

WYCOMBE HOMELESS CONNECTION

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020-21



INCORPORATING WYCOMBE WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

Registered charity no. 1156211



OUR VISION

WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS OR FACING HOMELESSNESS BY:

- ▶ Preventing homelessness before it starts
- ▶ Reducing harm for people who are homeless
- ▶ Helping house people who are homeless
- ▶ Defending the rights of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY PERSON WHO IS HOMELESS IN OUR COMMUNITY HAS WORTH AND SHOULD HAVE A FRESH START, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR SITUATION.



PLEASE DISPLAY OUR POSTER (ON PAGES 8-9) SO PEOPLE IN A HOUSING CRISIS KNOW WE ARE HERE FOR THEM.

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Wycombe Homeless Connection is a charitable incorporated organisation with a governing document dated February 2014 based on the Charity Commission's 'Foundation' model constitution.

This review reports our activities between 1 May 2020 and 30 April 2021, unless otherwise stated, and was approved in August 2021.

Due to the nature of our work, we often change the names of people whose stories we have included. Pictures are for illustrative purposes unless otherwise stated and may be a stock image to ensure the privacy of our clients and volunteers. All content is the copyright of Wycombe Homeless Connection and our partners and may only be reproduced with permission.

WELCOME

FROM OUR CHAIR

I am privileged to introduce our annual report for 2020-21, which tells stories of how you have helped us give people a future and a hope.

It was a year like no other. Despite that, we were blessed with the resources to grow our services in difficult times through the ongoing generous support of our whole community.

We adapted our services to deliver our work online and by phone, offering legal advice and support across the county. We increased our support for people in temporary and emergency accommodation and worked with the NHS to expand our homeless health service.

Our volunteers inspired us by finding creative ways to support us, whether through virtual marathons or joining our virtual Big Sleepout. As restrictions eased, we were encouraged by the volunteers who joined us in walking through town keeping an eye out for anyone who had fallen through the net and might still be sleeping rough.

Underpinning all our work is Wycombe Homeless Connection's Christian ethos: our belief that every individual has worth motivates us to empower people to seek a better future.

We are enormously grateful to our staff who went above and beyond to respond to the rising demand for our services, and to our trustees who brought their wisdom and expertise to ensure good governance and a strong financial base to underpin the charity's services.

We are deeply grateful for all your generosity, support and prayers. I hope that you will be inspired by reading how together we were able to make a difference in people's lives – giving them a future and hope.



Sheena Dykes BEM, DL
Chair of Trustees



FROM OUR CEO

In this tough year, our team and volunteers found it hard to work from home, missing our friends and colleagues, and dealing with anxiety.

But no matter how tough it was for us, it was even tougher for the people Wycombe Homeless Connection supports. While most of the country was told to stay at home, many people we serve didn't have a place of safety and others were at risk of losing their homes.

As a result, much of the work we did over the year resembled an emergency humanitarian operation. If anyone was found to be sleeping rough, we got them into emergency accommodation, followed up with food, clothing, welfare phone calls, and connected people to the healthcare they needed, including, importantly, co-running COVID-19 vaccination clinics.

Although we've had to concentrate on people's immediate safety more than ever before, I've been pleased that we've been able to create and run new projects, responding to new challenges facing the people we serve.

We ran a special project to help people who were trapped in homelessness because of their immigration status. We've been helping people register with a GP and we provided training for local NHS workers so that together we could tackle the health inequalities that people who are homeless face.

I'm grateful that even when we weren't able to see you very much over the year, your amazing support continued; volunteering may have changed but a huge number of people were still keen to find things they could do to help!

Thank you for that and I hope to see more of you soon!



James Boulton
Chief Executive Officer



REDUCING HARM FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS

WORKING HARDER THAN EVER TO END HOMELESSNESS

The coronavirus continued to take its toll on the people we serve and we worked quickly to ensure everyone who needed help could get it.

We were again unable to run our mobile, dormitory style winter night shelter but thankfully, **emergency COVID-19 accommodation** remained open all year. The government picked up the majority of the cost, but we paid for 273 bed-nights to make sure people who fell through the cracks, for many complex reasons, didn't have to sleep on the street.

Our team were on the **front line**, working with our partners at Buckinghamshire Council, Connection Support and others, making sure anyone who needed a room in the **emergency accommodation** was identified and moved in as soon as possible.

Despite the restrictions and risk to themselves, our team and volunteers did an inspirational and life-saving job. They delivered **food parcels** made by our friends at One Can Trust and fresh meals from Meals from Marlow and created and distributed **emergency care packs**. Volunteers worked from their homes during the lockdowns, making hundreds of welfare calls.

In February, we hit an ominous milestone: we were looking after more than 50 people in emergency accommodation, the most we have ever looked after at one time.

Outreach walks continued, making sure everyone who might have been sleeping rough was found and helped to access the emergency accommodation.

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT:

60

PEOPLE WERE PLACED
INTO EMERGENCY
ACCOMMODATION

3180

FOOD PARCELS
WERE DELIVERED

103

PEOPLE WERE HELPED TO
MAKE HOMELESSNESS
APPLICATIONS



Susan and Tony
Frontline volunteers

Susan and Tony are used to doing whatever needs doing and were invaluable throughout the pandemic. Tony coordinated fresh food deliveries and Susan made calls to people in emergency accommodation.

Tony said: "Every time I volunteer with WHC I feel like I am going on an adventure; you never know what you will be doing to help people."

Susan: "I call people who had sought help at our housing legal clinics. I update them on their cases and let them know we are here for them. Keeping in touch like this gives them confidence to tackle their problems."

D'S STORY

We met D a few years ago when she was not long out of care. She was struggling with many of the challenges young care-leavers face, including repeated periods of homelessness. Not long after we met, she managed to connect with her wider family; they welcomed her and we hoped for the best for her future.

So we were sad when D contacted us again to say there had been a breakdown in the familial relationship and she was back to sofa-surfing, sometimes sleeping rough. Her mental and physical health had deteriorated and she was suffering alcoholism.

There was no doubting D's extreme vulnerability but she didn't qualify as being in 'priority need' and the local council couldn't act straight away. So we did. We paid for a place to stay, connected her to local addiction support services and registered her with mental healthcare services. D inspired us with her dedication to putting her life back together, had the offer of a job and in no time at all was named employee of the month!

Her next goal was finding a more permanent home and we helped her find a private tenancy she could afford on a monthly basis. But collecting enough for a deposit and rent-in-advance is tough so we paid these costs. She didn't have anyone who could act as a guarantor so we paid for guarantor insurance.

D moved in and settled quickly. She still faces huge challenges especially in relation to her mental health and addictions, but she is trying her best and we will be with her along the way.



A FOCUS ON HOMELESS HEALTH

NEVER MORE NEEDED...

People who sleep rough are often clinically vulnerable and face significant health inequalities.

Alongside the danger of the coronavirus, two shocking facts are that the average age of death for people sleeping rough in the UK is around their mid-40s, and that the deaths of people sleeping rough in the UK rose 37% just in the year to 2019-20*.

Bee, our homeless health worker and **NHS care navigator** spent the year helping people get the healthcare they needed and building relationships with local healthcare providers. She worked closely with Tower House Surgery, registering our clients with them.

She helped people get **doctor and dental appointments**, order and pick up **prescriptions**, and made sure anyone who had been hospitalised was discharged to a safe and suitable home. Together with the Cygnet Primary Care Network she helped develop a project to **improve health outcomes** for local people who were homeless.

From the start of the pandemic, we worked more closely than ever with Buckinghamshire Council and a number of local agencies. Together we were able to make sure **no one had to sleep rough in Wycombe**. This kept people safe both from COVID and the numerous other dangers of life on the streets.

And when the **vaccination programme** started, we worked hard to make sure our clients were able to get their jabs.

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT:

20+
PEOPLE RECEIVED THEIR
COVID-19 VACCINATION

14
PEOPLE REGISTERED
WITH A GP

474
INSTANCES OF HEALTH CARE
SUPPORT GIVEN



Celia
Hotline volunteer

Celia had been concerned about homelessness for a very long time and jumped at the chance to help in our Support Centre. After a long break because of the pandemic, she was back in the office answering the hotline, triaging calls and helping clients.

She said: "When I think of Wycombe Homeless Connection, and all the people involved, I'm very conscious of their caring approach. It's like a warm hug."

VITAL VACCINES: NO ONE MISSED OUT

Because of the inequalities in healthcare homeless people face, there was a real risk that our clients would be missed when their turn came to be offered the COVID-19 vaccine. Making sure no one was left out was a life-saving priority.

Together with our partners at the Cygnet Primary Care Network, we arranged drop-in COVID vaccination clinics at a local church and a supported-living facility, bringing clinics to people rather than expecting them to book and travel to centres.

People who had been rough sleeping and staying in emergency accommodation were given the chance to ask questions about the vaccine and over 20 people took the opportunity to be vaccinated.

This vital work was only possible because of our unique and effective partnership that brings hope and health to so many. Our extra special thanks go to local GP, Dr Amanda Bartlett, of Priory Surgery who led the effort and worked closely with us.

James, our CEO, said: "I'm hugely proud of the hard work of our team, Cygnet PCN, and the way everyone pulled together to make this happen. I'd also like to thank the team at King's Church, High Wycombe, who offered their building to host a special clinic for clients who wanted to take up the offer of the vaccine."



The COVID-19 vaccination team was led by GP Dr Amanda Bartlett, left, of Priory Surgery, and volunteer, nurse Averil Bird

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS BEFORE IT STARTS

HUNDREDS, THOUSANDS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

Despite an eviction ban being in place for most of the year, our homelessness prevention services were as vital as ever.

The economic impact of the pandemic was on an upward curve.

Nationally, there was an 81% increase in claims for Universal Credit (UC) between March and August 2020 while the furlough scheme was in place.

Locally, the situation was significantly worse with a disproportionately high increase in UC claims of 129%. That was well above the national rate and made us the fourth hardest hit area in the country. **Hundreds of households in Buckinghamshire were at risk of homelessness.**

Our **homelessness prevention hotline** continued to be busy as people from across the county got in touch for help.

We offered a wide range of **free, independent, legal help and support** including housing-related advice, connecting people to statutory support, and helping people access grants to pay off rent arrears.

We doubled our **housing legal advice clinics** which were staffed by members of our advocacy team, a housing solicitor from the Hillingdon Law Centre and a team member from Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme. We helped people **fight illegal and unfair evictions**, started a 'keep your home' project and launched a special partnership with Aylesbury Homeless Action Group who promoted our clinics to their clients in the north of the county.

We added an **extra advocacy worker**, Tabatha Eckford to the team and were grateful to Ewa who provided translation and interpretation support across all our services.

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT:

24

EVICIONS WERE
AVOIDED

131

PEOPLE WERE GIVEN
BENEFITS ADVICE

538

INSTANCES OF HOUSING
ADVICE WERE GIVEN



Jo
'Keep your home' volunteer

Jo keeps in touch with clients in emergency and temporary accommodation. She listens, offers support and connects them to our support workers. She can often be the only person they talk to on any given day.

Jo says: "I hear people's stories and realise how important it is not to stereotype anyone who is in a housing crisis. We respond as one human to another. It is a joy and a privilege to be part of the WHC team."

LENA'S STORY: FIGHTING ILLEGAL EVICTION

Lena was working full time, albeit for a minimum wage and on a zero hour contract. When the pandemic took hold, Lena was sent home but she didn't qualify for furlough payments and quickly fell behind on her rent.

Instead of trying to find a way to help, her landlord acted illegally, entered her room, forcefully removed Lena from the property and changed the locks.

Illegal evictions happen far too often. Harassment and violence like that Lena experienced is thankfully rare, but it does happen. Lena began sofa surfing, relying on friends, paying what she could towards their bills but staying with them was made even more difficult by lockdown. A friend told her to contact us and we quickly established that Lena couldn't return to her home and didn't qualify for statutory support so she faced continuing homelessness.

We encouraged her to apply for a place at a local supported-living facility, but places are like gold-dust and usually go to people who need additional help. This turned out to be the case; she didn't get a room.

Next we helped her to look for an affordable private tenancy, a very tricky job in our part of Bucks. Lena did find a place, but couldn't quite stretch to cover the rent-in-advance and the deposit. So we helped with both payments and Lena quickly moved into her more affordable, and most importantly, safe new home.

And, we helped her apply for compensation from her landlord for what she'd been through, and together we were successful. The money doesn't remove the trauma, but it helped her start to rebuild her life.



Lena was illegally removed from her home

HELPING HOUSE/DEFEND THE RIGHTS

HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

Did you know many people face homelessness in part because of their immigration status? People without a 'settled' immigration status can be ineligible for help to end their homelessness, despite the fact they are as likely to find themselves in housing crises as people from the UK.

We launched a new project to help people trapped in, or facing homelessness, because of their immigration status.

We ran an immigration clinic focused on helping people gather evidence and apply to the Home Office for the right to stay in the UK. Once that was sorted, we helped them navigate the complex social support system and claim the benefits they had become entitled to.

We **campaign**ed to revoke proposed government rules that would make **sleeping rough grounds for deportation in certain circumstances**. We launched our first **manifesto** calling on all candidates in the first Buckinghamshire Council elections to commit to tackling homelessness in our community.

And we worked with our partner organisations to make sure as many people as possible could leave emergency accommodation and **find a more permanent home**, helping find affordable properties, helping people talk to landlords and housing associations, assisting with deposit payments and even helping paint walls and build beds.

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT:

13

PEOPLE WERE HELPED
TO SETTLE THEIR
IMMIGRATION STATUS

28

PEOPLE WERE HELPED
TO FIND A MORE
PERMANENT HOME

28

PEOPLE WERE GIVEN
IMMIGRATION ADVICE



Mike

All round volunteer!

Mike has been a volunteer since our first night shelter in 2008. Over the year, he focused on helping people get settled in a new home, recently helping one of our clients build his bed.

Mike says: "I was delighted and so pleased he didn't have to sleep on the floor that night. I volunteer to serve; I do it for God and I feel I am helping people."

KRZYS' STORY:

Krzys was a regular guest at our night shelter. Despite having lived and worked in the UK for many years, Krzys' right to remain in the UK was under threat.

Because of his lack of settled status, Krzys couldn't make a homelessness application with the council. At one point, we were extremely concerned it meant that he might have lost his right even to stay in the COVID-19 emergency accommodation.

But following months of hard work by our senior support worker Kevin, our advocacy team and our partners, Krzys was granted leave to stay!

Kevin said: "To say Krzys was delighted was an understatement. He was thrilled and could not believe it when we told him he had been granted leave to stay, meaning he no longer had to fear being deported. He can now apply for full benefits, have full access to the NHS, and other life-changing support.

"We are extremely hopeful Krzys will be able to secure the suitable and stable accommodation he needs to move on and rebuild his life, including returning to work when restrictions allow."

Krzys was determined to make this decision happen and worked with the team doing everything he could to achieve settled status. We think his smile says it all!



Krzys was delighted to be granted leave to stay in the UK!

WYCOMBE HOMELESS CONNECTION

**HOMELESS...
FACING EVICTION...
SOFA SURFING...
UNSAFE AT HOME...**

**WE CAN
HELP YOU**



**CONTACT
US**

01494 447699
www.wyhoc.org.uk
contact@wyhoc.org.uk



GOVERNANCE

STAFF TEAM

James Boulton
Chief Executive Officer

Helen Sheppard
Office Manager

Steph Clay
Volunteering Manager
Until December 2020

Heather Stanley
Fundraising and Marketing Manager

Helen Biggerstaff
Services Manager

Kevin Boughen
Senior Support Worker

Bee Lötter
Support Worker (NHS Care Navigator)

Rosemary Chilton
Advocacy Lead

Leticia González-Muñoz
Advocacy Worker

Tabatha Eckford
Advocacy Worker
From September 2020

Liz Lewis
Fundraising and Marketing
Coordinator
From February 2021

TRUSTEES

Sheena Dykes
Chair of Trustees

David Sparks
Treasurer

Mark Dykes
Muriel Reynolds
David Winder
Dawn Segrue
Kate Yates
Peter Joy
Richard Alexander

PATRON

Countess Elizabeth Howe

OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTS

Wycombe Homeless Connection's charitable objects are 'the relief of poverty by the provision of emergency and other accommodation advice and assistance for persons in need who are deemed homeless and require such accommodation advice or assistance.'

Having regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, the trustees led the charity to pursue these objects principally by continuing to provide housing advice and support and emergency accommodation, but also by evolving services, developing new services and increasing effectiveness to provide further public benefit. Further details can be found throughout this review.

SPECIAL THANKS TO



**ROTHSCHILD
FOUNDATION**



EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS TO

Business Connexions for their ongoing financial support and advice. King Cullimore Trust for their dedication to our homeless health project. The Wycombe-based winter night shelter churches who continued to support us despite not hosting the shelter: All Saints, King's Church, Oakridge Baptist, Trinity URC, Union Baptist, Wesley Methodist and Wycombe Community SDA.

OUR IMPACT

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT, WE WERE ABLE TO KEEP OFFERING SUPPORT AND ADVICE TO PEOPLE WHO WERE HOMELESS OR FACING LOSING THEIR HOMES. THANK YOU!

HERE ARE SOME OF THE WAYS TOGETHER WE MADE AN IMPACT.

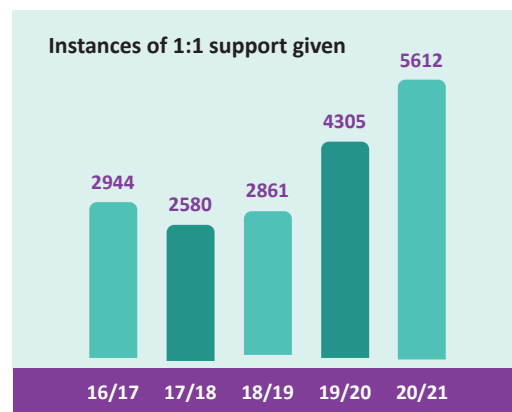
WHO WE HELPED...

We served a broad range of people:

- ▶ **1 in 3** clients were women
- ▶ **1 in 4** people were over 60 years old
- ▶ **Over 60%** were white British with a spread from other backgrounds and nations
- ▶ **75%** of our clients came to us for the first time

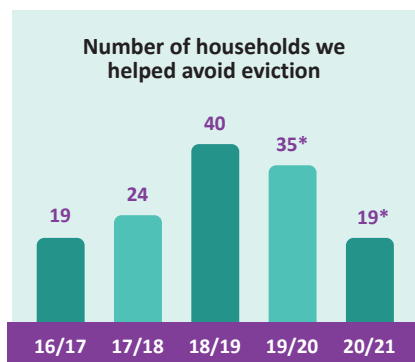
People contacted us because...

- ▶ **256** were already homeless
- ▶ **109** were at risk of losing their home
- ▶ **189** needed material or other support

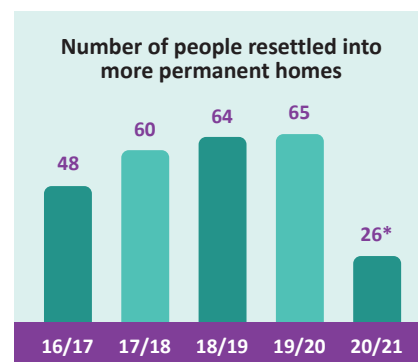


HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION...

- ▶ We made **103** applications for homelessness to the council
- ▶ **131** people were given advice on the social support they were entitled to
- ▶ **24** people were given advice about their immigration status
- ▶ **69** people were referred to our clinic for housing legal advice



*A pandemic-related eviction ban was in place for the year but people were still facing losing their homes due to a mix of causes, including being faced with unfair and illegal evictions.



*Resettlements were lower as COVID-related accommodation was available all year round.

HELP WHEN YOU HAVE NO HOME

- ▶ **246** people who were homeless came to us for help
- ▶ **60** people were given a place in emergency accommodation
- ▶ We made **680** welfare calls to people in emergency and temporary accommodation
- ▶ On **3180** occasions we gave material assistance including food parcels and clothing
- ▶ **14** people were helped to register with a GP
- ▶ More than **20** people attended our pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinics

Unless otherwise indicated, all service information in this report is related to April 2020 - March 2021. Service statistics refer to people who we consider to have actively engaged with us during the year.

VOLUNTEERING REVIEW



WELCOMING BACK VITAL VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are passionate people who are vital to the people we serve and the work we do.

After sending almost everyone home in March 2020, opportunities to volunteer finally began to increase as the year went on. As we adapted to new ways of working, fresh opportunities to serve arose and more volunteers were able to return to their roles, or take up new ones. We can't say thank you enough!

What our volunteers did:

- Organised and delivered food parcels and fresh meals, clothing and toiletries to people living in emergency accommodation or in our 'keeping your home' project.
- Made welfare support calls to people in emergency accommodation, checking they had what they needed.

- Answered the homelessness prevention hotline, taking calls from people in crisis and making sure they were welcome, listened to and connected to support as soon as possible.
- Kept the organisation running by offering IT support, administrative skills, accounting help, building databases, governing the charity and much more.
- Raised awareness of our work by distributing leaflets and posters about our free services in their local community, speaking (online mostly) at schools, churches, and to community groups.
- Collected donations of food from supermarkets and schools.
- Helped people settle into their homes, building furniture, painting and decorating.

THANK YOU!

VOLUNTEERING HELPS YOU SEE THE GOOD AROUND YOU

Francis moves a lot with his job in the RAF but has been settled locally for a while. He noticed people sleeping on the street and was moved to find out how he could do something that would make a difference.

Francis came to us offering help and we were thrilled to accept. He started with shifts in our Support Centre helping clients with important tasks like setting up email accounts and helping with paperwork so they could join waiting lists for housing.

"It's not just that people lack a computer, it's also some people haven't had the opportunities to learn how to use computers, a skill many of us take for granted." Francis said.

"I love giving practical help, buying a train ticket for instance, and offering emotional support, giving people a listening ear, some company and a cup of tea."

Throughout the pandemic, Francis helped deliver food parcels to clients in emergency accommodation. It was hard work, lifting heavy bags and transporting them to a range of places across the town.

And when we'd manage to move someone on from emergency or temporary homes, Francis helped them settle in. By his own admission, his DIY skills are not the best, but he gave it a go!

He said "It's so rewarding when you help someone out. They can be so down on their luck, just the simplest things can mean the world to them. I helped a young woman recently move into a new place, and managed to rope in some fellow airmen. She was delighted that we were there to help."

"It doesn't seem like so much, but for people who have lost everything, the help is a big deal. It takes a weight off their mind when you do something when they couldn't see a way of getting it done."

"Volunteering restores my faith in humanity. It's easy to think the world has gone to pot. But when you volunteer, work alongside others and see people's generosity, you see the good around you."



Francis says volunteering restores his faith in humanity



Volunteers like Francis help people make a house a home

FUNDRAISING UPDATE



THE WONDERFUL WAYS YOU GIVE

Our incredible supporters found inspiring and creative ways to raise money despite the challenges of spending most of the year in various levels of lockdown. Individuals and families, faith groups, companies, sports clubs, schools and community groups all found ways to support people in housing crisis.

We are so grateful for your enthusiasm, dedication and generosity. Thank you!

We were especially moved by the compassion of school students and staff who did so much for the people we serve while facing huge challenges themselves. Among too many to mention are the students at Bourne End Academy who donated Christmas boxes, Wycombe Abbey School who held a virtual Met Gala, the children at Godstowe School who took part in the Big Sleepout and Highcrest Academy who chose us as their charity of the year.

BIG SLEEPOUT 2020: AT HOME

Over 350 people 'slept out' taking to gardens, sheds, greenhouses, churchyards and even bathtubs raising an incredible £53,000!

Our first live-streamed Big Quiz raised over £5,000; Caroline and Michael Bird hosted the quiz and celebrities recorded questions including Mary Berry, Tom Kerridge and Wycombe Wanderers stars. Local bluegrass band Papa Truck provided musical entertainment and the whole event was sponsored by Dreams.



THE WONDERFUL WAYS YOU GAVE



HELEN CYCLED
'UP EVEREST' AND
RAISED £3000+



IVY AND RUPERT
SOLD THEIR TOYS AND
RAISED £37



ISABELLA RAN 5KM
RAISING £1400+



KATE RAN HER
SECOND VIRTUAL
LONDON MARATHON

NICOLA KNITTED AND
SOLD A BEAUTIFUL
BLANKET



CLINIMED DONATED
MASKS FOR CLIENTS
AND STAFF



SOFTCAT DONATED
FOOD AND TOILETRIES
FOR OUR EMERGENCY
CARE PACKS



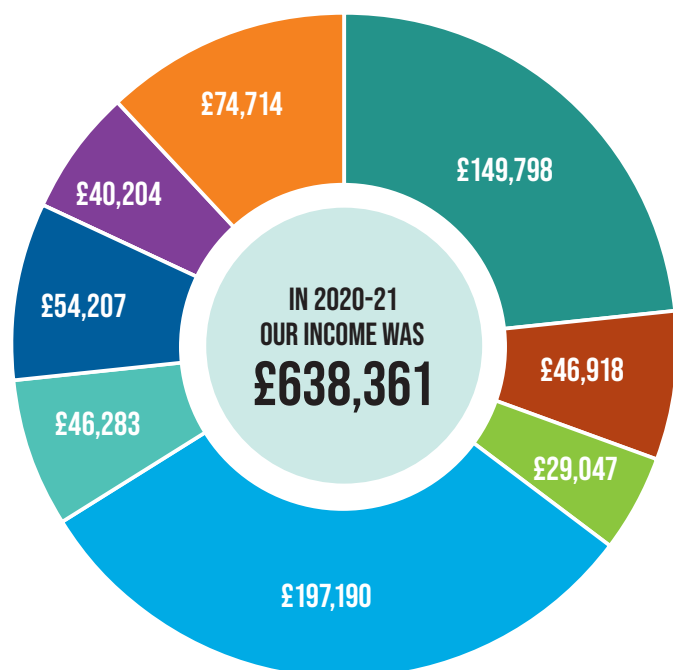
TESCO LOUDWATER
DONATED BAGS FOR
OUR EMERGENCY
CARE PACKS

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

HOW YOU SUPPORT US

In 2020-21 our income was £638,361. We have been overwhelmed by generous support from our community who continued to provide most of our income, especially in such a difficult year.

There was a significant contribution from grant-givers as they focused on supporting frontline charities during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, much of this grant income won't be repeated and so we will need to focus on encouraging regular gifts that help us plan for the future.

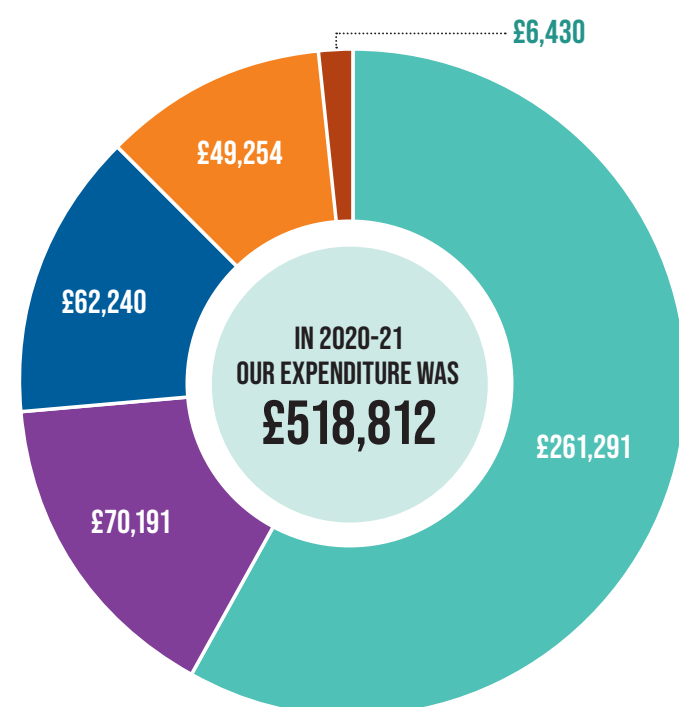


- INDIVIDUALS
- CHURCHES & FAITH GROUPS
- CORPORATE SUPPORT
- GRANTS
- OTHER DONATIONS
- OUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS
- OTHER INCOME INC. GIFT AID
- RESTRICTED TARGETED FUNDS

HOW WE USE YOUR GIFTS

Our expenditure increased to £518,812 as we responded to changing needs during the pandemic. We supported our clients more often in direct financial ways including paying for bed-nights to ensure people who fell through the cracks of statutory support were not forced to sleep on the street.

We invested in staff to meet a rising need for specialist support and we offered our services to a wide geographical area as the economic impact of the pandemic caused huge challenges. We improved our IT and office infrastructure as we began to work in new ways.



- PROVIDING SERVICES: STAFF
- PROVIDING SERVICES: OFFICE
- PROVIDING SERVICES: OTHER
- FUNDRAISING: STAFF
- FUNDRAISING: EXPENSES



PLEASE KEEP GIVING
WWW.WYHOC.ORG.UK/DONATE

OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2021-22:

We will build on the progress made to ending rough sleeping for good in our community

The government wants to end rough sleeping in the UK by 2024 and some of the steps taken, like providing emergency accommodation during the COVID-19 pandemic, has brought us closer to that goal. However, the causes of homelessness remain complex and the economic impact of the pandemic and other factors loom large. The next 12 months will be critical in terms of ensuring that we do not return to mass rough sleeping.

Buckinghamshire was named as the third best local authority area in the country in terms of the proportion by which rough sleeping was reduced in 2019-21. We want to continue on this track and for Buckinghamshire to be recognised as a place where great partnership working and innovative solutions bring real change.

We will recruit a new support worker who will focus on helping people in emergency and temporary accommodation to find more permanent homes. This will be a huge challenge given the significant lack of suitable and affordable homes in the area.

We will expand our homeless health work

We intend to grow the number of GP surgeries we partner with so that we can ensure that primary health care is available and accessible to our clients. We plan to share our knowledge and expertise with primary care networks so together we can ensure our clients get the healthcare they are entitled to. We will increase the amount of funding we use to pay for healthcare e.g. dental treatment.

We hope to build on the great success we had partnering with local NHS services to deliver COVID-19 vaccination clinics for homeless people to find other ways to work to reduce health inequalities in our area.

We will reach local communities that need more support

As the new unitary council for Buckinghamshire settles we will be looking to collaborate with councillors and officials at all levels.

We are particularly interested in doing more in Chesham following a number of pilot projects we have undertaken in the town. Our research indicates it is an area of particular need for our homelessness prevention and harm reduction services.

We will work alongside charities and organisations that have a presence in Chesham, and continue piloting community outreach walks that promote opportunities to support our work, while also making contact with people who may need our help directly.

We are excited about bringing help to people across the whole of south Bucks, in terms of access to health care, advocacy and housing rights for people threatened with homelessness. We will ensure that anyone facing sleeping rough there is offered as good a service as people in Wycombe would receive.

WE WILL MAKE
SURE CLIENTS GET THE
HEALTHCARE THEY ARE
ENTITLED TO



VOLUNTEERS HAVE
STARTED A PILOT
OUTREACH WALK
IN CHESHAM



**WE ARE COMMITTED
TO THERE BEING ZERO
TOLERANCE TO LEAVING
PEOPLE TO LIVE ON THE
STREET...**

**WE BELIEVE THAT THERE
SHOULD BE ENOUGH HOMES
FOR EVERYONE...**

**AND THAT EVERYTHING
THAT CAN BE DONE
SHOULD BE DONE TO
PREVENT ANYONE EVER
LOSING THEIR HOME...**

**WITH YOUR HELP,
WE CAN MAKE THESE
AIMS A REALITY.**

WYCOMBE HOMELESS CONNECTION

INCORPORATING WYCOMBE WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

Oakley Hall
8 Castle Street
High Wycombe
HP13 6RF

01494 447699
contact@wyhoc.org.uk
www.wyhoc.org.uk



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



Wycombe Homeless Connection

Statement of Financial Activities

for the Year ended 30th April 2021

	Unrestricted Funds 2020-2021 £	Restricted Funds 2020-2021 £	Total Funds 2020-2021 £	Total Funds 2019-2020 £
Notes				
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Grants	197,190		197,190	69,420
Corporate Donations	29,047		29,047	31,655
Church Collections & Donations	46,918		46,918	39,962
Individual Donations	149,798		149,798	112,060
Other Donations legacies etc	46,283		46,283	74,920
Fund Raising Events	54,207		54,207	53,948
Other income	39,319		39,319	21,273
Bank Interest	885		885	594
Personalisation Fund		2,187	2,187	9,650
Homeless Health Fund		1,033	1,033	0
Rent In Advance Fund		5,000	5,000	11,592
Housing Benefit receipts		66,495	66,495	
Total incoming resources	563,646	74,714	638,361	425,074
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Staff costs	277,733		277,733	235,369
Employers Pension & NI & Payroll	28,693		28,693	20,891
Travel	405		405	1,265
Training	3,713		3,713	11,788
Office Expenses	44,949		44,949	33,053
Telephones	5,659		5,659	6,631
Communications & Marketing	6,270		6,270	948
Legal Fees	0		0	0
Insurance	1,675		1,675	1,500
IT systems	17,473		17,473	14,609
Service Support incl Night Shelter	55,889		55,889	44,111
Fund Raising Events & Costs	160		160	224
Recruitment	350		350	12,179
Sundries	0		0	1,416
Bank Charges	84		84	60
Personalisation Fund		3,317	3,317	10,581
Homeless Health Fund		801	801	0
Rent In Advance		2,232	2,232	13,357
Housing benefit payments		69,502	69,502	
Total resources expended	443,055	75,853	518,907	407,981
NET INCOMING RESOURCES	120,592	-1,138	119,453	17,093

Balance Sheet at 30th April 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Current Assets:			
Bank		585,451	387,322
Cash		158	216
Debtors		0	0
Prepayments		0	0
		<u>585,609</u>	<u>387,538</u>
Less Current Liabilities:			
Creditors		9,984	12,992
Accruals	6	151,625	70,000
		<u>161,610</u>	<u>82,992</u>
		<u><u>423,999</u></u>	<u><u>304,546</u></u>
FINANCED BY:			
General Fund	2	269,653	149,061
Designated Reserve Fund	5	150,000	150,000
Homeless Health Fund		232	0
Rent In Advance Fund	4	2,643	2,883
Personalisation Fund	3	1,471	2,602
		<u><u>423,999</u></u>	<u><u>304,546</u></u>

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 30th April 2021

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with the 2014 version of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities applicable in the UK (effective from 1 January 2015) – the Charities SORP (FRSSE) – in replacement for the SORP's 2005 version specified in its related 2008 Regulations and in accordance with the 'true and fair override' provision contained therein."

The Accounts have been prepared under the Historic Cost Convention on an accruals basis to show a true and fair view of WHC's financial position and activities. This is in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2016).

2. General Fund (Unrestricted)

The general fund is the working capital of the organisation. Fund raising peaks during the late Autumn so that the free cash in the General Fund is at its highest at the end of the winter months. At that point it has to be sufficient to carry the organisation through a 'funding drought' in the summer months. This year the Coronavirus pandemic has generated a significant increase in income from individuals and grants, some of which has been accrued to 2021-2022 since it relates to employment costs in that year, or is grant income attributable to that year.

3. Personalisation Fund (Restricted)

The personalisation Fund is money donated specifically for use in enabling guests to obtain and maintain accommodation, and to pay for ancillary costs such as copies of Passports, Medical records, travel costs, etc.

4. Rent In Advance Fund (Restricted)

This fund is normally reserved for money donated specifically for Rent in Advance payments. This year housing benefit claims for clients housed by Wycombe District Council have been paid to WHC to hold prior to being invoiced for the same amount by a different department in the council. This money has been carried forward to the next financial year as it has not yet been invoiced.

5. Reserve Fund (Unrestricted Designated)

The reserves policy is to maintain a balance of between 3 and 6 months operating expenditure plus sufficient funds to meet redundancy and other legal liabilities in the event of a forced closure. The reserve fund has been set at £150,000 in line with turnover and commitments.

6. Accruals

£124,458 of grant income has been carried forward to 2021-2022 as it relates to salary costs in that year. £3,000 has been carried forward for the Personalisation Fund, £24,167 for the Health Fund, and £8,384 due to Bucks Council for housing benefit.

Independent Examiner's Unqualified Report to the Trustees

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of Section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) do not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

P. W. Curren

Date:

23-6-21