

The Friary is a local charity - we empower homeless and disadvantaged adults to rebuild their lives by providing practical services, advice and emotional support.

"A wonderful compassionate and caring organisation" says retiring Chair of Trustees

I am grateful for this invitation to offer a few reflections as I stand down after twenty years as a Trustee, and the last nine as Chair.

There is no doubt that the Friary is a very special place to many people including Trustees, staff, volunteers and not least those who use the services. Launched in 1988 by the Friary URC as an initiative in response to the report 'Faith in the Cities', it has developed into a high-profile ecumenical charity with its core values firmly rooted in the social teaching of the Christian faith.

Although my introduction to deprivation began whilst working in St. Ann's and The Meadows in the mid-1960s it was not until more recent years that a deep personal experience reminded me that poverty and vulnerability still abounds in our community.

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On a dank autumnal morning, I had to take some papers to the Friary for 9.00 am and I arrived exactly on time to observe a queue of about fifteen service users waiting in complete silence for the door to open. At that precise moment, the door was unlocked with a loud click and the queue, in an orderly fashion, filed-in maintaining complete silence. Immediately I pinched myself to make sure what I had witnessed was really happening in Nottingham - people queueing outside the

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> "A wonderful compassionate and caring organisation" says retiring Chair of Trustees
continued

front door of a charity to access something to eat and other welfare services. For the rest of that day, I thought about nothing else than the many burdens carried by homeless people and rough sleepers and the justice they deserve.

Pre-Covid, Friary services were accessed by one thousand unique individuals each year, and this raises the fundamental question around what makes Friary so popular – and what makes it tick?

I believe it is all about the willingness to LISTEN.

Listening carefully to a person when they are most vulnerable is a sign of understanding and respect for that person and helps them maintain their dignity. This is paramount for their recovery and future well-being, as poor people need to feel cared for when in crisis. In far too many cases, constant rejection has been the factor that has had a negative impact on their lives, not least resulting in loneliness.

Each person presents with their own story and their own needs. It is not out of place therefore for me to offer my personal thanks to every individual in the staff team for endless patience and sensitivity shown in helping to turn round the lives of service users, and since March 2020 for their outstanding work in meeting the challenge of Covid.

Likewise, our many volunteers should receive recognition for their unselfish loyalty and a special mention would be appropriate for the work of the Allotment Team who provide so much fresh food for the kitchen throughout

the year. I should also like to extend thanks to the elected members and staff of Rushcliffe Borough Council for their on-going support. There is no doubt that in our community the Friary occupies its rightful place as a beacon of hope for many vulnerable people; even in the most difficult of circumstances where the death occurs of a person in our care who has no known family or friends, we have been able to offer support by arranging their funeral.

Listening carefully to a person when they are most vulnerable is a sign of understanding and respect

It has been my privilege to be part of a wonderful compassionate and caring organisation for two decades and for all who have read this far I would ask the question that I asked myself at the beginning of my journey – What duty of care do I have towards the weakest in our community?

The answer is found in the Gospel of St Matthew 25.

Robin Lund



Free printing of this newsletter courtesy of A R Signs

Friary Advice Centre - more space to expand the service we offer.

The Advice Centre has been operating for around six months now so we asked our Senior Advice Worker how things are going.

What do you find are the issues you spend the most amount of time on with our visitors?

Much of the work I do is around benefits. It's important that those we work with are on the correct benefits and I spend a high proportion of my time checking this. Where they are not, I will provide support to make new claims.

A significant number need me to liaise with the DWP (or other organisations) on their behalf, as they don't always have the confidence or capacity to do so. Often their own attempts have been unsuccessful. This could be by way of a phone call, written representations or submitting a formal review or appeal on the individual's behalf.

What are the main reasons that our visitors need to access benefits?

This is most often because they are unfit for work due to physical and mental health issues. Many of these are long standing and can be a result of family/relationship breakdown, lack of stable housing and sometimes substance misuse.

We also see an increasing number of families where one or both of the wage earners has faced reduced hours or loss of employment.

What are the key areas affecting someone's finances?

Fuel poverty is increasing as energy costs are soaring. We see those on very low-incomes spending a greater proportion of their income on heating. Our visitors' accommodation is often sub-standard, with less efficient heating

or insulation and pre-paid meters so costs are higher. Families with children say they have to choose between paying for food or their heating bills. The internet is often vital for children to do their schoolwork and school uniforms are relatively expensive for families on a limited income. Any loss of income is likely to be damaging to those individuals' physical and mental health.

We also see an increasing number of families where one or both of the wage earners has faced reduced hours or loss of employment.

How does the Friary help?

We are providing practical items of food, clothing and household items to alleviate poverty, we also seek to support with maximizing incomes and negotiating with creditors.

How has opening the Advice Centre helped?

The opening of the advice centre has given us more space to expand the service that we offer. We now have a large office space more conducive to offering face to face meetings in a safe environment. In the past we have often had to see individuals outside, which is obviously not ideal. Speaking to visitors over the phone is often an unsatisfactory means of obtaining relevant information and it is clear that our visitors prefer the option of meeting their adviser in person.

Friary winter appeal 2021

Nobody deserves to be on the streets at Christmas. Help the Friary help the homeless and those in need this Winter.

We are starting to see the rise in the cost of energy and fuel affect the most vulnerable. Increased numbers are visiting the Friary for practical help and emotional support as they attempt to cope with this increase in the cost of living.

The Friary has recognised the need to focus on preventative work and as such, we have now launched our Advice Centre to complement the work in our Drop-In Centre. We are working to support people with issues around benefits, housing and debt. This is already starting to make a difference and those who could have ended up on the streets are being supported.

The Friary is here to provide both practical and emotional support and it is the emphasis on both that makes the real difference. To many people we see, without the time invested with them, they feel there are few other places to turn.

The pandemic has brought extra support for rough sleepers with increased accommodation provision this Winter. This is so welcomed for those entrenched rough sleepers. It will give them space and support to consider the future. It can't help everyone though and the Friary is here to help those who will still be in need.

Help the Friary to remain the support network that we are to so many people this Winter.

www.justgiving.com/campaign/friarywinterappeal2021

Ben Talbot, Chief Exec

Figures are for people coming to Drop-In only.

Visitors in 12 months to 31-10-2021	6,115 visits made by 769 unique individuals
New in 12 months to 31-10-2021	322
Cooking Food Parcels in 12 months to 31-10-2021	1,511
Non-Cooking Food Parcels in 12 months to 31-10-2021	3,249
Rough Sleepers Oct 2021	43 (out of 66 NFA*)
Unique Males Oct 2021	158
Unique Females Oct 2021	26

*NFA = No fixed abode.

the Friary **Working**
locally to end
homelessness

Nobody deserves to be homeless this Winter

£30K needed

Help the Friary to help the homeless this Winter

- More people will need our help this year
 - Consequences of the pandemic continue to affect the most vulnerable
 - Poverty is leading to poorer diets, deteriorating mental health and debt
 - The Friary is sometimes the only support network
- With your help the Friary will make sure people are not left hungry or alone.**

Could you make a contribution towards a meal or the cost of providing practical and emotional support?

DONATE HERE: justgiving.com/campaign/friarywinterappeal2021

Our mission is to empower homeless and disadvantaged people to rebuild their lives. We achieve this by providing practical help, advice and emotional support.

Redstock

Redmile village and local residents HAVE KINDLY RAISED £2,500 for our charity. Funds will go towards our new Advice Centre to help prevent homelessness. On behalf of the Trustees, staff and people we support, thanks go to the organisers of Redstock, especially Sandra Harrhy a loyal volunteer and champion of the Friary's cause and everyone who joined in at the event. Your support will make a difference.



the Friary Working
locally to end
homelessness

BIKES WANTED!



We take any bikes
(working, or not) and
bike parts
to renovate & raise funds

Friary Centre – Services available

- A warm welcome (no matter what!)
- Initial point of contact in time of crisis
- Food & hot drink, shower (rough sleepers only), clothing, footwear
- Welfare advice (by appointment)
- Health advice
- Access to computers (by appointment), e.g. to apply for benefits, support with CV writing & job searches – essential with roll out of online only applications for state benefits
- Hot meals
- Budgetary advice
- Support to maintain tenancies
- Social interaction to improve mental health and confidence building
- Rough sleeper sessions

These are some of the services/activities on offer at the Friary, please feel welcome to visit.

If you have been inspired to support us in any way, we would really love to hear from you.



Where to find us

46 Musters Road
Nottingham NG2 7PR

Phone 0115 982 5448
Option 1 Centre, Option 2 Admin Office
admin@the-friary.org.uk

General Manager; Ann Bremner MBE

FRIARY OPENING TIMES

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

8.30 am – 12 noon

Tuesday and Thursday

8.30 am – 11 am

Cooked breakfasts
(rough sleepers only)

Donations to the Centre
Monday-Friday 8 am - 4 pm

**Our depot is now
closed, please
bring items to
the Drop-in
Centre,
46 Musters Road
Thank you.**

the-friary.org.uk

 **[Facebook.com/theFriary88](https://www.facebook.com/theFriary88)**

 **[linkedin.com/company/friary-drop-in/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/friary-drop-in/)**

**the Friary Working
locally to end
homelessness**



You can find out more about our events and what's going on by following us on twitter **@theFriary88**

REGULAR GIVING: Please visit our website for details on how to set up donations on a regular basis. This is the most helpful way for our Charity to be able to budget and plan for the future. Complete a Gift Aid form as appropriate.

Registered Charity Number 1056825
Company registered in England and Wales
Number 3190740