

Shelter Nova Scotia to Receive \$713,000 annually in Provincial Funds to Support Operations



We at Shelter Nova Scotia wish to thank Premier Tim Houston, and colleagues at the Department of Community Services for the stabilizing funding announced Wednesday, October 20, 2021. The pledged \$713,000 annually will help ensure we have a permanent employee team to effectively support the increased number of people in our community facing homelessness, housing insecurity and marginalization.

Supporting people in crisis and helping them transition to stable, supported community living is about more than just a place to sleep. "It's complicated; but it's not," says Shelter Nova Scotia Executive Director Linda Wilson. "Change happens through relationships. The experience of someone in a housing crisis often includes betrayal, abuse, fear, and loneliness. Over time the stress of this circumstance creates feelings of desperation and defeat. Our employee team needs to build reliable connections with people who have suffered so many broken relationships in the past to help them move forward."

Shelter Nova Scotia's six facilities house 106 individuals every night of the year. We also support roughly 1200 additionally housed people in the community through our community trustee and housing support programs. The housing support program is expanding this Fall to include a drop-in centre with access to shower and laundry facilities, food support, and advocacy. The Housing Hub is expected to officially open in November and will assist people to locate housing and remain housed.

Each one of Shelter Nova Scotia's programs and facilities require trained, experienced staff. "Unfortunately, during the first wave of Covid-19, we lost about a third of our people," says Wilson. "Those who were able to stay on during the hardest times, were required to do more than anyone should take on. This is emotional, stressful, sometimes dangerous work. People do it because they understand the struggle, barriers and isolation others are experiencing. It is not reasonable to ask employees to witness such strain and take on this work without a living wage they can depend on."

The new Provincial funding will allow Shelter Nova Scotia to maintain safe staffing ratios in our facilities, provide effective support to those we serve, and finally, provide a living wage to the dedicated people who are making a difference daily in the lives of others.

We are very thankful for the permanent funding increase and grateful for the commitment of our employees, board members, volunteers, donors, funders, and community colleagues. All good things ahead.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Wilson".

Linda Wilson, MSW RSW
Executive Director