

# Centre

# 33

*Helping homeless people  
in St Albans*

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# Summary Report and Accounts for 2016

Published: April 2017



# Who we are

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

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.

Centre 33 began, at 33 Hatfield Road, in 1977, so 2017 will mark 40 years since the Centre's creation.

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.

# Investment in our future

The need for our services remains significant and, recognising that we are unlikely to find suitable larger premises in the medium term, we are investing in ensuring sustainability and quality of service in the present Spicer Street location, which has been home to Centre 33 for over 25 years.

A programme of improvements has seen refurbishment of the Visitors' shower room in 2015, the toilet facilities, communal areas and ventilation of the Centre in 2016, and will see modernisation of the kitchen areas during 2017.

# 2016 in review

The most significant event in Centre 33's year was the refurbishment and ventilation work undertaken, both because it resulted in a relatively large number of planned closures for the work to take place, and because the results have had such a positive effect on the environment within the Centre. The work was planned for the summer to minimise the seriousness of the necessary closure for our most vulnerable Visitors.

The improvements include:

- A humidity-reducing ventilation system with heat recovery
- New flooring
- Improved lighting
- Upgraded security camera system
- Interior decoration
- Window repairs
- Renovation of the toilet facilities

Most of these have had an immediate visual impact, making the Centre a nicer place for Visitors and Volunteers alike, whilst the less-visible ventilation system should put an end to the recurrent issues with mould on the internal walls.

Additionally, a corporate volunteering team from Bunnings overhauled the Centre's yard, upgrading the outdoor space for Visitors.

The Centre was officially reopened, after this major phase of our improvement programme, by our Patron, the Mayor.

During 2016, Centre 33's public profile has been enhanced by social media content, stories in print and online in the local press, and broadcast coverage on local radio. This is important to us because it raises awareness of what we do, and consequently helps us to recruit more volunteers and to raise funds.

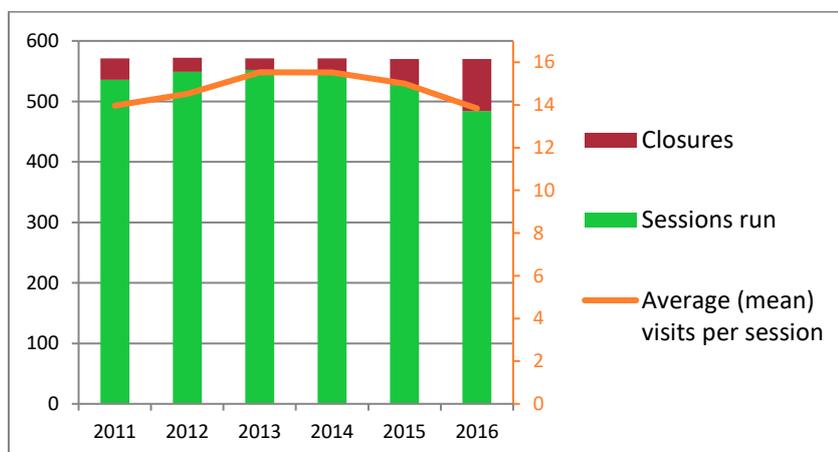
Trustees and Volunteers from Centre 33 contributed to the Council's process for renewal of their statutory Homelessness Strategy, which was published in December, and continued to take an active part in partnership working, developing links and strategies with partner organisations, as a member of SACDC's Homelessness Forum and as a member of the STAMP (St Albans Multi-agency Protocol) panel.

# Need for our services

In 2016, our volunteers again donated over 4,000 hours of their own time to keep Centre 33 running and open for our visitors on almost 500 occasions including Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

**6,698** meals were provided to Centre 33 visitors in 2016.

The total number of visitors to Centre 33 in 2016 was down 15% on 2015, largely due to the 55 planned session closures over the summer, required for the Centre's improvement works, but also reflecting a slight reduction in demand over the last few years, since a peak in 2013. These numbers don't give an indication of degree of need, and we hope to be able to help those who need our services most. If July, August and September are excluded from the comparison, the year was flat when compared to 2015.



**On average, 2016 saw a decrease in attendance per session.**

Peak visitor numbers in any month were lower than last year's high in July 2015 and, unusually, the busiest month this year was December, with 724 visits – 47% more than in December 2015 – and no closures, with the Centre open throughout Christmas and the New Year.

There were 32 sessions which had more than 20 visitors attending, which is about half the number recorded in 2015, but skewed by the planned closure period. By average visitor numbers, March and May were the busiest months in 2016.

# Volunteers

Our Volunteers – the people who collectively donate thousands of hours each year of their precious time – are the reason that Centre 33 is able to offer its services to those in need.

Most volunteers run sessions at the Centre, opening and shutting the premises, preparing and serving food and drink, and handing out towels and toiletries for the shower. Our volunteers also exercise diplomatic skills, keeping the peace and managing difficult situations on the rare occasions that these occur. Being a volunteer can be a varied and sometimes challenging role.

Centre 33 also has volunteers helping with the recruitment processes for new volunteers, representing the Centre at multi-

agency meetings, helping us to manage our communications, and managing donations and stocks of clothing, blankets and other items. We would like to have more volunteers involved in a greater range of the management activities of the Centre and are always open to offers of skills and involvement in other management activities.

Evolution of our recruiting strategies, especially by our Volunteer Co-ordinator, has resulted in higher numbers of seasonal volunteers to allow us to resource and stay open throughout the summer and Christmas periods when regular volunteers' availability is often reduced by the need for family time and well-deserved breaks.

# Support & donations

Centre 33 runs entirely on the generosity of others. We receive support from St Albans City & District Council, local businesses, schools, churches, synagogues, community-based organisations and from individuals and other charities in the St Albans area.

We are exceptionally grateful to everyone who has given their time, donated money and supplies, or fundraised for Centre 33. We could not exist without you. Thank you!

# Summary Accounts

	2016 £	2015 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>		
Incoming resources from generated funds		
Voluntary income	25,116	19,944
Investment income	254	407
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	25,370	20,351
<b>Resources Expended</b>		
Charitable activities	41,914	21,835
Governance costs	0	0
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	41,914	21,835
<b>Net (Deficit)/Income for The Period</b>	(16,544)	(1,484)
<b>Funds Brought Forward</b>	46,595	48,079
<b>Total Funds at 31 December</b>	30,051	46,595

	2016 £	2015 £
<b>Voluntary Income</b>		
Grants	300	0
Donations	24,816	19,944
Fund raising	0	0
	25,116	19,944

## Resources Expended On Charitable Activities

	2016 £	2015 £
Volunteer management and support	8,000	8,000
Food and other household costs	2,582	3,447
Refurbishment	22,439	0
Repairs and maintenance	1,996	7,254
Heat, light and utilities	2,499	2,408
General administration	1,928	2,005
Accruals no longer required	0	(1,279)
	41,914	21,835

# 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

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

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

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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 held the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, sometimes known as '*the MBE for volunteer groups*', since 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)