



Winter Provision Update February 2022

Halfway There and Going Strong

Since December 1st, 2021, Church on the Bus (CotB) has welcomed 58 guests; some of these have attended just one session but many have returned again and again - these are the ones we are all getting to know.

Among these guests are the people who are being housed in bed and breakfast accommodation and are receiving support from Freedom, Pathways, P3 and the various local authority departments – these are part of the Winter Provision programme which runs from December 2021 to the end of March 2022. There have been 15 such guests within the Chesterfield based programme, entering, and leaving the programme at different times. There are a few others within the programme, across the county, who don't attend Chesterfield sessions.



To the end of January there have been 72 sessions at Grace Chapel and Holy Trinity Church. These sessions have only been possible because of the efforts of over 80 volunteers and donations of finance and food.

Shout out: Thank you All!

Thank you for the time and energy of each and every person who has invested in making a real difference to the experiences of our guests. Thank you to the cooking teams who have done an amazing job of preparing all the meals and to Gregg's who have donated food each Monday and Thursday.



Watch this space

There will be another newsletter when the programme ends on March 31st; this will give a more detailed reflection. There is much to learn, and you can be involved by adding your own reflections to this. At any time, you can leave a note on the reverse of each session log; alternatively, talk to Ian Macleod at a session or drop him an email churchonthebus@gmail.com

Keep on Keeping On

Volunteering does not have to end after March 31st. If you would like to stay involved with Church on the Bus, or the Sunday lunchtime session at Grace Chapel, then just let us know. It is straightforward becoming a volunteer, although CotB does need a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) statement – we can help you with this. We always need volunteer to help us to keep on with our hospitality for guests. Most volunteers attend sessions once a fortnight – although you can do more!

What is it like to be a Volunteer?

Here is what Samantha says:

My name is Samantha and I've been volunteering with Church on the Bus since September 2021. I originally signed up in 2020, however the Covid restrictions meant that I couldn't start fully until the restrictions were lifted.

I wanted to volunteer in this kind of setting after watching a heart-warming Christmas film in 2019. This led me on to my Google search where I found COTB. It was their mission that stood out for me, and I felt I wanted to be a part of this. I found the process of becoming a volunteer really simple.

Even though I have only been a volunteer with this amazing community for a short time I already feel like a part of the team and look forward to my sessions each week, interacting with different types of people from all walks of life, volunteers, and guests.

Volunteering with COTB has changed how I view certain aspects of life. I feel like my life stands still for the time that I'm in attendance and that I'm there to serve a purpose. I find attending very humbling, even more so with how appreciative and grateful the guests are and knowing that what we're doing makes a difference.

If I wanted to encourage someone else to become a volunteer with COTB I would 100% tell them to sign up.



Come and Pray with us

We are planning a prayer meeting to pray for all aspects of the Winter Provision for the Homeless and Church on the Bus' This will be on:

Tuesday February 22nd at Grace Chapel from 7pm until 8.30pm.

All are welcome, whether you are new to prayer or an old hand, whether you are an active volunteer, a donor or have just received this newsletter for information.

Rev. Hilary Moore says, "When I was homeless, and not a Christian, people who were Christian would tell me they were praying for me, and I would sigh and roll my eyes. Looking back however I can see how much their prayers not only helped practically but helped me build a new life and so was the most important thing anyone could do for me."

Please join us: **Tuesday February 22nd at Grace Chapel from 7pm until 8.30pm**

If you are coming it would help with planning if you could contact Hilary so that we have an idea of numbers: email hilary90@hotmail.co.uk or text on 07399159655