



C4WS ANNUAL REPORT 2013



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Authored & Edited By
Jamie Nalton
 Project Manager
Amanda Pickering
 Welfare Manager
Sam Forsdike
 Project Worker
Editorial Advisor
 William Saunders

Photos By
Felicity Crawshaw
www.felicitycrawshaw.com
 Design By
Essen Creative
www.essencreative.com

Welcome to our 2013 Annual Report. Summarising a whole year of work into 30 odd pages never proves easy, especially when all the work we do is based on over a hundred people from different ages and nationalities with their own personal battles to be won. It is our hope that after reading this you come away with a real sense of C4WS Homeless Project and all that makes it what it is.



As the name suggests we are a homeless project in name and in practice but we are also so much more. In this report you will read quite a few facts and figures documenting our past year's work and while this is necessary, we would really like you to get a feel of the individual guest who comes through our project.

Etched on these pages are the names of some of the guests who have been part of our project. Throughout a year we will see and hear much heartache, helplessness, hopelessness and loneliness. However with our support and much strength from our guests, this is more than often turned into hope and the feeling of being able to achieve a life away from the cold streets.

I would like to thank everybody who has given their time and resources freely to C4WS. Without you there would be no us and the 1000 or so guests we have seen over the past few years would not have benefited from the unique service we provide.

Thank you

Jamie Nalton
Project Manager



Why C4WS?

We are often asked why it is necessary for a project like ours to exist? Questions range from “surely the Council/Government provide housing, benefits and support to anybody who needs it, don’t they?” or “why cant they just find a job and pay for somewhere to live?” If life was only that simple!

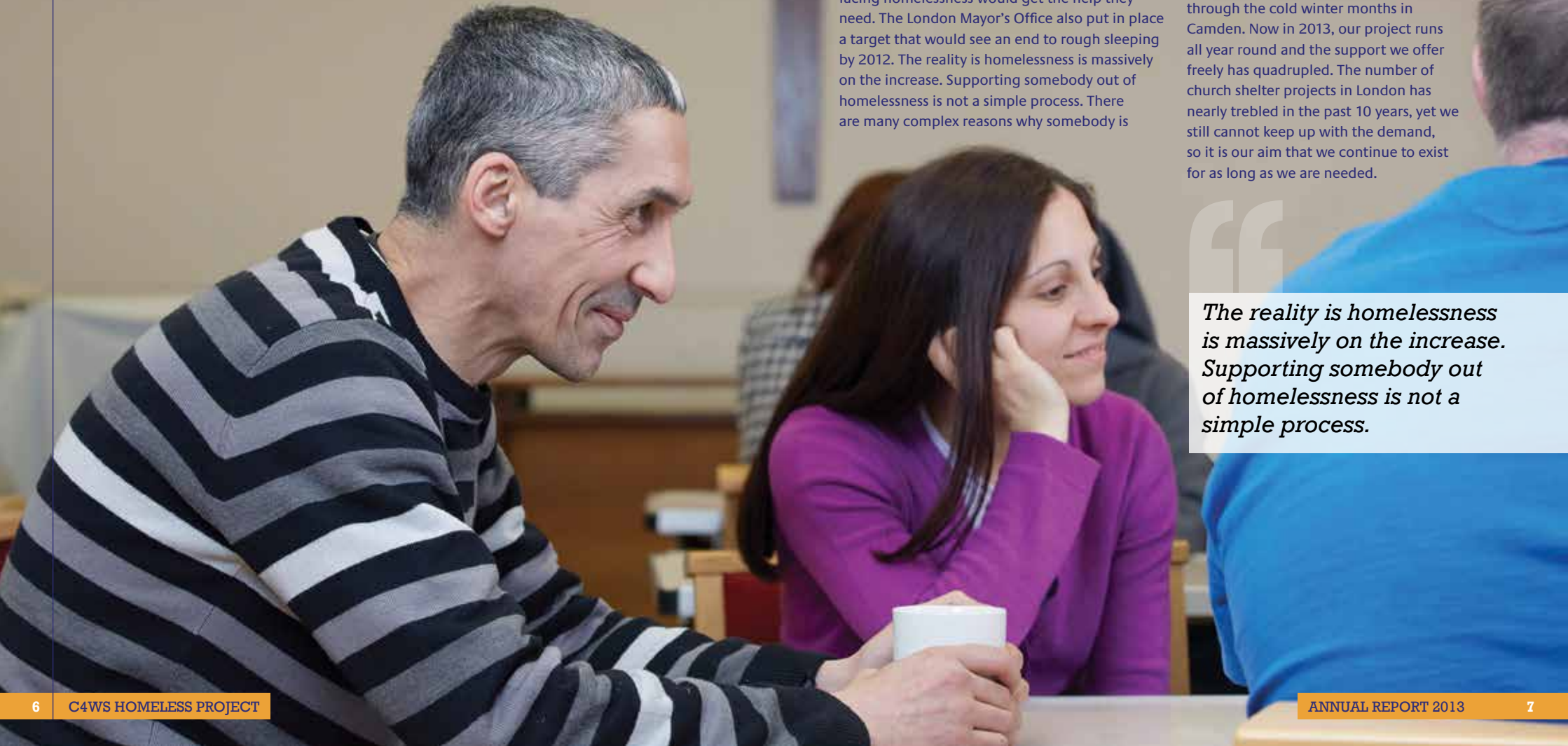
This coming winter will be our 10th season providing emergency accommodation for the single homeless in the Borough of Camden. Many of our veteran volunteers tell us that they cannot quite believe this. They thought it would be a stopgap until the local authorities put things in place to make sure that anybody who was facing homelessness would get the help they need. The London Mayor’s Office also put in place a target that would see an end to rough sleeping by 2012. The reality is homelessness is massively on the increase. Supporting somebody out of homelessness is not a simple process. There are many complex reasons why somebody is

unable to access secure accommodation for one night or a life time such as not being able to find work, mental health issues, addictions, being ineligible for benefits and not having the right to council support.

When we began in 2005 we were the only source of free emergency accommodation through the cold winter months in Camden. Now in 2013, our project runs all year round and the support we offer freely has quadrupled. The number of church shelter projects in London has nearly trebled in the past 10 years, yet we still cannot keep up with the demand, so it is our aim that we continue to exist for as long as we are needed.

“

The reality is homelessness is massively on the increase. Supporting somebody out of homelessness is not a simple process.



GUEST STORY



The efforts of C4WS gave me hope and a drive to overcome the challenges

This was going well until I was taken seriously ill and had to return to the UK at the end of 2012 with little or no money.

On return to the UK I was sofa surfing with family and friends but eventually found myself homeless. I was refused Jobseekers Allowance and any kind of housing or shelter because I had been abroad for nearly 2 years. I was at my lowest, feeling broken and broken-hearted. I was full of negative thoughts and really didn't want to go on living. I needed help. I couldn't solve my problems alone. After a visit to the hospital I got a referral to Focus Outreach who help homeless people with mental health problems and they referred me to C4WS.

I received a call from Jamie, the Project Manager at C4WS. He was offering me a place on a cold weather shelter scheme for the homeless. He explained how the project operated with a nightly rotation of churches in Camden on a weekly basis with a hot meal also provided.

I never imagined that I would find myself helpless and homeless. I had a very successful career, was earning a good salary and lived in a desirable area. I had worked in senior management and had never experienced problems with securing jobs. In 2009 during the banking crisis I was made redundant and couldn't secure a job for 2 years. Eventually I was given notice to leave my rented flat. With no prospects and savings exhausted, I sold a few items and took myself to Vietnam to teach English and hopefully ride out the recession.

My journey Michael

*The guest stories do not correlate with the photos to protect their identity

I arrived at a church on my first night feeling very despondent. How could I have hit such rock-bottom; how could I have ended up such a failure? All the clichés went through my head, I was now a down-and-out, I was going to end up with soup kitchens, tramps, alcoholics and addicts. What I actually found was very different.

After a few nights I realised that many others were in similar circumstances to my own.

They were not down-and-outs, many of us were victims of the economic recession.

I met and made friendships with my fellow guests. The volunteers at each church prepared and shared with us, wonderful home cooked meals, bingo nights, movies on TV, chess and other games. Some volunteers shared sleeping dormitories with us on comfortable and clean beds followed by breakfast in the morning. Any visitor would have been unable to distinguish between guests and volunteers. I came to look forward to my evenings in the shelters, the wonderful meals, the camaraderie of our common situation, the laughs and the feeling of not being alone.

Much of the pleasure of the shelters was due to the strong management of Jamie and his team at C4WS. They ensured that unacceptable behaviour would not be tolerated. This made for a harmonious and pleasurable environment for both volunteers and guests. C4WS are a wonderful team who demonstrated caring,

compassion and a passionate drive to help each of us with our diverse and individual cases. The work and efforts of the C4WS team goes beyond just providing cold weather shelter for the homeless. They work tirelessly to help us through the problems and bureaucracies of National and Local Government to ensure as best they can, that we are off the streets and end up with accommodation and a home.

In my own case the efforts of C4WS gave me hope and a drive to overcome the challenges. After 6 weeks on the project the wonderful Amanda got me fixed up in an amazing sheltered

housing scheme with my own studio flat in beautiful London close to all my old haunts and friends. Although things are still tough financially and I'm still job seeking, I remain upbeat,

positive and relatively happy. A very different person to the one I was when I first entered C4WS Homeless Project. I could never have got to this place on my own. I owe so much to Jamie, Amanda and the lovely Sam. And many thanks to the fantastic volunteers who fed and sheltered us. They treated us with dignity and gave us dignity.

I am glad to have made this journey and I wouldn't change it for the world.

**Thank you
Michael**

They were not down-and-outs, many of us were victims of the economic recession

C4WS Church Shelters

Call it religion, call it faith, we believe in Jesus. This does not mean that anybody benefiting, supporting or working with the project needs to. We do this work as a reflection of God, but believe actions speak louder than words. All we ask of anybody is to be respectful of each other's beliefs.

We now run shelters for over 5 months of the year, in 13 Churches in various locations in Camden, providing the accommodation, food and volunteers with further support coming from another 12 churches from all denominations.

Our church council was immediately enthusiastic about the idea of joining the cold weather shelter when it was put to them back in 2010. Thanks to the commitment of our parish administrator, Celyn, everything seemed easy from the start. Money was quickly raised from the congregation to buy beds and bedding and to pay for the groceries. Volunteers signed up in droves and came to the excellent training provided by C4WS. When the shelter opened, we were all nervous, sizing each other up on the first evening – who was a volunteer and who was a guest? Because church people didn't necessarily know each other well, it wasn't always clear. One of the biggest benefits of taking part was that people in the congregation got to know each other much better.

We soon found our rhythm, and we tried to make Monday evenings at St Mary's as enjoyable for both guests and volunteers as possible, with high-quality food, candlelit tables, ambient music and lively games of table tennis.

Gifts of clothing poured in and one side of church became a place to browse for coats, shoes, shirts and scarves. Volunteers also provided books and board games.

Those who slept over enjoyed the peacefulness of spending the night in church with the guests, who nearly always slept very soundly, and the valiant breakfast team always turned up on time and cooked a hearty meal to line the stomachs of those who were often facing a cold day on the streets.

In our second season we added a shower to the church's disabled toilet, and now we are turning our attention to the kitchen facilities. Taking part in the shelter has brought benefits to our infrastructure as well as our community life. We have always felt fully supported by the professional C4WS staff, so we have been able to relax and enjoy offering hospitality without worry.



Some highlights of our first three seasons include:

- One evening when Monopoly was being played on the chancel steps, someone was doing yoga on the church floor, and others were chatting quietly or playing cards at the tables after supper while people washed up in the kitchen or started bedding down – I looked at the scene and thought “this is what church should look like.”
- Seeing guests occasionally light a candle or pray before the altar, as if the space itself was inviting them to receive God's love.
- Getting return visits and thanks from guests who had been helped by C4WS to find permanent accommodation, and often work or training too.
- Drawing in people from the community as volunteers who wouldn't necessarily come to church but who loved being part of Christianity in action.
- Everyone joining in a birthday celebration for Celyn just before Christmas, with crackers and cake and singing.

In short, becoming part of C4WS has been one of the most positive steps we have taken as a church in the past five years. We look forward to our fourth season!

*Marjorie Brown,
Vicar of St Mary's, Primrose Hill*



The Guests

82 people stayed at the C4WS Shelter between November 2012 and March 2013.

Everyone came from a different background with different needs. **They all had the same goal though...to get out of homelessness.** And it was this goal that often joined them together and created a sense of **community**, even if only temporary. The companionship between guests, people looking out for each other and the older guests welcoming the newer ones was moving for the volunteers and staff to see. We had guests from **26 nationalities** and an age range which spanned **49 years**, male and female, from different religions and beliefs and we are extremely privileged to have been able

to be part of their journey, for some just a short period of time and others, years.

The people we support are not just limited to our guests staying at the shelter. Guests from previous years are still given support whether it be through mentoring, helping with the next stage of accommodation or job searching to name a few. We also support guests who use our weekly lunchtime club or people who are often directed to us by other services when homeless. **Homelessness is an issue that affects people 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, winter or summer and we are ready to assist whenever someone needs our help.**

Guest make up 2012/2013

93% of those that engaged in our service were rehoused



73% 27%



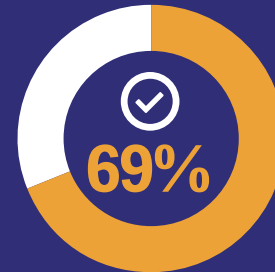
MALE



FEMALE



C4WS provided 2115 bed spaces



ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS



WANTED TO GET INTO EMPLOYMENT



Over 3700 meals were served



AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY

21% had no recourse to public funds

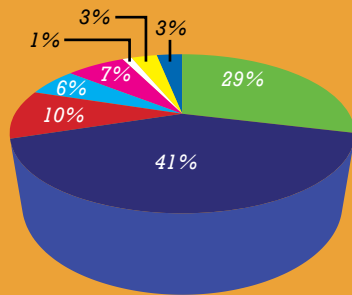
Support

As the effects of the recession continue to hit, increasing numbers of people are finding themselves homeless for the first time. A 1/3 of our guests cited relationship breakdown and upbringing as the main contributing factor to their homelessness which means that many do not have a support structure when things go from bad to worse. This is having a massive impact on their mental and physical health. **41% of our guests suffered from mental health problems, a staggering 20% more than last year.** From mild depression to paranoid schizophrenia we are always on hand to support people through the devastation of mental illness, working alongside Focus, our specialist mental health team in Camden.

Gambling, repeat offending, drug and alcohol misuse are just some of the issues our guests are faced with when they come to us. We provide the specialist links needed to overcome these life controlling issues.

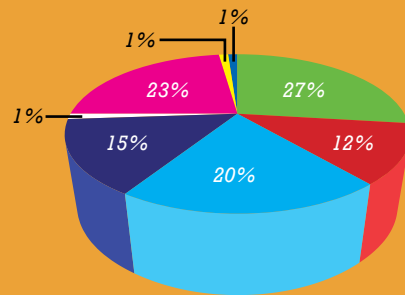


SUPPORT NEEDS CHART



- Lack of English speaking skills
- Mental Health
- Physical health
- Alcohol misuse
- Repeat offending
- Gambling
- Domestic violence
- Drug misuse

PRIMARY REASON FOR HOMELESSNESS



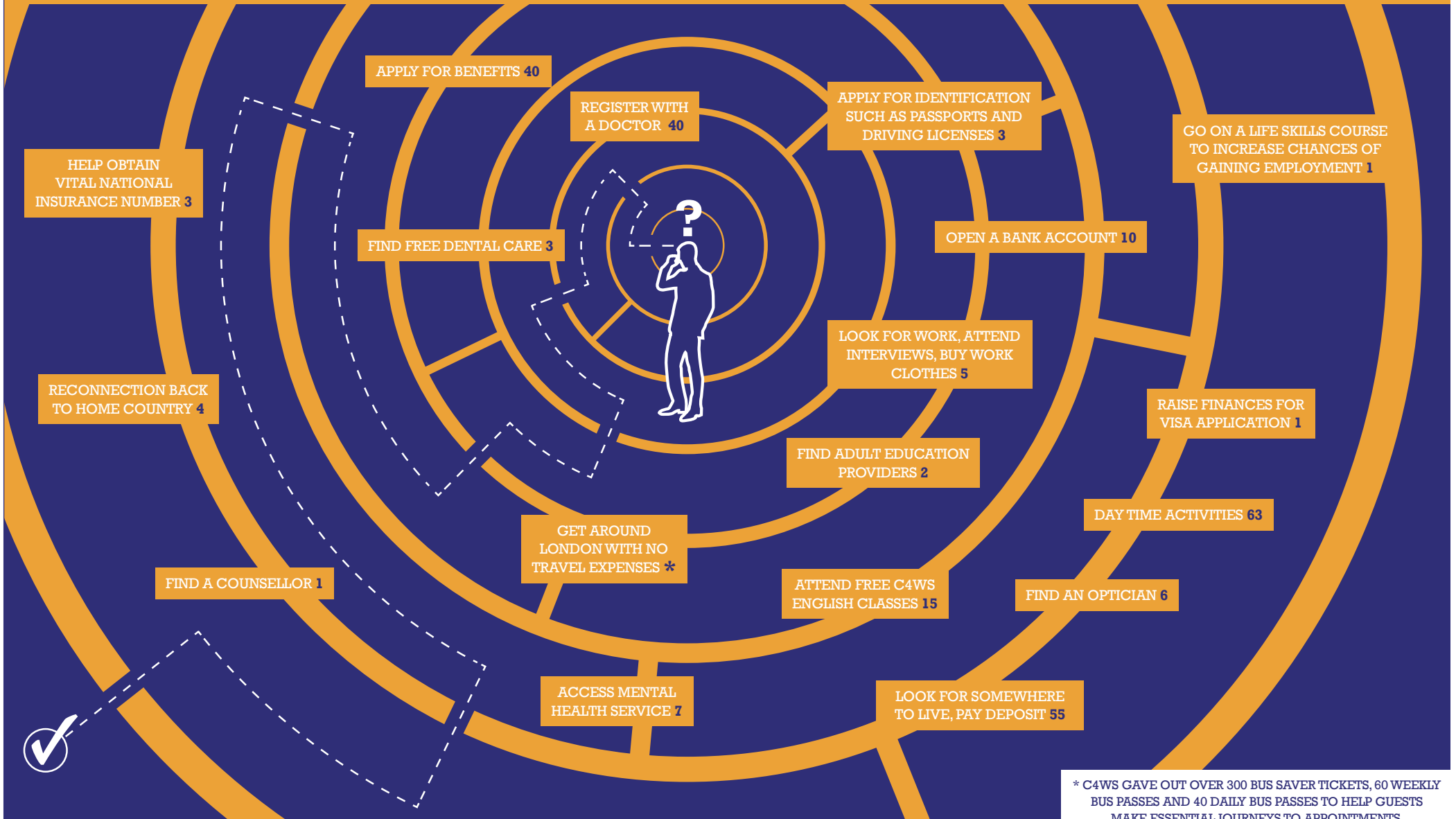
- Lack of money
- Relationship breakdown
- Upbringing
- Other
- Combination
- Immigration
- Alcohol
- Domestic Violence



The work that C4WS and Focus have done together has been very good this year. We have found the communication between the two teams effective, and it has been helpful that referrals were discussed before being sent to us to ensure that they were appropriate. The referral process has been straightforward and we have found C4WS flexible and accommodating with our clients, essential for often hard to place people. I have found the work done for clients has been excellent.

**Jo Hendle - Community Psychiatric Nurse
Focus Homeless Outreach Team**

The homelessness maze



* C4WS GAVE OUT OVER 300 BUS SAVER TICKETS, 60 WEEKLY BUS PASSES AND 40 DAILY BUS PASSES TO HELP GUESTS MAKE ESSENTIAL JOURNEYS TO APPOINTMENTS.

C4WS Welfare

In many ways it would be great if C4WS Homeless Project did not exist. If there were no homeless people, there would be no need for us. However with statistics like homelessness increasing by 31% in the last two years¹ and that number increasing to 42% in the borough of Camden alone², our work is nowhere near complete. In some ways it feels like it is only just beginning...

It is getting progressively complicated for a single person to access the right kind of services whilst homeless. Professional staff are continuously going on specialist training just to keep up to date with the ever changing homelessness scene. **Rising rents, cuts to benefits and lack of employment** are just some of the reasons why many are finding themselves homeless for the first time, **with over half of our guests being homeless for less than 6 months.**

With accommodation shortages on the rise waiting lists can sometimes be up to a **year!** We have worked tirelessly to build relationships with new accommodation providers and although the wait can still be a long one we are proud to have been able to help **93% of those that engaged in our service secure more permanent accommodation.**

Whatever the state of our society, we will continue to support homeless people, with the utmost professionalism, care and compassion, for however long we are needed.

*Amanda Pickering
Welfare Manager*

“

There have been numerous challenges this year that have affected the availability of housing options for single homeless people in the Borough of Camden and Greater London. The C4WS Project has continued to be a valuable resource over the winter months and has continued to assist the local authority with its homeless prevention strategy. The joint working between Camden Council and C4WS has helped to ensure a seamless transition from the streets into more settled accommodation.”

*Simon Rathborne
Housing Options
and Opportunities
Team Manager,
Camden Council*

”



GUEST STORY



Before being homeless I read somewhere that people who are unfortunate enough to be homeless will often be unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure and adequate housing.

From then experiencing homelessness with C4WS I was in fact able to feel as part of a family, with a safe and secure roof over my head on a night time, having endless support from the staff and volunteers which made me almost forget I was actually homeless.

What I enjoyed most about the shelter was the support I had received not only to help me into accommodation, but with my studies, the constant reassurance we all received and the amazing set of people I had met.

I would like to end by saying without the help and support I received from the shelter I wouldn't have been able to continue as a student. I appreciate mostly the support the staff still gives even once you have left the shelter, and I am truly grateful.

Elisheba

¹Crisis 'Bleak April of multiple cuts will increase homelessness' <http://www.crisis.org.uk/news.php/624/bleak-april-of-multiple-cuts-will-increase-homelessness>

²Broadway Chain Annual Report Camden 1st April 2013-31st March 2013'

Options

C4WS Mentoring & Befriending Scheme

In previous years, after the shelter closed many guests were coming back to us asking for help with things like filling out forms, accessing training and paying bills on time, as well as just having someone to chat to on a regular basis. There can often be a loneliness that follows when a guest has moved out of the shelter community and into accommodation. Since it's beginnings in 2010, our mentors have played a key role in supporting our mentees with:

- Securing successful employment
- Confronting learning difficulties
- Accessing work placements
- Dealing with rent arrears
- Improving self esteem and confidence
- Social support
- One of our former guests and mentees is now a qualified phlebotomist!

In the past, former guests have been known to abandon their accommodation due to worries about rent, problems with other tenants, or their own personal difficulties.

Our mentoring scheme has successfully supported people in staying in their accommodation for longer and working through their difficulties in life as a direct result of the support they receive from C4WS.

Referral Agencies into C4WS Night Shelter

- New Horizons Youth Centre*
- Alone in London*
- C4WS Office*
- Hope Worldwide*
- Camden Health Improvement Practice*
- American Church Soup Kitchen*
- London Irish Centre*
- Housing Options - Camden Council*
- Albert Kennedy Trust*
- ICCWS*
- Police*
- Manna Centre*
- St Giles Trust*
- Bloomsbury Church*
- Focus Mental Health Team*
- British Red Cross*
- Shelter from the Storm*
- SANKTUS*
- University College Hospital*
- CRISIS*
- Growth*
- Safer Streets Team, Camden*
- Islington Centre*
- Centre Point*
- Praxis*
- Holy Cross Centre Trust*
- Scarlet Trust*





Learn and improve

English Classes

1/3 of our guests did not speak English as their first language. This creates low confidence in people and makes it extremely difficult to successfully integrate into our society. It is not from lack of will that these guests have trouble with their English skills; nowadays it is lack of free available services for those that need it the most; asylum seekers, refugees, and migrant workers. Our English classes practically support

homeless and previously homeless people with the vital skills they need for their day-to-day lives. This is an essential but often overlooked skill that everybody should be entitled to learn.

Our classes are free of charge and each student is given their own study materials, travel to classes and the chance to learn/improve their English skills.

I must admit to having an ignorant view of homeless people before volunteering at C4WS. They are not all street drinkers/pavement beggars and I now understand that homelessness could affect any of us with the right combination of unlucky life events. I'm already looking forward to teaching at the shelter next season.

Antony – English Teacher

Our classes are run by our qualified English Teacher Antony, who has given up of his time freely to support our guests with learning vital English skills. Thank you to Antony for all your hard work and support – we could not do it without you!

“I live in Camden and was delighted to be given the opportunity to teach English at C4WS. The team provide a vital service in a borough where the gap between the wealthy and poor is vast and ever-increasing. I have taught basic to advanced English language lessons to guests from a wide variety of countries and found it enlightening to hear about some guests' daily fight to find accommodation, get visas and generally get back on their feet in what can seem a daunting city. The guests have a good opinion of the shelter and some even come back to visit the team or join an English language class after their time in the shelter finishes.

Health & Nutrition

When homeless, one's health and welfare is often the first thing to suffer. For many of our guests thinking about where they are going to sleep that night takes priority over that niggling cough, or sore throat. Often these health problems can be easily treated but not when you are homeless.

This year we have been blessed with offering our guests a more rounded health care service than ever before. This has consisted of:

Lung Screening

The Camden Community Respiratory Service attended C4WS Lunch Time Club on several occasions, screening people at risk for problems with their lung health, especially those that do not attend their GP regularly. This helps to diagnose respiratory disease and improves future treatment and prognosis. This is a vital service that our guests can now access easily and regularly.



We can then offer full diagnostic tests, support, advice and treatment to people who need it. This can help to improve quality of life, and prevent deterioration of respiratory problems.

Corina Sampson
Specialist Respiratory
Physiotherapist



Chiropody

It is not uncommon for guests to spend the night walking the streets trying not to look homeless or being too afraid to 'bed down' before they come to us. Having a Chiropodist who volunteers her time freely at our Monday night shelter, January to March has been an absolute godsend for many of our guests.

Doctor visits

A team of doctors and nurses has visited our evening shelters to offer guests one to one advice and guidance around minor ailments and illnesses. We also have a fantastic relationship with Camden Health Improvement Practice who see our guests without the need for a permanent address, which is a lifesaver for many.

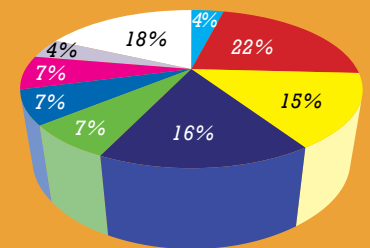
Nutrition

We have found that when our guests move into accommodation after having home cooked food for the duration of their stay at the shelter, many are struggling to make an impossible budget stretch to buy nutritious food. Some do not have the cooking skills to make meals and others feel overwhelmed by their financial situation that they rely on takeaways until the money runs out and go hungry until their next pay day. Sometimes up to two weeks. We believe that no one should live like this.

Our volunteer nutritionist has designed talks **educating people around basic nutrition, how to get your five a day in and eating on a budget** which is delivered to our guests while staying at the shelter. There are also nutrition workshops teaching people how to make **easy, nutritious, affordable meals that they can cook at home**. We hope that providing this service will give people the skills and confidence to look after themselves, even on the tightest budget.



TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION CHART



- Moving in with friends
- Hostel / B&B
- Council accommodation
- Private rented
- Reconnected to home country
- Shared housing
- Specialist accommodation
- Home Office Accommodation
- Other

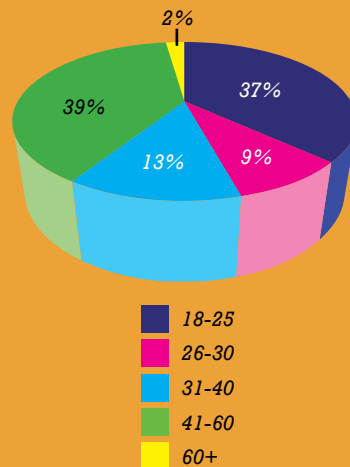
Employment



People need an income. We are not talking about money to spend on designer clothes or penthouse apartments. It is about people living a day by day life **where you can afford to heat your home and put food in your cupboard**, which is way beyond the reach of any guest when they first come to us.

It has always been a myth that single people are better off on benefits but this is even more so with the complex changes that the government has made. Benefits are a means to an end, however **being in employment gives people a sense of self worth, increases their confidence and gives people so many more options in life.** Here at C4WS, we do our best to help people get to a point where they are work ready. This is not as easy as some may think.

AGE RANGE CHART



“I am very, very, very happy, thank you so much. I HAVE A JOB” *Guest who C4WS supported in looking for work for over two years.*

There are many barriers to homeless people getting into employment:

- Low self esteem
- Inadequate CV
- Poor interview skills
- Lack of reading/writing skills
- Confusion and anxiety around benefits entitlement once employment commences
- Affordability of rent and bills
- Being unemployed for a long time.

These are all issues that need to be addressed before someone can even think about successfully applying for a job.

We work in partnership with fantastic job led agencies to address these needs, which offer work place training, coaching and support. One of the biggest requests we get from our guests is help in finding work and this is something we actively encourage by offering CV help, job search support, paying for employment related items such as suits, hard hats and funding professional qualifications to enable people the best possible chance of securing employment.

47% of our guests said they want to work



My journey

Danny

Early January 2011 I had broken relationships with both family and friends due to various reasons and lost the accommodation I was living in. I had become homeless and didn't have any idea or plan of what I wanted to do next. I turned up at an organisation called Hope Worldwide for some advice and the possibility of somewhere to stay.

They told me there was a space at a local night shelter (C4WS) that day so I made my way there as this was my only option. I was a bit anxious about staying at a night shelter due to things I

had heard and read about them. When I arrived at C4WS I was a bit put off by all the beds laid out in one room which was full of strangers. I then met the manager who explained what was expected of me and how the shelter runs. The volunteers and guests were very welcoming towards me and after eating dinner and chatting with them I soon felt much more comfortable and noticed the place had a nice atmosphere.

I found the day to day routine of the shelter very helpful. There were wash/shower facilities, food and donations of clothes. I think the changing of location every night brought the group closer together as we would often arrange to meet

somewhere before hand and travel together. I would meet with Amanda and Jamie from time to time in order to find me a more stable type of accommodation which they eventually did. Staff were always supportive towards me throughout my stay and I think they got the balance just right around when to meet for one on one sessions or just a quick catch up. I was encouraged to take charge of my life and use my time here productively so I used my time to figure out my next move in life. At C4WS I was inspired

I was encouraged to take charge of my life and use my time here productively

by the staff and volunteers there and wanted to try something similar. I could see the hard work and time everybody put in to the place to make it comfortable and productive. It seemed like more than just

a job for them and I could see and feel their purpose. I remember telling Jamie I wanted to do something similar to what he does and he encouraged me to pursue this. He told me that once I'm more stable and ready he would give me the chance to volunteer here. I took this on board and after several months I was given the chance and loved every moment of it. Whilst volunteering there I realised my own potential and the experience of being both a guest and a volunteer backed up my new desire to work in this field.

During this period Jamie told me about an apprenticeship with a homeless organisation called Thames Reach which I applied for. I was successful in my application and completed a one year apprenticeship and was asked to stay on with them beyond that point. I achieved an NVQ Level 2 in Health and Social Care with them as well as many other qualifications relevant to this sector. I have now left Thames Reach and have a permanent contract with another organisation as a full time support worker at a hostel. I am delighted at my current situation and for the first time in my life I have a clear idea and plan of what I want to do. I am aiming to manage a project in the future and feel confident in myself to do so. Since leaving C4WS I have also been fortunate enough to build a family. I had a son born in January 2012 and a girl born March 2013.

I feel I owe an incredible amount to everyone involved with C4WS as their support provided me with the platform to get where I am today and rebuild my life for the better. I'm deeply grateful to Jamie, Amanda and Paul for the ongoing support they provided me with. I am now in the position to pass on the support and advice I received there to others who need it which is very fulfilling and satisfying. I wish everyone at C4WS the best of luck and I hope to help out again with them in the future.

For the first time in my life I have a clear idea and plan of what I want to do



GUEST STORY

*The guest stories do not correlate with the photos to protect their identity



Lunchtime Club

Every week, throughout the entire year C4WS Homeless Project, in conjunction with King's Cross Methodist Church hosts a lunchtime club where guests, former guests and anyone experiencing homelessness can drop in.

The purpose of the lunchtime club is to offer a neutral and informal place where people can come by for food, conversation and professional advice. Hot drinks are served and a small lunch provided. Some people come by just to read the papers or enjoy the company of other visitors and the club's hosts, others simply making the most of the opportunity to spend a few hours somewhere safe and out of the cold.

C4WS staff also are on hand to offer support and welfare assistance which can include filling out paperwork, help writing CVs and preparing people for appointments.

This is also an invaluable opportunity during the shelter season to facilitate intensive one-on-one sessions with guests to work on the increasing complexity of their housing needs.

Over the course of the last winter we saw a **200% increase** in attendance of the lunchtime club. With the closure of many local day centres we have continued to facilitate the growing numbers both in provision of food and welfare support.

We have also been able to use the lunchtime club to offer other free professional services – as well as some fantastic entertainment! In the last year visitors to the club have been able to benefit, from among other things, lung screening and follow-up healthcare, hairdressing and performances from renowned classical musicians.

What is a Church-Co-ordinator? Every Church which hosts the Shelter requires at least one Co-ordinator. Every week 15 beds must be made up, a dinner for 21 people shopped for, prepared, served and washed up afterwards, and a breakfast served and then cleared away the following morning, while 15 beds are stripped and packed away until by around 8.30am there is not a trace that anything took place. This requires at least 16 volunteers, spread over three shifts every week. Someone needs an overview of all this activity.

Here are some interesting things I learned this season.

If you need to defrost frozen food quickly, stand it in cold water.

If anything goes awry it usually goes awry in the kitchen, because food cannot be rushed. When the vegetarian option turned out to be still frozen solid at 7.30pm, somebody knew what to do. In the last rush to prepare dinner the kitchen is a crowded place of diverse knowledge. Because of the kind of venue we are, a Church hall in a residential neighbourhood, much of our cooking is done by our immediate neighbours.

What is obvious to me is not obvious to everyone.

One volunteer brought her daughter to the Shelter. The second question she asked me was "So how do they get their beds here?" A childish question, yes, but an example that every new person is not going to grasp everything which is going on around them. I am supported by a core team of volunteers who work expertly together which can make things all the more opaque for beginners. Every week I have to make the same set speech at the volunteers meeting. I get weary of it, but I have to remember that while my answers are stale the questions are fresh.

The Arabic for snow is thelaqa.

This season Arabic was the second language after English in the Shelter. This varies from season to season. Like anywhere in Central London you have a variety of languages in the Shelter, spoken by guests and volunteers.

Snow was topical because winter held on so long and hard this year. Because our venue runs from Friday night to Saturday morning I am able to be around for every shift, not something every Co-ordinator can do. I begin in January with 15 strangers but over the weeks I learn about them and they learn about me. Over this time the weather should improve too. This year on our final Saturday I shook hands and said farewell to the guests in flurries of snow. That hurt a bit.

**Bill Saunders, Church Co-ordinator,
St Mary, Brookfield**



CARIS

Elsewhere in this report Jamie, our Project manager, writes of the indiscriminating hospitality and care that C4WS gives to its guests; that is something of which CARIS Camden, as C4WS's parent body, is particularly proud. CARIS purpose is to be Christian Action in Society in Camden and there is no contradiction in the non-denominational and inclusive work of C4WS. We believe we can see God in every human being and our aim is restore the dignity and physical well being of anyone who is deprived of a home and family support.

There is much in this report to be thankful for; C4WS's success in improving the lives of its guests is evident from the figures that you will read here and the descriptions of the varied and growing welfare activities. Mother Marjorie, of St Mary's Primrose Hill writes convincingly of the benefits experienced by a host church as it welcomes guests into its midst. I want to emphasise a different, but as important, aspect of C4WS' work and CARIS' involvement; the major churches in the UK often have a bad press and for very different but usually justifiable reasons. There is equally a widespread feeling that any overtly Christian activity has a suspicious agenda.

The C4WS project is an example of what groups of Christians of very different shades, supported by non-religious groups of volunteers can achieve, bringing about something of the vision that their common founder described. Despite the failures and scandals of the institutions, Christians and Christian inspired groups and individuals are, quite simply and without other motive, making a better world in Camden. That this happens is thanks to the efforts of many volunteers, directed and encouraged by the professionalism and dedication of the C4WS staff, Jamie, Amanda and Sam.

This report celebrates the work of C4WS but it is appropriate to mention that CARIS is planning to expand its work in social welfare in the coming year, complimenting and growing the work of C4WS with the homeless.

Andrew Penny
Chair of CARIS Camden trustees.



Our community

Volunteers

Volunteer dictionary definition

- 1. To perform or offer to perform a service of one's own free will.**
- 2. To do charitable or helpful work without pay.**

We could write thousands of words to describe what our **400** plus volunteers mean to this project but hopefully we can do them justice with just a few. For the volunteers that are reading this, **thank you** from all the staff and trustees. Every guest that comes to the shelter talks about the experience they have had with you; the warmth, the food and some can hardly believe that you give up your time with no rewards. Of course we know that the rewards are that first smile from the guest, that story about how they have been helped with a job/accommodation.

Thank you again, you make the project what it is.



VOLUNTEER STORY

It has been an absolute pleasure to volunteer at C4WS this season - as it always has before. I got involved in the project along with other students from university in 2011. All of us lived in Camden and wanted to do something to help some of the many people affected by homelessness we had seen. I enjoyed the experience so much I have been back every season since and hope to continue for as long as I can.

This year I started writing a blog and found that the evenings I spent with guest and volunteers were the best inspiration for writing! A friend commented during the season that I had 'given up my time' to help other people. It struck me because I have never felt like I am giving anything away. The time I spend at C4WS is enjoyable and I always get something out of it. I am proud to be a small part of C4WS because I have seen what a difference the project makes to our guests.

Sitting around the table after dinner is a social event rather than what I expected from a homeless shelter. Perhaps it is the diversity of the people involved but our conversations are always lively, thought-provoking and often funny. I was initially surprised that it never feels forced, I have found something in common with guests and volunteers alike and am always shocked when bedtime has come around so fast. Over time I have got to know people from the shelter and look forward to seeing them to find out how things are going, or that a previous guest has left us for a permanent home. My highlights this season were learning to play chess, losing at every single board game anyone could find and the many friendly debates!

From a volunteers perspective this season has been brilliant and I can't wait to see new faces during the 2013/14 season.



Lauren

Community Involvement and appreciation

We are extremely fortunate to continue to benefit from the passion and diverse range of skills of our supporters, which time and time again proves invaluable to the success of the work C4WS has been able to carry out. This year was no exception with individuals and groups getting in touch with us to offer their services. We would like to thank everyone who has given up their time and energy to enable C4WS to reach out to those people most in need of our help.

On 28th January, local author Bob Boyton hosted a literary evening where he read extracts from his book Bomber Jackson Does Some, which offered a poignant insight into the realities of life on the streets.

He was backed by a fantastic supporting cast, which included renowned poet John Hegley who kept everyone entertained with his ukulele-accompanied comedic performances and acclaimed Spoken Word artist, Dzifa Benson, who dazzled the audience with the breadth of her subject.

On several occasions throughout the year Stewart's Quartet staged classical performances including entertaining guests at the Lunchtime Club and playing at our Service of Thanks.

Laura from Grant Thornton provided free hairdressing for people dropping in to our Friday Lunchtime Club.

BBC Director, Richard Bentley, kindly gave up his time to shoot the brand new C4WS promotional film.

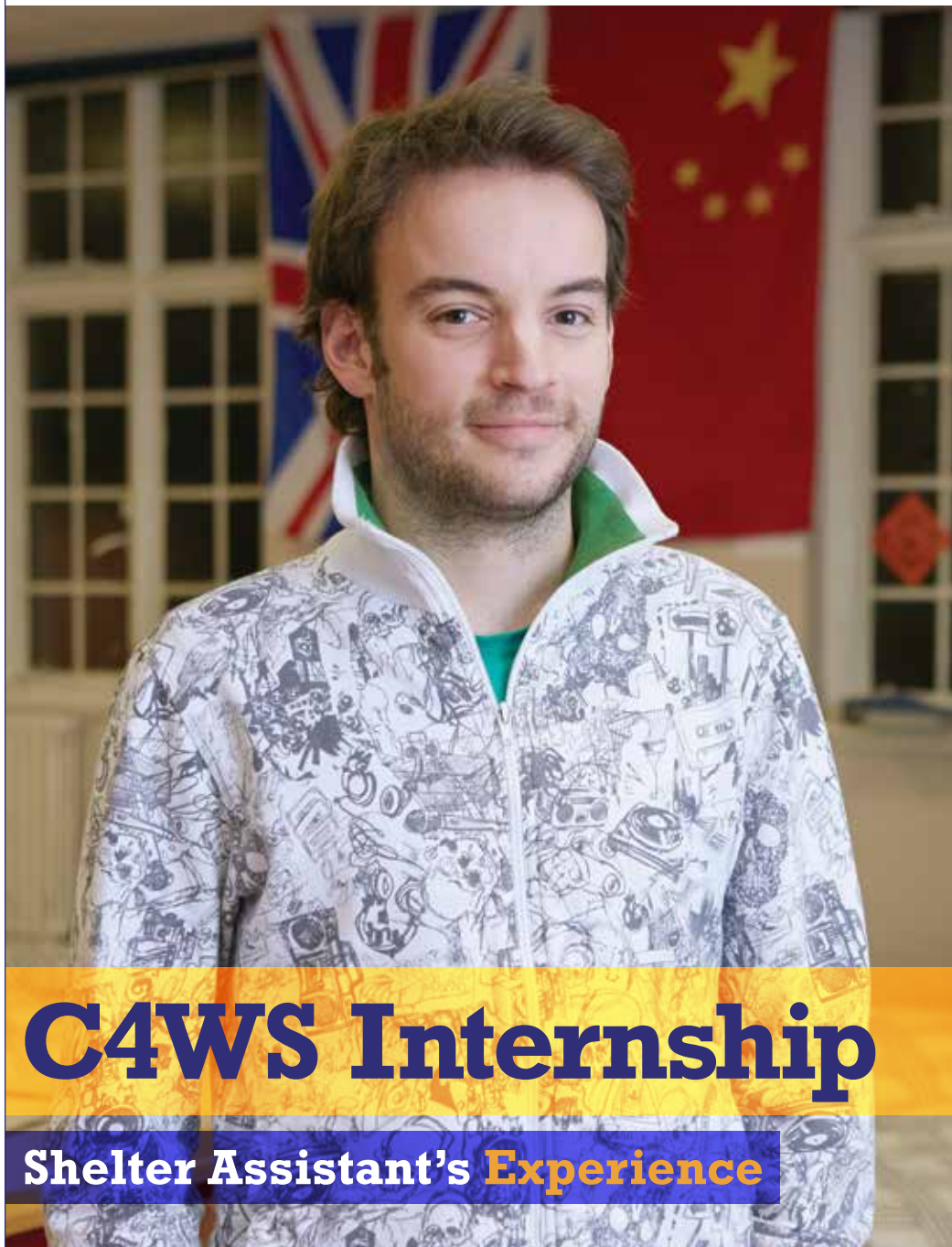
Gustav Pickering recorded the stunning track Streets of London which has been released on iTunes with all proceeds being donated to C4WS.

In March, Susanne Griffin, organised a hugely successful fundraiser at St Mary the Virgin church in Primrose Hill. A Song among the Stones brought together the talents of Scottish poet, Kenneth Stevens with the percussion of Philip Roderick to provide a spell-binding performance that raised £528.28.

Yet again the trainee doctors and vets from UCH came and gave their time on mass to support various different churches in Camden. We also receive support from colleges, schools and local businesses.

We only have space to name a few of the many people who have contributed but please check the website and our Facebook and Twitter pages for more details.

THANK-YOU!



C4WS Internship

Shelter Assistant's Experience



Since graduating from university I have worked in documentaries passionately believing that I could make a difference to the world around me through making films that would challenge and change the way we see and understand it. In recent years the increasing commercialism of the television industry meant that I was more often than not having to produce programmes where I could see little positive value in how what I was doing was in any way making that difference.

I had long been considering a career change into the charity industry but had struggled to find even basic entry level positions for someone with no professional experience. When I saw the advert for a Shelter Assistant at C4WS Homeless Project I was struck by the brief that this was an opening specifically designed for someone who had never worked with homelessness before.

I was as surprised as I was excited to be offered the position and joined C4WS Homeless Project at the start of October, immediately getting stuck into preparations for the shelter season. Having previously volunteered at a similar rolling shelter in south London it was eye-opening to be on the other side of the operation and understand the logistics and mechanisms that go in to coordinating 13 churches and an army of 400 volunteers ready to accommodate those people in need throughout the winter.

As the shelters opened I shadowed Jamie and Amanda to learn more about what and how C4WS can do to help the guests that are accepted onto the project. Everything I thought I knew, or assumed I knew about homelessness was thrown out of the window. Homelessness might be the common factor shared by the guests but that's about it. No two people came from the same background or shared the same story. Getting to know and work with the guests was inspirational and often devastating in equal measures.

Jamie and Amanda were extremely supportive in training me to be in a position where I could take on the added responsibilities of running evenings at the shelter and managing my own caseload of guests. No question was ever too trivial to ask, no time too late to make a call, and I benefited enormously from their patience and experience. Furthermore I was made to feel included in decision-making processes as a member of the team and given the opportunity to choose the direction of my own professional development in terms of areas I wanted to explore or learn more about within the charity sector.

When I joined C4WS I had no idea what to expect. I was leaving a successful career as a television producer and entering a world that felt very far removed from everything I was used to. But it has proven to be one of the most rewarding decisions I have ever made. I feel privileged to have been involved in a project which really does change the lives of the people it comes into touch with. Not only is this evident in the transformation in the guests during their contact with C4WS, but also in the real sense of community that is fostered through the churches and volunteers.




When my contract ended I was thrilled to be offered a new role within C4WS as a Project Worker. I am under no illusions that with the current economic and social climate about how difficult things are, and are going to continue to become, but I am also excited about being part of a team that continues to defy the odds and really make a difference to those people most in need.







Giving

All of our funding comes from charitable trusts, individuals and events we put on. We are extremely grateful for everything we receive and ensure every penny counts. Ways we do this are by only having three members of staff and we try and use as many resources that are within the community. All of our church shelters fund themselves and volunteers within and outside the parishes freely give their time. We also benefit from many groups and organisations that provide us with various degrees of support.

If you would like to contribute and help raise funds for C4WS Homeless Project you can do so in the following ways:

 <p>Bank transfer to CARIS Camden, account number: 00019217, sort code 40-52-40 at CAF Bank Ltd.</p>	 <p>Make a cheque payable to 'CARIS Camden-C4WS'</p>	 <p>Setup a regular donation</p>
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100% of your donation comes directly to C4WS Homeless Project

 <p>Give online at BT My Donate</p>	 <p>Donate a percentage of your profit made on selling an item on Ebay.</p>	 <p>Give by paypal to CARIS Camden - C4WS</p>	 <p>Text CAMD13 and the amount to 70070 eg CAMD13 £10.</p>
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C4WS are a small but hugely efficient team that quietly and confidently improve the lives of many. They provide guests with a meal and a bed but more importantly advice and friendship. They are trusted. We have supported them for many years because their formula for helping people out of homelessness is more successful than many larger charities with greater resources.

Glenn Pougnet,
Director, StreetSmart

Finances

	2012/2013 Expenditure	2013/2014 Budget
Staffing costs	£80,007.68	£95,946.10
Running costs	£12,549.88	£18,490.00
Guest Welfare	£13,167.18	£14,500.00
Equipment	£1,125.32	£1,500.00
Total	£106,850.06	£130,436.10

The increase in staffing costs reflects the intention to employ an additional permanent member of staff to help respond to the increasing demand for our services.

Income breakdown

Charitable Trusts	£106,006
Private Donations	£3,567
Community donations and fundraisers	£19,216.65
Grants for guests	£850
Carried over from season 8	£10,493.68
Total	£139,833.33



Thank you to all our amazing funders in 2012/2013:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust | Santander Foundation | The Beatrice Laing Trust |
| Aldo Trust | Souter Charitable Trust | The Church of St Alban the Martyr, Holborn |
| All Hallows' Church | St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Frogna | The French Huguenot Church of London Charitable Trust |
| Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church | St Anne's Church, Highgate | The Garfield Weston Foundation |
| Camden and Lumen Poetry | St Mary's Hampstead | The Goldsmiths' Company Charity |
| Cinven Foundation | St Michael's Church, Highgate | The Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust |
| Construct Manage Maintain Ltd | St Pancras Church Ancient Trusts | The Mercers' Company |
| Coutts Charitable Trust | St Paul's Cathedral | The Mrs Smith and Mount Trust |
| Friend's House Local Quaker Meeting | St Peter's, Belsize Park | The Oliver Borthwick Memorial Trust |
| Highgate United Reformed Church | St Aloysius Church | The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation |
| Highgate URC | StreetSmart | The Vandervell Foundation |
| L.E.K. Consulting LLP | Structured Finance Management Directors Limited | United Reformed Church, Muswell Hill |
| Lambeth Palace Public Occasions | Thanet Trust | Waitrose |
| Marsh Christian Trust | The Albert Hunt Trust | |
| Ministry of Defence | The Alchemy Foundation | |
| N M Rothschild & Sons | The Allan Charitable Trust | |
| North Camden Deanery Synod | The Archer Trust | |
| Pret Foundation Trust | | |

Joint working



The British Red Cross Refugee Support Service provides advice, advocacy and emergency provisions to refugees and asylum seekers in the London area. Our service encounters many destitute and homeless asylum seekers who being No Recourse To Public Funds are not entitled to statutory support. We also encounter refugees who having being granted refugee status experience homelessness due to delays in receiving benefits and problems finding private accommodation. Many of these people are especially vulnerable due to mental or physical health problems, and also include women who have experienced gender based violence. During the winter C4WS can provide vital temporary relief to our clients offering them a warm, clean and safe place to stay.

We have found the referral process to be straight-forward and very quick, on many occasions we have been able to refer a client at last minute to the shelter who would otherwise be sleeping outside on a harsh cold winter night. Once clients have been able to access the shelter C4WS also work with them to explore statutory and longer term support options. This was particularly helpful for a female client of ours who had lost contact with her solicitor; Amanda was able to chase the solicitor so that they could proceed with preparing a fresh claim. Overall we have found C4WS and the winter shelter network to be a lifeline for our clients; we only wish they were open all year round!

**Helen Mead, Casework Co-ordinator
British Red Cross Refugee Support Services**

Once again, it has been a delight to work with C4WS.

A placement with C4WS offers clients who cannot access assistance elsewhere the opportunity to stay somewhere safe and supportive whilst their problems are explored and resolved. Rough sleeping would be the only alternative for most of these clients.

The C4WS service is particularly valuable given the current pressure on accommodation options available in the borough. Rising rents, changes to welfare benefits and limited hostel vacancies combine to create challenging conditions for clients. C4WS offers respite and their care and expertise helps to improve their guests' circumstances.

The relationship between CHIP and C4WS has always been excellent and once again we worked together effectively to address the health, housing and financial needs of our joint clients. I know the team will look forward to working with C4WS next winter.

It is unfortunate that the C4WS service is not available year round!

**Rachel Francis – Health and Housing Worker
Camden Health Improvement Practice**



Yet again C4WS came to the rescue at Christmas time and through the harshest parts for the winter. With professional and friendly staff at the helm, making referrals were not only simple and swift, we knew they were considered and appropriate. The volunteers are of the highest calibre and are very caring. Yet again the project accommodated our most vulnerable clients with excellent professionalism and then provided a follow up service even after the project closed.

This made the staff at NHYC feel that the project really cared which was also fed back by the clients who had accessed the project. All the feedback was positive, with comments of how they had helped in areas such as ESOL, move on and self esteem. They also helped the clients relax, socialise and have fun. The bingo seems to be a big hit!

Again great work, great workers and a great service overall. Just a pity the accommodation could not be available all year round.

**Dean Harris
Advice, Resettlement and Outreach
Manager, New Horizons Youth Centre**

Guests poem

*It all started out as a blur
 I didn't have any clue what would happen to me
 All I knew was I couldn't stay in that situation any longer
 I set off for London, 2 bags by my side I boarded the train, shaking
 Once I was on I could relax
 I knew I was safe, homeless, but still alive
 I saw familiar faces, shared good times with friends by my side
 However only for a week, I was happy
 Sleeping rough now, all was lost
 It seemed like the end of the road
 But a miracle was coming for me...
 like mother Theresa's hand
 I was safe once more
 C4WS came to my aid
 Took me in with welcoming arms
 Like long lost family members
 I was shown love and a new start
 This was my new life
 I was no longer hungry or thirsty
 No longer cold
 No longer dirty
 No longer lonely
 My new home
 My new path
 My new life was starting
 Now I have my freedom
 Now I have my support
 Now I have my own room
 I look to start a new life
 I look to have my own place to call home
 With our new arrival expectant in the new year
 I will have my own new family
 New life
 New beginnings
 New hopes and dreams
 A happy ending*

Rebecca





C4WS Homeless Project

Kings Cross Methodist Church

6 Crestfield Street

London

WC1H 8AT

☎ 020 7278 6267

✉ admin@c4wshomelessproject.org

www.c4wshomelessproject.org