

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2017



Celebrating 15 years of being a charity ... but still so much to do!

In March we celebrated our 15th Anniversary of being a charity and so it was very timely when our Patron, Bishop Karen invited me to speak on behalf of R2R at her first Bishops' Breakfast in Poole. It really was a great privilege and I was proud to be able to share all that R2R has achieved over the last 15 years. I ended by saying that after 15 years I am still as passionate about our work with the Homeless as I was at the very beginning. Passionate, but also frustrated because I know that there is still so much to do!

I believe there is an appalling situation in our town, which really needs to come to an end! I am referring to the way in which some of our most vulnerable people in Poole, our rough sleepers, are having to live on the streets, to find somewhere to sleep each night, usually in a town centre car park (or, like the ladies above, in a church porch) - and there is absolutely no provision for them for washing or toileting! Where are they meant to go I wonder? Apart from anything else, isn't this a public health issue? Why is it acceptable for these 'poor' people to have to live like this? Why are we dehumanising them in this way? Is it because many of them also have drug addiction, alcoholism and /or mental health issues and, therefore, can be difficult to house? Does it mean they are not worthy of our care? Are these not the members of our society who need our help most?

Many years ago we in R2R dreamt of having our own building - A place where the homeless in Poole could access the most basic necessities for life: food, clothes, warmth and friendship, help and advice as well as much needed washing and toileting facilities. A place where we could help them to feel human. It's still our dream to end rough sleeping in Poole by providing an alternative ourselves! If this is your dream too and you really do care about the situation in Poole, then please come and join us and please pray for us that together we can find a way to end rough sleeping for good!

Let's never forget that Jesus said: "*What you do for the least of these, you do unto me.*"
Matthew 25:35

*The Revd Pat Southgate,
Chair of Routes to Roots and Chaplain to the Homeless in Poole*

To donate to Routes to Roots, text **RTOR42 £2 (£5 / £10 / £££)** to **70070**

or donate online at: <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/routestoroots-poolecio>

Like Routes to Roots on FaceBook at: <http://www.facebook.com/RoutestoRootsHomeless>

Follow Routes to Roots on Twitter at: [@R2R_Poole](#)

Founded on Christian principles, Routes to Roots seeks to help all homeless and vulnerably housed people in Poole regardless of their faith. At four drop-ins R2R provides basic necessities, such as hot food, clothing and sleeping bags, and offers indoor and outdoor motivational activities, which aim to boost self-confidence and develop skills. In addition, internet and telephone facilities, 'care of address' and one-to-one support, guidance and information are provided. From November 2015 Routes to Roots has provided supported accommodation to three of Poole's homeless.

THE R2R TEAM

CHAIR & TRUSTEE

Revd Pat Southgate

TREASURER & TRUSTEE

Claire Tourle

TRUSTEE

Kate Mellor

TRUSTEE

Carole Heiriss

HON SECRETARY

Marilyn Latcham

NEWSLETTER

Susan Gittins

SOCIAL MEDIA

Natalie Heiriss

AMOS HOUSE SUPPORT

Iain Scott

AMOS HOUSE SUPPORT

Andrew Teale

CHAIR ASST/VOL CO-ORD

Elaine Mellers

AMOS HOUSE

Peter Newman

Patron: Rt Revd Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne

Routes to Roots (Poole) CIO

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OUR SUPPORTERS



...and many Individuals, Churches, Christian groups and Businesses in Poole and the surrounding area.

KEY SERVICES: STATISTICS

All R2R Drop-Ins: October 2016 - March 2017

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total 2016	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total 2017 to-date
Total individuals attending	75	78	58	263	90	81	86	141
Cumulative total of individuals	234	251	263	263	90	116	141	141
Total afternoon meals	128	128	128	1587	185	194	249	628
Total evening meals	180	180	180	1968	194	194	193	581

Since 2012 R2R has provided a Big Breakfast to rough sleepers through the winter thanks to the Fisherman Cafe on Poole Quay. Every year we have seen an increase in the number of individuals on the streets, from 39 in 2012-13 to 54 in 2016-17.

This year we offered four breakfasts, as opposed to six in previous years, and provided a more substantial lunch at our drop-ins on the other two days - the Salvation Army provides breakfast on one morning. This was a deliberate decision to encourage rough sleepers to attend the afternoon drop-ins where they can engage with a wide variety of outreach services to help with other problems. We are reviewing whether we should continue this change or revert to providing six breakfasts.

BIG Breakfast					
	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017	Total 2016-17
No. breakfasts claimed	78	157	147	191	573
No. individuals served	13	31	25	32	54

Broadstone Middle School

Based on the theme of the School's new Year 5 topic, 'Soap and Glory', pupils held a Lush bath bomb sale to raise money for Routes to Roots. They had learnt how to make the bath bombs during a visit from Lush in February.
<http://www.bmsweb.co.uk/middle-school>



AT THE DROP-IN

PACT on Mondays

We are extremely grateful to Andrew Teale who joins us at our Monday afternoon drop-ins to engage with clients who have drug and alcohol problems.

Andrew is the Harm Minimisation Co-Ordinator with PACT (Poole Addictions Community Team) and our drop-in is the only outreach they offer, so this is a very valuable service for our clients.

Andrew comments: "I enjoy working at the drop-in and it is absolutely brilliant that we are able to bring this service in to R2R. It is an ideal place to come to."

"Not all rough sleepers have addiction problems but some do, as do many others in our society. Opiate users are at a very high risk of over-dosing and death.

"I test people and then treat them accordingly. For free. The biggest challenge I face is people's reluctance to be tested because they don't want to know they have a problem so education is very important. I have to gain and nurture trust and friendship. Nowadays medication is much better so we have an incredibly good success rate."

Andrew works closely with other local service providers of community and residential services e.g. SMART, Essential Drugs and Alcohol Services (EDAS) and counselling services.

Toothbus Delivers Dental Check-Ups



In March the Toothbus arrived in Skinner Street to provide free dental check-ups at the Routes to Roots drop-in.

This event gave homeless and vulnerably housed people in Poole the opportunity to see a dentist for a check-up. It can be difficult to look after your dental health if you're homeless.

Client Karen said: "I was really nervous about seeing a dentist because I know I need some work done, but the Toothbus dentist was very friendly and put me at ease. They also gave me some great advice."

There are a lot of health problems that are exacerbated by poor dental health e.g. heart conditions, diabetes and pneumonia. Poor dental health can also affect how someone feels about themselves, so it's important that everyone has easy access to NHS dental treatment.

Rev Pat Southgate explained: "We support a number of homeless people who have been refused urgent dental care in the past because they weren't registered with a dentist. We're very grateful to Healthwatch Dorset for organising this Toothbus visit. It's provided a safe place for the people we work with to get a dental check."

The Toothbus Manager, Angie Naughton said: "We'd like to thank Healthwatch Dorset and Routes to Roots for a great afternoon. The dentist saw 10 patients at the event and everyone received details of how to register with a local dentist for ongoing treatment."

The Toothbus is available to everyone. it usually parks on Poole High Street on Mondays and on Boscombe High Street on Fridays. So, if you haven't seen a dentist in two years or more - pop down and see them, there's details on their website: www.toothbus.co.uk"

ROUGH SLEEPER OUTREACH SERVICE - NEW PROVIDER

Homelessness charity St Mungo's will be supporting people sleeping rough in Bournemouth and Poole to access accommodation and leave the streets behind as part of the Bournemouth and Poole Rough Sleeper Team.

St Mungo's is the new provider for the service following a re-tender and are being jointly funded by Bournemouth Borough Council and Borough of Poole.

A recent annual street count of people rough sleeping carried out by council officials in November counted 39 people in Bournemouth and 11 in Poole. Numbers have increased reflecting a picture seen across the country over the last few years.

The Bournemouth and Poole Rough Sleeper Team will be on shift six days per week and will be working with people to assess their options, access accommodation and support around health and employment to help people to rebuild their lives away from homelessness.

Paul Hudson, Regional Head, St Mungo's said: "Rough sleeping is harmful and dangerous and ruins lives, and no one should have to sleep rough in this day and age. We'll be working with people to tackle the particular problems that lead to them sleeping rough and aiming to connect them with services as needed, from housing to health services and into skills and work opportunities.

"Rough sleeping is not inevitable, and we know that concerted action works. We are looking forward to working with local partners in Bournemouth and Poole to support people as they move away from homelessness and on with their lives."

Councillor Robert Lawton, Cabinet Member for Housing, Bournemouth Borough Council, said: "We are extremely pleased to have St Mungo's on board providing the town's rough sleeper outreach service who will continue the good work previously delivered by CGL over the last few years.



"They bring a wealth of experience and knowledge and they will play an essential part in supporting rough sleepers off the street."

Councillor Karen Rampton, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Borough of Poole, said: "One of our priorities is to support the most vulnerable members of our community, and the service provided by St Mungo's will help us to provide the support needed to keep rough sleepers safe and, ultimately, help them off the streets. It's important to address the issues which may have led to individuals being on the streets in the first place, and to help prevent their mental and physical health from deteriorating."

St Mungo's delivers rough sleeping outreach services in London, Bristol, Reading, Oxford, Brighton, and South Essex. They provide a bed and support to more than 2,600 people a night who are either homeless or at risk, and work to prevent homelessness.

They support men and women through more than 260 projects including emergency, hostel and supportive housing projects, advice services, specialist physical health, mental health and skills and work services.
<http://www.mungos.org/about>

Bournemouth Borough Council and the Borough of Poole have since 2014 jointly commissioned a Rough Sleeper Outreach Service.

IN THE NEWS: Falling Support for Single Homeless People

The 2016 Homeless Link survey of frontline homelessness services in England found that there are 35,727 bed spaces available in homelessness accommodation projects, a drop of 2% since 2015. The number of accommodation projects has fallen by 5% to 1,185, while the number of day centres has increased by 3% to 214 since 2015.

Although 47% of accommodation projects have experienced decreased funding, they are still supporting people to develop the skills they need to move on.

They provide a range of support services, with 93% offering life skills, 90% resettlement support and 87% helping with basic needs. However, of people engaging in activities, those participating in training and education have decreased by nine percentage points, and those in employment have fallen by five percentage points.

The survey also indicates that while 30% of people living in homeless accommodation projects are ready to live independently, many cannot move out because there is nowhere suitable to go, despite the sector's efforts to innovate. Of this group, more than a quarter (27%) have been waiting to move on for more than six months.

The homelessness sector's ability to innovate is undoubtedly one of its key strengths. With a raft of changes already taking effect or set to impact the sector shortly, including the Government's £40 million homelessness prevention programme and pledged 2,000 move-on accommodation places, and the expected Homelessness Reduction Act, they anticipate a different landscape in 12 months' time.

Homelessness Reduction Bill

The final chance for the House of Lords to change the Bill to make provision about measures for reducing homelessness took place on 23 March 2017 and no amendments were made. As both Houses have agreed on the text of the Bill, it now waits for the final stage of Royal Assent when the Bill will become an Act of Parliament. A date for Royal Assent has yet to be set. The Bill will bind Councils to prevent homelessness rather than triage people with nowhere to go and offer assistance only to the most vulnerable (usually young families, rather than single people).

Homelessness in numbers

- There are currently 35,727 bed spaces available in homelessness accommodation projects – 18% fewer than 2010.
- There are 214 homelessness day centres – 14% more than in 2010.
- 70% of accommodation projects provide services to help prevent homelessness.
- 47% of accommodation projects have experienced decreased funding.
- 8% of accommodation projects have seen their funding increase.

Accessing move on accommodation

- 30% of people in accommodation projects were ready to move on but had not yet been able to.
- 34% of projects reported a lack of affordable accommodation as the main barrier to move-on
- Projects report problems with landlords unwilling to accept housing benefit tenants.

The range of support needs

- 33% of people in accommodation projects have complex needs and need additional support.
- 73% of accommodation projects have had to turn people away because their needs were too high.

Homeless Link's annual review of support for single homeless people
 Louise Weaver
 Monday, 27 March 2017

IN THE NEWS: Alarming Rise in Rough Sleeping

The number of people sleeping rough on England's streets has more than doubled since 2010 to more than 4,000 in what opposition politicians called a "national scandal".

The increase comes despite falling unemployment and, since 2013, rising real wages. It accompanies a broader expansion in numbers of people without a permanent place to live, who now number more than 250,000, according to Shelter, the housing charity.

Rough sleepers in the autumn of 2016 were up 16 per cent on a year earlier to 4,134, according to government figures published on Wednesday; numbers have risen steadily since 2010, when the total stood at just 1,768.

During the same period, those formally recognised as in temporary accommodation rose 55 per cent to almost 75,000, but these do not include people in hostels or with informal arrangements such as living in friends' homes.

"It is a national scandal that in England in the 21st century the number of people forced to sleep rough on our streets is spiralling upwards — and this is only the tip of the iceberg," said John Healey, shadow housing minister.

Graeme Brown, Shelter's interim chief executive, said the numbers were "a shame on this country" and added: "Many more thousands of people who we don't see on the streets, including families with children, are hidden away in emergency B&Bs, hostels and on friends' sofas.

"The lack of affordable homes coupled with cuts to welfare have led us to this tragic situation. Until the government provides more homes that people on low incomes can actually afford to live in, the problem will only get worse."

FT 25 January 2017 by Judith Evans
<https://www.ft.com/content/26ac619c-e2ff-11e6-9645-c9357a75844a>

Housing Justice are sadly not surprised, but remain deeply concerned about the shocking numbers of individuals who are sleeping rough in England. The latest figures, released at the end of January, paint a particularly grim picture.

4134 people are estimated to have slept rough on the night of the count in Autumn last year. This represents a 16% increase on the previous year, and a 134% increase since 2010. We further estimate that another 500 individuals were in Church-run night shelters and so will not have shown up in these figures.

There are few success stories; while Westminster saw a small drop in numbers and some other central London boroughs saw little change there still has been a 3% increase across London as a whole; nearly 1000 individuals sleep rough in our capital city every single day. The explosion of the numbers of people sleeping rough in outer-boroughs like Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Havering and Hounslow is truly appalling.

The rest of England has seen some astonishing rises in rough sleeping. Amidst huge cuts to their overall budget enforced by central government, Birmingham City Council has recently announced its plans to slash 40% from its Supporting People funding, while the number of those sleeping on their streets has risen by over 500% in 6 years, and 53% in the past 12 months alone.

These rates of growth are repeated across England, and in some places are even worse: Thanet in Kent has 33 people with no roof over their head and Cornwall now has 99 officially recorded rough sleepers. This is affecting our urban and regional areas, both our small towns and large cities.

Even more concerning is the fact that rough sleeping represents only the tip of the iceberg in terms of overall homelessness figures; nearly 120,000 children this Christmas were housed in temporary accommodation.

Housing Justice, February 2017

GENEROUS DONATIONS: The Co-op

Many thanks to The Co-op, Blandford Road, Hamworthy and all your customers for raising £1826.22 for Routes to Roots. The Co-op adopted us as their chosen charity and raised the money through their membership and 5p bag sales from October last year to this March. Every time members chose Co-op branded products and services and used their Co-op Membership card, 1% of what they spent went to

their chosen cause. Members could change their choice at any time. If members didn't pick a cause then their 1% was shared out equally between all the local causes in their community.

<http://www.co-operativefood.co.uk/>



Baden-Powell and St Peter's CofE Junior School

Easter egg treats for the guys and gals were kindly donated by children from Baden-Powell and St Peter's Church of England Junior School. We are their charity for the (Academic) Year.
www.bpspschool.co.uk/

...and Holy Angels Mothers' Union

The Mothers Union at Holy Angels Church held a collection for us after a talk given by Trustee Kate and raised £99.30.

You CAN Help Us

For information about becoming a member, volunteering or making a donation please visit the R2R website.

Annual membership, from April to March, costs only £24 for an individual or £48 for a Church, School or Business (pro rata if you join during the membership year).

Membership, donation, standing order and gift aid form: <http://www.routestoroots.org/updates/volunteering-membership>

Volunteer application forms: <http://www.routestoroots.org/updates/volunteering>