



Andy Mason joins Routes to Roots as Drop-in Manager and Volunteer Co-ordinator

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New Manager for Poole Homeless Drop-in Centre

Poole homeless charity, Routes to Roots, has appointed Andy Mason as Manager of its vulnerably housed outreach drop-in sessions, currently held at the United Reformed Church in Skinner Street. Andy also takes on the role of the charity's Volunteer Co-ordinator following the departure of his predecessor, Helen Tucker.

Having recently relocated to Poole after training to be a vicar, Andy will work part-time for Routes to Roots running the daily drop-in centre which provides

support and advice for Poole's vulnerably housed and homeless. Taking a break from parish life as a vicar, Andy is also working with several local primary schools alongside the PACE Trust.

"I am very excited about joining the team at Routes to Roots and as a passionate Christian, I look forward to putting my values and principles into practice," said Andy. "It presents a great opportunity for me to play an important role in this wonderful charity which provides vital support to those who, for many complex reasons, find themselves sleeping rough or without permanent accommodation."

Routes to Roots re-opened their daily drop-in sessions in July after Covid-19 lockdown restrictions eased, leading to many of Poole's homeless being released from their temporary accommodation and back on the streets. Due to social distancing rules, the sessions are currently limited to providing daily takeaway lunches; however, it is hoped that the drop-in team will soon be able to extend this service by offering more 1-1 support as the colder months draw closer.

Meanwhile, renovations at the charity's new permanent base in Hill Street have begun this month. Once completed, the transformed former Hill Street Baptist Church will offer Poole's vulnerably housed a long-term sanctuary to help them realise lasting positive change in their lives.

For further information about Routes to Roots and details of how to make a donation, visit www.routestoroots.org/charity/

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Media information & interview requests

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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 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.

Routes to Roots currently runs five drop-in sessions a week offering basic necessities such as showers, hot food, clothing and sleeping bags, as well as outreach access to mental health workers, the local addictions team and housing advisers. Once refurbished, Hill Street will become the charity's centre for all services to help homeless and vulnerably housed people in Poole. Founded on Christian principles, Routes to Roots supports all adults regardless of their faith.

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.