



MEDIA RELEASE: HOPE CENTRE OPENING DAY

Released 8 February 2010

The Directors of Hope 4 (Rugby) are pleased to announce that **the new Hope Centre will open on Tuesday February 16th at 10.00** after a short ceremony for invited guests to be attended by the Mayor of Rugby and her consort and by some of the Centre's first guests. Also present will be Hope 4's new Support Worker, Joshua Axford and Derek Hartwell of Bilton Design, whose firm have overseen the recent refurbishment work .

The Hope Centre is a referral centre for homeless and badly housed people. Referrals will be accepted from agencies working with in the town and from Church leaders. The Centre can be found on the first floor area of 45-6 Church Street – formerly the Patio Cafe. At the Hope Centre, referred guests will have access to laundry facilities, shower rooms, somewhere to sit and relax with newspapers and magazines, tea and coffee and a cooked lunch initially on 3 days of the week: Tuesdays and Thursdays (11.00 – 13.00) and Sundays (13.00 – 16.00). Later in the year - if funding and volunteers allow - these opening hours will be extended.

Mr Bochenski , the Minister of Rugby Baptist Church, who has had previous experience of helping to establish a similar centre in St Albans said: “ **It has been a joy to see so many people working so hard to make the Hope Centre a reality this Winter. The recent bitter weather has reinforced the need for a centre such as this here in Rugby. We are so pleased to be able to open the Centre to those who are homeless and badly housed in one of the coldest months of the year.**”

Joshua Axford who has recently been appointed as Hope 4's first paid Support worker added: “ **I am really looking forward to taking up the new position, and, thoroughly enthusiastic to start. It has been great to see the Hope Centre taking shape. To be working there when it opens is a real privilege.**”

After the Opening Ceremony from 11.00- 13.00 the Hope Centre will be open for those who would like to come and see it. The first session for referred guests will be on Thursday February 18th from 11.00.

Hope 4 has already caught the imagination of many churches, businesses and schools in the town. Those wishing to volunteer should contact Cathy Hemsley on 01788 553245. And those wishing to donate towards the work of Hope 4 can do so via the Hope 4 Treasurer, Peter Davies: 01788 810630. Or via the Hope 4 web-site: www.hope4.org.uk/

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Background Information:

Hope 4 was set up in Rugby in 2004 to create a drop-in centre that would provide food, practical support, laundry facilities and shower facilities for its guests. Longer term the vision is that Hope 4 will also be able to offer some kind of overnight sleeping accommodation for homeless and badly housed people. With the generous support of the Parish Council of St. Andrew's church, Hope 4 already provide food regularly to around 30 people each week. More recently an occasional Saturday breakfast service has been provided in partnership with the local branch of the Salvation Army. Hope 4 will continue to oversee this work as well as that of the new Hope Centre. In addition to food, other essentials for life are also given free of charge to homeless and badly housed people who attend. These include sleeping bags, coats, gloves, scarves, hats and toiletries. A team of 120 volunteers, drawn mainly from 12 churches across the town, already work with Hope 4. **More volunteers** will, however, be needed in 2010 to work in the new day centre and **additional funds** will also be necessary as Hope 4 develops in new ways.

For further information connected to this Media Release please contact:

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