



Winter Night Shelter Report 2014





FirmFoundation

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FirmFoundation have been pleased to appoint a full-time 'Night Shelter Co-ordinator' and a 'Support Worker' part-time for the twelve week project. This has released the Charity Manager to continue FirmFoundation's growing wider work across the Borough of Harrow.

These two appointments were in addition to FirmFoundation's usual paid positions of which five people were contracted for the position of 'Waking Night', one person per night for the shelter period.

Both FirmFoundation's wider work and the addition of extra staff have been particularly effective for our guests at the 2014 shelter.

FirmFoundation's Winter Night Shelter opened its doors for the fourth consecutive year on Monday 6th 2014. The all-male shelter ran at the same venue as the previous years at the Weldon Centre for seven nights per week until the 31st of March 2014. Harrow International Christian Centre (HICC) once again offered the use of their magnificent building to help us overcome the difficulty of the unavailability of the Weldon Centre site until after 9:30pm on Mondays.



The aim for the shelter was to provide a warm and friendly atmosphere and a safe dormitory style overnight accommodation for up to 10 male guests per night. We were also able to offer extended Support Worker engagement to assist with guests accessing relevant services with the provision of the part-time employee. The shelter was also made possible by the help of the volunteers who gave time, energy and skills and made sure that the guests were well fed and well looked after. In all volunteers contributed 2004 hours to the Night Shelter, their commitment has positively affected guest's lives and outlooks. They offered sumptuous meals every evening which left the guests feeling loved and cared for. A cooked breakfast was also provided Monday to Friday at Trinity Church Hinds Road which is located close by. The guest had their Saturday and Sunday breakfast at the shelter. In addition to the meals served to guests staying at the shelter (seven hundred and fifty two of them), meals were also offered to others not gaining a bed space as a way of keeping contact with our service. A further two hundred and twenty two meals were served in this way over the shelter period.

Hot shower facilities and necessary toiletries were also available on site.

Referral's to the Night Shelter

The wider work of FirmFoundation and the referral routes into the Night Shelter has meant that for the first time all of the beds were allocated on the first night with a waiting list in place.

The guests were referred to us by the Harrow Street Pastors (HSP) Harrow Council (Housing Advice Team), Victoria Hall Single Homeless Drop-in, Harrow Citizens Advice Bureau, London Street Rescue, the Probation Service, Kennedy Scott, Prisons as well as Mental Health and other London homelessness services.

The shelter received 49 referrals this year, of which the Night Shelter offered bed spaces to 30 males. Twenty one of the shelter's guests had a Harrow connection, five with no connection to any borough, two to other London Boroughs and two from out of London. All guests were rough sleeping in the Borough of Harrow.

Only one guest this year was asked to leave the Night Shelter due to behavioural issues, however, FirmFoundation continued to work with him outside of the shelter.

FirmFoundation's work during the year has produced positive inter-working relationships with other homelessness agencies. We were pleased to assist a Harrow rough sleeper who was given a supported re-connection to a different county through London Street Rescue and the supported housing scheme where he was offered a place. This went well and he now has the chance of a new beginning.

With the addition of a Shelter Co-ordinator and a part-time Support Worker, guests could be offered further support. Strong links with Harrow's Job Centre Plus and Harrow Council's Housing Needs Team were strengthened further this year as some of FirmFoundation's guests were made appointments at the Job Centre and some attending accommodation viewings via the Council to the

Private Rented Sector. Referrals were also made to 'Compass' and 'EACH' for alcohol related issues.

We are delighted that seventeen guests gained accommodation.

FirmFoundation also provided starter packs for guests who required basic items, we would like to thank the Charity Shop 'Found' who have graciously and generously provided many of the items needed for guests making a new start.

2014 Shelter



Julian Saunders (Charity Manager) 1st left, Bob Blackman MP (Harrow East) 3rd left and Alex Gichohi (Shelter Manager) 3rd right

Feedback

'Recently I experienced the darkest moments of my life, rock bottom. This resulted in me becoming homeless...FirmFoundation gave that support and reminded me others do care. The volunteers have gone above and beyond. I now have a flat in Harrow and have stability, I have a FirmFoundation.' Justin (Guest)

'Without the shelter I wouldn't know what to do or where to go'.
Ali (Guest)

'I am very happy and grateful to FirmFoundation, the night shelter was very good and the food was really nice!' Lionel (Guest)



Our thanks to all who have supported FirmFoundation's Winter Night Shelter.

King's Church Harrow

Trinity Church Harrow

Harrow International Christian
Centre

St Joseph's Harrow Wealdstone

Greek Orthodox Church

St Paul's South Harrow

St Peter's West Harrow

Waitrose Harrow Weald

Belmont Primary School

St Paul's Cathedral London

Ignite Harrow

Elmfield Rayners Lane

Harrow Baptist

St John's Harrow

All Saint's Harrow Weald

St Mary's Harrow on the Hill

Cornerstone Church

Agape Prayer Fellowship

The Lawton Trust Limited

Rotary Club of Northwick Park

Six Crown Street Trust

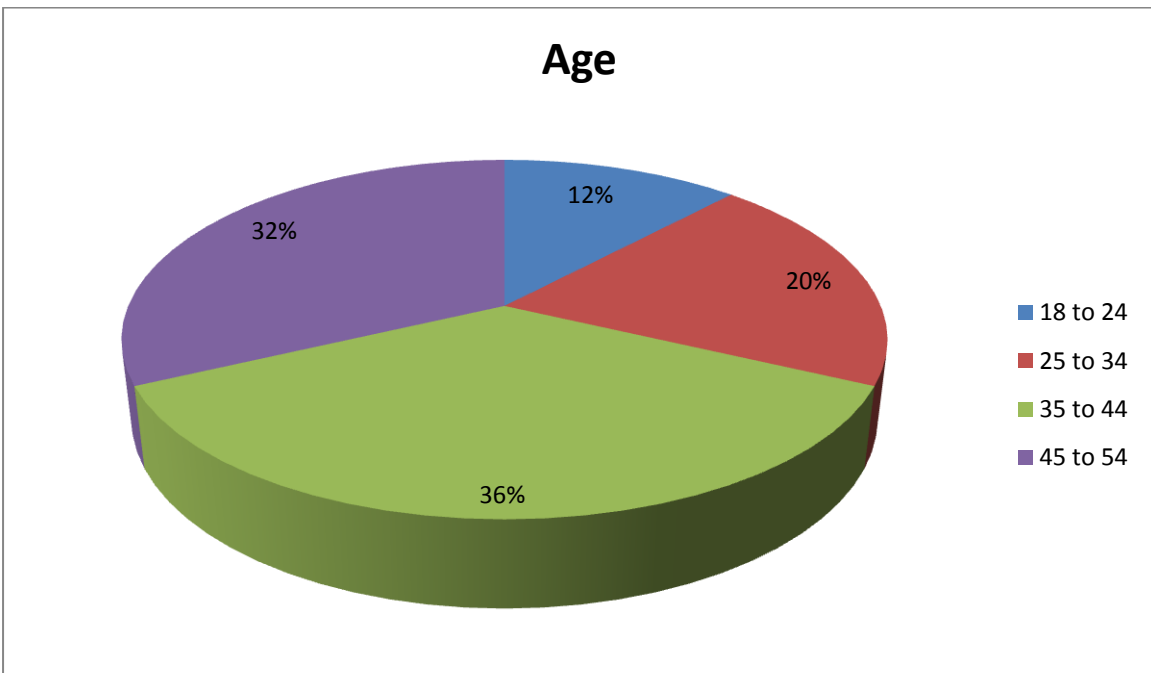
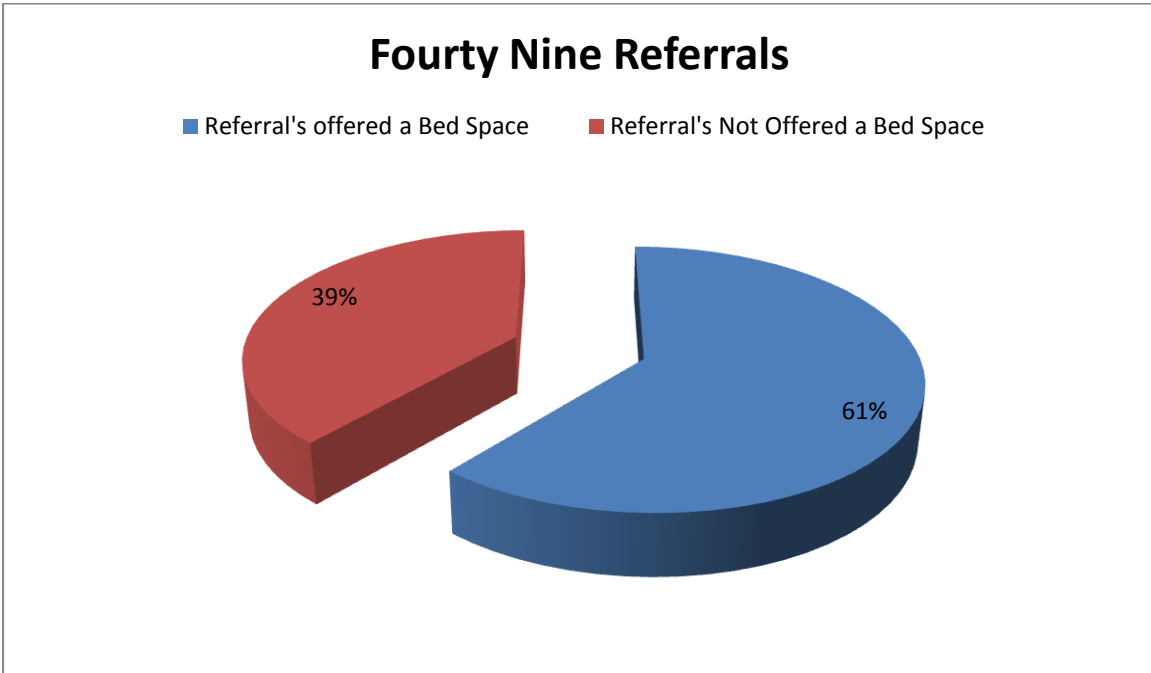
Souter Charitable Trust

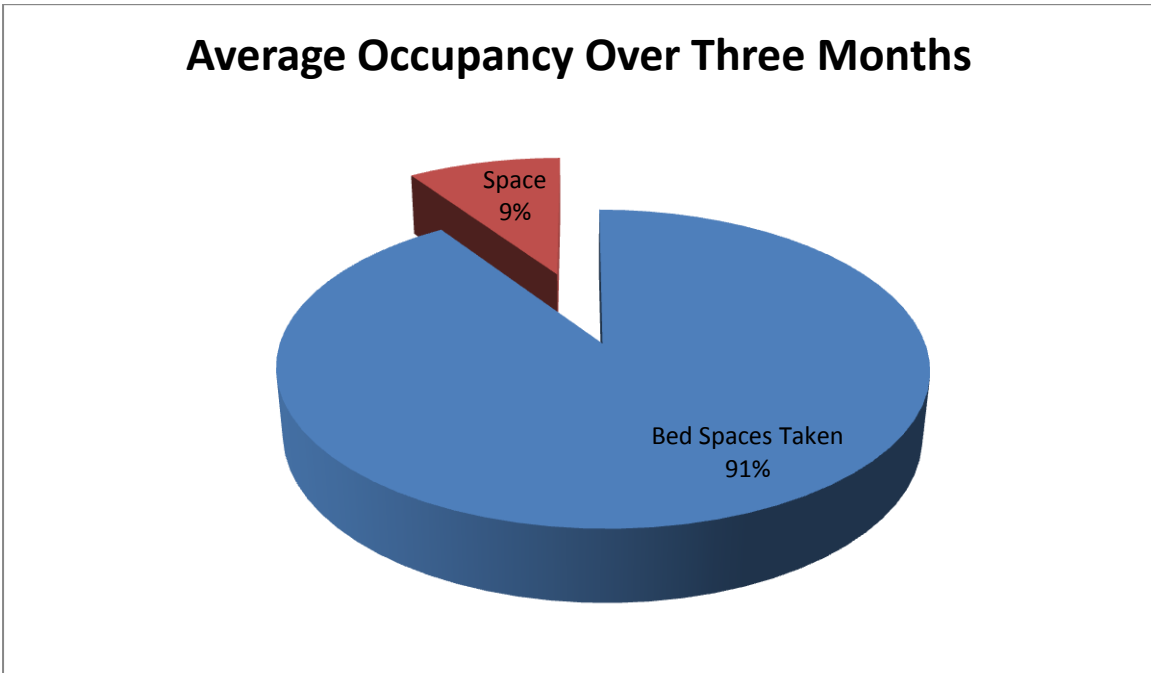
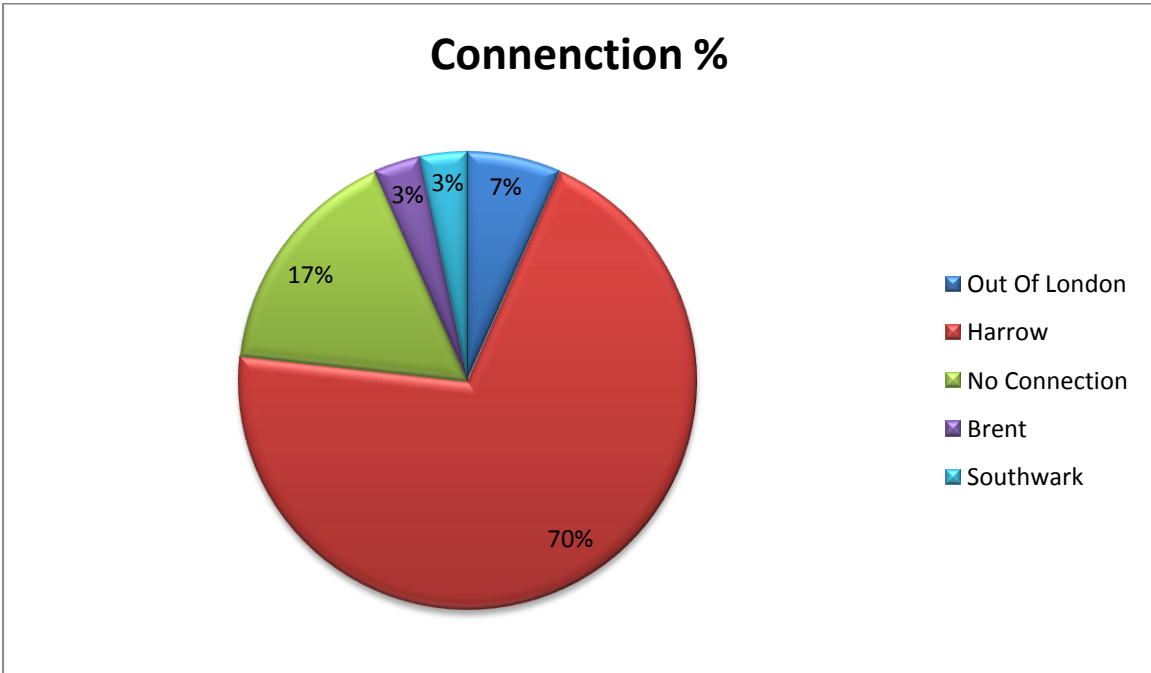
Restoration Fellowship

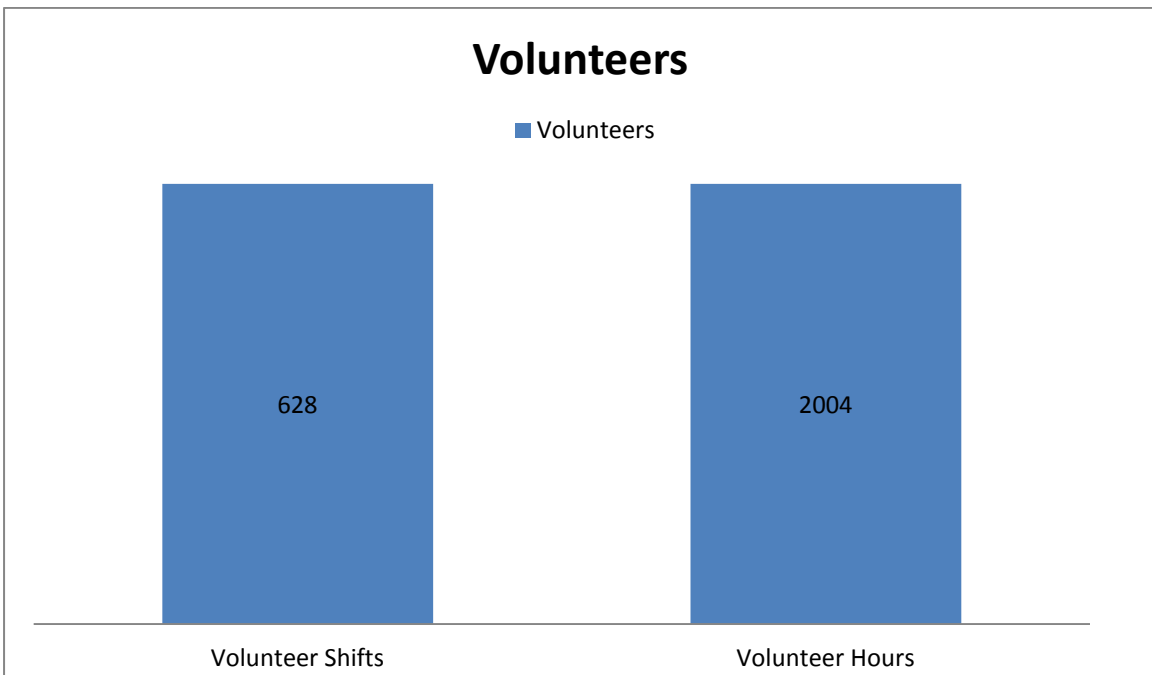
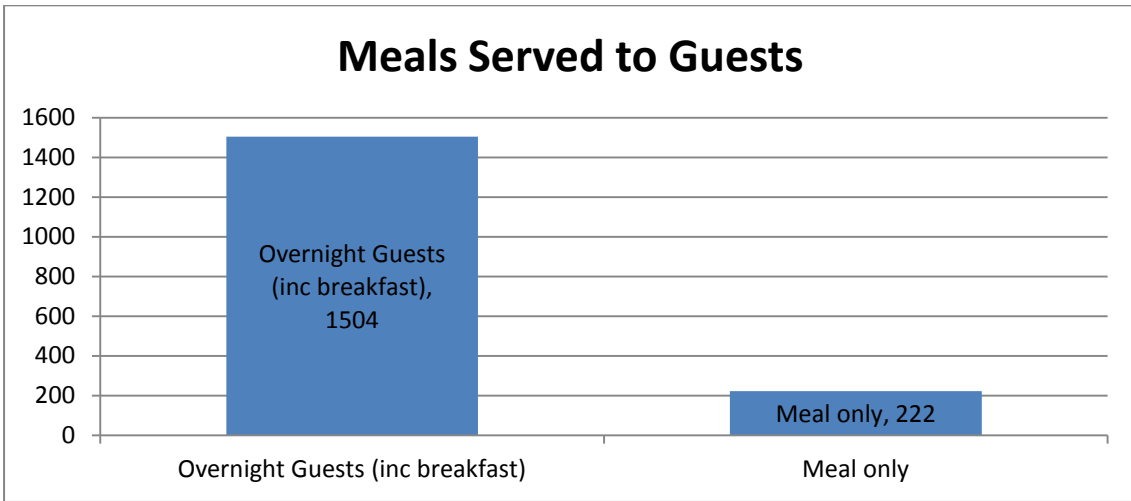
Hatch End Free Church

To the many individuals who have
gifted

Night Shelter Statistics







Conclusion

The night shelter has been a great success this year. FirmFoundation were able to almost double the number of guest housed last year. This has been made possible through a combination of the wider work of FirmFoundation since April 2013 and the appointment of both a separate Co-ordinator and part-time Support Worker. The Council's 'Housing Needs Team' and the Night Shelter have worked successfully together in gaining guests accommodation. Also, the referral systems and FirmFoundation's own clients ensured that the bed allocation was full on the shelter's first night and continued a high level of occupancy until its final night.

We would like to thank all of those involved with the Night Shelter 2014, we have been bowled over with the huge support we have received from the volunteers who have provided meals, support, sleeping overnight and the myriad of those other jobs that rarely are mentioned but are just as important.