



Stable One
more than a place to stay

Winter Night Shelter
1 June-31 August

2018

Evaluation

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Contents

	Page
1 Project Summary	2
2 Project Description	4
Introduction	
Background	
Project Objectives	5
How have objectives been met?	
3 Key Recommendations	6
4 Evaluation Methodology	7
5 Findings	7
Prayer	7
Venues	7
Night Shelter Venues	8
Daytime Support Centre	8
Guests	9
Staffing	12
Transport and Nightly Timetable	15
Food	16
Evening Activities	16
Equipment	16
Laundry	17
Challenges	
Unsuitable Guests, Intoxicated Guests, Guests not taking medication	17
Uninvited Guests, Guests who stayed too long, Scabies, Staying connected	18
Finances	19
Media and Communication	19
Additional Events/Activities	20
6 Operational Recommendations	21
7 Acknowledgements	22
Churches	
Businesses	
Other Organisations/Agencies	
8 Conclusion and Reflection	24
9 Case Studies	25

1. Project Summary

The 2018 Winter Night Shelter offered a safe and supportive environment for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness in the Yarra Ranges. Stable One partnered with local churches and congregations, equipping and empowering them to work together, utilising their buildings as venues and engaging their members as volunteers. The Church has a mandate to care for people, spiritually and physically. As well as fulfilling this mandate, this project helped to fill a critical need for crisis accommodation, offering refreshment and rest to those in need. At the same time, it provided opportunities to develop community and to journey with individuals towards a more stable future.

Project Objectives

Project objectives remained the same as for the pilot project with four additional objectives added. All objectives were achieved. They were:

1. Provide overnight shelter for people experiencing homelessness and in need of crisis accommodation.
2. Offer a place of welcome, care, refreshment, and rest.
3. Build relationships with guests, developing community and journeying with those who want support and encouragement towards a more stable living situation.
4. Facilitate and support local congregations to offer a coordinated approach and to work together across denominations.
5. Increase awareness in the church and the community of the issues and challenges that people face when they don't have permanent and stable living situations.
6. Form a Winter Night Shelter Steering Committee to manage the project.
7. Encourage greater ownership of the Winter Night Shelter by partner churches and investigate shower options for guests.
8. Establish a daytime Support Centre/office space with a coordinator and investigate transport options for guests.
9. Review policies and procedures, risk management, communications including social media and website, and all supporting documents required for the project including training of volunteers.

Summary of Key Recommendations

1. Employ Project Coordinator on a full-time contract for six months of the year.
2. Continue to employ a Deputy Coordinator for 2 days per week for the duration of the Winter Night Shelter.
3. Produce a Guest Handbook.

Findings

Prayer

Prayer was foundational to the project and continued throughout with special gatherings, a prayer chain and 'prayer request' boxes at each venue which were used by guests.

Venues

- Eight churches partnered with Stable One to host the Winter Night Shelter. They were: Discovery (Mt Evelyn), Immanuel Lutheran (Lilydale), Lilydale Baptist, Mooroolbark Baptist, Mt Evelyn Christian Reformed, Mt Evelyn Presbyterian, St Patrick's Catholic (Lilydale) and Wandin Baptist.
- Churches offered safe and warm spaces for dining, socialising and sleeping. Two offered shower facilities.

- Mt Evelyn Presbyterian church hall was used as a Daytime Support Centre offering shower, lockers, storage shed, table tennis, kitchen and lounge. It also provided office space for the Project Coordinator and interview room for assessments.

Guests

- 26 different guests stayed at the Shelter (20 male, 6 female) filling 438 beds. The maximum on any given night was 9.
- 10 guests stayed up to a week, 6 up to 2 weeks and 10 between 3 and 11 weeks.
- Guests under the age of 25 were not accepted. Guests with mental illness were only accepted if it was managed well. Guests were not allowed to stay at the Shelter if they were substance affected.
- 12 guests moved into stable private rental/house share accommodation. One moved into transitional housing, three to suitable boarding houses and four to rehabilitation centres. Two were known to have chosen their cars over other options and four did not give details.

Staffing

- The WNS was managed this year by a volunteer Project Coordinator (5 days per week) and a paid (2 days per week) Deputy Coordinator. These staff assessed guests and worked with them through the daytime to offer support and help them connect to other services.
- 185 trained volunteers, ranging in age from 18-84, coordinated at venues, staffed shifts, cooked meals, drove the trailer and minibus.
- Venue Coordinators took responsibility for the Shelter when it was operating in their church. They attended monthly Steering Committee meetings from February-September and organised additional volunteers to bake items for supper and to do laundry.
- A Volunteer Coordinator helped with the initial recruitment and screening of volunteers and was also responsible for organising a Thank You party at the end of the project.
- There were additional roles of Prayer Coordinator and Secretary to the Steering Committee.

Transport and Nightly Timetable

- A minibus was provided at 6pm from the Daytime Support Centre to the nightly venue via Lilydale. This mostly eliminated issues with guests arriving too early. Guests made their own way via public transport in the mornings, leaving the church at 8.30 am.
- The Daytime Support Centre opened from 1-6pm Monday-Friday and 5-6pm on weekends.
- Dinner was at 7pm followed by games or other activities. Shift change was 10pm with lights out at 11pm. Guests would often go to bed very early. Doors were locked from 11pm-6am and guests coped well without going outside for a cigarette at night.

Challenges

- Guest behaviour was managed very well this year by Venue Coordinators and volunteers. Policies were enforced and had a positive impact on guests and the 'culture' of the Shelter.
- Staying connected to guests after the program finishes is a challenge. Guests are unlikely to go to church, but they highly valued the connection they found with volunteers and each other. The Presbyterian Church is looking into continuing to open as a drop-in facility once a week.

Finances

Expenses were close to \$19,500. This included almost \$9,000 in wages for the Deputy Coordinator (covered by a donation from Lilydale Uniting Church of \$11,000). Unsolicited donations were received amounting to \$11,000. Shower costs were covered by grants from Baptcare and St Andrews Foundation. There were also many donations of food, bedding, toiletries etc.

2. Project Description

Introduction

Stable One has been established as a not for profit charity to support the Church to work together to show the love of God by providing accommodation to those in need. The goal is to provide more than a place to stay. It is to journey with people towards stability, offering spiritual and physical care.

This report is an evaluation of the 2018 Winter Night Shelter (WNS), a partnership between Stable One and eight churches in the Yarra Ranges. Crisis accommodation was provided to people experiencing homelessness by opening their buildings to provide an evening meal, a bed and breakfast for up to ten guests per night throughout Winter. A Daytime Support Centre was also provided. The Shelter was staffed by volunteers representing 38 different churches, along with other members of the community.

The rate of homelessness in Australia has increased 4.6 per cent over the last five years, according to new data from the 2016 Census of Population and Housing. The latest estimates reveal more than 116,000 people were experiencing homelessness in Australia on Census night, representing 50 homeless persons for every 10,000 people. In Victoria, over 24,000 people were recorded as homeless on Census night in 2016 (up 11% from the previous census).¹ They included people sleeping outside or in impoverished dwellings, sleeping temporarily with friends or relatives, staying in boarding houses, or staying in government-funded crisis or temporary accommodation or severely crowded dwellings. There is no crisis accommodation in the Yarra Ranges and there is a critical need for more short, medium and long-term affordable housing.

"You give them something to eat!" - Jesus

Background

The Winter Night Shelter is a practical way to reach out and care for those who are among the poorest in society. The writer to the Hebrews exhorts the Church to "not forget to show hospitality to strangers."² When Jesus' disciples were faced with over 5,000 people who needed to eat, the task looked impossible and they wanted to send them away. Jesus told them in no uncertain terms, "They do not go away, you give them something to eat³." Typically, the Church has been good at providing food, however offering accommodation seems fraught with difficulty. It seems easier to send people away and hope that other services will provide the help they need. The WNS model allows churches to throw open their doors and provide a warm welcome to those who otherwise would have nowhere safe and warm to sleep.

Following a successful pilot project in the Yarra Valley in 2017, agreement was sought from local pastors to continue to offer a Winter Night Shelter in 2018. The key recommendations from the evaluation of the pilot were adopted and planning commenced in February.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2016, Australian Government, Canberra

² Hebrews 13:1

³ Matthew 14:6

Project Objectives

This year's objectives built on those of the pilot project which were:

1. Provide overnight shelter for people experiencing homelessness and in need of crisis accommodation.
2. Offer a place of welcome, care, refreshment, and rest.
3. Build relationships with guests, developing community and journeying with those who want support and encouragement towards a more stable living situation.
4. Facilitate and support local congregations to offer a coordinated approach and to work together across denominations.
5. Increase awareness in the church and the community of the issues and challenges that people face when they don't have permanent and stable living situations.

Additionally, the following objectives were set:

6. Form a Winter Night Shelter Steering Committee to manage the project.
7. Encourage greater ownership of the Winter Night Shelter by partner churches and investigate shower options for guests.
8. Establish a daytime Support Centre/office space with a coordinator and investigate transport options for guests.
9. Review policies and procedures, risk management, communications including social media and website, and all supporting documents required for the project including training of volunteers.

How have objectives been met?

1. 26 guests in need of crisis accommodation were welcomed into the Winter Night Shelter. They came from sleeping in their cars, couch surfing, hospital emergency departments or had left or been evicted from boarding houses or other unsuitable accommodation.
2. The Shelter offered a safe, warm and welcoming place for 13 weeks where guests could access the Daytime Support Centre and have a place to go for the night for a hot meal, along with a bed and breakfast the next morning.
3. The average stay at the Shelter by a guest was 2½ weeks (although a number stayed significantly longer). This gave time for relationships to be formed and for additional support to be provided. This occurred during the daytime and evenings over dinner and games. On occasion it also involved accompanying guests to doctor appointments or court appearances, referring to other support services (e.g. mental health, financial counselling), advocating and following up with agencies, driving guests to see accommodation or rehabilitation services etc. Some guests who were helped to move on were keen to stay connected and would return to visit the Daytime Support Centre in the afternoons.
4. By partnering with Stable One, churches have been able to work together to provide the Winter Night Shelter. Stable One have provided the project coordination, as well as policies and procedures which have been implemented across all venues. Over 200 volunteers, representing 38 congregations, have worked together to staff the Shelter. Baptist, Lutheran, Churches of Christ, Uniting, Presbyterian, Christian Reformed, Catholic, Anglican, Wesleyan Methodist, Vineyard, Pentecostal, community and house churches were all represented.

"I enjoyed the food, people, warmth, showers, locations and Day Centre"

5. Volunteers involved in the project had the opportunity to spend significant time with guests, hear their stories and begin to gain some understanding of the issues and challenges each of them faced. Their feedback testifies that their first-hand awareness of homelessness has increased.
6. A Steering Committee was formed and met monthly from February-September. It was led by the Project Coordinator and comprised a Deputy Coordinator, Venue Coordinators, Volunteer Coordinator, Prayer Coordinator and Secretary. At the first meeting, a former guest was also in attendance as Advisor. The Committee contributed to the smooth operation of the Shelter with consistent implementation of policies across venues.. The lead time provided a good period for preparation, team building, information dissemination and training. It also gave a forum to iron out difficulties as they arose during the operation of the Shelter.
7. Venue Coordinators were appointed at the start of the year and were responsible for oversight of the Shelter on the evening at their church. Churches provided their own cooks and covered the costs of food. They also organised for people to bake and do laundry from within their congregations. Three churches applied for grants and were able to install showers to their venues. One of these was the Daytime Support Centre venue, which meant that guests could access shower facilities every day.
8. A Daytime Support Centre was established at Mount Evelyn Presbyterian Church hall. This had kitchen, lounge, table tennis, lockers, toilet and shower facilities. It also provided an interview room and a separate office for the Project Coordinator. Mount Evelyn Christian Reformed Church made their minibus available. This departed each evening from the Daytime Support Centre, with a pick-up in Lilydale on the way to the venue.
9. A full review of policies and procedures, forms and other documentation and publications was undertaken before commencement of the Shelter. Minor changes to policies included capping the number of guests at 10 and prohibiting guests under 25 years of age.

3. Key Recommendations

1. Employ Project Coordinator. For this project to be sustainable, it is important to recognise the breadth and value of the work undertaken by the Coordinator and to offer appropriate remuneration. It is recommended that the Project Coordinator be employed on a six-month full-time contract. The employee should be willing to work flexible days and hours to meet the requirements of the project. Funding should be sought from partner churches, other churches and organisations in the Yarra Valley and, if necessary, grant applications.
2. Employ a Deputy Coordinator for the three-month duration of the project, 2 days per week as per 2018. (Funding has already been secured for the next two years via Lilydale Uniting Church.)
3. Produce a Guest Handbook to give to guests with important and helpful information, including the Guest Agreement.

4. Evaluation Methodology

A project plan and other evaluation tools were developed prior to commencement of the Winter Night Shelter to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was tracked for demographics, referrals, reasons for homelessness and volunteer numbers. These included guest assessment forms, log book, volunteer registration forms. Qualitative data was collected via guest feedback forms, log book, incident reports forms, volunteer feedback via online survey, Steering Group evaluation meeting, email and anecdotal evidence.

5. Findings

Prayer

Prayer has been foundational to the success of this project. The Prayer Coordinator organised monthly gatherings in different churches and supplied 'Prayer Boxes' for each venue. A prayer chain of 35 people was set-up and they received texts via the Prayer Coordinator when there were specific or urgent things to pray for. Guests were encouraged to write prayer requests and put them in the prayer boxes and these were sent to the prayer chain. There were many occasions when these prayers were answered. Guests and volunteers alike commented to this effect.

Venues

Stable One had a partnership agreement with churches who wished to be venues. This clearly defined the distribution of responsibilities between both parties for the running of the Shelter. The church was to provide their own Venue Coordinator/s, cooks, food and take ownership of the operation of the Shelter at their church on their allocated night. Stable One was to provide coordination, guest assessments, additional volunteers, advice, policies and procedures, training etc. As part of the agreement, Stable One sought to help churches with prohibitive costs as a result of being a venue for the Winter Night Shelter (e.g. heating).

The eight partner churches were:

1. Discovery Church, Mount Evelyn (Monday)
2. Wandin Baptist Church (Tuesday)
3. Lilydale Baptist Church (Wednesday)
4. Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lilydale (Thursday)
5. St Patrick's Catholic Church, Lilydale (Friday)
6. Mount Evelyn Christian Reformed Church (Saturday)
7. Mooroolbark Baptist Church (Sunday)
8. Mount Evelyn Presbyterian Church (Daytime Support Centre – open all week)

It is important that partner churches consider the Winter Night Shelter a ministry of their church to be covered by their own insurance, as they would be for other ministries. It is pertinent for churches to inform their insurers of the WNS ministry. Yarra Ranges Council do not require planning permits for churches to run the Shelter, considering it ancillary to their normal activity. They have stipulated, however, that churches can be used for no more than two nights per week for the 13-week period and have a maximum of 20 guests per night.

Night Shelter Venues

Most venues had more than one space for use by the guests and volunteers. The evening meal and area for socialising was usually separate to the sleeping space. In some venues, guests slept in the 'worship space', which allowed them plenty of room to spread out and for their beds to be divided by pews or chairs. These were often carpeted areas which provided added comfort and warmth. Where possible, women were able to sleep in a separate room to the men. It would be ideal to offer this at all venues, and potentially would increase the number of women who feel comfortable to stay.

Two of the nighttime venues had installed showers ready for this year's Shelter – Wandin and Lilydale Baptist. They were able to obtain grants via Bapcare to cover the installation costs. Lilydale Baptist was able to connect hot water to the taps in the bathrooms, which supports effective hygiene.

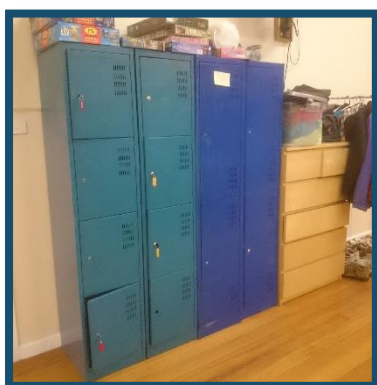
In some locations, volunteers/guests talking overnight disturbed guests who were sleeping as the noise travelled between areas. Some venues were also quite cold and lacked comfortable seating for overnight volunteers (a nine-hour shift).

There was only one security issue at a venue this year which involved the theft of \$50 from a volunteer (stolen from the pantry where it was stored in the back of a mobile phone). Otherwise, there were no other issues relating to personal belongings or buildings.

Daytime Support Centre

Mount Evelyn Presbyterian Church used their hall as a space for the Daytime Support Centre. This was in response to the evaluation from the pilot project which recognised the need for a space during the daytime for guests. The location worked very well as the town has great facilities – bulk billing doctor, pharmacy, library (with free Wi-Fi), launderette and lots of cafes. Two regular buses also stop outside the church. Opening hours were Monday-Friday, 1-6pm. It was not intended to open at the weekends, however, the first weekend in June was very wet and cold. As a result, it was decided to open for just an hour from 5-6pm on Saturdays and Sundays so that guests could access lockers and the shower.

"It helps give me a routine and structure. It helps me stay positive."



A grant from St Andrew's Foundation funded the installation of a shower and hot water to the bathrooms. Lockers were donated by a local gym. Couches, a coffee machine, coffee tables, a rug, desk and chest of drawers were also donated, and a table tennis table was brought into the hall from storage. The church made a secure shed available which was useful in temporarily housing the belongings of guests, particularly those who had been evicted. The Project/Deputy Coordinator had an office at this location and carried out assessments in a classroom which had a large window into the hall.

Guests appreciated the space, which they said felt like coming 'home' each day. They quickly took ownership and were happy to get the coffee machine switched on, make lunches and even do some cleaning. There was always a jigsaw puzzle in progress and often guests could be found catching up on some sleep. A daily paper was provided, along with items for simple lunches and snacks. Soft drink and toasties were available for \$1, but everything else was provided free. Guests with cars also found it helpful to have a space in the carpark to reorganise their belongings. Once guests had moved out of the Shelter, some stayed connected by continuing to visit the Daytime Support Centre.

It was very useful to have the opportunity to see guests before they arrived at the Night Shelter, particularly those who struggled with alcohol and drugs to see if they were fit to stay that night. Those who had to be turned away were required to be reassessed at the Day Centre before being allowed to stay another night.

"You guys go above and beyond what a centre like this would ordinarily provide. You are our researchers. You go out of your way to assist us in our everyday lives."

The continuity of seeing the Venue Coordinator as well as the Project/Deputy Coordinator was helpful for guests in building trust and to be able to assist them to move on. They were able to be linked in to other support services – financial counselling, medical, legal, housing, drug and alcohol counselling etc. This was made easier because guests were seen at a time when these services were open. Outreach services

were also provided to the Centre (Anchor - housing, Eastern Community Legal Centre – legal aid services, EACH – flu vaccinations and information). A chiropractor volunteered his services and treated four guests at the Centre. A range of information pamphlets were also made available to assist guests.

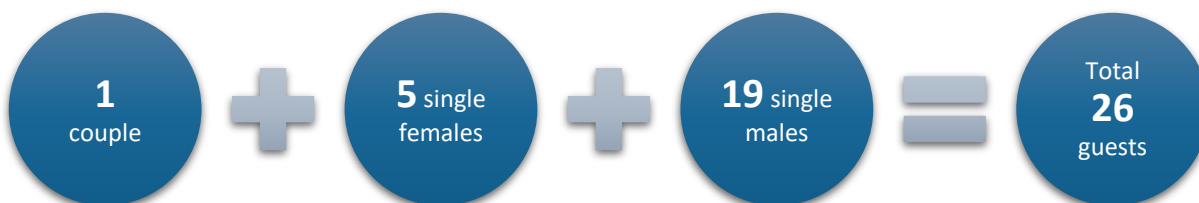
The Presbyterian Church are investigating the feasibility of continuing to provide a Drop-In Centre one day per week to provide a means for staying connected to ex-guests and for others in the community who would find this service helpful.

Guests

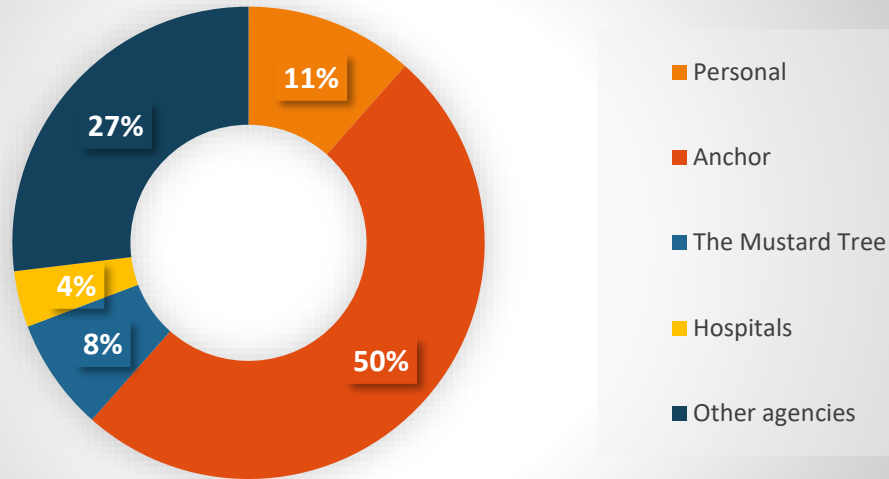
The maximum number of guests per night was set at 10, however the most who stayed at one time was nine. For dynamics and space, this is a good number. The Stable One Admissions Policy directed that guests should be aged 25 or over, have a local connection, be managing mental illness and not be substance/alcohol affected when at the Shelter. All local welfare agencies, police, council and local hospitals were made aware of this policy and given contact details for referrals.



Who stayed at the Shelter?



Referrals



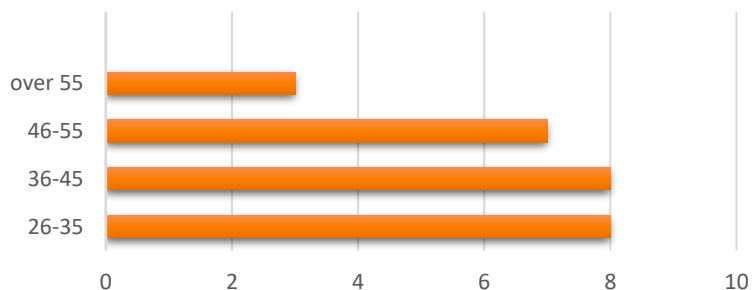
Assessments were carried out at the Daytime Support Centre by the Project/Deputy Coordinator. A Guest Assessment form was used for the interviews. Questions were asked around criminal convictions and cautions, drug and alcohol use, general and mental health. Guests were also asked if they had supplies of their prescribed medication and were taking it as per the direction of their doctor. This initial assessment interview is extremely valuable in getting to know the backgrounds and issues faced by guests. Often guests are very open and willing to share and those who do are usually more willing to be helped to move forward. Guests were not always honest, however, and often things came to light as time went on, sometimes resulting in their exclusion from the program. Two people who were interviewed were sleeping in their cars and wanted to use only part of the program (showers and meals). This was declined. Two other guests were deemed unsuitable for the program – both based on their unmanaged mental health. One of these guests then approached Wesley in Mission in Ringwood who were undertaking assessments for the City of Maroondah churches Winter Shelter project. Although they had the same admissions criteria, they approved him to stay at their Shelter. For this reason, a partnership with Wesley will be sought next year to share information. This would be explained to guests at assessment. A further two guests were approved to stay at the Shelter but decided not to.

Total Number

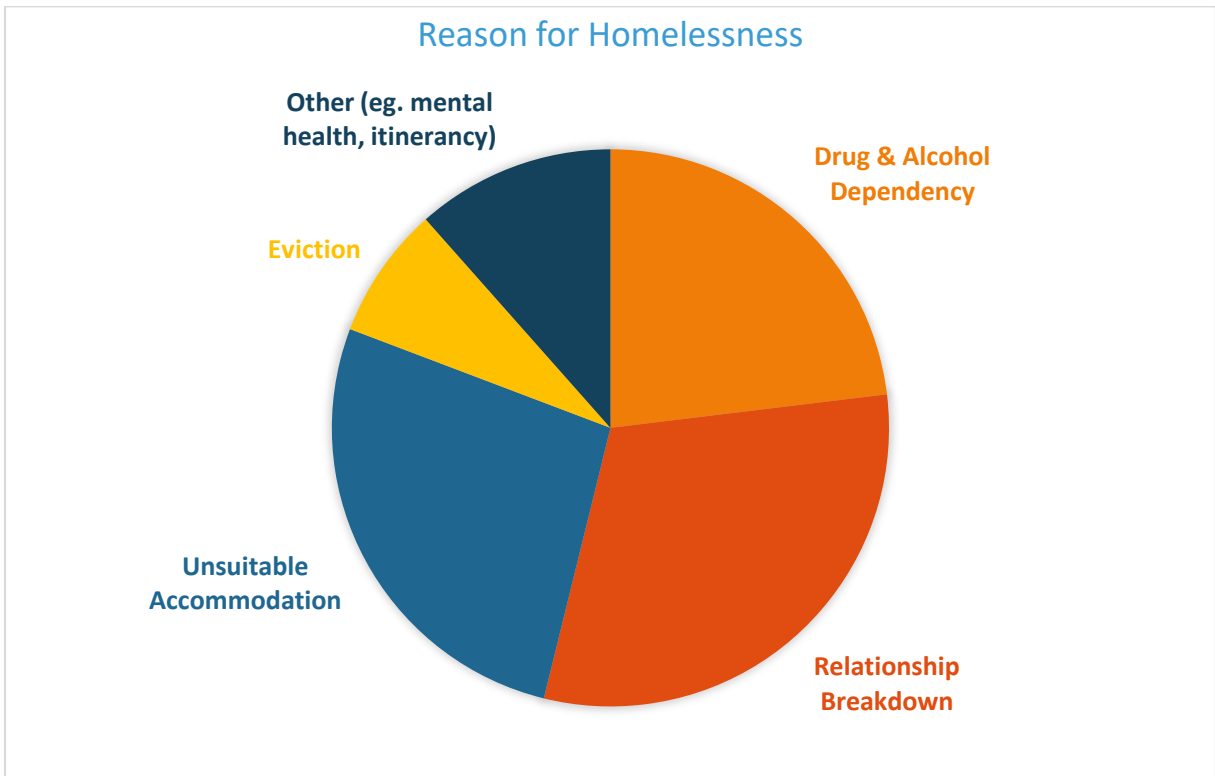
Beds Filled



Age of Guests at Shelter

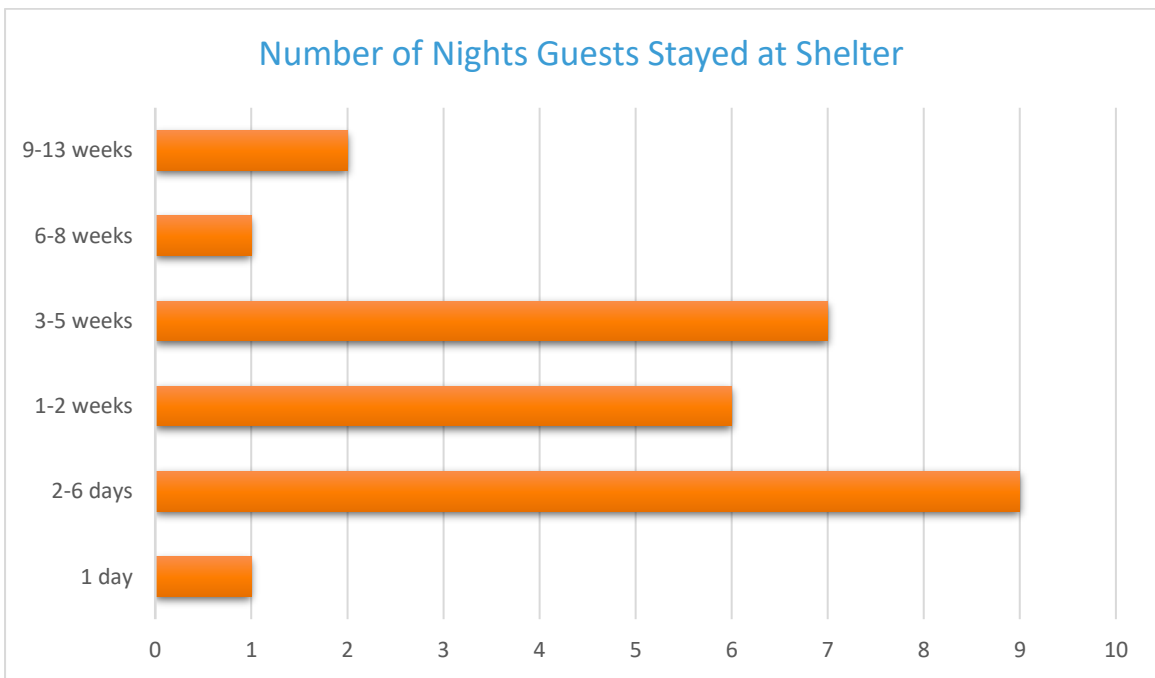


"What a wonderful way for a person such as myself to re-integrate into the community. To feel safe and respected by good people is a true blessing."

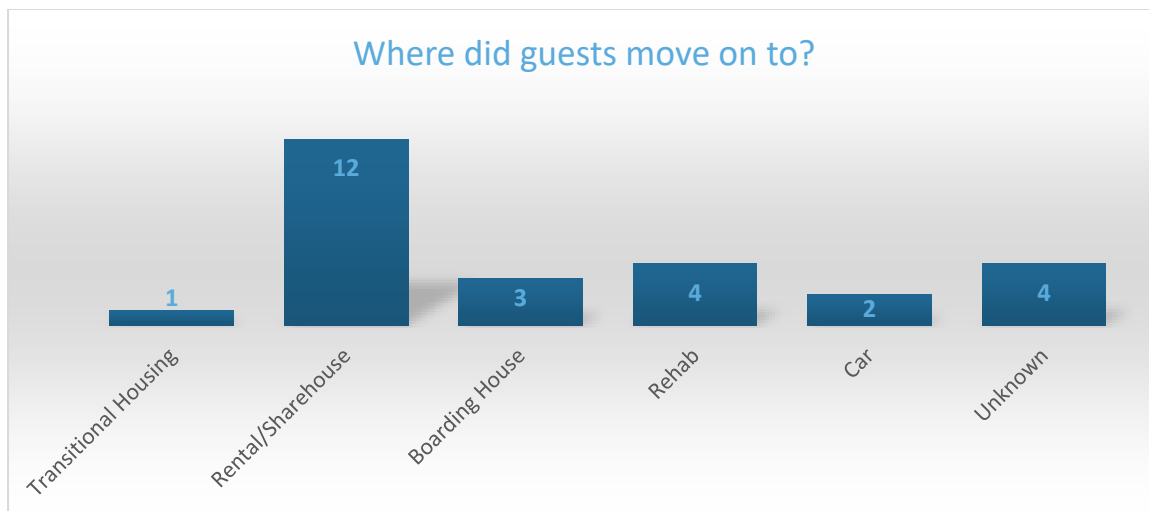


Guest feedback forms indicated that guests felt welcome at the Shelter. They particularly enjoyed the food and the volunteers. The sleeping arrangements were rated on average 9/10. A few guests suffered with bad backs, so not having a proper bed for any length of time caused them discomfort. Guests rated safety as very high and commented that they were grateful for lockable buildings and volunteers to oversee things at night.

"I enjoyed my fellow travellers and the volunteers as well as being warm, fed and loved."



This year 20 of our 26 guests were able to move into more stable accommodation. Some secured this themselves. Others were assisted by the Project/Deputy Coordinators and Anchor Inc. (Opening Doors) who provided outreach housing services to the Daytime Support Centre each week, along with information on private rentals and rent assistance. Practical and moral support was given to guests who needed to access rehabilitation and mental health services. This involved writing referrals and advocating via telephone calls and emails. Developing good networks with housing services, organisations offering accommodation and other support agencies has been fundamental to this outcome.



Staffing

The Project Coordinator role is a full-time position throughout the three months of the Winter Night Shelter and a part time position from February-May (preparation) and September (evaluation). This year it has been filled by a volunteer (Jenny Willetts). It is proposed to appoint and pay a Coordinator for any future years that this project runs. The load of the Coordinator could be lightened with some good administrative support.

A Deputy Coordinator was appointed to a two day per week casual position. This was funded by Lilydale Uniting Church. The Deputy worked two consecutive days, one of which was at the weekend. This provided for the Project Coordinator to take time off. The Deputy, Kerry Pell, is a social worker and has experience in Drug and Alcohol rehabilitation as well as in forensic settings. Her training, skills and networks were a great addition to the project this year. Handovers between the Deputy and the Coordinator were vital to the smooth running of the Shelter.



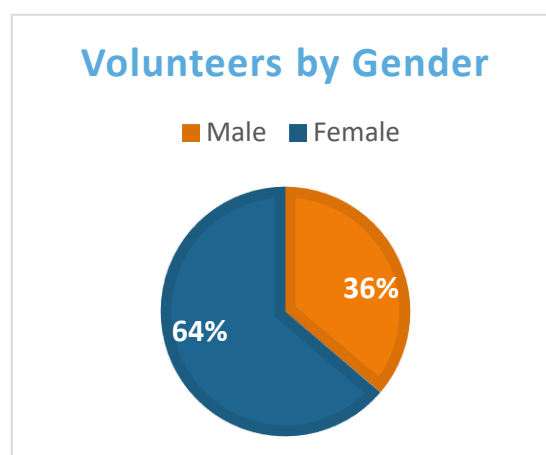
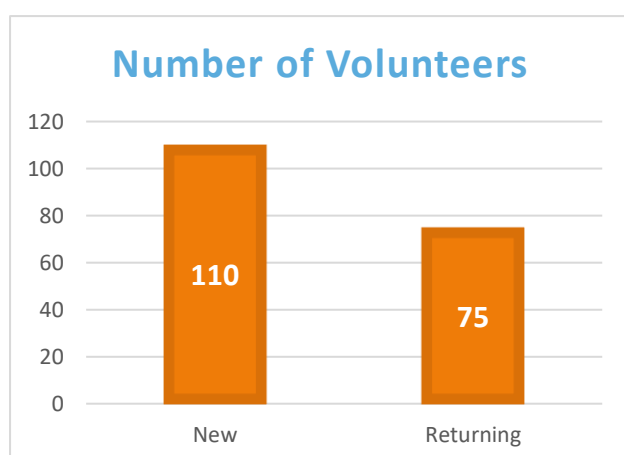
"Advocacy is about having someone on their side who holds the hope they don't have for themselves."

The Winter Night Shelter was staffed by an army of volunteers. Recruitment began in February and a total of 185 people were involved in the day to day running of the Shelter. They ranged in age from

18 to 84 (under 18s were not allowed at the Shelter). Many others were involved by donating bedding, knitted items, toiletries and finance, as part of the prayer chain, doing laundry or providing baked goods. Volunteers who had a role at the Shelter completed an online registration form, provided a referee, a Working with Children Check, attended a training session and signed a Volunteer Agreement. Once approved, volunteers were engaged to staff shifts (evening, overnight, breakfast, Daytime Support Centre), cook meals, drive the trailer or minibus. The 7000 volunteer hours represents only hours covered on shift. There were many additional hours spent on the project behind the scenes.

Shift	Time	Volunteer Ratio
Evening	5.30-10.00 pm	2 Cooks (leave after dinner) Venue Coordinator 3-4 Shift Workers
Overnight	10 pm-7.00 am	3 Shift Workers (2 always awake)
Morning	7.00-9.00 am	3 Shift Workers
Daytime Support Centre Weekdays	1.00-3.00 pm and 3.00-6.00 pm	Project/Deputy Coordinator Venue Coordinator 1 Shift Worker
Daytime Support Centre Weekends	5.00-6.00 pm	Project/Deputy Coordinator Minibus Driver

A key recommendation from the previous year's evaluation was to form a Steering Committee. This comprised of the Project Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, Venue Coordinators, Volunteer Coordinator, Prayer Coordinator and Secretary. An ex-guest attended the first meeting as Advisor. Dates were set at the start of the year and meetings were held monthly from February-September. They gave a good period of preparation, allowed for team building, giving and receiving feedback and unity around policies and their implementation. Meetings were held at all the different venues for the Shelter, which was helpful. Venue Coordinators were the 'point person' in their church and were responsible for recruiting their cooks, people to do laundry and to bake. They were able to communicate needs, prayer requests and updates to their churches.

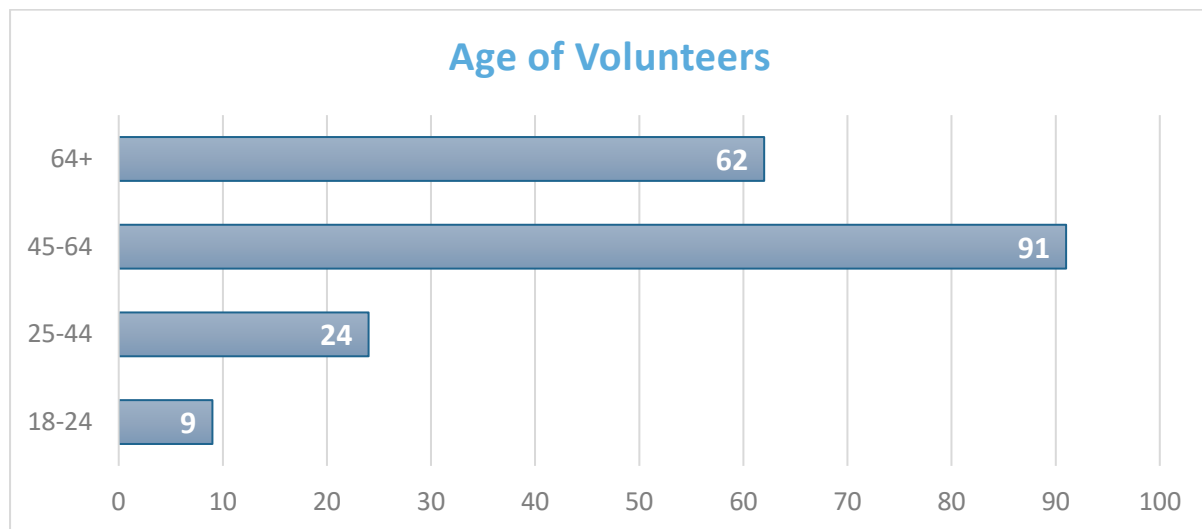


The skills and experiences represented in the volunteers was vast. Some had personal experience of homelessness, abuse, addiction etc. Others had experience of working in welfare, social work, nursing, drug and alcohol and mental health roles. An ex-guest from 2017 volunteered on evening and overnight shifts and was able to encourage the guests by the



example of the changes in his own life. The spread of ages of volunteers was also helpful with guests often relating well to the oldest volunteers. 62 volunteers were over the age of 64 and volunteers in their eighties were cooking meals and working shifts at the Day Centre.

"I am quite a shy person and I have gained so much confidence through my volunteer experience. Walking in for my first shift was a bit scary but the other volunteers made me feel very welcome."



Volunteers overwhelmingly stated that they gained a better awareness of the issues that people experiencing homelessness face. They commented on how much they have grown personally and how their views have changed. They have found new confidence in their abilities and real joy in meeting guests and other volunteers alike. Many remarked that the project gave them an opportunity to practically show God's love to others and that working together as different denominations was a real blessing.

"I have learned not to judge people from the way they look or speak."

Training

Two training events were held early in May 2018 – a Saturday morning and a Wednesday evening. Volunteers were required to attend one. Topics covered included operations, communications, generational poverty and insights into the current housing climate, a presentation by local crime prevention officers on dealing with aggressive behaviour, health and safety and boundaries. A Volunteer Handbook was given to each volunteer, along with an ID lanyard. The training was filmed and was available to volunteers who registered after the event. Around 50 volunteers also took advantage of some free Ice training, which was funded by the government. This was held at Discovery church and was extremely informative. First Aid Training was also provided for Venue Coordinators.

Rosters

Rosters were filled early this year with an adequate number of volunteers. They were made available online through a password protected page on the Stable One website. There was a separate roster for the Night Shelter, Daytime Support Centre and trailer drivers. Each shift was allocated a 'standby' volunteer. They were to stay available until the start of that shift, in case of sickness or an emergency need for a volunteer. This eliminated most of the need to try to find volunteers at the last minute. The roster was mostly filled before the program began.

Transport and Nightly Timetable

Mount Evelyn Christian Reformed Church donated the use of their minibus each evening, leaving 6pm from the Daytime Support Centre, picking up in Lilydale before dropping guests off at the evening venue. Volunteers were recruited for the role of driver – a shift which took approximately one hour. In the morning guests used public transport. Some guests had their own cars which they would use at different times, often depending on whether they had money for petrol. Some mornings they would give rides to other guests, though this was occasionally a pressure as they felt they had no choice. The Vehicle Policy had to be enforced on more than one occasion, as guests with cars would sometimes want to access them frequently throughout the evening or even leave the Shelter to sleep there overnight. This had safety implications for other guests and volunteers.

This year guests were not able to go outside during the night to smoke. This eliminated issues that had been experienced the previous year. Guests were happy to accept the restriction.

Nightly Timetable	
5.30 pm	First shift arrives. Prepare meal. Set-up beds, tables, hot drinks etc.
5.50 pm	Briefing (Health and Safety, Guests etc) and prayer
6.00 pm	Doors open, guests sign-in, orientation and introductions
7.00 pm	Evening meal
8.00 pm	Clean-up and optional activities (e.g. games, devotions)
10.00 pm	Shift change , briefing/debrief
11.00 pm	Last cigarette, doors locked, lights out (2 volunteers to stay awake)
6.00 am	Outer doors opened
7.00 am	Shift change , briefing/debriefing
7.30 am	Breakfast and bookings for next night, pack-up
8.30 am	Guests leave, clean, pack trailer
9.00 am	Debrief and lock-up

Food



The meals provided at the Shelter were a huge hit once again. Churches mostly provided their own cooks, sometimes with help from extra volunteers from elsewhere. One church was unable to find cooks from within their small congregation and were grateful for the consistent help of two ladies who had volunteered to cook when they registered. The grandson of one cook wanted to contribute to the Shelter but was too young to volunteer. He decided to make dessert each week and even took requests for guests' favourites as time went on. The guests rated the food very highly in their feedback and the time around the table with volunteers provided opportunity for conversation and 'normality'. A roster for different styles of food was organised prior to

commencement, with churches changing cuisine each month. Breakfast was simple and there was often not huge uptake. Fruit was always popular, and guests would often take some away for during the daytime. Two churches provided a cooked breakfast on their last morning.

Evening Activities

After dinner was cleared away each night, there were opportunities for guests and volunteers to relax together. Baked goods were delivered to the venue each evening to have over a hot drink after dinner and a box of board and card games travelled between venues on the trailer. Guests would go to bed very early, sometimes straight after dinner. Sometimes guests would even miss dinner. When numbers were low or most guests were in bed, some volunteers were released early from their shift.

"I learnt a lesson at the Shelter about social confidence. Card playing (UNO) had given a guest confidence around people and this had translated into more confidence in an interview situation. This makes sense to even a non-card player like me!"

Equipment

The 8x5 single axle trailer is fitted with shelving to store and transport bedding, towels, king-single fold-up camp beds, toiletries, games, the 'Welcome and Code of Conduct' notice board, electric heater and spare swags for guests who are turned away. This year, blankets were replaced with new, washable double doonas and covers for these were donated. King single fitted sheets were used on the stretchers and some spare, washable blankets were also available. Guests were given a large drawstring bag for their bedding to go into, and later into the program it was also decided to label stretcher beds, so that guests used the same one each night. Guests were not allowed to store personal belongings on the trailer because of space constraints. They were encouraged to use the lockers at the Daytime Support Centre instead.



Laundry

Laundry was undertaken by each church. When a guest moved on or needed a change of bedding, the dirty washing was left with the venue and was returned clean to the trailer the following week. This meant that there needed to be ample supply of sheets, pillow cases, doona covers and towels (there were 20 of each on the trailer at the start).

Challenges

Unsuitable Guests

The WNS is run by volunteers and is all about providing hospitality. Some guests who wish to stay at the Shelter are just not a good fit – for volunteers or for other guests. Their presence can mean that everything becomes unsettled and people do not feel safe. One guest this year was reported to have been encouraging others to take drugs and his behaviour during the evenings made people feel uncomfortable. Although there was no definite breaking of the guest agreement, it was still considered reasonable after a week to ask him not to return. The Shelter is not a ‘service’ which people have any right to. A welcome is extended at the discretion of the Coordinators and can also therefore, be withdrawn.

Intoxicated Guests

It was once again a challenge this year to deal with guests who arrived at the Day Centre, minibus pick-up or Night Shelter intoxicated. Several guests had an addiction to alcohol and were able to function quite well, even after drinking a substantial amount. The Intoxication Guidelines issued by the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation were helpful in determining who was in a fit state to be admitted and who needed to be turned away. This was the topic of lengthy discussion at the June Steering Committee. There were at least 7 occasions when guests were not permitted to stay due to intoxication. The most challenging incidence was with a female who arrived one Sunday evening at the Daytime Support Centre heavily intoxicated. She was too drunk to go to the Night Shelter but the alternative of a night on the street was hard to enforce because of her vulnerability. An ambulance was called and after a few hours in hospital, she was sober enough to go to the Shelter. This was the final week and she was one of only two remaining guests. Adhering to the policies proved, without a doubt, to have a positive effect on guests and the whole program. There was a noticeable positive change in the behaviour of some guest who had had reason to be turned away.

Guests not taking medication as prescribed or sharing medication

Some guests had significant mental health and other chronic illness to manage. Although they would disclose these conditions and the medication they were prescribed, on more than one occasion guests did not have either a current prescription, money to fill the prescription or were not taking their medication. Stable One would initially cover the cost of medication for guests who had a current prescription but were unable to pay for it, to ensure that they had what they needed whilst staying at the Shelter. Some guests were not good at managing their health and it was agreed to add a question to the Guest Assessment form to determine if guests were taking their medication as prescribed. On two occasions, guests were discovered to be sharing prescription medication. They were given warnings, reminding them that it was not permitted to do so.

Uninvited guests

On two occasions at the Daytime Support Centre, a man walked in who was neither a volunteer nor a guest. He wanted to know what was going on at the hall and the first time seemed quite friendly. He attended the Presbyterian Church on the Sunday morning (the next day) and was later observed by other guests in the car park taking drugs. He turned up at Wandin Baptist church two days later during the breakfast shift wanting to sell magazines to people. The Venue Coordinator and another guest spoke to him outside and he left. A few days later he walked into the Centre at the end of the afternoon and appeared to be substance affected. He was quite agitated and wanted to get coffee. It was explained to him that the Centre was only for guests at the Shelter. He got quite escalated but then left of his own accord. He had a car and drove erratically away from the venue, the wrong way down a one-way street. The police were notified, and volunteers were encouraged to keep venue doors locked, unless guests were going outside to smoke. He did not return.

Guests who stayed too long

Ten guests stayed at the Shelter between 3 and 13 weeks. It was agreed to stress at the initial assessment (and in the Guest Handbook) that the Shelter is intended to provide 'crisis' accommodation only. It is not particularly comfortable and after a while, guests will find the experience challenging. Moving each night to a different location, sleeping on a stretcher bed in a room with other people is not ideal. Guests who complained the most had usually stayed the longest. On the flip side, there were guests who enjoyed the Shelter so much and got so comfortable, that it was hard to persuade them to move out when an opportunity arose for them to take accommodation elsewhere. This is partly since it is free to stay at the Shelter, but possibly more to do with the connection that Guests enjoy with other people.

Scabies

Two volunteers at the Daytime Support Centre contracted Scabies. The Department of Health was contacted for advice. All bedding was treated, and hand towels were removed from venues and replaced with paper towels. Volunteers and guests were notified with instructions of what to do if they suspected they had contracted the infection. No further cases were reported.

Staying Connected

A real challenge is how to stay connected and build on the relationships formed with guests at the Shelter. For most, they say the greatest benefit has been the community that they have enjoyed. Many guests had no one they remain close to – family nor friends. When asked 'Next of Kin' in their assessment, they often struggled for a name. Although several guests had some faith, only three attended a church service this Winter. It is unlikely that they will attend a church to seek out continuation of the community.

Finances

Winter Night Shelter Expenses	Budgeted	Actual
Accounting and Audit Fees	400.00	400.00
Bank Fees	50.00	45.95
Bedding	500.00	535.90
Church Expenses – Heating, Lighting etc	4,000.00	1100.00
Computer and Software	500.00	350.00
Equipment *	1,500.00	2619.58
Food	1,500.00	723.16
General Expenses	200.00	47.23
Guest Costs **	500.00	595.89
Insurance	1,500.00	1545.82
Motor Vehicle Expenses	1,000.00	683.12
Postage	150.00	134.18
Printing and Stationery	800.00	742.09
Resources	150.00	0
Training ***	0	413.83
Volunteer Costs ****	500.00	900.00
Wages and Salaries	10,020.00	8,648.82
Web Hosting	360.00	360.00
Total costs for project:	23,630.00	19,385.74

Notes:

- * A defibrillator was purchased with donations from Box Hill Girl Guides and Lilydale Rotary.
- ** Includes laundry for Daytime Support Centre (towels), newspapers, pharmacy
- *** Included cost of first aid training for Venue Coordinators
- **** This included \$450 for catering for a volunteer Thank You party in September.

The cost of shower installations was covered by grants from Baptcare and St Andrew's Foundation.

Unsolicited donations of \$10,921.05 were received from 1 January-31 September 2018. The Deputy Coordinator's salary was covered by donations from Lilydale Uniting Church. A grant of \$11,000 pa has also been promised for 2019 and 2020 projects.

Media and Communication

Facebook

Stable One has a public Facebook page with around 850 followers. This was used to recruit volunteers, advertise events and share newsletters, photographs and updates.

Website

An addition to the website this year was 'Volunteer Central'. These were password protected pages for volunteers to be able to read policies documents and to view the current roster. A few unsolicited donations came via the website and enquiries from other areas who were interested in the project.

Speaking Engagements

The Project Coordinator has accepted invitations to speak at different churches, organisations and events. These afford good opportunities for networking and sharing the vision of the project. There are often financial donations as a result.

Newsletters

Regular newsletters are sent out via the online platform Mailchimp to around 450 people. They are also posted on the Facebook page and the Website.

Weekly Email Update

Volunteers received a weekly email to keep up with events at the Shelter, changes to the timetable, information on new guests or guests moving on. The weekly roster was also shared in this way, highlighting shifts which needed to be filled. Feedback showed that these were extremely useful to volunteers, helping them feel connected and feeling part of the team.

Contact Business Cards

These were produced to give brief information about the project to prospective guests, along with the freephone number for them to call to arrange an assessment.



Other Agencies/Organisations

Communicating with local welfare agencies was also part of the communication strategy. These agencies have contact with people in need of crisis accommodation. They were equipped with information regarding the admissions policy, as well as with the business cards. The Yarra Ranges Emergency Relief Network was a helpful forum for sharing about the project and disseminating information. Local hospital emergency departments, police and local council were also informed.

Additional Events/Activities

Commissioning Service

This was held at Mount Evelyn Christian Reformed Church on Sunday 27 May at 4pm and was followed by refreshments. The service was led by nine local pastors with a sermon on Hebrews 13. Volunteers were commissioned and prayed for and the service concluded with all pastors standing together to bless the congregation.

Volunteer Thank You Party

This was held at Mooroolbark Baptist Church on Sunday 16 September at 3pm. Volunteers were invited to come and bring a 'significant other'. Catering was provided by The Able Bakehouse (a Not for Profit social enterprise for people with disabilities). A brief presentation on statistics from this

year's project was given along with a special thank you to all the volunteers and the Steering Committee members. 'Volunteer' camelias were given as gifts and provided with the compliments of Anthony Tesselaar.

Visits

Visitors representing five different churches in Bendigo visited the Daytime Support Centre and then Lilydale Baptist Church for dinner towards the end of the program. They were given the 'Tool Kit' which has been put together by Stable One to assist other areas who wish to run their own Winter Night Shelter. Visitors were able to talk to volunteers and guests and to see first-hand how things were run. They went away enthused and to pray.

6. Operational Recommendations

Training

- *Include training on addiction.*
- *Investigate shorter training for returning volunteers.*
- *Produce volunteer name tags which say 'Winter Night Shelter' instead of Stable One.*
- *Investigate including something on mental health first aid.*
- *Have the trailer and beds at training and get volunteers to set up and put away a bed.*
- *Provide more input on what to put in the Log Book.*
- *Review health and safety guidelines to include more information on hygiene. Recommend wearing gloves when handling laundry.*

Policies and Procedures

- *Health and safety – infectious diseases. Paper towels. Gloves for handling dirty laundry/towels. Beds labelled. Hand washing.*
- *Ensure that personal information around volunteers is protected (e.g. sign in sheets to be kept out of sight of guests)*

Guests

- *Produce compact Guest Handbook with details of how the Shelter works, bus numbers and times, guest agreement etc. Stress the nature of the Shelter e.g. 'Crisis' accommodation and the need to take other offers if they are found.*
- *The Project/Deputy Coordinator to meet weekly with guests as a 'duty of care' to offer support to move on. Areas they would like to work on could be identified at assessment.*
- *Add question regarding ambulance cover to assessment form, CRN number and 'taking medication as prescribed by doctor'*
- *Add 'Permission to contact for future research/evaluation purposes' to Guest Agreement.*
- *Have an MOU with City of Maroondah Winter Shelter to share information.*

Staffing

- *When recruiting for overnight volunteers, suggest that a minimum of two shifts is acceptable (rather than 5).*
- *Make sure that some volunteers on shift have the physical capacity to assist with beds and lifting boxes in and out of trailer.*
- *Don't have too many volunteers. Guests commented it was sometimes overwhelming. Stick to the recommended ratios and send volunteers home early if necessary.*
- *Look at trying to have volunteer teams to have some consistency.*

- Continue to roster a Standby volunteer as a back-up for sickness etc and use online roster.
- Encourage Venue Coordinators to be the key communicators between the Shelter and their pastor/congregation. Also encourage delegation of responsibilities – appoint ‘head cook’ for venue to take responsibility for other cooks/food.
- Shift Leader for morning from venue church eliminating need for Venue Coordinator to be on duty in the morning for lock-up.

Venues

Night Shelters

- Comfortable couches for seating in evening and overnight
- Investigate separate sleeping areas for women in all venues
- Try to make sleeping areas a little ‘cosier’/private by dividing spaces with chairs etc.
- Each venue to have its own phone charger which stays at the venue.
- Have smaller tables for meals (around 6 per table) to encourage better conversation.
- Have a volunteer from the host church as Shift Leader for the breakfast shift.

Daytime Support Centre

- Have two Venue Coordinators to share the load.
- Daytime Support Centre – keep supplies of socks/jocks away from guests to be able to help themselves.
- Install washing machine and tumble dryer to save on costs of laundering towels. Charge guests nominal fee for use. (NB. These whitegoods were donated towards the end of the project this year and have been installed ready for use next year)

7. Acknowledgements

Special thanks to ...

Churches

Supporting the Winter Night Shelter with prayer, donations, volunteers and as venues were:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Activate | • Mooroolbark Baptist | • Sacred heart Catholic Preston |
| • Box Hill Lutheran Seniors Group | • Moorabbin-Dandenong Lutheran | • St Francis Xavier Montmorency |
| • Church of Jesus Christ of LDS | • Mount Evelyn Christian Reformed | • St James Anglican Wandin |
| • Eastern Hills Community | • Mount Evelyn Presbyterian | • St Joseph’s Boronia |
| • Faith Christian | • New Community Ringwood | • St Patricks Catholic Lilydale |
| • Glory City | • New Hope Baptist | • St Paul’s Anglican Seville |
| • Hope Christian | • Outer Eastern Lutheran | • Templestowe Baptist |
| • Hope City | • Red | • Upper Yarra Anglican |
| • Immanuel Lutheran | • Red Outer East | • Wandin Baptist |
| • Kilsyth South Baptist | • Ringwood Church of Christ | • Wandin, Seville and Mt Evelyn Anglican |
| • Life Ministry Centre | • Ringwood Community | • Warrandyte Community |
| • Lilydale Baptist | • Sacred Heart Catholic Croydon | • Wesleyan Methodist Boronia |
| • Lilydale Uniting | | • Yarra Valley Vineyard |
| • Montrose Uniting | | |

Businesses

- Bunnings
- Telstra
- Anthony Tesselaar plants
- Mount Evelyn Medical Clinic
- Dr Alex Rodwell, Yarra Glen

Other Organisations/Agencies

- Anchor Inc
- Baptcare
- Box Hill Girl Guides
- Caring Women's Group
- Centre 81 Drop-In Centre
- Chum Creek Primary School
- EACH
- Elisha Care
- Healesville CWA
- Tan Family Fund, a charitable fund account of the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation Rotary Club of Lilydale
- The Mustard Tree Op Shop and Café
- Mount Evelyn Christian School
- Mount Evelyn Library
- St Alfred's Youth Group
- St Andrew's Foundation

8. Conclusion and Reflection

The Winter Night Shelter 2018 has been another successful year. Local congregations have united together with a common goal to provide accommodation for people experiencing homelessness. Their desire to fulfil the command of Jesus to 'love God and love your neighbour as yourself' has resulted in eight churches opening their doors to welcome inside and show hospitality to strangers. Over 200 volunteers representing 38 different churches and from within the community have worked together to care for guests and provide a safe, warm and welcoming place to stay. Their desire to build relationships, to journey with individuals and create community has meant that the Winter Night Shelter has been more than a place to stay.

On reflection, providing *just* a place to stay would be much simpler. To not get involved in the lives of the guests and just provide a meal and a bed for the night would be reasonably straight forward. To come alongside someone walking a difficult road, to journey with them, offer support and encouragement takes enormous emotional effort. To help them take even one step forward can be hard work. Multiply that by 26 different people with different struggles and circumstances over the course of 13 weeks and the enormity of the task becomes apparent. God makes the difference. He is the one who knows each guest intimately. He is the one who sees the past, the present and future. He sees the bigger picture from an eternal perspective. That is why prayer is so fundamental to the success of this project. God is the one who sustains the volunteer who feels weighed down by the problems of a guest. God is the one who gives wisdom when the way forward seems so unclear. God is the one who opens doors of opportunity. He is the one who brings along the right volunteer with the right mix of gifts and skills at just the time they are needed. God hears and answers prayers. On numerous occasions through this season's Shelter both volunteers and guests have testified to that fact.

The numbers of guests this year who moved on to more stable accommodation is worth celebrating. Networks are the key. These have built over the last 12-18 months and there are good connections with other housing agencies and knowledge of appropriate opportunities for guests to explore. 20 of 26 guests moved on to something better.

The cost of this project is very small for such good outcomes. A value for what has been gained is almost impossible to calculate. There are benefits to the Church, to volunteers as individuals, to guests and to the community. The Church gets to 'be' the Church - the people of God 'on mission', loving others. Volunteers have an experience which money can't buy. They grow personally by stepping outside their comfort zone. They learn what life is like for people they may otherwise have no contact with. They get to appreciate that it could easily happen to them. Guests are given shelter and connection with people who genuinely care about them. They are supported to take steps towards a better future and to link in with services who can help them. The community has a solution, albeit temporary, to the issue of non-existent crisis accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.

For the Winter Night Shelter to continue it is important to recognise the role of key staff and remunerate them appropriately. Paying a Deputy Coordinator this year was the first step. The challenge for future years is to secure enough funding to employ a Project Coordinator. Going forward, the Managing Director of Stable One plans to concentrate on supporting other areas who wish to start a Winter Night Shelter, whilst at the same time providing support to a Project Coordinator for the Yarra Ranges.

9. Case Studies

These case studies show how being 'more than a place to stay' plays out in the lives of our guests. Providing hospitality is relatively easy. Journeying with guests takes much more time and commitment on the part of volunteers, and particularly Coordinators. The 'one' in Stable One is there because from the beginning it was agreed that if only one person was helped, it was still worth it. These stories are about some of those 'ones'. There are many more.

Case Study 1 - B

B, in their early 50s, came to the Shelter as a referral from a metropolitan hospital. B had been without accommodation for some weeks as they had lost their job which provided them with accommodation in exchange for work (with no pay). They had been in hospital as an inpatient during this time, but at other times had slept in different hospital waiting rooms. They had a chronic health condition which they did not manage well. Having very few possessions and was not overly concerned with self-care, B, when interviewed stated that their last 'home' was in the late 90s and was a share house. Since then they had maintained an itinerant lifestyle

B was a vulnerable guest. They had previously been exploited in different work settings. They wanted to work but had unrealistic ideas of what kind of work was possible. B was linked to a job agency but had difficulty complying with requirements and made applications for unsuitable jobs. B had no clear picture of a better future, nor a hope for a permanent and stable place to call home. B is on the waiting list for public housing. During the time spent with B, it was apparent that they could possibly qualify for the Disability Support Pension. Coordinators assisted B to connect to appropriate Centrelink personnel who facilitated assessments and helped them with their application.

On two occasions, an ambulance had to be called for B because of their poor health. On another occasion they took them self to hospital. After a few days in hospital B was visited by the Project Coordinator who was also able to liaise with a hospital social worker. B was supported to be more proactive around managing their health. B was assisted by Stable One to purchase all the medication the hospital prescribed, and volunteers encouraged B to take them consistently. Over the next few weeks B's health improved dramatically.

B was referred to a Community Housing Service in Melbourne who specialise in accommodation for people like B. The Coordinator and another volunteer accompanied B and another guest to view the property and meet with the Tenancy Manager. B turned down the offer of accommodation. It came to light that B had some outstanding debts. B was offered an appointment with a financial counsellor, which was accepted but then failed to attend the appointment.

B enjoyed the company at the Shelter very much. B was otherwise without friends and family were interstate. B also enjoyed going to church and attended a large inner-city church from time to time. B reported, however, that their hope in going there was to make friends and to find someone who would go out to eat Thai food with them. B was disappointed that in such a large church, they could not find what they needed most.

B stayed at the Shelter for 10 ½ weeks. B was encouraged by the Coordinators and volunteers to consider accepting the second place offered by the Housing Service, which they did. Two volunteers drove B there on moving in day.

Case Study 2 - F

F, early 30s, was connected to the Shelter via an emergency relief agency. They had their own car and had been in a long-term relationship which had recently failed. F was an expectant parent but was unable to have any contact with the child's other parent. F had suffered an ABI because of a car accident and suffered with PTSD and anxiety. F was taking medication. With a history of substance misuse and though reporting being clean for six years, F also disclosed a recent lapse eight months prior with the use of Ice.

After a few days of F staying at the Shelter, it was evident F was struggling with anxiety and asked for help. F had no current mental health support worker but did have a psychologist. F was assisted to make an appointment to see this professional, but subsequently missed the appointment. F claimed their ABI meant that they often didn't even know the day of the week. The psychologist was unwilling to reschedule as this had happened multiple times.

F was proactive in trying to get help and went to the doctors almost daily. F would get frustrated at GPs who wouldn't prescribe them what they felt they needed and would make appointments to see different doctors at different clinics. F was subsequently accompanied by the Project Coordinator to a doctor's appointment to obtain a referral to see a psychiatrist who had recently treated F as an inpatient with a view to getting a full medication review. This appointment did not eventuate before F moved on.

F needed a support worker urgently. F was informed that they needed to be registered for the NDIS to access this service. F was assisted by the Coordinator with this telephone application. Paperwork was sent to the Stable One post office box and passed on and the Coordinator was listed as a contact person for F if they didn't answer his phone (which was often off, out of credit or lost). There has been no further progress.

F was concerned to know if their baby had been born and was afraid of being sent to jail. A meeting was set up with the local Crime Prevention Officers who agreed to meet with F to help explain the restrictions of their Intervention Order. Before this could take place, F needed to present at the police station to answer questions regarding a breach of a different order. F was accompanied by the Coordinator for support.

F had a court appearance to attend in Ringwood and no legal representation. Through connections, F was helped to access representation through Legal Aid and two volunteers supported F on that occasion.

The Deputy Coordinator helped F to put together a calendar of significant events with dates to help with legal issues. The ABI contributed to F's inability to clearly order these events.

F was found accommodation through volunteers at the Shelter who had a unit available. F was at the Shelter for 5 weeks and returned in the weeks following to catch up with volunteers. F's life is still somewhat erratic.

Case Study 3 - H

H was referred to the program via Anchor Opening Doors service in Lilydale. In their mid-50s and homeless because of a relationship breakdown. H was not eligible for Centrelink payments as they had too many assets. H received a small sum of money each month from their ex-partner while legalities were being settled. H had an addiction to alcohol and was waiting for a place in a detox/rehab facility. H was a caring person who had a big heart for the other guests. They continued to use alcohol during the daytimes and functioned just well enough to be able to stay at the Shelter. H would be at the Daytime Support Centre most days and appreciated the opportunity to shower and relax there with volunteers. H joined in a walking group that one of the volunteers ran on a Saturday morning, attended church on three Sunday mornings and went to an AA meeting with a volunteer one evening.

H was waiting for a place at detox and wanted to make a change in their life. H complied with the requirements for GP evaluations and sent off paperwork. After the first two weeks, the Deputy and Project Coordinators began to advocate on H's behalf with the rehab agency. This continued until the final week of the Shelter when almost daily phone calls and emails were being exchanged. Two volunteers drove H to visit the rehabilitation centre where H was to go for nine months after detox. This was a positive encouragement to H.

A bed became available four days after the end of the program. The Project Coordinator requested Anchor to support H for these nights in motel accommodation, which they generously provided. Volunteers offered H companionship through that weekend, which had the potential to be quite a difficult one. They took H out for lunch and coffee, for walks, to church etc. On the Tuesday morning, a volunteer drove H to detox. H was only able to take a small number of personal belongings. Another volunteer was near the rehabilitation service a week later and was able to take the rest of H's possessions there ready for when they arrived a few days later.