



HOMELESS PROJECT



**ANNUAL REPORT  
2020**



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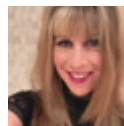
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Names have been changed and the images used do not reflect the stories on the page to protect the identity of our guests.



# Introduction



**C4WS Homeless Project was established in 2005 as a response to the homeless crisis Camden churches were encountering and struggling to respond to in a way that made a tangible, lasting difference. 16 years on from those humble beginnings, we are extremely proud of our achievements. Despite the hardships of the season, covered later in this report, we were able to offer respite to 78 guests after 253 calls were made for places, and rehoused 97% of those who engaged with us.**



Figures published by Homeless Link in February 2020 report

a 9% reduction in rough sleepers from the same period the previous year. We believe that this figure hides the real scale of the crisis, as our own experience has shown a significant increase in the number of vulnerable homeless people seeking help. It is also worth noting that despite the quoted fall, this figure is up 141% from that reported in 2010.

What's more, official numbers do not record the thousands of people that are classed as hidden homeless (sleeping on a friend's floor, sofa-surfing, sleeping on night buses, etc).

The situation we find ourselves in currently is unprecedented and this report seeks to show how the hard work, dedication and 'never give up' attitude of the C4WS Staff Team, Volunteers, Partners and Guests ensured continued success across all our projects.

What always stands out when reflecting back on the season for this report, is how much we have achieved with such a small team. Sam's endeavours to recruit new accommodation options



for our guests has been hugely impressive - with new providers from Boost Up to Hope Community Homes - securing options for those who would have previously been confined to an infinite waiting list at other locations which are already hugely oversubscribed.

Laszlo's hard work with Jobs Club saw him progress from Project Worker to Employment Support Coordinator, securing new pathways and opportunities for our guests to make the transition back into employment.

Julian Miller joined as our Project Worker and proved invaluable when taking on the management of both our Sunday Club and Friday

Club. We are grateful to him for his vision for the future and the measures he put in place before his departure to ensure their continued success.

With such a strong team behind me, my work as Project Manager could progress unimpeded. Although it is now coming to a pause as I head off into maternity leave, we are extremely pleased to welcome Adam Eustace who will be taking on this role for the forthcoming season, joining us from CARIS Islington.

It would be remiss of me if I did not give a shout out here to our Church Coordinators, whose support has been unwavering, our volunteers, old and new, who have



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ensured that our shelters provided a warm and safe environment every night for our guests, our partners, whose input meant that our wider programme, Jobs Club, English Classes, Sunday Club and beyond, really gave our guests a sense of belonging and empowerment to move beyond the shelter environment with new found confidence and finally of course, our generous funders, without whom we just wouldn't be able to carry out our lifesaving work. Thank you all for enabling C4WS to hold another successful shelter season, we couldn't have done it without you. ■

**Nikki Barnett**  
C4WS Project Manager

# Shelter Overview



**NOVEMBER:** We opened our doors on 6th November 2019 and welcomed our new guests. We are grateful to all of our wonderful volunteers across all venues for ensuring that they were well cared for every night throughout their stay and for enabling us to ensure that they were kept safe and well.

Right from the start, our brilliant Church

## 2019

Coordinators ensured that each venue was managed impeccably, arranging everything from ensuring there were enough volunteers to run each shift, to shopping, cooking, laundry, and everything else in between. They are the constant presence at each weekly shift, and they provide stability and a friendly face for new volunteers and guests alike.



**JANUARY:** This month marks the traditional halfway point of our shelter season, when we swap over the majority of our venues to different churches. This change can provide a wonderful boost for staff and guests alike, as new volunteers bring renewed energy, more fantastic food, and other activities for our guests to enjoy in these new spaces from bingo to foot massage!



## 2020

**MARCH:** Not long into the month we experienced some of our most trying times as the environment began to shift rapidly around us. It felt as if every day new information was being shared regarding this silent nemesis and we were forced to reassess our provision constantly to stay safe and open.

In the end, we could not have managed this without the help of Jonathan Miller at The American Church or Pat Day Cobb at St George's Holborn. Both have written of their experiences of this time elsewhere in this report, but needless to say we are exceptionally thankful to them, and indeed all of our volunteers, partners and supporters during this time. Thanks to the assistance C4WS received from our network, we were able to stay open until 29th March, just a few days short of our planned closure, when all remaining shelter guests were moved into hotels provided by our local authority. ■

**DECEMBER:** As we approached Christmas, our guests were supported by Wellcome once more, who provided them with items on their wish list as part of their Giving Tree initiative. A memorable occasion took place in the office, where one guest delighted in unwrapping their gift, an acoustic guitar complete with case, in front of the team. We understood that this was because they wanted us to



share this moment of joy with them. Food is important throughout the shelter, but it takes on a special meaning at this time, and we must thank all our wonderful cooks who prepared food and shared it together with the guests. Amongst them were corporate teams from Apple, Gazeley, BT Global and the London Business School, who managed several dinner shifts.

Sharing moments together in the shelter season are all too important, and sitting down together over a meal encourages conversation and for all parties to relax. For our guests, they might have had a trying day of multiple appointments, for our volunteers they might be rushing straight over from the office or elsewhere. These situations encourage us to sit down together, press pause for a moment on all those external stresses, and socialise without pressure.



**Sharing moments together in the shelter season are all too important, and sitting down together over a meal encourages conversation and for all parties to relax.**

**FEBRUARY:** Responding to feedback from last season, we encouraged local businesses to support our shelters in the morning for the breakfast shift. Whole groups came in to manage this shift before heading off to work in the morning, which worked exceptionally well at some of our more central venues hosting shifts from Multiplex (led by Andrea Buckle) and Apple (led by Luc Dinh).



# THE FINAL WEEKS OF SHELTER: COVID-19

**We are committed to looking after our guests, no matter what, so when a global pandemic hit, our incredible Coordinators went into overdrive. With social distancing and shielding measures being put in place, we quickly had to move away from our standard rotating model into something more static, and safe. Here, Jonathan from The American Church and Pat from St George's Bloomsbury share their experience of those final few weeks.**

**W**hen people ask me what it is like to run a shelter venue, I often say that the thing that is equally challenging and exhilarating is how the shelter makes time disappear: one moment it is the middle of January and the next it is the first of April. There is something about the weekly rhythm of preparing for, working at and following up with the shelter that makes the weeks and months fly by.

A lot of the time, this is a real joy: January through March can be an unbearably dreary season, and I am grateful for the emotional and physical distraction that the shelter brings to my ministry. But it can equally be frustrating when I am wishing for time to slow down a bit, whether to catch my breath, start another task or simply live life a little more fully.

As we took on the entirety of the shelter season for the first time in November, this adage was even more true; this winter was

even busier than usual, and the shelter contributed to November through February being gone in a flash. But then COVID-19 hit. No longer was time flying by. Instead, every day seemed to stretch on beyond belief.

The first week saw our dinner crew cut in half. The second week our dinner and breakfast crews had to step back in order to safeguard their volunteer teams, and we were supplemented by last-minute volunteers who were within walking-distance of the church. Then we did the same thing the next night.

As the weekend approached, every hour brought new updates, changes and situations. By the end of it, we ran another three nights of shelter back-to-back during a national lockdown with two volunteers and minimal staff. It was exhausting and exhilarating and rewarding. In the meantime, we got to know the guests better than we ever have, all facing the



crisis together. And what a joy it was when we finally heard that the remaining guests were moved into accommodation!

I am still not sure which is better: a shelter season that flies by or one that drags on and on. Each comes with its own challenges and rewards, and neither is the ideal way to live life. But it does make me sympathize with our guests all the more as they juggle the weight of each moment feeling like forever while also wondering how life changed so fast. I hope that new understanding is what I remember once this is all a memory. ■

**Jonathan Miller**  
The American International Church

**O**ur Saturday shelter at St George's Bloomsbury was going well until the ninth week, when the corona wobble started, and many volunteers cancelled. It got worse the following week, but we still managed.

On the Monday of our final week, Nikki called asking if I could help Jonathan Miller at The American Church and if St George's could host extra nights that week. I agreed, got approval from the Rector for the extra nights and cancelled my Saturday volunteers. C4WS did everything possible to keep the six remaining guests safe and the shelter open. Jonathan taught me what was needed for social distancing in the shelter, as we worked as a team of two.

At midweek, the shelter moved to St George's where Steve Richards joined me. We set everything up as I had been shown and we did all the cooking. Each morning the guests left together and each night they returned together. Each day, I did food shopping, not at one shop but several due to supply and demand. The C4WS vs Council waiting game finally ended on late Saturday, so on Sunday morning we said farewell to the guests (no hugs or handshakes) as they were taken to a hotel.

What I experienced in the shelter and witnessed on the streets during this time, is something I will never forget. I am glad to have been able to offer my support to C4WS with many thanks to Steve and St George's. ■

**Pat Day Cobb**  
St George's Bloomsbury

# Wellbeing Tuesday



**This returned once again this season and remained focused on helping guests relieve their stress. We were pleased to offer massages by volunteer students from The British College Of Osteopathic Medicine, and every second Tuesday yoga classes by the amazing Gabi Markham from Yoga Quota.**

**This year we added counselling sessions taken by Bodhi Hunt from BGPS, a much sought after service for our guests.**

**T**his year, Wellbeing Tuesday incorporated 30-minute drop-in therapy sessions for counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). This service provided symptomatic treatment for low moods and anxiety states. It helped guests gain skills in regulating their mood by reflecting on their thoughts, feelings and behaviour.

Bodhi, a registered psychotherapist, ran the sessions each week from November 2019 until June 2020. He has several years' experience working within the NHS and Homeless sector and feels passionate that people have the potential to live a full, valuable and meaningful life with the capacity to heal

from past difficulty and self-regulate their emotional world in line with their values and context of life.

The aim of this addition to the wellbeing service was to provide a safe time and place to talk to someone who won't judge, helping guests to make sense of things and to understand themselves better. Help was provided to include problem-solving skills and how to overcome worry - one of the most common symptoms of anxiety.

A number of guests benefited from learning emotional regulation skills with a little mindfulness to help calm and regulate the body since anxiety can have a very physical element linked with sleeping

problems, restlessness and feelings of panic. Guests were also encouraged to acknowledge unhelpful patterns in their ways of thinking or acting and to find new ways to help shift them or change them by focusing on strengths and moving forward with setting simple goals each week.

A number of guests attended regularly over the weeks and reported good results in emotional management and improved wellbeing, with improved reflection on their strengths and values.

Talking therapy can work on its own, or it can be something to try alongside other treatments, including exercise and medication to help manage mood. Many



**I felt deeply privileged to be able to offer these therapy sessions at C4WS, it helped me connect with a shared humility**

**Bodhi Hunt,**  
BGPS Psychotherapist

guests reported using the local gym, a good way to help maintain wellbeing as well. But talking therapy isn't a quick fix and might not be the right 'fit' for everyone. This is why we offered a 'drop-in' service as well as regular sessions, so guests could try it and see. ■



**I thoroughly enjoyed my experience with C4WS. Their team was immensely helpful and always accommodated my requests. I think C4WS is a wonderful organisation and I was very happy to be able to help. I got very good feedback from the massages I gave the guests and it was clear to see that all those I saw were very grateful to C4WS for working with BCOM to arrange this service. I often saw it made a big difference to the guests and that meant a lot to me. I would like to thank all those at C4WS for the opportunity to meet their guests; it has been a very enriching experience and I would welcome the opportunity to work with C4WS again in the future.**

**Mike Smith,** BCOM Student



# Ted Styles You



**Ted Baker employees have long volunteered to both encourage and bring uplift to projects with C4WS. The Ted Styles You (TSY) project, which started in 2018, empowers users of the Jobs Club to restore dignity and maximise confidence through fashion and photography. At its heart is the principle of supporting guests to build their inner confidence while still maintaining their authentic selves; suggesting that when you dress well you have a positive mindset and therefore increase your potential possibilities of future employment.**



**Just before TSY, I had been crying, having had a really hard day. But coming to the session had given me a lift and I now felt more confident and happier.**

**Priyanka**



**W**e provided an Interview Wardrobe based on guests' sizes, styles and the types of jobs they were applying for. The clothes were sourced from Ted's Derby warehouse and centred around its brand themes of quality and quirkiness - ensuring guests could wear items that reflected their individuality and make a good first impression that would grab an interviewer's attention.

TSY was split into three sessions involving interactive activities, job scenarios, styling tips and meeting Ted staff to learn about their jobs and how they managed interview situations. The sessions were led by the Ted Extras team which this year included Jamal - a former C4WS guest who now works in Ted's Special Project team and was able to lend a unique insight into his journey from shelter to Ted employee.

The final workshop was built around a fun photoshoot with Ted's photographers, designed to capture everyone's own story. I wanted people to feel comfortable in a familiar environment, so we set up our studio in the C4WS building. It was amazing to see everyone interact and I felt incredible joy witnessing how keen and happy guests were to showcase their own personality in front of the camera. Their smiles demonstrating how people undergoing difficult circumstances were able to participate in - and enjoy - something that made them feel good.

From my experience running TSY, I know this will help others at C4WS to believe in themselves. Looking good and feeling good are so instrumental in helping us reach our goals and I loved being able to interact with the guests and build



relationships over the weeks. Priyanka, one of C4WS's guests said in one of the sessions, how "Just before TSY, I had been crying, having had a really hard day. But coming to the session had given me a lift and I now felt more confident and happier". This perfectly sums up what TSY can do and how important it is for one's wellbeing and self-esteem. I felt really proud of Priyanka .

The workshops became an inclusive, diverse and helpful environment for C4WS's guests - and also for me. Ted Baker's Interview Wardrobe remains at C4WS for more people to benefit from and create their own future destinations. ■

**Tyra Porter**  
Ted Extra



# Jobs Club

## A community initiative to help guests return to work

**This season of the winter night shelter marks the sixth year of Jobs Club, the service that supports homeless people to reach their employability aims through one-to-one mentoring. Initially designed to help people who need to gain employment to access accommodation, Jobs Club enables pathways into education, training and volunteering.**



Over the winter **36 guests** joined our Jobs Club and completed **103 appointments**. We are proud that **80% of those eligible and looking for work found employment.**

This is also the second year we have run Jobs Club as a year-round service. This is in response to the enhanced need for this project. **During the summer of 2019 there were 81 one-to-one appointments, for 29 members.**

Jobs Club has developed into a real community project, bringing together people from our local community, who dedicate their time to helping the homeless.

Our volunteer mentors are from local businesses, who are always keen to make the effort to look for potential vacancies at their companies for their mentees. We really enjoyed working with the amazing volunteers coming from **Wellcome, Santander, Skanska, Regent's Place Community Fund, London Business School, Network Rail, Smart Energy, Ted Baker, University College London** and **Costain**.

**Regent's Place Community Fund** has not only supported Jobs Club with funding over

the years, but has helped introduce us to other local businesses, as well as linking us up with projects similar to ours.

Our Jobs Club members often lack essential equipment for job seeking. We are very pleased to be able to donate refurbished laptops from **Social Box Biz**. A similarly vital need is having a bank account, which is difficult to obtain when you have no fixed address. We were delighted to have this service provided by **Lloyds Bank**. Longer term funding for the project was also provided by the **Lloyds Bank Foundation**.

We are proud to be able to refer candidates to local employers, such as **St Pancras Renaissance Hotel**, or work closely with local job agencies like **King's Cross Recruitment**.

**Ted Baker** and **Jones Knowles Ritchie** are both global companies based in Camden. As well as supporting us in many ways (see the article about their workshop separately in this report on page 24), two of our former guests are currently working in full time positions at Ted Baker. We have to thank JKR for our amazing tote bag design, as well as offering their expertise to our Steering Group by hosting a meeting at their offices.

A really important step in securing a job is to attend an interview. Often overlooked, this is something people need to prepare for. With the help of **IPG Mediabrands** we were able to offer mock interview sessions to our Jobs Club members, allowing them to practise and hone their skills for the real thing.

### Stepping Stones

This year we designed a new work-placement/volunteering project called Stepping Stones, that sadly had to be paused due to the outbreak of the pandemic. It is based on a simple idea: many companies based in Camden would like to help people get back to work by offering placements, something we've found to be a crucial step towards getting into employment. Our idea was to pair up our expertise on how to best support vulnerable people while they are at placements, with the offers of these companies as they seem to be a perfect match.

Stepping Stones is designed to be a bridging programme for guests at Jobs Club who are not yet ready for or able to take on full time employment, but can access structured work experience placements to get vital on-the-job experience, understand more about what is required to enter the workplace and learn more about different industries and opportunities. We are incredibly thankful for the funding and help of the EQUIP programme by Paddington Development Trust, that made our project possible. ■

### Laszlo Balla

Employment Support Coordinator

*Stepping Stones was supported by:*



### In the light of numbers

Number of interviews attended	20
Number of job applications made	47
Courses completed	8
Enrolled to college	1
Apprenticeships completed	1
Number of CVs made	24
Number of people used our interview wardrobe	20
Volunteering roles	5
Number of people received travel support	15
Help with opening a bank account	3
Number of people received IT Equipment	10
Number of people received phones	3
Equipment for work	2

I was pleased to attend the C4WS Jobs Club for an initial three-week period in March 2020. I found the experience profoundly humbling and incredibly rewarding. I previously thought I had a good idea of what it must be like to be homeless but this experience made me see things from a different perspective. It's the simple things that we all take for granted that struck me most, as these present a daily challenge to homeless individuals; How can I contact someone, I don't have a phone?

How do I meet this person, I have no mode of transport? A simple short investment of time on my side together with great support from C4WS, helps individuals overcome these barriers and get things back on track. The positivity generated as a result between the mentees I met was incredible. The whole experience, brief as it was, has been one of the most rewarding in a lifetime and has been left me wanting to do more.

**Rob Chapman**, Jobs Club Mentor, Costain Skanska



# English Classes



**This season we received referrals for guests from 28 different countries. For many, English is not their first language and the number of guests citing a lack of English as a support need was double the previous year. This poses a significant barrier to both their housing and wellbeing.**

**W**e were delighted to partner with **Speak Street** to facilitate weekly English Classes which were attended by **22** different guests across **105** attendances. Over the five months we saw significant improvements not just in their ability to communicate, but in their confidence to converse, manage paperwork and develop friendships.

The classes went beyond helping people learn English. They contributed significantly to guests moving on, rebuilding their lives and forging new, independent and exciting futures.

## Tieu's story

From the short time we were there, I saw a discernible change from initial wariness to a relaxed enthusiasm, anticipation even, for the sessions. I would arrive just before 3.30pm and there would be a sense of good-



**I improved my level of English thanks to you!**

**Benji**

natured impatience from the guests for the session to get going!

From a learning perspective, the higher level group engaged well on topics such as reading a payslip and taxes, calculating shopping discounts (which prompted great comparisons of who got the best value clothing) and talking about ailments and medical instructions (I'll never forget listening to one guest composing poetry on that last topic and then drawing a wonderful picture of a leg!).

Another took pride in reciting words and phrases he had learnt at college ESOL classes each week. He also had gleaned a fantastic knowledge of bus routes that we quizzed him on regularly.

I was touched when a new student asked me rather sceptically if I was the "English" teacher whereupon one of the guests immediately jumped in with an emphatic "he is the best English teacher". Smooth sailing from there! It was a small moment but one that stayed with me; ties, however fleeting, are forged in all sorts of places.

I hope the project provided a safe, comfortable space for guests to engage with topics outside of their immediate situational demands and worries. I think having the consistent presence of myself and Jack helped provide stability too. The small groups allowed the tutors to really focus on the learners, and I got the impression that it was something they appreciated. I also think that our engagement with C4WS was light touch (suited both parties) as we came in, said hello, did our thing and said goodbye. ■

**Tieu**, Intermediate Level Tutor

## Jack's story

I had a brilliant, rewarding experience teaching the guests at C4WS. I taught those with an elementary level of English, and over the months I noticed a marked improvement in their ability to communicate. They increased their vocabulary knowledge across a wide variety of topics including transport, body parts, clothes, sports, shopping,

directions, weather, and food. Most importantly, I felt like the guests were very engaged in the lessons and extremely enthusiastic about their learning, we had several regular students who always seemed to look forward to the lessons every week. I saw an increased level of confidence among many of the guests, which will hopefully equip them well in the future. ■

**Jack** Beginner Level Tutor

# Legal Clinic

**C4WS has always been so much more than a winter night shelter: its dedicated team of staff and volunteers work with former guests for months, and often years, after their stay to help them build safe, happy and fulfilling lives for themselves.**

**T**he Jobs Club and the Mentoring and Befriending Scheme help guide C4WS's former guests into secure housing and stable employment - but these worlds are not without their complications, especially when English is not your first language. Having spent several years volunteering with the Jobs Club and the Mentoring and Befriending Scheme - and having witnessed the extraordinary motivation of former guests to establish independent lives after staying with C4WS - I suggested that I might offer my legal knowledge at a monthly legal advice clinic, as a forum for an otherwise independent person to seek help with a tricky issue. In November of last year, two weeks after first discussing the idea with C4WS's Welfare Manager, Sam - whose determination to help, I have learnt over the years, knows no bounds - we hosted the first clinic.

The clinic is attended by two or three guests each month. Early successes have been persuading the NHS to retract a mistaken

invoice for thousands of pounds worth of emergency surgery, and exercising the 'right to be forgotten' from a Google search. In each example, these matters were the last obstacles preventing two thriving former guests from living free from the trauma of their early years in London. There is still much to do, and work on several housing and asylum cases is ongoing. In each of these jurisdictions, the unfortunate truth is that it is easy for someone to be mistreated by an administrative system that is under-funded, under-staffed and, therefore, overwhelmed. Quite often, my service has been to offer little more than persistence and an attention-seeking email footer that says 'Barrister'. Even so, it has been a pleasure to help some truly inspiring people over the last months. The clinic has continued throughout the coronavirus crisis, taking on new cases via email, and I hope to resume the service in its usual way as soon as it is safe to do so. ■

**Max Mills**, Barrister





# If on a winter's night a traveller...

**On a dark and damp February evening I found an unknown young woman on the doorstep of St Mary Brookfield Hall and gradually teased out her story. She had woken up that morning in Cardiff, where, because of the latest kink in the asylum pipeline, she'd had to vacate her accommodation. Accustomed to the lilt of Welsh accents she found it difficult to understand people in London. She had been told she could sleep here, was it true?**

Scenes from the Shelter are seldom lit so dramatically but in this short conversation much is revealed: desperate circumstances, the haste of arrangements and the trust of the guests. Those of us who host, begin with the advantage that we are unlikely to make anything worse for our guests.

There are many paths that lead here, for hosts as well as guests. The guests come out of immediate need, we who wait for them arrive by other routes which are just as compelling. Yet whatever has brought us together is forgotten for the night. The Shelter is a shared space and however you might be measured outside does

not apply inside. There is little privacy, regrettably, yet little to be ashamed of either. We meet around the most human essentials: food and rest and we make the best of what we have together.

Which is not to say there are no stories in the Shelter. This is as much of a home as we can make it, a place where people can be themselves, and once they are themselves there are memories and surprises, ideas, dreams and often laughter, one of the characteristic sounds of the Shelter in the evening and even in the morning as it all comes to an end. The volunteers

tend to produce more surprises for me than the guests do, because I think I know them. The guests surprise each other forming friendships across the normal social barriers that keep people apart. There are the games which can involve everyone because they require little common language. Then there is just plain companionship. One evening a guest and I just sat in silence together.

I am sure it is not just the Christian tradition that sees life as a journey, and in that sense both guests and host are travellers together. We Christians believe that nobody ever travels alone, this is sometimes more apparent to us in another's journey than in our own.

"Who is the third who walks always beside you?"

When I count, there are only you and I together

But when I look ahead up the white road

There is always another one walking beside you"

Last winter I spent three Friday nights walking beside a young woman asylum seeker, among many others. I hope I was as good a companion to her as she was to me. ■

**Bill Saunders,**  
St Mary Brookfield

Bill Saunders has been the Church Coordinator for St Mary, Brookfield (CofE) in Dartmouth Park NW5 for several years. He is also Lay Chair of South Camden Deanery Synod.



**We meet around the most human essentials: food and rest and we make the best of what we have together.**



- CARIS Islington
- Crisis Skylight
- GrowTH
- Housing Options
- Islington Centre for Refugees & Migrants
- London Irish Centre
- London Jesus Centre
- New Horizon Youth Centre
- Praxis
- Routes off the Streets
- Solace Womens Aid
- Thamesreach
- The American Church Soup Kitchen
- The British Red Cross
- The Pret Foundation
- The Refugee Council
- The Winch



# Sunday Club

**Provides an additional service for guests, which runs on a day when the vast majority of other services are closed.**

**A**s a volunteer, Sunday Club was a fantastic initiative to see and take part in. Such a peaceful and welcoming space for guests to escape from the world.

The variety of what was an offer was impressive: board games, movies, art, books, laundry, food, company, reading on the internet or from the small library. I absolutely loved seeing the

guests sharing their skills and talents at the Culture Club - really inspiring!

For a volunteer, you get so much out of it - the chance to meet a bunch of interesting people and help create a welcoming space for guests. Not to mention the games of Jenga, the art classes, and the chance to enjoy a calm space yourself. ■

**Ainslie Walker**, Volunteer

I have been involved as a volunteer with C4WS for six years. It's wonderful to be part of the community; my neighbour is the church coordinator for the local Shelter, so I have often done some baking or cooked a vegetarian option for the evening meal there. I have also volunteered via my employer, as my team have also participated in Friday Club, making a three-course meal for the members there.

Most recently, I have been a regular volunteer at the C4WS Sunday Club since its inauguration last season. I have gained the title 'Laundry Lady,' as this is very much my domain and my responsibility! There is just one washing machine and one dryer available, so it can be very challenging at times where guests have lots of items that need washing, as I need to make sure these are dry as well as we are unable to leave any items behind, no easy task in under four hours.

I see the laundry as a major responsibility as many guests have very few items of clothing, so if anything gets lost or damaged, there is no way for them to replace items. There are also guests who need to launder their work uniforms, which can make me nervous as I want to ensure these are well looked after. No one will thank me if there is a random red sock left in the wash turning everything pink! I therefore need to stay organised, ensuring I know which items belong to which guests.

I find my role very rewarding as I build up a rapport with guests and find out more about their circumstances. It's nice to be able to do something practical to help and I know guests are very grateful when I hand them back clean, fresh clothing. ■

**Lisa Syne**, Volunteer

# Community Involvement

**Community is one of the four C's that make up our name. It is a crucial aspect of the work we do and is undoubtedly what enables us to reach as far and as wide as we do. Whether this be volunteering across our projects, organising clothing collections, running ever-creative fundraisers or sharing existing skills of photography, baking, graphic design and languages, we are incredibly grateful for the dedication and care of our local community to support our guests.**

## Zappi - #pantsforc4ws

As a company that was founded in Camden in 2012, we've seen first-hand the growth in the number of people sleeping rough in our community. We know it can happen to anyone. C4WS do such amazing work with people just when they need it most, and we are proud to support them.

The Pants4C4WS initiative really made us think about the reality of arriving at a shelter, having a warm shower then having to step back into dirty clothes. Our staff are very keen to be involved and happy to be helping in a small way to address a very real issue. ■



**Each year we quite quickly fill up our donation bucket - I guess everyone recognises the humanising effect of a fresh pair of pants!**

**Tom Hollis**  
Head of People and Culture

## The British Library Sunday Film Club

Homelessness is on the rise, especially in Camden and the Sunday Film club is a good example of how we are able to support the community. As Sunday is a day when many public services are closed, so the Film Club was intended to provide something fun and relaxing for C4WS's winter shelter guests.

We grouped together The British Library's comfy chairs and large beanbags, kindly offered by the Alan Turing Institute, to place in our Knowledge Centre which helped create an 'Everyman style' cinema experience.

Many of our volunteers who supported the Film Club got involved in setting up the space, preparing popcorn and refreshments and meeting and greeting the guests as they arrived to watch the film.

Throughout the different screenings, I watched the guests share laughter and tears as well as their views on what film they would like to see next. We had a lot of action films, the favourites being Thor, Black Panther, Hobbs and Shaw!

It was clear to see how the guests benefited, as they felt welcomed by the team and grew in confidence to have conversations with the volunteers who in turn shared more about other events they could attend at the Library.

As the Film Club took place during the Christmas and Easter seasons, our volunteers bought some mince pies and mini Easter eggs for the guests to have festive snacks while watching those films.

In addition to the Film Club, The British Library's Qatar Partnership organised a collection of underwear for the #pantsforc4ws campaign and staff volunteered at the Friday Club.

In between the Sunday Film Clubs, I took part in the C4WS Culture Club at The Living Centre. The idea was to hold a "Meet the Artist" session which was a great way of getting to know the guests through engaging them with a show and tell of my artwork. ■

**Amber Perrier**, Community Engagement Assistant



## Wellcome - The Giving Tree



**W**ellcome as an organisation actively encourages staff to give back to local people and communities. The Giving Tree has been a key part of Wellcome's Festive Volunteering season for a number of years and becomes more and more popular every year. It supports three different charities each year and we are so happy we can support C4WS through it.

Each year, we work with the charities to understand who won't be fortunate to receive any gifts over the festive period and in particular for C4WS, who will be a guest in the shelters during this time. We gather the information and create personalised tags, detailing peoples interests and gift ideas, to decorate the 'giving tree'. Staff are then able to browse the tags and pick someone at random or that may have similar interests to them, and buy a gift for that person. Gifts are then dropped into the big red post-box and wrapped in the hugely popular wrapping sessions! Staff love being able to get into the festive spirit and help wrap a few gifts with colleagues over a lunchtime.

The number of gifts we are able to contribute increases each year, and staff are always so eager to be a part of it - we struggle to keep up putting more tags out sometimes! It's loved for a number of reasons; being able to give back to the community, helping to spread happiness and making a positive difference to someone's life to name a few.

Hearing from the guests in the shelter is what really makes it truly special:



**Santi said he hadn't had a pair of shoes that fitted him in years and loved his new trainers.**

**Glynn said he had wanted the Steve Jobs biography "forever" but had never been able to afford it.**

**Hester Sharpe**, Energy and Environment Manager

# Corporate Involvement



**The desire from the corporate sector to share their resources and skills and make a difference to those who are homeless continues to underpin our work. Over the last year we worked with more than 70 different businesses to support those accessing our services.**

This included teams cooking lunch at Friday Club, dinners and breakfasts at the shelter, mentoring and providing employment and training opportunities for the Jobs Club, running services at Wellbeing Tuesdays and Sunday Club and collaborating with our Steering Group. Other organisations got involved by arranging collections at their offices, contributing to our Amazon WishList and giving generous and vital donations to fund our work.

## Jones Knowles Ritchie

As a company, Jones Knowles Ritchie was first introduced to C4WS in 2016 and it's been a real pleasure working with the team since then. Over the last 12 months, one of the highlights was hosting a workshop with the Steering Group at our Camden Studio. Speaking with Sam and the team ahead of the session, we realised there was a real desire to challenge perceptions of homelessness, addressing stereotypes and tackling stigmas, in order to break down barriers and encourage more people to get involved and support C4WS' efforts. It was a powerful

vision born out of experience; our goal was to empower the team to come up with ideas and initiatives that could address it. Although the workshop environment might have felt daunting for some, the Steering Group leapt straight into action. After discussing how other causes had tackled similar issues in the past, we set up breakout groups where the teams started coming up with their own initiatives, focusing on what would really drive positive change for C4WS. The ideas they came up with in a couple of hours were fantastic - they all linked back



to the challenges they wanted to address and were both relevant and innovative. The best part? They didn't just stay as suggestions. Just a few months later, we received an invitation to join the 'C4WS Plus One Launch Event' based on one of the ideas they came up with in the workshop. Overall, we were really impressed by the group's insights, ideas and passion for driving change throughout this whole experience. We can't wait to see what they come up with next! ■

**Amy Maw,**  
Jones Knowles Ritchie

## Postcard Productions

I had previously volunteered at C4WS, firstly bringing in a team to cook at Friday Club, and then hosting a young man at my house as part of Home From Home. When C4WS mentioned that they were looking to make a short film about Home From Home in order to recruit more hosts I was keen to help. I had found hosting to be an eye-opening, rewarding and mutually beneficial project in which I had learned so much and encouraging others to take part seemed like a no-brainer.

The Postcard staff were happy to give their time for free producing, shooting and editing the film. We spent a day with former guest, Sam and his hosts Andrew and Lucy who shared with us their experiences of Home From Home who made our job very easy by speaking so eloquently about their time together. It was lovely to see their bond and hear how well Sam was now doing - something that he attributed to having the opportunity to live with them whilst sorting out his housing and job.

As a company our ethos is about making films that make a difference and knowing about Home From Home both on and off screen I couldn't think of a more fitting example of a project that is genuinely transforming lives and celebrating the best of people.

I hope that this film goes on to inspire more people to become hosts. If you don't believe me then go watch Sam's story! ■

**Richard Bentley,** Postcard Productions



## Camden Giving

Camden Giving has supported C4WS with funding over the last year for a range of projects including their new counselling service as part of Wellbeing Tuesdays. Our funding decisions are made by people who have lived experience of the challenges facing Camden. In practice this means that people who have experienced homelessness or have been at risk of homelessness have decided, alongside their neighbours, that C4WS is doing work that is important to Camden's communities. With this comes a tremendous responsibility to live up to the expectations of your community, something we see C4WS rise to time and time again. ■

**Natasha Friend,**  
Camden Giving

# Friday Club

Every Friday, C4WS and King's Cross Methodist Church (KXMC) offer a friendly and welcoming space to 50 people at Friday Club. In September 2019, Laura Mobilia, an actress from Argentina, started as an intern based at KXMC and joined the Friday Club volunteer team. Here, Laura shares some of her reflections:



A huge thank you to Laura and all of the Friday Club Volunteer Teams, the Corporate Cooking Teams, and the donations and support of so many people, without whom the Club would not be able to run, and of course to the members who make the Club the great place that it is.

**What were your first impressions?** The warm way in which Friday Club welcomes its members. The space is set out each week to be as engaging as possible by the regular volunteer team. Great care is taken over chopping and arranging the fresh fruit; biscuits are generously stacked on plates; the pastries from King's Cross Artisan Market brought to the Club by Plan Zheroes are artistically displayed. Newspapers, word searches and puzzles are spread on the tables. It all helps to show how the Club cares for each member in every way it can.

Lunch is always amazing. It is the best that can be provided and cooked by one of the many local corporate volunteer teams who come each week. It is always nutritious, attractive and delicious. "Bangers and Mash" continues to be a favourite but the range of dishes is interesting and satisfying prompting the regular question "What's on the menu today?" The teams that come to cook are enthusiastic and bring energy and compassion, and as well as cooking and serving the food, they enjoy the opportunity to sit and chat to the members over the meal.

**What have you enjoyed?** Being part of the team and sharing in the activities each week. Also having conversations and building relationships with the members, so that they have felt comfortable to share something of their lives with me.

**What have you learned?** How the regular volunteer team works together. Everyone has their own tasks and are all there to help the members, listening to them and sharing a conversation, helping them to choose something nice to wear from the clothes donations, finding their favourite shower gel, or managing the shower rota, or even giving a haircut.

**What has been a highlight for you?** The day trip to Brighton. It was one of my first Friday Clubs and was a fantastic day out funded by Network Rail and IPG Mediabrands. We met for breakfast at KXMC, travelled by train to Brighton, had fish and chips on the beach, wandered on the pier or played crazy golf, and had ice creams before catching the train home. It was a lovely day spent with new Friday Club friends, where everything was well organised with choices of what to do, taxis from the station to the beach for those who needed them, and fun watching the seagulls trying to join in and eat our members' food!

**What will you particularly remember?** The members and the many conversations I was able to have with them; and also that taking care over even the smallest detail points to the care and love for, and value of each person. ■

As told to **Linda Gilson**, Deacon, King's Cross Methodist Church

# Finance and Fundraising

With thanks to our supporters for their contributions which ensured we were able to continue running our project once again this season:

**Addleshaw Goddard**  
**American International Church**  
**Barclays Bank**  
**Beat Concepts Ltd**  
**BEE Midtown**  
**Belsize Residents Association**  
**Benevity Causes**  
**Bowercross Construction Ltd**  
**Camden Giving**  
**Church Homeless Trust**  
**Church Urban Fund**  
**CSM Sport & Entertainment**  
**Drapers Foundation**  
**European Social Fund**  
**Euston Town**  
**Equip**  
**Fortune Green Choir**  
**Friends House Local Quaker Meeting**  
**GMS Estates**  
**Goodenough College**  
**Gospel Oak Methodist Church**  
**Groundwork London**  
**Hampstead Chamber Choir**  
**Hampstead Wells & Campden Trust**  
**HS1 Ltd**  
**HSM Charitable Trust**  
**John Lewis Partnership**  
**LHA London Ltd**  
**Linkey**  
**Lloyds Bank Foundation**  
**LSLA**

**Lumen Poetry**  
**NACCOM**  
**North Camden Housing Co-operative**  
**Ocorian**  
**Paul Hamlyn Foundation**  
**Pret Foundation Trust**  
**Regent's Place Community Fund**  
**Royal Veterinary College Students Union**  
**SCS Railways**  
**Sir Mark and Lady Turner Charitable Settlement**  
**St George Dragon Trust**  
**St Giles in the Field**  
**St Martin's Gospel Oak**  
**St Mary's Church, Holly Place**  
**St Michael's Highgate**  
**Streets of London**  
**Streetsmart**  
**The Albert Hunt Trust**  
**The Beatrice Laing Trust**  
**The Cheruby Trust**  
**The Cooperative Bank**  
**The Diocese of London**  
**The French Huguenot Church in London**  
**The Mercers' Company**  
**The Parish Church of St John Hampstead**  
**The Sybil Shine Charitable Foundation**  
**The Vandervell Foundation**  
**Vistex**  
**Zappi**  
**Zenith Media**

# CARIS Camden

**W**riting at the beginning of May 2020, it's hard not to see everything in Covid 19 related terms, and in particular, its effect on C4WS. So, at the risk of repetition, I must mention the wonderful job that our staff achieved in keeping the shelter going and finding hotel places for the remaining guests. Sam and Laszlo were (I know from first-hand experience) working incredibly hard, directed from Nikki's nerve centre (Nikki was obliged, for reasons that will appear, to self-isolate). Special thanks must also go to Jonathan and The American Church and Pat and St George's Bloomsbury, without whom the shelter would have had to close early.

Much had, however, happened in the past year, before and unrelated to the current crisis. I shall highlight a few of the changes, actual and planned, in our governance and structure.

In January CARIS appointed two new Trustees, Nick Price and Jane Hinde. Nick, has been involved with the shelter for many years, notably as cook at King's Cross Methodist Church, is a Civil Servant and Church Warden at St Mary's Kentish Town. Jane is a retired solicitor and artist and has been involved with the shelter at St John at Hampstead.

Previously, C4WS was a project of CARIS Camden, but we have formed a new company, C4WS Homeless Project, which is now registered with the Charity Commission. C4WS has built up its own distinctive operation and reputation and it is right

that it should now have its own separate existence as a charity in its own right.

The first physical step in the separation took place in January when Caris Camden Families moved out of St Pancras Church House into premises in the London Irish Centre, in Camden Square, leaving C4WS in sole occupation of its office and meeting rooms. Although physically separated and shortly to be legally separated, it is our hope and intention that the two projects continue to collaborate where they can complement each other. Both have the welfare of the homeless at their core and the same ethos of practical kindness.

No one exemplifies that ethos more than Nikki, our Project Manager. She has led us through three successful seasons now, despite the considerable challenges at the end of the last. We are lucky to have her, but must endure her absence for a while, as I am delighted to report that she and her partner (and Friday Club volunteer) David are expecting a baby in August. We have recruited maternity cover, and are pleased to welcome Adam Eustace to the role. We look forward to welcoming her and baby back in time for the 2021/2 season.

Thank you to our hardworking volunteers; thank you to our shelter churches and their co-ordinators; thank you to our generous supporters, individual and institutional; and thank you to my fellow trustees, especially Geoff Browne, our vigilant and long-suffering treasurer. ■

**Andrew Penny**, Chair of Trustees



**Do you have a spare room?  
Could you help someone in need?  
Would you enjoy meeting new people?**

**Home from Home** is a hosting scheme run by C4WS Homeless Project where people we are supporting are placed with volunteer hosts for a short term period.

We are looking for hosts who have space in their home and can make a real difference to someone rebuilding their life to join the scheme.

For more information please contact us:

**T: 020 7267 6267**

**E: [admin@c4wshomelessproject.org](mailto:admin@c4wshomelessproject.org)**

**[www.c4wshomelessproject.org](http://www.c4wshomelessproject.org)**

# Housing

**We have always viewed the shelter as a stepping stone to more permanent accommodation and our Welfare Team work to ensure that every guest can achieve this. Our personalised approach to developing move-on plans with each individual is tailored to their specific needs.**

**W**e take a range of factors into account, such as how they will pay for housing (employment or benefits), whether they might need support (and what form that might take), location, age, gender and immigration status.

This season 12% of guests moved into private rented accommodation. This was either through arrangements we made with estate agents or places they found themselves. Raising a deposit and rent in advance can often be challenging, so we made 5 emergency grant applications to cover these costs for guests.

10% of guests moved into Supported Housing. This comes attached with either live-in or floating support to help residents adjust into and manage independent living. These tend to be fixed contracts of between six months to two years and are often used as a bridge towards private rented accommodation – something that C4WS will support an individual to move into when they feel ready.

For our asylum-seeking guests whose cases are pending with the Home Office there are typically two options: hosting projects, where they can live in the spare rooms of volunteer hosts, and Home Office accommodation. This accounted for 9% of guests this season. We continue to work with these guests and their legal teams through the immigration process and then, once a resolution of their case has been made, to secure more stable accommodation.

In the last couple of years the shortage of housing, changes to the benefits system and the growing numbers of homeless people have meant that securing housing within guests' 28 days stay has become increasingly difficult.

Consequently, 31% of guests were transferred to another shelter when their stay with us came to an end. At the time of writing, of those who continued to engage with our Welfare Team, 50% had successfully moved into stable housing and 50% were building move-on options while remaining in temporary accommodation.

Although the shelter closed at the end of March, the housing work of the Welfare Team is ongoing. They remain busy working with those in stable housing to manage their tenancies so that they do not risk falling into homelessness again, and continue to help those not yet in permanent homes to take the next steps towards achieving these goals. ■





# Steering Group

**The Steering Group was formed in 2018 and is a place for former guests from previous seasons to share their insight to inform day to day decision making at C4WS. Thanks to them, we now run the hugely successful Sunday Club and held our first ever shelter launch event in October 2019, where new volunteers signed up to help across all C4WS projects.**

**T**he Steering Group members were able to share their own experiences of C4WS, be it at the shelter itself, or one of our other services, such as Jobs Club, or Home from Home.

We are grateful to them for being so forthcoming with their ideas and so willing to share their personal experiences - as this is what makes C4WS.

The launch event was a resounding success. Current supporters and volunteers were encouraged to 'bring a friend,' ideally one who didn't know anything about us. The event created a real buzz, and contributed to a number of new volunteers joining us - most notably at Sunday Club (another excellent Steering Group invention) and as volunteer mentors.

The event also allowed us to reopen our #pantsforC4WS campaign - with lots of donations arriving on the night.

We look forward to working with the group ahead of the shelter opening next season, and capitalising on their ideas to bring another record year of programming for C4WS.



**The season's shelter launch event was a resounding success.**



## Guest Story Priyanka



I became homeless in January of this year and I was very apprehensive in trying to sort out accommodation as I had nowhere to go. I was referred to C4WS on the same day and my application was processed swiftly. I was not sure what to expect and my thoughts were completely blocked. I felt so isolated and lost. Upon my arrival on the first night, I collapsed outside the Church after enduring a very long stressful and tiring day with limited food and water. The staff/volunteers at the Church were very attentive and caring and called an ambulance for me. I returned to the shelter the following day and I was made to feel calm, warm and welcome. I was assured that I was not alone.

It was an unsettled situation to be in. Having stayed in different locations every night, my mental health became so fragile as I felt that I was not stable. However, having the support and guidance from C4WS, I was able to get through it. Every night at these different locations, I gradually started to form a great relationship with the other guests and I felt happy seeing them at the end of the day. There was always somebody to talk to whether that was a guest or a member of staff/volunteer. They all had a smile on their faces and genuinely cared for others well-being. I was provided with a hot meal for breakfast and dinner every day.

I have suffered with social anxiety for as long as I can remember. It was nice being able to talk to the other guests at the shelter who were in a similar if not worse situation to me, which gave me the assurance that once again, I was not alone. C4WS has given me a boost of confidence where I am now able to approach and talk to new people without any hesitation.

Being a part of C4WS, my perspective on homelessness has changed. They say, you never know what a person goes through until you have experienced it yourself. You become more appreciative of simple things, such as a bed and food/drink. I am eternally grateful for the constant support from C4WS. My last night was in late February and even after spending my 28 days at the shelter, I still received great help from Nikki, Laszlo and Sam following my stay. I was invited to attend the Ted Styles You event and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

I would like to say a massive thank you to Nikki and her entire team for managing such a wonderful homelessness project and I hope that I am able to give back one day and volunteer myself to help others in need. The staff at C4WS are so passionate about their role that it reflects on how the guests and others are treated. The thing I most admire about C4WS is the after support they provide for their guests. ■



**C4WS has given me a boost of confidence where I am now able to approach and talk to new people without any hesitation.**

**Priyanka**

# Mentoring & Befriending



**Moving into your own home is something to celebrate - and something everyone in the C4WS family does when a guest leaves the shelter and gets the keys to their new house. But this is a milestone that is also a transition point. One which poses new challenges. Maybe it's the first time someone has lived independently. Perhaps it's around managing money. Or living in a new and unfamiliar area.**

**C**4WS would not be the project it is if in November when we reopen the shelters we were flooded with referrals of familiar faces. People we had housed the previous winter but who had struggled to manage running a home. Or had run into difficulties with budgeting. Or whose wellbeing had deteriorated due to isolation.

That we don't see former guests returning in crisis is testament to the longer welfare work we do. Part of this is the Mentoring and Befriending Scheme which matches guests moving out of the shelter with volunteers for the first six months of their new lives to empower them with the skills and confidence to build a stable foundation for themselves. And for this to be the platform from which they can pursue their dreams and achieve the lives they want for themselves.

This year **129 Mentoring and Befriending sessions** were facilitated covering computer lessons, dog-walking, setting up a self-

employed business - and lots of eating! The scheme also provided a lifeline through COVID-19 lockdown and the transfer from in-person to digital contact ensured a seamless and reassuring presence through difficult times. ■



**I think it would be nice for it to be extended until COVID ends. It's nice to have a person who is understanding and mature to speak to at this point in time.**

**Melody**

## Krys and Caitlin

**K**rys and I both grew up in North London and quickly realised we shared not only geography, but a mutual interest in films, good food and exploring London's sights.

Before Sam paired us up, Krys had just secured his first job in Ted Baker's IT department through C4WS's Jobs Club and was excited to start.

It quickly became clear that Krys was an incredibly bright and hard-working individual. Once Krys suggested we go visit the British Library where he talked me through the Leonardo da Vinci exhibition. He has also explained the entire inner workings of a computer and taken me through his impressive photography projects. He even came to one of our meetings equipped with work phone and laptop, on call for Ted Baker. Krys's placement was going so well at Ted, he was offered a permanent position, plus funding to study IT at college.

We rented bikes to cycle through Regent's Park, and enjoyed deciding on the best burger in town from Dalston to London Bridge.

We spoke about settling into the new world of work, budgeting and navigating his new shared accommodation and life with housemates. He came to every meeting with a smile and was always up-beat with a funny story to tell and we had some great times getting to know each other.

Krys and I extended our original placement by a further 6 months. We have also stayed in contact during lockdown and look forward to our chats and seeing where his wealth of knowledge, determination and resilience take him.

## Emmey and Anastasia

**T**he last time I speak with Emmey is during lockdown on a video call. Usually, we would be out, tasting new foods like Palestinian Shakshuka, sipping oat milk mochas in museum cafés or visiting different areas of London.

On the surface, we are very different. Emmey is a nineteen-year-old non-binary vegan with autism. They are incredibly introspective yet expressive, and very creative, enjoying drawing, writing music and tarot reading. As we get to know each other in person, our similarities become apparent. We share values of self-awareness, human connection and acts of kindness. We both appreciate being listened to and having the space to explore ideas and hobbies.

For both of us, the Coronavirus-induced quarantine has eased our daily anxieties, as we feel less pressure to be hyper-productive. We are both enjoying cooking new recipes, talking about how to implement daily structures with healthy routines and discussing the struggles and rewards in the journey to become an independent adult.

Although it is not possible to interact in real life for the time being, keeping in touch virtually has enabled us to continue building our relationship. During our last conversation, Emmey tells me they have been practicing daily gratitude, which involves starting the day by noting things they are thankful for. On that morning's list, Emmey says, is our scheduled chat. This, as ever, reminds me of how grateful I am to have the opportunity to be a mentor and friend to someone who needs it.



# Welfare



**This season we had guests from 28 different countries that ranged from the UK to El Salvador and Afghanistan to Bangladesh. Consequently 27% of guests lacked English-speaking skills - nearly double the number from last year - and we were grateful to embark on a new partnership with Speak Street (see page 16) to offer much needed English Classes.**



Communication issues posed daily challenges for guests having to navigate their way around Camden to find the different shelters and then familiarise themselves with those venues and their volunteer teams, whether this was knowing how to sign up for the Shower Rota, understanding what food was being served or trying to access the clothing donations.

These difficulties were amplified when trying to process housing referrals, make job applications or simply keep on top of the paperwork that is accumulated while being

homeless. These tasks are hard enough without language barriers and a reliance on volunteer translators, language lines and interpretation apps was key to ensuring move-ons and reducing the sense of isolation that can often be overwhelming in such situations.

Given this trend it is unsurprising that immigration was cited as the most common reason for becoming homeless, accounting for 40% of guests - a 22% rise on the previous year. These could be broadly divided into two distinct groups: EU migrants and those seeking asylum.

For our EU migrants there was an increased focus on supporting them to be able to make EU Settled Status applications where they met the criteria or engaging them at Jobs Club to find employment. For those with asylum needs we were thankful to be working once again with Connections at St Martin's and Praxis who provided a fortnightly legal service in our office to help guests navigate their immigration cases. Through this service we were then able to refer people for hosting or help them apply for the relevant Home Office support so that they would be able to access temporary housing until a decision was made on their case.

Eligibility and access to benefits was another noticeable need. 48% of guests were either not in receipt of benefits or were awaiting a decision on an application - an all too familiar scenario now that Universal Credit has been rolled out in Camden and which has a five-week processing timeframe. Not being in receipt of benefits drastically reduces the move-on options for a guest. Even once someone has been granted benefits there is continual need for follow-up support in managing monthly payments, keeping up with the Claimant Commitment and navigating an online system - a particular issue for those with low IT literacy.

The lack of income - even if only temporary while waiting for benefits or to start work - generated significant destitution. Many guests had no money for day-to-day essentials and the Welfare Team made 54 individual crisis applications to a range of organisations that resulted in £9,311.72 of grants being made to cover transport, phones and credit, clothing and move-on costs.

Youth homelessness (18-25 years old) was a growing statistic accounting for more than 1 in 3 of our guests this season. We were excited to build a new relationship with Centrepoin who offered football and employability sessions at Arsenal and Chelsea

Football Clubs, a Music & Film course and an Art & Identity course for these younger guests.

38% of guests identified as having a mental health need and for the first time we were able to provide a professional in-house Counselling Service. For two hours every Tuesday guests were able to sign up for 1-2-1 sessions with a Therapist who would work with them over a period of weeks. 91% of guests reported that the sessions significantly helped them and 55% felt significantly more positive straight after the session.

As always, welfare extended beyond just the shelter with staff and volunteers continuing to provide direct and extensive assistance to former guests. This included new and changing housing needs, using Jobs Club, facilitating 1,352 nights of hosting, accessing healthcare and support through legal and immigration cases. One guest who stayed in our shelter five years ago was - after many ups and downs - finally granted refugee status and helping him move into his new home and start his new job in the midst of the shelter season encapsulated C4WS's ethos to support guests for as long as is required for them to have the lives they dream of and deserve. ■

**Sam Forsdike** C4WS Welfare Manager



**The lack of income - even if only temporary while waiting for benefits or to start work - generated significant destitution.**

# Giving



Every penny that is donated to C4WS Homeless Project is not taken for granted and is used to support homeless people. If you would like to contribute and help raise funds for C4WS Homeless Project you can do so in the following ways:

Give directly by visiting our website: [www.c4wshomelessproject.org/donate](http://www.c4wshomelessproject.org/donate)

By bank transfer to **C4WS Homeless Project**  
Acc No: 0003 3607 Sort Code: 40-52-40 at CAF Bank Ltd

Write a cheque payable to: **C4WS Homeless Project**

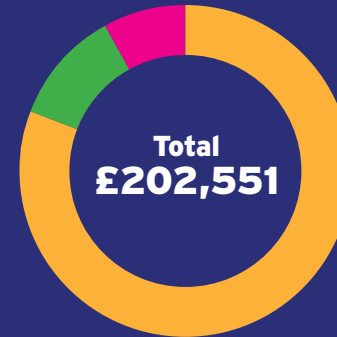
Give online via CAF Donate - just search for: **C4WS Homeless Project**

Support us by using **'Amazon Smile'** and choosing to donate to:  
**C4WS Homeless Project**

Support us by purchasing one of the essential items from our **Amazon Wishlist** at:  
<https://c4wshomelessproject.org/donate-items> (click on the 'Amazon Wishlist button')

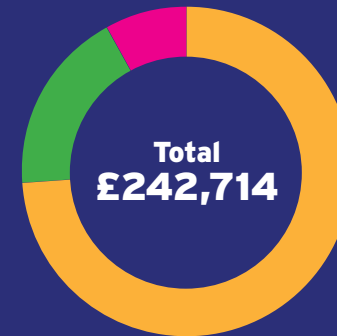
Give by Paypal to: **C4WS Homeless Project** or by searching for C4WS under 'charities' at [www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk)

# Expenditure and Budget



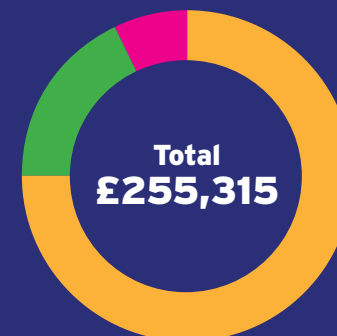
## 2019 Expenditure

- Staffing Costs £163,524
- Running Costs £23,027
- Guest Welfare £16,000



## 2020 Budget

- Staffing Costs £179,724
- Running Costs £43,546
- Guest Welfare £19,444



## 2021 Budget

- Staffing Costs £189,669
- Running Costs £47,146
- Guest Welfare £18,500



HOMELESS PROJECT

**C4WS Homeless Project**

St Pancras Church House  
1 Lancing Street  
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