

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN OAKHAM

Project Sukkot, housing the homeless.

Churches Together in Oakham met on 25th January by Zoom.

Plans for the second Sukkot house are moving forward, though at an early stage. Oakham churches will be asked, formally this time, to underwrite the project equally with All Saints - the proposal will come to Church Council in March. The Council representative on the Steering Committee has confirmed the need for a second house; the council expect the situation to worsen as protections preventing eviction are withdrawn.

A report from the Foodbank noted that since 1st April 2020 they have received 670 referrals; many for existing clients but also new referrals. As a guide, they identified nearly 220 households when packing and delivering the Christmas Goody Bags. The 670 referrals equate to 930 adults and 721 children (1651 total). They've provided 7 day packs for the 1651 individuals, which works out at 34,671 meals assuming 3 meals a day.

Tony Law also introduced the concepts of Build Back Better; churches are invited to consider ways in which the objectives might be taken forward. Of course, churches already have community involvement and, indeed, examples such as Hope in Action, the Foodbank, and Christians against Poverty were mentioned. Dependent upon the way forward, we might invite our local council CEO and leader or MP to next year's prayer breakfast.

A suggestion had come for an open air Memorial and Thanksgiving Service to remember people who had died (not necessarily from the virus) during the pandemic, and whose relatives had been unable to have a full funeral or memorial service. The "New Day Dawns" Committee, which has members from each of the churches, will be asked to take on this project and make suitable arrangements, possibly in September.

If anyone would like to see the full minutes or the introductory paper on Build Back Better, please let Tony Law know (cgaa240@gmail.com).