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| LEAF PROJECT (Locally Encouraging All to Flourish) **Trustees’ Update: December 2021** |
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 *“I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message…   
so all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you…   
so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:20-21)*

**Project Update: December 2021**

With all the activity being undertaken under the auspices of LEAF it is hard to believe that we don’t celebrate our first year as a formal charity until April next year. The success of the project so far is in no small part to Tony’s committed leadership of the work, along with the passion and enthusiasm of the project team leaders. They are ably supported by others who undertake much of the more hidden administrative aspects behind the scenes. As trustees we would commend their work to you and would wish to express our thanks to all who have contributed so much, in such a short space of time.

**Physical Well-Being**

Denise, who is a CAP Debt Counsellor, is now funded to work in Ledbury one day a week and is working with a number of clients in the area. She is working well with our CAP Befrienders and so far, four people have been befriended by three different volunteers. However, there is still a need for more befrienders so if this is something that you feel you might be able to commit to then please let us know. CAP will be running a money course early next year and there have been conversations with the Ledbury Children’s Centre looking at the option of running a course there for young parents.

**Emotional Well-Being**

The first Kintsugi Hope course is up and running with thirteen people attending. Ali Bennett is now fully trained to run the courses and Liz Jones is undergoing training to be able to do the same. The first ‘cohort’ are predominantly from the churches with a view of using some of these attendees to be able to run future courses in the community.

LEAF now has two professional counsellors who work in the community. It is hoped that another counsellor will be added to the ranks as we develop a funding stream for this work.

**Spiritual Well-Being**

In the past year LEAF has run three Alpha courses and has just started a fourth. If you know of anyone who may wish to know more about the Christian faith then please speak to your church leader who will let the Alpha team know.

One exciting project is the development of a chaplaincy service that will operate within the surgery in the town. Discussions and meetings are on-going and agreement has been reached to start this service on the 10th January 2021. Further meetings are taking place before this to ensure everything is in place. LEAF has two people who have been trained to function in this ministry.

The Monday Worship evening remains an arena for those of any denomination to seek God. This runs alongside the 7/12/7 prayer times which we would commend to anyone who wishes to see God’s Kingdom extended in the town. All the trustees are aware that this prayer remains the engine room both for churches to express a tangible form of unity and togetherness but also, and more importantly, it will always be the foundation on which any work in the community is built.

**Children**

Mary Anne Keyes co-ordinates this work and after the successful events in the summer the team has held the Light Party in October which 43 children attending and more recently the Advent party which was also well attended. It is also worth noting that these events have been supported by 25 people from the churches within the town. Alongside these events LEAF has purchased Advent Calendars for each class (Real Advent Calendar) in Ledbury and Eastnor Primary Schools. LEAF also supported a new event, a Nativity Festival, which was held at the Methodist Church. Looking further ahead there are plans to host “Experience Easter” and “Thy Kingdom Come” events next year.

Tony and an ex-teacher visit the Ledbury Primary school each work to mentor some of the more challenging children. This is the genesis of a longer-term project as there is a high possibility that these children will maintain a link with LEAF through the Youth Drop-in in future years. LEAF also has a representative on the governing body of the school as one of the trustees was appointed to the board recently.

**Youth**

It is hoped that the Youth Drop-in will be re-established in the near future. You may be aware that there has been an issue finding a home for the group since it lost the option of The Masters House. Negotiations are nearly concluding that would see the group move into the Old Magistrates Court and Ledbury Police Station. This project works in conjunction with LYAS an existing charity for youth already established in the town. Looking further ahead it is hoped that we will be able to employ a Youth Worker, the costs of which will be shared by LEAF and LYAS with a combined brief to serve the young people in Ledbury and the surrounding areas.

**Other News**

The Bank account is now fully functional and monies that have traditionally been held by St Michaels for Tony’s ministry are being transferred to LEAF. The trustees would like to record their thanks to the church not just for the smooth transition of funds but for their administrative support of Tony in recent years. All of the project teams are currently undertaking new plans and budgets for the coming year and Tony is actively engaged in looking for areas of grant funding to support much of the work being undertaken.

**How can you help?**

There are needs within the work and if you feel God is calling you to serve the community of Ledbury in this way then please do let us know. As stated previously we are looking for befrienders for the CAP project. We also need someone who has marketing skills and can support the work of the website and other communications. If you know of funding streams or would be willing to support in any of the administrative work of the charity then again please talk with us.

Finally, can we thank all of you in all the churches for your ongoing support and involvement. If you should wish to know more then please check the website which has a wealth of information about the charity and its work. The web address is <https://www.leafledbury.com/>