THE lives of scores of rough sleepers in North East Lincolnshire are set to be transformed, thanks to the opening of Grimsby’s first-ever day and night centre for homeless people.

Great Grimsby MP Melanie Onn will join the team at Harbour Place at a public Open Day of The Hope Centre, on Saturday September 22.

Developed within a former NHS building in Hope Street, its opening sees the Harbour Place team realise a dream to provide a facility with the ability to offer ‘true and lasting change’ for clients.

Over the last few months public consultations have been held to re-assure nearby residents and raise awareness of the need to offer long-term support to the 45 or so people who are sleeping rough in North East Lincolnshire every week. On average the charity helps 150 street homeless annually.

An initial pilot project, which has been running at Harbour Place’s current premises, in Albert Street West, since July 2017 has seen the charity provide six overnight places three days a week and the provision is regularly oversubscribed.

Charity Project Director, Rob Barr – who has more than 35 years’ experience in the care and support sector – said the larger indoor and outdoor space at The Hope Centre offers flexibility and scope for development.

There will be a medical room, a day support centre, sleeping for 15 with separate rooms for men and women and space for the particularly vulnerable. There is also a dedicated staff area, a reception and relaxation room, showers and a fully equipped kitchen. Meanwhile the outdoor space has room for gardening.

While the centre itself offers dedicated help and support, the team also assists clients to move-on into accommodation, with ongoing
HARBOUR PLACE GRIMSBY
PRESS RELEASE

assistance. Since last July Harbour Place has recorded a 70 per cent move-on success rate (people who are now settled elsewhere and no longer sleeping rough).

It is also increasing its outreach and support work, with additional staff assisting people during the early stages of their move off the streets.

“A lot of the people who we work with have a chaotic housing history, but with the on-going support offered here and the relationships that are built, we do achieve very successful outcomes,” said Rob.

“It is important to understand that the majority of people we see are often very keen to change, but there has to be the resources around to help them do that,” he added.

While the development is part-funded through the Government’s Rough Sleepers Initiative via North East Lincolnshire Council, Harbour Place remains reliant on other grants and public and private donations.

Trustee chair, Andrew Brown – who is onsite almost daily and taking a leading role in the refurbishment of The Hope Centre – was keen to stress the importance of local individuals and businesses getting involved.

“There is a true need for this sort of provision. As a society we must engage with people in this way if we are going to effect change. Everyone needs to see they have a sense of worth and the power to change, but they need the right environment in which to do so successfully,” said Andrew.

Addressing some concerns that have been voiced in the neighbourhood, Andrew added: “We all genuinely understand that there will be a level of concern, however we are here to offer re-assurance. We have high expectations of our service users with clear standards and that is a message that is strongly delivered.”

Regular meetings will continue to be held with the local Resident’s Group and it is hoped that as many people as possible will attend the Open Day, with everyone welcome between 1pm and 4pm. Melanie Onn will officially open The Hope Centre at 2.30pm.

For more information or to find out how you can help, please email Rob: robinbarr@harbourplacegrimsby.org.uk