



**Positive vibes at our
Big Get Together**

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Learning achievements

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amongst young people**

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homeless families in Arun**

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Introduction from Steve Benson

Welcome to this bumper edition of Involve, packed with news and case studies. The Hampshire social inclusion services went live on 1 April 2016 and we've worked hard to implement these and produce excellent outcomes for our clients.

We continue to work towards delivering our ambitious strategy to increase our annual turnover from £9m to £12m over the next three years. We're busy tendering for existing and new services, as well as looking for

opportunities to work with other organisations.

We carried out a survey of our stakeholders over the summer, which provided us with excellent feedback and showed commissioners are

pleased with the services we offer. We're now using the information provided to further improve our services to meet the increasing demand.



TWO SAINTS

WELCOME

Together with others in the sector, we've been lobbying the government on their proposals to cap housing benefit for clients in hostels at local housing allowance rates, as if implemented, this would bring into question the financial viability of the sector. We welcome the government's recent announcement to delay their plans for another year, so they can look more closely at the impact of their proposals.



Steve Benson

Steve Benson
Chief Executive

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Fundraising success

Car boot



Clients and staff at our Portsmouth Foyer have been busy raising much needed funds at local car boot sales to raise cash to support their popular cookery and bingo sessions. The group cooking sessions enable residents to sit together to enjoy freshly prepared fajitas, pasta and home cooked roast dinners.

"I love car boots! It was fun because it was like teaching us how to sell stuff and then manage the money. The Bingo is really social and I made a lot of friends there."

Molly, a client at the Portsmouth Foyer

Newbury Baptist Church



Parishioners at Newbury Baptist Church spread some good cheer by raising money to support our services in the local area. They presented Richard Davies, our Contracts and Performance Manager with a cheque for £125 which will directly benefit people affected by homelessness.

NEWS

Wickham triumph

Once again, the Two Saints team lent a hand at the Wickham Festival; raising funds and awareness of homelessness amongst festival goers and pop stars!

Staff, clients and volunteers helped sell merchandise and litter-pick over the weekend of live music, collecting over £300 in donations. Acts including Toyah Wilcox and Matt Cardle dropped by to lend their support and organiser Peter Chegwyn generously donated £5,000 from the festival to Two Saints.



Fareham raft race



Staff from one of our Fareham hostels braved the cold waters of Fareham Creek to compete in a local raft race, raising over £700 for charity in the process.

The money will be used by the hostel to provide direct support for rough sleepers.

Visit www.wickhamfestival.co.uk to pre-book tickets for next year's festival which takes place 3-6 August 2017.





A life worth living

After spending most of last year sleeping rough with just a bottle for company, Simon has much more reason to celebrate, as he looks forward to 2017 and a home of his own.

Simon had been homeless on and off for five years. He was in a vicious cycle of drinking heavily and committing crime - and last year he hit rock bottom. He'd been evicted from various hostels for drunken and aggressive behaviour towards staff and other residents, and with nowhere else to go he ended up on the streets.

After almost eight months sleeping rough in Southampton he entered

Patrick House in May 2016. We accepted him into the hostel on the condition he promised to work with us to turn things around. Simon knew this was his last chance. He was deeply affected by the time he spent on the streets, which he said was the worse period of his life, and was determined never to spend another Christmas as a rough sleeper.

With the help of staff at Patrick House, Simon was able to examine the reasons

behind his behaviour. He opened up about the death of his former partner and realised that his alcoholism and violent outbursts had been his way of dealing with the pain. We referred him for counselling and provided ongoing, intensive support to help him come to terms with grief, manage his anger and reduce his dependency on alcohol.

With our help and support, and a real sense of determination, Simon has managed to turn his life

around. He has learned how to walk away from confrontation and now enjoys socialising and interacting with others. His success means he's now moved to another service, but we continue to provide help and support to ensure he settles in well.

Simon's aim is to move into a home of his own this year where he can reunite with his family and enjoy a more settled lifestyle.

A learning curve

It's not just a roof over your head you miss when you're homeless, it's your own sense of self-confidence.

Developing self-belief is an important step on the road away from homelessness, so we provide lots of opportunities for our clients to learn new skills and achieve qualifications that boost their confidence as well as their CV.

From basic maths and english to practical skills including cooking and budgeting, we offer a range of courses and accredited qualifications in partnership with Highbury College in Portsmouth. This is ideal for learners who've had little or bad experiences of education in the past.

The accredited courses range from employability, well being, mentoring, carpentry, customer service and our tenancy sustainment programme Smart Move. They all equip clients with new skills and experiences as well as all-important self-confidence and self-belief. Plus, learners don't even have to travel into college as the courses can be delivered on site in our services meaning clients have the opportunity to achieve a qualification without having to face the barrier of a college environment.

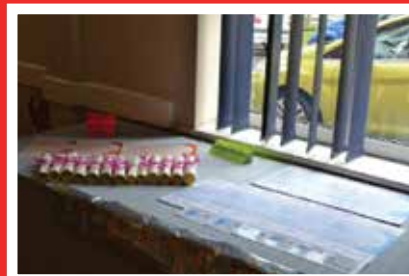


Celebrating learning success

Clients at one of our Fareham hostels were treated to a special certificate award ceremony to celebrate their successful achievements in education and training. The qualifications, which range from first aid to food hygiene, have helped to boost self-confidence as well as CVs, and for many clients signify their first ever educational achievement.

“I feel I have achieved something whilst overcoming major obstacles in my life”

Steve



A Two Saints record -breaker!

Sammie from our Newbury hostel is proving a real source of inspiration to other clients considering embarking on a learning or training course.

She has completed more qualifications than any other Two Saints' client, and the experience has provided a real boost to her self-esteem and confidence as well as her job prospects. She is currently looking for voluntary work and is well on the way to living independently in her own flat.

Over 70 of our clients came together at our annual Big Get Together, held again in partnership with the community team at The Ageas Bowl in Southampton on Wednesday 26th October.

Big Get Together is a big success!

The event was a chance for clients to meet others who have also experienced homelessness, learn new skills, discover more about what we do and provide important feedback to help us further improve our services.

The theme for the day was My Skills which focuses on education and employment. This year we invited local businesses and training providers to get involved, including The National Careers Service, NHS and Mitie. Some of our contractors including Coombs catering and ServiceMaster cleaners were on hand to discuss employment and work experience opportunities to help clients break away from homelessness.



“I came specially to speak to the businesses. They’ve been really helpful about my options for the future.”



“Would love to see this happen more often.”

Clients enjoyed some light entertainment from local magician Mike Brown, a lunch part funded by Dominos Pizza in Hedge End Village and an action packed day of activities including chocolate making (courtesy of Novelty Bakes), laser clay shooting (courtesy of For Life Experiences), boxing (provided by Poseidon Boxing), a graffiti workshop (run by Bert Hall Furniture Makers) and stadium tours from staff at The Ageas Bowl.

Thank you to our many supporters for helping to fund the day including Coombs Caterers and Lloyds Bank, (who also had staff on hand to talk to clients about how to set up bank accounts).



“I enjoyed the boxing the most as I used to do this before I became homeless.”



“Amazing day, loved all the workshops.”



Listening to our clients

Our client scrutiny & involvement team keep an eye on how we're working and provide useful feedback.

They report their findings straight to senior managers and the board, so we can ensure our policies, procedures and the services we offer are exactly meeting our clients' needs.

An independent advocate, Alan Marshall, has been appointed to support the team and ensure actions are tracked and progress made.

Recently the team has been inspecting our services in Andover, Eastleigh, Newbury and Portsmouth. They've made several recommendations including the need to regularly

update and refurbish accommodation and provide internet access in all our services, particularly now that benefit claims and most job applications have to be made online.

We're working with the team to move these recommendations forward.

"Clients are making valuable recommendations that will help us further improve the services we provide."

Charlotte Buckingham, Regional Director

National Citizenship Service

Raising awareness about the reasons people end up on the streets is one of the ways we work to prevent homelessness happening in the first place.

Almost 1,500 teenagers took part in the National Citizenship Service phase 2 programme at our Two Saints Enterprises Centre in Southampton this year to learn more about the issue first-hand by meeting former rough sleepers. The students heard how mental health issues and family breakdowns coupled with drug and alcohol misuse are often the causes behind homelessness.

They were invited in to our onsite carpentry workshop provided by the team at Dobson Training to make mobile phone holders and wooden benches, before organising their own fundraising activities. They have already made £4,000 this year which will directly benefit our clients.



Steve Neville is a former Two Saints' client and currently acting chair of our client scrutiny and involvement team.

He shared his emotional story with the teenagers on the National Citizenship Scheme and ran bench making workshops. He says the experience has helped with his recovery by boosting his self-confidence and encouraging him to reconnect with his family.

Steve said "The programme has really helped me when I've been at my lowest point and has given me a new lease of life. I just hope the young people can take something away from me sharing my experience with them."





Carving out a new career

Wayne was battling alcohol and mental health issues as well as homelessness when he arrived at our Newbury hostel.

He was determined to face his demons and turn his life around. We supported him to embark on and complete a carpentry course with Newbury college. He had found his calling and began volunteering at Newbury's community furniture project. He's now a regular there each week and has been involved with major projects including building new offices and a bike workshop.

We supported Wayne to gain more qualifications including maths and literacy, to boost his confidence and skills and he is now looking forward to a promising career as a joiner.

Wayne's determination and his remarkable achievements were honoured at the West Berkshire Learner Achievement Awards earlier in the year.

Eastleigh Community support

Our Eastleigh drop in service provides support and advice for anyone with housing or benefits issues. The facility is open five days a week and staff are on hand to provide support or referrals as needed. This can range from arranging emergency accommodation to help applying for benefits or completing job applications.

Julia is just one of the people we've helped through this service. Read her inspiring story below.

See www.twosaints.org.uk
for more information.

Julia's transformation

When we first met local resident Julia she was feeling extremely isolated and suffering from depression and low self-esteem. Although she was living independently, she spent a lot of time at home and her self-anxiety and loneliness were leading to alcoholism. Initially she was too nervous to go out so we visited Julia at home to offer advice and support.

Gradually we worked with Julia to build her self-belief so she could sustain her tenancy and start looking forward to a brighter future. After successfully encouraging her to join regular activities at the Wellbeing Centre in Eastleigh we looked for a volunteering opportunity to boost her self-confidence (and improve her CV) so she could start to feel better about herself and her future. Thanks to her new found confidence and skills, Julia managed to secure paid work at the local leisure centre where she is now employed as a cleaner. We continue to offer ongoing support to Julia.



"I am so happy with the way my life has improved and I feel motivated and positive about the future. I'm finally doing something meaningful with my life. My depression has lifted and I no longer drink. I'm so grateful for the support from Two Saints."

Helping families stay together

We launched the Arun private accommodation service to provide support for vulnerable families and people who rent in the private sector.

Many people found to be intentionally homeless by the local council have to rent from a private landlord. Without a deposit, regular income or references this can prove extremely hard, so we're here to help find private accommodation and support, to ensure families can stay

Success in Arun

After Jean* and her four children were found to be intentionally homeless by the council they struggled to find somewhere to rent in the private sector. Escalating rents and lack of

job opportunities meant they moved around a lot, living in unsuitable accommodation. We developed a relationship with the family and found a private landlord willing to offer them suitable

accommodation. Jean and her eldest daughter found work while the other children were able to continue their education in a much more stable home environment. Nine months later and

together and settle into a new home. We also provide support for the private landlords and carry out regular inspections to ensure tenants are looking after their new home and paying rent on time. the family are doing well. They've maintained their tenancy, continue to pay rent on time and are looking after their new home so well the landlord has agreed the family dog can join them.

*name changed

Kicking homelessness into touch

Our annual soccer tournament in Fareham once again proved a huge success with players from all our services coming together to enjoy a day of team work and exercise.

Local businesses offered support – both financially and on the pitch – and the trophies were generously supplied by Trophyman. Everyone had a great time and played well and the final winners were Ronin FC who won a hard battle with the team from our Portsmouth Foyer.

Congratulations to all the teams:

Group A	Group B
Newbury Saints HQ All Stars Ronin FC The Northerners Mitie Painting	Paddy House Pele's Misfits Dene Court Foyer Omega



Towpath Taskforce

A stretch of Newbury’s towpath has been given a makeover thanks to a group of clients and staff who regularly spend a day volunteering with the Canal Trust.

They’ve joined other local volunteers to clean litter, cut back branches and paint furniture to ensure the area can be enjoyed by residents and visitors.

“It’s a fun way for our clients to get out, learn new skills, meet new people and enjoy a positive activity that also benefits the local community.”

Sam Headland
Service Manager



Colourful space in Fareham

Andover MP visits hostel

Kit Malthouse, local MP in Andover dropped in to meet clients at our Dene Court service recently.

He discovered how we work to tackle homelessness and saw for himself the ways in which we support people to build confidence to get back on their feet and rebuild their lives.



The external area at one of our hostels in Fareham has been totally transformed to provide a colourful and peaceful community garden for residents to enjoy.

Clients rolled up their sleeves to join in the work and helped with cleaning, choosing and planting flowers. They even provided designs for a local artist to create the stunning graffiti wall. The community garden was officially opened by local MP Suella Fernandes.



“A once drab piece of concrete has been transformed into a beautiful sanctuary where clients can enjoy peace and quiet. The new plants and flowers have bought back the birds and butterflies, The garden has made such a positive difference.”

Michele Reynolds, Community Inclusion Worker

Support for aspiring actor

Leon

Our Supported Lodgings scheme provides safe, secure and stable accommodation for young people, coupled with our professional support and guidance to help them move on to live independently or reunite with their families.

17 year old Leon is just one of the young people to benefit from this service. He came to us when he felt he could no longer live at home and we found him a room with a host family, providing a stable home life. This was coupled with ongoing support to help Leon learn to live independently. Leon's support worker was on hand to help him apply for benefits and learn important life skills including budgeting, cooking and cleaning.

When we found out Leon was an aspiring actor we encouraged him to participate in the Hampshire County Youth Theatre programme. This is a platform for young performers to work alongside professional actors. And thanks to our personalisation fund, we were even able to pay for the bus fare to get him to rehearsals at Southampton's Nuffield Theatre.

Appearing on stage was the realisation of a personal ambition for Leon, and something that he had previously felt unable to achieve. It was not until he moved into supported lodgings that he felt stable in his environment and confident enough to take part in the theatre group.

Due to his outstanding performance and his general enthusiasm, Leon has since been offered a voluntary job at the Nuffield Theatre and is now a member of the Nuffield Youth Theatre. With our help and support, he has transformed his life and now feels confident to make decisions about his future.

“Being with Two Saints and my host landlords, has helped me to have confidence and believe in myself. I'm really pleased to have this opportunity.”



Kurt

in his own words

“Years of heavy drinking were taking their toll. I was suffering physically, mentally and emotionally and after a two-week drinking binge I ended up in hospital on a chemical detox. I felt isolated and confused. Just how had I got to this state? That’s when I first met Kevin from Two Saints. He explained how Two Saints could help me access accommodation and benefits and support me get back on my feet again.

“I had lost my job and didn’t know where to turn but he reassured me that I just needed to concentrate on getting well again. I stopped drinking and managed to get a job, but I didn’t address my underlying drinking issues and soon ended up in hospital again after a dreadful binge. I felt very vulnerable so it was a huge relief to see Kevin’s friendly face again when he turned up towards the end of my detox.

“This time, I took Kevin’s advice and decided to change my life for good. I asked for help to tackle my drinking problem and my doctor signed me off work for six months. Kevin helped me move into supported housing which gave me the space and time to access different treatments and support organisations.

“I was so fortunate to benefit from a peer led recovery organisation called P.U.S.H. in Portsmouth. Its ethos of empowering people through peer support, education and training really struck a chord with me. I learned to take responsibility for my actions so I could change my life for the better. Just seven months later and I feel like a new man!

“I’m enjoying my sobriety and instead of drinking I am putting my energies into training and helping others.

“I’m currently undertaking a 12 month accredited course to become a volunteer peer recovery broker. I’m Treasurer of “First Act” Recovery Saturday group and was recently voted new chairman of P.U.S.H.

“I can now see a positive future ahead without drinking and it’s all down to Two Saints. I’m enjoying my training and spending quality time with my 80 year-old Mum.

“It’s remarkable what some understanding, help and support can do to a life”.

A close-up portrait of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a brown cap and a purple hoodie. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Sonia

With our support and a non-judgemental approach, Sonia has left behind a life on the streets and is now enjoying life once again. She's relishing the opportunity to live independently and build relationships with her grandchildren.

When we first met Sonia she had been sleeping rough for three years and was struggling with addiction issues. She had accessed housing in the past but all previous tenancies had quickly ended in eviction. Sonia couldn't look after herself properly but had such a deep distrust of services she wouldn't let anyone help her and due to her vulnerable nature she was a target for abuse.

We worked daily with Sonia to slowly build her trust and confidence. We gave her an emergency bed and provided targeted, intensive support every day. Within three months we were able to house Sonia in a one bedroom flat. She did not have to meet any specific 'conditions' such as addressing her addictions and was given a tenancy agreement similar to what would be expected of any other council tenant. This is part of our 'Housing First' scheme – a project that is led by the needs of each individual client. For Sonia this meant offering time, patience and a non-judgemental approach to help her step by step to get back on her feet again.

Sonia's self confidence has soared in the ten months since she's had her own home. With daily support and encouragement she has become financially independent and able to budget and pay her bills. She cooks herself meals, has her own bank account and is even learning how to use a computer. She has also reconciled with her grandchildren and sister and sought help to address her addiction issues.

"If it wasn't for the help I received I would not be where I am today so I am very grateful to Two Saints and all the help and support I get"

Corporate support

We couldn't help so many homeless people turn their lives around without support from local businesses. Corporate support comes in many forms from leg waxing to zip wiring, but the end result makes a huge difference to us.

Solent Blind's zip wire challenge

Thank you to the team at Solent Blinds who raised over £1,200 for our Southampton day centre by taking part in a charity zip wire challenge at The Ageas Bowl. Not content simply with fundraising, the team have also been volunteering at the day centre to discover more about homelessness and

how we work to help those affected by it. They're also offering work experience placements for our clients, providing free blinds & curtains to our day centre and hostel and will be donating Christmas presents to clients.



"Helping out at the day centre opened our eyes to how hard it is for those who have nowhere to go. Seeing first-hand how the day centre works has made us want to help more and raise more money to make the lives of the homeless and the amazing workers, a little easier. We've seen how donations can make such a big difference so we will be regularly donating old clothes, towels and unwanted toiletries."

Lloyds bank leg waxing

Thanks to the very brave staff at Lloyds bank in Totton who took part in beard-trimming and leg-waxing to raise much needed funds for our Big Get Together event (see page 6).



Want to help?

Why don't you and your colleagues (or friends and family) get together to raise money for us and have fun at the same time?

Try something new, get fit or achieve a personal goal. We can provide fundraising packs, sponsorship forms and even help you set up your own online fundraising page. Please help us to make a difference to people who are homeless in your community.



**TWO
SAINTS**



www.twosaints.org.uk

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