

One Roof Leicester

Empowering communities to help people who are homeless rebuild their lives



ORL Winter Night Shelter 2019/2020

The Winter Night Shelter (WNS) provides a warm bed, a hot meal and a friendly welcome for guests who would otherwise be rough sleeping on the streets during the cold winter months.

We are a volunteer-led project that values the contribution and experience of volunteers from all walks of life.

The shelter is a very open, welcoming environment where we treat the people who stay with us as our guests. We aim to create a homely atmosphere where guests can relax and feel safe.

Our Values

Inclusive: We welcome people from all backgrounds and all faiths or none, offering support based only on their needs and our ability to meet them.

Holistic: We offer more than a meal and a bed; we offer a listening ear and support to help guests take their first steps to rebuild their lives.

Community focused: We can only provide the shelter due to the generous support of the community both in offering venues to host the guests and the 250 people who volunteer, cook and fundraise.

During the winter of 2019/20 we:

- Welcomed **21** guests and supported **8** on to more stable accommodation.
- Provided **998** nights' accommodation across **7** faith venues.
- Opened our doors for **84** nights between December and March
- Served over **1600** evening meals and over **1000** breakfasts
- Had the invaluable support of over **250** volunteers
- Organised barbers and hairdressers to give guests hair cuts
- Trained local communities to support homeless people.



Our venues

The shelter rotated around 7 different venues, each providing a team of volunteers for one night per week between December and March. Each venue has a volunteer coordinator who arranges their venue and coordinates the set up and food and supports the guests and volunteers on their night. Some venues provided the volunteers and food in-house whilst others partnered with other Christian, Muslim, Quaker and Sikh groups to provide the food and additional volunteers that were needed.

Our partner venues were:

- Holy Trinity (Church of England)
- Sacred Heart (Roman Catholic)
- Jalaram Mandir (Hindu)
- 7th Day Adventist Church
- St Andrew's (Church of England)
- St Margaret's (Church of England) and St Peter's (Roman Catholic)
- Neve Shalom (Jewish)

The meeting point:

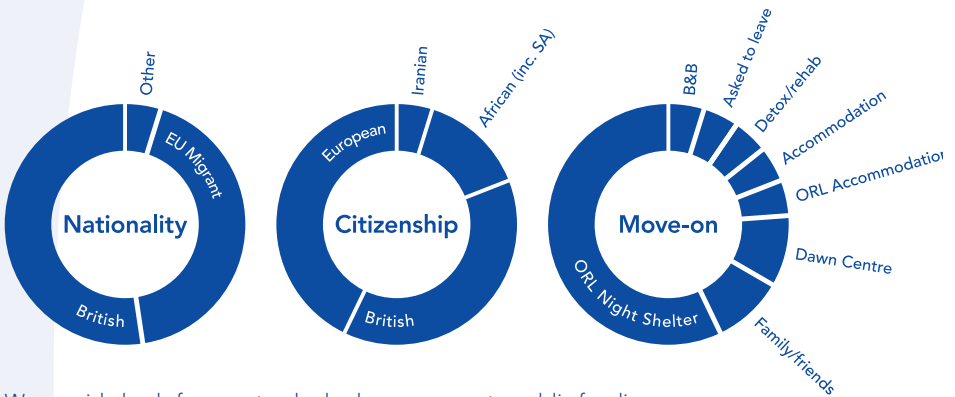
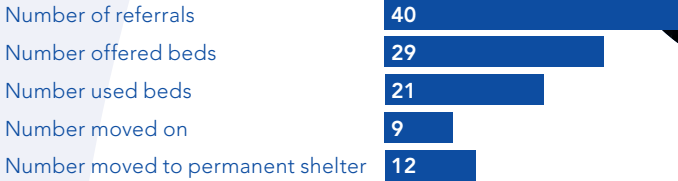
Every night the guests gathered at Bishop Street Methodist Church, where they could have a hot drink and a chat before the minibus came and picked them up to take them to the night shelter venue for the evening.

Our Guests

The Winter Night Shelter welcomes guests from all backgrounds and all faiths or none, offering support based only on their needs and our ability to meet them.



Guest referral numbers



We provide beds for guests who had no recourse to public funding. Some of these were supported to apply for settled status where they were eligible. Four guests stayed on the shelter for the full 12 weeks.

Referral agencies



Our volunteers

250 volunteers of all faiths and none supported the project

Volunteers offer a wide range of support: they set up the beds, cook and serve the food and offer our guests conversation in a friendly environment. Some stay overnight and some turn up first thing to serve breakfast and help clear up. Others drive the minibus in the morning and evening.

It is the incredible commitment and generosity of the volunteers that make the project possible.

During the winter months volunteers:

- Gave over **5800** hours of their time
- Did over **300** hours of driving
- Set up and packed away **1000** beds
- Spent **1512** hours working overnight
- Played innumerable games of Scrabble and dominoes



Our Funders and Supporters

The WNS operates due to the funding we receive from individuals, faith and community groups and local organisations.

The Give Leicester Campaign enabled donations to be made through contactless giving points.

This helped to raise funds and create awareness of the difficulties faced by rough sleepers. Give Leicester is a project set up by BID Leicester and Leicester City Council, working in partnership with Leicester Homelessness Charter.



Our thanks

7th Day Adventist Church

Bid Leicester

Give Leicester

Help the Homeless

Holy Trinity Church

ISB Eat'n'Meet volunteers

Islamic Society of Britain

Jalaram Mandir

LCC Outreach Team

Leicester City Council

Leicester Homelessness Charter

Leicester and Leicestershire Citizens

Muslim Hands

Neve Shalom Synagogue

No.5

Prana Cafe

Red Cross

Sacred Heart RC Church

Sikh Ladies Group

St Andrews Church

St Margaret's Church

St Peter's Church

The Bridge

Triangle

Y-Support

...and many others

We received grant funding from



Scott's Story

(Names have been changed to protect the identity of the individuals)

I became homeless after being evicted from a private tenancy due to thousands of pounds in rent arrears, this built up because I was spending my money on drink. I have been drinking for years so now I suffer with liver cirrhosis, fatigue and irritable bowel syndrome. I also suffer from depression which comes and goes.

I was found living on the streets by Leicester City Council's Outreach team. They put me in the Safe Space at the Dawn Centre for a few nights and from there I was referred to the One Roof Winter Night Shelter.

At the shelter I was given a safe warm place to sleep and help to start addressing my issues. I was given a hot meal every day and I felt a sense of belonging which I have not felt for a long time.

When I first met my support worker Betty from ORL she just wanted to get an understanding of my situation. She sat with me for nearly two hours to find out about how much arrears I owed the private landlord, whether I had completed a housing application with the local authority, what benefits I was getting and what help I was accessing for my drinking.

I was getting help from Turning Point for my drinking, but I didn't always keep my appointments. Betty made contact with my support worker there and between them they encouraged and supported me to keep attending meetings, even when I was feeling really low.

Betty also helped me with my housing application and rent arrears. She found out who my previous landlord was and talked to him about my situation, the help ORL was providing me and how I was dealing with my drink issues. These conversations led to the landlord quashing my rent arrears.

Once my rent had been sorted, Betty worked with the council and got them to reinstate my housing application. I was able to apply for housing again, Betty would meet with me every week to help me to bid for properties on the council website.

I was offered a flat, but I turned it down because I want to address my alcohol dependency issues first. Tomorrow (Mid-February) I am going into a two-week detox programme and after that I will go for rehab for three months. Betty has told me that when I return she will help me to find accommodation, reconnect with my family and build a new life. I am so grateful to everyone at the shelter, the help and support they gave me, especially Betty who has helped me to change my life around. Hope to see you all on the other side.

Mo's Story

Volunteer Minibus Driver

I've been minibus driving for the WNS for four years. I mainly do the evening minibus driving as this shift fits in with my working hours. As the shift is only 2 hours long it's perfect for me as I would struggle to do a full evening. This still gives me an opportunity to meet the guests and get to know them. I can leave once I have dropped them off. Other drivers stay for dinner and to socialise in the evening. This is what is so good about the way the shelter is run, you can be involved as much or as little as you want and no one judges you. Having another volunteer who acts as an escort alongside you is very helpful. It means that you are not on your own and you have someone to help you keep an eye on the guests – counting them on and off the bus. On days where we have to drop off the equipment you have lots of help from everyone at the host venue so you are never left to cope with it all (and there is a lot of it) on your own.

