



The new Routes to Roots Genesis Centre, at former Hill Street Baptist Church, Poole

Dec 02, 2021 15:32 GMT

Local Charity Reaches Formidable Milestone

Homeless charity Routes to Roots in Poole is pleased to announce significant progress with the imminent completion of the former Hill Street Baptist Church development - initial phase. Providing vital support and services for the vulnerably housed and the homeless, with a view to getting them off the streets, the charity offers support to around 260 individuals in Poole every year. Kate Mellor, Trustee of Routes to Roots said, "We are extremely pleased with the completion of this phase, which means we can move into the newly named Genesis Centre, extend our services with the involvement of other local agencies and continue to make improvements to the lives of the

vulnerable.

“We could not have come this far without the tremendous support of everyone involved, from the volunteers who work daily, to the professionals who have provided their skills and services, often for free, to make this project work. We are really looking forward to the official move, expected in January or February next year.”

While 2021 has marked a significant milestone, Routes to Roots still needs to raise considerable funds for phase two, which involves a second hall to be used for outreach health provision, a possible winter shelter, financial advice, training and other opportunities to help clients move back into the community.

So far, the charity has secured grants of £15,000 for phase two, with a winter appeal planned to raise money for work which includes the installation of electrics and heating as well as repointing, guttering and drain repairs.

As with all charities, the service depends on the good-will of people to give their time and support and Routes to Roots is no exception. The charity is always in need of new volunteers and is keen to encourage anyone who is interested in helping, even for as little as two and a half hours a month, to get in touch.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer for Routes to Roots ‘A Place for Change’ – email or call the office on 07901 387643 / 01202 667880 or to make a donation please visit <https://www.routestoroots.org/charity/donations>

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Media information & interview requests

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Background notes for editors

Routes to Roots

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 access to outreach services to help those in need make long-term change. Through its Amos House facility, it provides short term supported housing for three former rough sleepers, helping them 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. Once renovations at its future permanent base are 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.