

Oxford Homeless Pathways

Annual report 2009/10



“Changing perceptions...”

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O'Hanlon House is owned by Home Group and managed by Oxford Homeless Pathways for Stonham, the supported housing division of Home Group



Oxford Homeless Pathways

O'Hanlon House, Julian Housing and
Oxford Homeless Medical Fund

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Registered
charity no.
297806
Registered
company
no. 2164150
Constituted
as an
incorporated
charity under
a Memorandum
and Articles of
Association

327
clients stayed
at O'Hanlon House
in 2009/10
43 new clients were
admitted to Julian
Housing



Staff and volunteers (April 2009-March 2010)

Oxford Homeless Pathways

Chief executive Lesley Dewhurst

Finance manager Mike Slater

O'Hanlon House (01865 304600)

Project manager Simon Pitkin

Deputy manager, operations Lucy Flanagan

Deputy manager, client support Souad Bouterfas (Lucy Richman maternity leave October 09)

Facilities officer Jason Buckingham

Resettlement team Fred, Tina, Aaron, Laurent, Bhavan

Training, education & activities

co-ordinator Sarah (Iain left August 09)

Shift leaders Richard, William, Verity (Sue maternity leave January 10)

Day team: Jason, Surivijay, Rodney, Penny, Beverley, Hannah, Suzanne, Peter (Freddie left July 09, Jess left Sept 09)

Night team: Robert, Zak, Dominic, Amarjit, Vanessa, Dario

Finance assistant Gabriel

Admin assistant Nell (Sophie left Feb 10)

Maintenance and cleaning team: Trevor, Jeremiah, Ojingo, Tracy (Clive, Rob and Sam left 09)

Casual project workers: Frank, Steve, Lindsey, Simon, Anny, Morgan, Ruari, Quaiser, Shamah, Sheila

Julian Housing (01865 201992)

Project manager Toby Blake

Deputy manager, client support Matt Clarke

Supported housing workers: Paul, Lindsey, Pearline, Jane, Georgina, Nina (Gemma maternity leave Oct 09)

Admin assistant Vanessa

Maintenance team: Chris, Dave, Ian

Oxford Homeless Medical Fund (01865 792126)

Manager Margaret Burden

PATHS Volunteer Co-ordinator Jan Penrose

Thanks also to: Gavin (harm reduction, SMART); Helen (reconnection worker); Mary (mental health practitioner); Margaret, Marie, Pete, Lisa, Kirsty, Ian and Harry (caterers from MITIE); Aziz (Adult learning and skills for life); Janet, Tessa and Maretta (counsellors); Alex and Greg (Make Trax project); Ed (photography); Janet and Helen (Mind group work); Vivien (acupuncture); Learning & Skills Council and Adult Learning for all their help and support; Dennis, who has been so brilliant with extra maintenance help at O'Hanlon House; Sister Anne (chaplain for the homeless); O'Hanlon House volunteers Philippa, Jane, Sharon, Polly, John and Pete for all their very valued input with training, education and activities, and the wonderful PATHS volunteers – Gabby, Tony, Karima, Shahin, Lucy and Julia.

Trustees and advisors

(April 2009-March 2010)

Trustees 2009/10

Christopher Blount (Chair)

David Barnett (Treasurer)

Mark Nightall; Stuart Reid; Deborah Glass-Woodin; Paul Goodman; Pat Goodwin; William Downing; Karen Simeons, Eamonn Gaspar

Advisor to trustees

PC Paul Phillips

Oxford City Council representatives

Cllr Beverley Hazell; Cllr Stephen Brown; Cllr Sushila Dhall; Cllr Val Smith

Patrons

Radiohead; Hugo Brunner; Miss Jean Marsh; Rt Rev John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford; His Grace the Duke of Marlborough

Professional advisors

Auditors: Shaw Gibbs, Kingsgate, 4610 Cascade, Oxford Business Park South, Oxford OX4 2SU

Solicitors: Ferguson Bricknell, Chester House, George Street, Oxford OX1 2AY

Bankers: Unity Trust Bank, 9 Brindley Place, 4 Oozels Square, Birmingham, B1 2HB

Growing and developing

The past year has seen many perceptions challenged, says chief executive Lesley Dewhurst

Whether we like it or not, people make judgements based on their perceptions. Stigma and prejudice are hard to challenge and misconceptions can endure, simply because of one bad experience.

Challenging perceptions has been the theme of 2009/10. This was the major driving force behind the decision to change the name of Oxford Night Shelter to Oxford Homeless Pathways in December 2009. People's expectations of what a "night shelter" offers are so far from reality that we took the plunge to change the name after more than two decades. More of that later...

Another perception we challenged during the year is the stigma attached to a homeless person when they are looking for a job.

We launched the campaign "Potential @ Work" in February 2009, in conjunction with other homeless, refugee and mental health charities (see report on page 18). We are determined to make the possibility of sustained employment a reality for our clients and want to demonstrate what an able, motivated and skilled bunch of people they can be – if only given the chance.

Julian Housing has seen major changes during 2009/10. True to the theme of enhancing perceptions, we have carried out a major refurbishment project to

upgrade our properties. This nine-month project is due for completion in October 2010 and will result in properties we can truly be proud of – and will properly reflect the standard of support that we continue to provide.

The team has also moved into new offices, providing much needed space for client interviews, support and training. The upheaval was enormous, but the rewards are great. For more, see later in this report.

For any of us, attending a hospital appointment can be extremely stressful; if you are homeless this can be even more the case. Many homeless people fail to attend medical appointments through fear of what they might find out or because of the daily chaos of their lives.

We are extremely pleased to have been able to launch the PATHS project this year through the Oxford Homeless Medical Fund. This exciting new venture assists homeless patients in attending medical appointments, helping them overcome the fears and misconceptions they might have had along the way. Again, read on for a full account of this great initiative.

My thanks to all staff, volunteers, trustees, and in-house contractors for all their hard work during 2009/10. We have achieved a lot and have much to be proud of.



'We have come a long way...'

Council of Management chairman Christopher Blount and trustees share their thoughts



One of the most important developments in 2009/2010 has been the regular attendance of a trustee at the weekly service users' meetings. The council of management sends a representative every month. Speaking for myself, I have learnt a huge amount from these meetings about the day-to-day issues which service users face.

These days, a very considerable amount of time in the service user meetings is devoted to training, education and activities (TEA). The training extends from literacy to IT, and the education ranges from personal health and financial management to forming a book club. Activities include football, rowing and theatre. The wide range places a huge demand on the OxHop staff responsible and the trustees are hugely indebted to them.

Other issues range from the quality of the meals to the

state of the rooms and the number of dogs.

It is very encouraging that one of the most common issues is the requirement for greater computer access so that service users can apply for jobs. The contrast with the most prominent issues in the mid-1990s could not be starker. Then the biggest issue was violence and personal safety. We have come a long way since then – but some issues will apparently always be with us. The television in the public area is always either (a) too loud or (b) too quiet!

Christopher Blount

This has been a tough year for everyone working at O'Hanlon House and Julian Housing. The process of restructuring is always fraught with anxiety, and it is to the great credit of all the staff that they were able to maintain the high standards and reputation of the organisation during the uncertainties brought about by change. I am confident that the new structure will significantly strengthen the organisation, and welcome the new name that describes what the organisation does so much better.

Paul Goodman

Changing the name to Oxford Homeless Pathways was a bold step and has involved a dynamic re-design of the organisation and the services it offers. As our aspirations took shape it was an inspired opportunity to listen to the views and concerns of the entire organisation; later to translate these into the ideas, and actions for the future.

I am optimistic about an inclusive, participatory and happy future for all concerned – not to forget the compassion!

Pat Goodwin, Chair of Trustees

I have particularly enjoyed being involved in the restructuring that took place. Although the changes were unsettling for staff, I was so proud to see so many people rise to the occasion and witnessed some truly impressive performances in interview. There are so many ideas and so much professionalism within the staff team. With my background in employment law I was very pleased to help the process.

William Downing

Unlike the other trustees, for me it is a case of looking back rather than forwards, as after ten years as treasurer, I have decided to stand down from the Council of Management.

In that time I have seen huge changes: the move from the awful Victorian former school, to cramped temporary accommodation, and finally to O'Hanlon House with the great feeling of space and light; the start of Julian Housing and growth of the resettlement team; constantly

changing and improving services.

Two things have remained constant: sadly, the need for the work done by the staff – just as critical now as it has ever been – but, more importantly, the commitment and dedication shown by those staff. It has been a huge privilege to work with them over the last ten years.

“Two things have remained constant: the need for the work done by the staff... but more importantly, the commitment and dedication shown by those staff.”

I will always be grateful to Paddy O'Hanlon for inviting me to become a trustee and wish the Council Of Management, Lesley and her team every success in the future.

David Barnett

I became a trustee in early 2009 to offer my business experience to the charity. Since then I have supported them through the name change from Oxford Night Shelter to Oxford Homeless Pathways. More recently I have worked with Julian Housing in planning for an upcoming open day, drawing on both my project management and marketing background. Oxford Homeless Pathways is run with impressive energy and professionalism by Lesley and her team and I am always glad to assist them in planning key initiatives and changes to help them broaden and improve their services.

Karen Simeons

A new year... and a new office

Support manager Matt Clarke welcomes a change of scene for the Julian Housing office staff

After almost a decade at our old and much-loved offices in Bartlemas Road, it was time for a change. Over the years the number of staff at Julian Housing had grown steadily, in line with the expansion of the project, and things were getting pretty cramped in the offices. And so we moved: to new, pleasant and spacious offices in Crown House, just off the Cowley Road.

It was inevitably a bit strange at first: the new environs, the space, the internet working even when it rained! But we quickly settled in and are benefiting from our new surroundings on a daily basis. We have a comfortable reception area with resource point, greater office space, more meeting rooms for support sessions, a confidential space for drug and alcohol testing, and a large meeting room. There has been lots of good feedback from residents, who have commented that the new offices feel more professional while remaining welcoming.

The new offices offer greater flexibility,

from ease of booking rooms to increasing the options for the way we tailor support to each resident's specific needs. We have also begun providing in-house courses for residents in our training room. The courses, some facilitated by members of staff, others by local trainers, cover the varying needs across a typical stay at Julian Housing: from a Move-In course for new residents, through courses in relapse prevention, voluntary work, and budgeting to a Move-On course designed for residents about to move into their own accommodation to help prepare for independent living.

At the time of writing, we have only been in our new offices for a little over three months but already we wonder how we ever managed in our old place! Both our working environment and the quality of support we can offer are considerably improved, and we are in a place where we can continue to develop the work of the project in creative and stimulating ways into the future.



“Both our working environment and the quality of support we can offer are considerably improved”



Making the move

Moving to a new place can be really difficult, and settling in while remembering all the dos and don'ts can be even harder! For new Julian Housing residents, their first day tends to be a bit of a whirl of paperwork and people have admitted that they've just want to get their key and sign on the dotted line. Their licence ends up in a drawer, never to be seen again until something goes wrong!

To prevent this from happening, new residents at Julian Housing now attend a group session on how to understand their licence, in order to know what their rights and responsibilities are. We know this subject can seem boring so we realised we needed to inform people about their licences in a more dynamic way. We used real scenarios of how things had gone wrong for people and how that could have been avoided.

Residents were asked to think about how anti-social behaviour, alcohol and drugs and not attending support sessions or paying service charge could have an impact on their accommodation. The group responded really well and could identify with

the issues. They came up with some good ideas about how staff could improve on things too!

The session also includes information on confidentiality, boundaries and warning procedures – all issues that are important to new residents on the project.

Learning about what the licence really means in practical terms will stand people in good stead when they move on from Julian Housing and take on a tenancy agreement.

People learn a lot from these courses. As one participant said: “There was quite a lot I didn't know, so I'm now aware of where I stand should any of what we learned occur”.

This course now forms part of a wider programme of sessions running at Julian Housing to help people get some structure into their lives and deal with past issues. These include: budgeting, work and volunteering opportunities, relapse prevention and accommodation move-on options – with more to come!

Jane and Lindsey
Supported housing workers



“Learning about what the licence really means in practical terms will stand people in good stead when they move on from Julian Housing and take on a tenancy agreement”

Raising the standard of our houses

The property refurbishment programme has been a great success, says project manager Toby Blake



■ Refurbishment work in progress

For years now there has been general feedback to Julian Housing: “Great support, poor rooms” – or words to that effect. As time went on, despite the best efforts of the maintenance team, the standard of the rooms remained low.

Prospective residents have told us they have been put off coming to Julian Housing because of the poor quality of our housing stock. They felt they were stepping down a rung in terms of the quality of their rooms when they left the hostels. We also had old-fashioned bathrooms with up to six people sharing – not an ideal situation.

So in 2009 the management committee agreed to commit a considerable sum to the upgrade of eight of our houses (the others being already of a good standard). The refurbishment would include making 29 out of 50 rooms en suite and upgrading the existing bathrooms, replacing the baths with showers. We also would replace kitchenettes, wiring, fire alarm systems, and redecorate and re-carpet throughout.

In January 2010 the refurbishment began. Residents and their belongings were moved into other rooms on the project, and the houses emptied of furniture. Then the builders moved in, stripping out the houses and moving at a pace to get each house completed in a month.

The results are fantastic: bright, clean rooms with built-in kitchenettes and en suites. And for the rooms without en suites, a fresh feel and a bathroom shared with only one or two others.

Big thanks to the team from Cooper's Construction, who have been very understanding of our demands, and to Julian Housing staff, both for supporting clients during their moves, and for their practical help. But the biggest thanks are due to our residents, who have been fantastic in their understanding of the need for change – living on the project they are well aware of the houses' shortcomings – and willingness to be shunted around while their rooms were being refurbished!

11%
of Julian
Housing clients
were female and
89% male in
2009/10

A wide range of supporting roles

Supported housing workers Georgina and Nina talk about developments in two areas of the Julian Housing team

I have been at Julian Housing since September and was aware when I started the job I might have to work with sex offenders so I decided that when the opportunity of doing a training course on this area came up it would be a good opportunity to broaden my understanding.

The training was extremely good and run by Circles, which works with sex offenders in the community.

The first part of the day looked at our ideas of what sex offenders are, how they affect the community and how they are dealt with by the media. This led to a discussion with the group around our preconceptions and the facts. We then focused on what Circles do and the support they provide.

In the afternoon, the participants split into small groups and looked at two case studies. Our conclusions were then brought back to the whole group and discussed.

The final part of the day looked at how we managed ourselves at work, our health and support both at home and at work, and getting the balance right. I would recommend this training to anyone working in supported housing.

I joined Julian Housing as an admin assistant. I enjoyed the post and appreciated the scope for greater involvement in the project at all levels. After a year's full-time work, I was offered a post as supported housing worker to cover maternity leave.

My successor on administration has done the project proud and we're very sad to see Vanessa go. The administrator role here has continued to be an integral part of the smooth running of our project.

We're now looking for a new, computer-literate, intuitive designer with an ability to get on with everyone and everything, problem solve and input, as well as to generally keep the whole project running.

Most recently we've called upon admin's graphic design skills for the residents' full colour newsletter – created for residents, by residents. Each edition involves planning, receiving and chasing up articles, designing, printing, collating and stapling.

We are now hoping to look into admin and reception work training for residents. From our experience, this kind of role can help with confidence, assertiveness and can really open doors for people.

“...this kind of role can help with confidence, assertiveness and can really open doors for people”

Forging new PATHS for patients

A volunteer initiative will support patients attending the Luther Street Medical Centre, as Jan Penrose and Margaret Burden explain



“Volunteers can offer important emotional support, helping the patient to believe they can improve their health, giving them the confidence to talk to new medical staff”

The most important new development in Oxford Homeless Medical Fund this year has been the start of the PATHS volunteer project. PATHS stands for ‘Promoting Access To Health Services’ and the aim is to provide trained volunteers who will be able to support Luther Street Medical Centre patients to attend health appointments made for them by the doctors.

Medical staff at Luther Street have always been concerned that many patients do not attend these appointments because of their chaotic lifestyle, depression, lack of confidence and fear of strange people and places. As a result they do not get the treatment they need, and problems can go undiagnosed.

A volunteer can play an important role in tackling this problem, by offering practical help: such as reminding the patient of the date and time of the appointment, travelling there with them, or helping them find the right clinic.

They can, if the patient wishes, go in with them to see the doctor – maybe taking notes, or reminding the patient of questions they wanted to ask. They can also

offer important emotional support, helping the patient to believe they can improve their health, giving them the confidence to talk to new medical staff.

Jan Penrose was appointed as part-time volunteer co-ordinator in October. Her post is funded by Oxford Homeless Medical Fund, while all the project costs are being funded this year by the Community Health Improvement Fund.

Jan ran the first training course for volunteers in March, for six volunteers with a wide range of skills and experience: some have been homeless themselves, others have worked with homeless people before, one is an A&E nurse. They were to start working with patients in May, and Jan plans to hold a second training course in October, after the project has run for a six-month pilot phase.

Apart from PATHS, OHMF has continued to support the patients of Luther Street through a programme of grants, provision of an acupuncture service and the supply of herbal medicines.

Finally, we’d like to thank numerous donors for their generosity over the past year.

After more than two decades, the night shelter

At the end of 2009, we launched our new identity – Oxford Homeless Pathways: a name that better services. Here's how we celebrated...



On 1 December 2009 we marked one of the greatest changes this organisation has ever experienced – it was the day when the name ‘Oxford Night Shelter’ became obsolete after more than two decades of use, and the charity became known as Oxford Homeless Pathways.

The decision to change the name of the charity was a difficult one. We are aware that our old name was

extremely familiar to both our service users and the wider public – but we also recognise that familiarity can also breed contempt. The name ‘Night Shelter’ simply no longer described the range and quality of services that we now provide and it had to go.

We wanted our new name to reflect the work that we do in as simple a way as possible, and ‘Oxford Homeless Pathways’ certainly fits the bill. We are based in Oxford, we provide services for homeless people... and we aim to help people find pathways out of homelessness.

The word ‘Pathways’ means many things for us:

- Route planning – all our service users work with staff to create a plan of how they can get away from homelessness
- Guidance – staff are skilled at assisting our service users to find their way through the maze of services that can assist them
- Clearing obstacles – it is never straightforward getting out of being homeless, and one of our tasks is to help our service users get round problems such as addiction or health issues
- Acquisitions along the way – as with any

“We wanted our new name to reflect the work that we do in as simple a way as possible, and ‘Oxford Homeless Pathways’ certainly fits the bill”

ter changes its name

encompasses the range and scope of our

journey, homeless people can acquire new skills and confidence from the experiences they have on their pathways through homelessness

- Getting a view – it is part of our role to help service users get a different perspective on their lives. A bit like the way that the view changes on a path through varying countryside.
- Choices of pathways – there are many routes through homelessness, and the choices made along the way are important ones to get right.

So, what you need to remember is:

Oxford Homeless Pathways is the NAME OF THE CHARITY
Individual projects keep their own names:



And if you find 'Oxford Homeless Pathways' a bit of a mouthful, you can call us OxHoP. Catchy!!!



“Current service users spoke eloquently about their experiences of Oxford Homeless Pathways and the care and support they have received”

The launch event, held in the Four Pillars Hotel, was attended by a wide variety of supporters, service users and other professionals. There were speeches, cake and a splendid buffet lunch.

But the real “icing on the cake” was the speeches by several of our current service users, who spoke passionately and eloquently about their experiences of Oxford Homeless Pathways and the care and support they have received.

They really helped us to celebrate the work we have done in the past and to launch a new and exciting phase in our lives with our new name.



A day in the life... of a shift leader

William, one of three shift leaders at O'Hanlon House, talks about his role

Shift leaders are responsible for overseeing the running of a shift, ensuring project workers complete their tasks to a high standard and effectively maintaining a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment.

A typical day begins with reading staff diary entries, noting appointments in the clients' diary and leading morning handover. Incidents arising from the previous day or night are discussed, which may involve setting bars within the parameters of O'Hanlon House's Inclusion policies and procedures. We may exclude a client for one or two hours for minor misdemeanours, longer for more serious incidents.

Key aspects of my role include delegating project workers to complete outstanding paperwork, ensuring staff understand what they are doing and supporting staff throughout the shift. I ensure there are enough staff in and cover if necessary.

I help to implement support structures and encourage individual initiative. For example, 'link' session activities are drawn up each day by the training and activities co-ordinator and

resettlement team in consultation with shift leaders, project workers and service users. A link activity – such as cooking or a museum visit – mainly involves a project worker working in partnership with clients. My role is to ensure the link worker is confident and able to undertake their tasks in terms of encouraging service user involvement in a particular activity.

I also encourage staff to adopt a person-centred, holistic approach – for example, when completing resettlement application forms: exploring with clients their choices of move-on options and encouraging clients to address their particular issues.

An aspect of my role I particularly enjoy is supporting new members of the staff team and sharing information and knowledge – with the aim of supporting O'Hanlon House to promote best practice.

The above is just a small fraction of the tasks I undertake during a shift leading day. Although there is routine – as in any other job – no two days are quite the same. A day in the life of a shift leader is a challenging and rewarding experience.



“I particularly enjoy supporting new members of the staff team and sharing information and knowledge”

The overall average length of stay was **55.6** nights



Harm reduction service

Shift leader Richard outlines developments in a vital service

In August 2009, SMART'S in house harm reduction worker, Gavin, moved on to pastures new. Due to the great success of the harm reduction service, Oxford Homeless Pathways agreed in co-operation with SMART to keep the service running, with O'Hanlon House project staff operating the service.

The service is there to promote safety when using intravenous drugs, both for the individual and the wider public.

This was a great opportunity for us and a chance to develop a great service. The service is unusual in the sense that it is kept entirely separate from the other services we provide at O'Hanlon House, to keep it as confidential as possible.

All the project staff have undergone a training group facilitated by Gavin, enabling us to work in this environment.

This has given a new angle for project staff working on the floor and all staff members have been excellent with their approach to this new service. We would like to thank Gavin for the work he has done while in O'Hanlon House and

wish him the best for the future.

I have now been designated as the lead for the harm reduction service. This has been a great opportunity for me and has helped my development and knowledge in working with drug users.

My role is to keep in contact with outside agencies for new initiatives, safety concerns and regular stock updates. I have worked with Gavin, looking into ways we can productively run the service, while managing the day-to-day aspects of working on the floor.

**Drugs,
alcohol and
mental health
are the three main
areas where clients
have most
problems**

Let it snow, let it snow...

Severe weather has a big impact on O'Hanlon House and its service to clients, says project manager Simon Pitkin

So what happens when it snows? This is a common question asked by visitors, particularly after last winter with its record cold snaps.

For decades (when we were the Oxford Night Shelter), we changed our operating procedures during severe weather conditions.

I can remember as a project worker in the 1990s we had over 80 people in the building – a number we actually beat one night earlier this year.

Back then it was all rather ad hoc: just stick our head out the window and if it was really cold, we would open the doors. Twenty years on, and its not quite as simple, as we have health and safety assessments, written procedures, Met Office forecasts and extra staffing to consider, but the principle is very much the same. If we are in for a spell of severely cold weather, then we try and take people who are sleeping rough in.

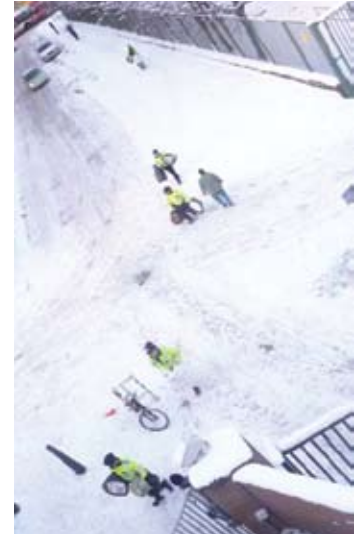
The problem we have is that we are almost always full – over 99 per cent of our beds are occupied – so when O'Hanlon House was built in 2005, we had severe weather beds in mind, and designated an area for it.

What we offer is limited: a sleeping bag, chair or mattress, sandwiches and soup, but it's a chance for us to engage with people who maybe often don't come to us, or couldn't get a bed that night, or who are even from another country and thus not allowed to stay with us normally. Most importantly it's much warmer, dryer and safer for them than sleeping outside.

Other agencies like the Street Services team help out, telling people we are open, lending us their staff. This year the police even came over with some spare sleeping bags, as did many others.

Over the winter we opened liked this on 31 nights, a total of 380 nights' emergency accommodation. We don't charge for this and are thus grateful to Oxford City Council who provide us with a small grant that pays for the extra costs.

In many ways it's a step back for us, back to a time when that was all we did – keep people safe, warm, dry and fed. We've moved on from then, and now do so much more, but when the weather turns cold, it is a reminder of those days, and why the project was first started.



“We’ve moved on from then, and now do so much more, but when the weather turns cold, it is a reminder of those days, and why the project was first started”

Making changes: a case study

We work with many clients with substance misuse issues. Two particular cases spring to mind: we have been working with a couple of clients with substance misuse issues. They were both entrenched rough sleepers for a long time. From entering our project, they both started to work pro-actively with the front line staff, their respective resettlement worker and with outside agencies to facilitate addressing the issues that led them to homelessness.

They both contributed towards their individual support plans – which included actions such as engaging with specialist agencies, educational programmes, learning activities, and work-like experience. Move-on housing options were identified at that time too. This gives a structured plan of action for the client to aim for, as well as the opportunity to make a positive contribution to their recovery.

They first went on to a methadone maintenance prescription as an alternative to illegal drugs. Both then started to engage with outside specialist community-based drug services to get some insight into their behaviour patterns and the reasons behind their substance misuse habits. As both were progressing well, they were moved to O'Hanlon House's resettlement floor, where clients get more freedom but require more involvement and responsibilities.

As they addressed their issues and produced random clean drug tests, we got in touch with Oxford City Council to put them forward to the Home Choice rent deposit scheme to secure a privately rented flat. They have now been in their tenancy for six months and have been doing very well indeed. We have provided on-going support in order to help them sustain their tenancy. Since then, they have made contact with their family, continued their engagement with specialist agencies and got involved in artistic events. Subsequently, the landlord has been very pleased to offer them a further 12 months' tenancy agreement.

They have created and taken the opportunities presented to them with open arms, have enjoyed the benefit of settled accommodation and have gained confidence and control over their lives.

Laurent, resettlement team

Learning curve

Adult education funding has enabled us to offer a broad range of courses that have been well attended by residents. The programme has included groups and projects specifically designed for those wanting to develop their maths, literacy and IT skills. We have offered healthy eating courses to some of our most vulnerable clients who need one-to-one sessions. We have also been able to encourage our clients to access training outside O'Hanlon House by working together with other hostels to run joint courses.

A six-week reading group – on Bill Bryson's *Notes From a Small Island* – had fantastic feedback: "It's great just to read a book, and share it;" "It's good to practise reading out loud;" "Everyone is supportive and you never feel stupid."

Compulsory resettlement courses cover health and safety, dealing with neighbours, tenancy sustainment, benefits and budgeting.

We have also purchased a fishing licence to enable groups of our residents to have a day out fishing. This was all led by a client who once did nothing but sit in the wet room all day. He is now on the resettlement floor and working towards independent living.

Sarah, TEA co-ordinator

Releasing the potential



In March, we teamed up with three other local charities to run a campaign designed to challenge the perception of homeless and other disadvantaged clients in the job market.

The campaign, Potential@Work, promoted the benefits of employing local disadvantaged people, whose talents are often overlooked in today's job market. The client groups covered by the campaign included people who have experienced homelessness, mental health problems and/or are refugees.

Potential@Work provides access to a resource pack, website and hands-on support for employers, and ran a series of bus advertisement to promote the work.

The campaign was launched at a buffet lunch event at Morgan Cole, Solicitors. More than 70 people attended, including local employers and a number of people who have found work recently, having successfully overcome the stigma attached to their background.

Several of them spoke movingly about their struggle to find work, and their joy at being finally accepted into the job market.

A local employer spoke about the benefits of providing employment to people with this kind of background, particularly reflecting on the energy, enthusiasm and commitment that are engendered by combatting difficult life experiences.

“A local employer spoke about the benefits of providing employment to people with this kind of background, particularly reflecting on the energy, enthusiasm and commitment that are engendered by combatting difficult life experiences”

Potential@Work was delivered in partnership with Aspire Oxfordshire, Refugee Resource and Restore and was sponsored by the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership.



‘Sharing people’s sorrows and joys’

Sister Anne Proudley, chaplain for the homeless, talks about her five-year association with O’Hanlon House and its clients

It is nearly five years since I started working as chaplain to the homeless community in the centre of Oxford on behalf of the city centre churches.

It’s difficult to believe it has been as long as that; but then I have met more and more new people, while still meeting many of those whom I got to know in the very early days. Some of these I feel I know fairly well as the trust has grown over the years, and I’ve met up with them in O’Hanlon House, Lucy Faithfull House, Simon House, and at the Gap and the Gatehouse – and back to O’Hanlon House!

It’s also great to occasionally meet someone who has moved on and my prayer is always that they will be able to sustain their new lifestyle and not fall back into the old.

It was good to attend the launch ceremony in December when the new name, Oxford Homeless Pathways, was unveiled and we heard from those who had been helped by all connected with ‘the Night Shelter’ to take the pathway out of homelessness, and into more stable accommodation.

During the past year I seem to have been

particularly involved, in both a pastoral and practical way, with some of those who found themselves staying there, working with the resettlement team. I have found that very rewarding: so grateful thanks to them – and to all the staff for the warm welcome I receive.

Sadly, there have been those who have died – some at a fairly young age, and one or two who were older and well-established figures in the homeless community.

In the last two years, at the beginning of November, I have been able to arrange a memorial service for those who have died during the previous 12 months and in 2009 we had 29 names requested, one from some years back which says something of how people are missed. Thank you to Kathryn Bracewell, the minister of New Road Baptist Church, Bonn Square, for sharing the service and to everyone there for the welcome and help you give at the service and throughout the year to those of the homeless community who wander into the church.

It is a great privilege to be part of all that happens in O’Hanlon House as I continue to reach out with God’s love to all who come through its doors, being a listening ear and sharing people’s sorrows and joys.



“It’s great to meet someone who has moved on and my prayer is always that they will be able to sustain their new lifestyle and not fall back into the old”

A valuable resource

Luther Street Medical Surgery provides primary healthcare to Oxford's homeless from its base next door to O'Hanlon House, says practitioner Mary Squires

It is estimated that 30-50 per cent of the homeless population in Britain has serious mental health problems. In June 2008 a new post was created at Luther Street with the support of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Mental Healthcare (OBMH), the Primary Care Trust and Oxfordshire County Council. The mental health practitioner's post meant a member of the local community mental health team would be based at the surgery. I was seconded from OBMH to work at Luther Street four days a week. It is my role to provide and improve access to mental health care, to prevent deterioration in mental wellbeing and to work towards recovery.

I work closely with O'Hanlon House, visiting people staying at the hostel and working with the team to support those with mental health difficulties. It is a busy and varied job: I run a full day clinic on Tuesdays; on Thursday mornings there is a Wellbeing Drop In that anyone who is a patient of Luther Street Medical Centre can access. I also go out and meet people in hostels, supported housing (such as Julian Housing) and rough sleeping. The support and communication levels with others service has really helped this post be successful.

The OHMF has been a wonderful resource, enabling people to access essential basics such a clean set of clothes, as well as to plan social outings. It is highly valued by patients and staff at Luther Street Medical Centre and is a welcome resource for people in need.

The post has been granted funding for a further 12 months, which is excellent news, and I'm looking forward to another busy year.



Welcome support

Rental income for both O'Hanlon House and the Julian Housing Project has been maintained throughout the year although void periods in Julian Housing have been an issue while refurbishments are carried out.

Grant awards have been as anticipated, including the Supporting People grant, the Primary Care Trust, Oxford City Council and the Big Lottery. General donations increased across both Oxford Homeless Pathways and the Oxford Homeless Medical Fund due to some generous donations.

We are continually grateful for the support from individuals and groups who donate 'in kind' as well as cash support. These donations enable us to provide services and welfare specifically targeted to our residents, above the level provided by general grants.

Additional expenditure of £195,000, met from reserves, was needed during the year to carry out major one-off repairs and renewals to the building and ancillary equipment.

Reserves include £650,000 (three months' operating costs for 2010/11) which is set aside as a contingency against future uncertainty affecting the service we provide, in accordance with best practice, and recommended by the Charity Commission.

Mike Slater, finance manager

Statement of financial activities 2009/10

INCOMING RESOURCES	2008/09	2009/10	BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2010	2009	2010
Rent and Supporting People	1,892,651	1,994,546	Fixed assets		
Grants	502,196	283,316	Tangible	1,146,220	1,221,993
Donations	87,527	97,410	Investments		375,335
Investment Income	<u>89,484</u>	<u>53,359</u>	Current assets		
			Investments		374,769
Total incoming resources	<u>2,571,858</u>	<u>2,428,631</u>	Debtors	134,562	81,527
(Less cost of generating funds)	<i>no fundraising</i>	<i>no fundraising</i>	Cash at bank and in hand	<u>1,442,448</u>	<u>437,941</u>
Total available				<u>2,723,230</u>	<u>2,491,565</u>
for charitable applications	<u>2,571,858</u>	<u>2,428,631</u>			
RESOURCES EXPENDED			Creditors	(183,667)	(164,979)
Direct charitable expenditure			Bank loan	(152,090)	(134,802)
Service costs	1,606,654	1,588,795	Total net assets	2,387,473	2,191,784
Service support	<u>725,137</u>	<u>964,352</u>	Funded by:		
	<u>2,331,791</u>	<u>2,553,147</u>	Unrestricted funds		
			Julian Housing	353,687	245,600
Governance costs	55,758	71,268	Oxford H'less Medical Fund	332,164	384,885
Total resources expended	2,387,549	2,624,415	Designated funds		
			Welfare Fund	85,596	101,507
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources			Emergency Reserve	735,668	584,619
for this year	184,309	(195,689)	Restricted funds		
			Building development	159,563	168,370
Balance brought forward at 1 April	2,203,164	2,387,473	Oxford H'less Medical Fund	720,795	706,803
			Total Funds	2,387,473	2,191,784
Balance carried forward at 31 March	2,387,473	2,191,784			

Auditor's statement: "We have examined the summarised financial statement included in this annual report. The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements; we have agreed to report our opinion on their consistency with the full financial statements. We have carried out the procedures we consider necessary to ascertain whether the summary is consistent with the full financial statement from which they have been prepared. In our opinion, the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statement for the year ended 31 March 2010."

Notes to the accounts: The summarised accounts printed in this annual report may not contain sufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. Copies of the unabridged accounts (which comply with current statutory requirements and include an unqualified audit report) can be obtained on request from Oxford Homeless Pathways.

Shaw Gibbs Accountants

Whether you are an individual, a business, or a member of a group or society there are a variety of different ways that you can help Oxford Homeless Pathways...

Donations

Set up a regular donation to Oxford Homeless Pathways and enable us to develop our services and offer long-term help when and where it is needed. A regular gift gives Oxford Homeless Pathways a secure and reliable income, which means that we can plan long-term projects cost-effectively.

One off donations, however big or small, contribute enormously to the success of our work. Every penny counts!

There are other ways to help than purely financial. We are very pleased to accept donations of towels, toiletries, single bed linen, and blankets. We have limited storage for clothing but are grateful to receive good quality items.

Fundraise for us!

Get involved by co-ordinating a fundraising event. Whether you decide to throw a theme party, organise a sponsored walk or shave your head, your support will make a big difference to homeless people in Oxford.

In memory

You could remember Oxford Homeless Pathways in your will, or arrange for donations in lieu of funeral flowers or donate the proceeds of a church collection to us. Leaving a gift in your will to Oxford Homeless Pathways is a wonderful way to make a lasting contribution.

Corporate

Your company can play a significant role in the local community. By supporting Oxford Homeless Pathways you have the opportunity to demonstrate your company's commitment to local issue and be apart of local solutions.

Get involved with Oxford Homeless Pathways by donating goods in kind, sponsoring one of our projects, or making Oxford Homeless Pathways your Charity of the Year.

Events

The Oxford Sleep Out is an annual event which raises awareness and financial support for homelessness charities in Oxford. Get involved by asking your friends and family to sponsor you to sleep out (or sleep in!) at this year's Sleep Out. If you'd like more info on this, check out our JustGiving page by following the links from our website – www.oxhop.org.uk.

For more information on ways in which you can support Oxford Homeless Pathways please contact our fundraiser, Christy, on christyspenle@oxhop.org.uk or 07769 217603. Your support is very much appreciated.

Thanks to all our generous donors over the past year

It has been another amazing year for donations to Oxford Homeless Pathways – both financial and ‘in kind’. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of individuals, groups and organisations who have given to us without prompting. We are especially grateful to the anonymous donor, who continues to send us money nearly every week, as well as all the people, too numerous to mention, who have standing orders or regular commitments to us via the Justgiving website.

We were very excited to receive a generous contribution to our refurbishment work at Julian Housing, from the Beatrix Laing Family Trust. This really helped launch our project to upgrade the bathroom facilities in our houses. We were also particularly pleased to receive a generous grant towards our Training, Education and Activities work from the St Michael Feoffees.

The list below is just a small selection of other donors, to whom we send our great thanks and appreciation:

British Gas Business; Oxford Wholefoods; Streetsmart; OXPAT; Hardwick Park; Trusthouse Charitable Foundation; Tomahawk; Tobit Trust; Manches LLP; Bartlett Taylor; Horton-cum-Studley Social Committee; Oxford Computer

Consultants; Thames Valley Police; Oxon Federation of Townswomen’s Guild (The Christmas present judging competition group!).

Church groups: Mother Theresa Group, Kidlington; Shelswell Group of Parishes; Kidlington Baptist Church; St Nicholas Church, Marston; Long Hanborough Methodist Church; Trinity Church, Abingdon; St Michael’s Church, Cumnor; Kennington Churches Together; Champion Hall Carmelite Priory; All Saints Church, Abingdon; Oxford Christadelphian Ecclesia; St Giles Church; St Ebbs Feoffees Charitable Trust; Bicester Methodist Church; St Mary’s Church, East Hendred.

Education establishments: Christchurch College; Brookes University; Pembroke College; Regents Park College; Balliol College.

All of the schools (and churches) who kindly donate for Harvest Festival.

Many others gave direct to the Oxford Homeless Medical Fund, which was also greatly appreciated.

Of course, we could not continue to provide the services that we do without support from the statutory and grant making bodies that support our work:

Oxfordshire Supporting People, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust, Homelessness, Overcrowding and Work Directorate (HOWD), Big Lottery Fund.





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