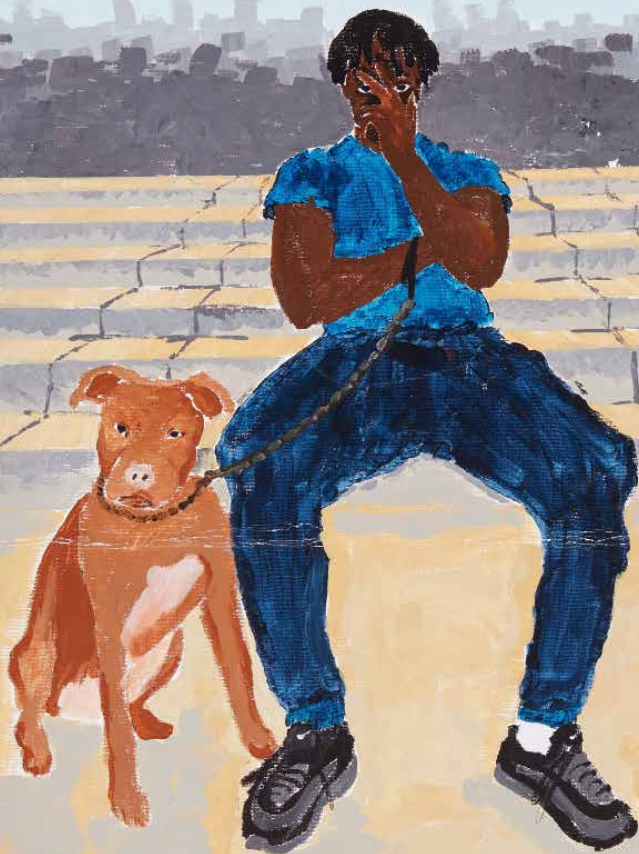


thePavement

The free magazine for homeless people



Hope
July / August 2020

1

Hey guess what? It's illegal for police to nick anyone at the moment as they have to stay 2 meters away!

I'm with stupid...

Duh...

2

If you don't believe me, watch this!

Yee Ha!

3

I'm issuing you with a £20 fine for cycling on the Pavement.

4

HUMPH!

I bet you £20 I can ride on the Pavement in front of a policeman without getting in trouble

You're on!

5

OI BRUV!
You're on the road!

6

True, BUT I'm ON the Pavement

BUY STUFF

the Pavement

ROSIE ROKSOPH 2020

Hope

Everyone has had very different Covid-19 experiences. Writing this in June the next stage of getting back to normal is far from clear. The worst result could mean 1000s of people thrust back on to the streets. The best could bring homelessness to an end. So in the spirit of positivity our summer issue is an editorial mash-up of lockdown stories, hope and help.

To find food, recovery support and somewhere to stay you would normally use the centre pages of this mag. Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to compile an accurate List for this issue. If you have WiFi then go to www.pavement.org.uk to find our most up-to-date info. Next issue – if it's needed – we plan to provide our readers with the List again. Until then, stay safe.

The Pavement team

- twitter.com/thepavementmag
- facebook.com/thepavementmag
- instagram.com/pavement_magazine

London/Scotland Issue 127 July–August 2020

Published by *the Pavement*
Registered Charity Number 1110656
www.thepavement.org.uk

Editor: Nicola Baird nicola@thepavement.org.uk
Web editor: Kieran Hughes web@thepavement.org.uk
Design: Marco Biagini scotland@thepavement.org.uk

Writers/Researchers: Mat Amp, Marco Biagini, Rachel Brennan, Jo Brown, Martin Burrows, Jake Cudsi, Selina Hanley, Matthew Hobbs, Kieran Hughes, Ian Kalman, Michael Keshani, McGinlay, Jacqueline Messih, Chris Reed, Chris Sampson, Frances Schofield

Cartoons: Ken Pyne, Rosie Roksooph, Mike Stokoe

London Co-ordinator: Mat Amp
london@thepavement.org.uk, tel: 07595 602 324

Scotland Co-ordinator Marco Biagini
scotland@thepavement.org.uk, text: 07701 093 643

Cover: We love this portrait. The unnamed artist at Oakhill Secure Training Centre, which is for boys aged 12 to 17 serving a custodial sentence, has called it *Untitled*. Also see Prison & Homelessness stories on p6, p18, p24. www.koestlerarts.org.uk
© Koestler Arts

Contents

About us.....	4
News	5–8

SPECIAL

How was lockdown	9
#HealthNow	10 – 12
All change.....	13
Zoom	14 – 15
Cartoon	16
Mini List.....	17
Behind bars	18 – 21
Mat's column	22 – 23
Radical recruit	24 – 25
Health.....	26 – 27
Healing art.....	28 – 29
Humour.....	30
Your rights.....	31

The Pavement is written for your entertainment and information. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the publication, *the Pavement* cannot be held responsible for the use of the information it publishes. The contents should not be relied upon as a substitute for medical, legal or professional advice. *The Pavement* is a forum for discussion, and opinions expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of *the Pavement*.

The Pavement (print) ISSN 1757-0476
The Pavement (online) ISSN 1757-0484

Make sure you read...

thePavement



Find us online:

www.thepavement.org.uk

Strange times

During lockdown *the Pavement* worked with health charity Groundswell to produce 15,000 *Health & Wellbeing in a Crisis* booklets. Funding came from Crisis (thank you!). We really hope you saw a copy and it helped you through lockdown. If you want to share any writing, art or poems with *the Pavement*, email nicola@thepavement.org.uk or see the **Your Voice** page on our website.

This mag is going to be shared with our readers in London and Scotland. But thanks to another collaboration with Groundswell we are printing enough to also distribute in Birmingham, Newcastle and Manchester.

Welcome to *the Pavement*: a magazine for homeless readers

We're a small charity, founded in London in 2005, producing a pocket-sized mag full of news, views and cartoons. Right in the centre is a list of places to help you. Each issue we print 8,500 FREE bimonthly magazines written for homeless and insecurely-housed readers in London and Scotland. You can find *the Pavement* at hostels, day centres, homeless surgeries, soup-runs and libraries.

We believe that sleeping rough is physically and mentally harmful, but reject the view that a one-size-fits-all approach to getting people off the streets works.

We are always looking for volunteer journalists and photographers to create exclusive content that's written with our readers in mind. We particularly welcome those who've been homeless. A big thank you to our readers and writers.

• www.thepavement.org.uk

Fundraisers needed

Can you fundraise or donate so we can keep providing *the Pavement* free to homeless people? A magazine that helps in moments of crisis, as well as giving the info people may need to move on.

• nicola@thepavement.org.uk

Covid-19 crisis update

After warnings that half the rough sleepers in hotels may not have access to support from July, because of NRPF, from Museum of Homelessness and 100 organisations with *#NoOneLeftOut* and Crisis's *Home For All* campaigns comes some good news. On 24 June government promised £85 million to prevent 1000s of people in emergency accommodation from having to return to rough sleeping. Crisis adds: "We need emergency legislation to ensure that every local council can provide housing support to everyone experiencing homelessness."

Everyone In £ flaws

The *Bureau of Investigative Journalism's* investigation into the government's Everyone In policy – which asked councils to house their rough sleeping population in a matter of days – explores the problems with the response, and the issues now facing government policy on homelessness. Firstly, emergency housing for people sleeping rough with symptoms of Covid-19 wasn't secured by the Greater London Authority until three weeks after the "Everyone In" policy was announced. **Wales** set aside £10m to secure housing and protection for homeless people during the pandemic, three times the amount ringfenced by **England**. Alarming, contracts with

14,160

rough sleepers moved to hotels and temporary accommodation for lockdown Source: *Big Issue*

hotels to house people sleeping rough was set to expire in June. By late May cash-strapped councils were struggling to raise funds to secure the emergency hotels beyond that date.

- As *the Pavement* goes to press exit dates are still not clear. For this reason, we have a Mini List of services on p17 only. Also see www.thepavement.org.uk/services.php

Ideally phone before making a long trip as places may be shut.

Lifesaver

Everyone In saved lives. In **London** at the end of April there were 28 homeless people diagnosed with Covid-19 and none diagnosed since mid June. In **New York**, as of 6 May, 700 homeless people were diagnosed with Covid-19 and 69 people were known to have died. "This success is directly attributable to the closure of dormitory style night shelters and the move into single room accommodation in hotels and similar accommodation," reports the NHS.

Unsafe freedom

The Ministry of Justice has revealed they released more than 1,000 prison leavers into homelessness, at the height of the coronavirus pandemic lockdown. The prison leavers were released into rough sleeping or other forms of homelessness between March 23 and April 30. The *Guardian* reports the government has increased funding for accommodation for prison leavers in response to the figures, which were released to Labour MP Lynn Brown. The figures, relating to **England and Wales**, also showed an additional 1,209 people left prison with unknown circumstances for accommodation during the same period.



Feed the people: After 12 weeks of lockdown the brilliant duo at Museum of Homelessness, Streetskitchen and dozens of volunteers have provided 8,504 hot meals to people in temporary accommodation. Now they have to give the homeless task force hub back, so Museum of Homelessness is looking for a building in north London.

museumofhomelessness.org © Pavement

No recourse

The Guardian understands local authorities in the **UK** have demanded the government drop its “no recourse to public funds” (NRPF) immigration status, until at least the end of the Covid-19 pandemic. Under the status, immigrants are allowed to work in the UK, but are excluded access to most benefits if they become unemployed.

The Local Government Association told Westminster in June that thousands of immigrants using the NRPF visa had approached their council for assistance during the pandemic. There has been a rise in homeless migrant workers with NRPF status, with many more facing homelessness once eviction restrictions are lifted. The NRPF immigration status was introduced in 2012 as part of the government’s unpleasant “hostile environment” policy.

- Do you have NRPF? You can still see a GP, see p26

Refuge & outreach

Good news: during lockdown the Outside Project opened an LGBTIQ+ DVA Refuge called STAR Refuge. They also received funding for an LGBTIQ+ Outreach Worker to support LGBTIQ+ people in emergency hotel accommodation, the ‘new’ homeless and general enquiries.

- www.LGBTIQoutside.org



Happy to help: The UCKG Finsbury Park soup kitchen tripled the number of free food bags it distributed to 169 on Saturday 6 June. They also took home-cooked soup and food bags to people who did not want to lose their pitches outside supermarkets. © UCKG

Everyone In closing?

More on the Everyone In policy, from *Manchester Evening News* (*MEN*). The government planned to end it less than two months after it was introduced. By mid-May the government had stopped funding the scheme, according to a report leaked to *MEN*, leaving councils scrambling to maintain support services and fund accommodation. The scheme's end arrives at the start of a fresh homelessness crisis, with **Greater Manchester** alone expecting 5,000 new people to become homeless between April and July. Homeless charity Crisis, meanwhile, warned the *BBC* that thousands of homeless people would be forced to return to the streets once the scheme ends.

Lockdown legend

Pauline Town told *Manchester Evening News* in June that she was "busier than ever", working 16-hour days at her pub in **Greater Manchester**. Law enforcement needn't worry, however. While her pub was closed, landlady Town ran a kitchen for homeless and vulnerable people during the pandemic. A team of nine volunteers (Town included) served food daily to those struggling to get a meal. Town's charity preceded the Covid-19 crisis, having served the local homeless community with packed lunches at her pub every day for a number of years.

MINI LIST ON P 17
SEE WEBSITE FOR UPDATES



Hot lunch: During lockdown the Akshaya Patra Foundation UK, with Food for All, served over 100,000 hot vegan meals of khichdi, an Indian dish made with vegetables, lentils and rice, at Holborn and Watford, along with its affiliate partner Food For All. © Akshaya Patra Foundation

Priority failure

Los Angeles mayor Eric Garcetti has a peculiar set of priorities. In April the two-term Democrat revealed his latest budget, pledging US\$1.86b to the LA Police Department (LAPD). Then the budget was passed without review by the City Council, according to the *LA Times*, even though funding for the LAPD in Garcetti's budget represented a US\$120m increase on the previous year. The annual budget also eclipses Garcetti's US\$1.2b 10-year scheme to house the city's 60,000 homeless population. Responding to the ensuing protests against racism and police brutality, Garcetti eventually pledged to cut the LAPD's annual budget by up to US\$150m.

Curfew cruelty

Citizens of **Nairobi, Kenya** are bravely protesting an extra-judicial killing by the police. The protests were sparked by the death of James Mureithi, a 51-year-old homeless man accused by police of breaking the Kenyan capital's coronavirus curfew. The Independent Policing Oversight Authority believe police officers have killed 15 people for allegedly breaking curfew, as well as injuring 31 others. Mureithi was reportedly shot by officers who then left his body in an alleyway, according to the *Independent*. ■

How was lockdown?

Groundswell is monitoring the *Impact of Covid-19* on people who are homeless. Report by *Mat Amp, Jo Brown & Martin Burrows*

Since the Covid-19 pandemic first came to the UK, Groundswell have been working with NHS England to understand the issues currently faced by the homeless community during the crisis. The pandemic and the measures taken to contain the virus are having a significant impact on the lives of people who are homeless. The research has included people sharing their experiences through interviews and reporting through their mobile phones. The evidence gathered is helping to inform how the NHS and other services respond.

This is what we have heard so far during our Impact of Covid-19 research:

- “I have been on lockdown for 3 weeks. Can’t access a GP service and unable to speak with my keyworker as they are unwell.”
- “Benefits are a big issue.”
- “A lot of us cannot use the internet.”
- “My mental health has deteriorated... I’m lonely and bored.”
- “I’ve had Covid-19. I spent 16 days in bad way and received no real support from the staff at the hostel.”
- “My doctor changed my script and I couldn’t get my meds over the weekend which caused me to relapse.”
- “[I have] gone from being [street] homeless to having food delivered, making new friends and getting taxis to health appointments.” ■

Join the research

- If you are street homeless, living in a hotel, hostel, sofa surfing or have recently been moved on, Groundswell would love to hear from you. Text **07476 552 438** to share your story confidentially and anonymously. You will be charged your usual rate for texts, but we can reimburse you for phone credit to cover the cost of data and text messages.
- If you’d like to train as a Citizen Journalist collecting stories email jo.brown@groundswell.org.uk



#HealthNow roundup

Highlights from #HealthNow projects running in Birmingham, Newcastle and Greater Manchester

BIRMINGHAM: #HealthNow in Birmingham has a fantastic group of Peer Researchers who are committed to investigating barriers to accessing healthcare and developing solutions to overcome them. *Frances Schofield* spoke to Peer Researchers, Dan and Lee.

Q. What has been your involvement with #HealthNow in Birmingham?

Lee: I've been involved in every step of the peer research. I trained as a researcher in March and helped design research questions. We were ready to start interviewing people in day centres and hostels to find out more about their health needs.

Dan: As a peer researcher I've been attending Birmingham #HealthNow Alliance meetings. These meetings bring together experts by experience and representatives from the NHS, Public Health England, the Council and the voluntary sector in Birmingham to talk about homeless health inequalities.

Q. What first attracted you to the role of peer researcher?

Lee: It's something we've been crying out for. I believe everyone has

a right to access healthcare and for me it was more of a personal thing. When I was homeless, I found it a struggle to get health appointments and also wasn't treated normally. If I could help change any of that, I wanted to be involved.

Q. How has your role as a peer researcher changed during lockdown?

Dan: Groundswell has been monitoring the impact of coronavirus on people experiencing homelessness and sharing this data with decision makers who are responding to the pandemic. I've contributed to this research through phone interviews.

Q. Which activities are you most excited about?

Dan: I'm looking forward to joining the Birmingham #HealthNow Alliance and sharing my experiences with local stakeholders. I'm also looking forward to inputting into the development of the new Call & Check phone service offering peer support to people experiencing homelessness with their health needs.

- **Based in Birmingham and want to know more? Email frances.schofield@crisis.org.uk**





Jeff Parker: peer researcher in Newcastle. © #HealthNow

NEWCASTLE: Before lockdown restrictions were put in place, the #HealthNow project in Newcastle had recruited a great team of volunteers to train as peer researchers *writes Chris Reed*.

Unfortunately, that training had to be postponed. We have been meeting twice a week online. This means that peers have been involved in advising Crisis in Newcastle on coming out of lockdown, online learning offers and even what our Crisis at Christmas event should look like. Peers have also used their insight and lived experience to provide advice to government departments on the priorities they should consider when supporting people experiencing homelessness as we move out of current restrictions.

They say no-one should go back to the streets and every person housed temporarily should be given a plan that relates to their individual and unique set of circumstances, as one-size-fits-all offers do not work. They also advise that health for people experiencing homelessness should be at the heart of any support provided. Peers also attended our regular #HealthNow Alliance meeting online and asked the Local Authority to include their insight and experience to support future planning. Happily, we are now looking to bring peer research training online, so we can identify where health inequality lies and make some changes for the better.

In a nutshell

- #HealthNow is a UK-wide campaign, working towards an inclusive health system where everyone has access to the health care they need.
- The aim is to move people out of homelessness.
- More at: groundswell.org.uk/healthnow



► **GREATER MANCHESTER:** We started #HealthNow in December 2019 and were due to commence our peer research into homeless health when Covid-19 brought plans to a halt, *writes Caroline Allison*. Our #HealthNow Alliance met fortnightly (online) to discuss the health needs of people experiencing homelessness during the crisis. The meetings have been really informative and a great way to share best practice and discuss and escalate any emerging

issues. It's been inspiring to work with and learn from our amazing #HealthNow volunteers during lockdown who have completed fundraising challenges, taken up new hobbies, supported friends and family and continued to volunteer.

- **Manchester is now recruiting volunteers with lived experience of homelessness to deliver a new Call & Check service for #HealthNow. For more info email caroline_allison@shelter.org.uk**



© Mike Stokoe

Will anything change?

Things are hopefully going to change says Manchester's #HealthNow research volunteer *Selina Hanley*

With the world on lockdown all of a sudden people are starting to experience how people that they might only hear about, or watch on TV, feel like on a daily basis. For example, the rush to bulk buy food for fear of being hungry. People are also losing jobs and having to sign up for Universal Credit – those same people who walked past a person in the street and said, 'Get a job'.

People will now understand how easy it is to find yourself struggling and maybe feel what it is like to be in despair, not knowing where your next meal will come or when the money will run out.

People who once looked down their nose at the shop assistant, bin men, care workers or were abusive to the nurse at the hospital – now we are all thanking these guys for the work they do. We now realise that when everything stops and the shit hits the fan, as it has, it is these guys who have kept the place moving while the rest of us, who can, have been able to self-isolate.

But if and when this is over, will everyone remember the anxiety that surrounded these uncertain times and think about the people for whom this is a daily experience before there was a pandemic?

Will people be more considerate to others and notice the great work others do? Will people learn to simply thank people when they have served them or say sorry when someone bumps into you? Will people be more giving to homeless charities and foodbanks? Will people be more understanding of the families that fled their countries to come here for safety?

Will anything change? I believe that people will start to appreciate what they have, they will appreciate the sound of their children playing, they will notice when their neighbours are struggling and need some support. I think people will have more compassion for the struggle of people less fortunate than themselves. I think things will change. They have to.

As for you, this is an opportunity to change the job you hate, by upskilling or doing an adult apprenticeship. Volunteer for a cause you like, give back, do that course, write that book, or even start that business. This is the time to start to make a change.

**MINI LIST ON P 17
SEE WEBSITE FOR UPDATES**

Can you hear me?

Zoom workshops for actors and singers. Report by Ian Kalman

When the isolation started many organisations came up against one big hurdle to overcome. How do they engage their members/ clients during this time when face-to-face work was impossible?

Cardboard Citizens, who make theatre that activates change, decided to try Zoom as a way of continuing their workshop programme. Joint CEO and Creative Director Adrian Jackson said: “We knew our members needed to do something, and we wanted to supply something to take their minds off the lockdown.”

The first project was called London on Lockdown (LOL), Mr Jackson facilitated it using Daniel Defoe’s book *A Journal of the Plague Year* as a springboard. “It was surprising

how many members wanted to be involved. It became the highlight of the week,” he said, adding that he really enjoyed checking in with the members.

The members liked it too, saying: “It gave me structure”; “It gave me something to do” and “I really looked forward to it”.

The first LOL workshop was an experiment to see if a Zoom workshop could work, and as it proved a success an Impro workshop was run and a regular Friday gathering in the form of a check-in.

As social distancing makes it hard to know what the future holds, more Zoom workshops are planned, so if you are interested contact:

- www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk





Let's sing: screenshot from The Choir with No Name's Birmingham Zoom rehearsal. Normally the charity works with more than 1,000 vulnerable adults and has around 240 regular choir members. Due to lack of internet access this dropped to between 50-60 attendees joining the four rehearsals held weekly in London, Brighton, Birmingham and Liverpool. If you have internet you can join on Tuesdays at 2.30pm, details are at www.choirwithnoname.org/online-workshops or email emaq@choirwithnoname.org. Expect to sing favourites such as *This is Me* (released as a charity single in 2019) and the soul classic *Ain't No Mountain High Enough*. "We are working hard to overcome barriers to access through providing devices, data and training to members who are the most isolated," says Rachel Clare from The Choir with No Name.
© The Choir with No Name

Calling writers: Are you a writer or poet who wants to find readers? Paper Nations, the creative writing incubator, wants to champion isolated and marginalised writers via an online publishing platform. See how to submit work on Twitter @TheGreatMargin or go to daretowrite.org/atlas/the-great-margin/submissions.
© Paper Nations



Ken Pyne

" I LIVE IN HOPE OF ACTUALLY BEING IN IT
INSTEAD OF UNDER IT ! "

This time it wasn't possible to compile a full list, but if you have WiFi see www.pavement.org.uk for our most up-to-date info about services in London and Scotland.

Please send any changes to:
web@thepavement.org.uk

ACCOMMODATION

STREETLINK

App and website is the national rough sleeper referral service:
www.streetlink.org.uk

ADVICE & HEALTH

CITIZENS ADVICE

03444 111 444 (England)
0800 028 1456 (Scotland)
citizensadvice.org.uk

COVID-19 MUTUAL AID

Use Facebook for offers of food and other supplies. Find your nearest food bank at www.trusselltrust.org

NHS 111

Call 111 (open 24/7)
All NHS services for Covid-19 are free for everyone – whatever your immigration status. You will not be reported to the Home Office for coronavirus testing or treatment. Dial 999 for urgent emergencies.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE

0808 2000 247 (24/7)

SOLACE

0808 802 5565 for help in London
www.solacewomensaid.org

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

0800 9177650
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

FRANK

0300 123 6600 talktofrank.com

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (NA)

0300 999 1212; ukna.org
Helpline open 10am–midnight.

SMART RECOVERY

Online meetings at the times listed on their website: smartrecovery.org
Use their call back service 9am–5pm by emailing your name & number to support@smartrecovery.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH

CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIVING MISERABLY (CALM)

0800 58 58 58; thecalmzone.net
Helpline open 5pm–midnight. If shut speak to the Samaritans.

SAMARITANS

116 123 (open 24/7),
jo@samaritans.org; samaritans.org
Provides support to anyone in emotional distress or at risk of suicide.

SHOUT

Text 85258 (open 24/7) if you are in crisis, www.giveusashout.org

Behind bars

22 years ago Ruth Wyner, director of a Cambridge homelessness charity, was imprisoned for letting heroin be dealt by service-users on site. Here she discusses politics and prison with *Matthew Hobbs*

"I used to get people knocking on the door of the night shelter saying that the Cambridgeshire police had taken them off the street and just driven them 10 miles out of Cambridge to drop them in a field in the middle of nowhere. There was a really harsh climate in Cambridge," says Ruth Wyner, then Director of Cambridge homelessness charity Wintercomfort. She experienced this "harsh climate" first-hand in May 1998 when she and her colleague John Brock were arrested under Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act for, "knowingly allowing class A drugs to be traded on a centre that I was managing."

Despite her admirable work in journalism, the homelessness sector and more recently psychotherapy, this is how I first heard of Ruth, a charity worker imprisoned while doing her job.

A born "people watcher" Ruth trained in journalism before experimenting with different styles of living including squatting a bungalow in Norfolk. It was here she heard that they were looking for someone to become Deputy to the Director of the Norwich night shelter. Here Ruth's flare for innovation within community-led projects

secured a reputation for developing and managing homeless services. By 1995 she was recruited as Director of Wintercomfort in Cambridge.

"It was run from an old bus in a car park where most of the local street homeless hung out.

"But then we got some funding to buy premises beside one of the college boathouses. I ended up running five projects from there: the day centre, the move-on projects, a rent deposit scheme, an outreach team and the winter shelter which became Jimmy's," says Ruth.

She also secured planning permission and raised a million pounds for a hostel project. But with the landscape of homelessness in Cambridge changing, the police launched their campaign against Ruth. "They sent in two policemen undercover. They infiltrated the day centre 12 times and on nine occasions they were able to buy a £10 bag of heroin. On that basis they arrested me. That law was really set up for people who run crack houses, it wasn't set up for people trying to provide services."

Despite regular liaison with the police over Wintercomfort's activities, Ruth was seen as a

In a nutshell

- Ruth Wyner used to run a homelessness charity in Cambridge.
- Ruth was arrested and put in prison because service-users were buying heroin on site.
- The campaign to release the Cambridge Two was run by Alexander Masters and service user Stuart Shorter.
- Many people leave prison with “no fixed abode” because local authorities say when someone has gone to prison they have made themselves “intentionally homeless,” so lose their right to accommodation.
- *Prison: a survival guide* by Carl Cattermole reveals what it's like in UK prisons now.

threat, but why she became the target of the sting that shook the homelessness sector remains unclear. For some it's simply because the police could, but for Ruth it's because she became “too powerful”; a woman with strong ethical beliefs and the resources to challenge the status quo.

“It's quite Far Right really. I do know that 18 months after my arrest there was a clean-up at the Cambridgeshire Police by the Home Office. They realised there was a

rather nasty presence and they had made me a target.”

Ruth was sentenced to five years in prison, but the fight was not yet over.

Fortunately, she had friends, who prior to sentencing assisted her in navigating the draconian bail restrictions drawn up to prevent her having direct contact with Wintercomfort. Alexander Masters, of book and film *Stuart: A Life Backwards* fame, became the go-between, running between Ruth's university office and Wintercomfort, carrying all the messages and resources they needed to keep the organisation going.

“When Alexander Masters phoned up and wanted a job I thought, ‘Well he won't do very well on the day centre because it's quite rough and ready, but he wrote well’,” says Ruth. But it was Alexander and service-user Stuart Shorter who organised the Cambridge Two campaign to support Ruth and John Brock's release from prison with marches in Cambridge and London, “contacts with other agencies, a sleep-in outside the Home Office, a debate set up in Parliament by my local MP and articles in the press, TV & radio. I owe them everything.”

Ruth also credits her psychotherapy training as key to surviving in prison. “I sent myself on the Group Analysis course and then



Home comfort: Ruth Wyner, one half of the Cambridge Two, spent time in prison as a result of doing her job running a homelessness charity. She says: “Help people to develop as human beings to deal with some of the impact of the traumas that they’ve been through.” © *Matthew Hobbs*

▶ I went to prison. They wrote to me in prison saying, ‘We’ll hold your place’, and that was a lifeline; it made me realise that having hope for the future, having something meaningful is absolutely crucial to staying alive when you’re in prison.”

In prison Ruth soon met the very same people she was once trying to support. “I was amazed at how quickly I became a standard prisoner, it is brutalizing. Right from the start there’s an awful trauma. I had an overnight in the cop-shop, then was put in the sweat-box and travelled down to London – it’s really

uncomfortable, a tiny cubicle, no seat-belts, you’re thrown around all over the place, it’s extremely hot and you’re just like a piece of meat. That’s how it feels – you become nothing. You lose yourself.

“The vast majority of the people that I met in prison had been abused; if you’ve been abused as a child, you’re vulnerable as an adult. I don’t think I ever met anybody who was down and out nasty because they wanted to be nasty. I knew that homeless people didn’t choose to be homeless and I would say the same about prisoners. The

prison environment is abusive and therefore abused people are being further abused. In my view locking up a human being is the worst thing you can do to them. The stress of being locked up is massive and it affects you viscerally as well as psychologically. I grew a cancerous tumour when I was in prison, I checked with the consultant and he told me that's when it started. That's just one example."

With the campaign's support on the outside Ruth was granted a second appeal after the first was denied; this time she won. The sentence was quashed although not the conviction. After seven months in prison for a crime they never committed Ruth Wyner and John Brock were free.

Freedom

"So, when I came out it was only a couple of months later that I went up to be interviewed for the Qualifying Course in Group Analysis and they offered me a place straight away. It was held at Turvey Abbey in Bedfordshire, which is a very beautiful place and I was given a really nice room with a door into the gardens. At night I used to open that door and go out, just because I could. I think it was quite healing for me; it really helped put me back together."

Following her release Ruth gave talks for those working within the

Criminal Justice System, set up the Dialogue Trust and facilitated therapeutic discussion groups with prisoners. Today she is a board member for the Institute of Group Analysis and runs a low-cost private practice in Cambridge. She is a parent, grandparent and a keen lover of music, meditation and walking the family dog.

Despite her experiences, Ruth's kindness, penchant for creative solutions and wry wit remain intact. "In prison, people have no control over what happens to them, they've lost everything, they're destitute, many of them have families that they can't get help from, they're kind of caught up in a maelstrom of our society without any solid boundaries or anything to hold on to. That's why it feels like spinning to me. If you can get people into a safe, humane, supported environment and help them to develop aspects of themselves then they have something to hold on to and a hope for the future," says Ruth.

"I think groups are good at helping people to relate to others and to find themselves and to help each other; helping others is very healing. The kindness of some of the women in prison helped me. Oh, and I used to try to get around the system quite a lot, everybody does that, if you get one over the screws it's a great pleasure."



Hopeful

How a story about hope helped Deputy Editor *Mat Amp* rebuild his life

So much of the stuff they try and ram down our throats at school is drab, irrelevant and about as inspiring as a wet Wednesday. Stories have always been my thing, whether they be factual, fictional or, somewhere between the two – historical. Occasionally at school a story would come along that had something powerful enough to stay with me. The myth of Pandora's Box is a perfect example. There are several versions but basically Pandora has a box that contains all the virtues. When she carelessly leaves the lid open, the other virtues – such as mercy, freedom and peace escape, leaving humanity with hope alone.

Oliver Sacks, a neurologist way ahead of his time, had a friend who, after doing the drug PCP (angel dust), developed the ability to tell when people were angry, amorous and even deceitful. Sacks surmised that this was some sort of primal ability to 'smell the truth.' This peculiar superpower disappeared after a month, much to the friend's relief. Oliver Sacks' conclusion was that our minds had learnt to hide this ability from itself because in order to develop the type of trust that civilisation is built on, we must be able to deceive

In a nutshell

- John Lennon said it too: "You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will live as one."
- You have to have trust others to hope and you have to have hope to trust others.
- Trust should never be given away in the form of blind allegiance to an idea, an organisation or a person.

each other.

The process of developing trust may feel uncomfortable when you've been let down in the past, but it's what makes us human. It's also what makes relationships so valuable.

Blind faith and slavish devotion are the so-called qualities demanded by extreme cults, religions and hardcore political groups. Free from the scrutiny of reason, organisations are free to abuse people's faith, dismissing the need for hope with the promise of eternal bliss in the afterlife/future.

Similarly, homelessness is a condition that disconnects you from the rest of the world. It also limits your choices, often creating the impression that there is nothing left in mainstream society for you. That's why recovery from homelessness is as much about believing society is worth recovering for, as it is about



thinking you're worth it.

But where do you start when it comes to rebuilding trust with others? How do you start to hope, when things have been hopeless?

If not a leap of faith, it takes at least a little step in that direction. For addicts, recovery can be really intense as the drugs leave your system and the illness is replaced by this wave of intense, highly-emotional energy. People with mental health issues, which, let's face it, is the majority of us, also suffer in this way.

For six months I was a regular at NA meetings, and I remember some people there called me selfish for not engaging more. The more fanatical members put pressure on me to share more of my personal stuff, but I'm not comfortable sharing in large groups so I didn't.

Hope is vital if you're going to get back across that bridge from the broken edge, but try not to give too much of yourself, too quickly. Remember there are employment opportunities now for people with lived experience of homelessness. Of course, there's still stigma and prejudice when it comes to the public's perception of homelessness, because there are always going to be arseholes, but the move towards consultation and genuine engagement makes me hopeful... and that hope is what keeps me going.

- **Narcotics Anonymous (NA) 0300 999 1212 helpline open 10am–midnight.**
- **Looking for a job or volunteering and have homelessness on your CV? See p9 & p24.**



Hidden talent

**Try a new way to get a job.
Interview by *Jacqueline
Messih* (before lockdown)**

“We are Radical” is the slogan behind a pioneering recruitment agency shaking things up in the recruitment industry to secure employment for the underdog. Emma Freivogel is the co-founder and CEO of Radical Recruit and advocator for changing the way businesses source and employ hidden talent.

Emma explains this social recruitment agency in London works exclusively with, “Anyone under-represented in the labour market, that includes homeless people, ex-offenders or people who have left the care system. Our candidates come to us because they want to regain control over their lives, have financial autonomy and the choice to live how they wish”.

Emma has a vigorous screening process that requires candidates to speak openly and honestly. The average time it then takes to place a candidate into a suitable job is eight weeks. To date Radical Recruit has secured 30 placements, including a chef, web developer and bar manager. Candidates receive support developing their CVs, are offered interview preparations and techniques, confidence building, disclosure workshops and life and job coaching.

Success story

For seven years Malcolm found himself living on the streets of London after his father passed away, and he could no longer afford the family home. Struggling with mental health and homelessness, Malcolm considered ending his life. In 2017, while sitting in a police station Malcolm decided he would try and get a job and take back control of his life. After two years unsuccessfully handing out his CV, Malcolm was put in touch with Radical Recruit and at his first interview with Honest Burgers he was given a contract to sign. In April Malcolm was still working for the company.

- **See if Radical Recruit can help you find a job**
www.radicalrecruit.co.uk

Radical Recruit works with people in all levels of criminality from petty crime to murder. More than half of female prisoners are victims of domestic abuse. Some prisoners have failed to pay their TV licenses, others have mental health concerns or learning disabilities that have not been identified or issues related to drugs and alcohol.

Emma believes her candidates have life experience that is transferable to the workplace. “They have resilience, determination and grit that you cannot teach in the classroom or on a job”. We try to seek



Radical Recruit helps people disadvantaged by their life experiences to get a job. Photos taken before lockdown and social distancing. © *Radical Recruit*

out their potential, help them see their potential and help employers see what we see”.

Each candidate has a story to tell and Radical Recruit helps them to tell their story. “Imagine being judged for the worst thing you have done in your life? We’d all be damned,” says Emma. “But most of us don’t have to, we’ve all been guilty of bad decisions that have hurt others or ourselves, most people get to move forward. And those with a conviction are not allowed to move forward even though society demands they be better citizens”.

Emma’s greatest undertaking has been changing the way employers think. “We find employers that want to turn their commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion into

In a nutshell

- As the #BlackLivesMatters campaign has shown when it comes to getting a job it’s not an equal playing field.
- Radical Recruit aims to shake up the recruitment industry by offering interviews to people who have all sorts of life experience on their CV, such as prison and homelessness, but have been overlooked by most employers. More info at www.radicalrecruit.co.uk
- workingchance.org is the UK’s only recruitment consultancy for women leaving the criminal justice and care systems.
- Top tips from Radical Recruit for nailing a job interview: (1) Believe in yourself, (2) Take action, (3) Be honest.

action. It’s no use giving someone a job because you feel sorry for them. We want to elicit systemic change. We are changing the way employers think about people with convictions, people who have experienced homelessness and young black men. We accept people who are essentially denied the right to work.” Once a candidate has been matched to a job and offered a role, Radical Recruit continues to support them in their employment.

REGISTERING WITH A GP

during Covid-19

Covid-19 and registering

- Most GP surgeries are closed due to Covid-19, however some are doing phone and online appointments.
- Registration has moved online or over the phone.
- If you are having difficulties registering, contact **Doctors of the World** on **0808 164 7686** (Mon–Fri, 10am–12noon).

Your GP will help you with:

- Physical health problems, including minor illnesses, minor injuries and the management of all ongoing more serious health problems
- Mental health issues
- Substance misuse issues
- Wound dressing
- Preventative care e.g. health screening and vaccinations
- Support with your pregnancy
- Contraception and sexual health
- Referral to termination of pregnancy services (If you prefer not to attend your GP for this you can alternatively call **0333 999 9951**)

If the GP cannot support you to manage your condition, they will refer you to a specialist.

URGENT MEDICAL ISSUE

DIAL 111 or go to Accident & Emergency at your nearest hospital.

What is a GP?

- A General Practitioner (GP) is a doctor based in the community.
- Your GP can treat minor issues.
- Identify any more serious health issues.
- Refer you for further treatment to a hospital or other specialist health service.

Who can register?

- Anyone in England may register and see a GP for free.
- You do not need a fixed address.
- Immigration status does not matter.
- You do not need identification, documentation or an NHS number.



Health care provided within a GP surgery is FREE.

HOWEVER you may have to pay for prescribed medicines depending on what benefits you receive and what health conditions you have.

I need to book an appointment

- During Covid 19 phone or online booking systems are the only way to access GP appointments.
- Speak to support staff or an advocacy agency if you have issues registering.
- GP appointments are usually 10 minutes long, but you can always request longer appointments if you need.

I need help with the costs of prescriptions, dental treatment and sight care:

- Depending on which benefits you receive and your medical conditions, you might be required to pay for prescriptions, dental care, eye tests and glasses.
- HOWEVER, if you have a low income, you may be eligible for an NHS HC2 certificate which entitles you to free prescriptions, dental treatment, sight tests and vouchers for glasses. If you are not entitled to benefits you can still apply for this.
- An HC1 form is used to apply for this certificate – get one from your healthcare provider or online.
- You can also apply online <https://services.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/apply-for-help-with-nhs-costs/apply-online>
- Ask for help to fill in the form if you need it.

I need an interpreter

- If English is not your first language NHS services must provide telephone interpreting services.
- You can ask a receptionist or health care provider for an interpreter to help you register and you can also ask for an interpreter for your appointment with the GP or nurse.

Will my GP share information about me?

- GP practices and other NHS services will NOT share your information with any other Government department.
- GP practices do not currently share information with the Home Office.
- The only situation in which a GP might have to share information about you is if you are at risk or there is risk to others.



Healing art

Geraldine Crimmins is a mentor at Café Art which now runs art workshops online. She has lived experience of homelessness.

Q&A by our writer McGinlay (before lockdown)

Q: How does homelessness affect people?

Homelessness has a variety of impacts on your health, physical and mental. I found that PTSD and anxiety disorders are very common and often undiagnosed as you get used to being on high alert all the time and having a heightened sense of anxiety. Having limited or no access to healthcare, sleep deprivation and fear of theft, assault or bullying can lead to clinical depression which will affect your ability to access outreach teams or homeless projects.

Q: Is it worth going back for help when nothing seems to be happening?

Keeping in touch with outreach teams or support workers will give you a feeling of consistency and keep you connected with support. It can open any new opportunities if and when they arise. Keep any appointments with support workers, even if you feel that nothing is happening, as it will keep you in the system and on the list for support.

Q: What advice would you give someone who is starting to be independent again?

Go to the same food handouts and develop a relationship with them, it helps to see a friendly face that you know.

- Join art and photography workshops online www.cafeart.org.uk
- Get support for PTSD at www.ptsduk.org
- Find free food/hot meals via foodbanks, mutual aid and religious groups, also see p17.

Big Miss You Podcast

Big Issue vendors have been out of business since lockdown began. But now a podcast has been set up so people can leave messages for their friends and vendors. Join in by subscribing to the Big Miss You Podcast via any podcast provider (eg, Apple, Spotify etc).

- www.bigissue.com/podcast



Art box: During lockdown Accumulate sent out more than 500 art kits to vulnerable young people living in 31 different hostels/emergency accommodation across London. Each art box had a themed project inside with instructions and all the materials needed. Challenges included felted postcards; an architectural commission to turn an everyday object into a building and a collage project. © Accumulate



Lockdown laughs

Stuck without internet Chris Sampson began dreaming up new jail tales

During early lockdown, it seemed possible to be arrested for seemingly innocuous breaches of strange laws. You could imagine a new arrival at Wormwood Scrubs asking his cellmate what he's in for: "Murder," says the old lag. "And you?"

"Erm...sunbathing in a public space..."

"Do what?" says the old lag, aghast. "Don't get any ideas about slapping on the factor 50 during the next rooftop protest! We don't want your sort here! The Beast of D-Wing walks amongst us!" he screams, alerting other cons to the fiend in their midst.

It made me wonder if there was a special jail where miscreants caught breaking daft rules were kept for crimes such as...

Wearing a Loud Shirt in a Built-Up Area: This crime dates back to the 1960s era of peace and love. The entire cast of the 1960s Brit flick *Groovy Movie* was incarcerated for displaying such eye-wateringly psychedelic shirts. The original sentences – 17 shillings and sixpence – were lengthened after the defence counsel told the Judge: "Hey daddio, don't you be no fascist square, you dig?" They were finally released in 1994...

Whistling on the 14th Thursday After Pancake Day: In Medieval times, this was a felony worthy of the death penalty. Contemporary documents from 1485 explain: "For did Saint Pancake himself not abhorreth ye whistling? Yea, he did liken it to wynking at ye maidens in a saucy manner in the hope of eliciting a response in like fashion..." Well, when you put it like that you can see why it was deemed such a crime.

In one of those amusing farces of British legal history, this felony was not removed from the statute books until 1974. Sadly, this came a year too late for class 5b of Chelmsford, who, after whistling the theme to *Match of the Day* during a boring school trip to a museum in Walton-on-the-Naze, were hanged in the town's centre...

Housing in England: Your Rights

Your local council does not always have to help you find emergency accommodation if you are homeless.

If you need help right now, please try these numbers below.

Ask them to help you make an emergency housing application.

For free help with your emergency housing application:

1. Streetlink

- Tel: **0300 500 0914** & also an App

2. Shelter

- Web: www.shelter.org.uk
- Tel: **0808 800 4444**
(8am–8pm Monday – Friday,
8am–5pm weekends)

3. Citizens Advice Bureau

- Web: www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Tel: **03444 111 444**

If your application is rejected:

- You should appeal the rejection if you think it is wrong. You have 21 days to do so.
- Shelter and Citizens Advice Bureau can help you with your appeal.

Visit www.thepavement.org.uk for a more detailed version of your housing rights in England and Scotland.

Housing in Scotland: Your Rights

Call Shelter Scotland for free housing advice

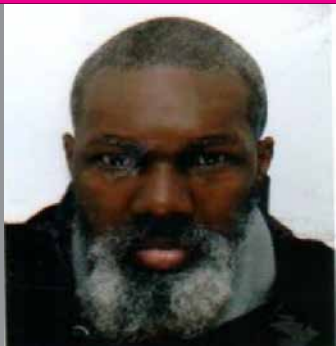
9am–5pm, Monday to Friday on **0808 800 4444**.

You may be able to make a homeless application with a local council. This is different from a housing options interview and from an application to the mainstream housing waiting list.

You have the right to temporary accommodation while the council considers your application. The council must notify you of their decision in writing.

TELL US: If you want to order more or less copies of *the Pavement* OR need to make a change to the List of services please contact web@thepavement.org.uk

Missing



Thomas Ogunmuyiwa

Thomas went missing from Camden, London on 2 June 2016. He was 55 when he was last seen.

Thomas, we're here for you whenever you need us. We can talk through your options, send a message for you and help you be safe. Call/text 116 000 or email 116000@missingpeople.org.uk. It's free, confidential and 24/7.



Peter Brown

Peter has been missing from Scarborough, North Yorkshire since 8 May 2019. He was 46 at the time of his disappearance.

Peter can call our free, confidential and 24/7 helpline for support and advice without judgement and the opportunity to send a message to loved ones. Call/text 116 000 or email 116000@missingpeople.org.uk.

If you think you may know something about Thomas or Peter, you can contact our helpline anonymously on 116 000 or 116000@missingpeople.org.uk, or you can send a letter to 'Freepost Missing People'.

Our helpline is also available for anyone who is missing, away from home or thinking of leaving. We can talk through your options, give you advice and support or pass a message to someone.

116 000 - Free, confidential, 24/7.

**missing
people**

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419)
and in Scotland (SC047419)

A lifeline when someone disappears