

BEXLEY WINTER SHELTER

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30th MAY 2021

Charity Details

Bexley Winter Shelter
c/o New Community Church S E London
24 Station Road
Sidcup, Kent
DA15 7DU

Charity number: 1184243

Trustees

Charles Edward January (Chair)
Sean Anthony Knights (Treasurer)
Ursula Jean Ayliffe
Rev James Richard Charles (appointed 2 July 2020)
Rev Edward Rhys Barlow (appointed 2 July 2020)
Rev Melanie Jemmett (appointed 10 September 2020)

Activities and objectives

The Bexley Winter Shelter ('BWS') is a project run by Bexley churches to help homeless men with a connection to the London Borough of Bexley (and sometimes beyond). Set up to provide support during the coldest and most difficult time of the year, the shelter normally runs from January to March each year.

With the introduction of COVID-19 Health & Safety Regulations, the 2021 BWS season was always going to look different from previous years. In the past, BWS's model was based on providing safe night shelter for homeless men utilising the rotating dormitory model. At a different venue each night, an evening meal and breakfast would be provided, guests would sleep in a church hall and support was provided by a large volunteer base. COVID-19 pushed us into uncharted territory for the 2021 Season. Government guidance in the form of 'operating principles' for Winter Shelters was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in mid-October 2020 confirming that communal sleeping spaces would be very hard to make COVID-safe and were to be strongly discouraged in favour of self-contained or single room options. To assist shelters in making this move, the MHCLG provided grants. As a result, for 2021, with the help of such a grant, our guests were accommodated in self-contained rooms at two Bed & Breakfast establishments in Bexleyheath, Kent. Evening meals were provided, either 'home' cooked (at one of three participating churches) or take-aways, which the guests had to eat in their room. A breakfast and midday provisions were also provided.

BWS is not an 'open' shelter, people cannot simply turn-up and expect to be allowed in. Unfortunately, the support base that facilitated guest assessment, support and move-on in the past was no longer available. However, with the help of the grant we were still able to engage the services of a Guest Case Worker (GCW). They provided the assessment, support, move-on and after care support that our guests had experienced previously.

Some things, however, were not touched by COVID-19. As usual, the view going into the season was to provide a holistic, loving approach to our guests to enable them to be empowered and experience God's presence and love. God's presence has been strong and visible through His work during the 2021 season. While there were many challenges, BWS saw growth and laid strong foundations for continued development going forward.

Community Code

All guests at the shelter are required to sign-up to our Community Code, which outlines a joint standard of behaviour. Alcohol, drugs and weapons are not permitted on any of the premises and guests may be refused entry if they arrive drunk and unable to sober up or if they are under the influence of drugs. Repeated violations of the Community Code and these conditions resulted in the removal of the invitation to three guests.

Achievements and Performance

During the 2021 shelter season

How many people used the night shelter?

Due to the 'operating principles' for Winter Shelters, written in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we considered it necessary to provide our guests with self-contained accommodation. This, together with capacity issues, restricted the number of guests we could help at any one time to ten.

During the 2021 shelter season 11 guests were assessed and eight guests used the shelter. Seven guests were male and one female (self-contained accommodation allowing us to be open to women for the first time). Five of the guests were white and three BAME, with all eight being British. Two were under 24, two under 35 and four over 54 years old – the average age was 42. Seven were referred to us by Thames Reach and one by CRISIS. All guests had a connection with the Borough. Two guests were working; one had been homeless for less than one week whilst one had been for more than six years. Four guests were homeless due to a breakdown in relationships with three because of eviction due to job loss.

This information was supplied voluntarily by our guests to our GCW, who was outstanding in ensuring potential guests fitted our criteria: three people had to be declined access to the shelter due to not meeting one or more criterion (which could be as simple as allowing no pets).

What services did the shelter offer the guests during their stay?

The shelter was open from 18th January 2021 to 30th April 2021. Each guest was accommodated in a self-contained room in B & Bs in Bexleyheath.

COVID-19 restrictions meant that we could not provide the usual evening meal and breakfast in a communal setting. However, three churches opened up their kitchens to allow seven teams of cooks to prepare and provide a 'take-away' evening meal for the guests. These were delivered to the B & Bs by five voluntary drivers along with a snack-box for breakfast and mid-day meal. New socks and underwear were provided as well as a range of new or second-hand clothes, along with toiletries. Access to the Citizens Advice was arranged as well as medical professionals and four guests accepted COVID-19 vaccinations. No cases of COVID-19 were reported amongst the guests.

How the shelter helped people move into more permanent accommodation

Guests were signposted by our GCW and supported to complete applications for more permanent accommodation. Thames Reach, who were working with the local Council, were invited and regularly attended the shelter or were in contact with us. During these interactions seven guests were found accommodation - a success rate of 88% (the one remaining guest refused offers of two places and is regarded as an entrenched rough sleeper). On average, a guest stayed with us for 52 nights before moving-on.

What preparations took place for the new shelter season which began in January 2021?

When COVID-19 struck, BWS was winding up its 2020 season. The few remaining guests were passed over to the *Everyone-In* initiative and found accommodation by the local authority. As the year went on and it was obvious that the Coronavirus pandemic would not disappear anytime soon, thoughts around the country turned to how to build upon the Everyone-In initiative. BWS still wanted to help the homeless in the Borough but the rotating dormitory model was clearly not COVID-19 secure and so we began to investigate alternatives. We looked (and are still looking) into Hope into Action, pods, utilising an empty local authority property and hotel/B & B accommodation. Despite a promising start in all these areas, all options slowly ground to a halt apart from the use of hotel/B & B accommodation.

In late 2020, in recognition that the night shelter sector needed financial support to help homeless in a COVID-19 secure way, the Government launched the Winter Transformation Fund, administered by Homeless Link. With the assistance of Housing Justice, BWS's bid was successful. This provided BWS with sufficient funding to provide hotel/B & B accommodation for up to ten guests at a time, to engage the services of a Guest Case Worker, operate in a COVID-19 secure way, provide move-on help and assist in finding long-term accommodation for homeless men and women.

The Guest Case Worker started on 11th January and the launch of 2021 Season started on 18th January 2021. Weekly Wednesday meetings were scheduled for the season between BWS and London Borough of Bexley (LBB) to discuss referrals, guests, and process. Thames Reach, Housing Justice (HJ) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) were also involved. These allowed us to address concerns and flag situations early. These meetings continued until the end of April 2021.

The week leading up to 18th January was used to secure self-contained rooms for guests at B & Bs in Bexleyheath, finalising the referral process with Thames Reach and LBB, and producing and finalising the Referral Pack and New Guest Assessment Packs for BWS. Everything was finished and confirmed the evening of 17th January for the 18th January launch.

Community Involvement

Due to the radical change in our modus operandi, volunteer numbers were restricted to needs-based support rather than interaction.

Although the number of churches involved never fell (some 33 churches participated in one form or other in 2020) the number of active-on-the-ground volunteers was limited to less than 20. In addition, there were numerous people praying for BWS, the guests and associated bodies throughout the season. In addition, the Al Ihsaan Community again provided 'goody bags' of personal items for our guests and Bexley Foodbank provided items like baked beans and soup.

A Thank You event was held in July where some 22 people enjoyed a short church service followed by afternoon tea. The attendees included BWS Trustees, volunteers, the GCW as well as representatives from the B & B and Housing Justice.

Governance Structure

Trustees

The Charity Trustees manage the affairs of Bexley Winter Shelter, ensuring the activities are in line with the Objectives of the Charity outlined above. Decisions taken by the Trustees throughout the year have taken into account the Charity Commission's Public Benefit guidance.

It is the duty of each Trustee to exercise their powers and to perform their functions as a Trustee in the way they decide in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the Charity.

Eligibility for Trusteeship

- A Trustee must be a natural person.
- A Trustee must be at least 16 years old.
- They must be properly appointed following the procedures and any restrictions in our governing document, with due regards to re-election.
- They must not act as a Trustee if they are disqualified, unless authorised to do so by a waiver from the Commission. The reasons for disqualification are shown in the disqualifying reasons table and include:
 - being bankrupt (undischarged) or having an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA)
 - having an unspent conviction for certain offences (including any that involve dishonesty or deception)
 - being on the sex offenders' register

Appointment of Trustees

There should be not fewer than three nor more than 10 elected Trustees.

The Trustees named within this Report were appointed without an election. A number of them were sourced from previous volunteers or individuals connected with the Shelter during previous shelter seasons. Further Trustees were sourced from individuals who expressed an interest in ensuring the work of the Shelter continued and were interviewed by the Chair of the Trustees prior to appointment.

Further details on the appointment of Trustees, their responsibilities and the structure of the Charity can be found in the Constitution of Bexley Winter Shelter.

Signed off by

Charles Edward January, Chair of Trustees, 17/03/2022

Bexley Winter Shelter

Analysis of income and expenditure Selected period: 01 June 2020 to 31 May 2021

	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies						
D01 - Personal Donations	£400.00	-	-	-	£400.00	£540.00
D02 - Corporate Donations	£2,005.00	-	-	-	£2,005.00	£4,223.33
D04 - Church Donations	£846.72	-	-	-	£846.72	£6,090.23
D05 - Donations From Other Charities	£500.00	-	-	-	£500.00	£607.84
D07 - Anonymous Donations	£881.99	-	-	-	£881.99	£916.11
D08 - Personal Donations - Gift Aided	£100.00	-	-	-	£100.00	£545.00
D10 - Church Donations - Gift Aided	-	-	-	-	-	£3,732.10
Donations and legacies Totals	£4,733.71	-	-	-	£4,733.71	£16,654.61
Income from charitable activities						
Income from charitable activities Totals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other trading activities						
Other trading activities Totals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments						
D09 - Bank Interest	£2.87	-	-	-	£2.87	£5.59
Investments Totals	£2.87	-	-	-	£2.87	£5.59
Other income						
D03 - Grants	-	-	£76,525.00	-	£76,525.00	£19,060.43
D06 - HMRC Gift Aid Reclaim	£1,069.40	-	-	-	£1,069.40	-
Other income Totals	£1,069.40	-	£76,525.00	-	£77,594.40	£19,060.43
Income and endowments Grand totals	£5,805.98	-	£76,525.00	-	£82,330.98	£35,720.63

Expenditure on:

Raising funds

Raising funds Totals

Expenditure on charitable activities

E01 - Food For Guests	-	-	£2,682.79	-	£2,682.79	£3,804.16
E02 - Bed & Breakfast Accommodation	-	-	£20,270.00	-	£20,270.00	-
E03 - Guest Case Worker	-	-	£6,151.50	-	£6,151.50	£5,040.00
E04 - Move On Assistance	-	-	£4,464.25	-	£4,464.25	-
E07 - Catering Equipment	-	-	£324.79	-	£324.79	-
E09 - Bedding	-	-	-	-	-	£251.06
E14 - Administration	£52.25	-	-	-	£52.25	£3,000.00
E16 - Guest Referrals	-	-	-	-	-	£3,000.00

					Total	
	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Last year
E17 - Guest Travel	-	-	£10.00	-	£10.00	£175.00
E18 - Toiletries	-	-	-	-	-	£3.75
E19 - Utilities Contribution	-	-	-	-	-	£1,043.87
Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	£52.25	-	£33,903.33	-	£33,955.58	£16,317.84
Other expenditure						
E05 - Insurance	£545.83	-	-	-	£545.83	£676.24
E06 - Training	£129.00	-	-	-	£129.00	£34.00
E08 - Other Equipment	-	-	£73.72	-	£73.72	£225.14
E10 - Fees & Subscriptions	£520.00	-	-	-	£520.00	£35.00
E11 - Cleaning	-	-	-	-	-	£15.45
E12 - Website, Email & Phone	£359.51	-	-	-	£359.51	£311.36
E13 - Gratuity	£100.00	-	-	-	£100.00	£52.00
E15 - Stationery & Printing	-	-	-	-	-	£261.00
Other expenditure Totals	£1,654.34	-	£73.72	-	£1,728.06	£1,610.19
Expenditure Grand totals	£1,706.59	-	£33,977.05	-	£35,683.64	£17,928.03



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

BEXLEY WINTER SHELTER

On accounts for the year
ended

30TH MAY 2021

Charity no
(if any)

1184243

Set out on pages

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Responsibilities and
basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30/5/2021.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. *Delete [] if not applicable.*

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

K Kennedy

Date:

21/3/2022

Name:

KATHLEEN KENNEDY

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

CIPFA

Address:

7 OAKLANDS CLOSE

BEXLEYHEATH

KENT DA8 7AP

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).