

# NEWSLETTER

## BURY DROP IN LAUNCHES LOOKING FOR CHANGE CAMPAIGN IN NEWMARKET TO COMBAT HOMELESSNESS



Image courtesy of Newmarket Journal

After the successful launch of the Looking for Change campaign in Bury St Edmunds, Bury Drop In were asked to team up with the Newmarket Inter-Faith Forum and bring the alternative giving campaign to Newmarket.

The campaign asks people not to give money direct – but to text donations to a dedicated number. It means the money will not only help rough sleepers, but also people who are homeless but not living on the streets, and those who are vulnerable.

Max Drinkwater of Newmarket Inter-Faith Forum said: "People, no matter what their beliefs are, want to help those less fortunate than themselves. Sadly, sometimes when we give

money to people on the streets, that money is used to feed addictions which doesn't help them change their situation and makes it harder for them to stay in accommodation. We also know that sometimes people are deceived by beggars preying on human kindness.

"Looking for Change is about making sure that the money we donate can make a genuine difference to people's lives and that is why we are delighted to be working with the Drop In charity."

David Bonnett, Executive Chairman at Bury Drop In said: "Our team of volunteers provide support for vulnerable people including food

and a warm drink, while we also work with other partners to help homeless people get a roof over their head, any support they may need, improved health, education, clean clothes, a job and to reconnect with their families if they want to."

Newmarket Looking for Change campaign is backed by West Suffolk Council, The Newmarket Journal, Love Newmarket which represents town centre businesses in the town, Suffolk Police and Newmarket Town Council.

# DELIVERING SUCCESS - 4 YEARS ON

As Bury Drop In entered its fourth year of operation it was with a certain degree of humility that we could look back and see how it had grown since its inception.

Bury Drop In continues to be successful in delivering the services and meeting the objectives it set out to achieve. The very fact that the Bury Drop in is still vigorously functioning on two days per week to provide for the homeless\* in our community is both a source of pride and sadness. By way of explanation, we are proud that the support we provide continues to develop, evolve and improve, welcoming between 60 - 70 guests each session. We are saddened by the fact that in this day and age, especially in such a largely prosperous community, there remains a need to provide for the guests we welcome week by week. It is perhaps indicative of the nature of the society in which we live that there will always be those who, for whatever reason, do not fit within the norms of the general community and sometimes are missed or ignored by the agencies that should be helping them.

We open the Drop In twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays with the guests welcomed from 11am until 2pm. We are very fortunate to have the use of the Trinity Methodist Church in Brentgovel St Bury St Edmunds as our base. These premises are ideal for the sessions and the basement meeting room has a friendly and hospitable cafe feel to it. The volunteers arrive from 9am to set up and prepare the meals for the day and the sandwiches which we offer to the guests to take away for later. The Drop In was never meant to be just a 'soup kitchen' providing drinks and meals. We do however provide excellent meals and takeaway foods. This is in no little part thanks to the local firms who have regularly and faithfully supported us, some from the commencement of the work. Because of this we have been enabled to provide high quality nourishing meals at minimal cost. In 2018 we cooked and served 6,000 meals at a cost of 60p per meal. Our costs are reduced, not only because of the donated food, but also because our labour costs are zero as we benefit from the tireless work of the volunteers who selflessly give of their time week by week.

One of our main aims as a Drop In was to be a 'signposting' service to our guests. What we wished to achieve was the ability to direct guests to whatever agency or organisation would have the capability and resources to meet their needs. In the early days we relied heavily on the Citizens Advice and the Probation Service. West Suffolk Housing Department also attended. As the work developed it became evident that there was perhaps a greater need than had been anticipated. The Housing Department took up the challenge of the numbers presenting themselves as homeless\* at each session and applied for and secured funding for a Rough Sleeper support worker. From this beginning a department of up to 7 staff are now employed in Support and Prevention work among those who are homeless\*. The Rough Sleeper Team has been expanded and now includes a worker who specialises in mental health issues and another specialising in supporting addictions - alcohol and drug dependency.

So far from January this year (2019) we have welcomed over 100 new guests, all of whom fit our revised criteria of homelessness\*. It has become apparent that a great majority of the guests at

the Drop In have deep seated difficulties. These can include alcohol or drug dependence or addiction, or a Mental Health issue. Often these troubles can be traced back to incidents in the past, some relating to systematic childhood abuse over a number of years.

We partner with many different agencies and are always open to welcome other agencies or organisations who may wish to join us and use the facilities we can offer, to meet with and help the guests on a more informal basis. At the beginning of this year, with the mental health issues of the guests in mind, we were delighted when we were approached by a therapist who offered to come and work with us. She had previously worked at Focus12 in Bury St Edmunds as well as in other locations. Her presence has proved to be a great benefit as many guests have the opportunity to talk over their problems week by week. Two of the guests who suffered systematic sexual abuse as children have been referred to Survivors in Transition in Ipswich. For one of them at least this has been a huge step on a very slow path to healing and reintegration into society. A small group of NHS therapists is also involved with us working to ensure that the volunteers, as well as the guests, are cared for in a pastoral way. Some of the narratives we listen to from our guests are harrowing and we wish to ensure that our volunteers have the necessary capacity to deal with them without distressing themselves.

As the Drop In has grown, there has inevitably been an increase in the volume of administration required to ensure the safe and effective running of each session. The paperwork that emanates from ensuring we are compliant with all aspects of Charity Commission requirements as well as compliance with Safeguarding and GDPR regulations, needs manifold attention. To effect this compliance, with the help of the grant received, we have been able to appoint a part time Charity Coordinator working 22 hours per week. Alongside the Chairman and Charity Secretary she has taken on day to day running of the Charity and has proved to be a great asset. With her help and expertise we have been enabled to update and develop our website and social media presence. We have created a positive Public Relations profile which has had good results in attracting new volunteers, supporters and donors. One of our Charity Coordinator's roles will be to look out and identify funding opportunities for the future support of the ongoing work.

We give thanks to God for all His grace and mercy, and pray that His hand will direct and channel and motivate us as we go forward together and seek to show the love of God to those we serve and support.

\*[Our definition of Homelessness is covered by four categories -

1. Rough Sleeping / Street homelessness.
2. Sofa surfers, living day to day at friends.
3. Accommodated at one of the Hostels in the town and area.
4. Follow on accommodation comprising a room in a shared flat or house. None of these options offer any security of tenure and have to be seen as temporary and where therefore, the guest is vulnerable.]



David Bonnett  
Executive Chairman



# BURY DROP IN APPOINTS CHARITY COORDINATOR



In February, we welcomed our new Charity Coordinator.

Ally Gill started her position of part-time Charity Coordinator with Bury Drop In in February. The role is funded by West Suffolk Council, initially for two years. Ally brings a wealth of experience gained from the private and charity sector including working at the Cambridge & District Citizens Advice for a number of years, both as a generalist adviser and marketing officer. In addition, Ally also works alongside SMEs and charities as a digital marketing consultant.

Since joining, Ally has been guided through an exciting whirlwind of meeting new faces and get-togethers with people from all walks of life. During this short period, she has taken over the role of Public Relations and applied her digital marketing expertise by giving the website a facelift, designed a new logo and generated an online social media recruitment campaign to attract new volunteers. Moreover, she has taken the reins to bring the design of the newsletter in-house, plus a review of our current marketing materials including stationery. We welcome Ally on-board.

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## DONATIONS - THANK YOU



Image courtesy of Bury Free Press

Horringer Middle School Lidgate House raised a total of £2,037 for us through various fundraising activities including a bake sale.



Image courtesy of Bury Free Press

Knights Lowe Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers donated £1,000 to us, raised at the company's annual charity ball.



Waitrose Shoppers raised £583 using their Community Matters green tokens to support our work.



# Guests get creative



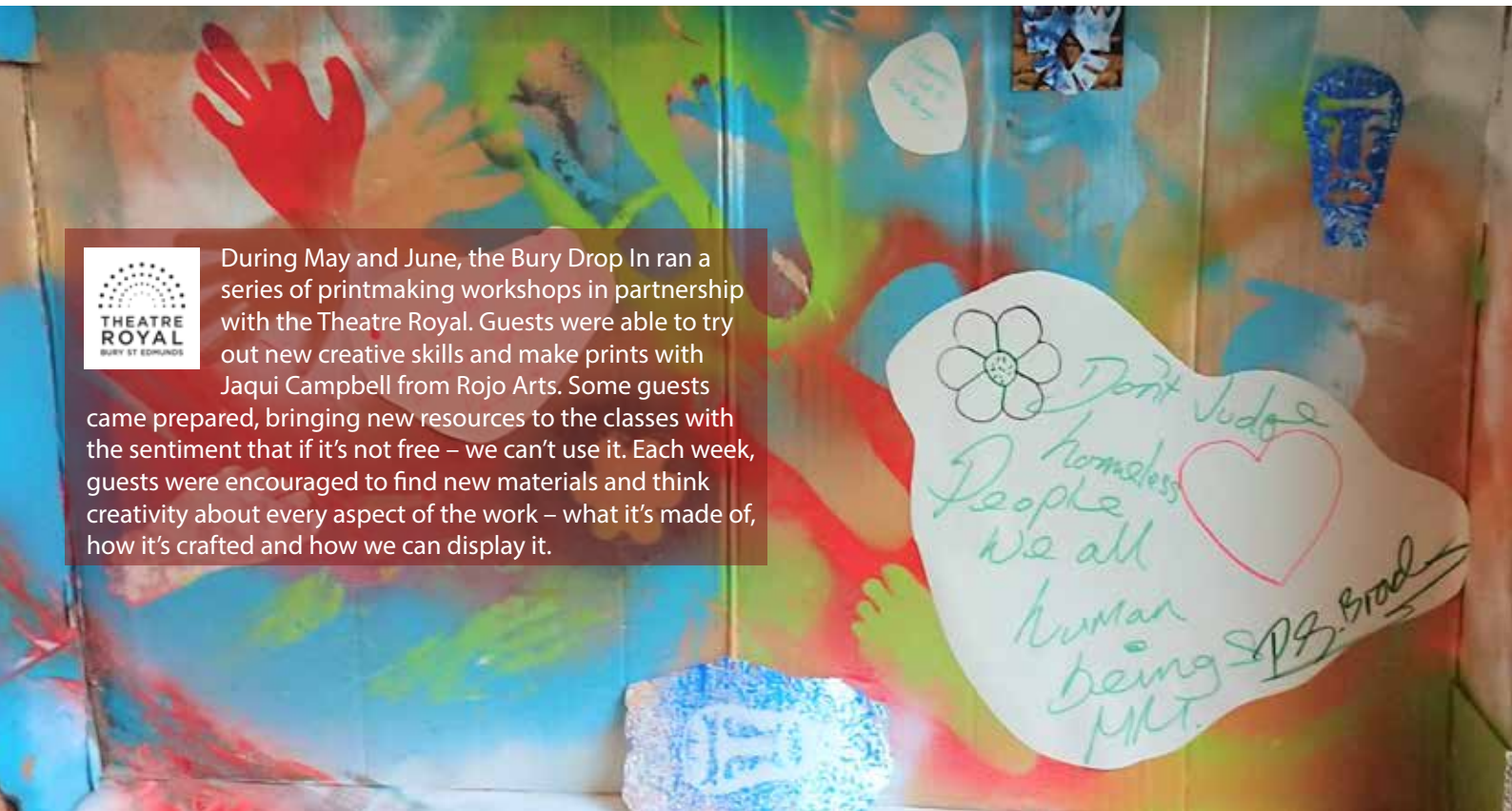
Drop In guest, Keith has taken up writing his daily memoirs in a journal.



Drop In guest, Jurek has been busy drawing portraits.



During May and June, the Bury Drop In ran a series of printmaking workshops in partnership with the Theatre Royal. Guests were able to try out new creative skills and make prints with Jaqui Campbell from Rojo Arts. Some guests came prepared, bringing new resources to the classes with the sentiment that if it's not free – we can't use it. Each week, guests were encouraged to find new materials and think creativity about every aspect of the work – what it's made of, how it's crafted and how we can display it.



# DROP IN WELCOMES THERAPIST TO HELP OUR GUESTS

Bury Drop In is attended by agencies offering help and advice to our guests on such things as housing, mental health, employment and addictions but we are always making efforts to attract more agencies. Since our last newsletter, we have been joined by Sam Nash who offers therapy.

Welcome to Sam, who started at the Bury Drop In during February, and is available every Tuesday. Sam is a qualified Integrative Psychotherapist, with an extensive history of working with those



she had a 'calling' in her twenties, but she decided to gain some life experience before pursuing a career in it. During her thirties, she started a course in Integrative Counselling, followed by a BA in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy. Sam is taking a break from studying for a Masters in Clinical Mental Health Sciences to focus on developing her business.

Sam specialises in the process of addiction, substance misuse, attachment disorders, and childhood trauma and abuse. We were blessed to have Sam reach out to us on Facebook, after hearing about our charity, as she wanted to give something back to the community.

suffering from substance misuse and dependency.

Sam has worked as an addiction counsellor at Focus12 and the Recovery Hub, Ipswich. She is company director of her own business, Sober Guardians. Sam's interest in therapy began when

Sam provides a non-judgemental and empathic loving relationship to our guests, on a 1-2-1 basis. When Sam feels that further help is required, she undertakes an assessment and liaises confidentially with other therapeutic agencies, referring guests to appropriate

organisations. At the drop in, Sam handles emergency situations by making sure that resources are offered and managed where needed. Recently, it became apparent to Sam that one of our guests was a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. Therefore, she mediated with the support centre, Survivors in Transition, where our guest is now receiving treatment.

As Sam is available at the drop in every Tuesday, guests feel they are able to build upon a trusting, understanding and loving relationship, disclosing feelings that they may have never spoken about before. Sam enjoys the connection that she has with our guests and feels privileged to hear the stories they share with her.

Sam has three children; two sons aged 23 and 16, and one daughter aged 14. Her interests include painting, meditation, visits to galleries, and the beach. At the time of this interview she was about to start a book club.

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## NEXT STEPS NEWS

At a Wellbeing event held at the Jobcentre we were able to publicise the work of Bury Drop In and to get details of other services available to our guests which will further our role as a signposting organisation. Another of our aims is to help our guests take that next step to improve their lives. In partnership with Realise Futures, we held a number of courses for our guests including a Mental Health workshop, Complimentary Therapies, Floristry, and Art. Shortly, they will be offering a First Aid Awareness course.

Mike Ryall  
Drop In Trustee & Next Steps Coordinator



# HOW YOU CAN HELP

## VOLUNTEER KITCHEN MANAGER & DATA PROTECTION OFFICER REQUIRED

We are looking to fill these two roles as soon as possible, as our current volunteers would like to take a step down to focus on their other roles within the Bury Drop In.

Full training and ongoing support will be provided.

For more information, please send an email to: [theburydropin@btconnect.com](mailto:theburydropin@btconnect.com)

## DONATE

Your donations are critical to our work as we don't receive any government funding. There are a number of ways that you make a financial contribution:

### DONATE ONLINE

Change the way you give by donating online. Your money will come to us direct and help us to keep people off the streets and get the support that they need.

For more information, visit [burydropin.org/donate](http://burydropin.org/donate)

### DONATE FROM YOUR MOBILE

You can donate by text from your mobile. Type BSE and the amount that you want to donate. For example, if you want to donate £2, you would text 'BSE2' and send to the number 70085.

### GIFT AID

If you would like to make a one-time donation, please make your cheque out to Bury Drop In and post it to **Bury Drop In, Office B, Hoste House, United Reformed Church, Whiting Street, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1NR.**

If you would like to contribute regularly, please contact us by email or at our office address, and we will provide a form you can complete and submit to your bank.

## PRAYER

Please continue to pray for more volunteers in all areas of our organisation. The Bury Drop In continues to extend its influence both with guests and other partners and due to this growth our need for more manpower increases. In short, we're becoming a victim of our success!

The guests continue to inform us that we have become a critical life-line in their lives. This can simply be down to the food we provide, the clothing we access and the support/guidance we give regarding job applications/interviews, finance advice and helping with life-style choices. Please continue to give thanks for the impact our wonderful volunteers are having and also pray for Godly wisdom for both our volunteers and leaders.

Please also give thanks for the agencies and professionals who come in week by week to support our guests. Please also pray for our volunteers for their safety and for coping with the mental and emotional strain that they can find themselves under due to the nature of our work. Some of our volunteers are not without their own challenges, please pray for their well-being in general.

Finally, please pray that God's Spirit will continue to be with us, and as the Bury Drop In continues to evolve, will lead us wherever He wants us to go!

## A FEW OF OUR KIND SPONSORS



## CONTACT

[theburydropin@btconnect.com](mailto:theburydropin@btconnect.com)  
Trinity Methodist Church, Brentgovel Street,  
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1EB  
Opening Times: Tuesday & Friday, 11am to 2pm

Find us on  [burydropin](https://www.facebook.com/burydropin)