

NIGHTSTOP NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 2

April 2013

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

Steve Jewell, one of our valued Nightstop drivers, based in Ruishton, near Taunton.

Q: A cheeky question to start: how old are you?

A: 49!

Q: Tell me about your family.

A: I am married to Anne, and I have 3 children: Ben (5), Becky (8) and Holly (19) from my first marriage, who is at university.

Q: What job do you do and where do you work?

A: I am the Practice Director for a firm of independent financial advisors in Burnham-On-Sea, effectively an administration manager.

Q: You are obviously a busy man, so what made you become a Nightstop driver?

A: Brittney visited our

church and talked about Nightstop requiring more hosts and drivers. I could not



Steve Jewell, one of our drivers

be a host as we do not have space, but I have a company car, and driving is something I can do. It was one way I

c o u l d practically do something to help the **y o u n g** people in need. As a

Christian I feel it is important to use the gifts I have been

given to be a practical help to others. Jesus, when he was here, showed love and acceptance to many people who had no status in society at the time, and I feel by helping, I am showing his love today to these homeless young people.

Q: When driving the young person to their host for the night, do you get a chance to get to know them a little?

A: They are all completely different, and the journeys vary from 10 minutes to my longest one of about 50

minutes. I usually make a bit of small talk and you get the vibes very

quickly if (continued on page 2)

"I feel it is important to use the gifts I have been given to be a practical help to others."

CANAL BOAT GET-TOGETHER

All Nightstop volunteers are invited to a Canal Boat trip followed by supper at Maunsel Lock Café, North Newton on Friday 24th May. Price £10 per person

The canal boat will depart at

6.30pm sharp from Maunsel Lock in North Newton and will navigate the canal for an hour and a half. Half the party will ramble alongside and swap onto the boat for the return journey. Those not able to

ramble will be able to stay on the boat. Well behaved dogs welcome. Upon return to the lock we will have a hot supper at Maunsel Lock Café.

Please book in with Sally
Sally.East@bridgwaterymca.org

FROM THE HOME PROJECTS TEAM:

Some of you will remember our Nightstop conference last year. Due to changes within our organization we will be delaying the conference this year. We have been awarded the Pathways to Independence contract for delivering young people's services in Sedgemoor and West Somerset and will work alongside TAH in Taunton Deane. This will further improve the services we are able to offer to young people with housing needs. We hope to book a conference later this year, along with some volunteer training opportunities. Watch this space...

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Projects

@bridgwaterymca.org

This new email reaches all the team, so is a great new way to let us know about host availability and for submitting your monthly expenses.



YMCA

Somerset HOME Projects

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF... (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

they want to chat. Some are very inward looking and just want to be quiet. One was very anxious travelling to the host as he did not know what to expect. He had spent some time in prison, but he was really scared, so I was able to reassure him. I don't fire questions and interrogate them, but do allow them to talk and open up if they want to.

Q: Do you drive the same young person often?

A: I have only driven one young person twice.

Q: How often do you drive for Nightstop?

A: I guess it is 4/5 times a month on average, and it is mostly during the week, although I have done the occasional run at the weekend.

Q: Do you ever say no when you are asked to drive?

A: Yes, I do, probably about a third of

the time, as I do have some practical restrictions. I am involved in a car share to work, so I have to go back home before I do a run, as my car share partner is not CRB checked, so I cannot pick up the youngster, even if I am in my car. Also, we are a one car family, so my wife does need the car from time to time.

Q: Do you ever find it awkward with the girls?

A: I have only driven one girl and she was one of the chatty ones, so it

was not awkward at all!

Q: Can you plan ahead with your journeys?

A: No, not at all. I usually get called in the afternoon that they want me to drive. If I am driving on Saturday or Sunday, I am usually called on the Friday before. Driving is usually between 5 and 6.30 in the evening and between 8 and 9 in the mornings. Because I am called on the day, I don't

feel guilty about saying no, as I cannot always do it. It is part and parcel of signing up, so I am pleased when I can help, but equally don't feel at all bad about saying no.

Q: Do you feel you get something back from being a driver?

A: Yes, it is rewarding. I feel I have done something valuable. Someone might not be able to get to their Nightstop placement if I did not drive them. It is only usually half an hour, but it is an essential cog in the wheel. I feel I am part of the big picture.

Q: How do your family feel about you being a driver?

A: Anne is fine with it. She feels it is valuable work. It is inconvenient to the family at times. In the evenings we usually all eat together as soon as I get in from work, so that we can get the youngsters to bed promptly. Sometimes I don't make it back for dinner, but I usually get there for bedtime. I just explain to the little ones that I am out helping someone, and they accept it.

"(Driving) is an essential cog in the wheel. I feel I am part of the big picture."

NEWS IN BRIEF

STAFF CHANGES

Goodbye

Liz Pardoe left us in November to travel the world. Follow her blog at travellinggirl.travellerspoint.com. She would love to hear from you.

Sue Flawn, our student worker, has returned to her third year studying Social Work at Bath University.

Hello

Eleanor (Ele) Peasland, our new Projects Worker, has a drama background and has worked in adult social work.

Holly Crossley our new Projects Worker, is from the private sector

From October, **Brittney Strange** stepped into Liz's role as Projects Coordinator

Nightstop was quiet in January and February, but we are very busy so far in March.

West Somerset Update

We now have 1 host nearing the end of her induction, and have hosted 2 young people from the area so far. We need 3 more hosts to meet our target.

Pathways to Independence—P2i

The YMCA, with its tendering consortium, has been awarded a 3 year contract to

be the sole provider of youth housing services in Sedgemoor and West Somerset. It is a recognition of what a fantastic service we already provide. **P2i** will provide services that will include high quality supported housing, family mediation, floating support and schools education, as well as the "Hub" which monitors the progress young people are making towards independence and long-term housing (as per the Routes office in Sedgemoor).

Apr'12—Mar'13	NIGHTSTOP STATISTICS
18	HOSTS
3	DRIVERS
70	YOUNG PEOPLE ACCOMMODATED
519	HOST NIGHTS

FIRST IMPRESSIONS AS NEW HOSTS!

Rosie and Ian Tremain have been fully inducted hosts for several months now, and we find out things are going

Q: How many young people have you hosted so far?

A: We have only had 3 young people to stay so far. We lead busy lives and we are only able to host for the odd night a week, sometimes less. When we are available, sometimes they don't need hosts either, so we have only been occasional hosts, but we are doing what we can.

Q: What have the young people been like?

A: Just completely normal young people really. Our last young person was Portuguese, so his English was not great. He was homeless for a week whilst he was waiting for a flat to become available.

He had just moved to the area. The other 2 young people we hosted came from family breakdown situations

which resulted in homelessness, but they were completely normal too.

Q: Was it awkward at all hosting the young people?

A: Not at all. We have quite a few visitors to stay, and they were no different. When they arrived we gave them a tour of the house. They just fitted in.

Q: How were mealtimes, did you have to cook something special?

A: Not at all. We just cooked what we would normally have for dinner—I think we had chicken casserole—the young people just joined us.

Q: Did you find it easy to build relationships with the young people?

A: One was very quiet. The Portuguese chap's English was not great, so conversation was limited, but the other young man was chatty.

Q: So what has your overall experience as a host been like?

A: Easy really. We do the bit we can in our busy lives. It is just like having any of our other visitors to stay.

"It is just like having any of our other visitors to stay"



SPARE ROOM CAMPAIGN

DePaul UK, our national affiliate, has launched a national Spare Room Campaign to raise awareness of youth homelessness and to ask those with spare rooms to consider being hosts. A fantastic video about it, featuring Trevor McDonald, is a strong way of persuading friends and acquaintances to volunteer.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxeHQjGZnZA>

FAMILY MEDIATION—WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Project Worker, **Erin Taylor**, talks about Family Mediation.

Q: Do you always contact homeless young people's families?

A: Yes, where it is safe to do so. We try to talk to both parties individually first and then together. Sometimes this is a phone call and sometimes a face to face chat. It is good to hear the story from both sides, as the truth is normally somewhere in the middle.

Q: How can you begin to help resolving the issues?

A: Often it is minor issues that have become huge, resulting in the young

person leaving home. We are able to see the issues from a different perspective and are able to negotiate a compromise. It is important that there is movement on both sides, so that the parents and the young person are in a win-win situation. If the parents are willing to talk, we usually move heaven and earth to get the young person to the table too.

Q: What sort of issues are involved?

A: Overcrowding is common with the oldest child being asked to leave. Arguments are also a big contributing factor. Teenagers often end up arguing with parents about things that are trivial in the grand scheme, but

when communication breaks down, these arguments often become unmanageable.

Q: Do you often get a positive outcome?

A: Anything that improves the relationship is a positive outcome. Sometimes this results in the young person moving back home, if only temporarily, so that we can sort out supported housing. Often it helps bridge the relationship, so that the young person does not go back home, but the relationship is on a much better footing, which is good news all round. Family Mediation is a vital part of every homeless case.



Nightstop in Partnership with Somerset County & District Councils

FROM MAKING MONEY TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE

New staff member Holly Crossley talks about how she came to be part of the Home Projects Team.

Q: When did you join the Home Projects Team?

A: I joined the team at the beginning of December.

Q: What made you apply to the YMCA in the first place?

A: I was working in administration for a hotel booking agency and the company was doing really well, but I wanted to help or care for people, not

just make a lot of money for a

private company. So when I heard about the project worker vacancy, I jumped at it.

Q: What is your favourite part of the job?

A: I love getting out and about,

meeting young people and hosts. Every other Tuesday I run a drop in at West Somerset. I also visit youth clubs and the Baptist Church Hope Centre Drop-In for the homeless in Minehead. I get a buzz from talking to the young people there.



"You don't know what the day is going to bring and it is great knowing you are making a difference in people's lives."

Q: Are you regularly in contact with young people in your job?

A: Daily. I meet homeless young people, or sofa surfers that come into the Routes office. I talk to them and help get them into Nightstop or supported housing in the short term. I get to know them and find out the problems

they are facing, so that we can address their longer term problems. This is a very rewarding part of the job.

Q: What else have you been working on recently?

A: I have recently done most of the training for a new Nightstop Host including the home visits. I have also taken 2 students through the TAS scheme, which gives the

young people a wide range of skills from budgeting to putting up a shelf; from managing debt to how to cook - basic life skills really.

Q: Do you miss your old administration job at the hotel booking agency?

A: Not at all. The work was repetitive and boring. I love being a Projects Worker. You don't know what the day is going to bring and it is great knowing that you are making a difference in young people's lives. I can make a career out of it too!

SKITTLES AT THE MAYPOLE INN!!

November saw the first get together of Nightstop volunteers for a social...

12 Nightstop volunteers braved the floods and wet weather to play skittles at the Maypole Inn in Thurloxtton.

With only one seasoned skittler amongst us, we divided into 2 teams with Bob and Iain at the helm of them. Style and high scores were not really the order of the day, but the skittles were good fun and helped to break the ice amongst us. Anna and Bob brought their Nightstopper with them and he turned out to be more skilled than most of us!

We were wondering what had happened to Sue and Brian, and despite major car

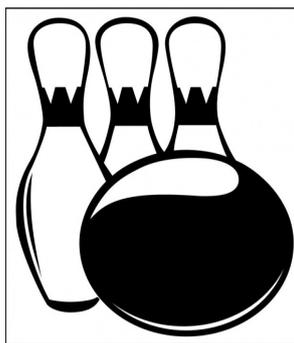
problems which included a dead battery and a flat tyre, they still somehow managed to get along in time for the fish and chips. We were impressed they made it at all!! Maybe the smell of the delicious supper got them there!

I can't quite remember which team won the skittles, but the evening ended with an open forum discussing our experiences and included a brainstorming session. It is amazing

how many ideas and new contacts came out of the group discussion.

I am sure everyone will agree that it was great to get together and meet some of the other volunteers. We were a disparate bunch, but with a common goal, wanting to give these young people a leg up at a difficult time in their lives.

We look forward to the canal trip in May!!



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YMCA



Somerset HOME Projects

YMCA FOYER

