

Issue 45 - August 2023

# On the road

The newsletter of Open Road published for staff, volunteers, service users, partners and supporters

Harlow Walled Garden | High Sheriff of Essex Visits Open Road | SOS Bus Services



open road  
your journey to recovery



# Welcome from the Chief Executive

Welcome to our latest newsletter.

We were delighted to receive a visit to our head offices by the High Sheriff of Essex, Charles Bishop and his wife Nellie in June where they found out more about the work of Open Road and met many of our staff, volunteers and service users. Joni Thompson and I were also honoured to be invited to the High Sheriff's garden party at the beginning of July on a beautiful sunny day – please see page 3 for more information and photographs.

At the High Sheriff's garden party, I was introduced by our Chairman of Trustees John Aldridge to Charles Gratwicke, who is a retired High Court circuit judge and has agreed to become a Patron of Open Road. We all look forward to working with Charles in his new role with us.

We are excited to be holding a fundraising event at Layer Marney Tower on Sunday 29th October with the theme being Poetry, Music and Magic, hosted by our Patron Dave Monk with performances from John Cooper Clarke – Poetry; The Jentones – Music; and Nick Brown – Magic. For further details and to purchase your tickets please see page 8.

Having increased our services and activities across Essex and Medway over the last year, we have had a structure review of our head office team, who support our frontline staff, volunteers, and welcomed two new members of staff to the team in June and July – Claire Beecham, Regional Manager for North and Tim Young, former mayor of Colchester, as Senior Leadership Support. It is great having all the new staff team on board.

In this edition, we are delighted to have Simon Bunn from Brewhouse & Kitchen under our funder spotlight – please see more details on page 4. A big thank you to Simon for his very generous donation to Open Road.

This month the spotlight for our teams is on John Sherman, a valued volunteer from the Colchester team – a big thank you to John for many years of supporting us through his volunteering. Please see page 3 for more details.

Our next newsletter will be published in November 2023 so please do let my PA, Nici or myself have any articles you would like published.

With best wishes,

Sarah Wright, Chief Executive

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## Open Road Spotlight - Colchester Centre Volunteer, John Sherman

*Our North Essex Centre Manager, Scarlett Doherty sat with Colchester volunteer John Sherman to find out more about his role.*

John has volunteered with Open Road for 8 years and is a valued member of the Colchester team. When

asked what drew John to the role, he said he "knew about Open Road through his volunteer role at the April centre and when this closed, he wanted a similar organisation to volunteer with to take him out of his comfort zone".

A typical day at Open Road for John involves assisting with data inputting, answering phones and the intercom and with general day to day tasks to "help ease the workload of recovery workers". John said he is "impressed by how dedicated the staff are to help people". A highlight of volunteering for Open Road

was "meeting the Duke of Gloucester", which John says, "was an interesting experience!".

John says he particularly enjoys speaking with family members of prospective service users "to reassure them and offer support to them in addition to the service user". Overall, John says he enjoys his role as it "gives him another social outlet".

When asked if he would recommend volunteering, John said he "would certainly recommend volunteering to anybody wishing to contribute to their community" and would especially recommend to those who are retired as it "provides a substitute for the social interaction they would have had whilst working". John said that volunteering allows people to "feel as though you are an integral part of the community and allows you to see other sides of life".

*Thank you, John, for all your hard work! The Colchester team are very grateful for your help and look forward to Thursdays as they know they will have a laugh when you are around!*

## High Sheriff of Essex Summer Garden Party

Our Chief Executive Sarah Wright and Clinical & Business Development Director Joni Thompson were delighted to attend the garden party hosted by High Sheriff of Essex, Charles Bishop and his wife Nellie at their beautiful home, earlier this summer.

The event was attended by representatives of Essex's amazing voluntary sector, local authorities, supporters and the county's great and good. It was a stunningly warm and sunny day with blue skies and sunshine, where everyone enjoyed great food and great company in beautiful surroundings.

We wish to thank Charles and Nellie for their very kind invite and for a really lovely afternoon.



High Sheriff leading garden party orchestra



High Sheriff addressing guests



High Sheriff Garden Party

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## Funders and Supporters Spotlight

*In supporting local communities, we embrace opportunities to partnership work with corporate organisations based in those communities, to learn more about our work and be a part of what we do. We are delighted to welcome Simon Bunn of Brewhouse & Kitchen (B&K) as our August newsletter's funder in the spotlight. Through a kind introduction by Jim Grigg of Mid Essex Quaker Meeting (who was our spotlight in May), Brewhouse & Kitchen very generously made a donation to Open Road earlier this year as part of purchasing an historic building in Chelmsford for their newest Chelmsford B&K venture. Simon tells us more.*

Our business consists of 23 brewpubs spread across the country, we actually brew beer in the pub and sell it over the bar, we also serve great food from the Kitchen. We (Kris Gumbrell and I) founded the business in 2011, going on to open our first brewpub in 2013 in Portsmouth. 10 years in and with so much water under the bridge and so many challenges in such a short space of time for everyone in the country, the last 4 years have been very intense. Our team have been amazing all the way through this adjusting to all the challenges and going the extra mile. I feel very lucky when walking into any of our businesses, as they are full of amazing people, doing the best job they can.



**Open Road is an incredible organisation offering a range of services to support those in need in our society. Whether someone needs a temporary crutch, like a safe place to stay for the night on the Bus, or more long-term support for addiction, it's such a relief to know that charities like Open Road exist to provide help and hope."**

Chelmsford. Jim introduced me to Open Road CEO, Sarah Wright who informed me of the areas of support.

### **What impresses you most about Open Road?**

The positive spirit within the business is definitely one that can change people's lives, and you can feel it strongly.

### **What do you envisage is next for Open Road?**

We would like to support the continuation of the good work done with our presence in Chelmsford.

*Thank you to Simon and Brewhouse & Kitchen. We are thrilled to be able to work with you and your team to engage local communities and make the lives of local people happier and healthier.*

### **How did you find out about Open Road?**

We were introduced to Open Road by the quakers, I have been very impressed by the work you do.

### **What is the background to your funding/ donation to Open Road?**

Jim Grigg of Mid Essex Quaker Meeting asked us to support Open Road, as part of the agreement to purchase the Anne Knight building in

Ways to support Open Road – many options are free ways to support us as you shop, at no cost to you!



Scanning the QR code will take you directly to our website where you can make a one off donation, or set up a monthly direct debit

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Texts cost £3 plus one standard rate message and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give £3 but do not wish to receive marketing communications, **text OPENROADNOINFO to 70085**

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## Fundraising News

*As always, our Fundraising Manager Leah Slator has been busy with all things funding and fundraising since our last newsletter. It's already been a packed 2023, between applying for funding, planning events, meeting funders and supporters, and networking to get our name out there so that people hear about the good work we do and how they can help us. Leah lets us know more...*

**Our 2023 fundraisers have been many and varied, so far – a massive thank you to all of our fundraisers who take on the most amazing challenges. We are incredibly grateful to you.**

**Sky Dive** – This summer, our supporter, Sarah Dufosse and her team of 4 fellow supporters jumped out of a plane to raise money for Open Road! The event took place in Langar Airfield in Nottingham. Those who took part ranged from 16 to 81 years of age.

If you would like to help Sarah and the team reach their target, please go along to the following link, where you can donate. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/open-road-drug-and-alcohol-charity>.

**Cycle ride** – Liam, one of our SOS Bus volunteer, is undertaking a 50-mile bike ride, raising money for the SOS Bus. The event is taking place on Saturday 26th August, travelling from Chelmsford to Colchester, via Halstead, Braintree, and Sudbury.

Liam said, "I am undertaking this challenge as I have worked on the SOS Bus for nearly 4 years now. I regularly try to raise money for charities close to me and as part of my fundraising efforts, I have overlooked the Open Road and the SOS Bus. I felt that now was the right time to raise some much-needed funds for the bus as well as awareness of the bus project at the same time."

If you would also like to support Liam on his fantastic challenge, please click the link to donate <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/liam-cross7>

### Marquis Pub Charity Football Match

– Danny, from the Marquis Pub in Colchester, approached us a few months

ago asking if the staff and customers could host a fundraising event on our behalf. Obviously, we were delighted and said yes.

They decided to host a charity football match that took place on Sunday 14th May. Danny said before the event, "So we decided to do a charity



football match; an eleven-a-side match full of our current team members, and our regular customers. We're holding this to raise money for the Colchester SOS Bus. In recent Pubwatch meetings, they had expressed that they would like a new bus and wanted to raise funds. We can't think of a better cause to raise money for than the SOS bus which so many of the town's nightlife actively rely on and use! Hopefully, we can get a good turn out and raise a good amount of money!"

This was a great event, and the Marquis ended up raising an amazing £327. Thank you so much to all those who took part in the match and donated. A special thank you to Danny for all his hard work organising the event.

**Poetry, Music and Magic** – This year on Sunday 29th October, instead of our charity ball, we will be hosting a poetry, music and magic event, which will take place at Layer Marney Tower. Fun for all the family! Please see the advert in this edition for more information - we would love to see you there!

Afternoon of  
**Poetry, MUSIC & Magic**

Please keep an eye out on our website and social media platforms for further information. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our funders for awarding money allowing Open Road to continue providing vital services to vulnerable people within our communities. This summer, our very generous and vital funders have included:

- Essex Police Fire & Crime Commissioner – £15,000 received to go towards the refurbishment of the SOS Bus.
- Essex Community Foundation – £5,000 to go towards our Essex Family Support service.
- 'First Give' – St Benedict's School in Essex – £1,000 to go towards the SOS Bus.

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### Special Coronation Event - Rose Planting –

Open Road wanted to do something to celebrate the new King, so it was decided for us to plant a rose in commemoration of King Charles III Coronation. One of our patrons, Lorna Rolfe DL very kindly donated the rose and plaque, and for the planting ceremony, this was planted within Harlow's walled garden for all to see. Helpers on the day included Harlow centre manager Louise Taylor, Lorna, Leah and Leah's two children, Zac and Emily. It was a beautiful day enjoyed by all.



Leah, left, with Lorna planting our Coronation rose

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## Fundraising News

### Essex Lottery is BACK!

The Essex Lottery is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes in Essex. Tickets for the lottery cost just £1 per week, with 60p going to your chosen local charity. Top prize of £25,000!  
[www.essexlottery.co.uk/support/open-road](http://www.essexlottery.co.uk/support/open-road)



### [www.forgoodcauses.org](http://www.forgoodcauses.org)

This is a great site where you can donate your retail reward vouchers to your chosen charity, which could be us! On their website, just click the 'Donate My Rewards' button and search for 'Open Road'.



### [www.openroad.org.uk](http://www.openroad.org.uk) donation page

Scanning the QR code will take you directly to our website where you can make a one off donation, or set up a monthly direct debit



### [www.makingadifference.cards/supporting/Open-Road-Visions](http://www.makingadifference.cards/supporting/Open-Road-Visions)

Making a Difference charity cards is an online card shop where you can purchase all your celebration cards while raising funds for the charity.



### [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

Donate for free as you shop online with hundreds of brilliant High Street and well-known retailers. It's easy to download the EasyFundraising's app. Just chose 'Open Road' as your charity of choice and, without any cost to you, Easyfundraising will donate a percentage of each purchase to your chosen charity. It's as easy as that!



### [www.charity.ebay.co.uk/charity/Open-Road-Visions/](http://www.charity.ebay.co.uk/charity/Open-Road-Visions/)

ebay for Charity has partnered with the PayPal Giving Fund to make it easy for sellers to donate anything from 1% to 100% of your item's final sale price to a certified charity. Or you can make a one-off donation when you make a purchase.



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## How can you help?

Giving back to your community, either time or money can boost your self-esteem. There is nothing more self-affirming than knowing you are doing something good and supporting others. You and your loved ones can give back by either making a monetary donation, host a fundraising event, or volunteering your time.

### • Volunteering

There are many volunteering opportunities within Open Road, such as...

- Supporting the night-time economy on the SOS Buses
- Becoming an Appropriate Adult within the criminal justice system
- Become a Digital Fundraiser or Events Champion
- Work frontline within our centres across Essex
- Support head office team with finance, HR, fundraising etc

### • Hosting a fundraising event

Create a fundraising event where you can set yourself a challenge or arrange a coffee morning to raise funds for Open Road, get in contact with our fundraising team for your fundraising pack today.

### • Monetary donations

Donations are our lifeblood. We rely on donations to continue providing support to those in need. You can either give a one-off donation, set up a direct debit for monthly donations or leave a gift in your will, which is called a Legacy donation.

To donate, simply scan the QR code, log into our website, visit our JustGiving page or pop down to your local Open Road centre.



[www.openroad.org.uk](http://www.openroad.org.uk) <https://www.justgiving.com/openroad>

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**THE ESSEX LOTTERY** supporting **openroad** your journey to recovery

## WE'VE LAUNCHED OUR LOTTERY PAGE

Buy Your Tickets From Our Page - We Get 50%

- We now have a page on The Essex Lottery!
- Support local causes and win prizes of up to £25,000!
- 50% of all tickets sold from our page go to us!
- PLUS 10% goes to other good causes in Essex!
- Tickets only cost £1 per week!
- Support us and win prizes - WIN WIN!

To Start Supporting, Visit:  
[www.EssexLottery.co.uk](http://www.EssexLottery.co.uk)  
And Search For:  
**Open Road**

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older

## You've Got To Be In It To Win It!

The Essex Lottery is giving everyone the chance to win up to £25,000 and support our amazing local charity at the same time. Tickets are just £1 per week, 50% of all ticket proceeds bought on our page go to us, with 10% also going to other worthwhile local charities. It's a WIN WIN!! To get your tickets, please go to -

<https://www.essexlottery.co.uk/support/open-road>



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# Afternoon of Poetry, MUSIC & Magic



**Sunday 29th October 2023**

**Venue:** Layer Marney Tower

**Time:** 1-5pm

Welcome Drinks on arrival

**Ticket Price:** £30  
(children under 16 go free)

**Tables:** of 8-10

**Entertainment:**

**Poetry:** Dr John Cooper Clarke

**Music:** Live Music - The Jentones

**Magic:** Nick Brown

**Fundraising:** Auction and Raffle

**Catering:** Bring your own picnic  
and drinks

*(Free hot drinks and wine available to buy)*

To book your tickets contact:

**01206 369782 / [info@openroad.org.uk](mailto:info@openroad.org.uk)**

12 North Hill, Colchester, CO1 1DZ

**[www.openroad.org.uk](http://www.openroad.org.uk)**

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## Recovery Stories

*Our Essex All Age Recovery Coordination Service (AARCS), in partnership with The Children's Society, supports vulnerable people throughout Essex. The team offers accessible, confidential support and advice to young people and adults who need help with drug and alcohol problems, to get their life back on track. Here, we hear how clients KG and GE have turned their lives around, through their own hard work and by engaging with our teams.*



KG, centre, at the High Sheriff's visit

KG entered treatment in 2019 and was street homeless using heroin. Open Road's Senior Recovery Worker, Ben approached him and brought him in for an assessment. KG was then scripted, engaging with us and our partner, Essex Stars and through Open Road, KG was referred for housing support, which was successful. KG moved into sheltered accommodation in 2023 and has also stopped using illicit drugs.

Ben also worked with KG around excessive drinking and KG agreed to entering detox as part of his treatment journey. KG was a guest at The High Sheriff of Essex's visit to Open Road's head office this summer, and thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone. Everyone attending really enjoyed meeting KG too.

GE is stable on script and not using illicit drugs, through engaging with Open Road and Essex Stars. She has a young toddler and has been closed to social care and family solutions. GE has been attending the Open Road parent and baby group since we launched it in the last year, which offers our clients who are mums to little ones a chance to meet, make new friends, gain support and advice and go on trips such as to Colchester Zoo which featured in an article in a newsletter earlier in 2023.



GE and her little one at baby massage class

In February this year, GE and her little one attended a baby massage course that our centre provides, thanks to funding that we have received. GE engaged really well with this and we are really pleased to be able to offer this opportunity to GE and our other clients, helping to learn new skills and make new memories with their babies.

*A massive well done to KG and GE for everything you have achieved on your journeys to recovery. We are delighted to be able to support you in making the positive changes you have, thank you for trusting us. We look forward to seeing what life holds for you all next. A massive thank you too to our amazing team members who go the extra mile to support our clients to be the best they can be.*

## SOS Paw Patrol Dog Bandanas – Now in Stock!

Have the best dressed dog on the street and support Open Road! We are really pleased that our fantastic SOS Paw Patrol dog bandanas are now available for £8.50 (small) or £9.75 (large).

To get yours, please go to our website – [www.openroad.org.uk](http://www.openroad.org.uk) or email us on [Info@openroad.org.uk](mailto:Info@openroad.org.uk)

Alternatively, please ring us on 01206 369782 for details.

All sale proceeds help vulnerable people in local communities.



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## Five Seasons in One Summer for Harlow Walled Garden

*Our Walled Garden client volunteers have had a busy summer, tending to the Harlow Walled Garden as part of proactive diversionary client activities, supported by our Harlow team. The weather has been an added challenge with the very changeable conditions we've had this year. From storms to very warm weather, our volunteers and Harlow team have taken everything in their stride!*

Harlow Recovery Worker, Anita Bailey says the garden is looking fantastic even with the stormy conditions. "This year, amongst other things, we have grown green peppers from seed. Open Road planted the Red Lucifer crocosmia (which you can see in the photos) 7 years ago when our garden project started, which still looks incredible. It was aptly chosen for the name as alcohol and drugs represent the devil for many of our clients."

During Volunteers Week this summer, Harlow Council invited volunteers from across Harlow to a celebration event where they were awarded certificates in gratitude for all their efforts and time. Invitees and winners included Anita, who prior to being a recovery worker with us, for many years volunteered as the Walled Garden Project Lead. Well done, Anita, for such a well deserved award!

This June, we also planted a gorgeous pink coronation rose, donated by our Patron, Lorna Rolfe DL, in the garden in celebration of King Charles' coronation. Lorna kindly attended the planting along with Fundraising Manager Leah (who brought her two lovely little helpers, Zac and Emily!), Anita and Harlow manager, Louise. Thank you to Lorna for your very generous donation of this lovely rose and to everyone who came along for the planting. The rose will be a really lovely reminder of a very historic and special year, for years to come.

The team also recently said 'good luck, but not goodbye' to Park Manager, Mike Levett who has retired this summer. Mike has always been a great champion of Open Road's Walled Garden project and of all the various volunteer groups who also help to keep Harlow Park looking so fantastic for all its visitors. We thank Mike for his unstinting help and support to Anita and our volunteers, who will all miss him a great deal. Hopefully, he will often pop into the garden to visit everyone.

*Thank you to everyone for all your efforts in making Harlow Park and the Walled Garden such a gorgeous haven in the heart of Harlow.*



Anita's Certificate



Crocosmia & Walled Garden meeting room behind



Green peppers grown from seed



Nasturtiums



Walled Garden Flowers



Summer colour



Leah and her two little helpers with Lorna and Harlow centre Manager, Louise



Lorna, right & Leah with our Coronation rose



Harlow Sunflowers

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## SOS Bus Services - Always here to help!

The SOS bus has been really busy of late with multiple projects and new services that have been introduced in the last 12 months.

We have launched a new and improved 'lost children service' for festivals and events. Our first trial run was at a recent RaverTots festival in Maidstone - this is a rave festival aimed at children between the ages of 0 - 10 years. It was an amazing success, finding eight lost little ones in crowds of up to 5,000 people. Everyone at the festival was very impressed with the service and stated that every event like this should have this service. We have another five RaverTots festivals to attend and look forward to helping any lost 'little ones' and returning them safely to their families.

Another service that has really taken off is the Changing Futures outreach service that the bus runs on weekdays. This service is designed to reach those people that are in hard to reach areas to help them with everything from mental health issues to the cost of living crisis. The bus sets up in many different Essex towns and villages and multiple different partner agencies come and join us on the bus. This means that when someone needs some help, they are able to get what they need in one place. We will continue to build these services making sure we can supply the public the support and tools they need in these difficult times.

Thank you to all of our SOS volunteers, who donate their time to be on the buses at weekends helping vulnerable people, and support our welfare services at the many community events we attend.

*If you are interested being an SOS Bus volunteer, please visit our website [www.openroad.org.uk](http://www.openroad.org.uk) or please contact our head office on 01206 369782 to speak to a member of the SOS team.*



Coronation Weekend Welfare Team



Colchester Drum & Pipes band



Stacey in a borrowed Glengarry!



Volunteer, Sophia and Manager, Stacey



Maidstone RaverTots 2023



RaverTots



RaverTots Welfare Team

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## Open Road Training

*HR & Training Manager, Gavin Real keeps us updated on the charity's training news.*



Following my first training article in the May newsletter, it's been a very busy summer so I wanted to let you know what we have been up to and our exciting training plans for the rest of 2023.

I have spent time with the Regional Managers and the relevant project leads focussing on the training requirements for each of our operational roles. This matrix will form the benchmark for our operational development training and ensure our continued adherence to DANOS competencies.

Responding to feedback we have moved our training from a one-week block at a more free-flow structure of available dates as we continue our strive to be inclusive and accommodating to all across our teams.

We hosted our first Learning at Work Week events and a very enjoyable morning with the fabulous Ren Massetti delivering a Drug and Alcohol awareness session, followed by a more calm but none the less well received Mental Health Resilience workshop. Both training sessions we will look to run again as we move forward.

Plans now move on as I am focussing on developmental sessions and opportunities as we progress as an organisation. Watch this space!

*I look forward to keeping you updated in our upcoming newsletters about Open Road's exciting training and Continuing Professional Development programmes, helping our people to be the best they can be in their roles, as they support vulnerable people in local communities.*

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## Military Provost Service Regimental Coin to Open Road Counsellor, Jane Williams

In June, we were delighted that Counsellor, Jane Williams BACP was personally awarded The Military Provost Service Regimental Coin for her Service at The Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC), in Colchester by MCTC Commanding Officer, Lt Col M Fielder

Open Road have been providing Counselling services to MCTC since 2005 and Jane Williams has been at the forefront of the provision for the past eight years. In these eight years, Jane has supported hundreds of detainees with her Counselling, helping them understand their past, present, and future and aiding them to overcome loss, trauma, addiction and many other problems.

Jane's commendation noted that, "While we cannot know the full impact of every single case, it is clear from the detainee's continued engagement, feedback and the letters and cards of thanks she receives, that she has changed lives for the better and helped people accomplish the changes they want to make. Jane is a highly respected member of the Welfare Team at MCTC and the wider family at Open Road. Jane fully understands the MCTC custody environment and appropriately shares relevant concerns to assist the whole establishment with the safer custody of our detainees whilst adhering to her professional confidentiality. In testament to her professionalism and expertise,



Jane's award



Presentation by Lt Col Fielder to Jane



1st Military Police Brigade Military Formation



Royal Military Police Insignia

Jane's counselling service, was praised in the recent MCTC HMiP report."

"This recognition of service via the gifting of a Regimental Coin by the Commanding Officer is a time-honoured way for the Armed Forces to say Thank You. Thank you Jane for the last eight years of dedication to changing the lives of British Armed Forces Service Personnel for the better."

"With thanks and recognition for your service from Lt Col M Fielder, MCTC Commanding Officer."

## Open Road Southend Welcomes Essex Community Foundation Trustees

In July, our Southend Young People's team were delighted to host a visit by Essex Community Foundation (ECF) Trustees, Gemma and David. Our manager, Natalie Amos and team were joined by our Chair of Trustees, John Aldridge and Clinical & Business Development Director, Joni Thompson, for the visit.

Gemma and David learned all about the support we provide to vulnerable young people in Southend, in partnership with Forward Trust who support adults alongside us. ECF awarded the young people's service £500 earlier in the year to provide diversionary activities for our young people. Sport is always top of the list in popularity for activities we provide locally which includes football training, amongst other sports.

Gemma said of the visit, "It was wonderful and so inspiring to meet with you all - thank you so much. You are such an amazing team doing brilliant work."



It was a really interesting and inspiring visit for all involved. Thank you for Gemma and David for giving your time, as well as Joni and John. Thanks also to Natalie and the team for welcoming everyone and arranging refreshments.

### Make a donation!

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## High Sheriff of Essex Visits Open Road

This summer, we hosted a visit by High Sheriff of Essex, Charles Bishop and his wife, Nellie to our head office.

Charles and Nellie initially met with our Chief Executive, Sarah to learn more about our work and how we support vulnerable people throughout Essex. Our guests then enjoyed a lovely buffet lunch to meet some of our patrons and trustees, frontline staff and volunteers, clients and some of our head office team.

It was a really lovely event, and we were delighted that Charles and Nellie were able to meet so many of our team and some of our clients. Thank you to everyone who came, and to Charles and Nellie, for giving your time – we hope you enjoyed the event as much as we did.



L-R; High Sheriff, Claire Beacham, Chairman John Aldridge and Patron Simon Brice



Charles, North Regional Manager Claire, Chairman John, Patron Simon



Delicious lunch



High Sheriff meets our guests over lunch



High Sheriff meeting some of our head office team



Manager Simon Alders, Sarah and Charles view 'drug box' visual aids used at talks and presentations

## Colchester Centre Gets a New Look!

Through generous funding from The Clothworkers Foundation, the Colchester Centre is looking amazing with brand new furnishings in the drop-in, ready to welcome our clients and visitors, as well as better working spaces for the team.

Centre Manager, Scarlett was in touch with our Senior Management Team to say, "I just wanted to say thank you for our new furniture and show you the photos for the drop in and the new desks upstairs! We are really pleased."

Our many thanks to The Clothworkers Foundation, we are incredibly grateful to you for your support.



Desks



Drop in



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## Essex Recovery Foundation Awards

In May, Open Road staff, volunteers and clients were invited to and delighted to attend Essex Recovery Foundation's 2023 celebratory awards event.

Essex Recovery Foundation (ERF) says the event is to, "celebrate some of the brilliant people within the recovery community - whether it's for their personal progress in their recovery journey or for an amazing member of staff who is working within recovery services in Essex - we want to take the opportunity to acknowledge YOU!"

Nominations were in three categories:

- Recognising a person in recovery
- Recognising staff within recovery services
- Recognising a person making a positive contribution to the recovery community.

We were very fortunate that Open Road staff and clients were amongst the winners! We thank ERF for inviting us. It was a really fantastic day - we loved celebrating our amazing clients and the great work that colleagues and partners do in supporting vulnerable people throughout Essex.



Julie with her ERF Award



Anita Bailey with her ERF award



Stuart, right, and our ERF award winners

## Make a Difference - Be The Difference!

Open Road's goal is to improve the lives of people in our local communities, free from addiction, offending behaviour and disadvantage. Every one of our funders, donors and supporters help to fund increasingly vital services and support for our clients. We can't do what we do without donations and fundraising. Can you help?

- **Fundraising** - Whether running a half marathon, holding a sponsored sporting event, coffee morning, quiz or other amazing event for Open Road, we would love to hear from you. Please email us on - [info@openroad.org.uk](mailto:info@openroad.org.uk).
- **Donate Online** - You can donate a one-off amount or set up a regular donation via our secure online form on our website - [www.openroad.org.uk/Appeal/donate](http://www.openroad.org.uk/Appeal/donate). Setting up a regular donation provides a steady income for Open Road to provide help and support to individuals and families affected by drugs and alcohol.

- **Donate £5 by Text** - So simple to do - just text OPEN00 £5

Regular donations help Open Road to provide sustained support to individuals and families towards full recovery from the many problems they face. They also save on administration costs - so that more of your money can be spent on crucial services.

**One Person can make all the difference to Open Road!**



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## Essex University Drug & Alcohol Support Project

Our project is coming to the end of its first academic year and our worker, Ellie has seen a total of 33 students referred for support. In 2022/23, we have attended a number of university events including the fresher's fair, volunteer fair and mental health day fair. The project has renewed for another 12 months and we will soon get ready to promote the project to the new students at the start of the next academic year.

At the Freshers Fair, we hand out leaflets on harm reduction and overdose prevention and promote 1:1 support for students struggling with substance misuse.

Ellie tells us about one of her clients as an example of the good work the service does, "ED is currently 3 weeks clean from cannabis and over a month clean from ecstasy. He has also made the decision



Essex Uni - Ellie

not to drink alcohol. A relapse prevention plan has been created with ED which he can use as and when needed. He is awaiting counselling from the YES service to help manage his mental health after I made a referral for him. ED is enjoying being sober and he is able to excel academically in his final and crucial last few weeks at university. He will be able to return home after finished his time at University of Essex and apply for a summer job,

knowing substance use will not be in the way."

Another client generously fed back, "Thank you so much, I feel like I have got my life back on track and have improved so much in such little time. I feel like it wouldn't have been possible without your guidance and care."

## Colchester Mother & Baby Group

*This year, funding from East of England Coop has very generously supported our Colchester Mother & Baby Group activities.*

Our Centre Manager, Scarlett Doherty said of the group, "This year we have done baby massage, an easter egg hunt and relapse prevention with the clients. During the baby massage session, 'Basking Babies' facilitates the session and all attendees were given a booklet of massage techniques to do with their baby/toddler and a little box of massage oil and shower gel. The session went really well and it was lovely to see the mums bonding with their babies."

"For Easter, we did an Easter egg hunt in the garden of the mulberry tree family centre and the toddlers really enjoyed running around collecting eggs. The mothers were taking photos and all toddlers got a large sized easter egg at the end."



Baby massage



"We are planning to go to Fingringhoe nature reserve in August and will take a picnic."

*Our many thanks to East of England Coop for your generous support. Thanks also to our Colchester group for arranging such brilliant activities, allowing clients to enjoy fun and interesting activities with their little ones.*

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# EVERYBODY! *knows* SOMEBODY!

Life is challenging and everybody knows somebody who is struggling. For over 30 years, Open Road has helped thousands of people in Essex, when things get tough. We love to help people be the best they can be, in work and in life, and are really successful at what we do.



- **Businesses work with us to help their people;** with training, advice, one to one staff support



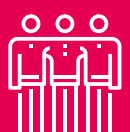
- **We help people in recovery to get that dream job** with a network of dedicated, local employers



- **We walk with people as they journey to recovery,** to healthier, happier lives. Our teams support families too, as substance misuse affects everybody.



- **We keep people safe at festivals** and community events



- **We support people who have lost their way in life,** helping them maintain productive, non-offending lives in their local communities



- **Plus our SOS Buses are in local communities** providing welfare advice services and at weekends in Colchester and Chelmsford, helping vulnerable members of the public

**Our IPS employers network can help fill those vacancies. Our other services could also proactively support your business. Or are you looking for ways to directly give back to your local community?**



**Make us a part of your Corporate Social Responsibility goals** – Corporate Volunteering lets your staff volunteer with

us. We have lots of opportunities, offering a fantastic chance to give back, meet new people and learn new skills, all benefitting the local community.



**Charity of the Year** –

be a corporate fundraiser and choose us as your charity of the year. We would be delighted

to work with you, to proactively champion your fundraising events and goals.

## 'Everybody *knows* Somebody!'

Team Open Road needs your help! We would love to have a chat about what we do and how we can do more by working together - **01206 369782** or **info@openroad.org.uk**

**Find out more about us**

**01206 369782 / info@openroad.org.uk**

12 North Hill, Colchester, CO1 1DZ

**www.openroad.org.uk**

**openroad**

your journey to recovery

Registered Charity No. 1019915



**Raise FREE funds**  
for us every time you  
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## Forthcoming Events with Open Road:

### Open Road AGM

Friday 27th October 2023  
Colchester Stadium

### Afternoon of Poetry, Music & Magic

Sunday 29th October  
Layer Marney Tower

We are planning various fun and exciting events throughout 2023, please follow our social media platforms for more details.

### Head Office

12 North Hill, Colchester  
Essex, CO1 1DZ  
01206 369782

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## New starters

We would like to extend a warm welcome to:

- Rapheal Sakwe
- Dev Bilir
- Lauren Cox
- Reema Haque
- Ella Martin
- Clare Brookes
- Billie-Jo Ellis
- Brittany Richmond
- Harry Bond
- Claire Beacham
- Emily Settle
- Denis Ismail
- Gemma Moore
- Tim Young
- Stuart Braybooke

## Our Leavers

We bid a farewell and thank you to:

- Nathan Fulcher
- Lea Yip
- Stuart Meyrick
- Kellie Shiels Shaughnessy
- Tyler Wilmot
- Adrian Mills
- Vicky Elliott
- Lauren Perryman
- Matthew Shadrake

The next issue of On the Road will be published in November 2023. Please send any articles, ideas and comments to [sarah.wright@openroad.org.uk](mailto:sarah.wright@openroad.org.uk)

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