



## Wirral Churches' Ark Project

# ANNUAL REPORT 2005/2006

*Supporting homeless people in Wirral*

**Company No: 3896833 Registered Charity No: 1079070**



# Wirral Churches' Ark Project

## DIRECTORS

- Rev'd Robert Nelson – Chairman
- Jacky Turner
- Carole Ricks
- Father John Hovington
- Ian Cubbin
- Barry McDonald

## Registered Office

Mary Cole House  
6, Sandford Street  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH41 1BN  
0151 649 0111

## Supportive Organisations

B'head & Wallasey Primary Care Trust	Rotary Birkenhead
Birkenhead School	Rotary Club North West
Blakes Benevolent Trust	St Albans Primary School
J Cubbin & Sons	St Johns Infant School
Miss A E Evans	St Nicholas Catholic High School
Heswall Round Table	Scout Post
HSBC Bank	J A Shone Memorial Trust
Ladymount Catholic Primary School	Mr L Sullivan
Lever Faberge	Tudor Trust
Marks & Spencer PLC	West Kirby Health Centre
Metropolitan Borough of Wirral	West Wirral Lions
Neston Music Festival	Whinlatter Fund

## Auditor

Guild Appleton & Co  
Union House  
21, Victoria Street  
Liverpool L1 6BD

## Main Banker

Barclays Bank plc  
2 Liscard Village  
Wallasey  
Wirral CH45 4JS

## Chairman's Report

Last year I mentioned a new challenge for the Ark: in view of opposition to our intention to develop further direct access accommodation in Laird Street or at Mary Cole House, we decided instead to progress a project to provide move-on housing for those Ark residents who would benefit from such a scheme.

We have named this new development of our service **ArkAngel**. In collaboration with Riverside Housing Association, who provided three two-bedroom houses in Wallasey (which we named Gabriel House, Raphael House, and Michael House), and with Supporting People money, which enabled us to employ staff to run the scheme, beginning in July we were able, within a short time, to house six residents from the Ark.

We took on Dave Harrison as our ArkAngel manager, and Annie Lynn as his assistant housing support worker. They have proved to be a great team, and the project has been so successful that we very soon decided to expand it. This we have done by using a major proportion of our liquid funds together with a bank loan to purchase two more houses of our own – this time in Birkenhead.

The security of owning our own property to supplement the housing association provision will be of benefit to us in the future, and will offer flexibility in deciding whom to re-house and when. We need such flexibility, because not every Ark resident will make a suitable tenant, and some need longer to develop towards this objective than others.

One immediate benefit of ArkAngel is that we have now released ten bedspaces to enable more of those who turn up on our doorstep to be taken in. ArkAngel cannot, however, be regarded as the only (or even principal) answer

to the constant, and perhaps increasing, demand for direct access beds in Wirral. Mary Cole House is still all too often full. There needs to be political recognition that the need exists, so that sufficient provision can be made.

We are still keeping under consideration the use of the additional land we have been promised adjacent to Mary Cole House for building an extension. I expect that progress will be made on this during the coming year. It will enable us to improve our medical, interviewing and social facilities, as well as offering much-needed storage space.

We have had to say farewell to Kevin Hogan who decided he wished to pursue a new direction in his career, and Douglas Heffell has been appointed as his interim successor as General Manager. We wish him well in his new level of responsibility and I thank him for undertaking this role. A decision will be made later this year about Kevin's permanent replacement.

The Ark relies tremendously on the initiative and commitment of our Business Manager, Bob Jarvis, and I thank him for all his efforts towards achieving success for our project.

I should also like to thank all our volunteers, our paid staff and visiting professionals. With the Grace of God we shall continue to work effectively for those who find themselves homeless.

Thank you for your support in prayer and in practical ways, especially for the new direction the Ark has taken.

Robert Nelson - Chairman

## General Manager's Report

Operationally the Ark is going from strength to strength - now well into the new millennium and we really are developing a far broader range of services for the homeless on Wirral, whilst still remaining focused on the importance of emergency, direct-access accommodation.

Not all who come through our doors are at a stage in their lives where change can occur easily. Some only want a room of their own to get off the streets, whilst many do have plans and aspirations. As each day goes by that a resident stays with us, the team collate information to enable the individual to acquire the most appropriate longer-term solutions – both for accommodation and other support needs.

Changes in staff have led to some fantastic and fortuitous appointments.

The team becomes refreshed by new ideas and new energy that experienced and dedicated colleagues bring. Now, more than at any time in the Ark's history, we are starting to question all aspects of what we do, seeing what works and developing those areas further, and moving on from those aspects that may now seem no longer relevant in a contemporary shelter.

My gratitude and thanks go out to all the highly committed individuals, staff, volunteers and colleagues from other agencies.

Without all their hard work and efforts we would not be where we are now. It is my belief that, now, when residents move on to more permanent accommodation, they do so better equipped than ever, to maintain their tenancies and find their own homes.

Douglas Heffell - General Manager

## Duty Officer's Report

Duty officers are the frontline project workers who maintain the smooth day to day running of the Ark. Co-ordinating the volunteers, managing the building and ensuring all residents are safe and well is not always an easy task, but one from which my colleagues and I get a great deal of satisfaction.

The fact that we are still a direct-access hostel is very important to us all, but it is exciting to see the development and growth of the other services

we provide in terms of greater support and housing options.

We, as a team, appreciate all the effort that people put into improving the Ark and the quality of life of our service users – from all the staff, paid or otherwise, and also many of the residents themselves, who contribute to making the Ark the success it is.

Brenda Wood – Duty Officer

## Resident and ArkAngel Tenant Perspectives

I would like to thank all the staff here at the Ark. They helped me to survive my darkest hour. They took me in and gave me a second chance at life, and for that I will be eternally grateful.

All the staff are so straight, and down to

earth, and so caring for everybody's individual needs.

I personally feel that if it wasn't for their care and attention I would not be alive today. From the bottom of my heart, a great big thanks for everything.

Philip – an Ark resident May '06

Due to a series of events in the last ten years, I hit the bottle badly – so badly that I became homeless last year by being evicted from my home. I lost everything – my daughters were put in different places from me. The depression and stress was bad. I tried some of the hostels in the area and eventually found the Ark. It was such a life-saver for me because I knew I wouldn't last long on the streets.

The Ark staff were kind, supportive and tried not to be critical of residents, but some residents pushed their luck. It looks like a palace compared to some hostels. The rules are strict but there for a purpose.

The residents are a mixed bag of people, some using drugs and alcohol. They did scare me a bit. I felt so alone, scared, anxious, guilty and most of all ashamed of what I had become – an alcoholic!

I had been at the Ark 8 months – it was like a lifetime – people coming and going. I was

still there, and I was sad until I was offered a house with the ArkAngels.

The ArkAngels is a project to help residents to get back into society, and give more 'one to one' support and advice with issues, so we can fit back into the community.

The house where I live now, I share with Lesley, another ex-Ark resident. We have our own bedrooms and a lounge each, and we share the kitchen and bathroom.

Since I have moved, I feel more relaxed, and I'm sorting out all of my problems and issues now.

Both the Ark and ArkAngels have opened my eyes that there is more to life, so please keep projects like these going, they saved my life.

Sandy – an ArkAngel tenant. May '06

### **Business Manager's Report incorporating Finance Report**

Good, solid progress, is how I would sum up the year.

Some headline figures are:-

Bank balances at the beginning of the year £227,000, and at the end of the year £250,000.

Income for the year £414,000, expenses £421,000.

These are healthy figures, particularly when one bears in mind that at the beginning of the year we were holding the £33,000 grant which was received to pay for the bedroom conversion (18 beds from dormitories to individual bedrooms). This £33,000 was spent in early 2005, as planned, on the conversion work – in fact the total cost was £44,000. One might have expected, therefore, bank balances to reduce.

This conversion work went very smoothly, even if we had to reduce resident numbers for a period (with a commensurate reduction in housing benefit income). Individual bedrooms have been welcomed wholeheartedly by residents, as they give greater security, privacy and dignity.

The negotiations with Wirral Council and Riverside Housing Association have born fruit, and we now operate five 2-bedroom 'move-on' houses. Wirral Council began in August paying the £3,000 per month Supporting People grant towards this ArkAngel scheme. Their commitment is for one year only, but we are hoping that they will continue. ArkAngel figures show a £7,000 loss, this being due to the 'set-up' costs of £10,000.

In 2005 we found, and in 2006 we purchased, two 2-bedroom houses costing £65,500 and £59,450 respectively. We arranged loans of £40,000 on each. Further, we obtained the agreement of grant providers, totalling £46,800, who gave/agreed grants towards our abortive second hostel project, to switch their grant to these house purchases.

My thanks go to all who have supported us with time, money and goods – for their goodwill, support and prayers.

Bob Jarvis – Business Manager

## ArkAngel Manager's Report

ArkAngel has been up and running for nearly a year now. It has progressed from three properties to five, with each property having the potential to house two tenants. Our aim is to motivate, support and offer direction. Ultimately our goal is to assist and empower our tenants to live as independently as possible. We have introduced a programme which is designed to identify clear attainable goals which will propel the tenant towards their personal targets. Our programme (which is continually evolving) is in its infant stage. However with constant input from our staff team and feedback from tenants, it appears to be successful. To date we have already facilitated two successful departures. In our first year we have experienced a low turnover of tenants, most are still working towards their own personal goals. We feel this is due to quality support and the high motivation of tenants.

We have developed a buddy system to enable our tenants to engage in positive activities which will assist their personal growth and social life.

We have also introduced a personal development course which is designed to promote self esteem, self worth, confidence

and assertiveness. We believe these skills are vital for the growth of good mental health. ArkAngel now enjoys close and positive working relationships with many agencies in our local community, which we feel is invaluable both to our tenants and our project.

The process of compiling the policies and procedures within the Riverside HA management agreement is currently still in progress. The next objective for ArkAngel is to successfully complete the Supporting People review. One major long term objective is to see the development of a supportive and efficient move on process.

I would like to thank Annie for all her great work on the personal development course, encouragement and support. I also thank the volunteers involved in the buddy system which is an integral part of our programme. Also, a big thank you to Bob Jarvis for his determination and resolve in taking the ArkAngel project forward. Finally thanks to Douglas and all Ark staff who made our team feel welcome.

Dave Harrison  
ArkAngel Manager

**Statement of Financial Activities  
Year ended 31st December 2005**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	<b>2005 Total Funds £</b>	2004 Total Funds £
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
Donations & legacies	36,020	14,734	<b>50,754</b>	50,213
Grants receivable				33,462
Charitable trust re Laird				11,000
Membership fees		-	-	
Housing benefit	122,442		<b>122,442</b>	123,556
Supporting people		202,222	<b>202,222</b>	198,563
Income from trading activities	3,181		<b>3,181</b>	5,423
Income tax refund/Gift aid	18		<b>18</b>	2,015
Bank interest received	7,415		<b>7,415</b>	4,735
Sundry Income	13,666	13,845	<b>27,511</b>	
<b>Total Incoming resources</b>	<b>182,742</b>	<b>230,801</b>	<b>413,543</b>	<b>428,967</b>
<b>Costs of generating funds</b>				
Christmas card expenses	1,660		<b>1,660</b>	1,388
Water	13		<b>13</b>	11
Light & heat	14		<b>14</b>	22
Wages & salaries	4,016		<b>4,016</b>	3,900
Insurance	19		<b>19</b>	16
Subsistence & cleaning	30		<b>30</b>	32
Printing, postage & stationery	350		<b>350</b>	400
Repairs & maintenance			-	
Depreciation		71	<b>71</b>	67
Sundry expenses	33		<b>33</b>	18
	<b>6,135</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>6,206</b>	<b>5,854</b>
<b>Cost of charitable activities</b>				
Water	3,348		<b>3,348</b>	2,955
Light & heat	3,668		<b>3,668</b>	5,908
Resident services	514		<b>514</b>	960
Wages & salaries	90,242	215,393	<b>305,635</b>	291,826
Training costs	2,166		<b>2,166</b>	2,272
Insurance	5,091		<b>5,091</b>	4,362
Catering	7,938		<b>7,938</b>	5,959
Telephone	2,808		<b>2,808</b>	2,675
Printing, postage & stationery	2,423		<b>2,423</b>	3,178
Subsistence & cleaning	8,063		<b>8,063</b>	8,825
Advertising				2,332
Bank charges	212		<b>212</b>	167
Building Costs	10,716		<b>10,716</b>	11,292
Arkangel	18,025	13,845	<b>31,870</b>	
Depreciation	3,778	15,340	<b>19,118</b>	18,620
Criminal records bureau	203		<b>203</b>	1,029
Auditors remuneration	1,645		<b>1,645</b>	1,645
Computer costs				2,557
Sundry expenses	8,708		<b>8,708</b>	4,915
Legal & professional	565		<b>565</b>	799
	<b>170,113</b>	<b>244,578</b>	<b>414,691</b>	<b>372,276</b>
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>176,248</b>	<b>244,649</b>	<b>420,897</b>	<b>378,130</b>
<b>Net incoming resources</b>	<b>6,494</b>	<b>(13,848)</b>	<b>(7,354)</b>	<b>50,837</b>

## Balance Sheet

Wirral Churches' Ark Project  
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2005

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	<b>2005 Total Funds £</b>	2004 Total Funds £
<b>Tangible Fixed Assets</b>				
<b>Freehold Property</b>				
Mary Cole House 84 Laird Street	14,182	696,181	<b>710,363</b>	682,203
<b>Other</b>	<u>14,918</u>		<u><b>14,918</b></u>	<u>17,094</u>
	29,100	696,181	<b>725,281</b>	755,931
<b>Current assets</b>				
Cash in hand	301		<b>301</b>	146
Cash at bank	<u>220,966</u>	<u>28,990</u>	<u><b>249,956</b></u>	<u>226,807</u>
	221,267	28,990	<b>250,257</b>	226,953
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>9,020</u>		<u><b>9,020</b></u>	<u>9,012</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<u>212,247</u>	<u>28,990</u>	<u><b>241,237</b></u>	<u>217,941</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>	<u>241,347</u>	<u>725,171</u>	<u><b>966,518</b></u>	<u>973,872</u>
<b>Total reserves</b>				
Restricted funds		725,171	<b>725,171</b>	739,019
General funds	<u>241,347</u>		<u><b>241,347</b></u>	<u>234,853</u>
	<u>241,347</u>	<u>725,171</u>	<u><b>966,518</b></u>	<u>973,872</u>

## Nurses' Report

Firstly, we are happy to welcome Patsy back to the fold after a traumatic few months – she's been greatly missed, and, after a phased return, normal duties will be resumed.

The nurses continue to provide high quality nursing care under difficult conditions. They refer to other agencies, and liaise with GPs as appropriate about resident health issues. Residents have continued to present with divers and challenging problems that have stretched our resources, but, hopefully we have risen to the demands on our service. Some new infection control issues have been discussed with management, and these will hopefully be implemented soon.

The nursing staff are now fully conversant with the computer, and this has helped communication as we can now access the resident's log if non-confidential information about health concerns need to be relayed to duty officers.

Working towards the same goal ensures continuity of care for the residents and if the coming year is as busy as the previous one, there will be no shortage of work for us all.

Norma Ovens

## Key Worker Report

At the Ark we continually explore ways of improving the service we provide to residents. Over the last year some new approaches have been introduced with the aim of enabling residents to stay at the project for the appropriate length of time with regards to their needs.

With residents staying at the Ark longer, they have the opportunity to stabilise, address problematic behaviour, maintain positive aspects of their lives, and then plan towards successfully moving on from the Ark.

Within the Ark, the keyworker team aims to look at all aspects of a person and their needs. This includes working

on physical and mental well-being, personal development and appropriate housing.

We also liaise with outside agencies who are encouraged to work within the Ark, enabling continuity of support, and ensuring that residents are aware of services available to them.

As always, all involved with the Ark will continue to work towards improving provision for homeless people on the Wirral.

Tracy Upton  
Senior Keyworker

## Volunteer Representative's Report

We now have 102 volunteers on our current database.

Not all of them volunteer on a regular basis, but most do. The database includes fundraisers, sellers of Christmas cards etc. The vast majority are regular volunteers – loyal, hardworking, and extremely reliable. Volunteers do most of the cooking and befriending at the Ark, but we do need some help at present on Monday and Tuesday mornings, and at weekends.

Some volunteers are now part of the Arkangel 'Buddy' scheme, where volunteers 'buddy' an Arkangel tenant, and help them to settle into the community. This is managed by the Arkangel team, but again this could not happen without the support of our volunteers.

I congratulate Jacky Turner, who was selected as a Volunteer of 2005, and presented with her award by the Mayor of Wirral. (continued overleaf)

Thanks to Rose Cowing who has stepped down as Volunteer Representative. She has worked so hard and we will miss her, while she takes a well-earned sabbatical from volunteering. We have had one candidate for the Volunteer Representative vacancy, and would welcome another.

Finally, grateful thanks to all our volunteers. Without your help the Ark could not provide the excellent, essential service that it does. Thank you.

Irene Kennedy  
Volunteer Representative



## ARK STATISTICAL SUMMARY FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 DEC '05

### Residents

	Male	Female	Total
Number of residents	232	52	284
Average number of residents per night	19.0	4.6	23.6
Total bedspaces occupied	6930	1667	8597
Average number of nights stayed by residents	30	32	30

Many residents were successfully moved on:-

- 2 were housed by the Local Authority
- 5 were housed by a Housing Association
- 18 were housed in a supported housing scheme
- 12 were housed in private accommodation
- 19 were housed in sheltered housing
- 9 returned to their family, or home
- 4 moved in with friends

<u>How Long Residents Stayed</u>					<u>Age of Residents</u>				
No. of days	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	Age	Male	Female	Tot	%
1-10	73	22	95	33	18-25	49	11	60	21
11-20	38	8	46	16	26-35	77	19	96	34
21-30	32	6	38	14	36-45	69	13	82	29
31-40	23	3	26	9	46-55	26	6	32	11
41-50	15	1	16	6	56-65	10	3	13	5
51-60	11	1	12	4	65+	1	0	1	0
61-70	8	2	10	4	Totals	232	52	284	100
71-80	11	3	14	5					
81-90	9		9	3					
91-100	2	1	3	1					
101 +	10	5	15	5					
Totals	232	52	284	100					

We captured 'underlying problem' data residents gave to us when registering on their first night.

#### Underlying problem information

	<u>Male</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
No problem with drugs, alcohol or mental health	51	22	6	12	57	20
Drug only problem	62	27	14	27	76	27
Alcohol only problem	47	20	10	19	57	20
Mental health only problem	26	11	7	13	33	12
Multiple problems	46	20	15	29	61	21
Totals	<u>232</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>284</u>	<u>100</u>

#### Underlying problem additional information

Drug problem (with or without other problems)	90	39	23	44	113	40
Alcohol problem (with or without other problems)	75	32	18	35	93	33
Mental health (with or without other problems)	61	26	17	33	78	27