



ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

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FOREWORD

BY THE HIGH SHERIFF

As the immediate past High Sheriff of Worcestershire, it is a privilege to introduce this year's annual report for Wyre Forest & South Worcestershire Nightstop and Mediation service.

In a time when many face increasing uncertainty and hardship, the work of this charity stands as a powerful testament to what compassion in action truly looks like. Nightstop provides not just emergency accommodation for young people in crisis, but something far more enduring: safety, dignity, and the reassurance that they are not alone.

Nightstop's mediation service plays a crucial role in repairing relationships, preventing homelessness before it begins, and rebuilding the fragile bridges that connect families and communities.

The trauma that comes with homelessness can manifest itself later in life, so I was hugely impressed learning about their outreach work in schools.

HOST FAMILIES DO SELFLESS, REMARKABLE WORK AND IT WAS DEEPLY HUMBLING TO MEET SOME OF THEM. IT IS NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT LIVES ARE CHANGED, AND OFTEN SAVED, THROUGH THEIR EFFORTS.



During my year in office, I had the opportunity to witness firsthand the dedication of the volunteers, staff, and supporters who make this work possible. The host families do totally selfless, remarkable work and it was deeply humbling to meet some of them. It is no exaggeration to say that lives are changed, and often saved, through their efforts. Meeting some of their former clients who are now ambassadors was deeply moving. I am also immensely grateful for the ongoing support of the High Sheriff's Forum meetings.

I extend my sincere gratitude to everyone involved with the charity and commend this report to you as evidence of what can be achieved when a community comes together with purpose and heart.

Ian Smith,
High Sheriff of Worcestershire 2025-2026



WHO WE ARE

WE'RE A LOCAL CHARITY WORKING TO PREVENT YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN WORCESTERSHIRE BY EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

We believe every young person deserves a safe place to sleep. Family breakdown is one of the leading causes of youth homelessness, often caused by conflict and relationship difficulties within the home. As youth homelessness continues to rise, we have expanded our services to focus on early intervention and prevention before situations reach crisis point.

Prevention

- **Mediation & Conflict Coaching**

We offer free, confidential mediation and conflict coaching for young people and families experiencing difficulties at home or school. Our trained mediators provide a safe space to resolve conflict through individual and joint sessions. We also deliver school drop-ins to support healthier communication and emotional wellbeing.

For young people at risk of homelessness, mediation can help rebuild family relationships, support safe reunification, or assist with planned transitions to alternative accommodation. We also provide guidance and referrals to specialist support services where needed.

- **Education Programme**

We deliver educational sessions in local secondary schools to raise awareness of youth homelessness, challenge misconceptions, and ensure young people know where to access support.

Support for Young People in Crisis & Facing Homelessness

- **Access to Safe, Appropriate Accommodation**

Our Nightstop service provides emergency accommodation for low-risk young people through trained and approved volunteer hosts, who offer a safe place to stay, a hot meal, washing facilities, and a supportive environment. While Nightstop was originally designed for short stays, increasing demand has led to the need for longer-term support. In response, we developed our Supported Lodgings model, enabling young people to stay with volunteer hosts for several weeks or months while we help them secure permanent accommodation through repairing family relationships, local authority housing, or private rented accommodation.

- **One-to-One Crisis Support**

We provide intensive one-to-one support tailored to each young person's individual needs. This includes mental health support and life-skills training to help young people develop independence and sustain future tenancies.

OUR VISION

Our vision is an end to youth homelessness in Worcestershire. We believe every young person deserves a safe place to sleep and the support needed to thrive and to play an active role within their community.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to empower young people to achieve their full potential by giving them somewhere safe to stay, the skills to develop and maintain stronger relationships, opportunities to learn, volunteer and live independently.



“SO WHERE WOULD I BE WITHOUT NIGHTSTOP? I WOULD PROBABLY SAY NOT HERE. I HAD A TIME WHEN I NEARLY THREW MYSELF AWAY UNTIL I HEARD ABOUT NIGHTSTOP.”
BENEFICIARY FEEDBACK

OUR VALUES

HUMAN

We are real people, supporting real people.

WE ARE ONE

Regardless of role, title or status within the organisation, there is a golden thread that joins us all together. From Trustees to Team Members, to Young People and our Hosts we operate as one with our collective sleeves rolled up.

AGILITY

The world around us is changing and we know we can't stand still. Our 3 year Strategic Plan is focused on ensuring that our core services of emergency accommodation and mediation remain both effective and efficient, whilst being able to adapt to the needs of our young people and our community.

SAFE PAIR OF HANDS

Trust is central to all our relationships. And what we say we're going to do, we make sure we do it.

NEVER GIVE UP

Most importantly, we are relentless in pursuing our core purpose of preventing homelessness by empowering young people to reach their full potential. Whether that's in responding to a time critical situation or our focus on ensuring the long sustainability of Nightstop, we don't stop until we have established a way forward.

THE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Over the past year, we have continued to see the growing challenges facing young people across our communities, with increasing pressures on housing, family relationships, mental health, and financial security. In the face of these challenges, and amid an increasingly uncertain future, supporting our young people and helping our local communities to thrive is more important than ever. I remain incredibly proud of the compassion, professionalism, and determination shown by everyone involved with Wyre Forest and South Worcestershire Nightstop.

WHILE THE NEED FOR OUR SERVICES CONTINUES TO GROW, SO TOO DOES OUR COMMITMENT TO ENSURING THAT EVERY YOUNG PERSON HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO FEEL SAFE, VALUED, AND SUPPORTED.



As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, it is important to reflect on the thousands of young people whose lives have been changed through the support, safety, and hope provided by the charity over the past two decades. What began as a small local response to youth homelessness has grown into a respected organisation delivering prevention, mediation, emergency accommodation, and practical support to vulnerable young people across Worcestershire.

This year's achievements would not have been possible without the dedication of our staff team, volunteers, host families, supporters, funders, and partner organisations. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who contributes their time, expertise, and generosity to our work.

While the need for our services continues to grow, so too does our commitment to ensuring that every young person has the opportunity to feel safe, valued, and supported. We remain ambitious for the future and confident that, by working together, we can continue to prevent homelessness, strengthen our communities, and transform lives.

Darren Turner
Chair

THE CHIEF EXEC'S MESSAGE

As we reflect on another year, we are reminded that youth homelessness remains one of the most urgent challenges facing our communities. Behind every statistic is a young person whose future is at risk, and the human and financial cost of failing to act is simply too high. Prevention must remain at the heart of everything we do. Our mediation work, schools' education sessions and conflict coaching all speak to the benefits of acting early and that is why we are proud to be piloting our early intervention project, Upstream, in the Wyre Forest this year, with endorsement from Centrepont.

We were delighted to host a highly successful partners event at the Guildhall Worcester, opened by the mayor Councillor Matt Lamb and attended by partners, young people, businesses and council dignitaries, demonstrating the shared commitment across our community to tackling youth homelessness together. In challenging times, we continue to see the strength that comes from working together. Our deepest thanks go to our incredible volunteer hosts, without whom there would be no Nightstop, and to every supporter, donor, partner and volunteer who stands alongside us. Your commitment changes lives. While the future will undoubtedly bring challenges.

We look forward to working closely with all our partners and I have every confidence that by increasing collaboration across the county, we can achieve even more for vulnerable young people and ensure they have the safe, positive futures they deserve.

Judith Ford
CEO



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COLLABORATION



At Wyre Forest District Council, we recognise the importance of working in partnership with organisations like Nightstop to tackle youth homelessness.

Although the numbers of homeless 16 and 17 year olds isn't substantial in the district, an average of 19 per year, for those young people, homelessness can have a devastating effect on their education, employment and health and wellbeing.

Working together with our key partners to prevent homelessness, or where it occurs, to make it rare, brief and non-reoccurring, is a central aim of the Council's Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-31.

Kate Bailey
Director of Housing and Planning
Wyre Forest District Council

We've worked with Nightstop for several years now, and they've become a massive part of how we support our students. The way they teach conflict resolution and resilience actually sticks—it helps our students handle the tough stuff both in school and at home. We're incredibly lucky to have their expertise on hand; the difference they make is huge.

Rob Birch
Director of Student Services
Baxter College

CASE STUDY. EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION LOUISE, AGED 18

Louise was referred to Nightstop by her college tutor after experiencing a chaotic and unsafe home environment. Her mother struggled with drug addiction, her father with alcoholism, and domestic violence was a frequent occurrence in the family home.

Louise, who is bisexual and shows signs of neurodiversity including selective mutism, anxiety and depression, made the difficult decision to leave home following a serious dispute between her parents.

Nightstop initially placed Louise with a local host before moving her out of the area for her own safety after her parents began searching for her. Due to her anxiety and difficulties with communication, Nightstop staff advocated on her behalf with the police and local authorities, while also providing emotional and practical support – including helping her move and carry her belongings.

After 11 nights in emergency accommodation, Louise was successfully placed into temporary accommodation and awarded high-priority housing banding, enabling her to begin rebuilding her life safely away from her parents.

Since then, Louise has made significant progress. She has successfully managed her own tenancy for the past 18 months, maintained her mental health, avoided self-harm, and developed healthier relationships and greater independence.

Alongside this, Louise completed a Level 3 qualification in Animal Studies and plans to progress to Level 4. Her confidence and self-esteem have grown significantly, leading her to take on leadership roles within college life. She is now a Student Governor and Chair and Founder of the college Inclusivity Committee.

Louise has also become an Ambassador for both her college and Nightstop, supporting other young people to share their experiences and build confidence in engaging with others. She is now looking towards the future and seeking employment opportunities.

**“EVERYONE’S GOT
CONFIDENCE INSIDE
THEM. IT JUST NEEDS TO
BE UNLOCKED.”
LOUISE**



LOUISE HAS ALSO BECOME AN AMBASSADOR FOR BOTH HER COLLEGE AND NIGHTSTOP, SUPPORTING OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES AND BUILD CONFIDENCE IN ENGAGING WITH OTHERS.

CASE STUDY.

MEDIATION

AARON, AGED 14

Aaron was referred to Nightstop by a local refugee charity for family mediation. Following his parents' separation, Aaron had become heavily relied upon to translate and mediate between them due to his ability to speak English fluently. As a result, he was carrying significant emotional responsibility and struggling with the pressures of managing adult conflict within the family.

When Aaron decided to move with his mother and attend a new school, tensions between his parents increased further. The refugee charity recognised the family would benefit from mediation to help Aaron feel heard, reduce conflict, and support positive family relationships moving forward.

As neither parent spoke English fluently, an interpreter was arranged to support the process. Our mediators met individually with each family member to better understand the family dynamics and ensure Aaron was no longer placed in the role of interpreter or intermediary.

This was followed by a joint mediation session involving both parents, Aaron and the interpreter enabling the family to have constructive discussions despite language barriers and heightened emotions.

Together, they reached agreements around:

- Aaron's move to live with his mother
- His transition to a new school and community
- Ongoing contact with his father
- Future communication between the parents
- Removing Aaron from the role of family interpreter during disputes

Since mediation, Aaron has settled positively into his new home and school environment. Both children continue to spend time with their father, and communication between the parents has become calmer, more organised and child-focused.

The referring refugee charity later shared the following feedback:

"All your work with Aaron and his family has paid off. Both children have visited dad over Easter. Mom and Dad are now communicating! This is such wonderful news and thank you so much for all the time you put into this family."

This case study demonstrates the value of culturally sensitive mediation and interpreter-supported services in reducing conflict and improving outcomes for young people and families experiencing significant transition and trauma.

OUR PARTNERS

We are deeply grateful for the support of our partners who share our vision of ending youth homelessness. Through this collaborative approach, we are better positioned to meet the growing demand for our services. By focusing on prevention, we strive to address the rising incidence of youth homelessness and make a lasting impact.



“WHAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAY

NIGHTSTOP ARE ALWAYS REALLY SUPPORTIVE AND UNDERSTANDING OF SITUATIONS. IF NIGHTSTOP HADN'T HELPED ME I WOULD HAVE BEEN WALKING THE STREETS.

I can't thank Nightstop enough. They have helped me so much – even linking me up for job which is going really well. After 12 weeks with the agency, I can become permanent.

You have all been very supportive, and the support you have given me has really benefitted me and I really thank all of you for being so lovely.

MEDIATION HAS HELPED ME BY BUILDING MY COMMUNICATION. IT'S GIVEN ME A HUGE CONFIDENCE BOOST & SELF CONTROL.

I feel like it's good because they listen and are understanding. They say it's ok to have bad days. Mediation has helped me because it was a safe space to talk and they listened to me.

The sessions have really helped me deal with my friendships. I am glad to be at school.

I understand now that Mum and Dad are understanding of me and I feel I can open up to them. I have gone from not feeling my best to feeling better with home life, family friends, confidence and emotional wellbeing.

Conflict coaching is helping me understand me better and help myself. It's helped me to understand how to control myself more and how to cope with it.

Really helpful and supportive. When I am feeling annoyed at myself, I use my inner coach voice instead of inner critic.

Mediation has helped me with my feelings. I am going to tell myself positive things.

Mediation has helped me to control my anger. I have taken control of how I respond to things.

”

OUR IMPACT 2025/2026

10



Young people placed with a host

"Nightstop are always really supportive and understanding of situations. If Nightstop hadn't helped me I would have been walking the streets."

361



Mediation sessions

30



Families supported with mediation

257



Bed nights

"Really helpful and supportive. When I am feeling annoyed at myself, I use my inner coach voice instead of inner critic."

"Conflict coaching is helping me understand me better and help myself. It's helped me to understand how to control myself more and how to cope with it."

110



Young people supported with mediation

9



Volunteer host families

31



Young people received crisis support

39



Referrals for emergency accommodation

11

Schools and colleges supported

2459

Students reached at school or college

"Where would I be without Nightstop? I would probably say not here. I had a time when I nearly threw myself away until I heard about Nightstop."

105



Crisis support sessions