



## **"Arc gave me a roof over my head and if it wasn't for them I could have been anywhere"**



Chris became homeless just over a year ago and found himself sleeping rough in Bridgwater. After a couple of weeks of sleeping rough Chris was offered sheltered accommodation with Arc. His story not only demonstrates his own strength and resolve during austerity, but also proves that by integrating armed forces specialist roles within mainstream services, help and support can be accessed. Having previously served as a soldier in the British Army Chris' veteran status was identified and he was subsequently offered a room in Arc's Veteran accommodation service, 'Victory House'.

"I found myself homeless after a bad relationship and went to the British Legion Hub in Bridgwater who put me in contact with Arc." Suffering with his mental health and self-esteem, Victory House offered solace and support amongst fellow veterans. It would eventually be Chris' desire for improved resilience and independence that would prove to be the catalyst to moving on.

Chris engaged well with support staff, and it wasn't long before he developed the confidence to start working towards bettering his life. "When I got to Victory House, there's two ways you can go - you can become dependant on staying in your room or you can make yourself a better life and that's what I decided to do." Arc were able to assist Chris in getting a diagnosis of complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and from here, he accessed Arc's counselling service.

Chris used Arc's services for just under a year, and within the first six months had completed ten educational courses. He continued to engage well with external agencies, as well as finding time to volunteer at one of the local charity shops. "Getting out of the house kept me going, and I'd work seven days a week sometimes, I felt like I was worth something and it was nice meeting new people. I just wanted to make something of myself and felt like it was my chance."

One of the many courses Chris completed was the "Tenant Ready Scheme" or "TRS" which is hosted locally by the YMCA. This course is designed to prepare individuals for the responsibilities of being a housing tenant. After searching for his own home, Chris was offered his own flat.

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Having moved on from Arc, Chris now volunteers with Ark at Egwood, another fantastic charity that we're partnered with for our armed forces project. Chris aspires to eventually work as a veteran's peer support worker within the NHS. He has started a growing Facebook support group and breakfast club, which can be found by searching "Veterans Chat and Support Group - Chard and Surrounding Areas. Keep up the amazing work, Chris!"





## Beneath the Night Sky

On Saturday, 16th November, the Somerset County Cricket Club was transformed into a cosmic experience for “Beneath the Night Sky,” an extraordinary fundraising event hosted by Sam & Rosie from Arc. This unique experience, inspired by our fundraising theme of “sleeping out under the stars,” brought the wonders of astronomy to life while raising vital funds for the local homeless community

The evening included a delicious three-course meal, a unique and interactive presentation, a Q&A with the Astronomy team, an astrophotography gallery showcasing stunning cosmic imagery, a virtual planetarium, and an auction. The event was a well balanced blend of education, entertainment, and fun, leaving everyone enriched by the experience, despite the cloudy weather stopping everyone from getting outside to gaze at the stars.

Due to the incredible attendees, generous sponsors, supporters, and informative astronomers the night raised an amazing £5,081.00 for Arc. All proceeds from the event will directly support Arc's mission to provide life-changing services to the local homeless community. It's a shining example of how coming together for a cause can lead to both a joyful evening and a meaningful impact. A big thank you to our event sponsors: Corza Medical, Neil Robertson Plumbing, Barton Law, Logic Distribution and Global Engineering



## A brand new kitchen thanks to Nationwide!

Earlier this year, Nationwide kindly gift £10,000 as part of their good causes grant, enabling us to make some much needed improvements on our homes! Thanks to the grant, we were able to introduce a new kitchenette and dining area to one home, and have just recently completed a second project, pictured below. The fund allowed us to replace a kitchen which had not been upgraded for 20 years. As well as a big thanks to Nationwide, we'd like to congratulate our Property Services Team for doing such a fantastic job!



At Arc, we have always been fortunate to work alongside individuals whose passion and dedication truly transform lives. One such individual is Dr. Horman, a specialist GP in Health Inequalities, who has been an integral part of our mission for many years. Her tireless work has not only shaped the way we provide healthcare to our clients, but has also left a mark on the lives of countless individuals facing homelessness within the Somerset Community. Sadly (for us), Dr Horman retired earlier this year and to recognise her work, we were delighted to name our GP Surgery in her honor!



Pictured  
L-R:  
Dr Horman  
Sherri Grant  
(Arc)  
Dr Norbury





# ARC'S CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX APPEAL

Christmas can be a difficult time of the year for those experiencing homelessness, so each year, our shoebox appeal supplies every Arc client with a shoebox filled with gifts and every Arc property with a Christmas hamper to spread some Christmas magic to those who may have lost their sparkle.

## WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR BOX:

- Shampoo
- Shower gel
- Roll on deodorant
- Gloves / Handwarmers
- Brushes / Combs
- Mug
- Sweets or chocolate
- Novelty socks
- Packs of biscuits
- Christmas decoration
- Christmas card
- Hot chocolate / Coffee sachets
- Small notepad, colouring or puzzle book

If you choose to wrap your shoe box, please wrap the lid and box separately.

Possible extras if space: small games, keyrings, mini torches, colouring pens, pocket diaries/ planners/ calendars and other festive or edible treats are always popular!

**DONATIONS CAN BE DELIVERED TO OUR DEDICATED DROP OFF LOCATIONS BETWEEN 18TH NOVEMBER AND 8TH DECEMBER 2024.**

## DROP OFF LOCATIONS:

**Bridgwater**  
Asda,  
East Quay

**Wellington**  
The Nook &  
Cranny

T1 Fitness

**Taunton**  
My Carbon Coach

Co-op, Cheddon  
Road

Co-op, Wellington  
Road

## WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR HAMPER:

- Nuts / Crisps
- Crackers
- Fruit
- Chocolates
- Biscuits
- Mince pies
- Jams/Spreads/Chutneys
- Breadsticks
- Yule log / Christmas cake
- Hot Chocolate and Marshmallows
- Soft Drinks
- Croissants / Pastries

If you would rather give the money to make a hamper, we suggest a donation of £50

**Hamper drop off by appointment ONLY between 11th and 18th December - please contact Rosie or Sam on [giving@arcinspire.co.uk](mailto:giving@arcinspire.co.uk) or 01823 271326**

**\*Please do not include items containing alcohol or refrigerated food\***

If you would rather make a monetary donation towards the cost of Christmas at Arc, please do so by visiting our website: [www.arcinspire.co.uk/donate](http://www.arcinspire.co.uk/donate)

## DECEMBER DELIGHTS

**We make sure that no one misses out at Christmas! We offer all properties a Christmas tree and decorations to put up should clients want to, something that many clients enjoy taking part in!**

**As well as your incredible shoeboxes and hampers, each client will be offered a full Christmas meal, either delivered by our Support Workers through 'meals-on-wheels', or the ingredients will be given so that clients can enjoy cooking their dinner together.**

**We're also very grateful to the fantastic Augustus Restaurant in Taunton and the lovely team at Ethic Street Pizza who both donate meals to all our residents over the Christmas period.**





# VOLUNTEER IN SOMERSET - YOUR TIME, YOUR WAY!



We're delighted to announce that we have joined forces with charitable organisations across Somerset, on a journey to spark positive change and make a difference in our local community via the promotion of Volunteer – your time, your way!

The new campaign, which is led by Spark Somerset, aims to inspire and empower people across the county to discover the joy and impact of volunteering. By breaking down the barriers and showcasing the diverse opportunities available, Volunteer – your time, your way invites volunteers of all ages and backgrounds to become catalysts for positive change in their communities.



This initiative addresses the barriers to volunteering, and promotes flexible and tailored volunteering opportunities, aiming to match individuals with roles that suit their availability and interests. Through this campaign, we want to encourage volunteers to explore the range of roles available within Somerset. By getting involved, volunteers give back to the community, gain valuable skills, expand their networks and experience personal fulfilment.

Here at Arc volunteers are invaluable to our work, providing all the extra important services that help our clients in many ways. From collecting food donations, to running a skills workshop, our range of volunteering opportunities means there is something suitable for everyone. Volunteering is so much more than just the work; it's about connecting with others and forming new friendships. Just last week we held a Curry & Quiz Night to thank our Volunteers and Supporters at the Brewhouse Theatre. It was a fun filled night with around 50 people in attendance and a great atmosphere in the room. Huge well done to our winning team the Carl-culators!



If you would like to meet local, like-minded individuals who share a passion for making a difference you can contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Joan Evans for more information:

jevans@arcinspire.co.uk OR to find other volunteering opportunities local to you, please visit <https://www.sparkachange.org.uk/volunteer-campaign>

**AS EVER, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT THIS YEAR.  
WE COULD NOT LOOK AFTER OVER 170 INDIVIDUALS EACH DAY IF IT  
WASN'T FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.  
ALL OF US AT ARC WISH EACH OF YOU A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS  
AND BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR!**