

July 2021: update on where CCHP is at the end of the 2020-2021 season.

The Council refused us permission to run our usual **Winter Night Shelter** due to the Pandemic, therefore we decided to use our resources to fund Bed & Breakfast through the winter. We decided to use the same criteria as we would have done for the Night Shelter, i.e. we engaged with the various council organisations, such as Street Outreach, & explained that we would run all winter & wished to house, at our expense, vulnerable Rough Sleepers who could be managed safely. In total we housed seven female Guests plus eleven male Guests.

In September 2020, we were approached by an immigration charity who informed us that a gentleman called E.M. who had **No Access to Public Funds**, was homeless, charming, & did not participate in cigarette smoking, drug usage or alcohol consumption. Mr E.M. joined us in September and remained with us until the end of April, when the Project closed for the summer, & he became homeless again. CCHP successfully engaged with a B&B, and a Travelodge, to negotiate a good price- both of these places proved very successful placements for our Guests.

The B&B accepted three Guests over the course of the winter, one of whom was rehoused by the Council into his own flat -- this was the first permanent housing that this gentleman had attained in 25 years. Mr Y had been housed inconsistently by Volunteer Host families for the previous four years & during his stay with us Asylum status was achieved & Mr Y was rehoused. This gentleman had **No Access To Public Funds**. We received little Council Funding, and no Housing Benefit, for any of our Guests. There appeared to be a variety of excuses, but fundamentally the result was always the same.

The Travelodge housed the remainder of our cohort with considerable success. The total in the Travelodge was seven female and eight male guests over the course of the winter. Some only stayed a short time, including an 18-year-old woman, whose care worker contacted us at 4pm on Thurs 17th Dec after her placement had broken down. She stayed until Mon 21st when another placement was found for her. We housed two Romanian men with **No Access to Public Funds**, one of whom was discharged on to the street after twelve weeks in Addenbrookes, plus a man whose partner was in Intensive Care with Covid and was being offered housing in Peterborough, but who had said he preferred to sleep on the street to be nearer his partner. One female Guest was discharged from prison directly into a shop doorway. An agency worker contacted us to explain that she was very vulnerable as she had been approached by groups of men on a number of occasions and felt very frightened by their demands.

The council together with another charity that it supports financially, argued that "they would manage rough sleepers" and that "there was no role for CCHP". This did not prove to be the case as the council found it extremely difficult to accommodate potential Guests with **No Access to Public Funds**. Last winter we accommodated 5 male Guests and 2 female Guests with **No Access to Public funds** .

None of this would have been possible without the support of our **Volunteers & Donors**. CCHP's income fell by nearly 30% compared to the previous year , however our Donors rallied wonderfully & we achieved our objective.

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

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

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This is the mantra of the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, and this was our eighth winter in succession. I believe that we have, and can, make a difference to those with whom we engage. CCHP is totally dependent on the support of the Churches, and the Synagogue, for our ability to function.

To all of our supporters, I wish to say **Thank you**, for without your support there would be no direct action, or intervention, by CCHP.

Please remember CCHP and our Guests in your Prayers .