



From left: Amanda Streatfeild, Dorset High Sherriff George Streatfeild and Routes to Roots Chairman Reverend Pat Southgate

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Dorset's High Sherriff Inspired by Routes to Roots' 'A Place for Change'

The High Sherriff of Dorset, George Streatfeild pays a visit to Routes to Roots' future permanent support facility for Poole's homeless, which is undergoing renovation

Work is well underway at Routes to Roots' future permanent base in Hill Street, Poole to transform the building into a lasting 'Place for Change' for Poole's rough sleepers and vulnerably housed. Routes to Roots Chairman and co-founder, Reverend Pat Southgate was delighted to play host to Dorset

High Sherriff, George Streatfeild and his wife Amanda, showing them the transformation of the former Baptist Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Streatfeild were given a tour of the building where the project's architect Ken Morgan and project manager, Routes to Roots Trustee, Kate Mellor talked through the charity's ambitious plans for the listed building.

As High Sheriff, Mr. Streatfeild's role is independent and non-political. In addition to supporting the judiciary and the Crown, he actively lends support and encouragement to crime prevention agencies, the emergency services and to the voluntary sector. As reigning High Sherriff for Dorset, Mr. Streatfeild was made aware of the support that Routes to Roots provides to Poole's homeless by the charity's Patron, The Right Reverend Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne and was eager to witness first-hand what was happening at the new facility and learn about the charity's future ambitions.

"It is awe-inspiring and quite humbling to hear Pat's passion and her determination to transform a rundown building into somewhere safe, warm and welcoming to so many who are struggling in today's society – and not just because of Covid-19," said Mr. Streatfeild. "She has created an amazing team of volunteers to support her vision and make sure it happens; I cannot wait to see the completed work."

Once complete, the charity's new home will provide many basic facilities to improve the well-being of its clients and help them achieve lasting positive change in their lives. Facilities such as showers, toilets, laundry, hot food, clothing and sleeping bags will be provided in addition to crucial access to outreach workers for addiction and mental health support, nurses, chiropodists, housing and benefit advisors. The new daytime hub will also provide a sanctuary to relax and feel comfortable throughout the day, reducing the need to be out on the streets.

"After 6 months of planning, getting the appropriate permissions and seeking out grants, it is wonderful to see the work finally happening," said Routes to Roots Chairman, Reverend Pat Southgate. "We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of the donations we have received so far but we still have some way to go before we to meet our target, so our fundraising efforts continue unabated."

Details of how to make a donation can be found

at www.routestoroots.org/charity/

ENDS

Media information & interview requests

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Poole-based charity Routes to Roots was founded in 2002 to support local rough sleepers and the vulnerably housed and is dedicated not just to providing day-to-day support but also outreach services to help those in need make long-term change. Through its Amos House facility, it provides three short-term supported housing units, helping residents make the transition from life on the street to more permanent homes.

The Patron of Routes to Roots is The Right Reverend Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne. The Trustees are the Reverend Pat Southgate, Chairman of Board of Trustees and Associate Priest at St Peter's, Parkstone, Founder Trustee of R2R and Chaplain to the Homeless in Poole, Kate Mellor, Martin Finch, Andrew Teale and the Reverend Lucy Holt.

In February 2020 the charity bought the former Hill Street Baptist Church.

Renovations at its future permanent base have begun this month. Once completed, the building will become the centre for all the help and support available to Poole's vulnerably housed to help them realise lasting positive change in their lives.

Saltwater Stone is working for Routes to Roots on a pro-bono basis. PR, marketing services and advice are being offered to the charity without charge.