



SEPTEMBER 2025 IN THIS ISSUE:

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NEW ACTIVITY IN BLACKPOOL'S SOUTH SHORE

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We're excited to launch a new project in Blackpool's South Shore, supporting some of the most disadvantaged families in England. In partnership with St Peter's Church, we will run a twice-weekly Community Soup Kitchen, providing hot meals and a welcoming space for the area's many homeless and disadvantaged adults.

We're also co-delivering a weekly Youth Group, offering local young people a safe after-school refuge, hot meals, and positive activities- an alternative to complex home environments or self-destructive behaviours.

Our specialist Community Worker will provide tailored advice and signposting to attendees, supported by vicar Tracy Charnock. This project will offer stability, friendship and opportunity to the area's most vulnerable people.

We hope to grow in future years, maximising our impact in a community experiencing extreme need.



Rev. Tracy Charnock
is leading this project
in partnership with
Toc H



**THE FLORENCE
FOUNDATION**
Supporting People and Pets

Reg. Charity 1204533

Sincere thanks to the
Florence Foundation
for kindly funding this
work.

CELEBRATING ART AND SOUL

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We're thrilled to announce that participants from our Art and Soul project in Middlesbrough have had their writings published in new anthology book: *Changing Futures: South Tees*, edited by Helen Aitchison. The collection, comprised of pieces from diverse groups, gives voice to the people of the area, the sense of place and connection, and the complex stories and experiences of local people.

We are currently seeking funding to continue the project and expand our reach in Middlesbrough to support more people in need.

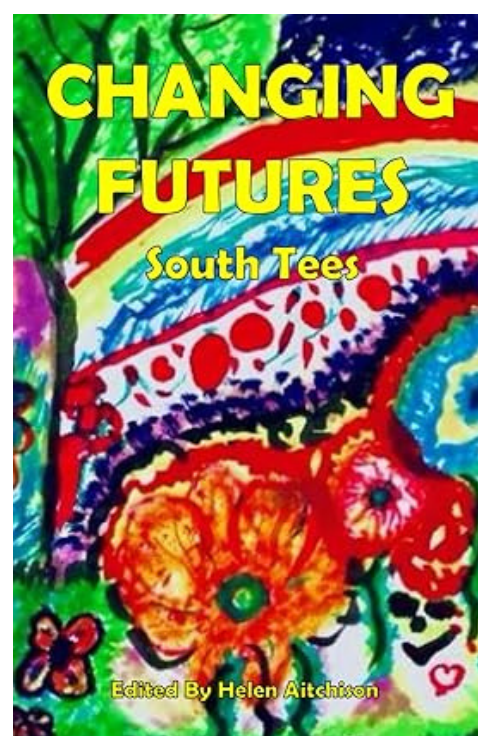
Project facilitator Terry says:

"I'm so pleased to say that the weekly Art & Soul Group is absolutely thriving at the Hope Foundation each Thursday morning.

Some recent comments from participants are that the group is "better than therapy"....."my new family"... "my lifeline".

Here is a photo of some of the guys whose writing is now published in the Changing Futures South Tees book. I recall on week one how one of them asserted that "I can't write!" Well, he's now a published author!

The group started in the wake of the awful riots last year and it's playing it's part in helping the town to recover. The Community Cohesion team are delighted with us. Also, the nuns down at Wass have invited us to come to their beautiful home in the woods and write for the nuns there! All good stuff!"



TOC H HIGH BROOMS SUMMER FAYRE

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Thanks to Lynne from Toc H High Brooms, who sent in these photos of the High Brooms Summer Fayre. The event was well-attended with plenty of stalls, activities and edible treats! Thank you to all who organised the event and helped make it such an incredible success.



THANKING OUR SUPPORTERS

A sincere thank you to Pat and Vera Ruddock, who donated £200 to our Newport hub in memory of Michael Harris and Margaret Ogden.

Vera's dad Michael Ogden arrived in London in 1949 aged 18, to start work and train as an architect. He found a room at the Toc H 'Mark 7' hostel in Fitzrovia and he lived there for quite a few years. One of his close friends was Michael Harris who was a 'warden' there. Women were not allowed to live at Toc H but they could visit subject to conditions.

Jean began to visit and befriended Michael Harris. They later married and remained lifelong friends of Michael Ogden and his wife Margaret. When Vera, their first child was born, Jean was asked to be her godmother. Michael Harris and Margaret are no longer with us, but Michael Ogden is 94 living in a care home in Penarth, and Jean has recently celebrated her 100th birthday!

Thank you Pat and Vera for your kindness- donations like these help to keep our work going for new generations.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

By Paul Hackwood - Toc H Chief Executive

I thought I might share my thoughts on immigration for this newsletter because it is a hot topic which has been to some degree hijacked by one side or the other in the wider debate. There is a tendency to look first for who is to blame rather than trying to understand what is going on.

When I think about immigration in the UK, I feel it's important to see both sides of the picture. On the positive side, immigrants make a huge contribution to our country. So many of the doctors, nurses and carers in the NHS come from overseas, and without them the health service would be in real trouble.

The same goes for other parts of the economy too - people come here to work hard, start businesses, and add something valuable to our communities. I think that's something we should recognise and appreciate. Welcoming migrants has been a key British value for hundreds of years.

At the same time, I do understand why some people feel uneasy. When public services are already stretched, it can feel like there isn't enough to go around.

If you're waiting a long time for a hospital appointment, struggling to find affordable housing, or trying to get your child into a good school, it's natural to worry that more people coming in might make things harder. Those concerns aren't always about prejudice- often they come from real experiences of struggling to access the basics.

That's why I think we need a balanced approach. Immigration brings so many benefits, but it also has to be managed in a way that makes sure communities don't feel left behind.

To me, it's about fairness: making sure people who come here are welcomed and valued, while also making sure everyone has proper access to the services they need.

If we can have that balance — and listen to each other with a bit more understanding — immigration doesn't have to divide us. It can be something that makes the country stronger.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Paul Hackwood'.

September 2025

CONTACT TOC H



Visit our website at: www.toch-uk.org.uk



Email us at: info@toch.org.uk



Call us on: 0208 057 4200



Connect with us: www.facebook.com/TocH.International

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Dates for your diary:

Thursday, 9th October 2025- Toc H AGM

Sunday 9th November 2025- Cenotaph

Please contact info@toch.org.uk if you would like to attend either of these events

HOW YOU CAN DONATE

Donating to Toc H has never been easier:

- To set up a regular gift, or offer a one-off donation, please visit our website: <https://www.toch-uk.org.uk/get-involved>
- Raise FREE donations for Toc H when you shop online using Easyfundraising. Find us at: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/toc-h/
- **If you wish to remember Toc H in your will - Please call our CEO Paul Hackwood on 0208 057 4200**

TOC H MEMBERSHIP



Our members commit themselves to an associational life, encouraging participation, friendship and engagement in local communities.

Membership is **FREE** and supports us all to make our neighbourhoods better places to live and flourish.

We offer various simple ways to become a member:

- Sign up online on www.toch-uk.org.uk,
- Contact us on 020 8057 4200 for a membership form
- Scan the QR code on the left and complete our short membership form