

# *the* Pavement

The *FREE* monthly for West Midlands' homeless

December 2010





**Editor-in-Chief**  
Richard Burdett

**West Midlands Editor**  
Ellie Jones

**Web Editor**  
Val Stevenson

**News Editor**  
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**West Midlands Team**  
Carole Fox, Neil Johnson, Duncan Jones,  
Hannah Wilson

**Distribution Coordinator**  
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**Reporters**  
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Rebecca Evans, Adam Grinsell  
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Jackie Lindoe, Nicholas Olczak, Jim O'Reilly  
Garnet Roach, Carinya Sharples  
Katy Taylor, Rebecca Wearn

**Photographers**  
Rufus Exton, Bob Henry, Katie Hyams

**Contributors**  
Flo, Toe Slayer, Evelyn Weir

**Cartoonists/Comic Artists**  
Neil Bennett, Cluff, Pete Dredge, Kathryn  
Lamb, Ed McLachlan, Ken Pyne, Steve Way,  
Mike Williams, Mike Donaldson

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# The Editor

## Winter shelter

Welcome to the Christmas edition of *The Pavement* West Midlands. In this issue, the Housing Benefit shortfall saga continues with Birmingham City Council, only just out of court, allegedly attempting a policy that would cause debts to mount up for those in emergency accommodation. Out-raged local charities have questioned the legality of this move – see page 4.

Christmas is supposed to be a time of goodwill and, in fact, there is plenty about. We would like to thank one of our homeless volunteers, Gary Birdsall, for undertaking an epic eight-day walk from London to Birmingham to raise funds for us. Thanks to all those who supported him. (page 8)

On the subject of fundraising, Blue Hippo Media, whose blockbuster *The Insatiable Moon* will be out in January, suggested organising a preview of the film in late November to raise money for Birmingham-based charity SIFA Fireside. New volunteer journalist Liam Bradley reviews the film, which is about homelessness and mental health issues, on page 7. Finally, we are pleased to report that despite rumours to the contrary, the Birmingham Christmas Shelter will once again be operating this year from 23 to 29 December at St George's Hub in Newtown. Guests can find directions to the shelter and details of what to expect on page 4.

Like many charities, we take a break at this time of year. Our next edition will be in February, but please continue to send us your stories. We wish you all a very happy Christmas and new year!

**Ellie Jones**

Editor

westmidlands@thepavement.org.uk

## Contents

### News

### Pages

*West Midlands News*

4–10

*Missing People*

10

*News-in-brief*

11–20

### Street Life

*Street Shield – the homeless hero*

22–23

*Foot care – the podiatry column*

24

*Dear Flo – The Pavement's health column*

24

*Homeless city guide*

26

*The List (incorporating soup runs)*

36–27

# West Midlands news

*All the region's homeless news*

## BCC deny charging homeless for B&B

Birmingham City Council (BCC) has denied rumours that they had charged an elderly homeless man – a priority case – for emergency B&B accommodation.

The man, who speaks little English and has a history of mental ill health, was distraught when the council subsequently presented him with a £160 bill.

From this surprising case, it appears that the council had been paying £103 housing benefit towards emergency housing, and then charging the remainder of the rent to the person being accommodated. The debt builds while the person stays at the B&B and must be repaid once they leave.

Other homeless people have allegedly been asked to sign an undertaking that they will pay the difference between their housing benefit entitlement and the B&B charge. If they refuse to sign the undertaking, the Council judges it has discharged its statutory responsibilities, and the people are no longer regarded as being in priority need.

Several concerned local charities have questioned whether it is legal for a council to offer accommodation on a loan basis to a priority case homeless person whom they know will not have the funds to repay it.

Alan Fraser, the chief executive of Birmingham YMCA, said: "Having become aware of this problem, I have been seeking clarification from Birmingham City Council. Despite numerous telephone calls and emails, I have had no confirmation or denial from

them regarding their policy on this issue. We are concerned about the impact on homeless people."

St Martin's Centre in the Bull Ring has also dealt with two cases where people using their centre have reported similar issues with Birmingham City Council.

Dr Graham Stubbs, help desk co-ordinator at St Martin's Centre, said: "There have been two instances where service users have been charged £60 per week for their rent while they remain in B&B. It has been Birmingham City Council's policy for the last several months to cap the difference between service users' housing benefit and the outstanding amount for their rent. I have written to the Temporary Accommodation Team at Birmingham City Council. They did reply saying this policy is now under review with their legal team."

A BCC spokesman told us: "It is not our policy to recover costs for temporary accommodation from clients who do not have the means to pay. We are aware that some invoices were issued in error. This has been corrected and we apologise for any anxiety this has caused."

However, as *The Pavement* goes to press, the Community Law Partnership (CLP) claim to have other cases of this type with charges being passed on to homeless people.

Mike McInvaney of CLP told us they have 17 possible cases and that he "fully expects BCC to come back and claim each individual case is merely a mistake."

"We have a stream of people coming in who have been treated in this manner," McInvaney said. "We have today [25 November] commenced High Court proceedings arguing that this policy is

unlawful and that the council will therefore need to repay anyone who they have had money from. We hope to hear back from the High Court judge within a week."

This is a story we'll report on again when we're back in February.

*Jackie Lindoe*

## As the mercury drops...

In mid-November, Birmingham City Council released a statement about cold weather provision. Basic overnight shelter at the Salvation Army's William Booth Centre will provide "an opportunity for rough sleepers to rest in a lounge area and to access refreshments and a hot breakfast. Support staff are available to conduct needs/risk assessments, explore temporary and permanent accommodation options and to refer to the Homeless Services Centre". However, this facility will only be available when a forecast of 0 degrees Celsius or below is predicted for a single night, and as official figures state that there are only nine rough sleepers in Birmingham, it will be available to a maximum of 10 people.

Regardless of temperature, however, the Birmingham Christmas Shelter (pictured opposite) will offer basic overnight accommodation for up to 100 people on a 24-hour basis from 23 to 29 December. It is a big but well organised operation receiving up to 150 guests a day, with around 80 in the centre at any one time. Dogs are allowed provided they are kept on a lead.

The charity has been running for over 30 years and is important, as many other charities will close for Christmas. Generally, the centre





has been well received by people in need, though some have questioned the decision to employ a professional security team. However, trustee Mike Davy defends this: "The security staff are there to ensure the comfort and safety of everyone. No one is allowed alcohol or drugs within the centre. Trustees, volunteers and guests alike are searched upon entering".

Other than the security staff, the centre relies entirely on around 200 volunteers. They are particularly needed to help with the catering: "We provide three big, hearty meals a day," Davy said, "and an extra special traditional roast dinner on Christmas Day. There are also tea bar facilities and a sandwich bar operates throughout the day."

Other services such as haircutting and a foot specialist will be available, as will advice agencies such as the Samaritans and the Citizens Advice Bureau. Davy said: "We encourage our volunteers to mix in

and get chatting to our guests, and we try to keep them entertained. We have a TV, and we do karaoke and several rounds of Bingo a day. However, we depend on groups volunteering their time to come in and entertain. We are still finalising the programme - in previous years we have had DJs and guitarists and this year we will have a choir".

More information can be found at <http://www.birminghamchristmasshelter.org/>

The shelter is at St George's Hub, Great Hampton Row (off Great Hampton Street) Newtown, Birmingham B19 3JG. Tel: 07846 299 336. Bus service 46/46a from Bull Street stops outside St George's. Buses 16, 74 and 79 stop in Great Hampton Street.

*Ellie Jones*

## The Insatiable Moon

The Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust sponsored a preview screening of *The Insatiable Moon* at Cineworld in Birmingham on 18 October. The film will be on general release from January 2011.

The film, set in New Zealand, centres on a Maori man named Arthur, a former psychiatric patient living in a community care hostel. He proclaims himself to be the Second Son of God who is destined to father a child with the "Queen of Heaven".

The *Insatiable Moon* documents the developing relationship between Arthur and a social worker called Margaret, whom he believes is his 'Queen'. This scenario is played out against the backdrop of Arthur's hostel being threatened with closure due to the pressure of a vicious media frenzy. Rather than emphasising Arthur's mental health

**You can read the news,  
keep informed & search our  
directory of services online @  
[www.thepavement.org.uk](http://www.thepavement.org.uk)**



issues, however, this crisis draws out his compassion, his efforts to defend the hostel and his fellow residents, and his unquestioning forgiveness of the hostel's opponents.

After enduring over 10 years of funding problems and filming issues (James Nesbitt and Timothy Spall were originally lined up as the film's big names), *The Insatiable Moon* has emerged as a wonderfully engrossing piece of cinema. It lacks the glitz and the star attraction of Hollywood: it was shot in five weeks on a budget of just under half a million dollars, with a cast and crew native to New Zealand. Far from being shortcomings, however, these details reinforce the sometimes gritty but often upliftingly honest account of what it means to be marginalised in a modern society, lending the film an aura of authenticity rarely found in high-budget, sentimental Hollywood productions.

*The Insatiable Moon* will make you think, talk and laugh, and may even make you cry, but most importantly it will force you to consider the issues of mental health and homelessness, and will challenge your own and society's percep-

tions. William West, a reader who attended the preview screening, said he "would recommend that anyone who has ever worked with or been affected by mental health or homelessness – and the vast majority of the general public – should see this film. It will take you on an emotional journey through the twists and turns of an unseen world."

Blue Hippo Media gave a DVD of the film to Birmingham's SIFA Fireside so they could show it at a fundraising event on 28 November.

*Liam Bradley*

## Pounding the pavements

Gary Birdsall (pictured below), aged 37 and originally from Yorkshire, has been homeless for over 10 years, but has been volunteering for *The Pavement* in London since it started in 2005. He has done many long-distance walks so earlier this year, when he heard about the launch of the new West Midlands edition, he

offered to walk from London to Birmingham to raise awareness and funds.

Gary set out from London Paddington on 30 October and set off northwards along the Grand Union Canal following a route that Pavement volunteer Ian Mountford had worked out for him which took him through West Drayton, Watford, Berkhamstead, Leighton Buzzard, Milton Keynes, Daventry, Leamington Spa and Dorridge. He walked between 11 and 28 miles a day, arriving in Birmingham a day earlier than expected on Sunday 7 November. After a brief photocall, he was presented with a box of Cadbury's Heroes chocolates and taken out for a celebratory meal, then put on a train to Yorkshire to stay with family and recuperate.

Gary raised an impressive £865 through the Just Giving site (<http://www.justgiving.com/GaryBirdsall>), and reports of his walk made the BBC and Teletext news pages.

Gary said: "It was tough going at times and I wasn't sure I could make it, but I have. Please thank everyone who has supported me. The West Midlands edition of *The Pavement* is great, and I hope to do more to help in the future".

Ellie Jones, the West Midlands editor, said: "It was very good of Gary to offer to undertake this walk. He is a charismatic man and drummed up a lot of support for *The Pavement* en route. I am so impressed by the distances he covered and the speed with which he finished. He should be very proud of his achievement. Thank you to everyone who has supported Gary and *The Pavement*."

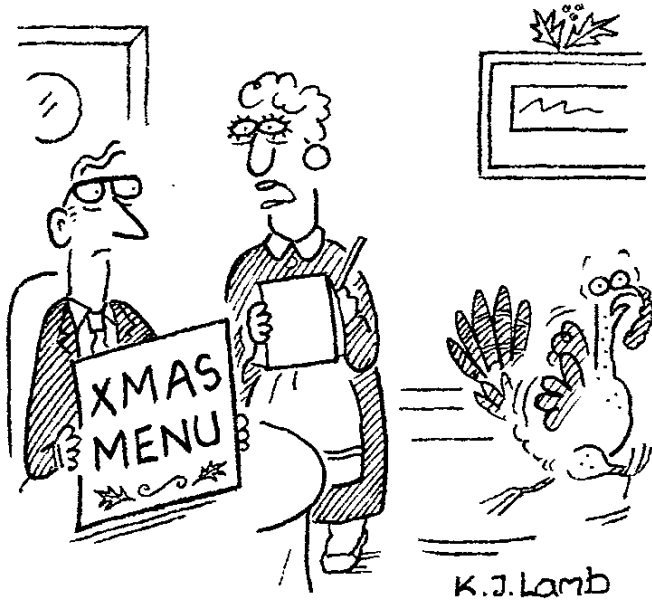
*Staff*

## Gatekeeping at BCC

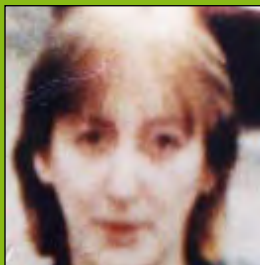
In the December 2009 case of Kelly & Mehari v Birmingham City Council (BCC), the council was found guilty of gatekeeping – it appeared to have an unlawful policy of refusing interim accommodation to







"Turkey's off"



## Patricia Lashley

Age at disappearance: 45

Patricia has been missing from Dudley, West Midlands since 8 June 1999.

There is concern for her welfare and she is urged to call the confidential service **Message Home on Freefone 0800 700 740** for advice and support..

Patricia is 5ft 4in tall, of slim build and has light brown, shoulder-length hair. She has links with Scotland, the north east of England, Manchester, Dudley & London. Patricia may be using other names.

If you've seen Patricia please call the 24-hour confidential charity **Missing People** on Freefone **0500 700 700** Email: [seensomeone@missingpeople.org.uk](mailto:seensomeone@missingpeople.org.uk)



homeless applicants under section 188 of the Housing Act 1996. The council blamed individual officers, but the court held that the refusals were systematic. BCC said it would amend its policies.

Despite this, there has just been a judicial review of the similar cases of four more homeless people – Messrs Khazai, Mirghani, Azizi and Ms Ibrahim – who tried to apply as homeless in February this year. BCC was cleared of malfeasance – a legal term meaning ‘doing bad’ – but hardly emerges smelling of roses. Justice Foskett suggested BCC should conduct a “thorough review of [its] procedures”.

Mr Khazai’s application was not taken, though he was homeless and in priority need, and he was referred to the charity Midland Heart. His solicitors obtained an email from Mr Hardy, BCC’s interim head of housing needs, dated 24 February. It said: “Please note with immediate effect all single homeless who are presenting as homeless/roofless and Domestic Violence victims requiring refuge must be referred to the appropriate funded support service. We should not be completing a homeless application.”

Instead, they were to be diverted to St Basil’s (under 25s); Midland Heart (vulnerable over 25s); or Trident or Birmingham & Solihull Women’s Aid (domestic violence victims).

BCC subsequently stated that this advice had been corrected quickly and disseminated in two subsequent briefings.

Or not, as the case may be...

In what the court described as “not a very promising start to the credibility of the Council’s factual case”, Mr Hardy said there was no specific reference to the incorrectness of his e-mail at the briefing on 26 February. Indeed his deputy, Vicki Pumphrey, emailed on the same day that team leaders were monitoring ‘non-compliance’ with it. Mr Hardy did retract that original

email, but not until 17 March, by which time Mr Khazai’s solicitors had applied for a judicial review.

The court held that the instructions in the email were unlawful and that BCC had acted unlawfully towards Mr Khazai, but Mr Hardy was not guilty of malfeasance; the email, which he apparently drafted on his own initiative, was badly thought-out rather than deliberately misleading.

BCC told Mr Mirghani every day for two weeks to come back the next day. The council sent a letter – to the wrong address – on 4 March saying that he was homeless but not in priority need. The court disagreed: “it is difficult to see on what basis he could not be said to be both homeless and in priority need”. His solicitors initiated the judicial review on 26 March. On 22 June, the BCC accepted that Mr Mirghani was owed full housing duty. However, his claim, and Mr Azizi’s, went ahead on the basis of ‘wider interest’: the same-day policy (assessing applications on the day they are made rather than taking time to consider them).

Mr Azizi went to BCC on 2 February and said he was homeless. He was told to return on the day he was evicted. Shelter faxed evidence of his medical complaints to the council and requested interim accommodation. BCC turned down the request.

The court found that the decisions on interim accommodation in both Mr Mirghani’s and Mr Azizi’s cases were unlawful, adding that “the nature of those statutory duties is now well-established and ought to be capable of being applied without significant mistakes”.

Ms Ibrahim’s application and the decision on interim accommodation were delayed, but full housing duty was subsequently accepted.

Val Stevenson

# News in brief

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

## Councils call for fairer funding

London councils have called on the government to end the "unfair" allocation of homeless funding in the capital.

Enfield, Haringey and Newham said that the current system was "unfair and leads to major disparities between boroughs", adding that they were "dismayed" at plans to extend the system for another four years.

The three boroughs have some of the highest levels of homelessness in London, yet receive the lowest levels of government funding, they argued.

London has 37,900 households living in temporary accommodation, and despite housing 24 per cent of them, these councils receive just three per cent of the capital's Homelessness Grant.

Haringey's allocation of £200,000 is the equivalent of just £57 for each household living in temporary accommodation, according to the borough. This compares to more than £16,000 per household in the City of London, the councils said.

Just six London boroughs (including Westminster, Camden, and Kensington & Chelsea) receive 65 per cent of London's Homelessness Grant, despite accommodating just 18 per cent of the city's households in temporary accommodation.

Speaking on behalf of the three councils, councillor Claire Kober, leader of Haringey Council, said: "We are dismayed by the government's decision to continue with a homelessness grant funding regime that is neither fair nor based on any evidence of relative need.

"We cannot understand why the government is unwilling or unable to take into account the scale of each borough's homelessness problem when determining the amount of grant each London borough should receive," she said.

*Garnet Roach*

## Canadian horror

A flesh-eating disease has claimed four homeless victims in Canada, prompting health authorities to issue warnings to shelters.

The four have appeared in casualty wards in Calgary over the last two weeks, but no one shelter has been identified as the source of the disease, so authorities have had to post bulletins to all local shelters in a bid to warn their customers of the symptoms. The alerts stress that anyone suffering from fever, muscle aches, vomiting or severe pain in any one area should seek immediate medical attention.

The disease, medically termed Group A streptococcus in its initial stages and then necrotising fasciitis as it turns into the flesh-eating disease, is easily transmitted from person to person and can be fatal.

Homeless people in the Canadian city have been advised on preventative measures such as hand washing and not sharing items that have been in other people's mouths.

Previous victims of the disease in the UK who have not managed to diagnose the disease in its early stages have had arms and legs amputated, and have had long stays in hospital.

*Liza Edwards*

## Cut for revenge?

A London council has been accused of forcing the closure of a housing advice service because it had referred them to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Threshold Housing Advice (THA), based in Shepherd's Bush, closed in November after losing funding from Hammersmith & Fulham Council in July. However, rather than being the result of cuts in public spending, the Labour opposition claims that the reason was probably revenge.

In 2009, THA referred Hammersmith & Fulham Council to the ombudsman after it failed to house a pregnant victim of domestic violence in emergency accommodation. She was forced to sleep out in a park for four nights. As a result, in January 2010, the council was found guilty of "maladministration causing injustice." The ombudsman's report stated: "the standard of record keeping by housing officers in this case was so poor that it hindered the ombudsman's investigation of the complaint and fell so far below acceptable standards that it amounts to maladministration."

After the cuts made to THA, Cllr Stephen Cowan, leader of the Labour opposition, told the *Hammersmith & Kensington Times*: "It is hard not to reach the conclusion that the removal of all Council funding to that organisation is anything other than cold-hearted revenge." This charge was countered by Cllr Joe Carlebach, cabinet member for community care, who stated that the decision had been made after looking at all applications for funding and at the limited funds available.

*Staff*

## Pressure against squatters increases

Housing Minister Grant Shapps has stepped up pressure against squatters, issuing guidelines to property owners about actions they can take and criticising organisations giving squatters advice.

The guidelines explain what a person can legally do upon finding somebody occupying their property and the limits of squatters' rights. They highlight that landlords can apply for an interim possession order that requires occupiers to move out within 24 hours.

"Squatting is anti-social, undesirable and unfair on homeowners who find they have their homes taken over," Mr Shapps told the *BBC*. "This government is not prepared to stand that situation continuing, and in particular we're keen to provide better advice for people who find that they are victims of squatters as well."

The Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS), an organisation providing legal guidance to squatters and homeless people, said Mr Shapps was scaremongering. Myk Zeitlin, a member of the organisation, said Mr Shapps's description of squatters was inaccurate.

"I have met some squatters who are anti-social, as I have tenants and homeowners," he said. "Squatting itself is not anti-social or undesirable, nor unfair. What is anti-social and unfair is the ownership of property that allows it to be left empty or used for anti-social activity when there is homelessness and other social need."

Mr Zeitlin said some people made a personal or political decision to become squatters because they felt the rents asked of them by landlords were too high.

Mr Shapps said the guidelines for landlords sought to counterbalance extensive advice offered to squatters. He criticised organisa-

tions such as ASS, saying these acted like estate agents and helped people take over others' homes. Mr Zeitlin said this was incorrect.

"We are not an estate agent, as we cannot find properties for people," he said. "We provide a service so that people know that it is legal in this country [and] can make the best decisions for themselves about whether to squat or not."

*Nicholas Olczak*

## Cuts bite

Funding for homeless, drug and domestic violence services in London is under threat because of a change in the way money is allocated.

At present, councils across London pool £26.4 million to spend on these services across the capital. But the Government is considering "repatriating" the funds to individual councils. Consultation meetings have been taking place across the city, but a final decision is expected by December.

If funds are repatriated, projects – many of which were awarded contracts until at least 2012 – will be guaranteed backing only until April next year.

The move could threaten a key funding source for a number of services including the Nia project and Eaves Housing for Women, which support domestic violence victims, and the New Horizon Youth Centre, which supports 16–21-year-olds with multiple needs from almost every London Borough.

A key problem with the proposed change is that homeless people are often transient, moving from borough to borough, so a council-specific funding scheme would fail to reach them.

Also, victims of domestic violence often need to move away from an area at short notice, making it essential that services are accessible by all Londoners.

The Roma Support Group, a London Councils-funded project working with East European Roma refugees, has notified London Councils that it intends to apply for a judicial review. This would, effectively, see them challenge a decision to repatriate the London Councils funding as unlawful, and a judge would have to consider whether the process was fair or unfair.

According to the Women's Resource Centre, which offers advice and support to women's organisations, London Councils has already decided that it cannot guarantee funding for voluntary organisations beyond March of next year, partly because of the big cuts in central government spending announced in October's Comprehensive Spending Review.

Organisations such as the Scarlet Centre, a pan-London organisation that offers support for women, risk losing their funding and having to close, meaning a potentially vital service for at-risk women could disappear.

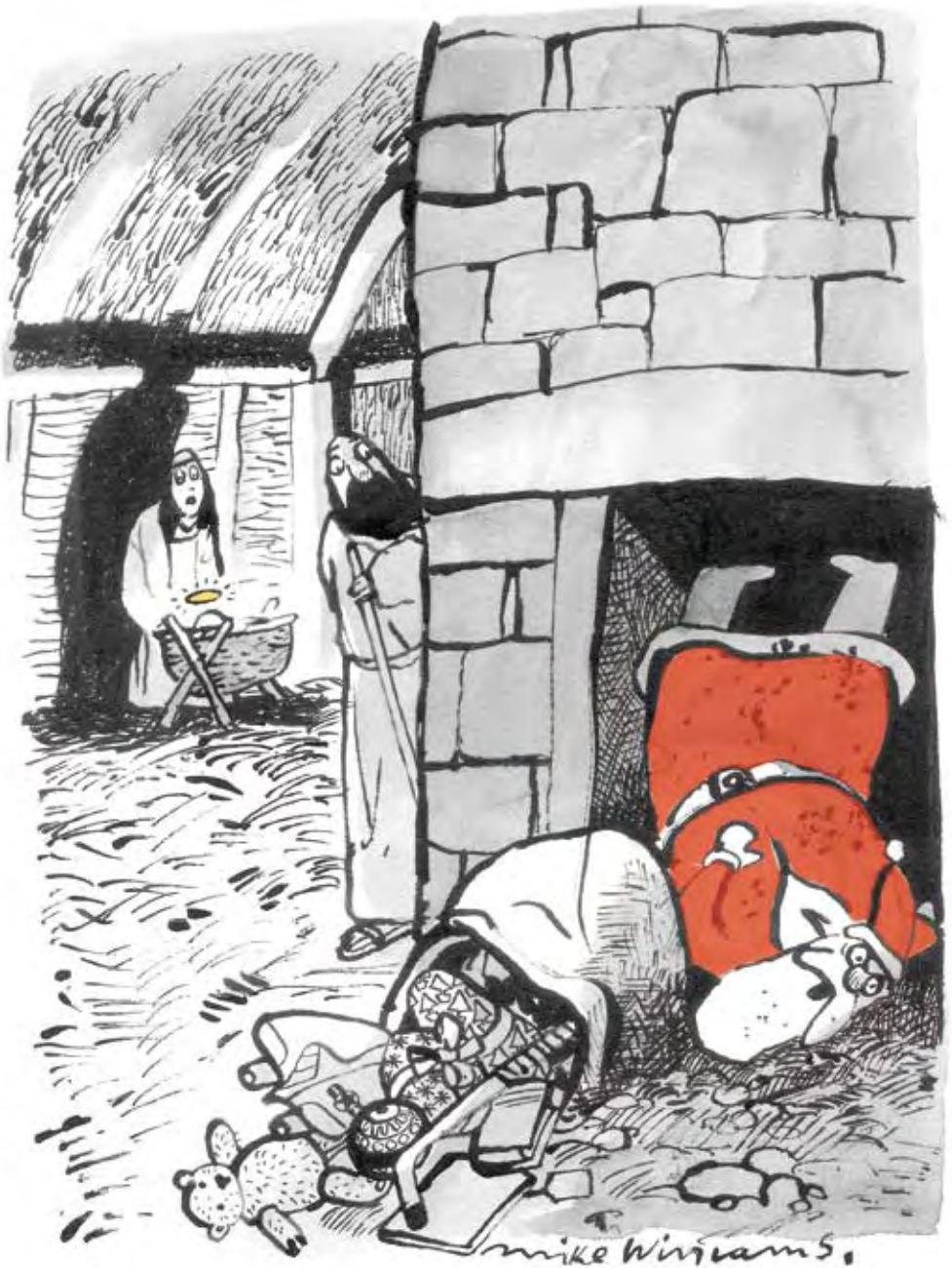
Joanna Goodbody, of the Scarlet Centre, said a change in funding arrangements would be a "devastating blow" to the centre, as councils tend not to prioritise women's support.

She is calling for individuals and partner agencies to support the centre's work by sending her an email of support, asking London Councils to commit to fund the valuable services that the centre provides for women. Her email address is: [joanna.goodbody@eaveshousing.co.uk](mailto:joanna.goodbody@eaveshousing.co.uk).

*Rebecca Evans and John Ashmore*

## Folding housing

The urgent need for emergency housing has inspired some creative ideas in recent years from St



"Jesus!"



*"I've been elf-harming again"*





Patrick's Church Trust's 'pods' to the Dome Village in Los Angeles (see *The Pavement* passim).

Now North Carolina-based building designer Peter Anthony has designed a collapsible, lightweight emergency accommodation unit that can be air-dropped and assembled by two people in less than 30 minutes, using a single spanner.

Designed in response to the increasing number of natural disasters around the world, The Anthony Emergency Housing System (pictured above) could be deployed as temporary accommodation for people left homeless following disasters such as the earthquake in Haiti and floods in Pakistan.

However, it's not only countries struck by natural disasters that are in dire need of emergency accommodation. According to Homeless Link, who last year published a report entitled *Emergency Accommodation: A survey of provision in areas with no direct access hostel*, one in four areas in England has no emergency accommodation for single homeless people.

Cuts in public spending are likely to exacerbate the problem. Jo Ansell, chief executive of London homeless charity Providence Row, told the *East London Advertiser*: "The cuts will also mean more costly emergency accommodation. It costs over £400 per week to house one person in a hostel, and that bill looks set to rise."

With a mounting bill for emergency housing, politicians will soon be on the lookout for cheap alternatives that can rapidly implemented – perhaps something like The Anthony Emergency Housing System.

*Carinya Sharples*

## Homeless checkout

Supermarket giant Morrisons plans to create 1,000 new jobs for homeless and vulnerable people over the next three years.

The first five employees joined the Harehills store in Leeds last month, after training through a pilot scheme with the company.

The initiative will now be rolled out across the country with the help of charities Create and the Salvation Army.

Gary Stott, deputy chairman at Create, said: "This is a real example of collaboration between social enterprise and corporate employers. We hope that Morrisons will be the first of a 'coalition of the willing' to see talent grow and lives change in every sector of society."

Morrisons said that it wanted to offer up to 10 per cent of jobs at new stores to vulnerable people, adding that former rough sleepers would receive three months of training before moving onto the shop floor.

Norman Pickavance, group HR director for Morrisons, added: "This initiative will help give disadvantaged people to get their lives back on track. We would encourage other British businesses to join us on this initiative."

Anyone interested in joining the scheme should either do so through the organisation which has supported them

into secure housing, said Create, or contact the charity at [info@createleeds.org](mailto:info@createleeds.org)

*Garnet Roach*

## £6m employment academy

Charity Thames Reach is to open a £6 million employment academy to help homeless and long-term unemployed people find work.

The academy will provide training and employment support to people in the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. There are also plans for a community café and a space for local groups to hold evening meetings.

In August, Thames reach bought the grade II-listed building at 29 Peckham Road, Camberwell, which will house the academy. It is currently being refurbished, with the help of £4 million from the Homes and Communities Agency.

Thames Reach's Jeremy Swain said: "This initiative is a remarkable collaboration involving the boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth, the HCA, the Mayor's Office and ourselves at Thames Reach. It represents [...] a beacon of hope for the many people wanting to develop the skills to get back to work."

If you're interested in making use of the new facility, you'll have to wait – the academy is due to open in December 2011.

*Carinya Sharples*

## Poncho continues

The practice of 'hot-washing' by the City of London Corporation under Operation Poncho appears to have picked up steam once more – despite the recent fall in temperature.

Ignoring criticism from homeless charities and advocacy group, the police are still moving on rough sleepers in the night and washing down the areas where they have been sleeping. This policy runs in conjunction with the Corporation's outreach work (the contract fulfilled by Broadway).

According to the City of London's website, Operation Poncho is designed "to reduce begging and vagrancy within the City of London by ensuring that those involved received support from drug and welfare agencies."

There is concern the teams may simply be forcing people elsewhere by washing down the areas they have been sleeping. Depending on police availability, they go out in the evenings between 9pm and 1am roughly once a week.

Alison Gelder, the director of Housing Justice, paid tribute to the work done by the City of London with housing homeless people, but said she worried about the potential to disrupt vulnerable rough sleepers.

"They've done some amazing work helping people who've been out for a long time. Helping people to find somewhere indoors to sleep is really good, but disrupting them when there's no service available doesn't seem to be an ethical practice."

She said she would be "dismayed" if the police and outreach teams were actively disrupting people's sleep.

Asked whether the washing down was simply to clean the area or to discourage people from sleeping there, Ms Gelder said: "I think it's got a dual purpose".

Another council which had been involved with hot-washing in the past is Westminster; however, they said this was no longer the case.

*John Ashmore*

## Santa on the street

A former rough sleeper is spreading seasonal cheer to homeless people in Croydon.

Chris Collins is collecting toiletries, radios, old phones and warm clothes from residents of the South London borough, which he'll then hand out to those on the street every Thursday up until 25 December. Thirty-nine-year-old Mr Collins, who is looking for volunteers to help him in the evenings, decided to do this having been homeless himself in 2007. If you can help with time or donations email [christophercollins\\_810@hotmail.com](mailto:christophercollins_810@hotmail.com).

*Staff*

## Canadian police found guilty of misconduct on homeless

Two Canadian police officers who rounded up local homeless people and drove them around in a hot van for over an hour have been found guilty of misconduct, according to local paper *The Edmonton Journal*.

The two officers, of Edmonton in Canada, were charged with one count of discreditable conduct and two of insubordination in a police disciplinary hearing.

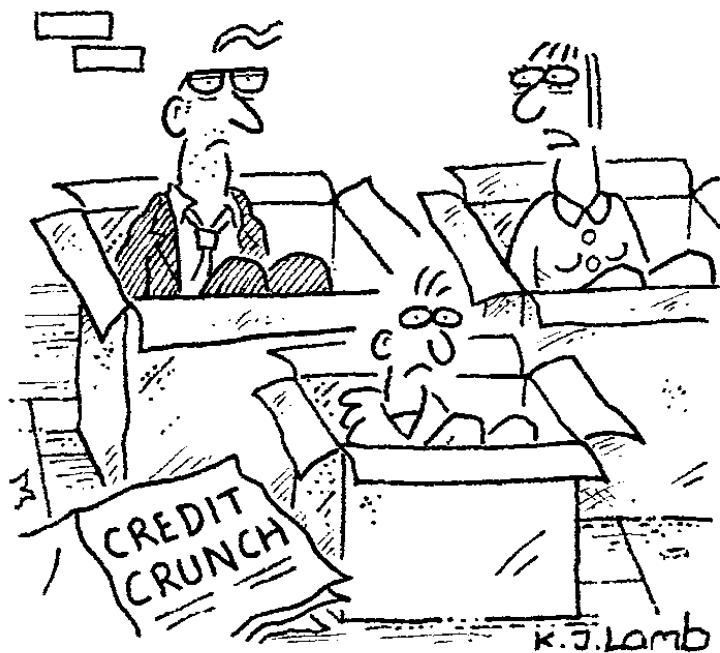
They were found to have broken with police policy by transporting a higher than acceptable number of homeless people, failing to take notes, and not leaving the passengers at a residence or with a responsible person.

"There was no justification for these actions, either in law or in police policy," said Calgary Police Inspector Paul Manuel, who presided over the hearing.

The *Edmonton Journal* reported that during the disciplinary hearing, the two officers testified that they had picked up a group



McLACHLAN



*“When you said we were getting  
a ‘box set’ for Christmas...”*

of around six people with opened and unopened bottles of alcohol.

Manuel said that moving homeless people into downtown shelters on busy weekend nights was routine police practice. But he said the officers collected more people than their van could properly hold.

"Nine people were placed in the patrol wagon that has a reasonable capacity for six," he told the *Edmonton Journal*. "[This] would create uncomfortable conditions in the van."

Erika Norheim, a lawyer representing several of those involved in a civil lawsuit, said the decision demonstrated that all citizens had rights that protected them from this kind of mistreatment.

"These are highly vulnerable people that can be easily taken advantage of in a way that many other members of society could not be," she told the *Journal*.

"It was clearly wrong... These individuals were not properly dealt with, so there is a victory in the sense that that was recognised by the decision."

Nicholas Olczak

## Bumfighter turns life around

A homeless man who starred in one of the first ever Bumfight videos has turned his life around and got off the streets.

Rufus Hannah (pictured below and overleaf), 55, became infamous in 2001 when a video of him riding in a shopping trolley down concrete steps, running head-first into walls and punching his best friend went global.

The father-of-five – who at the time was an alcoholic – was paid \$5 to perform the degrading stunts, which including him getting a tattoo with the words 'bum fight' on his knuckles.

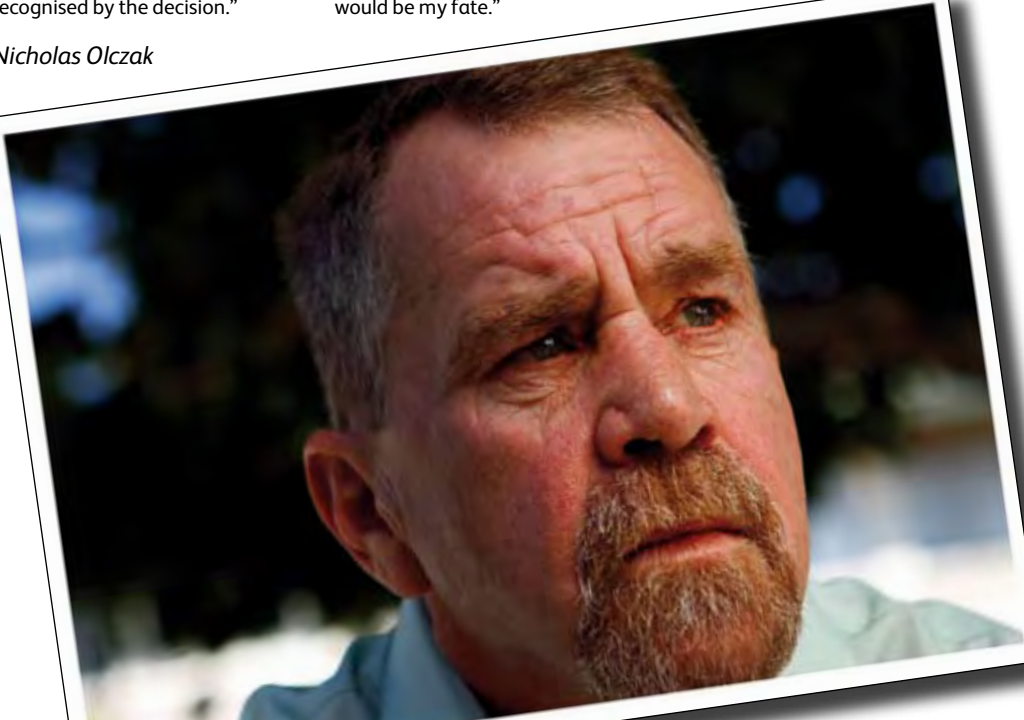
But since then he has transformed his life, having been sober for eight years, re-married and got a job working full-time as a property manager. He is also a campaigner for homeless rights. Speaking to the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, he said: "I always thought dying on the street would be my fate."

Bumfights was a US film series that showed homeless men fighting and attempting amateur stunts in exchange for money, alcohol and other incentives. Homeless groups across America condemned the videos, and said they "disseminate hate against the homeless and dehumanise them."

Stunts Rufus performed for the videos included riding a shopping cart down a flight of stairs, ramming his head into steel doors so hard that he now suffers from epilepsy, and beating up his homeless best friend, army veteran Donnie Brennan, so badly that his leg was broken in two places.

Mr Brennan was paid to have the word 'bumfight' tattooed across his forehead.

The videos' makers were eventually convicted of several charges, including the soliciting of felonies, and they were sentenced to six months in prison. The producers also paid an "unspecified" amount in damages to the pair.





Photography by K CALfreds, San Diego Union-Tribune © 2010

Mr Hannah, of Swainsboro, Georgia, became homeless and an alcoholic after being discharged from the army because of an injury.

He is worried that Bumfights contributed to the sick trend of homeless bashing, where people attack rough sleepers and film it. Last year, 43 homeless people were killed in America, up from 27 the year before.

Mr Hannah now works with state and federal legislators to pass hate-crime legislation that would increase the penalties for those convicted of attacking the homeless – and hopes to one day to get his tattoo removed from his knuckles (pictured above).

*Rebecca Evans*

• Thanks to the *San Diego Union-Tribune* for the photographs

## Faith in humanity

A good story appeared in November, which reaffirms our faith in humanity: a homeless man in the US state of Arizona found a backpack containing thousands of dollars in cash, and returned it to its owner.

Dave Talley, of Tempe, Arizona, found \$3,300 in a bag behind a railway station. Homeless after losing his home through drug addiction several years ago, Mr Talley had been tempted to keep the cash, but told local broadcaster *KNXV-TV* that “not everyone on the streets is a criminal. Most of us have honour and integrity.” Having used a local day centre to help him track down the owner of the backpack, student Bryan Belanger, it was returned. Mr

Belanger, who had the cash to buy a car, told the local news: “It really is a lesson to keep your faith in people.”

*Staff*

## Heroin ‘drought’ alert

Drugs addiction teams across the UK are on alert with a spate of heroin overdoses in November, caused by a shortage of the drug.

A fungus blighting the Afghan poppy crop has resulted in a massively reduced supply of heroin, leading to dealers ‘cutting’ the drug with other, often dangerous, substances.

*Staff*





# STREET SHIELD

CHAPTER 19

ANSWERS!

AT THE BUS STATION.

THERE'S YOUR MAN!  
WAITING FOR THE FIRST  
BUS IN THE MORNING!

HE SAYS HE'S HEADING  
OUT OF TOWN FOR THE  
WINTER!

THANKS FOR  
LETTING US KNOW.  
WE CAN PUT HIS MATE'S  
MIND AT REST.

JIM SAID YOU'D GONE MISSING.  
HE WAS WORRIED.

ARE YOU HEADING  
OUT OF TOWN...?

YUP. I'M  
AFRAID SO...

...AND HERE  
COMES MY  
LIFT!



HELLO, NICK.  
IT'S BEEN  
A WHILE

THIS IS MY MATE -  
STREET SHIELD!

HI!



AH... I'VE HEARD OF YOU!

KEEP UP THE GOOD  
WORK, SON. WE STILL  
NEED YOU.

THANKS. I'M GLAD  
TO HELP IN ANY WAY  
I CAN.



PLEASE GIVE MY COAT  
TO JIM AND TELL HIM  
I'LL BE AWAY FOR  
A FEW WEEKS!

MERRY  
CHRISTMAS  
TO YOU ALL!

STREET SHIELD  
WILL BE BACK  
WITH A NEW  
ADVENTURE  
IN FEBRUARY!

# Health and wellbeing

*The Pavement's health team – a podiatrist and a nurse – aim to help keep you well*

## Cold feet in 2011

"January brings the snow, Makes our feet and fingers glow" starts the poem about the months and seasons. January certainly brings the snow if November and December haven't already brought some, and February and March often help out with a snow delivery too. Glowing feet are not such a good thing, though...

The 'glow' is often our circulation responding to the external temperature. Foot circulation is tricky at the best of times. Smoking, drinking, certain prescription and street drugs, and problems with diet can lead to bad circulation, as can conditions such as diabetes. Mix this with the drop in external temperature we get in the UK every winter, and your feet can be at serious risk. It isn't always easy to achieve, but the best thing you can do for your feet during the winter months is to aim for a constant temperature. But how?

### Outdoors

If possible, stay indoors when the temperature really drops. Limit the amount of walking you do on pavements or hard surfaces, which grab the cold, store it and transfer it back to you. Grass and bark are more insulating, so if you're walking through a park, choose the grass. And if you have to go out, walk, don't stand. Standing reduces your foot and core temperatures more; but if you have to stand, either stamp your feet and wiggle your toes from time to time or stand on cardboard. If your Granny told you to wear a hat "as most of your heat leaves through your head", she was

onto something: wear a hat, if you have one, to preserve heat and yes, keep your feet warm via your head!

Put layers between you and the ground. Try to get shoes with thick soles that will lift you off the cold ground and insulate the soles of your feet, and wear socks. Two thinner pairs can sometimes be warmer than one thick pair, but keep them dry.

The ever-popular UGG-style boots from the high street stores may at first seem like a good winter option. That soft fluffy-furriness will keep you cosy, but it doesn't offer much support, which some people need. Combine that with an easily worn sole and (in the 'copycat' UGGs) not much waterproofing, and they won't be a long-lasting solution to cold toes. Leather lace-up walking boots with thick gripping soles are a good option, if you can get hold of them. Deep snow may come in through the top, in which case wellies may be better. However, we don't get that much really deep snow (we hope!), so walking boots should provide enough protection for most of the year.

### Indoors

Coming in from the cold is usually a nice feeling. When you move from the harsh frosts, cold winds and snow into a more pleasant environment with warmer floors, the temptation is to remove your shoes and socks, and put your feet near a fire or radiator to warm them. It's tempting, but don't do it! It confuses the circulation to your feet: the small vessels that deal with heat and cold can't cope with going from cold to warm in a few seconds. You may end

up with chilblains or itching in your feet, or a 'glow' that could cause you pain and discomfort.

Slippers are not the most fashionable type of footwear, and I cannot really ask you to wear them when I don't... (I'm not a fan – too many traumatic memories of getting them for Christmas when I wanted a Barbie.) Slippers don't have to be tartan, as many are here in Scotland (it's not a cliché – tartan slippers are a common Christmas present!) or even furry (as most are, one way or another), but a soft pair of indoor shoes can be useful. I use Croc-style shoes as substitute slippers. They cushion and insulate without making the feet too hot, and you can wear them into a communal shower area and then dry them. If you have only one pair of shoes, take them off to dry them when you get indoors, but wear thicker dry socks inside. If you have a range of shoes, keep your most waterproof ones for your 'outdoor' shoes and a softer, breathable pair for 'indoor'. The room should be warm, not your feet, so don't stick your feet next to the heat source.

And don't worry: it isn't long until spring.

### Evelyn Weir

Lecturer in podiatry  
Queen Margaret University  
Edinburgh

## Getting it off your chest

Coughs and colds are common over the winter and for most of us will be only a fairly minor and inconvenient illness. Chest infections are more serious and are more common over the winter months.



There are two main types of chest infection. Acute bronchitis, the most common and less serious, occurs when the lining of the air tubes in the lungs (the bronchi) become infected. The infection usually follows a virus and can come after a bout of the cold or flu, but smoking increases your chances of getting it. Coughing and wheezing are the most common symptoms. Acute bronchitis will often go away after seven to 10 days, and medical treatment is not always needed. Over-the-counter painkillers and cough medicine can relieve symptoms, but ask a pharmacist for advice. Drinking lots of non-alcoholic fluid also helps – your body uses more fluid if you have a cough and fever. Being properly hydrated will also keep the mucus in your tubes thin and easier to cough up. Try to sleep propped up rather than lying flat. However, if your symptoms are severe or don't go away after a few days, visit a doctor for advice.

With pneumonia, which is more serious (particularly if you are run-down or an older person), the infection is likely to be deeper in the lungs. If you sleep outdoors and you suspect you have pneumonia, get medical help as soon as you can. The symptoms include feeling unwell, chills, a temperature, chest pain and coughing up phlegm or blood. If you think you have pneumonia, you must visit a doctor as soon as possible. Pneumonia can usually be treated with a course of antibiotic medicine, though if you are very unwell, you may be admitted to hospital. Remember: if you are given antibiotics, you must finish all the tablets, even if you feel better.

You can pass acute bronchitis and pneumonia to other people by coughing and sneezing, so remember to cover your mouth, wash your hands and throw away any used tissues.

If you have longer-term breathing problems (you may often feel short of breath, have a cough or



wheeze that won't go away, or feel a tightness in your chest), you may have a condition such as asthma or COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). If you have any of these symptoms and they don't go away on their own, then you need medical treatment. The only way you can treat these conditions is by seeing a doctor and getting a proper diagnosis.

Before antibiotics were invented, tuberculosis (TB), an illness that affects your lungs, killed millions of people in the UK. It's a growing global health problem, but still a lot less common here than it once was. Most adults will have received the BCG vaccination as children – look for the scar on your upper arm. It's treatable, but it's a very serious disease. The symptoms are coughing, weight loss, night sweats, a fever that comes and goes, and coughing up blood. Close contact with someone who

has TB or comes from a country where TB is still common is risky. If you are worried about TB, seek medical advice immediately.

All of the above can happen to you whether you smoke or not, but, being a smoker makes you much more likely to get chest illnesses. Your symptoms will be worse and your recovery slower. If you feel ready to stop smoking, you can get support from a doctor, practice nurse or pharmacist. If you're not ready to quit, at least try and stop or cut down until your chest infection has been treated. If you don't smoke and have a chest infection, avoid breathing in other people's smoke. Good health,

*Flo*

- To put a question to our nurse, email: [flo@thepavement.org.uk](mailto:flo@thepavement.org.uk) or write to the address on page 3

# 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.





## WEBSITES

**Shelter**  
0800 800 4444  
Housing info and advice  
8am–8pm daily  
**UK Human Trafficking Centre**  
0174 252 3891

**Birmingham City Council**  
Click through 'housing' / 'finding a home' / 'help for homeless people'  
[www.birmingham.gov.uk](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk)

**Mental Fight Club**  
A creative/arts site for those with mental illness.  
[uk.geocities.com/gabriele-jenkinson@btinternet.com/](mailto:uk.geocities.com/gabriele-jenkinson@btinternet.com)

**National Homelessness Advice Service**  
Readers can click on the section 'need advice'  
[www.nhas.org.uk](http://www.nhas.org.uk)

**The Pavement Online**  
An online version of *The List*, amongst other things.  
[www.thepavement.org.uk/](http://www.thepavement.org.uk/services.htm)

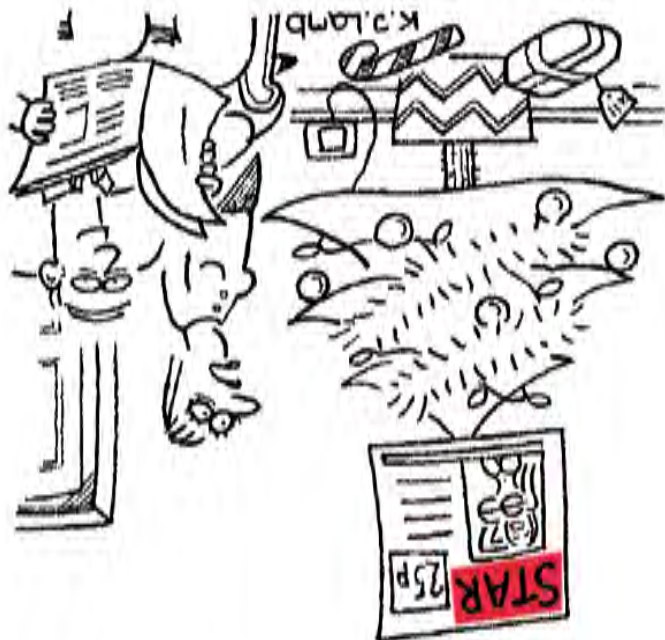
**Proud to be mad**  
A campaigning site for those with mental illness  
[www.proudtobemad.co.uk](http://www.proudtobemad.co.uk)

**Sock Book**  
An 'e-shelter', with a large directory of services.  
[sockbook.referrata.com](http://sockbook.referrata.com)

**Stonewall Housing**  
Addresses the housing needs of lesbians and gay men. Provides temporary, supported housing for 16–25 years old lesbians and gay men.  
[www.stonewallhousing.org](http://www.stonewallhousing.org)

**Streetmate**  
An independent site with substantial information on housing, working and learning, built for those homeless who use the internet and want to do-it-themselves as much as possible.  
[www.streetmate.org](http://www.streetmate.org)

*“When you said we’d cut costs this Christmas,  
I didn’t think it would come to this”*



young women who are pregnant or single parents. Referrals to other agencies for specialist help. C ET, LA, OL

## TELEPHONE SERVICES

### Community Legal Advice

0845 345 4 345

Nationwide

www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk

Mon-Fri: 9am-8pm;

Sat: 9am-12:30pm

AD, BA, DA, H

Free, confidential service, offer-

ing specialist advice on housing,

benefits, tax credits, debt etc.

0808 2000 247

### Domestic Violence Helpline

0800 776 600

Free 24-hr drug helpline

### Frank

AD, BA, CA, C, D, MS, OB, OL, SH

Birmingham, Sandwell and Walsall.

ing of female sex workers (18+) in

Promotes the health and wellbe-

done clinic - 01 21 446 5381)

Thu: 11am-1:30pm (Metha-

Wed: 12am-4pm (drop-in clinic);

1:15pm-3:30pm (walk-in clinic);

Mon: 12:45pm-1:45pm (clinic

0121 440 6655

Phone for details

0121 440 6655

SAFE Project

Education and training for

refugees, and the homeless.

Outreach to asylum seekers,

0871 717 7284

Birmingham B70 6HA

0871 717 7284

0871 717 7284

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01384 815771  
All credit union members (18+) can apply for a Handloom (£100 to £500) and anyone living or working in Dudley can join.

### Centrepint Streets Project

PO Box 2156, West Bromwich,

Birmingham B70 6HA

0871 717 7284

Outreach to asylum seekers,

refugees, and the homeless.

Education and training for

children and young people.

AD, CA, ET, H

024 7622 7254

Mon-Thu: 9am-5pm; Wed &

Fri: 1pm-5pm; Fri: 9am-4pm

Helps asylum seekers and EU

citizens. Helps refugees given

leave to remain to set up home.

Women's and youth groups.

AS, AS, C, ET, H, LA, TS

17 St James's Rd, Dudley,

Birmingham DY1 1JG

01384 812626 or 815108

Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm

Culturally sensitive support

service. Advice on benefits,

harassment, domestic violence,

housing. Flooding support.

BA, H, OW

Gilgal

PO Box 3918, Birmingham B9 5AQ

0121 773 1431

Mon-Sun: Open 24 hours

Emergency accommoda-

tion for women and children

escaping domestic violence.

Birmingham Domestic Abuse

Refugeeline: 0800 111 4223

AS, AD, H, LA, SH

The Haven Wolverhampton

PO Box 105, Wolver-

hampton WV1 4LP

01902 572140

Mon-Sun: Open 24 hours

For women affected by domes-

tic violence and their children.

Emergency accommodation,

benefits and immigration

support, resettlement, and help

for children and young people.

24-hour helpline: 01 902 71 3001

AS, AD, BA, C, H, MH

### Panahghar

Coverity - phone for details

0800 055 6519

Support for Asian women and their

children facing domestic violence.

Safe house, advice, info, advocacy,

counselling, and children's services.

AS, C, OL

### SAFE Project

Phone for details

0121 440 6655

Mon: 12:45pm-1:45pm (clinic

- 01 21 440 0034); Mon:

1:15pm-3:30pm (walk-in clinic);

Wed: 12am-4pm (drop-in clinic);

Thu: 11am-1:30pm (Metha-

done clinic - 01 21 446 5381)

Promotes the health and wellbe-

ing of female sex workers (18+) in

Birmingham, Sandwell and Walsall.

AD, BA, CA, C, D, MS, OB, OL, SH

time2talk Mediation Service

DACHS, Dudley MBC, 5 St

James's Rd, Dudley DY1 1HP

01384 812 422

Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm (message

service outside these hours.

Interpreters can be arranged)

Free for Dudley residents.

AD, C

Walsall Metropolitan Borough

Council (Refugee Support Team)

2nd Fl Civic Center, Darwall

St, Walsall WS1 1TP

01922 653827, 653840, 653476

Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm

AS, BA, H, OL

The What? Centre

23 Coventry St, Stour-

bridge DY8 1EP

01384 379992

Advice, information and

therapeutic counselling for

people 13-25 in Dudley.

AS, AD, BA, C, DA, ET,

H, LA, MS, MH, SH

0808 800 7070

Free line for under-18s

who have left home

The Samaritans

Navigation Centre, 55-57

Bell Green Rd, Courthouse

Green, Coventry CV6 7GQ

024 7626 6270 or 6290

Mon-Sun: Open 24 hours

Single people and parents, inc.

women escaping domestic violence,

young homeless people, and

affected by mental health

Qut-of-hours helpline for those

0845 767 8000

6-1pm

SANeline

## EX-FORCES

**AWOL?**  
01380 738137  
Call the 'Reclaim Your Life' scheme from SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association): Mon – Fri: 9am – 10am

## Birmingham City Council (Housing

**Pethays)**  
PO Box 13254B1, Birmingham B15 1DL  
0121 675 1683  
If you are leaving, or have left, the armed forces, you can apply directly. Phone or email (HOUVulnerablepersons@birmingham.gov.uk).

## CRISIS SKYLIGHT BIRMINGHAM

0121 348 7950  
PO Box 15850, Birmingham, B9 9HL  
Running at various locations – call for details  
AC, ET, IT, MC, PA

## SEASONAL SHELTERS

**Birmingham Christmas Shelter**  
St George's Hub, Great Hampton Row (off Great Hampton Street), Newtown, Birmingham, B19 3JG  
07846 299336  
23 - 29 Dec: 24 hours (opening 10am on 23 Dec, and closing 10am on 29 Dec)  
Age 18+ mixed; Dogs on a lead welcome; Beds for up to 150  
Bus service 46/46a from Bull Street stops outside St George's. Buses 16, 74 and 79 stop in Great Hampton Street  
www.birminghamchristmashelter.org

## SPECIALIST SERVICES

**Anawim**  
PO Box 8902, Birmingham B12 9JZ  
0121 440 5296  
Mon–Fri: 10am–4pm (out of hours: 07976 188 220)  
Reaches out in friendship to women trapped in prostitution. Courses and activities, creche. Methadone programme, 24-hour helpline: 0800 970 8232.  
AS, AD, AS, BA, C, CL, C, D, ET, FF, H, LA, SH

**The Castle & Crystal Credit Union**  
25 New St, Dudley DY1 1LT

## Aquarius

2nd Fl, 16 Kent St, Birmingham B5 6RD  
0121 622 8181  
Mon–Fri: 9am–4:30pm  
For people with alcohol, drugs and gambling addictions. 0121 414 6340 (North B'ham); 0121 414 0888 (South B'ham). AW, C, D

## Norman Imlah Day Centre

2nd Fl, The Matthews Centre, Duddston Manor Rd, Duddston, Birmingham B7 4LZ  
0121 685 6346  
Mon–Thu: 9am–5pm; Fri: 9am–4pm  
For people wanting help and support in addressing their alcohol problem/dependence. AS, AD, AW, AS, C, ET, LA, MH, SH

## EASTERN EUROPEAN

**Polish Club Birmingham**  
Polish Millennium House, Bordesley St, Birmingham B5 5PH  
0121 643 3577  
Fri: 1pm–3pm  
Advice on employment law, social benefits, housing and accommodation. AS, BA, DA, H, LE

## EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

**ENTA**  
Mill Wharf  
10 Mill Street  
Birmingham B6 4BS  
0121 380 4801  
Mon–Thu: 8.30–4.30; Fri: 8.30–1.30  
www.entapeople.com/default.aspx  
CA, ET

## Jericho Foundation

196 197 Edward Rd  
Balsall Heath  
Birmingham B12 9LX  
0121 440 7919  
www.jcp.org.uk/  
birmingham@jericho.org.uk  
CA, ET

## The Big Issue (West Midlands)

Peace House, 23–25 Summer Lane, Birmingham B19 3TN  
0121 236 1936  
Employment and training. CA, ET

## MEDICAL SERVICES

**Veterans UK**  
0800 169 2277  
Free help and advice for veterans and access to dedicated one-to-one welfare service  
www.veterans-uk.info

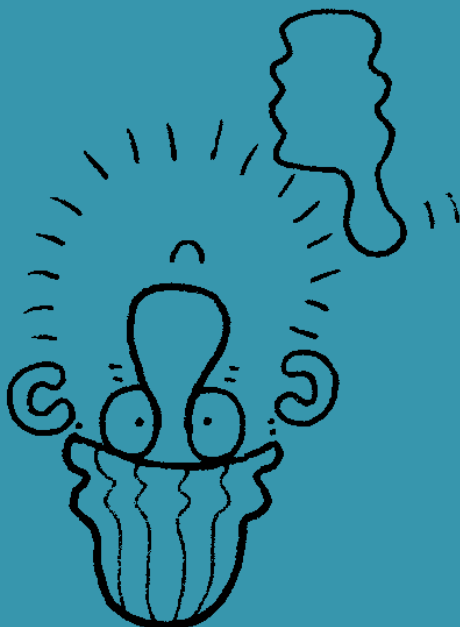
## Community Mental Health

**Homeless Team**  
3rd Fl, Morcome House, Ledasam St, Ladyswood, Birmingham B16 8DN  
0121 685 6970  
Mon–Fri: 9am–7pm; Sat & Sun: 9am–5pm  
Help with accommodation, benefits, employment and resettlement. Help with access to mental health services. AS, AD, BA, CA, C, H, MH, OB, OL

## The Health Exchange

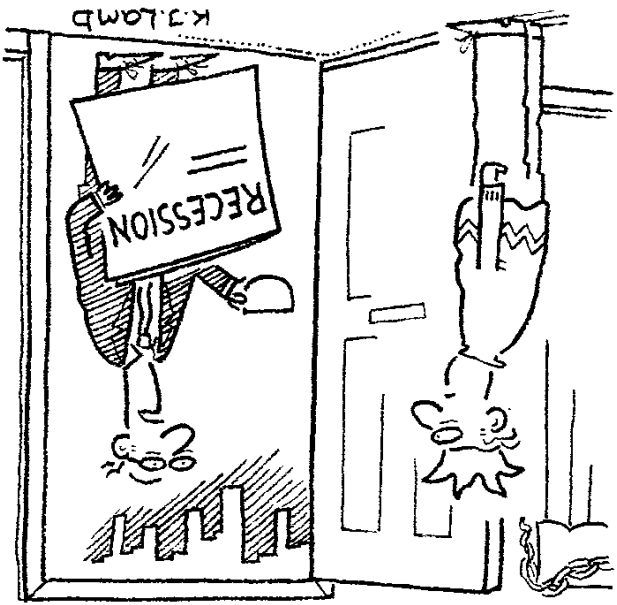
William Booth Lane, Birmingham B4 6HA

**www.thepavement.org.uk**



**You can read the news,  
keep informed & search  
our directory of services  
@ online**

*"Can I borrow a cup of cheer?"*





**Princip Street Hostel**  
 Waterside House, 33–35 Princip  
 St, Birmingham B4 6LE  
 Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
 For single homeless men aged 25+ with support needs, inc. mental health and/or alcohol problems.  
 AD, AW, MH

**St Anne's Hostel**  
 112 Moseley St, Bir-  
 mingham B12 0RY  
 0121 772 4406  
 Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
 For single homeless men aged 25+, May accept dogs.  
 AW, BA, D, ET, F, MS, OL

**Stonham (St George's House)**  
 Old Hall St, Wolver-  
 hampton WV1 3AT  
 01902 420536  
 Mon–Sun: 8am–10pm  
 Single homeless men  
 and ex-offenders.  
 AS, AD, ET, H, OL, TS

**P3 – Bilston Hostel**  
 53 Wellington Rd, Wolver-  
 hampton WV14 6AQ  
 01902 490050  
 Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
 Single homeless men, inc. ex-  
 offenders and rough sleepers. D

**P3 – Dickens Lodge**  
 89–95 Dickens Rd, Wolver-  
 hampton WV10 8SD  
 01902 572162  
 Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
 Single homeless men, inc. rough  
 sleepers, ex-offenders, people with  
 mental health needs and those  
 with alcohol or drug problems.  
 AS, AD, AW, D, ET, H, MH, TS

**Women**  
 tbta

**Young people (16–25)**  
**Coventry Foyer**  
 Holyhead Court, Lower Holy-  
 head, Rd, Coventry CV1 3AX  
 024 76251001  
 Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
 For young people 16–24  
 who require support around  
 independent living.  
 AS, AD, CA, ET, H, IT, OL

**CHADD – On Route Project**  
 6 Dixons Green Rd, Dudley DY2 7DH  
 01384 455464  
 Mon–Fri: 9am–10pm; Sat  
 & Sun: 7pm–10pm  
 Accommodation for men aged 16–  
 27, inc. ex-offenders or those at risk.  
 AS, AD, ET, H, OL

**Midland Heart – Gilbert Road**  
 100–108 Gilbert Rd, Smeth-  
 wick, Sandwell B66 4PZ  
 0121 555 6500  
 Mon–Fri: 8am–7pm (ring  
 for appointment)  
 For young people aged 16–25  
 with low support needs.  
 AS, H, TS

**Midland Heart – Grange Road**  
 c/o 100 Gilbert Rd, Smeth-  
 wick B66 4PZ  
 0121 555 6500 or 0121 558 5739  
 Mon–Fri: 8am–7pm (ring  
 for appointment)  
 For single homeless 16–25-  
 year-olds with support needs.  
 AS, H, TS

**Midland Heart – Murdock Road**  
 1–3 Murdock Rd, Smeth-  
 wick B66 2LS  
 0121 555 8444  
 Mon–Fri: 8am–7pm (phone  
 for appointment)  
 For young single homeless  
 locals aged 16–25 with medium  
 support needs who are home-  
 less or in housing need.  
 AS, C, H, MH

**Midland Heart – Rolfe House**  
 69 Rolfe St, Smethwick B66 2AR  
 0121 558 5739  
 Mon–Fri: 8am–7pm (phone  
 for appointment)  
 For single homeless 16–25-year-olds  
 to engage with employment, educa-  
 tion and training opportunities.  
 AS, CA, ET, H, IT

**Nacro – Allesley Old Road Hostel**  
 43–45 Allesley Old Rd,  
 Coventry CV5 8BU  
 024 7669 1229  
 Mon–Fri: 9am–5pm (call  
 for appointment)  
 Single people 16–25 with  
 low support needs.  
 AS, AD, H, TS

**Stonham (Gilson Way Hostel)**  
 c/o Morris House, 430–432  
 Chester Rd, Castle Bromwich,  
 Birmingham B36 0LF  
 0121 770 9360  
 Mon–Fri: 9am–5pm  
 For single local homeless aged  
 16–25 with support needs.  
 AS, AD, C, D, H, IT, SH

**West Bromwich & District YMCA**  
 38 Carters Green, West  
 Bromwich B70 9LG  
 For single homeless people aged  
 16–40 with support needs.  
 CA, ET, IT

**Wolverhampton YMCA (Badger Court Foyer)**  
 Cannock Rd, Wolver-  
 hampton WV10 0AD  
 01902 870382  
 Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
 Single homeless people aged  
 16–25 who have support needs  
 around life skills and are willing to  
 engage in training and support.  
 AW, C, D, ET, IT, LF, OB, OL

**Wolverhampton YMCA (Rugeley Foyer)**  
 Aeffgar House, Church St, Rugeley,  
 Staffordshire WS15 2WH  
 01889 585232  
 Mon–Fri: 9am–6pm  
 (call in or phone for appointment)  
 Young single home-  
 less people 16–25.  
 AS, AD, BA, CA, C, ET

**DRUG / ALCOHOL SERVICES**  
**Addaction Birmingham**  
 279 Gooch St, Highgate,  
 Birmingham B5 7JE  
 0121 465 4030  
 Mon, Wed, Thu: 10am–6pm;  
 Tues & Fri: 10am–8pm  
 Information, support and advice for  
 those with alcohol or drug problems.  
 AW, D, MS, NE

## Salvation Army (William Booth Centre)

c/o Homeless Single Point of Access, Midland Heart – Homeless Services Centre, 44 Bradford St, Birmingham B5 6HX  
0345 60 20 540 (24/7)  
Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri: 10am–6pm; Thu: 10am–2pm  
For single homeless men aged 18+ with low to medium-support needs, inc. refugees. Call in at Midland Heart's Homeless Services Centre.  
AS, H

## Men

**Central and Cecil – Tullamore House**  
61 Stratford St, Coventry CV2 4NJ  
024 7663 5105  
Mon–Fri: 9am–5pm (phone)  
for application form)  
Move-on accommodation for local single homeless men 18+. Priority to Irish people. Dogs allowed.  
AS, H, TS

**Midland Heart – Hanwood House**  
Leopold St, Highgate, Birmingham B12 0QB  
0121 753 1386  
Mon–Fri: 8am–7pm (phone)  
for appointment)  
For single homeless men 25+.  
AS, F, H

**Midland Heart – Zambesi Project**  
185 Stratford Rd, Sparkhill, Birmingham B11 1AG  
0121 766 7645  
Mon–Fri: 8am–7pm  
For single homeless men aged 45+.  
AS, AW, D, H

**P3 – Bilston Hostel**  
53 Wellington Rd, Wolverhampton WV14 6AQ  
01902 490050  
Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
Single homeless men, inc. ex-offenders and rough sleepers. D

**P3 – Thornley Street**  
27 Thornley St, Wolverhampton WV1 1JS  
01902 773721  
Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
Single homeless men. Must be substance-free at time of admission.  
ET, H, LA, LF, MH, OL  
AS, AD, AW, BA, C, DA, D, AD, AW, CA, ET, IT, LA, LF, MS

## DIRECT ACCESS HOSTELS/ NIGHTSHELTERS

All with low-support needs

## Coventry and Warwickshire YMCA – Daimler Green

Endeavour Court, 20 Chelmarsh, Daimler Green, Coventry  
West Midlands CV6 3LB  
024 7659 7009  
Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours  
Single homeless people and care leavers with low support needs.  
AS, AD, CA, ET, H, IT, TS

## Midland Heart – Gibbs Road House

Gibbs Rd, (off Balis Lane), Lyce, Stourbridge DY9 8SG  
01384 423 771  
Mon–Fri: 8am–7pm (phone)  
for appointment)  
For single people aged 17+ (83 men, 9 women).  
AS, H, TS

**Salvation Army (Eden Villa)**  
13 Charlotte St, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 3EB  
01926 450708  
Mon–Fri: 9am–5pm (call for appointment)

Single homeless people with support needs, and 1 room for married couples. Residents who have moved on can use the drop-in advice centre.  
AS, AD, BA, H, TS

**SHARP Hostel**  
57 Edgbaston Rd, Smethwick B66 4LG  
0121 558 2104  
Mon–Sun: 8:45am–1pm  
(phone calls): Mon–Sun:

9am–8pm (referrals)  
For single people or couples aged 18+. Considers people who are overcoming dependency, but active drug use is not acceptable.  
AS, BA, H

**Salvation Army (Lincoln St Centre)**  
1 Lincoln St, Coventry CV1 4JN  
024 7625 1437  
Mon–Sun: 7am–9pm  
Staff provide help and advice as required. Job seeking sessions, computer literacy courses and basic skills sessions are also available.  
AD, AW, CA, ET, IT, LA, LF, MS

## SIFA Fireside

18–28 Lower Essex St, Birmingham B5 5SN  
0121 666 7023

Mon–Fri: 9–10.30am (breakfast)

12–1pm (lunch); Sat & Sun: 10:30am–1:30am (nurses Tue & Fri: chiropodist Thu)

One-to-one help, accommodation and support for people dealing with alcohol issues; counselling; resettlement and tenancy support; training opportunities; help for people on probation. Help accessing emergency accommodation. AS, AW, AS, BS, BA, C, DA, ET, FF, H, LA, MS, OB, SK, TS

## St Eugene's Court (Irish Welfare Drop-In)

77 Rea St, Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6BB, 0121 622 3145  
Mon–Fri: 11am–3pm  
Primarily aimed at the Irish community. Supported accommodation for Irish men aged 55+, with support for alcohol and mental health needs.  
AS, AW, F, MH

## St George's House

St George's Hub, St Marks Rd, Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton WV3 0TZ  
01902 421904  
Mon–Fri: 9:15am–4:30pm  
Helps people 18+ to avoid becoming homeless and to live independently after resettlement. Leisure and sporting activities.  
AS, AD, BE, CL, F, H, LA, TS

## St George's House Drop-in

1 Clarence St, Wolverhampton WV1 1WZ  
01902 714746  
Fri: 2:15pm–3pm; Mon–Thu: 2:15pm–4:30pm; Mon–Fri: 9:30am–1:30pm  
For homeless people, ex-offenders, substance misusers and others who are often barred from other services and facilities. Practical advice, support and guidance, and signposting to other services. Big issue distributor.  
AS, AD, AW, BA, D, ET, F, H, LA, LF, OL

## DAY CENTRES AND DROP-INS

**Chace Centre**  
Chace Ave, Coventry CV3 3AB  
024 7630 2694  
Mon-Fri: 9am-12am; Mon-Thur: 2pm-5pm; Fri: 1pm-4:30pm  
For single men 18+.  
CA, ET, LA, LF, OL

**Coventry Cyrenians**  
1 Bird Street, Coventry, CV1 1FX  
02476 228099  
Mon-Fri: 9:30am-4pm

**(Chelmsley Wood) Solihull Community Housing**  
44 Broadford St, Digbeth,  
Birmingham B5 6HX  
0345 6020 540; 0121 233 6370  
Mon, Wed, Fri: 10am-6pm; Tues:

**Bridge Drop-In**  
7 Lamb St, Coventry CV1 4AE  
02476 550033  
Mon: 10am-1pm; Tues-Fri:

9am-4pm; Sun: 9am-10:30am;  
Sat: 9am-12am  
Support groups, skills classes,  
cafe, and drop-in.

**(Kingshurst) Solihull Community Housing**  
Church Close, Kingshurst, Solihull, Birmingham B37 6HA  
0121 717 1515  
Mon, Tues, Fri: 9am-4pm;

AS, H  
4:30pm; Sat: 9am-1pm  
Wed: 10am-5pm; Fri: 9am-10am-5pm; Thurs: 9am-5pm;  
0121 704 1515  
Solihull, Birmingham B37 5TX

**Coventry Jesus Centre – The**  
Solihull, Birmingham B37 5TX  
0121 704 1515  
Solihull, Birmingham B37 5TX

**The Glebe Centre**  
Wednesbury Rd, Walsall, Birmingham W51 3RU  
01922 625687  
Mon - Fri: 9am - 4pm

For people (18+) who are vulnerable, including homeless, unemployed, drug dependent, mental health issues or socially excluded  
AS, A, BA, BS, CL, DT, ET, F, H, LA, MS, MH  
www.theglebecentre.org.uk

**Irish Welfare and Information Centre (Older Irish Adults Project)**  
77 Rea St, Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6BB  
0121 622 3145  
Mon-Fri: 11am-3pm

Drop-in centre for older (45+) Irish people, inc. people who are homeless, isolated, living in poor accommodation, ex-offenders, those needing support around life skills.  
AS, AW, BS, CL, F, H, MS, MH, OB, TS  
01922 746798  
Mon & Wed: 10am-12am

**Walsall Rent Guarantee Scheme**  
PO Box 1427, Walsall WS4 2YT  
01922 746798  
Mon & Wed: 10am-12am

Helps people registered as homeless in Walsall to access private rents.  
AS

**Salvation Army – Homeless Action Project (Leamington)**  
1A Chapel St, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 1EJ  
01926 883613  
Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri: 9:30am-12am; Thu: 9:30am-12:30am; Sat: 9:30am-1:30am

**Housing Options (Sandwell)**  
Court House, 335-337 High St, West Bromwich, Birmingham B70 8LU  
0121 569 6000  
Mon-Fri: 8am-5:30pm  
If you are at risk of becoming homeless, contact the Housing Options Team for advice. Outside office hours: 0121 525 4688 or housing@sandwell.gov.uk  
AS, AD, H

**Midland Heart – Homeless Services Centre**  
44 Broadford St, Digbeth,  
Birmingham B5 6HX  
0345 6020 540; 0121 233 6370  
Mon, Wed, Fri: 10am-6pm; Tues:

10am-8pm; Thur: 10am-2pm  
Drop-in and telephone housing advice. Welfare benefits advice. Outreach and tenancy support for rough sleepers. Tenancy support for refugees and asylum seekers, young people with multiple needs, people with current or past drug problems. Alcohol and mental health referrals.  
AS, BA, H, OB, TS

**Macro Services – Coventry Young Homeless Accommodation Project**  
1st Fl, Koco Building, The Arches, 254 End, Coventry CV1 3JQ  
024 7671 5113  
Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm (call for appointment)

Advice on homelessness and finding accommodation. Temporary accommodation with support for young people, pregnant women and women with a baby aged up to 2 years.  
AS, AD, H

**St Basil's Link**  
5 Ryder St, Birmingham B4 7NE  
0121 233 1508  
Mon-Thur: 9am-5pm; Fri: 9am-1pm

For people aged 16-25 who are homeless or are facing homelessness. Emergency 24/7 freephone: 0800 068 7499, Youline (24/7 hotline (24/7): 0800 056 4034 (male); 0800 068 7499 (female).  
AS, AD, BA, CA, C, ET, OL

**St Martin in the Bullring Helpdesk**  
The Bullring, Birmingham B5 5BB  
0121 600 6336  
Mon-Fri: 10:30am-3:30pm (closed 12.30-1.30); Sat: 10:30am-1pm

Listening, advice and referrals. Practical intervention and support in a friendly environment. Many people seeking help are encountering homelessness, addiction, mental health problems, bereavement and loss.  
AS, BA, C, FF, H, OW

# the List

Directory of the West Midlands' homeless services

Updated 1 December 2010

Key to this list:	Debt advice – DA	Luggage storage – LS
Accom. assistance – AS	Dentist – DT	Medical services – MS
Advocacy – AD	Drugs workers – D	Mental health – MH
Alcohol workers – A	Education/training – ET	Music classes – MC
Art classes – AC	Free food – FF	Needle exchange – NE
Barber – B	Food – F	Outreach worker links – OL
Benefits advice – BA	Foot care – FC	Outreach workers – OB
Bathroom/showers – BS	Housing/accom advice – H	Patient stockist – P
Bedding available – BE	Internet access – IT	Safe keeping – SK
Careers advice – CA	Laundry – L	Sexual health advice – SH
Clothing – CL	Leisure activities – LA	SSAFA – SS
Counselling – C	Leisure facilities – LF	Tenancy support – TS

If you've any changes or suggestions visit our website - [www.thepavement.org.uk](http://www.thepavement.org.uk) - or email: [thelist@thepavement.org.uk](mailto:thelist@thepavement.org.uk)

Updated entries: 1  
Services added: 2

## ADVICE SERVICES

**Base 25**  
Castle House, Wheelers Fold, Wolverhampton WV1 1ST  
01902 572040  
Mon–Thu: 12am–6pm; Fri: 12am–5pm; Sat: 1pm–3pm  
Advice for people aged 11–25 on housing, sex, drugs and alcohol, emotional wellbeing and job search. Groups for young women, fathers, asylum seekers and refugees.  
Free phone: 0800 073023  
AS, AD, AW, BA, C, D, ET, H, LA, OL, SH

**CHADD Outreach Support Service**  
98–99 Dixons Green Rd, Dudley DY2 7DJ  
01384 237555  
Mon–Fri: 9am–5pm  
Advice and assistance on benefits, debt, registering with a GP, schools, work and college etc. Tenancy-related problems. Info about local services.  
BA, DA, ET, OL, TS

**Dudley Area Housing Office**  
5 St James Rd, Dudley, Birmingham DY1 1HP  
01384 815035  
Mon–Fri: 9am–5pm  
If you find yourself homeless over the weekend or outside office hours, call 0300 555 8283 for help.  
AS, H

**Dudley Tenancy Guarantee**  
Dudley Housing Office, 15–17 St James's Rd, Birmingham DY1 1JG  
0300 555 2345  
Mon–Fri: 9am–5pm  
Helps people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to access private rented property.  
Phone 01384 815035 for details.  
TS

**Derbyshire Housing Aid**  
Milestone House, 93 Green Lane, Derby DE1 1RX  
01332 642150  
Mon–Sun: Open 24 hours (emergency); Mon–Fri: 1pm–4pm (assessment)  
Assessment service for all single homeless people in Derby.  
Emergency accommodation.  
AS, AS, BS, BE BA, DA, H, LF