

Winchester Churches Nightshelter

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Registered Charity No. 1080443

Trustees/Directors

Martin Blockley	Chairman (Secretary 1999-2006)
Fiona Stannard	Resigned 2006 (Secretary 2005-2006)
Marion Fletcher	Treasurer (Chair 1999-2000)
Tim Stevens	Resigned 2007 (Chairman 1996-1998)
Brian Osmond	Resigned 2007
Alistair Stewart	
Pam Wright	Resigned 2006
Vanessa Crookes	
Sarah Lloyd	

Staff

Jonathan Walker	Project Manager
Michele Price	Project Administrator
Carol Taylor	Project Supervisor
Phill Gallant	Project Supervisor
Miguel Buldain	Project Supervisor
Gary Jones	Project Supervisor
Karen Goddard	Project Kitchen Supervisor

Frontpiece

'The Nightshelter', by Dan Cippico. The building was completed in 1997 by and with help from Winchester District Housing Association - WDHA - now A2). The cost of the building was fully paid for by the WCNS and held on a 99-year lease from WDHA at an annual rate of one peppercorn. Accommodation includes 9 bedrooms with 12 beds, lounge, library, toilets, bath and shower rooms, kitchen and dining room, laundry room, staff offices and overnight staff/volunteer sleeping accommodation and storage rooms. W.D.H.A. has ten maisonettes on the floors above, accessed at ground level from Staple Gardens.

From the Chairman

The Nightshelter has had a difficult time for many months, as the building works on the new library extension has meant inconvenience to staff, volunteers and guests who have all been affected in many ways. However it looks as though we are nearing the end of the road as the building is nearing completion.

We have maintained a good relationship with the builders and we are delighted to point out that four companies paid for our volunteers 'thank you party' party held in April. This turned out to be a great success as about 100 people came and swapped stories and experiences enjoyed at the Nightshelter. Michelle Price deserves a special mention for all her hard work. We will do it again but not for a year or two as next year we will have homelessness Sunday at the shelter.

The last year has, as usual, been eventful within our organisation. Pam Wright was forced to resign as a director through ill health and earlier this year we lost Brian Osmond who very sadly died in March after a long illness. He will be sadly missed as he was a very popular man as borne out by the number of people who came to his thanksgiving service.

We are daily aware how essential to the successful operation of the Nightshelter project are the many and varied volunteers who support our permanent staff. Their contribution to our efforts is greatly valued not only for defraying a considerable part of the cost of our activities but also as a constant link with the community, in particular the churches.

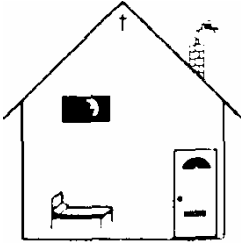
It has been a great advantage to the smooth running of the Nightshelter that we have enjoyed the services of the same staff over the year. The workforce has maintained high standards under Jonathan Walkers' management and the directors/trustees are grateful to them for what they have achieved throughout the year.

Hampshire Supporting People, a government agency, part fund our operation. Together we agreed that they would supply Floating Support Staff who would provide assessments of guests to establish the guests short and medium term support and housing needs in order to plan, with the individual, appropriate next stage housing and support options. This directive has been in place for some months now and seems to be proving effective and of benefit to the guests.

We hope that all who have served the needs of our guests and been part of the

Nightshelter family this year have enjoyed and benefited from the experience.

Martin Blockley
Chairman



Winchester Churches Nightshelter Project Manager's Report 2007

'Only the pavement should spend 24/7 on the street...'

Another year equals another report it seems! I recently produced an interim report specially written for the Churches Together in Winchester (CTW) AGM so much of this will be the same but updated & expanded.

2006/07 has, again, been a real year of change & adaptation for the WCNS. Basically, we have been forced to alter our remit, at the behest of Hampshire Supporting People, or suffer the financial consequences!

Times are 'a changing' & as a result, so must we. This is not always a bad thing but when we are firmly told that the need now is for more short to medium term hostels & that the provision of overnight accommodation in night shelters is no longer appropriate or needed, we take issue. We believe that such emergency provision is still needed for some people. Even crash bed facilities are apparently not considered appropriate these days! However, our vision & aim remains the same; 'To relieve suffering caused by homelessness, to provide overnight shelter and food for the homeless, to ease comfort and to preserve life'. All is not lost, however, as with some creative thinking we continue to maintain our service & presence in the city offering this help at least for another year.

For years the WCNS has operated on the principal that we will offer basic shelter for 17 guests who we feel able to help. We have no thought to become a day hostel as well! This was not why the churches of Winchester & District helped establish us. The need was (& largely still is) to help rough sleepers into safe & welcoming surroundings with sufficient support & give them a meal, bath & a bed etc.

The bottom line is, that as of January 2007, Supporting People would only renew our contract with them if we agreed to reduce our intake from 17 guests to 12 & although they did not want us to establish any crash bed facilities in addition to this, we have negotiated that we can do so, for at least until the end of the contract, so we also have a male & female crash bed facility for direct access use only, where an individual is considered by the supervisors to be vulnerable or where the weather is particularly bad. This means, in effect, that we have now lost 5 permanent beds - but are able to release 2 beds as crash beds for 1 night or possibly a weekend. The rationale behind this, we are told, is because Winchester

has more direct access beds than it needs - indeed, more than Southampton has, and therefore, the extra capacity is not required. Then there is the issue of 'local connection'. Many of our guests have not come from the Winchester area or indeed from the Hampshire area & although we have always had a policy of non-discrimination regarding previous location, we are finding that many other organisations will not allow us to refer potential clients to them if they have no local connection with the area they wish to move to, even if beds/rooms are available in that area. It is also my belief that Hampshire Supporting People are aware that for us to take these homeless people in will be an ongoing cost to the Hampshire rate payer & that as such clients may be arriving on our door step simply because we are here. This may possibly be the case & whilst it is recognised that Hampshire may be bearing the financial cost in providing services to those within its boundaries, what is the alternative? If everyone only ever accepted those clients who have local connections, then there would be many more on the streets of our cities as many of our client group are itinerant & would not necessarily claim any local connection anywhere!

On a more positive note, the introduction of the Floating Support Service, supplied by Westgate Support & Care, has been of great value as each of our guests can now access FS on the premises (by appointment) each weekday morning. This enables them to quickly access local services & to get on various local housing lists. Each guest is now required as a condition of their stay, to engage with FS to facilitate a 'planned exit' rather than to just leave when their 28 nights were up. Most can now stay for up to 3 months to achieve this if necessary.

We have much settling in to do & we will have to see how this next year works out so please do keep us in your thoughts & prayers as we attempt to continue to help those in most need amongst us. If you are interested in volunteering at the WCNS, please contact the WCNS office.

I should like to record my personal thanks and appreciation to the Board of Directors, to the staff & our faithful band of volunteers for their continued support in relation to the ongoing work of the Winchester Churches Nightshelter during another year of operation. I should also like to mention our appreciation of the Trinity Day Centre for their invaluable help with our client group.

Jonathan Walker
Project Manager

Financial Report

Once again, a big thank you to all who have given us financial support during the last year. We have decided not to try and list all the names of donors this year, but you should receive a copy of this report and we are very grateful for all your contributions.

We have again received a grant from Winchester City Council, and money from Hampshire County Council through the Supporting People Scheme. We also received a grant from the police authority towards the CCTV system.

Donations from individuals have again been 'increased' by Gift Aid, and local churches and organisations have continued their financial support.

Our expenditure has followed a similar pattern to previous years. Salary payments increased by £6,000. Some of this is due to pay increases for inflation and some to pay for overnight duties as it is difficult to find enough volunteers for this.

Also we have employed Karen as a part time Kitchen assistant. She has been able to access more food from Marks & Spencer which is much appreciated and also has helped to reduce our food bill.

The local Churches have continued to supply excellent home-cooked meals.

Stalbridge Linen (formerly Wintex) has continued to deal with our laundry free of charge and we are very grateful for this help. Also Copyman have printed this annual report free of charge as they did last year.

As you will see from the figures in this report we have a surplus of £3,600 this year. However our grant from Winchester City Council for 2007/2008 will be £4,000 rather than the £10,000 we have received for the last few years, so we may well have a deficit next year. Also as you will read elsewhere in the report we are reducing the number of available beds in order to comply with conditions for our grant from Supporting People. Our expenditure will not decrease, but I expect our income from Housing Benefit and guest payments to be lower.

Thank you for the valuable support from our volunteers and the generous donations of food and other items.

Marion Fletcher
Treasurer

Housekeepers Report

Yes! I am still here, happily serving the WCNS as they continue to care for homeless here in lovely Winchester.

However, it is good to report we have been able to employ a lady (see Karen's report) to do the actual catering side of things, which is quite a constant and demanding job.

This leaves me free to keep an eye on the other aspects of "housekeeping" toiletries, bedding, clothing etc. As most people will appreciate there are always a hundred and one jobs to do around a house!

Another cause for thankfulness is that we have a valuable volunteer coming in to check on and maintain the furnishings. This means curtains; cushions etc are always kept up to date in cleanliness and freshness, making the Nightshelter more homely.

Oh! Where would we be without our volunteers to do all the vital cleaning, repairing, gardening etc? What a debt we owe and what a service of love and care. **Thanks to one and all: you are much appreciated.**

We have experienced many changes through government policies etc. some for good and some more work - more rules - all needing forbearance and understanding. Life is not always easy these days, yet we continue to prove God's love, faithfulness and keep rejoicing that "His grace is sufficient". Nevertheless prayer and support is always needed and is valued. We are indeed working together with "Him"; we are here to be available to express the great compassionate love of God.

With renewed thanks for all received in help, provisions (and the extra goodies which just make seasons and events that bit special!).

Once again let me record my personal gratitude to fellow directors, the Manager, staff and volunteers for their support.

God Bless

Alistair Stewart
Project Housekeeper

Introducing Karen Our Kitchen Supervisor

I started working as a volunteer at Winchester Night shelter in August 2006, when I heard there was a vacancy for a kitchen supervisor. I had previously worked at the Trinity Centre and the Christian kitchen as a volunteer and wanted to continue working with the homeless, so I applied.

When I started to work in this role I was very pleasantly surprised by the generosity and the invaluable help of volunteers. The cooks that make a meal and bring it in, the cooks that heat and serve the food, the people that come in and clean and the people that donate food and other items of use.

During my time working at WCNS I have been very pleased with the generosity of Winchester Marks and Spencer for their donation of food and flowers that I collect from them on two or three nights a week. This has made a great difference to the variety of meals for our guests, while making a large saving to our budget. My thanks go to the team of men and women at M&S for providing this.

My role at the Shelter has been made a lot easier as I follow in the footsteps of Alistair (a hard act to follow). Alistair had been working very hard at the shelter for the past few years as a volunteer. So when I came to work at the shelter I found the kitchen very well organised, very tidy, clean and well planned. I would also like to thank him for his continuing, invaluable support.

Karen Goddard
Project Kitchen Supervisor

'A Volunteers Perspective'

Being a volunteer at the WCNS Nightshelter is a rewarding experience. I 'work' one morning a week in the office helping out Jonathan and Michele in any admin tasks they can delegate. This can involve anything from entering data into the computer to helping Alistair organise where we're going to put all the food when the harvest festival donations come in! I love my time there and the opportunity to work among such dedicated staff and directors is a privilege. The office is always busy and people are in and out all the time, visiting, coming for meetings, prospective volunteers wanting a look around, guests wanting their post, food being brought in - there's never a dull moment.

What we never lose sight of though is why we're there, both as a Nightshelter and as human beings. My view on it has always been 'there for the grace of God go I'. Becoming homeless is so easy, it can and does happen in every walk of life, no profession or religion is exempt and that's what makes the Nightshelter such a wonderful place, everyone is treated equally regardless of colour and creed, and each guest is treated with respect and given a warm Winchester welcome.

Cooking in the evening is busy but fun. The kitchen and menus are brilliantly organised by Karen and often we can serve up food generously donated by Marks and Spencer, a real treat, although I do recall serving M&S lobster one evening and a few guests asking if there was any 'proper' food! Food is at the heart of the Nightshelter; having possibly been outside all day the guests are in need of a hearty meal. Meals prepared by the Winchester churches on the rota are just that and always well received with plenty of requests for seconds. Cooking and serving up food is a great opportunity to chat and share banter with the guests. Those of us who have cooked at the Nightshelter for a long time will remember the horrors of the 'kitchen' at St. John's and be thankful for the permanence and efficiency of our kitchen in Jewry Street, we have indeed been blessed and long may the work of the Nightshelter continue.

Deborah Farrow
Volunteer

"Being Homeless"

It's hard being homeless and filling days
Life makes no sense, it's all a haze

My friends and family are all just great
But no one has space so I need to vacate

There seems no point to living my life
Everything now is one big strife

I want security, I'd love my own place
But I can't do much without my own space

What it is to be without a home
The days are long, I'm all alone

No sense of belonging, a constant roam
Wish I had somewhere to call "my own"

Vanessa Crookes
Director, WCNS
April 2007

Our Volunteers & Donors

In the past we have made a special attempt to name and list all of volunteers who have helped us out in so many and varied ways during the last year. We run a Volunteers database which at present has over 200 volunteers listed, and we have received hundred of different donations.

We have made a decision this year to thank one and all for their wonderful support, but not to name each individual separately. You all know who you are, and how much effort you have put into ensuring the success of the Nightshelter. With a minimum of three volunteers every single night of the year, we need a minimum of one thousand names to be put onto our annual Rota Board, and without you we would not be able to remain open.

Our heartfelt thanks go to each and every one of you for giving up one of our most valuable commodities - your time. We have several stalwart volunteers, those who come in on a regular basis, once a week or may be once a fortnight, to clean, or to cook, or help in the evenings, - thank you all for making such a tremendous effort.

Please remember that if every current Volunteer introduced a friend of theirs to the Nightshelter, then we would have a truly magnificent team, so please put on your thinking caps, and bring along a friend one night when you are helping to see if they might be interested in volunteering some of their time to help us open each night.

Donations - in several guises, from bags to blankets, from socks to suitcases, from bread to bananas, from spaghetti to soap - we are most generously donated all of the items on our much needed list - for which we thank you.

Money comes in from several sources, from Carol Singing, from Choirs, from weight watchers, from runners, from Churches, from individuals, from pensioners with not much to spare themselves, from wonderfully supportive causes - we are grateful to every one of you for saving every one of the pennies you have most generously donated.

We have chosen to name our main supporters:

- James Dickens and Computer Solutions for all our computer system and back up support
- Russell Honeyman and Copyman for kindly producing the Annual Report for us

- Marks and Spencer of Winchester for a continuous supply of food three times a week
- Stalbridge Linen of Winchester for providing an excellent weekly laundry service for all our sheets, pillowcases, tea towels and aprons

Michele Price

Guest Interview

Alistair Stewart & Michele Price interview a guest who has stayed at the WCNS for over 100 days...

Thanks for agreeing to talk to us. Can you tell us a little about yourself?

Yes! I am from Italy, a lovely country with a rich culture which attracts lots of visitors and they fall in love with Italy. My family live in the south, but my brother was already here in England so I came over to London to visit him. I then found a job in the building industry, a girlfriend and somewhere to live - it was perfect - my dream. I was happy for several years and then my wife divorced me. This was the start of my financial problems. I walked back home one night and realised that I had lost everything, my dream fell apart. I had lost and I was losing everything I treasured.

How did you come to be at the Winchester Churches Nightshelter & who recommended it to you?

When homeless in London one of the Citizens Advice bureaux's suggested that I try the Winchester Churches Nightshelter. I had some questions about having never been in a shelter before and I had heard of such places - but not always nice reports. I came straight down to Winchester to enquire and was surprised how well it all was. I booked in and have now been here for nearly five months.

What is your overall opinion of the Winchester Churches Nightshelter?

The Nightshelter is a very pleasant and friendly place, with helpful, caring staff. In this place I found many of my immediate needs are met. I have a bed, food, laundry facilities etc, and good back up support from all concerned.

The Nightshelter has given me stability at a time when I needed it. I have been in England for over twenty five years; my home is here not in Italy. I am very glad that residents can now stay for longer than 28 days at the shelter. I needed the extra time to settle down and sort myself out. I have met many new people and made several good friends, many of whom I hope to keep in contact with.

You need a permanent address to find a job. I am over sixty now and age is a real problem when looking for a job. There are several young people coming into the UK from abroad who are working as cheap labour and take most of the jobs in the building industry. Being at the Nightshelter has given me the support I needed and

has helped me in my search for independent accommodation. Once settled in, with a permanent address of my own, I can then start a serious search for a job.

Do you have any particular thoughts or comments about us?

As I move on and find a place of my own I will always remember my days at the Winchester Churches Nightshelter and would recommend it to others in need. I also hope once I have left to return and pay visits. Thank you very much.

Manager's Statistics				
Guest comparison with previous years:				
		2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007
Local Guests:		107	88	61
Itinerant Guests:		209	183	144
TOTAL:		316	271	205
Male Guests aged:	16 - 24	83	44	44
	25 - 39	83	94	64
	40 +	98	97	67
TOTAL:		264	235	175
Female Guests aged:	16 - 24	28	17	12
	25 - 39	14	05	10
	40 +	10	14	08
TOTAL:		52	36	30
Total bed spaces used:		5,284	4,864	4,412
Utilisation %		85%	78.6%	73.8%
From 05.02.07 we reduced our bed spaces from 17 per night to 12 per night with 1 female & 1 male crash beds which is reflected in the stats				

FINANCIAL STATEMENT			
Operating Account		2006-2007	2005-2006
		INCOME(£)	
Donations	Individual	10571	12271
	Churches	10222	11544
	Other	6251	12205
	Tax reclaim	<u>2385</u>	<u>2676</u>
		29429	38696
Grants	Winchester C C	10000	10000
	Police Authority	2250	
Guest Contributions		10595	11557
Housing Benefit		33265	36713
Supporting People		57347	55948
Deposit Interest		5672	5058
Total Income		148558	157972
		EXPENDITURE (£)	
Salaries		115985	109869
Catering/Household		4039	4472
Repairs		8871	6925
Equipment		789	2218
Telephone		722	837
Utilities		6785	4759
Admin/Sundries		3059	6349
Insurance		1284	1515
Training		865	1526
Total Expenditure		144955	138470
BALANCE IN HAND £122202			
Our policy is to hold a balance of between 4 and 12 months operating costs.			
Copies of the full accounts, prepared by the independent examiner. Mr. J Bell can be obtained from the Hon Treasurer c/o the WCNS.			

What Can I do to Help?

EVENING HELPER

Task: To assist the Duty Supervisor and provide security back up. To generally ensure the welfare of the guests.

Hours: 6.00 - 9.00pm

COOK

Task: To heat up the evening meal and to serve it to our guests leaving the kitchen tidy after the duty shift.

Hours: 6.30 - 8.30pm

OVERNIGHTER

Task: To assist the Duty Supervisor and provide security back up through the night.

Hours: 9.00pm - 8.00am

(You can usually count on at least 6 hours sleep).

CLEANER

Task: To keep the Shelter as clean and tidy as possible, so that we can provide a safe and comfortable environment for all.

Hours: Week days only. Daytime hours to suit.

Our grateful thanks go to all our friends who support us with their time, their donations and their prayers. If you feel that you might be able to assist in any way or if you would like to know more, please call on: 01962 862050.

Particular thanks to...

MARKS AND SPENCERS OF WINCHESTER
FOR ALL THE EXCELLENT FOOD GIVEN TO US ON A REGULAR
BASIS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

STALBRIDGE BRIDGE LINEN OF WINCHESTER
FOR PROVIDING AN EXCELLENT LAUNDRY SERVICE

COMPUTER SOLUTIONS FOR HELP AND BACKUP FOR OUR
COMPUTER SYSTEMS

COPYMAN FOR PRINTING THIS REPORT FOR US

Guest Comments

Every Monday evening we ask our Guests who are staying with us to complete a Questionnaire which we need to produce for the "Supporting People" Initiative.

Here are some of the comments from 2006 - 2007:

- Excellent, Four Stars
- Fantastic
- Staff are very Helpful
- First class
- Don't like getting booted out during the day
- My stay here has been satisfactory, very good
- My view of Night Shelters has changed I feel very welcome and safe
- The service is very good
- Fantastic place to stay and all the staff and volunteers are very helpful
- Thank you
- Very good service much appreciated
- Very nice staff and people
- Enjoyed the friendliness of both staff and guests
- Just don't stop what your doing as you're a BIG help
- Needs to be open earlier in the evenings
- It is much appreciated
- Very good service
- I think it would be better if we were allowed in at 5.00pm
- I am very pleased with all that has been offered
- Staff are all nice and make you feel welcome, with nice meals, and a lovely bed - PS Miguel is the greatest - yeah can I have crisps now?
- It is a great and fantastic service

Harvest Help Needed

Local churches & schools are particularly generous to us, supplying us with much needed harvest produce but so are many local individual supporters too which is very much appreciated.

Last year we were very blessed to have some additional volunteer help to sort through these donations, sorting items out by type & date, boxing up for storage etc. & undertaking a general tidying of stocks & stock take. This invaluable help was necessary to maintain good order & service in relation to food stocks etc. So, again this year, if you, or anyone you know, would be interested in spending some time, by arrangement, helping with the Harvest produce during September / October we would love to hear from you. We would also appreciate anyone who can help by preparing, at home, some of the vegetables & fruit by peeling, pulping & preparing into meals for us to use at the Shelter. Fruit can be made into crumbles & vegetarian dishes prepared. Whatever is produced, we will use to vary our weekly menus so that our guests can have wholesome, substantive & healthy food on a cold winter's night.

Items Always Needed

Anti-bacterial Spray

Black Sacks

Carrier Bags

Cereals

Dishwasher Tablets

Ladies Sanitary Items

Jiffy Cloths (red & blue)

Peas (tinned)

Rice Pudding (tinned)

Sugar

Rice Pudding

Toilet Rolls

Tooth Brushes

Washing Powder

Biscuits

Brown Sauce

Carrots (tinned)

Custard (tinned)

Flash Floor Cleaner

Liquid Soap

Orange Squash

Potatoes (tinned)

Smash Potato Powder

Sweetcorn (tinned)

Toilet Duck

Tomato Sauce

Tooth Paste (small tubes)

Washing up Liquid

Any individual sachets of Soap/Toothpaste/Shampoo etc. from air flights/hotels are always useful.

Amended May 2007

AIMS OF THE WINCHESTER CHURCHES NIGHTSHELTER (WCNS)

'To relieve suffering caused by homelessness, to provide overnight shelter and food for the homeless, to ease comfort and to preserve life'.

1. To open every day from 6.00pm to 8.30am to provide a hot evening meal, a comfortable bed, a towel, shower and toilet facilities and breakfast for anyone who is homeless. Anyone is welcome irrespective of race, colour, creed, gender or sexual orientation, except anyone who is drunk or violent and likely to cause harm to others in the WCNS;
2. To create a friendly, safe and secure environment in which guests can feel valued and develop a measure of self discipline and self worth by:
 - a. requiring guests to pay something towards their accommodation and ultimately denying them accommodation if they refuse to do so;
 - b. by showing them that antisocial behaviour inside the WCNS is unacceptable and will result in refusal of accommodation if it persists.
3. To provide toiletries, a limited range of clothing and self help clothes washing and drying facilities, so that guests can improve their general appearance, personal hygiene and sense of well-being;
4. To provide information on local medical facilities and to effect liaison with local health services, emergency psychiatric social work departments and with drug and alcohol advice and rehabilitation units;
5. To identify the needs of the guests and offer practical advice when asked for it. To network with other agencies to help the guests satisfy those needs. This includes effecting liaison Floating Support Services, with social workers, local council and housing association officers and with daytime activity centres;
6. To try to meet immediate needs until more permanent solutions can be found. The normal length of stay may be from one night to 3-months (28 nights only without reference to Floating Support Services);
7. To record various statistical data for ourselves & other statutory agencies so that the decision makers in our society and the general public may be better informed by:
 - a. Statistical analysis;
 - b. correspondence, press notices and presentations;
 - c. involving local volunteers as cooks, cleaners, evening helpers and overnighers to help the staff run the WCNS, so that, from first hand experience, they can inform public opinion;
8. To maintain close liaison with local police so that the WCNS is seen by guests and public alike as supporting law and order;
9. To provide appropriate training and support for staff and volunteers to meet the needs of the WCNS.

Amended April 2007