

Joined via Zoom Meeting

10am-11:00 am

- **Land Acknowledgement** – Giiwe Shko Naaniibwida (Standing Strong Together)



Recognition and respect are essential elements of establishing healthy, reciprocal relations. These relationships are key to reconciliation. We acknowledge that we are meeting on the territory of the Anishinabek Nation. We give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen, and the Chippewas of Nawash, known collectively as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land and the Metis Nation.

We recognize that we are on this land as Treaty People under Treaties 45 ½ and Treaty 72. At a recent Bridges Out of Poverty workshop in Southampton, we were reminded that as Treaty People we have a contractual relationship. And we need to ensure it is a meaningful relationship.

1. Safe N Sound's Winter Shelter Pilot Project – Annette Pedlar, Executive Director, Safe N Sound

Results

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Unique participants	134	139	130	140
Total day visitors	1300	1158	1158	1069
Total evening visitors	811	905	915	973
Total night visitors	725	646	622	628
Average nightly	24	20	21	20

- Warming Centre Pilot ran from Nov 1st, 2023 - March 30th, 2024, \$150,000 funding from Grey County.
- Targeted unsheltered community members and offered low barrier services with hard reduction intervention. Capacity of 18 people at a time due to number of washrooms and fire regulations.
- Safe N Sound sees 40-60 people/day; 60% are men; majority are on OW/ODSP. They are the main contact for people unsheltered
- 130-140 unique participants were identified with staff doing hourly recording of the number of people using the service. Day visitors 1158-1300, evening visitors 811-973, night visitors 622-725, average nightly 20-24.
- Positive data points attribution - 164 hospital visits in Nov-Mar 22/23 as compared to 93 emergency department visits in Nov-Mar 23/24.
- Considered safety as a major issue – majority of participants reported feeling safe; where they would have alternatively stayed was more unsafe. People reported they would have stayed on the streets or squatting on private land.

Challenges

- Biggest challenge with not using the space was pride and stigma.
- Biggest issues dealt with were theft, fighting/threats and space/comfort. These are also reflective of the day program. No cameras work in the space.

- Current space constraints – inadequate and crowded. More beds, cots, blankets needed.
- Lockers needed but questioned whether peoples’ bags would fit into lockers? Maybe possible to store small valuables. Bins were used but they disappeared quickly or were broken.
- Very positive feedback on the role of staff.
- The pilot received recommendations by participants including new rules to govern the space.
- Staff contracts were short with no benefits. The rate of pay was low for such intense work. They experienced 4 overdoses in the first week of being on the job.
- **Next Steps**
 - **Feasibility Study** funded by the United Way of Bruce Grey to be released this summer.
 - **SNS Strategic Plan** to be release in August
 - Examining the potential for a new space that would accommodate winter shelter/cots
 - **Neighbours Helping Neighbours** for business engagement (see attached slides)
 - New brochure **How You can Support** – being released soon.
 - Addressing the stigma and negative narrative about people coming from outside the community. Releasing a chart of demographics, visits, income, where they grew up, where they are sleeping and their connection to Owen Sound.

Other Updates/Action:

- **Food needs** – milk is hard to keep available. They access the Grey Bruce Food Share, but they have stopped “all day cereal” to slow down the milk demand.
- **Drug Testing Kits:** they are giving away a lot of the new drug testing kits via SOS; 72 distributed so far.
- **Tents/Tarps:** Giving away a lot of tents and tarps through County and public donations.
- **Cooling Station/Extended hours:** due to the heat wave SNS has extended its hours from 9am-3pm to 9am-4:30pm; and Tues-Thurs from 9am-8pm. Bought shade tents for the back area to help people cool off. They also bought a sprinkler, which will be used, hopefully, in the future.

2. **Grey County Housing Shelter Program Updates** – Josh Gibson, Manager of Housing Programs, Grey County

- **7th Avenue East Fire Update:** all people are fine, 4-5 apartments affected, 18 people to re-home, looking for new long term housing for them.
- **Winter Shelter Program:** funding is confirmed for 2024-2025 season. Examining potential other location, expansion, etc. and the best practices/results of the evaluation.
- 713: short-term transitional housing, warming station; 10-15 rooms in Hanover. Consistent capacity – 46-56 placements/night; 43/night last year during peak winter.
- **Grey County By Names List:** 162 people on the active list/experiencing homelessness; of those, 139 are experiencing chronic homelessness (more than 6 months). No longer seeing episodic cases. The team is focused on reducing chronic homelessness. Since February 14th, 2024, 57 households have been moved from short term shelter into longer term housing.

3. **Bruce County Housing Shelter Program Updates** – Tania Dickson, Housing Services Manager, Human Services, Corporation of the County of Bruce

- **Bruce County Outreach:** Bruce County is solidifying their outreach approach and streamlining their processes across the County. Bruce County Outreach in process of organizing the outreach opportunities in Bruce County. Confirmed Warton, Port Elgin and Kincardine, 12-2pm, Walkerton Outreach is every Tuesday 12-1pm at the Big Door.
- **Emergency Shelter:** Bruce County partners with YMCA Community Initiatives and Canadian Mental Health Grey Bruce to deliver the emergency shelter program. The emergency shelter program is currently at or over capacity most nights. Motel rooms are expensive and hard to access in the summer months. Motel closures during COVID also impacted availability. Transportation remains an issue with no public transportation and very little cab service to support people accessing shelters. The Sandcastle Motel has been converted into transitional housing. Still need more long-term housing.
- **Bruce County By Names List:** 38 people on the active list/experiencing homelessness; of those, 33 are experiencing chronic homelessness (more than 6 months).
- **Coordinated Access and By Names List Training:** training is being offered. Please register for one training through the Eventbrite links:
 - In Person (Walkerton) Wednesday, September 4th, 9am-noon, <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/coordinated-access-and-by-name-list-training-in-person-tickets-908239216947?aff=oddtcreator>
 - Virtual Wednesday, September 18th, <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/grey-bruce-coordinated-access-and-bnl-training-online-tickets-908241744507?aff=oddtcreator>

4. **Partners' Updates**

- **Community Foundation Grey Bruce:** Capital Grants applications open until 1 July 2024 (up-to \$35,000). AGM is being held on Tuesday, June 25th. Fall grants will be open soon.
- **United Way of Bruce Grey:** student backpacks intake is open. Call 211. <https://unitedwayofbrucegrey.com/services-offered/backpack-program/>.
- **Reaching Home grant for supports (beds, appliances, rent bank) to people experiencing homelessness** has been renewed but is already oversubscribed. Support is limited and will only go to people moving from homelessness into more long-term housing. Please use all the available resources before the United Way at this time.
- **Thrift Stores Coupons** can be obtained through direct contact with the stores. The United Way is happy to facilitate an introduction to the procedure of obtaining coupons for any organizations.
- **City of Owen Sound:** a reminder to complete the survey for the Future Owen Sound – Vision 2050 initiative. Survey is open until July 12th, 2024. There are physical locations around the City and paper copies can be obtained by emailing communications@owensound.ca or call 519-379-4440 ext. 1211. The Poverty Task Force will be meeting with Jay Pittar and her team to look at ways to engage with our partners to provide feedback.
- **Grey Bruce Community Volunteer Income Tax Program Network Gathering:** will be hosted by Bruce County in Walkerton on June 25th.

Next meeting: TBA

In attendance:

Annette Pedlar, Safe N Sound
Caroline Araujo Abbotts, United Way of Bruce Grey
Francesca Dobbyn, United Way of Bruce Grey
Tania Dickson, Bruce County Housing
Alexis Cook, Community Safety Well-Being Plan
Jill Umbach, PTF/United Way of Bruce Grey
Jon Farmer, City of Owen Sound
Josh Gibson, Grey County Housing
Laura Needham, GBPH
Mary Dodge, Blue Mountains Public Library
Mary Fenton, Victim Services Bruce Grey
Paul Wagenaar – United Way of Bruce Grey Board
Rebecca Holton, Grey Bruce Community Legal Clinic
Robin Cork, United Way BG
Roni Delleman - wiarion Salvation Army
Sarah Cowley, YMCA
Seana Moorhead, GB Community Legal Clinic
Stuart Reid, Community Foundation Grey Bruce
Tina Metcalfe, Bruce County