



the  
**FREE**  
monthly for  
homeless  
people

# thePavement

June 2013



# The Editor

This is the new format for *The Pavement*, which has been designed by our friends at the *Guardian*.

We'll try a new order next month, with *The List* as a pull-out in the centre pages, but this is the size and format for the foreseeable future. However, the important part of this is that you let us know what you think. Email or write to us with what you think; good and bad.

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## *the***Pavement**

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Formerly homeless women making coats/sleeping bags; see story pages 22–23

*Photography by The Empowerment Plan 2013*

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# Worries over HB

## ‘Confused’ councils cut housing benefit to night shelters

Night shelters operating on a ‘first come, first served’ basis are under threat following a new legal ruling, which has prompted a number of local authorities to withdraw or reassess their housing benefit payments.

Widespread confusion over whether residents of UK night shelters are still legally eligible for housing benefit followed the publication of the February ruling (<http://bit.ly/XG1W0c>), in which the judge ruled that Isle of Anglesey County Council was not liable to pay housing benefit to the claimant, “OR”, for nights spent at a Holyhead night shelter – on the grounds that he did not occupy the dwelling “as his home”.

Kevin Spice, of Isle of Anglesey County Council, said “One of the main reasons the HB section had reservations about the proposal was, despite the extremely limited facilities available at the night shelter, the nightly charge for occupants was intended to be in excess of the rate that was being paid by the Council’s homeless section to B & B establish-

ments housing homeless people.

“The night shelter was only ever intended as a short term measure over the winter months” Spice added, “it was scheduled to close at the end of March 2008. However, the night shelter continued to operate until June 2008.”

Since the ruling, Salford City Council has stopped payments of housing benefit to Narrogate Night Shelter, forcing the 28-bed unit to close.

The *Guardian* reported that the council “feared that the Department of Work and Pensions would refuse to recompense it for payments ruled illegal”.

Another shelter “in the south” has also been affected, said Homeless Link’s head of communication Ben Knox. According to the homeless umbrella charity, “The council has decided it will only fund the four beds [each given to the same person for up to 28 days] until the remaining six are no longer allocated on a nightly basis.”

Blackpool Council also reviewed its housing benefit payments to local night shelters, such as Streetlight, but decided not to change its policy after seeking legal advice. According to a statement on its website, the council was “assured that the case

will not set a precedent and the DWP were not seeking to establish a wider principle of refusing to give housing benefit to night shelters”.

The judge did emphasise that the ruling was based on the facts of the individual case and were not intended to “prescribe how housing benefit claims from rough sleepers should be decided”.

However the judge made the decision based on the fact that the claimant had no guaranteed place for the night, no right to occupy the hostel for longer than his 12-hour overnight stay and was unable to stay or leave his belongings in the shelter during the day – all factors that are not unique to the Holyhead shelter.

According to Homeless Link “it is not yet clear how far this will have an impact across the country as not all night shelters are reliant on housing benefit”.

The organisation does not yet have statistics on this or on how much of the overall housing benefit budget goes to night shelters.

“It’s a bit of a difficult one - how do you define a night shelter?” said Knox. “I mean there are many that are open for the winter – a lot of which are closing down now... It’s not that clear cut.”

## Legal action

Many homeless organisations and individuals are now demanding clarification before the situation escalates.

Two campaigns have been launched; one by the manager of Narrowgate Night Shelter Phil Brown on the 38 Degrees website (<http://bit.ly/112mOfn>) the other by Emmaus companion John Gall on the Change website (<http://chn.ge/11UV9Ey>).

The 38 Degrees petition has attracted 4,644 signatures and calls on Iain Duncan Smith, secretary of state for work and pensions, to “please make an allowance in the application of the definition of ‘dwelling’, in terms of housing benefit... so that a night shelter will automatically qualify as a dwelling”.

The Change petition, meanwhile, has clocked up 10,983 signatures and asks Lord Freud, minister for welfare reform, and the DWP to “make sure night shelters aren’t forced to close their doors to homeless people”.

Homeless Link has called for the government to publish their own legal advice on the matter. “In the short-run, government has a responsibility to clear





*"They call themselves the English Defence League"*

up confusion around this ruling and councils should ensure there is emergency accommodation for homeless people in place," it said.

"What this highlights is the fundamental need for both secure long-term funding for effective emergency accommodation, as well as accommodation that provides individuals with a secure base they can call home".

But will the government distribute legal advice help? "Guidance is advice and councils are statutorily obliged to pay attention to advice but it doesn't trump a [upper tribunal decision]," solicitor and Nearly Legal blogger Giles Peaker told *The Pavement*.

What will do the trick, he surmised, is passing secondary legislation or a new regulation to say "night shelters count as dwellings".

However Alan Murdie, barrister and former senior lawyer of legal charity Zacchaeus 2000 Trust, argued there was "too much legislation. It's gone beyond what any human being now understands".

There are at least three ways of reading a regulation, he claimed. "This is an exercise in statutory interpretation... and you can't guarantee just on one [judge's] decision that the correct reading

of the law has been made... I can see adverse judgements going on for an awfully long time, creating an awful lot of havoc".

The cutbacks in legal aid make things even more difficult for individuals and even groups to take action. "There are pro-bono lawyers who can be instructed," explained Murdie. "But you've got to get solicitors together first and most of the ones that do legal aid work are now struggling under the new regime. People can do judicial reviews themselves but it is very hard."

However secondary legislation isn't the only option. An alternative, Peaker suggests, "would be by an appeal either in that case [Isle of Anglesey vs OR] or another case up to the Court of Appeal".

The latter is perhaps more likely as the time frame for "OR" to launch an appeal is increasingly shrinking: according to online guidance, claimants "must ask the Upper Tribunal judge for permission to appeal within one month of the decision (three months for social entitlement and war pensions or armed forces cases), stating why you are asking for permission to appeal".

Another potential route outlined by Peaker is where "a decent QC finds a way to really distinguish



that case on its facts so it wouldn't apply to other similar night shelters".

In terms of action, Peaker concluded: "The most likely way of getting an outcome is if councils and the homeless and the charities and the night shelter charities link up and actually lobby the DWP".

## Lobbying government

Already the issue has provoked widespread media attention and is being pushed to the foreground in Parliament.

In a Commons debate on 20 May, the Labour MP for Bolton West Julie Hilling asked Duncan Smith the following: "Given that night shelters will not be able to continue without an income from their service users, what action is being taken to address this problem?"

He replied that the DWP was "looking at this issue with my noble friend Lord Freud" adding that he would "definitely" write to Hilling regarding the outcome. So far, she has not received a response.

Narrowgate manager Brown is also pushing the issue as far as possible. "We've got a petition going, our local MP is on the case [and] we've actually got members of the House of Lords submitting written parliamentary questions," he told *The Pavement*. "We're quite

ahead of the game on getting it discussed on Prime Minister's Questions, things like that".

However, he added, "getting legislation changed can be measured in months if not years, whereas we've got people on the street tonight, tomorrow night, next weekend".

The charity is also focusing on fundraising. Already it has received a generous donation from a member of the public which will allow it to re-open three nights a week over the next four months – but it needs many more funding pledges if it is to continue beyond then.

Meanwhile, the DWP is continuing to highlight that any action councils take is a local decision. A press office spokesman Daniel Barnes told *The Pavement*, "The decision was very much about one [shelter]," adding: "I know other areas that have been taking legal advice about whether it's supposed to cover them or not, or what is the correct funding stream for these places" – suggesting housing benefit is not viewed by the government as the 'correct funding stream' for night shelters.

*Carinya Sharples*

## The homeless news from across the UK and the World

### Police raid rough sleepers in Ilford

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Police have targeted rough sleepers in Ilford, Essex, taking sleeping bags and food parcels donated by the public.

Local reports said police swooped on a group of eight men sleeping in the former Ilford Baths in mid-May, bundling their possessions into a police car and leaving the rough sleepers “stunned”.

One man, Adam Jaskowik, told the *Ilford Recorder* he had pleaded with police to be able to keep his things but was ignored.

Mr Jaskowiak, 34, said: “They were just taking the sleeping bags and chucking out everything. I asked to keep it and the food, but they said ‘no’.

“I just grabbed as many of my things as possible and put them into a bag and ran.”

Ilford chief inspector John Fish told the newspaper: “The public rely on police to reduce the negative impact of rough sleepers, this includes the need for us to assist in the removal of temporary structures, tents, and

bedding from public spaces and other inappropriate locations.”

John Clifton, 26, corps officer at the Salvation Army, which had donated some of the items said: “I’m shocked and disgusted. Why would you take the only form of shelter someone has from them?”

“We have tried to find out why they were taken and if we can get them back.”

*Staff*

- This is not the first time *The Pavement* has heard about police harassment and it’s unlikely to be the last. If you have experienced something similar, or you know someone who has, please get in touch by emailing:

**editor@thepavement.org.uk**

### Funding cuts hit homeless charities

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Government cuts have hit the funding of almost half of all projects aimed at helping the homeless, according to research published by Homeless Link at the end of April.

The study found that during 2012, 58 accommodation projects





**Linda Millard**

Age at disappearance: 48

Linda has been missing  
from Bristol since  
1 March 1996.

If you think you can  
help the search for Linda  
please call or text **Missing  
People on 116000**  
or email **116000@  
missingpeople.or.uk**.

Linda, we would love  
to hear from you. Call.  
Text. Anytime. Free.  
Confidential. 116000

**missing  
people**

Registered Charity No. 1029418

closed in the UK, with the loss of  
1,811 beds for rough sleepers.

There has also been a decrease  
in the number of services offering  
targeted support to help people  
with the most complex problems  
– leading to an increasing number of  
services that do not feel equipped to  
help individuals who, because of the  
multiple issues they face, require the  
highest level of support.

Of the services whose funding was  
cut, 22 per cent said it had affected  
their ability to move people into long-  
term accommodation, while 18 per  
cent said it had impacted on getting  
people into employment. More than  
half believe that cuts are resulting in  
increased rough sleeping and anti-  
social behaviour.

*Tom Bowker*

## **US runaway mother resurfaces**

A homeless woman who vanished  
11 years ago has resurfaced,  
in a bid to make amends with  
her abandoned children.

After disappearing in 2002, 54 year  
old Brenda Heist approached police  
in Florida in May, reported *CBS News*.  
She explained that she left her two  
children in central Pennsylvania to  
become a 'vagrant' after snapping  
due to extreme stress.

Heist, who had been working as  
a bookkeeper at a car dealership,  
was divorcing her husband when  
she made the decision to leave her

children, then aged eight and 12.

The journey began after three strangers found her crying in a car park. Reaching out to her, they suggested she join them on their hitchhiking trip to South Florida. She told Lititz Borough Police Detective John Schofield that she slept in tents and under bridges, and ate restaurant scraps from rubbish bins. To maintain her secret she used pseudonym and made no contact with her children or estranged husband.

After hitchhiking to Florida, Heist moved into a camper van with a man, where she scraped by doing odd jobs. Most recently she lived in a tent facility run by social services.

Her children, Morgan and Lee had no idea why their mother had disappeared. "She was my best friend, her and I were so close, I never thought she would do this to me and my brother," Morgan told *CBSNews.com*. "I don't know what was so hard in her life, it was a mutual decision to divorce."

Police, who had suspected Heist had been killed, were shocked by her confession. "Everybody that knew Brenda told us there was absolutely no way Brenda would leave her children. She explained to me that she just snapped. She turned her back on her family, she turned her back on her

friends, her co-workers."

J. Todd Matthews, a spokesman for the National Missing & Unidentified Persons System, said that although it was highly unusual, it was not unheard of for people to just 'walk off'. At present she is being held in custody before facing charges.

Heist has apologized for her disappearance and is keen to make amends with her ex husband and children.

*Lizzie Cernik*

## Aylesbury death unexplained

The body of a woman found dead on a canal bridge near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, on 22 April, has been identified following an appeal by the Thames Valley Police.

The woman, who had been sleeping rough in a tent, was identified by her family on 2 May. She was 20 year old Anasdasaja Mamedova, recently from Ilford and originally from Latvia.

Her death continues to be treated as unexplained, but not suspicious, awaiting a coroner's report.

*Staff*



## Squatters Legal Network

New to *The List* (in London and the West Midlands) in *The Pavement* this month is the Squatters Legal Network (SLN) – a volunteer organisation providing advice and support to those affected by the recent changes to squatting law. Following new legislation

passed in September 2012, squatting in residential properties in England and Wales is now illegal - punishable by up to six months' jail and fines of up to £5,000.

The change in the law does not affect commercial premises.

The SLN provides legal advice regarding this new law (known as Section 44) as well as court support



"Waiter

mike winans -

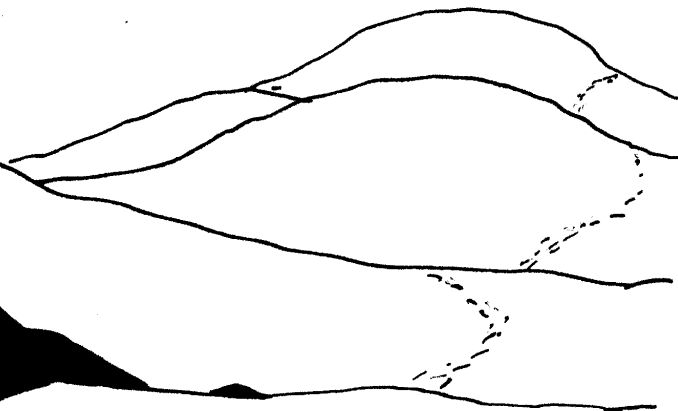
and a 24-hour emergency phone for people to call who need advice - from squatters to homeless people and anyone else in a precarious housing situation.

During the last six months following the implementation of Section 44, there have been 33 known arrests of squatters living in residential property - ultimately

leading to 10 convictions and three prison sentences.

Pro squatting campaign group Squash claims the cost of criminalising squatting will be as high as £790m over the next five years.

*Jim O'Reilly*



r, waiter!"

## Judicial review halts Christian Kitchen relocation

A row over a soup kitchen in Walthamstow, north-east London, is on hold pending a judicial review of the council's request that it should relocate.

The Christian Kitchen has served meals to homeless people from the same spot in a town-centre car park owned by Waltham Forest Council for more than 20 years.

But in November the service was asked to move by the council, which claims that it attracts anti-social behaviour to the area, damaging local businesses and disrupting residents.

The council claims that 15 users of the soup kitchen are street drinkers who behave anti-socially in the area on a regular basis. The council also points to a soup-kitchen user who was convicted of sexually assaulting another user, and sentenced in March to six years in jail.

Christian Kitchen organisers dispute the claim that the soup run contributes to these problems.

During the last week of May, law firm Irwin Mitchell sought a judicial review on behalf of the Christian Kitchen, to examine whether the council's decision to request it relocate was lawful.

Supporters of the soup kitchen called for community organisations to join them in delivering a letter to the council demanding that they should



be allowed to stay in their current location.

The council has said that it will wait for the outcome of the judicial review before taking further action.

Councillor Clyde Loakes, deputy leader of Waltham Forest Council, said: "The council appreciates that the vast majority of the people who use the soup kitchen are law-abiding, but the current site has sadly become a magnet for some people who want to cause trouble and we do not think



## NEWS

### Government policy “forcing” people into homelessness

Fewer than one per cent of London landlords say they are willing to accept tenants claiming benefits – one of many factors that could be “forcing people into homelessness”.

New research by Homeless Link also reveals that only 5.5 per cent of shared properties in the capital are within budget for under-35s on benefits.

This comes as government figures show that welfare reforms have seen a rise of 12,000 people competing for rooms in shared accommodation.

Meanwhile, private rent levels have increased by 37 per cent over the last five years and are expected to rise a further 29 per cent in the next five.

The study follows the government’s changes to the Shared Accommodation Rate (Sar), which places restrictions on the amounts someone under the age of 35 can claim.

Sar is limited to a maximum amount based on what is seen as “appropriate” rent for a room in a shared property.

Until January 2012, this only applied to 18-24 year olds but has now been extended to include all benefit claimants under 35.



that it is right that local residents should be made to feel unsafe.”

A council spokesman added: “We want the soup kitchen to remain and continue providing the service because it does a good job, but just not in the place where it is. If the judge does find in council’s favour, we’ll work with them [Christian Kitchen] to find a solution in a new location.”

*Katharine Hibbert*

This, combined with the low level of landlords willing to accept benefit claimants as tenants, suggest young people could be heavily restricted when it comes to finding a room over their heads “potentially forcing people into homelessness”.

Homeless Link chief executive Rick Henderson said: “This report clearly shows that the recent changes to the system have left it falling far below the mark and could be putting many people at risk of homelessness.

“The bottom line is that the housing crisis must be fixed and the dysfunctionality of the housing market needs to be addressed. In the short-term, government must make in-roads by ensuring that more properties are affordable and encouraging landlords to open their doors to those on benefits.”

Howard Sinclair, chief executive of Broadway, added: “We are already seeing evidence at Broadway of the negative effects of the housing benefit changes. People are losing their homes and those looking for accommodation from the streets are finding the move on from temporary accommodation increasingly difficult.

“We can only see the situation getting worse unless urgent action is taken to make properties more affordable for those on benefits.”

*Staff*

## **Bristol pilot scheme expands**

A pilot project to house rough sleepers in families’ spare rooms is hoping to expand to 10 host households by the end of June.

Bristol Nightstop will offer rooms to young people aged 16-24 who are at risk of becoming homeless.

May was a busy month for the scheme, with nine families applying to become hosts.

To be accepted, families are paid two visits from Nightstop workers, and must pass background checks and a training session to make sure they are ready to host vulnerable young people.

The project’s website admits that “it can take some time” for families to be accepted on to the scheme, but says the benefit each family can make for young people is “immeasurable”.

The scheme is part-funded by the Homeless Transition Fund, which is itself supported by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Under the scheme, rough sleepers arrive at a family home at 7pm and get an evening meal, followed by breakfast the next day. They then leave the house at 8 the next morning.

Although this project is still small scale, there are 40 similar projects around the UK, with 700 families offering rooms to rough sleepers.

The manager of Bristol Nightstop Matt Dowse said: "It's a tried and tested model that's used across the country and, of course, anybody entering into this kind of project would be thinking 'why would I do that?'"

"What we are about is trying to show people you can do it and you can do it in a safe way."

The project is not aimed to solving long-term problems but would help "stopping a person getting into a cycle of homelessness", he added.

The manager of the local Wild Goose drop-in centre, Alan Goddard, welcomed the Nightstop scheme, pointing out that Bristol has a real problem with young people sleeping rough.

"Myself and three colleagues went onto the street all night on a Wednesday and found 19 homeless people living on the streets..."

"There's so many more below the surface and one of the great things about Nightstop is that it targets young people," he said.

*John Ashmore*

## **Rough sleeper's death draws crowd of mourners**

The funeral of a homeless man who became famous for living in a public toilet block in Ireland drew a crowd of 150 mourners, and an impromptu performance from the local gospel choir.

Josef Pavelka, 52, became famous in Ireland for regularly sleeping in the public conveniences, along with his friend Piotr Baram, 35. At his funeral, the priest called on the authorities in Ireland to use the occasion to "review the policies we have towards the homeless and the weak", according to local press.

Pavelka was found dead in the street on Saturday 5 May. The local police speculated that he had choked to death on food he had found outside a fast food restaurant. He and Baram had both been known for suffering an addiction to alcohol – for which Baram is now receiving treatment, according to a report in the *Irish Times*.

*Tom Bowker*

## **Rough sleeper donates \$250 to charity**

A rough sleeper has saved up \$250 (£165) in spare change and donated it to the Society of St Vincent de Paul Council of Los Angeles.

Ed Denst, 77, is an ex-marine who has been living on the streets of LA for the last 23 years. Mr Denst was inspired by the charity of others to pay it forward to Our Mother of Good Council Church, which has been helping him out with free lunches for the past 20 years.

The charity's board president, Claire Padama, told CBS LA: "I was shocked. I think that's more





"Are you sure summary execution



for burglars is Tory policy, Norman?"



# London Soup Run Forum

**Monday 20th June 5.30-7.30 pm**

Venue: Connection at St Martin's  
12 Adelaide Street  
London WC2N 4HW

Does your group give free food and / or outreach  
to homeless people on the street?

**Then this forum is for you!**

Come to share your experience, discuss the best  
ways to help homeless people and coordinate your  
services.

More info / to be added to the mailing list please contact  
[info@housingjustice.org.uk](mailto:info@housingjustice.org.uk) / 0203 544 8094  
The forum is convened by the independent homeless charity  
Housing Justice. [www.housingjustice.org.uk](http://www.housingjustice.org.uk)

meaningful than those people who have a lot.”

The donation, which was paid in one dollar bills, would help people in need of assistance with their rent and utility bills.

Mr Denst told TV cameras that when his wife died he sold the house, spent all his money and has been sleeping rough ever since. But he said: “Giving back makes me feel very good.”

*Jane Evans*

## The rise of the self-build home

Some Lewisham (South London) residents will soon be supported to build their own homes, through a new scheme offered by the borough’s council.

In partnership with The National Self Build Organisation (NaSBA) and an experienced house builder, Lewisham Council are offering individuals, community groups and organisations the chance to custom-build a house.

A site off Church Grove in Ladywell, London SE13, has been identified for the scheme, with spaces for up to 16 new homes to be built by 2016.

In addition to gaining a new home, participants will acquire new skills in house building trades such

as electrical, carpentry, plumbing and bricklaying, which could help them access future employment opportunities.

Councillor Susan Wise, cabinet member for customer services, said: “Everyone recognises that London has a real shortage of housing but Lewisham Council is exploring a whole range of ways to support the needs of local residents.

“We were the first in the country to experiment with self-build projects, so we know we can make this work.”

The council ran a successful self-build scheme in Honor Oak Park which was completed in the 1980s. It was the first project of its kind in the UK and inspired similar initiatives around the country.

Earlier in May, NaSBA organised the first-ever National Self Build Week to raise awareness about self-build options.

In this latest scheme community groups and organisations can support residents in their application but applicants must be a Lewisham resident and be on the Lewisham housing waiting list. For more information and to register your interest email [housing.matters@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:housing.matters@lewisham.gov.uk) or call 020 8314 9163.

*Anna Kostyrina*



## College grad makes coats, jobs and prospects for the homeless

In the beginning the idea was to produce a coat that provided comfort and pride for the homeless. But Veronica Scott of Detroit soon realised jobs were far more valuable.

A college project started three years ago inspired Scott (pictured below modelling a coat) to research and produce a coat that could morph into a sleeping bag, keeping those sleeping rough in Detroit's -20° C winter nights warm.



She now runs not-for-profit organisation The Empowerment Plan, which employs 13 homeless or former homeless women (pictured opposite and on the cover). This year the business aims to make 4000 coats.

She recruits single parents with no history of violent crimes and pays above the national minimum wage. This, combined with the microloans that Scott offers, has helped her employees to achieve independence, access education and move their families off the streets.

Their coats are distributed free of charge to rough sleepers, but they have also been used by the Red Cross for disaster relief.

This has been made possible in part due to donations from local businesses. Carhartt supplied the initial sewing machines and coat lining fabrics and General Motors provided insulation materials.

Scott told ABC news: "I was raised in a situation of poverty. It wasn't abstract as it is for most people. So knowing that can happen to my family means that can happen to anyone."

*Jane Evans*





This year the business aims to make  
4,000 coats



## Kansas tunnel city evicted

Kansas City Police have evicted a series of hole-dwellers after their underground homes, which extended beneath the city, were discovered.

The authorities have cleared the area and closed the holes, which were home to many people including children and babies. The local police said the people were “living in squalor, with piles of garbage and dirty diapers left around wooded areas”, reports said.

Kansas City policeman Jason Cooley told one paper that officers found a series of winding underground tunnels after a recent crime spree had led them to the area.

“One of the tunnels probably went 20 to 25 feet underground towards the back and veered off in another direction about six feet or so,” he told the *Kansas City Star*. Another tunnel network was discovered nearby.

Residents of both were told they needed to vacate the premises, and a ministry organization was on-site to assist any homeless people with shelter needs.

*Sarah Cox*



We recap on the origins of *Street Shield* and some early episodes on pages 30-48

# Nurse Flo

## When NOT to use Accident and Emergency Departments

Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments are in the news again. I say again because for as long as I can remember (since about 1980 ish) the problem of lots of folk turning up at A&E who don't have to be there has been a head scratcher for those who manage the health service.

Many things have been tried, out of hours services tinkered with, phone lines set up, posters campaigns and all the rest. But it keeps on happening.

Of course, this crisis will pass without most of us noticing, and the headline makers will have to find other things to describe as "crippling" and "on the brink of collapse."

To me – and this is my personal opinion – all the rhetoric misses the point. Its fundamental human nature that people will look for the easiest option and for many that means turning up at their local hospital A&E department.

Many people don't know the difference between an urgent health need and one that's not. Pain can be relative and many fairly minor ailments can present with alarming symptoms, so telling people not to go to A&E unless

it's serious isn't always helpful.

Serious is also a matter of opinion, I believe.

### What will help A&E?

The internet can be helpful with self diagnosis, but can also make it worse. As soon as you start reading about disease you begin to imagine you have loads of weird and wonderful symptoms. In the course of my work I regularly torture myself in this way.

If it were up to me I'd stick a place called A&E Lite next to every real A&E and stream people through. Probably too expensive. In some areas there are minor injury clinics but only a limited number of them exist...

In the meantime folks, here are some tips to help avoid a long (typically four hours plus) and boring wait in the emergency department:

NHS Direct guidelines: A&E departments assess and treat patients with serious injuries or illnesses. Generally, you should visit A&E or call 999 for life-threatening emergencies, such as:

- loss of consciousness
- acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- persistent, severe chest pain
- breathing difficulties
- severe bleeding that cannot be stopped

You should have a good awareness of your local services:

- Minor Injuries Units (MIU) – the A&E Lite I referred to
- GP out-of-hours service – you can get this when you phone your local GP when the surgery is closed and the answer phone message will contain a contact number for this.
- Out of hours Dental treatment clinic
- Other services for mental Health etc. exist but it might be worthwhile contacting NHS24 or NHS Direct directly and they will help direct you on this

## What you can do

My general advice would be this:

Use your GP, and order prescription drugs well in advance. Make sure you have plenty to cover holidays when surgeries are closed.

If you have a long term illness or condition, keep your appointments

and make sure you let your GP know if there are any changes. Don't leave things to the last minute.

Make use of NHS 24 in Scotland and NHS Direct in England and Wales. At time of writing there were some teething problems with the new 111 number, but hopefully this will be quickly resolved. The purpose of these phone numbers is to direct you the most appropriate service.

Take Care out there folks!

*Susie Rathie*  
*Our Nurse Flo*

# Foot care

## Summertime blue, summertime shoes

One of the challenges of living on the street is finding suitable footwear to cope with all weathers and all terrains.

The British 'summer' presents extra challenges, with the daily weather changes. It is perfectly possible to start a day in shorts and sandals and end up needing a raincoat and boots on by teatime. Boots that were comfortable in the winter and spring, however, can make us build up quite a sweat on a warm day and make things uncomfortable and overly hot, especially if you are on your feet a lot or walking long distances.

The 'trainer' is a good all weather solution for summer, but can be pretty expensive, so an alternative may be to look for a suitable second hand pair that would meet your needs.

### What should you consider?

Wearing shoes that someone else has worn is never ideal, but may not be as risky as you think. Contrary to popular belief, isn't easy to pick up bugs or infections from a second hand trainer, unless you are putting

your warm bare foot in it directly after someone has taken their infected, warm bare foot out of it (so if you think about it, it might be more risky to buy new shoes in a busy shoe shop than go second hand!).

Given that most second hand trainers spend some time waiting for their new owner, the bugs cannot survive, and will be long gone by the time you put your foot in. Keep your socks on anyway. If you are still worried about infection, a good spray of disinfectant may be helpful, but the risks of catching something from used trainers really are minimal.

A second hand trainer had a life before it came to you. All 'new' trainers start off their life being moulded in the shape of the shoe last (a foot shaped thing used in the industry to mould or design the shoe) or in the shape of a computerised 'virtual' 3D foot – a perfect foot shape that probably does not exist. New trainers start off fairly stiff, especially round the heel area and the bendy bit of the sole just under the ball of your foot. The wearer then 'breaks them in' stretches them in places (sometimes picking up a blister or two along the way),

and beds down the inner sole and outer of the trainer to reflect their own foot shape. Sometimes you can see an imprint of the previous wearer's footprint on the inner sole of the trainer. This is what gives people the feeling of a comfy trainer – a shoe that has adapted over time to fit their own foot.

If you then put your foot into a second hand trainer that has been shaped by someone else, there can be issues of rubbing and chafing, new blisters, or the shoe may not provide the support you need.

The key think is to look for shoes that appear less worn and 'stronger' rather than a shoe with a lot of heel and sole wear, and wear socks to put a layer of something between you and the trainer.

### What materials to choose?

Natural materials are always better for breathability than synthetic, so try to pick up a pair of leather ones if you can – but it would seem the trainer industry is heading more and more towards synthetic materials inside and outside of the shoe.

If you are a 'sweaty' foot person, look for a trainer with lots of obvious breathing holes on the top surface.

If buying new, and all you want them for is walking about rather than sport, a cheaper brand will be practical and affordable. Just check that the sole bends easily in the area of the ball of your foot, and try to avoid trainers with a really thick, fixed rubber sole, which may interfere with the natural movement of your foot.

Check in your local area – many shelters have/will know of an associated 'shoe swap' scheme, where you might get new or second hand trainers in exchange for your old ones.

Charity shops and jumble sales can also be a good source of trainers, often 'quality' footwear is available at a reasonable price. If you get a good pair that fit, look after them, and try to leave them off at night to dry out when wet. That is assuming we get rain this summer.

I remain ever hopeful.

*Evelyn Weir  
Lecturer in Podiatry  
Queen Margaret University,  
Musselburgh*



FIGHTING CRIME AND INJUSTICE





AS I'M FALLING NOW.



FALLING AND BURNING.

JUSTICE ON THE PAVEMENT, IN THE PAVEMENT EVERY MONTH!

# STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 1: ARRIVAL



YOU  
BURN.



SHOOTING BOMB!







# STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 2  
'ELLO, 'ELLO, 'ELLO.

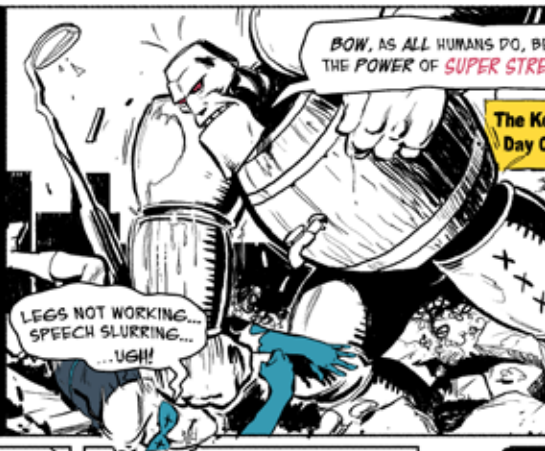


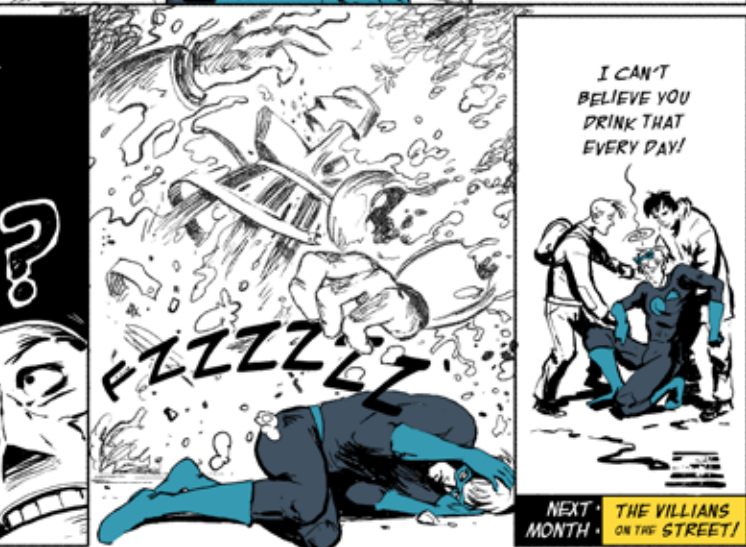
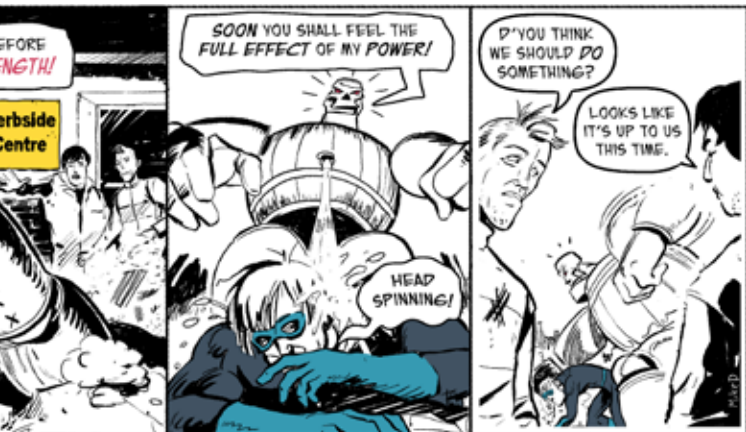


# STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 3

THE  
DEMON  
DRINK





# STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 4

THE  
VILLAINS

UNDER A BRIDGE DOWN BY THE RIVER.

SO WE'RE BEING  
CHALLENGED ON THE  
STREETS, HEY?

SUPER STRENGTH  
BUT WHO IS THIS  
STREET SHIELD?

STRONG IS WHAT HE IS,  
AND HE'S MADE FRIENDS  
ALREADY. WE MUST ACT!

AND ACT WE SHALL MY BEERY  
FRIEND, AND STOP HIM ONCE  
AND FOR ALL, BEFORE HE  
INTERFERES WITH OUR PLANS.

BUT WHAT SHALL WE DO?  
SEND IN MY HENCHMEN?

NO. BRITAIN'S NOT SEEN ME IN  
A LONG YEAR, BUT I THINK  
IT'S TIME FOR MAYHEM...

**STREET SHIELD  
BEWARE,  
HERE COMES...**



# STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 5

THE CLASH!





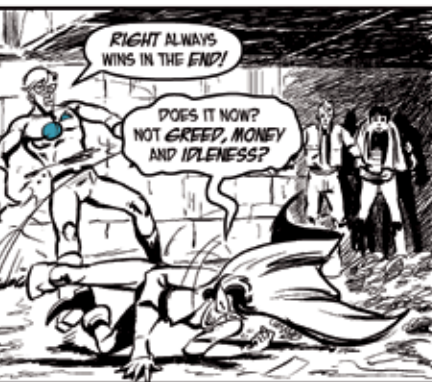
# STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 6

STREET  
ARENA

A BATTLE ROYALE IS TAKING PLACE ON THE STREETS, BETWEEN OUR HERO, STREET SHIELD, AND THE SINISTER SPRING-HEELED JACK.





RIGHT ALWAYS  
WINS IN THE END!

DOES IT NOW?  
NOT GREED, MONEY  
AND IDLENESS?

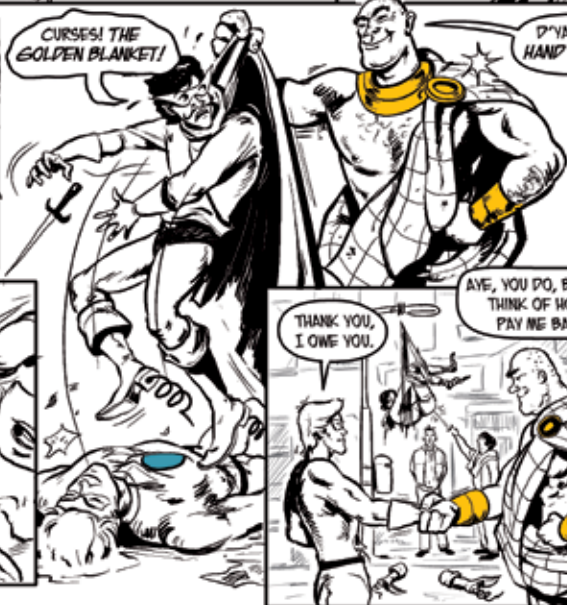


WELL MATE, WHAT DO WE  
DO NOW, IT'S NOT LIKE WE KNOW  
THIS NASTY PIECE OF WORK?  
CALL THE POLICE?

NAH, WE'RE NOT EXACTLY  
FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH  
THERE. HAVE FAITH  
IN OUR MAN.



CURSES! THE  
GOLDEN BLANKET!



D'YA NEED A  
HAND BIG MAN?

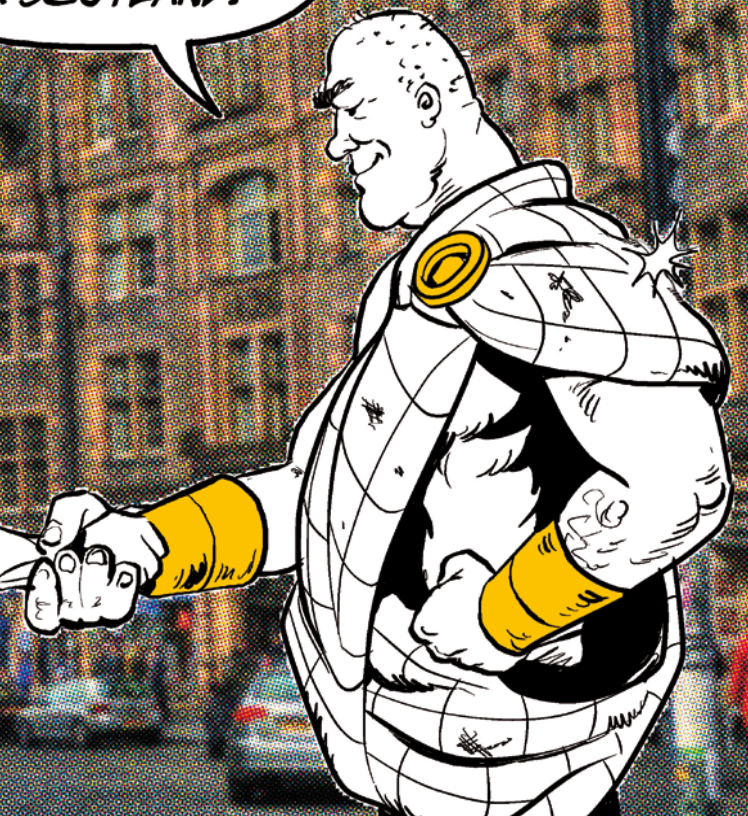


THANK YOU,  
I OWE YOU.

AYE, YOU DO, BUT I CAN  
THINK OF HOW TO  
PAY ME BACK...



HELPING ME WITH A  
BLEM UP HERE,  
SCOTLAND.



# STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 7

## THE MISSING MAN

WELSH JOHN AND SCOUSE HAVE JUST SEEN STREET SHIELD DISAPPEAR.

WELL WHAT D'YA THINK THAT WAS ALL ABOUT THEN?

...AND THAT'S GET SOME B...

SO DO

I'D GUESS THAT HE TELEPORTED TO HELP THE OTHER HERO, BUT SOMETHING ELSE IS OF MORE IMMEDIATE CONCERN TO ME...

I DID IND

I'M NOT SURE, BUT THE MISSING MAN TOLD ME TO CALL YOU, AND HE TALKS TO ALL OUR KIND.

ACH, YA \*\*\*\*

WHERE TO  
BREAKFAST.

GOOD CALL, MATE, LET'S GET  
DOWN THE CENTRE. HE'LL BE  
BACK WHEN HE'S READY.



NEED - FOR YOU ARE BOTH NEEDED HERE!



ON A PARK BENCH IN EDINBURGH, STREET SHIELD TALKS WITH  
THE GOLDEN BLANKET.

...I WAS SLEEPING ROUGH AND  
GOT THIS **BLANKET** FROM THE SALLY  
ARMY, AND WELL, IT TURNED OUT TO  
HAVE **POWERS**. YOU?

I FELL FROM THE SKY, AND  
THINK MY PLACE IS TO **FIGHT  
CRIME** FROM THE STREET. SO,  
WHY D'YOU NEED MY HELP?



A **CREEPING TERROR**  
STALKS **UNDERNEATH**  
EDINBURGH, AND ONLY  
YOUR **COMBINED POWER** CAN  
STOP IT, AND PREVENT IT **PROWLING**  
THE **STREETS** FOR PREY!

NEXT  
MONTH

THE TUNNELS!

# HOMELESS CITY GUIDE

-  squat
-  empty building
-  dangerous neighbourhood
-  danger
-  guard dogs
-  an attack happened here
-  good place to drink / smoke
-  unfriendly place
-  friendly place
-  soup run (with rating)
-  strong police presence
-  potential for work
-  good food thrown away here
-  safe for sleeping
-  message board x mins that way
-  security guard
-  you'll get moved on here

step 1



step 2



## MAKE YOUR MARK AND HELP OTHERS TO READ THE CITY

Make non permanent marks to keep the system up to date and stay within the law.