Ashford Churches Together Winter night shelter

newsletter



***October 2018***

# Preparations are well under way for the 2018/2019 winter night shelter.

Our name has changed to Ashford Churches Together Winter Night Shelter (ACTWNS) operating under the umbrella of Ashford Together. Our new website will launch soon ([www.actwns.org](http://www.actwns.org)) and we have new Facebook and Twitter feeds to keep you up to date with what is happening. Our status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (which allows us charity status) is pending.

We are now recruiting volunteers, from our wonderful experienced previous volunteers, within the Ashford Community and from some of our partner organisations. Training/refresher training will take place at Ashford Christian Fellowship on Saturday 3rd November, Tuesday 6th November and Saturday 10th November. Training is compulsory as there have been considerable changes at both central and local government level to incorporate. The Saturday training also includes a confidence building First Aid session, giving practicalities and common sense approaches to situations you may be faced with. This is delivered by the British Red Cross and highly recommended.

## There are six venues confirmed with the seventh hopefully being finalised this week. All venues will have capacity for 17 beds and we hope to be able to host SWEP this year in another venue if we are over capacity.

This year there will be a core team of coordinators, two of which will attend venues each evening to administer new referrals, check venues have enough equipment and deal with any queries and concerns. They will be on call during the shelter hours and hopefully provide support to the venues when needed.

### Rules have been tightened with every guest being given a booklet detailing the whole shelter operation, what is permissible (luggage, behavior, times, etc.) and this will be standard in every venue. Each guest will also have a Personal Shelter Plan (PSP) which details what agencies they need to engage with, services they need to register with and support we can give with CV’s, housing and benefit applications and job applications where applicable. This will in some measure determine the stay in the shelter as engagement is vital to change circumstances and get our guests off the streets for good. This will be delivered by the core coordinators.

We have also engaged with a local launderette, using a token system empowering guests to do their own washing and drying. Venues will no longer undertake washing duties, which will free up time, reduce venue energy bills and give responsibility back to the guests.

### Coordinators meet this evening (Tuesday 9th October) to begin the venue readiness for our guests and we will produce further newsletters regularly to keep you informed.

Application forms can be obtained from [ashfordwintershelter@gmail.com](mailto:ashfordwintershelter@gmail.com) and any queries please address to [kareen@actwns.org](mailto:kareen@actwns.org).

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# if you use facebook please add your name to the member list on our new page ASHFORD CHURCHES WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

This will replace the current Facebook page in keeping with GDPR data protection principles.