

# NIGHTSTOP NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1

September 2012

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

### Sarah and Ian Beach, based in West Lyng near the canal

Sarah and Ian have been Nightstop Hosts since January this year. We wanted to find out all about them and their experiences as Nightstop Hosts.

Q: How did you first hear about Nightstop?

A: We read about it in our local parish magazine.

Q: What made you decide to become Hosts?

A: We supposedly downsized from a 3 bed cottage to a 6 bed house when we moved to Somerset! With more rooms than we knew what to do with, and our grown up family only coming back for holidays, we decided we could put

the rooms to good use.

Q: How did you feel when you knew your first Nightstopper was on his way?

A: We were really anxious that we did everything right and that we remembered all the instructions—the fire exits, house rules and all the things you need to cover! It was so much information, we did not want to bombard him.

Q: Who was your first Nightstopper, and did it work out as expected?

*"We found they were pleasant young people who found themselves in difficult circumstances."*

A: He was a chap called Joe and he was really easy



Sitting Room, Cobweb Cottage

going. After the first night we were much more relaxed. Somehow, second nights are always easier as you get to know each other. It was much easier than we expected. Without exception, we would have any of the young people back, but they were all completely different. We did have a stereotype in mind and thought the young person might be tricky, but we found they were pleasant young people who found themselves in difficult

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Welcome to our first Nightstop Volunteers Newsletter! We hope this newsletter keeps you up to date with what is happening within Nightstop.

We really want to link you all together and show you the value of the work you are doing. We look forward to your feedback. A huge thank you for the wonderful contribution you make!

Liz, Erin and Brittney

Home Projects Team

### Nightstop Volunteers Get-Together

You and your family are invited to a pub meal and game of skittles.

Friday 9th Nov, 7.30pm  
The Maypole Inn,  
Thurloxton

Cost: £5 to include fish & chips

RSVP by 2nd November to  
Sally.East@bridgwaterymca.org

## NEW NIGHTSTOP INITIATIVE

### Nightstop is moving to North and West Somerset!!

We are actively looking for new hosts in the following areas: Minehead, Watchet, Williton, Weston-Super-

Mare, Nailsea, Clevedon and Portishead, so we can expand Nightstop to even more young people.

If you have any contacts or friends in these areas that

you think might be interested in becoming hosts, please call Brittney at the office as soon as possible: 01278 726040  
Brittney.Strange@bridgwaterymca.org



# YMCA

Somerset HOME Projects

### Potential Volunteers'

#### Directory

Give us your views!

We are thinking about circulating contact details of hosts/drivers to each other so that you can contact each other for information, help and support. Would this be helpful? Let us know either way!

Contact

Sally.East@bridgwaterymca.org

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF... (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

Circumstances, sometimes through no fault of their own. Your heart goes out to them and you just want to give them some normality and an island refuge in their troubles.

Q: Have you made any changes to your Nightstop arrangements since you first started?

A: Not really, but some of the things we tried worked really well. We have 2 boxes of toiletries, 1 male, 1 female. The young people often arrive with just the clothes they are wearing, so it can be useful. We also have a snacks and drinks cupboard where the young person can help themselves. This is really popular and it gives them a bit of freedom, as they can be too polite to ask if they are hungry, and they often have not eaten all day. We also offer them a packed lunch when they leave, and all bar one have taken us up on this. They are all short of money, and this just helps a little.

Q: Do you feel you have both benefited yourselves from hosting?

A: Yes, we like having young people around. They are good company and

it chirps the place up.

Q: Have there been any negative effects on your family or home?

A: None at all

Q: What is your funniest Nightstop experience?

A: We have only had 1 girl and she stayed with us for 3 nights. She was very jolly and asked me if I would help her dye her hair. I am no hairdresser, and I was worried it might go green! She brought the kit with her and I gave her a hand. We even used foil to put in some blond streaks. It all turned out nice and she was thrilled to bits. She was tickled pink with the result!

Q: Have you had any Nightstop disasters?

A: We only had a slight hiccup when the young person did not turn up. We phoned the 24 hour number we were given. It turned out that the driver was waiting in one place, and the young person in another. In the end they turned up an hour late, but came.

Q: Have you kept in contact with any of the Nightstoppers that have stayed with you?

A: No, we don't want to. We feel we are a cog in a big wheel. We do our bit, then we move on. I was a social worker, and I was taught not to worry or take things home. It is a natural instinct to help people. We look after them, and then we move on and so do they.

Q: If you had to give 3 top tips to any other Hosts, what would they be?

A: One : Have a snacks cupboard, it is really popular

Two: Be yourself and just relax. If you are addicted to East Enders, watch it, and they can join you. Don't tidy up and let them take you as they find you.

Three: Have frozen or tinned puddings in stock. We are not much for puddings, only yoghurt, but some of the boys are quite hungry, and sturdy puddings go down a treat after the main course.

One other tip: Pets are a real ice breaking point. We have dogs and the young people often cuddle up to them, take them for walks, or even groom them.

*"You just want to give them some normality and an island refuge in their troubles."*

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### STAFF CHANGES

#### Goodbye

Leanna left us at the end of August to progress with her career. She has been a valued member of the team and instrumental at bringing Nightstop to Taunton Deane. We wish her every success with her new job and best wishes for the future.

#### Hello

Sue Flawn, Social Work Student from Bath University, joins the project team on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

We are recruiting for a new project worker this month and look forward to welcoming them to the team in October. Watch this Space!

### WHATS ON @BYMCA

Bridgwater YMCA held it first Community Games Event. 9 teams took part in the games which included welly whanging, assault course, beat the goalie, archery, climbing and bell boating. Competition was fierce and the winning team were the Pink Penguins!

Congratulations to all teams who took part. A BIG thank you to everyone who supported the day and baked a cake. The community games will be an annual event.

We look forward to next year and maybe there will be a Nightstop Team.... !!

APR—AUG 2012	NIGHTSTOP STATISTICS
16	HOSTS
6	DRIVERS
28	YOUNG PEOPLE ACCOMMODATED
193	HOST NIGHTS

# NEW HOSTS ABOUT TO EMBARK

**New Hosts, Ian and Rosie Tremain from Cheddon Fitzpaine near Taunton, are preparing for their first Nightstopper. We catch up with them to chat about their expectations.**

**Q:** How did you hear about Nightstop?

**A:** At our church. Brittney Strange, one of the Home Projects Team, gave a talk about Nightstop. Rosie was in the service, but I was out with the young people. Rosie was really taken with Britt's enthusiasm and passion. She really inspired Rosie to be able to make a difference. When we got home Rosie told me all about it and we then found out more about becoming Hosts.



**Q:** What made you take the plunge to be a Host?

**A:** We have a huge house which is predominantly empty, and we wanted to fill it up! So we have the ability to be able to host and make a difference in a small but practical way.

*"We are just very happy to help someone who needs a safe place to sleep and a listening ear."*

**Q:** What preparations have you been making?

**A:** We have nearly completed the induction process—we have done 2 of the 3 home visits, and then we will be ready to host our first young person.

**Q:** Are you nervous about hosting

your first young person?

**A:** No, not really. We have young people here all the time, and we regularly have family and friends to stay, so we don't really have any concerns or anxieties. We are just very happy to help someone who needs a safe place to sleep and a listening ear.

**We'll catch up with Ian and Rosie in our next newsletter and find out how they got on.**

## MAILBOX

If you have a question or comment for the Nightstop Team, please email

Sally.East@bridgwaterymca.org

And we can post answers here!

# INSPIRED TO FUNDRAISE!

**Lynda Defriez, one of our valued Nightstop hosts, writes about her recent fundraising walk...**

"The Nightstop Conference in March was an interesting and enjoyable event. It was good to meet other hosts as I was very new. The team mentioned that they would like to do a fundraising event as the service was expanding but funding wasn't, so I put on my thinking cap.



Bridgwater and Taunton Canal

I like walking, drinking tea, baking and eating cake so I decided to combine all of these and organised a "Walk & Tea" in my village on Saturday 30 June.

The walk started at North Newton Village Hall and took us past St Peter's Church, along the canal towpath and country lanes to Maunsel Canal Centre. We stopped there to look at the boats and the wildflower garden which had been

created by volunteers. We completed the 3½ mile circular walk along a different section of the towpath.

Then we returned to my house where I put the kettle on for our tea. Six of us did the walk and about another half dozen joined us for refreshments. It was a fine day so some people sat outside.

Donations were given by those who attended and friends who were unable to come. Thanks to them all, over £70 was raised for Nightstop.

**Well done and thank you, Lynda, from all the team at Nightstop HQ! 😊**

Nightstop in Partnership with Somerset County & District Councils



## A JOURNEY THROUGH NIGHTSTOP...

We follow the story of Stuart on his journey through Nightstop and beyond...

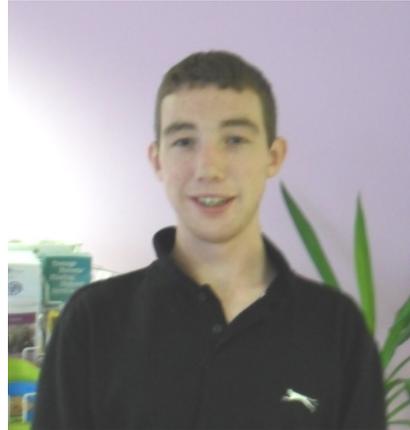
Q: When and how did you become homeless?

A: I left my job at Morrisons after working 4 years there and found myself unable to get another job quickly. I was renting a room from someone and they gave me 2 weeks' notice to pay the rent or leave. I paid the first month after I quit my job, but was not able to pay after that, so I left. I stayed a few days at my Mum's and my sister's and then I stayed with my Nan and Grandpa for a while, but they were in Keinton Mandeville and there were no jobs there.

Q: When did you first use Nightstop?

A: I needed to be able to stay in Bridgwater so I could look for a job and a friend of mine had used Nightstop, so I went to the Routes office to get some help with accommodation. It was my only option. They put me in Nightstop so that I had somewhere to stay whilst they sorted out something a bit more permanent.

Q: How did you feel on the way to your Hosts?



A: I was a bit nervous, but they were really nice. They really looked after me. In the end I stayed 3 weeks, not just one night. I managed to get a part time job at Argos working shifts, and my hosts even drove me to and from work. Sometimes they would take me at 5.15am and pick me up as late as 10.30pm.

Q: How did it compare with what you expected?

A: There were ground rules and I had to tidy my room, like at Nan's. But I was on best behaviour. I was

not expecting it, but I was really waited on—they ran me a bath when I

got in tired from work and cooked tea for me. I was really looked after.

Q: How many Nightstops have you been to?

A: That was the only one.

Q: Did it help staying with the Nightstop family?

A: It helped me get back on my feet. After the part time work at Argos, a friend told me that there were some jobs going at Wiseman's Dairy, so I applied to them and got the job. That was a turning point. I am very grateful to my hosts, they were so good to me.

Q: Did you have any funny or embarrassing moments during your time as a Nightstopper?

A: Yes once, when I was on my own I popped out and locked myself out. I had to call my Hosts to get back in again!

Q: Where are you living now?

A: I spent 4 weeks in Thorncombe House for assessment and then I moved to a YMCA flat in Clifford House. I can stay here 2 years. I am working lots of overtime at Wiseman's and am trying hard to pay off my debts, so that I can move into my own accommodation after. I am also hoping to buy a car, I would love an old BMW...

*"It helped me get back on my feet again...I am very grateful to my hosts, they were so good to me."*

## BECOME A HOST AND MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE

Could you be the person who makes a difference in the life of a young person in need? Do you live in Bridgwater, Taunton or West Somerset and want to help prevent a young person from becoming homeless? Bridgwater YMCA, in partnership with local District Councils, is supporting homeless young people, between 16-24 years

old, through an initiative called Nightstop. Nightstop is a scheme where a young person is placed in the home of one of our volunteers for one night at a time. A volunteer needs to be able to offer a spare room, an evening meal, breakfast, use of washing facilities, and preferably be able to drive. We reimburse hosts £15 for

each host night and for relevant travel expenses. Nightstop has been successfully operating in Somerset since January 2011 with our hosts accommodating nearly 70 young people. To find out more, call our team on 01278 726040, or Brittney at [Brittney.Strange@bridgwaterymca.org](mailto:Brittney.Strange@bridgwaterymca.org)



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# YMCA



Somerset HOME Projects

**YMCA FOYER**