

## **Information about Romsey Mill**

### ***Introduction***

Romsey Mill is a respected charity with 29 years' experience creating opportunities with young people and families in Cambridgeshire, including those experiencing significant disadvantages. With an emphasis on participation, we create opportunities for development in all areas of life. We take a long-term relational approach supporting, challenging, inspiring and encouraging people to raise their aspirations and to fulfil their potential. We do this by developing confidence, skills and wellbeing, through a range of activities including outreach, social groups, focused activities, education, 1:1 support, trips and residential.

Romsey Mill was founded in 1980 by churches in the Romsey Town area of Cambridge and continues to be motivated by a Christian ethos to serve people and transform communities.

### ***Romsey Mill's Vision and Mission***

Romsey Mill's vision is of a transformed society in which all young people, children and families fully belong, positively contribute and thrive.

Romsey Mill creates opportunities with young people, children and families to overcome disadvantage, promote inclusion, and develop personal, social and spiritual wellbeing

### ***Romsey Mill's Ethos***

As an organisation we aim to ensure that our Christian beliefs shape our thinking and govern our actions. Certain key themes, which include values and behaviours, are rooted in and are sustained by our beliefs and form the basis for our work. These include justice, hope, valuing the whole person, excellence, creativity, community, integrity and forgiveness. We will work in partnership with any who share a commitment to these.

We believe that as people explore and experience these themes, the relevance of the Christian faith becomes apparent and that discussion with them of the inspiration and motivation behind the actions of those involved in Romsey Mill's work may be appropriate and helpful.

As our beliefs underpin Romsey Mill's work, it is necessary that those who hold certain specific roles and responsibilities share them. We will therefore recruit people with a personal commitment to the Christian faith to such posts. However, because we actively promote inclusion, people of different faiths or none are warmly welcomed and valued, as we come together to fulfil our hopes and aspirations to serve all unconditionally. Our programmes and activities are open to all, regardless of their beliefs.

We are keen to engage in cross-sector partnerships with a broad range of public bodies, private companies, other voluntary organisations and churches in order to support young people, children and families as effectively as possible.

## ***Our Values & Behaviours***

Romsey Mill's values and behaviours are rooted in and sustained by our Christian beliefs. They reflect what we think is important in life and demonstrate our aspirations for the kind of organisation we want to be. They provide guidance on individual and organisational principles, standards, qualities and conduct. We will seek to form partnerships of trust and collaborations for change wherever these values are held in common.

We believe that the integrity of Romsey Mill lies in the consistency between the values we hold and the practice of them. Whilst these values are aspirational, members of staff and volunteers are encouraged to be personally committed to making them a reality in everything they do for Romsey Mill.

Romsey Mill is guided by the following core values:

- We affirm the intrinsic importance of social justice. Our work will challenge injustice and reflect a long-term commitment to people, whatever their need.
- We will seek to awaken and sustain hope for transformation and a better future. This requires us to develop a culture of forgiveness.
- We recognise that lasting change must include all aspects of a person and their community, so we will promote physical, mental, spiritual, economic and environmental well-being.
- We strive for excellence in our work, seeking to improve by listening, reflecting and learning.
- We positively encourage imaginative and flexible approaches in responding to unmet needs and breaking new ground in community development.

The following values inform our approach to people:

- We recognise our interdependence and believe that a strong caring community should be at the heart of our identity and work.
- We give priority to those who are excluded, disadvantaged or neglected in our society.
- We recognise the immeasurable value of every individual, so we will care for all people equally and respect their differences.
- We are committed to continuous learning and development so that everyone connected with Romsey Mill - and the organisation as a whole - can realise their full potential.
- We are responsible and accountable for our actions and will act with integrity. We are open to correction and change.

## ***Governance***

The Romsey Mill Trust was formally registered as an independent charity in 1998 (Charity no: 1069905) having previously operated as part of an Ely Diocese charitable trust. It is also registered as a company limited by guarantee (no:3556721).

The Board of Trustees plays an active role in the governance of the organisation and is currently made up of nine people drawn from the local community. We also have four patrons who act as ambassadors for our work.

### **Romsey Mill today**

Romsey Mill has been pioneering life-transforming children's and youth work initiatives and family support for over twenty nine years.

Our current Programmes and activities include:

- **Young Parents Programme** - intensive personal, educational and parenting support for teenage parents, expectant parents and their children
- **Social Inclusion Programme** – support, development and advocacy work with 13-21 year-olds facing various disadvantages, including those who may not be in education or employment
- **Under 5s Programme** - provides information, advice and support to parents of children under 5 and a range of groups for families with babies or toddlers
- **Transitions Programme** - targeted work with 10-14 year-olds experiencing a range of difficulties, especially with the transfer to secondary school
- **Aspire Programme** – creates social space, promotes mental well-being and develops life skills with 9-16 year-olds with autistic spectrum conditions.
- **Community Development Activities** – a range of activities including children's clubs, charity shop, room hire, training, participation work

We are currently a staff team of 13 full-time, 16 part-time and sessional staff and, over the course of a year, 135 volunteers are involved in our work. Romsey Mill Centre functions as a community 'hub' for much of our work, providing office space, training/meeting rooms, sports hall, and creative arts facilities including a recording studio. Romsey Mill also has a charity shop, run by volunteers, raising funds for our work. Romsey Mill has an annual income/expenditure in the region of £650,000.

Romsey Mill is a regular contributor to the development of statutory policy and strategy, and has also been successful in receiving trust funding to develop innovative programmes. Romsey Mill played a key role in setting up the CYM in Cambridge, which trains professional Christian youth workers, and today still provides a number of placement opportunities for students studying youth and community work. Romsey Mill also works in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University and The Open University, providing training and support for students studying social care at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.