

WORCESTER CARES

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WHY ARE PEOPLE ON THE STREET?

Rough sleeping, excessive street drinking and begging are not the same. People who beg are not necessarily rough sleeping (or indeed without a place to stay) and someone who sleeps rough may not need or want to beg.

Many people who find themselves on the street have unmet care and support needs. Those of us who work directly with them know this through the work we do every day. Some of their problems are complex and do take time to solve. Some have a background of childhood abuse or neglect. Quite a few have had alcoholic or violent parents. Poor physical health can be obvious, but there are hidden mental health illnesses, which often lead to and are made worse by, drug and drink addictions.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

No single organisation can tackle these problems alone. *Worcester Cares* brings together local charities, the Police, local businesses, the City Council, churches and many other organisations to coordinate their efforts and work. Whether a person is rough sleeping, begging or street drinking, all the *Worcester Cares* organisations will work together to help the person off the street.

The City already has an infrastructure to support people but as the problem has increased, public resources have not kept pace. It is now more important than ever, therefore, to coordinate the activities of Local Authorities, and other public and voluntary organisations, so that we do not duplicate or waste resources. Some key organisations working under the *Worcester Cares* umbrella are:

- **St Paul's Hostel.** They run a 46-bed hostel that provides a safe and secure place to stay, two meals a day, help to access state benefits, on site counselling and to training and employment opportunities. St Paul's also has thirty rooms in City based housing when someone is ready to move on from the Hostel. St Paul's services use the Psychologically Informed Environment (known as PIE) and work with a person to resolve the root-cause of the problem.
- **Maggs Day Centre.** They run the City Day Centre and provide food, health drop service in partnership with the NHS, clothing and activity centre. A new Countywide Outreach Service, Maggs' Outreach And Transition Service (called MOATS for short) has just set up to engage with people on the street.
- The Homelessness Charity, **Caring For Communities and People** (known as CCP). Established in 1989, they run the Homeless Prevention and Engagement Service, (HoPES) funded by Worcester City Council. This includes the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) shelter in extreme weather.
- **Worcester City Council** has a responsibility to provide advice and guidance to people who find themselves homeless. You can access City Council services and those of other organisations who support getting people off the street by talking to the Homeless team in The Hive.
- The **YMCA Worcestershire** provides accommodation and has specialist expertise for younger people.
- **Swanswell.** A national drug and alcohol recovery charity, Swanswell deliver the county-wide drug and alcohol treatment service. They provide a treatment service in Worcester City and its staff work alongside community based GPs. They are open 5 days a week Monday to Friday and a person needing help can either self-refer, visit their GP or be helped with a referral from one of the other Worcester Cares organisations or other professional agencies.

There are also Worcester Street Pastors, City churches and organisations that provide food through street kitchens and a listening ear.