

ANNUAL REPORT 18/19



The
**LIVING
ROOM**



Registered charity number: 1175380

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Living Room was set up by some of the Great Yarmouth church leaders and Imagine Norfolk Together, working in conjunction with local agencies, and first opened its doors in January 2017.

Vision: A town where nobody has to sleep rough on the streets.

Mission: To open Church halls during the winter months, offering shelter, hospitality, and hope to people sleeping rough.

Culture and Ethos: The Living Room believes that every person, regardless of their circumstances, has great value and significance. Consequently The Living Room seeks to foster a culture and atmosphere of welcome and mutual respect and warmth. This was the origin of the name "The Living Room" along with the desire that for some at least, their stay with us would represent the beginning of a new and better life.

Aims: To enable people sleeping rough to have shelter, warmth, and hospitality for some nights every week during the winter months. To improve outcomes for people sleeping rough who want to move on to permanent accommodation.



WHERE AND WHEN

This winter The Living Room was open between the 24th November to the 25th March.

Between November and January The Living Room was open for 3 nights a week, and during February and March the Living Room was open for 4 nights a week due to additional funding.

The Living Room was also able to open for 3 extra 'emergency' nights during the very coldest weather.

We used 3 different church venues: Park Baptist Church, the Minster Mission and the King's Centre



VOLUNTEERS

The Living Room benefitted this year from 39 different volunteers from the local community, 80% coming from local churches. The Living Room is incredibly grateful for the fantastic team of volunteers without which we could not open.

All our volunteers have DBS checks and are given training on Safeguarding, personal safety, and professional boundaries as well as other training opportunities which arise throughout the year.

100% of volunteers who gave feedback said that they were very likely to recommend The Living Room to someone who was homeless and 91% said they were very likely to recommend it to someone who was interested in volunteering



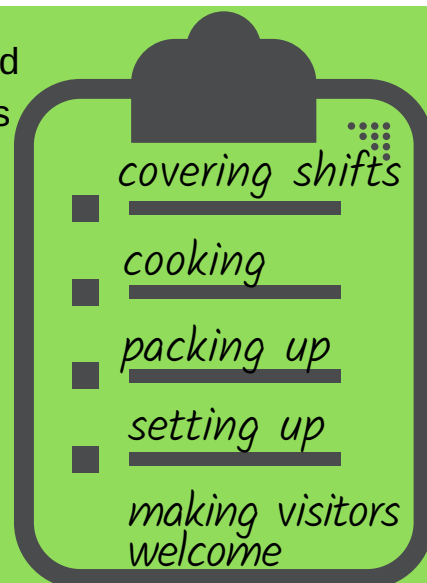
"thanks to organisers and volunteers for all they do and also for encouraging and supporting me. I've found it a real blessing to be able to bless others in a small way."

Living Room volunteer



Hours given by
volunteers over the
winter

Main tasks carried
out by volunteers



"the visitors feel it is a safe environment"

"it is good to know they are in a safe, warm and caring environment."

"great to be able to feel part of a wonderful team!"

"I've found it a real blessing to be able to bless others in a small way"

 Volunteer feedback

PAID WORKERS

Jo Morrison has continued this year as Project Co-ordinator for The Living Room. She worked 35 hours a week over the winter, co-ordinating the nights and working with the visitors throughout the week.

Jo will continue to work 10 hours a week over the summer in order to maintain relationships and support for our visitors and to organise the weekly Living Room hot meal drop-ins.

Towards the end of the winter, extra funding meant that we were also able to pay several other workers to be able to support Jo in her work and allow The Living Room to open for an extra night.



FINANCE AND DONATIONS

The total cost of running The Living Room for the year 2018 - 2019 was £23,456.32. The greatest expense was for salary, followed by expenses for the general running of the evenings we have been open (food etc.)

The Living Room received £29668.93 in grant funding (some of which is to cover costs for the coming year) and £2668.75 in donations, as well as countless donations of toiletries, clothes, sleeping bags etc. for the visitors.

We are extremely appreciative and grateful for each and every donation we receive as we are dependent on these to be able to keep running and to provide our visitors with the everyday essentials they need.



KEY FACTS

Nov 2018 - April 2019

Key facts about The Living Room

33 DIFFERENT VISITORS

stayed overnight at The Living Room and received food, a bed for the night and people to talk to



NIGHTS OPEN

61



The Living Room was able to welcome visitors in on 61 different nights, including 2 emergency nights during the worst weather

480

In total The Living Room was able to provide 480 beds and hot meals during the time of opening.

NIGHTS OFF THE STREET



ACCOMMODATED

7



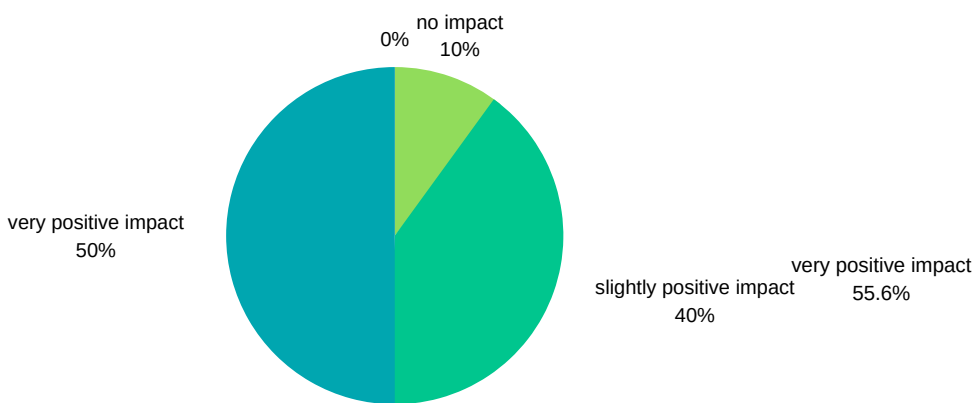
In conjunction with the council and other agencies, 7 of The Living Room's winter visitors have been able to move into permanent accommodation

Thanks to our donors, hosts, workers, trustees and volunteers

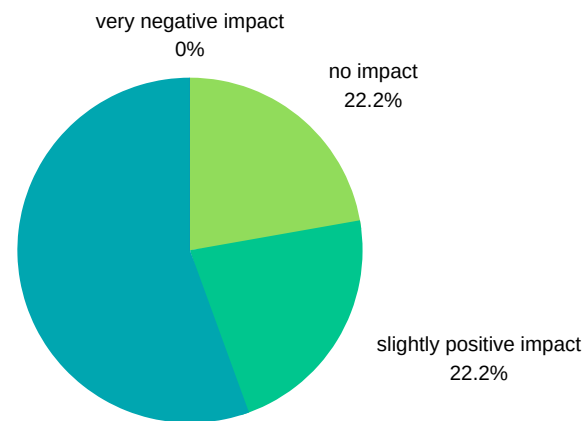


VISITOR FEEDBACK

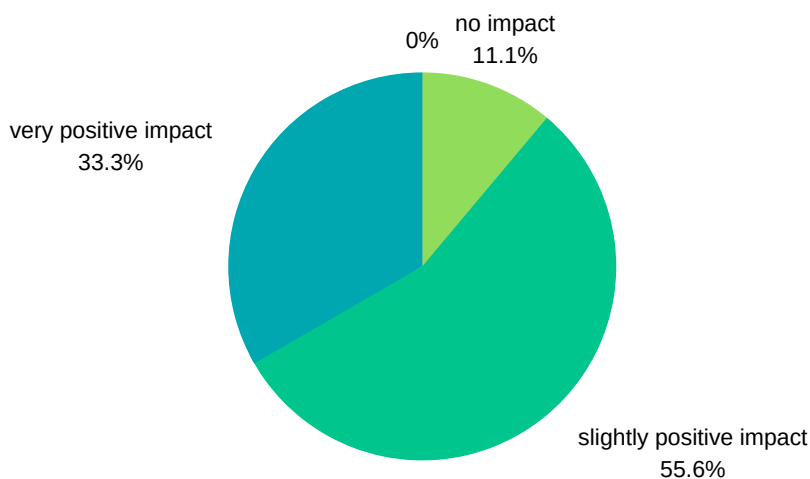
Impact on relationships



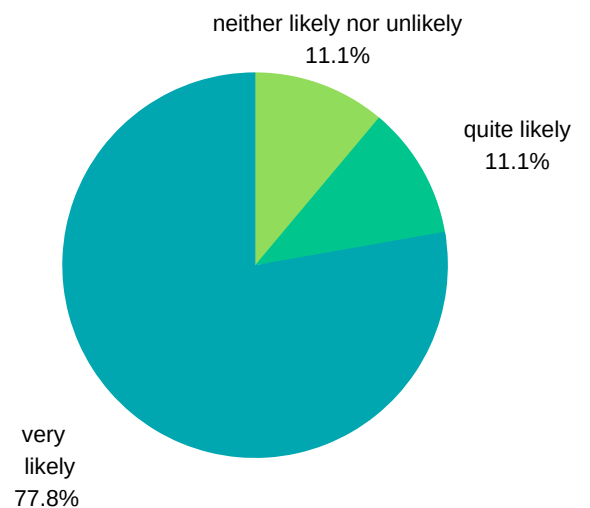
Impact on health and happiness



Impact on connections with people who can help



Would recommend to another homeless person



VISITOR FEEDBACK

What is good about the Living Room?

The most common responses to this question were about having somewhere to sleep, food, safety and above all the volunteers and their friendship and kindness.

“the volunteers are friendly and very very welcoming”

“it is a big help for me”

“it reminds one that there is goodness in people”

What could be improved about the Living Room

Almost all the responses said that nothing could be improved or stated that they would like the Living Room to be open more often. A couple mentioned having a television.

What difference has the Living Room made to your life?

The most frequently mentioned areas of impact were around mental health / positivity and safety

“it’s helped a lot”

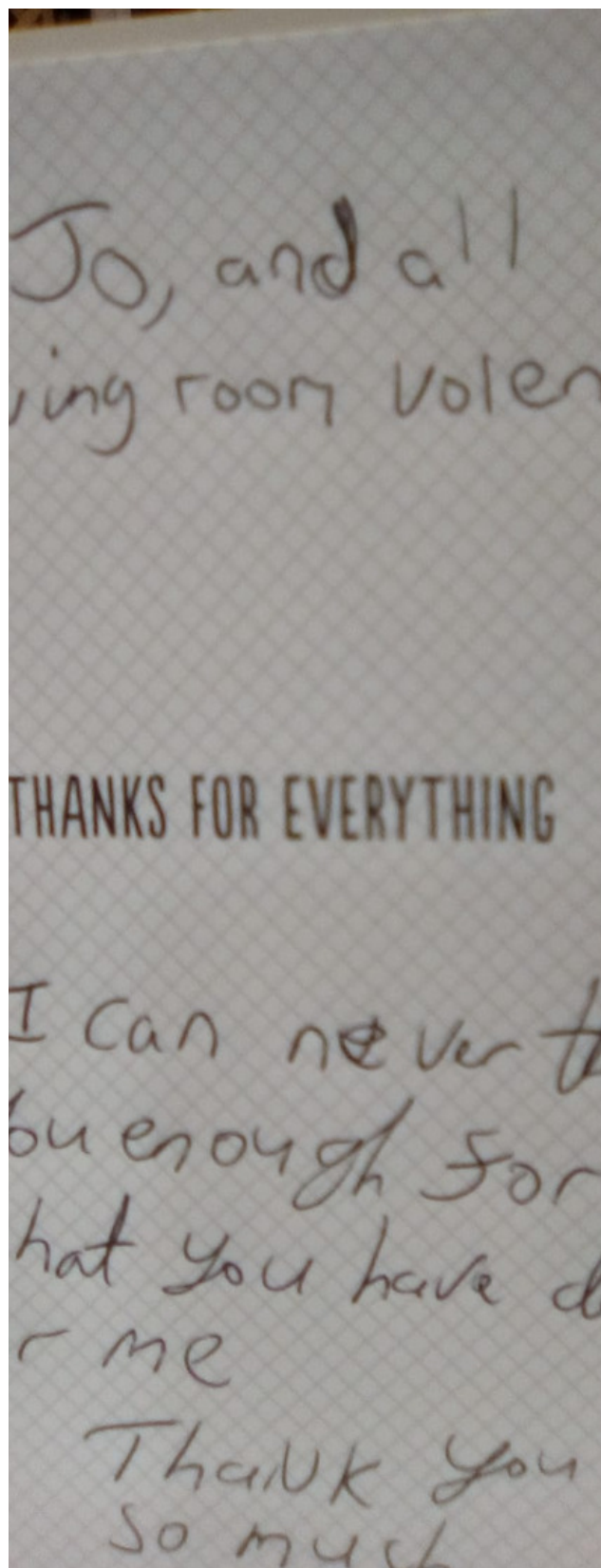
“make me feel alive”

“the difference between going mad and staying sane”

“I have met some wonderful people who give us their time and I believe they all deserve recognition.”

“I feel they have helped a lot and helped to take me off the street when nobody wanted to know.”

“something that can be relied on / a anchor when everything else is transient / random / mental etc.”



CASE STUDY

Tom was referred to The Living Room by one of the church lunch drop-ins. He was living in a tent. He had a history of mental health difficulties but was not accessing any mental health support.

Tom stayed at The Living Room regularly for 3 months. During that time he was able to meet with the GP who regularly attends The Living Room to work with the visitors. The Living Room Project Co-ordinator also liaised with mental health services and the wider multidisciplinary team, highlighting Tom's vulnerability in terms of mental health.

As a result of this liaison, Tom was able to see a Psychiatrist, and was admitted as an inpatient to a mental health hospital. The Living Room Project Co-ordinator continued to communicate with him and support him. Tom had broken his glasses some time before and was unable to afford to replace them, so The Living Room worked with the charity Acts 435 to raise the money for new glasses.

After a few weeks as an inpatient, Tom was moved to Housing Association accommodation where he is now successfully maintaining his tenancy.



FUTURE...

As last year, The Living Room will continue to open one evening a week to provide a meal for homeless visitors (by referral only). Our Project Co-ordinator will continue to work (on reduced hours) to support the visitors during the week.

We hope to be able to open again overnight for the winter of 2019 /2020 (dependent of funding and volunteers). By far the most unanimous request from both our visitors and volunteers is for the Living Room to be open for more nights a week, with requests for showering facilities at more venues coming a close second. We would love for this to become a reality but again we are reliant on the money, venues and volunteers which are needed to make this possible. If you can help in any way please contact us using the details provided.

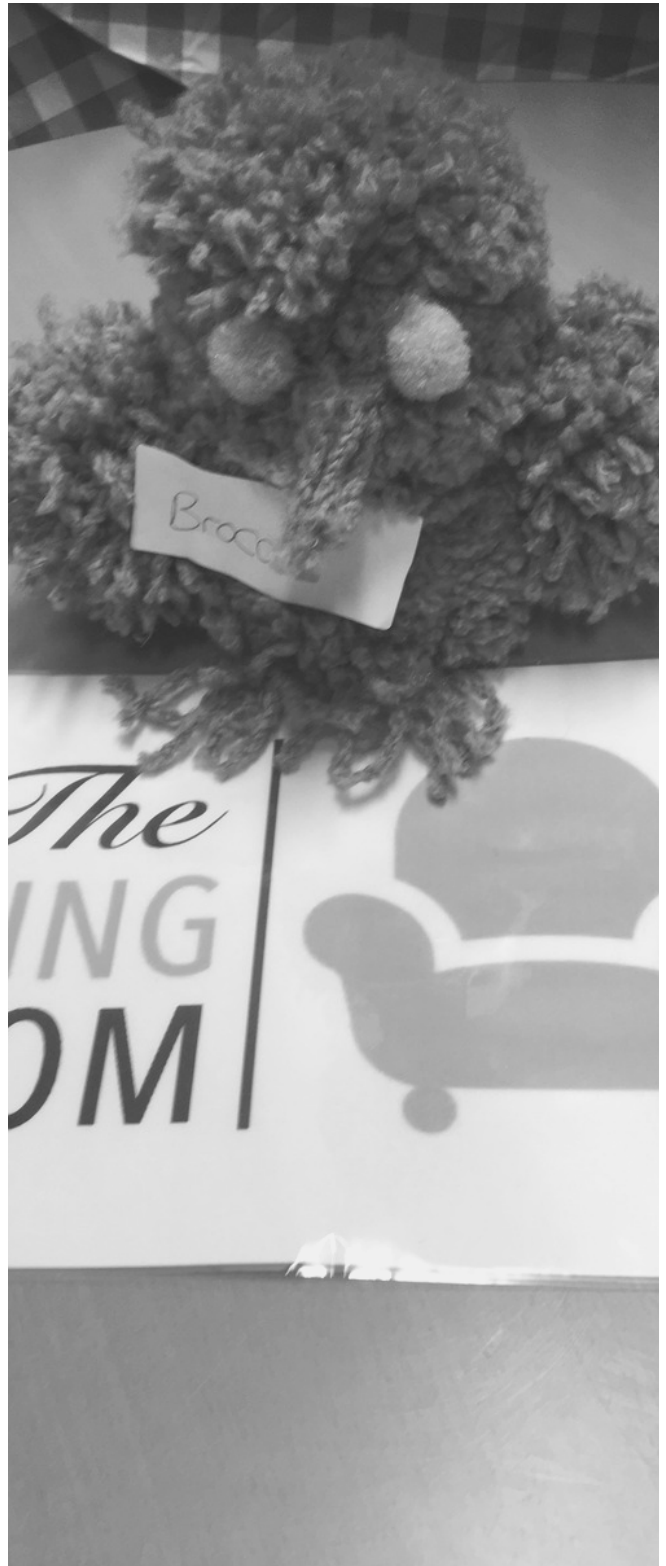


THANK YOU

As always we are extremely grateful to the multitude of individuals, churches, groups and organisations who have enabled us to run. We can't name everyone but if you have supported us in any way then please know that your contribution is valued.

Thanks to:

- all our volunteers in whatever capacity
- the trustees
- Park Baptist Church, Great Yarmouth Minster and Kingsgate Community Church for providing our venues
- Funding from Dreams and Visions, Cold Weather Fund via Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Surviving Winter Fund via Norfolk Community Foundation, Mrs Smith and Mount Trust and The Mercers' Charitable Foundation, and ASDA Great Yarmouth green token scheme.
- Donations from Ormesby Light of Life Church, Cliff Park Community Church, St Andrew's Church and All Saints Belton, as well as other groups and individuals
- The Kingsgate prayer group and others who prayed for us



website: www.TheLivingRoomGY.co.uk

tel: 07724303310

email: TheLivingRoomGY@outlook.com



Registered charity number: 1175380