



For the last six years, the Ipswich Winter Night Shelter has worked with local churches, volunteers, community groups, services and supporters to provide a safe and supported shelter during the three coldest months of the year.



Hope & Hospitality

The Ipswich Winter Night Shelter aims to provide an alternative to rough sleeping during the winter months alongside support with finding suitable accommodation.

Nine Churches & One Shared Vision

During 2016/17, the following town centre churches generously provided venues for the Ipswich Winter Night Shelter:

- Burlington Baptist Church, London Road
- Christ Church, Tacket Street, Tacket Street (with the support of St Pancras)
- Holy Trinity, Back Hamlet (with the support of St Augustine's)
- Hope Church, Fore Hamlet
- Ipswich Community Church, Clarkson Street
- St Margaret's, Bolton Lane
- St Mary's at Stoke, Stoke Street.

As well as letting us use their buildings for free, they also provide a wide range of resources including:

- Bedding and beds
- Breakfast
- Clothing
- Home cooked evening meal
- Showers (at 3 venues)
- Storage
- Towels and toiletries
- Umpteen cups of hot, sweet coffee and tea
- Volunteers

We are incredibly grateful to them all and we recognise that we could not run the shelter without their support.

People With A Passion

Over 320 volunteers gave their time to help provide the shelter last winter. One volunteer worked 35 shifts and another worked 20 twenty shifts but most volunteers worked between 3 and 6 shifts. Our volunteers made over 860 beds up with clean bed linen and they made thousands of cups of tea, coffee and hot chocolate. They also made 95 home cooked dinners ranging from staple favourites like sausage and mash and roast chicken, to Mexican feasts and Indian curries. In addition to getting beds, food and drinks prepared, they also collected clothing and toiletries for our guests, ran film nights, played games, baked cakes and collected items for guests to equip their new accommodation when they moved out. In short, our volunteers are nothing short of superheroes.

This year, for the first time, the shelter was supported by two full time staff. They worked with local services to create a referral process that would allow anyone in need of shelter to make a request for a bed. They also provided our guests with support to find accommodation. This involved everything from liaising with housing providers, attending housing interviews with guests, helping guests move in to their new accommodation, setting up and attending appointments to get specialist advice, liaising with other services and helping with paperwork.

Booking Beds

Booking requests were received from our 7 Booking Partners for 67 people

- 8 found housing without needing the shelter
- 10 did not reply to any of our attempts to contact them
- 12 did not meet our criteria *

* We do not admit guests with a recent history of violence

We arranged to meet with 37 potential guests to book them in

- 2 did not turn up to meet us or reply to our attempts to contact them
- 35 met us and were assessed

Following their assessments, 35 people were offered a bed in the shelter

- 1 declined the offer of a bed and 3 didn't ever turn up to stay with us

Grateful Guests

31 guests used the shelter last winter and they were all grateful for the opportunity to have a good meal, sleep in a clean, comfortable bed and have support from our staff. Here is some of their feedback:

- “It is helpful to have the staff making calls on our behalf”
- “I like having somewhere nice to go after a bad day”
- “It is good to be able to get things off my chest by talking to volunteers”
- “The signposting to where I need to go and what I need to do is helpful”
- “I'm stable and I can now start to sort my life out”
- “It's not just having a roof over your head, it's having staff to support you”
- “If you're having issues, all you've got to do is pull one of the staff aside”

New Homes

As a result of the dedication and hard work of our volunteers, staff and local service providers, 15 night shelter guests moved in to suitable accommodation during the winter. 13 of them are still in that accommodation but sadly 2 are not (they both made choices that have resulted in them losing their accommodation).

Little Things That Are Actually Big Things

We often spoke in the shelter about how big changes happen because lots of little changes take place. Some of the little changes that we celebrated during the winter were; guests putting on weight, guests enjoying games, guests making people laugh, guests taking care of each other, guests trying new things, guests feeling happier & healthier, guests having massages, haircuts & foot treatments.

Hope Into Action

As well as running the Ipswich Winter Night Shelter, we are also a franchisee of Hope into Action. This project provides homes for the most vulnerable in society in partnership with local churches. Our first Ipswich Hope into Action house is now home for two people who stayed in the shelter last winter.