



Annual Review 2020-21



Like many charities, the last year has been one of the most challenging we have faced. The Covid pandemic resulted in a significant loss of income

from fundraising events. However, this was offset by grants and donations and the acquisition of rent free temporary premises for the shelter.

This, our 25th year has been pivotal and one of profound and lasting change in other ways too. We embarked on a new three-year strategic plan. Central to the strategy is the move to single shelter venues and to operating all year round, building on the success of opening our women's shelter in 2019.

We were already working towards moving all service provision to static shelters when the pandemic began and we had found a temporary venue. We thank Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association for the provision of these premises, until the redevelopment of the site in 2022.

We are now seeking a future home for our shelter. We are also seeking to diversify and strengthen our funding base to ensure a sustainable future as we face economically challenging and uncertain times.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of our staff and volunteers over the last year, and to thank our donors for their continued support enabling effective routes out of homelessness for our guests.

Andrea Daniels
Chair of Trustees Hackney Doorways
(Hackney Night Shelter)



It has been my privilege to co-lead the strategic transition of the Charity this year.

Working alongside a committed trustee board, dedicated staff team and many partner agencies the Charity has developed the foundations of delivering an all-year service from static venues.

Our service model has seen a significant review and robust governing policies, procedures and practices have been introduced.

The Covid pandemic has presented many challenges. We have had to adapt to the priority of creating safe places for all and, unfortunately, to reduce the number of guests we accommodate at any one time.

However, I am particularly proud of the staff team's achievements of securing move-on accommodation for those guests we've been able to help on their routes out of homelessness.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge our loyal volunteers who are the backbone of the shelters, providing companionship, hospitality and meals for our guests.

The Charity has an established standing in the Borough of Hackney and benefits from the generosity of the community and many funders who support the financial sustainability of our work. I'd like to express my sincere gratitude.

Thank you!

Henry Brown
Interim Director

About Hackney Night Shelter

Hackney Night Shelter has been opening doors to vulnerable homeless people since 1996. What began as a network of churches and local volunteers providing a warm bed and a hot meal during the coldest winter months has become an effective route out of homelessness for many who stay with us.



Volunteers have always been at the heart of Hackney Night Shelter

The charity Hackney Doorways, established in 2010, is governed by volunteer trustees and managed by a small staff team.

Volunteers have always been at the heart of Hackney Night Shelter and they are vital for running the shelters, providing for guests' basic needs and much more: a friendly face, a listening ear, and kindness and hospitality for which Hackney Night Shelter is renowned.

Our shelters provide a safe place to sleep away from the harsh conditions and dangers of living on the streets, giving people – our guests – time and space to rebuild their lives.

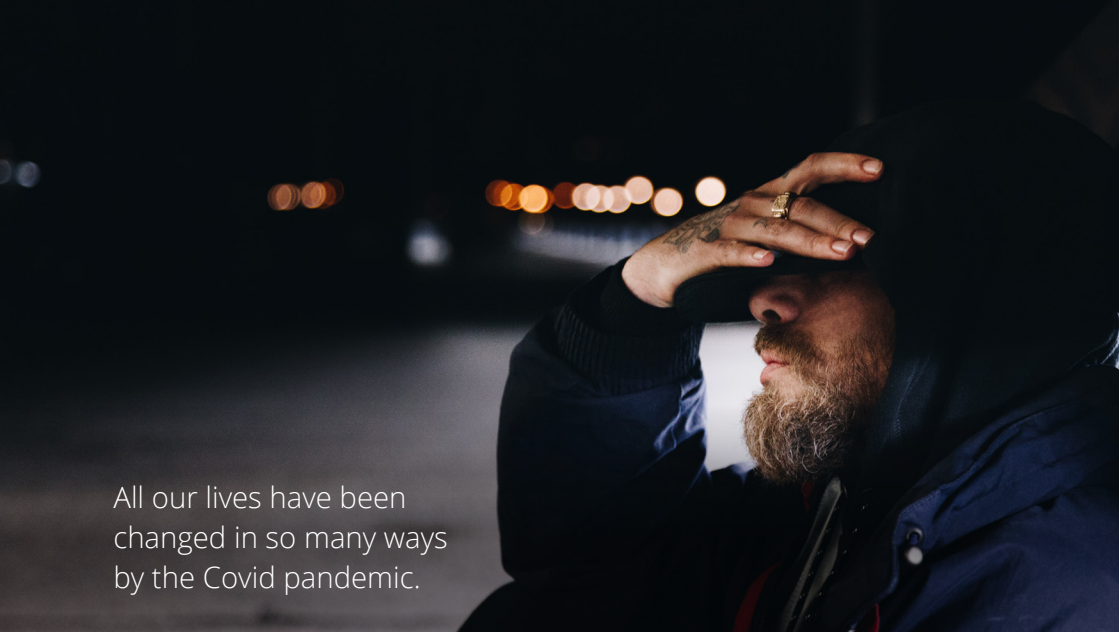
Our support and advocate workers enable our guests to access healthcare, benefits, employment opportunities, and legal, financial and immigration advice. Often these are the first steps on the route out of homelessness.

Most importantly, we help guests to find longer term accommodation so that they can move on from our shelters and towards a more secure future.

Our mission is a route out of homelessness for everyone who comes to us in need.

Throughout Hackney Night Shelter's 25-year history, homelessness has been a stubborn problem.

The number of people sleeping rough in London trebled in the decade to 2020-21. 11,018 people were recorded sleeping rough in the capital in 2020-21 compared to 3,673 in 2009-10.



All our lives have been changed in so many ways by the Covid pandemic.

Homelessness and Covid

Some homeless people have been able to break their cycle of homelessness, through the government's emergency 'Everybody In' initiative. As a result of this temporary measure, between June 2019 and June 2020 the number of people with long histories of homelessness (deemed to be living on the streets) in London fell by about 30%.

But the risk of becoming homeless remains and there is a new group experiencing homelessness for the first time, for whom there is no government provision.

In June 2020 2,680 people sleeping rough in London were new to the streets, a 77% increase on the 1,513 new to the streets in June 2019.

They now make up the majority of street homeless in London and many have low support needs.

In London: 63 out of 100 people rough sleeping in 2020 were new to the streets. 48 out of 100 were new to the streets in 2019.

The proportion of street homeless people without alcohol, drug or mental health support needs was twice as high in 2020 as in 2019.

In 2020 45 out of 100 people new to rough sleeping had none of these support needs compared with 17 out of 100 long-term homeless people.

The need for our shelters and our service has never been greater and we have seen a marked increase in demand this year.

Our shelters and our guests



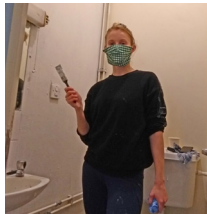
Our women's shelter opened in 2019 as a year-long, year-round pilot project accommodating up to nine guests at any one time in a single property.

During 2020-21, the shelter successfully stayed open throughout the pandemic.

Due to Covid restrictions, we reduced the number of beds from nine to five and we adapted how the shelter operated to make it possible for each guest to have her own room, and for guests to stay in day and night for many months during lockdown. Indeed, some guests stayed at the shelter for as long as eight months.

When lockdown restrictions eased in 2020 it became possible to look for alternative accommodation again. By September 2020 all guests had moved on to the next stage of their journey.

Between July and September 2020 there were five women at the shelter. In the ten months from September 2020 to June 2021, 23 guests stayed at the shelter, with an average stay of 66 nights.



Volunteers helped with cleaning, carpentry, painting, plumbing and more to get the shelter ready for opening to guests

Our 'new' temporary Hackney Night Shelter opened to guests on 1st November 2020.

In the eight months to 30 June 2021, we accommodated 59 guests with an average stay of 44 nights.

The shelter has 10 guest beds, mostly in single rooms. We had planned for 13, but needed to reduce the number to allow for social distancing.

It was real shift from the 'roving' winter shelter model where the shelter was hosted by a different church or school venue each night of the week during the coldest months of the year.



Our first ever Christmas day at a shelter



“Hackney Night Shelter is by far the best night shelter I have stayed in, the shelter is immaculately clean and I love the food; it is the best...”

The move to fixed shelter venues means that now all our guests at both our shelters have the same bed in a familiar place every night. They have somewhere to leave their belongings during the day instead of having to travel to a different venue every night, taking everything with them in the morning.

From single shelter bases, we can work more effectively and intensively with guests to help them to improve their lives and move on to more stable accommodation.

Our night shelter guests are single homeless men and women, with low to medium support needs. The shelters are run on a day-to-day basis primarily by volunteers who would not have the skills to manage the potential challenges that people with more complex or multiple needs (substance misuse, mental health issues, some types of offending history) can present.

The total number of guests who stayed at our shelters during the year was 87: fewer than we would have anticipated pre-pandemic. However, the rate of move-ons was better than we had hoped for.

Our target length of stay for a guest is 90 nights at the women's shelter and 60 nights at the main shelter. Most of our guests were able to move on to more stable accommodation after fewer nights than anticipated.

We are proud to have been able to provide shelter and support for all those individuals who have stayed with us, in safe spaces, throughout this difficult year. We are enormously grateful to all the volunteers who helped make that possible.

You can find out more about some of our guests' stories on the following pages. Guest names have been changed and quotes anonymised.

Shelter guest, Rauf

Rauf stayed at Hackney Night Shelter for a little over three months from November 2020 at a particularly difficult time in his life. His partner had recently died and neighbours told him he had to leave the council property he and his partner had been living in together.

Of Turkish origin, Rauf was fearful of homophobia, which is widespread in his home country. He had kept his relationship with his partner a secret, so when he was told he could no longer stay at the property, he left. His English was not good and he had no understanding of his rights.

Rauf had come to the UK in 2000 and overstayed his visa. He had been dependent on his partner, so when he died, Rauf had nothing.

For months, Rauf 'sofa-surfed' or slept at the local Mosque. He was never sure where he was going to sleep each night. During this time, he suffered verbal and physical abuse when 'friends' he was staying with wanted him to move on.

When he was badly beaten up, he did not go to hospital for medical help because he was worried about his immigration status. He was homeless, his health wasn't good and he couldn't buy food.

Rauf began visiting the Clapton Community Drop In, where he could get food, clothing, vouchers and advice. They found out about his homeless

situation and referred him to Hackney Night Shelter where he could have a safe space to sleep at night.

Together with Clapton Community Drop In, we sought legal advice and, after disclosing Rauf's relationship with his partner, discovered that he may in fact have a right to reside at the property.

Proving that was not going to be a quick or easy process. Rauf needed to gather paperwork for evidence and had to contact various people to retrieve all the papers he needed.

When Rauf came to Hackney Night Shelter, we successfully applied for a grant from the Nawaal Benevolent Fund for him to buy essential items. He began English classes and he joined a gardening group. Having these new skills and interests, as well as a familiar safe place to stay helped with improving his overall wellbeing.

Rauf's immigration and NRPF (no recourse to public funds) status also needed to be addressed. Having been in the UK for 20 years, he had the right to remain, but that too needed to be proved and required more paperwork. Eventually, his solicitor was successful in securing leave to remain and getting NRPF lifted. He could then begin the process of claiming benefits.

In March 2021 Rauf won the rights to his 'partner's' place. He was able to claim housing benefit, enabling him to move back into his home.

Women's shelter guests, Clara and Deborah

Clara, a French national was sleeping on the streets when she was referred to us.

During her three month stay, Clara particularly enjoyed the volunteer led art workshop sessions. Making art helped her to take a break from worrying about her past troubles and what her future would hold.

Clara was determined to improve her situation and we connected her with services that could help with her settled status application and once this was successful we supported her with her universal credit application.

With access to benefits, we were able to make applications for longer term supported housing through Moremei Housing Trust, Peter Bedford Housing Association and Focused Living.

Clara had a choice of three properties! She moved from the shelter into her own place in North London where she would be supported by Focused Living.

“Thank you very much for everything. I consider myself very fortunate and lucky to have stayed here. I appreciate everything you did.”



Deborah (not real name or image)

Deborah had been sofa surfing with friends for a while and all seemed to be working out fine until one of her 'friends' tried to get her to exchange sexual favours for accommodation. When she refused, she was asked to leave and she slept on a bench in the park until she went to Crisis for support.

Crisis referred Deborah to us and to a women's refugee service.

We were able to take Deborah into our women's shelter immediately. She stayed just two nights before a space became available through the refugee service, where she would receive the support she needed around her sexual assault as well the security of longer-term accommodation.

Fundraising

Without income from large scale fundraising events this year was a challenge from the outset, however the community rallied and raised an incredible £25,000 through their own events and other fundraising initiatives in aid of Hackney Night Shelter.

We thank everyone who chose to support our work this year, including these that were fun, funny and raised a much needed smile.



Otis King

Otis King, aged 8, wrote 'OK – Just for LOLs', a book of his own original jokes - and exceeded his £1,000 fundraising target by £700 within 24 hours of the book going on sale.

Otis was interviewed by Vanessa Feltz on BBC Radio London; he read out some of his jokes and his dad, Ed, explained why he was raising money for Hackney Night Shelter.



Big Wowie!

'Big Wowie!' and 'Grow Hackney' took their 2020 Christmas cabaret online with a free 'wrap party' in aid of Hackney Night Shelter encouraging people to wrap presents together while watching the show and making donations to Hackney Night Shelter.

“ I don't like that some people have to sleep on the street, everyone deserves a place to call home. I like helping other people, and it was fun thinking up my own jokes too. ” Otis King

Shelter guest, Mohammed



Mohammed (not real name or image)

Mohammed came to the UK from Eritrea seeking asylum. His initial claim for asylum had been rejected and it was a real struggle finding somewhere to stay because he had no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

Hackney Night Shelter gave Mohammed a place where he stayed for three months in 2021.

We worked with Refugee Action and Hackney Migrant Centre on Mohammed's second appeal against the decision not to grant asylum and the support to which he was entitled.

More immediately, Mohammed needed to see doctor. We registered him with GP services at the Greenhouse and quickly got him an appointment.

As his health improved and thanks to all the people he came into contact

with at the shelter, by the time he left, Mohammed was a changed man. He made many friends: other guests, volunteers and staff.

After applications were made and presented to the Home Office for a second time the appeal for asylum was accepted. Mohammed moved from the shelter into Home Office accommodation in Brighton.

“Appreciated the volunteers and food, the help to relocate and help with my paperwork was vital.”

Our funds and how they are used

Our total income was £397,891 (2019-20: £300,851)

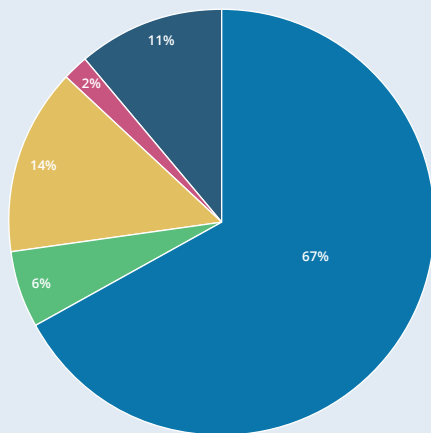
Our total expenditure was £306,925 (2019-20: £270,346)

Although there were no major fundraising events this year (due to the Covid pandemic), both individual and corporate supporters organised their own fundraising activities and raised £25,000.

We received gifts and grants from charitable trusts and foundations, totalling £291,320. There were many generous single gifts from individuals, adding up to £60,000.

We are especially grateful to those who have committed to supporting Hackney Night Shelter with a regular monthly donation, together they gave £19,000 this year.

At the end of the year our net surplus was £90,966, £60,000 more than expected because our temporary main shelter premises were rent-free. These funds will be used to continue our work year round and towards the acquisition of a long term home for the shelter. We are grateful to Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association for providing shelter space in a building due to be demolished in 2022.



Expenditure	2021
Staff costs	£205,750
Main shelter operating costs	£18,215
Women's shelter operating costs	£41,943
Assistance fund	£6,739
Office costs	£34,278
	£306,925

Financial activities

For the year ended 30 June 2021

In 2020-21 we spent more than in previous years on staff and associated costs: 67% of income (2019-20: 59%). Due to the pandemic and the availability of volunteers we have needed to rely more on paid staff to ensure our static shelters can operate safely and all year round.

Office costs include rent, insurance, Independent Examiners Fees, professional and legal costs.

The Assistance Fund is used to purchase items for guests according to their needs. These include mobile phone top ups, travel cards, and the costs of replacing passports or ID documents.

When guests leave the shelter, we can provide move on packs of equipment for setting up a new home.

There were no Fundraising costs in 2020-21.

	2020-21	2019-20
Income	£	£
Donations and legacies	103,858	143,851
Charitable activities*	291,320	150,664
Other trading activities (events)	0	2,474
Other income	2,713	3,862
Total income	397,891	300,851
Expenditure		
Raising funds	0	2,027
Charitable activity	306,925	268,319
Total expenditure	306,925	270,346
Net income	90,966	30,505

*Trust and Foundations

Full accounts are available on our website: www.hwms.org.uk and on the Charity Commission website.

Thank you

Hackney Doorways would like to thank all the charitable trusts and foundations who gave grants and donations during the 2020-21 year, including:

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
AXA XL
Bishops Waltham Deanery Synod
Garfield Weston Foundation
GLA grant
Goldman Sachs Gives
Hackney Parochial Charities
Housing Justice
Invesco Cares Foundation
Isla Foundation
Leach Fourteenth Trust
Leslie Aldridge Trust
London Catalyst Project Grant

Morrisons Foundation
National Lottery
Peter Stebbings Memorial Charity
Pret Foundation Trust
South Hackney Parochial Charity
St James Place
The Albert Hunt Trust
The Alexandra Trust
The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust
UK Online Giving Foundation
Vanguard Asset Management
West Hackney Parochial Charity

Thank you to every single one of our enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers, who welcome our guests and make their stay comfortable, participating in the running of the shelter, cooking delicious meals, and sharing their time with our guests.

Thank you to everyone who has made a donation or supported Hackney Night Shelter in any way that we may have omitted to mention here.

A few comments from our guests



I would like to thank each volunteer for their warm support and contribution. My stay would not have been enjoyable without all of you volunteering your time. There is no kinder act than helping someone less fortunate than yourself. Every one of you has been great and brought my spirits up, which had a positive effect on my overall wellbeing. The shelter recreates a family environment to some extent, which in turn is healthy for us. Thank you very much for everything. I consider myself very fortunate and lucky to have stayed here. I appreciate everything you did. I have great esteem, consideration and respect for everything you have done so that we do not lack food. I really like the way all of the team treat me with great care, affection and attention. The best is the volunteers who come and cook for everyone. I like the way they look after their guests, I like the food, the volunteers and staff are very professional and kind. The staff and volunteers are really awesome, warm, easy to talk to, polite, welcoming and friendly. I enjoy the volunteers and the people staying with me at the shelter. Thank you so very much for your love and care during my stay at the Manse. All volunteer staff are very gentle and friendly. A million thanks to you all...”



Registered office

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