

BCHA Support Narrative

Narrative for planning application for Plymouth Night Shelter

The proposal for extending the operational period of BCHA's night shelter at Hamoaze House from its current season of 1st October to 31st March to a year-round facility supports the city's commitment to addressing the increasing challenges of homelessness. This adjustment is driven by the significant increase in individuals seeking help at our night shelter over the past three years, signalling an urgent need for more consistent availability of these critical services.

From 2020 to 2021, the shelter served 109 individuals, a number that increased to 117 in the following year. Most recently, in 2022-2023, the shelter has provided assistance to 127 individuals, underscoring a growing trend in the need for such services. Notably, 337 individuals have successfully transitioned from the shelter to more stable living situations, highlighting the shelter's effectiveness in facilitating positive change.

Impact story: A former resident 'C' came to Hamoaze House in a critical state due to alcohol dependency and trauma from homelessness. Over two months, he received targeted support and engaged in key work sessions. Through self-motivation and assistance from Harbour for alcohol support and regular mental health care from his GP, C dramatically reduced his alcohol use and improved his overall wellbeing. His journey led him to independent living in a shared house, where he discovered a passion for gardening. A year later, C remains sober and engaged with support services, exemplifying the profound impact of our night shelter on individual lives.

During the winter of 2023 alone, the shelter has received 60 referrals, out of which 23 individuals have already moved on to better circumstances, with three months still remaining in the season. These statistics reflect the critical role the night shelter plays in the lives of those experiencing homelessness in Plymouth.

The proposed year-round night shelter aims to extend and enhance these services, providing a stable and supportive environment for individuals who find themselves without a home. By offering shelter, guidance, and resources throughout the year, the facility will not only address the immediate needs of those sleeping rough but also lay the groundwork for their successful transition into permanent accommodation. The shelter's expansion is a crucial step towards alleviating the challenges faced by the homeless population in Plymouth and reflects our collective dedication to improving the lives of the most vulnerable members of our community.