

Bedford Street Angels Celebration Presentation

Saturday 6th March 2010

Led by Adam May, Project Director of the Bedford Street Angels

Introduction

Mr Mayor, colleagues, friends, ladies and gentlemen, Good afternoon. I would like to welcome you most warmly to the Bedford Street Angels first year anniversary Celebration here at The Bedford Salvation Army Corp.

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Adam May and I am privileged to serve currently as Project Director of Bedford Street Angels. At the outset today, I would want to express my deepest thanks to many of you in this room who have welcomed and supported me since taking on this role in the autumn last year.

Just a couple of the normal housekeeping notes as always before we begin.

- Please could we kindly ask you to turn mobile phones to either silent or vibrate. It does interfere with all the electronics. Many thanks.
- We are not expecting a fire alarm this afternoon, so should the alarm be raised, we ask that leave by the nearest exit - there is a door at back as you entered, there is a door on my right and then one behind me on the platform.
- This event is free, but at the end of this session and the service itself, there will be opportunities for anyone to give donations to Bedford Street Angels. There are opportunities for you to gift aid your donation if you wish, but filling in one of our envelopes. We do need your name and postcode to claim the 25p in every pound back.

It is encouraging to see civic, statutory and voluntary partners joining with us, especially our Mayor, David Hodgson as we celebrate all that has happened in the last twelve months since we began our work on the streets. I believe this afternoon is both about looking back but also looking to the forward and the work for the next twelve months.

Our format this afternoon is that in this first session will be an opportunity to hear from various people something about the work we are engaged in and a history of how Bedford Street Angels began with a powerful interview I had with Fred and Fran Gill. There will be then be an opportunity enjoy refreshments and to network and meet many of our volunteers and then at 5.15pm, we will close with a Celebration service led by Major Ian Loxley, the Bishop of Bedford and David Gibson.

As we begin, it is now my delight to welcome and introduce Paul and Jean Blakey, from Halifax. Paul is the National Founder of Street Angels and from his vision that the work has now spread to over fifty projects around the UK. It is a personal privilege to have been asked to serve with seven others as a National Trustee of the Street Angels - National Christian Nightlife as we form a national charity for our work.

In the New Years Honours List, it was announced that Paul would receive the MBE in recognition of his services to the Community. It is highly appropriate that Paul will receive his award this coming Wednesday at Buckingham Palace. We congratulate Paul on this timely reward for all he has done and continues to do. I now invite Paul to share with us briefly, something of his national vision for Street Angels. Over to you, Paul.