

the Pavement

Issue 9

The paper for The Homeless (London Edition)

Free

The saga of "Nobby the Tramp" looks set to run and run

Stories about Nobby, a rough sleeper in Peterborough, Lincolnshire, have gripped readers of the *Peterborough Herald & Post*, and divided opinion in the area. Having laid his hat in a bus shelter in Peterborough in the early 90s, he has continued to win column inches in the town's paper and stirred debate about attitudes to sleeping rough.

Nobby was forced to move from his first bus shelter after disgruntled commuters complained that they had no option but to stand in the rain and wait for the bus while its inhabitant slept. But, it soon became evident that Nobby has a certain penchant for bus shelters after moving on and setting up home in a redundant bus shelter in Oundle road, Peterborough, where he has lived happily for over 10 years.

But, on 16 November last year it was reported by the *Peterborough Herald & Post* that Nobby returned from the local hospital, where he was receiving treatment for thrombosis, to find vandals had trashed his home and left his belongings sprawled all over the surrounding pavement. A shaken Nobby summed up the day's events by saying to the local press, "they removed a lot of stuff and left it in disarray - It's just a bit of bother, you know."

Benefit advice cuts due

Homeless benefits services are due to radically change this April

Major changes are being introduced to the availability of benefits advice across London day centres, which is feared will result in a poorer service.

Currently, 38 Job Centre Plus (JCP) outreach staff operating at sixty locations - mostly day centres - across London provide clients with access to benefits, assessing their claim and enabling them to 'sign on' for the support they're entitled to. In addition, they offer accommodation advice and assistance with gaining proof of ID, National Insurance numbers and other essential documents. From April, due to changes brought about by the Department of Work and

Pensions, these provisions will be reduced. Staff will be cut to just 22, with the service having to withdraw from some locations as a result. Staff will be less likely to operate on a drop-in basis, instead requiring claimants to make appointments.

In addition to this, the emphasis in services will shift from linking people into the benefits system, to focusing on getting people into work. In keeping with the main purpose of JCP, the advisors will concentrate on finding work for their clients, with performance measures imposed on them to encourage this.

Combined with the reduced number of staff, this change will mean that those who aren't already linked into the system, and able to start work, will effectively be shut out of the service. While JCP

used to case-work those who, for example, had no proof of ID and weren't yet able to start looking for employment, from April the new direction of the service means that it's unlikely that JCP will be able to assist in those complicated circumstances.

One worker told *The Pavement* that "the thinking behind it's okay, but it means that we can't concentrate on getting people onto benefits in complex cases. It's the most vulnerable who'll suffer". In addition, it's recognized that to successfully get people into work, their overall circumstances need to be stable and secure; something JCP will no longer be able to help with.

A statement issued by the Public and Commercial Services Union, who oppose the cuts, states, "whilst we recognise helping people back to work is a desirable long term aim, we firmly believe that homeless people need a lot of practical help from our members before this aim can be achieved."

The proposed changes are to be introduced in order to meet the targets set out by the Department of Work and Pensions 'Public Sector Agreement' with the Treasury. Although they do not officially take effect until April the service will likely be disrupted before then, as staff levels will be reduced from January.



Continued on page 4

'VG'

News



"Actually, I live here"

Homelessness Sunday is here again

Homelessness Sunday 2006 will be held on Sunday 29th January. The day unites churches across the United Kingdom in drawing attention to the effects of homelessness. This year the focus is on preventing people becoming homeless.

The organisers of this day liken prevention to "stopping people falling into the river, instead of waiting until they are almost drowned before pulling them to safety." The groups involved include those

who offer housing advice, such as the Housing Justice Alliance of Housing Advice Centres, those which help people keep their homes by visits, like the Scottish Churches Housing Action, and those providing food parcels to help with tight budgets.

Last year many churches marked Homelessness Sunday with special services, and practical action such as collection of sleeping bags and blankets.

'Cobbett'

• To get involved, go to www.homelessness-sunday.org.uk

St Barnabas hostel to temporarily close

St Barnabas hostel is due a makeover

On hearing rumours that one of the oldest hostels in London was about to close, *The Pavement* was first on the scene. But all is not as it appears, as the hostel will only close its doors for a renovation.

But, at a time when the number of beds for homeless people in London is decreasing almost daily, financial pressures have forced St Barnabas to go the same way. Dilapidating accommodation and escalating costs of maintaining the building at No. 1 Greek Street, along with the ever-greater difficulty in raising sufficient funds, has put pressure on the House of St Barnabas Charity to reconsider the future of the hostel in its current form.

The House, which currently has 39 beds, will close its doors as an accommodation centre in March, but will reopen in an estimated 18 months after an extensive redecoration programme to improve the

building and conditions for the new residents. The aim of the regeneration scheme is to help more women on a more regular basis, via a more intensive move-on scheme, entitled the Life Skills Programme,

accommodation.

Eluned Santos, chief executive of the House of St Barnabas, is confident that the Life Skills Programme will maintain its great success rate and that the

and is confident that all current residents will be assisted to find more suitable accommodation before the hostel closes.

Supporters and staff at St Barnabas are sure that this change will be beneficial to those it helps, but the reality is that there is no other women-only hostel in the area and when the hostel finally closes, there will be no compensation for the number of beds lost. However, in the long run, if the staff at the House of St Barnabas are able to reach more women on a regular basis and help them, the future looks bright for the women of Soho.

'RN'

• The house of St Barnabas in Soho has been helping homeless people in London since 1846 and became a women-only institute after the Second World War to help women who had been "demobbed", i.e. mostly those whose homes had been destroyed in air-raids, or had lost all their financial support during the war.



Photograph: VG The Pavement

which is already practised at St Barnabas. This programme specialises in providing educational workshops and courses, financial support and housing advice to women on a daily basis, but without

House will carry on helping local homeless women. "It is imperative that we help these people and we will continue to provide a service to those who need it". She has received support from other charities,

News

WCC under pressure

The Waterloo Christian Centre on Webber Street is feeling the effects of its neighbour's closure

With the closure of the North Lambeth Day Centre (NLDC) in November last year, the pressure on services at Webber Street has increased, at a time when they are already feeling the strain of staff shortages.

When NLDC, the St John's based day centre managed by St Mungo's, closed, *The Pavement* reported comments by Richard Cunningham, Street Population coordinator in Lambeth, that the Webber Street drop-in service would still be providing a service. But no mention was made of manpower or financial support for Webber Street.

Now it appears that Webber Street isn't yet in any state to fill the gap left by NLDC, in either staffing levels or funding.

Mr Maze, a spokesperson for

the Webber Street centre, said, "unfortunately the centre is currently facing extreme staffing issues and because of this we are unable to open for the hours we would like to". This comes on top of wrangling within the organisation over plans to employ non-christian staff - against their long established customs.

We can also now report that The London City Mission, who own the day centre, have had general talks with Lambeth Council on the issue of funding and they are waiting to hear back.

Terry Puttick, director of ministries at London City Mission, told *The Pavement* on 16th January that, "we will be open for discussion with Lambeth with regard to financial help or supports."

The hope is that Webber Street can keep its open-door policy and unique character, despite the changes in staff and pursuit of council funding.

'Bez'

Homeless book lauded

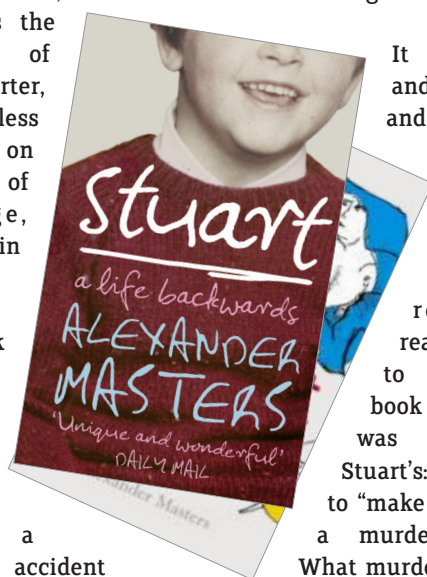
Recognition is given to a remarkable book about a homeless man

A tale about a homeless man in Cambridge has won the prestigious Guardian First Book Award. Alexander Masters scooped the £10,000 first prize with his book, *Stuart: a life backward*, which tells the life story of Stuart Shorter, a homeless man living on the streets of Cambridge, but in reverse.

The book begins with Stuart's death (he was tragically killed in a railway accident before the book was published) and charts his life back through prison, heroin addiction, self harm, his struggles with muscular dystrophy, bullying, child abuse and a violent father. As you get to know the spiky character of Stuart and the sometimes frustrated and impatient Masters you begin to understand what makes this book successful: a refreshing lack of sanctimony on the part of the author combined with an ability to let Stuart's voice control the story.

Alexander Masters first met Stuart in 1998 and their friendship blossomed during a campaign to release Ruth Wyner and John Brock who were controversially imprisoned for allowing heroin dealing to take place at the rough sleepers' day centre that

they ran together. Masters led the campaign and increasingly found himself in debt to Stuart for his street-savvy ideas for campaign stunts. Over time Masters became "aware how often I'd take his stories back with me and tell my friends. And I thought, well this is ridiculous, I'm getting all this material and wasting it - I'm not recording it".



It took four and a half long, and sometimes frustrating, years to finish the book and it is a remarkable read. The idea to write the book backwards was entirely Stuart's: he wanted to "make it more like a murder mystery. What murdered the boy I was?". It was this that attracted the judges' attention and admiration for the work.

It is a shame that Stuart never got to read the published work, something that is down to his insistence that the whole thing be re-written after declaring a first draft as "bollocks boring". Masters stayed true to his friend's wish by creating a story that is both funny and uplifting - a fitting tribute to the life of a man.

'DD'

Alexander Masters has recently retired as the founding editor of the *Willow Walker*, a free quarterly paper for rough sleepers in Cambridge. We are in touch with this paper, and hope to forge links with their new editor.



News

Nobby's Saga

Continued from front page

The *Herald & Post* reported the outrage that this act elicited, and although some of our readers may find this type of thing an every-day event, the people of Peterborough jumped to the defence of this rough sleeper. The local paper recorded the many voices that expressed disbelief, saying, "how could people do such a thing?" A local councillor came down wielding a bundle of blankets and the bus shelter's owner, Orton Longueville Parish Council, undertook necessary repair work on Nobby's home. Shortly after the incident a local glazing firm fitted patio doors to the shelter in a bid to increase security.

But, not everyone agreed with this outpouring of affection for Peterborough's most famous rough sleeper. One letter in the *Herald & Post* stated, "Has the world gone completely mad? Now we have a double glazing company wanting to fit doors and windows to a bus shelter for a tramp...Nobby,

in my opinion, is a parasite to society. He should be made to live in a hostel, not in a place which looks like a rat-infested den."



• Michael Ross, more popularly known in Peterborough as "Nobby the Tramp" has made frequent headlines for several years through a series of debacles, most notably when he duped the local newspaper into believing that he would realise his dream of competing in the

North West of Ireland Open golf tournament.

Ross took up the sport when a passer-by left a set of clubs at

The *Herald & Post* backed the outsider by providing sponsorship.

However, as professionals teed off at Ballyliffin in County Donegal on the 25 August 2005, Ross was to be found behind his iconic home, the Oundle road bus shelter (pictured left), practising his swing. He told his sponsoring paper, "It wasn't a joke and I had good intentions of going and playing, but I guess it was not meant to be. I wasn't accepted."

Appearing to bask in this new found pseudo-celebrity status, perhaps Ross was playing a different game altogether - he was later reported to have told a rival publication, *The Evening Telegraph*, that he had been pulling their leg all along.

Ross returned the cash given to him to follow his sporting dream, and swiftly became a household name in Peterborough.

'Bez'

Homeless man found winter warmth in hospital bed

It's true that hostel spaces are at a premium, and that the Met Office were predicting a harsh winter, but a hospital bed can't be a serious alternative accommodation, particularly in a busy ward.

A patient got an unexpected surprise during his recuperation at the Central Middlesex NHS Hospital in Acton, West London this winter. A rough sleeper had wandered into the hospital, dodged all ward security, before tucking

himself up for a good night's sleep in a patient's bed.

It was up to the patient, Brian Dagger, 64, to raised the alarm with matron after returning to his ward to find the man sound asleep in the bed next to his own.

The incident, which took place in October last year, has caused considerable embarrassment to the NHS. The result is that the North West London Hospitals Trust is still investigating the incident - so expect tighter security next time!

'DD'

St Martin's begins its long planned renovation

On the cards for several years, The Connection at St Martin's, the old Social Care Unit on Trafalgar Square, is at last beginning a multi-million pound reconstruction of its premises. The market has closed above the day centre and soon excavation will begin to replace the day centre with purpose built facilities, and a visitors centre for the church.

Details of what will replace the day centre are available in the church, including how the

£34 million will be spent there. Much of the development will be directly relating to improving what the church offers its many visitors.

Its loss will be felt by many who will miss the dependability of shelter the steps by the church have represented. But, services will continue next door at No. 12 Adelaide Street with the under 26s' service

'Cobbett'

• We will look more closely at the redevelopment of St Martin's and what it promises in a future issue.

News

What's on in London

Some events coming up in the next couple of months:

- Good news for soup runs! On Wednesday 8th February the new London Soup Run Forum (which we have reported on from day one) are meeting again. A large number of runs and interested parties will be present, and we'll go along to see what's said.
- A student conference on homelessness will be held on Saturday 18th February at Imperial College London, South Kensington. It aims to inform and educate students currently unaware of homelessness issues, and to foster best practice/ share ideas within student-run homelessness projects. Timetable for the day: 1000-1100: Introduction, statistics and statutory provision; 1100-1230: Debate - 'This house believes that soup kitchens propagate street homelessness in London'; 1230-1330: Lunch; 1330-1500: Project talks and stalls/ networking/tea; 1500-1600: Conclusion: overview of recent developments and the way forward. Interested? Then get in touch with Sara at sara.lethby@imperial.ac.uk.
- Highlights of the Capital Arts programme are: Tues 07 Feb, 'Government Ministers: Truth or Spin?' NPG; Fri 10 Feb, 'Landscapes of Feeling' Wallace Collection; Tues 14 Feb, 'Colour: Josef Albers' Tate Modern; Fri 17 Feb, 'China: The Three Emperors' RA; Tues 21 Feb, 'Tom Hunter: Photographs' National Gallery; Fri 24, 'Shadow Puppets' Theatre Museum. To book ahead for any of these e-mail CapitalArts@aol.com or call Jennifer Burnham on 07985 411 458.

Size does matter in publishing

After the *Guardian* went Berliner and *Glamour* magazine topped sales lists by fitting inside a handbag, it's time for this paper to redesign and relaunch - as a pocket-sized A5 read.

The Pavement will be half the size from next issue, but have over twice the number of pages, in a bid to make it a more convenient read. The new size is being adopted for several reasons, the most influential being the cumbersome nature of the A4 size causing most issues to be folded into pockets. The A5 size will slip into a large jacket pocket with ease.

The content will remain the same, with a few additions, including a crossword, readers' comment page and a comic. Watch out for the new *Pavement* in mid-February

'Hector'

Homelink houses its 100th

HomeLink, the Quaker Social Action's rent-in-advance scheme, has reached a major milestone - housing its 100th homeless people since launching eight months ago. In total the project has housed 1225 homeless in the east of London since 1994.

Based in Tower Hamlets, HomeLink works to house and support 'non-priority' homeless people in east London. Non-priority means those who are not eligible for emergency housing and who tend remain at the bottom of council housing lists. Councils do get involved though, as HomeLink only takes clients who have been referred from the local authority.

HomeLink works by providing landlords with two months rent in advance, which is then claimed back through the housing benefit system, and a guarantee against loss. The paid and volunteer resettlement workers continue to support the service's users after they have been housed. Sustaining a tenancy is one of the key aspects of this scheme. Ninety percent of the people HomeLink houses and supports are able to maintain their tenancies.

Tim Nicholls, manager of HomeLink, said, "Housing 100 people in just 8 months is a fantastic result for a small team of 4 and an even better result for the 100 people with new homes."

Homelink have plans to continue the drive to win over more HomeLink-friendly landlords, enabling the many more to be housed.

'Cobbett'



Focus

Editorial

The future of this paper

Just space for a quick word to keep readers up to date with what's happening with *The Pavement*.

We are getting the website in order, with our new webmaster, Alistair, having already uploaded all previous issues as PDFs. To read old copies go to www.thepavement.org.uk and then to the "Latest Issue" page.

'RN' will have to stop writing for us, due to a change in employment, and we wish her well in her next job. Thank you for all your hard work.

With the new design (See page 5) we're looking for more contributions from readers, and have already started with 'Cardboard Carrier'. If you've an idea for an article or column that will make a good read, get in touch - address below.

Editor

Contacting us:

It is easy to drop *The Pavement* a line, whether by e-mail or post, and published letters get a T-shirt. Write to us at -

The Pavement
PO Box 43675
London
SE22 8YL

editor@thepavement.org.uk

Polskie Strony

Nasza uliczna pielęgniarka 'Flo' napisała dla polskich czytelników artykuł o rozprzestrzenianiu się szybko choroby. W następnym miesiącu powrócimy do naszych zwykłych tematów.

Wzrost zachorowań na gruźlicę (często nazywanej w skrócie TB) dotyczy wszystkich. Narazeni na zarażenie się gruźlicą są szczególnie ludzie bezdomni, żyjący na ulicach lub tymczasowo w zatłoczonych pomieszczeniach. Jako obywatel Wielkiej Brytanii byłam szczepiona jako dziecko przeciwko groźniejszym formom gruźlicy i jestem pewna, że podobne programy szczepień występują w innych krajach w Europie. Należy jednak pamiętać, że nie jest to pewne i wystarczające zabezpieczenie.

Jeśli jesteś bezdomnym, musisz być świadomy zdecydowanie większej możliwości zachorowania na gruźlicę oraz umieć rozpoznawać jej symptomy u siebie i innych.

SYMPTOMY ZACHOROWANIA NA GRUŹLICĘ:

1. uporczywy kaszel pogłębiający się w ciągu kilku tygodni
2. niewytłumaczalna utrata wagi
3. Kaszlenie krwią
4. niewytłumaczalne zmęczenie i znużenie, generalne odczucie bycia nie w formie
5. wysoka gorączka i nocne pocenie się.

Jeśli miałeś kontakt z osobą chora na gruźlicę, powinieneś także się zbadać.

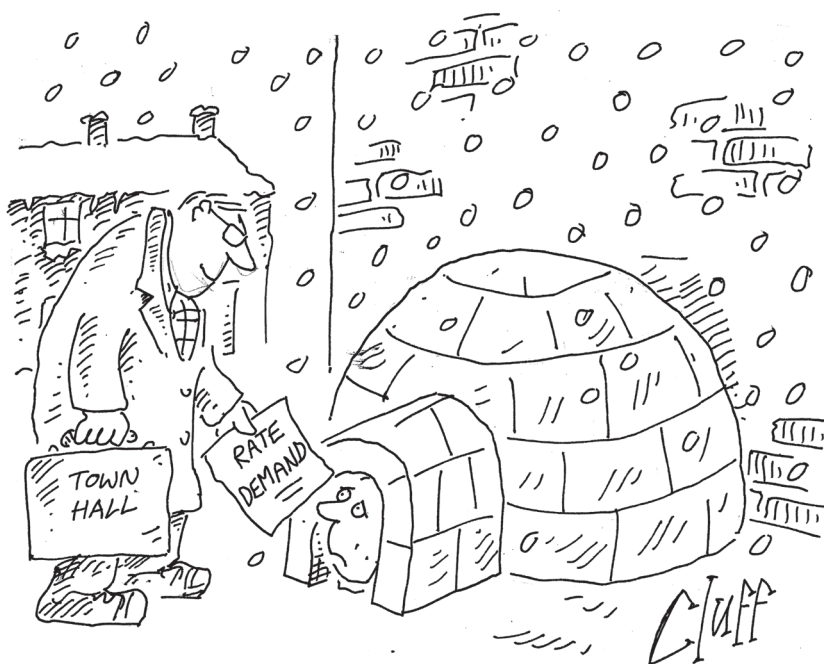
Jeśli zauważył u siebie lub u kogoś innego powyższe symptomy, zbadajcie się natychmiast w szpitalu lub w jednym z medycznych zakładów, których adresy zamieszczone są na ostatnich stronach gazety. Miejcie również oczy otwarte na samochody - mobile TB van. Są to jeżdżące po mieście przenoszące małe kliniki pomagające w wypadkach zarażenia się gruźlicą a także kierujące ludzi do przychodni oraz schronisk.

Życzę dobrego zdrowia

'Flo'

Translation by Karolina Białobłocka

- We will have our service listings and other information in *The Pavement* in a variety of languages on our website soon.



Focus

Two views of Christmas Crisis...

Using Crisis, by our newest columnist

Christmas, love it or loathe it, for those of us on the street it is a time of many mixed feelings. I've heard many say it. Being street homeless myself I do tend to agree.

Perhaps the spirit of Christmas past wrestles with the spirit of Christmas present, and let's be honest, we have not lived on the streets all of our lives. I can personally look back over many years of the annual festive season with fond memories, but, of course, I realize that is not the case for everyone. Despite the common misconception, we are all different.

Christmas is a package. A mixture of what is good about it and what's bad. It would be nice if we could separate the two, but we cannot, the two are intermixed into one beast - the Snugglebitch. Some of it we cannot get enough of. Some of it we hate.

Being the street homeless we also know that this time of the year most of the day centre services that we tend to rely on close for the seasonal duration. Have we been abandoned? Some would say yes.

I met the Snugglebitch beast at Crisis Open Christmas this year. And what did I think?

Well, I've heard the comments many times before, "They smother us with kindness for a few days and then throw us back onto the streets again." True, but let us again be honest, we do have the choice don't we? I know several amongst our

number, who for reason best knownst to themselves, will have nothing to do with Crisis. Indeed I have had many years on the streets and have avoided it myself some years, but this year I used it like a day centre. Coming and going by day and sleeping out at night.

The verdict: To start with the food (I ate mainly at the quiet shelter) was very good indeed. The staff, mostly volunteers, were marvellous. The only criticism I could possibly make in that direction would be at the Samaritans.

Because I am homeless does not mean I must therefore be suicidal! This seems to be their immovable view. Standing still for a moment at the main shelter to take a look around I was immediately pounced upon by one of these over-zealous individuals who insisted that I should "talk about it." Talk about what? We all know the good work the Samaritans do, but this was too much.

There is room for other improvements, restraining the Samaritans aside, for example, the showers at the quiet shelter were very poor! But, overall the complete package, considering what it cost us, was... Well, very good indeed.

Of course, that's just my opinion (and no, I am not being paid to say this), and you will have your own interpretations of events, and I'm sure we'll get letters on this subject.

To everyone who made it possible at Crisis. Thank you, from one grateful client.

'Cardboard Carrier'

A reporter's view of the Crisis services

The 34th Crisis Open Christmas took place from the 23rd to the 30th of December and an estimated 1,500 people made use of either the main shelter which was this year based at the London Arena on the Isle of Dogs, and smaller satellite shelters across the city.

As well as providing a place to sleep and hot meals, including a full Christmas dinner on the 25th, all the venues offered a wide range of activities and services. Doctors, dentists, opticians and chiropodists were available to deal with health concerns (although, ironically, illness amongst the volunteers meant medical centre services were limited towards the end of the week). Massages was available to ease aches and pains, and for those interested in complimentary therapy there was also reiki. Sports on offer included football, cricket and tennis facilities. Evening entertainment consisted of the ever-popular karaoke, as well as bingo, films and live bands. The days could be spent surfing the internet, reading from the library, or getting creative in the arts. More seriously, advice on housing, education and dependency was available. There was an emphasis on using Crisis as a 'gateway' to accessing such services, not only during the festive period but also on maintaining this contact with them throughout the year.

However, criticism has been made from several sides of Crisis. Year round medical

services for the homeless balked at comments made by Shaks Ghosh's, chief executive of Crisis, on the 23rd December. She said that for many "it's the one chance in the year to get a doctor or dentist." A glance at our medical listings will show this need not be the case, as there are many easily accessible services available across London. And the criticism persists that people are allowed to use medical services at Crisis without strict enough assurance that it does not duplicate their regular GP or nurse visits, which can lead to breaks in a treatment regime and confusion.

Some of Crisis's guests voiced their complaints. A major point of concern arose over what was seen as the 'censorship' of guests' comments, which were regularly removed from the feedback point where messages could be written about the event. However, volunteers stated this was so they could be safely kept, to be looked over at a later date as well as to make space for more. Some people voiced dissatisfaction over the quality of the food, while others expressed disappointment at the behaviour of a minority of disruptive guests.

Overall though, the majority of feedback was positive. Written comments included "Thank you for everything you have done this Christmas". One man, in his first winter as a rough sleeper simply stated, "I am very happy to be here, surrounded by so many people".

'VG'

Health



"I'm not going to p...p...pick up a penguin
- it might have bird flu"

Foot care

ToeSlayer looks at night cramps in the leg

Night cramps are common symptoms many people have to live with. The severity can vary from general heat in the leg to excruciating pain that wakes you up from sleep. Old wives' cures range from the hanging socks up by the toes whilst you sleep, to spitting on your finger and then making a sign of the cross on the bottom of your feet.

Today we know night cramps are related to a lack of oxygen in the leg tissue, often caused by restricted muscle action during sleep. Old wives' tales such as keeping a beer bottle by your feet had a practical use in that it provided a useful exercise surface to press against when gently contracting the leg muscles.

Many swear that getting up to stand on a cold surface helps, but the feeling of chill on a

hot foot is no true alleviation of the problem. The secret of its success, I will now reveal! When troubled with cramps and awoken from sleep, the first reaction is to sit straight up in bed; this reflex action causes a large increase in general blood activity. More oxygenated blood flows to the part that was cramped and by the time you nip out of bed and put the foot on a cold surface the cramps have gone. The muscular action greatly helps the flow of circulation.

One other old wives' tale is that wearing night socks can help prevent leg cramps; and that is probably true.

In conclusion, dear reader; night cramps can be symptoms of more serious disease, so if like me you do suffer from them, then please have yourself checked out at your general practitioner.

"ToeSlayer"
Podiatrist & Shoe Historian

Dear Flo...

Got a question on health matters? Then ask The Pavement's own nurse, Florence

Dear Flo,
I have heard that a few people at a hostel near me have caught TB. I thought I had an injection when I was fifteen to stop me catching it. I remember the injection because I've got a scar on the top of my arm. Should I still be worried though and are there any precautions I can take?
Guy
Soho

Dear Guy,
When you were fifteen it's probable that you had an injection called the BCG. This is indeed an injection to protect you against the more serious forms of Tuberculosis (TB). However, it does not protect in all cases and so it is important to be aware of the symptoms. The symptoms to look out for are:

- 1) A persistent cough that gets worse over a number of weeks
- 2) Unexplained weight loss
- 3) Coughing up blood
- 4) Unexplained tiredness or a general feeling of being unwell
- 5) Fever and heavy night sweats
- 6) If you have been in close contact with someone you know has TB it is also important to get checked out.

If you, or someone you know, has any of these symptoms get them checked with a medical service. There are sure to be plenty of specialist medical services for homeless people in your area. Rough sleepers and those living in overcrowded accommodation are known to be more at risk of TB.

There is also a van, that will take an x-ray, that goes around hostels and day centres in the London area. Look out for its times and locations advertised in surgeries and day centres.
Flo

Dear Flo
I partied hard at Christmas and New Year but now I seem to have developed an itch down below! I think I may have had unprotected sex but I can't quite remember. What shall I do?
Concerned of Southwark
By e-mail

Dear Concerned,
Oh dear, you may well have contracted a sexually transmitted infection (STI) whilst partying over the festive season. One present you could do without. Go to either a walk-in medical service or a sexual health clinic (called GUM clinics) as soon as possible. The longer you leave it the worse it will get. The trouble with STIs is that the symptoms can disappear and you think you're over it, but the infection gets worse, and can affect fertility and even your lifestyle; not to mention passing it on to your next sexual partner. Well done for acknowledging it; both men and women sometimes ignore the symptoms due to their embarrassment. In future always have plenty of condoms with you, and if the other person refuses or says not to bother – run a mile, they're not worth the aggro.

Good health
'Flo'

• E-mail Flo at flo@thepavement.co.uk. Polish readers will find part of Flo's column translated on page 7.

Soup Runs

Good Soup Guide

No. 6: The Students

Most of the soup runs one comes across are church-based, or at least faith-based in their rationale, but this month's group are something different - students from Imperial College (famous for its science and as being the place Queen formed).

The Imperial College Community Action Group (CAG) has been going for around 30 years. Started by

students within Imperial College Union, the majority of members are students at Imperial,

Known widely as The Students, the CAG soup run meet on a Sunday evening in a kitchen of one of the student halls in South Kensington, and then out to Lincoln's Inn.

No student fare of pasta and baked beans here though. A staple of cheese and ham sandwiches is always on offer, as well as biscuits and fruit. Hot beverages are on hand, particularly their rather good

hot chocolate. Importantly, Sara Lethby who currently leads the group told us, "there's no soup in sight!"

They do occasionally have clothes.

The Students usually get to Lincoln's Inn Fields between 8 and 8.15pm on Sunday, and can be seen in their student union minibus. They used to go to the Strand and Lincoln's Inn for shorter periods of time on a Tuesday and Thursday evenings, but changed after discussions with the old Salvation Army Eagle Project

around 3 years ago.

Now, in the absence of the Eagle Project, that used to coordinate soup run activity, The Students are attending the London Soup Run Forum organized by Unleash.

'Gourmand'

• Do you know a soup run that we haven't listed here? Contact us at the addresses on page 6.

Rating:



SOUP RUNS*

All Souls' Local Action Network (ASLAN)

4 slab rating

Sat 5.30-8.30am - Covent Garden, Milford Lane, Surrey Street, Strand and Waterloo.

Hare Krishna Food for Life

The Hare Krishna food run provides vegetarian meals from Monday to Saturday all year round.

Islip Road (Kentish Town) 12.30pm; Arlington Road (Camden) 1.30pm; York Way (King's Cross) 2.30pm; Lincoln's Inn Fields 7.15pm (Mon, Wed & Thurs); finish at Temple if there's food left.

House of Bread - The Vision

3 slab rating

Second and fourth Sunday in the month (6.45am onwards) - Hot food; note that a full cooked breakfast is served on the fourth Sunday. On the Strand (Charing X end, outside

Coutt's).

• We're in touch with Jenny who has the reciprocal run on the first and second Sundays, and will have details of the service soon.

Imperial College

3 slab rating

(Reviewed above)

Sunday evenings (8-9.30pm) at Lincoln's Inn Fields. Serving Sandwiches and hot beverages.

New Life Assembly

A run in Hendon, that comes into the West End once a month.

The Salvation Army

Although their tea run (with sandwiches) that used to cover Victoria has been suspended, this large organisation has many services across the capital which we'll try to list here.

Sai Baba

Mon and Wed (possibly) 7.30pm: Lincoln's Inn Fields - a great curry! This

group provide several food services, both in buildings and on the streets.

Simon Community

4 slab rating

Tea Run: Sun & Mon (6.15-9.30am): Islington - St Mary's Church 6am; Euston - St Pancras Church 6.10; Hinde Street 6.30; Marble Arch 6.50; Milford Lane 7.10; Catherine Street 7.20; Burleigh Street 7.30; Southampton Road 7.40; Covent Garden 8am; Strand 8.10; Victoria Street 8.40; Victoria - Buckingham Gate 8.50; Victoria - Behind Sainsbury 9am; Victoria - House of Fraser 9.05; Grosevenor Gardens 9.20; Waterloo 9.40am.

Soup Run: Wed & Thurs (8-10.30pm): Euston - St Pancras Church 8pm; Hinde Street 8.30; Maltraver's Street 8.50; Waterloo - Behind NT 9.10; Victoria Street 9.30; Victoria - Buckingham Road 9.45; Victoria - Back of Sainsburys 10pm; Victoria -

House of Fraser 10.10pm

Street Café: Always in the enclosed area at St Mary-Le-Strand (Strand): Mon (4.30-7.30pm) & Wed (9.30am-12.00pm)

Silver Lady Fund

AKA 'The Pie Man'

4 slab rating

Piping hot pasties, pies and sausage rolls from the van (it's white with 'Silver Lady Fund' written on the side).

SW London Vineyard - The King's Table

3 slab rating

Sun 2.30-4.30pm beneath Waterloo Bridge (Embankment) - hot stews and potatoes, bread, fruit, and tea and coffee.

Temple

If in doubt go to Temple. This location has a long history of soup runs, and still has a few operating - we're working on getting the details together.

* Please note, soup kitchens are listed on page 11

Services in London

Alcohol workers – A
Art classes – AC
Benefits advice – B
Barber – BA
Bathroom/showers – BS
Counselling – C
Careers advice – CA

Clothing – CL
Drugs workers – D
Dentist – DT
Education/training – ET
Food – F
Free food – FF
Foot care – FC

Housing advice – H
Internet access – IT
Laundry – L
Luggage stowage – LS
Music classes – MC
Mental health – MH
Medical services – MS

Outreach workers – OB
Outreach worker links – OL
Pavement stockists – P
Sexual health advice – SH
Safe keeping – SK
SSAFA – SS
Tenancy support – TS

Normal service is resumed at most day centres, but many cold weather shelters will continue into March.

DAY CENTRES

Ace of Clubs (16+)

St Alphonsus Rd, Clapham
020 7622 3196

Sun, Mon, Tues: 2pm-6pm;
Wed, Thurs: 12 noon-2pm; Fri,
Sat: 12 noon-6pm

BS, DT, F, FC, H, IT, L, MS, OB

Acton Homeless Concern

Emmaus House
1 Berrymead Gardens, Acton
Call for opening times:
020 8992 5768

A, B, BA, CL, D, DT, ET, F, FC

Aldgate Advice Centre

Aldgate High Street, Aldgate
020 7283 1950

Mon-Fri: 9.15am-11.30am
for rough sleepers; 1.30pm-
3.30pm: appointments and
activities; Fri: 3pm-4pm for
rough sleepers

**A, B, BS, CL, D, ET, F, H, L,
MH, MS, P**

Broadway Day Centre

Market Lane, Shepherds Bush
020 8735 5810

Mon-Fri: 9.30am-2.30pm
(drop-in); 8.30am-4.30pm
(breakfast for rough sleepers)

CL, ET, F, FC, H, MS, P

Choral Hall Lifeskills Centre

310 Barking Road, Plaistow
020 7511 8377

Mon-Fri: 10am-2pm

A, B, BS, C, CL, D, F, FC, L, MS

Cricklewood Homeless Concern

60 Ashford Road, Cricklewood
020 8208 1608

Housing drop-in: Mon, Wed,
Fri: 10am-11am (for advice
please be at front door at 9am
for ticket). Day services: Mon,
Wed, Fri: 10am-3.30pm (10am-
12.30pm for advice; 1pm-
3.30pm basic services)

AC, B, BS, H, IT, L, MS, OL

Crisis Skylight

66 Commercial Street, E1
020 7426 5661

Mon-Thurs 2pm-9.30pm

AC, ET, IT, P

Deptford Churches Centre

Speedwell Street, Deptford
020 8692 6548

Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri:
9am - 3.30 pm

BS, ET, F, H, L

Finsbury Park

Street Drinkers Initiative
91 Tollington Way
020 7263 4140

Mon-Thurs: 8.30am-3pm

A, BS, D, F, H, L, OL

Hanbury Community Project (S.C.T.)

22a Hanbury Street
Spitalfields, E1

020 7377 2497

Wed -Thurs 10.00am-4.00pm

AC, B, C, ET, IT, P

Holy Cross Centre

The Crypt, Holy Cross Church
Cromer Street, WC1

020 7278 8687

Mon: 2pm-5pm;

Tues: 6.30pm-9pm; Thurs:

5-8pm (Italian speakers

session); Wed: 12-2.30pm and

Fri: 12-3pm (refugees and

asylum seekers session).

FF, H, MH, P

London City Mission

- see Waterloo Christian
Centre

Manna Day Centre

6 Melior Street, SE1

020 7403 1931

Mon-Sun: 8.30am-1.30pm

**B, BS, CL, DT, FF, FC, H, MH,
MS, P**

North Lambeth Day Centre

• Gone!

North London Action for the Homeless (NLAH)

Church Hall

24-30 Bouverie Road, N16

020 8802 1600

Tue: 12pm-1.30pm (drop-in);

Thurs 7-8.30pm

B, BS, CL, FF, P

Rochester Row Day Centre

97 Rochester Row, SW1

020 7233 9862

Mon and Fri: 5.30pm-8pm

(appointments only); Tues

2pm-4.30pm (art workshop);

Wed and Thurs: 5.30pm-8pm

(drop-in session); Thurs 1pm-

5pm (Benefits); Thurs and Fri

2pm-4pm (English classes)

AC, B, BS, CL, ET, FF, P

Shoreditch Community Project (S.C.T.)

St Leonard's Church

Shoreditch High Street, E1

020 7613 3232

Mon, Wed, Fri: 9.30am-

12.30pm; Tues: 2.00pm-

4.00pm

FF, B, OL, P

Simon Community

House of Hospitality, 129

Malden Road, Kentish Town

Mon-Fri: 9am-5.30pm

Spectrum Centre

6 Greenland Street, NW1

020 7267 4937

Mon: 10am-12pm (advice),

2pm-4pm (drop-in); Tues:

10am-12pm (advice),

2pm-4pm (women only); Wed:

2pm-4pm (advice); Thurs:

10am-2pm (advice);

Fri: 10am-2pm (advice); 2pm-

4pm (advice)

**A, BS, C, CL, D, FC, H, L, LS,
MH, MS, TS**

Spire Centre

8 Tooting Bec Gardens

020 8696 0943

Tues and Thurs: 9-10.30am

(rough sleepers only),

10.30am-2pm (drop in); Wed:

10am-12pm (rough sleepers),

10am-1pm (adult learning

centre); Fri: 10am-1pm

(women only); Sun: 11.30am-

3pm (drop-in)

**A, B, CL, D, ET, FF, FC, H, MC,
MH, MS, P**

Spitalfield's Crypt Trust

see Hanbury and Shoreditch
Community Projects

St Christopher's Fellowship

Lime Grove Resource Centre

47 Lime Grove, W12

Please call for opening times:

020 8740 9182

AC, BS, CA, ET, FC, IT, L, MS

St Cuthbert's Centre

The Philbeach Hall

51 Philbeach Gdns, Earls Court

020 7835 1389

Mon-Fri: 11.30pm-3.45pm

AC, BS, C, CL, F, H, IT, L, OL, P

St John's at Hackney

Community Space Centre

Lower Clapton Road, E5

020 8985 6707

Mon-Thurs: 10am-12.30pm;

2pm-4.30pm; Wed: 10am-

12.30pm

B, BS, CL, ET, F, H, IT, MS

St Stephen's Church

The Manna

17 Canonbury Rd, N1 2DF

020 7226 5369

Tues: 7pm-9pm (drop-in);
Weds: 1-3pm (drop-in: B and
FC); Fri: 10am-1pm (drop-in)
BS, CL, FC, FF, L, P

The Connection at St Martin's (Social Care Unit)

12 Adelaide Street, WC2
020 7766 5544
Daily 9am-12.30pm drop-in
with some afternoon sessions.
On the weekends the service
is mixed (16+) from 9am-1pm
(no entry after 10.30). There
are also drop-in sessions
on Tues and Thurs 4.30pm-
7.30pm (26+ only).
Social Care Unit (age 26+)
**A, AC, B, BS, CA, CL, D, ET, F,
H, IT, MC, MH, MS, P, SK, SS**
• The long planned
work has begun on the old
Social Care Unit. See page 5.

The Passage (25+)

St Vincent's Centre,
Carlisle Place, SW1P
020 7592 1850
Mon-Fri: 7am-11am for rough
sleepers. Appointments only
beyond this time
**A, B, CA, CL, D, ET, F, FC, H,
IT, L, MH, MS, TS**

Upper Room, St Saviour's

Cobbold Road, W12
020 8740 5688
Mon-Thur: 5.30pm-6.45pm;
Tue: 9.30am-11.45am; Sat-Sun:
12.30pm-1.30pm
A, BA, C, CA, D, ET, FC, FF, H

Waterloo Christian Centre

6 - 8 Webber Street, SE1 8QA
020 7928 1677
Mon-Fri: 9am-12noon
B, BA, BS, CL, FF, H

West London Day Centre

134-136 Seymour Place, W1H
020 7569 5900
Mon-Fri: 8.45am-10.30am for
rough sleepers only; 2pm-4pm
(drop in) with TS and light
refreshments
**AC, B, BS, C, CL, F, IT, L, LS,
MS, OL, P, SK, TS**

Whitechapel Mission

212 Whitechapel Road, E1
020 7247 8280
Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun:
6am-11am (cooked breakfast)

BS, CL, FF, MS, OL

NIGHT SHELTERS

Redbridge Night Shelter

16 York Rd, Ilford,
IG1 3AD
020 8514 8958
Year 'round
18 Beds (16 male/2 female)
Open Access (Dry)

St Martin's Night Centre

Social Care Unit
St Martin's-in-the-field
Year 'round: 10pm-7.30am
Space for 40 (no beds)
Referral only (Dry)

Turnaround (Newham)

Choral Hall
020 7511 8377
Year 'round 7.30pm to 7.30am
25 beds
Referral from Choral Hall Day
Centre (Dry)

SOUP KITCHENS

American Church

(entrance in Whitefield Street)
79a Tottenham Court Rd, W1T
020 7580 2791
Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 10am-
12pm. Serving hot meals, soup
and bread, and/or sandwiches

ASLAN

All Souls Church -Clubhouse
020 7580 3522
Sat: by invitation

MEDICAL SERVICES

Great Chapel Street Medical Centre

13 Great Chapel Street, W1
020 7437 9360
Mon-Fri: 2pm-4pm; Mon, Tues,
Thurs: 11am-12.30pm
**A, B, C, D, DT, FC, H, MH, MS,
P, SH**

Dr. Hickey's - Cardinal Hume Centre

Arneway Street, SW1
020 72228593
Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 10am-
12.30pm & 2pm-4pm.
Wed: 10am-12.30pm
**A, B, C, D, DT, FC, H, MH, MS,
P, SH**

King's Cross Primary Care Centre

264 Pentonville Rd, N1
020 7530 3444
**B, BS, CL, DT, FC, H, MH, MS,
P, SH**

DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES

Hungerford Drug Project/ Turning Point

32a Wardour Street
W1D 6QR
Mon - Fri 2-5pm (drop in)
020 7287 8743
A, C, D, MH, P

ADVICE SERVICES

Borderline (Scottish)

7-9 Belgrave Road
SW1V 1QB
0845 456 2344 (advice line)
Mon-Fri: 9.30 - 10.30am (drop-
in advice service); 9.30am-
4.30am (appointments)
Closed Wed pm
A, B, C, CL, D, H, MH, P

London Irish Centre

50-52 Camden Square
London
NW1 9XB
020 7916 2222
Ring for specific service times
A, B, C, CL, D, ET, H, MC

Notre Dame Refugee Centre

5 Leceister Place, WC2H 7BX
020 7434 1619
Mon and Thurs: 11am - 4pm
Service for French speaking
refugees and asylum seekers
B, C, CA, FF, H

St Giles Trust

64 Camberwell Church St, SE5
020 7703 7000
Mon-Fri: 9.30am-12.30pm
A,B,BS,D,ET,H,L,MH,MS,P,TS

BENEFITS AGENCY

Southwark Homeless Unit

Wedge House
36-40 Blackfriars Road
SE1 8PB
020 7902 8600

SPECIALIST SERVICES

Quaker Mobile Library

Mon (every second): The
Christian Centre in Webber St

(behind the Old Vic), and The
Manna Centre (the busiest
stop); Sat (every): am, The
Passage and St Martin's.

EX-FORCES

Ex-Service Fellowship Centre

40 Buckingham Palace Road.
Victoria
020 7828 2468

AWOL? Call the 'reclaim your
life' scheme from SSAFA on
01380 738137 (9am-10am
Mon-Fri).

TELEPHONE SERVICES

Shelter Line: 0808 800 44 44
(8am-12am, 7 days)

Message Home Helpline:
0800 700 740 (24 hrs, 7 days)

Runaway Helpline
0808 800 7070. Free line for
u18s who've left home

Get Connected: 0808 808
4994. Free advice for young
people (1pm-7pm, 7 days)

National Debtline:
0808 808 4000

THE SEASONAL NIGHT SHELTERS

Camden and Clerkenwell

Various churches
07908 131518
01 Jan - 31 Mar 06: 24hrs
Beds for 12
Local referral only (Dry)

Hackney Winter Shelter

Various Churches
07985 977 751
01 Jan - 31 Mar 06: 8pm to
8am (7pm Sun). Last entry
10pm (9pm Sun)
Beds for at least 20
Open Access (**Dry**)

Islington Cold Weather Shelter

Various Churches
07960 491151
01 Jan - 31 Mar 06: 7.30pm to
8.30am
Beds for 12 - 15
Entry by booking ahead (Dry)

Hostel hobbies

Another cynical look at life in hostels with our 'Insider'

Recent research suggests that people engaged in activities they find meaningful are less likely to abuse drugs or alcohol or suffer mental ill-health. The result is that homeless hostels are more interested than ever in how residents are spending their free time; it is no longer enough to stay out of trouble and to leave the staff to browse the internet in peace.

To be a good resident you now have to be occupied, and occupied meaningfully at that. However there can be a sizeable

difference between a resident's definition of what's meaningful and the hostel's. If you're not working or in education, what you are doing probably won't be meaningful enough for the hostel's liking, and you will find yourself being persistently nagged to take part in an in-house activity.

This wouldn't be so bad if these in-house activities weren't so half-hearted and, dare I say it, meaningless. Every hostel seems to have an art group, cookery, and possibly a weekly trip to a cultural hotspot (usually the Tate Modern). And that's it.

Fine, if you enjoy these, but even then another problem is that an activity's success is

often judged on the number of attendees rather than what they are getting from it. In order to bump up the figures every resident is asked to attend every activity.

It's no wonder that many residents decide to opt out and find their own activities.

Unfortunately, watching a documentary on TV, reading a book or discussing current affairs with your friends will probably not meet the hostel's criteria for meaningful activity. This is odd considering that drawing a picture with some crayons has no problem meeting the criteria, but there you go.

If you are not participating in any hostel sanctioned activity and also spending a lot of time out of the hostel or in your room, you might even find yourself labelled as self-isolating, unmotivated or depressed (workers love playing psychiatrist). So, what to do for a speedy move-on? The best advice I can offer is to play the game.

If you aren't interested in the hostel's activities, make sure the staff know that you are spending your time fruitfully. And if you're bored and in need of something to do, remember the hostel will listen to any suggestion you make; they have to. Go through the right channels, whether this means filling out a suggestion form or raising it in a residents meeting.

Get your fellow residents doing daily Tai Kwondo.

'Insider'



"I'm not convinced about mum's new multi-vitamins - she still can't do a full Inverted Aerial Lip Grind"

MISSING



James Dowsett

Age at disappearance: 64

James, also known as Jim, has been missing from Whittingham, Preston since Saturday 18th June 2005. He went for a walk at about 5pm but failed to return. James, who has since turned 65, has not been seen since.

There is great concern for James's welfare as he is unwell and requires regular medication that he is not believed to have with him. It is possible that due to his ill health, James may appear confused and disorientated.

James is 5ft 10in tall, of slim build with shoulder-length, wavy grey hair and a grey moustache. James also wears glasses and when he went missing was wearing a long sleeved pale orange shirt, dark blue trousers and a pair of slip-on leather mules.

If you have seen James or have any information regarding his whereabouts, please contact the National Missing Persons Helpline on 0500 700 700. All calls are free and confidential.

All other NMPH lines are listed on page 11.

Please note, *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*.