

**Who cares about people  
begging in Sheffield?  
We do.**

**We're Help Us Help, a group  
of organisations in Sheffield,  
who've come together to help  
vulnerable people improve their  
lives for good.**



[www.helpushelp.uk](http://www.helpushelp.uk)

**HELP US HELP**

# Support services in Sheffield

**The public is generous and Help us Help aims to give people who want to help a greater understanding of the situation in Sheffield, and provide clear options of how their money or their time can be best used to support those who are begging.**

## **Cathedral Archer Project**

Holistic service which helps homeless people by developing their independence and self-confidence and help people to improve their ability to tackle setbacks and change negative behaviours.

[www.archerproject.org.uk](http://www.archerproject.org.uk)

## **Ben's Centre**

"A place of sanctuary for the vulnerable". A day centre and an outreach service for people who suffer from the negative impact of drugs or alcohol.

[www.benscentre.org](http://www.benscentre.org)

#we-are-bens-centre

## **The Sunday Centre**

Provides a safe, warm refuge for homeless and vulnerable people on Sundays – providing hot food and drinks and offering guests the chance to socialise with others

[thesundaycentre.org](http://thesundaycentre.org)

## **Sheffield Churches Soup Kitchen**

Provides food, basic clothing and bedding and 1:1 support, 7 nights per week from 8-9pm, between September and May.

[sheffieldsoupkitchen.com](http://sheffieldsoupkitchen.com)

## **Roundabout**

Provides shelter, support and life skills to young people aged 16-24 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, along with a comprehensive programme of training allowing them to develop long term independent living skills which breaks the cycle of homelessness.

[www.roundabouthomeless.org](http://www.roundabouthomeless.org)

## **Addaction Sheffield**

Work with anyone over 18 who has a substance misuse issue which has led to involvement in the criminal justice system. Services are open to everyone, including people who are completing a statutory order.

[www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

## **Sheffield Street Outreach Team, provided by Framework**

Support for those sleeping rough in the city. Contact 0800 066 5358 or text SOT to 80800, followed by your message.

[www.frameworkha.org/framework\\_near\\_me/1839\\_street\\_outreach\\_team\\_sheffield](http://www.frameworkha.org/framework_near_me/1839_street_outreach_team_sheffield)

## **Sheffield City Council Housing Solutions Service**

Provide advice, help and support for anyone who is homeless, could become homeless in the near future, or has a housing problem. The focus is on early prevention work before a crisis occurs.

Tel: 0114 2736706

8.30am–5pm.

[www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-advice-options-line.html](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-advice-options-line.html)

## Weather watch

**During the cold weather Sheffield City Council activates its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol, known locally as Weather Watch. Last winter the council worked in partnership with South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, the British Red Cross, and Framework to provide somewhere safe and warm for people at risk of rough sleeping.**

**In total, 29 people stayed at the fire station, and all but three were known to services. Some of the people that used the service were previously reluctant to engage and accept help. The scheme proved to be great partnership working, something that is intended to be built on and progressed in Sheffield for this winter.**

# Advice, help and support with housing

Sheffield City Council's Housing Solutions Service provide advice, help and support for anyone who is homeless, could become homeless in the near future, or has a housing problem. The focus is on early prevention work before a crisis occurs.

## The Housing Advice and Options Line can:

Advise on a range of housing related issues; disrepair, ending a tenancy, affordability.

Advise on rights as a tenant/owner occupier and explore options to prevent you having to leave your home.

Advise on paying for your home, including signposting to benefits advice.

Advise on options available, including Council housing, private rented, Housing Association, supported accommodation, emergency hostels and refuges.

If already homeless, or about to be, your case can be referred for a detailed homelessness assessment to see if the Council can help find somewhere for you to live.

Where it is not possible to resolve a housing issue immediately the case will be referred to one of the casework teams so that further work can be done. In some circumstances there is a duty to provide accommodation, as defined by law. The Service work collaboratively with numerous support services including Framework, drug & alcohol support services, mental health services probation and NHS services.

**If you need help or see someone sleeping rough call Framework on 0800 0665358**

[www.helpushelp.uk](http://www.helpushelp.uk)

# 1660

In the year 2017/2018 Sheffield City Council helped prevent or relief homelessness for 1,660 people

Housing Options & Advice telephone line can be contacted on 0114 2736706 8.30am-5pm.

For emergencies out of these hours contact: 0800 0665358. Email: [housingsolutionsgeneric@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:housingsolutionsgeneric@sheffield.gov.uk)

In person, go to Howden House, Union Street, S1 2SH.



# Supporting people with complex needs to move forwards

## Not just a bed for the night; individual, tailored support

The Salvation Army run two Lifehouses – accommodation and tailored support for people experiencing homelessness – in the city; one for men on Charter Row, and a recently opened women only centre, Lincoln Court in Wincobank to the north of the city. The Salvation Army offers clients support usually for 6-9 months, but this can be extended to a year depending on needs, and clients are encouraged to get fully involved in their support plan, deciding what goals they would like to work towards with the support of their key worker. This could be around education, addressing their substance misuse or other health needs, all of which are supported via the Lifehouse. For the majority of clients, the main goal is securing their own accommodation, be that through the Council, or private tenancy which is often supported by Crisis.

# 160

St Anne's Hostel in Bighton supported 160 men experiencing homelessness last year.

## Empathy, care and kindness for vulnerable women

Lincoln Court offers supported accommodation to 11 women for a period of 6-9 months, providing a high level of support within a therapeutic environment, and a goal of supporting the residents to experience real transformation in their lives. Typically, residents have experienced significantly traumatic events, such as controlling relationships, substance misuse or mental health issues, or they may have learning difficulties, or be seeking asylum in the UK; a real mixed bag of reasons for referral and are all supported by a small team who are on site 24 hours a day.

A resident told me, "I've got stability and routine in my life, I'm getting out of bed every day which is a massive thing for me, and I'm getting involved in activities and accessing support and counselling to help me work through what has happened to me."

**The people referred to us at the 911 Project are incredibly damaged individuals. Many have been abused as children, many have been in care, then in prison as adults. They all have substance misuse problems and many have mental health issues too. For some people, having their own tenancy is simply too much for them to deal with – the responsibilities are overwhelming. Our support can be the stepping stone they need to move from scraping by just about existing on the streets, into securing their own independent tenancy and a life away from the streets.**

911 Project Service Managers

# Our outreach team, out on the streets, daily

**When you see somebody begging all that you see is the person sat there. It could be your son or daughter, your brother or sister. And then you walk a little further up the street and you see someone else begging, and that image stays with you all day, nagging at you that something needs to be done, someone needs to do something to sort it out one way or another.**

What you don't see is the work that goes on in the city to engage with rough sleepers and people who beg. The street outreach team from Framework engage with anyone they find sleeping rough or begging on their early morning walks around the city, asking if they need help, and signposting where appropriate. They leave a card with a freephone number on and aim to catch everyone later in the day, most often at one of the day centres in the city.

The street outreach team genuinely care about people on their caseloads, and work hard to try and provide accommodation, drug and alcohol support, food parcels and benefits – the support is offered daily and will continue to be, in the hope that one day it will be taken.



**I conduct daily patrols within the city centre from 6am engaging with any rough sleepers located. We have a hard core of 15 to 20 who are all known, begging and sleeping rough, in and out of accommodation but constantly living on the street.**

Steve Hart, city centre PCSO



**100**

**Ben's Centre outreach hand out 100 sandwiches and drinks to vulnerable people in the city centre every week.**

# Big Issue North

## More than just a magazine

"While Big Issue North is a business solution to a social problem - with vendors buying each magazine for £1.25 and selling to the public for £2.50, it is not just a means of income generation. We work with every vendor to help them identify the issues they face and help them to achieve their aspirations. We assist vendors in developing an action plan to improve their lives. We support vendors to access services and take up opportunities such as basic skills training and English language classes.

Across our offices we run a number of projects such as breakfast clubs, computer suites and arts projects."

Ben Stevenson, Big Issue North.

**300+**

vendors work across the North of England, 33 work in Sheffield.



**I come to the Archer Project's recovery group. That's helped me a lot. This is my second chance, and people deserve a second chance, don't they? Everyone deserves that.**

Big Issue North vendor



## Hand up, not hand out

By buying a copy of the Big Issue North from a vendor, rather than giving money to somebody who is begging on the street, you are supporting vulnerable people to make a positive change in their lives, and providing a stepping stone towards their next step, be that their own tenancy, beginning to access support, or to other employment. Giving money to people begging on the street doesn't allow people to move forwards, as people who beg are reliant on the actions of others to sustain them, rather than actions that they are taking themselves. Selling the Big Issue North can lead to big, positive changes in a vendor's life.

A vendor commented, "What the Big Issue North guys get compared to what I had when I begged - it's like pennies versus pounds. But I don't want to beg anymore."



## Free food and drink every evening for those in need

From humble beginnings 31 years ago, with volunteers walking the city at night, flasks of hot soup in hands to offer to people on the streets, the Sheffield Churches Soup Kitchen now runs from a base in the city centre and feeds homeless and vulnerable people every evening at 8pm from September to May. Staffed entirely by volunteers, and with all food donated by local people and businesses, the Soup Kitchen is a vital part of the wraparound support available to those in need.

The Soup Kitchen is about much more than providing food and a hot drink, its about building relationships with people, being a friendly face and a kind word in times of need, and encouraging those who use the kitchen to access other services in the city, whether that's mental health services, drug and alcohol services, or agencies working with asylum seekers or older people who are socially isolated.



**The Archer Project and Ben's Centre serve around 100 breakfasts between them each day to homeless and vulnerable people, and they are always looking for local businesses to get involved in sponsoring the breakfast shift and serving food to people.**



## Understanding, friendship and food on Sundays

On Sundays in Sheffield, homeless support services are closed. So, if you are homeless or vulnerably housed, socially excluded or in need of company, want somewhere to get warm and sit for a while amongst understanding friends, wish to enjoy a hot drink and a home cooked nourishing meal, then the only place to go is the Sunday Centre.

For the past 25 years, the team of volunteers have been welcoming guests and providing all of the above and much more to people in need in Sheffield. A guest told how she'd first visited the Sunday Centre when she became homeless after being evicted from her property. 'I came for food and warmth as I was living on the streets back then. These people here are like a secret hidden community. Nobody knows we exist or notices us, but we all look out for each other'.

**70+**

The Sunday Centre serves a two-course hot lunch to 70+ people every week.



# Support and treatment for drug and alcohol use

**Support and treatment are available for anyone in Sheffield experiencing drug and alcohol misuse. The support given by services is tailored to each person and might include: one to one therapeutic support and/or medical interventions.**

## **Spice – Sheffield’s coordinated response**

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Spice is a mixture of chemicals sprayed onto herbal mixture which looks like cannabis. The physical effects of using the drug can be significant and shocking due to the effects Spice has on the part of the brain that controls movement.

There are relatively small numbers of people using Spice in and around Sheffield centre – approximately 200 – but it has a big impact on people who are using the city centre and can be frightening to observe.

Sheffield DACT is leading work to address Spice use, including working with South Yorkshire Police to tackle dealing, a multi-agency city centre team dedicated to the issue, training for frontline staff, and a ‘Spice clinic’ at the Non-Opiate Service on Sidney Street.

If you see someone very unwell or unconscious, call 999 and let the call handler make the judgement about dispatching an ambulance. If you see someone dealing Spice, call it into 101.

This includes help with alcohol, opiates: such as heroin and non-opiates including cocaine, cannabis and new psychoactive substances.

There is extensive provision of needle exchanges in Sheffield, at both the Opiate and Non-Opiate Services and pharmacies across the city. People can access all equipment needed for safe injecting there, as well as return equipment for safe disposal.

Addaction Sheffield provides support for adults to address offending behaviour relating to their substance use. They support people who are completing statutory orders and others who are attending voluntarily. They also offer a range of mutual aid groups and activities.

## **Sheffield’s thriving Recovery community**

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There are more than 40 recovery group meetings each week in Sheffield, meeting seven days a week. Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), as well as groups set up in Sheffield: KickBack Recovery running from the Cathedral Archer Project and De Hood gym in the Manor area of the city, SMART recovery groups and Sheffield’s Alcohol Support Service (SASS) – there is a growing and supportive community who celebrate their recovery and fresh starts together in safe and welcoming spaces.

September is National Recovery Month and the community in Sheffield organise lots of fun events to raise awareness of recovery, reduce stigma and celebrate their progress together. To get involved, search ‘Sheffield Recovery Community’ on Facebook.

**Sheffield drug and alcohol services are open access – you can drop into the service and be seen the same day or call and speak to someone for support. Visit [www.sheffielddact.org.uk](http://www.sheffielddact.org.uk) for more information.**



# A sanctuary from life on the streets

## Cathedral Archer Project

Everyone using the Cathedral Archer Project is at a different stage of their journey – some are clearly in crisis, sleeping rough, hungry, cold and in need of support with a variety of issues.

There is a wide range of support available here; assessment and signposting, in house nurse and dental clinics, access to hot food, drinks and food parcels, showers and laundry, access to computers and phones, support for those in recovery from drug and alcohol dependency, a wide range of activities and a thriving structured volunteer programme.

Alongside those in crisis, it was encouraging to see lots more people whom the Project had supported to move past that stage, still accessing the centre daily to keep working on their own personal journey. The Archer Project clearly has a huge impact on the lives of so many people in the city, whether directly, or by supporting a friend or family member.

**The Sunday Centre team serve a free two course hot lunch to vulnerable people in the city, and guests leave with goodie bags with bread, cakes and fruit, thanks to generous support from local businesses.**

## Ben's Centre

Ben's Centre is open 4 days a week, from 10.30 to 2.30 and offers free breakfast, hot lunch and drinks, access to clothing and washing facilities, internet access and activities such as pool, newspapers, a TV room and day trips. The staff provide signposting and support, advocacy and a voice to their guests, whether that's regarding their accommodation, benefits, mental or physical health or substance misuse issues. The manager, Sue, described Ben's Centre as, "a place for people to take a break and have someone listen to them".

One guest was keen to share his story of moving from being a street drinker, to volunteering with the Centre a couple of days a week, making teas and coffees. He stressed how important a role the Centre had played in helping him to manage his mental health and reduce his drinking. "We are just one big happy family".

**10**

**10 weekly groups run at the Archer Project; literacy, numeracy, CVs, film club, yoga, cookery, art, music, recovery.**

# How to best help those who beg

**1.**

**Give time or donations to charities that provide support.**

Research shows that giving money directly to people who beg can do more harm than good. See the list of organisations involved in Help us Help on page 2.

**2.**

**Have a chat with someone and encourage them to access support services.**

Remember our drug and alcohol services are open access and there are no waiting times.

See [www.helpushelp.uk](http://www.helpushelp.uk) for more information.

**3.**

**Give food or a drink rather than money.**

Some local outlets run pay in advance schemes – see [www.pendingcoffee.co.uk](http://www.pendingcoffee.co.uk). Free food and drinks are available from support services every day of the week in Sheffield.

**4.**

**Buy a Big Issue North.**

Vendors buy the magazine and then sell it on to customers. Vendors are working, not begging, and need public support. Read more about the Big Issue North on page 5.

**5.**

**Get involved.**

Find out more about the support that exists in the city, and how you can get involved at [www.helpushelp.uk](http://www.helpushelp.uk).

# **Support and help is available – Sheffield Services never give up on people**

**If you're reduced to begging, it can feel like there's  
nowhere left to turn. That's where Services and  
Agencies in Sheffield come in, who offer support to  
people that find themselves destitute in our city –  
however they got there. We don't turn anyone away.  
So if you want to help, help us.**



**Help us Help is a collaboration between all of the services who support those who find themselves homeless or begging. Many have complex needs and Sheffield services aim to give those on the street a future through both practical and compassionate advice.**

**Support services are run by dedicated professionals and volunteers who never give up. Many have been there themselves.**

**Visit our website for information and options for the best use of your time and money, as well as a list of charities and organisations looking for volunteers and donations.**

**[www.helpushelp.uk](http://www.helpushelp.uk)**

 **[/helpushelpsheffield](https://www.facebook.com/helpushelpsheffield)**

 **[@helpushelpsheff](https://twitter.com/helpushelpsheff)**

 **[/helpushelpsheffield](https://www.instagram.com/helpushelpsheffield)**

**Help us Help asked Sheffield blogger, Alison Riggott from SheffGives, to visit local charities and support services to speak to service users and staff and write about what she learned. These excerpts are taken from her blogs available in full on the Help us Help website.**

**SheffGives is an independent blog which highlights work going on in the city by charities, agencies and individuals to support and help improve the lives of others, with a particular focus on homelessness and food poverty. Read more at @SheffGives on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.**