



Helping the homeless and vulnerable in our city

The Trustees are delighted to announce that Kevin Howie has been appointed as the new Manager of Gloucester City Mission.

Kevin is from Gloucester and a member of St Catharine's Church. As a former Primary Head Teacher and Community Development Manager he has also run his own business as an education consultant and has been working as GCM's Fundraising Coordinator for the past 18 months. Please pray for him as he starts this new role.

It's been an interesting start to my new role here at GCM!

We were told to temporarily close the Mission down in the third week of March because the clients we deal with are so vulnerable and high risk, this meant that we were able to work with the council to ensure that all of the clients from the Winter Shelter and anyone sleeping rough in the city were given alternative emergency accommodation in hotels across Gloucester. The only people still out on the streets now are those who are choosing not to engage with any emergency provision - this can be for a whole range of reasons. Please Streetlink anyone who you see on the streets if they are rough sleeping.

The staff and Trustees are trying to change the way in which we offer provision so that we are moving away from being an aid agency but instead we want to be able to offer the clients opportunities to better themselves and their lives. This could be through rehab or detox projects; it could be through life skills courses in cookery or budgeting; it could be through offering them employment opportunities but at the centre of everything we do is Jesus and prayer. Please keep the clients and our work in your prayers.

Kevin Howie



Over these last few weeks, it has been tough for the GCM staff as they have grappled with fulfilling their brief to help the homeless in the face of Covid-19; working in conjunction with the Council and following national and local health guidance. The Trustees are so grateful for their dedication. Somehow, they and all of us seem to be surrounded by an enemy that we are not sure how to fight. Can I suggest a look at a passage from the life of Elisha (2 Kings 6.8-22)? When they are faced with an army surrounding the town, Elisha's servant expresses fear. Elisha's response is to pray to God to open the servant's eyes and they see a far greater host surrounding the besiegers. God's love for the homeless and us is far greater than Covid-19. Covid-19 may knock us sideways, but GCM will endeavour to continue to do God's work, enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Revd Nick Gleich, Chair of Trustees

THIS EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER WILL ONLY BE PRODUCED DIGITALLY PLEASE SHARE IT WITH FRIENDS/FAMILY/CHURCH/WORK COLLEAGUES ETC

Jeremiah 29 v 11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

As we enter this time of new life we are also looking in to ways in which we can keep GCM moving forwards so this year will see some big changes in GCM;

- We have just bought a food van so that we can go out and do outreach more widely several times a week during the day and night.
- We are continuing to move forwards with our plans to opening a Coffee Shop in town where we will employ clients to run it and work with the general public.
- We have increased staff's working hours so that we can offer more life skills opportunities such a weekly clubs (we now have rugby, football and crochet clubs up and running)
- We are working more and more in partnership with organisations across the city
- We are continuing to grow our schools and Church work by establishing teams of volunteers to go out to do talks and presentations.
- We want to set up more teams to go out to spread the Gospel to hostels and accommodation blocks (we have a link with Newton House where a team go out for Bible Study and cake once a week with the residents)

We aren't sure what will happen in the next few weeks/months and we ask that you hold Gloucester City Mission in your prayers. We work with an average of 80 clients per week and this year's Shelter saw over 100 individuals need feeding and somewhere warm to sleep through the winter months.

Winter Shelter

After a busy 4 months the Night Shelter has come to an end. We have had 105 referrals with 78 using the provision, we have provided 1147 beds and we are really proud that 32 clients have been moved on to more permanent accommodation this year. This is only possible through donations, volunteers and staff.

A huge THANK YOU to all those who donated or fundraised. We have also seen an increase in the number of local Churches, Salvation Army and regular volunteers who provided an excellent hot and nutritious meal every night, as well as a listening ear words of encouragement and love, you have all made a difference to the lives of our most in need guests.

Finally thanks to the shelter staff team, Lou, Clara, Jayne, Dave, Martin and Ash. Bless you for your dedication and love that you have demonstrated to the clients, it has truly been an example of amazing team work.

Lou

This Feb/Mar we have been running another Alpha course but due to Coronavirus we have sadly had to stop but we will continue once things have settled down.

But...so far we have had : great conversations,with an openness and willing to share about their lives and beliefs.

: AMAZING cakes.

: given out 5 bibles.

: given out 2 pairs of reading specs!(who knew they would come in handy, thanks for the donation, essential for reading esp the bible)

: A wonderful team of supportive,prayerful volunteers.

: Given out Alpha literature.

: Wonderful poignant praise times.

: and have had creative moments along the way.

We are missing our attendees and helpers on Alpha and the excitement of talking about Jesus with those who are seeking Him. Prayer that as momentum is lost in time, that it is not lost in seeking,finding and journeying with Jesus.

Paula



WE ARE GOING TO REALLY NEED YOUR HELP

Like many other registered charities, one of our biggest challenges will be the huge reduction in fundraising opportunities due to Social Distancing, (we are looking at a shortfall of about 40%) and given that it costs us around £180,000 a year to operate then this is quite significant for us. We normally have many volunteers doing events and challenges to raise funds for us as well as concerts etc. We have also been affected by the postponement of events such as The Cloister Challenge as HaVing donate some of the funds raised to our work.

We really need your help financially so if anyone is able to support us through a one off gifts, by cheque, cash, online or by text or even on a monthly basis it would be greatly appreciated. For more information please kevin@gloscitymission.org.uk or visit www.gloscitymission.org.uk .

.....

WWW.GLOSCITYMISSION.ORG.UK

PLEASE DONATE

£5 will pay for 3 meals
£10 will pay for fresh underwear, clothes, toiletries and a shower
£25 will pay for someone to get off the streets for a night during the winter months
Maybe you could sign up to give a monthly gift.

.....

Online www.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/gloscitymission

.....

By Text

To make a donation, text [gloscitymission](https://www.gloscitymission.org.uk) followed by the amount you wish to donate to 70085 (ie 'GLOSCITYMISSION 5' to 70085 to donate £5).

This costs £5 plus a std rate msg, you can opt to give any whole amount up to £20.

.....

To donate in Person or by post
Please make cheques payable to Gloucester City Mission and post to the address below, we also accept CAF cheques

.....

Gloucester City Mission
The George Whitefield Centre
107 Great Western Road
Gloucester GL1 3NF
Charity Number 1115780



PLEASE COME AND VISIT OUR ONLINE STORE. YOU CAN BUY A WHOLE RANGE OF T-SHIRTS, HOODIES, PHONE CASES AND BAGS IN DIFFERENT COLOURS AND SIZES AND ALL PROFITS GO TO OUR WORK

WWW.GLOSCITYMISSION.ORG.UK/SHOP

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Having joined the team in September 2019, six months have passed, and I have had a great opportunity to get to know the group of dedicated and willing volunteers that help to keep GCM ticking over.

There is a core group of over 50 regular volunteers offering support with our day time food provisions, keeping our clothing store organised and offering outreach in the city on a Wednesday lunchtime and Saturday evening. However, we frequently get enquiries from people who want to help in other ways. The winter shelter had a robust group of new volunteers who came along and provided food service alongside the regular churches and organisations that have donated their time and food for the past 2 years.

We had a fantastic uplift of volunteers over the Christmas period helping out at the new unit in Eastgate Shopping Centre.

Most of these volunteers work full time so to be able to give time in the evenings or weekends was invaluable to them and us. It's encouraging that many have signed up for our 'Bank of Volunteers', an initiative we have set up which allows us to have a bank of people we can call upon when we have ad hoc fund raising initiatives or incremental outreach work.

Our next phase is to look at extending our support to our clients particularly around helping them upskill their basic living skills enabling them to lead more normal lives. We have been asking our volunteers to complete a questionnaire which will help us identify what additional skills people have to offer and where/ when we could utilise those to the benefit of our clients.

If you feel you might have a skill that would be useful take a look at the questionnaire attached here.

Hopefully we can start to put these new steps in place as soon as we get back to some sort of normality.

Elaine

Please support The March Hare Tearooms

As many of you are aware, GCM is one of our supported charities at The March Hare Tearooms in The Oxeboode, Gloucester, and we have developed a scheme to further support the charity at this time. We are starting a home/workplace delivery service from Monday 30th March, delivering quality packed-lunches and cream teas around the Gloucester-area Monday to Saturday, and also to Cheltenham on Tuesdays and Fridays. All our food is high quality and handmade (where appropriate).

Each week, all of our sales takings over £350 (which covers our rent and food costs) will be donated to GCM. Once the scheme has had a week or so to develop, we anticipate that weekly sales will be around £600 - in which case GCM would receive £250 for that week Please visit our website for more details or follow The

March Hare on Facebook

**Please take a few minutes to have a
look at our website
www.gloscitymission.org.uk
Also follow us on**



**Find us at The George Whitefield Centre, 107 Great Western Road,
Gloucester GL1 3NF**

Registered Charity Number 1115780, Company Number 5830147

admin@gloscitymission.org.uk 01452 901922

