



WCNS CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2008



Dear Supporter

Since Christmas seems to be nearly upon us I thought I would give you a quick update on the work and activities of the Winchester Churches Nightshelter.

If I can introduce myself I took over in September as Manager of the Nightshelter (from Jonathan Walker) having been working as the WCNS administrator for the past four, nearly five years. We have been busy updating our new website www.wcns.org.uk from which you can see the latest pictures and reports from recent activities.

I particularly wanted to let you know about the next event we are holding at the Nightshelter, and I would be very grateful if you could promote this item in your January issue parish magazines and in your church notices and on any noticeboards you have access to:



Please come along to Winchester Churches Nightshelter on Homelessness Sunday, 1st February 2009, between 10am-1.15pm. The Nightshelter (behind the Discovery Centre, Jewry Street) is opening its doors again to welcome all our current volunteers and supporters and any potential volunteers or anyone interested in seeing around the Nightshelter and finding out a little more about our work. Please drop in for a chat and a cup of coffee. We will also be announcing details of our exciting new fundraising and awareness raising event to be held in the Cathedral Close on May 15th – The Big Sleep Out, Winchester! Look forward to seeing you on Homelessness Sunday – do bring your family and friends.

Many thanks for any help you can provide in promoting the details in the above.

Our special thanks to all the many individuals, churches and schools who supported us at Harvest time and allowed us the chance to fill our store cupboards and replenish our stocks which had run very low, we are most grateful to you.

The Nightshelter remains full nearly every night and sadly we have had to turn away over 140 people in the last 3 months as we had no space. There is a great, and seemingly growing, need out there. Some guests stay for a short stay of up to 14 nights, during which time we hope to provide them with as much help and connections to resources available to them in Hampshire as we can. Most of our guests stay a little longer and we aim to try to really help them break the homelessness cycle for good, and help them into long-term accommodation elsewhere. We aim to help all our guests to move on to accommodation which suits their individual needs within 3 months if we can – and in most cases we are achieving this well within 3 months (except where a person's needs are particularly complicated).

Plea for Volunteers – as usual we can never have too many! We would be particularly thrilled if any of our kind supporters feel able to do an overnight shift over the Christmas week.

I also attach a list of our Christmas needs which would make Christmas at Winchester Churches Nightshelter just that bit more special (we have included some of the basic necessities that we always seem to run out of). We are constantly having to update computer systems, renovate the building and spend money to maintain our standards, so if at this Christmas time you feel you can spare some extra to assist us in our cause to offer hope and help to the homeless we would be most grateful.

Thank you so much for all your help and support in 2008 – you have made all the difference to our ability to run the service we do at Winchester Churches Nightshelter and the guests' feedback confirms that you have helped make a real and positive difference to their lives.

With best wishes for a very Happy Christmas and New Year, and with thanks,

Michele

Michele Price
WCNS Manager
Michele@wcns.org.uk
www.wcns.org.uk

Items Most Needed at Christmas time

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Old Blankets | Chops |
| Warm Hats & Gloves | Fresh Fruit |
| Christmas Decorations | Tinned Custard |
| Christmas Cakes | Long Life Cream |
| Chicken wings/legs | Fruit Juice/Coke/ soft drinks |
| Butter/Sunflower Spread | Fresh Fruit |
| Seasonal Crisps/Nibbles/Savory Snacks | Mince Pies |

Small joints of meat (large ones take too long to cook) preferably boned as it is easier for us to serve up in the evening

Christmas presents for our guests, perhaps after shave, nice razors, or perhaps mobile phone vouchers, nice pens,

New Christmas Cards – blank for use for us to send or hand out

Wrapping paper for presents,

Office Hours Monday to Friday 8.30am – 2.00pm
The Nightshelter opens every evening from 5.30pm (for deliveries)