



KORBAN

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Annual Report 2019 - 2020

***"providing supported housing
for young people in crisis"***

OUR VISION

Breaking the cycle of homelessness in Colchester by giving young people a home and supporting them to move on and live independently.

OUR MISSION

"Providing supported housing for young people in crisis"

Helping young homeless people aged 16-25 realise their potential and thrive, by providing accommodation, support and guidance enabling them to develop the character, skills and confidence to live independently.

OUR AIMS

We aim to:

- Provide quality, safe, stable, supportive accommodation which feels like a home
- Give young people a healing experience of family; sharing meals and eating together being an important part of this
- Work in partnership with the local church, other professionals and service providers
- Empower young people to grow and mature, through investing and believing in them as individuals
- Provide and facilitate holistic support recognising people's physical, psychological and spiritual needs
- Give professional and genuinely caring support

OUR VALUES

We value:

- Christ-centred spirituality, which energises us to do this work
- All young people as individuals of intrinsic worth and potential. We accept them as they are
- Building community amongst our team and residents, as well as those that partner with the Korban family
- Authentic relationship, through transparency, integrity and vulnerability.
- Having fun



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This has been an extraordinary year for all of us. When we had our last Korban AGM in November 2019 no-one had heard of Covid-19, and the idea that a world-wide pandemic would cause such widespread chaos and confusion was more the stuff of science fiction than reality. How different things are now and how much has changed in the months since the first lockdown in March.



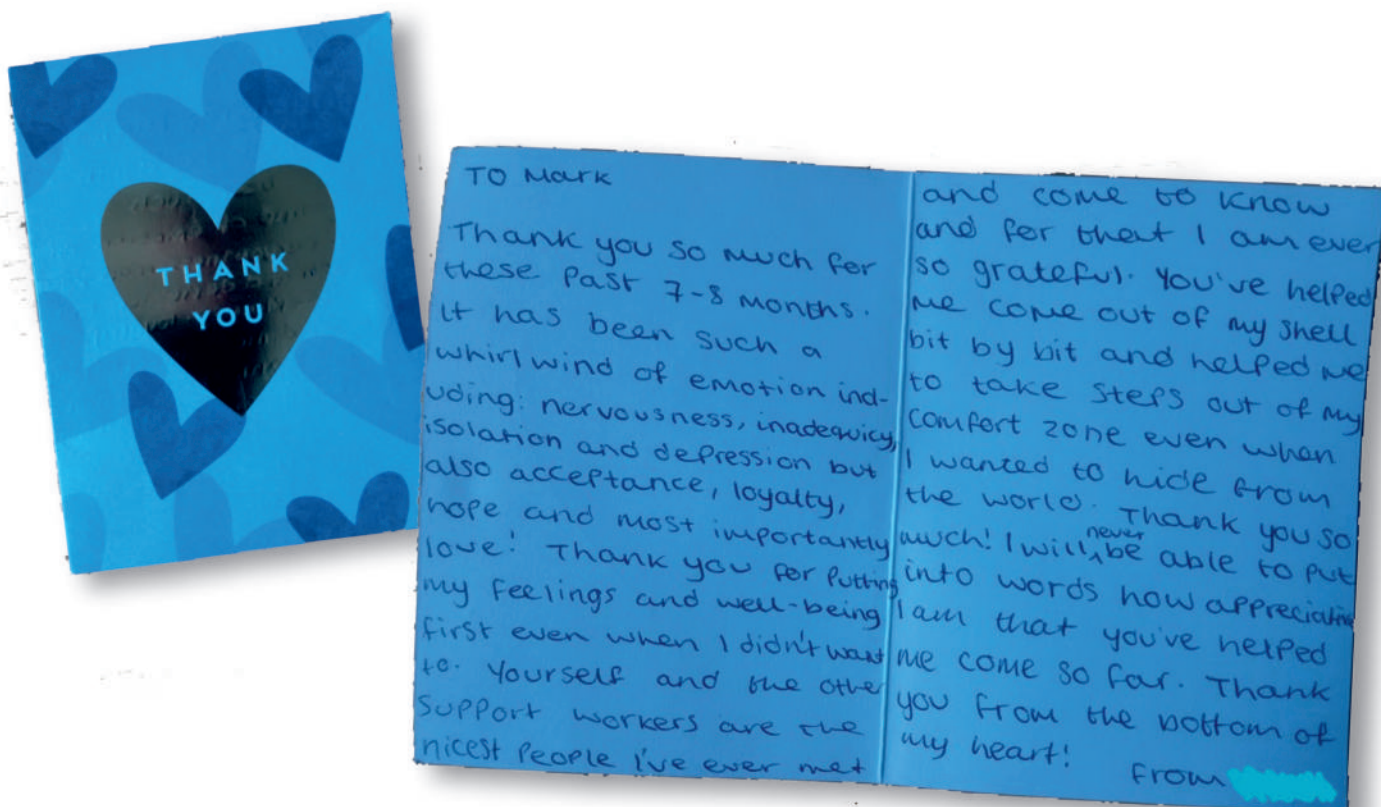
However, it is not all gloom and despondency because many good things have come out of these challenging times, and I am pleased to say that Korban has not only survived but flourished. The staff have responded with great fortitude and creativity under Mark's very capable leadership, and our volunteers and helpers have continued to work tirelessly, when not prevented by Covid restrictions! Our trustee body has grown and continues to function well, as we've welcomed Robin Pagden, Tim Young and Nicky Sirett who bring a wealth of experience and passion between them. We've also said farewell to Amanda Binding who served faithfully as a trustee for several years, as well as Pam Ellis and Dan Maby. Most of all our residents have been housed, supported and cared for in the best way possible.

This report contains a detailed summary of all our activities in the year 1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020 and it makes exciting reading. **It is remarkable what progress has been made despite the adverse circumstances, and it is clear that the vision and sense of purpose when Korban was founded over 12 years ago remains.**

Sadly some things have not changed. According to Homeless Link "young people in England have been facing a homelessness crisis for some time. They are over-represented in services; over a third of people accessing supported accommodation in England in 2018 were 16-25." (Young and Homeless 2020). Colchester is no different. There are still homeless young people here and the need shows no signs of abating. The loss of opportunities and the likelihood of poor outcomes that arise from homelessness in young people is manifest, and just one disrupted or shattered life is one too many. Korban is as necessary now as it ever has been.

If we were a purely secular organisation the above might give grounds for despair, but we are not. Korban was founded by a small group of faithful Christians who identified a real need and out of love and compassion, inspired by Jesus Christ, set about doing something. That something has helped 130 people over the years and continues to do so. In summary it is faith and trust in a loving God, and the guidance and strength of that same God which has yielded such amazing results.

"Korban saved my life... you took me under your wings and guided me to the man I am today"
Ali, aged 20



Jessica gave Mark this card at Christmas last year

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT

Nobody could forget our AGM last year when one of our new residents gave a rousing speech encouraging us to "rid society of the scourge of homelessness", and who knew then what was coming in 2020. This year has been unprecedented for anybody working in the housing and homelessness sector with the government's "Everyone In" initiative showing what can be done to help homeless people in a national emergency.

However, young people at risk of homelessness have been significantly affected by Covid-19 and there are some worrying trends, at the same time that relevant services are struggling (Homeless Link's Policy and practice briefing on youth homelessness, October 2020). Evidence is also pointing to the economic shockwaves of the pandemic disproportionately affecting young people eg. lack of employment opportunities, so we are preparing for this going forward.

Throughout the pandemic we have experienced God's grace and empowerment as we've worked really hard as a staff team to support our residents in these extraordinary times. At the start we felt it would be their mental health that would suffer the most, which has definitely proved true.

In the first lockdown we gave the residents personalised goodie bags with grown-up colouring books, puzzles, an inspiring postcard and chocolate bar, to help them get through what most of us thought would only be a few weeks. We continued to do 1-to-1 meetings outdoors as much as possible or walking so as to avoid close face to face contact in a confined space. We held our weekly communal meal outdoors, having a lot of barbecues, or socially distanced in the lounge. Staff led sessions in meditation and relaxation, gardening, football, and even posted requests on Acts 435 to help residents get money for a diablo, baking equipment and board games. One of our residents participated in some health research along with myself, residents got creative and several of them were involved with DIY projects during lockdown. Our bike hire scheme was well used too. You can read more in "Living through Lockdown".



Physical contact amongst the staff was limited to avoid the risk of all of us being infected or in isolation at the same time! So far 1 member of staff has had to self-isolate for 14 days and another staff member was off sick for 7 days with the virus. When a resident got suspected Covid in April our hub house went into total lockdown. We supported them to isolate in their room as much as possible providing a microwave and food supplies and assigned them a "Covid" bathroom. During the 2 weeks we provided virtual support to all the residents by phone/video calls and cleaned the house with PPE.

I'm so proud of our team, both staff and residents, and as you can see over the last year there has been much to celebrate as **more than a third of our residents moved on to more independent living.**

Before Coronavirus hit the UK we welcomed a number of guests to weekly communal meals. In October last year our MP Will Quince came to meet everyone and learn more about our work. Greg Headley joined us from Homeless Link, Archdeacon Ruth Patten enjoyed a lively debate with our residents about spirituality and religion, Pioneer Minister Sue Howlett and Trainee Vicar Sam Lees came along from St Anne's, and Clarissa St Ives also joined us during her 6 month stint as volunteer admin assistant for 2 hours a week.

In 2019 we served our biggest ever Christmas dinner as residents invited friends and family to celebrate and enjoy some amazing food as we reflected on the meaning of the first Christmas. The Youth Enquiry Service (YES) collected donations of presents for Christmas for the second year running and we gave each resident a voucher and card. For the first time this year a few residents attended the "Comedians and Carols" event at Kingsland Church.

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT CONTINUED...

Since lockdown we've all missed Sister Diana who has not been able to cook with us since March because many of her religious community are elderly and vulnerable. However, this did not stop some residents making socially distanced visits over the summer, enjoying tea and cake in her garden.

In June we finally secured sufficient grant funding for an office cabin in the garden, which we will build together next year. It will give us an extra space to hold meetings, training and small group work.

Earlier this year we were awarded funding from Colchester Borough Homes from their Community Initiative Fund, voted on by CBH Tenants and Leaseholders. The £3,000 grant has enabled us to already start giving residents greater support when they move-on, including more time and help with things they need when first moving into a new place.

We have continued to benefit from Tesco's leftover food donations as part of the Fareshare scheme, and throughout the year we've worked in partnership with Restore retreat centre, St Helena Hospice, The Prince's Trust, Acts 435, Youth Enquiry Service (YES), Kingsland Church and St. Anne's. We are also blessed to have ongoing support from churches across Colchester including; St John's, St Leonard's, St Albright's, St Anne's, St Margaret's Berechurch, All Saints' Great Horkesley and Kingsland.

Korban has been a member of the Joint Referral Panel for Colchester's supported housing providers for many years now, and despite the challenges we've also continued to participate in Homeless Link's Essex Community of Practice to share expertise and learn from others in the area.

We continue to adapt and improve the support we provide to help young people successfully move on. During the last year we've had a total of 13 different residents living at Korban. 4 were new residents who came to live at Bethany Place and 1 went straight into Bethel House. **Despite lockdown we have helped 5 residents move on positively:** 1 went to university in 2019, another moved into a council flat ready to go to university in September 2020; 2 moved to other supported housing providers as they were ready for more independence and 1 moved into a house share and then his own flat.



LIVING THROUGH LOCKDOWN: CORONA CREATIVITY

Although there were some difficult times, we have seen incredible creativity and resilience from our residents. We supported them to paint their own rooms and several of them helped our volunteer handyman Andy Courtier lay a new patio, with senior resident Corban making a significant contribution.



Corban with our amazing volunteer "handy" Andy

In the early days of Covid-19 Mark was approached by Healthwatch Essex who were doing research highlighting the ways in which life had changed in 2020 across Essex. The short films were captured via Zoom. Young homeless people are **consistently under-represented** in research like this, so Mark was keen one of our residents should have the opportunity to tell their story and have their voice heard. Corban, who has been at the Project for almost a year and is currently our senior resident, was happy to take part! Go to www.korban.org.uk to see the full interview





HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019-20

We had our first bonfire night, celebrated birthdays, went to Mersea on our third annual beach day.



These are some of the other highlights over the last year:

- 7 reported that their mental/emotional health improved
- 5 reported an improvement in their key relationships
- 8 reported improvements in managing their money
- 5 residents were in regular paid employment, 4 of whom were full-time
- 1 resident got a month of work experience in October 2019 and succeeded in getting agency work at the end of lockdown. Another even got work experience with our MP for 3 days.
- 2 residents were in full time education
- 2 residents were in training / voluntary work, 1 volunteering on our own programme
- 2 residents attended courses run by the Princes Trust, 1 got a level 2 food hygiene certificate
- 2 moved from Bethany Place to Bethel House, ready for the next step towards independence



RECOGNITION

"I am delighted to announce that Colchester Korban Project has been nominated by a number of people for a Community Recognition Award. Thank you for making a difference within your local community, Colchester Korban Project thoroughly deserves this recognition." Colchester COVID-19 Community Response Team.

ORIGINS & ONWARDS

We currently operate 2 homes providing medium term (2 – 3 years max) supported accommodation for 8 young people aged 16 – 25 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Korban began life as part of 'Colchester Night Stop', a branch of a national charity, using host families to provide emergency temporary accommodation to young people in immediate crisis.

Then in 2008 we became an independent charity and set up Bethany Place, a former vicarage, accommodating 5 young people at a time for 1 - 2 years. Each resident has a named support worker they meet with every week. Together they create an individual holistic support plan addressing physical, psychological and spiritual needs.

The support is provided directly by Korban staff, or by working in partnership with other services, and focuses on areas including; self-care and living skills, money management, relationships, education / training / employment, physical and mental health, substance misuse and risk of offending.

Residents also attend a weekly communal meal which they help to cook, with a trained volunteer, giving them an opportunity to learn how to cook healthy and nutritious meals.

Our life skills projects have included gardening and growing vegetables, and a make-over for our lounge when the residents built a TV unit and completely redecorated.

In addition there are different social activities 5-6 times a year eg. going to the beach, bowling etc.

In December 2017 we bought a new property; Bethel House is a 3 bedroom home providing move-on support. This is primarily for residents of Bethany Place ready to take the next step towards independent living*. They can stay at the move-on house for a maximum of 1 year with support provided by a dedicated move-on project worker.

From 2008 – 2020 we have helped 130 vulnerable young homeless people. Korban's early intervention helps to break the cycle of homelessness and knock-on effects eg. lost jobs, unfinished education, mental health problems, potential substance abuse and crime. This has a hugely positive effect on the individual, and ultimately the whole community.

*Although we do occasionally house residents ready to move on from other supported housing providers



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2020

	Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Fund £	Restricted Fund £	2020 Total £	2019 Total £
Incoming resources from generated funds					
- Investment income	40	-		40	16
- Donations and legacies	11,726	-	500	12,226	5,754
- Incoming resources from charitable activities	62,310		13,500	75,810	57,877
Total incoming resources	74,075	-	14,000	88,075	63,647
Resources expended					
- Charitable activities	59,876	-	11,850	71,726	72,449
Total resources expended	59,876	-	11,850	71,726	72,449
Net incoming resources before transfers	14,200	-	2,150	16,350	(8,801)
Gross transfers between funds	(2000)	2000	-	-	-
Net income for the year	12,200	2000	2,150	16,350	(8,801)
Total funds brought forward at 1 September 2019	(7,323)	11,000	5,230	8,908	17,709
Total funds carried forward at 31 August 2020	4,877	13,000	7,380	25,257	8,908

During the year Korban raised money from a variety of sources, notably:

£50,440 from Colchester Borough Council for Housing benefit. The significant increase is due to applications for increased housing benefit to cover our actual costs for maintenance, housing management and property services.

£13,700 from Grants:

- £10,000 from The Joseph Rank Trust for Bethel House running costs
- £1,000 allocated of £3,000 from Colchester Borough Homes for move-on support for our residents (to be spent over 3 years), including extra support sessions and essential items for a new home.
- £1,000 from Jerome Booth Charitable trust towards an office cabin
- £200 locality budget

The following were carried forward from the previous year:

- £1,000 from Fowler, Smith and Jones trust towards an office cabin.
- £500 from Grassroots towards an office cabin.
- £11,460 from residents; for rent (for those not eligible for full/any housing benefit) and personal charges (all residents' personal use of utilities). £11,726 from donations including regular giving.

Expenses were largely connected with the following: staff and administrator costs, £32,527; costs associated with the house including rent, council tax, utilities and communal household items, £13,808; loan interest on Bethel House, £5,833; and repairs and equipment, £2,718.

The charity now has assets with a netbook value of £254,520, due primarily to purchasing Bethel House, associated equipment and appliances.

The charity has a reserves policy of £13,000 and the reserves held as at the 31st August 2020 were £13,000. We have built these up significantly this year. These are maintained at a level that, in addition to Korban's rental income, ensures that our core activities could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty, for a minimum period of 3 months, giving time to find suitable alternative supported accommodation for any young person in our care. The reserves are our only designated funds. All unrestricted funds are to be deployed as per the trustees' direction, in line with delivering the charity's services.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Colchester Korban Project is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee i.e. a company not having a share capital. Our memorandum and articles of association were incorporated on 25th June 2008 and amended at an EGM on 16th July 2020 to better reflect our ethos and update some articles regarding membership.

The charity was registered on 27th August 2008.

The trustees meet 5 times a year. Decisions are reached by a majority of votes, providing a quorum of 2 voting members is present (or a tenth of the total number of persons entitled to vote, whichever is the greater). We have a robust process for appointing new trustees including vetting and appropriate checks that they are eligible to serve in this way, which is available on request.

Colchester Korban Project is also known as Korban.

The trustees serving at the time the report was agreed:

Revd Anthony Bushell (Chair), Nicky Sirett, Robin Pagden (Treasurer), Stella Lee, Sue Biffen and Tim Young

Dan Maby and Amanda Binding resigned at the AGM on 27th November 2019. Pam Ellis resigned on 16th July 2020, Julie Henkel resigned on 10th September 2020

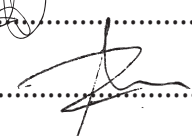
Day to day management of the charity is designated to the Project Manager, who line manages the project workers and all volunteers.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

In exercising our powers and duties, the trustees of Colchester Korban Project have carried out our work with due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the charity commission. This annual report was approved on 19th November 2020 and is signed on behalf of the trustees:

Tony Bushell  (Chair)

Date: 19th November 2020

Robin Pagden  (Treasurer)

Date: 19th November 2020



I came to live at Korban as when I turned 16 I was made homeless by my mother and was staying at a friend's place but that wasn't a long term option. When I first moved into Korban I was very quiet and shy, and wouldn't eat much.

However, as I grew into my time, people who know me and lived with me found that I was very different. Korban helped me learn new cooking skills as I helped cook communal meals and they also helped me understand that I won't like everyone I meet in my life.

My favourite thing about Korban is the support that I received and how approachable all workers are, and a residential trip we went on. I'd like to thank Korban for helping me get all the support from the county council I was entitled to as well.

Samuel

www.korban.org.uk

Colchester Korban Project is a Charitable Company. Charity no: 1125617 Company no: 06630415

Patron: The Rt. Revd. Roger Morris, Bishop of Colchester

Some names and ages have been changed to protect residents' identities