



NIGHTSTOP NEWS



A SPRING MESSAGE

BY JUDITH FORD, CEO

Spring is finally here! I hope that this signals a more positive time ahead for everyone.

Our Spring newsletter sends an update to our wider Nightstop family about our current work and our plans for 2021. Our team (including Ellie, pictured above with lamb!) have been working tirelessly to support young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, in Wyre Forest and South Worcestershire.

As the lockdown eases, we will be delivering more face to face services from our new premises starting on 12th April. We're very excited to announce our OCN accredited independent living skills courses for young people will be available from May. Independent living skills, including the development of mental wellbeing and personal budgeting, are more vital than ever for young people as they negotiate post-lockdown challenges.

We would like to thank all of our supporters, volunteers and our community who continue to champion our work and ensure that young people can have a brighter future.

"Independent living skills...are more vital than ever for young people as they negotiate post-lockdown challenges"



Building skills for life



Service developments at Nightstop are coproduced with the young people we support. Over the last year, we have facilitated a number of focus groups and forums with young people to understand more about their needs and what they need to build a future after homelessness.

Young people have told us that they need to develop skills to live independently after they leave emergency accommodation. These skills include "budgeting for the real world", making applications, cooking and managing mental health. One young person said, "I need to be able do things for myself". Another, when speaking of an experience of previous support said, "Everyone did things for me, such as a universal credit claim. It meant I had no voice".

The core purpose of Nightstop is "**preventing homelessness by empowering young people to fulfil their full potential**". We aim to give young people their voice so, in partnership with them, we have developed and piloted a suite of life skills courses. These courses are delivered by Nightstop and accredited by the Open College Network (OCN). The courses on offer currently are Health and Wellbeing, Tenancy Management and Employability and Personal Development. Young people can take an entire course or work on individual modules including "Developing Confidence and Self-Esteem", "Positive Mental Health", "Personal Budgeting and Managing Money" and "Career Preparation". Upon completion of a module, the young person will receive a certificate which will evidence their participation to employers and colleges.

Our OCN courses will be an invaluable resource for young people. They provide a level one course that develops confidence and skills for independent living. They can also act as an entry point to further education or employment, opening up opportunities for young people in the post-COVID world.

Our OCN courses will be available from May. We will be delivering courses through a blend of digital sessions and face to face sessions with members of our friendly team. If you are working with young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and are interested in finding out more, you can call us on **01562 743111** or email **info@wfnightstop.org**

"It's a good course to study I think, as so many young people suffer from stress from school and daily life so I think it would be a really useful course to help anyone" - Feedback from young person piloting "Health and Wellbeing"

Nightstop Update

In 2020, we delivered more nights of Nightstop accommodation than in any previous year in our history. For every night of accommodation provided, there are many hundreds of additional hours of wraparound support provided for young people by our dedicated team of homelessness prevention officers. This work complements the support offered by our volunteer hosts and helps young people build a life after homelessness.

We have had a busy start to 2021. We are currently supporting a number of young people with crisis support and emergency accommodation. The young people are also being supported to develop living skills such as establishing a daily routine and opening a bank account. These skills are vital to help young people live independently and maintain a tenancy. The young people have also been volunteering to coproduce our new suite of independent living skills courses and gaining new found confidence and communication skills through their volunteering.

Our team have been supporting Sadie (pictured right) who is being safely accommodated by one of our wonderful Nightstop host families. Sadie has worked hard to secure her own tenancy and the team are now helping her to find furnishings for her new place. Our fabulous supporters in Bewdley have been rallying behind Sadie and donating essential items for her new home.

Sadie has also been enjoying "Walk and Talk" support sessions with homelessness prevention officer, Jo, and Nightstop pup, Dudley. Sadie had the highest praise for her host family and the Nightstop team, particularly for the support they gave for her mental health. Sadie said, "They've mentally supported me...they accept you entirely for who you are which is actually amazing".



"They've mentally supported me...they accept you entirely for who you are" - Sadie

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Thank you, In Touch!

2020 was a hugely busy year for Nightstop. In addition to our ongoing support for young people during the pandemic, we found time to move into a new home!

As our team had expanded, we had outgrown our previous office space. We have been fortunate enough to find new premises in the heart of Kidderminster Town Centre in Worcester Street. This space has allowed us to develop a new purpose-built centre for young people to meet with our team for advice and support and to access our new life skills courses through our digital hub.

The space has been coproduced by young people using our services. The development and refurbishment of the space has been made possible thanks to the generous support of InTouch Global Foundation. We cannot thank them enough for their help in ensuring we can provide a safe and welcoming space for young people in need of our services.

We're pleased to announce that our centre for young people will be re-opening on **Monday 12th April**. Attendance will be by appointment only in the first instance. To make an appointment, call us on **01562 743111** or email **info@wfnightstop.org**



Love in the air for Nightstop



We were overwhelmed by the love shown for Nightstop from our local community in February. We have been supported by the amazing Anna Downes and Music For Sanctuary who use the power of music to raise money for homelessness charities. Anna has previously fundraised for Nightstop and she hosted another beautiful concert for us on Valentine's Day. The romantic programme of music was enjoyed online by members of the public.

We want to say a huge thank you to Anna and everyone who bought tickets. **They raised a phenomenal £926.35 for Nightstop!**

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