

HOPE Frome Report to FACT AGM 1st May 2014

It has been another busy year for HOPE Frome volunteers.

The van continues to go out on alternate Friday nights on a regular basis. Even during the period of severe weather there was only one cancellation due to storm damage at the caravan storage site. The ongoing successful impact of the van is owing to the co-ordination by Gary and commitment of volunteers in person and in prayer. We recently received a grant from the community environment fund which will pay for storage and insurance costs. There is always a need for more volunteers to join the van team.

The 'litter picks', now rebranded as Autumn and Spring 'Clean Ups'. We have tried to get people interested in meeting with neighbours, whether Christian or not, to clean up their local area. These events are ongoing, though again there is a need for volunteers to co-ordinate areas and be enthusiastic about using the opportunity to meet with their neighbours.

HOPE Frome are recognised as a key part of making the Food Festival the success it is, and it is anticipated volunteers will be helping to erect & dismantle gazebos, and collect litter again this year.

HOPE volunteers have helped with cooking for the FACT Alpha course – a great example of us being the 'practical arm' of FACT!

New projects last year were the litter pick for the Super Market at Christmas, and the purchase of Bibles. These are intended for use by Christians to give to people they are talking to on the van or in their day to day lives who would benefit from one. This idea reflects the HOPE 2014 aim to not only show God's love in actions, but also being committed to telling our own faith story and what Jesus has done. (If you could use any I still have a few, please contact Jackie Chilvers)

We seem to be speeding through 2014; however we have had a few small hitches (e.g. illness, struggles with meeting dates) which have not enabled us to plan ahead for this year. I believe that we are still making an impact, through discussions with dog walkers while litter picking, people being able to stop at the van to receive care and friendship and the practical help we give.

We remain challenged regarding how as a group of Christians (that includes everyone in every church represented in FACT!) HOPE Frome can respond to the needs of the local community in a way which allows us to share our individual stories as to 'why we do what we do' – for this to happen we need continued support from the churches and individuals, we need to don the armour of God, and pray and listen to Him for a clear vision for the future.

Jackie Chilvers

HOPE Frome Co-ordinator