



a bed for the night

Reading Churches Night Shelter

2016

Report



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In association with



Reading Christian Network and Reading Street Pastors





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B4N Report – 2016

Introduction and Acknowledgements

From the Director:-

I would particularly like to thank Louise who picked up this project and ran with it so enthusiastically, efficiently and effectively. Her gentle manner smoothed over many a minor problem and it was clear that she was well-loved by all the guests.

I would also like to thank all the other members of Faith staff who picked up at least one of the mornings and evenings each week to ensure continuity.

Special thanks go to Mark Glover (staff) and Dave Bolton (Salvation Army volunteer) for ensuring that the beds and bedding got to where they need to be.

Malcolm

We would like to acknowledge all the Church leaders who gave permission for their premises to be used; for all the financial implications of running the shelter; all the volunteers who gave of their time, especially those who stayed overnight, not to mention the small army of amazing cooks!

A special thanks goes to all the venue co-ordinator's for their hard work and their patience at times. Without them the shelter couldn't possibly function.

Finally, as per last year's Report it would be wrong to launch into this Report without acknowledging the Holy Spirit. None of this would have been possible without Him prompting us and carrying us through.

His Presence has been strongly felt throughout and I am very grateful to Him for all he is doing and all he continues to do.

"Keep on Loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering"

Hebrews 13 1-3

Malcolm and Louise



St. Laurence's Church Interior



LifeSpring Church Kitchen Team



Much of the first few pages of this report are a straight repeat of the 2015 report, in case you have already seen that. This report is intended for anyone interested in finding out about the shelter and how it runs. If you have been involved as a volunteer or leader in any capacity, **there is a fuller report available containing recommendations for next year,** which you can receive from us if you email malc@fcg.org.uk

Background

From the very beginning when Jim McConnel took sandwiches out to a rough sleeper over 25 years ago, through the winter night shelter run in 2003, God has been speaking to us about the need to provide a roof over the head of rough sleepers.

More recently a seminar at the 2013 New Wine Christian Conference led our Chairman Nick Beard to recommend looking into the Housing Justice model of Night Shelters.

Initial discussion with a couple of senior Church leaders in the town indicated that this was both the right thing to do, but also feasible.

As Christians we cannot escape the weight of scripture which calls us:-

*to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?
to share your food with the hungry and
to provide the poor wanderer with shelter'
Isaiah 58 v 6 +*

*'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me,
I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me...
I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me'
Jesus (Matthew 22v37)*

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
for he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released,
that the blind will see, that the downtrodden will be freed from their oppressors,
and that the time of the Lord's favour has come."
Jesus (Luke 4:18-19)*

"Love your neighbour as yourself" - Jesus

"The biblical basis for the project, and the importance of prayer to underpin it, was more clear here than in some church-based projects, which felt like a strength of the project without being uncomfortable to volunteers or guests of other faiths or none. The emphasis on prayer to underpin its smooth running is a good model for other church-based Shelters to consider"

Rachel Makin, Housing Justice



History

Faith Christian Group has always been committed to setting up some form of provision for rough sleepers. Feeding guys of an evening only to leave them to return to their spot behind a bush or under a bridge has always felt very inadequate. Our 'articles of association' actually commit us to working towards a 24-7 model.

We currently have a small housing project aimed at men, mostly in recovery from addictions, who would otherwise be homeless. "Stepping Stones" is currently a two-phase project, like two rungs on a ladder. "A Bed for the Night" would provide the first rung up off the street.

In January 2014 a small team visited Southall and Ealing Night Shelter and were impressed with the how well the model worked. In this case they had 21 churches running over 3 months.

We were fairly confident that we could find 7 local churches in Reading that would catch the vision. Reading has a great history over the past 18 years or so of co-operation between congregations, even to the extent of often referring to there being only ONE Church in Reading. However, it was clear to us that to try to go for two or three months straight off would be ill-advised for very good reasons.

1. To ask any one congregation in Reading to contemplate more than 4 nights straight off was a big ask
2. We had no definitive data on numbers of rough sleepers. Published local authority figures were so low as to appear unreliable. We could only go on two factors:-
 - a. Numbers of people seen by Street Pastors and by our own Soup Runs
 - b. The size of the problem implied by St Mungo's Broadway employing 4 workers for the Reading Street Team

To have launched assuming, say 30 long term rough sleepers, needing help over 2/3 months, only to find half a dozen men in need of shelter, could have involved unnecessary costs and time.

We did some background research including assessing the likely costs of the Night Shelter and in September 2014 we introduced the vision to a group of Church leaders. The response was very positive and after a few email circulars and a couple of meetings we had come up with the full complement of 7 churches and agreed a timetable.

In parallel with this we approached Reading Borough Council to gain their approval for St. Mungos Broadway to work with us. It was then a case of drawing up documentation and designing suitable training for volunteers. This involved a huge amount of work to meet the requirements of the local authority in particular which we can really only now justify in terms of the night shelter recurring in subsequent years.

Costs

The direct cash costs of the Project in 2015 totalled £7,450 of which £3,975 was funded by restricted donations from Churches, Organisations and Individuals. 2016 cost slightly less having fewer set up costs this time around.

Some costs are 'hidden', such as food provided. It should also be borne in mind that the real costs, if you were to include rent of properties, heat, light, cooking, cleaning, borne by the churches, are actually very, very much more. That's without calculating the value of hours donated by volunteers.



Aims and Objectives of the Night Shelter

The aim was to provide nightly accommodation in local church buildings throughout the month of January.

The proposal was to provide accommodation for up to 15 male and 3 female rough sleepers, at local churches, in January 2015. The model was simple and well-tried elsewhere. The seven churches model works on the basis that a rota of local churches offer one night per week each. Over a month, that would mean only 4 nights in all for any one participating Church.

It was felt as simply wrong that anyone should have to sleep rough in an affluent town. However we know that many rough sleepers are happy to cope outdoors most of the year, it is the cold winter months that hit hardest.

A permanent night shelter is objected to generally as it might become full of people who simply never move on

A temporary - winter months only - provision in various venues would:-

- remove any sense of permanence
- avoid the overheads of a permanent building
- spread the burden of provision
- allow for flexibility

Most towns already running this scheme have started by covering 4 weeks in January in the first year, then, finding that it is rewarding and possible, have gone on to cover a second month and possibly even three, in the second or third year.





Planning

Most of the original planning was undertaken by Malcolm Peirce, Director of Faith Christian Group.

A strategy was devised by which to introduce the idea to Church leaders, build interest and confidence among key leaders and then formally launch the proposal. It was realised from the outset that Churches are incredibly busy places. Church leaders too are stretched in all directions and are often approached with new projects and ideas, which often call for finance. It was decided that we should promote this as a pilot scheme intended to see both what the real need was like out on the street and whether we could deliver what was needed.

FCG set aside funds so that from day one money was not an issue. Malcolm approached a few key leaders and sowed the idea. The interest from the beginning was very positive. By the time it came to more formally launch the proposal there was already buy-in from a number of leaders.

Co-ordinator

Research into existing Night Shelters suggested that we would need to employ a paid manager/co-ordinator to oversee the project so as to ensure consistency and safety; to act as the coordinator of the rota; to ensure that everything and everyone was in the right place at the right time; to liaise with St. Mungos-Broadway and to agree who is eligible to use the provision. The post ran from October 2014 to February 2015 and then November 2015 to March 2016.

Preliminary meetings

The first meeting of interested church leaders and other significant people decided upon a Steering Group / Core Team to take things forward and was able to establish the nights each Church would be responsible for. It was quickly agreed to include Street Pastors as a resource to support venues on the door.

Core Team

The Core Team for 2016 consisted of:-

Malcolm Peirce (Director FCG & member of LifeSpring Church)

Louise Lawler (FCG – Night Shelter Project Manager)

Iain Hudson (Salvation Army)

Christiaan Bijl (B4M Co-ordinator Central Corps – Community Worker Salvation Army)

John Davies (Minister Providence Chapel)

Sally Leonard (Street Pastor Co-ordinator & member of LifeSpring Church)

Vicky Parting (Mustard Tree Foundation / RAHAB & St Laurence's Church)

Charlie Payne (Carey Baptist)



Organisation & Structure

RESPONSIBILITY

Each church has ultimate responsibility for the running of the night provision. Security of the building has to be thought about. Access to certain areas need restricting.

VENUE CO-ORDINATORS/MANAGERS

Each Church appoints their own supervisor to head up their team of volunteers.

INSURANCE

Public Liability insurance for volunteers was covered by FCG. Each church's own buildings, contents and public liability cover were checked for the unusual aspect of overnight sleeping.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

With help and support from FCG, each venue carries out its own Risk Assessment to ensure as best they could the safety of volunteers, guests and buildings.

VOLUNTEER TEAM

Each church provides a team supplemented where possible or necessary by people from other churches, perhaps those unable to provide a venue themselves. All volunteers were required to undergo training by Faith Christian Group. Each evening required:- a supervisor; hospitality team; kitchen team; overnight volunteers; breakfast team; clearing away team



Some of the Carey Kitchen Team



SLEEPING

Camp beds, duvets and pillows are provided by Faith and moved from venue to venue each day. Duvet covers, sheets and pillow cases are provided by each venue. All bed linen is washed each week.



The Salvation Army "Bedroom"

FOOD

A hot evening meal is provided by each venue, along with breakfast the following morning. This required a fresh couple of volunteers arriving very early.



An example of the Quality Fayre provided



HOSPITALITY

Hospitality had to be right at the top of our priorities. Anyone rough sleeping has found themselves there through a complex set of circumstances, some probably of their own making, others imposed upon them. Many in our experience will have been through the care system, yet others the armed forces. All need love, care and a great deal of patience. Friendship is the big requirement, however, various activities, table games, T.V. etc. would really help make guests feel at home.



Street Pastors on the door

WASHING

Toilet facilities were provided together with some basic washing facility.

ACCESS

Once the local authority felt reassured that the scheme would be run safely, permission was given for [St Mungos Broadway](#) to “gate-keep” the access list. Each day they provided a list of eligible guests. A limit of 15 men and 3 women was set on numbers accepted - i.e. number of available beds. This was based on the available size at the smallest venue and an assessment of how many people it was felt would be safe to house together. Experience proved that to have been a remarkably accurate estimate.

“The Health and Safety policy is a good example of how an over-arching policy can helpfully highlight the ethos and aims of a policy area rather than simply bringing together all the related material from other policies.” Rachel Makin, Housing Justice 2015



Training

All participants were signed up with FCG as volunteers and required to undergo training, in order to ensure Public Liability Insurance cover. Training involved a minimum of two hours of explanation of safety issues and procedures, all documented in a manual. (see page 12) One practical point learned for 2016 has to be that more emphasis needs placing on drugs awareness.

Andy – one of our lovely Street Pastors

“The Volunteer Handbook is the best I have encountered - it is really readable in lay-out and style, and gives a clear background as to why and how the Shelter runs, as well as very practical lists of dos and don'ts for the volunteers to follow.” Rachel Makin, Housing Justice

Ops Box

One of the best ideas put forward quite early on came from the experience of Street Pastors. The “Ops Box” idea is to have one or two large plastic boxes which can be moved from venue to venue containing all the vital files, documentation, mobile phone, sharps box, etc. This proved to be highly effective and will be repeated in future.

Records

With the benefit of having visited an operational Night Shelter and example documents from Housing Justice we found that we had all the documentation in place that we needed. The only changes that we envisage for 2016 would be simplification and possible removal of one of the record documents that proved unnecessary and unused.

Final Preparation

Sufficient preparation had been done that there wasn't too much last minute panic over anything. The major task was ensuring that all beds and bedding were in place for the first night. Also the records file took a while to put together.



Mark moving the bedding



How Venues work

Each venue runs virtually the same way apart from Providence chapel, which has been running a food hand out on a Monday night for the last 10 years. They opened their doors on a Monday night as usual at 7:45pm and served their meal to over a 100 people. They then closed their doors at 9:00pm to everyone and set up the venue ready for the B4N guests on the list.

This year, usually around 9.00 am Dave Bolton or Mark Glover arrived at the venue which had just run overnight to collect the camp beds, bedding and ops box. They then delivered to the next venue, either immediately or later in the day.

General timings:-

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5:30 - 7:00pm | The venue co-ordinator arrives along with a few other volunteers to help set up the beds. Also Catering team would arrive and start the food preparation. |
| 6:30 - 7:00pm | B4N staff arrived at venue with the guest list and discuss any new guests or issues that had arisen the night before. |
| 7:00 - 7:15pm | Co-ordinator and volunteers would gather together to pray before opening the doors to the guests. |
| 7:30 - 8:00pm | Guests would start arriving and firstly be greeted by a Street Pastor. They would then be greeted by the co-ordinator and volunteer who would tick them off on the guest list. On the first night only they would have the guest agreement sheet read out to them by a volunteer so that they fully understood the rules and regulations. They then signed the guest agreement form against the relevant date. The guest's bags would then be taken from them, tagged with their names and stored in a locked room overnight. |
| 8:00-9:00pm | Guests and volunteers would all sit down together and eat dinner and chat amongst themselves. |
| 9:00-11:00pm | Guests and volunteers would chat, play games, watch a DVD or just chill out. |
| 10:00 -10:15pm | Over Night shift volunteers arrive, short debrief with coordinator about any issues or instructions for the morning. Evening staff leave. |
| 11:00-7:00am | Everyone in bed and lights out for the guests. |
| 6:30-7:00am | Breakfast catering team arrived and start preparing breakfast. Morning clean up team arrive. |
| 7:00-8:00am | Guests were woken up and breakfast was served. Cleaning of kitchen and other areas starts. |
| 8:00-9:00am | Beds were stripped and linen bagged ready to be taken and washed.
Beds taken apart and packed ready for collection at 8:45 am. Guests all left by 9 am. |



2016 overview

This was the second year of 'A Bed for The Night' running in Reading and this year was slightly different as we ran for two months, both January and February.

'A Bed for the Night' started on Monday 5th January 2016 at Providence Chapel and finished on Sunday 28th February 2016 at Salvation Army.

Two extra Churches were on board this year, Carey Baptist and New Hope Community Church.

Carey took over from St Laurence on a Thursday evening in February and New Hope from Greyfriars on a Friday evening.

We initially started with 8 guests on our first night and rose steadily, at one stage we got up to our full capacity of 15 men and 3 women.

It ran smoothly, again as like last year, once up and going ran by itself really with a few incidents which I will touch on later on in the report however no serious incidents.

At the end of 'A Bed for The Night' it was deemed a huge success with all Co-Ordinators and Volunteers happy to carry on and do a third year and for two months.

Unfortunately we ended just after a very cold weekend in which a SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Provision) was on. The following week was cold and icy and was hard for us ending knowing that some of our guests were still "out there".

We had 288 Volunteers on our lists. Not all of them were able to volunteer although all without exception are keen to be considered and want to volunteer next year.

Venues and nights

	January / February
Monday	Providence Chapel
Tuesday	St Giles and All Nations - CiRDic
Wednesday	LifeSpring
Thursday	St Laurence / Carey Baptist
Friday	Greyfriars / New Hope
Saturday	Wesley Methodist
Sunday	Salvation Army





Guest Information

Care is taken over guest confidentiality. St Mungo's do provide Faith with fairly detailed background information on each guest so that we are aware of potential dangers, not to mention dietary needs and allergies. However, only really vital information is relayed to venue co-ordinators. Volunteers are not given any detailed information. This does create potential problems. Firstly possible danger to volunteers. Secondly the possibility of volunteers making unwise decisions.

We take the approach in training that volunteers must fear the worst of all guests, i.e. that they may well be using drugs, be involved in criminal activity, may be prone to violence or abuse and cannot be trusted! That means simply that volunteers should never arrange to meet up outside the shelter; never offer lifts; never take a person home; never give them money. Over the two years we have thereby been able to give beds to a known murderer; a paedophile; a wife abuser; drug dealers; several who have done time for ABH and GBH; etc. etc.

Conversely volunteers should treat guests at the shelter as if none of that is true of any of them. Dignity, respect and friendship is offered to all. Remarkably what ends up happening is a blurring between guests and volunteers into a "family" having fun together.

Files

This year two files travelled round with a member of Faith Staff and were handed to the Co-ordinator of the Venue with any relevant information to be passed on.

One file held the guest list and guest agreements to be signed by our guests and the other the assessment forms sent to us by St Mungo's with details of guests and daily venue report sheets and incident report sheets.

Van / Bedding

The beds and duvets and pillows were moved around successfully by Dave from Salvation Army with their van and also Mark from Faith with the Faith Van.

John from Providence Chapel took the beds to CIRDIC every Tuesday afternoon.

We tried a new system with numbered bedding with our guests being allocated a bag with their own duvet and pillow so in theory they had the same duvet and pillow each evening. It sounded simple but caused quite a few problems.



Dave moving bedding



St Mungo's

For the 2015 Night Shelter we arranged with Reading Borough Council that St Mungo's would act as our "gate-keepers". Being the eyes and ears on the street, St Mungo's are well placed to know exactly who is in genuine need of a roof and a bed. They are also able to determine whether an individual has a local connection* and therefore whether they will be able to be found long term accommodation.

We have developed an excellent working relationship over the two years and it would be difficult to run the shelter without their input.

Each evening we are sent a list of guest names for the night. Then each morning a member of their staff came along at breakfast time to engage with the guests, which reflects in the sheer numbers of individuals who were housed this year.

These are the figures and final report received from St Mungo's for 2016 with 2015 figures for comparison.

	2016	2015		
No. of nights B4N ran for	56	28		
Referrals from St M's	38	26		
Allowed Overnight by B4N direct	5			
Number Used False Identity	1	0	Gender	
Numbers Housed at End of B4N	22	7	Male	25
Ability Stage 2	1		Female	5
Homes in Action	3			
Hamble Court	6		Age	
Launchpad	1		16-24	1
Salvation Army	4		25-34	11
Housing Association	1		35-44	6
Social Services Accom	1		45-54	4
Friends/Family	4	2	55 +	4
Prison	1	1		
Ongoing on waiting list	4			
Ongoing no recourse	3			

*"local connection" is an issue that we have to accept. Local authorities simply cannot afford to take responsibility for people who "come from somewhere else". Usually local connection is established after living in an area for 6 months. Otherwise there needs to be historic or family connection.



Incidents

Behaviour

We had to ban 2 guests during B4N

One female guest had to be banned for general angry behaviour and attitude, causing upset with our guests, swearing at and being disrespectful to volunteers. As far as we know she slept in her car for a few nights and then following this was housed.

One male guest for suspected drug use in toilets at Wesley, being verbally abusive towards other guests and myself/Louise when being challenged on suspected drug use. After a phone call to Malcolm decision was made to ask him to leave and he did without any further upset.

We made the decision with support of the following night's venue, Salvation Army that if he turned up again the Co-Ordinator was going to sit with him and re-read the Guest Agreement so he understood the rules about abusive language and behaviour and also drug use on the premises. However he did not turn up and we were informed by St Mungo's staff he was then staying with family.

All other guests were very respectful and grateful for their meals and beds.

Police Visits

The Police visited B4N about three separate issues.

Concern for a missing person

Two Community Police Officers visited Wesley Church on Week 3 to ask after a person who was missing and to check if they were on our guest list. They weren't. The Police that visited came to the side door and rang the bell, Louise spoke to them and the guests were not aware of the Police visit. They left a poster and details which were kept in the Co-ordinators file.

The person missing subsequently turned up and during the last two weeks of B4N was one of our guests!!

An Arrest

The Police came to CiRDIC at 6am one morning to arrest one of our guests on suspicion of burglary. This was an upsetting experience for volunteers and our guests.

This particular guest was a suspect in ongoing investigations and I (Louise) was asked to provide an alibi for him on one occasion. I was able to do this as he was staying at our venue and I could let the Police know he was there at lights out/door close and then again for breakfast and had not left in between these times (as far as we could tell).

The Police rang a couple of times asking if I could confirm that he was with us on certain nights/dates. On the occasion of his early morning arrest he was let out after questioning and was at the next venue that evening for a meal and his bed.

Ultimately the good news is that this particular gentleman was housed.



Female “C” (20 year old – single mum)

This was a big upset of B4N. C. was with us from the second night of B4N and was a regular, never missing a night. She caused quite a lot of upset for our volunteers, she was young, vulnerable, with lots of issues. The main one of these that was highlighted for us was her son and her up and coming Court Case to determine whether or not he was to be adopted.

The Court case went as was expected and C. found out her son was to be adopted. This was a huge blow for C. and her behaviour became even more unpredictable and upsetting. It was very hard for us to support her and also to see her so upset.

Medical Issues/Ambulances

An ambulance was called to a B4N venue on two separate occasions and a paramedic once.

1. An ambulance had to be called on a Sunday evening to Salvation Army to a guest who was very intoxicated and had passed out on the toilet.

He had been refused entry due to his intoxication although allowed in to the premises to use the toilet where he passed out.

He was taken off in the ambulance and returned to the venue the following evening.
2. A paramedic had to be called to one of our guests who was suffering with a bad back. He had been suffering for quite a few weeks and we advised him to go to the walk in on many occasions. He spent the day in the hospital and was discharged with strong painkillers.
3. One of our guests, an elderly gentleman was discharged from hospital following a heart attack using the Cirdic address and was consequently put on our guest list by St Mungos. He was quite poorly with a heart monitor still attached and lots of medication. Undoubtedly being at B4N saved his life during that week. It is not thought he would have survived out on the streets.

St Mungos called an ambulance for him after a morning visit to one of our venues and following this he had a short stay in hospital and was then housed.



The Good Bits

The success of B4N speaks for itself with number of people being housed.

The feedback from our Thank You Brunch from volunteers and co-ordinators is an overwhelming 'what now' – and what more can we do.

Aside from the two guests that had to be banned all our guests were polite, respectful and grateful both to volunteers and also to each other.

One housed guest actually turned up to collect washing from another guest to do from him. Washed it and returned it. The camaraderie between our guests was very touching to see. Friendships were definitely formed.

Some of our guest comments ...

"good food, good company, loved it"

"if it were not for B4N I would definitely be back in prison, I'm out on Licence and would have committed a crime for sure to get me back inside for 3 meals a day and a roof over my head"

"lovely non-judgemental people"

"thank you so much, I will never forget what you have done for me"

"I have loved my time with you all and would like to volunteer next year".

And this from Helen, Manager at St Mungos regarding one of our guests who was a long term rough sleeper and had not engaged with any services for at least two years.

She wrote this after he had been housed;

"it is such good news, we wouldn't have been able to do it without B4N. B4N really changed him and gave him his dignity back and helped improve his self-esteem. It is not just having the bed, it is having you and all your volunteers to make someone feel they are worth something again. Honestly it has been such a breakthrough for him". Helen, St Mungos





And finally

We received this email of thanks from St Mungos which was read out at our 'Thank You Brunch' for volunteers. This really demonstrates the success of B4N.

Dear Louise, Malcolm and all B4N Volunteers

I am so sorry we can't be with you for your B4N celebration.

I just wanted to say a huge and heartfelt thank you from all of us at Reading St Mungo's for the incredible work you have all done at B4N over the last two months.

B4N has made such a difference for our clients, particularly during the cold winter months. Having the chance to get respite from the streets in a place where they are treated with such kindness and dignity, helps many rough sleepers to achieve a feeling of self-worth again and motivates them to accept offers of housing and treatment.

All our clients reported to us that they were so grateful for B4N and pleased to have somewhere to go at night where they could get a hot meal, warm bed and friendly conversation.

We referred 38 people into B4N. Unfortunately 8 did not use it. However, 30 did use it successfully. And as a result 22 rough sleepers are now in accommodation instead of sleeping on the streets due to being able to stay in B4N and stabilise.

Sadly not everyone had housing when B4N finished. 8 did not. Of these, 4 are on the waiting list for a space in supported accommodation so should be housed very soon and 1 is in custody and there is a multi-agency housing plan for release. The other 3 do not have recourse to public funds and do not want to be reconnected to family or hostels in their local country but they are still receiving support from P. with their job searches and any other issues.

We are particularly grateful for the opportunity B4N gave W. to try out not sleeping on the streets. He had been sleeping rough a very long time and refusing offers of help. We kept nagging him to give B4N a chance, even just for one night. The fact that you were flexible enough to let him start off using it late made the difference! Once he was in, he realised that there was a different life possible. He began to use it on time, stayed every night and his self-esteem increased. He began walking around town with his head held up and a smile on his face. Previously, he had always looked at his feet and struggled to talk to us. Now he has a room of his own, is back in touch with his mother and he is linked with health and other support agencies and he is incredibly motivated to lead a 'normal' life again.

We all look forward to working with you again next year.

*Wishing you all the best
Helen, Zoe, Tom, Patryk and Wendy*

Helen Arnold – Manager St Mungos Reading Street Team