



HOMELESS PROJECT  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2019**



“This is the first time in my 3 years in the UK I have found **hope!**”

Adam, Former Shelter Guest



“C4WS saved me from **sleeping rough** on the streets of Camden and London in general.”

Mo, Former Shelter Guest

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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.



HOMELESS PROJECT



“Thank you, thank you,  
**THANK YOU!**”

Laura, Former Shelter Guest



## Introduction

**H**omelessness remains a growing issue and Camden remains the borough with the second highest numbers in London once more, with the recent rough sleeping analysis from Homeless Link showing an 11% increase on numbers since 2017. Sadly, we are amongst several boroughs who reported an increase during the same period. Camden also has seen the second highest number of female rough sleepers during this time.

The changing landscape, exacerbated by uncertainties about Brexit and the change to benefits brought by the introduction of Universal Credit, meant that C4WS had to adapt and change as these new circumstances brought additional challenges for our guests.

However, despite these trying times, we are proud that we have continued

to innovate and assist those who seek our help. A record number of guests stayed in the shelter this season, **88**, and we saw a dramatic increase in those who had moved on continuing to work with our Welfare Team to secure more permanent accommodation, as our help extends far beyond those 28 nights they stay with us.

We were pleased to welcome new referral partners this year, Solace Women’s Aid and The Winch as well as securing new partnerships, notably with the The Living Centre in Somerstown, who hosted our weekly Sunday Club.

Our small team continued to expand, and we were delighted Kevin Cohen joined us as Project Worker, taking on the (rather large) task of running Sunday Club every week, and whose passion and enthusiasm was clear

for all to see. Our wonderful Church Coordinators all mentioned how they enjoyed his inspiring briefings to the shelter volunteers at the start of their evening shift.

We have also seen other organisational changes and we are sorry to say goodbye to Jenna Roberts, our outstanding Shelter Coordinator, who has decided to move on after three years with C4WS. Her input to the shelter cannot be overstated, her organisational skills (and those layers and layers of post it’s) were second to none.

Laszlo Balla took on the running of our Jobs Club, which we are proud to say has expanded and will be operating year round – taking referrals from partner agencies who require our knowledge and expertise to help people into work or volunteering roles.

Sam Forsdike has continued to manage our hosting scheme, Home From Home, now flourishing one year

on from our pilot, and you can read more about it on page 34. This has proved invaluable, bridging the gap for guests moving on from the shelter and freeing up a bed for others in need.

Our volunteers are invaluable, and we are hugely grateful to them all. Our Church Coordinators work tirelessly to ensure that there are enough volunteers to welcome, look after and feed guests every night. Mentors at Jobs Club, our Mentoring and Befriending Scheme, Friday Club and new Sunday Club all ensure that C4WS continues to thrive, despite the challenging climate, and make real, positive change in people’s lives.

**Nikki Barnett**  
C4WS Project  
Manager



# Shelter Overview



It's the end of another winter shelter season and we are asking ourselves the question 'Where did the past five months go?' Our doors were open seven nights a week in our network of thirteen churches. We've trained 197 new volunteers, taking our volunteer database to over 1000 people, all of whom are willing to give up their free time to serve and offer companionship to our guests – who start off as strangers, but become familiar, friendly faces as the weeks pass by.

We've eaten hearty and delicious food, lovingly prepared in homes and churches around the borough of Camden. We've won and lost countless boardgames, shared jokes, debates and enjoyed musical performances from both guests and volunteers. As the evenings get lighter and longer, it's hard to imagine the cluster of 16 people waiting outside the church on a freezing cold, dark winter night, eagerly anticipating the doors opening at 7:30pm. Despite the hardships of the day, the staff member on duty is (almost always) greeted with a smile and a hello, and we share the relief of the shelter being open and bask in the warmth radiating from the church

hall that has been transformed into a home for the night. Guests choose their beds and offload their backpacks, most of which are full to bursting with everything they own; next is a race for the plug sockets to charge mobile phones. When you are experiencing the isolation of homelessness, these items are a lifeline – they help you find the shelter location each evening, navigate your numerous appointments, keep in touch with relatives in your home country and offer a welcome distraction via music and films. This season a large number of guests took solace in their devices, particularly those where English was not their first language, or for whom communication with others was a struggle. We are grateful to a Jobs Club mentor from Getty Images who donated some much needed iPhones after hearing about our guest's needs.

The next priority in the shelter routine is to get your name on the shower rota. Around 50% of our churches offer shower facilities, with a new one added at Rosslin Hill Chapel this year. Showering every day is a luxury we take for granted. It can present a real struggle for our guests, particularly those working full time while in the

**“I had some personal issues which they handled very sensitively and give me all the support and directions I needed.”**

Chloe, Former Shelter Guest



shelter, often with manual jobs in construction or the hospitality industry. Once everyone is settled, we serve the evening meal. Food plays a very important role in shelter life. Every evening, a team of volunteer cooks prepare a nourishing and tasty main course and dessert. In some churches, volunteers prepare dishes at home and bring them in, others prepare food onsite. Volunteers and guests eat together and share stories from the day – an observer would struggle to identify who is a guest and who is a volunteer; something C4WS prides itself on. There is an immense power in sharing a meal with others that appeals to the essence of our humanity and helps to transcend cultural and social boundaries. This highlights a key theme from this year's shelter season: the importance of companionship and the power in feeling a sense of belonging. We witnessed strong bonds and friendships developing between guests, with a real sense of camaraderie. The launch of Sunday Club reinforced these bonds, offering a space for guests to meet and socialise.

Volunteers should not underestimate the effect that sitting with guests and sharing conversation has on their daily

wellbeing. This season, we saw an increased number of local businesses sending groups of volunteers to help out at the shelter. We had teams from **The London Business School, Multiplex, Zenith, UCL, The Edge and Apple**, all of whom contribute to the community ethos of the C4WS Winter Night Shelter.

A special and heartfelt thanks goes to our amazing team of Church Coordinators who take on the huge responsibility of managing the individual shelter venues, arranging everything from volunteer rotas, shopping, cooking, laundry, overnight shifts and being a constant and familiar presence at the shelter throughout the season.

Jenna Roberts  
C4WS Shelter  
Coordinator



**“Many thanks for all people C4WS for helping homeless.”**

Mamadou, Former Shelter Guest

# Sunday Club

**“The Sunday Club is a brilliant idea and it always made me feel better about being in a bad situation.”** Josh, Former Shelter Guest

The idea for Sunday Club originated in a Steering Group meeting. The conversation focused on somewhere people could go on a Sunday, which is traditionally a day for family, leisure, and relaxation, and the chance to embrace free time in a positive light. This isn't something which can be easily achieved when you are homeless. We were also aware that some guests moving on from the shelter were left feeling isolated after experiencing the camaraderie and support offered there. So a place with some friendly faces and a welcoming atmosphere provided a great comfort when needed.

For four hours, at The Living Centre in King's Cross, every Sunday morning during the shelter season, guests past and present were able to come and get washing done, play games, use computers, watch movies, read newspapers, eat, and sometimes just enjoy the luxury of catching up on some sleep in a warm dry place. We celebrated birthdays, people getting accommodation, debated Brexit and the relative merits of Communism versus Capitalism, listened to music

from every corner of the globe and above all watched support networks develop through new friendships that will hopefully last a lifetime.

The rules are very different to shelter attendance and most of our other welfare services as Sunday Club is an optional rather than compulsory space, and guests can come and go as they please.

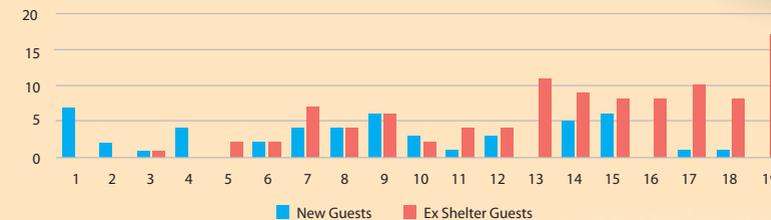
We saw an average of 14 guests each week using the facilities and enjoying additional activities such as creative writing workshops delivered by **Springer Nature** and art therapy run by **Georgia** and **Vanessa**, plus a giant Lego workshop led by **Toby**, our Sunday Club Coordinator.

We were blessed with some amazing volunteers over the months who really bought into the ethos of Sunday Club and helped to provide an incredible atmosphere with a willingness to chat or the ability to give people space when it's needed, a definition of the perfect family in many ways. We are also grateful to the **British Library** for hosting Sunday afternoon film screenings, meaning our guests

No. of Guests



Guests Composition



had a private space to go to after Sunday Club, where they could see all the latest releases, plus a couple of classics!

More subtly perhaps, it has also given volunteers the chance to interact in a different way helping to change people's perception of homelessness which is powerful and crucial if we are to move closer to its eradication.

The feedback from guests was overwhelmingly positive, with longer opening hours being requested along with expanded laundry facilities plus a sofa to provide somewhere comfortable to relax, so here's to next year!

The demographics of the people attending Sunday Club have changed regularly over the season, but the benefits remained constant.

**Kevin Cohen**  
C4WS Project Worker



## Washing Statistics:

**463** pairs of socks  
**402** pairs of pants  
**347** T-Shirts  
**231** pairs of jeans and trousers

**“I want to say thank you to the C4WS team and all volunteers. You made me feel better during the worst period of my life.”** Dexter, Former Shelter Guest

# Sunday Club Caretaker

I was employed by The Living Centre to be the caretaker during the pilot season of Sunday Club. We welcomed the first group of guests on 11 November, a date not lost on me, as it was the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day. On this day, my daughter was in France visiting the trenches, and I was on my way to start my new role, so clearly needed, as I began by walking past rough sleepers as I left King's Cross, which felt like I was marching through no man's land.

'Build it and they will come' (ref: Field of Dreams) and they did! I met so many wonderful guests and volunteers, people from so many different nations.

I took pride in cleaning and setting up the building

before everyone arrived, as I wanted it to look like one of those old fashioned Ladies and Gentlemen's Clubs and for it to be a special place for all. Hopefully I achieved a modicum of that goal!

I spent the majority of my time during opening hours on the front desk, playing my old hippie music for the guests as they came in, which created a mellow vibe and caused many of the guests to comment on my choices. I also discussed poetry, politics and fashion with many of my new friends.

Every so often I would venture upstairs for a coffee and it was great to see the place really buzzing with activity. And yet on one Sunday it was so peaceful, serene almost, that I wondered what Gezim had put in the tea!?

Looking back there was never a bad atmosphere or tense vibe, I think at the end we had all learnt so much more about ourselves and each other. I am also sure all of us left better human beings... Rock n'Roll peace out.

Mark C Bolton



**“I am settling day by day. the shelter programme prepared me well.”**

**Wiley, Former Guest**

# Jobs Club

“I always **enjoy** seeing Lukas at work, he has such a can-do attitude and he really wants to be successful in his role. And I know that the team really enjoy working with him.”

Employer at St Pancras Renaissance Hotel

This is the 5th year of running our Jobs Club. Sessions doubled from a total of 114 from last year to **231 appointments this season**. This shows the enhanced need for this service within the homeless community and we are proud that this year, **74%** of those guests eligible and looking for work found employment.

While on the surface we undertake the usual process with our guests when applying for jobs: writing CVs and cover letters, preparing for interviews etc., we believe at the heart of the Jobs Club we are raising their confidence and helping them realise their potential. Finding a job is not easy in general and it is even harder when you have no fixed abode.

## Our model

The Jobs Club model relies hugely upon our volunteer mentors, recruited from local companies, who are then paired with a guest. Every Wednesday our training room turns into a busy space filled with the creative noise of mentors and mentees working towards their aims in their one-to-one sessions.

We want to thank **Regent's Place Community Fund**, who not only funded our programme and provided mentors, but also helped by introducing us to other companies in the area. This year we had amazing volunteers from **Atkins, Skanska UK, Santander, Wellcome, Debenhams, Getty Images, Accenture, Asos, Network Rail** and **Siemens**.

## Partnerships

We are very privileged to have offered mock interview sessions once more by **IPG Mediabands**. Interviews are something people often underestimate and the only way to learn how to excel and get the role, is by practising. This year, just as in former years, these sessions proved to be a real confidence booster for our guests.

Many shelter guests this year wanted to start on their journey into a career in construction. We were fortunate to secure amazing



support from **King's Cross Construction Skill Centre** which helped us to meet the increased demand for CSCS cards, allowing workers to enter a construction site. We also established a great partnership with **Bower Cross Construction** who were keen to receive referrals. Those who were successful, were also supported by Bower Cross into affiliated housing schemes.

**King's Cross Recruitment** is an agency in Camden that connects local employers with job seekers. We could confidently put forward our candidates for their roles, as they were always handled with extra care.

We have also worked with **BEAM** since their inception and were pleased to welcome their growing team to our Jobs Club on several occasions this season. In return, we continued to signpost guests who were in need of funds for training or education to their crowdfunding project.

## New Features

We were delighted **Ted Baker** became a partner as they not only supplied amazing suits, but also delivered training to our guests on how to upgrade their presentations skills in situations like job interviews. Moreover, Ted offered invaluable work experience opportunities.

Throughout the year we realised that our work shouldn't stop at just helping people secure work. We understood that people need to be

supported beyond this initial success and therefore set up our **Remote Mentoring Scheme**. This is designed to so our guests can continue to check in with their mentor during those first few weeks and months whilst they find their feet in their new role.

## Successful stories

**Lukas** – We were working with a very talented young Eastern European man who was keen to seek a career in finance. He needed to find a job immediately, as that was the only way for him to get into housing. He applied and gained an entry level role at **St Pancras Renaissance Hotel**. With the support of the staff he has settled into his role and had the chance to get involved with the finance department. He is now living in his own private rented flat.

**Ahmed** – We have many asylum-seekers and refugees in our shelter. Ahmed was one of them, who arrived to the UK recently. He was a tailor in his home country. However, while waiting to secure his refugee status, he is not allowed to work. As with many other asylum seekers, there is nothing worse than living in a society that you can't contribute to. With his mentor Ahmed found a voluntary position as a tailor at **Suited & Booted**, that helped him use his skills. It also means, when he will be finally able to work, he will be able to add this volunteering experience to his CV.

**Laszlo Balla**  
C4WS Project Worker



# C4WS Jobs Club

## Mentor: Five things I Learnt

**E**arlier this year, I was lucky enough to spend four weeks volunteering as a mentor at the C4WS Jobs Club. Tucked away behind Euston station, Jobs Club is a weekly one to one support service to help shelter guests achieve their goals. I worked with Ben, an 18 year old from Germany, who needed to find a job as quickly as possible in order to access housing.

Over four weeks, we worked on goal-setting, searching for opportunities, drafting CVs and cover letters. I can't speak for Ben, so here are five things I learned from my time as a Jobs Club mentor:

### 1. It's not about you

As someone at the start of my own career, I didn't feel particularly qualified to give out advice. In the run up to meeting Ben I was nervous – what if I didn't know what to say? It felt like a stretch for me to offer guidance to someone else when I was still figuring out my own plan.

Very quickly, I found this didn't matter. Ben was very driven and full of good ideas; my role wasn't to tell him what

to do. Instead, we chatted about opportunities and bounced ideas off each other, directed by Ben's own ambitions. By talking things through, we made sure that the applications Ben submitted were the best they could be.

### 2. The jobs market can be baffling...

This one wasn't a surprise, so much as a timely reminder. Whatever your situation, job-hunting is a universally stressful experience. The huge variety of online platforms is confusing, and the constant rejection – or worse, radio silence – can be extremely disheartening. This is especially true if your access to housing depends on getting it right.

### 3. ...but everyone has something to offer

Even though Ben was incredibly young, it was clear to see that he had plenty of valuable skills. By discussing his previous success as a care worker, we quickly agreed that Ben was good at problem-solving and putting people at ease – vital abilities in the retail and hospitality roles he was applying for. He had also completed several

relevant training courses not listed on his CV, which we highlighted as proof of his commitment to learning and developing. And he was bilingual – something he found too mundane to mention, but that many employers would see as a real advantage.

"Transferable skills" might be a bit of a buzz-phrase, but for someone in Ben's position, they're crucial. Sometimes it just takes an outside perspective to help you spot your own.

### 4. Bad luck doesn't discriminate

Everyone at C4WS has different needs and a different story. The shelter supports people from all walks of life, from those just starting out in their careers to guests who have reams of qualifications to their name. With London's homelessness crisis only getting worse, the shelter's services are now more essential than ever to keep guests safe and to help them get back on their feet.

### 5. A little support can go a long way

The atmosphere at Jobs Club is focused, positive and full of hope. Conversations around the room range from in-depth unpicking of job descriptions to discussions about far-off ambitions. There's no shortage of laughter either. At its heart, Jobs Club is about treating people as individuals with their own aspirations.

With support from the team at C4WS, Ben was referred to Pret-a-Manger's fantastic Rising Stars programme. After impressing at his interview and shining on his trial shift, Ben was hired in what I hope will be the start of the bright future he deserves.

Laura Mulvey  
Wellcome



# Jobs Club – A Mentor’s Perspective

Over the past three months I’ve had the privilege to work as a volunteer mentor with Jobs Club, working one on one with one of the young men using the service. I decided to sign-up to due to a growing interest in supporting the local community where I work particularly in relation to the homelessness crisis, an issue that I felt acutely aware of passing through Euston Station every day.

From what I read in advance, Jobs Club seemed like a fantastic volunteering initiative that provided the structure for a meaningful mentoring relationship, as well as the training and support to help you make the most of your weekly lunchtime mentoring slot. When I contacted C4WS to express interest in Jobs Club, Sam was really helpful and got me booked into training. This walked you through the format and resources used in Jobs Club and also provided an opportunity for a number of new mentors to collectively ask questions about the remit of the role and how best to support people you work with.

Following the training you are matched with a guest and can begin as soon as you are available. C4WS have developed an excellent workbook that can be used with your mentee, plus information on current job and volunteering opportunities. So there are no expectations or requirements for you to prepare materials in advance, making it a manageable opportunity alongside work commitments.

One of the best parts is working with the team at C4WS, who are very supportive and welcoming each week, going out of their way to help you and the guests. Through their personal knowledge of everyone’s individual situations, as well as their warmth and professionalism, they have created a friendly and positive environment, which fosters a focused and open attitude among everyone involved.

I really enjoyed working with the young man I was paired with to help him move towards his job goals. One of the most rewarding aspects of our mentoring partnership was knowing that the skills we covered in our weekly



sessions were skills he could take forward with him beyond the Jobs Club setting. The flip side of this was that applications often took longer than expected, but it was important for him to create and populate the documents himself, so he could do this independently in the future.

Overall Jobs Club is an excellent initiative for both guests and mentors. I’d highly recommend it for anyone looking to work directly with people in their local area and support them to achieve positive outcomes relating to work and their lives more broadly.

**Cat Ayres**  
**Wellcome**



# Wellbeing Tuesday

Now in its second year, we were able to offer yoga and osteopathy to our guests, which provide a much needed counterpoint to the often stressful situations presented by our guests during their Welfare Meetings.



This year marks my third of teaching yoga and mindfulness to the guests at C4WS. Each season we have slightly adapted how we approach the sessions for the guests and I was so happy that we settled on group classes this year.

We encouraged the guests to come back to the sessions every fortnight and it was fantastic to see them develop their practice over this time. In the sessions I introduced some of the principles of yoga and explored various poses to strengthen, release, and relax the body as well as

breathing exercises, mindfulness and meditation.

Many of the guests are completely new to the practice but they always join the classes with an open mind, ready to try whatever I throw at them. C4WS does incredible work and it's such a privilege to be able to share the benefits of yoga and mindfulness with their guests who otherwise wouldn't have to opportunity to access these incredible life skills.

**Gabi Markam**  
Yoga Quota

Working with the C4WS project provided me with the opportunity to work with a wide variety of people from many different backgrounds and countries. It was interesting to learn about their life experiences and tales whilst aiding them in any way possible. All of the guests I had the pleasure of working with were really appreciative and being able to help them was a very rewarding experience.

**Chris, Student, British College Of Osteopathic Medicine**



**“I was very happy I saw you, I will never forget you because you were the first people I met when I had my problem and you helped me.”**

**Amina, Former Guest**

# English Classes

**W**ith guests from 34 different nationalities it is inevitable that English-speaking skills and building confidence is a common support need. Communication is important on a personal level but also being able to understand your paperwork – from a tenancy agreement to a job contract – can be a vital means of exiting homelessness.

Our weekly English Classes are designed to help with this and operate flexibly, complementing the rolling nature of people joining and leaving the shelter. This has been masterminded by our wonderful volunteer teacher, Antony, who is sadly stepping down. Over his time working with C4WS he has helped improve the lives and prospects of so many guests and will be sorely missed by all of us here.



After seven fun and fulfilling years, my volunteering at C4WS teaching English has come to a close as I pursue other interests. I have had the pleasure of seeing the shelter and the services it provides mature, diversify and improve over my time here and I am certain this will continue.

I had a very rewarding experience meeting many of the homeless men and women that came to the shelter who were also in need of help with their English language skills. All the students who attended were motivated to learn but one of the main challenges I experienced was the mix of levels with elementary learners sat alongside those with more intermediate skills. Because we only offered one lesson a week, making a course structure harder to achieve, I tried to keep the lessons as self-contained and as relevant as possible. For example, we covered useful topics such as food, sharing accommodation, asking for and understanding directions and jobs and careers as well as emphasising the need to do a little reading, writing, speaking and listening every day to steadily increase skills.

C4WS has an excellent team and the atmosphere is happy, helpful and hard-working. I shall definitely pop in over the years to come, when I am in the Euston area, to say hello and hear an update on this vital service.

**Antony Bailiwick**

# Corporate Involvement



Over the past year it has been a pleasure to build on existing partnerships with corporates at our Friday Club and Jobs Club to continue the vital support of those accessing these projects. We are thrilled to have developed new relationships with other organisations that has built on their expertise, passion and dedication to get involved in their local community and offer exciting new opportunities to our guests.



After one of C4WS' guests showed an interest in creative writing, C4WS approached Springer Nature hoping we could run monthly sessions at their Sunday Club. A call for volunteers on our intranet and a few brain storming sessions later we had prepared different creative cues in the form of pictures, drawings, key words and other story prompters to cater for different skills and expectations. We arrived on a cold December morning at the cosy Sunday Club venue where we were

greeted by curious people eager to participate in our workshop. Within a few minutes everyone had settled down with pen and paper to let their imagination and creativity run wild – and share their stories with everyone else. The first session flew by and we left Sunday Club incredibly happy and humbled by the experience of how little it takes and how easy it is to take minds off worries and problems and instead relax, dream and forget the world for a little while! The monthly Creative Writing workshops were a real highlight of my winter months and I am very much looking forward to the privilege of running the sessions again in the upcoming winter.

**Alexandra Stegner**  
Springer Nature



Ted Baker has been involved in a number of exciting and worthwhile projects with C4WS this year. Ted employees have volunteered for some time, but in 2018-19 the relationship really blossomed. In the first instance, Ted's graduate apprentices (Ted's Extras) curated men's and womenswear wardrobes, making use of terminal stock, for users of the Jobs Club to have appropriate clothes to wear for interviews and starting work. This project led to a bespoke series of afternoon workshops, called Ted Styles, which focused on providing support and advice around looking and feeling good for Jobs Club users heading to that all-important interview.

C4WS also made us aware of the need for evening entertainment for guests and so, working with our friends at The Reading Agency, Ted created a mobile library of over 200 Quick Reads titles, housed in an enormous Ted Baker

As the number of homeless people rises, the need to provide them with tech so they can find jobs and education is imperative. Social Box Biz are proud to be able to help people overcome obstacles and get back on their feet by giving them laptops and are looking forward to what the next year brings.

With a mission that's also aligned with decreasing homelessness, Social Box Biz intends on creating a team of former homeless youth to perform on-site data and software services.

It's great to see churches in Central London area opening their doors and providing

suitcase. The purchase of books was funded by a mega cake sale, organised by Ted's Extras, at Tedquarters. Ted also supported the collection of underwear for the #pantsfor4ws Christmas campaign – branded as Ted Believes in Pantala Claus.

Perhaps the area we at Ted are most proud of, has been working with Sam and the team at C4WS to find full-time employment and careers for guests using their Jobs Club. First Jamal joined our Special Projects team as a designer. Jamal's story was featured by the BBC, The Evening Standard and The Daily Mail. Next, with rather less fanfare, Krys joined our IT department. These stories indicate the critical importance of personal involvement and relationships built on respect and a shared desire to create life-changing opportunities.

**Peter McDonough**  
Ted Baker

a safe place to stay to those who need it the most – and other much needed support such as a hosting programme for unaccompanied refugees. I came to London as an unaccompanied refugee at the age of 15 and can only emphasise the importance of such services.

It was especially great to work with the compassionate C4WS team and it brought us joy to see how a simple idea of repurposing old laptops can give hope and confidence to C4WS's guests, to help rebuild their lives.

**Peter Paduh**  
Social Box Biz

# Friday Club

**F**riday Club is a friendly and welcoming space open to all throughout the year. In winter, it offers respite from the cold with unlimited cups of tea, coffee and hot chocolate, a warm shower, radiators to dry your coat, a hot and hearty lunch, and the chance to share friendly conversation with peers and volunteers. These services are still available during the summer months, but this year, based on feedback from our members, we broadened our remit and hosted the very first Friday Club Daytrip to the seaside. Thanks to funding from Zenith Media, 21 members enjoyed a sun-drenched day on Brighton beach, including a feast of fish and chips followed by ice-cream, crazy golf, a stroll on the pier and some fresh sea air. The trip was enjoyed by all and successfully enhanced wellbeing, offering a welcome respite from the struggles of London-life, if only for a day.

## Trip Feedback

*"It was a brilliant day. I appreciate the efforts of all the staff, volunteers & funders who made it possible."*

*"Least favourite part of the day was going home."*

Over the past year we have seen an increase in demand for Friday Club. The space at King's Cross Methodist Church allows for a capacity of 50 people, and whereas in the past, we would be full by midday, we are now seeing more than 50 people in the queue by 11am, with people waiting from as early as 8am to ensure they get access to our shower facilities. We have seen an increase in the number of rough sleepers, reflected by the high demand for essential welfare items such as sleeping bags, survival bags, rucksacks and wet-wipes, which help people with personal hygiene in between their limited access to shower facilities. Word of mouth is also a factor in bringing more people to visit us. Our members enjoy the service they receive each week and encourage others to attend knowing they are guaranteed a warm welcome, good company and the assistance they require. We always endeavour to find ways to improve the way we run so our services that reflect the needs and desires of our members, so new for this year were:

**Pants for C4WS campaign** - asking local businesses to donate brand new underwear that allows our members to have something clean to put on after their shower.

**Carol Service with the Friday Club Choir** - hosted by Linda with musical arrangements from intern, Charlotte.

**The Friday Club Library** - kindly donated by Ted Baker, allowing members regular access to popular fiction novels.

**Monthly visits from the Camden Connector Team, part of Ageing Better in Camden** - offering members information and access to local, free activities helping to alleviate social isolation and loneliness.

**Free West End Theatre Tickets for 'Motown - The Musical'** - kindly arranged by Richard Cotton, the former Mayor of Camden. This helped break barriers to culture that rough sleepers often face. For some members it was their first ever trip to the theatre.

**Day-Trip to Brighton funded by Zenith Media.**

**Q&A session with team from British Library** about their services & how they can better support & engage with the local rough sleeping community.

**2,218 lunches served**  
**71 New members**  
**39 Foodbank Vouchers distributed**  
**74 Haircuts**  
**122 Individual Welfare Support**

Friday Club couldn't operate without the amazing support from our corporate volunteer teams who prepare the meals. Cooking for 50+ people is no easy task, but week in and week out our teams prepare high-quality, nutritious and delicious meals. We welcomed volunteer cooking teams from local businesses **Vistex, CC Group, BAM Construction, Quakers Friends House, ASOS, Frontline, Facebook, Hanover Comms, Aviva, Network Rail, UCL, Origin Housing, Smartenergy, Zenith, Addleshaw Goddard, Marsh**, and as always, a special Thank You goes to the continued support from our regular teams **GLG, IPG Media Brands** and **St Pancras Renaissance Hotel**, who once again prepared a 5\* Christmas Lunch with all the trimmings.

We would also like to say a massive Thank You to our Friday Club Volunteer Team that work tirelessly every Friday setting up the hall, washing endless cups, chatting with members and ensuring the smooth running of the club. We were lucky to have Charlotte & Manfred, interns with King's Cross Methodist Church, working with us this year. Charlotte infused the club with her passion for music and was instrumental in coordinating our Friday Club Choir. She also helped members enjoy personal song selections on Spotify. Manfred used his technical skills to support members with talks/presentations and worked tirelessly to find bespoke essential clothing items for members in need.

# Guest Story



**I became homeless almost 3 years ago and went to the Red Cross for help as I was destitute with no other options. They referred me into the C4WS Winter Night Shelter, where I was able to stay for the next 28 nights.**

My philosophy in life is that if someone helps you, then you have to give back. I had started volunteering with various charities before staying at the shelter, as they had given me assistance. The same went for C4WS. It started with helping on a Friday morning to get out the tables and chairs for Friday Club. This expanded, and soon I was attending Friday Club every week and helped by wiping down the tables and chairs to put away, and just generally helping out where I could see there was a need.

I did so despite the worry about where I was going to go after the shelter, as these were kind people who were helping me, and I wanted to do my best to give back to them in the only way that was open to me. I was advised by Sam Forsdike, my Welfare Worker, to go back to the

Red Cross on the morning of my last day at the shelter, as they would need to find somewhere for me to move on to. I was very grateful to receive a call later that morning from Sam, explaining that C4WS would extend my stay and that I would have three weeks after the shelter closed in a hostel.

Despite this assistance, the road from here wasn't smooth, and I was rough sleeping for a couple of months after that, whilst looking for legal aid to take on my case. I had also not been feeling well and had gone to see the Doctor before the shelter closed. I was told that I had cancer, but that I would not be able to receive treatment until I had somewhere to stay, as I wouldn't be able to cope on the street, as chemotherapy and radiotherapy together would be very draining.

Sam called me on 5th August 2017 to see if I would be interested in going into a hosting programme. I couldn't believe it, I was able to stay with different hosts during the course of my treatment, and until I moved into Home Office accommodation on 10th

March 2018.

It had taken me four months to get the treatment I needed. I was so fortunate that the first host I stayed with was understanding and extended my stay there until it was finally complete.

I have to go back for check-ups every 6 months, but thankfully these have remained clean.

As well as continuing to volunteer at Friday Club every week, where I have significantly expanded my skills from those early days of setting up the chairs and tables, to almost being able to run it myself, I also enjoyed helping out at Sunday Club. The kitchen is very much my domain!

I was invited to take part in the newly formed Steering Group as well, and have been able to make suggestions to the team on how to make positive changes at the night shelter, that will ensure C4WS is able to continue supporting guests in the future.

**Gezim Ymeri**  
Former Shelter Guest and  
Steering Group Member

## CARIS Camden

**T**he 2018/19 Shelter, our 15th, saw a higher number of guests than any of the previous seasons. Despite a lack of move on accommodation and other challenges facing guests, Church Coordinators agreed it was our most successful season, with guests made secure and confident during their stay. Credit must go first to the volunteers and the Church Coordinators who kept them happy and motivated.

The trustees are also grateful to their staff. This season, we were joined by Kevin Cohen as an additional Project Worker. Kevin came from the city and work that could hardly be more different, but he brought huge enthusiasm, kindness and sympathy and we will miss him. Kevin brought his unique enthusiasm to our new Sunday Club venture and carries a large part of the responsibility for its success.

We shall also miss Jenna, our Shelter Coordinator. Invisible, but vital to the operation, her efficiency in organising the nuts and bolts of the shelter mean she has left it in very good order and we are especially grateful to her for that.

Jenna's most obvious contribution was at Friday Club, where I enjoyed working with her. I'm washing countless cups, while she is calmly organising it all. Together with Linda Gilson, the wise and kind Minister at King's Cross, the club has developed even more of a community feel.

A new venture this year, Sunday Club filled a much needed gap when other services are traditionally closed. Kevin brought his unique enthusiasm to this and carries a large part of the responsibility for its success.

Laszlo has taken responsibility for Jobs Club and it is gratifying that via his inclusion of beneficiaries of Caris Camden Families, two mothers have now used the Jobs Club to prepare themselves for a return to work.

Home from Home has also grown chiefly under Sam's direction. Having participated myself, I can commend the sensitive and thorough care Sam takes in arranging a hosting placement; I can also say what pleasure it gives to be able to look after someone in need. The scheme is growing and as mentioned, is increasingly needed. If you have a spare room and think you could help, please get in touch.

Finally, I must mention Nikki who has presided over all this activity and kept the wheels running smoothly. I have appreciated working with her, encouraged by her calm efficiency and practical concern. I make no apology for dwelling on our staff; I am proud of them and feel privileged to work alongside them.

**Andrew Penny**  
Chair of Trustees  
CARIS Camden

# Church Coordinator Story



**T**hursday evenings at King's Cross Methodist Church through to Friday mornings from November to March take on a special meaning! It is when a community of guests and volunteers come together to share a unique experience. No two evenings are the same as there will be a different mix of guests as some will have moved on and new ones will have joined. Each evening the guests welcome the volunteers into their community, and at the same time, the volunteers welcome the guests into the community of that place. The roles of host and guest are interchangeable. Each night brings a uniqueness of the community formed in that place with all its different people and languages.

We are blessed with premises that can easily adapt to offer accommodation to our 16 guests. At the beginning of the evening shift, the team of volunteers arrive to make up the beds and set the tables for dinner and then when the door is opened, they welcome the guests, particularly looking to help those staying with us for the first time.

After hot drinks, dinner is served. This will have been lovingly prepared by the inventive and brilliant cooking teams, who manage to take into account the sometimes complex dietary requirements. The food is always delicious, from a wide variety of cuisine and there is always more than enough! We often have themed meals, on occasion, matched with music.

Before and after dinner, some of the guests will rest and others may play or watch favourite boardgames with the volunteers. It is something that everyone can join in with and the champions become evident very quickly.

We also have a team of overnight volunteers and a breakfast team who arrive at 7am to serve breakfast and then clear away. It is much quieter in the mornings and guests leave at different times, but all by 9am.

Over the season, we get to meet many guests and it is a privilege to get to know them. For some, the night shelter

may be a place of loneliness and sadness, but we hope it also offers a place of welcome, companionship, comfort and hope for the future.

This is only possible through the team of amazing volunteers, many of them having volunteered for years and some who have recently joined; it is a mix of people from all walks of life, some have come through C4WS and some are connected with the church; they work tirelessly and are always willing to do whatever is needed.

We are all supported by the seemingly indomitable C4WS staff who offer continuity and help with the greatest and smallest of needs. Their framework, encouragement and care for the guests and volunteers enables the shelter to run as smoothly as possible so that lives may continue to be rebuilt, renewed, and transformed.



If you have been thinking that volunteering at the night shelter is something you would like to do, please contact C4WS in readiness for the coming winter.

**Linda Gilson**  
King's Cross Methodist Church



**“A hug of eternal gratitude to all the volunteers of all the Churches. I promise it will not be a goodbye.”**  
**Cassie, Former Shelter Guest**

# Finance and Fundraising

[20.20 Together](#)  
[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](#)  
[Euston Town](#)  
[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](#)  
[HSI Ltd](#)  
[HSM Charitable Trust](#)  
[John Lewis Partnership](#)  
[LHA London Ltd](#)  
[Linkey](#)  
[Lloyds Bank Foundation](#)  
[LSLA](#)  
[Lumen Poetry](#)  
[NACCOM](#)

[North Camden Housing Co-operative](#)  
[Ocorian](#)  
[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](#)  
[Zenith Media](#)

## Expenditure and Budget

	2018 Expenditure	2020 Budget
Staffing costs	£130,264	£179,724
Running costs	£43,541	£43,546
Guest welfare	£18,000	£19,444
<b>Total</b>	<b>£191,805</b>	<b>£242,714</b>

# Steering Group

## Freda

It was an honour to be chosen to be part of the pilot Steering Group. For this role I felt that it was important for me to voice the gaps I felt during my stay at the shelter as well as some of the challenges i.e. social isolation, mental wellbeing and livelihood.

Therefore I felt the creation of the Sunday Club filled in some of these gaps; a sense of belonging; improvement & enhancement of livelihood whilst strengthening mental wellbeing. As a former guest, I look forward to more brainstorming of creative ideas to help make guests' stay enjoyable, less stigmatising and an empowering experience.



## Rahel

Being part of the steering group will enable me to hopefully input my perspective and my experience into sharing fresh ideas and helping to change the stereotype of what a homeless person looks like.

## Sam

After staying in the shelter this year, it has been a privilege to be asked to be on the steering group to help shape and enhance the services of C4WS.

## Amadu

Being on the steering group means a lot to me because I believe with the little input we all contribute, we might be able to bring a change in someone's life completely.

I decided to join this group in order to help eradicate homelessness and I think we are getting there. Meeting up with the former members of C4WS makes me learn a whole lot about life after leaving C4WS shelter. I believe with the effort we all put in, we will be able to eradicate homelessness in the near future and I'm happy to be part of this team.

**“I got the help that I needed, and even more than I asked for. I'd love to say thank you from the depth of my heart.”** Ben, Former Shelter Guest

**“I was a bit hesitant the first day. But it all went after the meeting the rest of the group and volunteers. They made me feel welcomed and helped me with the most personal issues I carried for years.”** Julia, Former Shelter Guest

Former Shelter Guest

# Guest Welfare

The two outstanding trends from this season were the increase in the number of guests staying at the shelter and the drastic reduction in entitlement to benefits. This posed significant challenges to the C4WS staff and volunteer teams but in spite of this **95%** of those engaging with us successfully secured move-on accommodation.

With 88 guests accessing the shelter, this represented a **28%** increase from last year. Given the rise of homelessness in Camden, London and England it is unsurprising to see such high figures. However, it is also important to acknowledge that this is still less than a quarter of the calls we received for referrals which further reflects the sheer volume of need. It is a testament to the experience and compassion of all our shelters that this steep rise never appeared to be overwhelming and Coordinators and volunteers took this in their stride and ensured that every guest received the same dedicated care.

The impact of **48%** of guests not being eligible for benefits or awaiting an outcome on a decision of eligibility for benefits when arriving at the shelter did, however, have a significant effect.

This was an increase of **18%** on last year and demonstrated the results of an increasingly hostile environment and the roll out of Universal Credit in Camden.

The Welfare Team supported those individuals who were eligible for benefits to make applications but with a five week waiting period for an award to be made guests were left in limbo: effectively destitute and severely restricted in their ability to leave the shelter. Without proof of income no housing work could be carried out which caused longer stays in shelter accommodation and a need to provide further support for the frustrations and knock on mental and emotional health consequences for those left feeling trapped and helpless.

This resulted in many guests reaching the end of their stay with C4WS and being transferred to another shelter or hosting schemes (including Home From Home). This caused an increase in caseloads for the Welfare Team who continued to work with these guests staying outside the C4WS shelter in order to resolve their situations.

Naturally this meant that our Jobs Club was busier and more successful than ever. **67%** of guests were seeking

“I really appreciate the help that I received, because I don’t even know where I’d be without you guys.” **Elijah, Former Shelter Guest**



employment – often as a direct method of exiting homelessness – which was a **16%** rise from last year.

In terms of reasons why our guests had become homeless, the biggest difference this year was with immigration. There was an **8%** increase of those citing immigration as the primary reason for becoming homeless whilst we also saw the emergence of a separate demographic of refugee care leavers, which accounted for nearly **8%** of all guests. As minors seeking asylum in the UK, these individuals had been provided with housing but on turning 18 the gap of transition between child and adult services left many either becoming homeless or abandoning unsuitable accommodation and needing the support of C4WS.

With migration being a key theme across the season it is unsurprising that guests represented **34** different nationalities. Whilst asylum remained an issue we also saw an increase in Western European migrants,

particularly from Italy, Spain and Ireland.

There was also an increase in mental health as a support need with a **7%** rise from last year. We work with a range of different professional mental health services that we are able to signpost and refer to for expertise with this but it was also a vital resource to open our counselling sessions this year for the first time. Five guests were able to utilise twenty three sessions and access a safe and confidential space to discuss the issues affecting them.

The shifting landscape has presented difficult challenges this season and shows little signs of abating in the near future. But we are proud of the positive changes that we are able to help bring about and will continue to provide for those seeking support from C4WS.

**Sam Forsdike**  
C4WS Welfare Manager



# Mentoring and Befriending

**T**his programme was started to support guests leaving the shelter and moving into their new homes with the transition to independent living. Recognising that having your own place to manage can bring about new challenges, the support of a volunteer mentor who can meet weekly to help you problem-solve and address those everyday things that crop up, has proven to be an invaluable structure to many of our guests.

But Mentoring and Befriending can also be fun! For many guests moving out of the shelter it is a structured programme which gives them the opportunity to have someone to chat with, try new things and get to know their new area – and city. It can sometimes be daunting going somewhere different by yourself but knowing there is someone who can accompany you there and participate alongside you can often make the difference.

Fun was definitely the name of the game for Alem, a recent refugee who had been forced to flee her homeland leaving her family and husband behind. Daunted by the barriers of learning a new language and adapting to a new country and culture having a mentor enabled her to discover the fun things that can be done in London and have the confidence to try them knowing she had a supportive companion willing to try things alongside her – including a historical dressing up exhibition.

## Alem and Ainslie

**Alem and Ainslie have both been in London for four years and five years respectively, Alem from Eritrea and Ainslie from Australia.**

When Sam paired us up, Alem wanted to explore London, and do those touristy things she had never had a chance to do before. As we started embarking on our London adventures, strolling around the South Bank, going to the National Gallery, and paddle boating in Hyde Park, we got to know each other. I learnt that Alem has a keen interest in history, loves Princess Diana, and is a busy woman, not only working at Pret a Manger but also studying.

As we continued to meet up, we were able to tailor our meetings to meet Alem's interests; we visited the Princess Diana Memorial, Kensington Palace, and the Tower of London (along with many other excellent outings). Not only was Alem able to visit the parks, monuments, galleries, and palaces of London, but I also ended up seeing

many sites of this beautiful city I had not visited before, and had a lot fun in the process, getting to spend time with a kind and interesting soul.

Along with touring ourselves out, we also relaxed by going to the cinema, escaping the rain on miserable London days over cups of tea. It was a true pleasure spending time with Alem and getting to know her.

At the end of our six months together, Alem feels more comfortable navigating the centre of London and knows the city better. Alem has said there are several places she is going to return to and take her husband.

For our final sessions we were able to share a lovely time on the London Eye, surveying the city on a beautiful sunny day, and an open bus tour of London, on a less-beautiful day that ended with some numb toes. I look forward to staying in touch with Alem and hopefully squeezing in a few more London adventures!



# Home From Home

**S**eaason 14 saw C4WS launch the pilot of our own short-term hosting scheme, Home from Home. This enabled us to provide 221 nights of accommodation thanks to our wonderful hosts. Overall, this equated to an extra 10% of nights of emergency respite accommodation.

This season, we saw similar success, with a number of guests hosted once more, providing an **additional 110 night's accommodation** to those who most needed it.

One of our hosts had this to say: "Leah moved out today, having been able to sort out a lot in her new accommodation over the weekend. She seemed positive and I hope that she is now firmly on an upward trajectory and gaining in confidence."

**Thank you for all the work you do in helping the homeless get back on their feet."**

Our initial aim was to enable our project to grow the number of bed spaces we could offer, thereby helping a wider number of people. It also meant that we could extend our respite accommodation provision long after our shelters had closed, which is often a difficult time for those guests who are still reliant on us for somewhere to stay when we get to Easter.

Home from Home enables a guest to move out of the shelter and into a hosting placement and in turn this allows us to accept someone from the waiting list into the shelter – and therefore help more people. Whilst staying with a host, the C4WS Welfare Team continue to work with the guest to secure move-on accommodation to more stable housing. We aim for this to be a safe, positive and enriching experience for hosts and guests, while the caseworker uses this time to proactively move their client's cases forward.

We are limited in the ability to increase capacity at our winter night shelter due to the restrictions of the size of the churches that provide the shelter. Therefore, we see hosting as an innovative and strategic new approach that allows us to harness community goodwill and volunteers to meet this demand without the strain of additional physical shelter resources.

We feel passionately that Home From Home is the most effective way forward for us to be able to reach more people in need.

We are looking to recruit more Home from Home hosts. Please get in touch with Nikki if you would like to find out more.

# 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 on our website by visiting [www.c4wshomelessproject.org](http://www.c4wshomelessproject.org)



Bank transfer to CARIS Camden, account no: 00019217, sort code: 40-52-40 at CAF Bank Ltd



Make a cheque payable to 'CARIS Camden - C4WS'



Give online via CAF Donate – just search C4WS Homeless Project



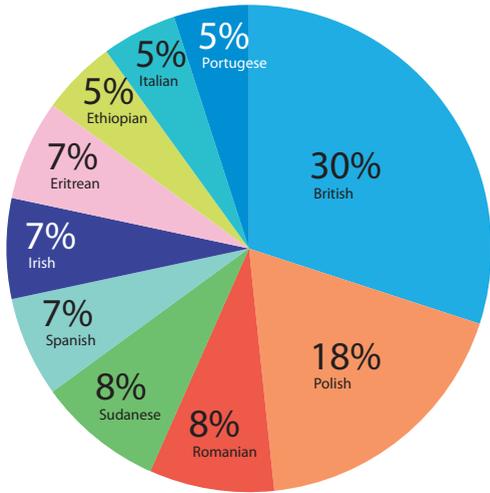
Support us by using 'Amazon Smile' and choosing to donate to CARIS Camden



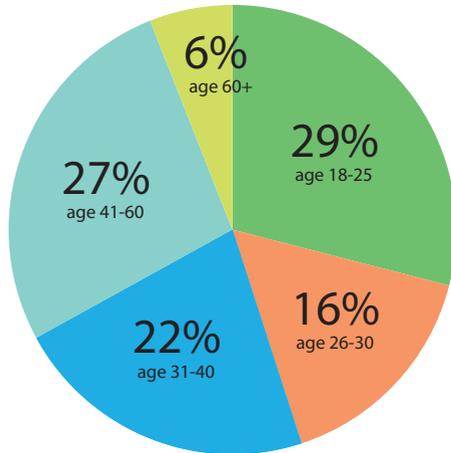
Give by paypal to CARIS Camden – C4WS or by searching for C4WS under 'charities' at [www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk)

# Facts and Figures

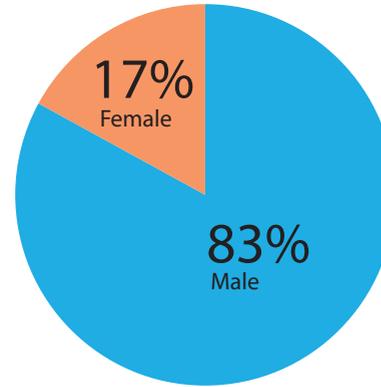
Nationality of Guests



Age Range



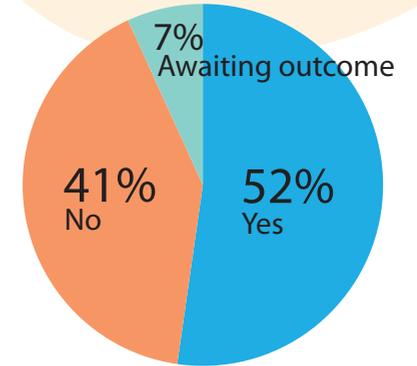
Guest Gender



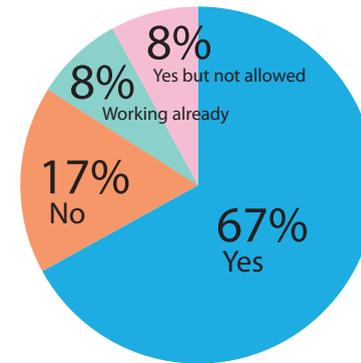
**“Thanks a lot 4 U still look after me... I’m super glad to meet with you and it’s not just empty words.” Akos, Former Shelter Guest**

**Former Shelter Guest**

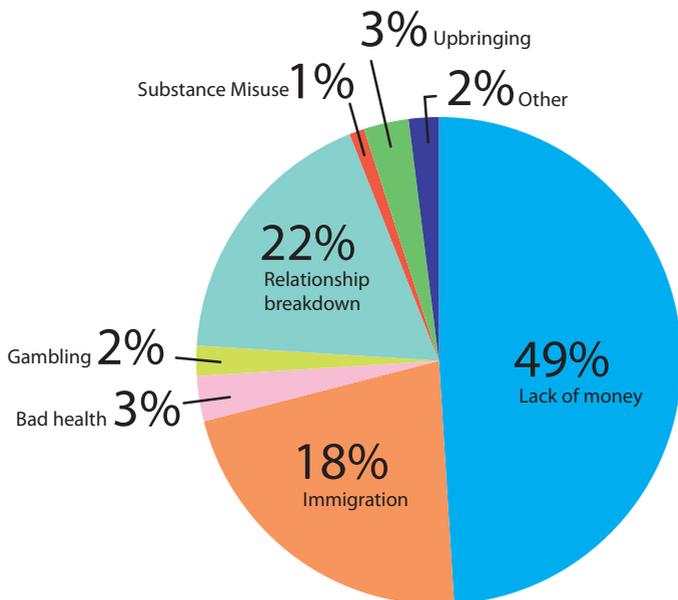
Benefits Status



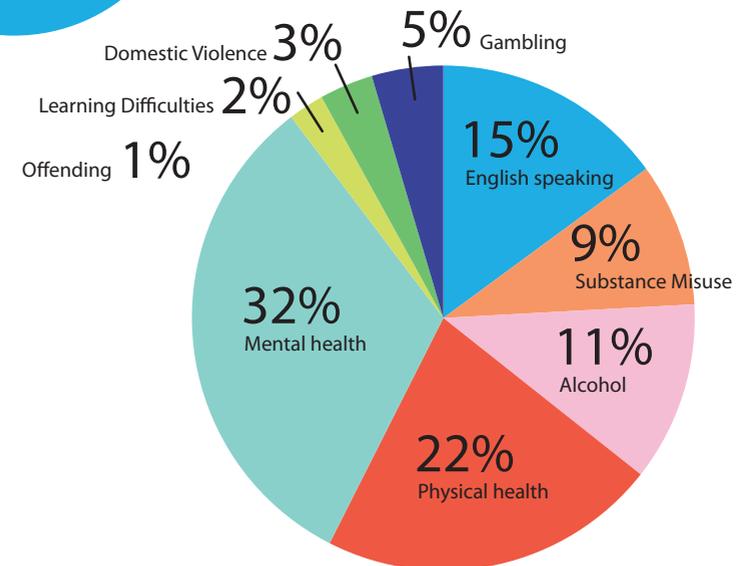
Guests Seeking Employment



Primary Reason for Homelessness



Support Needs



# Guest Story

**First and foremost, I would like to thank my almighty God for his guidance on this particular stage of life.**

I would like to give thanks to Jenna for listening to me cry on one of my lowest points in the shelter, Laszlo for always encouraging us to pursue our dreams at Jobs Club, Kevin for your endless words of positivity and encouragement and Nikki for not giving up and fighting on my behalf. I can't put into words how much you have all helped me, thank you just doesn't feel enough.

To Sally, my wonderful host as part of Home from Home; it's not easy to have a complete stranger

in your house, in Spanish we say "arropar," which loosely translated means bringing people together, or to embrace, and that's what I felt from your kindness and warmth – particularly when you had your own things to focus on during my stay. I was glad to be there for you, as much as you were there for me, as we both came through our own challenges thanks to the other's support. You made me feel comfortable immediately.

C4WS has demonstrated empathy, kindness and constant efficiency in supporting their guests. Following up each of our cases with numerous phone calls, booking

meetings and constantly pushing my case forward, so I was finally able to achieve what I had dreamed of for so long, my own home, in exactly the place I had hoped for.

Last but not least, thanks to all my colleagues, shout out to the Shelter Class of 2018-19 and to all the volunteers, for their time, laughter, positive, encouraging and insightful moments we shared together. I have great admiration, respect and love for you all.

Leah, Former Shelter and Home from Home Guest



## Referral Agencies Season 15

Albert Kennedy Trust  
Red Cross  
London Jesus Centre  
New Horizons Youth Centre  
Housing Options  
Spectrum  
London Irish Centre  
Safer Streets Team

Refugee Council  
Freedom From Torture  
Islington Centre for Migrants and Refugees  
Crisis Skylight  
The Winch  
Solace Women's Aid  
Pret Rising Stars



**Peak** inside for  
inspiring stories  
of our amazing  
volunteers and  
guests!



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