

# Colchester Emergency Night Shelter



[www.colchesternightshelter.org.uk](http://www.colchesternightshelter.org.uk)

## Annual report July 2010

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Registered Charity No:	803328
Company Registration No:	2475258
Trustees/Directors:	Michael Abbs Nicholas Baker Dr Lester Carlyon Marian Clegg (Secretary) Gordon Evans (Honorary Treasurer) Teresa Hall Peter Kerr Julie Ward
Co-ordinator:	Pernille Petersen

Colchester Emergency Night Shelter has received support from:

National Lottery  
Charities Board



Colchester Borough  
Council



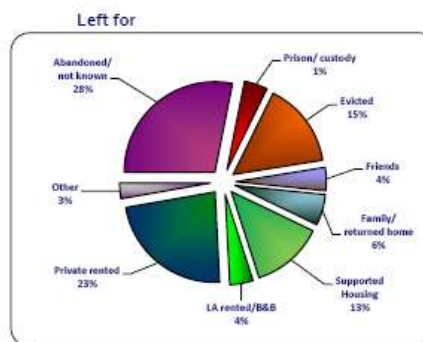
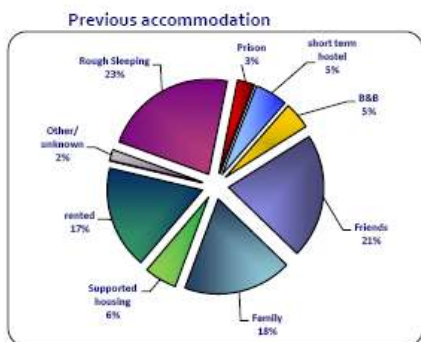
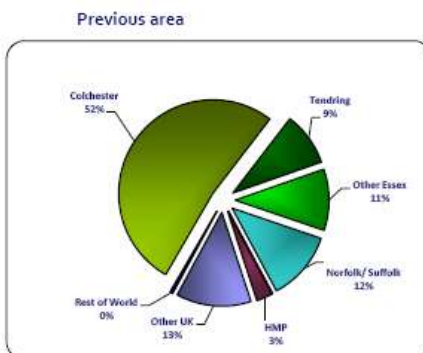
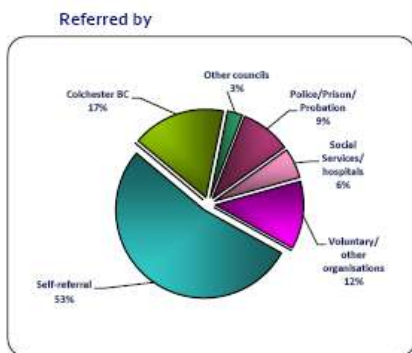
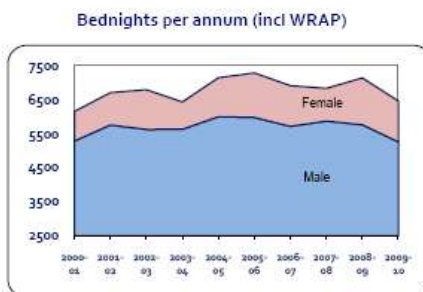
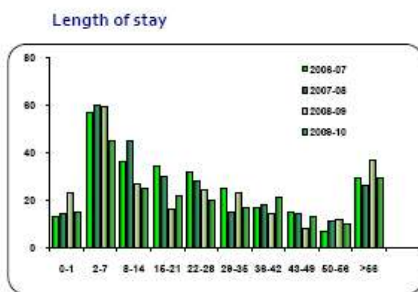
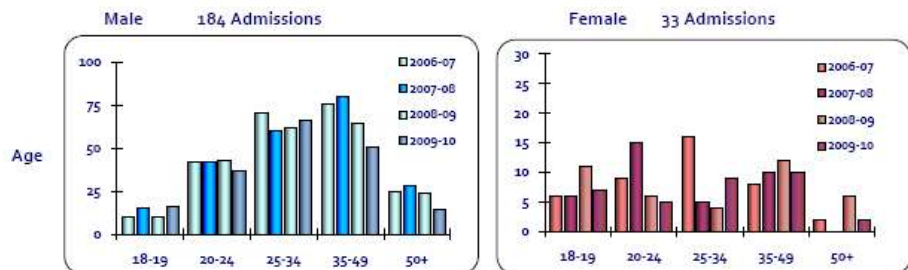
Essex County  
Council



The summarised accounts do not contain all the information required by law to be included in the accounts of the charity. The full accounts (audited by an independent auditor) are filed with the Charity Commissioners and Companies House. A copy of the full accounts for the year may be obtained by writing to the Secretary of Colchester Emergency Night Shelter.



## COLCHESTER EMERGENCY NIGHT SHELTER Profile of Residents, 2009-10



### FOCUS ON RESIDENTS: HOW ARE THEY DOING?

In our Annual Reports we always focus on the successes and the positive changes we have enabled residents to make to their lives and we will report on those again this year. However, we also have to acknowledge that there are times and situations when we are not successful. When that happens, it is important to investigate and identify what went wrong in order to help that person again and also to use the experience to help support others to avoid the “revolving door” of homelessness.

For example there are times when after only a short while living independently the accommodation is lost and the person returns to us. Sometimes this happens more than once. In other cases we may have worked hard to find appropriate supported housing but the resident avoids engaging with the support, drifts back to their old ways and, eventually, returns to the Night Shelter. In these instances the resident may have other priorities, unacknowledged needs or lacks desire to change. Some are unaware of their needs and act only on short term interests.

*MILLY: In Milly’s case, a drug habit of long standing combined with an inability to face up to her problem was only part of the difficulties which led her back to the Night Shelter time and time again.*

*She was in a relationship with a partner who was mentally unwell and violent towards her, mirroring her childhood experience. Her self esteem was very low except when she was influenced by drugs. Often she would only stay a few days for respite before returning to her partner.*

*Last time, she stayed longer and began to engage with our resettlement worker. An interview was arranged for her at a supported housing project but at the interview she denied that she had any needs. Although the project knew this not to be true, without her co-operation, they could not help.*

*After working for seven weeks attempting to persuade her to engage and to make some kind of commitment we had to ask her to leave in order to be able to help another vulnerable person who would be ready to change. We were sad and worried because she is vulnerable and has little support in the community, but until she is able to be more aware and committed to change, all we can offer is temporary respite rather than arranging more permanent and stable accommodation.*

### BUT NOW THE GOOD NEWS

As a short-term direct access emergency night shelter we do not have the resources to support everyone for long periods and some residents still move on very quickly but for those who we do allow to stay beyond 28 days we are still achieving good resettlement outcomes overall, and sometimes we can achieve a positive outcome for a resident staying for a shorter period.

This year we have had several young couples who we have helped to move into self-contained accommodation which they still maintain successfully. One couple, who have now been together for nearly two years, will soon be moving into a house as their baby is due in a few months.

Some of our most vulnerable men and women have been accepted by Ipswich YMCA where they are doing very well. The hostel has excellent facilities and there are further options for moving on from there to self contained accommodation.

Emmaus continues to play a very important role in our resettlement process both locally and further afield. The April Centre too continues to play an important role as a provider of private rented accommodation for very vulnerable and hard-to-help people.

### **IMPROVING RESIDENTS' SUPPORT**

We encourage residents to sign up to a weekly rota of tasks such as cooking and cleaning in return for the opportunity to use the computer and telephones during the day time, which can be helpful in searching for accommodation and jobs. This is the very first step in rolling out a basic life skills programme which will teach residents some of the skills they need to sustain independent living.

In the near future we also intend to offer solution focused counselling with David Hawkes from Anglia Ruskin University, who is the speaker at this year's AGM. This form of counselling is well suited to the project and to our residents as it is short, very client centred and positive and forward looking. Staff have had an introductory training session and were impressed with the delivery and relevance for residents. We hope that it will help turn around the situations described above and produce a positive life change for the most difficult of our residents.

### **IMPROVING FACILITIES**

Two more bedrooms have been totally refurbished and refitted and we have once again been very pleased with the quality of the workmanship and the furniture, which is proving to stand up to the intensive use to which it is put.

Our next priority is the four bedrooms on the second floor which have fewer facilities to store and organise belongings. There is a small balance of funds available, sufficient for one more bedroom, but we still need to raise a further £30,000 to finish this phase of our refurbishment project.

In the light of the increasing emphasis on engagement and life skills training, we also intend to bring forward our plan to convert one of the lounges into a multipurpose IT and skills training room which could be easily converted back into a lounge for evening use. This project will be our next focus for seeking funds from Trusts and other sources as we will also need revenue funding to support at least one, and ideally two, additional support workers.

As part of this project, we are also advertising a new position for a catering and kitchen hygiene assistant to free up some of the Assistant Co-ordinator's time to work with residents on life skills learning.

### **CHANGING RESIDENTS' PROFILE**

We have, as always over the past few years, been running very near full capacity, though sadly we were unable to run the Winter Reserve Accommodation Project which does reflect in our occupation figures being slightly below 100% at 97.5%.

The distribution between men and women is close to our usual 15-85 split although slightly more women 17.9 % have been with us this year. This is a likely result of the fact that we have had many more couples.

Compared with last year we have had a few more young people (18-19 years olds) up from 8.6% to 10.6%. Looking at individuals, we note that there was an increase in 18-19 year old men from 10 to 16, whilst the number of young women fell from 11 to 7.

The majority of residents are still in the 25-34 and 35-49 age groups. But this year 34.6 % account for the younger age group as against 27.2 % last year. Altogether 64.6 % are under the age of 35 this year as against 56.0% last year. This shift towards a younger population may also have been a result of the increase in the number of couples. There was a large drop in the over 50 age group from 30 (12.3%) to 16 (7.4%).

As we have already noted there has been a tendency for people to stay longer and this is reflected in the fact that whilst 29.3% spent more than 35 nights at the shelter in 2008-09 this year 33.7% spent more than 35 nights. The multiplicity of individual needs and the greater input and longer time needed to successfully resettle people with complex needs is in many cases the cause of this increase. On the other side, we still provide a short-term solution for people who suddenly lose their accommodation, with just over a quarter of residents staying for less than one week.

### **WHERE DO RESIDENTS COME FROM AND WHERE DO THEY GO?**

More than 52% of the resident came from Colchester where they have commonly been staying at friends (21.2%) or with family (19.4%), but this year the single most common "accommodation" background is rough sleeping, up to 22.6% this year from 18.1% last year. This too is an indication that our residents arrive with more complex problems. There was a significant fall in the number of residents coming to the Night Shelter directly from prison (down from 6.2% to 2.8%) which, sadly, may also be a cause of the rise in those sleeping rough given the high profile of offenders at the project.

After their stay at the Night Shelter, 56.7% were found accommodation in a planned way through our dedicated resettlement support. Regretfully, 15.2 % were evicted but this is a significant improvement on the previous year when 20.6% had to be asked to leave for infringement of our basic house rules. The reduction is a result of a conscious effort to help residents to avoid eviction through a flexible system of warnings and early intervention when a problem is identified.

### **PROBLEMS AND MORE PROBLEMS**

We are always improving the information we collect about residents, both in order to be able to better support them, to meet such of their needs as we are able to in a night-only short term project and to signpost where they might be able to obtain further support for the needs we cannot address. This year we have generated some enlightening information about links between problems.

34.1% of our residents were assessed as being an offender or at risk of offending, up from 23.9% in the previous year. Whilst 48.8 % of residents overall have problems with alcohol or drugs, among offenders this rises to 70.3% as against 37.8% of non-offenders. More worryingly, 10.8% of offenders have learning disabilities against only 5.6% of non-offenders.

It is not surprising that there is a strong link between offending and substance misuse because, apart from alcohol which can cause behaviour that leads to offending, drugs are often illegal in themselves. Having said that, the fact remains that people with offending behaviour and substance misuse problems have twice the problems at least of those who have but one or the other. Worse still, if there are problems with dyslexia or similar in addition to these the outlook for their future can be bleak indeed.

In short, the statistics highlight what we have already illustrated with our examples of individual residents' stories. It underlines the need there is to address the growing problem of people with growing problems!!

This is why our future long-term prospects are focused on a project which will still be emergency crisis response in nature but will have the further facility to enhance the residents' chances of turning their life around so that they are not forced to return to the Night Shelter again.

### OUR THANKS

We have many thanks to give not only to the staff and volunteers who keep the project running under sometimes stressful circumstances, but also a group of hard working trustees who contribute a tremendous amount of work to the maintenance, financial management and project development of the Night Shelter's work. Two of our longest serving Trustees are standing down at this year's AGM so we would very much like everyone who reads this to consider whether they could make a contribution of their time to this valuable work.

Once again we express our very deeply felt gratitude to Lauren Evans' family for raising such large amounts of money to refurbish our residents' bedrooms. A staggering £4,210 was raised on a single night at Lauren's Glitter Ball.

Many local organisations such as parish churches, schools, companies, Rotary Clubs, as well as individuals have made numerous contributions all flowing together to make a real difference to vulnerable people in Colchester. The congregation to St. Leonard's have been particularly active and keep inventing new ways of helping us and fund raising.

As well as helping with our refurbishment programme, donations help to support the ever increasing cost of providing services such as heating, water and food which is not funded by any statutory organisation. We are reluctantly increasing our daily charge to residents to £3, but even this only covers about 40% of their cost. Without these generous donations we would have to reduce our provision for vulnerable people.

We would also like to thank our statutory funders: DAAT, Supporting People, Colchester Borough Council and the helpful attitude of the Revenue Services.

Last but not least we would like to thank Henry Spyvee, last year's Mayor, for choosing the Night Shelter to be one of his charities. This has added a further £7,300 to our reserves. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with him and the other charities which benefited from his generosity.

Without all of you our work would not be possible.

*Gordon Evans, Acting Chairman*

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year to 31 March 2010

	12 months ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010 (unaudited)		12 months ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	
	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>				
Donations	34,380		25,243	
Grants	75,859		72,269	
Rent & other income	86,795		88,673	
		<b>196,995</b>		<b>186,185</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
<u>Staff &amp; volunteer costs</u>				
Wages & salaries	104,754		100,235	
NI/Pension and other staff costs	23,641	128,395	22,789	123,024
<u>Direct Costs:</u>				
Food & provisions	16,005		17,137	
Cleaning materials	1,723		1,072	
Domestic Equipment repair/renewal	1,635		3,683	
Health & Safety/Property security	4,097	23,460	3,717	25,609
<u>Property Costs:</u>				
Insurance premiums	5,622		5,904	
Council Tax, Water & sewage rates	3,312		3,257	
Light, heat & power	6,789		7,139	
Repairs to the freehold	26,945	42,668	13,151	29,451
<u>Office Costs:</u>				
Telephone expenses	1,196		1,634	
Postage, Printing and stationery	1,265		1,347	
Office equipment maintenance & computer costs	1,762	4,222	2,450	5,431
<u>Other Costs:</u>				
Audit	3,671		4,048	
Legal & Professional	1,413		3,417	
Fundraising expenses	642		522	
Subscriptions	648		227	
Sundry expenses	696		0	
Bank charges	955	8,025	869	9,083
		<b>206,770</b>		<b>192,598</b>
<b>SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>				
<b>ON THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>£ -9,775</b>		<b>£ -6,413</b>