

Making a difference

I have met and lived with a lot of homeless people now, males, females, young and old and all streetwise. We have all had to learn quickly to survive but I have yet to talk to a fellow resident who woke up one day and decided to be homeless. With some stories I could make you howl with laughter, others aren't so funny. All are thought provoking.

Try hard to imagine not knowing where your next meal was going to come from! The often taken for granted essentials in life, personal hygiene, a hot drink, a change of clothes, an encouraging word. They are hard to come by for the homeless.

I was lucky to get under the umbrella of WCHP with their three residential homes and a day centre with a stepping stone approach to getting us off the street and back in to society. Their trained staff with their overall willingness to treat each person as an individual, someone to listen, observe, guide and advise us. It doesn't stop there, the project relies on, amongst a lot of other help, volunteers who give up their spare time to come and sit with us and more importantly talk to us. As mentioned we are a varied bunch of individuals from all walks of life and I am sure these volunteers gain as much as us from giving up a bit of their spare time.

I personally gained from one such volunteer in a way they probably didn't even realise; it was simply a comment about how much I had changed in the two months I had been a resident, my appearance, my general attitude and more importantly my enthusiastic outlook towards the future.

It worked for me and it took place under a roof; they cared!

Paul

Going through some old files, I found this which was written in response to an item which appeared in the local press about seafront yobs. The message is not targeted at you, our wonderful supporters. However, it is very poignant and something which we feel is worth telling.

Without doubt there are homeless seafront 'yobs' who can make some peoples lives a misery. Perhaps it is because they are miserable themselves and feel the need to express their frustrations by targeting those less 'fortunate' than themselves.

I gained a degree, passed out from Sandhurst and served my country in the British Army of the Rhine and Northern Ireland. Subsequently I taught for twenty years. I was made redundant and found myself turning increasingly to alcohol.

My life seemed purposeless.I am separated from my wife and family: the talents and education I have received and given seem to have no value.

I have been the subject of violence from some of the 'seafront' community. I have also been shown compassion and friendship. Without doubt some of 'us' can be anti-social but the majority are calm, sensitive, keeping ourselves to ourselves trying to cope with our illness, an illness that only those who suffer from it can understand. The disapproving looks and comments are hurtful to those in our distressed state.

Perhaps stopping for a few minutes and talking to one of us may be a revelation. Talents wasted yes, but we are still human beings with all our faults. Just different faults from yourselves.

When you next enjoy your aperitif prior to a roast with wine, pause - how easily could it be me.

Do not condemn us, compassion is free, from the heart. Yes, avoid those who are violent verbally, or in any other way, look inside your heart. It could so easily be you. We are ill, some more than others.

Do not condemn without knowledge. For the faults of our 'community' I apologise. As Christians all I ask is that you accept this illness. Call the police when necessary, return our greetings, talk to us if you are able but do not condemn us out of hand.

David

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

To contact the Fundraising Team call
01903 227829

To contact HR, please call
01903 227826

To contact the Volunteer Department,
01903 227825

Harvest 2008

This year's appeal has been sent to schools and will be coming out to the churches in August. We are keen to talk to as many groups as possible about our work. If you would like a talk, please contact Katie on 01903 227829 to arrange it.



Your support keeps growing

The last three months have been amazing. Since the last edition of withinreach, with which we enclosed one of our new home collecting boxes, we have been overwhelmed by your support for WCHP and the homeless people living in our community. We love receiving your letters and were thrilled to have so many positive comments about the newsletter, collecting boxes and the work we are doing. On behalf of our clients we want to say a big 'Thank You' for your donations of money, food and many voluntary hours. We'd also like to thank all those of you who have arranged fundraising events through your school, church or workplace.

Further to an article in our January newsletter, where our client told about Homelink in Littlehampton being unable to help him because of his alcohol problem, we are pleased to see that Links have established a new and robust work ethic with those in need in Littlehampton and we wish them well in their endeavours.

Some exciting things have been happening for us.

Our annual Flag Day in the middle of July raised just over £1,900 thanks to the WCHP Fundraising Committee led by Jean Saunders. We are particularly grateful to the many musicians who took their turns to busk and the collectors who worked so hard. Thanks too to the many shoppers who stopped to listen to the music, sometimes joined in and then put money in the volunteers' buckets.

Worthing Lions have chosen WCHP to be one of the beneficiaries of their Festival Weekend at the end of July. It will be a while before we know how much that will raise but we'd like to thank all of you who stopped to play our duck game, to chat or buy items from our bric-a-brac stall.

The next week Red Anywhere Catering held their 3rd Annual Golf Day at Slindon Park Golf Course with proceeds to WCHP. A big thank you to Dan and Andy for organising the day, and to all the golfers who took part.

We are grateful too to all the people who have taken part in sponsored activities like school mufti days, marathons, walks, and of course the Arundel Castle abseil. These events raise thousands of pounds for us during the year. Thank you.

If you have any comments on the newsletter, please email me direct at sue.stevens@wchp.org.uk or write to me at WCHP, 14-16 Selden Road, Worthing, BN11 2LL.

Sue

Abseil at Arundel Castle

Thank you to everyone who took part in the abseil at Arundel Castle raising money for Worthing Churches Homeless Projects.

The Bishop's did it in style and raised over £2,600 between them. 180 people joined them in this daring feat and the total raised so far for WCHP is over £14,000. At least one person had a serious fear of heights. The fact they were prepared to challenge themselves for the benefit of homeless people made the achievement even more meaningful.

We'd like to thank the media for the extensive press coverage and Southern FM for putting on the event and then sending reporter Jack the Lad to Rupert Bacon House to find out more about WCHP and the people living with us.



Bishop Lindsay and Bishop Kieron go 'over the top' at Arundel.
Photos by Bees Knees Photography

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 16 AUGUST CAR TREASURE HUNT** with Barbecue
 - 27 SEPTEMBER TABLE TOP SALE** Holy Trinity Church
 - 25 OCTOBER OUTCRY** Grand Victorian
 - 8 NOVEMBER STALL** Henfield Christmas Market
 - 15 NOVEMBER QUIZ NIGHT** River of Life Church
 - 15 NOVEMBER OUTCRY** The Brunswick Pub
- Call Katie on 01903 227829 for details.**

How you have helped local homeless people April - June 2008

St Clare's

Day Centre
151 different individuals accessed the services at St Clare's,
84% were male
There were 1,512 recorded attendances

Rupert Bacon House

Direct Access Hostel
32 individuals used the services, which included 21 new clients
84% were male
Average length of stay was 76 nights
Of the 21 who moved on, three went to independent accommodation, two went to temporary accommodation, five went to temporary supported accommodation and eleven left for unknown destinations

As you can see, with your support we are making a huge difference to the lives of many people - thank you!

Cornerstone House

Stepping Stones Project
17 individuals stayed here, which included four new clients
87% were male
Average length of stay was 204 nights
Of the four who moved on, two went to independent accommodation, one went to alternative Hostel accommodation and one left for unknown destination

Delaney House

Recovery Project
15 individuals used the services, which included five new clients
86% were male
Average length of stay was 174 nights
Of the three who moved on, two left for unknown destinations.

Move on accommodation

Due to the generosity of local people we have found a property which will provide bedsits for 5 clients who are waiting to move back into the community. Clients will be able to begin the next step towards gaining their total independence. The house has a communal lounge, kitchen and bathroom facilities. Clients will shop and cook for themselves, and keep the place clean and tidy just as we all have to. Staff members will provide minimal advice and support to help with a smooth transition to independent living.

All WCHP projects are designed to meet the needs of clients at the various stages of their lives to enable them to work through any problems, gain work where possible and regain their place in our community. This latest development will free up rooms in our other projects to enable us to help even more people.

We are extremely grateful to all of you who responded to our appeal for furniture in the Worthing Herald. Thanks to your generosity we now have all we need apart from some rugs and chests of drawers. Please call Katie on 01903227829 if you can help with these items. ■

LEGACIES

Since the last newsletter we have been told of two people who had arranged for money from their estates to be donated to WCHP. We are grateful to them for remembering homeless people in this way. Legacies are the lifeblood of many charities and all gifts made in this way to WCHP will help us to secure the future locally for homeless people.

In most cases, making a simple will costs less than having a washing machine repaired, or having a celebration night out. Leaving clear instructions in your Will can make life easier for those you leave behind. If you would like a free guide to making a Will please contact Sue on 01903 227828. If you'd rather use the internet go to www.rememberacharity.org.uk to find out more about this way of giving and find a solicitor who specialises in will making. ■

THANK YOU

In the last three months many people and organisations have supported us financially. Every donation is appreciated and used to run our services. In particular we would like to thank the following organisations: ■

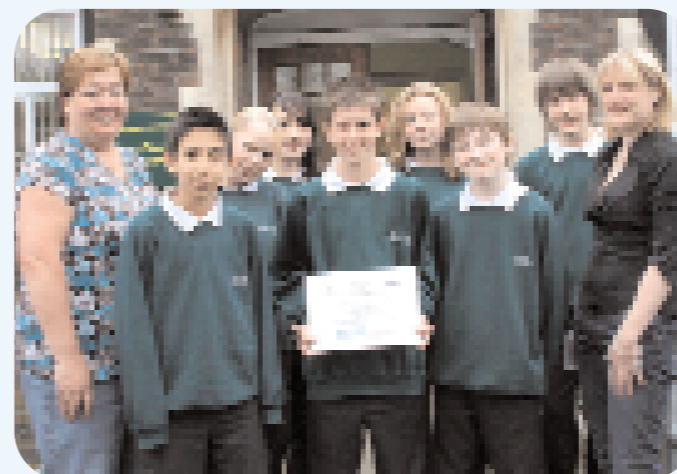
Outcry - this local band perform at pubs and donate their fees to Worthing Churches Homeless Projects. Over the years they have donated many hundreds of pounds. They also support us every year with our Street Collection in Worthing Town Centre. Visit their website for details of their forthcoming events.
<http://www.outcryarts.co.uk/> ■

To **Pentlands Nursing Home** for donating the proceeds from their Summer Fete - a huge £446. ■

To **St Michaels and All Angels** for their donation of £360 and **Queen Street Fellowship** for their £350. ■

Adur Brewery for choosing us to benefit from their first brew! ■

Commissions to **Andy Shepherd** of Outcry and **Vicky** from The Brand Doctor who were due to take part in this year's cancelled Birdman Competition raising funds for us. ■



To the schools who took part in our recent **Mufti Day challenge**. Boundstone Community College, Elm Grove County First School, Oakfield Middle School, Worthing High School, Durrington High School, Holbush First School. The event was a huge success bringing in £2,482.33. ■



Sue and Katie with pupils of Worthing High School (top picture) and Durrington High School (above) ■

CUDDLES

We're sad to report that Cuddles, the Manor Road cat, was put to sleep on the advice of the vet. Cuddles had fought ongoing health problems for some time, so it was reluctantly agreed the time had come to let him go. Over the years he has given staff, clients, volunteers and visitors lots of enjoyment and comfort. Rest in peace Cuddles and thank you for the companionship you have given us during your stay at Stepping Stones. ■



Thank you! to everyone who gave coffee in response to the recent appeal. Every day we serve 200 cups of tea and coffee. Thank you for stemming the flow and filling the shelves again. ■

(left) Chris Fleming, housekeeper for WCHP with some of the donated coffee.

Regular Giving

People support WCHP in a wide variety of ways giving time, money, food, clothing and prayer support. Without them we would not exist. Everyone knows how important it is to budget in order to match your income with your expenditure and WCHP is no different. Whilst a family will rely on regular payments of wages or salary, pensions, and investment income, WCHP relies on limited income from statutory or Government sources, some from charitable Trust Funds, and payments for accommodation from our clients but we are also extremely grateful to those people who give regular monthly sums of money, usually by standing order, and all those who are able to add 28% to the donation in reclaimed tax.

Last year it cost just over £1.2 million to run all four of our projects. Our income was just under £1 million which left us with a deficit of £200,000 over the year. Anyone owning a property will know how expensive it is to maintain them. Increased legislation incurs extra costs with many more requirements placed on organisations like WCHP. Against this gloomy background is a ray of hope provided by our regular givers. We asked some of them why they choose to give in this way. These are extracts of their replies

There are so many worthy charity appeals nowadays - mostly focusing on national or international problems - that it is difficult to know which, in your opinion, is the most deserving. WCHP is however a very local charity, giving help to local people - people you see on the streets of our town.

The old saying 'charity begins at home' could perhaps be amended to say 'charity begins in our local community'. In these hard financial times I know that 'every penny counts' but I hope you feel you could give a few pounds regularly each month, like I do, to support out local charity - WCHP. John

As an older member of the community I am not able to give 'hands on' help but am very happy to give a very small but regular financial contribution. From my point of view, I can be assured that my contribution is expected and duly arrives without any anxiety for you or for me. I would encourage anyone who has decided to give to this very worthy cause, to give on a regular basis. It doesn't have to be often or large amounts but once the arrangement is made the money will go directly where it is needed. Violet

I've always worried - and felt guilty - about the homeless people I see, wherever I go. I am reluctant to just give them money as I can't be sure how it'll be spent. But goods are random, in content and quantity, and I realised that the people with the job of running the hostels need something more dependable. If I contributed a regular amount, when put together with contributions from others, it would be possible to budget more effectively. WCHP can never know what's round the corner, what demands the next day will bring - regular contributions mean that they do have something they can depend on! Eleanor

Since becoming a Christian 11 years ago, Jesus has spoken to my heart for those in need and from the beginning have felt challenged by His words 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Matthew 22 v 39) and 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. (Matthew 25 v 35-36)

WCHP does amazing work caring for the homeless people in the Worthing area and I'd urge anyone who gives to WCHP to consider giving regularly by standing order which is so much easier administratively for both WCHP and the individual. There is also the opportunity to Gift Aid the amount given benefiting WCHP's work further. Whatever you can give, however, large or small on a regular basis helps WCHP plan for the future. Diane

If you would like to give in this way, please complete the enclosed form and return it to Katie.