

Newsletter  
December 2020

NewHope

PREVENTING  
HOMELESSNESS.  
TRANSFORMING  
LIVES.

Make sure someone is

NOT  
^ Alone  
at Christmas

“NOT  
^ Cold. Tired. Lonely. Fearful.”

# One day at a time

(with an eye to the future)

It's New Hope's 30th anniversary this year and it's proving to be probably the most challenging year of them all. Yet, amidst the uncertainties, the challenges and the anxieties something quite remarkable has been happening, something which is quietly worth celebrating: over 100 men and women who were experiencing rough sleeping were brought into a place of safety.





For the vast majority of these individuals, this has marked the end of rough sleeping, at least for now but hopefully for ever. This incredible effort has only been possible through some outstanding partnership work, notably between New Hope, One YMCA and Watford Borough Council.

As we continue through this challenging period, we welcome our friends at One YMCA who will be working alongside us to play a more dominant role in the provision of homelessness services in Watford. The events of this year have taught us that lives can only be transformed and homelessness prevented when organisations work closely together.

The pandemic, despite all its woes, has been a catalyst for positive

transformation in the lives of many. But sadly, humanly speaking, the future looks somewhat bleak with economic and social factors suggesting that we may have a new wave of people presenting as homeless. So, how do we respond? With despair? No. With panic? No. We keep doing what we've been doing for the past 30 years: working hard, doing our best, taking one day at a time (with an eye to the future). We are always mindful too of the Christian foundations on which New Hope is built, which causes our hearts to respond with warmth and our minds with reassurance to Solomon's wise words found in the Bible to, *'Trust in the LORD with all your heart, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths'* Proverbs 3: 5-6.

Matthew

Matthew Heasman  
CEO





# NOT Alone at Christmas

Christmas is going to be a difficult time for many of us. The traditional celebrations with colleagues, friends and family have been cancelled or curtailed. Many of us have experienced a drop in our income. Some of us are grieving loved ones. We are all missing the freedoms that we had and perhaps took for granted.

**Yet, if you are street homeless, then Christmas has always been a time of loneliness, sorrow and hardship.**

**Meaningless. Cold. Tired. Lonely. Fearful.** This is what some of our current residents said when asked to describe what Christmas was like when homeless – **a Christmas without a warm and safe home.**

At the Haven Support Centre, we will give a warm welcome this Christmas time to people who are currently rough sleeping in Watford. Our support workers and volunteers, who are full of compassion, kindness and patience, will provide hot food, clothes, sleeping bags and toiletries to those who have nothing. **We will do all we can to help people feel they are not alone.**

We see people who have been let down by everyone else in their lives; broken men and women who have grown up in abusive rather than loving homes; vulnerable people who are struggling to access the support they need with mental health and addiction challenges; people who feel alone and lost.





Please donate  
online today  
[www.newhope.org.uk/christmas](http://www.newhope.org.uk/christmas)

Cheques can be made payable  
to New Hope and posted to  
New Hope, 67 Queens Road,  
Watford, WD17 2QN.

Please, if you are able, consider making a donation  
so that people who are sleeping rough in Watford  
are not alone this Christmas time.



**£4.98** can provide  
hot food, a shower,  
clean clothes and  
free access to laundry  
facilities at the Haven  
Support Centre.

Help give someone  
dignity and respect.



**£17** can give someone  
experiencing  
homelessness access  
to a key working  
session with a skilled  
and compassionate  
staff member - a  
session which may  
change someone's life.



**£35** can provide an  
advocacy session  
for someone  
who is currently  
rough sleeping to  
help them access  
accommodation,  
benefits and  
healthcare.

# NewHope

## SOS Street Outreach Service

**Michele** from the SOS writes:

**“The Street Outreach Service (SOS) was launched in 2019, and we work in partnership with the Intervention Team. The SOS team’s remit is to engage with entrenched rough sleepers.**

We go out on a daily basis to connect with people who are rough sleeping. We locate where people are sleeping and establish their needs. Our aim is to develop and maintain non-judgemental, honest and trusting relationships with them, and facilitate their accessing other support services.

The challenges of the team include the service users’ reluctance to engage and even when they do, due to the chaotic nature of their

lives, they often do not attend appointments and have lost all trust with professionals. Their behaviours can also be very challenging. But we hope by establishing trusting relationships and never giving up we will see people develop the skills to face their difficulties and live in their own accommodation.”



For the latest information on winter shelter provision, please visit [newhope.org.uk/winter](https://newhope.org.uk/winter)





## We asked the SOS staff members why they do their jobs.



“ For me, it’s about being a voice for those who often go unheard, and being there to listen when they need to talk. ”

Freya

“ Sometimes people can become invisible to others, I like those people to know that I see them and I believe they deserve a second chance, as I have been given a second chance. ”

Caroline



“ I feel I am fulfilling God’s purpose for my life. Having had struggles myself, I truly believe that ‘all things work together for the good...’ This was recently summed up by a service user who said to me ‘Jesus helps you and you have helped me’. ”

Michele



“ I like to know that I can make a positive difference to the most entrenched rough sleeper helping them to know their worth and purpose in society. Everyone deserves a chance and the right to make their own choices to feel included in their journey. ”

Vivienne



# A LONG WAY

# from HOME

**The chances are Christmas will be different for many of us this year, but the true message of Christmas remains the same. As I reflect on that timeless story of the birth of Jesus, I am struck by how much of it resonates with the plight of the homeless and refugees. Government requirements often add to the difficulties and frustrations experienced by those who are homeless. In a similar way the census held at the time of Jesus' birth meant Mary and Joseph had no option but to go to Bethlehem. It would have been a difficult journey for someone heavily pregnant and it meant Mary could not give birth in her own home.**

We all remember there is no room in the inn or perhaps more accurately there is no guest room. Mary and Joseph had to bed down amongst the animals. The baby Jesus is laid in the manger. Those who are homeless often rely on the kindness of others, but this may be limited to a sofa for a bed or perhaps a mattress in a parked van on the driveway.

It seems Jesus' birth goes unnoticed by most people in Bethlehem. Those who did notice were the shepherds who hurried to see the Christ Child having been told of his birth by angels. The first people invited to meet Jesus are not the rich and powerful but the lowly shepherds who themselves lived a hard life tending the sheep and living in caves.







time before they can get back to that place they call home.

The Christmas story is one of God meeting us in our humanity. Not from a position of power, but one of vulnerability, a babe lying in a manger. It is a symbol of hope, of new life and a declaration of God's love for all of humanity, identifying especially with poor and vulnerable, those who are homeless and those who are refugees.

Christmas will be different this year, but it can still be very special as we remember the timeless story of

Christmas. Perhaps we can spare a thought and say a prayer for those who are a long way from home or have nowhere to call home. Please pray for New Hope and please support their work if you can. May the love, peace and joy of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas.

Next to visit the baby Jesus were the wise men who come from the East, foreigners, outsiders and yet welcomed by Holy Family. Shortly afterwards Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus were forced to flee to Egypt, because of persecution. They have become refugees. It will be a long



**Rev Tony Rindl**  
Vicar of St Mary's,  
Watford

Laura, project lead writes:

**“It is quite possibly the most important thing we have ever done in our working lives”.** These are words that Matthew Heasman, New Hope’s Chief Executive, said to me early on in lockdown, when we spoke about the big question of ‘what happens next?’ to those rough sleepers that had been housed in the Travelodge and other temporary accommodation sites. **Back in April, *Project Home* was formed by a small team of staff from across New Hope.**



As we developed our ideas, we set ourselves aims using three core principles from Homeless Link’s ***Everyone In For Good*** campaign as our basis:

**🏠 Nobody should have to return to the streets when the temporary accommodation is no longer made available**

**🏠 Everyone should receive an appropriate offer of next-stage accommodation that is tailored to their needs**

**🏠 As an organisation, we should not just return**

**to business as usual – this presents an opportunity to add in or redesign some of our services and look at innovative options.**

We met regularly; to support the incredible work that was already taking place, to help encourage the need for partnership, to propose new ideas and extensions to current services to help support people into new accommodation, and to prepare for





those who may come to us in the future due to losing their homes.

Together, we launched the **A Home Of My Own** appeal which raises money to help people get together deposits for the Private Rented Sector, helps with grants to buy essential furniture or white goods, and to provide intensive floating support to support anyone who hasn't held a tenancy in a long time, to ensure they have the best possible chance of success in a new home.

**We've seen some incredible generosity from both individuals and groups which will enable us to help a lot of people move into their own homes for a long time to come.**

Being completely honest, we didn't achieve everything that we wanted to, but much of that is due to circumstances outside of our control, perhaps some of the impact of the work we have done will take time to bear fruit.

It has been a pleasure working closely with people in New Hope that I might not ordinarily interact with, and during a time where we would otherwise all have felt quite isolated in our services,

the ability to come together (albeit via Zoom) meant we could feel a sense of team effort.

All of us are changed by the pandemic, but some of that change – in thinking innovatively about how best to help people, and working collaboratively towards a common goal, is definitely for the better.



# Gifts of



Give a gift that changes lives – give a Gift of Hope



New Hope's **Gifts of Hope** cards are a popular way of giving someone a present at Christmas. They are professionally-designed and include a description of the gift as well as space for you to write your own message. We can either post a card to you or to your loved one or you can order an e-voucher from our website.

## THE ESSENTIALS



How does someone survive sleeping on the streets of Watford? It's a harsh way of life – all year round. New Hope provides essential humanitarian aid for people who are rough sleeping: hot food, showers, clean clothes (including new underwear), laundry facilities, sanitary items and sleeping bags.

**£4.98** will enable someone to receive the essentials from the Rough Sleeping Prevention Service. Help give someone dignity and comfort this Christmas by providing a warm shower, fresh clothes and a decent meal.



## TIME TO TALK



No two journeys of recovery are identical. Every resident is treated as an individual. Service users are supported and helped by skilled and compassionate staff members in regular key working sessions. It is these meetings that often hold the key to recovery for someone recovering from substance misuse or struggling with their mental health.

**£17.00** will pay for one service user to receive one key working session – a session which may change someone's life.

## ON YOUR SIDE



Kicked out of home. A victim of an illegal eviction. Fleeing abuse. Suddenly, you're alone and have lost everything. At the Haven Support Centre, we are 'On Your Side'. We come alongside people when they are at their most vulnerable. As well as providing essential humanitarian aid, we act as advocates helping people access accommodation, healthcare and benefits.

**£35** can provide an advocacy session for someone who is currently rough sleeping to help them access accommodation, benefits and healthcare.



**[newhope.org.uk/gifts](https://newhope.org.uk/gifts)**

To order a Gift of Hope, please visit [newhope.org.uk/gifts](https://newhope.org.uk/gifts)

Please place your order by 4pm on 18 December to ensure the card arrives in time for Christmas. The downloadable e-vouchers can be purchased at any time so perfect for a last minute gift!

# Bringing people together

When lockdown began, we closed the Community Market Garden and Ian Bond, Community Market Garden manager, was redeployed to the Sanctuary to run an activity programme for the 23 residents there.

Ian says: “We expected that lockdown would increase the number of incidents at the Sanctuary, but they actually decreased dramatically and the atmosphere became surprisingly calm.

Residents were involved with a variety of development opportunities: PAT testing certificates, poetry writing, making a planter out of pallet wood, increase of fitness through exercise sessions, weights and exercise bike, music as a therapeutic aid (drumming, guitar,

keyboard, singing) or improving existing musical skills, using art as a therapeutic tool, using plants therapeutically and for practical purposes (food growing), bike maintenance and table tennis.

Aggression, fear and anxiety were channelled into practical activities. There was a ‘we’re all in this together’ spirit of solidarity and consideration of others.”

**“ Just knowing that the activities are available gives a sense of being welcome... It creates a sense of belonging and ease... activities are so varied and flexible, there are no expectations or levels of achievement makes it much more ‘fun’ orientated and easy to join in. ”**







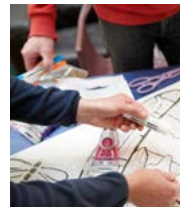
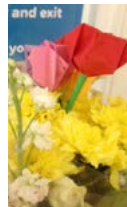
“ I describe my art project as my new oxygen! I am so happy that I started it and fortunate that I had the right people to encourage me on my journey... it definitely has been a godsend for me during this difficult and challenging time! ”

“ The existence of the activities has lifted the general mood ”

“ I’m certain that my personal recovery from addiction has been greatly encouraged by engaging with the activities and also by the simple fact of having somewhere to be during the daytime. ”

“ Had the opportunity to practice and improve personal skills. ”

“ It’s important to me to contribute to community living. Playing a lot of table tennis improves fitness while gyms are closed and it brings people together. ”



Thank you to Soul Survivor Church for the loan of their table tennis table and to  watford community housing

Watford Community Housing for the grant to buy our own!



# The reset button

**Taking up residence at the Community Home means a new phase in life. New residents are encouraged to leave their old lives, behaviours and negative self-beliefs at the door as they are welcomed in with open arms, irrespective of their past.**

Residents build self-confidence and develop essential coping mechanisms for facing life's challenges in a non-judgemental atmosphere which promotes personal growth, compassion and belonging.

Community is the essence of the house, with residents actively supporting and encouraging each other through the peaks and troughs of recovery.

Residents become part of the Community Home family; they enjoy dinner time together every evening where they reflect on the day and express gratitude for life's blessings.

All residents receive individualised, holistic and specialist care from staff in their rehabilitation from substance/alcohol misuse and homelessness.

“ I have received more helpful advice at the Community Home than I had received during the rest of my life. The New Hope community has taken me in with open arms and I feel supported and ready to move onto the next phase of my life. ”





“ Before I came here, I felt hopeless, helpless and trapped but the Community Home has been a ‘reset button’ for me. Life was stagnant and I felt like I was on a Ferris wheel. The Community Home has given me time and space to be comfortable with myself. I now feel trustworthy and trusted. ”



“ The Community Home is a place of peace and tranquillity. Before moving into the Community Home, I was struggling, in a bad state of mind and stuck in a downward spiral. I’m so grateful to the Community Home for being my support network whilst I’m on the 12 steps recovery journey. ”

# Together, we make a difference!

## Congratulations to Charlotte!

Congratulations to Charlotte Mangam, from TK Maxx, who raised over £800 by taking part in the New Forest Marathon.

“It has been amazing to see so many friends, colleagues and relatives sponsor me for the race. I first heard of New Hope through TK Maxx as we donate homeware and other necessities to the Sanctuary. I started volunteering there last year, making dinner once a week, and sadly had to stop due to lockdown. Although my cooking probably wasn't the best they had ever tasted, I really enjoyed chatting to both staff and residents for the hours I was there. I hope to go back to the shelter and get back into my old routine! On the other hand I am not quite as keen to sign up to another marathon anytime soon...”



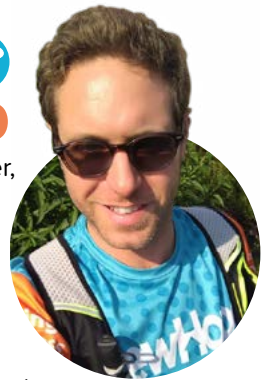
## Daniel and Hilary Woolley get married!

Daniel and Hilary very kindly chose New Hope as one of four charities to support in celebration of their wedding and raised over £100. If you have a celebration coming up, why not think about marking the occasion by asking for a gift for New Hope?



## 30 for 30

During the summer, Mark Clements completed a 30 kilometre walk in 35° heat in aid of New Hope. He walked from Watford to St Albans to celebrate 30 years of New Hope as part of our 30 for 30 initiatives! Well done Mark!







## Harvest still happened!

A big thank you to the schools and community groups who kindly held collections for us throughout Harvest and everyone who donated to our Harvest Fresh Food Fund this year!

Participating groups included:

Abbots Langley Primary School

Aldenham School

All Saints Church,  
Croxley Green

Christ Church  
Chorleywood  
C of E School

Christ Church and St John's, Radlett

Divine Saviour School

Kingsway Infant School

Knutsford School

Northwood and Pinner Liberal  
Synagogue

St Luke's Church, Watford

St Margaret's School

St Mary's Church, Harefield

St Meryl's School

Stanborough Primary



**Josi Zane** is our  
Fundraising and  
Communications  
Officer.

Please get in touch with Josi on  
**[jjane@newhope.org.uk](mailto:jjane@newhope.org.uk)**  
or **01923 227 132** if you would like  
to find out more about fundraising  
for New Hope.



# Volunteers - the heart of New Hope

**Thank you to the  
volunteers who  
helped with  
HARVEST  
collections!**

“I’ve really enjoyed being able to use my time during lockdown to help out in the local community. It’s been great to have something useful to do while I was furloughed and it’s been so interesting to meet other volunteers too. I’m back at work full-time now, but volunteering on a Saturday morning is a nice way to start the weekend!”



Emma  
Topham



Zoe  
Wilson

“I started with New Hope soon after lockdown. I first started working in the kitchen at the Haven, then when the regular helper was back I stayed helping out wherever needed, either sorting out the clothes supplies, organising donations, helping serve breakfast or whatever is needed. They are a lovely team and they do such a great job supporting the community.

I have also helped at the Community Home, just spending time with the guys living in the home, going on walks to do errands with them (when they are unable to go out alone) or just chatting in the garden/watching TV. To me this was special, watching people transform themselves, with such a supportive group around them encouraging and showing God’s love.”







“I’ve been picking up bagels from Flax Foods in Bushey Heath twice a week and taking them to the Sanctuary, where the ‘Bagel Man’ is always received with appreciation and smiles! I am also picking up customer donations and damaged stock from Lidl and taking it to the Haven. I am constantly amazed by how much I collect and regularly have a full boot. I have enjoyed being able to support by doing these two roles and seeing the smiles and gratitude it brings.”



“Volunteering in lockdown not only gave me a sense of purpose, but I felt I could use my skill set to help those less fortunate. It’s about giving back, and never so much needed more than in the last six months. Cooking and serving breakfast for the residents of New Hope gave me great joy and puts a lot into perspective.”



“The lockdown changed nothing for me. I wasn’t worried about going out during lockdown and in fact I have benefitted because now I do not carry the food crates into the buildings. Watching others carry it in is good for my bad back!”



# NewHope Annual Review 2019 – 2020

Copies can be downloaded from [newhope.org.uk/annualreview](http://newhope.org.uk/annualreview)

Or email Rebecca Palmer, Fundraising and Communications Manager, at [rpalmer@newhope.org.uk](mailto:rpalmer@newhope.org.uk)



RENEW > REBUILD  
RESTORE <

**NewHope  
Annual  
Review  
2019 – 2020**

The year to end of March 2020 saw a continuation of the trends of the previous few years followed by the dramatic dislocation to both society and the work of New Hope brought about by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early March 2020.

Writing about the 11 months up to March feels like ancient history after the huge upheaval of the last few months. However, the work of the previous year and the years before is what enabled us to respond so rapidly and effectively when the crisis struck.

In the pre-COVID period, we had seen levels of those facing homelessness continuing at very high levels with our accommodation services housing 60 people per night, the Watford Winter Shelter providing short-term shelter for another 19 and still around 130 people either rough sleeping on the streets of Watford or in cars and squats.

In March, when the pandemic broke out in the UK, there were 80 people on the streets of Watford. Clearly this was a very high risk situation. The government was emphasising washing hands and staying at home where

possible – not easy when you're sleeping rough. With the passionate and sacrificial work of our staff, helped by the government's support, we moved people into temporary accommodation, including the Travelodge. One YMCA and council temporary accommodation. Huge thank you to those organisations and to Watford Borough Council for their wonderful support.

Sadly, our planned 30th anniversary celebration on the evening of 23 March (the day lockdown began) was cancelled. The day was therefore very different to how we anticipated but we thank God for this organisation, for Janet, Sheila and Tim who founded it all those years ago and for all those who have been a part of helping those who so often fall between the cracks.

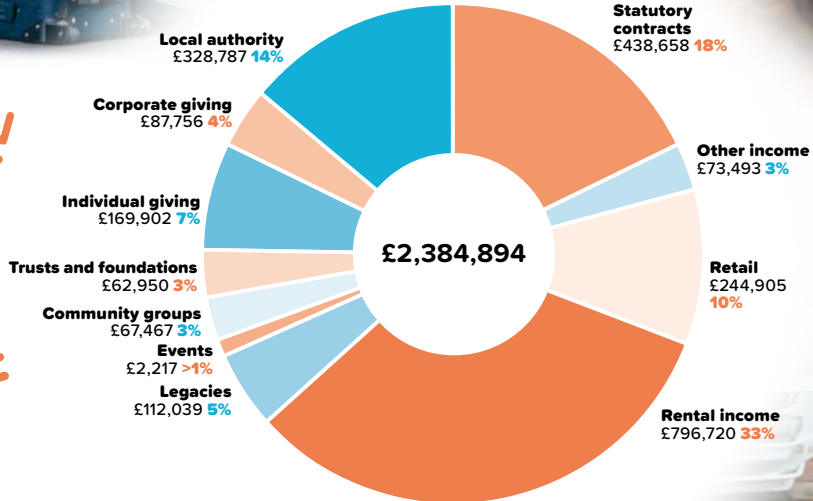
Thank you.  
**John Ford**  
(Chair) and  
**Matthew Heasman**  
(CEO)



[newhope.org.uk](http://newhope.org.uk)  
PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS. TRANSFORMING LIVES.



INCOME





## INTERVENTION



1,130 calls to the 24/7 emergency helpline.



477 people accessed the Rough Sleeping Prevention Service.



111 different people used the winter shelter for at least one night.

**515**  
people were supported by our intervention services

## RECOVERY



111 people stayed in Assessment Beds.



78 people stayed in Emergency Accommodation.



A service user gained a qualification in Leadership in Running Fitness with England Athletics funded by HopeCollege.

**203**  
people were accommodated in our recovery accommodation services.

## PREVENTION



All but one of those who were in permanent accommodation maintained their tenancies.

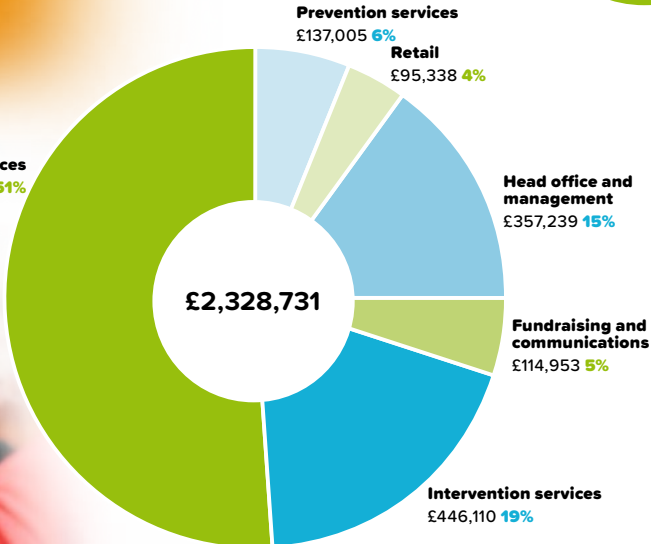


Each month between 80% and 90% of TST service users received help with their benefits



Support with bills and budgeting was provided to approximately 32 people each month.

**99**  
individuals supported by TST  
**11** people were resident in the two HopeHomes



EXPENDITURE



New Hope

NOT  
^ Alone  
at Christmas

Please donate  
online today  
[www.newhope.org.uk/christmas](http://www.newhope.org.uk/christmas)

Cheques can be made payable  
to New Hope and posted to  
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**New Hope**

67 Queens Road, Watford,  
Herts, WD17 2QN



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