

SMART!
HELPING PEOPLE TO HELP THEMSELVES

News Bulletin:- issue I4 December 2022

SMART!

PREBEND CENTRE



**This year, Christmas will
be tough for many**

**Our centre
provides help
when it
matters the
most**

**Food, warmth, hot showers, clean clothes,
support and hope for people in Bedford.**

Help us to stay open this winter

DONATE www.smartcjs.org.uk/crib

Welcome



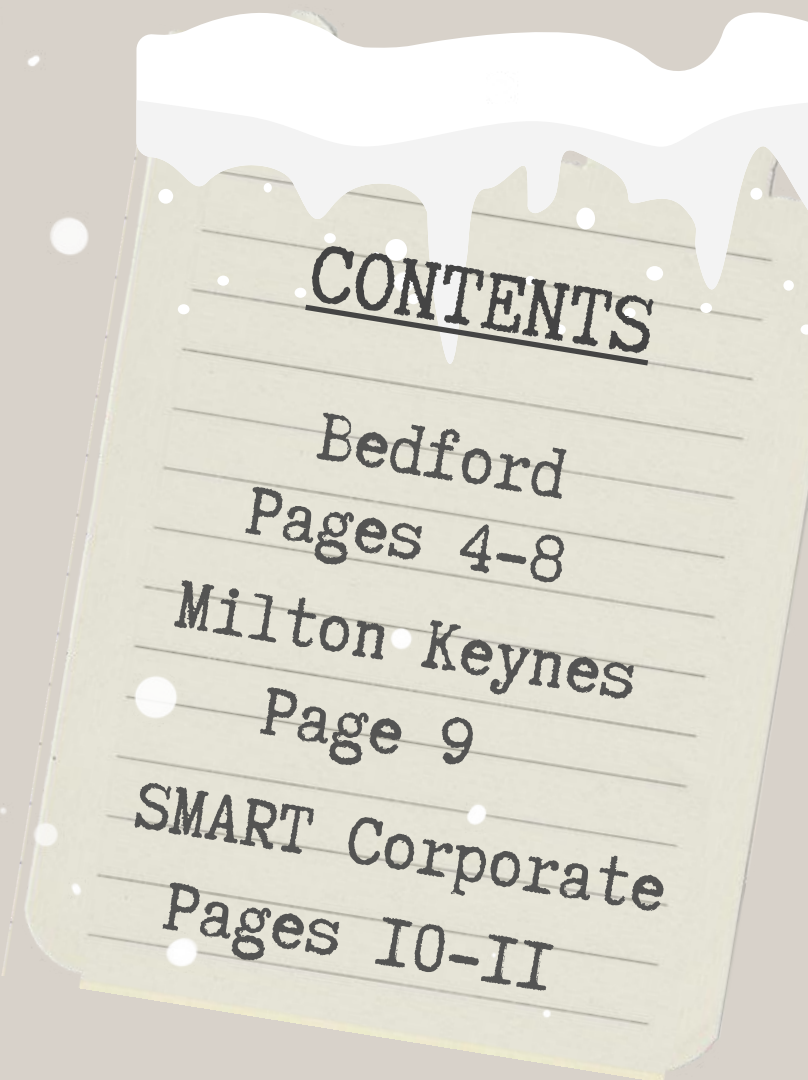
It's a busy time for all of us and also a time in which there is a lot of uncertainty – wherever you find yourself. A time for reflection.....

The one thing that is certain is that people are experiencing tough times – and often through disrupted and unstable housing and desperately need our help to STOP them having to rough sleep or sofa surf. And that's why we have launched the CRIB Appeal again for 2022/23. The Appeal helps boost the funds needed to keep the SMART Prebend Centre open throughout the cold winter months to feed and support those in dire need. The Centre has been a part of the town's landscape for over 30 years and residents always seem to get behind this campaign and make it a success, despite the economic challenges faced. Please give whatever you can to help.

Some ideas are to wear the same Christmas jumper this year (as last year) and donate the money you may have spent on a new one to CRIB. Or don't buy Christmas cards or stamps and do similar...

A donation of £33 buys hot showers and clean towels for a whole week's worth of visitors to the Centre and £55 one weeks' worth of food to feed our beneficiaries (from FareShare). Donate here:
www.smartcjs.org.uk/crib

Thank you for all your support & seasonal wishes to you!



This bulletin is compiled by Anita McCallum CEO, SMART CJS.
For any comments, questions or feedback – please email:
director@smartcjs.org.uk .
For other information visit
www.smartcjs.org.uk

Prebend Centre, Bedford

Rising Demand Highlighted at Prebend Centre Open Day

The Prebend Day Centre is coping with unprecedented and rising demand – latest figures record that 750 people per month are accessing hot meals at the centre. The Mayor of Bedford, Dave Hodgson, lent his support to our Prebend Centre Open afternoon in September. It was an opportunity to say thank you to those who support us and an opportunity to have a look around and discuss the challenges faced.

Mayor Dave Hodgson said:
“SMART provides crucial support for some of our most vulnerable residents and I would like to thank the staff and volunteers for all they do.”



Pictured L-R: Lou Ritchie, Head of Operations, SMART CJS; James Whitcomb, Head of Business Development, SMART CJS; Mayor of Bedford, Dave Hodgson & Anita McCallum, CEO, SMART CJS.

Currently, the Centre can only operate Monday - Fridays due to funding, so it was a surprise for us when some new and existing users of the service presented at the door on a day it is not usually open Saturday. They needed food, a hot drink, showers and new clean clothing, access to healthcare and some urgent housing advice.



Thank goodness we were able to provide immediate assistance. It just shows there is the huge need for the SMART Prebend Centre to open at weekends - if only we had the funds!

If you would like to support the Centre then please do donate to the CRIB Appeal using this link: www.smartcjs.org.uk/crib

History of Prebend and the CRIB Appeal

Thirty years of service to the Bedford Community

The Prebend Centre has been around for over thirty years – with the same mission: to help those who are homeless and that may be rough sleeping. The CRIB Appeal has been a regular calendar event also for many years and people have given money, goods and devised seasonal fundraising to boost the total.

The Prebend Centre over the years

1992 - 2016

BECHAR was formed (AKA Bedford Recovery Centre). The buildings at Prebend Street started being used to assist those in distress who were homeless or likely to become homeless.



2018/19

SMART continued its concerted fundraising efforts in the shape of CRIB – Cold Relief in Bedford – campaign.

2016/17

SMART took over the running of the Centre and the amazing work started by our predecessors. To the present day - it relies on donations and people's time to keep going.



2020/22

In March 2020 SMART reluctantly had to shut during the pandemic. But re-started again in Feb 2022 with even more determination to help those in need! In 2022 - we attended the Bedford River Festival for the first time and launched the first-ever Sponsored September Sleepout.



Our target is to raise £10,000 per month from November to February. It will keep the Centre open and able to offer food, warmth, clothing, company and much more...It's not just a Christmas Appeal – this one is to support people through the entire Winter period.



Why the Appeal is so important - Disappointingly, there is no statutory or government funding for the Prebend Centre – we stay open only through the generosity and kindness of people in and around Bedford and further afield. The staff, heating, lighting and food costs (as we all know from our own bills at home) all need to be paid and are rising at an alarming rate. Please join us as we do our very best to raise 40,000 pounds in total. Thank you very much for your support, generosity and kindness; if you would like to support the Centre then please use this link:www.smartcjs.org.uk/crib

Sleepout Event Success Teams from around the UK participated

SMART CJS held its first-ever virtual Sponsored Sleepout in September in aid of the SMART Prebend Centre. Many teams around Bedfordshire, East Anglia and Essex were involved in the event. The Nuffield Health "No Sleep Dream Team" braved the cold in deepest darkest Suffolk and raised over £400 for the cause. The team was led by our SMART CJS Chair of Trustees, Sarah Ladbrook, FCCA (pictured below in the turquoise hat)!

We reflected that it was a mighty chilly night and how very challenging and debilitating it must be if you had to do this for any length of time for real. Thank you to everyone that roughed it for one night and everyone who has sponsored. Amazing work and heartfelt thanks all round.



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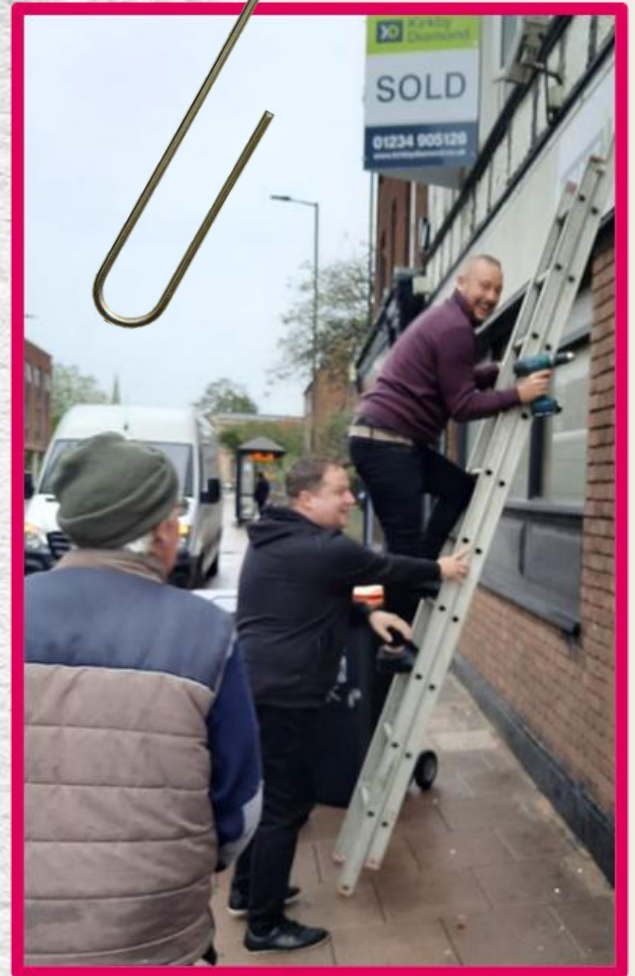


Thank you to Chloe Barnes and friends (pictured above) from the Trace Group for raising £835, as well as being a corporate sponsor of the event! It's good to note that we attracted many from outside our traditional catchment area – demonstrating that no matter where you live, there are people that care universally about alleviating homelessness and rough sleeping.

Thank you for giving!

Even in tough times, the community in Bedford continues to demonstrate its kindness and compassion. There are too many to name – here are a few recent amazing donations:

DIY SOS Situation - When faced with an unbelievably big bill for nearly £50,000 from a landlord for dilapidations work - where would you turn for help? Savills in conjunction with Readie Construction Ltd helped us greatly with some volunteering decorating and electrical work. It was just left to Service Manager, Ricky, to get up the ladder to take the sign down (pictured).
Thank you to all concerned.



Thank you for giving!

Fab food donations – Thank you to Puddleducks Bedford, Sainsburys, Keysoe International (pictured right with cake and SMART Team member, Evette) Blunham Parish Church, John Donne CofE Primary School, Castle Newnham School, Great Denham Primary School & The Hills Academy for the incredible influx of edibles. Thank you to SMART Team member, Ali, for co-ordinating many of the food collections and dropping them off at the Centre (pictured right with Hills Academy pupils).



Milton Keynes: Norman Russell House



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The Milton Keynes team at NRH played its part in the Sponsored Sleepout in September!

Fishing for rubber ducks, an amazing barbeque and memorable music from one of our residents - all part of the entertainment on offer at Norman Russell House on September Sleepout night. It was a welcome show of support from our Milton Keynes base to help us raise money for the SMART Prebend Centre in Bedford. Thank you to all who attended, organised and made it possible!



And the food-related themes continue with a fajita night at NRH (and also loads of cakes at our female-only house). Shopping, preparing, making and sharing food is a really important part of encouraging those we support to enjoy and learn about how to keep healthy. Sadly, in November, the female-only service has closed and the team is busy making sure everyone is placed in other supportive units. Thank you to everyone, who even in the short time the service was live, made a real difference to people's lives and life chances. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

Vacancies - Trustees Wanted

Are you concerned by the rise in homelessness in our towns and cities?
Do you want to support a charity that helps others going through tough times and makes a difference to their lives?

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to bring experience and knowledge to our board of trustees. The board is our governing body, providing strategy and direction and ensuring we're run according to the rules.

To find out more visit:

<https://smartcjs.org.uk/we-are-looking-for-passionate-people-to-become-smart-cjs-trustees/>

Find out more about other opportunities here: www.smartcjs.org.uk/get-involved/work



SMART! PREBEND CENTRE

Cold Relief In Bedford (CRIB) Appeal 2022/23

SMART CJS Reg. Charity 1069087

This year, Christmas will be tough for many

Our centre provides help when it matters the most

Food, warmth, hot showers, clean clothes, support and hope for people in Bedford.

Help us to stay open this winter

DONATE www.smartcjs.org.uk/crib

THANK YOU

Heartfelt thanks to staff members, volunteers, donors, partners and stakeholders for your generosity and all that you do.

DONATE

Support one of our services by making a financial donation.

www.smartcjs.charitycheckout.co.uk/profile

SPONSOR

Support SMART CJS by sponsoring one of our fundraising events. Contact supportservices@smartcjs.org.uk

VOLUNTEER

Make a difference as part of the team by volunteering at one of our centres.

www.smartcjs.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer

FUNDRAISE

Join our fundraising heroes and raise money whilst having fun.

www.smartcjs.org.uk/fundraise

This bulletin has been compiled by Anita McCallum CEO, SMART CJS. For any comments, questions or feedback – please email: director@smartcjs.org.uk



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