



# ANNUAL REPORT 2014–2015



ENABLING PEOPLE TO ESCAPE HOMELESSNESS



Winchester Churches Nightshelter is open 365 days a year offering accommodation, food and vital support services to Hampshire's homeless.

- Our Vision** is to enable people to escape homelessness.
- Our Mission** is to help as many people as possible into successful independent living.
- Our Values**
  - Honest and open** we treat everyone with kindness and respect, without prejudice or discrimination.
  - Safe and supportive** we provide a home where residents can be comfortable and safe and can find the help and restoration of self-esteem they need.
  - Flexible and caring** we foster collaboration to work as a team with residents, staff, volunteers, the local community and other agencies/partners.

**Office opening hours:**  
Monday to Friday, 8am – 3pm *(plus 24 hour answer phone)*

**Contact us:**  
**Winchester Churches Nightshelter** (Registered Charity No. 1080443)  
20B Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RZ

Phone: **01962 862050** Email: [admin@wcns.org.uk](mailto:admin@wcns.org.uk)

# ABOUT US

Winchester Churches Nightshelter has been providing a vital lifeline to the homeless since 1988 and remains the only nightshelter offering direct access emergency accommodation in Hampshire. We have **17** beds and open **365** days of the year, offering high quality accommodation, food and vital support. We help, on average, between **140 - 200** homeless people yearly, working with them to find more permanent accommodation to suit their needs.

## Who's Who

### **Michele Price**

Manager

### **Liz Howe**

Project Co-ordinator

### **Debby Hughson**

Advocate & Support Worker

### **Olly Hall**

Single Homeless Outreach and Support Worker

### **Ed Murray**

Project Worker

### **Will Manning**

Project Worker

### **Hannah Gurnham**

Part-time Marketing & PR Co-ordinator

### **Hilary Nutbeam**

Part-time Catering Co-ordinator

### **Alison Stoodley**

Part-time Project Worker

### **Carol Taylor**

Part-time Project Worker

### **Georgina Walker**

Part-time Project Worker

### **Grant Gibson**

Part-time Project Worker

## Board of Directors

### **Paul Montgomery**

Chairman

### **Sarah Lloyd**

Deputy Chairman

### **Marion Fletcher**

Treasurer

### **David Johnson**

Secretary

### **Jo James**

### **Paul Robinson**

### **Stewart Roberts**

### **Julia Sinclair**

### **Revd Lesley Leon**

(Director from June 2012 – Nov 2014)

### **Miranda Rock**

(Director from Jan 2012 – Nov 2014)

## Patrons

### **Rt Revd Tim Dakin**

The Bishop of Winchester

### **Baroness Celia Thomas**

of Winchester

## Organisation Structure

The Nightshelter is an organisation consisting of a Board of Directors, Project Manager and 12 staff as well as a large and committed volunteer base. In the light of our ambitious five-year plan, and mindful of the associated risks inherent in that, we are reviewing the organisational structure to keep pace with the plan.

# THIS YEAR AT THE NIGHTSHELTER



## **Michele Price, Manager**

He walked into my office, a huge smile all over his face, shaking his keys: *“I’ve just been offered a studio flat on a tenancy, and yesterday I was given a bed, two-seater sofa, table, chairs and a chest of drawers!”*

It’s days like this that make a job at the Nightshelter so very worthwhile.

Our most exciting news this year, discussed in more detail on **page 15**, is the launch of our move-on project. Thanks to one very supportive landlady, we have taken on the private rental of a four-bedroom

property near Winchester. This has allowed us to give four Nightshelter residents the opportunity to gain some valuable experience of living independently, while still receiving valuable support from us, until they are confident to move into more permanent, private accommodation. Our staff visit regularly during the week to help with budgeting, finding work and address any additional support needs, so that our tenants get used to the responsibilities of living and renting privately, giving them the best chance of escaping homelessness.

The Nightshelter continues to provide nearly 24/7 support, last year to **118 residents**. This includes computer training, budgeting (*over 60% of our residents managed to reduce their debts whilst with us last year – a remarkable achievement*), help with CVs and practical cookery lessons (*113 spaces on our food and nutrition workshops were taken up over the year*). We also now have a weekly volunteer to facilitate and increase awareness of residents about Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous. More information about the range of services we offer can be found on **page 18**.

We have, sadly, seen an increase in the use of NPSs (novel psychoactive substances) or legal highs, as they are also known. These chemicals, designed to imitate the effects of illegal drugs such as cannabis and heroin, constitute a significant public health risk that experts say can be up to a thousand times stronger than their illegal equivalents.

I must congratulate all the staff team for their continued dedication and commitment and for coping so admirably with the challenges presented by such a diverse group of residents during the year, many of whom have

# THIS YEAR AT THE NIGHTSHELTER

extremely complex needs. *Achieving an 80% planned move-on rate from the Nightshelter, and the lowest number of unknown departures (24) in the past four years, is a fantastic result.*

We continue to work closely with our residents to improve our services. Monthly forum meetings are crucial to our plans for the future and provide a great way to improve communication between staff and residents. We have implemented several suggestions made during these meetings, including opening earlier on Saturday evenings, and opening all day on Sundays for the weekly lie-in! Training sessions were also suggested as a means of helping residents gain qualifications while at the Nightshelter. Sessions that we have run have ranged from CSCS card training for work on building sites, to awareness of blood-borne viruses. We have held poetry workshops, taken part in Care Quality Commission surveys, and worked closely with other agencies, police, and community safety teams. See our full range of services on **page 18**.

As we look ahead to 2016, funding cuts again create uncertainty for all homelessness services, particularly surrounding the availability of local move-on accommodation. Our hope is that our new move-on project will help relieve the pressure locally and provide a step forward in the provision of supported housing that, if successful, we hope to replicate across the region.



One thing that is certain, and which becomes more apparent each year, is how far the Nightshelter has come as a charity; from the church hall we were founded in in 1988, to present day premises and extraordinary range of services.

Upon leaving us, one of our residents said: “I had an amazing time here, gaining a wealth of experiences and good friendships. This has been an eye opening experience and has helped me hone my skills in getting on with people so I can better deal and work with others.” Long may we continue to help others in this way.

# RESIDENT STORY



Every year, hundreds of people come to the Nightshelter looking for shelter, help and support to get them back on their feet. Everyone's story is different – here, Steve\* tells us how he became homeless.

## **My Nightshelter experience**

### **How did you come to be at the Nightshelter?**

It began when I was signed off work with sickness and depression. I was in a relationship with a girl that I worked with, and we were living together. I was doing a job that was stressing me out quite a bit, and I ended up getting sick, and then my relationship started falling apart. In the end I started using cocaine to block out everything else that was going on. I eventually had to leave the house that my girlfriend and I were renting, and I went to live in a pub. My sick note, exempting me from work, ran out, but I just wanted to bury my head in the sand and I got dismissed from my job. I signed on after that, but all my benefits money was going to pay my rent, and in the end I just had enough of it and couldn't cope. I didn't have the confidence to apply for jobs and go to interviews so I got sanctioned and my Job Seekers' Allowance got stopped, my landlord started hassling me and I just packed my stuff and left.

### **When did you first realise that you were homeless?**

I was petrified. It was the day that I left the pub where I was lodging. I really wasn't sure what was going to happen. I thought I was going to end up sleeping on the street, and I know lots of people do this and seem to cope with it, but I'm not sure it would have been something I could cope with. I think it would have broken me. I went to the local library and Googled what to do. I accessed some emergency accommodation in Guildford at first, then I was referred to Winchester Nightshelter as that's my local connection. From that point onwards I was so lucky to get the level of support I did. Although you do come under the label of "homeless" when you're staying at the Nightshelter, they way I

# RESIDENT STORY

was treated and the support I got, I never classed myself as homeless. Never thought of myself in that way. I feel lucky.

## **What did you think when you first went to the Nightshelter?**

The idea of a Nightshelter made me think of some kind of warehouse, something along those lines, I didn't really know what to expect. I found it daunting, to start off with, but that went quite quickly. The staff, and even some of the guys in there, made me feel better about it. I found it friendly, and my confidence started to build again, however I knew I had a long journey to sort things out.

## **What kind of support did you receive at the Nightshelter?**

Everything that was offered to me by the Nightshelter was helpful. I started to feel like a human being again. I was given counselling. I was given a hot meal every day, which was something I hadn't had for a long time. And direction to get back in work. I didn't have a decent CV anymore and lacked confidence, and I was helped massively with that. I have lots of interviews lined up, so I'm getting there now. I started asking for help, rather than burying my head in the sand.

## **How long did you stay for?**

I stayed for four months. First we looked at private rental in Southampton, but the fact that I didn't have anything to take to a private rental, it didn't seem like the right option. Now I'm staying at the Nightshelter's own supported move-on accommodation. The support is still there for me, and that's really important. I know it will stop eventually when I move on again, but right now I really appreciate the support. *(You can read more about the Move-on Project on page 15).*



*\*Steve is not his real name.*

# CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT



## **Changes to the welfare system, by Liz Howe, Nightshelter Project Co-ordinator**

The ultimate hope for all residents at the Nightshelter is that we can assist them into successful independent living, an important part of which is learning to manage money and benefits effectively.

Since 2012, we have seen far-reaching reform of our country's welfare system, with many of the changes significantly impacting on homeless people and those who support them. **The introduction of Universal Credit, which is being rolled out in Winchester in September 2015, will dramatically overhaul how welfare payments are delivered.** The main change will see claimants receiving all their money, including Housing Benefit, directly to their bank account in one monthly payment, rather than separate payments for each. In some cases this could be as much as £1000 in one go. Fortunately, as the Nightshelter is classed as exempt accommodation, we will continue to receive Housing Benefit on our residents' behalf during their stay here. When they leave, they will need to take full responsibility for their benefits entitlement.

The burden that this large monthly sum presents to our residents, many of whom are vulnerable people trying to overcome emotional, mental and physical problems, including battling addiction, is huge, and puts them at a much greater risk of mismanaging their money. Other challenges that residents will also face under the new system include the on-going threat of sanctions for missing appointments or not meeting stringent job search targets. In addition, those with literacy issues or who lack confidence with basic IT processes will need extra support to understand and engage with their benefits providers online, which they are now encouraged to do.

This is why we sit down with every person who steps through our door to see if we can support them with their finances and budgeting. This might include helping them to set up payment plans for any debts; talking to banks, the Job Centre, DWP and the Council on their behalf; helping to manage their benefits claims and resolve any queries; even just simply setting up a bank account or email address, both of which are now mandatory under Universal Credit.

Although the coming year will present some huge challenges to our residents, we believe our help and advice will give them the best possible chance of moving on successfully, escaping the cycle of homelessness.

# RESIDENT STATISTICS

## Our year in numbers

We highlight some of the key Nightshelter statistics from April 2014 to April 2015.

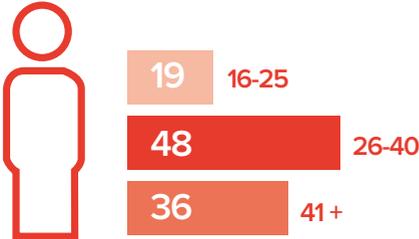


Total number of residents accepted:

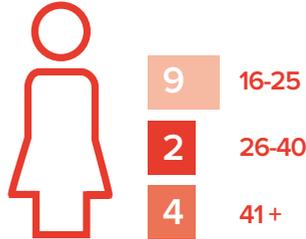


Total number we could not accommodate:  
*(primarily due to lack of bed availability)*

Total male residents: 103



Total female residents: 15



Residents local to Winchester



Residents local to Hampshire



Residents from outside Hampshire

## Moving on

Total number of planned, successful move-ons: **94 (80%)**

Staying with friends: **11**

Staying with family: **2**

Moved into supported housing: **52**

Moved into private rental: **18**

Local authority tenancy: **3**

Returned to previous home: **7**

Entered hospital: **1**

For more Nightshelter statistics, including those for previous years, visit our website [www.wcns.org.uk/resources](http://www.wcns.org.uk/resources).

# ADVOCACY

## Insight into advocacy, by Debby Hughson, Nightshelter Advocate



Our advocacy service was established at the Nightshelter in 2012, and the positive impact it has had on our residents has been growing yearly. Last year, **all of our 118 residents received advocacy.**

It has been critical for helping residents find suitable accommodation, sign-post and link to other agencies, and help with any other issues they may have. Advocacy is also important to residents to help them build

up their confidence again, so that they can deal with issues on their own when they move on from the Nightshelter. The majority of those who stay at the Nightshelter have experienced, or are still enduring, some kind of crisis; be that emotional, physical, mental, financial – or usually a combination of these. Whatever their circumstances, when they arrive at our door they often have very little confidence and don't know where to begin to start re-building their lives.

Our first step is to create a support plan that will enable them access to all the appropriate services. This is done through joint working with other local agencies; for example a resident may need support from local mental health or substance misuse teams, or they may wish to see one of our on-site counsellors who can help them deal with other personal issues. Residents can continue to access these services even after they have moved on from the Nightshelter.

Once we have established and addressed a resident's support needs, we can begin the 'move on' process, looking at the housing options that will work best for them. Keeping in contact is important; many of our residents suffer with loneliness and miss the structure of the Nightshelter to begin with, so maintaining contact and support can be really helpful. Former residents know our door is always open should they start having difficulties or just need a chat and a cup of tea.

Once a resident is set to move on, we can also help by sourcing furniture, managing utilities and other bills, registering at the doctors and dentist, and arranging for additional support if the resident is concerned about making the transition to fully independent living.

## PULL OUT AND KEEP SECTION



Give a little, gain a lot! Come and join our friendly team of volunteers at Winchester Churches Nightshelter and give something back to your community by helping to make a real difference to the lives of locally homeless people.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER & donate at Winchester Churches Nightshelter

Volunteering for us can also give you the chance to learn something new – about your community, about homelessness, about our organisation, and possibly even about yourself. We have volunteering roles to suit everyone – please see overleaf.

This section can be pulled out and we'd be grateful if you could distribute it to friends, family and colleagues, or place anywhere you think that potential Nightshelter supporters may see it.

For more information on volunteering for us, please visit [www.wcns.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.wcns.org.uk/volunteer), otherwise get in touch at:

### Contact us:

Phone: **01962 862050**

Email: [admin@wcns.org.uk](mailto:admin@wcns.org.uk)

 **@WinShelter**

 **WinchesterChurchesNightshelter**



*Thank you for your support!*

# WHY DO OUR VOLUNTEERS MAKE SUCH A DIFFERENCE?

Volunteers contribute an incredible amount to everyday life at Winchester Churches Nightshelter. Last year, our volunteers worked an enormous **8528 hours** and helped to save us around **£55,000** – money that we can spend on other vital services for the homeless.

It's not only our volunteers' time that we are grateful for; this same wonderful bunch of people also lends us an invaluable range of professional skills and resources, making it possible for us to provide services such as acupuncture, hairdressing, IT support and counselling, to name but a few, as well as the basics like a hot cooked meal, a lovingly-made cup of tea, or just a listening ear.



**Caroline, one of our long-standing volunteers, tells us why she enjoys volunteering at the Nightshelter.**

**When and how do you help the Nightshelter?** I've been volunteering at the Nightshelter since 2010. I help out in the office doing whatever is necessary; answering the telephone, taking in meal deliveries, writing thank you letters, filing - whatever is needed.

**What attracted you to volunteering at a homelessness charity?** I feel that I am very lucky to have my own front door key and I like to think that in a small way I am helping someone else get theirs as well.

**Was the Nightshelter what you expected?** I'm not sure what I expected, but certainly the image that a lot of people have of rows of bunk beds in a cold room could not be further from the truth. The Nightshelter feels really homely and is very clean with nice single, two or three-bedded rooms. The meals that are served are all home-made and are either cooked on site or brought in by other volunteers. It's a welcoming and friendly place to stay, and also to volunteer.

**Has your perception of homelessness changed since volunteering at the Nightshelter?** Yes, I am more aware that homelessness is a real and growing problem. I also appreciate that one should try not to judge others in any way - there are so many different reasons that can lead someone to homelessness. It really could happen to anyone.

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## AT THE NIGHTSHELTER

Our varied volunteer roles mean that you can choose when to help out, at a time that suits you and your busy schedule – just book in when you can. All our volunteers undergo a training session and work alongside other trained volunteers until they feel confident to work independently.

### **On-site daytime volunteers** (no residents present)

#### **Cleaners**

Regular morning cleaning help is always needed on weekday mornings at the Nightshelter, with hours and days to suit between 9am – 2pm.

#### **Home cooking teams**

If you're able to cook a meal at home to cater for 17 people, and bring it into the Nightshelter either fresh or frozen, our residents always appreciate home cooked meals. We are always looking for new home cooking teams, from Churches, staff teams, WI groups, or individuals.

#### **Admin Assistants**

We're a very busy office and often need someone to come in at short notice to type up documents, or to accept and help sort out unexpected deliveries, answer the phone or the door-bell and generally help out around the building.

### **On-site evening and Sunday daytime volunteers** (residents present)

#### **Evening/Sunday daytime helpers**

Our evening/Sunday daytime volunteers assist the Duty Staff, provide back up if required and generally help with the welfare of the residents by making drinks, answering queries etc. Hours: Evenings: 6pm - 9pm. Sundays: 3-hour shifts throughout the day. (Training given.)

#### **Cook**

Our cooks heat up and serve the evening meal (pre-prepared) to our residents, or if you're feeling daring you can even cook a basic meal for 17 from scratch in our fully equipped kitchen. Hours: approx' 6.30pm – 8.30pm.

#### **Overnighter**

Overnighters are essential to the Nightshelter. Without overnight volunteers we wouldn't be able to open at all. You'll support the Duty Supervisor who also stays on site, providing them with vital back-up just by being there. You'll also get at least seven hours sleep in our comfy guest bed. Hours: 9pm – 8am (8.30am weekends). Free WiFi available.



# DONATING TO THE NIGHTSHELTER

## Food and Store Cupboard Donations

We're always grateful for all the generous donations we receive. Without donations of food and other domestic items, we would not be able to feed our 17 residents so well each night of the year. Having a warm meal to enjoy is a basic comfort that everyone deserves. These donations save us, on average, around **£27,000** every year – an incredible amount of money that we can then reallocate to our other essential services.



We love to receive donations all year round and fresh produce in particular is really wonderful. You can find a list, which is updated monthly, of the food and other items that we are most in need of at [www.wcns.org.uk/donate](http://www.wcns.org.uk/donate).

**Before you donate, it's always best to check the website or get in touch with the office to see what we most need.**

## Clothes and bedding donations

We love to receive donations of second-hand men's and women's clothes and single bedding that is in good condition. As our storage is limited however, we advise that you call beforehand to find out if we are currently in need of the items you would like to donate.

## Financial donations and Gift Aid

On average, 35% of our annual income comes from personal, business, church, school and other local group donations and Gift Aid contributions. Without the generosity of these financial donations we would be unable to continue our vital work. Donating couldn't be easier and as a registered charity we can benefit further if you are able to Gift Aid your donation. **Gift Aid forms are available from our office or website.**

## There are many ways in which you can donate:

- Online regular or one-off giving via [JustGiving.com](http://JustGiving.com) or our website
- Text giving – text WCNS15 followed by £5 or £10 to 70070
- Regular Standing Order or cheque donations
- Corporate and Payroll giving
- Legacy Giving via your Will

For further details, please contact us: **01962 862050** or email [admin@wcns.org.uk](mailto:admin@wcns.org.uk). Alternatively visit our website [www.wcns.org.uk/donate](http://www.wcns.org.uk/donate). Thank you so much for your support.

# MOVE-ON PROJECT

This year, the Nightshelter launched an exciting new move-on project to provide short to medium-term supported accommodation to Nightshelter residents ready to take their next steps towards independent living.

Our aim is to offer temporary accommodation for around three months, providing a stepping-stone to fully independent living. We now rent a fantastic four-bed property located just outside Winchester, which has become the home to four former Nightshelter residents.

The transition from the near 24-hour support provided at the Nightshelter and by partner agencies, to living independently in a private rental, can be extremely daunting and is often the reason why the cycle of homelessness repeats itself. We hope our move-on house will make this transition less of a challenge, and also provide an opportunity for our tenants to gain some valuable experience of the private rental sector, save money for a deposit, and search for employment, while still receiving valuable support through on-site visits from Nightshelter staff.



In July, after running a series of tenancy training sessions, we welcomed our first four tenants to the property. Debby, our Advocate, supports the tenants on site. She gives us an insight into how the project is going: ***"It's great to feel that, as a charity, we are contributing something tangible and positive to our local community by providing more supported housing to vulnerable local people. Owing to a reduction in bed spaces in local supported accommodation, we very much hope that if this project is a success we can replicate it elsewhere in the region."***

*"It is definitely a journey of discovery for both the Nightshelter and our tenants. They have now settled in and feel positive about their new accommodation and, more importantly, the future."*

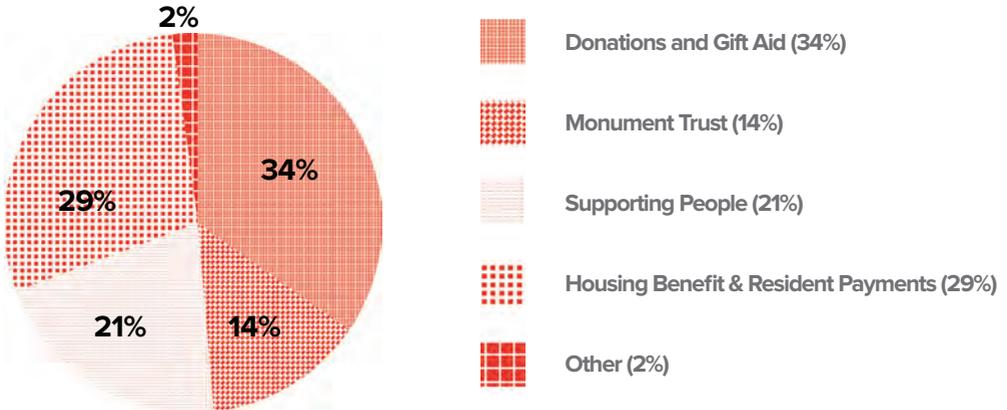
# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Financial Report By Marion Fletcher, Treasurer

The Nightshelter's financial Statement for April 2014 to April 2015 shows a simplified breakdown of income and expenditure. More details can be obtained from the Treasurer or the Nightshelter office.

Our income has again increased. Donations from individuals rose from £48,400 to £56,100, and 34 people now give by regular standing orders.

**We again appeal to all donors to use Gift Aid if possible** (see page 14 or our website for more information); **this means that for every £10 given we can claim an additional £2.50 from HMRC.**



### Income (£)

Donations and Gift Aid	£101,220	Other	£5,220
Monument Trust	£40,000	Sub-total	£292,010
Supporting People	£61,510	Restricted Income	£28,900
Housing Benefit & Resident Payments	£84,060	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£320,910</b>

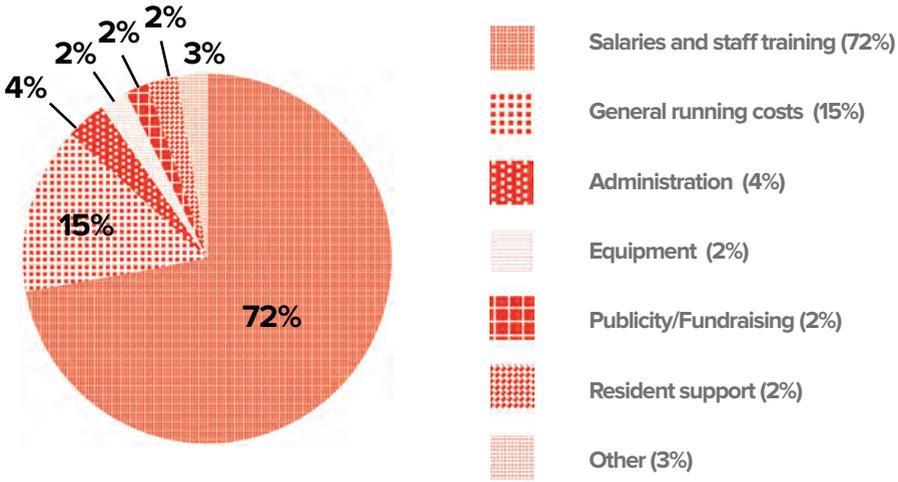
Sizeable donations this financial year included £40,000 from the Monument Trust, £15,000 from local churches, £5,000 from the Oliver Borthwick Trust, £4,200 from the Big Sleep Out, £2,500 from the Winchester Round Table, and donations from many other groups, for which we are most grateful. We also received £18,000 from the Hampshire Public Health budget through our local Health and Wellbeing Partnership to support our work with residents.

Our expenditure has also increased. Our staff have received a pay rise and we started up our own NEST Pension Scheme for all eligible staff, as well as increasing our staffing level to help cover our new Sunday all-day opening hours.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Financial Report By Marion Fletcher, Treasurer

We have also spent more on maintenance this year, improving Nightshelter facilities for our residents by installing much needed new flooring in six of our ten bedrooms. Four bedrooms have also benefitted from new windows to provide better ventilation, and we have replaced residents' showers as well as having the building repainted throughout. Most other expenditure is similar to last year.



### Expenditure (£)

Salaries and staff training	£188,960	Publicity/fundraising	£5,370
General running costs	£39,000*	Resident support	£6,430
Administration	£9,790†	Other	£6,860*
Equipment	£6,350	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£262,760</b>

\*Includes £13,106 for utilities † Includes £1,980 for insurance • Includes £4,500 for depreciation

We are very pleased to have been in a position to use our surplus funds to launch our exciting move-on project this year, which you can read more about on page 20 of this Annual Report. Our hope is that, in time, this project will be expanded.

As always, we can only continue our work because of all the practical support we receive, including donations of food and other items, and the many hours given by our wonderful volunteers.

# SPOTLIGHT ON OUR SERVICES

## How the Nightshelter helps people

Alongside the Nightshelter's range of core services, we try, wherever possible, to offer our residents some extra services that we believe will have a positive impact on their lives. In the last year, we've provided the following:



## Spotlight on new services and initiatives:

**Resident forum:** Our residents have many great ideas of ways to improve the Nightshelter. Our new forum meetings, which are scheduled monthly, give residents the chance to share their thoughts and ideas and also chat openly and constructively with their fellow residents about any communal issues they feel are impacting on life at the Nightshelter. A staff member is always present, and the discussion points of the meeting are shared with the rest of the staff team and Directors where appropriate; in this way communication has been improved between staff and residents, which both have found helpful. The meetings also provide valuable experience for those who move on from the Nightshelter into shared accommodation.

**Training:** Gaining qualifications and preparing residents for finding work is an important step on the path to independent living. Based on feedback from our residents and research by staff, we've collaborated with local professionals, organisations and colleges to run free training and courses for our residents in a diverse range of topical and vocational subjects, including the dangers of legal highs, tenant training and how to manage in a private rental property, budgeting and Universal Credit briefings, CSCS training (kindly provided by Eastleigh College), life coach motivational training, First Aid and Fire Marshal training. This is on top of training opportunities available at the Trinity Centre and Discovery Centre.

# OUTREACH AND JOINT WORKING



A new county-wide homelessness project is helping the Nightshelter and other local organisations work together more effectively to alleviate homelessness in the region.

## **Working together to alleviate homelessness, by Olly Hall, Single Homeless Outreach and Support Worker**

This year, the Nightshelter embarked on an exciting new project alongside local Hampshire councils and other organisations involved in the provision of homelessness services. The aim of the project is to improve joint working and increase the level of support on offer across the county to single homeless people who are of no fixed abode, sofa surfing or in temporary accommodation, as well as those with a history of rough sleeping.

Collaboration between local organisations is a key factor in effectively tackling homelessness. The project was created as part of a joint-funding bid made by Hart District Council. Single Homeless Outreach and Support Worker roles have also been created in Eastleigh, Test Valley, Basingstoke, Rushmoor and East Hants, vastly improving communication between local homelessness teams and charities.

This joint working approach is an innovative and creative way of sharing best practice, expertise and information between homelessness teams. By working closely together, agencies can more effectively address the many wide-ranging factors that are often involved in cases of homelessness, giving individuals the best chance of escaping homelessness for good.

Already there have been tangible positive benefits. Those who have local connections to another part of Hampshire who are rough sleeping in Winchester have been supported to return to their local area in a safe and managed way, thus proving the worth of the project. We're all working to achieve the same goal – tackling homelessness – and we can achieve so much more by working together in this way.



# CATERING REPORT

## **Feeding the 17, by Hilary Nutbeam, Part-time Catering Co-ordinator**

It's been another amazing year for the Nightshelter kitchen. A whole range of delicious, wholesome homemade dishes have made their way to us from kitchens across Winchester and beyond, kindly donated by our supporters.



This is in addition to the wonderful cooking that goes on in the Nightshelter kitchen, using the food donations that we receive throughout the year, and particularly at Harvest and Christmas time. On average, the food donations we receive help to **save us an incredible £19,000 per annum!**

It is because of this generosity that our residents have such a nutritious, varied diet during their stay with us. An enormous thank you to all our kitchen cooks and helpers, and those who donate food to us; your contribution makes such a positive impact on the Nightshelter.

Providing breakfast and a sit-down cooked evening meal has always been a cornerstone of our service to residents. We are proud that this continues as a way of restoring residents' health and wellbeing during their time at the Nightshelter, providing structure to their day, an opportunity to relax and socialise if they wish, and also, more recently, as a means of offering vital life skills via our ever-popular **cookery workshops, which last year delivered 113 hours of hands-on cooking, skills and advice.**

Our involvement with Fareshare has also proved very beneficial. Fareshare is a scheme that aims to tackle food waste and alleviate hunger by redistributing unwanted, but perfectly usable, food and drinks from major supermarkets and other food outlets to charities and vulnerable communities. For a minimal weekly amount we receive a wide range of dairy products, meat, fresh fruit and vegetables, saving us hundreds of pounds each year.

Although it is a never-ending job to keep the stock rotated and the store cupboard shelves full, our job is made so much easier by the generosity of those who donate, cook, help sort the shelves and keep the kitchen clean and functioning.

***Thank you so much for everything you do!***

# MARKETING AND PR REPORT

## **Raising our profile, by Hannah Gurnham, Part-time PR and Marketing Co-ordinator**

This year, the Nightshelter has been focussing on reaching out to new audiences, telling more people about our vital work. In times of funding cuts, it's vitally important that we not only maintain our existing supporters, but work hard to gain new ones.

**Our Open Saturday and pop-up café event in February** this year aimed to encourage members of the public who might not know about the Nightshelter to come in and have a look around, have a chat with staff and residents, and learn more about our role in their community. The open day was a huge success, with over **200 people stepping through our doors**, enjoying homemade cakes and biscuits made by residents during their cooking workshops, and having their perceptions of homelessness and nightshelters challenged for the better. We'll be running more events like this in the future, so please support us when we do!

The launch of our **Facebook page** earlier this year has been a great new way to share Nightshelter news, stories and photographs with a whole new audience, and our following is growing steadily. Facebook has also been a brilliant way to showcase our series of short Nightshelter films, which can be found on our **YouTube channel** too. These moving interviews gave residents the chance to tell their stories in their own words, and their impact has been huge, with one of the films being viewed over 1,400 times. Social media has been an invaluable tool, particularly for requesting emergency donations or volunteer help, and we are indebted to our "virtual family" for all the support and encouragement we receive.

We've also improved the ways that you can donate money to the Nightshelter. You can now donate small amounts by text and, by introducing icons to our website homepage, it's easier to donate online through JustGiving. **Our online shop is also a fantastic way to buy Nightshelter items** such as the Good Scoff Cook Book, Christmas cards and note cards using PayPal; why not have a look at [www.wcns.org.uk/shop](http://www.wcns.org.uk/shop) and purchase one of these great items for someone you know.

We've had some great media coverage this year. **The Guardian, BBC South Today, BBC Radio Solent and the Hampshire Chronicle** have all run features on the Nightshelter - fantastic opportunities to spread the word about our work even further.

More exciting events follow this year, with our **Christmas market stall at Winchester Cathedral on November 20th and 21st**, a creative collaboration with Winchester's famous Hat Fair for a special Christmas project this December, and another open day event in February. We look forward to revealing more details about these initiatives to you soon.

# THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to so many individuals, groups and organisations for their generosity and commitment – we could not help as many people as we do without you! Special thanks go to;

*Michele McKee and her team at Kee Creative Ltd* for designing this report and all their marketing support throughout the year.

*Oliver Borthwick Memorial Trust* for kindly supporting our advocacy and Befriending service.

*The talented chefs and patrons at the Light of Bengal restaurant* in Winchester for their donation of curry meals on Tuesdays.

*Photographer Adrian Brophy at xtrashot.com* for taking such wonderful photographs for use in this report and elsewhere.

*Alan Davis and the Penyards Property Management team* for their professional advice and cooking.

*Our wonderful Church cooking groups*, many of which have been providing food unflinching for many years, and in particular the teams from the Bramdean, Sparsholt, Littleton, Crawley and Chandler's Ford benefices.

*Winchester Cathedral* for providing work placement opportunities, donations and support.

*Canon Paul Townsend and the team at St Peter's Church* for their constant help and support.

*Winchester Discovery Centre and Graeme Pick the Centre Manager* for always helping and supporting us with provision of facilities and constant support.

*Wessex Laundrette and Robin* who service and maintain our clothes washing and drying machines free of charge the whole year round.

*Computer Solutions and James Dickens* for helping to keep our computer systems up and running and donating refurbished laptops to residents.

*Winchester City Council Housing Officers and Hampshire County Council Supporting People* for help, advice and funding.

*Winchester College* for their amazing teams of students who work so hard for us washing up in the kitchen during term time.

*Hampshire Constabulary Police Officers and PCSOs* who assist us in several ways.

*The University of Winchester* for their on-going support in engaging student volunteers for us, and other initiatives.

*Lisa Boyd and Citrus Coaching* for their free regular support to the Nightshelter by helping staff develop personal skills ([www.lisaboymcoaching.co.uk](http://www.lisaboymcoaching.co.uk)).

*Jason at Booker Cash and Carry* in Eastleigh for his support.

# THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Arqiva* for their training, expertise and painting skills, and for choosing us as one of their charities of the year.

*Dutton Gregory solicitors, Robert Bolwell* for his legal advice.

*Chris Mackenzie and the Winchester Round Table* and visitors to the 2014 Winchester fireworks display for all their generous donations, which helped to cover the fitting of new flooring for some of our bedrooms.

*Crash, the construction and property industry's charity for the homeless*, for their continued support, and to *Altro Ltd* for their very generous gift of free flooring for some of our bedrooms.

*Susie Brooks* for providing acupuncture on a weekly basis for ten months.

*Lorraine, Louise and Andrew* for generously giving their time and expertise to deliver 364 hours of counselling to residents this year!

*Michelle Beck* for her marketing support and advice.

*Lloyds Bank* for their volunteer help.

*Salvation Army* for their weekly donations of bread and cakes.

*Steve Feeney* for filming and producing our wonderful short films.

*Riverford* for weekly donations of fruit and vegetables.

In this Annual Report we would also like to remember our former resident, *Jack Marcus Panico Thomas*, who sadly died in September 2014, as well as *The Right Reverend Michael Scott-Joynt*, previous Patron of the Nightshelter, who also died in September 2014.

Our sincere thanks to all the other individuals, businesses, churches, schools and other organisations that have so kindly donated their time and supplies so regularly and readily.

And finally...a HUGE thank you to all our incredible volunteers, whose help, support and compassion makes it possible for us to open our doors every night of the year.

*Thank you so very much!*

## Public Benefit

Under the Charities Act 2006, charities are required to demonstrate that their aims are for the public benefit. The Vision and Mission of the charity are as above. The purpose of the charity is beneficial in a way that is identifiable and is evidenced in this Annual Report. The Annual Report also identifies that the charity benefits a sufficient section of the public. The Board of Directors regularly monitors and reviews the success of the organisation in meeting its goals and can confirm that all the activities of the charity are undertaken in pursuit of its aims.



## DO YOU NEED HELP?

Winchester Churches Nightshelter is one of many local organisations, charities and churches working hard to alleviate homelessness, day and night, throughout the year.

If you or someone you know needs help due to homelessness, please contact us and we will do our best to help you:

### Winchester Churches Nightshelter

Phone: **01962 862050**

Email: **admin@wcns.org.uk**



**@WinShelter**



**WinchesterChurchesNightshelter**

Website: **www.wcns.org.uk**

Address: Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RZ

You can also contact: Winchester City Council Housing Options Team

Phone: **01962 848163**

Email: **homelessness@winchester.gov.uk**

Registered Charity Number: 1080443

Company Number: 03928334