Salvation Army partners took to the streets on 10 October—World Homeless Day—sleeping rough to raise money for the homeless.

More than 200 people took part in 14 Hours Homeless, sleeping out in cars, on couches and on cardboard in secure locations in Auckland, Palmerston North, Wellington and Invercargill.

People fundraised in teams for the event, raising $22,549. Funds were also raised through a Trade Me auction of badges made by clients from The Salvation Army’s Community Ministries Drop-In Centre in Wellington.

Teams came from a wide range of life from formerly homeless people to politicians. Linton Army Camp and Ohakea Air Force base had the largest teams with 10 people from each camp attending the Palmerston North event.

Cardboard for the sleepers was provided by Crown Relocations, while Countdown supermarkets donated food for the event along with Kellogg’s. Dpod printing and design company donated printing, Flagmakers produced banners, and Armourguard provided security for the sites.

Along with sleeping rough, the teams heard from speakers about what is being done to tackle homelessness in New Zealand to make long-term change.

Stephen Bennett, director of Wellington business Orangebox, was part of the first team to sign up for the event. He said hearing from the formerly homeless people was humbling, especially one couple who lived in a car for 18 months. ‘It was pretty amazing listening to those stories. It certainly makes you appreciate what you have. Imagine living in a car for a year and a half and that’s a luxury.’

Members of his team were discussing ways to volunteer and help out after hearing the stories.

Trade Me Property head Nigel Jeffries said although it was a short time sleeping out, the team were excited to raise money for a good cause and came away with a better understanding of the difficulties of living homeless.

‘It was amazing how much insulation effect you got from cardboard but I found one blanket was not enough to keep the cold at bay which meant for a pretty sleepless night. And we were lucky—as it was an incredibly clear night in Wellington.’

Salvation Army Public Relations Director Shane Chisholm said businesses were increasingly looking for ways to help out and give back to the community. The event was a fun way for businesses to contribute to solving a serious problem.

Thanks to your generosity, The Salvation Army can provide the homeless with supportive services. Please donate today to give hope to Kiwis in great need.

- Post your donation to us
- Call 0800 53 00 00
- Online at salvationarmy.org.nz
Homelessness in New Zealand

The word homelessness often conjures up the image of an older man sleeping rough. For this reason, a 2013 study used the definition ‘severe housing deprivation’ to try to get away from such stereotypes.

Homelessness, or ‘severe housing deprivation’, takes many forms, so Statistics New Zealand published a definition. It essentially says being homeless means you have run out of options to acquire safe and secure housing. The four categories are:

1. **People without shelter:** who do not have personal space that is private, secure and safe, such as living on cardboard under a bridge.
2. **Temporary accommodation:** where people have accommodation that they cannot maintain permanently. An unexpected bill may see a family evicted for missing rental payments and they end up in a camping ground. Or a mother and children who, because of domestic violence, have to move into a refuge.
3. **Sharing with others:** where it is not a person’s preference to have to share their accommodation with others, which is often over-crowded, unhealthy and lacking privacy.
4. **Uninhabitable housing:** where the house is unsafe for habitation.

Homelessness—the experience of having run out of options—has multiple causes. These occur at both an individual household level, and at the wider structural level of systems and policies.

For a minority of people the cause may well be poor life choices. However, for the majority, the household level issues are more complex than our easy judgements suggest. For example, a two-income family may be able to manage paying over 50 per cent of their combined income on rent.

However, if the adults separate and mum is left to pay the rent out of her part-time income, then maintaining satisfactory housing for her and her children becomes impossible. If subsequently evicted, the family lose their credit rating, making finding alternative accommodation almost impossible. In the current market, landlords often give preference to the double income couple with no kids, no pets, and no debt.

The two big structural issues causing homelessness are the lack of available housing and the lack of affordable housing. This drives the market, so that New Zealand now has the most expensive housing in the world.

Many of us demand aspects of our lifestyle as of right: faster broadband, consistent electricity supply, or the ability to purchase alcohol 24/7.

Yet, we have not legislated for the basic human right of a safe and secure home. It is time for us to demand that all New Zealanders are guaranteed the basic human right of appropriate housing so that we all live in security, peace and dignity.

Major Sue Hay
Assistant Director, Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit
www.salvationarmy.org.nz/socialpolicy

“A ‘Can Do’ attitude

Staff at 16 NZCU Baywide branches collected just under 10,000 cans for Salvation Army food banks during the credit union’s August ‘Can Do’ initiative. NZCU Baywide partnered with schools, businesses, Countdown supermarkets and other NZCU Group branches nationwide to boost the collection.

‘We are very grateful to NZCU Baywide for their fantastic can food collection—it’s a hard time of year when bills are high and people often find they are short when it comes to buying groceries,’ says Major Pam Waugh, national head of Salvation Army Community Ministries.

‘NZCU Baywide’s Can Do campaign is a great example of how businesses can help make an important and positive difference to their local communities.’

Douglas Park School in Masterton collected 550 cans of food—pictured with pupils are Salvation Army officers Jess and Daryn Bishop and NZCU Baywide’s Catherine Cockeram and Sasha Bain
Wairarapa Times Age
Bringing hope to a family on the edge

Chantelle quietly weeps while reliving the recent months of tenuous, overcrowded living and the ever-present threat of life on the street for her and her children.

At the beginning of the year, she was living with her partner and balancing work with raising three children. Her husband left and Chantelle, struggling with a steep drop in her household income, fell behind with the rent. The family was evicted and went to board with friends. But the natural pressures of two families living under one roof meant she and her children were asked to move on.

Chantelle had been frantically searching for accommodation. Private rentals in her price range are rare and the boarding houses and caravan parks she considered were unsafe for young children. Compounding the situation was that she had been informed her earlier application for a Housing New Zealand property had been closed and she was asked to restart the long process of reapplying.

As her Salvation Army social worker points out, boarding houses or caravan parks in large cities, with their growing populations of displaced and itinerant residents, are unsuitable places for children, especially Chantelle’s 12-year-old daughter. The safest caravan park in the area charges $500 per week for a cabin with shared facilities.

Running out of options, Chantelle approached The Salvation Army. Social workers arranged accommodation for the family at a safe caravan park and began a series of negotiations with Housing New Zealand and Work and Income. In little more than a week of intensive advocacy, they had secured a home for Chantelle and her children.

Chantelle remains traumatised by the experience, feeling she let her children down by not providing a stable and safe home. Throughout this period, she struggled to present a semblance of normality to her children while her options and her hopes were dwindling rapidly.

‘It was horrible. If it was just myself to worry about it wouldn’t matter, but I had three kids to think about,’ she says.

National head of Salvation Army Community Ministries Major Pam Waugh says, worryingly, Chantelle’s experience is shared by a growing number of low-income clients evicted from their homes because their incomes cannot match the increase in rents and the costs of food and power.

Your donation will help us change the lives of people like Chantelle and her children.
Please call us on 0800 53 00 00 or donate at salvationarmy.org.nz

Celebrating 21 years of giving

The Wattie’s Can’s Film Festival celebrated a major milestone this year. On 12 November, Hoyts, Reading, Event and Independent Cinemas hosted the 21st annual festival, with Kiwis donating a can of food to The Salvation Army to watch a movie.

Countdown supermarkets also collected donated cans for the festival from 13 to 20 October.

While the films have changed over the years, Kiwis’ love of movies and helping has not. With Wattie’s matching the number of cans donated, more than 40,000 cans a year stock food banks for the Christmas demand.

‘We’re extremely proud to celebrate the 21st year of giving back to Kiwi families,’ says Heinz Wattie’s NZ Managing Director Mike Pretty.

‘Wattie’s has been working closely with The Salvation Army for more than two decades and together we’ve generated over 1 million cans of food for families in need around the country.’

Visit watties.co.nz
Businesses making a difference to Kiwis in need

Businesses that stand side by side with The Salvation Army are helping struggling families take positive steps toward a brighter future.

'ventures of all kinds, from small, local firms to large multi-national corporates, are making a difference to Kiwis in need through their partnerships with The Salvation Army,’ explains Public Relations Director Shane Chisholm.

‘Over the past 12 months, we've seen a significant increase in the number and diversity of organisations approaching us from every part of the country wanting to help. It is tremendously pleasing and humbling to see more and more businesses recognising the value that comes from giving back to their local communities.

Shane says there are whole range of ways in which businesses can make a difference from financial sponsorship of The Salvation Army's social service programmes, through to donations of goods—such as food, clothing, household items or children's gifts. Another increasingly popular option is payroll giving, where a regular percentage of an employee's salary is donated each pay cycle to The Salvation Army, often with a matched amount from the business.

“We work hard to ensure that our partnering opportunities deliver mutually rewarding, lasting benefit for our partners and their staff, as well as for the work we do,’ explains Shane.

Contact Camille Astbury, Corporate Relationships Manager, on 027 294 0802 to find out more about:

- Payroll giving
- Customer or staff-driven fundraising campaigns
- Programme sponsorship
- Donations of goods or services

Jamie needs your help this Christmas

Your donation will help us change the lives of Kiwi kids living in poverty.

Please donate at salvationarmy.org.nz