



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**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**

31/05/2024

**Charity
no (if
any)**

1184243

Set out on pages

8 - 9

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/05/2024

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's
statement**

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:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:

Date: **27/03/25**

Name:

KATHLEEN KENNEDY

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

CIPFA

Address:

7 OAKLANDS CLOSE

BEXLEYHEATH

DA6 7AP

Section B

Disclosure

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



BEXLEY WINTER SHELTER ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MAY 2024

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)
Alexa Moody
Rev Eucharika Ifeoma Asiegbu
Catherine Bird
Michael Fredrick Pethick
Melvyn Alfred French
Rev Melanie Jemmett
Rev Edward Rhys Barlow
Sean Anthony Knights (Treasurer)
Ursula Jean Ayliffe
Rev James Richard Charles – resigned 01/06/2023

Activities and objectives

The Bexley Winter Shelter (BWS) is a project run by Bexley churches to help those experiencing homelessness with a connection to the London Borough of Bexley (and sometimes beyond). Set up to provide support during the coldest and most difficult time, the shelter normally runs from January to March each year. Although BWS, at times, works closely with its Rough Sleeping Co-ordinator we are not affiliated with nor funded by the London Borough of Bexley

In an almost repeat of previous seasons, our guests were accommodated in self-contained rooms at two establishments in Bexleyheath, Kent. This was funded by *Year 2* of the *Night Shelter Transformation Fund, Revenue Grant* from the *Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)* as well as donations from individuals and other charities. We again continued our provision of an evening meal set in a communal eating context. At a different venue each night, we were able to provide a meal in an environment where the guest could socialise, be welcomed by our volunteers and meet with our Guest Case Worker.

BWS is not an open shelter; people cannot simply turn up and expect to be provided with accommodation and help. With the continued help of the DLUHC grant, we were still able to engage the services of a Guest Case Worker (GCW) who provided the assessment, support, move-on and after care support that previous guests had experienced. Following the departure of our GCW in January 2023 we were able to recruit a replacement. The new GCW started work on 1st June 2023 and proved very effective throughout the year.

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 was strong and visible through His work this season. While there were many challenges this time, BWS saw growth and has 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 accommodation/entry if they are 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 zero (2023, 3) guests.

Achievements and Performance

During the 2024 shelter season

How many people used the night shelter?

The move to providing our guests with self-contained hotel accommodation, together with capacity issues, restricted the maximum number of guests we could help at any one time to ten.

- During the 2024 shelter season 22 guests (2023, 20) used the shelter.
- 13 (2023, 12) guests were male, 9 (2023, 7) female and zero non-binary (2023, 1).
- We had an average of 5 (2023, 9) guests per week.
- 16 (2023, 17) held UK citizenship, 2 were from the European Economic Area (2023, 2) and 4 (2023, 1) were from the rest of the world.
- 10 (2023, 10) were under 35 and 12 (2023, 10) were over 35 years old.
- 10 guests stayed with us for more than 29 nights (2023, 10) and we are no longer supporting any guests with accommodation (2023, 1).
- All guests had a connection with the London Borough of Bexley.
- 5 (2023, 7) appear to have become homeless as a result of family or friends no longer being able to provide accommodation. Zero (2023, 7) came to us because of domestic violence and the rest due to various other reasons.
- Zero (2023,4) had known drug dependency, 1 (2023, 3) known alcohol dependency, 3 (2023 n/a) had identifiable learning disabilities and 3 (2023, n/a) had mental health issue.
- The referral route was 7 guests self-referred, 5 were from Thames Reach, 2 were from the police, 2 were from LB of Bexley and the rest from other services.
- 6 guests were in employment with 16 not in employment.
- 20 guests had a history of rough sleeping with 2 having none.

This information was supplied voluntarily by our guests to our GCW or obtained from CHAIN. Unfortunately, BWS is unable to help everyone who comes to us. We can provide help to those who are experiencing homelessness and who have low-medium needs. We may be unable to help for various reasons: for example, poor mental health, drug dependence, or even, unfortunately, just having a pet!

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

The shelter was open from 1st January 2024 to 10th April 2024. We did, however, provide accommodation for 4 guests prior to 1st January and 2 guests were accommodated into May. Any stay beyond the end of March (our official closing date) was agreed on an individual basis, with the primary

factors being engagement and how close the guest was to finding permanent accommodation. Each guest was accommodated during their stay with us in a self-contained room in B&Bs in Bexleyheath.

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.

How the shelter helped people move into more permanent accommodation

Guests were signposted by our GCW, The Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator from Bexley and Thames Reach and supported to complete applications for more permanent accommodation. As a result of these interactions:

- 12 (2023, 9) guests are now in positive and stable accommodation,
- 8 (2023, 2) guest are in a positive but unstable accommodation,
- 2 (2023, 5) are in unstable accommodation and,
- Unlike last year (2023, 4) we knew the outcome for all our guests.
- Our 'success' rate was 91% (2023, 55%).

On occasion, when a guest moves into accommodation, they need certain provision – bedding, utensils, a TV – which BWS is able to provide from a restricted fund. On other occasions, the GCW was able to fund the move-on items from other charities.

What preparations took place for the new shelter season which began in January 2024?

DLUHC (now MHCLG), recognising the benefits of moving away from the rotating dormitory style operation to permanent single roomed accommodation, offered a three-year grant in a programme called *Night Shelter Transformation Fund*. 2024 saw BWS move into the second year of its Revenue Grant which continued to enable us to make some plans for three years. However, without Capital and/or a benefactor to supply premises at a peppercorn rent, BWS continues to work on the basis of B&B accommodation. We looked (and are still looking) into Hope into Action, pods, utilising an empty local property and hotel/B&B accommodation. As previously, all options slowly ground to a halt apart from the use of hotel/B&B accommodation. The DLUHC grant 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 for another year, provide move-on help and assist in finding long-term accommodation for homeless men and women.

Following the departure of our Guest Case Worker in January 2023 we were able to appoint a replacement on 1st June 2023. Regular 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 DLUHC were also involved. These allowed us to address concerns and flag situations early.

The week leading up to the 1st January was used to secure self-contained rooms for guests at B&Bs in Bexleyheath, refining 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 by the end of December 2023.

Community Involvement

We again adopted the model of accommodation in a B&B/Hotel with the provision of an evening meal in three local church premises. The purpose being community and friendship. We aimed to provide evening meals each night of the week and approached our volunteer base and the local churches. In the end we had three venues, all in Bexleyheath: Trinity Baptist Church, St John Vianney and The

Salvation Army. This meant that we could provide meals on every evening of the week, although that didn't mean our guests availed themselves of this. There is no compulsion to attend the meals. The guests are, of course, free agents and as such are allowed to choose to *do their own thing*, which many did, so only a limited number of guests attended the meals at any one time.

The multi-church involvement in regards to many of (but not all) the volunteers, venues & Trustees witnessed to the truly ecumenical and community character of Bexley Winter Shelter.

The number of churches involved was around 14 (2023, 30), although not every volunteer identifies their church or attends a church, whilst the number of volunteers was 64 (2023, 60). The total number of volunteering time was 2,250 hours. Others also supported us in one way or another, e.g. fundraising, 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 for our evening meals.

A Thank You event was held in June at Trinity Baptist Church Bexleyheath where some 30 (2023, 28) people enjoyed the Chair's Report, a short church service followed by afternoon tea. The attendees included BWS Trustees, volunteers, our GCW and a representative from 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 less than three nor more than 12 elected Trustees.

Some of the Trustees named within this Report were appointed without an election, the founding members, with newer members being voted in by the serving Trustees. A number of them were sourced from previous volunteers or individuals connected with the Shelter during previous shelter seasons. New Trustees were individuals who expressed an interest in ensuring the work of the Shelter continued and were interviewed by the Chair of the Trustees &/or other Trustees prior to appointment. They were all supplied with the documents recommended by The Charities Commission.

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

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Charles Edward January, Chair of Trustees, 23/03/2025

Bexley Winter Shelter

Analysis of income and expenditure Selected period: 01 June 2023 to 31 May 2024

	General	Designated	Restricted	This year	Total Last year
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies					
D01 - Personal Donations	£2,747.60	0.00	£20,000.00	£22,747.60	£42,310.00
D02 - Corporate Donations	£570.89	0.00	0.00	£570.89	£508.92
D04 - Church Donations	£1,750.00	0.00	0.00	£1,750.00	£100.00
D05 - Donations From Other Charities	£2,455.03	0.00	0.00	£2,455.03	£350.00
D07 - Anonymous Donations	£811.47	0.00	0.00	£811.47	£1,298.66
D08 - Personal Donations - Gift Aided	£613.68	0.00	0.00	£613.68	£540.00
D10 - Church Donations - Gift Aided	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Donations and legacies Totals	£8,948.67	0.00	£20,000.00	£28,948.67	£45,107.58
Income from charitable activities					
Income from charitable activities Totals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other trading activities					
Other trading activities Totals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Investments					
D09 - Bank Interest	£1,761.34	0.00	0.00	£1,761.34	£182.00
Investments Totals	£1,761.34	0.00	0.00	£1,761.34	£182.00
Other income					
D03 - Grants	0.00	0.00	£63,784.00	£63,784.00	£73,100.00
D06 - HMRC Gift Aid Reclaim	£2,119.27	0.00	0.00	£2,119.27	0.00
Other income Totals	£2,119.27	0.00	£63,784.00	£65,903.27	£73,100.00
Income and endowments Grand totals	£12,829.28	0.00	£83,784.00	£96,613.28	£118,389.58

Expenditure on:

Raising funds

Raising funds Totals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
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Expenditure on charitable activities

E01 - Food For Guests	0.00	0.00	£4,065.40	£4,065.40	£2,530.73
E02 - Bed & Breakfast Accommodation	0.00	0.00	£53,991.90	£53,991.90	£42,836.70
E03 - Guest Case Worker	0.00	0.00	£12,389.11	£12,389.11	£7,731.42
E04 - Move On Assistance	0.00	0.00	£1,546.04	£1,546.04	£1,783.84
E07 - Catering Equipment	£44.89	0.00	£12.65	£57.54	£309.99
E09 - Bedding	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E14 - Administration	£217.50	0.00	0.00	£217.50	£221.15
E16 - Guest Referrals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

	General	Designated	Restricted	This year	Total Last year
E17 - Guest Travel	0.00	0.00	£252.00	£252.00	£129.00
E18 - Toiletries	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E19 - Utilities Contribution	0.00	0.00	£4,817.26	£4,817.26	£2,729.97
Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	£262.39	0.00	£77,074.36	£77,336.75	£58,272.80
Other expenditure					
E05 - Insurance	0.00	0.00	£680.73	£680.73	£636.55
E06 - Training	0.00	0.00	£109.46	£109.46	£288.00
E08 - Other Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E10 - Fees & Subscriptions	£813.00	0.00	£3.00	£816.00	£810.00
E11 - Cleaning	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E12 - Website, Email & Phone	£716.16	0.00	£687.50	£1,403.66	£2,639.11
E13 - Gratuity	£216.99	0.00	£155.00	£371.99	£168.66
E15 - Stationery & Printing	£78.01	0.00	£45.96	£123.97	£233.01
Other expenditure Totals	£1,824.16	0.00	£1,681.65	£3,505.81	£4,775.33
Expenditure Grand totals	£2,086.55	0.00	£78,756.01	£80,842.56	£63,048.13