

doorway

Moving on from Homelessness in North Wiltshire

Annual Review

For the Year ended 31st March 2011

**Doorway Wiltshire Limited, trading as Doorway.
Registered company (limited by guarantee) number 07232063
Registered charity number 1137757**

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Please refer to the “Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial Statements For the Period 22nd April 2010 to 31st March 2011 for Doorway Wiltshire Limited” for the following information:

1. Reference and Administrative Details
2. Structure, Governance and Management
3. Independent Examiner's Report
4. Statement of Financial Activities

Aims and Objectives

Our Values

Doorway accepts and values diversity in all people, and is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of its business.

We believe that time should be given to working with people who wish to fulfil their personal potential and participate fully in society but find it difficult to do so for whatever reason.

Service Users are known as 'Guests' rather than 'Clients', which defines the relationship we wish to achieve.

Our Vision

We believe that homeless and marginalised individuals are capable of change and will only achieve their full potential when offered a safe, supportive, empowering and non-judgemental environment – it is our vision to provide such an environment and meaningful activities which will help reverse the spiral of homelessness

“Doorway, for me, is the true meaning of ‘the Big Society’. A small group of dedicated volunteers working on a hand-to-mouth financial basis make a huge difference to the lives of people who’ve fallen through the social net, not only in terms of encouragement of self-esteem but also in practical ways that show a truly caring approach to those less fortunate.

“It would be interesting moreover to calculate the economic benefits of how this selfless approach helps reduce intervention by the Police and Social Services?”

“Personally, involvement has confirmed for me how seemingly small steps, such as a listening ear, can have profound and lasting effects. It is a joy to be involved with the guests and volunteers in such a worthwhile project.”

Ray Bradfield, Music Workshop Facilitator

Our Mission Statement

To realise this vision, Doorway will strive to:

- Provide a warm, safe, non-judgmental environment.
- Train staff to engage with guests and form professional boundaried relationships.
- Use these relationships to promote growth in guests' self esteem, confidence and aspirations.
- Provide information, support and, where necessary, practical help that will empower people to make and act on informed choices arrived at by themselves.
- Provide activities within the centre which are likely to enhance guests' skills and raise self-confidence as a first step towards changing their lives.
- Encourage and empower guests to become involved in the running of the centre and in forums designed to give service users a voice.
- Promote the needs of homeless and marginalised people locally by means of high quality PR, thereby helping to reduce discrimination towards them and influencing the local community to become more supportive and less judgmental.

Our Key Objectives

In April 2010, Doorway absorbed the work of ReachOut and our plan was to include both the vision of the charity, and their practical expertise into the new organisation, Doorway Wiltshire Ltd. (ReachOut had worked with people aged 16-25 who have issues with their own or other peoples' substance abuse, and their families.)

In order to advance Doorway's aims and objectives our plan has been to:

- Work, via our drop-in facilities, with individuals above the age of 16 (and their families and friends where appropriate) who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, exclusion or disadvantage because of their lifestyles, and to support the resolution of any issues they may have with substance abuse.
- Provide activities which help individuals to develop life skills in literacy, numeracy, IT and financial management and to gain self-esteem, confidence and a sense of wellbeing through meaningful recreational pursuits and therapies. Thereby, enabling them to move on in their lives away from dependency into self-sufficiency via employment, education or training.
- Signpost guests towards housing, social care and treatment options.
- Offer complementary therapies to enhance guests' wellbeing.
- Raise local awareness of the needs of the homeless and socially excluded people, and increase the ownership of the project by the community.
- Generate funds for all of the above by charitable or commercial means.



Doorway Volunteers



Doorway Guests

Introduction from Chair of the Board of Trustees

1. The Board of Doorway Wiltshire took formal control of the work of Doorway from the DEVELOP Salvation Army partnership on 1 December 2010, when the assets of and responsibility for the work of the Project were formally transferred. Taking responsibility for a fully operational charity (as opposed to starting a new venture which would steadily grow) is proving to be quite a challenge.
2. Having had to learn how to establish a new charitable company, the new Doorway trustees are having to learn how to manage a complex enterprise. They recognise how much responsibility had been carried on her own by Lisa Lewis over the previous years. While some of the Directors have been associated with Doorway for many years (though in the role of volunteers), others have had to acquaint themselves with the work and ethos of Doorway.
3. The Board of Doorway Wiltshire Ltd meets monthly, and receives regular reports from the Chief Executive. In addition the Chair meets with Lisa on a regular basis to supervise her work. The immediate priority in December of improving the Charity's finances was achieved when a number of funders approved grants. In addition a number of fund-raising initiatives were taken. The Charity is grateful to all our partners for supporting the work of Doorway. We secured funding which allowed us to appoint Helen Taylor as an assistant support worker, to help at drop-in sessions for 10½ hours a week, with particular responsibility for helping guests moving on. The Board has also established a formal structure and constitution for the Friends of Doorway, with a remit to take responsibility for local fund-raising activities.
4. The Board has also embarked on the process of reviewing Doorway's policies and procedures, both in the light of our new structures of governance and changes brought about by time and development. A high priority is for Doorway to clarify what we are achieving with our guests. What constitutes 'success'? How do we measure it? A guest may cease to use our services because he or she no longer needs them; or because he or she is in prison, or is again sleeping rough. How do we know? Our funders and donors understandably want to know whether their money is being well spent. Doorway owes it to the community to be able to tell them, and the Board is working with its staff to design a system to answer these points.
5. The Trustees are also committed to further training and learning in a number of areas of governance (eg human resources, management, fund-raising, accounting), and are looking for additional Trustees to join them on the Board.
6. As Chair I would like to thank my fellow Trustees for their work and commitment, and in particular to thank Tracey Ahilan who takes our minutes, and May Hart who attends Board meetings as an observer from our partners at the Salvation Army.

SIMON TATTON-BROWN
May 2011

“Through the effort and skill of a small group of dedicated volunteers, this project has become independent, and a charity in its own right.

“Everyone has been, and still is, on a huge learning curve, but the passion felt by each one will see Doorway through!

“Each and every guest is important and makes us feel the commitment we make is worthwhile and valuable.”

Doorway Volunteer

Our Guests

Doorway Wiltshire is open to people over 16 who are affected by homelessness or are marginalised because they have complex needs which may include physical or mental health issues, poor life skills, debt, substance use or learning difficulties.

“Doorway is a place where dysfunctional people can coalesce and feel better about themselves. The volunteers are uniformly excellent and frequently have direct experience of the clients’ problems.

“I am a lonely drunk, without this kindness, I should wither and die more rapidly.”

Doorway Guest

Our Achievements

- After 7 years of operation, Doorway is now the key agency in Chippenham and north Wiltshire for homeless and marginalised young people and adults.
- Our work benefits not only the individuals who attend the drop-in but also the wider community, as guests are supported to move on in their lives away from substance dependency and reliance on welfare benefits and services.
- We also provide numerous volunteering opportunities for local people who want to make a difference in our community. We have an excellent track record for recruiting and retaining high quality volunteers on whose wide diversity of skills and life experience the success of the drop-in depends.
- Our unique position means that we are regularly consulted by Wiltshire Council, the media and other agencies for information and statistics about our client group. Our work with substance users addresses the Local Area Plan priority of action to deal with anti-social behaviour arising from drug and alcohol problems and addresses a number of other issues related to harder to reach groups. In 2010 we won the Wiltshire Health and Wellbeing Award for ‘Action to prevent drug and alcohol abuse’ for our work in the community and the drop-in.
- Our guests are encouraged to engage in social activities designed to build skills and self confidence as preparation for moving on (e.g. music, creative writing and football) and to contribute to our website and to our community blog which gives them a ‘voice’ locally and beyond.
- We have piloted our own programme of one to one support, helping guests to identify and work towards achieving positive changes they wish to make in their lives. We are currently planning to launch an AQA accredited training programme – Practical Housing Units – teaching skills needed to obtain and manage a tenancy. Our aim is to reduce recurring homelessness amongst guests who have tenancies but lack basic life skills.
- We work closely with other agencies including the Police, Housing Options and specialist health and welfare agencies. Partnerships add value to the service we provide at no extra cost to Doorway.
- Our Chief Executive works in senior schools within the National Curriculum to raise awareness of the realities of homelessness and life on the streets including violence, addiction and prostitution, aiming to reduce preventable homelessness among young people resulting from conflict at home.
- Our very effective community engagement programme promotes the needs of homeless and marginalised people locally, thereby helping to reduce discrimination against them, and also generates support for the positive work we do.
- The future of Doorway has now been secured, and a proper management structure is in place. We have excellent staff with a superb body of volunteers and a standard of good practice established over seven years.

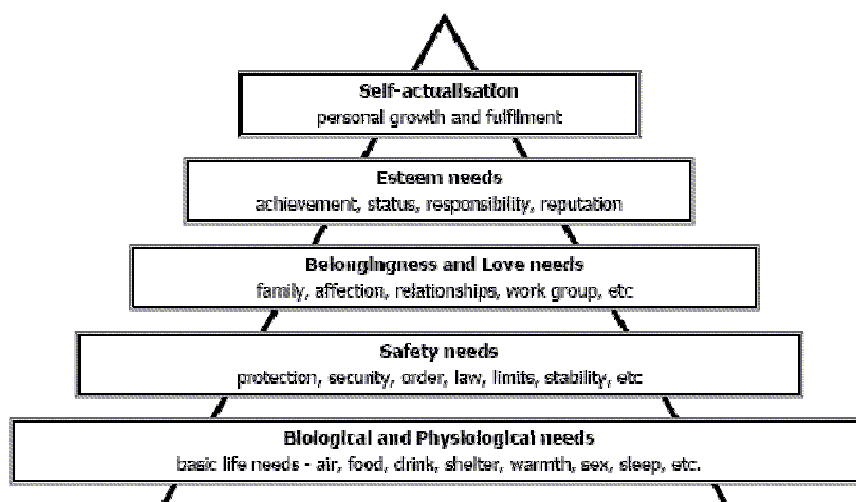
Core Activities - The Drop-in:

On Monday mornings and Thursday afternoons, Doorway operates a drop-in at the Salvation Army Hall, Foghamshire, Chippenham.

All services are free of charge and include:

- Freshly prepared hot meals
- Clean clothing and toiletries
- Shower and laundry facilities
- Street survival packs for those sleeping rough
- Support and signposting from trained staff
- Simple activities e.g. table tennis, Playstation, newspapers

One of the questions we are regularly asked is why Doorway doesn't charge for the services provided during sessions. One of the main reasons involves the concept of 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs':



Abraham Maslow 'Motivation and Personality', 1954

Doorway needs to be able to provide for the bottom layer i.e. guests' basic needs, before we can attempt to address any issues further up the pyramid. We do not charge for food, washing or showers because this is how we get people through the door in the first place.

Once they are in the session, and ready to engage, we can then use our 'extra' activities in order to assist them in moving up the layers. Sometimes guests need to visit on only one occasion to get the help that they require, but very often (and sometimes it can even take years) it takes a long time to break down the barriers, build trusting relationships and move people on in their lives...

At what point in that process do we decide that because a guest is not asking for help we should not allow them to use our facilities? Maybe it just needs a little more time and a little more patience and a large amount of belief in what we can achieve...

Structured Activities Provided Within the Drop-in Sessions:

Informal and more structured activities build skills and develop guests' self confidence and a belief that they can change their lives for the better.

“To facilitate music for people who’ve lost their way is an act of love for which I’m constantly grateful.”

Doorway Guest

Music workshops These monthly sessions were facilitated by Al Summers, a professional musician / teacher, and Ray Bradfield, a professional songwriter. We are very fortunate in that Doorway owns a highly professional set of musical equipment. Aims and objectives of the activity:-

- Through music, to engage with guests who find it hard to express themselves in words
- To encourage self expression and thus to increase self-esteem
- To encourage team work and mutual respect

“Thanks to Al and Ray for giving me a chance and believing in my potential.”

Doorway Guest

This year the Doorway band recorded original material and produced their own CD. They also performed, in public, at the Doorway Gig Night in January 2010 to promote Homelessness Sunday as part of Poverty and Homelessness Action Week.



“2010 saw a real ‘raising of the game’ for the music workshops... The ability to communicate, using this universal language, is extraordinary. The sessions, many years ago quite understated, are now emotionally rich, from great humour to deep spirituality.

“I’m constantly moved by what is expressed during these sessions: two hours passes with often few words but very effective mutual understanding.

“On a personal level running these sessions is life-affirming: I spend time with some very pleasant people and frequently meet with a degree of courtesy which seems all too uncommon now.”

Al Summers, Music Workshop Facilitator

Creative writing sessions were run fortnightly by a volunteer and embrace all levels of reading and writing skills. Aims and objectives of the activity:-

- To engage with guests whatever their level of literacy
- To provide a means for self expression and creativity which is universally accessible
- To build confidence and self-esteem

Poems can be found on the Doorway Blog at: <http://doorwayproject.wordpress.com/author/iambwotiamb/>

“Writing’s not the easiest of the expressive arts because it comes with an accretion of rules, education, formality and embarrassment. I find many of the guests I talk to say they can’t write because they can’t spell or don’t have neat hand writing or little grasp of punctuation and grammar, and this misperception is a real barrier to starting. What I wanted to foster was the idea that when we write creatively we can forget the rules, forget what we learnt or didn’t learn at school, forget any sense of having to conform or that writing is done in a particular way by

certain people. I wanted to free writing from all of these constraints and say, as it were, “let’s see what happens.”

Doorway Volunteer & Creative Writing Workshop Facilitator

IT training sessions were run weekly by a professional Westlea e-Chippenham agent. Doorway guests often do not have the confidence to attend college or other facilities open to the public. Aims and objectives of the activity:-

- Teach basic computer skills
- Enable guests to write CVs, research employment opportunities and access information about accommodation, benefits etc
- Signpost guests to more formal courses if appropriate

Structured Activities Provided Outside the Drop-in Sessions:

Football (indoor 5-a-side) sessions were run weekly at Ladyfield Church, Chippenham. Run by Doorway’s Support Worker, a current Sunday League player, and supported by trained volunteers, these sessions were also facilitated by Chris Ballinger, an external professional who runs Chippenham Futsal Club.

“The football was a great relief for me and enabled me to take my mind off of things.”

Doorway Guest

Aims and objectives of the activity:-

- Offer access to sporting opportunities not usually available to our guests
- Engage with guests who are more comfortable expressing themselves through physical activity
- Encourage teamwork and social cohesion, and counteract boredom which might lead to destructive behaviour
- Build skills which might enable some to join local teams
- Increase guests’ self confidence and belief that they can positively change their own lives
- Offer volunteering opportunities to people who are at work during the day and are therefore unable to volunteer during drop-in sessions



“We have been delighted to host Doorway’s football project during this session...we were also keen to use the building for projects which would be of help in the community. As a church we have to consider any proposals with great care. When Doorway approached us last summer with their proposal we were delighted, and they have not let us down in any way.

“We have been impressed by the dedication of the volunteers and the obvious enthusiasm of the participants not only in the summer but through the cold dark winter nights. They are a terrific bunch and deserve all the support we (the Community) can give. We wish Doorway staff, stakeholders and volunteers every success.”

Douglas Sheddon, Ladyfield Church

Tuesday Arts and Crafts Sessions were run weekly at the United Reformed Church, Chippenham. These workshops were started this year in order to continue the work of ReachOut, by providing support and diversionary activity to the 16-25 age group who are affected by their own or others' substance use. Doorway launched the sessions with a series of workshops facilitated by an organisation called "No Added Sugar" and commissioned / funded by Vinolved Wiltshire, aiming to train potential volunteers between 16 and 25 so that they can, themselves, deliver community arts workshops and projects, and thereby to further train other young people.

Outcome Report Guest D

Guest D had been coming to Doorway for many years. Throughout that time he had struggled with drug and alcohol dependencies, relationship failure and ill health. In the past, he had been given and lost tenancies and had spiralled further and further down.

Guest D was frequently a rough sleeper or a sofa surfer. He was often viewed as an easy target by his associates and he reached his lowest point last December when he was assaulted and left in a phone box in sub zero temperatures. He was bleeding from wounds and had suffered a skull fracture. Guest D was found by a passer-by who called an ambulance.

Whilst in hospital Guest D was visited by a Doorway volunteer who, on a second visit discovered that he was due to be discharged as medically fit to go home as the hospital records showed a former address for him. The Doorway volunteer was able to talk at length to the ward nursing staff and Doctor and assure them the Guest D had, in fact, nowhere to stay and if he were to be discharged, the prognosis was likely to be poor as temperatures had fallen even further. The ward agreed to retain him until Doorway and other agencies could find safe provision for him.

Guest D was now clean from drugs and alcohol and determined to make a fresh start. He knew that if he was to succeed, his best chance was well away from Chippenham and his former associates. Senior Doorway staff then had to work swiftly as Christmas Eve wasn't far away.

Working closely with other agencies, a safe and suitable place was found for Guest D and on Christmas Eve a senior Doorway staff member took him there, and also ensured that adequate care / medical care such as drug and alcohol support was put in place.

Guest D keeps in touch with Doorway. He has settled well in his new environment and is now doing voluntary work under the guidance of the staff at his new home.

"Found it to be extremely rewarding, it is fun as there is a lovely atmosphere amongst the volunteers and guests. I find that I receive probably more from attending than I give... Think I've gained confidence and learnt that although I can't provide all the answers, knowing that someone wants to listen is very important"

Doorway Volunteer

Guest Survey 2010

In November and December 2010 Doorway conducted a survey of its guests, with the aim of producing a guest profile and statistics for funding purposes. The format was based on our 2008 survey but expanded to include questions on Housing Options and Homes for Wiltshire and provide information on guests' prison sentences, literacy and voting rights. The response to the survey was very positive as we had 42 respondents and only 1 refusal.

The survey gave us broad information on issues faced by our guests, for example, 50% have been to prison, 63% suffer from mental health problems and there is a high level of substance misuse. More pertinent however are the results about specific problems and the connections between many of these issues. I have written a report on the findings of the survey called 'The Face of Homelessness' which suggests that the state and society are failing to deal with the interconnected issues faced by the 'homeless'. The report focuses in detail on substance misuse, mental health, prison time, employment, and education and tries to show that 'homelessness' is very often used as a broad term to describe

housing status, but in reality describes the chaotic lifestyle that is a sum of many inextricably linked issues.

Although the survey was a simple piece of research from a specific sample of people it provides us with an insight into the issues dealt with by our guests, and how very often their complex needs are not met. This first piece of research by Doorway provides a broad view of the interconnected issues faced by our guests, and will hopefully in time be followed up by some more detailed research into specific problems. The conclusion of the report suggests that currently our guests experience multi-deprivation and that their needs are not met in society. Furthermore, it states that with our current government and the introduction of spending cuts it is highly unlikely that their needs will be met in the near future.

'The Face of Homelessness' Report on findings from the guest survey completed in December 2010 is available separately from Doorway.

Helen Taylor, Doorway Support Worker

"There's such a positive vibe in the air when the hall is full. I often just listen to it – speaking volumes about the importance of the work Doorway does. Important and wonderful."

Doorway Volunteer

Community Engagement

A key element of our work is our active and continuous public engagement programme which reaches all levels of our community. The main aims of this programme are to:-

- Increase public understanding and awareness of issues relating to homeless people and others with complex needs in our community.
- Reduce fear and prejudice against homeless and marginalised adults in our community.
- Reduce hostility and aggressive acts against homeless and marginalised adults – particularly from gangs of young people.
- Increase social inclusion and improve community safety for the benefit of the whole community.
- Maintain a high and positive profile for Doorway and increase local 'ownership' and commitment to support the organisation.

We will do this by means of:-

- Our comprehensive and accessible website which receives several thousand unique hits per month.
- A high degree of search engine optimisation, thereby ensuring that we are easily found on the internet.
- Our dynamic PR and Marketing programme which attracts regular positive media coverage.
- Maximum use of networking opportunities in business, voluntary, Church and statutory sectors.
- Raising awareness amongst young people in schools and colleges by contributing to modules on homelessness issues as part of the National Curriculum.
- Giving talks to a diverse range of groups within the community.
- Organising major events each year which generate publicity and support for our work.

"Doorway helps me understand the true value of a smile, a hello and having someone to talk to without the fear of being judged. What I give to Doorway as a Volunteer is returned in equal measure."

Doorway Volunteer

'Moving On' Project

The Moving On Project was piloted at Doorway in 2007. Since then, we have completed two sets of training for volunteers to become Moving On volunteers and worked with a number of guests with very positive results. (See Annual Reports from 2007-2008 and 2008-2009)

With the recruitment of a new assistant support worker, who was a volunteer trained on the first Moving On pilot scheme, we have been able to expand on the project for 2011. We are currently running the project with the inclusion of the Outcomes Star[®] System, developed by Triangle Consulting, for one to one support work with the homeless and vulnerably housed. This system is a visual tool which enables guests to assess certain areas in their lives that they may have problems with and consequently form action plans with SMART targets to gradually make changes in these areas.

The use of the Star fully supports the aim of the Moving On project, and more widely Doorway's aim, of guest led change. The Star is also a tool which can be used to measure change. This has a double function, first to allow guests to see the change they have achieved but also to provide measurable outcomes of support for statistics and further funding applications.

The Moving On Project with the use of the Outcomes Star[®] System is currently being run as a 3 month pilot by the assistant support worker, who will then train volunteers to continue the project. As well as being able to provide one to one support at Doorway, the awareness of the Moving On Project amongst all volunteers has allowed interaction and support within the drop-in sessions to be of a higher quality, with a constant emphasis on volunteers as enablers to encourage guest led change.

Overview of This Year's Project:

This year, the first out of the 3 years I have worked on the Moving On Project, I have noticed that there are limits on the project. This is no fault of the project itself, or of the guests or worker but rather a reflection of the current political and social climate that we are in. Both guests A and B that I am working with are completing all of their action plans and engaging fully with our and outside services.

Guest A is currently job hunting and is finding it difficult to make ends meet. He is waiting on an appeal for his Disability Living Allowance which won't happen until August and is attending training programmes, job fairs and regularly getting interviews for jobs. We had to stop the Moving On Project after 6 weeks as the job centre sent him on a compulsory training course, which is 10am-5pm every weekday for 13 weeks. It will cost A £8.40 a day to travel to this course which after the first week was reimbursed. He did however have to forgo grocery shopping the weekend before the course started in order for him to get to the first few days. Although after completing the Star at his review (and final) Moving On meeting the guest believed his ability to budget had improved, he nevertheless stated about his life and finances that 'everything is completely out of my control.'

This was a similar sentiment to Guest B who is attending meetings with social services in order to get custody of his child. B is attending every social services meeting, successfully completing drug treatment and looking for work. But is nevertheless waiting on decisions and actions that are out of his control.

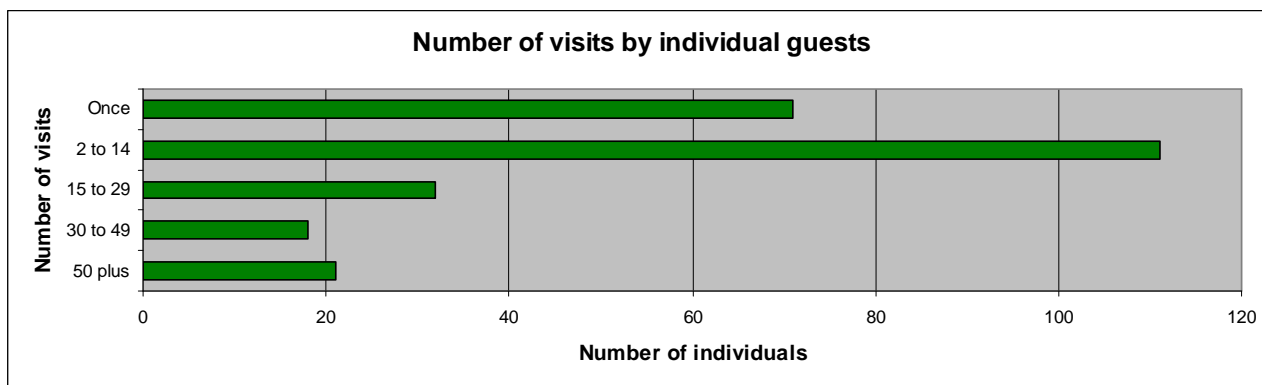
When I looked into the situations of other guests at Doorway I realised that powerlessness is appearing to be a common factor between all of our guests. Many are waiting on the results of benefits changes to see whether they will still qualify for disability benefit for example. Some are concerned about crucial services closing down or losing tenders such as Wiltshire Mind. Others are jumping through every hoop that the job centre asks them to, but in the current economic climate still cannot find a job. Many are desperate to go into drug and alcohol treatment but are waiting on funding for rehab, which is very scarce. Although being on waiting lists, for housing for example, has long been a common theme of those who are homeless, I do feel that with the current political and social situation this has permeated into other, or perhaps all, services and areas of support. Furthermore, this feeling of waiting for change to happen seems to be rapidly degenerating into a feeling of powerlessness. So, however we support our guests, whether it be in the sessions or through one to one work, we are limited by factors outside of our control, namely the state.

Helen Taylor, Doorway Support Worker

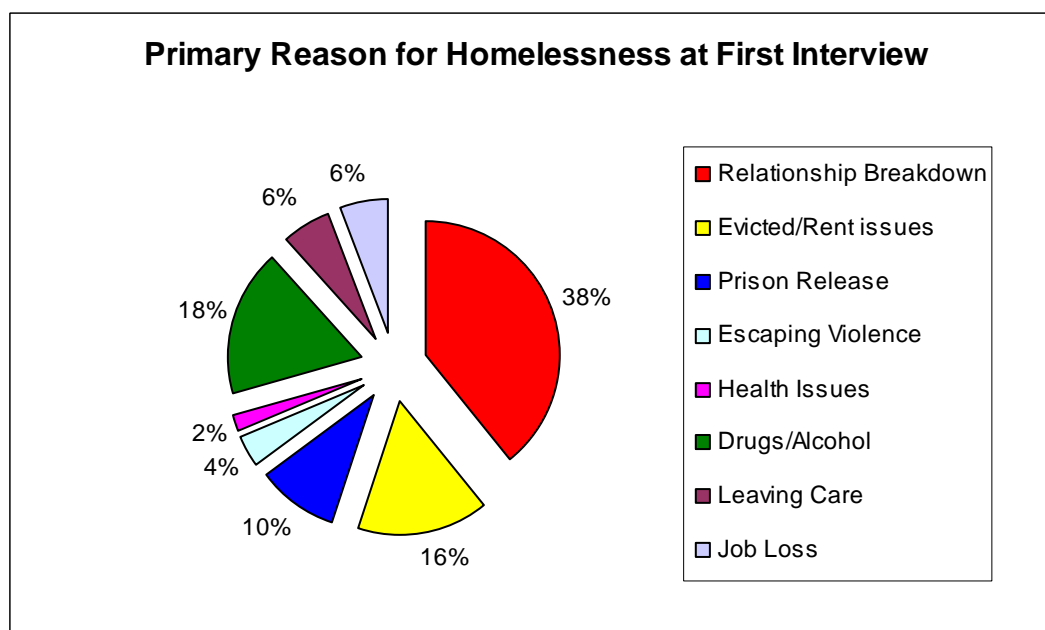
Monitoring the Drop-in

Between April 1st 2010 and March 31st 2011:

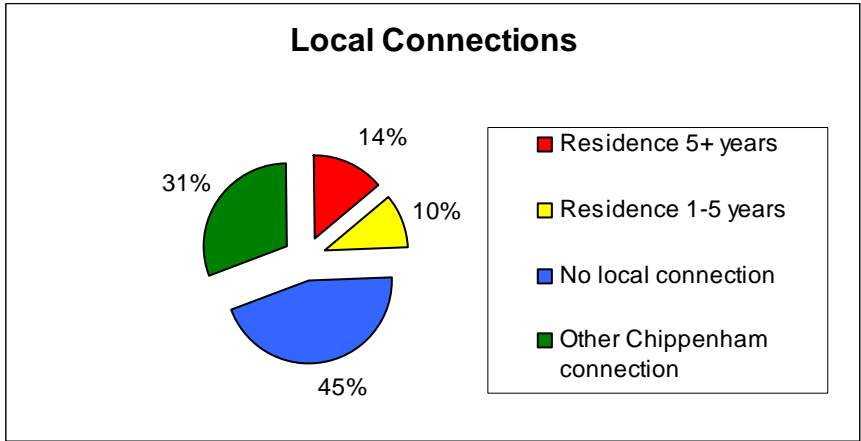
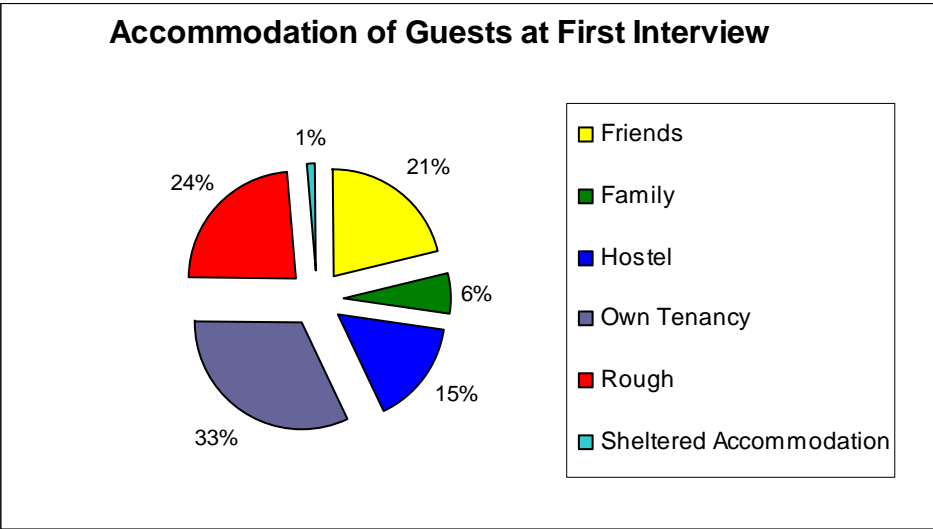
- We opened for 99 sessions and served 4807 meals
- Average attendance was 38.2
- Up to 7 guests were sleeping rough in or near Chippenham on any one night
- 253 individuals used the drop-in - of these about 28% visited only once
- 109 attended for the first time = 43%



Of those who attended for the first time, 81% were willing to give detailed information about themselves:

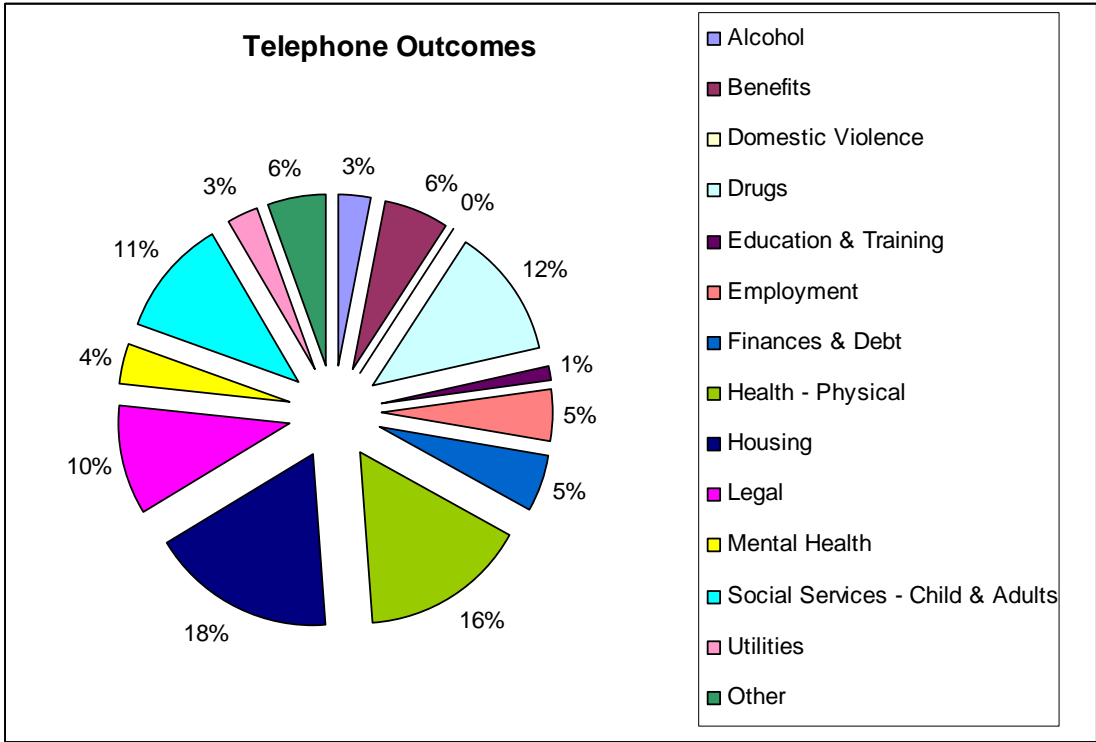


- 24% were sleeping rough
- The primary reason for homelessness was the result of relationship breakdown = 38%
- 16% of guests interviewed stated the primary reason for homelessness was eviction due to rent issues. This compares to a figure of 7% for the previous reporting year
- 33% of those interviewed had a tenancy but had complex needs likely to affect their ability to manage and sustain the tenancy
- The average age was 38 – but nearly 30% were aged under 25



- 55% of all those who attended and who were willing to give information either had a strong local connection with Chippenham or North Wiltshire, or resided in the area

All telephone calls made by guests or on behalf of guests are recorded during the drop-in sessions:-



Resources – The Team

One of our greatest strengths and crucial to the success of the project, is the team of paid and voluntary staff who bring such a wide variety of skills and experience to the project, united by their deep commitment to our guests and our community.

“Warm, supportive environment from both staff/volunteers. Eye opening...expected it to be interesting but didn't expect to love it...I've worked in other voluntary roles but without a doubt, this is the most supportive environment I've ever been in. When given thanks, it feels genuine.”

Doorway Volunteer

Staff

We currently have 4 part-time paid staff employed by Doorway Wiltshire Ltd:

1. Lisa Lewis, Chief Executive, responsible for day to day management of the project; recruiting, training and supervising volunteers; provision of direct support to guests; community engagement; fundraising; marketing and PR.
2. Sian Cooper, responsible for all administrative support.
3. Kevin Long, Support Worker and Deputy Drop-in Manager, responsible for supporting and signposting guests within drop-in sessions; facilitating football training and Tuesday arts and crafts sessions.
4. Helen Taylor, Assistant Support Worker, responsible for supporting and signposting guests within drop-in sessions; facilitating the Moving On project.

Volunteers

Crucial to our success has been the high ratio of staff to guests, ensuring that we maintain a safe environment where guests receive individual support when they need it. Most of our staff are trained volunteers who work to a rota and we need at least 10 volunteers per session.

“Doorway – caring, positive, non-judgemental, professional, unsentimental, led by example, always striving to improve, no wonder guests come back week after week.”

Doorway Volunteer

We have an excellent record for retaining volunteers and surveys show a high level of satisfaction with the training they receive. At present we have 45 trained drop-in volunteers plus community based Friends of Doorway. They are aged between 18 and 75 and bring a wide variety of professional and life experience to their roles. Some are seeking paid work and hope to enhance their CVs by working at Doorway. All volunteers have enhanced CRB clearance.

Around 25% of volunteers move on during the year and we run a continuous recruitment programme. All drop-in volunteers receive a one to one interview / induction session covering our aims and our ethos as well as elements of Health and Safety, Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities. This is followed by practical experience in the drop-in. Only when we are satisfied that volunteers are suitable, do they sign a formal agreement and join our team.

“It has been an eye opener on some of the stories I have learnt. I always feel a lot better when I leave as it makes you appreciate what you have. I have loved working with the guests and the volunteers, the atmosphere is amazing and so friendly.”

Doorway Volunteer

The de-brief after each drop-in session is a time to share information and offer mutual support and our monthly team meeting offers information and further training. In the last year training sessions open to all drop-in volunteers have included Active Listening, Assertiveness, Food Hygiene, Issues Around Homelessness, Drugs / Alcohol Awareness, Mental Health Awareness, First Aid Training. Benefits and Child Protection training are on the list for the coming year.

Annual staff surveys indicate that volunteers feel well supported to do this challenging but highly rewarding work.

“I always feel valued as a volunteer and very much appreciated. It’s a pleasure to come to work, and to know a variety of people.”

Doorway Volunteer

Friends Of Doorway

The main role of the Friends of Doorway is to raise funds in the community by means of street collections and other events.

In addition, the Friends’ Committee assist with awareness-raising in the local community in line with Doorway’s PR strategy and in consultation with the Chief Executive.

Friends of Doorway are a passionate group of volunteers who are always open to ideas for more fund raising events and are interested in recruiting more members.

Partnerships

No organisation can work alone within this sector. Our guests often have a multitude of complex needs and in order to enable them to address their individual issues, it is imperative that we work in collaboration with other local specialist support services.

“Doorway is a vital resource for the homeless and disadvantaged in the Chippenham area... (It) has also recently become a useful hub for local support agencies to meet and exchange ideas and information. It is by far the best drop-in service I have attended in Wiltshire.”

Stuart Harris, Support Worker, Community4

In order to achieve our aim of extremely effective signposting, Doorway has worked very hard over the last year to both develop existing relationships, and to establish new partnership working opportunities.

“Practical, inspiring, a safe place where change becomes possible... I would mention this as a model that similar projects could emulate / aspire to.”

Gail Foster, Substance Misuse Worker, New Highway

Doorway actively encourages other services to attend our weekly drop-in sessions. We have proved that guests are more likely to engage with specialist services within our informal and welcoming environment, and we also provide guests with a consistent point of contact.

“I attend four drop in centres across the county and believe by far that Doorway is the most professionally run of them all. Doorway is the centre I see with the most attendees and each and every staff member / volunteer is a credit to the organisation...”

“It also enables me to form more positive working relationships with colleagues from other agencies and this in turn benefits the client if a referral or handover is needed.”

Emma Hurst, Wiltshire DIP Worker, Wiltshire Criminal Justice DIP Team

Over the last year, the following agencies have regularly attended the Doorway weekly drop-in sessions:

- Community4
- Westlea
- Cranstoun
- New Highway
- Wiltshire Criminal Justice Drugs Interventions Programme (DIP)
- Specialist Drug and Alcohol Service (SDAS) Blood Borne Virus (BBV) Team

Strategic Planning & Future Plans for 2011/12

- Continue to ensure that the services which currently form the core activities of the organisation are of the highest quality and fully funded.
- Continue to develop additional opportunities which have been identified to meet needs, but which are not currently being addressed:
 1. community gardening project.
 2. complementary therapies to include auricular acupuncture.
- Continue to review and develop the Moving On programme so that it can evolve to include more guests with differing levels of support.
- Launch an AQA accredited training programme – Practical Housing Units – teaching skills needed to obtain and manage a tenancy. Our aim is to reduce recurring homelessness amongst guests who have tenancies but lack basic life skills.
- Investigate and research opportunities for drop-in sessions in other nearby towns ie Malmesbury and Calne.
- Investigate and research the possibility of a multi-agency outreach project.
- Investigate and research opportunities for a community centre offering a service for the increasing numbers of Doorway guests who have been affected by the current economic climate. We believe that there are also a significant number of individuals who are not currently accessing our services.
- Investigate and research the opportunity for a social enterprise charity shop. This exciting venture would enable guests to offer their services, thereby increasing their own self confidence and sense of purpose which would tie in with our “Moving On” programme.
- Continue to develop our work with schools and colleges to reduce preventable homelessness among young people and to dispel prejudice which leads to the victimisation of homeless people.
- Continue to develop our work with local businesses to increase awareness and opportunities for sponsorship.
- Actively seek new partnerships which will enhance our services to guests.
- Maintain a high and positive profile for Doorway and increase local ‘ownership’ and commitment to support the project.

Fundraising Strategy

- Continue to research and apply for charitable funding, locally and nationally.
- Build relationships with local statutory and voluntary agencies to achieve local partnerships and short to medium term grant funding.
- Be alert to new funding streams generally. Explore possibilities for government and EU funding.
- Exploit opportunities for business sponsorship.
- Give support to the newly reconstituted Friends of Doorway.
- Increase income and contributions in kind from the community via our Community Engagement programme.
- Increase planned giving by standing order and from gift-aided donations.

“I am most impressed with the commitment and sense of purpose which all the staff demonstrate, It gives us volunteers great confidence to know there is that quality of support available to us.”

Doorway Volunteer