



★ Sleeping out... at home! ★

On Friday 19th June, we held our first ever virtual sleep out! Normally our sleep outs would take place in a car park and we'd all join together for a night under the stars. However, with the current restrictions in place, we were unable to do this. Instead, we decided to run the event virtually so we could continue to raise the funds, awareness and create the community spirit that the sleep out brings each year. We encouraged participants to spend a night away from their beds and 'sleep out at home', in their gardens, sheds, garages or other alternative spaces. To keep our fantastic participants entertained during the evening, we ran a live stream with music from Evie Cosgrove and Wille Edwards, poetry from Graeme Ryan, storytelling from Alexandra Simonson as well as a thank you video created by our staff and clients. The event went better than we could have imagined, despite the wet weather! We had an incredible 138 participants sleeping out over 67 households – the most participants the sleep out has ever had! All set up different 'sleeping arrangements', under tarpaulins, hidden away in sheds and even sheltering under a ping-pong table! We were even joined by a few international students of a Taunton based school, which meant we had 'sleepers' in Kenya, France and Russia! As well as giving up their beds for the night, the participants worked hard to raise funds for Arc and we are delighted to announce that we have raised an incredible **£12,201** so far to help support our services. A huge thank you to everyone who took part, performed and contributed in some way. Here are some photos of the evening... (Can you spot our theme?)



Property update

By Martin Ball

Throughout lockdown, the Maintenance team have been carrying out essential repairs, answering emergency calls and ensuring all our properties remain safe and secure. This has also been an ideal opportunity to work on some projects that are classed as 'Planned Maintenance' meaning they are not prioritised.

The front of one property has been looking tired for some years, so when the scaffolding was in place for our garage conversion, it seemed perfect sense to extend the hire and work on the whole front elevation, including new guttering, replacing the rotten fascia and barge boards, and securing loose tiles with a cement fillet.



Although not quite finished, the team have received positive comments from neighbours praising their work and mentioning how good the building is looking. One said that we have "greatly improved the look of the street".

Well done to our maintenance team Andy, Steve and Billy for struggling on during the recent extreme weather conditions!



A lovely card received for Support Worker Charlie, from a client who recently moved on from Arc's services...

Words can't express how grateful I am to you personally. In my eyes you have gone above and beyond, what is required of you. You knew that making me laugh with your brilliant accents was the best medicine, when I just needed to be alone and when I needed you to give me a "kick up the arse!" I don't think any of you guys get anywhere near the amount of recognition that you so justly deserve! Especially not you, so love goes....

Charlie,

YOU are AMAZING!

We second that Charlie!



It's been a tough few months and change can be difficult to adapt to. We hear from Nicki, working on the frontline as a Support Worker at Lindley House, speaking of this change...



"What an emotional roller coaster ride we have been through these last 3 months. Our Lindley family was separated as the government requested we reduce our hostel capacity. With the uncertainty of 'will our residents cope', 'will they be ok', 'will they be safe'?... There has been anxiety, tears but also laughter, and this is just the staff!

Always the panic of 'nobody can look after our residents as well as us'. Selfish, but we are going to miss them. As our unit grew smaller we regrouped as a smaller Lindley Family. A new way of life, 2 meters apart. To think that 2 meters apart has actually brought us closer together."

A huge thank you to our frontline workers.

Thank you!

We would like to say an absolutely huge thank you to our friends and supporters Claims Consortium Group. They contacted us in April to say they were purchasing PPE for their supply chain and for every mask purchased from them, they would donate PPE to those in need. They contacted us knowing that our frontline staff rely on masks every day and as a charity, it's hard to source and afford the equipment we need. On 2nd June, they turned up at our hostel with 1000 masks to donate to us! We are so incredibly grateful for this and to them. It is so vital that we keep our staff and clients safe and Claims Consortium have helped us to do so.

Thank you!



Volunteer week

During the first week of June we celebrated National Volunteers Week by saying a big thank you to our fantastic team of volunteers with cards and chocolates! We are so grateful for all the time they have given and continue to give us and the support they provide for our homeless community. We couldn't do without them! So far this year our volunteers have donated roughly 1,800 hours and many have continued throughout the pandemic. Our volunteers also shared their stories with us. Here are a few words from Pauline who has been volunteering with Arc since 2017...



"I was scrolling through Facebook one Saturday morning in June 2017 and noticed a post asking for volunteers who could offer their time a few hours a week to make collections from local shops that were donating food to the homeless. I was due to take early retirement in July 2017, just a few weeks later, so I immediately wrote to Rosie offering to help. I've always felt immensely sorry for anyone that finds themselves homeless and, having seen it growing in my home town over the last decade, knew that if I could help in any way I would do all I could."

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Emma on edunn@arcinspire.co.uk

