



## GOD'S SANCTUARY FOR THOSE IN NEED

SANCTUARY  
TRUST

*Sheila Halsall tells of her vision for The Sanctuary and how the Lord is working it out.*

In November 86 I came to live and work in Rochdale, working for the Baptist Housing Association as a warden in charge of sheltered accommodation. Whilst working in that capacity I became aware of the drug problem in Rochdale. First of all through the pain and despair of one of my residents whose son was addicted, and then I began to realise that certain people in the street were dealing in drugs. Later, through the minister of our church, I was introduced to one or two of the lads on the street who were in bad circumstances because of their addiction. I came to understand at close quarters the terrible predicament that some of them were in, and I realized that I was being led into a different work.

During this time I spent much time in prayer and sought the Lord's will through prayer and felt that I was being guided a step at a time through His word, through preaching and that "still small voice" within me. I felt at the time that I was being shown two pathways and the choice was mine to make. One was a very steep pathway in front of me that would be very difficult but would lead to an outpouring of God's blessing in a mighty way. My instruction for this path was clear - that I must not look to the right or to the left but to rely on Him for guidance. The other pathway was a comfortable one, one that many Christians took; it wasn't evil just comfortable. I realized that in many ways the second pathway was the one that I was on. I did a Christian work with lots of enthusiasm and could have stayed there and had many material gains and no one would have known the choice before me, but I knew that God was calling me to the steeper pathway.

Whilst all of this was happening one of the lads took me to look at some property with six bedrooms and suggested it would make a great hostel. I went to look at it and it was a real mess, but I immediately had a good feel about it. This was from the Lord. I didn't have the money to bring it up to regulation standards but the owner was prepared to spend the £30,000 needed and rent it to us. Amazing - I can only believe that the Lord had His hand on it. In it we seek to show the practical reality of the Christian faith. Though the work is hard and we go home tired out, we see lives being touched in a real way by Our Lord Jesus.

It took approximately two years for the hostel to open but in the meantime we opened a "Drop-In" Center underneath the hostel. Here we sought to reach out in love to the many people in the area who were beset with problems. In the Drop-In Center we distributed cheap or free food, advised people towards professional services, and gave a listening ear and general support in any way we could.

God's word tells us "That the cattle upon a thousand hills are His" so therefore if this work is His we should have no need to beg. The practicalities of it are that God's work should be supported by God's people.

**Praise the Lord.**

Sheila Halsall