

WINDSOR CHRISTIAN ACTION

NEWSLETTER June 2016

By the time of our AGM in September, FoodShare will be a project of WCA and we look forward to welcoming a member of their Steering Group as a Trustee. This project is meeting a vital need in Windsor and has been built up in a most professional way by its coordinator, Sarah Howard, and Dedworth Green Baptist Church. Sadly, it is likely to be needed by vulnerable families and individuals for the foreseeable future, and will continue to need the support and generosity of our community.

This month we have said farewell to Frank Deakin who has resigned as a membership Trustee after a year in office. And we shall say farewell to Stephanie Minici who is standing down in September. Although she will no longer work as a Trustee, she will not be lost to WCA. She has been a volunteer with the Homeless Project from the beginning and will continue to run the Saturday team and contribute in other ways. We are immensely grateful for her dedication and her hard work – not least her skills as a cook and a hostess. Anyone who has attended the HP Christmas lunch will know what we mean!

Anne Dowling has had a busy first three months as Treasurer, just now grappling with HMRC and gift aid, and setting up an account with JustGiving. Nothing is quite so simple as one would wish.

A commercial company will be running a team building exercise next month, doing valuable work for the Homeless Project, and for Windsor Baptist Church and St.Stephen's. The kitchens at both churches are to be redecorated, with more substantial refurbishment undertaken at the Baptist Church. And the redecoration of the accommodation of two guests will also take place, which will give a real boost to morale. All this in one day!

Remember: our AGM is a public meeting. Do come – you'll be most welcome. It will last for about an hour, followed by refreshments. Here's the date for your diary: Tuesday 20th September at 8pm in St.Edward's RE Centre, Dorset Road.



During the past thirteen nights and We regularly get seen on our website

fulsome praise for the Angels given by some Ambulance staff. The good observational skills of the Angels not only identifies those people who need assistance, but also criminal behaviour which has sometimes led to very speedy intervention by the police.

Corinne, our part-time worker, is collaborating with Jane Deakin of the Homeless Project in setting up a Christmas card competition with some schools and community organisations. Windsor Christian Action wants to market its own Christmas card and, thereby, draw attention to the important work it is doing in our community. We're looking for someone to help us in the creation of a poster to advertise this initiative. We're also looking for a sponsor who will meet the cost of production and the competition prizes. Watch this space!

three months, the Angels have patrolled on that gave them some extremely busy shifts. very appreciative feedback, which can be and Facebook page, and we recently heard

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The possibility of making a promotional film by a creative arts company that works with youngsters who display behavioural difficulties is being explored. Teaming up with other community groups is something we want to do whenever we can.

Currently we have 21 Street Angels and one in training. Training sessions have been held in Autism Awareness, and Drug/Alcohol Awareness. Permission has been given by Windsor Royal Station for regular recruitment stalls to run at weekends in the concourse; we're very grateful for this opportunity.



Our new Manager, Murphy James, has also had a busy first three months. He is currently working with Sally and Jane to make a business plan for the coming year which will give us a budget goal to work for in our fund-raising. Fundraising is a continuing activity. Spring Bank Holiday Monday saw four of our volunteers at the Racecourse rattling buckets for the Project, and receiving c.£260 in donations, something we plan to repeat. Jane Deakin is planning to do a sponsored paraglide this summer, and Murphy is contemplating a sky dive. Brave souls indeed! The ACT Foundation has generously agreed to match funding received from local churches this year up to £10,000. That's a huge challenge and we live in hope. With three part-time workers, salary costs are now in the region of £30,000 pa . That sounds a lot for a small project but we know they give a really important service to the homeless and those at risk of homelessness. Read on.....

Drug/alcohol treatment has been initiated with three guests, two of whom are now off heroin and onto a stable methadone prescription. Another has been making headway on his depression issues. A text from a guest on Murphy's phone runs: "thanks for every think [sic] mate was nt for you would nt be here right now".

A guest of long-standing is now in part-time work; he's enjoying employment and told one of our volunteers how great it is to be earning some money and no longer dependent on state benefits. Three more guests have been housed. They will need continuing support for quite a time, to acquire necessary furniture and household items, and to settle into the responsibilities of holding a tenancy. Murphy and his team have been building stronger relationships with other services: A worker from Housing Options has been coming to the Wednesday lunch session each week to help guests with their housing issues. An Anxiety Management Coach also attends lunch sessions, giving her time voluntarily, so guests can get to know her and – if they wish – use the help she can give.

A training session for volunteers on homelessness took place last month and this will be repeated from time to time. From this training, four volunteers have become interested in working more closely with guests; appropriate training will be arranged to enable this to happen. We're delighted to report that we've recently seen an increase in the number of volunteers, up from fortyfive to fifty-nine. This should help us in due course to offer an extra lunch session each week at Windsor Baptist Church.

There are still rough sleepers in Windsor and **rough sleepers need sleeping bags**. If any of our readers have a sleeping bag to spare please contact wcahomelessproject@gmail.com or ring Jane Deakin on 07972 646613

We continue to receive most valuable support from Pret a Manger, Cinnamon, Tesco, and Marks & Spencer who provide us with food they can no longer offer for sale, and Waitrose for financial donations. We give our heartfelt thanks to these local businesses.

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