

## Carole Kuen

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**From:** Ed Walker  
**Sent:** 17 July 2017 14:35  
**Subject:** What is success? Breaking "yokes"?

Dear Friends

Lots of you have supported us in many, many ways over the years, but how do you know we are being 'successful'?

One of the verses which inspires me is from Isaiah 58: *'Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice, to set the oppressed free and break EVERY yoke.'* If we are doing something like that then, hopefully, we are being successful. At Hope into Action we want to try and understand, what breaking 'every yoke' means, because breaking one alone is rarely enough.

We measure and monitor our 'success' through '7 outcomes', hoping that each of those 'areas' (or in the language of Isaiah: 'yokes') improves. We are delighted to share last year's outcomes below. But before you get there, please take a moment to read how one of our tenants responded to the question, 'What is success?':

**'Success is different for everyone.**

**As far as success goes for the homeless it's not as simple as putting a roof over their head because the walk of their life probably has been a difficult and complicated one.'**

So, success can only be measured by an individual, at an individual's own pace. Success could be the healing of an angry emotional wound. It could be learning to love yourself. It could be finding peace. For some, the fact they stayed out of prison for longer than last time, or held a tenancy without debts is success - any step in the right direction is a success.

Our 'outcomes' for the year ending April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017:

Maintaining tenancy	87%	In total we gave a home to 152 people. 13 were children. Our average length of stay was 266 days. Of those who moved on: 16% went to a friend, 31% to private rental, 21% to social housing, 6% to a relative and 26% to 'other.'
Abstaining from crime	89% - <b>(national average is less than 40%)</b>	We housed 36 people who had previously been in custody and 32 of those abstained from crime. 1 of our tenants was removed from the police 'prolific offenders' list. Many of our other 103 tenants would be at risk of committing crime and only 1 of those served time in custody.
Reducing alcohol or drug intake	81%	57 of our tenants had a previous relationship with drugs/alcohol; of those, 46 have reduced their dependence. One tenant has now been clean for 20 months - her longest for 20 years! This year, the availability of new drugs has added to the challenge.
Improved social relations with their family	82%	82% have improved family relations. We have focussed on this much more this year as we feel it is vital to a sense of wellbeing.
Volunteering education or training	47%	65 people were involved in volunteering, education and training.

Secured a job	23%	32 of our tenants have overcome huge hurdles to get a job.
Financial management	This year we have focussed more on personal financial management: 92% have a bank account, 71% are paying for their water regularly, 46% by standing order. 85% are either addressing arrears they have or are free of rent debts!	

I hope you are encouraged that the above measures represent indicators of ‘success’. Perhaps the last word should go to our tenants, two of whom, in the last week, have said the following:

**“Thanks for making me feel like I matter”,**

and another:

**“The support and relationships I’ve developed through the church have hugely improved my wellbeing, self-esteem and the way I feel about myself. This has given me the confidence to begin to tackle my problems.”**

That last quote I think sums up our mission and therefore our success: enabling churches to meaningfully engage in relationships and thereby creating an environment where people are more likely to make positive life choices.

We thank you so much for your support in prayer, in giving, in investing, in partnering. Some of you have given a huge amount in the last few months and anonymously – each contribution is noticed and highly appreciated. I hope you are encouraged, as are we, that your inputs are serving a need and ‘breaking yokes.’

With warmest love

Ed and everyone at Hope into Action

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**Ed Walker**  
**Executive Director**

**Office:** Peterborough

**Telephone:** 01733558301

**Email:** [Ed.Walker@hopeintoaction.org.uk](mailto:Ed.Walker@hopeintoaction.org.uk)

Registered Charity No: 1137686

Registered in England & Wales No: 7309173

Registered office address: Hope Centre, 26 North Street, Peterborough, PE1 2RA




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