

# Greenwich Winter Night Shelter Report

14<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## INTRODUCTION

Now in its sixth year, Greenwich Winter Night Shelter (“GWNS”) opened its doors to homeless guests from November 2019 to March 2020. GWNS is one Shelter with seven venues, one for each night of the week, accommodating up to 15 guests per night. In comparison with last year, our statistics show that we were able to support more guests for shorter periods, and that there were many positive outcomes for guests moving into accommodation. We did accept a few guests in the medium and even higher-level risk category which was also a challenge for some of our venues and volunteers. We liaised very positively with The Royal Borough of Greenwich (“RBG”) and, overall, received many more requests from our referral agencies than in previous years.

## OUR OPERATION

Apart from one full time Case Manager and one part time Project Manager, GWNS is run solely by volunteers: eight trustees, seven venue coordinators, and 264 shift leaders, cooks and kitchen workers, laundry providers, bed makers, friendly faces and general help at the venues. Our funding has come from generous donations from small organisations and hundreds of individuals, for which we are enormously grateful. In addition, we have received some government and London wide grants this year through Housing Justice and RBG.

## OUR REFERRAL AGENCIES

- Greenwich Council Housing Inclusion
- Thames Reach
- 999 Club
- Crisis
- Bench
- WSUP
- The Manna Society
- Lewisham Migrant & Refugee Network and Shelter

We hoped that this year many more guests would be referred through RBG and the Navigators they fund for Thames Reach. Most of those from the other agencies had no recourse to public funds (NRPF). In the event, after RBG, the majority of our referrals came through The Manna Society, an independent charity based near London Bridge operating with its own network of support.

## 2019-2020 OUTCOMES (brackets reflect last year’s shelter)

- **Total number of referrals: 117** (96). **96** (56) were accepted and **30** (19) did not turn up/ no longer needed the space.
- **Total number of guests attended: 66** (56)
- **Gender: 15** (11) female and **51** (45) male
- **We were open for 119** (112) nights, and total bed nights occupied were **1,108** (1,298)
- **Nationality: UK Nationals 33** (22); **EU Nationals 6** (15); **Non-EU Nationals 27** (19)
- **Volunteers: 264** (300) volunteers who helped in at least one shift

By the close of the Shelter, **30** (19) guests had been housed; **7** (18) moved either to temporary hostel accommodation or to another supported night shelter; and **29** (19) either made their own move-on arrangements (sofa surfed) or went back to rough sleeping. At least **8** of these subsequently moved into alternative accommodation.

### **APPOINTMENT OF A CASE MANAGER**

We had a government grant through Housing Justice that allowed our newly appointed Case Manager, Rachel, to work part time from May to beginning of September 2019. During this time, Rachel researched, contacted and established working relationships with local support agencies. In addition, she received invaluable experience working with the 999 Club in Deptford. Not only did she shadow case workers there, increasing her knowledge of sector; but she also, over a couple of months replaced their absent Night Shelter Manager. Rachel was well equipped to contribute to GWNS when it started in mid-November and having a case manager made a big impact on our work enabling more of our guests to move into accommodation.

We obtained a further grant through Housing Justice for Rachel's full-time employment from September to the end of March.

### **VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING**

We had 193 returning volunteers; and a further 71 new volunteers attended an obligatory 2-hour training programme prepared and presented by our Case Manager. This inducted volunteers into the operations of the shelter and gave volunteers an initial understanding of those experiencing homelessness. We held a total of five of these between October and January. In addition, The Red Cross offered free 2-hour training courses in First Aid, tailored for the needs of Night Shelters, and we held three of these, training approximately 45 volunteers.

### **THE DAY CENTRE**

As part of GWNS's development and desire to do more for our guests, our Case Manager set up and ran a pilot day centre on Tuesdays at The Forum at Greenwich. The location and timing were chosen to maximise the ease of attendance for the guests, as it followed the Monday night shelter at Christ Church (located in the same building). The day centre was intended to be a safe and relaxing space for guests to 'hang out' during the day, whilst also meeting with the Case Manager for support. The Case Manager invited other professionals to attend the day centre to support the guests with benefits, health or housing and employment queries. It became a vital space for guests to use computers, borrow and read books, watch films, be creative with arts and crafts and use the showers and clothes washing facilities. It was regularly attended with an average of 10 guests per week. A team of 20 volunteers – both experienced and new to the shelter - staffed the day centre and enjoyed having a deeper involvement in the journey of each guest. The guests were provided with refreshments throughout the day and lunch as and when required. The pilot day centre proved to be a great success and may be extended in future seasons.

### **EXTERNAL REVIEW**

The GWNS trustees have commissioned an external review of the organisation (March to May 2020). This comprehensive review will help shape the strategic development of the organisation and identify areas to strengthen its practice.

Helen Othen, GWNS Project Manager  
28.4.20

## APPENDIX 1

### VENUES

- Sunday: St James Church Hall SE3 0DU
- Monday: Christ Church, SE10 9EQ
- Tuesday: St George's Church, SE3 7SQ
- Wednesday: OneSpace Youth & Community Centre, SE3 9YY
- Thursday: St Mark's Church, SE10 8TY
- Friday: St Thomas' Church, SE7 8EW
- Saturday: St Richards Church Centre, SE7 7NR

### TRUSTEES

Margaret Cave (Chair)  
Tony Othen (Deputy Chair)  
Tom Greenwood (Secretary)  
Adeola Boateng (Treasurer)  
Beverley Campbell  
Marianne Gass  
Hugh Ridsdill-Smith  
Bennett Spong

### PROJECT MANAGER

Helen Othen

### ASSISTANT PROJECT MANAGER & CASE MANAGER

Rachel Botley

### CONTACT:

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## APPENDIX 2

### YEARLY COMPARISON OUTCOMES

	2018 Shelter	2018-2019 Shelter	2019-2020 Shelter
<b>Guest Count</b>	30	56	66
<b>Referrals Accepted</b>	45	75	96
<b>Did not turn up</b>	15	19	30
<b>Female Guests (attended)</b>	7	11	15
<b>Male Guests (attended)</b>	23	45	51
<b>UK Nationals (attended)</b>	16	22	33
<b>EU Nationals (attended)</b>	8	15	6
<b>Non-EU Nationals (attended)</b>	6	19	27
<b>Nights Open</b>	85	112	119
<b>Number of Bed Nights</b>	1,275	1,680	1,785
<b>Bed Nights Filled</b>	1,005	1,298	1,108
<b>Guests from Manna Society</b>	15	30	23
<b>Guests from Crisis</b>	13	6	0
<b>Guests from the 999 Club</b>	8	4	8
<b>Guests from Greenwich Council</b>	6	14	18
<b>Guests from Greenwich Migrant Hub (LRMN)</b>	0	1	0
<b>Guests from Refugee Action</b>	0	1	0
<b>Guests from Bench</b>	N/A	N/A	2
<b>Guests from Shelter</b>	N/A	N/A	5
<b>Guests from LSR</b>	N/A	N/A	2
<b>Guests from Thames Reach</b>	N/A	N/A	2
<b>Active Shift Volunteers</b>	180	300	264