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Kevin
at 20
years



3rd July
1997
2017



Dear friends of the Vine Trust,

Today, marks my 20th year at the Vine Trust, and what a twenty years that has been. Back then, a younger, fresher faced 22-year-old, was given the challenge, of taking the then-Vine Project - YWCA, based in an old pub, 'the Vine', to the next level of support for young people.

I had initially given myself a couple of years for the role, but little did I know I'd be there for so long, and that the journey would encompass, battles with the News of the World, meetings with Prime Ministers, Princes, transnational banks and corporates, as well as the thousands of young people we have educated, employed and engaged through our social enterprises, schools, youth work, hubs and apprenticeships, UK wide.



'Christian haven, heaven for hookers'

My first day was dealing with the aftermath, of a malicious News of the world article, scandalising the Vine's then support of very needy prostitutes. The fall out of the article was the loss of financial support, a drop in trade from our restaurants, and threats from the pimps, who's 'trade' was made difficult by the increased police and media attention in the area. This was a lot for a 22-year-old, who wondered if he'd made the right choice, needless to say he, and the team prevailed.



20 years on, the Vine Trust Group, now embarks of a new phase of **Education, Employment, Engagement and Enterprise**.



• In conjunction with Queen Mary's Foundation, we launch the Mercian Trust, a new multi academy trust, embracing initially 5 schools, a combination of Comprehensive, Vocational, Grammar, and Alternative Provision, supporting over **5000** students.



• In conjunction with the Palace, we expand our Ladder apprenticeship campaign into new UK areas, through Trinity Mirror newspapers, creating **10,000** jobs.



• We will be developing new social enterprise zones, with new hubs, where young people can **work, live, play, learn and worship**.

I am very thankful for where I have come from, what we have achieved, and I am still equally motivated, by the enormous challenges we and our communities still face.

A great opportunity has arisen where some private donors have agreed to match our crowdfunding efforts, and so to mark my 20th anniversary, I need to grow the number of our regular givers.

The majority of our funds are restrictive, which means we still have to fundraise for core costs, so this has come as a welcome opportunity.

We very rarely ask for direct donations, but I would be personally grateful if you could join me in realising this opportunity.

Details on how you can support are on our site.

Yours

Kevin Davis
Chief Executive

