



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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FOREWORD BY THE HIGH SHERIFF

IN MY ROLE AS HIGH SHERIFF, I AM COMMITTED TO FOSTERING COLLABORATION AMONG CHARITIES, KEY SERVICES, AND ORGANISATIONS THROUGHOUT WORCESTERSHIRE.

We live in a world of exceptional demands; demands on ourselves, our families and our friends and colleagues. Yet for the majority of us, these are demands that we are able to navigate, to deal with, to find solutions. If, however, we are a young person who suddenly finds themselves in a place where the issues presented are insurmountable, where does that take us and how with our lack of life experience are we meant to deal with this?

Every single day a significant number of young people find themselves asking these questions. They may have experienced abuse, rejection, addiction, financial breakdown, or abandonment – or they simply for whatever reason may feel their home is no longer their home.

Nightstop is a quite extraordinary charity. It 'gifts' to these young people the chance to talk freely, understand the power of mediation and in-extremes find a safe place to stay for a while – until long term solutions can be found.

TOGETHER, WE ARE TACKLING MANY OF THE MOST PRESSING ISSUES FACING OUR COMMUNITY, INCLUDING HOMELESSNESS, MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES, ABUSE, AND THE ONGOING COST OF LIVING CRISIS.



I am deeply grateful to Nightstop for their continued support of the High Sheriff of Worcestershire Forum, a vital initiative founded by my predecessor, Louise Hewett. Louise's dedication and tireless efforts have left a lasting legacy that I am proud to build upon. The Forum invites West Mercia-based charities and community organisations that work with some of the most vulnerable and 'in-need' individuals in our area to come together and collaborate on finding solutions.

I salute the work undertaken by the extraordinarily dedicated team at Nightstop. They work tirelessly to create, in a damaged and imperfect world, a place of safety, refuge, and understanding for the most vulnerable young people in our county.

Charles Moyle,
High Sheriff of Worcestershire

WHO WE ARE

We believe that every young person deserves a safe place to sleep. As youth homelessness rises, we've broadened our services to include early intervention and prevention, addressing root causes to prevent homelessness before crisis occurs.

Prevention

- Mediation & Conflict Coaching

We offer free, confidential mediation and conflict coaching for young people and families experiencing difficulties affecting relationships at home or school.

Trained mediators create a safe space for resolving conflicts, offering family relationship sessions where individuals meet separately before joint sessions. Additionally, we provide mediation drop-ins at schools to promote healthier communication and emotional well-being. For young people at risk of homelessness, mediation helps reintegrate them into the family or facilitate safe transition to alternative housing. We also address underlying issues like inappropriate relationships or mental health concerns by offering guidance and referrals to relevant services.

- Education Programme

We present an educational programme to local secondary schools, raising awareness about youth homelessness, debunking myths, and equipping students with the knowledge of where to seek help if needed.



WE ARE A LOCAL CHARITY FOCUSED ON PREVENTING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN WORCESTERSHIRE BY EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

Support for Young People in Crisis & Facing Homelessness

- Access to Safe, Appropriate Accommodation

Our Nightstop service offers short-term accommodation with trained, approved volunteer hosts for low risk young people. Hosts provide a bed, hot meal, washing facilities, and a supportive environment. Initially designed for short stays, increased demand has led to longer-term placements. To address this, we developed a Supported Lodgings model, where young people stay with Nightstop volunteers for weeks or months while we assist them in securing permanent housing, either through family reintegration, local authority housing, or private rentals with our financial support.

- One-to-One Crisis Support

We provide intensive one-on-one support, tailored to each young person's needs, including mental health support, substance misuse intervention, life-skills training to help them achieve independent living including how to sustain a tenancy.

OUR VISION

Our vision is an end to youth homelessness in Worcestershire. We believe every young person deserves a safe place to sleep and the support needed to thrive and to play an active role within their community.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to empower young people to achieve their full potential by giving them somewhere safe to stay, the skills to develop and maintain stronger relationships, opportunities to learn, volunteer and live independently.



**“IF IT WASN’T FOR NIGHTSTOP, I WOULD NOT BE
HERE. THAT’S A GUARANTEED FACT.”
BENEFICIARY FEEDBACK**

OUR VALUES

HUMAN

We are real people, supporting real people.

WE ARE ONE

Regardless of role, title or status within the organisation, there is a golden thread that joins us all together. From Trustees to Team Members, to Young People and our Hosts we operate as one with our collective sleeves rolled up.

AGILITY

The world around us is changing and we know we can't stand still. Our 3 year Strategic Plan is focused on ensuring that our core services of emergency accommodation and mediation remain both effective and efficient, whilst being able to adapt to the needs of our young people and our community.

SAFE PAIR OF HANDS

Trust is central to all our relationships. And what we say we're going to do, we make sure we do it.

NEVER GIVE UP

Most importantly, we are relentless in pursuing our core purpose of preventing homelessness by empowering young people to reach their full potential. Whether that's in responding to a time critical situation or our focus on ensuring the long sustainability of Nightstop, we don't stop until we have established a way forward.

THE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

This year, Nightstop has continued to make a significant impact in a world where youth homelessness continues to rise, offering not just a safe place to stay, but also hope and a positive path forward for vulnerable young people. As Chair, I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved as a team – in particular our support of over 260 young people through our network of compassionate and dedicated volunteers.

Our funding in 2024 came from a diverse range of sources, including grant funding, individual donors, corporate supporters, community supporters and our own campaigns and initiatives. Thanks to their generosity, we invested in expanding our services, a host recruitment campaign and growing our team.

NIGHTSTOP'S SUCCESS IS BUILT ON THE DEDICATION OF OUR HOST VOLUNTEERS, THE GENEROSITY OF OUR SUPPORTERS, AND THE RESILIENCE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE WE SERVE.

These words from one of our young beneficiaries remind us why we do what we do. As we look to the future, we remain committed to reaching more young people in crisis across Wyre Forest and South Worcestershire.

This year, we began laying the groundwork for our next strategic phase, working closely with Peter Rose from Tiller Research to craft a comprehensive strategic plan for 2025–2028. This marks an exciting chapter for Nightstop as we refine our vision for the years ahead. By drawing on expert insights and stakeholder input, we are ensuring that our strategy addresses emerging challenges, seizes new opportunities, and positions Nightstop as a leader in youth homelessness support.



Key Focus Areas for 2025–2028 Strategic Plan:

- Increase awareness and reach of our mediation service
- Increase engagement with colleges and schools
- Develop an awareness raising package for professionals working with young people
- Recruit more hosts
- Enhance host support and retention
- Undertake a review of our crisis support operating model in South Worcestershire
- Co-develop a refreshed programme of life skills coaching with young people
- Strengthen move-on accommodation pathways

Nightstop's success is built on the dedication of our host volunteers, the generosity of our supporters, and the resilience of the young people we serve. As always, I'm incredibly grateful to everyone who gives their time, creativity and care to make it all possible. Together, we've achieved so much in 2024, but there is still much work to be done. With the support of our community, we remain committed to preventing homelessness by empowering young people to reach their full potential. We continue to strive towards a future where every young person has a safe place to stay and the opportunity to thrive.

Darren Turner
Chair



THE CHIEF EXEC'S MESSAGE

This past year has been one of remarkable activity and reflection for our charity, as we've worked tirelessly to address the rising levels of youth homelessness in Worcestershire. Our mission remains steadfast: to provide young people with the support, resources, and opportunities they need to build a secure future.

In response to the increasing demand for our services, we have focused not only on providing safe spaces but also on equipping young people with tools to address the root causes of conflict. Our mediation programmes have played a critical role in helping families rebuild trust and relationships, enabling more young people to remain in a safe home environment.

Change is inevitable in any organisation, and this year we said farewell to some of our dedicated team members and trustees. At the same time, we were delighted to welcome new faces, including Coralie, who has joined us as our Corporate and Community Fundraiser. Coralie's enthusiasm and expertise will be instrumental in strengthening our outreach and partnerships in the coming year.

Our partnerships remain a cornerstone of our work. This year, we were honoured to welcome the Lord Lieutenant and other community representatives to see our efforts first hand; a testament to the strong relationships we've built with stakeholders across Worcestershire.

As we look to 2025, we are excited about refreshing our Strategic Plan, ensuring our approach is aligned with the evolving needs of the young people we serve.



OUR MISSION REMAINS STEADFAST: TO PROVIDE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE SUPPORT, RESOURCES, AND OPPORTUNITIES THEY NEED TO BUILD A SECURE FUTURE.

Finally, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to our incredible volunteers, especially our hosts, whose generosity and dedication make Nightstop possible. Without you, our work would not have the life-changing impact it does.

Here's to another year of resilience, collaboration, and hope.

Judith Ford
CEO

COLLABORATION

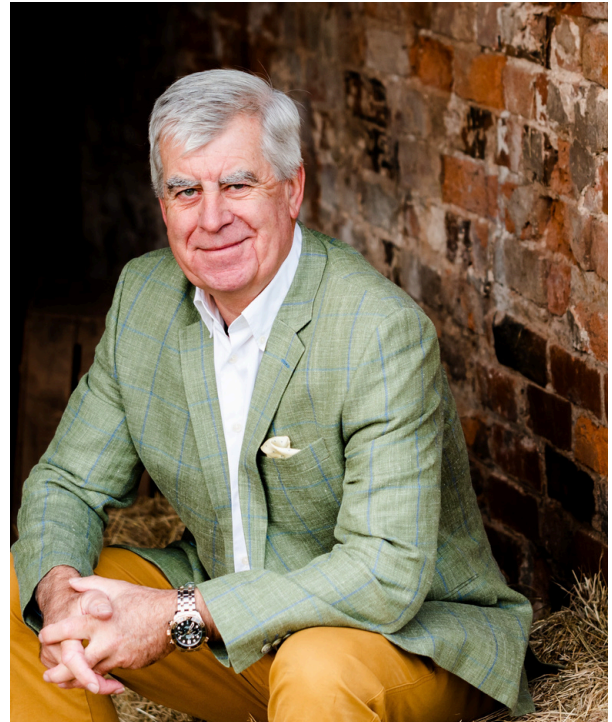
AS CHAIR OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE I HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF LEADING THE BOARD SUPPORTING THE 1,300 MEMBERS ACROSS THE TWO COUNTIES. I HAVE RECENTLY BEEN APPOINTED A TRUSTEE OF NIGHTSTOP AND MEDIATION WITH A MOTIVATION AND VISION TO HELP LINK THE TWO ORGANISATIONS TO MEET THEIR RESPECTIVE OBJECTIVES AND CHALLENGES.

Helping young people move towards fulfilling their true potential is a personal motivation of mine.

The Chamber membership includes around one hundred charity members across the two counties who benefit from the relationship through exposure to local businesses. Charity exposure to the wider business community is a wonderful opportunity for companies to appreciate how they can give something back. Funding support is critical to make sure charitable organisations can continue to maintain and grow their resource, so directly benefitting the local community in so many ways.

There are tangible reasons why a business should support at least one charity. Increased Employee Morale, Engagement and Company Culture: staff can see and feel proud that their company is a visible supporter of their community.

Brand Image and Reputation is Enhanced: a company's brand and image are exposed to a wider group of stakeholders, both internal and external within the community.



Customer Trust and Loyalty: a company who demonstrates their values and beliefs in a tangible way shares much with many of their customers. Particularly those who have a stated policy of community support.

Networking creating new Opportunities: exposure to charities creates other non-direct financial avenues of support. By staff volunteering, advice, use of resource such as meeting rooms and more.

Wyre Forest & South Worcestershire Nightstop and Mediation prevent homelessness for 16–25-year-olds, provide family mediation, offer schools education and life skills training. Who would not want to be seen supporting that?

**Mike Forrester CMgr MA
Nightstop and Mediation Trustee
and Chair of the Herefordshire & Worcestershire
Chamber of Commerce.**

**CHARITY EXPOSURE TO THE
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CASE STUDY. EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION HALLIE, AGED 21

Hallie self-referred into Nightstop around 6 months after becoming homeless. She had been staying in various short-term holiday lets and bed and breakfasts using finances left to her by her late father. Living this way was very expensive, she had no stability and felt very isolated. Hallie had no real friends, was very alone and just couldn't see a way forward. She had reached out to a maternal auntie a few months ago who had been providing support to Hallie including several short periods of time staying with her. With the inheritance money almost gone and nowhere to stay, Hallie approached Nightstop with the support of her auntie.

At the point of referral to Nightstop Hallie was hugely emotional and felt that she had little control her life and current housing situation. Hallie felt a real sense of hopelessness and her mental health was poor. Hallie was using alcohol to cope and help manage her emotional well-being instead of prescribed medications from her GP for her low mood.

Hallie knew this had got out of control and had to stop. She had been told by her doctor how drinking had affected her health and she felt really scared for her future.

Hallie experienced the trauma of bereavement, with the death of her father during her teenage years. Her relationship with her mum was very strained for many reasons including her mum's mental health. Over the past few years the situation really deteriorated at home and Hallie began to self-harm with thoughts of suicide. Hallie experienced various other adverse childhood experiences, which led to her mental health and wellbeing being so affected, she no longer felt safe living at the family home.

Following completion of our Nightstop assessment process and risk assessment, our experienced Nightstop hosts were able to provide Hallie a safe place to stay which allowed the opportunity to explore options for future housing. Hallie stayed with Nightstop a total of 10 nights in 2 different host homes. After initial anxieties about staying with Nightstop hosts within their homes Hallie flourished with increased confidence and motivation to make changes for her future. She worked with a Nightstop Homeless Prevention worker to contact potential accommodation providers making phone calls herself and taking control of the situation. Hallie even volunteered her time during her placement to volunteer with our host at a community lunch which she expressed great positivity about.

“I CAN’T REALLY PUT INTO WORDS THE IMPACT NIGHTSTOP HAS HAD. I COULD TELL HOW MUCH THEY REALLY WANTED TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE.”



23

Young people placed with a host

303

Number of bed nights

The model pictured is for illustrative purposes only.

CASE STUDY.

MEDIATION

CHARLENE, AGED 15

Background

Charlene, a 14-year-old girl, was referred to Nightstop mediation by Onside Advocacy following a significant breakdown in communication with her mum. Charlene had faced a tumultuous childhood, marked by her mum's heroin dependency, which led to Social Services removing Charlene at a young age. Since then, Charlene had been living with her auntie for five years.

Charlene's dad was in prison, and she had not seen him since she was a baby, leaving her without a stable father figure. Her relationship with her mum remained fragile and complex. Although Charlene visited her mum periodically, these interactions were often fraught with arguments. Charlene also witnessed her mum taking drugs multiple times, which fuelled her anger and frustration at her mum's inability to stop using.

In addition to these challenges, Charlene's auntie was suffering from a debilitating illness, and she had taken on the role of her carer which weighed heavily on her, as a young person.

Catalyst for Mediation

The family dynamic became even more strained when Charlene's mum was diagnosed with a serious brain tumour. Due to her health condition, Charlene's mum moved in with Charlene and her auntie, creating significant challenges in their small home.

The limited space and unresolved tensions between Charlene and her mum led to constant arguments. Charlene was also deeply afraid of losing her mum to the illness and harboured resentment, blaming her mum's past drug use for causing her condition.

Mediation Process

The initial 1-2-1 sessions revealed a deep well of hurt and unresolved emotions.

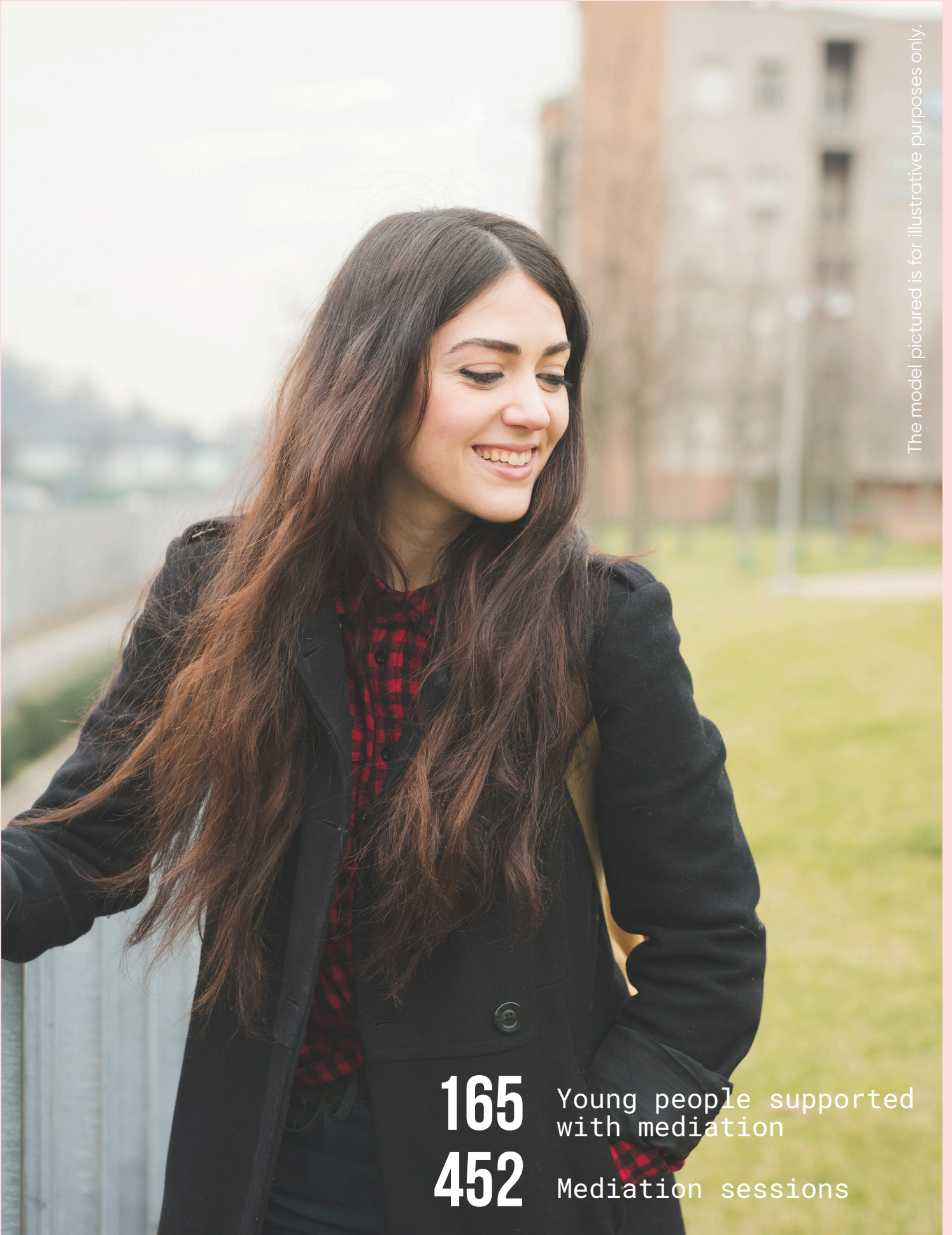
The joint sessions provided a safe space for both Charlene and her mum to communicate openly. For the first time, they were able to truly hear and understand each other's perspectives. This allowed them to start addressing shared pain and frustrations.

Outcome

Charlene and her mum reached an agreement for their future relationship.

Conclusion

This case highlights the power of mediation in addressing deep-seated family issues. By creating a safe space for honest communication, Charlene and her mum were able to acknowledge their pain, rebuild trust, and establish a path toward a healthier relationship. Despite the challenges ahead, the mediation process equipped them with tools to navigate their complex family dynamic with greater understanding and empathy.



The model pictured is for illustrative purposes only.

165
452

Young people supported
with mediation

Mediation sessions

OUR PARTNERS

We are deeply grateful for the support of our partners who share our vision of ending youth homelessness. Through this collaborative approach, we are better positioned to meet the growing demand for our services. By focusing on prevention, we strive to address the rising incidence of youth homelessness and make a lasting impact.



““ WHAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAY

MEDIATION HAS HELPED ME TO BE A BETTER VERSION OF MYSELF, I WAS STRUGGLING WITH FRIENDSHIPS AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.

Mediation has helped me deal with the stress of my parents, the mediators were helpful and taught me strategies to deal with my emotions.

Mediation has helped as I've learned healthier coping strategies and to be more open.

Mediation helped us with communication, boundaries and listening; skills needed in our relationship.

BEFORE I CAME TO NIGHTSTOP I FELT LIKE I WANTED TO GIVE UP. THE HOST FAMILY SHOWED ME HOW YOU ARE MEANT TO BE TREATED AND THEY WERE VERY SUPPORTIVE TO ME.

Everyone at Nightstop have been fantastic. I have got my confidence back and am loving my new home, I wouldn't have got this without you all.

You give a lot more support than others, I found my experience very good.

Thank you for all your help. I had not felt safe at home... Thank you for helping me and taking me to a safe place.

It has been good to know there is service out there to help people like me if you need it.

””

OUR IMPACT 2024

23



Young people placed with a host

"When I was in Malvern, it felt really freeing to not have to look over my shoulder, feeling comfortable and safe where I was placed."

453



Mediation sessions

31



Families supported with mediation

303



Bed nights

"Mediation has helped. Me and Mum have been able to speak about our problems and I am a lot calmer than I was before, and I now know when I have a toxic friend."

"The support I have had from Nightstop has been outstanding. This will impact on my future 'cause I'll always remember how I got this far."

164



Young people supported with mediation

9



Volunteer host families

42



Young people received crisis support

52



Referrals for emergency accommodation

"I feel the Mediation Service is a very good place and a very useful tool. It is a safe place."

"I know when things get tough or dangerous I can go to Nightstop for support. I also know that if I need somewhere as a refuge, they are a place I can turn to."

"Mediation has helped by giving me lots of ideas to improve the communication between me and my son. Both mediators were fantastic, friendly, understanding, non-judgemental and helpful."

128



Crisis support sessions