

# ST PETER'S WINTER SHELTER



## SUMMARY

The shelter provides basic overnight shelter from the end of November until the middle of March for up to sixteen men and three women in Hereford who would otherwise have to sleep rough.

In addition to providing overnight shelter, we encourage clients to engage with the council's Rough Sleeper Outreach Team and use other available support services including Addaction and the Mental Health service. We also give around twenty volunteers and wardens experience of working with homeless people.

## CONTEXT

St Peter's Winter Shelter is a part of the activities of St Peter's and St James Churches, Hereford.

Eleven years ago the Council asked the church to provide overnight accommodation for homeless men in the church hall to help meet its duty of cold weather provision. The shelter has operated each winter since then, each year increasing its scope and improving the support it offers.

Although the shelter operates only during the winter it fits in well with other activities run by other organisations for people on the margins of society which operate from Church House. The winter shelter is also represented on the Herefordshire Homelessness Forum, a group comprising the organisations, voluntary and statutory, working with homeless people which aims to increase awareness, share experience, co-ordinate and contribute to the development of services for the homeless.

## THE PROJECT (St Peter's Winter Shelter)

The Winter Shelter offers overnight accommodation for homeless people in Hereford from late November until mid-March. The Shelter works with the Council's Housing Solutions team and others to assess the needs of each of the people coming to the shelter attempting to resolve the problems that have led to their homelessness and to move them on into their own accommodation.

The shelter provides toilet, washing, shower and laundry facilities.

Up to sixteen men and three women can be accommodated on camp beds, the men in the church hall and the women in an upstairs room.

Shelter opening times are from 9pm until 7.45am. Hot drinks (tea, coffee, soup) are available in the evening and in the morning before the clients leave.

The Shelter is staffed by wardens who are paid as self-employed on a sessional basis for the nights that they work. Most have other jobs in addition. Two paid wardens are on duty to supervise the shelter each night. A third warden acts as doorman during the evening. The wardens have relevant experience of working with homeless people and are DBS checked.

The shelter is also supported by volunteers. In the evening the volunteers set up the shelter, help with the refreshments and spend time with the men coming to the shelter. In the morning volunteers help to clear and clean the hall ready for other users during the day. Volunteers are also DBS checked.

### **Project partners**

The winter shelter had a partnership arrangement with the council's rough sleeper outreach team. It works closely with Open Door, a separate charity covering much the same group of clients, which operates from the same building to provide cooked breakfasts three mornings each week. Various offers of help, for example Mental Health Team contact, chiropody etc and channelled through Open Door as it is a day-time operation, and better placed to accommodate such activities. The winter shelter also links with other support activities including Street Pastors through the Homelessness Forum

### **Number of People Benefitting**

Around sixty people will come to the shelter, most staying just a few nights.

About a dozen volunteers (in addition to the paid wardens) will be involved in the shelter.

### **Project Development**

There have been several developments over the years including continually developing our policies and procedures, the installation of CCTV and adapting the building to enable us to accommodate women. For this winter we have been able to get Church House redecorated which has been much needed. We are also arranging formal training sessions in the month preceding the opening of the shelter to better equip volunteers and wardens for their role. These will include personal safety, mental health awareness and drug awareness

### **Outcomes**

The main outcome sought for the shelter is to prevent people sleeping rough during the worst of the winter.

The second aim is to improve clients' situations in the longer term by using the opportunity afforded by the contact in the shelter to encourage them to engage with the Housing Solutions Team, addiction services and other agencies.

It is the Council's Rough Sleeper Outreach Team, rather than the winter shelter, which arranges housing for homeless people, but attendance at the shelter does facilitate contact with support services, and last winter of the sixty-five people who came to the shelter, Twenty-eight were found accommodation.

The number of people coming to the shelter far exceeds the estimate of about twenty people actually sleeping rough in Hereford at any one time. Many of the people coming to the shelter had previously been staying with relatives or friends, but come to the shelter if they are asked to leave after an argument, or just because it is easier than trying to find somewhere else to stay. Although most of these people could find somewhere to stay, and so in a sense are not eligible to use the shelter, the contact with them can be useful as an opportunity to get them engaged with services which may be able to help them.

Outcome measures include the number of people coming to the shelter and the number housed as a result. These and other information about the shelter are recorded in an annual report which is distributed to the Church Council, Herefordshire Council and to grant-making bodies.

## **Project Management**

The Shelter is run by a small steering group comprising members of the church and representatives of the Council Housing Solutions team and support from the police. The church members on the steering group have been involved in running the shelter for several years. The other members bring expertise and access to resources (principally ways to get the men attending the shelter engaged with the services they need).

The steering group is responsible to the Parochial Church Council which has the ultimate responsibility for the running of the shelter.

The shelter finances are kept within the church bank account, but separately identified. The PCC treasurer is a member of the shelter steering group.

The steering committee reviews and updates the shelter policies. The Church Council has adopted the diocesan vulnerable adults policy, and has its own supplementary policy to cover issues specific to the shelter. All volunteers and wardens are subject to DBS checks.

Details of people attending the shelter, exclusions from the shelter, serious incidents and outcomes are recorded. A detailed report of the shelter is produced after each winter. The report is considered by the Parochial Church Council, Herefordshire Council, the Hereford Homelessness Forum, and it is sent to each of the grant makers.



## Capability Policy and Procedure

### Introduction and Purpose

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Peter's with St Owen and St James' aims to provide the highest possible standards of service and support to the users of its provision within the resources available. The contribution and performance of each individual is crucial in achieving this aim.

The PCC will, therefore, encourage the attainment of the highest possible standards of performance by staff and will give appropriate attention to address areas of unsatisfactory performance.

The aim of this policy and procedure is to resolve areas relating to the recurring lack of capability of an employee to perform the role at the level for which they were employed. The procedure aims to provide a fair, reasonable and consistent method of addressing issues arising in relation to an inability to perform at the required standard due to a lack of competency, skill, knowledge, understanding and effort.

It is acknowledged that capability issues arising in relation to personal competence may result from shortfalls in skill or knowledge which could be addressed through further training and development. However, the capability issues may relate to a fundamental inability to perform the scope and range of duties within a post.

The PCC is committed to ensuring that appropriate training and development is made available to ensure individuals can competently perform their role. This may include the provision of training courses, supervised practice, mentoring, coaching and personal development plans.

### Principles of the Procedure

- The primary objective of this procedure is to help an employee attain the standard of achievement required.
- The church leadership and PCC will promote an open and supportive culture in which they are accessible and understand individual roles within the churches.
- It is the responsibility of the church leadership and PCC to ensure that staff are recruited with the necessary level of competence and skill to perform the role.
- Identification of training and development needs is a continuous process and the employee's line manager and the PCC should put measures in place to ensure that this occurs.

- Performance appraisals must be undertaken on an annual basis to identify development needs to enable the individual to perform their role to the best of their ability. This is a two-way process to allow for both the line manager and the individual to identify objectives, standards and training and development needs. Clear timescales for reviewing performance should be agreed between the line manager and the individual. It is the duty of the line manager to ensure that staff understand their role, objectives and the standards required of them.
- The line manager should speak to the individual regarding performance issues at an early opportunity in order to seek to identify any underlying reason for poor performance.
- This procedure is not intended to replace individual guidance and supervision on a day to day basis, but to be applied to recurring instances of poor performance.

### **Identifying Poor Performance**

It is the responsibility of line managers, those in a supervisory role and the leadership of the churches to identify instances of poor performance as part of their day to day duties. Problems should be raised by the line manager as close to the time of occurrence as is reasonably practicable, to allow the individual to respond and improve performance.

Unsatisfactory work performance may become apparent in a number of ways which may include:

- Through formal objective setting and the appraisal process;
- Through informal discussions with the individual;
- Poor recurring standards of work, e.g. recurring mistakes, not completing tasks, unable to cope with reasonable instructions given;
- Attitude to work, e.g. poor interpersonal skills;
- Complaints through other members of staff or users of the provision
- Team concerns
- High absence.

### **Procedure**

When the performance of an individual member of staff becomes unacceptable due to a lack of capability, the primary objective is to help him / her to improve their performance and achieve the standard of performance required. The following procedure should be used.

#### **Informal Stage**

The line manager will raise concerns regarding capability at the earliest opportunity and raise these with the individual in a one to one meeting, explaining the area in which he / she is failing to achieve the required standard / expectations. Through discussion, they will agree actions and objectives to help to rectify the concerns raised. These objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and with a timescale within which they are to be achieved

The line manager will make a record of the informal meeting, summarising the agreed main points and objectives, a copy of which should be sent to the employee within ten days of the meeting. A copy should also be kept on the employee's personnel file.

## **Formal Procedure**

### **First Review Meeting**

A review meeting will be convened within four weeks of the informal meeting. This will be attended by the employee, the line manager and a representative of the Parochial Church Council. The employee has a right to be accompanied by a colleague, friend or Trade Union representative.

The notice of this meeting will be sent to the employee at least 7 calendar days before the meeting with a copy placed on the individual's personnel file. The employee will be informed that they have a right to be accompanied by a colleague, friend or Trade Union representative.

At the meeting the line manager will state clearly the areas of performance considered unacceptable and the standards expected. The meeting will include:

- The opportunity for both the line manager and employee to identify any underlying reason for poor performance. This may arise from either work or personal concerns and it is important that the line manager offers appropriate help.
- The identification of how these factors may be overcome, e.g. additional training and development, a change in working arrangements, role clarification, closer supervision.
- The setting of agreed, specific, measurable, achievable and realistic targets for improvement and timescales in which these are to be achieved. The timescale will normally be between one and three months to give the individual time to demonstrate improvements.
- The line manager will make a record of the meeting, summarising the agreed main points, a copy of which should be sent to the employee within ten days of the meeting and a further copy placed on the employee's personnel file.
- The line manager will review progress towards achievement of satisfactory performance.

If targets for improvement are not met or there is a failure to make reasonable progress towards them following the first review meeting, the manager will communicate this to the employee, and convene a further review meeting.

### **Second Review Meeting**

This will be attended by the employee, the line manager and one or more representatives of the Parochial Church Council, one of whom would normally be the vicar. The employee has a right to be accompanied by a colleague, friend or Trade Union representative.

The notice of this meeting will be sent to the employee at least 7 calendar days before the meeting with a copy placed on the individual's personnel file. The employee will be informed that they have a right to be accompanied by a colleague, friend or Trade Union representative.

At the meeting the action taken to date will be reviewed and any outstanding concerns explained. The manager and the individual will both be given the opportunity to speak and give any mitigating circumstances.

The outcome of the meeting may be one of the following:

- To decide that satisfactory performance has been achieved, and that the capability procedure can be ended.
- To decide that progress, although still incomplete, is sufficient to justify a further period of work towards achieving satisfactory progress. In this case further targets may be agreed, and a date for a further review will be arranged. This further review meeting will take place after between one and three months. Only in exceptional circumstances will the interval be more than three months.
- To decide that satisfactory progress has not been achieved, and that employment will be terminated on the grounds of lack of capability. The employee will be given the notice or termination of employment appropriate to their length of service, or pay in lieu to include pay for any outstanding holiday entitlement

The line manager will make a record of the meeting, summarising the agreed main points. A copy will be sent to the employee within ten days of the meeting, and a copy will be placed on the employee's personnel file.

Where the decision is made to terminate the contract of employment on the grounds of lack of capability the individual will be given appropriate notice or pay in lieu of notice together with any outstanding holiday entitlement.

### **Right of Appeal**

The employee will be informed of his / her right to appeal using the process outlined in the Appeals policy.



## **Equalities Policy**

### **Policy Document**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Peter's with St Owen and St James', Hereford (SPSJ) welcomes diversity in our organisation and in society as a whole. Thus it is therefore committed to proactive equal opportunities and welcomes all people, with a positive view of age, caring responsibilities, gender, disability, racial/ethnic origin, religion, HIV status or other health-related reason, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, as Employees, Committee Members and Volunteers. However, where there is a genuine occupational reason for it employees to be a practising Christians, it is an occupational requirement that the post holder is a Christian who is prepared to live in compatibility with the ethos of these churches, the guidelines of the Diocese of Hereford and the Evangelical Alliance Statement of Faith.

- The PCC will not tolerate any breaches of this Policy and will endeavor to ensure that all its activities and other policies are in accordance with this policy.
- The PCC and accepts its obligations under current discrimination legislation.
- The PCC accepts that there is a need to understand what discrimination is, admit it exists and be able to recognise it in all its forms. It accepts that it is possible for individuals, policies and structures to be unintentionally discriminatory or offensive and accepts that such attitudes and structures must be challenged.
- The PCC expects its employees and volunteers to be sensitive to its Christian basis and promote an environment that treats all people with dignity and respect and provides equality of opportunity to people of any gender, age, religious beliefs, caring responsibilities, racial/ethnic origins, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.
- The PCC aims to nurture an environment of equality of opportunity in employment. Interviews for employment and voluntary work will take place in accordance with Equal Opportunities. Internal and external job applications and appointments and staff retention will be monitored.

- In order to make physical environments and services accessible to all, the PCC will strive to make relevant adaptations and provide appropriate resources.
- The PCC aims to ensure that all its staff and volunteers understand and are committed to the promotion of Equal Opportunities from the time of appointment. The PCC will ensure employees understand their responsibilities under legislation and government guidelines, by providing on- going training and development opportunities.
- The PCC recognises the need to have support mechanisms for those who have been or may be subjected to discrimination or harassment and will endeavor to provide such services.

The PCC will avoid entering into contracts, partnerships or agreements with individuals, groups or organisations when it is aware that any of their policies or practices contravenes the Equal Opportunities policy of the project.

### **Responsibilities of the project**

The PCC accepts responsibility under legislation for the actions of employees and responsibility for any practices, policies or procedures that may be found to be unintentionally discriminatory and will strive to ensure that this is eradicated. It welcomes the input of staff, volunteers, committee members and users to bring this to the attention of the project.