



A Guide to Helping Rough Sleepers and the Homeless in and around Winchester



Compiled by:
**Winchester Churches Nightshelter &
Churches Together Winchester Justice & Peace**
Sponsored by: Winchester City Council



Foreword

It would be wrong to call the history of *Churches Together's* involvement with homelessness a 'proud' one: we cannot be proud of where we remain today, with the continuing and complex struggle to address the needs and hopes of rough sleepers and homeless people in our City. However, the churches do have a substantial and serious record of engagement. Looking back at what we have done and looking around at what has developed, often from small beginnings, encourages us to press on with what lies ahead. More than ever we are aware that the only way to make real progress is by the different agencies working together, and for those who wish to help being well informed, so that they can reach out with clear minds as well as warm hearts. *Churches Together* welcomes the publication of this booklet, thanks all those contributed to it and pledges to play its part in distributing it. Above all, we pray that it will help us all to reach out wisely to those who Christ is calling us to serve.

*Canon Roly Riem – Chair of Churches Together in Winchester, and
Canon Chancellor and Pastor, Winchester Cathedral.*

It is sometimes tricky to spot the fraudster from the vulnerable street homeless person but please do not let this put you off helping those you believe to be vulnerable and homeless: their need is often very great. For the genuine rough sleeper it is often vital to know that someone is willing to listen, to take time to hear problems without passing judgement, that someone cares, can be trusted and will accept you the way you are. Thanks to all of you for taking the time and making the effort to help rough sleepers in and around our City, who are often trying to escape and cope with past unpleasant experiences in their lives. We hope this booklet provides the information and guidance you need to help others less fortunate than ourselves.

Michele Price – Manager of Winchester Churches Nightshelter

About this booklet

This booklet is dedicated to Ben Blyth, who spent many months sleeping rough on the streets of Winchester and sadly died in August 2010. We hope this booklet will help us all to be able to do more to help Ben's friends and others who are still sleeping rough and homeless, and enable them to benefit from the warmth and care of the people of Winchester and connect with the expert support services available in Winchester.

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Front cover photo: adapted from a still from Prefab Films 'Lucky' campaign and their DVD on 'Homelessness in Winchester' (www.prefabfilms.com).

This booklet aims to provide a resource for those who wish to help rough sleepers and others who are homeless.

Whether you are in your own home, church, community hall, or other location with somebody on your doorstep asking for help, or if you are passing somebody begging or in need on the street, we hope this booklet will enable you to respond safely, compassionately, constructively, and in the way you feel to be most appropriate, with more knowledge of the resources available in Winchester at your fingertips.

This booklet has been developed by *Winchester Churches Nightshelter* in collaboration with *Churches Together in Winchester Justice & Peace* initiative and with the support of Winchester City Council. It includes contributions from the many Winchester agencies, charities and faith groups working increasingly closely together in this area. Thank you to everybody who has contributed, and thank you to everybody who is helping rough sleepers.

Contributions and expertise in this booklet comes from:
Winchester Churches Nightshelter; Winchester City Council Homelessness & Housing Teams; Trinity Winchester; The Basics Bank; Emmaus Hampshire; West View; The Salvation Army; The Christian Kitchen, CAB Winchester; Winchester Police; Homeless Link; Shelter; Housing Justice

This booklet is available in print copies from Winchester Churches Nightshelter and other places around the city, and available as a digital PDF on various charity and church websites. If you have any queries about this booklet, or you wish to add to it in the future, please contact the office at Winchester Churches Nightshelter Tel: 862050

A single sheet of information on outreach and other support services in Winchester is also available to give to rough sleepers – see p14

Key Contact Numbers

If you are worried about a rough sleeper, or you just wish to report that you have seen rough sleepers needing assistance, or if you are seeking further advice, please call the following. Try to know the name of the rough sleeper when you call: they will often be known already to these agencies and more help can usually then be given.

Who to phone:

Winchester City Centre Police – Safer Neighbourhoods Team

When we engage with people on the streets we do not just deal with criminal matters that may arise: we also direct people to agencies so that they can seek support and advice. If you have concerns then please contact us: **Tel: 0845 0454545**

Evenings & Nights:

5.30pm-10pm

Winchester Churches Nightshelter Duty Supervisor

Tel: 01962 862050

(if no reply please leave a message and we will ring you back asap)

If an emergency or out of these hours please call the police or ambulance emergency services on 999.

Daytime office hours:

9am-5pm

WCC Homelessness Team Tel: 01962 848163

9.30am-4.30pm

Trinity Winchester: Operations Manager - Sue McKenna

Tel: 01962 842827

9am-2pm

Winchester Churches Nightshelter: Manager – Michele Price

Tel: 01962 862050

For Winchester's Street Outreach Team – contact either Trinity or the Nightshelter and ask for the Street Outreach contact.

Engaging with Rough Sleepers

- Safety, What to Give, What to Say -

Safety - Managing Risks

Ideally volunteers should not be lone working but it is inevitable that there will be people on their own in premises that will attract rough sleepers or other vulnerable people, eg in a church, church hall, even at your own house or rectory. Always try to carry a mobile phone, and a personal alarm is useful. These few points are worth noting to ensure everybody's safety:

- Try to have somebody else within easy contact, preferably in the same building. Do not let somebody into your home if you are alone.
- If you are on your own in situations where you might be approached by people seeking help you should make sure you have access to a phone and that someone knows where you are.
- If you feel at all uneasy about an individual, say you need to call someone else and make a call so that another person is alerted.
- Volunteers who are lone working can be given 'screech' or personal alarms for personal safety – make sure everyone knows where this is, how it works, and that it can be reached easily in emergency.
- If there are other people regularly in a building a panic button can be installed. It needs to be tested, accessible, and above all the people likely to hear it need to know what to do.
- Make sure there is no money or valuables obvious or accessible - put away your bag and keep cash boxes etc out of sight and locked
- Make an examination of the risks of where you are and what time of day it is – are people likely to be intoxicated or withdrawing? Is the person showing any threatening behaviour? Are there any factors you are aware of that may have affected their mood or behaviour?
- Be aware of risks to yourself if you are wearing particular items of clothing (e.g. scarves, long earrings, piercings) which could be grabbed in an attack.
- If you feel at all uncomfortable make sure you are not in a position where you could be trapped in a room - keep yourself near the exit. You may be able to insist on talking to the person in an entrance lobby or outside.
- Don't hesitate to dial 999 if you are threatened in any way (or use other local police contact arrangements)

What to Give

Please be realistic about what you can and cannot do or give.

It is not advisable to give money: this can set a difficult precedent, can be abused, can cause danger to others who are then approached more aggressively and don't give money, and money may do the reverse of helping the person you are giving to as it may simply fund a deepening drug/alcohol habit which they may be trying to control. Giving food or a hot drink or a voucher is more appropriate. If you do wish to donate money which will go towards services for Winchester's rough sleepers and homeless, please use the *Spare Change* boxes around the city (see p17)

Various vouchers and information leaflets from agencies and charities working with the homeless in Winchester can be obtained to give to rough sleepers (see p13). Itinerant rough sleepers - there are some longstanding itinerant rough sleepers who are well known in places they pass through regularly eg Alresford. They may be trustworthy and genuine, but giving money or generous hospitality can set difficult precedents and others can also follow who abuse this. Please use the vouchers, information and food schemes on page 13, or phone contacts on p5 for advice.

Professional Beggars in Winchester

A note from Winchester City Centre Police team: There are a small minority of people who beg on the streets even though they have housing and benefits. They sometimes work in teams, so as not to get caught by the Police and they can be aggressive and intimidating towards members of the public. We need to remove them from the streets and for you to use the *Spare Change for Real Change* boxes around the city, so your donations go to the charities that support the people who are actually in need.

Engaging with Rough Sleepers

Remember, people who are homeless and involved in street culture are victims of aggression more often than they are perpetrators.

Do not disclose anything personal and be clear that your relationship is professional. Be aware that your words may be interpreted differently to your intention. Be clear about what you mean. Don't promise anything on behalf of other charities or agencies. Do not accept responsibility for looking after somebody's belongings.

Body language is important: standing over someone can be very threatening but crouching can make you unbalanced and vulnerable. If you are crouching, then ensure you are far enough away not to be pushed over. Never wake somebody up. If you are approaching people from a distance then introduce yourself as early as possible to reduce any perceived threat to the person you are approaching. Don't forget you may be invading their personal space and possibly the place they presently regard as their home.

Listening and understanding the individual's perspective: paying attention to the needs and priorities expressed by the rough sleeper can lead to increased trust and a precursor to acceptance of assistance by support agencies. Listening is crucial – often it is not necessary to say much but just to let somebody have a listening ear. Allow time to engage with a person and develop rapport before trying to gather any information and offering suggestions for support services.

Alcohol and drugs are mood altering substances so however well you think you know somebody be aware of your own safety as well as the safety of the rough sleeper, and follow your gut reactions. Never touch needles.

Connecting to Charities, Agencies and other Support

If you are keen to really help a rough sleeper, it is ideal if you can find out their name and put them in touch with one of the local agencies (see p5) or, with their permission, contact one of these agencies on their behalf. Somebody can then make contact with the rough sleeper and let them know what is immediately available to them via outreach services and encourage them to engage with ongoing support services. It is very likely that at least one of these agencies or outreach teams is already working with the rough sleeper, and hopefully they will be linking to a support worker. Your extra listening ear and food donation could be invaluable even so.

Please don't promise anything on behalf of other charities/agencies. If you are part of a team running a soup-run or other outreach service to rough sleepers, it is useful to discuss with the other agencies your different ways of working and how best to meet your remits. Be clear to clients that you are from different agencies and discuss issues of confidentiality and detail what information will be shared with other agencies and what will not. If you are working with the police, be transparent with the rough sleeper about the purpose of the joint working between groups and be clear about your role.

Sources of Further Advice & Information

– for you and the homeless -

WCC Homelessness Team

Every Wednesday morning Winchester City Council Homelessness team offer a drop-in facility at their offices for rough sleepers from 9.30am-12pm, and by appointment any other day. WCC provides help and a housing advice service for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. WCC have to follow various eligibility criteria for help with housing including: 'local connections', not being 'intentionally homeless' and being 'habitually resident within the UK' Please contact the Homelessness team: Tel: 01962 848163
Email: homelessness@winchester.gov.uk
www.winchester.gov.uk/Housing/Homelessness

Winchester City Centre Police – Safer Neighbourhood Team

When we engage with people on the streets, we do not just deal with any criminal matters that may arise, we also direct them to other agencies so that they can seek support and advice. We have lots of reports about rough sleepers and beggars in the Town Centre. These people are at risk from the elements and other criminals, so if you have any concerns then please contact us by dialing 0845 045 4545 at the time.

Winchester Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Homeless people can be sure of free, confidential, independent advice on any subject including welfare benefits, employment, housing, immigration, legal, finance, relationship etc. Open: Mon/Wed/Thurs 10 - 4, Tues/Fri 10-1. Tel: 848000 Email: advice@winchestercab.org.uk www.adviceguide.org.uk

Trinity Winchester, and Winchester Churches Nightshelter

also offer advice and support and are happy to try to respond to any queries relating to rough sleepers or homelessness. Please contact either charity for further information (see separate entries below).

Street Outreach & Soup Kitchens

From Homeless Link: *Street outreach teams offer a valuable support service to some of the most deeply excluded people in their communities. Street outreach workers facilitate the crucial first step from the street to independent living. This work is challenging and requires workers to be attentive, proactive and persistent to understand the individual needs of each rough sleeper. Movement in to mainstream support services is key to addressing the difficulties faced by rough sleepers and street outreach is the most direct engagement point for this. Rough sleepers are often complex with individual needs, opinions, fears and desires, and good practice addresses these needs in the most supportive and appropriate ways.*

Weekly Timetable of

Winchester's Outreach & Daytime Services

Every Day: 10am-4pm - free lunch at Trinity

Wednesdays: 7-9am – Street Outreach Team

Thursdays: 7-9pm – Family Church Soup Kitchen

Fridays: 7-9am – Street Outreach Team

9am-11am – The Salvation Army

Saturdays: 9-10.30pm - Vineyard Soup-Run

Sundays: 2.30-3pm – The Christian Kitchen

Winchester Street Outreach Team

Operates on: Wednesdays and Fridays every week – 7-9am

Service Provided: Outreach and advice about services available (including opportunities to come in off the street). One trained Trinity and one trained Nightshelter staff member or volunteer go out together offering support, information, hot drinks, snacks and a chat to those sleeping rough. Non-intrusive but assertive outreach. Hoping to expand to more days per week with more volunteers.

Location: streets, car parks and open spaces in centre of Winchester

Run by: Trinity Winchester, Winchester Churches Nightshelter &

WCC Homelessness Team **Contacts:** Trinity: Sue McKenna: dropin@trinitywinchester.org.uk Tel: 01962 842827; Nightshelter: Michele Price or Liz Howe: Tel: 862050 admin@wcns.org.uk

Trinity Winchester

Operates on: Weekdays 10am-1.45pm. Afternoon opening every day until 4pm for rough sleepers, people staying at the Nightshelter and those attending classes and groups. **Services Provided:** All homeless and vulnerably housed people can access free breakfast and mid-day meal, advice and information on: benefits, housing, domestic violence and substance misuse; laundry & bathing facilities; clothing; harm minimization and brief interventions; adult education and access to doctor and CPN **Location:** Trinity Winchester, Bradbury House, SO23 8DX **Contacts:** Hannah Scott or Sue McKenna between 9.30am-4.30pm: Tel: 842827 dropin@trinitywinchester.org.uk

The Christian Kitchen

Operates on: Every Sunday lunchtime 2.30-3pm. The Methodists and St John's church from Alresford run 2 or 3 Sundays a month and the Salvation Army runs the other 2 Sundays per month, and gives generous support and the use of their premises every Sunday. **Service Provided:** Filled rolls or sandwiches, cake, tea, coffee and squash plus hot soup in the cooler months. **Location:** The Salvation Army, Winchester **Run by:** St John's, Alresford, Alresford Methodists and the Salvation Army. **Main Contacts:** Caroline Strudwick 773093; Stephen & Miranda Pinch: 732064. Email: carolinestrudwick@carolinestrudwick.co.uk

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army works to meet the need of the Homeless throughout Winchester by providing clothes and food parcels and having a *Christian Kitchen* (see above) for light lunch on Sundays from 2.30pm. We also are willing to give advice, but if we can't help we refer to the appropriate people. **Location:** The Salvation Army, Parchment Street SO23 8AZ **Run by:** The Salvation Army – Winchester **Main Contacts:** Major Teresa Harris and Daphne Frampton: Tel: 854239

The Vineyard Church Street Teams

Operates on: Every Saturday night between 9pm-10.30pm. **Service Provided:** Established in April 2001 with consent from Winchester City Council and Winchester Police. Teams of volunteers on a rota go out in groups of four taking soup, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, blankets, crisps and chocolate bars around the City Centre and various locations. **Location:** Winchester City Centre **Run by:** The Vineyard Church **Main Contacts:** Keith and Frances Rogers Tel: 07890 458803. E: admin@winvin.org.uk

Winchester Family Church – Soup Kitchen

Operates on: Thursday nights 7-9pm. **Service Provided:** The Family Church started up this initiative in January 2010. Serving hot homemade soup with bread, cake, and hot drinks from the church at Middle Brook Centre (opposite Iceland car park) on Thursday evenings. Currently trialing a packed lunch service on Friday's between 12 and 1pm, on request from the Middle Brook Centre. **Location:** Winchester Family Church, Middle Brook Centre. **Run by:** The Family Church **Main Contacts:** Dave Lockyer or Tom Foster – Tel: 01962 840800 E: thomasfoster2@mac.com

The Basics Bank

Operates on: Tuesdays & Fridays – 10.00am – 3pm **Service Provided:** Winchester Basics Bank provides food and clothes to individuals and families in urgent need via a voucher system (see below). It aims to make appropriate resources available to the maximum number of people at their point of greatest need. The Basics Bank provides food parcels for 1-5 days of tinned and dried food, good quality second hand clothing and shoes for all the family, including babywear. **Run by:** Winchester Basics Bank is an ecumenical project supported by local churches, caring organisations and Winchester City Council. **Main Contact:** Frances Rogers: 01962 855774

Vouchers & other Resources available

Vouchers:

Please be aware of the issues of giving vouchers to rough sleepers from your own home or church office: this may attract people regularly coming back for more even if housed (in which case it is often best to keep a record of names if possible) and possibly becoming aggressive and demanding; it may attract a long queue of other homeless and non-homeless people seeking vouchers too. Please be aware of personal safety issues, and the safety of others who may use the same building as you at other times of day.

The Basics Bank Vouchers:

Food and clothes can only be obtained with a voucher, which may be issued by an approved agency such as: Winchester City Council, C A B, Social Services, Local NHS, Churches, Probation Officers, Trinity Winchester, Winchester Churches Nightshelter, Housing Associations. Any individual is limited to 4 vouchers per year, and 1 within 6 weeks.

Churches Food and Transport Vouchers:

An additional set of food vouchers are being developed to hopefully enable churches and others to purchase a supply of food vouchers which they can then give out as they wish, so that those in need can exchange them for food in the particular supermarket named on the voucher. These vouchers for churches and others to use are being coordinated by the United Church and St Bartholomew & St Lawrence and the Nightshelter. It is hoped that a late night fast food business in Winchester will link to a similar voucher scheme which will then serve those in need when the supermarkets are closed. Please contact the Nightshelter for further information or to purchase a supply of vouchers, or to donate funds to this new scheme.

Churches Transport Vouchers:

A new voucher scheme is hopefully developing soon to enable churches in rural areas on the outskirts of Winchester to purchase vouchers for bus or taxi services which they can give out as they wish, so that those in need can get transport into Winchester for support.

Booklets, Flyers and Websites:

Information Sheet for Rough Sleepers:

A simple one-page flyer detailing the soup-runs and outreach services available to rough sleepers in Winchester is available for you to give out – please contact the Nightshelter, Trinity or WCC Homelessness team for copies, or see the Nightshelter website where you can print off copies.

This Guide to Helping Rough Sleepers & the Homeless:

Extra printed copies of this booklet are available from the Nightshelter, WCC, Trinity, CAB and various churches in Winchester. Also available as a PDF on the Churches Together in Winchester website and websites of many of the other organizations.

Churches Together in Winchester *Justice & Peace* Blog:

A new blog noticeboard, co-ordinated by Churches Together Winchester *Justice & Peace* initiative, promotes latest news, events, talks, and resources from the various churches, charities and other agencies working in Winchester in the fields of Justice & Peace. Please provide a link to this blog on your website, and keep in touch with latest news at: <http://ctwjjusticeandpeace.wordpress.com>

Accommodation Services – Short-term

Winchester Churches Nightshelter:

A vital lifeline to the homeless and first port of call for those in crisis. High quality, immediate access accommodation with home-cooked meals, and a safe, warm environment plus specialist support for guests during the mornings to help with long-term accommodation, counselling, employment, health issues etc. Guests often stay for up to 3 months. Self-referrals at the door as well as referrals in advance. Unfortunately the Nightshelter is often full, so it is best if people visit the office in the morning to try to book a bed. Individuals will be asked to complete a risk assessment before entry; anybody

dangerously out of control with alcohol or drug intake, or posing other serious risk to other vulnerable guests or volunteers, will be unlikely to gain a bed that night but might on the following night if posing less risk. Blankets and other support and advice are offered at the door to those unable to get into the Nightshelter.

Nightshelter Opening Times: 6pm-8.30am. Guest admissions 6-9pm. Office and support services for guests every weekday morning from 9am-2pm. Contact Michele Price, Manager. Tel: 862050
Email: admin@wcns.org.uk www.wcns.org.uk

Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP):

This service is operated by the Nightshelter with the support of WCC. If temperatures are forecast to drop below 0°C for 3 consecutive nights, then the Nightshelter's SWEP policy comes into operation and extra emergency beds are put up in the sitting room (up to 4 fold-up beds).

There is no other instant access accommodation available in Winchester. The nearest alternatives are: Oxford – O'Hanlon House; Southampton – Patrick House; Basingstoke – Mayplace House

West View House:

West View House is classified as a direct access hostel. We are able to accommodate both males and females, with the minimum age requirement of 18. The hostel comprises of 29 bedrooms, with residents sharing kitchens, toilets and bathrooms. To qualify the applicant must be homeless, and the majority of referrals come direct from prisons, and the Probation Service as well as Nightshelters and local authority Homeless Teams. An individual can also self-refer, and the offer of accommodation is by way of an interview process. West View House is classified as short term accommodation, with residents hopefully being assisted to move on within 18 months. We provide practical help and support to a wide range of people, and are funded to accept those with enduring drugs and alcohol problems, as well as those who are purely homeless through a variety of circumstances. Contact: Chris Ross, Manager, Tel: 841599

Accommodation Services – Longer-term

Longer-term accommodation is available in supported housing and other communities in Winchester. Some, such as **Emmaus Hampshire** and **Keystone**, will accept self-referrals though in most cases access is by referral through the Nightshelter, Trinity, WCC, the Supported Housing Panel and others. Please contact WCC Homelessness team for advice on longer-term accommodation in Winchester.

Health Support

A Doctor is available every Tuesday and Thursday at Trinity for homeless and rough sleepers to see by appointment. Doctors' surgeries in central Winchester include: St Clements Surgery, Tanner Street, Winchester SO23 8AD. Tel: 852211

For drug advice and needle exchange:

'CLEMS' offers an open access drop-in service for individuals with substance misuse issues. 9-5pm. 14 St Clements Street, SO23 9HH
Tel: 01962 870818. Various other services in Winchester are available for advice and support for drug and alcohol issues - accessed by referral at Trinity or other agencies.

A Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) is available for rough sleepers and the homeless by referral at Trinity and the Nightshelter.

For emergencies ring the Police on 999

Opportunities for Giving

Donations are invaluable to the following charities working with the homeless in Winchester, most of whom rely on the generosity of donations in order to keep doing the work they do:

Winchester Churches Nightshelter (particularly food and funds); Trinity Winchester (particularly food, clothes & funds); The Basics Bank (particularly food, clothes & funds); Emmaus Hampshire (particularly furniture for restoration & funds); The Salvation Army (particularly funds); Keystone (particularly funds). Please see the websites or phone the offices of each of these charities for more details. **Very many thanks.**

Donate through *Spare Change for Real Change* boxes

*SPARE CHANGE
FOR REAL CHANGE*



*Making a difference for the
homeless in Winchester.*



Trinity Winchester



Winchester's *Spare Change for Real Change* scheme (previously *Diverted Giving*) asks you to help the homeless by putting your spare change into donation boxes around the city rather than giving it to street beggars.

Developed by Hampshire Constabulary and Winchester City Centre Partnership, 100% of the money you donate goes directly to 3 charities that work together for rough sleepers and the homeless in Winchester: The Salvation Army, Trinity Winchester and Winchester Churches Nightshelter. Spare

*your change for real change today by putting a donation into any of the *Spare Change for Real Change* boxes sited across the city in shops, restaurants and public spaces, including: The Tourist Information Centre, the Brookes Centre, M&S, Mawson & Co, Discovery Centre.*

Opportunities for Volunteering

Volunteers are invaluable to the following charities working with the homeless in Winchester, most of whom rely on the volunteers in order to continue the work they do:

Winchester Churches Nightshelter (daytime office & cleaning & IT help; evening cooks, helpers and overnighters; fundraisers); Trinity Winchester (daytime volunteers); The Basics Bank (daytime volunteers); Emmaus Hampshire (daytime volunteers). Please see websites of each of these charities for details. See also CTW *Action Guide to Volunteering* – available in churches and via the Churches Together Winchester *Justice & Peace* website.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN OUR

WINCHESTER STREET OUTREACH VOLUNTEER TEAM?

If you would like to join the Street Outreach team of trained volunteers, please talk to Michele or Liz in the Nightshelter office. You will need to be CRB checked, attend taster sessions, and then attend a subsidized training day which covers key points for engaging with rough sleepers (see below).

Our Street Outreach volunteers usually undertake 2 or 3 mornings per month on a rota. If interested please Tel: 862050 (Nightshelter office)

Training Day – Engaging with Rough Sleepers

Best Practice for Street Outreach Volunteers

and all those working with Rough Sleepers

Training day run by *Homeless Link*

Hosted by Winchester Churches Nightshelter

Course covers: introductory best practice training for street outreach and soup run staff and volunteers, and all engaging with rough sleepers. Includes: general work and personal safety issues; drug and alcohol misuse; dealing with difficult and challenging clients; approaching and engaging with rough sleepers

Trainer: the Homeless Link trainer has over nine years extensive experience delivering a broad range of courses to the homelessness sector. He is also a freelance trainer for Chartered Institute of Housing and other organisations dealing with homelessness, and has experience of training soup kitchen staff.

Dates & Fees: the first date for this new course is **Wednesday 9th February 2011** (daytime), with other dates every couple of months after that according to demand. If maximum 16 attendees book onto the course then the fee per person would be approx £40.

This course is open to anybody who would like to attend.

Book your place now: please book your place asap (max 16 attendees) by phoning the Nightshelter office on: 01962 862050

Voices from the Street

ROB'S STORY - an Emmaus Companion 2010 -

“When my wife died I became very depressed. I didn't pick up the phone or reply to letters. I was out of work and four days after she died I lost my appeal to stay on Job Seekers' Allowance. I was evicted because I couldn't pay the rent. I left the house with a holdall with a few clothes, a photo of my wife and a couple of other personal possessions. I stayed with some friends for about a year. By then I was doing odd gardening jobs and was able to give them something towards my keep, but decided to move on to make more room for their family. A guy I knew offered me a room in his house, but he asked me to leave when he got into trouble with his rent and wanted the room for his stepson Luckily Emmaus Gloucester had a vacancy and I moved there and spent two very happy years there. I used to drive the van and do furniture removals. I came here to Emmaus Hampshire for a week's holiday and I loved it. I hope I'll be able to stay. I think it's absolutely brilliant here. Within three hours of my arrival, I'd met all the Companions. Everyone is equal and has respect for each other – there are no cliques, no-one has a chip on their shoulder and they all get on. This time next year I still want to be here in Emmaus Winchester. I still have problems that I need to sort out. I may try to get in touch with brother that I haven't seen for years, when I'm ready. I do all sorts: I'm kitchen porter here. I like to be busy and I'm quite happy as long as I can do the work”.

MARIE'S STORY - a Winchester Nightshelter Guest in 2010 -



“I arrived here with nothing facing prospects of being on the street. Did not know about the Nightshelter until a homeless person told me. I was in care until I was 18 yrs and have been homeless ever since. I got in feeling nervous, been in various nightshelters, Winchester is the best because there is less trouble and the cleanest. Been given the chance to finally settle down and being offered (without being shoved into a place) extra support to keep my accommodation. I feel

on top of the world now, I was feeling low but now with staff around and people to talk to I've found this place really helpful”.

PAUL'S STORY - a Trinity, Salvation Army & Nightshelter guest -

“Because of work and personal problems I had to flee my home and went to stay with family in Eastleigh who put me up for a short time before being referred to Winchester Nightshelter by Eastleigh Borough Council. Staying at the Nightshelter has given me help to push me into helping myself but also having support when I've needed it. I go to Trinity most days where I get a free meal and able to access the computers so that I can do my maths course and staff are always helping me and supporting me. I enjoy helping. I go to the Salvation Army every Sunday for lunch. The people help by encouraging and supporting. They have time to just talk and listen.

TOM'S STORY - a Winchester Nightshelter Guest in 2010 –

“I was evicted from my home. I went to the Council asking them where did homeless people go, they telephoned the Nightshelter and luckily there was a spare bed. I was at an all time low, going through withdrawal symptoms from heroin and cocaine, suffering from insomnia, and feeling suicidal. The staff and some volunteers helped me just by sitting and chatting in the evenings, encouraging me to sort myself out and stop drinking. Great food, lounge to watch TV and play games on the computer. Winchester Nightshelter was my life saver, I was off the streets, away from drugs and crime. I'm looking to do voluntary work, currently doing an A Level in Self awareness and I am starting a counselling course at Peter Symonds”.

Prayer

May God bless us with discomfort
at easy answers, half truths and superficial relationships
so that we may live deeply in our hearts.

May God bless us with anger
at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people
so that we may work for justice freedom and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed
for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war
so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them
and turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless us with enough foolishness
to believe that we can make a difference in this world
so that we can do what others claim cannot be done.

Amen