

St Wilfrid's Catholic School

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Diocese of Arundel & Brighton and West Sussex County Council

*"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of my brothers,
you did for me." Matthew 26:45*

7 September 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

As you are probably aware, for some years we have worked in close partnership with Crawley Open House, to not only raise funds and provide resources, but also to raise awareness of the issue of homelessness.

In 2018, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Homelessness Monitor for England cited that:

- There are 78,000 homeless households in England in temporary accommodation and if the recent trend continues this will be over 100,000 by 2020.
- 70% of councils in the South have indicated that the number of people seeking help from their homelessness services had risen in the last year.

Against this backdrop of an increase in the numbers of homeless, Crawley Open House continues to make a massive difference to the lives of some of society's most vulnerable people and works tirelessly to help get, and keep, "people off the streets".

Unfortunately, West Sussex County Council has announced that funding from centres like Crawley Open House are to be cut and as a result, Crawley Open House could lost approximately £250,000 per annum. This would have a devastating effect and would prevent the shelter from operating as it currently does.

I have therefore taken the decision to write to you to ask you to consider signing a petition set up by the Leader of Crawley Borough Council, demanding that West Sussex County Council reject the proposed cuts and therefore secure the future of Crawley Open House and other homeless organisations within the county.

The petition can be found at <https://www.change.org/p/louise-goldsmith-save-crawley-open-house>

I must explain that my letter to you is in no way written because of any political motive; it is however written with a very clear moral one. The measure of any civilised society is in the way it treats its most vulnerable members. To remove this funding would be simply immoral and I ask you to help put pressure on West Sussex County Council to reconsider its plans.

If you would like more information on the work of Crawley Open House, please visit their website www.crawleyopenhouse.co.uk where you can also access the petition.

Thank you in advance for any help you can give.

Yours sincerely

Michael Ferry
Headteacher