

Bright, New Beginnings For Women at Abby's House

If there's one thing to note about the women of Abby's House, it's how resilient they are. No matter what path they find themselves on their strength, determination, and desire to better their lives moves them forward on their journeys. This statement especially holds true for the twenty-two women who have been living at 52 High Street since February of 2018, when renovations first began on their home.

The first few months of the project were eye-opening, as the women adjusted to the sounds of construction. Each day began at 7 a.m. as the sound of hammers and drilling became their alarm clocks. The challenges of living through the renovation were 24 hours a day. Residents dealt with noise both inside and outside of the building, their windows being obscured by scaffolding, and the electricity and water going off at various times due to construction needs.

To help ride out the renovation, the women came together on Saturday mornings to talk about their experiences living through construction. At these gatherings, the women were able to connect with each other by sharing how the renovation was personally affecting them, and provide tips and coping mechanisms to one another. No matter what each week brought them, they continually expressed their gratitude for having a stable, safe home, despite the temporary disruptions of the renovation – a home where they can focus on their healing and receive the support and guidance they need to accomplish their personal goals!

With the first phase of construction now complete, a new chapter for the women of Abby's House can be written. "I've never been to a place like this," said Donna, a current resident of Abby's House. "Abby's has always had my back and I appreciate everything that they've



Donna admires the view from her newly renovated room

Patricia sits and enjoys her bright, new bedroom



done. **It's all a new beginning, and I'm so thankful to everyone who made this possible."**

"New beginnings are on the horizon," said Patricia, another current resident of Abby's House. "I love the room and how bright and welcoming it is! I also love that we now have laundry on each floor instead of going down to the basement! I can't wait to just walk out of my room in my bathrobe to go do my laundry."

Through your support, encouragement, and contributions, you've given women, like Donna and Patricia, a new outlook on life and have shown them the power of all of us coming together to ignite change and hope where it is needed. Thank you, for giving the women of Abby's House a bright, new beginning!



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Bright Spot

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Mission Statement

The mission of Abby's House is to provide shelter and affordable housing, as well as advocacy and support services, to homeless, battered, and low-income women, with or without children.

Vision Statement

Abby's House empowers the women we serve to lead self-directed lives filled with dignity and hope.



Your Impact at Abby's House

A Message from Executive Director, Stephanie Page

"Strong alone, unstoppable together." - Unknown

Since our founding over 42 years ago, Abby's House continues to be as vital today as the first day we opened our doors in 1976. The progress of the renovation at 52 High Street demonstrates that we *together* can meet the ever-changing needs of women and families experiencing homelessness in our community. Here's how your impact was felt in the lives of women and their families in 2018:



- 106 women and 26 children were provided with safe shelter or housing
- 20 single occupancy rooms, 2 communal bathrooms, and 2 lounges were renovated, and 2 dedicated laundry rooms were created on the annex side of 52 High Street as part of the on-going renovations
- Advocacy and referral services were provided to more than 500 women and their families who were experiencing homelessness
- Volunteers and staff served over 8,510 individual meals to women and children and provided food pantry access twice a month
- A new commercial kitchen was built with state-of-the-art appliances to enhance our ability to meet increasing needs for healthy meals
- The Thrift Shop was remodeled, including new display racks and shelving, new checkout counters and registers, and new security system to help better serve our community with ease
- 143 women received clothing in the Thrift Shop through partnering agencies, including LUK, YWCA, SMOC, CHL, You Inc, APW, CHMA, and others

Through your continued dedication to the women and children of Abby's House, you made all of the above possible. **Thank you for continuing to believe in our mission and for coming together as a community to support the women and children who call Abby's House home.**

With your support, 2019 promises to be another incredibly impactful year at Abby's House as we celebrate the completion of the renovations at 52 High Street and what that means for the women and children we serve.

With sincere gratitude,

Stephanie

Naming Opportunities Available!

52 High Street Single Occupancy Bedrooms

If you would like the opportunity to have one of the 56 newly renovated single occupancy bedrooms named in honor or in memory of a loved one, please contact Director of Development, Kelly Whalen at kelly@abbyshouse.org or by phone at 508-756-5486 x214.

Naming opportunities are \$7,500 and above.

52 High Street Renovation Update

Phase One of Construction is Successfully Completed! Phase Two is Underway!

We are thrilled to announce that phase one of construction is now complete! Since February of 2018, our largest building of supportive housing has been under renovation to upgrade major systems as well as to bring this century-old home into the modern era. Through this much-needed renovation of the largest of our four properties, we will be better able to address the ever-changing needs of women who are at risk of being homeless in our community now and long into the future.

With phase two of construction well underway, all renovations are expected to be completed by June 2019! The final two phases will focus on renovating the remaining thirty-six resident rooms, including three barrier-free rooms for residents with accessibility needs. Communal kitchens for each residential floor will be built and the remaining bathrooms and staff offices will be updated. Air conditioning will also be installed in resident lounges, kitchens, and program spaces, and a new, private room for residents to meet with outside providers will be constructed. The security system, parking lot upgrades and outdoor patio enhancements, and the installation of an elevator will also be completed in the final two phases.

This renovation would not have been possible without the support of so many, like you, and we look forward to celebrating its completion with you later this summer! Through your gifts of time, talent, and treasure, you have impacted the lives of the women and children of Abby's House today and will continue to impact lives for decades to come!

More information regarding our ribbon cutting will be posted on our website as well as in the summer newsletter.



We're grateful for the support of community partners, like The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, which awarded a \$75,000 grant to Abby's House in order to upgrade counters and registers, closet storage systems, and shelving and display racks in the Thrift Shop. (shown above)

Mark Your Calendars!

Spring-Tacular

*A Celebration of Rebuilding and Transforming Women's Lives
6th annual food & beverage tasting event & silent auction*

Thursday, May 16, 2019

6 - 9 p.m.

College of the Holy Cross
Hogan Campus Center Ballroom

Tickets on sale now through May 6, 2019 at abbyshouse.org

Abby's House 5K Run/Walk

*10th annual 5K race to support
the women and children of Abby's House*

Saturday, October 19, 2019

8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

West Boylston Middle/High School
Race begins promptly at 9 a.m.

Register today at abbyshouse.racewire.com

Get Involved At Abby's House!



It was through the sheer determination of compassionate and concerned individuals that Abby's House (Abby Kelley Foster House, Inc.) came to be.

There are many ways to make your impact felt at Abby's House! You can make a gift, donate needed items, volunteer, & more!

Make A Gift:

Your gift makes it possible for women and children to dream of a hopeful future. Once safely housed, women develop a plan to avoid future homelessness and housing insecurity.

To learn more on making a gift, visit abbyshouse.org/get-involved/ways-to-give/

Donate Needed Items:

You can help the women and children of Abby's House by donating items on our needs list.

To view the complete list, visit abbyshouse.org/get-involved/donate-needed-items

Volunteer:

Volunteers have been at the heart of Abby's House since the beginning. Interested in volunteering as an individual or group? Fill out a volunteer application here abbyshouse.org/get-involved/volunteer/volunteer-application

For more information on how to make your impact felt at Abby's House, visit abbyshouse.org/get-involved

2018 Program Funding

100% Funded!

Because of your support, our programs for 2018 were fully funded.



Through your contributions, the remaining 30% of our budget was raised in the final two months of 2018.

You made shelter, housing, and supportive service programs possible for women & children!

Lighting the Way Forward!

Over our 42-year history, you continue to answer the call to help those who are at risk of being homeless time and again. This was no exception when Abby's House announced its plans to renovate our largest property of safe and supportive housing at 52 High Street. Along with countless individuals, many local area businesses gathered to help. One of those businesses which made a huge impact in this project was Shepherd Engineering, Inc.

Located on Grafton Street in Worcester, Shepherd Engineering, Inc. has provided quality electrical consulting, design and supervision for projects involving new construction, renovation, energy surveys and design builds for 72 years. This third-generation family firm believes strongly in supporting their community and practices this belief both at work and at home. The Shepherd family has been involved with Abby's House since 1987, when Ellen Shepherd first began volunteering as an overnight volunteer in our shelter. In 2001, Ellen's daughter, Mary started serving meals with her church once a month in the Women's Center.

"When Abby's House proposed this renovation, John (Mary's brother and co-owner of Shepherd Engineering) and I decided right away that we wanted to help Abby's in any way possible and offered to donate our services to complete the electrical design for the building," said Mary Fritz, vice president and electrical designer for Shepherd Engineering, Inc. "We also partnered with John Godek from Reflex Lighting Group and Tom Smith from Electrical Wholesalers, Inc., to develop a light fixture package for the building. Both gentlemen worked at no cost to provide light fixtures that were either discounted or donated from various manufacturers. Through their efforts, we were able to provide quality light fixtures throughout while saving approximately \$135,000 for Abby's House!"

Through Shepherd Engineering, Inc. and other local individuals and area businesses, the dream of renovating 52 High Street has become a reality. We are grateful to Mary, John, the entire Shepherd family, John Godek and Tom Smith and their companies for their amazing contribution to this project. Their impact will be felt in the lives of many for years to come!

Be Social With Us!



Follow us on all of our social media accounts to receive the latest updates on what's happening at Abby's House!

Tag us in your posts and use #OpeningDoors & #HealRebuildEmpower to join in the conversation today!