

Mission Statement

- To help people in the community of Chorley who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and to seek to prevent homelessness
- To act as an advocate on their behalf to ensure they get the support they need: to be a catalyst for change to improve their lives
- As an organisation, we aim to uphold the following values: to be credible, collaborative, accessible and responsive to those who seek our help
- As individuals we will uphold the following values: to be respectful, inclusive, dedicated, fair and humane to those who need our help.

History

Founded in 1995 Chorley Help The Homeless celebrated its 25th Birthday in 2020, having been formed by an informal group of people from various local churches. One of the founders, Dorothy Griffiths, helped lead and support the charity throughout this time, until very sadly passing away last year. Our building on Clifford Street is named Dorothy House in her honour.

From that time there has been an unbroken period until the present day of providing practical help, advice and assistance to those experiencing or threatened by homelessness (in the widest sense).

The charity has lost count of the vast numbers of people who have benefited from our services over the years.

Our work is as important today as it was 25 years ago. So much so that we need larger premises to give even greater support to those who look to us for assistance but also to provide space to other groups in the community that want to work with us to help make people's lives better.

Current Operations

We currently operate from a small council owned property on Clifford Street.

Our current services are:

- Advice – helping clients with issues over benefits, landlord / tenant disputes etc.
- Foodbank – providing our clients with food parcels when they need them – our current provision is dried goods only.
- Voucher scheme for fresh food – provision of food vouchers to our clients enabling them to purchase fresh food of their choice from designated traders on Chorley Market.
- Clothing bank – provision of warm items, waterproofs, shoes etc.
- Supply of household items (not furniture) – provision of starter packs for people moving into permanent accommodation or replacement items as required. This includes such things as small electrical goods, housewares, bedding and towels.



We operate with 2 part time employees and a wonderful team of volunteers and advisors.

We are committed to supporting our volunteers to equip them with the knowledge and skills to do their work safely, confidently and to enable them to uphold the shared values of the service. Training in the last 2 years, attended by a blend of trustees, staff and volunteers has included: an Introduction to Welfare Benefits, Safeguarding, Team Building and Effective Communication Skills. A series of courses in Food Safety is about to be offered. The demand for our services means that we have outgrown Dorothy House and we have signed a lease to relocate to larger premises on Friday Street.



New Beginnings for our Existing Services

Our new larger premises will enable us to both improve our current service offering and to add extra services as follows:

Foodbank

Rather than giving people a bag of goods selected by us, we would set out more in the style of a supermarket, allowing people to select what they want; adding greater dignity to the process. There is room for a fridge and a chest freezer which will allow us to stock perishable items – particularly milk and bread.

The main focus of our work is meeting the need for food and for this our volunteers spend considerable time sorting the generous food donations we receive, and parcelling up to give out. We give out parcels to anybody who comes to us that is in need of supplies, and they can come back whenever they need to.

Since the end of the first lock-down, we have been giving out an average of 107 food parcels per month compared to 56 in the same period in 2019. Of these, as many as 50% are larger parcels for families. We are seeing a steady growth in demand and with the current and future economic climate, can only see the demand increasing.

We also operate a small scale delivery service to people who cannot get into town, and with the additional space in the new premises and easier access we will be able to extend this service.

Clothing / Household Goods Bank

Our Clothing Bank is very popular with our clients who are unable to afford new clothing. This facility has been limited up to now due to the size of our premises but our new location will allow us to expand our stocks and enable us to supply children's clothing which we haven't been able to do up to now. These pictures show just how cramped our storage facilities have become.

Part of our service offering is supporting our clients when they are moving into their own homes. Our Household Goods Bank can supply items they need such as bedding, towels, kitchen equipment and housewares, as these are not normally provided when people move into furnished accommodation.

Advice/Counselling Services

While operating from our existing premises we have been limited in the services we have been able to provide due to lack of private office space and the absence of disabled access.

Our new premises is all on one level and removes these limitations.

Demand for our advice/counselling service has been growing this year and with the projected continued economic downturn, we envisage that we may need to take on a second counsellor.

We also hope to be able to reintroduce mental health counselling subject to finding a suitable consultant.

Future Plans

Client Facilities

The new premises currently has a decommissioned toilet which we would like to convert into a shower room so that our clients who don't have access to shower facilities can come in and have some private personal hygiene facilities to use.

We will also look to add a washing machine to allow our clients to do their laundry.

Drop In Centre

One of the problems at the moment is that there is nowhere for us to properly interact with our clients, to be able to talk to them about their problems and establish any underlying factors that we might be able to help with.

Notwithstanding COVID-19 restrictions, our plans for our new premises are to include a Drop In Centre where we can sit with our clients over a cup of tea and chat with them, to find out more about

their concerns, priorities and aspirations and assess if they need any additional assistance, and where appropriate, explore steps on the way to developing increased independence.

We can also use this area to provide light refreshments – hot drinks, toast, soup and a sandwich etc. Age UK operate a drop in centre/cafe for the elderly – we want to do the same for the homeless (somewhere dry and warm is something most of us just take for granted).

Cooking classes

We are looking to install proper kitchen facilities which will allow us to provide some basic cookery tuition – particularly useful when we are trying to provide more healthy food and for people who maybe have never had to cook for themselves before. We have volunteers willing to do this.

Shared space

Our new premises are considerably larger than we have been used to. Initially, it is likely that we will not fill the space and it may be possible for us to use it for more effective liaison with other groups by:

- inviting other organisations in who provide services that we cannot
- a meeting room that could be accessed by other groups / charities
- engaging with other services to explore both unique and distinct support offered to the community and to develop coherent values-driven approaches

We aim to become the HUB for housing and homeless solutions in Chorley working as we already do with the Council and other groups.

This is just a starting point and no doubt the need for other services will become apparent as we become better known.



How Can You Help?

As a Charity we rely on the support of Chorley Borough Council, local businesses and Individuals for our funding.

We can apply for grant aid for certain aspects of our operation but funding for kitting out of the new premises cannot be obtained via this method.

We are therefore asking for your financial support or practical help in the following areas:

New Premises Fit Out

- Additional electrical work to kitchen including extraction unit
- Fit-out of shower room
- Flooring to office space
- Free-standing shelving for Food Bank
- Table and chairs for Drop In Centre area
- Kitchen utensils, general cutlery and crockery
- Cooker, fridge freezers and washing machine/dryer
- Erection of counters/work areas for the Food Bank

Food Bank

- Purchase of food supplies, toiletries and other household items i.e. toilet rolls, washing powder etc.

Clothing and Household Goods Banks

Purchase of:

- New electrical equipment i.e. kettles, toasters etc.
- New bedding
- Sleeping bags
- Towels
- General housewares – crockery, cutlery etc.

Contributions to rent and running costs

Ways to donate

Cash donations

We are hoping to attract funding from businesses based in the Chorley area, ideally over a set number of years to enable us to have confidence to fund future developments and to ensure the long term viability of the Charity for the next 25 years. For cash donations from individuals, it is very helpful for these to be gift aided.

Donations in Kind

We would be grateful for donations of furniture and equipment or discounts on purchases and contracts from our suppliers.

We will give recognition in our publicity etc. to all the businesses/individuals contributing to our work.

If you are interested in helping us with this exciting project, please contact me to discuss. Whatever level of support you can give, we will be most grateful.

Further Information and Contact

For further information please see our website (www.CHTH.org.uk) or our Facebook page. Our Manager (Gill Ferris) and our Administrator (Gavin Clayton) can be contacted at reception@chth.org.uk.

Many thanks

Ken Phillips

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