

THE HOPE TRUST OXFORD PRAYER LETTER

An update from our various ministry partners



Happy New Year! We have so much to give thanks for as we start 2026. We are very grateful for all of you who've been praying for us. It was a particular encouragement to pray with many of you at our prayer suppers last year and we look forward to more of these in 2026 (invitations to follow). The Lord has been very kind to us in his financial provision too: through gifts from St Ebbe's Central, Grace Church Cowley, and new individual donors.

'And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work'. 2 Corinthians 9:8

But His provision last year should make us all the more conscious of our utter dependence on Him as we look forward to 2026. So we would ask you to lift up the following in your prayers:

- Please pray that the goals of the trust would be guided by Him in 2026;
 - Please pray for His ongoing financial provision this coming year and particularly for new regular donors;
 - Please pray that many would be blessed by the ministries of the trust in 2026, and particularly that many would come to know Christ through them!
- In Christ,



Georgina Bartlett
Chair of Trustees, The Hope Trust Oxford

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY (CAP)



We have had a busy couple of months at the CAP St Ebbe's Debt Centre. We finished our latest **Life Skills** with a consistent group of regulars who gained a strong sense of community from being part of the group. One member commented that "a highlight was meeting others and knowing I'm not alone going through these challenges", another said they "look forward to continuing to budget with the help of a mentor", and another said that being part of the Life Skills group "was really good for helping me achieve things I thought I could not". We had discussions about faith on several occasions over lunch together, and the group loved hearing Andy Turnbull's testimony during our final celebration session. We pray for ongoing fruit from those relationships.

It was a joy to be able to give **Christmas hampers** to each of our debt clients whom we help. We were so grateful for the support of small groups from St Ebbe's and Grace Church in sponsoring hampers and praying for clients. The clients were truly touched to receive the hampers, and it provided a great opportunity to visit clients, some of whom we hadn't seen in a while. One client teared up when he got his hamper, saying "I've never received a hamper before. I can't believe you thought of me". Another said "The fact that you took the trouble to think about what we might need at this time of year and took the time to bring it to me means the world". One of our volunteers prepared special kids hampers for each of the children known to us amongst our debt clients. These were gratefully received, with one mother commenting that she always felt so bad that she wasn't able to get her kids much at Christmas, and having these little hampers would bring them so much joy. The hampers each contained a full gospel, and some shorter gospel literature. We pray that the clients would read these and come to know Jesus!

We hosted a **CAP Christmas gathering** at St Ebbe's for current and former clients and group members. It was a happy occasion with food and crafts, and we were able to bring the attendees along to one of the St Ebbe's lunchtime mini carol services as part of the event. A particular highlight was being able to catch up with Life Skills members from years past and to keep up that link with them.



The Debt Help side of the work continues to be really busy. We got several new clients who were facing imminent eviction, and got in touch with us only quite a long way through the process. We're so glad they did, and also had to work to manage expectations that whilst we can assist with finding a solution to the debt, we can't necessarily provide quick fixes. Often, however, working with CAP can help to reassure landlords that the clients are working out a solution, and wonderfully, at the time of writing at least three of the clients have managed to avoid the eviction, and one has been offered alternative accommodation by the council despite the debt solution not yet being fully in place. A significant number of clients currently have deficit budgets, where their income is not enough to cover their basic spending needs. This means that whilst there may be a way to deal with the current debt, unless there is a change in their circumstances and they are able to increase their income, there is a danger they will soon fall into debt again. This can be challenging advice to deliver. We're grateful for the volunteer befrienders who come along on client visits with us and would love to have a few more befrienders from the church family – see below for more.

We'll be starting a **CAP Money Coaching** group at St Ebbe's on 6 February. This will be a similar format to Life Skills with the course, coaching, and a lunch together at the end, but the content will focus on the budgeting and money management side of navigating life on a low income. We pray that God would draw people who can benefit from the course, and particularly that it would be a group that can commit to coming along regularly, as that helps the whole group.

Prayer Points:

- Thank God for all the opportunities to share the gospel over the Christmas season. Pray that this would bear fruit, and the Lord would draw people to Himself.
- Pray for clients with deficit budgets, that they would be able to manage their money carefully and find ways to make their budgets sustainable. Pray that they would seek God and come to know the lasting hope and peace of Jesus.
- Pray for a good start to the next Money Coaching group in February - that we would be able to get the word out to those who could benefit from it, and that the Lord would bring together a group that is committed and can be an encouragement to each other.
- Pray for a few more befrienders to join the volunteer team - it is such a privilege to be able to meet clients in their homes and walk with them through a time of great need. Befrienders can play such a helpful role in supporting the clients with friendship and prayer.



Kirsten Beavan
CAP Debt Centre Manager

FINALLY - HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We're looking for volunteer befrienders, prayer team members and life skills volunteers. If you would like to find out more, or to be involved in the work of the Hope Trust Oxford, please contact **info@thehopetrustoxford.org**, or Scan the QR code if you would like Prayer Updates and event invitations to be delivered to your inbox.

