



THE HUB

CHRISTIAN RESOURCE CENTRE

Unit 6, The Crossing at St Pauls
Darwall Street
Walsall
WS1 1DA

UK Company 07126042

*** HOLD UNTIL 25/1/2010 ***

The Hub Christian Resource Centre announces plans to rescue Walsall bookshop.

WALSALL, ENGLAND, 25/1/2010 - Following several weeks of speculation over the future of the former Wesley Owen Bookshop in Walsall, The Hub Christian Resource Centre Ltd (UK Company 07126042) has today detailed their plans to take on the mantle of Christian Retailing in the town. The announcement brings to an end months of uncertainty, following the news that former top 100 charity IBS-STL UK was selling its UK operations, and the subsequent administration of 26 of its former stores.

The plans will see the new company, owned and operated by former Wesley Owen Manager Christine Bunger, and her son Luke, begin trading as early as February, from the same location as the former Wesley Owen store, it was today reported. The shop will continue to stock Christian books, music, resources and gifts, and will fill the niche left vacant by the imminent closure of the majority of Wesley Owen Stores.

"The news of the closure really rocked the local Christian community," said Luke Bunger, Operational Manager of the new company, "we are just responding to the outcry we have heard from our customers." The new store will continue a legacy stretching back over 40 years. Originally formed as the independent The Beacon Bookshop, the shop also enjoyed success as both a Scripture Union and most recently Wesley Owen shop. "It's a legacy which we were not ready to see come to an end," added Luke, "we believe that there is a market for what we offer, and the response from our customers and local Churches has certainly confirmed this for us. We are delighted that these plans rescue the shop, and open a new chapter in the history of the store."

The opening of the new shop has been made possible, in part due to the work of St Paul's Church, who own the shop unit, and numerous pledges of support from local Churches and individuals. Revd. Mark Kinder, Priest in Charge of St Paul's Walsall has overseen much of the fund raising initiative. "The support has been truly fantastic." Said Revd. Kinder. "The local Churches have really got behind the management team, and offered their support, both financially and through their ongoing usage of the new shop. We are really excited about what the future has in store for The Hub and Saint Paul's Church."

The owners of the new shop, which will trade as *The Hub*, revealed plans to open the shop in as little as three weeks, and the staff are currently negotiating with core suppliers to restock the shop. "Discussions are ongoing," said Luke Bunger "but we are confident that the time frame we are working towards is both realistic, and achievable. We are very fortunate to be in a position where our suppliers, landlords and customers all believe so strongly in what we do. Without their support, none of this would have been possible. We are absolutely delighted by the responses we have received from all corners."

This news also brings hope to a large number of former Wesley Owen stores who's futures are less secure. "Perhaps most significant, however, is that the plans are so scalable. Our announcement provides a framework which can be used by any other managers or staff interested in saving their own stores." Said Luke. "As Christians, we believe that our store is more than a simple bookstore, but a mission centre too, and we have all prayed that the mission can be preserved. Through this plan, we have provided a real way for us to become the answer to our own prayers."

The Hub Christian Resource Centre Ltd exists to equip, resource and support the Christian community in the West Midlands and assist in the gospel mission of local churches. Offering Christian resources of all kinds, The Hub is a one-stop-shop for all the needs of the local Christian Community.

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