

RESPOND RECOVER REBUILD



HOMELESS PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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Names have been changed and images used do not reflect stories on the page to protect the identity of guests.

INTRODUCTION

Reviewing the last twelve months feels like an impossible task when the world has changed so much. But it has also never better demonstrated our **Respond, Recover, Rebuild** approach to helping those who are homeless.

A year ago the Everyone In policy launched, providing accommodation for those who were homeless. That meant a big change for C4WS. We needed to coordinate food parcels, provide phones, laptops and data packages to facilitate communication during lockdown and migrate services online to still reach and help guests.

We are hugely proud that, apart from temporarily closing Friday Club, all our other projects continued to operate through a blend of traditional face-to-face contact when permitted, and online interactions when required. Flexibility and innovation were key to adapting to ever changing circumstances. What remained unchanged was our person-centred approach, tailored to individual needs and never a one-size-fits-all strategy.

Laszlo Balla, our Employment Support Coordinator, moved Jobs Club online so mentors and guests already working together could continue to meet and took this online approach into the shelter season for new guests. With Savills, he also set up a new project, Conversation Club, for guests to practise and improve their English-speaking skills via weekly online chats with volunteer employees.

Our Home From Home hosts and Mentoring and Befriending volunteers defied all the odds to continue crucial and direct support to guests. And the Welfare Team could be found on the end of a phone, a Zoom screen, or in a socially distanced and safe office.

If the post-shelter period broke new territory, it was nothing compared to operating our winter shelter. The challenges, complexities and sometimes downright absurdities (how do you lockdown if you have nowhere to lockdown to?) are detailed further in this Annual Report. The stories represent the blood, sweat and tears of staff and a community determined to provide life-saving interventions.

There is not enough space to thank everyone involved in pulling off what has been the most remarkable feat I have seen in nine years at C4WS. However, special mention goes to our new staff: Harry Bateman, who coordinated the shelter making it a place that was safe and welcoming, and Rachel Hamilton, who case-worked with guests to secure move-ons from the shelter whilst also running Home From Home. Additionally, we were joined by two cohorts from Year Here: Alex Cawthron and Genevieve Hampson who hit the ground running with their energy and passion.

A recurring theme was guests' appreciation for in-person contact. With so many other services in the sector closed or only operating remotely, our shelter

was a reminder of the value of having an actual cup of coffee or playing a game of scrabble with a physical board and tiles. During the darkest times of the pandemic, this basic and simple human interaction was a shining light.

C4WS has always been defined by its people. The resilience and courage of our guests, the compassion of our volunteers and the dedication and innovation of our staff. If this last year is anything to go by then whatever comes next we are well placed to meet its challenges and continue to support people from crisis to the happy and stable futures they deserve.

Sam Forsdike, Welfare Manager



WHO WE ARE

We help people who have experience of homelessness.

We believe:

- ★ Everybody has the right to a home.
- ★ Everybody has the agency to achieve the change they want for themselves given the right opportunities and support.

We work with people to rebuild their lives and achieve their goals.

OUR HISTORY

C4WS Homeless Project grew from the generosity of the church community in Camden, which opened its doors to people without a home for the coldest months of the year. Rooted in the principle of Faith in Action and underpinned by Christian values, we provide holistic and long-term support to those who have been or are experiencing homelessness, irrespective of their background and without judgement.

WHAT WE DO

- ★ **We empower people** through providing support and opportunities.
- ★ **We take a person-centred approach** that embraces the complexity of people.
- ★ **We champion people** to act for themselves, and we follow their lead.
- ★ **We are committed to equality of access, support and inclusion** and recognise that we exist in a system where disadvantage falls disproportionately.

HOW WE WORK

- ★ **We listen, learn and evolve**, continually striving to better serve the people we support.
- ★ **We work flexibly and innovatively** to meet the needs of those we work with.
- ★ **We want to create real and lasting change.**



RESPOND

We respond to need throughout the year across all our services, enabling those who are homeless - or at risk of homelessness - to be able to access help at critical points when they have nowhere else to turn. This happens most acutely through our winter shelter which provides vital emergency accommodation, food and companionship for those who are homeless. It is a place of safety for our guests, offering respite at a point of crisis through the support of our local community.

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SHELTER - NEW MODEL

HARRY BATEMAN, SHELTER COORDINATOR

We are delighted to have welcomed 60 guests into our winter shelter between 16th December 2020 and 1st April 2021.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

We faced unprecedented challenges running up to the Winter Shelter. Guidance from Housing Justice and Public Health England meant the shelter was required to enable social distancing for guests, volunteers, Venue Staff and C4WS Staff. It recommended that each guest have their own room, bathing and toilet facilities. This meant we could not operate from our traditional church dormitory-style shelters.

We identified 50 possible venues, but none were quite right until we found The County Hotel. A strong partnership was forged, and the hotel team went above and beyond to ensure a safe and comfortable stay for our guests, also preparing their breakfast and lunch daily.

Given the new 24/7 service, we needed many more volunteers. Lots of our long-term volunteers needed to shield and traveling to the shelter was difficult for some, so we recruited and welcomed new volunteers into the C4WS community which ensured sufficient staffing.

We were conscious that the national lockdown announced on 4th January 2021 would isolate guests and limit their freedom of movement - prior to this, guests could come and go as they pleased. To reduce the negative impacts on wellbeing we doubled down on shelter activities, introducing Bingo, Yoga and Art Club. Guests continued to receive holistic welfare support during this period too.

To mitigate COVID-19 risks, we operated a static shelter which was open 24/7 and offered numerous benefits to our guests:



Individual rooms and en-suite bathrooms offered privacy and stability.



A place of warmth and safety available all day meant they did not have to spend any time outside waiting for the shelter to open.



Onsite welfare support from our committed Welfare Team.



Numerous and varied daytime activities provided a therapeutic and entertaining outlet, particularly in lockdown!

VOLUNTEERS

The work we do during the shelter season is only possible with the kindness and generosity of volunteers, donating their time and skills to improve our guests' experience.

This year's volunteers served drinks and food at mealtimes, played games and provided companionship. Several volunteers became activity coordinators, using their skills to provide entertainment to guests and a meaningful use of time. Most of all, our volunteers stepped in and ensured that we were able to run our shelter round the clock, seven days a week, safely for our guests, in the most trying of times. We are hugely grateful to them all.



HIGHLIGHTS

Christmas Day - For the first time in our history, we hosted guests over Christmas. Guests received presents and enjoyed a well-earned siesta after a delicious American-style Christmas feast provided by volunteer Sheila and her children!

New Year's Eve - The shelter was graced by singer, Delilah Montagu. Delilah performed a beautiful set for our guests, lifting everyone's spirits.

SHELTER PERSPECTIVES

CHURCH COORDINATOR

Planning and coordinating a shelter is never simple: there are supplies to order, volunteers to organise, rooms to clean, meals to prep, lights to turn off, doors to lock... the list at the start of each shelter season (and each shelter evening) is immense! Often, Church Coordinators are so busy making sure everything gets done that there is little time to pause and step back. My mantra is always: the volunteers are there for the guests, and I am there for the volunteers, working behind the scenes to help everything run smoothly.

That meant I knew launching a static shelter would be a Herculean job. Amazingly, most of the coordinating was done directly by the C4WS staff team and their partners at the hotel, and we owe them massive thanks. Above all else, the catered meals and a 24/7 facilities team meant that we, as Coordinators, could simply be present in ways we couldn't normally when running around our respective venues.

During my shifts at the shelter, this meant taking time to play a game of Ludo with guests and volunteers; sitting down for a morning coffee to hear about someone's plans for the day; and hearing who did what during the latest Gardening Club project. As COVID-19 meant a lot of the things we love about the regular shelter season – preparing a meal together, bringing the community together, meeting new volunteers – were mostly missing, so it was a chance to re-centre the shelter experience (at least for the Coordinators) on the guests we were serving.

Amidst all the changes and struggles of the shelter season, I am most grateful for that.

Jonathan Miller
Community Minister
American International Church

FORMER GUEST

My name is Gezim. I was homeless in December 2016 and it was a difficult time, but joining the C4WS Winter Shelter gave me hope. I was made to feel very welcome by C4WS staff and volunteers during my stay. In the summer of 2017, I became a member of the Steering Group at C4WS and at the same time began volunteering at Friday Club.

I also volunteered every Thursday in this year's shelter which was a good experience for me to share my story with the guests. C4WS staff work very hard to help homeless people find a place to live and this year's shelter offered lots of activities with kind volunteers for guests to talk to.

Gezim
Volunteer



SHELTER CALENDAR

MONDAY

ART CLUB

with **Jacque**

There were not just Monday blues in the shelter - there were greens, yellows and reds too! Art Club, led by volunteer Jacque Easton, provided a creative outlet for guests. Jacque's passion for watercolours helped showcase the talent of our guests.

TUESDAY

BINGO

with **Ian**

The silence of concentration and then a loud, BINGO! Led by volunteer Ian Lilly, Bingo brought out the guests' competitive streaks on Tuesday evenings, racing to complete their sheets for an array of chocolatey prizes.

WEDNESDAY

ENGLISH CLASS

with **Speak Street**

Wednesdays were very productive with both Intermediate and Higher English Classes provided by Speak Street in the morning.

COUNSELLING

with **BGPsych**

Afternoons offered 1-2-1 counselling sessions facilitated by Brett Grellier Psychology Services.

THURSDAY

YOGA CLASS

with **Bonny**

Yoga was popular with guests, volunteers and staff alike! Bonny Astor created relaxing yoga classes for all levels and was a therapeutic activity during lockdown.

FRIDAY

PERSONAL TIME

A day for guests to be able to unwind at the end of the week and enjoy some relaxation time. Although there were always plenty of volunteers ready to take on our Connect 4 and Jenga enthusiasts!

SATURDAY

GARDENING CLUB

with **Alex**

The courtyard at The County Hotel was transformed by our guests at Gardening Club. Led by C4WS Project Worker, Alex Cawthron, large groups of guests worked together to make their garden look more colourful and create an indoor herb garden. Rich Bentley ran a special session helping guests build and paint two raised beds.

SUNDAY

SUNDAY SCREENING

Each week guests voted for their top choice film, shown on a large projector screen in the dining room with popcorn on a Sunday evening.

"The counselling session left me with a positive outlook in my current circumstances. I've also managed to sort out some personal issues as well so everything has worried out for the greater good." **Ajeet**



JOHN

John lost his job as a decorator when the first lockdown hit in March 2020.



John became homeless after losing his job as a decorator at the beginning of the pandemic. After 7 months of staying in hostels and rough sleeping, John is referred and accepted into our shelter in December.



He doesn't have a bank account and with no fixed address or existing credit score is stuck. Through C4WS's partnership with Lloyds, he opens a new account and applies for Universal Credit, which takes 5 weeks to be approved. As a temporary move-on option, John is offered a place in our hosting scheme, Home From Home.



He and his host hit it off - John is relieved and happy to be staying there. John joins the C4WS Jobs Club and C4WS provides an electronic tablet so he can continue his job and house searches from his host's house.



His Universal Credit payment comes through and his Welfare Worker refers him to a supported long-term hostel for men. He settles in quickly and reports back that he will probably never have to move again! Through Jobs Club he obtains a vital construction qualification that boosts his employability.



John's Welfare Worker visits him in his new home and enjoys a tour and cup of tea in the garden. They talk about the importance of mental health. He is offered a space on C4WS's Mentoring and Befriending Scheme.



He is invited to become a member of C4WS's Steering Group Committee and accepts! He offers his insight into what can be done better at the charity and gets stuck in with working on the Home From Home podcast.



RECOVER

Our services are designed to equip guests with the skills and confidence to enable their own recovery. Empowered by staff and volunteers they can access housing, employment, financial aid and healthcare that will help them exit homelessness. We believe the process of recovery is ongoing and so we continue to be there for our guests once they have moved on from crisis services to help them with the next steps in their lives.

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WELFARE WORK

Over the pandemic we have all been tested. Every person's story of why they came to us is different and so too is their route out of homelessness, but what shines through is the resilience and strength among the people we support.

Our dedicated Welfare Team recognises and celebrates these differences. We work intensively with each guest to identify and achieve a move-on plan based on their individual situation and needs. This work is holistic and can include support for physical health, mental health, addiction challenges, lack of stable income and immigration needs. This might involve spending time at Home Office tribunals and in hospitals or creating safe spaces for wellbeing and helping build supportive networks inside and out of the shelter. But the aim is the same for all our guests: to have a home and be equipped to maintain it for the rest of their lives.



WHO WERE OUR GUESTS?

EU nationals rose by 7% from last year to make up 33% of all guests. This included a significant number of people we describe as being Employment First: European Nationals without full Settled Status who are not eligible for benefits and need to find work, save for a deposit and source accommodation in the private rented sector. This is challenging at the best of times and was exacerbated by the pandemic, which resulted in loss of jobs and lack of new opportunities.

Immigration was cited as the primary reason for homelessness for 32% of our guests - the most prevalent cause. In addition to the increased number of European Nationals it also included those seeking asylum in the UK. We connected people with solicitors to put in a Fresh Claim for asylum and access Home Office accommodation. We also supported complex mental health challenges and trauma due to conflict in their origin country, homelessness in the UK and the challenges of the asylum system.

Lack of money and relationship breakdown each accounted for 26% of guests' primary reason for becoming homeless. Relationship breakdown has become more prevalent as a primary reason for homelessness (12% increase from last year), perhaps reflecting the strain that COVID-19 has put on households.

There was an **increase in referrals of guests who had recently left prison** and found themselves homeless because of inadequate support. We supported them to comply with bail conditions, develop supportive networks and navigate the complex mental health challenges of rebuilding life after being in the criminal justice system.

It is also important to note that **75% of our guests this season were from black, Asian and other ethnically diverse communities.** Listening to our guests we have heard of the impacts of structural inequalities and systemic failings that have left them vulnerable and played a contributing factor in becoming homeless. We continue to build support for those from ethnic minority backgrounds to ensure fair and equal access to housing, employment and healthcare.



WELFARE WORK CONT'D

OUTCOMES

Of the 60 guests we engaged with, 52 were accommodated. 4 disengaged and 4 were asked to leave.

On average, our guests stayed for 30 days at our shelter - a significant increase of 9 more days than last year, which reflects the challenges of lockdown and increased difficulty in securing move-on.

SEASON 17 ACCOMMODATION OUTCOMES:		
Supported accommodation	16	27%
Transfer to another shelter	10	16%
Other	9	15%
Private rented	7	12%
Council accommodation	6	10%
Hosting Scheme	5	8%
Hostel / B&B	4	7%
Home Office Accommodation	2	3%
Moving in with friends	1	2%

The most common move-on was into supported housing (27%), which indicates the ongoing assistance that guests require as they take their next steps out of the shelter.

Significantly, half of our move-ons were into temporary accommodation - including other shelters - evidencing the lack of available options for many people and the ongoing uncertainty they face.

Whatever the next stage of accommodation is, our Welfare Team remain present in guests' lives for as long as they need, whether this be weeks or years.



We supported a higher percentage of women than last year.



Through use of hosting schemes we facilitated 1061 nights of extra accommodation.



We built a new partnership with The Bike Project to provide bikes to those from asylum-seeking and refugee backgrounds.



The shelter had guests from 24 different countries. 22% of guests were British Nationals, the single largest nationality.

"I feel I have someone who listens and gives you advice and hope to even make you understand what you can do next." **Robyn**

JOBS CLUB

LASZLO BALLA, EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Jobs Club is our dedicated employability service that supports guests through every stage of finding work, training, volunteering and accessing education. The pandemic, and the economic crisis which followed, posed huge challenges to this service, meaning we had to find new ways to ensure its success.

CHALLENGES

Pre-COVID-19, Jobs Club took place in our training room every Wednesday. Volunteer mentors were matched with guests and they met each week, cuppa in hand, to work on applications, look at our Interview Wardrobe for outfits, or just generally catch-up on the progress of their job searches. Due to the lockdown measures all in-person meetings stopped.

The decimated labour market made it incredibly difficult to find employment. Job opportunities in the sectors we usually rely on (hospitality, retail, leisure and entertainment) dropped to a third versus the same time last year. Many excellent employability programmes in the charity sector also had to stop. To compound all of this, post-Brexit regulations left many EU citizens with no recourse to public funds and with no other options to get off the streets than starting to earn money through paid work. In the midst of a lockdown.

SOLUTIONS

As the first lockdown started in London, we had to move our mentoring sessions online. To ensure the service was accessible for everyone we provided IT devices to our guests and applied for grants to cover internet costs.

We needed to change focus - key worker roles were the only ones available (mainly warehouse, delivery, and short-term jobs), which some guests managed to secure. With limited job vacancies, we chose to focus on better equipping guests for when the employment market revived - this included courses to learn new skills, online classes and general upskilling. Whilst guests were equally frustrated with this situation, by setting new goals and celebrating achievements through our mentoring model, there was an important sense of progress in a time of stagnancy.

OUTCOMES

We are proud of the 7 people we supported into work over the shelter season. They have started jobs as a delivery drivers, in warehouses, kitchens and as cleaners. A further 5 people achieved work related qualifications and certificates, such as CSCS cards and Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene. In one case we were able to support a gentleman with the fees of a forklift driving course, which meant a big upgrade on his employability skills and opened up new job opportunities.

We held 92 mentoring sessions over 4 months. These tended to focus more on the soft skills needed for certain sectors, and allowed us, in the absence of actual job vacancies, to do more work around fine-tuning CVs, interview practise and other skills. It also helped to raise confidence and provided a regular and continuous point of contact.

JOBS CLUB STATISTICS

92
Individual mentoring sessions

29
Members joined

21
Helped with CVs

7
People supported into work

5
Achieved work related qualifications and certificates



JOBS CLUB CONT'D

EMMANUELLE

- a mentor's perspective

I have been incredibly lucky to be paired with Mohammed since February 2021. We have similar working experience in audit/quality assurance, although Mohammed is specialised in nuclear radiation, so not for the faint-hearted!

Before starting I was worried that online sessions would make it harder to establish a rapport but we actually had a good connection very quickly, not least thanks to Mohammed's cheerful personality! It's also easier to be flexible online - if Mohammed gets an interview at the last minute we can arrange a session just before.

Mentoring has been a very rewarding experience for me and I am so glad to be part of this project. I have learned that mentoring is about listening: I try to understand Mohammed's concerns and work out what might be the best way to respond. I really see my work with Mohammed as a discussion between peers. I can make suggestions, hopefully some of them are helpful, but in the end these are his decisions and choices and I have to respect that.

When (and not "if") Mohammed obtains a clinical scientist role, we will definitely be celebrating - hopefully in person this time!

MOHAMMED

- a mentee's perspective

I joined Job Clubs to find a job in the NHS as I have degree in Medical Physics and relevant employment experience. I met Laszlo who looked at my CV and then introduced me to my mentor.

Emmanuelle is a kind, friendly, skilled, helpful and committed person. Together we achieved a lot as we revised my CV, applied for roles - including writing different personal statements for different posts - and practising interviews by doing many mock interviews. I have been shortlisted for four posts and have invitations for three interviews.

After leaving the shelter it was hard to continue applying for jobs because I had no computer of my own and public libraries were closed due to the pandemic. Jobs Club provided me with a laptop!

C4WS's Jobs Club is great. It really guides people who don't know where or how to start, I have had huge support.

Guests who wanted to work



Guests who wanted to work but were not legally allowed to



Guests who didn't want to work



Guests already working



Guests on furlough



REBUILD

We do not want to see anyone have to experience homelessness again and our rebuild services are designed to support guests achieve stable and happy futures. We want their new homes to be successes but also recognise that the transition to independent living can pose new challenges. We commit to being there for as long as our guests need, and welcome their contribution to developing and participating in our services to support others.

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ONGOING WORK

GENEVIEVE HAMPSON, PROJECT WORKER



New home but no furniture?

C4WS has developed good relationships with grant-making organisations, so can apply with guests for funding and help them purchase the items they need.



Juggling bills and living costs on Universal Credit?

We sit down with guests to help them budget, so that they can prioritise essentials and still afford some of the nice-to-haves.



Familiar with a phone but laptops are bewildering?

Thanks to partners Social Box Biz and Barrow Cadbury Trust, we provide some guests with their own laptops and have regular meetings to help them learn to use them.

Our ongoing support is designed to equip our guests with the skills, confidence and resilience that they need on the road to independent living – preventing a return to homelessness.

We might see guests at major future transition points and help them navigate those, such as looking for a new job or moving house again, or it might be a drop-in as they're passing by for a catch-up.

Over the last year we have supported **65** former guests from previous shelter seasons.

This has ranged from crisis need and mitigating potential risks of homelessness to the everyday bumps of managing tenancy paperwork or getting locked out of your new home!

Our ethos is that we will help if someone needs it - we put no limits on this timeframe. Nor do we place expectations on what this support or engagement should look like. For some, it might be intensive regular contact that slowly tapers off, for others C4WS exists as a touch point as and when things get tricky.

We also contribute to more systemic work that in the last year has included:

- ★ **Helping initiate and deliver the multi-agency outreach COVID-19 vaccination programme** in Camden for those who are homeless.
- ★ **Being active members of forums, both sector and borough based,** to develop cross-working community approaches to tackling homelessness.
- ★ **Collaborating with policy-influencers to inform better practice** for those who are vulnerable and experience homelessness.



CONTINUED SUPPORT

1 YEAR ON

ABIGAIL

Post-shelter, Abigail moved into supported housing.

With a history of abandoning properties, we worked to address the trauma of previous housing experiences. Regular and continued contact with her C4WS Welfare Worker focused on building support networks in her new area, managing finances and creating time and space for more light-hearted conversation too.

Abigail also joined our Mentoring and Befriending Scheme where she was matched with a mentor of a similar age and who lived nearby. With her mentor, Abigail got to know her new local community and address her fear of the digital era, which she felt was encroaching on all aspects of her life from accessing benefits to paying her utilities. Together they have helped Abigail choose and familiarise herself with a smartphone, manage admin online and have confidence to communicate via email and other platforms.

Abigail is happy in her new home and still pops by to visit the C4WS team from time to time.

3 YEARS ON

KAI

Kai was just 18 when he arrived in our shelter.

His relationship with his parents had broken down and he had become homeless. He was vulnerable, adapting to living outside of the family home for the first time in his life and struggling with anxiety.

Keeping his mind occupied was important for his wellbeing and self-confidence. With complicated ID and benefits issues to unravel before he could obtain housing, he filled his time with our Jobs Club. Through this we secured him a placement in the IT department of a global business which progressed into a full-time job.

When he moved into his new house, he joined our Mentoring and Befriending Scheme to get additional support. This covered learning to cook, sharing his passion for film and going to the cinema with his mentor.

Today he lives with friends in a shared house and is still working at the same employer - he's even managed to get them to support C4WS through volunteering, donations and our Jobs Club!

5 YEARS ON

ERROL

Errol came to the UK as an asylum seeker.

He and his family had endured religious persecution in his homeland that resulted in the deaths of all his relatives except one uncle who helped him escape. The trauma of this was compounded by having to navigate the complexities of the immigration system in the UK.

After staying in C4WS' shelter we referred him to a hosting project where he not only had a safe space to focus on his immigration case but was introduced by his host to the highs and lows of being a lifelong Brighton FC fan. Errol ended up staying with his host for three and a half years and C4WS supported him throughout, until the Home Office granted him right to remain in the UK.

Errol now lives in his own home in a Housing Association in Clapham. Through our Jobs Club he secured work as a maintenance gardener for a local authority in North London and remains a regular visitor to Brighton FC's stadium.



MENTORING & BEFRIENDING

SAM FORSDIKE, WELFARE MANAGER

HOW DO YOU MAKE PASTA?

WHAT IS A TV LICENSE?

SHOULD I REACH OUT TO MY MUM?

Perhaps these might not look directly connected to homelessness, but if you don't know how to cook you may end up with health issues. If you get caught watching TV without a license, you may end up in debt and facing prosecution. If you are worried about reconnecting with a family member this might affect your wellbeing and resilience. Any of these might pose the threat of homelessness again for our former guests.

This is why we have the Mentoring and Befriending Scheme. Volunteers are trained and matched with guests to support them manage the transition to independent living. They meet 1-2-1, once a week for six months. Continuity and longevity are crucial - knowing that someone is there, week in week out, builds trust. Six months means relationships can develop in a relaxed fashion and provides sufficient time to address needs and see guests through the ups and downs of adjusting to their new home and life. It is important that guests have more than C4WS for support, and a mentor offers a more relaxed relationship, reducing isolation and building their confidence.

When the pandemic began, we decided to pause new mentoring relationships. Instead, we focused on ensuring those already on the Scheme could continue. Through the bumps of 2020, a blend of in-person and remote meetings have enabled **146** mentoring sessions, providing invaluable support, connections and a constancy amongst flux.

We are excited to have now reopened the Scheme and guests from this season have started to meet with their new mentors as they take the next steps forward with their lives after the shelter.



HOME FROM HOME

RACHEL HAMILTON, WELFARE COORDINATOR

Homelessness exists because of many interrelated challenges, but undoubtedly one of them is a supply issue: there is a lack of affordable housing to meet the demand.

Home From Home, our hosting project, is an innovative solution that meets this systemic challenge by pairing people who have spare rooms with those in need. It is a short-term bridge that provides the necessary time and space for our guests to secure their own accommodation.

During the shelter season, every guest that moves into hosting means we can welcome another person into the shelter. Outside the shelter season it offers us a crucial form of emergency housing.

This shelter season, the generosity of our volunteer hosts provided **570** nights of hosting for eight people.

- ★ **One guest was waiting for his Universal Credit payment to come through, he is now in stable accommodation and doesn't think he will ever have to move again.**
- ★ **One guest is an asylum seeker and moved into a longer-term safe house after his hosting placement came to an end.**
- ★ **Three of the guests were a young refugee family who were left homeless after a sudden eviction and are now happily settled in their new home.**
- ★ **One guest has secured stable employment and is searching for her long-term next steps.**

However, we hear from our guests that Home From Home offers so much more than just accommodation.

"It's not just a roof over your head. It's an extension of what C4WS offers in general – a whole network of help. It was company – at the time, my host was living on his own. The companionship was good for both of us, I think. We'd make cups of tea for each other and eat together. Home From Home also gives you time to sort things out without spending money – you can save. It was a stepping stone to my long term accommodation." **Jason**



TOMASZ

Like many EU nationals, Brexit impacted Tomasz's rights to live and work in the UK.



Tomasz's work dries up during the pandemic. He can't keep up housing payments and becomes homeless. A day centre refers him into the shelter. He has struggled with alcohol and substance misuse for twenty years and builds a support plan with his Welfare Worker to manage this.



He has no ID and so his Welfare Worker applies for a grant to replace his passport and they attend the Embassy together to get it. He applies for EU Settled Status. He is also supported to sign up with a local GP, and he is offered the COVID-19 vaccine.



Tomasz is Employment First - without rights to benefits he has to work and earn income to access housing - so starts using the C4WS Jobs Club.



Feeling isolated he joins the C4WS Gardening Club where he meets other guests and is very proud of building two raised beds for the shelter garden. He receives some bad news and signs up for the in-house shelter Counselling where he learns about coping mechanisms he can use to help.



With the shelter coming to a close his Welfare Worker finds him accommodation at another shelter. They continue to keep meeting and working together on all his goals. Through Jobs Club he gains a job in the hospitality sector and this enables him to secure his own studio flat.



He decides that long term he wants to work in the homelessness sector as a support worker. At Jobs Club he starts looking for training and volunteering opportunities he can fit around his job to gain experience.



STEERING GROUP

The Steering Group is a panel of former C4WS guests who meet with our staff every two months to help innovate our work and shape our services.

Their experience, insights and voices are central to how we ensure we can best support our guests through every step of their journeys.

This is what they have to say.

What does it mean to be part of the Steering Group?

Members come from different generations and different walks of life.

An opportunity to use our lived experience and skills to give some of the most vulnerable individuals what everyone deserves - sustainable accommodation and access to basic social resources.

It feels like you're making a difference, contributing to and enhancing the charity.

Making the brilliant stuff that goes on even better.

What is your proudest achievement?

Sunday Club
A safe space for guests to use on a day when most places are closed, have a good time and feel very much part of the community.

Home From Home
There's now going to be a blog and a podcast sharing our experiences of staying with hosts.

Plus One
The winter shelter launch event bringing all of the volunteers together.

No charity that I know of has involved service users to be part of the decision-making process and involved them in implementing these ideas.

What does C4WS mean to you?

A long-term commitment to have meaningful impact on the community and make it a better place to live.

A safe space where everyone is welcome.

C4WS means the world to me - like a family!

It's an amazing charity. Don't know where I'd be without it to be honest.

They do everything they can for the people they help. But not everything is done for you, you're given the tools and then you do it yourself. It gives people motivation to keep pushing and pride when they achieve their goals.



PARTNERSHIPS

Come to any C4WS service and you will find guests, staff and volunteers working together. Collaboration and community is the backbone of everything we do.

REFERRAL AGENCIES

The organisations who referred into our winter shelter and worked with us to support our guests.



GRANT GIVERS

The organisations who supplied crucial funding for individual guest needs. In total we obtained **£11,717 worth of grants** to support guests with rental deposits, food packages, phone credit, equipment for work and furnishings for their new homes.



SOME OF OUR OTHER SUPPORTERS



This was our second year working with Joanna and Tieu from Speak Street who provided remote English Classes for **19** guests in the shelter. This helped improve speaking and literacy skills on practical topics and a chance to widen networks and build friendships.



16 guests took part in **29** confidential counselling sessions with a therapist. Some came for a one-off via the drop-in, whilst others returned week after week to share how they are feeling and develop coping mechanisms. And **74%** left the session saying it was helpful.



We have been in partnership for several years and again received refurbished laptops that we could give to guests as part of their move-on support. This year it was more important than ever, reducing isolation and facilitating access to mentors/staff support.



During the pandemic they reached out to C4WS and said, how we can help? Their awareness of the difficulties we were facing and their determination to support us in new ways led to the creation of the incredibly popular Conversation Club. What started out as a lockdown activity is now a flourishing and full blown C4WS project that has seen several Savills employees move onto our Mentoring and Befriending Scheme with their guests.



LLOYDS BANK

Working with our local branch in Camden, guests can open bank accounts - essential to receive benefits or income. This is often a challenge without proof of address, so this relationship, and a branch that understands our needs, is often a vital first step out of homelessness.



One dark day early in the pandemic, we arrived at our offices to find all of our IT equipment had been stolen. The Clothworkers Foundation came through with a much-needed grant so we could purchase new machines. Crucially these were now portable, meaning staff could work in any location, including at the shelter, day in and day out.

FRIDAY CLUB

C4WS works in partnership with King's Cross Methodist Church to run the Friday Club which provides refreshments, cooked meals, clothes and toiletries to anyone in need.

Many are long-term members, but we always see new faces and often see them return on future Fridays. All meals are cooked fresh and onsite in the Church by volunteer cooking teams from companies, universities, or friendship groups.

The Friday Club service closed in March 2020 due to the pandemic but reopened in September 2020 to offer an outdoor takeaway service. We served **644** meals in total, with an average of 30 members each time. We are incredibly grateful to the 22 cooking teams who have volunteered at Friday Club. We look forward to when Friday Club can be hosted inside the Church as it was pre-pandemic.

One long-term Friday Club member, Garry, generously arranged three seaside trips in the summer of 2021: two to Ramsgate and one to Margate. Friday Club members enjoyed fish and chips on the seafront and visiting the local attractions. Thank you very much to Garry for being so thoughtful!

We also ran our annual trip to Brighton for up to 30 Friday Club members. As it was unable to happen last summer because of COVID-19 related restrictions, there was extra excitement this year. Crazy golf and Brighton Pier were the highlights of the day!

Thank you to all our volunteers that make Friday Club such an enjoyable service for members. We must also thank Linda Gilson, Deacon of King's Cross Methodist Church for being the friendly familiar face for guests and for the smooth running of Friday Club. Linda has now left King's Cross Methodist Church after seven years of service and we wish her all the best for her new placement, continuing to show the kindness and compassion that she has to the members of Friday Club.



"Love the food and the team of volunteers."

"I am happy with this service and really enjoy speaking to everyone."

"It is a very nice place with good food and good conversation."



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

JOBS CLUB MENTORING

Volunteer mentors work in one-on-one sessions with guests to help them secure appropriate employment, training and volunteering opportunities. We are always looking for new mentors to join the Club.

 laszlo@c4wshomelessproject.org

STEPPING STONES

Stepping Stones is C4WS' work placement programme, that offers opportunities and bespoke mentoring with partner companies to guests accessing our Jobs Club. Being able to test their skills in a genuine work setting is invaluable in helping guests secure stable employment.

If you work for a company that could accommodate a placement, please email

 laszlo@c4wshomelessproject.org

CONVERSATION CLUB

Many of our guests wish to continue improving their English outside of the shelter English Classes. Conversation Club is more about having informal, everyday conversations with someone who speaks English as a native language. The role entails a 40-minute online chat with your guest each week to help them learn English in a friendly, supportive way. No background in teaching English is required.

 laszlo@c4wshomelessproject.org or

 harry@c4wshomelessproject.org

MENTORING AND BEFRIENDING

This project supports guests who have moved on from the shelter into their new accommodation with the transition to independent living. Mentors are trained and then matched with a guest who they meet with weekly over a six-month period to help them achieve their new hopes and goals for the future. Mentors must have previous experience of volunteering at C4WS and will need to complete a DBS check.

 nikki@c4wshomelessproject.org

CORPORATE FUNDRAISERS

Could you get your place of work involved in supporting C4WS? This might be running workplace fundraisers or a donations drive. Nominating C4WS for your company charity of the year or promoting volunteering opportunities within your company.

 nikki@c4wshomelessproject.org

HOME FROM HOME

Home from Home is a hosting project - volunteers with spare bedrooms provide these to our guests for a short period whilst they are waiting to move into accommodation. Volunteer hosts of Home from Home are supported throughout the process by the C4WS Welfare Team.

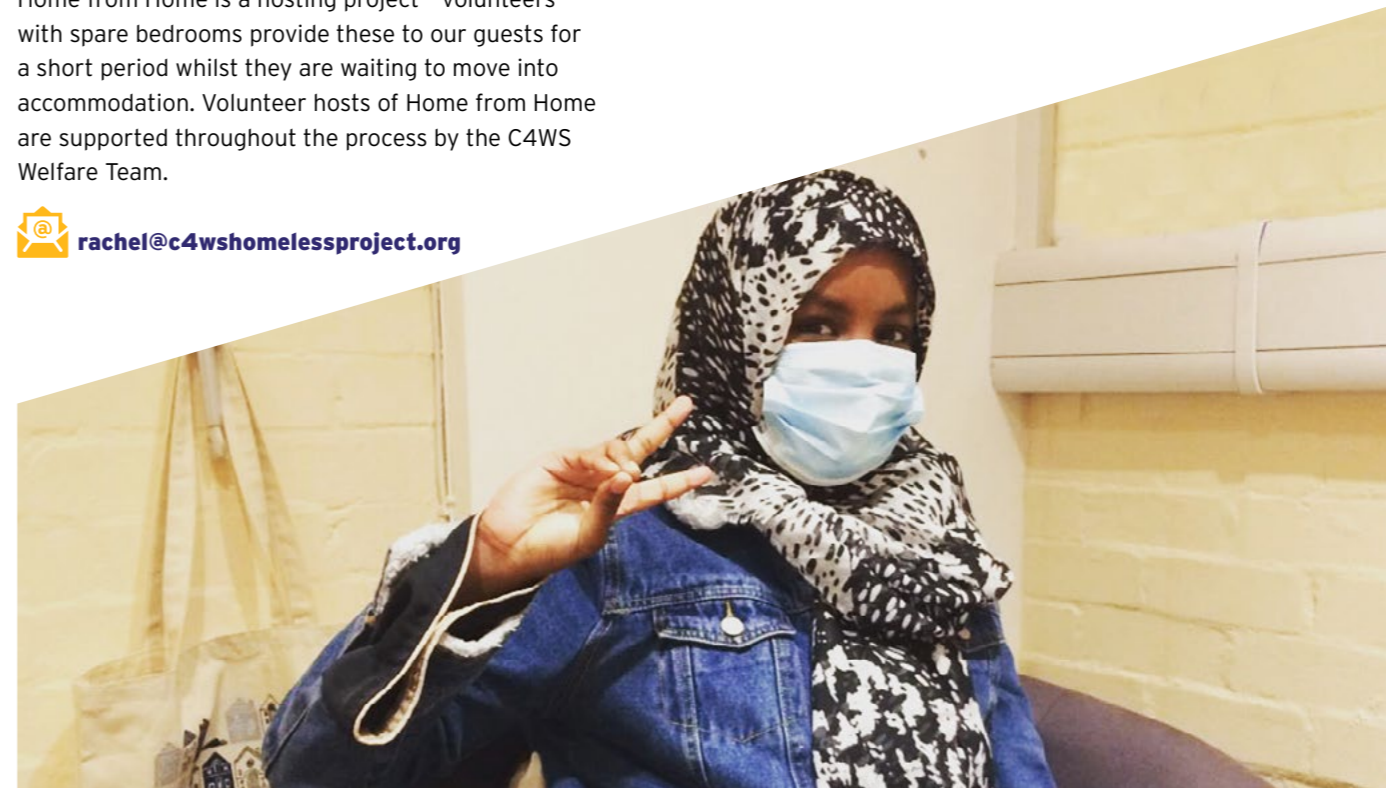
 rachel@c4wshomelessproject.org

FRIDAY CLUB COOKING TEAMS

The Friday Club is a weekly drop-in service that provides companionship, a hot and healthy lunch and professional welfare support to the homeless, vulnerable and in need. At its heart is a community environment in which members take ownership of the Club and ensure it is maintained as a safe and welcoming place for anyone to join.

If you would like more information about volunteering to cook at the Friday Club please email

 harry@c4wshomelessproject.org



LOOKING AHEAD

The landscape of emergency provision for those who are homeless has changed in the wake of COVID-19, perhaps permanently. Thus, the future looks different for C4WS too.

WINTER SHELTER

We are planning what our provision will be this winter. Whilst it may look different to previous years the values that have always been at the heart of C4WS will continue to underpin it: holistic support, volunteer hospitality, incredible food and an inclusive atmosphere for people from all walks of life.

We are looking for venues in the borough of Camden that we can use between November 2021 and March 2022. We hope to have a communal space for guests and volunteers and a kitchen.

If you know of a venue that may be suitable, please contact Harry, the C4WS Shelter Coordinator

 harry@c4wshomelessproject.org

Besides securing a venue there are other complexities. Our previous model was sustained by the invaluable support of the individual churches that acted as venues. Provision of the building, utilities, food and laundry were all generously included as part of their commitment of hosting the shelter.

Now we face significant new costs and need more volunteers to support across our provision. Please do reach out if you think you can help.

LAUNCHPAD

Outside of the shelter we are taking a big new step forward with managing our own accommodation for the first time in C4WS's history. Until now we have always relied on referrals to external organisations and partnership work to find accommodation. It is logical to the evolution of the charity, that to build our support for those who are homeless, we have accommodation of our own that utilises our extensive knowledge of our guests' needs and ensures continuity of support at a point of critical transition in their lives.

We are in the process of developing our own housing model based on the concept of social lettings: managing leased properties that will act as a bridge between crisis accommodation (such as the shelter and Home From Home) and stable long-term housing. Rooted in the ethos of supported housing, residents will continue to receive assistance from C4WS to build their skills and confidence towards independent living. They will then be assisted with finding and accessing the right home for them to move on into.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Also in the pipeline is a podcast to showcase and discuss the work of Home From Home - an idea originated and developed with our Steering Group.

We will also be starting our first peer support group for women, with plans to facilitate other peer-led support groups.



GIVING

Every penny donated to C4WS Homeless Project is greatly appreciated and used to support homeless people. If you would like to contribute and help raise funds for us you can do so in the following ways:



See how to give directly [CLICK HERE](#)



Give online via CAF Donate [CLICK HERE](#)



By bank transfer to C4WS Homeless Project, Account Number: 00033607, Sort Code 40-52-40 at CAF Bank Ltd



Support us by using 'Amazon Smile' and choosing to donate to C4WS Homeless Project [CLICK HERE](#)



Write a cheque payable to C4WS Homeless Project



Support us by purchasing one of the essential items from our Amazon Wishlist [CLICK HERE](#)



FACTS AND FIGURES

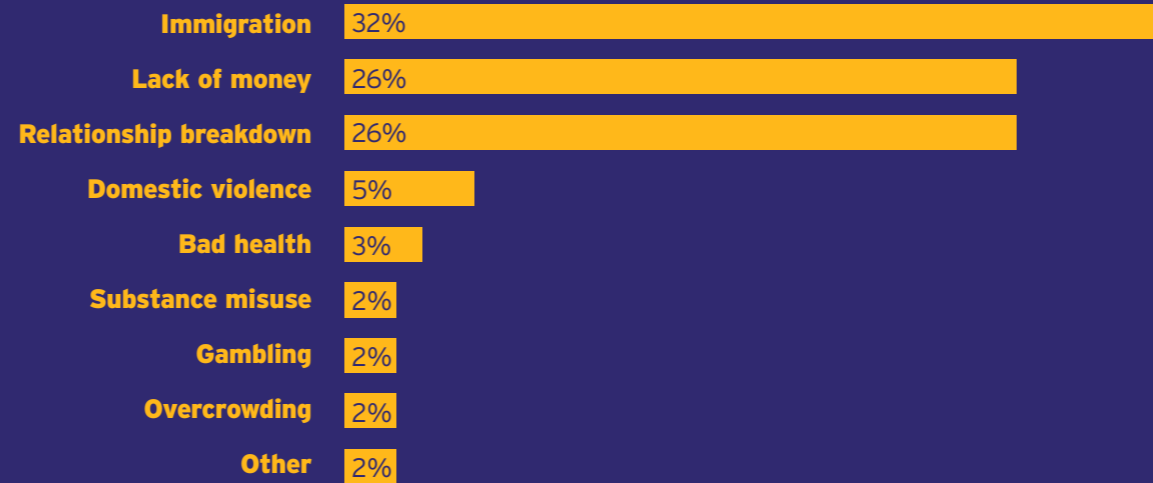
GENDER



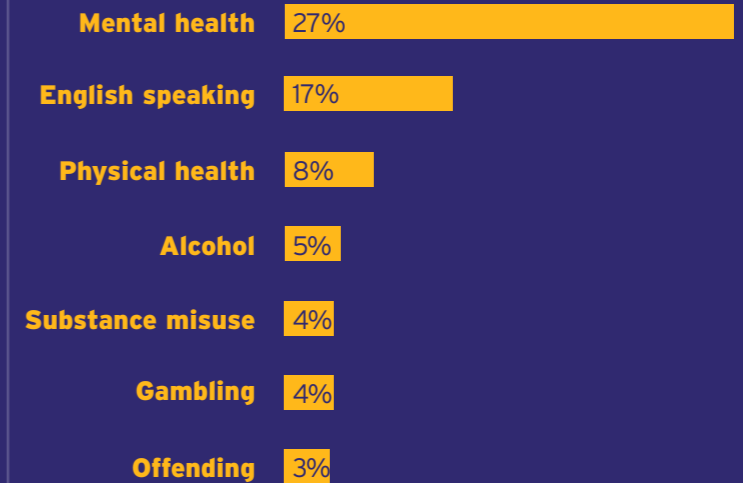
Male 46 77%

Female 14 23%

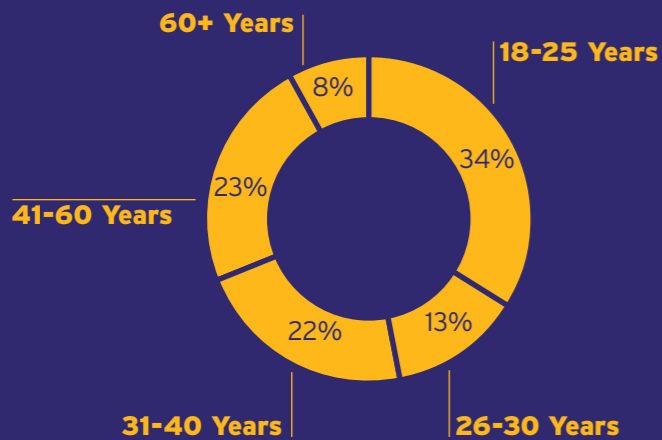
PRIMARY REASON FOR BECOMING HOMELESS



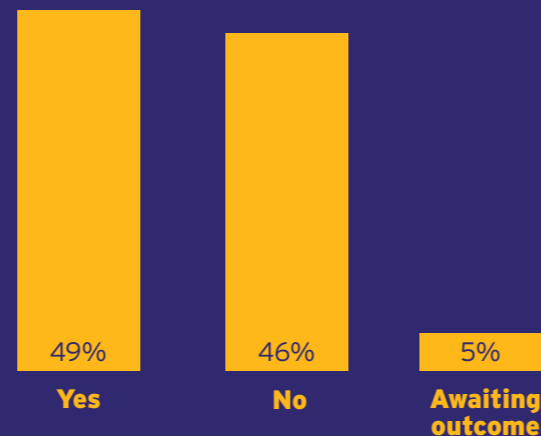
SUPPORT NEEDS



AGE



BENEFIT STATUS



NATIONALITY

Nationality	No of guests
British	13
Sudanese	5
Italian	5
Ethiopian	4
Portugese	4
Ghanaian	3
Spanish	3
Polish	3
Eritrean	2
Chinese	2
Iranian	2
Turkish	2

Nationality	No of guests
Dutch	1
Congolese	1
Nepalese	1
Swedish	1
Egyptian	1
German	1
Angolan	1
French	1
St Vincentian	1
Brazilian	1
Belgian	1
South African	1



CHAIR OF TRUSTEES' REPORT

I am sure anyone reading this report will have been as impressed as I was to see in writing the account of last season's shelter.

I am a Church Coordinator as well as Chair of C4WS' trustees, and I volunteered in the shelter, seeing for myself something of what was being done. As a trustee, I know what is going on beyond the shelter activities, nevertheless it is mightily encouraging to see it all brought together, and how over the years C4WS has developed a truly all-round approach. It's all the more remarkable that, although we build on 16 years' experience, this season we faced entirely novel and challenging circumstances which required imagination and much hard work. We can be proud of the successes achieved. Inevitably, we reached slightly fewer homeless people, although in many ways their experience was better.

The report is largely retrospective and it's right and impressive to look back. Congratulations to the staff are in order and I am very grateful for all their dedication, and in the early days of hunting for a venue, their patience and perseverance.

Adam Eustace, covering as Project Director for Nikki Barnett on maternity leave, and Harry Bateman deserve a special mention for their assiduous and so often frustrated efforts, which at last paid off - The County Hotel was in many ways ideal in the very difficult circumstances.

C4WS trustees and staff are not, however, people who spend time sitting around contemplating their success. We also need to look to the future. Sam Forsdike, Rachel Hamilton and Laszlo Balla are as busy as ever helping guests and members of Friday Club. Harry is hunting for a venue for the 2021/2 season, as it's clear we cannot yet return to a rotational shelter, although it is also clear that a static shelter will be expensive and that the grant money available last season is unlikely to be forthcoming next.

If you are reading this and are as impressed as I was at what we are doing please think about how you might be able to help, not just financially (although money matters!) but by volunteering. Many former volunteers felt unable to help last season (for good reason), but as restrictions ease and the threat of COVID-19 diminishes, please consider whether and how you might be able to help. Consider too (and let us know) if there are other communities which we might approach for volunteering or financial help. We will also welcome help in finding a location for the next season; if you know of hostel/hotel like accommodation (or a building which might easily be converted) then please let us know!

Andrew Penny, Chair of Trustees and Home From Home host





HOMELESS PROJECT

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admin@c4wshomelessproject.org



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“It’s like this place (new home) was waiting for me. It’s a great place to be and I’ve settled. I will always say it, it started the day I came to the winter shelter & into the care of C4WS because being involved with you all enabled me to rebuild my life back to something more worthwhile from the abyss I was facing.” Stanley