



Winchester Churches Nightshelter has provided a safe and caring temporary home to people experiencing homelessness since 1988. Last year we had 116 different people to stay with us, as well as providing additional beds during the very cold weather.

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic we have kept people in single rooms, and so numbers on site have been reduced meaning a loss of funding but greater safety, dignity and privacy for those we do now house. All residents now stay “at home” all day and night and at the weekends as well.

Our services have continued throughout this period, with residents benefitting from a wide-ranging programme of practical and emotional support designed around their personal goals to help them to break the cycle of homelessness and rebuild their lives. Residents can access one-to-one advocacy, support with housing, budgeting and finance advice, help with substance misuse problems, counselling and psychotherapy, assistance with benefits, tenancy training and help finding training and employment. Currently we have 5 people in work which is a great achievement.

An average stay at the Nightshelter is 75 nights but some have stayed up to three years until suitable accommodation is found.

The Nightshelter’s vital work to tackle homelessness is only made possible thanks to a wonderful team of volunteers who offer help with cooking, cleaning, overnight and day shifts, errands and much more. We have had to reduce numbers coming on site at the moment but we are always looking for those who can help during the day at the weekend, or those with HR and PR skills to offer us.

A volunteer at the Nightshelter notes: “I have volunteered for just over a year in a number of ways including cooking, cleaning, sorting clothes and linen, office admin and errands, and have loved every minute of it. The team is extremely friendly and welcoming and I was made to feel part of something very special.

As I progress on my journey of faith, it is becoming more and more important to me to hand over control to God and, through prayer and discernment, I feel more compelled to serve my community - God nudged me towards the Night Shelter and I went. It is hugely rewarding as well as an opportunity to meet new people and make friends, so I would strongly recommend it and would be happy to speak with anyone who would like more information.”

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