



**Maidstone
Churches
Winter Shelter**



Project Report 2016-17
www.maidstoneshelter.org.uk

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Introduction

Homelessness is on the increase nationally and this is reflected in the amount of people we see rough sleeping in Maidstone. You cannot walk along the high street without noticing the issue and many people are passionate about helping some of our town's most vulnerable people. This is most definitely reflected in the number of volunteers that have come forward to help ensure that the winter shelter was opened for its fourth winter.

The community has been very active by volunteering, amazingly giving over 8,000 hours of their time and also by businesses donating items and hosting fundraising events, and organisations, groups and individuals donating goods and money.

As a registered charity the Shelter is run by a board of trustees and this year the Board has had some changes

in its membership. Rev Canon John Tapper is the new treasurer, Maidstone Day Centre Manager Zofia Grzymala brings her homeless expertise to her role as Trustee and last year's Project Worker Kerry Faulkner is back this year to join the board. Kerry has been working in the homelessness and housing field since leaving the Shelter. As well as overseeing the governance of the organisation, our Trustees also volunteer in the Shelter including providing overnight cover.

This year saw a new project team with Alexa Kersting-Woods as Project Manager and Aziza Kilmister, Tabitha McGowan and Jessica Finn as Project Workers. The team really loved working for the Shelter and gained a lot both professionally and personally from the experience. Ophelia Orr has been with the organisation for over a year now as the Administrator, she enjoys the variety of her role and the fact that she meets so many different people.

The over-arching aim of the Shelter was met this year with no rough sleepers dying on the town's streets this winter.



A Message From the Chair



This is the fourth year that the churches of Maidstone have run a winter shelter for people who would otherwise have been sleeping rough, and the third year that this has been conducted through the Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter as a charity. I say that

it has been the churches of Maidstone, but from the very beginning it has been a cooperative effort involving staff, volunteers and partner organisations from beyond the churches. Every year I am humbled by the amazing hard work, generosity and teamwork of so many. Every year there are stories that bring me to tears. Every year I am grateful for all that has been done. Thank you!

Each year the Shelter has had a slightly different flavour, but the essential ingredients have remained the same. There is a continuing ethos within which the word guest has a special and honoured place. We do not want to be an institutional dispenser of care, but a means by which love and value can be conveyed to our guests through hospitality – offering a warm welcome in the coldest months. Meeting practical needs with human contact, and yet we are also very mindful of the need to operate in a professional manner with appropriate safeguards and boundaries. It is a big operation and there is always much to coordinate and consider. Again we are grateful for the way in which staff, volunteers and others have been willing to act flexibly and with immense goodwill as we have sought to achieve our aims.

Particular mention should be made of Alexa Kersting-Woods, who came fresh into the role of Project Manager with an entirely new team of Project Workers, and has kept the ethos while consolidating and developing our organisation. We are in much better organisational shape now than when she first came on board. Thank you!

On the final night of the Shelter one of our guests made a speech of thanks to the volunteers and staff on behalf of all the guests. He chose to read the biblical passage 1 Corinthians chapter 13, which speaks about the nature of love. You could have heard a pin drop. I would like here to act as a channel through which his message of gratitude is passed on to you. The Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter really does make a difference. The stories and statistics in this report show what we do, but there is no substitute for rolling your sleeves up and getting involved to find out what we are all about.

So thank you to everyone who has contributed so much to the success of the Shelter in 2016-17. We fully intend that next winter we will pull together once again to make a huge difference in many lives.

Bill Miller
Chair of Trustees

Our Trustees

Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter - Trustee Members



Rev Bill Miller

Bill is the minister of Maidstone Baptist Church and serves as Chair of the Trustees, focusing especially on church relations. He is a qualified social worker and has in the past worked full-time in a direct access hostel for homeless men and as a probation officer. Over the years he has chaired a number of community organisations including West Bromwich Street Pastors, Churches Together in Maidstone and the governors of a local primary school.



Martin Hinchliffe

Martin has a strong background in business and is the lead Trustee for Operations. He has volunteered for the Shelter and other homeless charities including Crisis at Christmas.



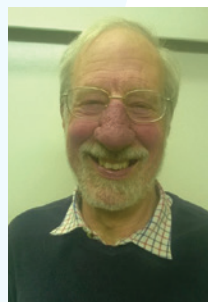
Michelle Peirce

Michelle started her involvement with the Shelter as a volunteer and is now a Trustee with the lead responsibility for fundraising which includes grant applications and corporate giving. Michelle is a regular volunteer at the Shelter providing overnight cover.



Wendy Tull

Wendy has over 30 years HR experience and is the lead Trustee for this specialism. She is an active Christian and has good links with local faith-based groups. Wendy also volunteers at the Shelter providing overnight cover.



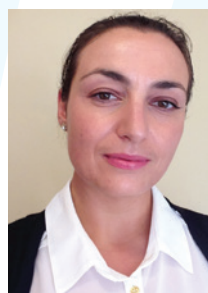
Rev John Tapper

Rev Canon John is a Chartered Accountant and is the charity's Treasurer. John has assisted the Shelter both as an overnight volunteer, and also collecting items for the guests.



Kerry Faulkner

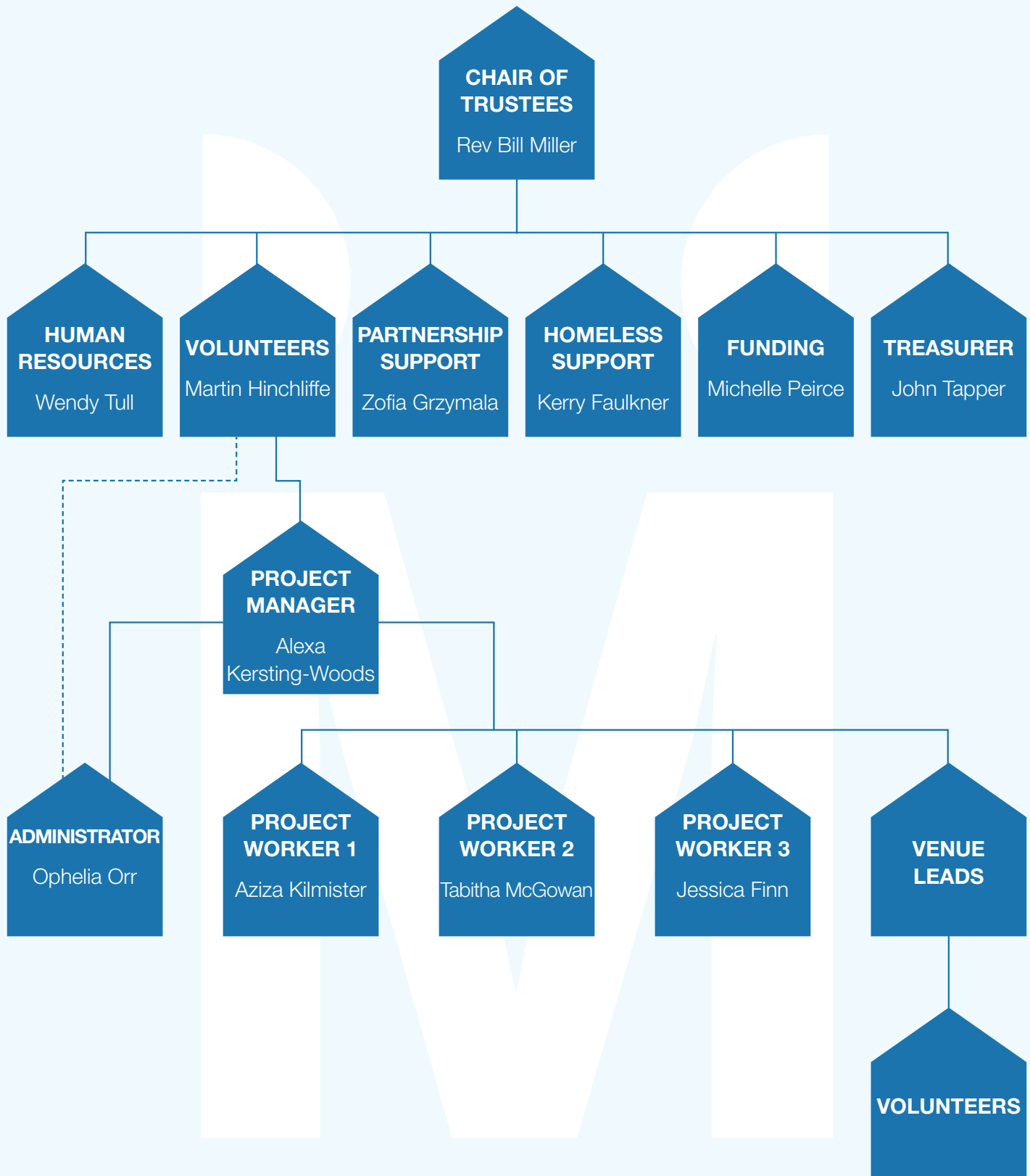
Kerry has, until very recently, been working for a homeless charity and is now studying Mental Health Nursing PgDip. She has worked as a Project Worker for the Shelter in previous years.



Zofia Grzymala

Zofia has substantial knowledge of the homeless sector and brings this to her role as Trustee. She is currently the Manager of Homeless Care Maidstone Day Centre which is one of the Shelter's key partners.

Organisation Structure 2016/17



The Shelter aims and how they were fulfilled this year

Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter was planned on the foundation of four aims:

1

Providing hospitality and overnight shelter for homeless people in the winter months.

Shelter /'ʃeltə/ (noun)

Definition: "A place giving temporary protection from bad weather or danger."

This year Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter went way beyond the dictionary definition of shelter by making sure our guests were treated as individuals – each homeless person is different and has varying needs, likes and interests.

The Shelter provided more than just a bed for the night. Guests were welcomed in to a safe, warm and friendly environment, and received a hot evening meal with scrumptious puddings. The Shelter also organised a vegan option for guests with special dietary requirements. We organised quizzes and film nights, sourced books, researched education opportunities and accompanied guests to various appointments.

2

Engaging members of churches in Maidstone and other volunteers in building supportive relationships with homeless people in Maidstone, without discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

Our patient and dedicated church members, and volunteers alike extended a warm welcome to guests and enjoyed getting to know them. Space and time were given to guests who shy away from social situations.

As friendships were made, volunteers humbly listened to fears, hopes and aspirations of our guests.

3

Supporting homeless people to find long-term accommodation.

Collaborating with agencies including Porchlight, Maidstone Borough Council, MADM, the Greenlight Charity, Trinity Foyer and Maidstone Day Centre, we were able to support our guests with accessing services including health and housing, applying for the right benefits, contacting and reconciling with family members, and even encouraged into various training, volunteer and employment opportunities.

4

Undertaking such other purposes in relation to the needs of homeless people as the trustees may from time to time determine.

This winter, we have focussed on strengthening our links with other agencies in the Maidstone area, all with a common interest in supporting homeless people. We have formed many new and successful relationships and it is our intention to continue building on this as we co-work with partner organisations to address the issue of homelessness in Maidstone.

How The Shelter Worked

The Shelter, now in its fourth year, opened for 12 weeks with an additional 3 days over the Christmas period, making this the longest number of nights we have run the Shelter.

This winter saw an increase of guests with substance misuse problems with at least 24 out of the 43 people who stayed facing a daily battle with addiction. Partner organisations such as Maidstone Day Centre have also highlighted this problem. We saw a number of people who had been previously housed coming to the Shelter after losing their homes due to behaviours associated with their addiction.

We had a slow start but after the first few weeks of opening we were full most nights. Luckily, we rarely had to turn people away and on most occasions we were able to secure a place in another Kent shelter or temporary accommodation through Maidstone Borough Council.

8 of our guests this winter were from outside the UK, this has been higher in previous winters.

Working with partner organisations, 17 guests were helped into accommodation often with other support services around them to support their stay.



We had 11 guests who only stayed with us for 1 or 2 nights, mostly due to relationship breakdown, and 24 guests who stayed with us regularly.

Around half of our guests had been identified by our partner organisations as needing a priority bed, mainly due to health reasons or vulnerability.

9 of our guests had stayed with the Shelter in previous winters and 10 were identified as long term rough sleepers. We had 5 people stay with us for the first time this winter despite lots of attempts to persuade them to come in previous years.

Our volunteers this winter were a mix of new and existing volunteers who brought a wide range of skills and expertise donating over 8,000 hours of their time. We also had a student nurse placement and young people engaging as part of the Duke of Edinburgh award, with our oldest volunteer being 84 years old.

This year we stepped up our community fundraising activities organising quizzes and a fundraising dinner, this was a good way to raise our profile as well as money.



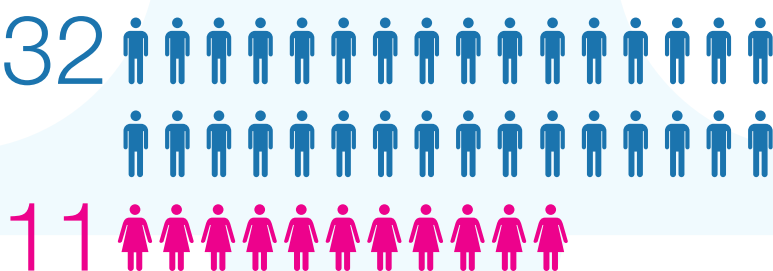
The Shelter in numbers



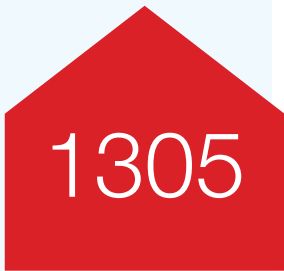
Number of nights.



Number of people assessed for a winter shelter bed.



Number of guests booked-in for a bed. Out of 43 guests 24 were regulars.



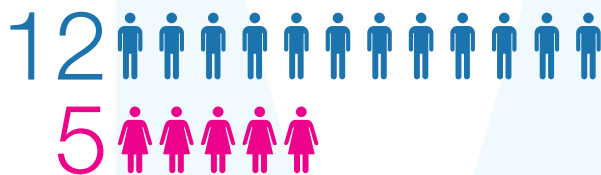
Number of beds allocated over the shelter.



Number of beds slept in over the shelter.



Number of beds not taken up where the person failed to present on the night.



Number of guests supported into housing.

11

Number of guests only staying for 1-2 nights.

8

Number of guests moved onto other accommodation, eg staying at friends or working away.

9

Number of guests returning from previous years.

10

Number of long term rough sleepers.

5

Those who have been homeless for over a year staying in the Shelter for the first time.

6

Number of EU guests

2

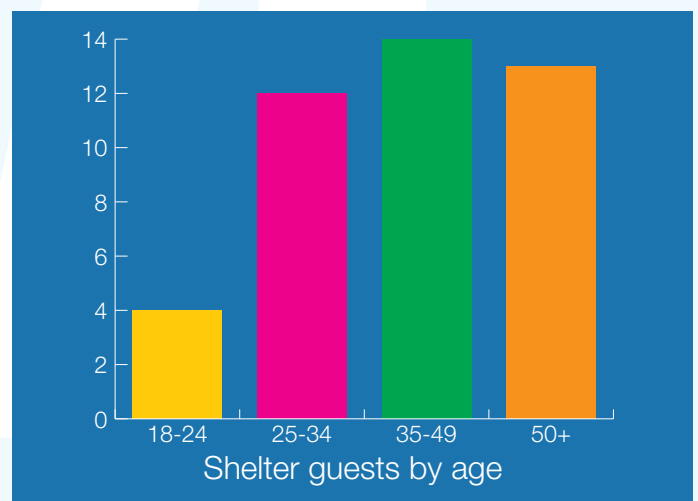
Number of non-EU guests.



Largest Cause of Homelessness for this year's guests



Second largest cause of homelessness for this year's guests



Key Differences From Previous Years

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
15 Beds	15 Beds	15 Beds
11 female guests	11 female guests	11 female guests
Number of returning guests from previous year 5	Number of returning guests from previous year 3	Number of returning guests from previous year 9
77 assessed for a winter bed	53 assessed for a winter bed	50 assessed for a winter bed
55 Overnight guests	28 Overnight guests	43 Overnight guests
23 out of 55 guests in long/short term housing through engagement with the Shelter	17 out of 28 guests in long/short term housing through engagement with the Shelter	17 out of 43 guests in long/short term housing through engagement with the Shelter
Largest age grouping of guests were 25-34	Largest age grouping of guests were 36-49	Largest age grouping of guests were 36-49
12 week shelter	12 week shelter	3 night Christmas Shelter plus 12 week Shelter
Opened early December over the Christmas period and closed early March	Opened early December over the Christmas period and closed early March	Opened 3 nights for Christmas. Opened 3rd Jan and closed on 28th March
4 paid staff involved	5 paid staff involved	5 paid staff involved

Our guests and their stories

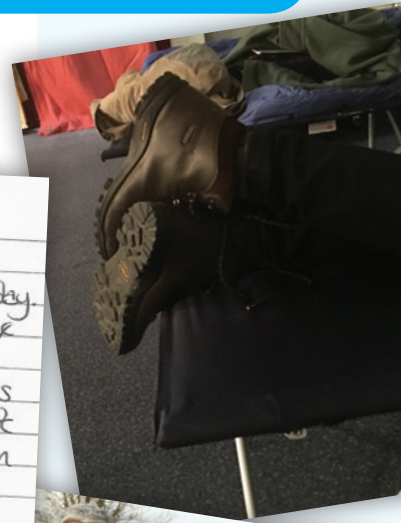
We have heard many stories from our guests about the issues of life on the street, which we could have published. But, this year we decided to simply publish a very moving letter which we received from our guests expressing deep felt thanks for the Shelter.

A Special Thankyou To The Winter Shelter Volunteers

These words have been specially selected
And pulled from the very deepest depths of
My heart,
For those wonderful + special Winter
Shelter Staff.
I speak for all that have spent each
night,
When I say all of you brought the brightest
of lights,
To help us see through the darkest nights
That we've endured for some years of our
lives.
You truly are angels of 'God'
You've injected into our hearts the purest
of love.
It certainly takes a special kind of
person
To look after us, because we all know
It can be hard to see & deal with the

"The night shelter saved a lot of people's lives. Without this lifeline, probably a few of us would not be around today."

Tony



"Nice people, nice food and a good night's sleep."

Adam



The daily grief that each of us get.
I can not express it in any other way.
Then these words I say, I've written today.
Winter Shelter Staff, a special place
You hold in our hearts.
Not one of you had to do this for us
So this BIG THANKYOU is a must
Please take these words & keep them
near
All of your prayers we'll continue to
hear.
The wonderful food, the patience too,
Frankly I do not know how you've managed
to.
Keep up the hard work & kind words
To keep us alive & make clear paths
back to the world
That is really loved by each one of us
I'll end this now with a few more truths
You've brought great joy & given us strength
To see this right through
To the end, hopefully this will end with
laughing, smiling & happiness.



With All of the Love that we
possess
Yours sincerely Sadie & the rest:

Adam, WILL, Linda, Tony,
Clemo + Jasmin, Peter, Nick, Gavin,
Liam, Paul, (Gid) Tony, Manu,
The 3 european lot, (not sure of their
names)
for anyone else who are not here &
have moved on & I can't remember their
names.

X X X

God Bless You All.

"Without the shelter I would be dead. The more dysfunctional you are, the more help you get."

James

Our volunteers and their stories

On behalf of our Board, our staff, and our guests, we extend a heart-felt thank you for your unwavering support and generosity. We recognise the amazing work and commitment of each and every one of you that supported the Shelter in various ways.

There are not enough words to describe how grateful we are for the dedication, compassion and kindness of our 262 incredibly, amazing volunteers who have given of themselves. What we have accomplished this year, simply would not have been possible without you. You, our enthusiastic and kind-hearted volunteers, have not only “talked the talk” but also “walked the walk” and given of yourselves in a most precious way, your time.

262 volunteers gave an estimated 8,169 hours.

“The vision of love was well and truly met!”

“I enjoyed this year as much as last year and look forward to being involved next year.”

“It was the most worthwhile and fulfilling thing I had ever done”

“Volunteering has been one of the most rewarding experiences”

“It was brilliant, a very worthwhile activity!”



What did our volunteers say

"After 4 years, I think the Shelter runs really smoothly and again it has been a pleasure to play a small part in it"

"So happy to help!"

"The guests felt so much love, as did the volunteers"



"Good experience, amazing volunteers and guests"

"Thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience at the Shelter, just a shame it had to end"

"It has been very positive having additional guests in for dinner who were not staying!"

"I have met some lovely people whilst being a volunteer"

Our volunteers' stories

Liz (Student Nurse)

"I am writing to say thank you so much for allowing me to spend my voluntary placement helping at the Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter.

The experience of working at the night shelter highlighted to me how much it is needed and valued, especially for those who are most vulnerable due to mental illness or poor physical health.

The other volunteers were very welcoming and it was great to volunteer at different venues and see the way that each church operated. I was most impressed with the catering teams and the excellent variety of home cooked meals provided every night.

As a student nurse I have found volunteering at the night shelter very fulfilling. I have gained more self-awareness and

"The experience of working at the night shelter highlighted to me how much it is needed and valued"

an appreciation of how the voluntary sector makes a huge contribution towards the health and well-being of individuals who find themselves in need for whatever reason. By engaging with guests and listening to their stories, it has helped me overcome preconceived ideas about homelessness and other issues such as drug and alcohol abuse.

I have great admiration for all the volunteers, and how their time and dedication is making a real difference to the homeless in Maidstone. This is truly a demonstration of the biblical teaching "love thy neighbour". I will certainly recommend volunteering at the night shelter to future students. This experience offers opportunities to practise many of the skills necessary for nursing such as interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, listening and collaborative working with others. It is also a place to demonstrate the six C's of nursing: Care, Compassion, Courage, Competence, Communication and Commitment.

Thank you once again for the privilege of serving at the night shelter.





Emily, 14

I didn't really know what to expect when I chose to volunteer at the Shelter, but I had heard a bit about it as my dad was a venue lead last year. I have always enjoyed cooking so I chose to help in the kitchen, preparing the meal and serving the guests. Each week, I got to know the guests who were always grateful for the food, with one of the guests singing "food, glorious food!" every week, and another eating 6 servings of trifle! I will miss everyone at the Shelter and the warm, friendly atmosphere, and I can't wait to volunteer again next year!

Vincent

I had not volunteered with homeless people before and I had no idea what to expect. I had a common misconception about homelessness but after volunteering at the Shelter, I realised how easily one can become homeless ... the slightest change in your circumstances can have life altering outcomes.

I found volunteering at the Shelter to be quite a rewarding and humbling experience. It has truly changed my view on homelessness. I enjoyed doing crosswords with the guests at the Shelter and I was deeply touched on hearing their experiences of being homeless.



"I found volunteering at the Shelter to be quite a rewarding and humbling experience."

Our venues



This year we opened our doors for a special Christmas Shelter held at the United Reformed Church in the centre of town. Annie and Keith Shave were the Venue Leads and gave up their Christmas to create a wonderful home from home for homeless guests that had nowhere else to go. A little local boy wrote to Father Christmas asking for presents for homeless people and with a little Christmas magic the guests woke on Christmas morning to presents at the bottom of their beds.

On Mondays the Shelter was held at St Luke's Church with Heather May as the Venue Lead. Members of St Luke's congregation make donations each year to sponsor a bed or to cover other costs such as food. This year St Luke's Church had a lot of young volunteers who were participating as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. The kitchen team prepared jerk chicken, rice, and paprika roast potatoes. Ladies that stayed with the Shelter commented on how cosy and warm the ladies sleeping area was at this venue.

Tuesdays the Shelter moved to the Baptist Church which was led by John Gurnett. Our guests really enjoyed staying here as the building has lots of space for them and a TV! The kitchen team made delicious traditional favourites such as shepherd's pie and fruit crumble. A number of the guests have started attending the church for services on a Sunday morning.

Wednesday nights were hosted by Gwyn McPherson at the Quaker Meeting House. This is a small intimate venue and this encouraged people to do things together, and this included singing and playing instruments. Whilst at the venue, guests were treated to massages, foot treatments and haircuts. Wednesday meals included pasta and chilli con carne.

Thursday nights were at the Maidstone Family Church with Andrew Nuttall as Venue Lead. Here our guests looked forward to sausage casserole and a choice of puddings. Guests commented on how lovely it was that the Minister, Steve Edney, provided overnight cover and they enjoyed their chats with him.

Friday night was at the Maidstone Day Centre with Manager Zofia Grzymala as Venue Lead. The guests described the centre as their home and loved the familiar surroundings. The kitchen team chopped, sliced and peeled to create yummy meals such as stew and dumplings, and homemade lemon meringue pie.

Saturday night guests were hosted at the Salvation Army by Mark Heather and Mary Scott. Every fortnight the Greenlight charity visited to provide the guests with access to doctors and nurses for treatment and referral into other health services. The kitchen team made pies with pastry made from scratch and delicious puddings including jam sponge and custard.

On Sunday nights Margaret Darge welcomed guests to the Methodist Church on Tonbridge Road. The kitchen team cooked a roast dinner with all the trimmings and a local family provided an array of puddings, if this weren't enough, Margaret always had a well-stocked tin of treats available.

Every weekday, Making A Difference Maidstone (MADM) gave us space to run our Guests Registration Process. It was a great place to assess our guests as they could sit in comfy chairs, have hot soup and drinks, and the Founder, Amanda Sidwell would find shoes, items of clothing and any other items our guests needed.

A huge thank you goes out to all our host venues for your willingness to host the Winter Shelter, offering your building, rearranging your schedules, bearing the costs of fuel and lighting, without these venues the Shelter cannot operate.

Thank you again for opening your doors and your hearts!



View From A Venue Lead



When I finished my first year as venue lead in March 2016, I was very tired and put on hold my decision whether to repeat the experience! In the back of my mind though I knew the enormous sense of achievement in providing for the guests, along with personal enjoyment of the role would draw me back again this year.

So the Winter Shelter 2017 arrived, and on the first night it seemed like we had never been away. Previous volunteers returned, joined by new volunteers in setting up, welcoming, overnighting, and morning shifts. I am sure other venue leads will agree the sense of all working together for the

same goal in helping our guests is a special experience, with people slotting seamlessly into their roles.

Every week I used to think "my job is to walk round lots and oversee, whilst my amazing volunteers do all the work! Not quite that simple, but all the venue leads have such enormous respect and gratitude to the way the volunteers give their time, care and love to the special guests we had this year.

Next year will be different, with new staff, volunteers and guests. What will not change is the enormous value the Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter brings to all. I think Tony summed this up on his last night reading of Corinthians 13. Love is what it all boils down to, and without Love we are nothing.

Andrew, Maidstone Family Church



Our partners

No single organisation can offer everything a homeless person needs, thus, collaborating with local agencies is vital to the success of the Shelter and the benefit of our guests.

This year new partnerships were made with the Aylesford Priory who laundered a number of our sleeping bags. Our experienced staff liaised with agencies, including The Quays in Sittingbourne and Kent Shelters, to promote a wide range of support for our guests. Other new partnerships include that of Kent Fire & Rescue staff Andy O'Neil and Julie Wade for conducting first aid training courses, and the Greenlight Charity and their team of skilled volunteers who go out onto the streets to provide medical care for Maidstone's homeless.

And, not forgetting our ongoing partnerships with organisations such as the Maidstone Day Centre for providing daily support to our guests, shower and laundry facilities, food, benefit support, clothing, etc. Making A Difference Maidstone (MADM) for providing access to their premises for our guest registration process. Hair professionals who kindly provided haircuts and help with laundering some of our sleeping bags. Porchlight for housing advice and support.

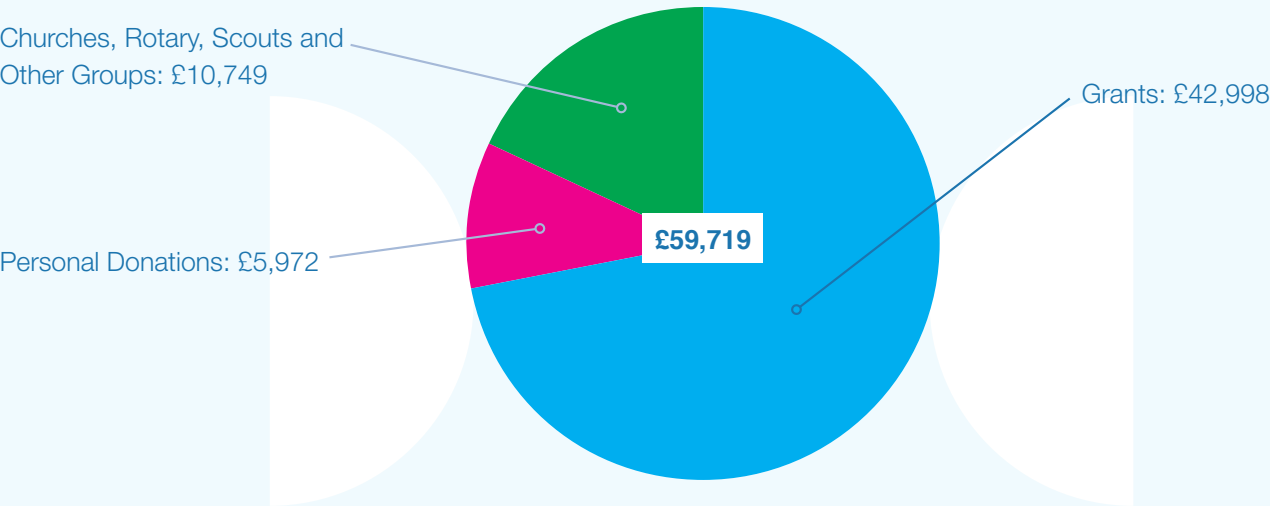
We also worked with:

Trinity Foyer
Maidstone Borough Council
Involve
Kent Police
Kent Probation
The Kenward Trust
CGL
Community Mental Health Workers
Kent County Council
Lily Smith House
Albion Place Medical Practice
Maidstone Town Centre Liaison Group

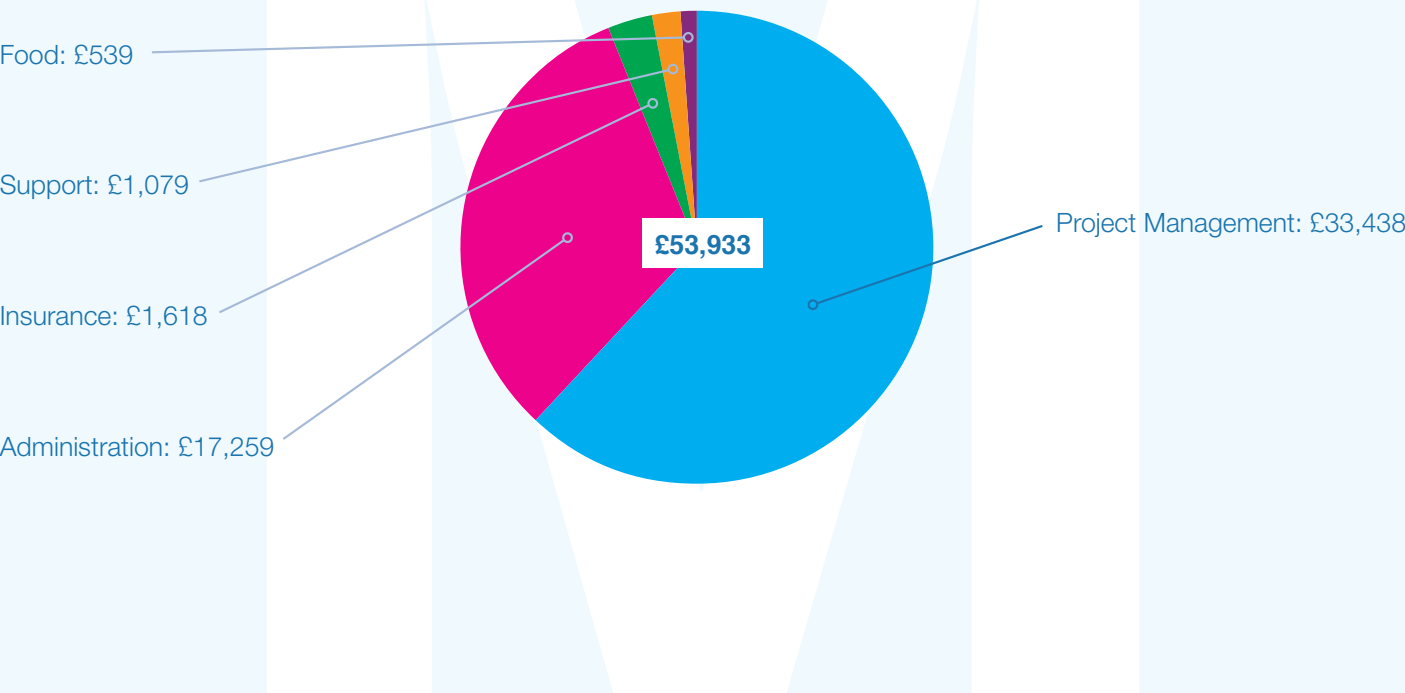


Financial information

Sources of Income



Expenditure



2016/17 Interesting Facts

-  Oldest Guest: 3 were 62 years
-  Youngest guest: 18 years
-  Most hours completed by a single volunteer: 84 (excluding overnights)
-  Most hours completed by a single overnigher: 220
-  1 birthday was celebrated in the Shelter
-  1 fire alarm was set off
-  Oldest volunteer: 84 years
-  Returning volunteers: 136
-  New volunteers: 126
-  Highest number of guests coming in for dinner only (in addition to our standard 15 overnight guests): 8

Thank you very much...

We do hope that we have thought of everyone who has contributed to the success of the Shelter this winter. Please accept our apologies for any omissions and let us know!

Our volunteers

Our volunteers have hearts of gold, and volunteering takes a sheer selfless sense of wanting to give back to the community. Your devotion and commitment need to be acknowledged, in expression if not in kind. You are proof that volunteers are people who don't want to be thanked for helping others, but want to thank others for giving them the opportunity to help. Thank you very much for your dedication and for yet another successful Winter Shelter which was made possible by you!

Our venues

St Luke's Church of England, Maidstone Baptist Church, the Quaker Meeting House, Maidstone Family Church, Maidstone Day Centre, the Salvation Army, Tonbridge Road Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. Making your buildings available to the Shelter has been a vital and generous contribution.

To all our Venue Leads, Lead Cooks, Ministers of our host venues, here, we recognise you and thank you for your whole-hearted support to the Winter Shelter.

Our staff

Our staff team this year consisted of Alexa Kersting-Woods, Aziza Kilmister, Tabitha McGowan, Jessica Finn and Ophelia Orr, who all gave heart and soul from start to finish to ensure that the Shelter not only opened but was well-coordinated. Thank you!

Our trustees

To Our Trustees, thank you for your passion, commitment, and leadership! All our Trustees are volunteers, and at the moment we have 7 Trustees who all generously give their time and a high level of dedication both behind the scenes, and at the forefront by volunteering at various venues during the Shelter.

Revd Bill Miller, Martin Hinchliffe, Michelle Peirce, Wendy Tull, John Tapper, Zofia Grzymala and Kerry Faulkner, we thank you!



Our funders and donors

Allington Baptist Church
Barty House Nursing Home
Bearsted Methodist Church
Cobtree Charity Trust
Cranbrook and Hawkhurst Rotary Club
East Farleigh Parochial Church
Amanda McKenna on behalf of Garfield Weston Trust
Grace Dieu Trust
Great Humphreys Farm
Harrietsham Messy Church
Hillier Trust
Kent Community Foundation
Brian Clark on behalf of Kent County Council
Kent Fire and Rescue
Kingswood Christmas Trees
Maidstone Borough Council
Maidstone Grammar School
Maidstone Lions Club

Maidstone Relief in Need Charities
Mid Kent Decorative and Fine Arts Society
Rotary Club of Maidstone
Sade Paseda
St Andrew's Barming
St Faith's Parochial Church Council
St Luke's Church
St Luke's Cub group
St Martin's Church
St Nicholas Parochial Church Council
St Paul's Church
South African Congregation Church
Tovil Christian Fellowship
TSB Bank Maidstone
The Tudor Trust
Walnut Tree Farm
Willington Players

... and for many individuals who have given online and in other ways.

Thank you very much...

Those Who Supported In Other Ways

Among those who have supported in other ways are the following:

Absolute Creative Prints for donating some printing services.

Aylesford Priory for laundering sleeping bags and pillows.

Bill's Restaurant for donating raffle prizes for our fundraising dinner.

4 Degrees Bar and Kitchen for hosting our pub quiz.

David Lloyd for donating raffle prizes for our fundraising dinner.

The Downs Mail for editorial coverage.

Frederic's Bistro for hosting our fundraising dinner.

Hair Professional, who once again assisted us in many ways including the laundering of sleeping bags and provided haircuts.

The Hair Lounge in Halling – Jo Dale for haircuts and her friend Jane Rhodes for manicures at Christmas.

Ironworks Gym for donating raffle prizes for our fundraising dinner.

Janice Hinchliffe, who assisted on volunteer rotas across all venues.

Jubilee Church, Quakers, St Paul's, St Luke's and the Baptist's Church laundry angels.

Kent Messenger for press notices and advertising.

Maidstone Customs and Excise for donations in kind.

Making A Difference Maidstone (MADM).

Morrisons, Lisa at the Lakefield store for donations in kind.

MuMu's Restaurant and Lounge for hosting our pub quiz.

One Hairdressing for donations in kind.

Retreat Beauty for donations in kind.

Rose Café for donations in kind.

South African Congregation Church for a large donation of toiletries.

Sure Foundation Assembly for donation of food and toiletries.

Tandoor Mahal for preparing a delicious curry meal over the Christmas period.

Tesco, Tina and her team at Grove Green for donations in kind.

Toni&Guy Maidstone for donating drinks.

Union Street Methodist Church, which served as a venue for the training of volunteers.

The White Rabbit Pub for donations in kind.

The White Horse Charity Otham for a large donation of sleeping bags and pillows.

Wilkinson's Maidstone for donations in kind.

The fact that you have been reading this report means that you are interested in the work of the Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter. Thank you! It is the interest and engagement of so many that is the lifeblood of our organisation. People support us in ways too numerous to be able to list fully in this report, and we are truly grateful. May what we do together – both that which is seen and that which is unseen – bring a smile to the face of God, who cares more for each one of us than we can possibly imagine.



The **co-operative**



**Maidstone
Churches
Winter Shelter**

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