

## The Way Ahead:

### Sharing in our Vision and Concerns for the Future

#### 1) Developing the Vision

As we look to the year ahead we are excited about the ongoing development of the vision of The Need Project. In the year ahead we aim:

- i. To further consolidate the growth which has taken place during 2014/15, so that the delivery of our services are more effective.
- ii. To prepare for possible future growth. We can foresee that if the predicted Government budget cuts reduce the levels of local services, and limit welfare benefits, then there could well be an increase in the demand for food parcels etc.
- iii. To work with our Project Leader in developing the wider vision he has for the ministry of The Need Project.
- iv. To seek to make the work of the Project more widely known and secure an increase in regular funding to facilitate its growth.

#### 2) Concerns for the Future

Clearly the major concern is providing a more secure and consistent long term funding sufficient to enable us to employ our Project Leader on a fulltime basis. The funding from Central Bedfordshire for 2014/15 has not continued due to budget cuts. We are therefore seeking to:

- i. Find other sources of funding from the statutory bodies who use our services.
- ii. Apply to various relevant charitable trusts.
- iii. Increase the support given by local churches, community groups and individuals interested in our work.
- iv. Encourage regular appropriate fundraising activities.

If you are able to help us then, please contact The Need Project:

Gordon Hamilton, Mob: 07952 765302

e-mail: [admin@theneedproject.co.uk](mailto:admin@theneedproject.co.uk)

Website: [www. http://theneedproject.co.uk/](http://theneedproject.co.uk/)

Please pass on this report to others who might be interested in the work of The Need Project.

Thank you for your support and interest.



The Need Project Central Bedfordshire is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
Charity Number: 1157691

# The Need Project Annual Report 2014 / 2015



***"I was hungry and you gave me something to eat"***

***[Matthew 25:35]***

***Serving Jesus in His most distressing disguise***



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## Introduction

Welcome to our first Annual Report!

The arrival of any child is a cause for celebration. However, the birth marks only a vital stage on the journey. During the pregnancy, much is happening, both to the baby and to the parents preparing for the vital day of arrival. But once the birth has taken place, the adventure really begins!

In July 2014 The Need Project Central Bedfordshire became a charitable trust in its own right. However, it had been already functioning for some six years, during which it had grown from an extension to the caring ministry of King's Baptist Church in Stotfold, through the guiding vision and passion of Gordon Hamilton. Since gaining charitable status, we have, like anyone with a new born, had a year of challenge, change and excitement.

We hope you will enjoy reading our first Annual Report.

Rev. Ian Hare

Chair of Trustees



## The Administrator

- Works with the Project Leader to ensure that referral calls are received and logged.
- Maintains the statistical analysis of the NP work.
- Helps to produce the monthly and annual reports.

## The Hub Liaison Group

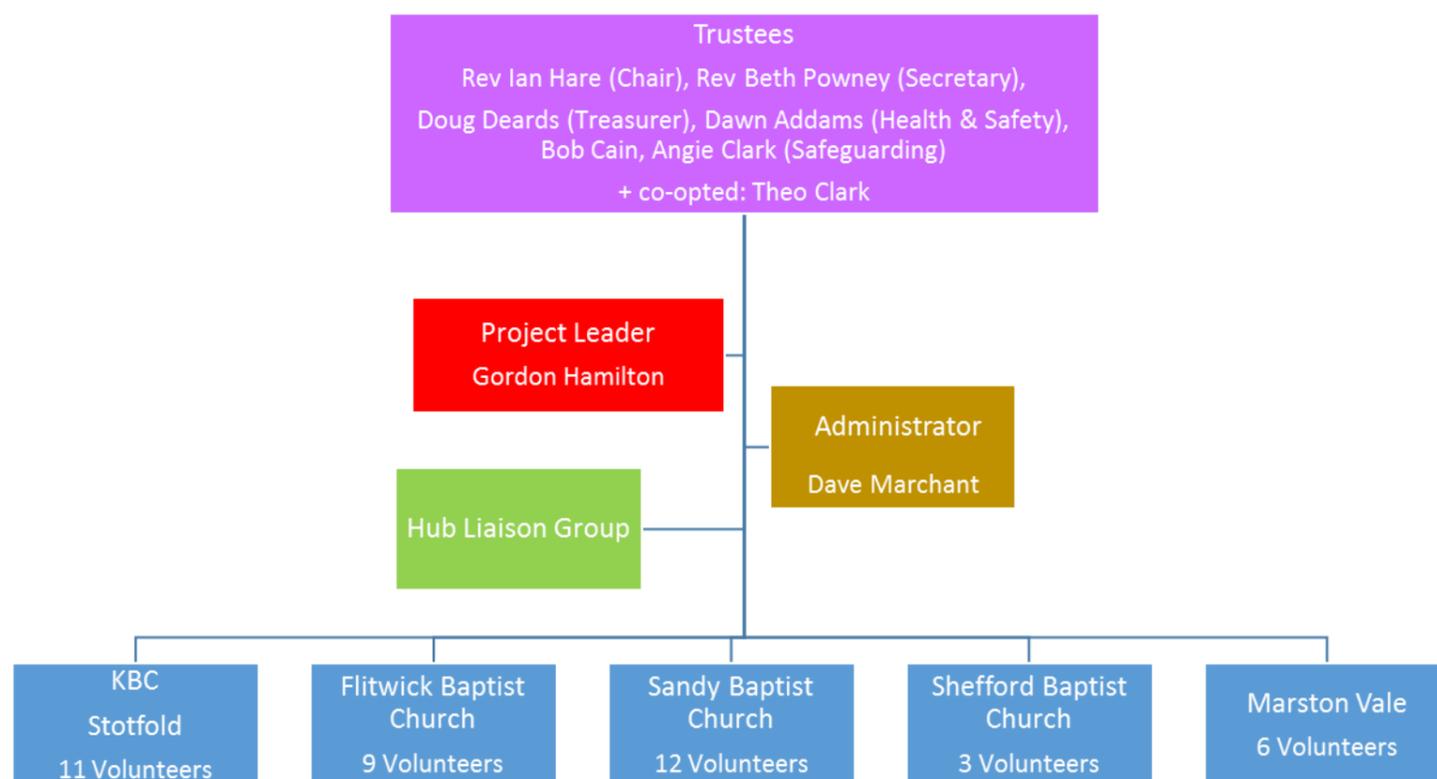
- Consists of 1-2 trustees, the project leader & 1 member from each hub.
- It will meet 2-3 times a year..
- Its main responsibility will be to ensure the standardisation of procedures and help to maintain cohesiveness and unity among the hubs

## The Hubs

- Operate under the supervision of the Project Leader and the Hub Leaders.
- Receives and sorts the food supplies for each particular area.
- Ensures the delivery of food parcels within the specified timescale.



## The Organisational Structure of The Need Project Central Bedfordshire



**Paid Staff:** One person, Gordon Hamilton, currently only partially funded for 3 days per week

**Voluntary Staff:** Forty one

## A Brief Outline of the Various Roles within the Need Project

### The Trustees

- Ensure that the Need Project runs effectively, implements its policies and fulfils its vision.
- Ensures that the NP fulfils the requirements of the Charity Commission.
- Supervises the work of the Project Leader.
- Meets at least 4 times a year, or as required.

### The Project Leader

- Co-ordinates and supervises the day to day running of the NP hubs.
- Co-ordinates the clothing and furniture supplies and deliveries.
- Liaises with the referral agencies.
- Advertises and advances the work of the NP.
- Attends, and is accountable to, the Trustees' Meetings.

## 2014/15 Annual Report Summary

During its first year as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the Need Project has brought assistance to many people in the Central Bedfordshire region experiencing deprivation. Working through five hubs at King's Baptist Church in Stotfold, Flitwick Baptist Church, Sandy Baptist Church, Shefford Baptist Church and Marston Vale Community Church, the Need Project:

- Delivered 1367 food parcels – (enough food to feed 1860 adults & 1379 children). On the basis of the average food parcel estimating to value £30-40, this represents £45,110 worth of food.
- Delivered 254 Christmas food hampers & 172 Christmas presents.
- Delivered clothing, children's toys, furniture etc.
- Held Open Days in Sandy, Shefford, Stotfold and Letchworth.

Food parcels are delivered to anyone in genuine need, regardless of their ethnicity, sexuality or beliefs. Clients are referred from many different agencies, including: Social Services, Children's Centres, GP services, Churches, Schools etc. Every effort is made to ensure that the need we respond to is genuine.

The majority of the food delivered was donated in kind, but during the year the Need Project received and spent the following:

Income:	£28,197.76
Expenditure:	£17,729.37
Balance:	£10,468.39

The work of the Need Project has been led by one part-time Project Leader and supported by over 40 volunteers (many of whom do not claim any expenses).

During this year, the trustees have sought to consolidate both the vision and work of the Need Project, seeking to ensure it has all the policies and procedures in place so that it operates effectively according to the objectives and aims of its constitution.

The Need Project is grateful to everyone who has supported its work during this year.



## The Need Project – Who we and What we Do

### *Who we are*

The Need Project Central Bedfordshire exists to provide a Christian response for people in our communities who are facing various situations of need.

The project is overseen as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and run by members of five “hubs”; Kings Baptist Church Stotfold, Flitwick Baptist Church, Sandy Baptist Church, Shefford Baptist Church and Marston Vale Community Church.

We respond to situations of need via confidential referrals processes from multiple agencies and care workers across central Bedfordshire.

All our delivery teams are DBS checked, approved by the leadership teams of the partner churches and have signed confidentiality agreements.

### *Our objectives*

To relieve persons in Central Bedfordshire and the surrounding area that are in poverty or financial hardship in such ways as the Trustees from time to time think fit, in particular, but not exclusively by:

1. Providing food parcels to support individuals and families who are experiencing food deprivation.
2. Providing other items to meet immediate and essential needs, as resources allow.
3. Developing other forms of support to meet immediate need and alleviate financial hardship.

### *Our values*

We are a Christian organisation motivated by Jesus’ teaching on poverty and injustice. We operate according to Christian principles of compassion, honesty, integrity, openness, kindness and care of all people, regardless of backgrounds or beliefs (or none). We are passionate about inclusion and being non-judgemental is central to what we do. We believe that everyone has the right to have food on their plate, dignity, skills, a chance to work and hope for the future.

### *Our Aims*

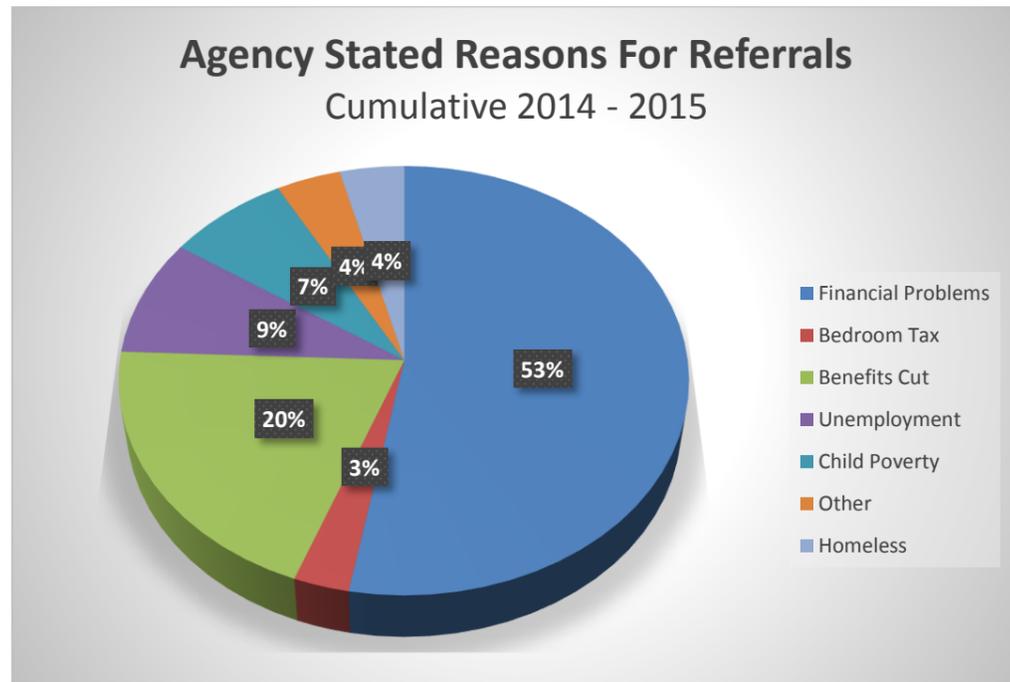
The Trustees employ a number of strategies to assist The Need Project to alleviate poverty or financial hardship and meet its Objects by:

- Providing free food parcels, and when resources allow furniture and clothing, for adults and families experiencing financial crisis.
- By providing food and other essentials to families and individuals referred to the charity by recognised social work agencies, local authorities, community bodies, churches, charities or other organisations whose purpose includes the prevention or relief of poverty (‘referral agencies’).
- Developing effective relationships with local councils (County, unitary, parish and town), referral agencies, faith groups and community groups.
- Ensuring wide community participation in the charity’s projects through giving, and raising awareness.
- Developing a culture of lifelong learning throughout the organisation in order to allow the trustees, core staff and volunteers to do their allotted jobs effectively.
- Building strong links with the local media, and regularly updating the charity’s website in order to stimulate public awareness of the charity’s work and the issues facing people in poverty and distress.
- Identifying, evaluating and incorporating best practice in project templates to ensure that projects become self-sustaining and are easy to replicate.

## Christmas 2014

<u>Items</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Estimated Value</u>	
		<u>£</u>	<u>p</u>
Christmas Hampers	254	11,430.00	
Christmas Presents	172	1720.00	
Christmas Party	65	150.00	
Christmas Dinner	18	50.00	
Cash Gifts Given		270.00	
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>		<b><u>£13,620</u></b>	





#### NOTES on Stated Reasons for Referrals

1. Many of the referrals received have had more than one reason given. In each case the administrators have made a reasoned judgement to record the primary reason.

Our processes and data recording are under review so that all reasons stated will be recorded for each referral

2. Without a clear definition of child poverty most referring agencies do not indicate this as a reason for referral. If children are in need of food due to any of the other reasons given, then perhaps child poverty should be automatically applied.

This has not been done for 2014-15 records, but this too is under review.

3. 'Financial Problems' has been given most often as the reason for referral. However this is an obvious catch-all that may have any of the other reasons as the root cause of financial difficulties.

Therefore, there may well be other reasons that have not been disclosed to us. Our review of processes seeks to address this so that more accurate data will be reported and recorded in the future.

#### Our Aims Continued

- Working closely with churches to help the Christian faith community to take a more active, practical and effective role in social action.
- Providing educational support to enable those referred to become more self-sufficient where it is appropriate and resources allow
- Setting up social enterprises which add value to the charity's existing projects by generating surpluses.

#### General Report for 2014/2015

##### A Year of Helping Those in Need

"If we hadn't received this food parcel, then my children would have gone without food this weekend." So one desperate mother commented to one of our volunteers as they recently delivered a food parcel to her home. This is a vital reminder of why The Need Project Central Bedfordshire exists.

When the Need Project was first established in 2008 it was an extension of the practical caring ministry of King's Baptist Church, delivering parcels to one to two local people each week. The food at that stage could be stored in one small cupboard in the church-hall. In 2014 the Need Project became an independent charitable trust in its own right, and working from five hubs and two other food stores, we delivered food parcels enough to feed 1,800 adults and 1,300 children, who had been referred to us by a variety of statutory and voluntary bodies (ie: Social Services, Children's Centres, Schools, GP Practices, Churches etc).

An analysis of our statistical returns for 2014/15 reveal a variety of reasons given by the referral agencies requesting a parcel for an individual or a family, including, child poverty, unemployment, homelessness and financial difficulties. Often there is a whole combination of factors behind the cry for help, and it can be hard to determine the underlying issue behind them. Whilst The Need Project will deliver to anyone referred to us, regardless of their ethnicity, sexual orientation or beliefs, we do work hard with the referral agencies to ensure that each request arises from a genuine need.

Throughout the year the Need Project has delivered parcels the estimated value of each being between £30-£40) totalling £45,110. Alongside this we have also responded to urgent requests for assistance with clothing, essential personal items, toys and furniture. We have only been able to do this because of the generosity of others. Food baskets are regularly filled at local town councils, schools, supermarkets, churches and local Sikh Gurdwara. On occasions other food banks have passed on food when they have had a surplus of stock. It always seems amazing that almost as soon as the hub stores are restocked, the food whizzes straight off the shelves again in the form of various parcels for delivery. We would like to thank everyone for their support

##### Christmas 2014

This was once again an exceptionally busy period, with 254 food parcels being delivered along with 172 Christmas presents. However, the figures do not really convey a true picture of the task involved. During the week before Christmas, virtually the whole premises at King's Baptist Church in Stotfold was taken over. Tables were stacked with not only the usual food items, but with special Christmassy items (ie: mince pies, Christmas puddings etc), alongside presents for Children of all ages. Throughout the week, telephone calls were being received with requests for assistance, food supplies were being collected, sorted into the right place and then the parcels were made up and placed in order for delivery according to their area, before being loaded up and sent out. Such a task required a veritable army of volunteers who willingly and cheerfully gave themselves wholeheartedly to the task, under the supervision of our Project Leader, Gordon Hamilton. It was a job well done, though, as always, with many lessons learnt for the future. Apart from the sheer joy of helping others in need, the only reward on offer all week – was a box of out of date Snickers bars!

Clothing, Toys & Furniture

2014/15 has witnessed a considerable increase in the requests for assistance with clothing, toys and particularly, furniture. Often those moving out of hostels, prison or off the streets into new accommodation have very little to equip their needs including, beds, tables, chairs, crockery etc. We are grateful to God that along with the increase in demand, we have also experienced an increase in supply.

One of our main concerns coming into 2015 was finding enough storage space for the furniture. We are very thankful that a local property developer after reading an article about the Need Project in a local paper contacted Gordon, and has kindly given us the free use of the former Liberal Hall in Stotfold to use as a store, until the site undergoes development sometime in the future. Since Central Bedfordshire has waived the rates for the building the only cost to the Need Project has been to insure the use of the premises.

During 2014/15 we held several Open Days at churches in Sandy, Shefford, Stotfold and Letchworth, to which local people, including our clients are invited, providing them with an occasion to avail themselves of clothing, toys and other essentials that have been donated. These days are always well attended, and provide us with an opportunity to build relationships with members of the local community, as we share with them over refreshments of home-made soup, bread and cakes.

The Hubs

In 2015 we were delighted to welcome Marston Vale as a hub, to join those already operating at Stotfold, Flitwick, Sandy and Shefford. In addition we have food stores at Houghton Regis and at Project 17 in Sandy. With the spread of the different hubs the Need Project is able to meet the demands across the county more effectively. Each hub has their own team managed by the Hub Leader, who in turn is supervised by the Project Leader.

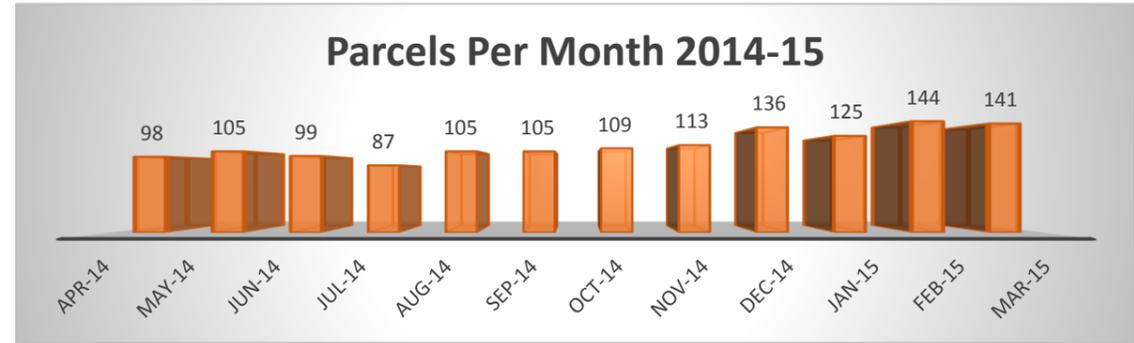


The hubs are responsible for collecting, sorting and then distributing the food in their immediate area. We are in the process of ensuring a greater standardization of the food parcels made up by each of the hubs, though this is dependent upon what is currently available, and the levels demand at any given time.

It is important to note that every request for a food parcel does not just involve enlisting the services of the Project Leader, but of the volunteers who regularly sacrifice their time in the commitment they make to ensure that food is collected, sorted and delivered when and where it is needed. Without this voluntary work, the ministry of the Need Project would be severely curtailed. We would express our deep gratitude to everyone who helps out in whatever way they can; every volunteer is deeply appreciated.

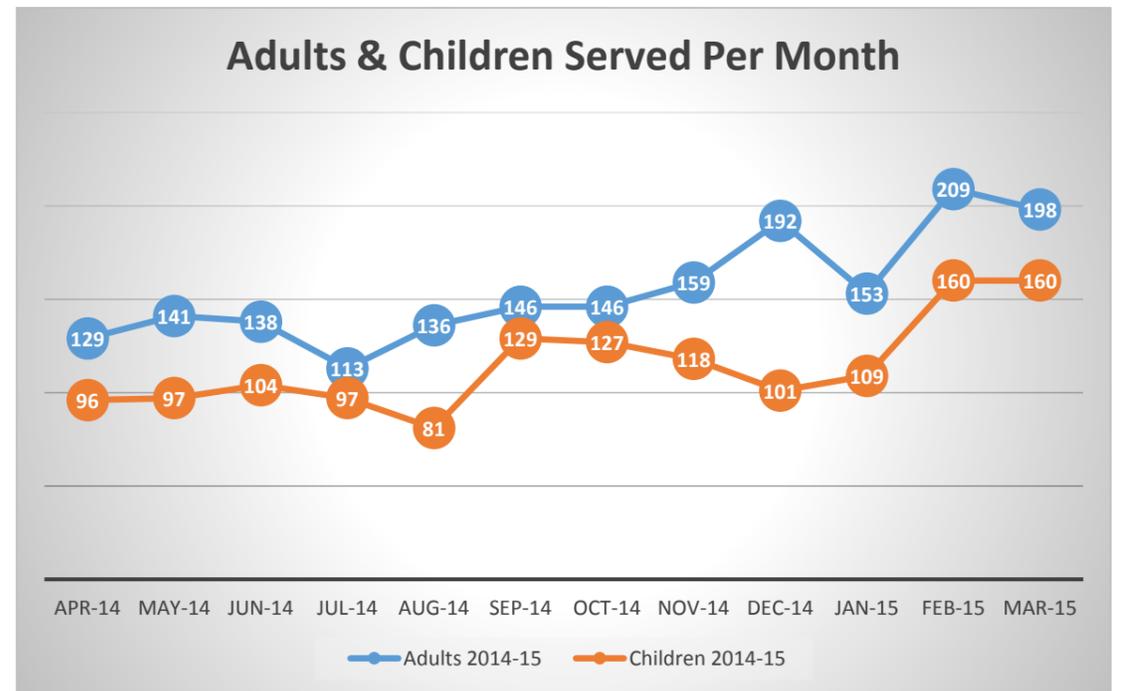
As the Need Project continues to grow, we are very conscious of the necessity of ensuring that all the hubs work together more effectively, and to this end (as the structural table of the Need Project on page 14 shows), we have established a Hub Liaison Group, whereby representatives of all the hubs will meet together 3-4 times a year, to build relationships, share experiences, learn from each other and maintain a more cohesive approach to fulfilling objectives of the Charity.

Annual Statistics



**Total** 1367 food parcels 2014-15

**Value** £ 45,110.00 at £30-£40 per parcel



**Totals 2014-15** (Adults) 1860  
(Children) 1379

As is noted below, our main concern as Trustees is to see more regular funding coming through so that we can employ Gordon Hamilton fulltime and more effectively fulfil the vision and aims of The Need Project.

### Donations

We acknowledge more significant donations made by the following organisations:

Ampthill Firework Association  
Aragon Housing  
Central Bedfordshire Council  
Flitwick Baptist Church  
Grange Baptist Church  
Howletts Building Supplies

King's Baptist Church  
Sandy Methodist Church  
Santander  
Shefford Baptist Church  
Stotfold Churches Together  
Stotfold Choir

### Fundraising Events

A number of different fundraising activities have been arranged during the year, each one of which had made a valuable contribution to the work of the Project; we thank everyone for their generosity and hard work.

Doug Deards: Treasurer



“Love your neighbour as yourself” (Luke 10:27)

### The Project Leader

There is no doubt that from its inception the driving force behind the Need Project has been our Project Leader, Gordon Hamilton. Without him the project would not exist as it does today. Through the funding received in 2014 from Central Bedfordshire we have been able to fund Gordon to work for the Project three days a week. However, we would highlight that Gordon often gives of himself over and above and beyond this. On behalf of the Trustees, Bob Cain acts as Gordon's line-manager, and is currently overseeing the need for a better work/life balance. However, as is stated below, we are concerned that we see a significant increase in the funding that we might employ Gordon fulltime, so that he is able to more effectively manage the continued growth in the Project, and to fulfil its future vision.

We pay tribute to Gordon and to the passion and commitment he shows to the work of the Need Project.

### Operating as Charity

In July 2014 The Need Project Central Bedfordshire was recognized by the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organization (CIO). This has provided it with the appropriate foundation to facilitate its growth and operate more effectively and with greater accountability.

In January 2015 we held a Service of Celebration and Commissioning at King's Baptist Church, celebrating becoming a charity and commissioning Gordon in his role as Project Leader. It was a special time, with different trustees leading and an inspiring message given by Bob Cain. We were delighted and encouraged to see the event so well attended.

Throughout the months since gaining charitable status the Trustees have sought to closely monitor the work of the Project, ensuring that its objectives are fulfilled, that a genuine need is being met and that the work is consolidated.

### "It is in Giving that we Receive"

As a Christian organisation it is good to remind ourselves of these words by St Francis of Assisi. The Need Project seeks to demonstrate Christian care and concern for those in our local communities who find themselves wanting for the basic necessities of life, whether it be food, clothing or furniture. This has been the work undertaken during this first full year as a CIO. The difference it makes to the lives of others cannot be better expressed than in the words of a Christmas card the Project received in December. In it the sender stated that the previous year they had found themselves in desperate circumstances and had received a much needed food parcel. Now this Christmas things had changed. They were once more standing on their own two feet and had enclosed a cheque to help others.

This is why the Need Project exists and such a vital role to play.

Rev. Ian Hare: Chair of Trustees

## Some Notes from Our Project Leader

We continue to grow as a project with more food going out and a lot more furniture and a lot more contacts being made through our networking. We have a God given relationship with so many food providers, from single givers to Trussell Trust food bank, from schools to supermarkets. So many churches give to us too, reaching right across denominations, from Catholic churches to Anglican, from Methodist to Baptist it is amazing just writing this down really.

Sometimes when I am in the thick of it I forget to realise just what is going on. We have the ear of the main services. We attend child poverty meetings and are asked to share our opinion on various issues.

Our hubs have grown in number and as has the volume of parcels delivered. We now have hubs in Stotfold, Sandy, Flitwick, Shefford and Marston Vale as well as food stores at Houghton Regis and Project 17.

We work with food banks locally and some not so local to access food. The food banks at Bedford, St. Neots and Harlow have been particularly generous to us over the last year. Also Kuljit and Jaz from the local Sikh community have been very generous. All we do is make a call and a few days later we collect what we have asked for.

At Christmas we were so busy but the team we had worked so well together; it was quite fun in a weird sort of way. I don't know the exact number of volunteers the Need Project has but without every one of them we would surely struggle, so I would like to thank everyone for their support to me but primarily for their commitment and passion to serve in this way.

What has the future in store for the Need Project? I have my own ideas but the most important thing is that we continue to serve Jesus and let him decide the way forward.

It has been seven years since the project began with the little store cupboard at KBC with maybe 1 or 2 parcels going out in a week, to March 2015 when we gave away over 144 food parcels throughout Central Beds and so much furniture and Easter eggs and so little spent, it is totally amazing.

In closing my mind always goes back to the saying, we can't do everything but we can do something. We won't let the things that we can't do stand in the way of the things that we can.

Gordon Hamilton



## The Finance Report

### The Need Project Accounts to 31/03/2015

	<b>Income</b>
	<b>£</b>
Transfer of funds from KBC	2000.00
Local Government funding	10000.00
Donations from Business, Schools and Churches	9377.34
Grants from Trusts	3000.00
Donations from individuals	3116.27
Other voluntary income	
Fund raising income	704.15
<b>Total income</b>	<b>28197.76</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>
	<b>£</b>
Contract	9602.00
Travel	4101.00
Food	2843.34
Party	174.57
Equipment	600.00
Miscellaneous items	408.46
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>17729.37</b>
<b>Change in reserves/balance</b>	<b>10468.39</b>

Independently Verified by Mrs. G. Roberts

## General Comments

Every gift received for the work of the Need Project Central Bedfordshire, has been greatly appreciated, regardless of the amount or the identity of the donor giving it. Without your support this work could not take place, food parcels would not be delivered to those who need them.

There is no doubt that a significant difference was made by the £10,000 funding received from Central Bedfordshire, helping to enable us to employ our Project Leader, Gordon Hamilton three days a week. This funding however has not been continued due to budget cuts.

Travel costs are high because of the nature of Gordon's work, supervising the hubs across rural Bedfordshire as well as collecting and delivering food, furniture etc. Volunteers generally do not claim travel expenses.

