



Working to PREVENT & END
homelessness in Surrey Heath

e-News

January – March 2021

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Christmas 2020

Our thanks to everyone who supported our online Christmas campaign and businesses, individuals and churches who support our work with gifts, items or financial support. The generosity towards, and desire to support, those struggling and in poverty has been heart warming and we are so thankful to each and everyone of you.

Through partnership working with Surrey Heath Borough Council and a benevolent grant for people with no recourse to public funds, we have been able to place Clients who engage with us into emergency accommodation and/or hotels. We even supported one Client to move into a permanent home on 27 December and we should acknowledge Senior Case Worker, Karen for physically assisting this female to move into a home of her own on a day off.

Christmas was different this year of course. We had spaced out visits with meals and gifts provided to each person. Their bumper gift packs included a lovely food parcel, a full emergency toiletry pack with t-shirt, socks, hats, deodorant, toothbrush etc and an individual gift whether a new pair of joggers, a jacket and we sought to tailor the gift for each person as best as we could. We have also been able to be generous with Greggs Vouchers and given some people Primark vouchers due to a crowdfunding page organised by one of our supporters and other generous folk. We love being able to give generously and see faces light up.

Busy volunteers and staff helped cook up various lovely meals throughout 2020 and a special effort was made to bring some festive cheer at a grim time. Our Clients are generally so very grateful for what they receive and your kindness in giving means we can be appropriately generous in our giving. It isn't unusual for Clients to shed a tear when they receive gifts and open up about their pain and their hopes for the future. We love to help them move towards achieving their hopes and we work tirelessly to support them in as many ways as possible.



2020 was a challenging year for everyone and particularly difficult if you are homeless or have had periods of homelessness during the pandemic. It is also stressful for people to be in emergency accommodation, typically a room in a shared house often with little/poor internet access. The impact on people's mental health has been profound.

Feedback from Clients is that they miss being able to access our full Services Pathway, learn a new skill, access digital support or our range of workshops to help them move their lives forward. They feel like a year has been lost and we have witnessed their struggle(s).

We continue to deliver our Outreach stretches across the wards of the Borough and provide direct support to homeless people in the form of food, clothing and encouragement/facility to access our services. We will of course continue to do all we can to support those on the fringes of society and we hope, in due course to ultimately see each person move towards independence.

A home of their own...

When people move into accommodation, they often need good quality items of furniture and physical assistance to move.

Our "shout outs" often generate response from people far and wide. We are really grateful and even more so, are our Clients.

Within The Hope Hub building, there is limited storage space so we have to try and arrange pick-up and delivery of items on the day of moving.



Thank you to everyone who has stepped up and donated quality items and/or helped with the physical moving. We get some incredible feedback from Clients who want to pass on their thanks to you too.

Snapshot of the last 9 months:

The whole team continues to work hard to deliver our commitment to the local community to help prevent and end homelessness and to assist those experiencing issues of poverty and isolation.

- The Hope Hub has remained open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Between April-December 2020, our various services have been accessed 6,979 times.**
- 81 new Clients have been supported in addition to the existing 100+ cases that remain open.
- **64 of the 81 new Clients have been supported into some form of accommodation.**
- 446 toiletry and emergency items packs have been given out.
- **800 activity items and menus have been distributed with food parcels.**
- 26 people have been supported into employment through our Training & Employment Coach.
- **4,137 1-to-1 Intervention Support sessions have been held with Clients and/or other services.**
- 1,800+ food parcels sourced, packed and many delivered.
- **We have outreached across the Borough 262 times (to provide direct support to homeless people - food, clothing, encourage access to our services).**
- 412 visits to The Hope Hub were made during the Lockdown(s) from Clients.
- **Secured 23 benevolent grants for vulnerable people who would not otherwise be able to pay their rent deposit/rent or have no recourse to public funds.**
- Provided 34 specialist debt management sessions for vulnerable Clients through our partnership with Frontline debt advice.
- **Supported many to access our online digital services and introduced a new project 'IT CONNECT' with 62 modules completely successfully online.**

From January 2021

Due to the new variant(s) of COVID-19, we are now working in smaller 'staff bubbles' with limited volunteers to keep everyone as safe as possible. We continue to open twice a week for Clients (outside our building with PPE) for food parcels, hot food, clothing, PPE and emergency items on a face to face basis. Some higher need Clients are met face to face and outreached each week including delivery of medication(s).

Intervention support is maintained at a high level through home working primarily outside of opening days as are our Outreach services across the Borough.

Background work is underway so when it is safe to do so, we can begin to re-open again and allow Clients in the building to access our full CRISIS and EMPOWERMENT services. Naturally, we are following central, NHS and local government guidelines closely.

Our staff and key volunteers are able to get an early vaccine from February 2021 and we are grateful for that. Clients are also on a priority list and we are supporting them to access a vaccine too.

**And more news next time as we unveil a new exciting partnership project...
Volunteers will be needed too – so watch this space!**

Christmas Giving Campaign

The response to our Just Giving Christmas Appeal was fantastic raising £6,030 plus Gift Aid. Thank you to everyone who supported us over the festive period allowing us to continue to deliver our essential services to those who need our support.

Local Community Supporters

Here's a shout out of our thanks and appreciation to you all – your generosity and kindness is truly amazing!



Alcon, ADP, Skanska, and Enterprise – Companies with a big heart with employees donating a whole range of items from joggers, gloves, scarfs, thermos flasks and gift packs to make life a little easier for our Clients.

Claire Black once again held a Facebook Christmas appeal to raise money to buy Gregg's vouchers. Perfectly timed for Christmas as we had run out in December. Vouchers are a great way to help our Clients get warm food easily and locally at weekends or early in the mornings before any services open.



Holloway Ladies Rugby Club

TK Maxx Foundation

Jenoptik

Bridges Estate Agents – donated money instead of holding their Christmas Staff party.

Integrity Solutions Limited

Dr Matt Golightly BDS Atrium Dental





The Square Camberley and its Giving Tree

Novacyt, Camberley

Pine Ridge Ladies Circle Golf Club held a Christmas appeal and added a further £707 to the £1,000 they had raised throughout the year.

Thank you to the many **Church communities and donors** who support our work regularly.



As a busy, focussed, frontline registered charity, we stand for those on the fringes of society struggling with life and are often a voice for the voiceless.

As your local charity, we ask you to continue to support our work.

We remain determined to support the vulnerable, those affected by homelessness and poverty in our community.

For more information, please visit www.thehopehub.org.uk where you can also find details on how to donate to support our work.

You can keep in touch by phoning, email, website, Facebook or Twitter.
Thank you.

*Here's to 2021 being a breakthrough year and improved services for those on the fringes of society.
Do stay in touch and keep well.
As always, a genuine 'Thank you' for caring about those struggling at this time.*

Mags Mercer, Chief Executive

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