

December 2021

Hello,

We have had a great start to our ninth consecutive Winter Season; welcoming back our Volunteers and introducing **Crossways** on Chesterton Road, one of our projects this Winter.

As you may have seen in our November update, we are still working in a covid-19 framework. As such, a rotating night shelter model was again blocked by the Council in line with Covid-19 guidelines. We took the decision to split our focus in two directions; firstly, we will be providing emergency Bed and Breakfast accommodation to the most vulnerable in our society, in the same way as we did last winter; to those with **No Access to Public Funding**, women, and those with no other option available to them. Secondly, we have gone into a one-off partnership with the City Council, It Takes A City and a number of other charities to help to set up and support Crossways House, a 20-bed house which offers our Guests the warm room, hot meal and companionship that we at Cambridge Churches Homeless Project have provided for the past 8 Winters.

Last Winter, the City Council set up and ran Masters House, as a part of the national “Everybody In” campaign. Masters House helped over 300 individuals by the end of the Winter but was very much a hostel set up. It was felt that there was a better way we could create a homely atmosphere and encourage Guests off the streets and to interact with services in a safe and relaxed atmosphere. This is where Cambridge Churches Homeless Project was invited in. We have always served our Guests with the utmost respect and kindness, and it is a privilege to do so again.

Cambridge Churches Homeless Project joined Crossways from Monday 29th November, and will run until the end of March as usual, and our dedicated and generous Volunteers are on site from 6.30am until 1am, running 5 shifts across the day. Our outstanding Cooks prepare and cook the evening meal for our Guests and Volunteers and our Hosts eat the communal meal with our Guests in the same way as we have always done. We also have our Late-Night Hosts, who join after the meal and sit and chat with our Guests until after curfew at midnight. Unlike previous Winters, there is a security team on site to run the Front Desk, which gives our Volunteers more freedom to build bridges and offer companionship with our Guests. We are so thrilled to see our Volunteers back among our Guests once again, albeit in a new location, and we look forward to welcoming new Volunteers in, after Christmas. All new Volunteers are welcome to register on our website; www.cchp.org.uk/register - we look forward to meeting you!

As the Winter sets in, we look to the second part of our Winter Season; the housing of the most vulnerable in our society. Those who cannot be housed at Crossways, or elsewhere, and those with no other option. We hope to raise enough funds to give all our potential Guests this offer of safety and security. Unfortunately, unlike last Winter, hospitality is now running at full price, and reluctant to give discounts due to the financial instability of the last year. This means we are facing a Winter where a room will cost us an average of £50 per night, per Guest. If we were to house the Guests we served last Winter, in the same way, we would be facing an expenditure in the tens of thousands of pounds.

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This is why we ask you to pray for us this Winter. Hold us, our Guests and our fundraising efforts, in your thoughts and prayers as we look to keep as many of the vulnerable warm and safe this Winter as we possibly can.

None of this would have been, or will be, possible without the support of our Volunteers and Donors. Cambridge Churches Homeless Project's income fell by nearly 30% compared to the previous year last Winter, however our Donors rallied magnificently, and we achieved our objective. We stood firm to serve those most in need and we are doing so again this Winter.

We will not cure homelessness, but we will make a difference to those with whom we engage.

Christ said, "I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome".

This is the mantra of the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, and as we begin our ninth successive Winter, it is this core belief which defines our purpose. I believe that we have, and can, make a difference to those with whom we engage. Cambridge Churches Homeless Project is totally dependent on the support of the Churches, and the Synagogue, for our ability to function and serve. With your support we will be able to grant safety, food, and shelter to our Guests once more this Winter.

To all of our supporters, I wish to say Thank You, for without your backing there would be no direct action, or intervention, by Cambridge Churches Homeless Project.

Please remember our Guests, and Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, in your Prayers.

Thank you.