

Taking action, moving forward



Oxford Homeless Pathways



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Staff

April 2013-March 2014

Oxford Homeless Pathways

Chief Executive Lesley Dewhurst
Finance Manager Mike Slater
Volunteer Co-ordinator Helen Wright

O’Hanlon House (01865 304600)

Project Manager Simon Pitkin
Deputy Manager Operations Lucy Flanagan
Deputy Manager Client Support Lucy Richman
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No Second Night Out Assessment Worker Souad
Step Up Co-ordinator Steve (Sarah left 2013)
Day Team Penny, Peter, Tim, Nell, Fran, Simon, Maxine (Nell left 2013, Dario left 2014, Bev became Senior Project Worker 2014)
Night Team Robert, Zak, Dominic, Survijay
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Admin Officer Kaye
Maintenance & Cleaning Team Dennis, Jeremiah, Tracy, Patience
Casual Project Workers Frank, Rodney, Lee, Steve, Jayson, Marc, Gary



Julian Housing (Main office 01865 201992/Vineyard 01235 526716)

Project Manager Toby Blake
Deputy Managers Susan Hemphill, Charlotte Blake (Matt Clarke left 2014)
Supported Housing Workers Lindsey, Gemma, Charlotte, Philip, Pearline (Substance Misuse lead), Alison (Housing First), Lesley (Vineyard), Andrew (Vineyard), Hannah (Compass), Verity (Kempson House)
Peer Support Worker Ben
Step Up Co-ordinator Roisin
Admin Officer Jane
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Oxford Homeless Medical Fund (01865 792126)

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Trustees & Advisors

Trustees 2013/14

William Downing (Chair – Christopher Blount left 2013)
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Karen Simeons, Gail Siddall, Liz Barter, Robin Aitken, Tom Flanagan, Margaret Stevens, Andrew Rodzynski, Anne Clarke

Oxford City Council Representatives Cllr Anne-Marie Canning, Cllr Scott Seamons

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

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Facing up to the challenges



Around 600 homeless people were supported by OxHoP over this year

The County Council's proposal to cut Housing Related Support by 38% will hit us hard

This year has been the usual mix of challenges and cheer – from leading a campaign against local authority cuts to launching our new accommodation and support service for ex-offenders, and lots of other stuff in between. So, where to start? How about with the good bits?

Our Housing First project at Julian Housing started taking clients early last summer. This is intensive work, aimed at bringing in people who have been stuck in rough sleeping for a long time. The first three residents had, between them, been sleeping rough for a staggering 20 years before accepting accommodation with Housing First.

We have been helping our stakeholders gain a better understanding of rural homelessness in Oxfordshire. Last summer we converted a room in our Vineyard project in Abingdon as an emergency bed for people sleeping rough in the South and Vale districts of the county. Initially, we had no idea how much this would be used, but it has rarely been empty over the past few months, supporting 19 residents who would otherwise have been sleeping out.

Last autumn we stepped in to take on and remodel a project for ex-offenders, following the sad death of its previous owner/manager. The Compass project has been running under our management since November 2013, providing accommodation and support to 41 people who might otherwise be homeless, working in partnership with Probation and Connection Floating Support. The initial challenges of stabilising the project and bringing in new working practices was not easy but it is now beginning to flourish.

At O'Hanlon House we have faced the challenges of working with increasing numbers of rough sleepers, many of whom have profound substance misuse and mental health problems. The No Second Night Out service is now firmly established within our hostel and we have recently added a "Sit Up" service – providing floor and chair space for an extra 10 rough sleepers each night. It is early days for this service, but is a sad testament of the times that it is needed.

As our Service User Board (SUB) constantly reminds us, involving clients in the running of our services is a very important part of making sure we get our approach right. So we have recruited our first GROW worker – a trainee post specifically for someone who has used homelessness services in the past and wants to work in the sector. Marc is a strong addition to our team; we hope he is just the first of a succession of trainees entering the sector through this route.

Our volunteer numbers continue to grow and we congratulate Jim O'Kane on his OCVA Volunteering Award. It is great to see the wide variety of work that volunteers are now doing within OxHoP – running courses, supporting clients to fill out forms, offering hairdressing and pampering sessions, encouraging creativity, accompanying clients to appointments in the community ... the list is growing all the time.

So now, the bad bit: the news from the County Council that they were proposing to cut the Housing Related Support budget by 38% hit us hard last December. We launched a strong campaign against the cuts and were proud to lead a large rally outside County Hall in January. Although the cuts are now set to go ahead in 2015, we were pleased to have raised the profile of homelessness. How the cuts will be implemented is still not known, but we know we must increase our income from other sources to ensure we keep up the quality of our services.

On a personal note, we would like to pay tribute to the excellent work done by Christopher Blount, who stepped down from the role of Chair of OxHoP's Board of Trustees last September. Chris started his relationship with Oxford Night Shelter in the late 1990s as a volunteer, becoming Chair of Trustees in 2002. He contributed so much over the years and we thank him for all he has done.

Finally, we don't get to say this often enough, but in a difficult year, we really want to say many thanks to all staff, volunteers, trustees and supporters. We couldn't do it without you.

Lesley Dewhurst *Chief Executive* and William Downing *Chair of Board of Trustees*

PATHS volunteers steer a steady course

This year has felt like one of progressions for our PATHS volunteering project. We welcomed six new volunteers into the service as they completed their training in October, and have also recently recruited and trained a further seven solely to run activities under our PATHS PLUS section of the project.

PATHS remains steady, with new patients constantly being referred into the service. This year the volunteers donated 138.5 hours to accompanying Luther Street Medical Centre patients to hospital appointments: most of these clients would be unable to attend without the generosity and dedication of our volunteers.

Our PATHS PLUS activities have expanded well over the past year. We introduced a new cookery session for clients who live at the Vineyard. This is always well attended, and is not only enabling clients to cook meals from around the world but also to challenge themselves with new skills such as cake decorating, with impressive results. We have accompanied clients to benefit appeals, helped a client to practise his English conversation skills, and recruited Polish translators to enable a client to gain the support he needs despite a language barrier. Both the personalisation and CSCS sessions continue to be well attended. PATHS PLUS has benefited from an impressive 452 hours donated to us by volunteers.

We are moving the project forward by beginning new activities such as a relaxation group, clay modelling, creative writing, reading group and also an Ultimate Frisbee Team! We now also have a volunteer qualified hairdresser about to begin with us, offering free haircuts to O'Hanlon House residents.

One of our volunteers has undergone training to become an ambassador for Oxford Homeless Pathways and has begun to go out to community groups to talk about the importance of our work and, by doing this, break down stereotypes that can be held by members of the public.

All our volunteers have undergone training in mental health first aid, breakaway techniques and first aid in order to support our clients more effectively. Further to this, four volunteers are about to qualify as first aid trainers, teaching clients six techniques around the type of medical emergency our service users are most at risk of. This will enable clients to support each other in times of need while medical assistance is on its way.

We will continue to find new ways to move forward to meet the needs of our clients. I would like to thank all our volunteers for their continued hard work and dedication, and for making such a difference to the health and lives of our clients.

Helen Wright Volunteer Co-ordinator

“We will continue to find new ways to move forward to meet the needs of our clients”



OxHoP fights council cuts

This year brought with it some troubling news about cuts to Oxfordshire's Housing Related Support Budget. The initial proposal was for a 38% cut to this budget next year. This equates to a loss of £1.5m across the board. We decided that this was the time to get politically active!

Oxford Homeless Pathways teamed up with other homeless services and advice centres also threatened by these cuts, to plan a campaign to try and get the proposal revised. One of the first things we did was start a petition, which got everyone busy sharing the petition online and collecting signatures from around Oxfordshire. We even had a stall in Bonn Square one day asking passers-by to sign!

The next step was to organise a protest outside the council buildings on the day of the cuts debate. Everyone from across the network got involved. The event was shared across Facebook and Twitter; service users of O'Hanlon House and another hostel, Lucy Faithful House, came together to make placards for the day, as did some of the city's university students. We had support from hundreds of people.

When the day came, we walked to town, balloons and placards in hand, wondering if anyone would turn up...

We arrived and realised we had nothing to worry about! The area was already full of people. Throughout the protest, we had nearly 400 people turn out to support us, including influential members of the community, such as political figures, the Imam from the local mosque, staff from various services, and even service users themselves. The student turnout was particularly impressive, and we had people from the press there to cover the action! The petition was presented to the council with over 3,000 signatures, and one of our previous service users, Kevin, spoke about his experiences of the homeless networks in Oxford.

The day was a huge success and gave us a huge burst of confidence knowing that our work is so valued by the people of Oxfordshire. Unfortunately, the 38% cut was still voted through. However, there was some good news: the cuts will now be split over two years, not one. This means we need to focus more than ever on fundraising, to ensure that our services, and the people that use them, don't get put at risk.

Thanks to everyone who got involved to support us through the campaign! It brought so many people and services together, and we see it as a real accomplishment of the community.

Kaye McDougall Fundraiser



Negotiating the benefits maze



The people we work with at Oxford Homeless Pathways rely on benefits such as Job Seekers' Allowance, Housing Benefit and Incapacity Benefits to get by, but chaotic lifestyles, mental health problems or lack of physical ability can make attending meetings and filling out the right paperwork difficult to manage. The new welfare reforms are making it harder for people to claim benefits and include much stricter sanctions, and the effect could be disastrous. Without these essential benefits, how are our clients expected to cope?

I work as a Senior Project Worker at O' Hanlon House and I have been involved with the Homelessness Network in Oxford for about 15 years now. Because of the new welfare reforms, OxHoP has asked me to take the lead as a benefits-focused project worker for the past year.

One of the more important things I do is supporting clients in becoming computer-literate, as more and more individuals will be expected to make new claims and update their information online. Due to those changes, most clients will also need to be well acquainted with financial products such as bank accounts, Post Office card accounts, and Jam Jar accounts with Credit Unions etc, all of which can be quite a muddle to understand.

I now have contacts with banks, which enable clients opening basic card accounts to get their benefit awards paid into these. These contacts are important to have to ensure that the clients have a positive and encouraging experience when maintaining their finances.

I have also been spending a lot of time networking with other agencies in order to establish strong partnerships to facilitate a smooth transition to the new benefit system and to signpost clients to the appropriate organisation. I am particularly trying to encourage clients and staff to use Job Centre Plus as a support agency, as it provides a variety of services – such as setting up an email account, creating a CV, IT training, English courses for those for whom English is not their first language. These skills not only help with finance and benefit issues, but are transferable skills that can help in the future with employment.

There is a big emphasis through various government initiatives to get benefit claimants back into employment. It is therefore important to incorporate learning like this into client support.

I strongly believe that by building up local welfare assistance, clients will have a more positive and constructive journey through this Welfare Benefit Reform.

Laurent Cadoret Senior Project Worker, Benefits Lead

78% of residents at O'Hanlon House have been helped to tackle rent arrears

SUB gives a voice to every resident

My name is Sam Hutchinson and I am a member of the Service User Board and have been for a number of months now. The SUB is an important part of OxHoP – as residents, we have our views listened to by not only the chief executive but also the trustees and staff of both Julian Housing and O'Hanlon House.

We have had a part in updating guidelines and welcome packs and are in the process of getting a points system up and running to benefit clients of Julian Housing and O'Hanlon House. This will work as a savings scheme for all clients who participate in various tasks, such as groups, courses, buddying system etc.

We have our meetings alternately at Julian Housing and O'Hanlon House on a monthly basis and normally have a positive turn-out by clients.

Sam Hutchinson



Client support

At O'Hanlon House, the key emphasis of our work is on supporting clients in the best ways possible, and helping them address why they became homeless and how they can change their lives for the better.

Each project worker has three or four clients that they support. This allows each client ample time in the week to have one-on-one contact with a key worker. This takes the form of weekly meetings and informal chats, helping to signpost clients to other agencies for alternative forms of support, and arranging interviews to work out how best they can achieve their goals and move on to more appropriate housing. Being a short-term project, one of our key jobs is to identify the most suitable move on accommodation for each client to aim for.

All our clients come in off the street through the council's No Second Night Out (NSNO) initiative. Many have had little or no previous support and are very nervous or scared about their situation. This is why we try to ensure that each client gets individual, tailored support.

There are many different move-on options for clients who come into O'Hanlon House, including our sister project Julian Housing, one of the other hostels in Oxford, perhaps a rehabilitation facility, or somewhere out of the area. Our job at O'Hanlon House is to try our best to equip clients to face the challenges ahead, and prepare them for their future accommodation.

Occasionally – because they are over 55, or ready for Move On – some clients will be offered social housing or private rented accommodation by Oxford City Council or one of the districts, and we will help arrange this. These opportunities are all too rare. Often the flats are completely bare and we have to help the clients to furnish them. But with the help of donations or grants from various organisations, and the Oxford Homeless Medical Fund, we are able to help prepare these flats for their new tenants. We also help set up the tenancy, arrange utilities etc, and refer the clients to floating support agencies such as Elmore Community Services or Connections for further support.

Client Support at O'Hanlon House is very varied: each individual has their own story and their own needs. Our main job is to try our best to identify and meet these needs for each person that comes through our doors.

Tina Seaton Client Support Co-ordinator

Room to GROW

O'Hanlon House is delighted to be able to introduce Marc, our newly appointed trainee on the GROW (Giving Real Opportunities for Work) programme.

The aim of the GROW programme is to change the culture of the homelessness sector so that it fully embraces employing former service users.

Oxford Homeless Pathways recognises that by creating enough momentum to change the current culture in this sector, a large number of jobs could become available for people who have:

- first-hand knowledge and experience of homelessness and the use of homelessness services;
- sorted out their own lives to the point where they are able to help others;
- immense value as influential and positive role models for current clients.

We hope the benefits for GROW trainees include:

- increased self-worth;
- hope, and a route away from difficult aspects of daily life, through a meaningful job with high levels of satisfaction and personal and professional rewards.

"I was so pleased when I was appointed as the GROW Trainee at O'Hanlon House and so far I am really enjoying it.

"I used to be a resident here and have lived at Simon House also. From Simon House I moved on to my own self-contained accommodation and had been volunteering with Aspire, which really helped with my confidence and gave me a reason to get up in the morning and have structure in my day.

"At O' Hanlon House I have my line manager, Noel, and I know I can go to any of the other seniors or managers here if I need support. Also the team as a whole have been really encouraging. I have been here a while now and am getting to grips with the competencies expected and of course the shifts!"

Marc GROW Trainee

"We have much to gain, not least a greater sense of unity, of 'practising what we preach'. But there are financial and service delivery benefits, and the development of a more knowledgeable, motivated and effective workforce.

"Marc is proving himself to be a reliable, conscientious member of the team and we are delighted to have him on board. Marc has a wealth of life experience and previous work experience to draw on and truly does reflect the ethos of the GROW traineeship."

Lucy Flanagan Deputy Operations Manager



Step Up increases confidence

The Step Up programme taught me to have a good temperament and confidence

Step up at Julian Housing is now in its third year and continues to exceed expectations in what it set out to do. The project has seen a large number of Julian Housing residents get into volunteering and employment and gain a number of recognised qualifications: part of the invaluable process towards moving on to their own accommodation.

During my first year in post I have immensely enjoyed working with our residents. Their commitment to meetings and courses shows a will to change and they now have skills and experiences which can be shared with others.

One of my first experiences in my new role was our four-day trip to Snowdonia in August. We all bonded well and looked out for each other. We supported each other up the mountain over difficult terrain. One resident, Paul, said after the trip: "I felt more at ease by getting away to Snowdonia and I wasn't feeling pressure while I was there. I did not want to go home."

Step-Up has also used the expertise of Barry, a Pathways volunteer who has worked as a chef in top hotels and restaurants, to lead the Julian Housing cooking group. We recreate restaurant-inspired dishes, with a different theme each week. Some ingredients are sourced from the foodbank. We hope to hold a fundraiser for Julian Housing, and we are working on a recipe book.

Our residents have recently started a gym club, which has had a lot of interest. A women's group has been introduced, which is particularly important as it provides a confidential safe place to relax and discuss many issues. We have recently taken part in water aerobics which was a real laugh.

Another resident, Ricardo, recently secured full-time employment for the first time in many years. He said Step Up and playing football have taught him the skills to mix with other people and increased his confidence. He said: "The Step Up programme taught me to have a good temperament, confidence and showed me there were other things to do other than crime and taking drugs. It got me fit. I am now detoxing and I think doing activities has helped me to do this and has kept me busy which helps take your mind off withdrawals. Activities keep me out of trouble and I enjoy them."

Roisin Heritage Step Up Co-ordinator, Julian Housing



Canoeing for one and all!

A couple of months ago, a canoeing event was hosted in memory of Kris Scott, our Step-Up co-ordinator who sadly passed away last year. Kris had always enjoyed taking the clients out on the water, and it seemed a fitting tribute to him. Marcel, a current resident with Julian Housing, was one of those who attended. Here are his thoughts about the day:

"The eye of the storm that had been hovering over Oxford looked set to set to pass the day before the canoeing event for Kris' memorial. At the swimming pool area on the Thames near Donnington Bridge, it was almost six years since I was on the river in the same area with Kris, Jed and Mark.

"Julian Housing provided me with a pair of Wellington boots and in the morning I bought a cheap pair of training shoes then made my way to the area where we decided to meet. It was a well-attended event from both Julian Housing, O'Hanlon House and others.

"A gazebo on the riverside was laid out with nibbles and snacks for everyone.

"People continue to use rivers for water sport as they develop over the years, in the past they were used for food, farming and transport! In my own opinion I think everyone who attended really enjoyed themselves."



Eventful and successful year

Having replaced Sarah as Step-Up co-ordinator at O'Hanlon House in September 2013, I believe we have had a successful year moving from year two to three of the Big Lottery funding.

The market stall, run by service users, continued through 2013, with a very successful event at Oxfam's One World Fair in November. After a winter hiatus, the stall is starting up again with some new lines of merchandise. The project has helped to build good relationships within the Oxford community and involved more than 100 service users this year producing goods for and selling on the market.

A football team from O'Hanlon House got together and entered the Social Inclusion Cup. An excellent day's football, against teams from all over the south of England, resulted in O'Hanlon House missing out on the semi-finals by just one goal! An OxHoP team that took part in the first annual Kris Scott memorial canoeing event had a great time and came third overall at the end of the day.

Christine Wallace, a quarter-finalist in the Great British Bake Off came in and ran a baking workshop, which was a great success.

The cuts announced by the County Council towards the end of 2013 resulted in service users becoming involved in a peaceful demonstration, making placards and campaigning through social media to involve other members of the public in the debate.

We have had a growing number of volunteers coming in this year, adding to our long-serving team. They have dedicated their skills and their time to helping service users at O'Hanlon House with a wide variety of creative arts sessions, from clay modelling to creative writing. A big thank you to them for their efforts, without which we could not hope to deliver all that we do here at O'Hanlon House.

Steve Usher-Wilson *Step Up Co-ordinator, O'Hanlon House*

Normally I don't like to get out of bed in the mornings, but when it's Big Breakfast day I always want to get up

Big Breakfast has far-reaching benefits

Big Breakfast (BB) has proved to be a popular activity at O'Hanlon House, with a consistently high number of clients participating each week. It grew out of a wish to encourage more service users to be involved in cooking, and inviting clients to cook their own breakfast has proved to be a very successful way of doing this.

On the first morning 18 people passed through the kitchen doors and made their own breakfast – ranging from bacon sandwiches to full English. Some people cooked individually and some together, but everybody enjoyed it.

So far, the greatest number taking part is 22: considering the size of our kitchen, and the limited amount of equipment we have, that is a major achievement.

O'Hanlon House clients have benefited in many ways other than just being fed. Big Breakfast has been a very good way to encourage people to take part in the 'soft activities' at O'Hanlon House, in a non-pressurised way. Day clients are also encouraged to participate. Often, many have been living on the streets for some time and have not eaten a hot meal for weeks.

Within BB, the participants are given a choice of food and what they do. This is important for people who may feel their choices are limited, have been taken away or have been made by 'the system'. The thing that I enjoy most about the Big Breakfast (apart from the number of thanks!) is how the group has evolved into a social occasion. It has become an opportunity for people to exchange information, for new friendships to form and for old friendships to be renewed.

As the Step-Up Co-ordinator and Link Project Worker we sometimes use the Big Breakfast to start introducing clients to the 'Lifeskills' courses that we have at OHH, and to link them in with services in the community such as Aspire, Crisis and Learn Direct. Such organisations help our clients to gain skills that can contribute towards meaningful use of time and gaining job skills, or to being able to move into supported housing.

Our service users may not be able to 'live like kings' immediately, but Big Breakfast can help them develop the skills necessary to sustain a tenancy.

Fran Rimmer *Link Project Worker*

Sober living

In the face of County Council cuts for homeless services, Julian Housing is very pleased that commissioners recently acknowledged the supported housing accommodation that we offer clients to maintain a positive recovery from addictions and maintenance of a sober lifestyle to enable successful move on in life, including housing and employment.

When people suffer with a homeless experience they may also experience addiction problems. When clients are ready to go into recovery they move from the homeless pathway. When they complete the recovery programme they may still be homeless and in need of somewhere stable to continue their progress.

Maintaining a change in lifestyle can be difficult, especially when trying to do so on your own. At Julian Housing we specialise in providing support and accommodation for like-minded people that have completed a rehabilitation programme, so you don't have to do it alone. This enables a stable platform for you to put your new life skills into practice.

Julian Housing has successfully provided sober accommodation for the past 10 years. This success has been reflected in the gradual increase of bed spaces from five to nine. An extra two rooms will be available from July 2014 which will bring the total to 11 spaces.

The houses are run therapeutically, offering one-to-one weekly support sessions; help into training, education and employment; and a weekly Sober Living house recovery meeting with peer and staff support. 2013/2014 has seen several of our sober living clients made successful progressions to permanent accommodation, employment and self-employment.

Pearline Blackstock Supported Housing Worker, Substance Misuse & **Charlotte Blake** Deputy Manager

Housing First: one year on

In the UK, 99% of homelessness services take the 'therapy first' approach, of working through a system of support, assessing the reasons someone is homeless and assisting them in dealing with these issues before they can become independently housed. In the USA, however, they take a 'Housing First' approach, whereby they provide people with accommodation and then try to engage them in support and therapy later on. When you see the areas of this state housing in American cities, often referred to as the 'projects', it is clear that homeless people need so much more than just houses. These areas are riddled with problems of crime, addiction and debt, because a roof over someone's head just isn't enough.

However, we are also quick to admit that the hostel system we have here in the UK, isn't right for everyone either. Certain individuals just aren't suited to hostel living: being in a building with so many others can be exhausting, tense and noisy. For those who cannot cope in a hostel environment, the best thing is their own home.

Julian Housing started the Housing First approach in April 2013, working with longer-term rough sleepers and getting them into housing with a tenancy without going through a hostel. Formalised support planning sessions are part of the general supported housing model.

Over the past year we have gained three properties to provide individual tenancies for three clients identified as entrenched rough sleepers. Alison (support worker) and Ben (peer support worker) have worked very closely with Oxford City Council outreach team and health agencies to engage and support these clients to maintain their tenancies. The support approach is person centred: that is client-led case work without formalised support planning. All three clients have been supported to maintain the tenancies from the beginning and are all still in their flats today. One client is ready to move on and is beginning the process to move into permanent accommodation.

We are engaging with new clients by working with the outreach team and going to meet people on the streets to let them know about Housing First as a successful housing option. We are also still aiming to acquire another property – to offer a further tenancy for Housing First within Julian Housing.

Charlotte Blake Deputy Manager



Compass shows the way

Many people who struggle to avoid homelessness are ex-offenders being released from prison after serving their sentences. Often this group of people can find themselves marginalised without anywhere to go, or any means of support, and for many, this means facing life on the streets.

Last year, Julian Housing took on the management of seven extra houses for the Compass project, which takes the form of supported housing for medium to high-risk offenders. The Probation Service agreed to fund a support worker post at Julian Housing to work within our supported housing, which comprises 41 units of accommodation in East Oxford and Botley. We share the support of Compass clients with Connection floating support and all residents have access to a support worker. Julian Housing provides housing management assistance to all clients and over the year we have been getting to know the clients and tailoring their support according to their needs.

The project has taken on an entirely new identity since Julian Housing began management in November 2013. With a new name and a new vision, there have been significant efforts to tackle historic anti-social behaviour within the houses.

Action has been taken to ensure all residents are protected and safe within their accommodation. The maintenance team have also been hard at work making much-needed improvements to the houses, including adding new kitchen appliances, washing machines and fixed boilers – to name but a few.

An eight-bedroom property was closed, completely refurbished and has recently opened as a house aimed at those who are in employment. This particular property had a number of ASB issues affecting residents and neighbours which have been eliminated by this process. Along with maintenance checks every month, the project is now receiving fortnightly welfare checks in all rooms to ensure the wellbeing of all residents. Additionally the project now has the benefit of being able to use the Julian Housing 24-hour on-call service to alert staff for any out-of-hours emergencies.

The project office has also had significant development. We have created two new confidential meeting spaces, and provided four computers for residents to use for tasks such as job and property searching, email access and so on.

The Compass project staff work closely with police and probation services. We have also formed close working ties with voluntary organisations, including Aspire, Steppin' Stones and Crisis Skylight. The Compass project provides a fresh start for clients with offending history who would struggle in the current economic climate and housing situation in Oxford, when there is very limited or no housing options following release from prison.

Hannah Mackie *Supported Housing Worker* & **Charlotte Blake** *Deputy Manager*

The Compass project provides a fresh start for clients with offending history

Housing First: the Peer Support Worker's view

Being part of the Housing First project as a peer support worker has been a very challenging, but ultimately rewarding, experience. By working with clients who face immense challenges and providing support in many aspects of their lives, the peer support role has been a new experience both for myself and the Julian Housing project.

As this was a new role, there was a lot of uncertainty, in defining what peer support entails. However, this

has allowed a degree of freedom in working with clients. Professional boundaries are slightly different and, as someone with experience of being a service user within homeless services, the role allows the 'us' and 'them' mind-set to be bridged.

Working with clients in the Housing First initiative has been a steep learning curve: a particular challenge is navigating the constantly changing and labyrinthine nature of services, in the city and more broadly, and adapting accordingly.

Also, building relationships with clients is a complex area; each individual's different needs require a personalised approach. I feel fortunate in being able to navigate different areas within the service with knowledge from my own personal experiences and provide an alternative approach.

Beyond this I hope the role will develop as I gain more experience and seek to benefit clients further into the future.

Ben Howard *Peer Support Worker*



Vineyard extends its support

45 Vineyard is situated in the centre of historic Abingdon. It is an impressive Grade II listed building which has 13 flats, an emergency bed space and use of a communal laundry. We provide support to residents aged from 22 with medium to high support needs. Referrals for the project come via Vale of White Horse District Council

It has been 19 months since Julian Housing took on the management of 45 Vineyard. We have made positive changes that have improved the practicality and usability of the building. We have converted one of the flats into offices and a large communal room. The private office space ensures that support sessions take place in a comfortable and private setting.

The communal area has been an invaluable resource in which to hold residents' meetings, staff meetings and provides residents access to computers. The weekly cooking group held in the communal area provides a sociable and valuable experience for our residents. Not only are they learning to cook but learning about budgeting and working together.

The 'No Second Night Out' bed space has been utilised far beyond our expectations. 'Connection' identifies rough sleepers in the South and Vale of White Horse area and refers them to this service. Nineteen vulnerable adults have so far used the service, which enables rough sleepers to start on the road to addressing their issues. We have also successfully moved on 11 residents from the main project into secure long-term housing.

The skills and determination of the support staff ensure that every resident receives the support and guidance required to assist them in addressing their issues and moving on to independent living.

The project offers one-to-one support, access to education, counselling, social and living skills, involvement in our Step Up programme and a safe environment. For the residents who embrace all that is on offer the experience can be invaluable, offering them confidence, increased ability and resources to prepare them for independent living.

Susan Hemphill *Deputy Manager*

I was sleeping on unused boats moored at Abingdon Marina for almost three months

161 clients moved into employment or volunteering positions in 2013/14

"I became homeless after a series of personal problems, and trying to block them out using drink and drugs. I was sofa surfing and dealing with depression. I was sleeping on unused boats moored at the Abingdon Marina for almost three months.

"I was referred to 45 Vineyard by my Connection floating support worker. Within two months of moving into 45 Vineyard, I had found the motivation to get back on track and back to work. During my time working I was employed as a roofer for a construction firm and was completely self reliant. I turned out some great work on some of Oxford's colleges and the Pitt Rivers Museum.

"In February of this year I broke my ankle, which brought my employment to an end – but it did enable me to make use of the support Julian Housing could offer me This resulted in me attending a six-week course of counselling at Steppin' Stone to help me overcome some deeper problems, and I was also introduced to Crisis Skylight. Through Crisis Skylight I am hoping to obtain funding to attend a welding course and buy some tools to open up more employment opportunities for me in the future.

"By the time this goes to print I hope to be in my new, permanent self-contained flat."
Carl Brown

Spreading the word

I'm the new – and the first - OxHoP ambassador. My role is to talk about OxHoP to anyone willing to listen, find new people who never knew that they wanted to learn all about OxHoP and talk to them, and help raise funds.

I started volunteering at OxHoP in November 2012, taking people to hospital. I was then asked to help compile homeless people's life stories, which ended up being published as the book 'My Story'. When that was done, I asked OxHoP for another challenge, and was given the ambassador role – and yes, it is a challenge!

I haven't done much so far: just some leafleting and a talk to 30 boys who were studying homelessness in school. They had read Robert Swindells' book *Stone Cold* and put together some presentations about homelessness that they showed me.

I hadn't dealt with 13-year-olds since I was their age, but I followed my mother's advice and asked them questions: "Why do you think that people become homeless? What kind of medical problems do you think that homeless people face? If you were running a shelter for homeless people, what kind of things would you need to think about?" The boys are sleeping outside for a night and collecting money for OxHoP.

If you would like me to come talk to your organisation, or have other ideas about what an ambassador could do, please email me at

riki@phonecoop.coop

Riki Therivel *Volunteer Ambassador*



Fundraising

Fundraising has gone from strength to strength once again this year. We have been blessed with a wonderful corporate partnership with Infineum, a world-class manufacturer of synthetic fuels. The team at Infineum went out of their way for an entire year to raise money for us in such creative ways, from getting our own clients involved in a charity car wash, to a silent auction and a sponsored diet. All the hard work paid off, and resulted in donations totalling over £20,000 at the end of it all!

Infineum's Matthew Robert said: "It was a privilege to support Oxford Homeless Pathways as Infineum UK's 2013 Charity of the Year. The great work that they do in supporting the vulnerable in Oxford made for an easy decision to support the charity.

"We were able to do a number of events throughout the year to raise funds and we had a high level of colleague involvement which shows a support for the charity throughout the organisation.

"Through a number of visits to O'Hanlon House I was able to meet with staff at OxHoP and witness first-hand the support that they provide and I hope that they can continue to raise support, long into the future, for their vital life changing work."

Other fundraising has also gone well, and we've seen people raise and donate for us for a variety of reasons, and in all kinds of ways. We surpassed our fundraising target this year, which has been so reassuring, as the future contains instability and change, with more funding cuts on the horizon. The coming year will be focussed on improving our fundraising yet again. As money gets cut from our other sources of income, we want to be sure that our own fundraising can help sustain the quality of care we provide, and can be used to protect our vital services.

Kaye McDougall *Fundraiser*

Thanks to

We would like to thank everybody who has given their time, possessions, skills or money towards supporting OxHoP this past year. We are always so grateful for the amount of support we find in the community and beyond. Unfortunately we cannot thank everyone individually, but here is a small selection of organisations, groups and individuals who have gone out of their way to help us this year. Thank you everybody!

ORGANISATIONS: Coombs Catering (Dario, Marie, Tony, Kerry, Steve), Oxford Food Bank, Oxford Poverty Action, Oxford Health, Monument Community Trust, Abingdon Business Centre, Aspire, Restore, Oxford Crisis Skylight Centre, Seacourt Printing, Lewis Silkin, Highcroft Investments, Jennings, Oxford Low Carbon Hub, Goodthinking, Bluespires, Liora Wolf, Connection Floating Support, Infineum and the SMILE Committee, Break-Through, Nielsen, No Second Night Out, especially Jaffa and April, and the Broadway Team and Oxford City Outreach, all the staff at Luther Street Medical Centre, especially Mary Squires and Susie Edwards, and Littlemore Baptist Church, especially Andrew Bevan.

Trusts: Tobit Trust, Monument Community Trust, Seymour Charitable Trust, Oxfam, StreetSmart, Trusthouse Charitable Foundation & the Duke of Marlborough, Doris Field Trust, Caron Trust & Prof Roy Goode, Ian Mactaggart Trust, K J Thornton Charity, Tolkien Trust, Sobell Foundation, J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, St Michaels & All Saints Charitable Trust, Beatrice Laing Trust, MW & AB Ingram Trust, Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust, 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust, Comic Relief, Oxfordshire Community Foundation, Cooper Charitable Trust.

Community Groups: Oxford Spires Rotary, St Johns College MCR, Oxford Student Hub especially Emily Silcock and Dan Tomlinson, Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University, Lincoln College, Jesus College, Oxford Christadelphians, Buckland Primary School, D'Overbroeks School, Clanfield Primary School, OXFAP, Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, Harris Manchester College, East Hagbourne Church, St Michaels & All Saints Methodist Church.

Volunteers & Sessional Workers: Francesca Cacace, Ian Draisy, Rachel Sene, Matilda McDonald, Liz Williams, Carlo Sico, Barry Dalziel, Holly Burns, Megan Hayes, Gabby Jameson-Walker, Ed Hart, Philippa Seymour, Vivian Shaw, Chris Morgan, Rich Broughton, Jimmy Hetherington, Amara Michaels, Astrid Hayles, Aziz Halime, Riki Therivel, Nick Vernede, Adam Lewandowski, Jim O'Kane, the Steppin' Stones counsellors, Lucy Surman, Janet Toye, Lisa Wadeson & Hannah Gattrell, Christine Wallace from *The Great British Bake Off*, Gillie & Sarah from Complex Needs Service.

Individuals: Zala Zbogor, Brenda Lennon, Mona Hafez and her family, Christine Spencer, Kirstin McCreadie, David Crowfoot, Susannah Moody, Pablo Newburry, Flo Harris, Simon Posner, Richard Hobson, Will Newell.



Financial report

The charity recorded a loss for the year of £190k after investment gains. Fundraising from the community, individuals, corporate and trusts increased during the year and legacies of £72k were received. Costs were largely maintained at the same levels as 2012/13 as the charity's focus is to always ensure its services are delivered cost effectively.

Rental income for both O'Hanlon House and the Julian Housing Project, which now includes supported housing for ex-offenders, has been maintained throughout the year with void periods being strictly managed.

A revaluation of the Medical Centre land and buildings was carried out and the accounts now reflect a more realistic market value. Reserves to cover three months' operating costs are included in our general funds.

Mike Slater
Finance Manager



Statement of finance 2013/14

INCOMING RESOURCES	2013/14	2012/13
Rent, Supporting People & grants	2,754,371	2,583,378
Rental income	46,200	46,200
Donations	238,535	722,642
Investment income	31,932	30,193
Total incoming resources	3,071,038	3,382,413
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Direct charitable expenditure		
Service costs	1,789,673	1,843,835
Service support	1,480,105	830,747
	3,269,778	2,674,582
Governance costs	15,400	15,027
Total resources expended	3,285,178	2,689,609
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources for this year	(214,140)	692,804
Unrealised assets/gains	23,331	65,981
Balance brought forward at 1 April	2,901,547	2,142,762
Balance carried forward at 31 March	2,710,738	2,901,547
BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH	2014	2013
Fixed assets		
Tangible	1,257,681	1,484,706
Investments	951,413	793,082
Current assets		
Debtors	178,845	132,521
Cash at bank and in hand	600,492	802,666
	2,988,431	3,212,975
Creditors	(227,761)	(242,365)
Bank loan	(49,932)	(69,063)
Total net assets	2,710,738	2,901,547
Funded by:		
Unrestricted funds		
General and office funds	988,978	832,525
Designated funds		
Welfare & Medical Fund	270,857	195,513
Service user accommodation and development	717,041	711,307
Housing First	437,084	449,300
Restricted funds		
Oxford Homeless Medical Fund building	281,055	702,902
Personalisation	15,723	10,000
Total funds	2,710,738	2,901,547

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.

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 2014."

James Cowper Accountants

Mission

OxHoP's mission is to make homelessness a thing of the past; to support and guide people along a one-way journey out of homelessness, towards fulfilling futures.

Aims

OxHoP's aim is to provide a broad range of innovative and excellent services across the Oxfordshire region, to help homeless people regain and maintain independence. We aim to empower individuals to take control of their own lives, and thrive to the best of their ability.

Objectives

Swift, effective, creative and lasting responses to transform the lives of people who find themselves homeless, including:

- Providing a range of housing with high quality support, creating individual solutions to individual needs
- Encouraging and supporting homeless people to take up training, education and activities to live the lives they want to live away from the stigma of homelessness
- Supplementing the effectiveness of health services for homeless people
- Working locally and nationally to influence all aspects of public provision which impact on homelessness, with the ultimate goal of ending homelessness
- Working with other providers to ensure that services evolve in a way that best meets the needs of homeless people
- Raising awareness and promoting social inclusion by helping people understand the complex issues surrounding homelessness



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Registered charity no. 297806
Registered company no. 2164150