

The Haven – Torbay

Newsletter

November 2013



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01803 558 727 <http://www.Haven-torbay.org.uk>



“No room in the Inn” we often sing at Christmas as we remember that Jesus came into the world not as a rich man, but as part of a family struggling to find somewhere to sleep. In later life Jesus often had “nowhere to lay his head.” In The Haven we listen to people who continue to share the experience of Mary and Joseph. The Christmas message says to us – God himself understands the meaning of homelessness and calls us to share His concern.

Christmas events

Carol singing outside The Haven

You are invited to join us in singing Carols outside The Haven on Wednesday **18th December at 4pm**. This will be followed by a Christmas Tea.

Free Christmas lunch at St. Andrew’s (Sands Road)

St. Andrew’s church will again be hosting a free Christmas Day lunch for people who are homeless, or spending Christmas on their own, or struggling to make ends meet. It will run from 12.00 to 2.00 in the church hall. Any one who can help prepare for and run this event, please contact Paignton Parish Office (01803 551866) All Haven visitors are welcome - tell Paula if you plan to come.

Who we are: For new readers

The Haven is a drop-in centre very close to Lidl’s in Paignton (above the butcher’s shop) We welcome people of all ages and backgrounds, especially homeless people. We offer endless tea, coffee and toast, often with beans. We provide free use of phone and online computer. Many of our volunteers are able to provide a lot of practical advice for people with money and accommodation problems, people frustrated by red tape, and those struggling with addictions. We also have a quiet room, a television room and an arts and activities room. The Haven started by an ecumenical prayer group many years ago, and is supported by many of the churches of the area. The Haven has no paid staff. It relies entirely on the generous giving of time by volunteers and depends financially on gifts from churches and individuals. We currently get 20-30 visitors a day.

Reflections from 2 Volunteers

From Cheryl:

Hi, my name is Cheryl and I'm from Scotland. I was eighteen when I got involved in Heroin, following the death of my mother. I went through detox in a rehab centre at one point and did really well – even becoming a manager there, but then after 6 years I had a relapse, and was back where I started.

It was at that time, two years ago, I started coming to The Haven. I was on the street and homeless. Coming to The Haven gave me somewhere safe to come and have some food and hot drink. The staff were really helpful and easy to talk to. I wanted to volunteer here and try to help others the way the staff helped me.

Now, with the help of Methadone I've got my life back again! I have now been clean for 18 months and doing really well in life. I have been a volunteer here for two months and really enjoy having an input into peoples' lives. I would like to get back into employment - in the caring profession.

And from Richard Livsey:

Whilst on a night out in Torquay, I was a victim of an unprovoked assault; as a result I suffered a fractured skull and partial brain damage. Fortunately now after 7 months, I am beginning to get certain aspects of my life back and I feel my rehabilitation has been enhanced by my time spent volunteering at The Haven. The Haven is an inspirational place, which provides sanctuary for vulnerable members of the community, subsequently with the difficulties I myself have been through, I believe I shared common ground with the various visitors and was therefore able to offer assistance.

I think it is important that there are more facilities like The Haven, because without this lifeline, those who find themselves in difficult situations would continue to spiral into a life which they so desperately want to change.

Although my time at The Haven has been brief, I hope that others will have benefited as I have from the compassion and the positivity glowing from within The Haven. I wish everyone all the best.



VOLUNTEER Comings and Goings

We thank those who have been able to move on for their valuable contributions:

- **Leigh Scarff** has moved on and we wish him well
- **Rich Livsey** was just settling in when he got a paid work opportunity.

We welcome new volunteers who are already making a real difference:

- **Jade Jones** and **Cheryl Wager** have recently become fully fledged volunteers. **Elaine Hooper** one of our founder volunteers has just re-joined us after a break.
- **Carolyn Hayes** has recently arrived.
- **Charlie, Sacha and Kelly, Cecil and Tammy** are all just starting
- **Karen Morris** has agreed to help primarily with Fundraising.

Paula's news: Our thanks:

October has been a good month for The Haven being the time of HARVEST. We have been blessed with so many gifts this year from both Churches and individuals and are extremely grateful for all of them. One lady from Goodrington Methodist was much appreciated when she toiled up our stairs with a Bread Pudding made from the Church Harvest Loaf. It was consumed very quickly! Another day someone from The Bridge came in with spaghetti Bolognese which he plated up – visitors soon started putting it in the micro wave (I must renew the notice about covering food in the microwave!!)

We've also had many special financial donations in recent weeks from major to modest, including TABS, Paignton Parish Charity, Young at Heart, Torbay Times, St. Paul's Church, Bay Christian Fellowship and St. Andrew's Highweek (all in copper !!)

Visitors moving on:

Conway has begun to work as a chef at the Guest House where he lives. **Wayne** has work at the Crab Factory and **Tammy** in "Poundstretcher " **Dave** now has a bungalow in Exeter. **Mark** has finished his entire rehab programme and is working. **Sam** is doing well in LSC. Congratulations to Nathan who has completed a detox at home with the help of his Dad.

Geoff's diary

An afternoon in The Haven. Looking back on the morning notes, various people have been in for coffee, one for a shower. One guy is losing his flat because his job seeker's allowance has been suspended. A busier afternoon with a queue for the phone - someone rearranging a missed appointment, another needs Connections to approve an Anode food parcel, another's new job hasn't worked out because of defective paperwork, another just needs to speak to Mum. I pray with one visitor who needs to get into rehab (again). One rough sleeper reports being harassed twice this morning, one bloke has bought some chops and is cooking his dinner, another visitor spends hours compulsively cleaning everything. Amid all this, a kitchen chat about whether Wagner was a Nazi, and why the Royal Family don't do more for the poor - oh and a visit from a local church leader. A good day!

From the trustees' meeting:

- **Trusteeship:** We are delighted to welcome **Rev. Lorna Sylvester** from Preston Baptist Church as a new trustee. Our other trustees are Paula Mayer, Geoff Kimber, Christine Legge and Mark Stokes, our chairman. Patrick Scott is on sabbatical.
- **Independent examiner:** We thank Stephanie Revell of the Innovation Centre, South Devon College for agreeing examine our books at a very modest fee.
- **Heating Plans:** Following the signing of the new lease, we are looking forward to new carpeting on hall and stairs, and are investigating the cost of installing a new central heating system and improved insulation.
- **Night shelter:** Discussions continue with the council, street pastors and other groups about the creation of a night shelter in the town.

Saturday lunches; Three churches each hope to take it in turn to provide a lunch for Haven visitors each Saturday 2-4pm.. They'd like to recruit a fourth team to do a monthly lunch. If you are interested in helping, each team needs

1. A cook with a kitchen to prepare the food
2. A driver to bring the food to the centre
3. Volunteers to serve the food and look after the visitors.
4. A budget to pay for the ingredients.

If you think you could raise a team, or would just like to be part of a team, please speak to Rev. Lorna Sylvester on: 522541 or e-mail

lorna.sylvester@prestonbaptistchurch.com



You are welcome to get involved

Pray: Please Join us for Prayer & Praise every Wednesday 2.00 – 4.00pm

Lunch: Come and Join us for Soup Wednesday every week 1.00 pm.

Drop in: If you are interested in the work of The Haven please feel free to drop by and perhaps enjoy a cup of tea... We are open week days 10-5.

Donations of food, sleeping bags or finance are always needed!

Regular Giving: To set up a standing order, please see form on p.6.

Gift Aid: Contact Tony on 07732 013696

Regular giving:

One-off gifts are fantastic, by cash, cheque or online via our website, but a regular gift, (monthly, quarterly, annually) however large or small, enables us to plan ahead knowing we have the funds necessary to continue.

To make a regular gift, please complete the form below and return to us.

Forenames;

Title..... Surname.....

Address:

..... **Postcode**.....

STANDING ORDER AUTHORITY

To: (Name of Bank).....

Address of Bank.....

..... **Postcode**.....

Sort code..... **Account number**.....

Please pay CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ for the credit of "The Haven-Torbay" Sort code 40-52-40 Account No 00021625

the sum of £..... each quarter/ month/ year,

Start date.....

Signature..... **Date**.....

Please return to The Haven: 2nd Floor, 1 Parkside Road, Paignton, TQ4 6AE 01803 558 727

<http://www.Haven-torbay.org.uk>

Havenmail99@gmail.com Company 07832748 Charity 1145052

For an email copy of this please contact: geoff.kimber@gmail.com