



C4WS

HOMELESS PROJECT

ANNUAL
REPORT
2014



75
guests were
accommodated
during 2013/14
shelter

1,936
bed spaces to the
homeless during
2013/14 shelter

3,700
meals were
served

95%
of those that engaged
in our services were
assisted in securing
accommodation

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introduction

'Overwhelming' is probably the word I have heard and seen displayed the most in my 6 years with C4WS Homeless Project. When a homeless person first finds our service they don't know where to start.

They are hungry, tired and without fail there is always a big wodge of paperwork at the bottom of someone's bag with benefits appointments, job searches, doctors appointments and immigration documents to name a few. The simple fact is people are overwhelmed. Overwhelmed with the harshness of life, the weather and often the resistance and hostility they can face from every direction when trying to get back on their feet.

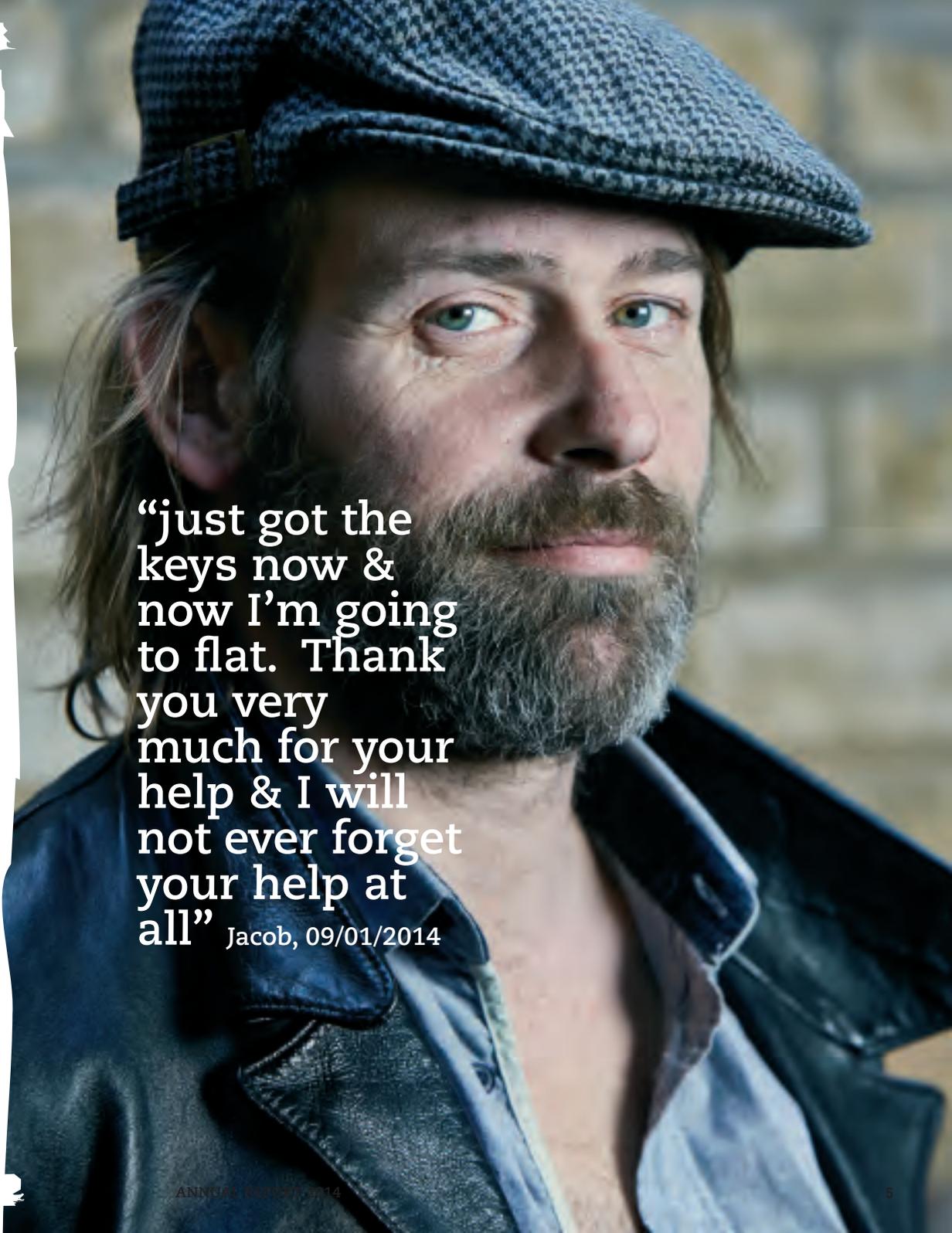
What I love so much about C4WS Homeless Project and what I think makes us so unique is that for the first few days of a guest's stay with us we just let them relax. Maybe for the first time in years - they get a shower, some food in their belly and a good night's sleep without having to worry about being mugged or harassed and talk about normal everyday things with our 700+ friendly and hospitable volunteers. And then you see it - slowly but surely you start to see hope in people's eyes again and a determination that just a few days before was squashed.

That's when we get onto what we have become famous for. Helping people rebuild their lives. And we have done a great job of that again this year - **95% of those that engaged with our service were successfully rehoused into more permanent accommodation.** That is a figure I am so proud of. But what I am even more proud of is the dedication and resolve of our amazing staff team, volunteers and the guests themselves.

What you will see in the pages that follow is the result of a colossal team effort. No one person can take the credit for our success but together, as a united team (guests, staff, volunteers and supporters) we are reaching homeless people in Camden in a unique and innovative way.

I hope you will enjoy reading about our 2013/14 journey.

Amanda Pickering
C4WS Project Manager



“just got the keys now & now I'm going to flat. Thank you very much for your help & I will not ever forget your help at all” Jacob, 09/01/2014

Guest story

“I really don’t know how to write this, to tell you how coming to the shelter changed my life. A sudden change in my personal circumstances led me to becoming homeless and at the time I wasn’t very well. I wasn’t thinking very clearly – couldn’t understand what was happening to me – was drifting further and further away from everyday life, couldn’t face anyone, didn’t want to talk or see anybody and most of all I didn’t want to be seen.

I felt without many things: my dignity, the ability to think clearly, to make decisions and above all hope. At times I felt totally empty, so alone, felt I was drowning. At other times I felt crushed, my spirit devoid of human warmth. I saw myself a stranger in this world. I was in no place and no time. No one looked, no one spoke, nothing to say. I wanted to reach out to someone but didn’t know how or who. Silence seemed the best option.

I was referred to C4WS and received a call from Becky offering me a place on the shelter scheme, so I made my way there that evening, feeling extremely nervous and in doubt. The volunteers, staff and guests were very welcoming. As days passed I felt more and more

confident and no longer isolated, looking forward to my evenings in the shelter. I saw the endless support and care from the staff and volunteers that changed the lives of so many people who came feeling very despondent with no hope and support and leaving totally a different person with a sense of self-worth, pride and a home, including me.

The C4WS staff found a home for me that I could have only dreamed of. Every night before I go to sleep I know there is a bright dawn ahead and tell myself I have my own nice home, I will find a job, I might not have much money but I always have enough and above all I have a lot of dear friends. What more could I want – nothing. The wonderful volunteers I want you to know, I admire you for your hard work and the kindness and respect with which you treated us all, you showed me the secret of life that its goodness radiated from human heart that holds the universe in harmony. I hope to see you always with a smile on your face. None of this would be possible without you. Thank you. I also would like to say a big thank you to all the host churches and trustees for all the good you do for so many. The good that lifts the heart and makes the day-to-day stresses that we all face more manageable. I

Over 65

starter packs/food hampers were given to our guests and others in need to help turn their new accommodation into a home

can’t imagine what it would be like without you for so many. I only know it would be much different, much less comforting. I appreciate your dedication and service and I know others do too.

The C4WS staff, I can never thank you enough for all you did for me and other guests, and still do. You were there for me at the worst point of my life. I

am a better person just because I have known you. Thank you for making me see the difference between what is considered good in life, and what is truly good in life, and how beautiful a day can be when kindness touches it. I hope some day to be able to give you a fraction of all you’ve given me. You take the most room in my heart.

Thank you, Iraj”



30

Our guests represented 30 different nationalities



"I felt like I was with my family... I would like to thank you for being my family for the duration of my stay."

The Volunteers

Our volunteers are the key component to what we can offer at C4WS. Over the five months of the shelter season our thirteen host churches are manned by around 700 volunteers, drawn from all quarters of our north London community: from church congregations, local businesses, student bodies and interested neighbours.

As a small grassroots charity, we simply could not run the project without them. To quantify it in economic terms, if each crucial volunteer were an employee on minimum wage we would have extra outgoings of around £50,000 each season, just to keep the shelter open with minimum staffing.

But of course, the real value of what our volunteer teams offer is impossible to capture in statistical terms. They pour imagination and empathy into the set up of the shelter venues night to night, transforming

a communal place of worship into a communal home. Some bring in books and board games, cut flowers and table cloths for the dining tables, CDs to play and DVDs to watch. Some plug their contacts and draft in professional musicians to perform in the evenings, from jazz groups to singer-songwriters to classical tenors. Others maximise their culinary skills to whip up the fantastic dinners and cooked breakfasts that are shared by our volunteers and guests on each shift. The quality of our food has become a cornerstone of the care we offer, and the innovation of our cooks

never fails to impress us as they work hard to avoid the 'chilli con carne trap' by which the same dishes might end up occurring night after night.

Perhaps most importantly, all of our volunteers come ready and willing to spend quality time with our guests. From the most light-hearted group chat to a serious one-to-one, our volunteers are there providing companionship and a sympathetic ear each morning, evening, even during the night. We cannot thank them enough.

Church Coordinator's Story

“Wary” would describe how I felt when I tentatively offered to take over the co-ordination of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel’s involvement in the Shelter from Leighton Cole, who had filled this role so ably for five winters.

Although I had volunteered regularly each year during our chapel’s involvement and even been a team leader, I remained concerned about the responsibility. Would we manage to find enough volunteers? Would we be able to cope for 10 weeks? Would we have a disaster?

In the event, the ten weeks seemed to fly by and proved both moving and enjoyable, thanks to C4WS, the congregation, and the guests:

The C4WS staff were incredibly supportive, full of reassurance and advice, and a sense that all would be well.

The congregation’s response was so generous; 60 of our chapel

community took part, and 11 friends from further afield. They gave their time and themselves, not to mention linen, pillows, blankets, clothes, teaspoons (a peculiar requirement at RHUC), and even the food they’d cooked, to make the whole enterprise a reality. It all began to feel possible. Some evenings we were in danger of outnumbering the guests!

The guests were wary too – especially when we opened our door on the very first night of the season. Some were understandably bewildered by their situation, and weren’t sure how to fit in with us or with each other. Gradually over the weeks, we seemed to blend into a community and looked forward to spending time together - I know I did. The atmosphere was convivial, friendly and fun.

It was a privilege as coordinator to know a little more about the circumstances of the guests – I



admired the stoicism, perseverance and tenacity I saw at first hand. And although I had been nervous of staying overnight, which I hadn’t done before, again it proved a meaningful way of ‘sharing’ in the guests’ experience - in a very small way.

Every week, we heard about the often-desperate situations of our guests and shared the joy when the C4WS team found them permanent accommodation, or helped with paperwork, or successfully appealed to a housing authority, or helped with a job search.

One person said it was the best volunteering experience ever. Several said it was the best food! And our guests were with us in the warm, not pitching a tent on Hampstead Heath or getting soaked and frozen on the street or making do with a shop doorway.

Charitable projects are so frequently



described as life-changing that it’s become a cliché, but in this case, it really is true.

And now I’m hurtling towards coordinating RHUC’s Shelter for a further season, feeling a lot less wary.

Claire Julian,
Rosslyn Hill

Shelter Coordinator Experience

I joined C4WS in November 2013, just in time for the start of the shelter season. This has been my first job working professionally in the homeless sector, having spent many winters as a volunteer at a similar but larger-scale project elsewhere, and I was struck on my first night by how peaceful and dignified the atmosphere in the shelter was.

The guests were quiet and polite and the atmosphere, as guests and volunteers sat chatting over dinner, was as convivial and homely as a temporary set-up can be. Over the course of the following five months it became clear that this homeliness, achieved through the hard work of our Church Coordinators and volunteer teams, was at the heart of what we could offer our guests. The shelter was not just a place to escape the bad weather and bed down for the night; it was a safe, restorative holding bay where people could rebuild their self-esteem and, with the support of our welfare team, find

the energy to tackle their problems afresh.

As Shelter Coordinator, my first and foremost responsibility was the acceptance of guest referrals into the project from our partner agencies.

I was quickly overwhelmed by the extent of the need, and the never-ending range of circumstances which led people to our door. Our referrals phone rang off the hook for five months with stories of relationship breakdowns, immigration issues, battles with addiction and mental

health difficulties.

Once guests had been inducted into the project, there was a lot of pastoral work for me to do to support them over the course of their stay, whilst my colleagues got on with the crucial, difficult work of securing them places in permanent accommodation. Whilst every guest had their own problems to contend with, I was moved by the overwhelming generosity and kindness they showed to each other, reassuring newcomers, acting as translators for those who spoke little English, showing each other where to go during the day and looking out for the ones who were struggling.

It was always a cause for celebration when a guest received an offer of permanent accommodation, and a particular pleasure of my job to load brand new starter packs into a van and help them move in. The very first guest I moved, one day in early December, was fixated with Christmas and the importance of being housed before then. We wandered around Ikea – a new and intimidating experience for him – picking up towels and bedding, before coming across miniature Christmas Trees resplendent with lights and baubles. When we unpacked his new belongings back home, the new tree took pride of place on the window sill and he had eyes for nothing else. Driving away and seeing the lights of the tree twinkle down from his window was a moment of job



satisfaction I'll never forget. **It is a privilege to work for a charity that is able to offer such holistic, on-going support to people in their recovery from the physical and emotional upheavals of homelessness,** and I am already looking forward to the challenges and joys that the next season and a new cohort of guests will bring us.

Rebecca Walker
C4WS Shelter Coordinator

Our Guests

At C4WS Homeless Project we don't pretend to be experts in every field of support - that wouldn't be possible with a staff team of three!

What is unique about us is that **we never give up on anyone**. We have found ourselves supporting people through legal battles, home repossession, child custody problems and much more. **Homelessness is not a single, isolated issue – there are so many other things surrounding someone's homelessness that can make a resolution very complicated.** These range from relationship breakdown, addiction problems and mental and physical health concerns to name a few.

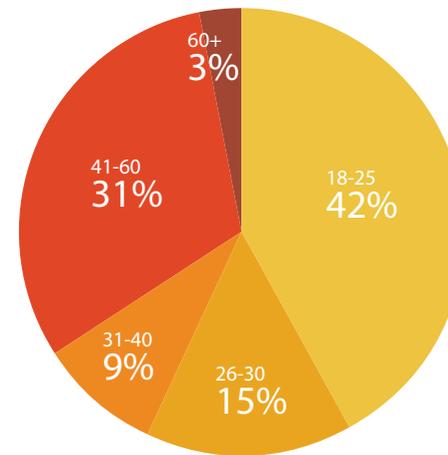
Every now and again we get a desperate phone call from a homeless person who is absolutely at their wits end. John was one of those phone calls. John had been evicted from his mother's council flat as she had passed away and he was told he had no rights to it. He had severe health problems and couldn't cope so tried to end his life. Following this suicide attempt he was taken to hospital but a few days later was discharged with only our number as a means of support. Our Shelter Coordinator met up with him in a coffee shop and his sense of futility was painfully apparent, as he methodically showed her all of the paperwork he'd kept in

an attempt to navigate an impossibly bureaucratic system. He later told us that if we had not returned his call and arranged to meet him he would have attempted suicide again, seeing nowhere else he could turn. But within a few days he seemed a new person, having relaxed at the realisation that the shelter was a supportive environment. We were able to help him sort out his complicated benefits entitlement, bought him some new clothes for a confidence boost (he cried that day) and most importantly he found the strength to endure a fraught battle with his local authority. We were with him every step of the way and the result was just what he was entitled to – stable accommodation! This consequently meant he was able to start treatment for a serious medical condition that would never have been possible if he had continued to be homeless.

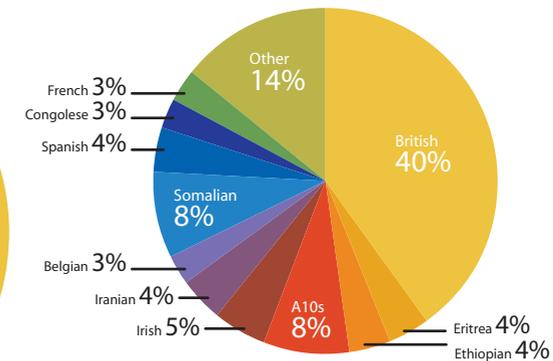
We never want to reduce our guests down to statistics and this report is full of stories of how we have practically helped hundreds of people to regain their confidence and step out of homelessness. However there are some interesting findings that can be seen from analyzing our stats:



Age Range



Nationality of Guests



57% of our guests were under 30 years old – many as young as 18. This is a sad and sobering fact that so many young people are facing homelessness and have no other option but to sleep rough as the head of the advice team at New Horizons

Youth Centre, Dean Harris reports: "Yet again, C4WS night shelter was invaluable to us at NHYC. In an era of major cuts, destitution and austerity, C4WS is a place of welcoming, warmth and hospitality. But it's more than that, it's also a place where

Our Guests

young people can gain life skills, turn their lives around and become part of the society we all wish to belong to.

C4WS is a resource, which has a major impact on our young people who would otherwise be sleeping on the street. Our young people always come to us after their experience at C4WS and tell us how it's just what they needed whilst they get back on track.

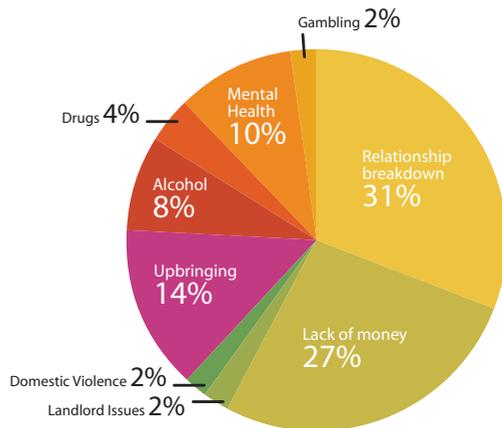
The work carried out with young people and the boundaries and targets set for them are of the highest professional calibre. We know our young people are in safe hands when they stay at C4WS. We look forward to it opening in the cold weather and dread its closure at the end of the winter."

28% of our guests cited a combination of reasons for their homelessness situation, which often involved their upbringing, coupled with addiction issues. The staff team worked extremely hard to help many people face these issues head-on and referred them into the most appropriate accommodation. This is reflected by twice the number of referrals being made into specialist and supported accommodation this year, compared to last.



"A godsend to get off the street when I caught the cold, helped to restore my health. Met some really lovely people and the staff were fantastic and made me feel comfortable."

Reasons for Homelessness



C4WS successfully assisted many guests with complex support needs:

36% of guests had mental health problems

26% of guests lacked English-speaking skills

19% of guests had physical health issues (double that of last year)

6% struggled with alcohol misuse

6% struggled with drug misuse (double that of last year)

3% had a gambling problem

2% had escaped domestic violence

The average stay of our guests was **25 nights** compared to **23 last year**. This is due to lack of available appropriate accommodation for those with complex needs coupled with extremely long waiting lists for housing.

Holistic Services

The primary need of those people coming to C4WS is to seek help securing accommodation. But as a project we pride ourselves on supporting our guests with other additional welfare needs they might need assistance with. These include amongst other things, employment, training, debt, physical and mental health, literacy and legal issues.

Often such help provides immediate relief to our guests but we also believe that it is crucial to provide long term support mechanisms as they begin to rebuild their lives. Helping someone into a house does not solve all their problems, but by supporting them around those issues that led to them becoming homeless in the first place will better help our guests to sustain a new tenancy.



Peteris, 29, was referred to our shelters after losing his job. Whilst we worked hard to find him new accommodation he also believed it was important that he get back into the workforce so that he would be able to support himself once in his own home. As well as helping him create a new CV we also referred him to the Ready for Work programme. Through this he successfully gained a two week placement at a supermarket where he gained vital on the job work experience. Every morning at the shelters he would put on his uniform to head off to work and said

it “made me feel like a human again.” Afterwards he was invited to attend the Ready for Work jobs club sessions and was given an employment coach to continue to work with him.

Once we had secured Peteris housing we also invited him to access our Hardship Fund to pay his deposit. Not only did this protect him from falling into debt but it also invested him with a sense of personal financial responsibility for his situation and instilled a proper budgeting plan so he could make his repayments.

“Understand, its great this fact that you are on my side, I’m grateful for your kindness. Thank you from my heart for all you doing for me. See you soon.”
Peteris, 06/05/2014

Joint Working

At C4WS we continually look to work in partnership with outside organisations who can benefit and help our guests. Many of our relationships are firmly established but we are always looking to develop new links that will complement the services we deliver.

This year we have been working with SPEAR Camden to help guests aged 18-24 develop skills that will prepare them for the workplace. We have referred a number of guests to their six-week employment training programme and are delighted to have forged such a successful working relationship.

“It has been great to work with C4WS this year and to receive referrals of young people to join our pre-employment programme. Our aim is to support 16-24 year olds to access

and retain employment. It has been great to work with the C4WS team in assessing how Spear can support and connect with their young people. We look forward to enjoying a long-term relationship with C4WS and supporting young people in their journey to independence and in fulfilling their potential.”

Steven Cotton
Spear Centre Manager
Spear Camden

We have also continued our long-running association with Ready for Work, which provides work placements at companies such as Royal Mail, Barclays and Accenture.

English Classes

Over the past three years C4WS has offered English classes free of charge to those affected by homelessness in Camden.

This year particularly these classes were a lifeline to so many of our guests, from those who were desperate to learn a few basic words to help navigate their daily lives more easily, through to those studying for a college exam or preparing for an interview. Often the hurdle that many of our guests face is not being able to secure employment, education or training as quickly as they would like because of their lack of English skills. We exist to bridge that gap.

Over 50% of our guests spoke English as a secondary language.

"My second year teaching at C4WS has been another rewarding one with all the students showing a strong interest in and focus on improving their English in class. There was a good camaraderie in each lesson, which helped learners relax and not worry about making mistakes.

My only regret is that it is only one lesson a week but I am looking forward to continuing teaching during the next cold season."

Antony Bailiwick
Volunteer English Teacher

17%
female,
83% male



"I've always been told that angels were these fantastic creatures with magnificent wings. In early February this year, I encountered my three wingless angels, Sam, Becky and Amanda. Passionate, compassionate and hard-working; where there was no hope they gave me hope,

where I'd seen darkness they showed me the light.

Each of them has contributed to changing my life for the better. I wish a big thank you to all of them 'but' thanks' seems to me such a feeble word."
Jane

Lunchtime Club

Our weekly Lunchtime Club has gone from strength to strength in the last twelve months as it continues to provide invaluable drop-in services for those experiencing homelessness, who are vulnerable and in need.

Run in conjunction with the King's Cross Methodist Church it provides a warm and safe space where people can come together for food, companionship and support. **We see more than 200 people come through the doors each year** and with many other similar services closing the Club has become an important resource within the local community.

This year we have re-modelled the Lunchtime Club so that each person accessing the services signs up to become a fully active member of it. This has encouraged them to make the Club something which they wish to belong to and has been hugely positive in allowing members to have a sense of ownership – and pride - in the Lunchtime Club.

As part of the re-design we now run a rolling volunteer chef rota whereby cooks from our volunteer network and local businesses take it in turns to prepare and serve a hot and healthy nutritious meal. So

far this year members have already experienced Japanese and Iranian dishes and enjoyed visits from local bakers dropping off cakes and biscuits!

We have also put into practice a peer-led aspect to the Lunchtime Club where members have been invited to make the meal with support from staff and volunteers. As well as building on the idea of a Club as something in which they have a say it also helps develop practical skills from budgeting to leadership.

The Lunchtime Club continues to act as a place at which members can take advantage of additional support services. In the last year this has included **lung-screening, physiotherapy and TB testing.** We are also affiliated with a city-wide art project and were delighted when one of our members came runner-up in the Café Art Royal Photographic Competition beating nearly 3000 other entrants.



"The cause is worthy, staff are fantastic, the shifts themselves are fun, the people staying have been wonderful company."

Hardship Fund



A time of cuts to the welfare system while rising housing costs continue to skyrocket, spells a recipe for disaster for anyone trying to raise a deposit and who can't afford it.

This is exactly the position so many of our guests find themselves in. Finding suitable accommodation for people and not being able to offer it to them due to lack of deposit and/or rent in advance is disheartening and frustrating to say the least for the staff and of course the guests involved. We don't believe any person should be homeless because of a lack of affordable housing but we at C4WS respond to the need and that is the situation so many people encounter.

Then one day, as if by a miracle Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church offered us the opportunity to partner with them to create what is now simply termed as 'The Hardship Fund'. They provide the finance; we provide the knowledge, expertise and ability to distribute it to those in need. We have been able to offer people a rent deposit scheme which essentially loans people, on an interest free basis, the money they need to secure and

move into a property and also helps people learn to budget by setting a realistic and attainable repayment plan. That deposit money then becomes theirs once the loan is paid, replenishes the fund and therefore allows us to help one more person in need.

But why stop there?

The Hardship Fund also gives us the opportunity to offer grants to those who would never be able to pay back a loan. We can support our guests by providing part or full funding for educational courses or vital training to get them back into employment.

The Hardship Fund means we can help provide for a need when no one else can and that is a beautiful thing!

Thank you Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church – You are a Godsend – literally!

CARIS Camden

As you will have seen there is much to celebrate in C4WS' 10th season and I would like to thank the project staff, the shelter co-ordinators and volunteers, the host churches and the guests themselves for the parts that each of them has played in making the 2013/14 season another success. The project relies heavily on the devotion and good will of many people; you can be assured that my fellow trustees and I appreciate the time and effort but above all those extra qualities of friendliness, sympathetic comfort and practical concern on which make this project special. Without these we would be, in St Paul's phrase just a sounding brass or tinkling cymbal.

Our national churches do make quite a lot of noise and it's quite right that they should speak loudly to raise public awareness and prick the country's conscience, but this would just be noise if there was not underneath it a still small voice calmly getting on with expressing our love for our neighbour in a practical way. Our archbishops and cardinals and moderators can speak with

authority because they know that ordinary church people know about poverty and homelessness and are doing something about it.

We are a church based organisation, but I'm well aware that some of our support- in man hours and money comes from people who have no formal belief in God, or positively no belief at all; I hope they will not mind if I say that I believe anyone who loves their neighbour expresses what I call God's love for his world and I am only grateful to the god of all people who moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform.

We can be proud that through Amanda's, Sam's and Becky's efforts, helped by so many volunteers and supporters, the great majority of our guests leave us with a home, with practical help and guidance, but above all, with hope for a brighter future.

Andrew Penny
Chair of Trustees, CARIS Camden

Community Involvement

A massive thank you to all our amazing volunteers who give up their time freely to raise money for C4WS or donate their skills to us free of charge. You are all heroes!

Thank you to Felicity Crawshaw for taking the most amazing photos that capture who we are and what we do so accurately. You are a gem!

Bob Boyton organised another fantastic Bookish Evening fundraiser at Kentish Town Library with appearances from Attila the Stockbroker, Cheryl McLennan and Phil Herbert.

The students at RVC and UCL continued their long-standing support of the shelters volunteering at evening, overnight and morning shifts throughout the whole season.

Sam Forsdike, our very own Project Worker ran a half marathon to raise money for the work of the shelters.

Liorah aged 6 and her brother Joshua raised £342 by holding a cupcake sale and a table tennis tournament.

The Truscott Arms donated £350 from the profits of their pub quiz.

"When I first arrived in London in the early 1980s I was shown a great deal of support by the new community in Camden I found myself in, and I promised myself that I would give back in turn one day. Now that my son is reared I have more time to give back a little of the kindness that was shown to me during my early difficult years in London. I hold the homeless dear to my heart and that is why I volunteer at the shelter - but to be honest I get more out of it than I give. The Guests and Volunteers I have met at the shelter have a great zest for life and always have a smile on their face regardless of what life has thrown at them - they truly humble me. When I come home after an evening at the shelter I always say to myself 'there go I but for the Grace of God.' It makes me appreciate what I have and not take life for granted. I am blessed to have met all these people and they have definitely made my life a lot richer." Suzanne Higgins - Volunteer

Timetable at the Shelter

Below is an example of a guest's stay at the shelter

Day 1 - 19.30

Arrive at the shelter and am signed in by the C4WS Staff member. Great to get in out of the cold and start to warm up inside the church.

19.35

Put down my bags which I've been carrying all day and a volunteer offers me a cup of coffee and asks how my day has been.

19.45

C4WS staff member welcomes me and we run through how the project works. They check I'm ok and introduce me to the church's Co-ordinator.

20.00

Dinner is served! 3 courses! Seconds available! Volunteers sit down and we start chatting.

20.30

Am shown where the clothes bank is and am able to help myself to some new socks and shoes as well as a virtually brand new winter coat.

21.00

Some of the other guests and volunteers are playing cards and ask me if I want to join in.

23.00

Tucked up in bed out of the rain and cold.

Day 2 - 07.00

Lights on and time to get up.

07.30

My turn on the shower rota!

08.00

Breakfast is served and we all tuck in. Great to meet the new volunteers.

08.30

The C4WS Staff member arrives and checks my night went ok. They give me the Guest Handbook with the map for where I need to go tonight as well as places I can go in the day to stay warm and get food.

09.00

Leave the shelters with a full stomach and the C4WS Staff member telling me that they're looking forward to seeing me again tonight.

DAY 4 - 10.00

I meet with my case worker to go through my situation. We chat about everything from housing to health to leisure activities!

Day 6 - 11.00

I'm told about the Lunchtime Club and spend a couple of hours in the warmth reading the papers and chatting to other members. Not to mention tucking into a fantastic carbonara!

Day 9 - 15.00

I meet with my case worker and complete applications for a number of housing options. Feels like I can see light at the end of the tunnel.

Day 12 - 16.00

I've been struggling with back problems and speak to the staff. They direct me to where I can get immediate treatment.

Day 16 - 10.30

Sit down with my case worker to put together my CV and start learning about where to look and apply for jobs. They also refer me to a great volunteer programme that I can take part in during the day and which will give me something positive to talk to employers about.

Day 19 - 15.00

I've been accepted for an interview for housing. The staff are great in preparing me for my meeting and also give me bus tickets to get to my appointment. Fingers crossed.

Day 21 - 20.30

There's a volunteer chiropodist at the shelter tonight. Come away feeling like I've got new feet!

Day 23 - 11.00

I get the call to say that I can move into my new flat today! The staff drive me over with a food and utilities starter pack and help me settle into my new home.



“Hi Becky
I got told
to move in
on Friday
(smile)”

Merry, 08/01/2014

Mentoring & Befriending Scheme

The C4WS Mentoring & Befriending Scheme has entered its fourth year of providing support and assistance to those that have recently moved into accommodation after a period of homelessness.

A variety of issues often emerge when someone finally reaches their goal of accommodation, often after an incredible struggle and fight. **Loneliness, isolation, boredom, anxiety, depression often mixed with excitement, happiness and relief are just some of the emotions people experience.** Many people try and move away from unhealthy relationships that they were involved in leading up to and whilst they were homeless and want to make a fresh start but it can be extremely difficult to face the type of situations that arise from moving into accommodation such as paying bills, getting used to a new area and looking after a tenancy alone. This is often the case for many of our former guests, which can make the whole process seem overwhelming.

A C4WS mentor is able to come alongside a former homeless person in this position and offer them a shoulder to cry on, a sounding board

to complain to but most importantly a listening ear. Before a mentor even meets a potential mentee it is for the mentee to make known exactly what is needed from the relationship. 'I need to quit smoking', 'My CV needs updating', 'I need courage to talk to my doctor about my depression', or just simply 'I want a friend'. These are just some of the many needs that come from our mentees and our mentors are adequately trained and prepared to support them in this way.

"It's been amazing - an absolute pleasure to work with everyone and the guests have all been lovely." C4WS Volunteer

Being a Mentor

I've been involved with the Shelter for three years, first as a volunteer and then as a shelter co-ordinator. Having been on C4WS's 'mentors and befrienders list' for eighteen months, I currently meet with George. We try to catch up face-to-face every week over coffee and cake, but if we don't manage to do that, we're normally also in contact by phone, to see how each others is doing.

Much of the time, I honestly wonder who is mentoring whom! George is full of fascinating stories and wisdom, and we share a love of things artistic. It's been a privilege to get to know him, and to listen to his beautiful poetry. Since being housed by C4WS, he has been encouraged by the Team to start classes in writing, so he often brings what he has composed in the previous week, and we chat about it. It's just a huge pleasure to listen to my new friend and to share life.

Tim Chambers



Moving into accommodation

Starter Packs, Hampstead Wells and St Botolph

Our support around housing does not stop on the day an accommodation provider offers someone a place.

Whilst moving into permanent accommodation is a cause for celebration, it can also mark a difficult transition period for former guests, and an expensive one as they begin having to budget again for all of the costs of independent living. Thanks to our partnership with The Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust, we are able to help each guest to set up home sustainably, so that their tenancies are not jeopardized by a lack of basic household resources. Each year Hampstead Wells donates a series of food hampers and 'Starter Pack' boxes to C4WS for donation to guests when they move into accommodation. These Starter Packs contain a range of essential kitchenware and household appliances, practical items which would cost hundreds of pounds to purchase but without which it would be impossible to cook for yourself or

clean your home. Each guest receives a food hamper and the appropriate combination of starter packs on moving-in day to ensure that their new home is all set up and ready to go.

In the past, we have been limited in how many Starter Packs we could request from Hampstead Wells due to a lack of storage space. However, since April 2014 we have been very lucky to receive support from St Botolph without Aldgate, a church in the heart of the City of London which has donated a huge space in its crypt for the storage of our Starter Packs.

The size of the space also means that C4WS can accept donations of good-quality furniture and second-hand computers for the first time, to be passed on to resettled guests where appropriate.

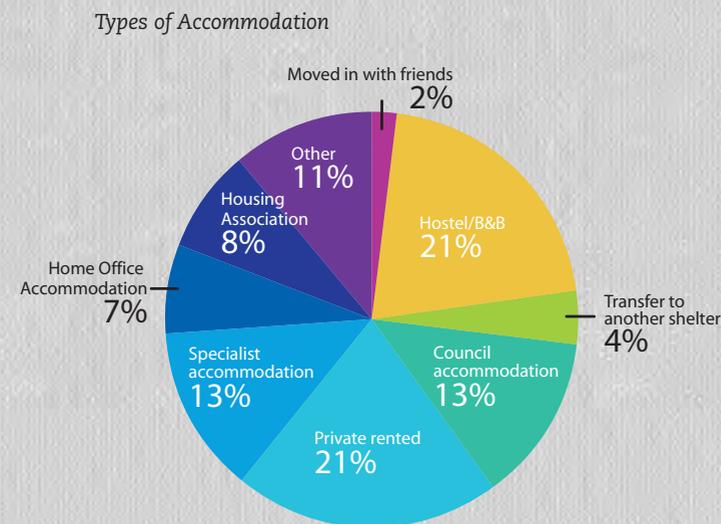
"We never felt overwhelmed or under-prepared - completely adore the staff and the work they do."

"I have been very impressed. The guests quite sweet."

"It was a truly rewarding experience, being able to connect with all the volunteers and guests. It changed my perception of homelessness."

"A real joy - the guests are such a pleasure."

"Keep up the fantastic work. You lot do a brilliant, exhausting, emotionally draining, vital job."



Referral Agencies

- New Horizons Youth Centre
- Alone in London
- Office
- Hope Worldwide
- ACSK
- London Irish Centre
- HOAS
- Albert Kennedy Trust
- ICCWS
- British Red Cross
- SANKTUS
- CRISIS
- SST
- Holy Cross Centre Trust
- Camden DAIS
- Duncan Lewis Solicitors
- London Jesus Centre
- Pillion Trust
- Refugee Council
- Robes Project
- Spectrum

Next Year

As one shelter season closes it is always important to start thinking about the upcoming one, both in terms of anticipating what needs we may be facing and how we can meet these.

Changes to the benefits system mean that there will be a greater need for people to be looking for and securing employment. **In this season alone over 50% of our guests actively wanted to get back into work.** As a result we will be launching our own **Jobs Club** that will work with guests in the shelter to help them with their individual needs. For some guests this will be to get them job ready so that they can find work once housed, whilst for others it will be supporting them into specific training placements and job opportunities.

We have also noticed an increasing number of guests coming to our project with financial issues. Consequently, we will be running



335

phone calls received for bed spaces - 20% more than last year

a **Debt and Budgeting Programme** for guests who come to us already with debt and/or have problems managing their finances. Our aim is to start preparing them to better manage their money issues so as to be able to sustain their new tenancy.

Shelter Assistant

In the lead-up to the 2014-15 winter shelter season, C4WS Homeless Project will be recruiting a part-time Shelter Assistant. This new role is designed for someone who has personal experience of homelessness and would like to work in the sector, but as yet has no professional experience. Over the course of their six month placement at C4WS we will ensure they gain the skills and

experience that they need in order to further their career in the sector. We are grateful to the Pret a Manger Foundation who have provided the funding for this position.

Office space

We are on the move! C4WS Homeless Project has outgrown its office space and we are planning to take a leap of faith over the next year and relocate to a space that allows us to continue to support homeless people at a greater capacity. Watch this space for more information!

“Thank u with my heart 4 a lovely gesture last night [birthday cake]. Am honestly grateful and humbled.”

James, 10/02/2014



Mike's story – One Year On

It's been well documented the amazing work and support that the staff and volunteers of C4WS gave me and my fellow guests during my stay in church shelters in 2013.

That period of homelessness ended when the wonderful Amanda managed to secure accommodation for me in a fantastic sheltered housing trust in Primrose Hill. It was a massive relief to be in my own place, warm and off the streets. However, I was now presented with new challenges. I was still on Jobseekers Allowance and somehow I had to find money to pay my household bills and feed myself. My life was so much improved but it was still difficult being so impoverished. Although I had many skills and experience it was still virtually impossible for me to secure work. The Jobcentre wouldn't help fund a short course for me to upgrade my electrical qualification. C4WS to the rescue again! They found the funding for me and I took the course and passed with flying colours. However, it was still proving difficult for me to find work (I guess because I was now 60 years old).

Sam contacted me late last year; he had been approached by a social enterprise called Sockmob who carried out Unseen Tours in which homeless and ex-homeless people would work as tour guides in parts of London. The guides would discuss the

known and unknown histories of the areas, where they had mostly slept rough, interjected with their own personal experiences, some of which are quite harrowing. This enterprise proved to be very successful despite the critics who thought it would be crazy having homeless people as tour guides. Anyway I became their new Camden Tour Guide.

Rather than try to explain here about my tour and Unseen tours generally and all the awards we have won, check out sockmobevents.org.uk.

My life has been transformed by both C4WS and Sockmob. I love being a guide and telling my story and the history of Camden music to a wide diversity of people from all over the world from large groups of visiting students to small intimate groups of 2-5 people. I have enough extra cash now to stay out of the food banks and to meet up with my friends for a few beers.

I'm presently also doing some temp work now as an electrical maintenance engineer and there are prospects of permanent full-time work. I would not have this without C4WS somehow finding funding for my electrical course.

What can I say? 2 fantastic organisations dedicated to helping the homeless. I'm blessed to have had their help.

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:



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



Make a cheque payable to 'CARISCamden-C4WS'

1,2,3

Setup a regular donation

www

Give online at BT My Donate
100% of your donation comes directly to C4WS Homeless Project

%

Donate a percentage of your profit made on selling an item on Ebay.

Pp

Give by paypal to CARIS Camden – C4WS or by searching for C4WS under 'charities' at www.ebay.co.uk

txt

Text CAMD13 and the amount to 70070 eg. CAMD13 £10..

Agencies

Working with C4WS this past winter has genuinely been the highlight of my year. At a time when emergency accommodation options for desperate clients is depressingly scarce it is difficult to overestimate the necessity for such projects and the hope that it brings for frontline homelessness workers such as myself.

Particularly for people who are outside the official parameters of homelessness support, the project is nothing short of a lifeline that in many cases has been the only intervention preventing someone from spending a night out on the streets. Even so, the project is much more than a crisis rescue operation and is holistic in its strategy, working professionally and forbearingly with clients as individuals, helping to ensure that there is a long term solution to their homelessness.

The team have been professional, warm and efficient in dealing with our referrals and on a daily basis inspired us to be better at what we do ourselves. There has never been an email or telephone call from us that they have ignored and often clients are in a bed for the night within hours of initial contact. I have personally learned a lot from the Welfare team and have even adopted aspects of their key working practices myself! However perhaps most importantly of all has been the feedback from clients we have referred who have all expressed finding the same spirit of non-judgmental hospitality and care at the night shelters as they had come to expect at our day centre.

We would regard it an immense privilege and pleasure to continue to work with C4WS in the future.

Jon-Jon Hilton
Drop-in Manager
London Jesus Centre

“We are in the hostel now and every thing is alright”

Leo, 1/4/14

This year we worked closely with C4WS who successfully found places for many of our clients who would otherwise have been street homeless during the cold winter. They also received valuable additional welfare casework support which for some gave them an opportunity to move on from the streets.

Some staff and volunteers from the British Red Cross were also lucky enough to attend the shelter for a night. As well as enjoying a slap up meal this gave us a great opportunity to see what the shelter was really like for service users. We were all really impressed by the quality of the food, accommodation, and the warm and welcoming atmosphere that had been created.

Helen Mead
Casework Co-ordinator
British Red Cross

Funding & Finances

Thank you to all our funders –
without you we would not exist!

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	Marsh Christian Trust	St Pancras Parochial Church Council (Crypt Gallery)
3F	Muswell Hill United Reformed Church	St Paul's Cathedral
Aldo Trust	Oliver Borthwick Memorial Trust	StreetSmart
Beatrice Laing Trust	Ove Arup & Partners Intl Ltd	The Allan Charitable Trust
Churches Together in Hampstead	Pret a Manger	The American Church in London
Close Brothers Group	Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel	The Archer Trust
Friends' House Local Quaker Meeting	Souter Charitable Trust	The Cooperative
Guiding Light	St Alban's Holborn	The Pears Family Charitable Foundation
Hampstead Parish Church	St Anne's Highgate	The Provost Trust
Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust	St Marks Catholic School	The Thanet Trust
Highgate United Reformed Church	St Martins Gospel Oak	The Truscott Arms
Leeds Building Society	St Mary's Church, Kilburn	WRC DT Somerstown Parish
Lloyds Bank Foundation	St Mary's Hampstead	Zurich
Lumen Poetry Society	St Michaels Highate	

We are very excited and privileged that we are one of The Catenians Charity of the Year

Income and Expenditure

	2013 Expenditure	2014 Budget
Staffing costs	£95,592.62	£92,214.50
Running costs	£16,869.48	£37,715.69
Guest Welfare	£15,740.96	£16,500.00
Total	£ 128,203.06	£146,430.19

Income Breakdown

Charitable Trusts	£95,683.00
Community fundraisers & donations	£14,837.49
Private Donations	£5,648.24
Carried over from previous season	£31,468.20
Total	£147,636.93

"I really enjoy meeting all involved in the centre, building on the parish community and meeting people from all walks of life."



7

people supported into
work related programmes
and/or permanent
employment

“Just want to
thank you all
@C4WS for
your help and
hard work.”

Kim, 24/12/13

C4WS

HOMELESS PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



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