



*"Having a safe, accommodating place to stay and helping me look after my mental health has made a massive difference."*

# Chair's Report

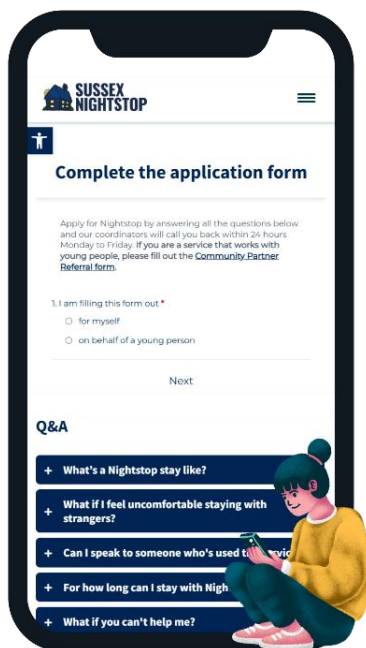
July 2024 - June 2025



*\*The image is for representation purpose only. Courtesy DePaul.*



## Every contact counts



**28% of young people have approached us directly for support this year, without the help of another agency.** The vast majority of these have accessed us through our new self-referral pathway launched in February 2025.

Getting to young people early in their homelessness experience is critical and just over a quarter of young people who get in touch tell us that they are not in touch with any other services. So, their first encounter with us is crucial. For some, we are the service they turn to having not found the support they need elsewhere. Positive first experiences are critical in preventing harms to young people and we've been working hard to make every contact with every young person count. Our experienced team has been spending more time listening, assessing needs and supporting young people to navigate and access services such as housing and health, so that **young people are effectively informed and guided in taking their next steps to address their homelessness, whether they stay with us or not.** This emergent and important role is one we are continuing to prioritise and invest in - whether the young person stays with us or not - and we're introducing new ways to capture, monitor and evaluate this new, additional work.

## Kindness matters

Making the system work better for young people can only be achieved with the input of young people, strong advocacy and committed collaboration – it's been a productive year for Sussex Nightstop on all three fronts.

We were proud to lead the first city insight project into youth homelessness alongside our partners Clocktower Sanctuary and YMCA DLG. The emerging 'Here for You' report shines a light on the real experiences of young people in our city seeking support in their time of homelessness crisis. It provides both recommendations and a mandate as to how things might improve. We are committed to working with partners moving forward to make those improvements real and we will continue our strong advocacy for improvements to the youth homelessness offer within key city plans. We are proud that our work here has resulted in a new children, families and young people chapter in the City Homelessness & Rough-Sleeping Strategy.

**The full 'Here for you' report can be read here**

*- what jumped out for us was the importance of the first encounter.*

Kindness has always been a core Sussex Nightstop value and what we heard from the 36 young people who took part in our qualitative insight work is that it matters to them too.

“

*Nice people keep you going back*  
- YOUNG PERSON

”

Our volunteers provide that. They help restore some of the trust and hope that has been lost and, despite an overall drop in volunteering uptake nationally, we recruited, trained and welcomed five new host households and two volunteer community champions to our 60 strong volunteer team.

“

*With big issues like homelessness, it can feel difficult to know how make a difference. Being a volunteer with Sussex Nightstop is one of the ways you can, and contributing as a volunteer to support their important work gives me a sense of purpose and hope - even if it's just a small effort, to know in doing so you are helping ensure a young person can sleep safely for a night.*

- VOLUNTEER

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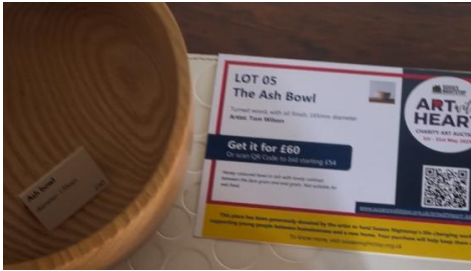
# Collaborating with our community



In a year where we have seen increasingly open hostility to people who by some are seen to be 'other', the willingness of our community to respond positively with open arms not only amazes us but is essential.

Our volunteer team efforts (hosts, community champions, on-call, FIT and events volunteers) have been further amplified enormously by the generosity of those who give in other ways: our individual donors, community and corporate supporters.

## So many people and businesses have stepped forward. Our thanks to:



**Artists Open Houses** and Richard Zinzan and Chris Storey who, with the generosity of local artists and our sponsors ran our Sussex Nightstop open house, raising over £5500.

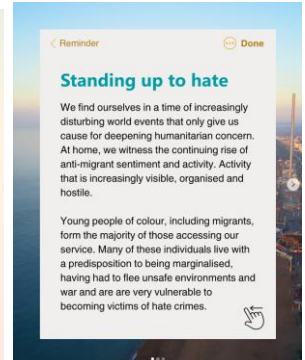
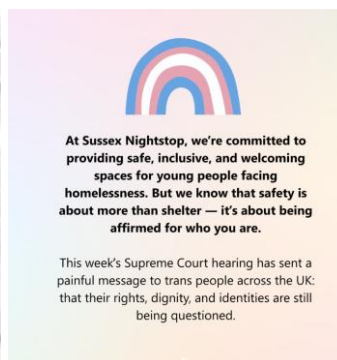
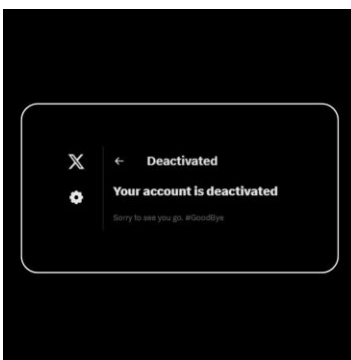
The enthusiastic businesses and sponsors who took part in our **Tryathlon 2025**, made it such a success and helped us raise over £4000.

**Hive HR, Orange Property and Mortgage Medics** for their pro bono business support and payroll giving.

## Our business champions, supporters and sponsors are amazing:



**We celebrate our increasingly diverse staff, volunteer and trustee team and take our responsibilities in making all feel welcome and included seriously.** Throughout this year, we have taken several public stands in support of marginalised communities. Guided by our commitment to inclusivity and fairness, we have shared messages of solidarity on social media, deactivated our Twitter account, welcomed refugees, supported trans people and the LGBTQ+ community, and spoken out against hate.



## A word from our treasurer

Following a year of surplus Sussex Nightstop entered into this 2024-2025 year with reserves of £162,280, of which £85,050 were restricted.

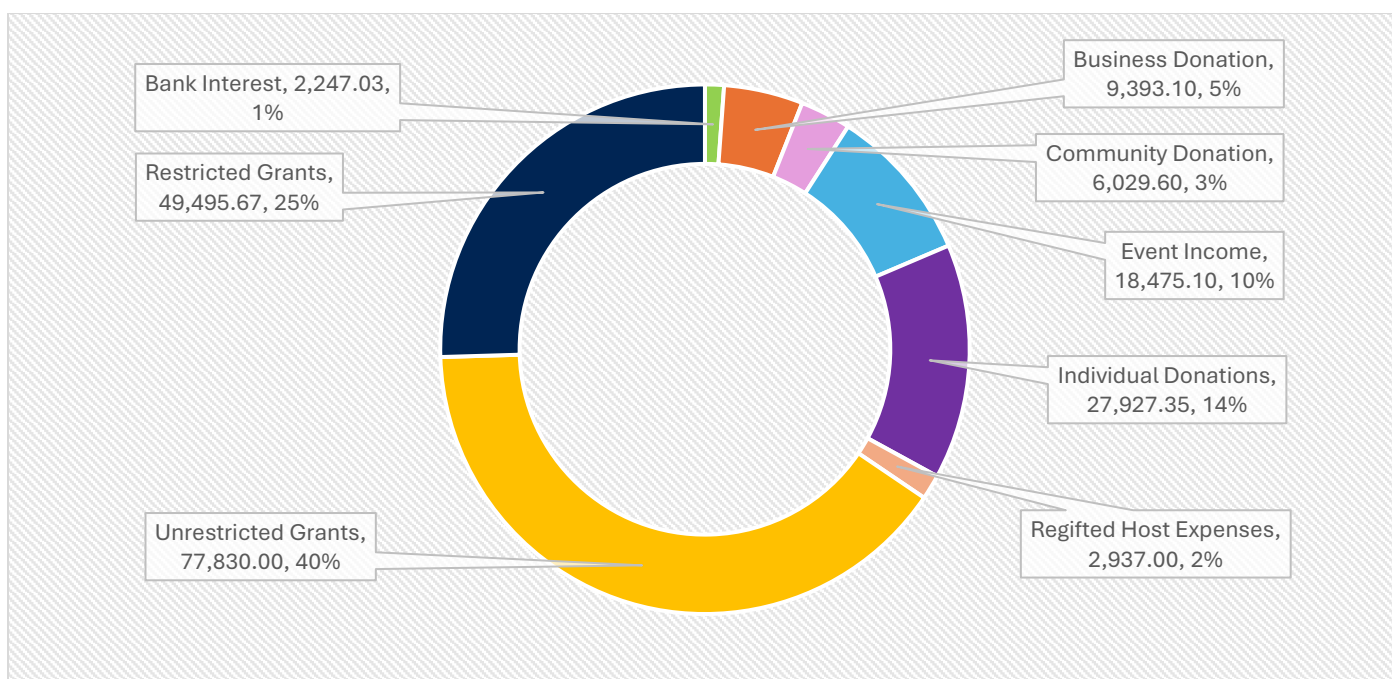
Anticipating a challenging fundraising environment and reduced income levels, the Board set a deficit budget with expenses partly funded through retained reserves.

The number of awards did reduce in 2024-2025 but the average value increased. The majority of the awards were also unrestricted, allowing for greater flexibility in allocating expenditure. We are pleased to report further growth in non-grant income with combined business and community donations - now 18% of our income, as compared to 12% in the previous year. Total income for 2024-2025 was £194,335.

Expenses were managed to budget at £202,782 and £30,830 of 'designated' unrestricted funds were invested in activities that enabled us to progress our strategic priorities, specifically the development of new access points into the service for young people and increased investment into our volunteer recruitment programme.

Overall, the net impact was a small deficit of £8,447 reducing reserves to £153,833, well above the Board approved designated reserve minimum of £40,000.

### Income split



Given the uncertain times, we remain concerned about the fundraising landscape whilst also anticipating increasing demands on the service, to which we have already increased resources. We are managing this risk through the release of reserves in 2025-2026, continued fundraising investment and a process of regular review of our expenditure, financial outlook and fundraising strategy.

	2024	2025
<b>Income</b>	£250,907	£194,335
<b>Expenditure</b>	£167,142	£202,782
<b>Surplus/deficit</b>	+£83,765	-£8,447
<b>Restricted reserves</b>	£85,050	£4,000
<b>Unrestricted reserves</b>	£77,230	£149,833

We are pleased at this juncture to be reporting from a position of strength but are mindful of the challenge in meeting our 2025-2028 target of £390,160

# I Looking forward

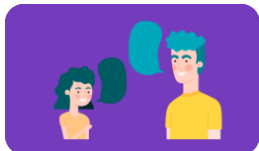
We have made considerable progress against our 2024-2027 strategy this year. In the process of achieving our milestones we have learned how our service needs to change over the upcoming years, in order to remain the positive force for change in young people's lives that we aspire to. It also reinforces how much of that is **reliant on us reaching out and building trusted relationships directly with young people**. Our team expect to spend more time out of the office than in next year.

We remain committed to our '**every contact counts**' approach, working alongside and with young people in an inclusive way that does not add to their trauma. Understanding the importance of our support role better we have clear objectives to develop that further, **so that our navigation, advocacy, wellbeing, listening and practical activities can have further impact**.

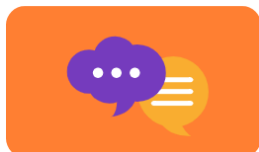
Our priorities for the year ahead:



**OUTREACH & REFERRALS** – Expand referral pathways through new community partnerships and our online self-referral system, ensuring that young people can find us quickly and easily.



**SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT** – Implement our refreshed support offer so that every contact we have with a young person counts; whether they are placed with a host or not.



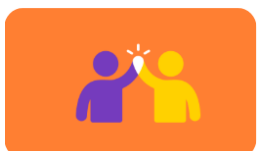
**YOUTH VOICE** – Deliver Here for You Phase 2, embedding young people's insights into service design and ensuring that every stage of our work is shaped by lived experience.



**VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT** – Recruit and retain more hosts able to offer longer consecutive stays, improving stability for young people and balancing supply with growing demand.



**IMPACT & DATA** – Strengthen how we measure and demonstrate outcomes, building a consistent data framework that captures immediate crisis prevention and long-term progress.



**PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT** – Deepen collaboration with local providers to create accessible and seamless referral routes, and a clear package of support for young people.



**COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS** – Mobilise supporters and volunteers as advocates, raising awareness of youth homelessness and building community commitment to tackle it together.

The trusted relationships we have with our volunteers, donors and supporters from across the voluntary, public and community and corporate sectors will continue to be our most valuable asset and will remain at the heart of future plans.

# A team effort

Once again, I draw attention to the highly experienced, skilled, dedicated and diverse Sussex Nightstop team of staff and trustees, whose collective contribution mean that we deliver results well above our size. The work is challenging and a commitment to staff wellbeing continues to be at the forefront of our mind.

Lastly, my thanks go to those colleagues and partners with whom we have worked so closely across this year, achieving more together as a result:



## A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR CLOSE FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

We rely on individual, community and corporate donations along with funds from grants and trusts to carry out our vital work and we share the successes within this report with you.



Ernest Kleinwort  
Charitable Trust



Garfield Weston  
FOUNDATION



With warm wishes

**Tim Williamson**  
Chair, Sussex Nightstop