

THE GATEHOUSE

SUMMER 2025
NEWSLETTER



NEW CEO AT THE GATEHOUSE

Last October saw a major change in personnel at the Gatehouse when we welcomed on board **Sasha East** (above) as our new CEO. Originally from Oxford, Sasha is a dedicated professional with over 20 years of experience in the voluntary and charity sector. With an extensive background spanning adult education, housing, youth work, and community engagement, Sasha brings a wealth of expertise to The Gatehouse. Holding an MSc in Charity Management and a Diploma in Charity Accounting, she is able to combine strategic insight with a passion for making a difference. Beyond work, Sasha enjoys hiking, learning Spanish, and swimming, embracing adventure, continuous learning, and well-being in both professional and personal life.

Managing a complex organisation such as the Gatehouse is no simple feat, and Sasha has spent the intervening time getting to grips with the complexities of our operations and infrastructure. In her own words "It's amazing how much good work the Gatehouse actually does behind the scenes, and the huge number of beneficial impacts we have on our guests' lives. Having now immersed myself fully into the ethos of the charity I'm looking forward to building further on what has already been achieved, and overcoming the many challenges that we will face over the coming years."

Sasha took over the reins from Katrina Horne (inset), who masterminded the widespread expansion of the charity over the last decade, overseeing the introduction of many new services including Casework one to one support, Counselling, and our Lived Experience Advisory Forum. All of these now form a core part of the Gatehouse's wide range of free services offered to guests, and have helped make us a significant force in the homeless support sector.



▲ Big Give Small Charity Week 23rd to 30th June

BIG GIVE: DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT

How would you like to see your donation having twice as much impact? Done! Take part in the Big Give Small Charity week campaign and your money will go twice as far, adding even more much needed support for our guests.

The idea is simple. Big Give, together with their partner Global's Make Some Noise are offering matched funding that will double any donation you make via our campaign page on their website during the week 23rd - 30th June. Our 'Gatehouse community centre drop-in services' campaign page can be found by searching for 'homeless people oxford': www.donate.biggive.org/small-charity-week-2025

This campaign will feature strongly on the News page of our website and on our social media sites so you can look there for more details and direct links to our campaign page. Adding Gift Aid will make your donation go even further so remember to do this if you are a UK tax payer. We rely strongly on the support of our local community and any donation, however big or small, will make somebody's life that little bit better. Spreading the news about this campaign will also help so please also share this information with your friends, family, colleagues and members of local organisations that you are involved with.



More information



Our campaign page

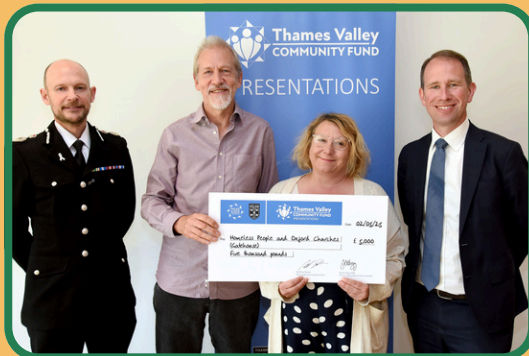
FUNDING UPDATE; WE'RE NOT TAKING ANYTHING FOR GRANTED!

A significant proportion of the Gatehouse's income each year comes from grants, and we're still benefitting from major multiple year grants from both Lloyd's Bank Foundation for England & Wales, and the National Lottery Fund RC London and South East Region, which have both played a major part in funding the expansion of our services over recent years.



It might sound simple asking grant awarding bodies for money, but competition for funds has become even more intense over the past few years, with a number of major grant providers winding up their schemes and more charities seeking a shrinking overall pot of funds. Each year that means we have to apply for around 50 grants, and it's usually a lengthy process, making it hard to plan ahead. None of the income is guaranteed – hence the headline for this article!

To ensure long-term financial sustainability we have developed a diverse income stream that includes continued support from local businesses, community organisations and individuals. You can read more about how to support the Gatehouse throughout this newsletter.



In the meantime, we'd like to say a huge **THANK YOU** to all organisations who have awarded us grants or provided other support over the past year, including the Thames Valley Police (see left), and many others featured in this publication. We should also make it clear that, despite the headline here, we are in fact very happy to take grants awarded to us!

If you want to get in touch about fundraising, contact: fundraising@oxfordgatehouse.org

Photo: David Kay (Fundraising Manager), and Sasha East (CEO) receiving a grant cheque of £5,000 from Jason Hogg (Chief Constable for TVP) and Matthew Barber (Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley) from the Thames Valley Police Community Fund.

WE'LL GET / BUY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS!

Support from local organisations can take many forms and we'd like to highlight and thank three examples here, namely the Oxfordshire Freemasons, and the companies Shaw Gibbs, Accountants and Welcome Break. If your organisation would like to support the Gatehouse please contact us via fundraising@oxfordgatehouse.org to discuss ways you could help.

WELCOME BREAK

Staff from Welcome Break have volunteered at the Gatehouse for several years, offering practical help and a friendly presence while preparing and serving meals or simply being there to lend a hand. They take great pride in supporting their local communities, and have found the experience incredibly rewarding and humbling. Looking ahead, they are excited to grow their involvement, encouraging more of their team to volunteer and deepening the relationship.



Photo: Volunteers from Welcome Break



Photo: Zoe and Mair from the Gatehouse receiving hoodies from representatives of the Oxfordshire Freemasons.

OXFORDSHIRE FREEMASONS

Over the past two years Freemasons from across Oxfordshire have been supporting the Gatehouse in a variety of ways from mountains of canned tuna for our café to dozens of hoodies and funding for our clothes store to a range of other donations and grants from individual Lodges and the Masonic Charitable Foundation. We have also given talks at their meetings, and highly appreciate the close relationship that has developed between the two organisations.

SHAW GIBBS, ACCOUNTANTS

In 2024 Shaw Gibbs chose us as their Charity of the Year and organised a range of internal activities to fundraise for us, including a successful summer party and raffle. They also encouraged staff members to take part in Bike Oxford and the Oxford Half Marathon on our behalf, raising several thousand pounds. Three of their Half Marathon entrants are shown below. In total they had 13 runners, enabling us to have a record 22 runners in our Team for that event!



Photo: Three of Shaw Gibbs' runners in the 2024 Oxford Half Marathon

LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

Gifts in Wills now make up around one third of the total donations to UK charities by individuals and that number is forecast to continue increasing. Our financial sustainability is also likely to become more dependent on this sector over the longer term, which is why we, and many other charities are encouraging people to explore this topic.



There are three good reasons why more and more people are leaving Gifts in their Wills. Unlike normal donations it won't impact on your current finances, you can choose as big or small a sum as you want, and it's a simple process. The Gifts in Wills page on our website includes a straightforward guide to this subject and links to a wealth of further useful information:

www.oxfordgatehouse.org/support-us/gifts-in-wills

We'll also be taking part in the national Remember a Charity Week from 8th to 14th September. Keep an eye out for more on our website and social media sites. Your support can make a huge difference to us and our guests over the long term, so please consider leaving the Gatehouse a Gift in your Will.

SUPPORT FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

We'd like to say a massive **THANK YOU** to all of our supporters who have helped us out by volunteering, donating, or raising funds for us. Unfortunately we haven't got room to mention everyone, but here are just a few of the local organisations who have supported Oxford's homeless community through the Gatehouse over the past year.

At the Gatehouse our expenditure continues to increase year on year as we widen our range of services and expand our capacity to meet growing demand. This year our costs will be over £500,000.



We rely heavily on local organisations and individuals for support and there are many ways that you can help including donations of money, clothes, food and other items, organising or taking part in fundraising events, and volunteering at our drop-in sessions or as part of a Food Group. We'd particularly like to hear from local businesses and community groups interested in discussing a wider support package.

For further information, please contact us via fundraising@oxfordgatehouse.org or visit the Support Us page on our website using this QR code.



BEHIND THE SCENES

We often highlight the great work of our volunteers and staff at the Gatehouse, but there is another small group of people working away busily in the background who don't often get a mention, namely our Board of Trustees. As with all charities, the trustees bear ultimate responsibility for the organisation and its effectiveness, including strategy, charity governance, financial control, and all aspects of running the charity. In other words, the role of the trustees is key to the success of the Gatehouse, and essential for the long-term well-being of the organisation as a whole.

Throughout its history the Gatehouse has been blessed with talented and committed trustees. An indication of their dedication is that since the Gatehouse was formally established as a charity thirty four years ago, there have been just 3 chairs and 4 treasurers; the last of the foundation trustees did not retire until 2017. Nevertheless, trustees come and go and we are currently recruiting new trustees, with the aim of widening the skill base, increasing diversity and bringing new vision to the Board.

If you would like to apply the deadline is 6th June. See the article on our News page at www.oxfordgatehouse.org/news for details. In the meantime, let's hear it for those unsung heroes, our trustees, past and present!



COMMUNITY CENTRE SERVICES UPDATE

The community centre continues to be as busy as ever. Since last summer we've seen nearly 14,000 individual visits to our café serving around 8,000 jacket potatoes and over 1,300 loaves of bread! Clothing and toiletry provision also remains a vital service and in the past year we've distributed nearly 5,000 items of clothing. Donations of these items are always welcomed.

Our workshop programme is going strong. Guests recently enjoyed a fascinating workshop on Rootical Folklore, and coming up are workshops on candle making, pottery, and dog first aid, plus our ever-popular wellbeing workshops return later this year.

Visits from our volunteer hairdresser, podiatrists and optician continue to make a big impact—our guests often say how much something like a simple haircut can lift their spirits.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!

Looking for something worthwhile to do in your spare time? Why not join us as a regular volunteer and help run our daily café sessions? A few hours of your spare time can help us to make a big difference to people's lives.

We're also looking for volunteers to make sandwiches and soup in one of our food groups. Email admin@oxfordgatehouse.org to volunteer today. For details: www.oxfordgatehouse.org/volunteer

MORE WAYS TO HELP!

THE GATEHOUSE

Supporting Oxford's homeless and vulnerably housed community since 1988



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Buy your lottery tickets for £1 each, the Gatehouse receives 50p

and you have a chance of winning up to £25,000!
www.oxfordlottery.org

You can raise FREE donations for us every time you shop online. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you shop via **easyfundraising** – at no extra cost to yourself!



Scan this QR code to visit our easyfundraising page.