



Dover Outreach Centre – April 2017 Newsletter

Dear All,

Too late to wish you all a Happy Easter, I hope that you have had a good one never-the-less and that no-one is suffering from too much chocolate.

Even though we are half way through the seventh month since we opened the Outreach Centre, I have today, finally finished collating the six-monthly stats (no-one is more relieved than I am!)

As you know we need to keep record of all manner of information to prove to the 'powers that be' that we are making a difference, most of it is pretty boring but you may like to know that during the first six months we have seen 25 people re-housed, 18 have moved into work and you have made breakfast 1,214 times (that doesn't include a calculation for those people who come in and eat three, four or five breakfasts each day and as you know there are a few of those!) Thank you for all that work. Thank you too that, although it would have been understandable, I have not heard over 1,200 episodes of swearing at the toaster. Well done for doing that so quietly!

We had advanced notice last week of the (projected) size of our electricity bill. We are heading towards £900 with three weeks left to go. This is scary but considering the amount of electricity we use every day – it's not just heating and lighting and tea urns, it's the washing machines, and (worse) the tumble driers! Likely to be more frightening yet is the water bill – again tea urns and washing machines but washing up, showers and the never-ending floor-washing. These things again evidence the amount of people we see and the work you do for them. Please pray that we will be able to meet the financial costs of the work we are doing, as you know the bills are not the end of it, we will be supporting both Neil and Glenn through onward training into new careers over the coming months. Let's not mention the telephone bill.

God has been amazingly good to us, some of the churches in and around Dover have been really generous in supporting us and so have some individuals as well, please pray that the Lord returns to them 'shaken down and pressed together' the same measure of blessing in return. I cannot believe for a moment that He will fail us but I do think we need to continually pray about these things.

Easter Sunday saw another Baptism of one of our (ex) homeless men. Paul gave a testimony which credited the Outreach Centre for his new faith, thank you for witnessing so effectively to him and to the other people we see. We are told of the outcome of this in Luke 15:7 - 'I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent'. Praise God, that really is an outcome to be pleased with.

Although March and April have been relatively quiet, the people we have seen have arrived with more complex needs than usual and dealing with these has taken up more time than has been the average up until now. Thank you for putting up with the slow mornings, the time may well drag on a bit on such occasions but you allow me the time to deal with more administrative issues by sticking with it.

Our Maintenance Team have all but finished in the neighbouring hall of St. Paul's and will shortly be moving on to decorate the church itself. This is a large and daunting task which the five of them hope to see finished within three months. Three of these five men were homeless not so long ago and have moved through volunteering into being employed by the Outreach Centre (on a part-time basis initially) and soon into full-time work, this is to be funded by the payments received by the people they are working for. They have made such a good job of the work they have completed that further work is stacking up. The idea is that they will eventually move on into independent employment, thereby making way for others to move out of homelessness and into work via the same route. You are not just making toast, you are making a difference. Thank you for all of your hard work.

I am awaiting confirmation of the new dates for training and will send them out separately as soon as I have them.

Meanwhile, thank you again for all that you are doing for the Outreach Centre and for the homeless people of Dover.

With love & blessings
Vee.