

# CASE STUDY

## Trusteeship

# Maldon Road Chapel, Colchester



**Maldon Road Chapel in Colchester** was a thriving assembly which was founded in 1933, but its congregation began to dwindle due to age, and by 2013, the trustees were seeking the Lord's leading on what to do next. Chair of Trustees, Ian Oakley, stated, "We put the building on the market and after a few false starts, a non-Christian organisation offered the full asking price. We prayed earnestly for guidance as to what to do. In early 2014, our brothers from Kemball Street Assembly in Ipswich told us about Church Growth Trust."

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Giles Arnold from Church Growth Trust (CGT) met with the trustees and explained CGT's heart to save properties such as this for Gospel use and how the Lord had provided evangelical churches to occupy other empty buildings around the country. The trustees were delighted and by the end of May, knowing that they were acting in the mind and will of the Lord, the property was gifted to CGT.

There were two main issues for CGT. The first was to find a suitable evangelical church to continue the Gospel work and reach the local community. The other was to ensure the building was safe and useable by a church.

The first turned out to be fairly straight-forward. It was at this time that a group called Dynamic New Anglian Networks were looking for a building for their mission. The property was let to them and has gone through various transitions since, to be let now to Maldon Road Evangelical Church, a church plant established by Suffolk-based evangelist John McCarthy.

John says, "One day, following a meeting I had had with Giles Arnold at another property, he rang me to ask if I'd be interested in the chapel in Maldon Road. I took it on. A fellow evangelist from Chelmsford came alongside me to help with our ministry to the homeless. We have around 25 homeless people coming to the drop-in every week and some attend meetings. Many of them are getting saved. A local doctor liked the look of what we were doing and now he offers two-hour sessions of teaching after school for kids who are suffering from a lack of education. At present, there are five in the leadership team. We have just appointed a pastor, Elijah Lamb. I always say that it is no good taking the word to the unchurched if you cannot bring them somewhere to be disciplined. I take the congregation (currently around 25) out to meet their neighbours – we go door to door introducing ourselves and asking if they need prayer."

The second issue of the making the building safe and useable is ongoing. There are problems with subsidence and a long-term solution to rebuilding the front elevation and creating a fully accessible entrance and welcome area is being considered. There was also a lot to do inside. The very low rent charged by CGT has enabled the occupying churches to refurbish the building, including rewiring, replastering of walls, putting down new carpets and redecorating.

