

Blooming House Women's Shelter
Annual Report
2019

**Blooming
House**

**A NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO
IMPROVING THE LIVES OF
WOMEN EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS.**

1271

bed nights this
year

61

individual women
from all over the
island

8

number of women we
helped to transition into
their own housing

45%

average
occupancy per
night

\$157,000

funds raised

Our Story

Blooming House Women's Shelter Inc. is a registered charity, nonprofit organization whose primary goal is to provide safe overnight shelter for women on PEI. This shelter serves as a low-barrier, harm-reduction, safe space for all women.

Blooming House opened its doors on January 25th, 2019 and now continues to operate a 12-hour overnight shelter, 7 nights a week. The organization currently has a small team of 8 employees running and organizing the only low-barrier shelter in Charlottetown, PEI. In addition to this team, the co-founders and board members volunteer their time to oversee business operations and management.

The Reality

Before Blooming House opened in 2019, women in Charlottetown had been without a homeless shelter for over 7 years. Women had no choice but to find other options for shelter; many times that included putting themselves in vulnerable and dangerous positions in order to have a place to sleep. Believing this to be unacceptable, in early 2018, co-founders Brynn Devine and Liz Corney started a necessary conversation with existing Island organizations serving the vulnerable population including local non-profits, municipal and provincial government and with women currently or previously experiencing homelessness. Through months of research and discussion, it was clear that there was a significant and real need in Charlottetown and something had to be done immediately. In late 2018, as the weather turned to winter, Brynn and Liz approached a local church asking if they would partner with us by allowing us to use their parsonage. Once the location was secured, we set about developing policies and procedures, securing funding, hiring staff and outfitting the house. On January 25th, 2019 we opened our doors for the first night.

Community-Funded, Community-Minded

Blooming House seeks to continue their work in providing safe shelter for women, but beyond that, their goal is to change the underlying issues that are root causes of inequality, violence, poverty, and homelessness for women in Prince Edward Island. The women we serve come from a variety of backgrounds including fleeing domestic abuse, fighting addictions, and mental health issues, etc. Our guests have ranged in age from 18 to 74.

Blooming House has 11 paid staff as part time or full time employees. They are responsible for maintaining the shelter and supervising guests overnight. Blooming House co-founders and board of directors are volunteers. We also have a bank of volunteers who help with various shelter needs.

We are located in Charlottetown, although we have seen women access our services from across the island including Prince and Kings County. The support we have received across the island from the community, local businesses, government, and other nonprofit organizations has been incredible. Blooming House would not be able to keep doors open to women of Prince Edward Island without the generous contributions of the community. Any contribution, monetary, volunteer, in-kind or other is generously accepted. To give an idea, the definitions of in-kind donations and monetary donations are below.

In-kind donations: in-kind donations in the form of retail dollars, food and beverage, transportation or other are an incredible asset to our guests. The off-set of costs allows our guests to prioritize their health and safety, spend time on professional development, and save money for long-term housing solutions.

Monetary donations: We rely on the support of government, other not-for-profit organizations and community members to provide housing and services to Island women.

Testimonial

“Thank you so very much for all of your strength, love and hope. I feel certain I may have chosen a different path if you ladies had not shown me a much better one.” - Former Guest of Blooming House

Board members

LIZ CORNEY

CO-FOUNDER & PRESIDENT, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Liz Corney is the co-founder and President of the board of directors for Blooming House. She is a new mother to one very busy baby boy. She works full time as the Content Marketing Manager at an IT company in Charlottetown. Her company sells software to nonprofit organizations in order to improve fundraising efforts and overall good in the world. Her educational background is in journalism, communications, and marketing and she has a passion for nonprofit, volunteerism, and women’s issues. She has over 10 years of professional experience as a consultant, a creative problem solver, and a strategic communicator in business.

BRYNN DEVINE

CO-FOUNDER & VICE PRESIDENT, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brynn is a Business Analyst and mother of three. She is a part of the core Blooming House team in charge of business planning and funding submissions. She is project-oriented, is able to take requirements and plan a successful implementation. She has strong skills in engineering, systems, and planning details. She is an expert problem-solver and is passionate about helping vulnerable women.

EMILY GILLIS

MEMBER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Emily Gillis is a Registered Nurse who has been working as the Executive Director of the Island Pregnancy Centre for over six years. She has served on nonprofit boards in the past and has invaluable hands-on nonprofit experience. Emily maintains her professional license by working casual shifts at the QEH and on contract with UPEI’s Faculty of Nursing as a clinical instructor. She enjoys volunteering here and abroad with annual trips to serve with a non-profit medical clinic in Honduras.

ERICA VANNIEUWENHUYZEN
TREASURER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Erica is a bookkeeper currently working with several local PEI businesses and charities and is a mother of four. She has a background working for a local accounting firm where her experience taught her to navigate the world of accounting for large and small companies in every business sector. Her work included year end financials, tax prep, financial projections and client relations. She also earned her Bachelor of Social Work degree and has several years of experience working in social services. Through her family business and her own time, she is a passionate supporter and champion of causes that help the most vulnerable and hurting in her community.