 2015 it is planned to seek ways of increasing the frequency of these luncheon clubs and to link in with new and existing ventures in other town locations.

There is currently no Meals on Wheels activity in Ludlow. An investigation is taking place into ways of commencing such a service in 2015. A survey of demand for such a service and discussions with various third parties providing similar services are in hand.

A start has been made to provide practical help in tackling fuel poverty. An Affordable Warmth training session for volunteers interested in this subject has taken place in November, a second is planned in January 2015. It is aimed for volunteers with a practical bent and enough household savvy to become champions in the subject, able to provide real help to those people who need help in tackling the problems.

It is anticipated that those volunteers with a skill for IT and computer networking will work towards starting to help referred clients during 2015.

During 2014 many volunteers have worked over many hours to establish this coordinated volunteer response to the Ludlow under Pressure report. The 14 member management team chaired by Neil Richardson comprises agency representatives as well as advocates from all the CTAL churches. It has met on 10 occasions and is steering HTL towards the constitution of Charity early in 2015.

There have been 4 major public events and promotions organised in 2014, the public launch in June, Food for Thought at the St Peter's Catholic Hall, the Well Being Day at the Methodist Church and at the Helena Lane Open Day in December as well as the promotion which took place at the publication of the Ludlow under Pressure Report update in November. It is intended to continue this public promotion activity in 2015.

The paid services of the Volunteer Coordinator will be maintained. This is the key administrative position in HTL ensuring that volunteer records and referrals details are kept confidential and that all operations are administered efficiently. In June it is intended to enlist the paid help of an Agency Referral community worker ensuring that relationships between agency staff and volunteers remains efficient and professional and in some cases to act as an independent referral assessor.

Discussions are in hand to look at ways of making the charity sustainable by creating a commercial Ready Made Meal company providing funds for the charity, work experience for the young out of work and eventually an opportunity for job creation for young catering graduates. This aspect of Hands Together Ludlow will develop during 2015 and will require significant funding and expertise in kind.