

# Colchester Emergency Night Shelter



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

## Annual report July 2011

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Registered Charity No: 803328  
Company Registration No: 2475258

Trustees/Directors: Nicholas Baker  
Marian Clegg (Secretary)  
Gordon Evans (Honorary Treasurer)  
Teresa Hall  
Peter Kerr (Chairman)  
Julie Ward  
Barbara Williamson

Co-ordinator: Pernille Petersen, MBE

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.

## INTRODUCTION

Colchester Emergency Night Shelter (CENS) has been serving the community as part of the “Big Society” for over 25 years. During that time there have been many changes but what hasn’t changed is the need for our services. Just as a quick summary, we had 271 admissions, providing 6,743 individual bednights (97.2% capacity), in the past year. 22 of those were also helped by the Winter Reserve Accommodation Project (WRAP), which provides extra bed capacity in church halls during the winter, for a further 75 bednights. Over the past 15 years, we have admitted more than 6,000 people for over 100,000 individual nights. Almost 1,000 of those were ‘WRAP’ nights. We are grateful to all the churches and volunteers which have helped us to provide these over the years, currently from Castle Methodist Church, St. Leonard’s Lexden, The Buddhist Centre, St James the Less Catholic Church and Beacon House and in the past the Friends Meeting House and Lion Walk URC.

The number of people we have helped is inevitably less than the number of admissions as we regretfully see some more than once. There is no one cause or typical pathway to becoming homeless. Indeed, homelessness can often exacerbate the conditions and issues which may have led to someone becoming homeless in the first place. This is particularly true for mental health issues and substance abuse. Both separately and combined they make it harder to find and sustain accommodation. A more detailed account of the nexus and complexity of single homelessness can be found in a recent CRISIS report “Hidden Homelessness” ([www.crisis.org.uk](http://www.crisis.org.uk))

## RESETTLEMENT

CENS resettlement programme aims to ensure that as many people as possible move into appropriate, suitable accommodation within a reasonable time scale. Because we now work with residents who have more difficult and complex problems, and often very unattractive housing histories, the Trustees have agreed to extend the normal maximum of 28 nights for a greater number of vulnerable residents who engage with our dedicated Resettlement Workers.

The resettlement rate for those who do remain for more than 28 nights is significantly higher: 75.6% this year as against 20.6% for those leaving before the end of their second week (where abandonments are especially high) and 50.8 % for those who stay with us between 2 weeks and 4 weeks.

Stay	Leavers	% of leavers	planned resettled	custody/sectioned	evicted	excluded for safety/axed	unplanned/abandoned	% planned
<b>April 2010 - March 2011</b>								
1-14 days	131	48.9%	27	7	17	10	71	20.6%
15-28 days	59	22.0%	30	3	9	1	16	50.8%
29 days+	78	29.1%	59	2	6	2	8	<b>75.6%</b>
Total	268		116	12	32	13	95	43.3%
% of total			43.3%	4.5%	11.9%	4.9%	35.4%	
<b>April 2009 - March 2010</b>								
1-14 days	82	38.5%	29	4	11	1	37	35.4%
15-28 days	41	19.2%	27	1	4	1	6	65.9%
29 days+	90	42.3%	61	4	16	0	9	<b>67.8%</b>
Total	213		117	9	31	2	52	54.9%
% of total			54.9%	4.2%	14.6%	0.9%	24.4%	

In other words the efforts made to help people who need more time are bearing fruit. This is a tribute especially to Marina and Mike our resettlement workers as well as the often heroic efforts made by staff to keep tolerating and helping difficult residents. A large proportion of those resettled (24%) go into private rented accommodation, much of which is provided or managed by The April Centre whose staff offer more support than a normal private landlord. Supported housing, where Emmaus make up a sizeable proportion, accounts for 9% and Housing Association and Local Authority housing help around 5%.

## FUNDING

CENS hosts a subsidiary charity, CHF-Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme, which is managed by Colchester Borough Council and The April Centre. Colchester Housing Forum has been raising money to top up the Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme Fund through a sleep-out in Colchester Castle Park (on a very wet Friday night in June). The Trustees are hoping that this will raise over £3,000 which will enable the Scheme to issue more guarantees. Night Shelter residents, along with other vulnerable people, benefit hugely from the scheme and from links with both supported housing organisations and private landlords signed up with The April Centre.

Donations and sponsorship for the sleep-out is still running and will continue to do so until 1<sup>st</sup> August. Donations can be made through <http://www.everyclick.com/colchester-emergency-night-shelter/803328>

In a time of increasing pressure of demand for services, which is almost certainly going to worsen following implementation of the Government’s Welfare Reform programme, reductions in statutory funding threaten many projects. In the current financial year CENS has experienced a raft of funding changes most of which have involved some form of top slicing of amounts received but which have not yet had a major impact on finances. Although Supporting People funding is no longer ring-fenced, the Essex SP team have made positive efforts to distribute reductions such that CENS loss in the current financial year has been marginal. The Trustees are already aware of further cuts next year and are working to minimise the effects and to prepare in various ways for the reforms. These reforms include implementation of Universal Credit, which will affect the way that Housing Benefit is paid, and restrictions to Local Housing Allowance.

## PERSONAL GROWTH AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Threats to statutory funding do not mean that CENS intends to retrench and reduce services. Trustees are actively seeking funding from Trusts to facilitate employment of a Personal Development Support Worker who will be able to extend and build on pilot schemes which are encouraging residents to develop their skills, gain confidence and self esteem. The fragile beginnings of the pilot schemes cannot be expected to turn someone’s life around immediately but will enable them to feel better about their capacity to plan and maintain their future accommodation.

## Cooking

In the spring of this year Sr. Diana from the Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre and her friend Charlotte offered to come in once a week to cook with a small group of residents. So every Wednesday the Night Shelter kitchen becomes a hive of activity.

Sr. Diana, with Sr. Alice, also comes in as a volunteer cook every Tuesday evening when the following day's lunch menu is decided, often with the help from the residents who

*"It's been really good coming in to cook. I like it anyway, but it's a great time."*

*Participating resident*

Residents cook the meal, then eat it for lunch. When there are leftovers they are put out for the rest of the residents as an early evening snack.

In the morning staff and residents forage in house to see what items are already available, then make a shopping list for items which need to be bought. Discussions include value for money and health as well as what to do with leftovers.

*"Yeah, really nice to have an early feed when we come in at night."*

*Non-participating resident*

### The BIG Garden Project

An allotment has been established in Highwoods for homeless and vulnerably housed people by Ciara Canning of Colchester Borough Council. Several of our residents have taken part and enjoyed the experience. People housed by the April Centre, many of whom are ex-night shelter residents, are also invited to take part. We are now looking to

*"I enjoyed my time up there and wish I could do it more often".*

make this a more regular feature of our activity plan.

### Preparing for work

Once a month Andy Flaxen-Pallet, a JobCentre Plus Outreach Worker who is seconded through Colchester Borough Council to reach out to people who are very disadvantaged in the job market, visits the Night Shelter. Andy makes one-to-one appointments with residents to discuss their job prospects and how to fill in gaps in their qualifications. Andy also advises them on how to make the most of their experiences on a CV.

*"Andy was really helpful and I feel more confident about going for a job now."*

### PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to the pilot projects, new ventures include more organised relationships with Probation, The Lakes Mental Health Unit and the local Learning Disabilities Team. These contacts are invaluable in helping people with multiple and complex problems. Staff have all been trained so that they are aware of the key values such as who to contact, what the information sharing protocols are and what referral mechanisms are in place.

With The April Centre's new "wet" facility in the offing the possibility of re-assessing risk with chaotic alcohol users and helping them to make a positive change will be enhanced. The speaker at the AGM is Dave Egan of The April Centre who will give more information about these plans.

### EXEMPLARY SERVICE

During the past year we have been especially blessed having two young German Community Service Volunteers: Matthias and Tobe. They have given exemplary service in the way they have carried out their duties diligently and supportively. Often they helped out during the day with practical and organisational tasks. They were always cheerful, helpful and had a great sense of humour. Sadly, they have both left but have left a big impression and the standard of their work reminds of what a great contribution CSVs can make to our project. We wish them all the best of luck in their future careers.

### OUR THANKS

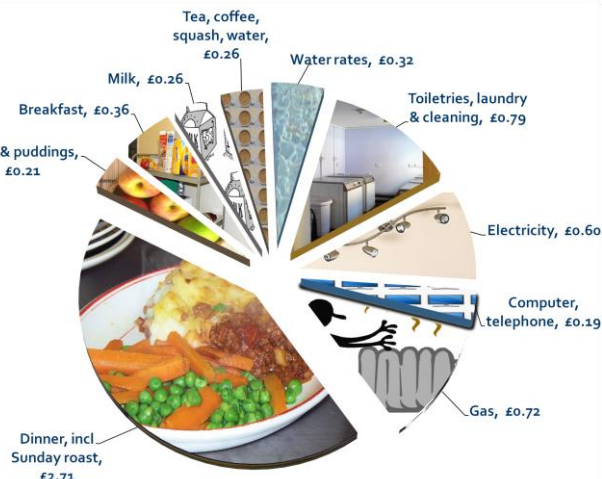
Meanwhile we have a lot to be thankful for. We have had continued and sustained fund raising from local churches, groups and individuals, both through donations and hosted events. Notable amongst these have been the Lauren Evans family (£17,094 since 2007) and St. Leonard's Lexden (£10,500 since 2007). A new supporter this year has been The Colchester Ladies' Circle who held a Venetian Masquerade Ball – a huge contrast to the sleep-out in Castle Park on the very wet evening before!

As a thank-you to Henry Spyvee who chose the Night Shelter as one of his Mayoral Charities the CENS Trustees, notably Teresa Hall, put on a very successful fundraising event for Beacon House as Henry is one of their Trustees.

Were it not for our supporters we would not have been able to refurbish our bedrooms in order to give the residents the decent standard of accommodation which they deserve as valuable human beings. Funds raised in previous years plus the small surplus at the end of March 2011 are currently contributing to the refurbishment of the four second-floor bedrooms.

As well as driving our refurbishment programme forward, donations support services to residents which cannot be funded through any statutory route. These include meals, utilities, room cleaning, telephone and computer. Residents are charged £3 for each night they occupy a bed and £1 for any night that a bed is held for them. In fact, it costs the same for every night as 20 evening meals have to be cooked and ready for residents

whether the Night Shelter is full at 7.15 pm or not; and there is no difference in gas/electricity usage whether one person fewer is actually in the building or not! The Trustees recalculate the cost "per occupied bednight" in April-June every year. This year, the overall cost has reduced slightly to £6.42 from £6.67 due to the hard work of staff in keeping many costs down - despite a substantial rise (20%) in the cost of buying fresh ingredients for the evening meals.



We are grateful to Colchester Borough Council for giving us a subsidy which reduces the shortfall but we will still need to raise £17,500 this year in general donations to support services. We thank all our donors and fundraisers and we hope they will continue in their efforts to support CENS and their work with single homeless adults.

Trustees, staff and volunteers put much effort, good will and expertise into their work at the Night Shelter. Their commitment is deeply appreciated.

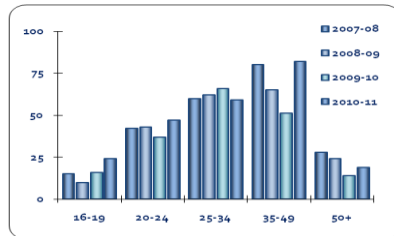
*Peter Kerr, Chairman*

# COLCHESTER EMERGENCY NIGHT SHELTER

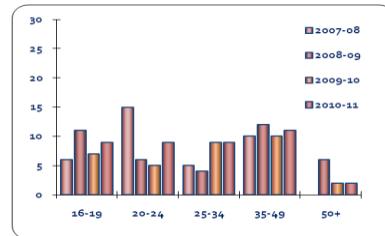
## Profile of Residents 2010-11

Age

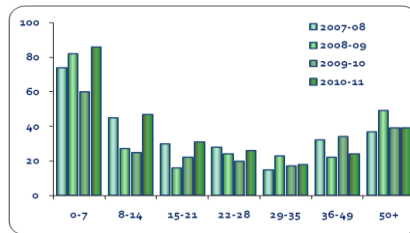
### Male – 231 Admissions



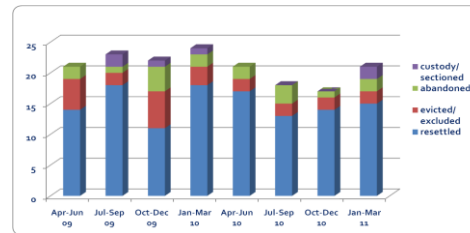
### Female – 40 Admissions



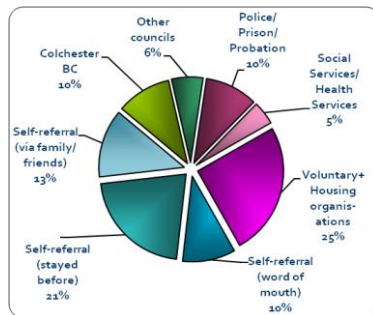
### Length of Stay



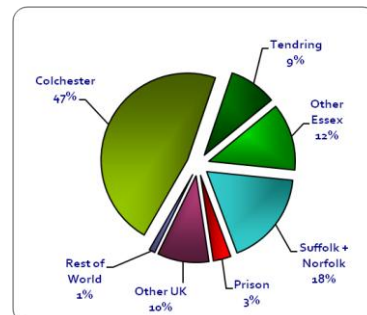
### Resettlement – Long Stay



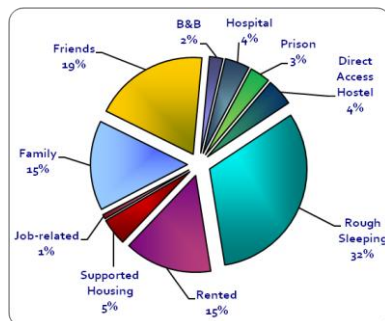
### Referred by



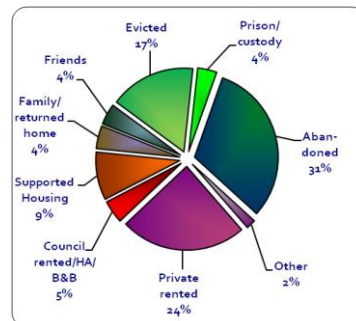
### Previous area



### Previous accommodation



### Left for



## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year to 31 March 2011

	12 months ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2011 (unaudited)		12 months ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	
	£	£	£	£
<b>NIGHT SHELTER INCOME</b>				
General Donations	12,540		15,453	
Fundraising & Trusts	-		25,311	
Grants	76,952		79,934	
Rent & other income	115,677		91,462	
		<b>204,808</b>		<b>212,160</b>
<b>NIGHT SHELTER EXPENDITURE</b>				
<u>Staff &amp; volunteer costs</u>				
Wages & salaries	109,670		104,422	
NI/Pension and other costs	24,170	133,839	22,207	126,629
<u>Direct Costs:</u>				
Food & provisions	17,395		16,849	
Residents' Travel/Computer	1,691		732	
Cleaning materials	682		1,265	
Domestic Equipment repair/renewal	2,901		2,409	
Health & Safety/Property security	3,149	25,818	4,920	25,815
<u>Property Costs:</u>				
Insurance premiums	6,006		5,622	
Council Tax, Water & sewage rates	3,380		3,144	
Light, heat & power	7,992		6,555	
Repairs to the freehold	7,748	25,125	31,461	46,781
<u>Office Costs:</u>				
Telephone expenses	836		1,554	
Postage, Printing and stationery	1,368		1,179	
Office equipment maintenance & computer costs	1,327	3,530	1,762	4,495
<u>Other Costs:</u>				
Audit	3,600		3,541	
Legal & Professional	2,754		3,372	
Fundraising expenses	515		516	
Subscriptions	161		548	
Sundry expenses	341		0	
Bank charges	944	8,315	954	8,913
		<b>196,628</b>		<b>212,651</b>
<b>SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>		<b>£ 8,180</b>		<b>£ -491</b>
<b>ON THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES</b>				