

Folkestone Churches Winter Shelter



Project Report 2015-16



Contents

Introduction	2
Summary	3
Shelter Culture & Christian Ethos	4
Funding & Costs	5
Hidden Funding	6
Building a Winter Shelter	7
Churches	8
Co-ordinators	8
Volunteers	9
Guests	10
Case Study	13
Feedback	14
Shadows & Responses	15
Our Thanks	17

Introduction

The Folkestone Churches Winter has now completed its seventh year of providing emergency night time provision for vulnerable, homeless adults who had nowhere else to go over the winter months.

The Shelter was initially set up in 2009 by Richard Fitzgerald and Captain Matt Clifton, of the Salvation Army, following the tragic death of a local homeless man. During Folkestone's first year as a shelter it really was a unique project to this part of the country; the nearest place you could receive such emergency support was Brighton or Crawley following the closure of the Scrine Foundation in Canterbury. Now Folkestone is one of seven shelters in Kent and Medway, three of those being new this winter. There was a clear need back in 2009 and an even clearer need now.

This year we have had 183 active volunteers taking ownership of the seven venues, giving 5552 hours of their time for free to provide a welcoming, safe space for people seeking respite from the cold. During the 84 days we've been operating, a staggering 889 evening meals have been served (not even counting the seconds or thirds!). Each venue is staffed mainly by volunteers who arrive ahead of our guests to assist the Project Workers unload the van and put up camp beds.

I was really pleased to come back and manage the Winter Shelter for a second year. It's a project I feel so passionate about and called to serve.

As well as being supported by so many volunteers, we have had an excellent staff team on board with a wealth of experience between them all.

Theresa Fowler has been the Shelter Administrator for 4 years now and stays on throughout the summer to fundraise for us. Theresa's enthusiasm for the Winter Shelter ensures the smooth running of the volunteer registrations in the lead up to the shelter as well as the organisation and thoughtfulness behind so many other aspects.

Lorraine Burley came on board as our main Project Worker. It was Lorraine's second stint as part of the Shelter team, as well as having experience working within the Rainbow Centre team during the summer months the year before last. Lorraine brought so much experience and knowledge to the role; it was a delight to work alongside her.

Jana Ernest was new to the Winter Shelter team, but not the Rainbow Centre. Jana works during the daytime as the Migrant Support Worker, focusing her time and expertise on EEA nationals. Jana also speaks 5 different languages, so it was a real comfort and reassurance to some of our guests to be able to freely communicate with someone in their own language.

Eric Brooks loves the shelter so much he returned for a third year! His dedication, wisdom and warm cheery smile instantly put our guests at ease. Eric is also extremely practical and could often be found wandering around fixing something, usually the camp beds!

I'd really like to say a big thank you to the staff at the Rainbow Centre. Jon Wilson (CEO), Richard Bellamy (Centre Manager), John Burgess (Project Worker) and Jana Earnest (Migrant Support Worker) have all been so thoroughly supportive, offering backing and wisdom time and again.

A special thank you also goes out to the Steering Committee, who continue to provide tremendous support and guidance, ensuring the Winter Shelter improves every year.

To all who have supported us through another successful year, thank you.

Vikki Moran
Project Manager

Summary

There is an alarming shortage of accommodation in Shepway, in both the private rented sector and social housing, which is not good news when homelessness is rising at such a disturbing rate.

Every year a street count is undertaken by local authorities and in Shepway alone there were found to be 13 rough sleepers on the day of the count, which is much higher than it has been in any other year (the previous year was 4). Despite 13 being the official number, ten days before the shelter opened the Homeless Support Service produced an updated list of at least 22 rough sleepers that were currently being supported by them. It came as no surprise to be fully booked from the first night.

Owing to the high numbers this year and lack of housing, a decision to put a local connection in place was made. The Winter Shelter never likes to turn people away who are in need. However it would have been unfair if a local community project were to become too busy to provide for the local need. We were however able to be flexible with this space permitting and still signposted for people we were unable to help.

In previous years housing guests has been much easier, not just due to the availability of housing, but also due to guests wanting accommodation as an end outcome. It's easy to assume they all do, but for some it's just a time for rest. Some guests who are migrants may not have any recourse to public funds, so unless they have employment which pays adequately, they have no money to pay for rent so cannot begin to explore options for housing.

We work daily with people who are victims of severe and often seemingly unfair benefit sanctions, as well as funding cuts, disabling them from the support and treatment they really need and spiralling their lives even further out of control.

Twelve weeks is an extremely short period of time to work with people who have deeper rooted problems like addictions or poor mental health, which inevitably leads to poor engagement with the services that can support them.

Shelter Culture

What are our Aims?

- *To provide an evening and night shelter for homeless people in Folkestone using church buildings and members through the coldest period of winter.*
- *To help homeless people move on to appropriate accommodation, resisting dependency on the shelter.*
- *To engage church members and local people with some of the most vulnerable people in Folkestone without discrimination, expressing Christian compassion in building supportive relationships.*
- *To establish the funding and administrative support necessary to enable the provision of such a shelter to continue in future years.*

Christian Ethos

The Winter Shelter is one of the many Christian led community inclusive projects of the Folkestone Rainbow Centre.



'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Matthew 25:35-36

Funding and Costs

FCWS Income & Expenditure 2015-2016

Income	2015-16	2014-15
Grants	£44,902.00	£22,542.00
Church Donations	£5,772.76	£4,794.82
Donations from Individuals	£6,206.76	£7,095.94
Fundraising Events	£9,634.69	£6,731.98
Total Income	£66,516.21	£41,164.74
Expenditure		
Recruitment Costs for Staff	£608.00	£307.20
Staff Wages	£31,755.26	£49,217.17
CRB's and Training	£638.31	£1,268.24
Contributions to Rainbow Centre (insurance, gas, elec, rent)	£9,400.00	
Contribution to Venue Costs	£278.73	
Vehicle Costs	£2,240.00	£569.71
Transport	£305.56	
Printing	£525.72	
Postage and Carriage	£53.52	£106.00
Beds and Bedding	£874.15	£223.50
Fundraising Expenditure	£682.30	£1,046.39
Housing Justice Accreditation	£75.00	£375.00
Sundry Expenses not listed	£265.93	£307.83
Total Expenditure for year	£47,702.48	£53,421.04

At a time when money is tight for many individuals and organisations it is important that the way FCWS spends the generously donated money is clearly explained.

We have been successful this year in gaining substantial grants from eleven different organisations in addition to £21,614 being received from individuals and churches connected with Folkestone.

From the beginning we set out to spend money in a responsible way, seeking the best value whilst trying to get products that were durable and of a good quality.

Staff wages are always going to be the biggest cost and as can be seen they accounts for 66.5% of our total expenditure. On a three month project the wage costs could be dramatically increased or decreased by the amount of lead-in you give to staff, which in turn affects the amount of training that staff can do. If the shelter is to be safe, well led and provide a high quality service then fund raising must reflect the need to pay for appropriate lead-in periods to enable staff to be trained for the task.

Owing to good stewardship of last year's funds we were able to support the part time employment of a member the 2014-15 project team to provide services to those who had used the shelter, continuity between the projects and assistance on gaining funding for the 2015-16 project. We are happy to announce that due to our fundraising success we will be able to provide even better services between the 2015-16 and 2016-17 projects.

Hidden Funding

Churches and individuals provided most of the food and refreshments at their venues throughout the 12 weeks, an impressive commitment to the project. A vast amount of toiletries, socks and other items were directly given to the staff at the Rainbow Centre in support of the Shelter and were incredibly useful for guests who arrived with virtually the 'shirts' on their backs.



We are also very blessed to receive donated services from the following local organisations:



Folkestone
St Mary's Church of England
Primary Academy



Building a Winter Shelter

There are so many elements to a successful Winter Shelter both tangible and intangible but all are equally important to our guests.



We would like to thank all those we have had the privilege of personally working with, from caretakers to church leaders, and everyone that has played a part in the Winter Shelter this year, all of whom have helped make the process of running the shelter an easier one.



Churches

We are enormously grateful to the hosting churches that have been so welcoming by lending out their buildings for 12 weeks and also to all the other churches that have supported these venues.

Special thanks go out to the Holy Trinity Cubs and Scouts who kindly used another premises during this time so that the hall was available for the shelter. Thanks also to St John's for offering your hall for them to use as an alternative location.



Coordinators

Good Venue Coordinators (VCs) for the Winter Shelter are crucial! We cannot stress enough just how much they do behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of each venue, from planning rotas and completing fire safety checks to liaising regularly with project Staff and attending occasional meetings. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to those who took on the role as VC this winter. You have been simply marvellous.

We really struggled to cover all the venues for the first time and were very grateful to Francoise Lloyd for stepping in and offering to coordinate a second venue. If anyone is interested in stepping up as a coordinator next winter, please do let the Shelter office know.

Venue Coordinators

Francoise Lloyd
Nick Buckley
Jamie Houghton
Caroline Camp
Tony Barr
Michael Preston

Driving Coordinator

Luke Moran

Luke Moran took up the role of Driving Coordinator for a second year after the successful trial of it the previous year, saving 35 hours of staffing time each week. The role includes loading the shelter van, then driving it to a pre-arranged location and delivering the log book and venue folder to the Rainbow Centre.

Folkestone Churches Winter Shelter is a Christian charity and we are passionate about what we do and although we are careful not to impose our faith on guests, we feel it is really important what we do is covered in prayer. Our Prayer Coordinator, Francoise, regularly visited the venues in the evenings before the guests arrived and although not physically with them, she also prayed for our guests and the staff daily, as well as providing a prayer calendar in the volunteer booklet.

Prayer Coordinator

Francoise Lloyd

Thank you all for your amazing organisation, enthusiasm, support and teamwork!

Volunteers



Every year it is overwhelming to see how much time and effort is freely given by volunteers. Each one of them has brought their own set of personal skills, whether that is cooking, hairdressing or playing games and chatting. The volunteers always sit down and share a meal with the guest which is always such a great leveller and helps to build relationships.

“Even though I am too young to be a volunteer I still enjoyed making some puddings at home.”

“The shelter has shifted my perceptions of how & why people are homeless & that we aren’t all that far away from it if you don’t have social support. “

Folkestone’s church and wider community share a vision to support and come alongside some of our community’s most vulnerable adults on the margins of society. The volunteers are why this project works so well, ensuring it was a safe and welcoming environment for all. It is so important to us that guests are treated with the respect, dignity and kindness they deserve; the volunteers have excelled at doing this.

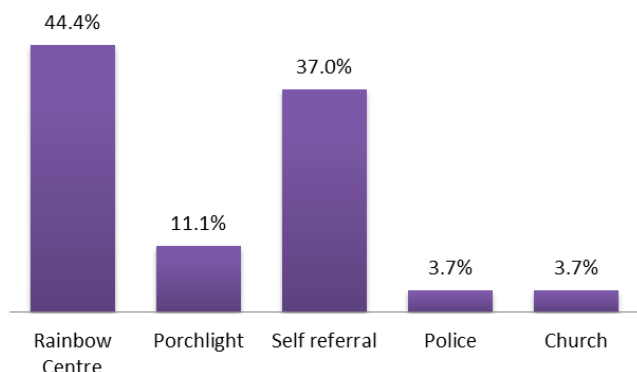
Hours individual volunteers are able to give vary considerably, ranging from 1 hour to an astounding 322! The total volunteer hours for the entire project amount to 5552. If those were paid at just minimum wage it would total £37,197.

“It was my first time – I learned so much from the guests. I will return next year to learn more.”

“Learning to think less materialistically and learning from the team at the shelter office from their humility and care.”

“It was humbling to see how appreciative the guests were. “

Where did referrals come from?



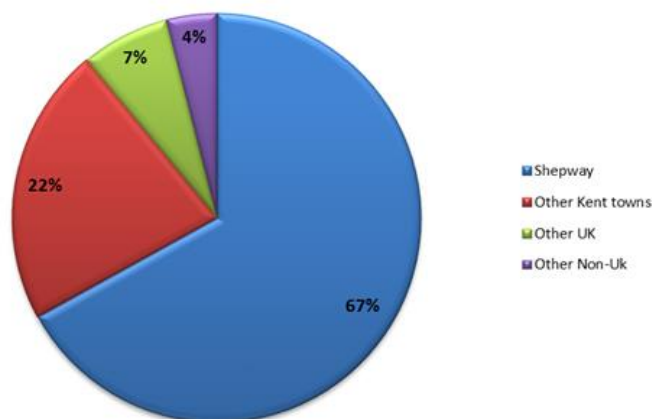
A large proportion of our guests were referred by the Rainbow Centre and many 'self-referred' as they had heard of us through other agencies.

It is worth keeping in mind that many of these individuals are working with a combination of agencies/council and we only record one referrer for each guest.

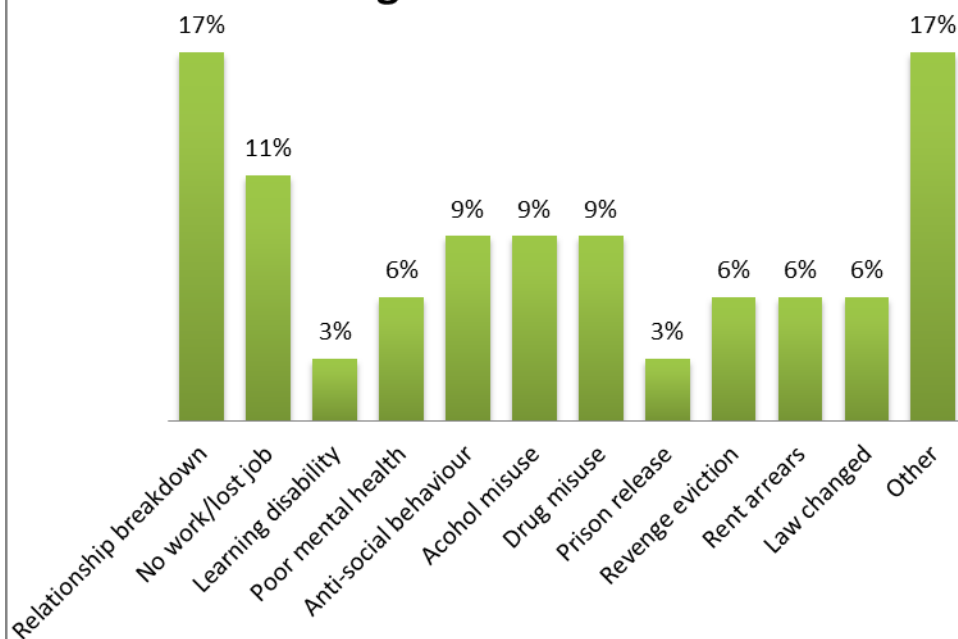
Due to knowing we had at least 22 rough sleepers in Folkestone at the start of the shelter, a decision was made to impose 'local connection only' as a guide for this year's Shelter. Our criteria are different to the Council's and the Manager had discretion in all cases to override this where deemed necessary.

The override decision was used for various reasons e.g. when guests were in danger in their own areas, or where they had relocated and had been engaging with the Rainbow Centre for some time before the Shelter.

Guests' Local Connection

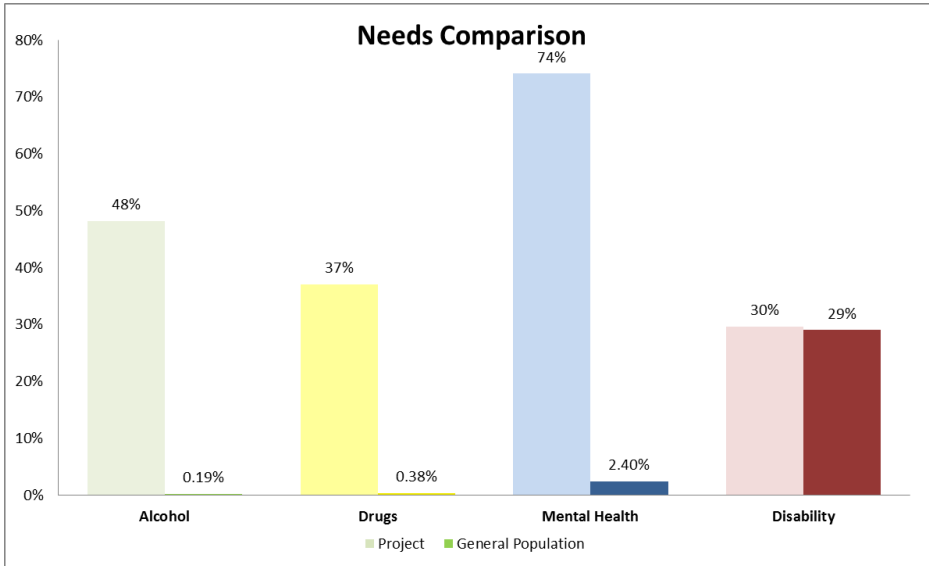


Contributing factors to homelessness



This year saw a broad variety of reasons for homelessness with relationship breakdown being the highest percentage and 'Other' being a collection of 'one-offs'.

We have listed what is seen to be the main underlying reason for each guest becoming homeless, but for many of our guests this could be a combination of reasons.



This graph shows how many of our guests had these four needs, compared to that of the general population.

This year we have also seen the highest percentage of need in all 4 categories.

3 guests had none of these needs
 7 guests had one of these needs
 9 guests had two of these needs
 7 guests had three of these needs
 1 guest had all 4 of these needs

When rough sleepers initially come to us they may already have some agency involvement, such as an outreach worker or the mental health team, but quite often they do not, or at least haven't accessed them for some time.

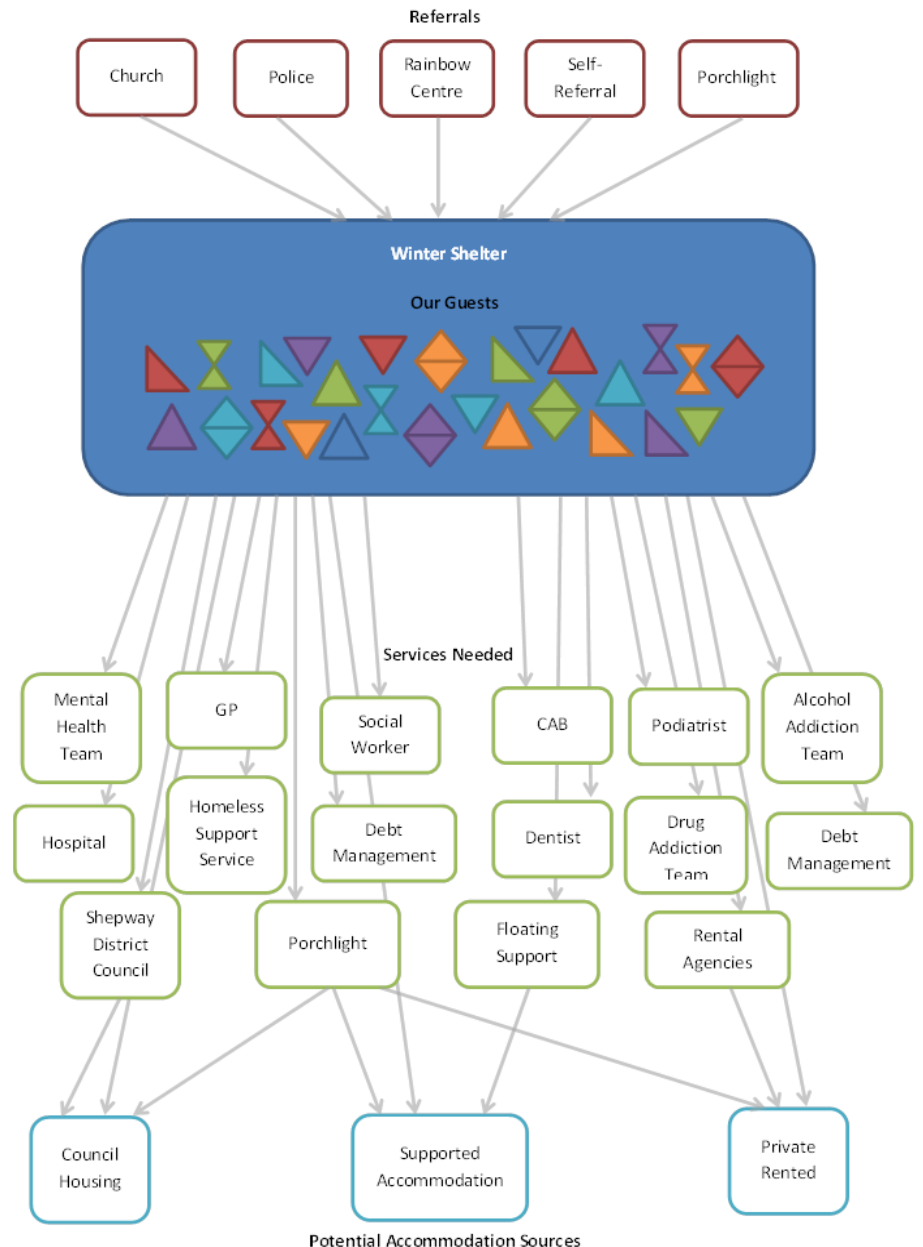
The graph on the right displays a whole variety of services that our guests are most likely to need support from.

Engagement with some of these services can take a while to set up as many of them are overstretched. Once regular meetings are taking place, housing options can be explored.

If an individual has been in Shepway for two years they can apply to go on the housing register. If they don't have ID then they must send away for documents which can become confusing & easily discouraging. They will then be put in a band between A-D and may begin bidding when they get their reference number. However due to lack of social housing this is often a very drawn-out process.

Supported accommodation is often the most suitable housing solution for a lot of our guests. However from the time of our referring them to appropriate projects to their being accepted & waiting for a vacancy can be between three and twelve months.

Private rented accommodation if the quickest route for housing but if guests don't have guarantors and claim benefits, a lot of landlords won't accept them so the only option is a room in a house of multiple occupancy.





Beds Available
(100%)



Beds Booked
(93.8%)



Beds Used
(81.4%)



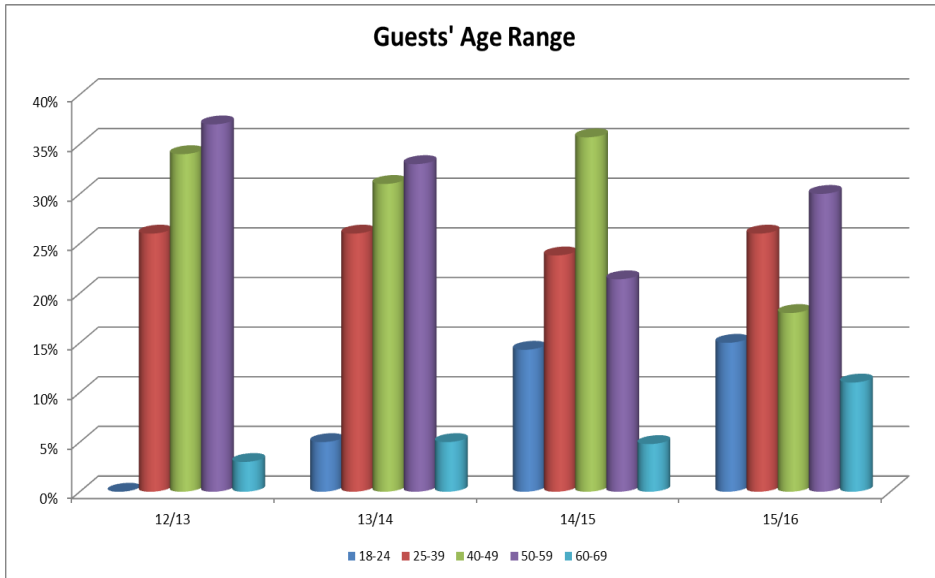
Meals Served
breakfast & dinner



Appointments Completed
at Rainbow Centre



Daytime Spaces Provided
Rainbow & Millfield



This graph shows the age ranges of our guests over this and the previous 3 years, as well as the min/max/average for 15-16.

Rough sleepers in both the 18-24 & 60-69 age ranges have grown considerably over the four years.

Both the 25-39 & 50-59 age groups have increased since last year.

The anomaly this year is that we have seen fewer guests in the 40-49 age range.

20 years

Min

43 years

Average
2015-16

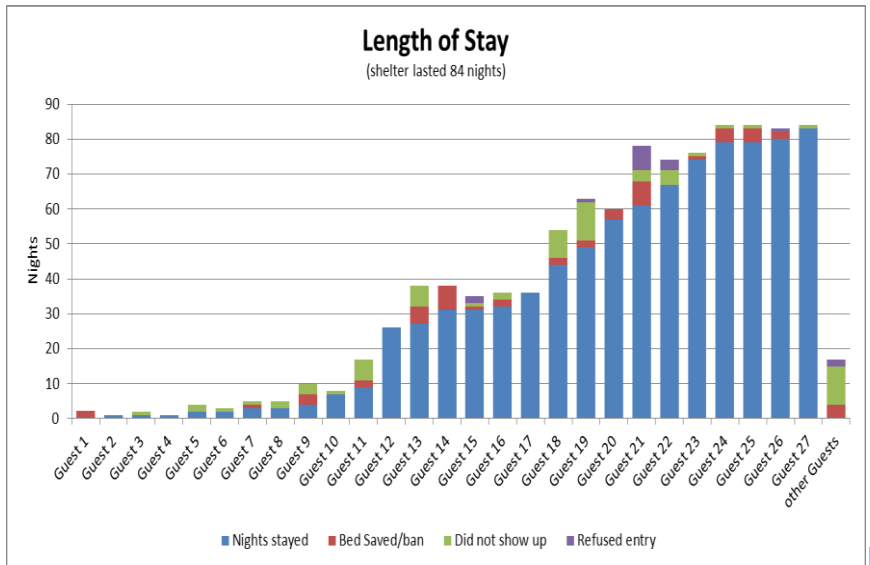
66 years

Max

11 of our guests stayed 9 days or less – this means they are gone before we can see any progress from the work that has been started with them.

Some of our guests also leave during the shelter and then come back such as 'Guest 16' who accumulated 32 days over three stints in the shelter.

This graph also shows other nights that were booked but not used, for various reasons.



1 day

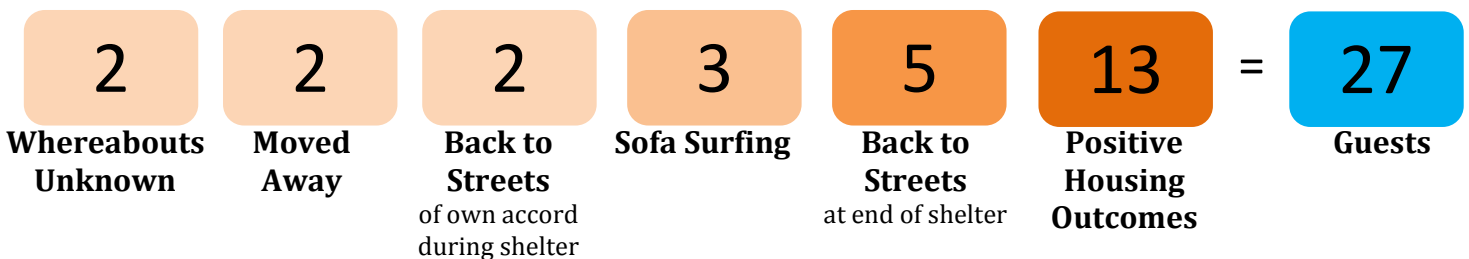
Min

33 Days

Average

83 days

Max



Case Study

During the 3 months of a night shelter, we can see amazing things happen in a relatively short period of time.

An example of one of the simplest cases we may see is when a homeless person comes to us for a bed space, we help them set up a benefit claim and they attend appointments offered & explore various accommodation options. We can then help them move quickly into a flat or a room by supporting them with submitting their housing benefit claim or a budgeting loan to help with furnishing it. We can then, for a period whilst they financially establish themselves, provide emergency food parcels. This person can then hopefully gain employment if able to, and regain control of their lives.

However sometimes we meet people who simply aren't ready to make that leap forward. One year we had a guest who was such an entrenched rough sleeper, who also suffered with poor mental health and autism, he refused to undress when he stepped into the shower, meaning his coat was always wet when he arrived in the evenings. He kept himself to himself and however many layers of clothing he had on, he wore them all to bed each night. He did not want housing at this time.

The following year, he returned but with quite a different reaction to his environment. He smiled and shed most layers of clothing before hopping into bed wishing everyone goodnight. He made attempts to engage in conversation with volunteers and appeared to feel safe. He was still not ready for housing. The third and fourth years he returned, continuing to grow in his engagement with volunteers and staff.

A few times he agreed to make a homeless application - and one day, very nearly did! He managed to sit in a room and allowed us to help him complete a form to get him on the housing register. The excitement radiated throughout the team... until he changed his mind when he got to the bit where he had to sign and thought better of it, thanking the project worker for their time.

It was often noted during briefings that everyone was doubtful he would ever end this homeless cycle and people came to respect his lifestyle choice.

Four years in the shelter and seemingly no closer to housing, until the shelter closed and it snowed. A member of the shelter team was out on FoodStop and offered to call the Council out-of-hours number to put him in B&B for a few nights under SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) as the weather was so cold. He immediately agreed, spent his first night in about 15 years in a proper bed and began bidding on social housing the next day. He has now managed to sustain his own flat for almost two years.

This was a huge success for not only the Winter Shelter, but for Rainbow, FoodStop, Millfield and the Salvation Army, who worked together for years to build a trusting enough relationship with this individual, enabling him to eventually access further support.

It is disappointing when people are not ready for housing, as is the case with some of our guests this year, but when people are not ready or not engaging we cannot lose hope in them. It doesn't mean they don't want the support - it's just means they are not able to accept the support at this time.

How it Works

The Post-Implementation Review (feedback meeting) was attended by a cross section of people including: guests, staff, steering group, Shepway District Council (SDC), Porchlight, Kent Advice Service for Single Homeless (KASSH), church leaders, venue coordinators and volunteers. The meeting consisted of all attendees putting 'highlights' and 'shadows' on post-it notes and sticking them on the corresponding board, – when grouped, each person chose the 2 groups in highlights and the 2 groups in shadows that they felt were most important, each choice awarded 1 point to that grouping.



Highlights

Project Team – 13 points

♦Project team were fantastically supportive ♦Support from leader was very good ♦Good communications with Centre [and VC/volunteers] ♦Cooperation between staff and volunteers ♦Theresa always there to answer questions ♦Well organised management system ♦Absolute dedication of staff ♦[good] communication with office team ♦Winter Shelter staff ♦The experience of the staff ♦Good to have a paid worker present all the time at daytime drop-in ♦Having the trained members of Rainbow on each night – good backup for the volunteers ♦Shelter Team workers ♦Excellent management team, Good ethical approach.

Volunteers – 11 points

♦Having such a large number of volunteers on roster ♦Very good volunteer core ♦Volunteers ♦Lots of volunteers ♦All volunteers I encountered had an excellent attitude ♦Good volunteers ♦Volunteers and church venues ♦Support of volunteers from the different churches working together was outstanding ♦Dedicated volunteers ♦Experienced Venue co-ordinators.

Access to services – 6 points

♦Access to mental health worker in Homeless Support Service ♦Putting guests in touch with other agencies ♦Provided me with a base to get my life back on track ♦Having migrant worker to support NRPF (No Recourse to Public Funds) guests.

Drop-in Provision – 5 points

♦Good to have a daytime drop-in so guest have a break during the day ♦Daytime Provision 5 days a week ♦Drop-in ♦Rainbow space for guests during the day ♦Millfield Tuesday afternoon.

Info about guests – 2 points

♦[there was] Appropriate info about guests ♦Thorough briefings meant we could pay more attention to sensitive situations ♦I enjoyed knowing some of the guests better, I can say hi when I see them in Folkestone

Speed of clearing volunteers – 1 point

♦Volunteers processed much earlier this year ♦Speed of DBS clearances

Atmosphere – 0 points

♦Food served was excellent and the cooks in the kitchen were wonderful ♦Good atmosphere at shelters and in management ♦Some of the shared meals were brilliant, not just the food ♦Accepting loving atmosphere

Clear communications and expectations – 0 points

♦Rules seemed to have been clearly explained [to guests] ♦Good communication around the service ♦Clear information about the shelter was given

Other Highlights

♦Van – good space for loading ♦[having] A venue with showers ♦Help from Food Warehouse for essential items – brilliant ♦I found the winter shelter mostly a positive experience ♦Good feedback form customers ♦Guests appreciation of volunteers ♦Relationships between the guests ♦Having honest conversations about different approaches ♦Timetable at the venues ♦Local connection – given the high demand I think it was just as well we didn't have people coming from other areas. ♦Having New Churches involved ♦Working together towards a common goal

Shadows & Responses

Provision of services by other agencies – 11 points

♦Council response ♦Liaison with Shepway District Council (SDC) ♦Porchlight ♦Keeping guests in touch with other agencies. We work very closely and have weekly/fortnightly meetings with SDC, Porchlight and the Homeless Support Service. We furthermore have links with and attend multi-agency meetings including the Voluntary Sector Group (quarterly), the Homeless Forum (quarterly), the Street Homeless meetings (between Forum meetings), as well as emergency meetings that are called to discuss specific issues such as the introduction of Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). We are very passionate about being advocates for and highlighting issues suffered by our guests. ♦Lack of housing both private rent and council. This is something we are painfully aware of but unfortunately not something within our control (see also advocacy above).

Guest Experience – 10 points

♦Lack of input [feedback] from guests and overwhelming input from others. This is something that has been done by feedback questionnaires in previous years, but which was not completed this year. We will look at how we can ensure more thorough feedback is sought from guests, particularly those with complex issues, in future and endeavour to invite more guests to the Post Implementation Review. ♦Tick box culture emanating entirely from the Rainbow Centre. We take great care to provide a safe, secure and quality service for our guests whilst at the same time doing our utmost to ensure we only do the things that are necessary.

Housing Outcomes – 7 points

♦Outcomes, but every year different ones needed. It feels disappointing for everyone involved when we are not able to house as many people as we would like and this year has been very challenging for many reasons. A large proportion of our guests had complex needs and/or declined to engage in the process of moving towards housing. There are many outcomes that we work towards with our guests and housing is just one of them. ♦People were being placed with no local connection ♦Some people were placed with no recourse to public funds. ♦Is the shelter for those with an income or for those without means? (for discussion). The only 'criteria' for accessing the shelter are: being homeless, 18+, and have a local connection to Shepway, although the latter is not necessarily the same as the local council and is at the Managers discretion on a case-by-case basis. The Winter Shelter works to achieve outcomes for all our guests, irrespective of local connection or status.

Lack of volunteers (Recurring) – 3 points

♦Difficulty in finding overnights ♦Lack of volunteers from the church I volunteered at ♦Lack of morning volunteers made long nights longer ♦Lack of overnight volunteers ♦Shortage of night shift volunteers ♦Often not enough volunteers to unload the van We found there was a shortage of overnight volunteers at most venues. We will look at all these issues over the summer to see if there are smarter ways to organise & distribute volunteers, we will also pass these comments onto the VC's. ♦I offered nights on various nights but had the feeling that this info was not available to or used by co-ordinators Generally volunteers are assigned to one venue as we have learned from past experience that assigning them to several provides logistical/communication problems. Where a handful of people who offer to do more than one night, these would usually be kept by the Administrator who would contact them directly in the event of a venue co-ordinator being short of volunteers. We will consider the viability of having an 'emergency reserve list' for those volunteers who are happy to be contacted by any of our 7 Venue Co-ordinators.

Daytime provision – 2 points

♦Staffing was noticeably tighter i.e. less daytime contact with the guests ♦Lack of daytime provision As we work in partnership with HSS and use the same building, the shelter has been adjusting to their new appointment based service and made separate arrangements for daytime provision for Winter Shelter guests. This will continue to be reviewed and improved using what we have learned this year. ♦Guests need somewhere to store personal things during the day e.g. strong bag for van (one only) We provide a small amount of storage space in a locked room at the Rainbow Centre for those who wish to leave some of their personal belongings. This is a more secure space, only accessible by staff, and does not add to the already considerable amount of shelter gear loaded & unloaded in the van on a daily basis. ♦Would be good to have a couple of beds for those who want to sleep (daytime drop-in) ♦May be good to have some relaxed seating (sofas) for daytime drop-in. Our daytime provision is a safe warm space where they can relax, socialise, look for work, all the things you might ordinarily do in your home. The addition of relaxed seating would be really good, but as this is a shared space used for many different types of activities this may not be an option, we will however pose the question.

Consistency of Service – 2 points

♦Some volunteers are very helpful doing more than others ♦confusion over location of folders ♦was there a rule about lights on/wake up time in the morning? ♦Danger of ‘institutional living’ some of the evening, night ‘service’ ♦Variations in packing up in the mornings. Some venues morning volunteers pack everything away and load the van at others this doesn’t happen. ♦Lack of consistency in decision making. As a rolling shelter we use 7 different venues each week, with different volunteers and different facilities at each one. They are never all going to be the same and we wouldn’t want them to be. Although we do have many rules and regulations we like to allow each venue to take ownership of their night, and run it in their own way within these boundaries. Decisions such as ‘lights out’ are fluid depending on the night and circumstances, we are caring for adults and seek to encourage them to make their own decisions and respect each other, the volunteers will assist this process where they feel it is necessary.

Inter-Venue Communication – 1 point

♦Communication between venues ♦Internal communication difficulties ♦How can we improve on communication between Venue Co-ordinators (VCs). Communication between Venues/Venue Co-ordinators is often very useful and something we encourage, however, we also understand that due to different approaches and time constraints some VCs may not find this helpful and/or practical and as such feel this should remain a personal choice for each VC. We would however like to introduce a ‘buddy’ system for any VCs new to the role to ensure, as well as the staff team, they have access to someone who does the same role to ensure they are supported. ♦To define prayer co-ordinator role/presence better. This role will be reviewed & more specific guidance given.

Opening hours & times – 1 point

♦Sometimes when really cold outside I felt guilty making guests wait till 7.30 [to let in] We completely understand the compassion our volunteers feel for guests, which is why they volunteer. Our starting time is derived from an intricate balance of accessibility of venues, availability of volunteers, staffing hours (split shifts), the time to set-up the venue and provision of appropriate volunteer briefings before opening, all of which happens between 6–7.30pm. ♦Start late in Dec and go into Mar? ♦It is worth considering which 12 weeks of the year would be most appropriate. Timing of the shelter is something that the staff team and the Steering group have been considering and discussing over the last couple of years and will continue to be regularly reviewed based upon usage, weather trends etc.

Bad Beds – 1 point

♦Camp beds ♦Beds ♦Bad beds ♦The camp beds were difficult to put up and take down ♦Camp beds were not generally up to the job. We are aware that the standard of beds was far less than satisfactory this year! For practical & logistical reasons camp beds seem to be the best solution, rather than mattresses or air beds, both of which we have historically used, but it was rather the quality of the camp beds that proved to be a problem. We changed supplier this year as the shop we bought them from in the previous two years closed down. A new supplier/brand of bed will be carefully sought for next year.

Christmas Day (Recurring) – 0 points

♦During Christmas week the shortage of places for daytime (e.g. open toilets, library etc.) ♦When Library shuts; provision for ‘wet’ afternoons/early evenings. Absolutely agree! Unfortunately this is something that we do not have the ability to undertake ourselves, but it would be wonderful if some of the churches in Folkestone felt they could arrange some form of provision during the afternoons. We could also contact Shepway Council regarding provision of toilets on Christmas day. FoodStop provides a Boxing Day meal from 11am to 3pm at Holy Trinity church hall.

Church Facilities – 0 points

♦Showers/personal hygiene facilities only at 1 venue (Recurring) Unfortunately this is something completely outside of our control as none of our venues are not purpose built as ‘lodgings’ and don’t have shower facilities. The Rainbow Centre has a shower & wash room for guests to use and this is being refurbished this year. ♦Sometimes the oven wasn’t hot enough to get the meals as good as they could’ve been. Specific practical issues can be fed back to the team throughout the shelter and the appropriate solution will be sought.

Other shadows – 0 points

♦Please [could we have] a ‘description of guest’ box on briefing sheets to recognise guests. We realise that this is a particularly difficult element to manage. The handover will raise volunteer awareness to guests’ individual issues and hope that through conversation and getting to know the guests as individuals you will be able to put names to faces. The suggestion of ‘description’ on briefing sheet will be considered before next year. ♦If possible inform the catering team numbers before 12 if possible. Definite numbers are not able to be given before 1pm each day as this is our cut-off time for registering new guests. However, we will look at ways of perhaps providing ‘ball-park’ figures earlier although this will only be a guide as things changed daily ♦For new volunteers, need for more practical induction. We will look at, if and how this might be possible before the next shelter starts.

Our Thanks

The Folkestone Churches Winter Shelter is extremely grateful for the help and support it receives from a wide variety of organisations and individuals for all manner of things including: volunteering, advice, support, funding, fundraising, promotion & publicizing, hairdressing, podiatry, leadership, fire & safety, risk assessment and the list goes on!

Special Thanks

The Folkestone Herald have supported us this year with great publicity and organised a campaign where people could donate money to the Shelter specifically for new home essentials packs for our guests, which raised just over £1000.

We would like to say a special thanks to SKCC and Francoise Lloyd who offered an afternoon drop-in service specifically for Winter Shelter guests on a Tuesday afternoon, the only weekday we were unable to provide this daytime space. It has meant an awful lot to our guests to have these hours of reprieve and we thank you for stepping into the breach.

We would also like to thank St Andrews Methodist Church & Anya Goldsack who allowed our guests to register for their Christmas day dinner and for your continued communication to ensure this happened.

We would like to acknowledge that our heartfelt thanks go to all the supporters already mentioned in our report and also to the following people and organisations:

- The Churches of Folkestone (and surrounding areas)
- Housing Justice
- The Police and PCSOs
- Millfield Drop-in
- Foodstop
- Homeless Support Service & Volunteers
- James Moorhouse & Porchlight
- Rachael Featherstone (Mental Health)
- Health and Wellbeing Team
- Rotary Club of Folkestone
- Rotary Club of Hythe
- Hythe and Romney Marsh Lions
- Asda Foundation & Carl Griffiths
- Roger De Haan Charitable Trust
- Laing Family Trusts
- Folkestone Town Council
- Kent Police & Crime Commissioner's Fund
- Shepway District Council
- Kent Community Foundation
- Grace Dieu Charitable Trust
- Emily Arnold (Folkestone Town Mayor)
- John Bird and St Mary's Primary Academy
- Neil Gibson & Go Go Espresso
- Terry Cooke-Davies
- Bill Regan
- Candice Watson & James Vaughan (KFRS)
- Clare & Iain Grove
- Emily Goldsack
- Robert Showan
- Lyn Osbourne
- Folkestone Podiatry Practice
- Dawn Kellers
- Canterbury Community Shelter
- Everyone who has fundraised for us this year!





Big Sleep Out 2016

Friday 30 September 16

Register your interest by emailing info@wintershelter.org.uk and we will send you an application pack in July



Web www.wintershelter.org.uk
Facebook Folkestone Rainbow Centre
Twitter @rainbowcentre01



Rainbow Centre

**Investing in young lives.
Supporting people through crisis.**

Folkestone Churches Winter Shelter is governed and managed by the Folkestone Rainbow Centre which is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status, registered in England and Wales.

Registered office: 69 Sandgate Road, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2AF
Company registration number 04318070
Charity registration number: 1096570



Folkestone Churches Winter Shelter
Folkestone Rainbow Centre
Cornerstone, 69 Sandgate Road
Folkestone, Kent CT20 2AF

Telephone: (01303) 210559

Fax: (01303) 244062

Website: www.wintershelter.org.uk

Email: info@wintershelter.org.uk

March 2016