

INVOLVE



**Barry's story
– a Housing First success**

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**Playing our part in getting
'everybody in' during Covid**

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from our clients**

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As we continue to work our way through these unprecedented times I'd like to thank our staff for the tremendous job they've done responding to the coronavirus crisis.

There's been a great deal of activity over the last few months, particularly working with our partner housing authorities to secure temporary self-contained accommodation for rough sleepers and those in emergency beds. The challenge now is to ensure these clients aren't

returned to the streets and we've worked closely with Homeless Link on their 'Everyone in for good' campaign to lobby both central and local government on this, with a good deal of success.

Remarkably, we've continued with a lot of

'business as usual' during the crisis. We successfully bid to run Housing First services for rough sleepers in Wokingham and we were successful with our tender to deliver accommodation, Housing First and outreach services on the Isle of Wight.



**TWO
SAINTS**

WELCOME

We've started to implement our exciting new strategy and we're delighted to announce that Emily Munford has joined us as our new director responsible for transforming the way we work.

One of our main fundraising opportunities was lost this year, when the Wickham Festival had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus crisis. Our staff work very hard to support this annual event and the donation from the festival organisers will be sorely missed. We look forward to supporting the festival in 2021 and in the meantime are appealing to everyone to offer support if they can (see the back cover for details of how you can help).

Finally, I would like to thank all the local businesses who have stepped forward to help us in some way over the past few months. We have gratefully received donations ranging from food and snacks for our services to face masks for our staff. All donations were greatly appreciated.

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Steve Benson

Steve Benson
Chief Executive

Want to help?

For more details of how to support us please visit www.twosaints.org.uk

Award recognition for our pioneering service



One of our innovative services reached the finals of the 2020 Housing Heroes Awards, in recognition of the way we're empowering the most vulnerable and hard to house people in Southampton to rebuild their lives.

Our homeless vulnerable adult support team was nominated to acknowledge their success in supporting the city's most isolated and complex rough sleepers. The team of five are dedicated to working with people who have exhausted all options, lost all trust in services, refused previous offers of support and seem unreachable.

The team take the time to get to know each individual in order to build trust and develop rapport, a process that often involves daily interaction over several years. The service is all about doing whatever is needed to help each individual – from providing pre-paid mobile phones so clients can access support, to driving them to medical appointments. The team's determination never to give up on anyone, however many barriers stand in the way of success, has helped many to achieve what they thought was impossible.



Rally adventure

Father and son team Nick and Ben are taking part in the Mongol Rally 2021 and have chosen Two Saints as one of the charities to benefit from their fundraising. They will be driving a 1988 Renault 5 Campus on the 10,000 mile epic adventure from Prague to Ulan Ude in Eastern Russia. Follow their planning and their progress on their [blog](#).



Michael is just one of those the team has helped off the streets and into a new settled way of life.

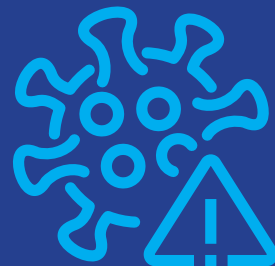
Thanks to the constant support and unwavering encouragement from the team over many years, Michael found the strength and confidence to tackle his substance misuse and mental health issues and leave the streets for a brighter future. He is now living independently in his own council flat, has reconnected with his family and is enjoying a stable and healthy lifestyle. Michael keeps in contact with our homeless vulnerable adult support team and was delighted to feature in our last issue.

Farewell to Pam

Pam Campbell from Homeless Healthcare touched the lives of many staff and clients at our Southampton Day Centre over the years and we would all like to wish her well in her retirement.

Playing our part in getting everybody in

As the government introduced lockdown restrictions to reduce the spread of the coronavirus crisis, rough sleepers with no home to safely isolate inside were left particularly vulnerable.



So, when the instruction came from the government to find temporary accommodation for everyone sleeping rough, we were ready to support our partner local authorities with this challenge. Without legislation or existing policies and procedures in place for such an unprecedented situation no one would argue that it was easy, but the success in almost eradicating rough sleeping during the crisis has underlined how effective partnership work can be.

We're immensely proud to have played our part in getting 'everyone in', working alongside local and national government, clinical commissioning groups, public health teams and our partner housing authorities to offer swift solutions for hundreds of rough sleepers across the areas we operate in.

We've helped house rough sleepers in emergency accommodation, local hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation and social housing to ensure everyone was safe and off the streets. The accommodation was

linked with ongoing support so clients could remain in their new accommodation and receive appropriate help with everything from meals to medical aid and mental health support.

The crisis proved a catalyst for change for many. Along with our partners, we've had to develop new ways of operating in order to overcome problems and achieve shared aims as quickly and effectively as possible. We're proud to have helped many rough sleepers to use the opportunity as a crucial stepping stone to settled accommodation and a brighter future, rather than returning to the streets.

Portsmouth

Working with Portsmouth City Council we helped over 400 people into temporary accommodation at two hotels in the city during lockdown and together with the Society of St James, we provided 24/7 support to clients in the hotels.

Everyone pulled together during the crisis, which provided a chance for local authorities to understand first hand some of the situations our frontline staff

face on a day-to-day basis. Although challenging, the experience has helped our partners to be more appreciative of the work we do to support the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Now lockdown restrictions have eased we're in discussions with the local authority about moving clients out of the hotels into other accommodation with ongoing support provided as necessary. This will include a mix of

private rented and student accommodation with low levels of support and other other accommodation with intensive support, depending on the needs of each individual client. With additional government funding being offered there's a real opportunity for local authorities to build on the successes achieved during lockdown and deliver support to keep rough sleepers safe and help them to build a brighter future.

Southampton

When our day centre, which has been in operation since 1962, had to temporarily close its doors during lockdown we worked with Southampton City Council's outreach teams to support rough sleepers and get them into safe, secure accommodation.

Over 100 people were supported off the streets and into temporary lodgings including hostels and bed and breakfast accommodation. As well as a roof, we've provided ongoing support to help everyone placed in emergency accommodation

to safely lockdown and move on to the next stage of their lives, rather than returning to the streets. Personalised plans have been developed with each individual and tailored support offered to help with a range of issues including claiming benefits,

tackling substance misuse, improving personal health and mental wellbeing. Working with the local authority, volunteers and churches we were even able to deliver hot meals every day to those housed in bed and breakfast accommodation.

Thanks to our support many rough sleepers and people at risk of homelessness have since moved out of bed and breakfast into settled accommodation. ***This includes Jane, who had nowhere to go when she was discharged from hospital. Working with the local authority Jane was able to secure a council flat and is now finally looking forward to a brighter future. Despite struggling with health problems and alcohol addiction in the past, she's feeling settled and no longer at risk of homelessness.***

Isle of Wight

There's no doubt the anxiety caused by the Covid-19 crisis has had an impact on many people's mental health. As a result, our Safe Haven facility, which provides a safe place for anyone experiencing or approaching a mental health crisis on the Isle Of Wight, has proved invaluable. We moved the service from our premises to form part

of an integrated mental health hub during the crisis. The hub, which was established in partnership with professionals from the Isle of Wight National Health Service Trust, was created at incredibly short notice in response to the epidemic. We were proud to come together with various agencies to establish this important facility and the

speed and efficiency with which this happened was phenomenal. Working together we've been able to offer both face-to-face and virtual support and, as part of the wider transformation programme, this facility will continue to develop as the integrated mental health hub on the Isle of Wight.

West Berkshire

During the lockdown we worked with West Berkshire Council to support rough sleepers into hotel accommodation where they could safely stay. Before the crisis we knew of 8 local rough sleepers, but when lockdown restrictions were introduced a further 52 'hidden' homeless people came forward. Many had been 'sofa surfing' and had nowhere to go to safely isolate. As a result, we helped 60 people to move into three local hotels and provided regular support during their stay. Our

outreach workers visited daily to deliver food donated by local charities and offer support in any way needed from claiming benefits and assisting with paperwork to accessing healthcare or simply chatting to help allay fears around the virus. With restrictions easing most have now moved out of the hotels and into other accommodation including private rented lodgings and hostels, with the reassurance that our support will continue.

"I was living in the woods when the crisis started. I was scared and feeling suicidal. I thought I had no chance of getting through this and then Jane called me. She took care of me and rang me regularly. She offered me a room in a hotel but I have a dog and it was difficult. Jane didn't give up though and worked with the council to find me my own place. I didn't think I'd ever live in my own property again but here I am, happy, homed and living a fantastic life with my dog. Thank you Two Saints." - Steven, client

Eastleigh

We had the challenge of starting a new supported accommodation facility for adults in a five-bedroom shared house during lockdown. We worked closely with the local authority to get referrals for clients who were either in bed and breakfast accommodation or homeless and prioritise those most in need. We were able to overcome the challenges in setting up this service during the crisis and supported five clients to move into a safe space with plenty of room to self-isolate if necessary.



Andover

During lockdown we worked closely with the local authority to look for appropriate alternative accommodation as emergency beds were no longer suitable with social distancing guidelines in place. We supported clients placed in bed

and breakfast accommodation or on temporary licenses either over the phone or in person to keep them connected with their support networks and make them as comfortable as possible.

David and Joanna's* story



David and Joanna had been living on the streets for four years and were both dealing with substance misuse, physical and mental health issues.

We secured a temporary 12 week tenancy for the couple at the beginning of lockdown and even bought a cooker for the property, funded from our personalisation fund. With help from their support worker they've managed their accommodation really well and have continued to work with the local drug and alcohol service to reduce

their drug use. It's been so successful the couple have been accepted onto the Housing First project in Test Valley and will be looking to move into a more permanent tenancy soon.

*Names changed

Winchester

Darren's story

"I spent the last few years floating about from homeless, rough sleeping and sofa surfing. During the crisis I was in emergency housing and I then moved to Westview House where Dan, my support worker, has helped me to develop a recovery plan. Dan has had a great positive impact and I'm now in touch with recovery services and have staff available to speak to when needed. I'm in stable accommodation and am motivated."

Our outreach worker John, who already worked closely with Winchester City Council was heavily involved in implementing their Covid-19 emergency housing strategy for rough

sleepers. In partnership with the local authority and Trinity Winchester we helped support 22 people to access emergency housing, providing support and helping to deliver

hot meals every day throughout lockdown. Any rough sleeper with underlying health issues that would be high risk from Covid was put up in a local hotel to self-isolate.

After lockdown, we worked with our partners to rehouse residents to more appropriate move-on accommodation.

Hampshire

Across Hampshire we've worked with the County Council, the two City Councils, all the local housing authorities, health organisations, a number of general need housing associations (Aster, Radian, Sovereign and VIVID) and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and local Government.

Fareham

Our staff worked tirelessly to support clients and furnish a six-bedroom property in Fareham managed by VIVID that became available at short notice to house rough sleepers. Thanks to our ongoing support, we're delighted that all the clients in the property are coping well and maintaining

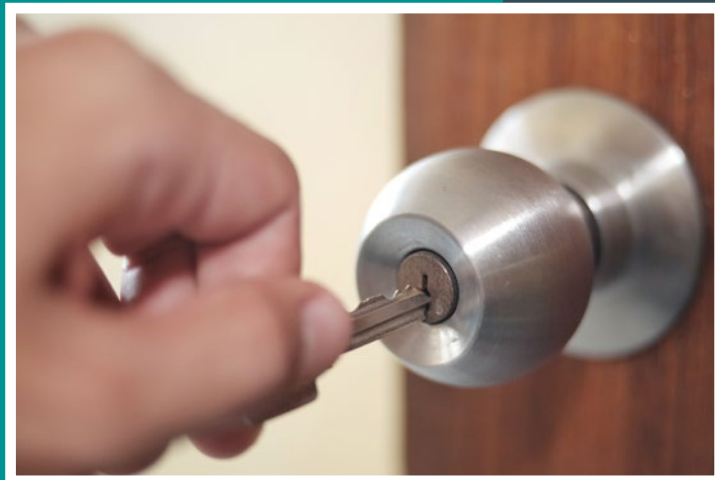
their tenancy. Many local businesses offered support and donations during the crisis including masks for staff and puzzles to keep clients busy during lockdown.

New services

Basingstoke

We've successfully helped many entrenched rough sleepers get their lives back on track using the Housing First principle of tackling homelessness. So, we were delighted to receive funding from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to launch such a service in

Basingstoke in April 2020. Check out page 10 for Rob's inspirational story as the first client to move into his own home in the town thanks to Housing First.



Havant

We're working in partnership with Havant Borough Council and VIVID to create new temporary accommodation in order to help end homelessness in the area.

Using a capital grant from Havant Borough Council along with our own funding we are refurbishing Brent House, an unoccupied large building in Leigh Park. When completed in 2021

Brent House will provide 29 temporary homes for homeless families and single homeless people. We'll provide appropriate support to help clients learn the skills required to move on into permanent

homes. Work should start later this year. Currently the council relies on the private rented sector or bed and breakfast to accommodate homeless people.

Isle of Wight

We were delighted to be awarded additional contracts, following a tender process, to expand our homeless services on the Isle of Wight.

Later this year we'll be launching new services including outreach, Housing First and supported accommodation. We already operate Housing First, community support and our Safe Haven service which offers crisis mental health support on the island.



Wokingham

Wokingham Borough Council is funding our new outreach service which was launched in August to help prevent rough sleeping and support people placed in emergency accommodation as part of the government's "everybody in" campaign.

The service supports rough sleepers by helping them to access vital services in order to leave the streets

and move into more settled accommodation. We also support individuals who have been placed in emergency accommodation to find long term housing options.

The service is all about building trust with those who have lost faith in the system and need a helping hand to get back on their feet.

Spencer's story

Housing First programme

After years living on the streets Spencer was referred for our Housing First programme and moved into his own flat on the Isle Of Wight managed by Vectis Housing Association earlier this year. This is his story ...

"I had been homeless for fourteen years, drinking, ducking and diving until Tim at the night shelter told me I should give Housing First a try. Normally I only work with support workers for a month or so and then get bored. You can tell they don't really want to help and they never listen to me, but with Two Saints it was different.

Looking back it did not take very long to get a flat but it felt like it was taking forever, like it would never happen. I was not bored working with my Two Saints support worker, we did things that I enjoyed like getting my bus pass sorted. When the virus hit and shut everything down, I didn't think I would

even see my support worker, let alone get housed, so when I was offered a flat I was amazed.

I fell in love with the flat straight away and could not wait to move in. My support worker had it all set up for me, which was really good. Because of the virus and most of the shops being closed I was not expecting there to be very much in the flat but it was all sorted. The problems we did have with the gas my support worker got sorted by the next day. I was worried about having to change my benefits to Universal Credit but I am getting used to the once a month payment and it's actually alright. I would never be able to manage my bills without support.



I would just spend it all on beer. I like the way my support worker and me go food shopping and bill paying together on the days I get my money. I enjoy meal planning and cooking, I feel healthier. I am pleased I was able to have my operation (thirteen teeth removed and a wisdom tooth) and I feel a lot better for it now. I would never have got it done if I was still on the streets. It's nice having someone positive to chat with. Someone who listens to me no matter what. I love my flat, I love my bed. It's beautiful no one bothers me. I feel safe here.

I feel like I will keep this flat. I am prepared to work for it, I have the right support and I know this is my home. I love

having a tablet and I video-call my brother in Thailand every day. After twenty years of not speaking to him, it's one of the best things that could happen to me. I feel proud of myself and my home. I have a comfortable bed, my own bath and a plant to love."

Looking to the future

With rough sleeping virtually eradicated during the lockdown, the challenge now is to avoid people returning to the streets. A key way to achieve this is to continue the successful partnership working the crisis necessitated.



It's becoming clear that the previous emergency bed system is no longer fit for purpose and hostel provision will look different in future. Joint working is essential and innovative ways of tackling homelessness, particularly with the most entrenched rough sleepers, are needed.

Like many others, we believe Housing First can and will form part of the solution. Housing First is based on the principle of giving people a stable home first, regardless of their situation or previous experiences, and then providing other support, services and treatment as needed.

We've been pioneering this approach for many years and our reputation has been recognised at national level. We've even produced a short video on [YouTube](#) outlining our successes.

We now deliver successful Housing First services in Andover, Basingstoke, Berkshire, on the Isle of Wight, in Portsmouth and Southampton working alongside partners including Aster, Sovereign and VIVID who provide the accommodation.



Rob's story

Rob was our first ever Housing First client in Basingstoke when he moved into his flat in the town in August 2020.



Battling alcohol and heroin addiction, suffering from bad health and with a string of prison sentences behind him, Rob was in a bad place and had never been able to sustain a tenancy before. He had exhausted every other option and Housing First was his last chance to turn his life around. He was given a home without any caveats or requirements and Claire, his support worker, has provided intense support since the day he moved in.

Claire visits regularly (daily at the beginning) to ensure Rob is OK, remains

positive and committed to maintaining his tenancy. She helped arrange furniture and set up utilities and continues to ensure Rob engages with other support agencies and keeps his health appointments.

It's a big adjustment coming off the streets and living under a roof, so Housing First is all about ensuring help and support is available whenever and however needed. Rob himself says he's determined to make it work and Claire is on hand to keep him focussed.

"I've only been in the flat a few weeks, but it feels like home. I know the support is there to help me, which is cool."

Rob

Barry's story



Barry's story is a familiar one. He ended up homeless after the breakdown of his marriage, turned to drinking and then lost his job. He could no longer pay the rent on the accommodation he'd rented after moving out of the marital home and before long he found himself on the streets.

After many years sleeping rough we've helped him get back on his feet through Housing First. Barry was offered a tenancy by Sovereign Housing Association and then together with West Berkshire Council and other support agencies we've provided all the help and encouragement he needs to rebuild his life and live independently. His support worker is on hand to help with everything from claiming benefits and sorting repairs to ensuring Barry remains focussed and addresses his physical and mental health issues.

Adjusting to life alone in a flat after years of living on the streets can be hard for rough sleepers, which is why the intensive wraparound support provided alongside a tenancy is so important.

Settled in his new home and with a new-found passion for gardening, Barry is finally able to look to the future with confidence in the knowledge support is on hand.



How you can support us

2020 has undoubtedly been a tough year for many people, so we'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone who has supported us during recent months. Your support has been invaluable during these challenging times.

We welcome support from individuals and local businesses, so please get in touch if you've got time to spare as a volunteer, fancy organising a fundraising event, or have items to donate.

Supporters – we need you

The Covid restrictions may have put a stop to certain fundraising activities but there are other ways that individuals, groups and organisations can help, such as:



Holding online fundraisers

like a virtual raffle, which is what Smooth Accounting Ltd in Whiteley did, donating £3,250. Director Jeri Williams told us to use the donation wherever it's most needed so we will put it to excellent use paying for rent deposits to secure accommodation, providing clothing for interviews and essential items to set up home for those moving on from our services.

Become a befriender

If you live in Newbury and have time to spare to offer companionship and support to our clients please contact Terri Harley on 01635 569 000 or email terri.harley@twosaints.org.uk to find out more.

Visit

www.twosaints.org.uk

Visit the **Support Us** page on our website www.twosaints.org.uk for details of what our different services would welcome as donations.



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