

**Centre**

**33**

*Helping homeless people  
in St Albans*

**Summary Report  
and  
Accounts for 2014**

# Who we are

Centre 33 is a charity and volunteer-run drop-in centre which provides practical support for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or otherwise socially or materially disadvantaged in the St Albans area.

We aim to help our visitors by providing a welcoming place to meet, offering hot food and drinks, toiletries and shower facilities, and by signposting other services which they may be able to access for further help. We also offer limited supplies of essential clothing items.

The Centre has over 150 volunteers and is a recipient of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award given to volunteer groups in the UK.

The Centre is managed by the Charity's trustees, who also operate as the executive committee.

Centre 33 is a member of St Albans City & District Council's Homelessness Partnership Board and collaborates with national and local agencies, organisations, and other charities working in partnership to improve the provision of support services in and around St Albans. We help around 300 individuals every year.

# Looking ahead

In the relatively affluent area of St Albans, the number of people sleeping rough is now in single figures, but there is no decline in the numbers of those who 'sofa surf', those who are classed as 'statutorily homeless', those who are at risk of homelessness, those who have to choose between paying their rent and being able to eat, those who just need a place to go where they are welcome.

Centre 33 continues to offer vital services to these people and others. Whilst high demand, which puts pressure on our facilities and on our volunteers, is leading us to look for the opportunity to expand both our premises and the facilities we can offer, our primary focus remains delivery of the services we offer now and striving to improve these.

# Demand for our services

**66%** more visits than 10 years ago when 5,109 were recorded in 2004

In 2014, we saw demand for Centre 33 stay the same as it was in 2013, with visitor numbers again averaging 15.5 per session, although we ran fewer sessions due to closures, so served slightly fewer meals overall.

**8,461** meals were provided to Centre 33 visitors in 2014

Despite visitor numbers staying at similar levels to the previous year, we continued to see higher peaks in demand for our services. More sessions than in any previous year had over 20 visitors attending.

**16%** of all sessions had in excess of 20 visitors, and sometimes up to 30

These increased peaks in demand remain a challenge for us because of the physical constraints of the Centre in terms of space for visitors, size of the kitchen and the number of volunteers who can sensibly operate in the Centre during a session.

**548** sessions when Centre 33 was opened to Visitors in 2014

In 2014, our volunteers donated over 4,000 hours of their own time to prepare food and open Centre 33 for our visitors on almost 550 occasions including Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

# 2014 in review

The year has seen some significant operational changes including the move to an online rota system for our volunteers, which has been a real success.

Another change followed the loss of our centrally-located storage site in vacant office space, when the building's owners unexpectedly withdrew the facility from the numerous charities who had taken up residence at their invitation just a couple of months previously.

At this point we took the decision that it was no longer practical for Centre 33 to manage a stock of items, also meaning that we no longer accept donations of food, unless in exceptional circumstances. Since then we have been buying supplies on demand and having them delivered directly to the Centre, and this is working well.

This move also affected our ability to accept the generosity of schools and churches wishing to give harvest festival donations, although we are pleased to say that our requests for these to be given to the St Albans & District Food Bank instead seemed to be well-received.

Inside the Centre 33 premises, the kitchen has had a new microwave and the electric hand-dryer installed

in 2013 has reduced instances of blockages caused by paper towels. Unfortunately it has taken less than a year for the internal mould problem to resurface in the Centre and it is in need of another thorough clean and probably redecoration as well. Plans were put in place to commission a full refurbishment of the shower room, including improved ventilation, and this work will be done in 2015.

Centre 33 was the first homelessness organisation to be consulted by the NHS St Albans and Harpenden Locality Team for a project they were undertaking related to provision of health services, although we still await the outcomes.

The Centre continues to be represented as a member of St Albans City & District Council's Homelessness Partnership Board, the Homelessness Networking Forum in St Albans and a member of the STAMP (St Albans Multi-agency Protocol) panel, with trustees and volunteers attending on our behalf.

We had 2 trustee changes during the year. In April, we were delighted to appoint our new Treasurer, Melanie O'Neill to the board. In July we said goodbye to Sue Dines, after several years as both a volunteer

and trustee. We are very grateful to Sue for her commitment and enthusiasm and wish her all the best for the future.

We have had a good volunteer recruitment pipeline over the year and our Volunteer Co-ordinator and Anne, our volunteer who handles the application process for us, have done a wonderful job.

Traditionally, both the summer holidays and Christmas period are harder for us, as more volunteers are away at these times, so we run recruitment campaigns to attract short-term volunteers. These were particularly successful in 2014, and we're grateful to all who gave their support and delighted that a number of those volunteers have stayed on longer-term.

In December, some of our most dedicated volunteers designed and decorated a Centre 33 tree in the Christmas Tree Festival, incorporating messages from some of the Centre's visitors.

The Christmas dinner, in mid-December, was attended by 28 visitors, plus the Mayor who dropped in for a cup of tea and a few chats before heading to another engagement. Thanks go to the Women's Institute and to SAMS for knitting hats and scarves for visitors in the cold winter weather.

Throughout the year we have been fortunate to receive ongoing support from Thai Rack and the Cancer Research Shop, and from Emmaus St Albans, all of which have helped us to continue offering our services.

## Fundraising & Donations

We are exceptionally grateful to everyone who has given to, or raised money for, Centre 33 in 2014 including the Community Café at St Julian's Church, Cunningham Hill Junior School, customers and staff of Marks & Spencer in St Albans, one of our volunteers (Maria) and St Albans City Youth Football Club, the Portland Arms, another of our volunteers (Sandra) who ran a half marathon, the Rock in the Wood event, everyone who took part in the Sleepout for Centre 33, and other organisations and private individuals who have given money to support the work we do.

# Summary Accounts

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Incoming Resources</b>		
Incoming resources from generated funds		
Voluntary income	17,931	27,554
Investment income	733	889
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<u>18,664</u>	<u>28,443</u>
<b>Resources Expended</b>		
Charitable activities	18,432	17,658
Governance costs	0	0
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<u>18,432</u>	<u>17,658</u>
<b>Net Income For The Period</b>	232	10,785
<b>Total Funds Brought Forward</b>	47,847	37,062
<b>Total Funds At 31 December 2014</b>	<u>48,079</u>	<u>47,847</u>

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Voluntary Income</b>		
Grants	3,665	5,495
Donations	14,266	13,347
Fund raising	0	8,712
	<u>17,931</u>	<u>27,554</u>

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Resources Expended On Charitable Activities</b>		
Volunteer management and support	8,000	8,254
Food and other household costs	3,295	3,212
Repairs and maintenance	2,404	2,277
Heat, light and utilities	2,572	2,299
General administration	2,161	1,616
	<u>18,432</u>	<u>17,658</u>

# Key Contacts

## Centre 33

2A Spicer Street  
St Albans  
Hertfordshire  
AL3 4PQ

[www.centre33.org](http://www.centre33.org)

Tel: 01727 830 901 (during opening hours only)

e-mail: [information@centre33.org](mailto:information@centre33.org)

## Trustees:

Chairman

Mark Arbeid

[chairman@centre33.org](mailto:chairman@centre33.org)

Vice Chairman

Bob Barrett

Secretary

Andrew Copley

[secretary@centre33.org](mailto:secretary@centre33.org)

Treasurer

Melanie O'Neill

[treasurer@centre33.org](mailto:treasurer@centre33.org)

Minutes Secretary

Penny Williams

Other trustees

Alley Ashton

Peter Graham

David Grimshaw

Colin Simmons

## Volunteer Co-ordinator:

Susan Devi

[volunteers@centre33.org](mailto:volunteers@centre33.org)

# Life President & Patron

**Life President:** Donald Minter

**Patron:** The Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City & District of St Albans

# Centre 33

*Helping homeless people  
in St Albans*



Centre 33 is very grateful for the ongoing support and partnership it receives from St Albans City & District Council.



Centre 33 is a member of the Centre for Voluntary Service (CVS) St Albans District and is grateful to the CVS for the considerable support provided to Centre 33.



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

In recognition of the service given by our Volunteers to the community in St Albans, Centre 33 is honoured to have received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, sometimes known as '*the MBE for volunteer groups*', in 2008.

It is awarded for outstanding achievement by groups of volunteers who regularly devote their time to helping others in the community, improving the quality of life and opportunity for others and providing an outstanding service.

Centre 33 is the trading name of Centre 33 (St Albans) Limited, registered in England as a company limited by guarantee (company no. 7955132) and as a charity (charity no. 1146438)