

Celebration marks Forty Years of Rehabilitation

Residents and ex-residents, many wearing the 40th anniversary purple teeshirts, streamed down the aisles of the Open Day marquee and on to the stage until it was nearly bursting with men in recovery. A quick calculation suggested that, between them, they had 223 years drug- and alcohol-free – a powerful visual image of just a tiny fraction of men whom Yeldall has helped over the past four decades.

The first resident to get up and speak was Robin, who shared: “I’ve been here for nearly nine months - it’s the longest time I’ve been clean and sober since the age of 12. I’m undecided about God, but I do know that this is a special place. And especially on days like today, you feel something. There is a lot of love here and that is what I really needed. I thank Yeldall for loving me and helping me. I’m more excited and optimistic now about my future than I ever dreamed I could be. I don’t have to use drugs, I don’t have to drink, I don’t have to go back to prison and the future’s there for me; I’ve got a life...”

Ex-resident, Marcos, added: “When I came to Yeldall I was just a mess: suicidal, broken family, I’d lost contact with my children: it was just a nightmare. But Yeldall allowed me to see myself in the way that God saw me, which was



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the most valuable thing in the world. Life has been on the up from the moment I left Yeldall. I finished my first year in accounting college with a distinction – for the first time ever I’m pleased with myself. Massive thanks to Yeldall, the supporters, the staff and my peers who got me through some really tough times.”

Tina Skinner shared the powerful story of how her parents, Bill and Joanie Yoder, started the ministry forty years ago.

Later, Treflyn Lloyd-Roberts, CEO, affirmed: “We can look back at many changes - in the staff, the programme, the structure of what we do - but the greatest change of all is in the lives of the residents. One thing that has not changed, however, is our calling. The call that was on Bill and Joanie to start this place is unchanged. We are still called to give hope through Jesus to the men who come onto the programme and, whatever we may do in the future, we don’t ever want to move away from that.”

Ride for Recovery - cycling and camaraderie

On 29th July, 29 riders cycled 10, 40 or 60 miles and raised around five thousand pounds for the Good Samaritan Bursary Fund. Brian has now been on the programme for eight months, thanks to funding from the Bursary Fund: "I hadn't ridden a bike for more than a couple of miles but, as soon as the Ride for Recovery was mentioned, I knew I wanted to do it. I just wanted to raise money for the Bursary Fund; to put something back and give someone else the same chance that I was given."

"The first training ride was nine miles and it was really hard, especially as we started by going up the steep hill at the back of Yeldall Manor. I nearly gave up but, when we got to the top and came out of the woods, it was nice and sunny and I actually started enjoying it. I worried for weeks about whether I'd be able to do the 40 miles. It was only when we did a 26 mile training ride that I started to think maybe I could do it after all."



"Paul (from Sprocket and Gear, who helped organise the event) was very kind and encouraging. He sorted me out with a helmet and gloves and fixed the bike for me as well as taking us out for the training rides."

"On the day, we had a good team and we took it easy and stuck together which really helped. By the checkpoint at 29 miles, I was so tired and hungry it was very welcome - it was great to stop and have something to eat and drink and relax a bit. At that point, I knew I could finish it."

"I did ache the next day, but it was so well worth it to know I'd achieved it and to have given someone else the chance of the same hope that I have. I just want to thank everyone who supported us."

Supporter, Hugh Barne, added: "The Ride for Recovery was a super event. Raising money for the Bursary Fund whilst cycling alongside some of the people who have benefited so much from it was a true privilege!"

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Tref also explained that, while local authorities cover the fees of many of the men on the programme, income has been increasingly drawn from the Good Samaritan Bursary Fund, which is a separate fund, made up entirely of donations, that finances those who otherwise could not get funding for rehabilitation.

He added, "I see it as a key way to enable us to fulfil our calling. Not only that, but it also enables us to walk in faith a bit. There have been times over the last year when we have offered people places on the Bursary when, to be honest, the Bursary Fund hasn't had any money. What would our justification be to say 'no' to somebody if we had an empty bed? So we walked by faith, and God provided the money afterwards, thanks to His goodness and generosity and that of our supporters."

The Coach House Works a stepping stone after rehab

The Coach House site at Yeldall Manor houses a community of small businesses, offering supported training and employment to our residents. It is overseen by Steve Hedger (himself a resident in 1998-99), a Director of the Community Interest Company which manages the site, as well as running his own business, Chissock Woodcraft, which specialises in creating bespoke items from reclaimed timber.

Paul Harfoot from online cycle parts shop, Sprocket and Gear (and now also a director of the overall Community Interest Company) says, "In my previous employment on an industrial estate, life was one long round of meetings and PowerPoint presentations.

I started my own business from home and then moved to the Coach House in 2015 simply because it was convenient. The first time I realised it could be more than that was when Jony (Yeldall intern) came over to ask me to fix his bike. He was so overjoyed that I was able to do it for him that he gave me a big hug. I drove home that night with a smile on my face and learned that, if you help people, it's enjoyable."

"Helping organise the Ride for Recovery helped me get more involved with some of the residents and it's great to see the enthusiasm that people like Brian had for building up his stamina and raising money for the Bursary Fund. Andrew, from Lines Guitars (who hand-crafts custom-made guitars), has given him an electric guitar to strip down and rebuild and it's great to see his excitement about getting stuck into that project during his time there every week."

Paul took on his first volunteer for Second-Stage voluntary work in November and explains, "I was apprehensive about training someone up, not least someone in recovery, but Steve (Hedger) encouraged and supported me. Andy (left) was great and, when he finished the programme, I was delighted to be able to employ him for 16 hours per week prior to him starting college in September."



Andy and Paul



Andrew, Dan and Paul enjoy a coffee break

Despite Paul's initial misgivings, Andy found his new employer welcoming and understanding. When he completed the Second-Stage and moved out of the Lodge into one of the Third-Stage houses in the community, he admitted, "I felt a bit lost, but it's great to come back here and see the residents going through the programme. Some guys go into full-time work and distance themselves from the Manor, but this keeps me grounded. I feel comfortable here and I get good support. I'm looking forward to starting a diploma in psychology and working here at the same time to help fund my course."

Alex (currently on the Second-Stage and pictured overleaf) added, "I am keen to get back into employment when the time is right and working at the Coach House (on general maintenance of the building), is easing me back into work again; I really enjoy it." *continued overleaf*

The Coach House Works - a stepping stone after rehab

“Working at Chissock Woodcraft has restored my confidence in myself,” says former resident, Dan. “And it’s a fantastic learning experience - much better than college - I’m learning on the job from a proper craftsman. It’s given me a new lease of life and is definitely a path I want to pursue. Being here in the Yeldall grounds is a daily reminder of where I started, plus I have the opportunity to speak to the guys on the programme and give them some encouragement.”

David Reed, from Reed’s Landscapes, which undertakes hard and soft landscaping including paving, decking, walling and home offices, comments: “For the first time, we have taken on one of the Yeldall residents to work with us. It has been a mutually beneficial experience and I would certainly like to do more in the future. Geoff, who is currently working with us from Yeldall, seems to enjoy the variety of work

and the fact he gets to go off-site and visit lots of new customers and projects. I’m sure he will have learnt a lot of new skills by the time he finishes with us in October.”

The other businesses on-site are Protek, which is an IT Managed Service Provider, specialising in the education sector; and domestic and commercial electrical company, Elekfix. Both play a full part in the community on-site and use their expertise to help the Coach House, the other businesses and also Yeldall Manor with their IT and electrical needs. They too look forward to having residents working with them in the future.



With insight gleaned from nearly twenty years in recovery, as well as supporting dozens of men over the years, Steve (described by both the business leaders and the guys as “the glue that holds it all together”) is a natural mentor, getting alongside those who are struggling in any way and offering support and encouragement as they continue in their journeys of recovery.



The Coach House is far more than a collection of enterprises. Since it began in 2006, it has evolved into a supportive community for businesses, residents and ex-residents alike; a bridge between rehab and life beyond.

Please come & visit:

Celebration services:

7.30pm, Friday 29th September
7.30pm Friday 8th December
An uplifting time of worship, news and testimony followed by time to chat over tea or coffee (and mincepies, in December).

We also hold **prayer meetings** on the first working Monday of every month at 8pm to hear from and pray with some of our residents.

Yeldall 40th anniversary teeshirts



£13 each including p&p

M, L, XL

Purple and gold
(As seen on the front page)

Order using the response form enclosed or send a cheque with your order to the address below.

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