



# RESTART

CREATING SAFE SPACES TO RESTART LIVES

EST. 2009



# ANNUAL REPORT 23/24

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# OVERVIEW

2023/24 was a year of consolidation and growth for Restart Lives. At the end of the previous year the charity was going through change in senior leadership; a new Chair was coming into her position on the Board of Trustees, and some time passed without a CEO, before my coming into post in February 2023. I was tasked with shaping a clearer unifying vision about what the organisation does and then reforming existing programmes and services as well as introducing new ones to generate impact in the agreed priority areas.

Mental health was a big focus for the year, both guests' mental health, and that of staff who deal with the strains of frontline work. We wanted to provide direct mental health interventions, but having found that engagement with those could be low in the homeless community we support, we also wanted to imbue all of our services with a trauma informed approach and mental health awareness. We engaged Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest into a formal partnership that saw them deliver extensive training, reflective practice and group sessions for staff, as well as one to one and group interventions for guests. They provided consultancy to me in shaping all of the programmes, conducting a values consultancy at all levels of the organisation and contributing to an improved Code of Conduct.

Increasing our capacity across all services was a priority. The approach was two-pronged: attract more guests and increase our capacity to support. To meet more guests we engaged in new partnerships, notably with Hoxton Job Centre Plus where we now operate an outreach post

one day per week and where we meet 50% of the guests who we do casework with. We also engaged in a similar post at Lighthouse at St Leonards, a drop in service in a church in the vicinity of our East London offices. We employed two new caseworkers to increase our capacity and met our internal targets for casework numbers.

We also attracted higher numbers than ever to our other programmes, including our drop in, which is both a testament to our innovation and hard work, and sadly to the social conditions leading to an increase in homelessness figures in London.

We launched a wellbeing programme, offering football skills coaching for our male guests every week at the Hyde Park football pitches in Summer, and Boxing sessions at the same regularity in Winter.

In terms of measuring outcomes, we introduced a new range of measures that work together to assess our success in terms of concrete positive changes in guests' living situation, and also in terms of guests' own defined aims and the progress they made towards those. Our systems have been overhauled and this year we are in a stronger position than ever to measure our impact.

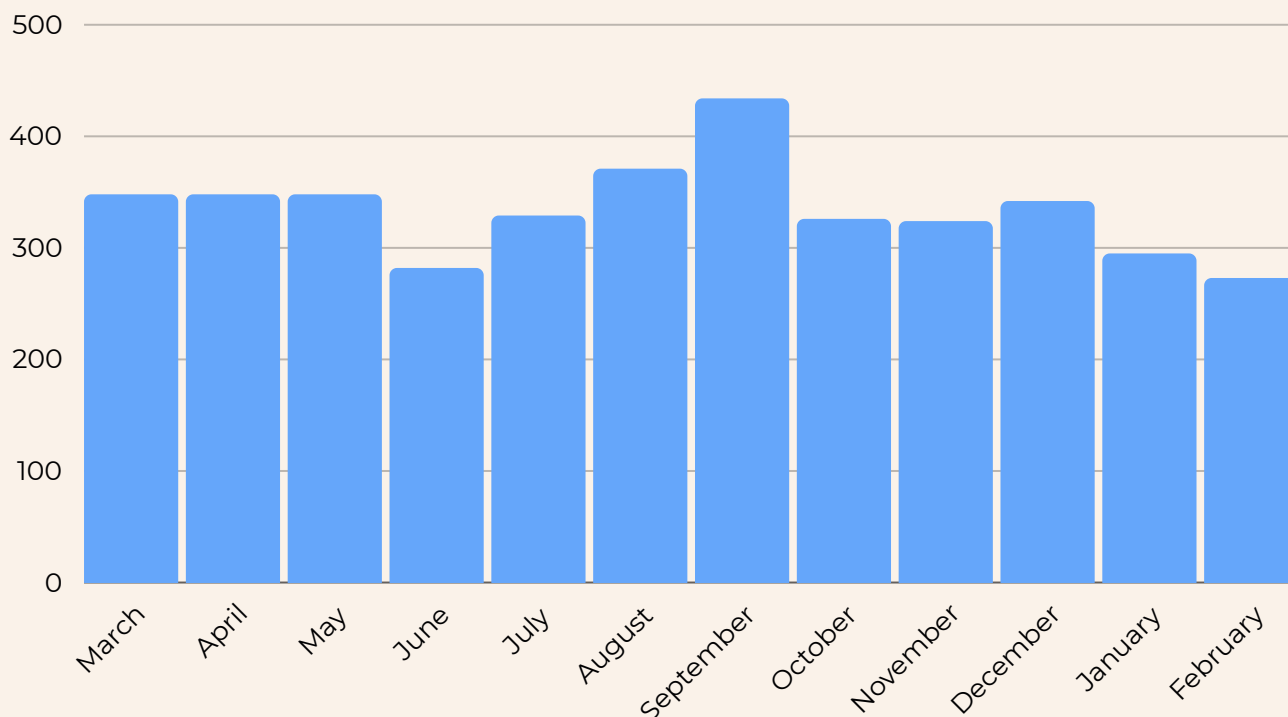
Policies were another 'back-end' area of focus, where we worked with an external consultant from Sefgarding Momentum, via our Lloyds Foundation grant, to bring our policies and procedures to the highest standard.

Overall, the year was strong, both in terms of growing the organisation, and in terms of the results we managed to achieve and I am proud to share the details with you in this report.

Catherine Flay, CEO

# THE DROP IN

we continued to run our drop in service every Friday night, 6.30-8.30pm at St Columba's church in Knightsbridge.



The drop in figures took a normal shape for our year. In January and February, we tend to find that guests who are in night shelters may not venture out for dinner at another service and our numbers are usually lower at that time of year. The first rush of warm weather in June can also prompt guests to feel less of a need to come indoors for a meal.

This year we:

- served 14366 meals
- supported 717 unique individuals in this service alone
- continued our partnership with Haircuts for Homeless offering a haircut service every 6 weeks
- Gave 179 haircuts

At Christmas time, we gave Christmas gifts to the first 100 guests through our doors for Christmas Dinner at the final drop in of 2023. These gifts included an All For One £10 voucher, kindly donated by Dani Anand at Dani Organics, plus chocolates, hats, gloves and other essentials.

We go into this new financial year with more guests than ever before registered as members of the drop in.

We saw over 80% return more than once, showing that once guests encounter us they find our support worth coming back for.

# THE DROP IN

## CONTINUED...

As well as the vital support we receive from volunteers, we are only able to run our drop in service with the support of official food partners, and with one off and regular support from business, and other organisations in our local community.

This year, Mandarin Hotel kindly ran one drop in for us this year start to finish providing all food and an incredible chef and staff.



2023/24 saw Knightsbridge School continue to show us incredible support, sharing with us their new caterers, Thomas Franks, who provided all ingredients and chef's time for two drop ins including one of two of our Christmas Dinners, plus they made mince pies with KS children and shared those with our guests too.



THOMAS FRANKS

We were able to run the drop in with food donations from the following. These are reflected in our in kind donation figures.





# SHARING RESOURCES

IN WINTER, WE RAN TWO RESOURCE FAIRS AT OUR KNIGHTSBRIDGE DROP IN CENTRE.

19 ATTENDED IN NOVEMBER, 74 CAME IN DECEMBER.

## WE SHARED

- 100+ COATS
- CLOTHING SUCH AS TROUSERS, SHIRTS, HOODIES, SOCKS, UNDERWEAR, GLOVES, HATS, AND SHOES
- SMART PHONES FOR THOSE TAKING STEPS TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT OR WITH OTHER REASONS OF NEED
- BASIC PHONES
- SIM CARDS WITH PAYMENT PLANS
- PHONE CHARGERS AND POWER BANKS
- HYGIENE KITS
- BAGS



What we shared was important, but we also were trying to create a trauma informed space, and facilitate a sense of being helped to try on clothes and make free choices about wants and needs with the support of 'shop assistant' style volunteers. Some resources were controlled in terms of criteria, but others were available for guests to choose and we encouraged them to remember others also had needs.

## DONATIONS CAME FROM

- ALL ITEMS FROM **INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS**
- COATS FROM **WRAP UP LONDON**
- CLOTHING FROM **ATHENAEUM HOTEL**
- SMART PHONES BY **ALIX PARTNERS**
- SIM CARDS AND PLANS FROM **VODAFONE**
- HYGIENE KITS FROM **ONLY A PAVEMENT AWAY**



AlixPartners



# CASEWORK

“You’re the only charity that have actually made a difference to the situation I’m in.”

This year, Restart Lives increased casework capacity, in recognition of the diverse causes of homelessness in the population we serve and the need to address the unique individual barriers that a person is facing in order to facilitate the most life changing results.

## CONCRETE RESULTS

- 136 NEW ONE TO ONE CASES TAKEN ON
- 72% OF ALL CASES HAD PROGRESSED ONE OR MORE STAGES AT END OF YEAR
- 69% OF CLOSED CASES ENDED WITH ONE OR MORE STAGES PROGRESSED BY END OF YEAR
- NOBODY ENGAGED IN ONE TO ONE SUPPORT FELL INTO ROUGH SLEEPING FROM A LESS SEVERE FORM OF HOMELESSNESS OR RISK OF EVICTION.
- AFTER ONE TO ONE SUPPORT, THE NUMBER IN PERMANENT HOUSING HAD INCREASED BY OVER 4%



# CASEWORK

## MEASURING OUTCOMES

### HOW DID WE MEASURE OUTCOMES?

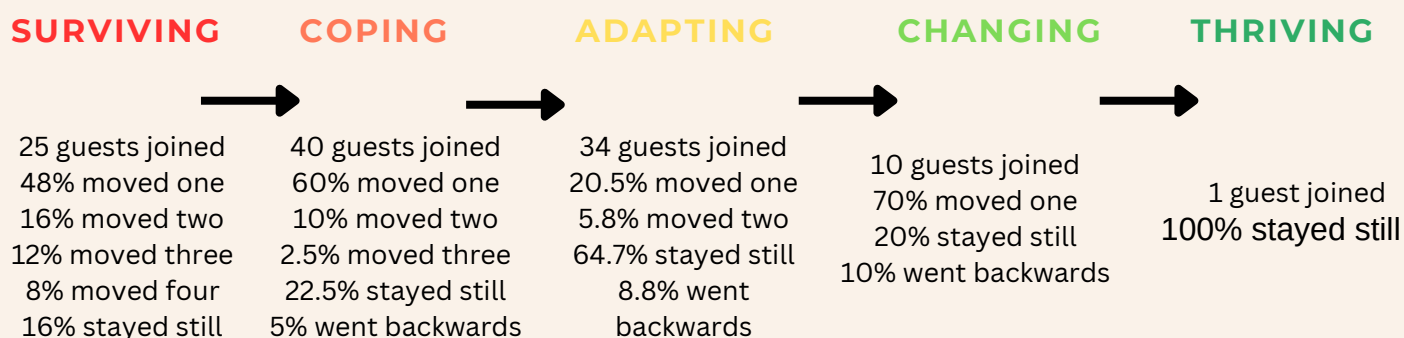
This year, we introduced new ways of measuring outcomes. These were:

- The Progress Pathway
- The Individual Progress Plan
- Concrete Outcome Areas

### THE PROGRESS PATHWAY

The Progress Pathway offers five categories of progress from Surviving, to Coping, Adapting, Changing and Thriving. When a guest first engages in casework, the caseworker uses the category guidelines to assign a stage to that guest. As they continue working with the guest, the caseworker assesses every month or at every milestone (whichever comes first) which category of progress to assign to the guest. Our aim is for 50% or more guests to move at least one stage on the Progress

Pathway which we surpassed this year. Of course, guests who join at the Surviving stage, have much farther to go to be considered to be thriving. That is a big challenge, but also a big opportunity, and we saw 8% of guests who joined at that stage move 4 stages. For guests who join at Changing or Adapting, it may take them a long time to make those final jumps to be considered to be thriving as they are already doing relatively well. We recognise the qualitative difference between each stage, but nonetheless feel that the blanket target of moving at least one stage is realistic and achievable no matter where a person joins and as an organisation seeking to help facilitate positive change, we need to target at least 50% of our guests moving forward, while keeping aware that the backwards steps need to be the smallest category, and that staying still is an achievement in itself.





# CASEWORK

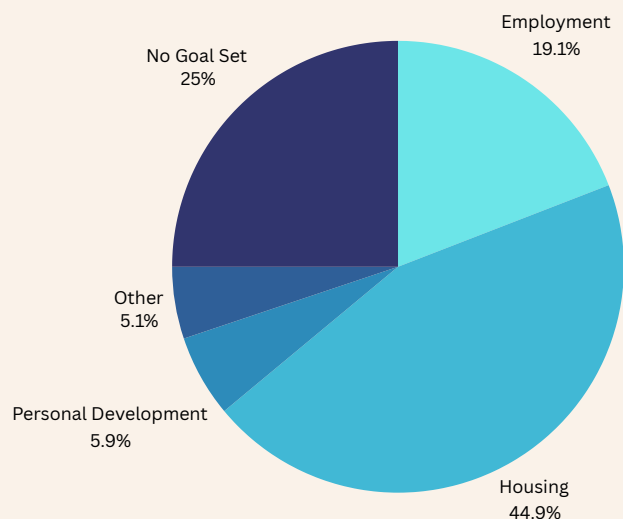
## THE INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS PLAN

The Individual Progress Plan works alongside the progress pathway.

- jointly created by the guest and their caseworker, a progress plan involves identifying the key barrier holding a guest back and setting an ultimate goal in relation to overcoming that barrier.
- to break down the goal into manageable steps, each plan includes up to five, timebound milestone targets and agreed actions to take to reach those milestones and that goal.
- as each milestone passes, the caseworker records whether or not the target was reached and whether the guest can be assessed as having also moved along the progress pathway.

**This progress plan makes sure that the guests' self assessment of their barriers and goals is at the heart of what we support them to achieve.**

## GUESTS' GOALS



Most guests set goals in housing. We interpret this as showing:

- how the housing crisis is affecting guests' priorities
- a spreading understanding that our caseworkers can support well with finding housing.

Guests who set a goal in 'other' predominantly set a goal relating to immigration, visas, and right to remain or right to work in the UK.

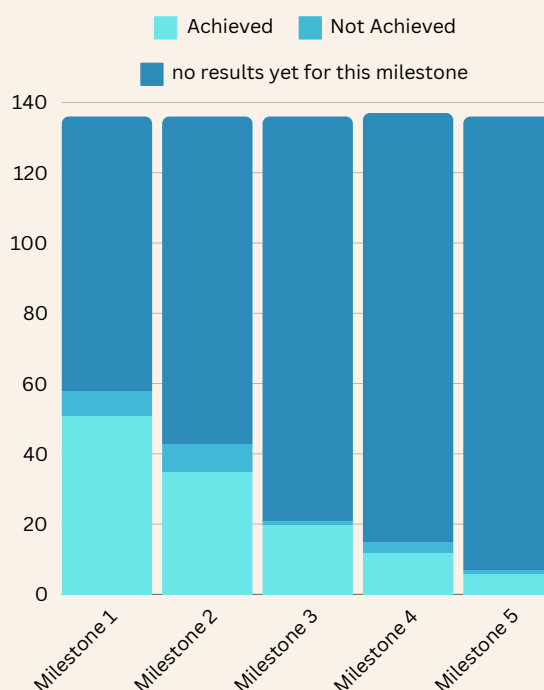
These results are for all cases on record at the end of the year including ongoing cases. This partly accounts for the number of guests without an outcome at any stage, and for the fact that the number of guests without a result increases across the milestones: some guests will still be working through their plans and not yet showing results, particularly in the later categories.

Nonetheless, we can also see that the plan model is used differently by different guests. This is either because they may achieve their goal almost straight away without the need for as many milestones as planned, or it might be that they drop out of casework, or take a much longer time on one of the milestone stages than planned.

Not seeing as many results for milestone 5 as milestone 1 is not necessarily a bad thing, but we will need more years of increasingly strong data to get a full picture of how the plan works for guests and whether we could and should further standardise the approach.

This level of data collection was a change for the team. At the start of the year we had only one frontline member of staff who had to do all frontline work and collect all data, resulting in some gaps in reporting.

## MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENTS



# CASE STUDIES

## “ROSA”

### PREVENTING CHRISTMAS TIME HOMELESSNESS FOR A FAMILY, INCLUDING A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Rosa is a woman in her late twenties/early thirties from Central America who presented as a walk in case at one of our weekly Tuesday outpost sessions at the Job Centre in Hoxton.
- She presented in the week just before Christmas 2023.
- She had received a letter giving her less than two weeks to vacate her Asylum accommodation, organized by the Home Office.
- The eviction date she was given was 22nd December.
- This eviction threatened to make Rosa, together with her 4 year old daughter with learning difficulties, homeless just before Christmas, and left her looking for a new place to live during a period when many organisations and business run a skeleton service due to staff annual leave, or are closed.
- She was distraught when she was first referred to us by her work coach at the Job Centre.
- With our support in understanding how to approach the council and help in reaching out to her daughter's school for a letter confirming her daughter's attendance and needs, she was able to get into temporary accommodation with Tower Hamlets Council.
- The support didn't stop there, as this was a stepping stone for her to provide the right level of stability to her child and for herself, having already had to go through the stressful asylum process and strain of uprooting from one country to another.
- A month later, she was able to move into affordable, private rented accommodation with the help of her Housing Officer who we had put her in touch with.

What was striking about this case was the need for us to be flexible, and find a solution at a time of year when the usually heavy pressures on services are even more extreme. It was crucial to build trust right away so that Rosa would be willing to take the action suggested, and it was crucial to make sure all the information and documentation she would need were prepared in advance of the appointment as, at that time of year, it might have been difficult to get another appointment had the first failed. She was extremely thankful for our support throughout the process and we closed her case.

BY PAULA MAZZEO, CASEWORKER

- Bill has known Restart for just over a year, we met him in March of 2023.
- He quickly became part of the drop-in space/atmosphere and relied closely on the team for support and conversation.
- He was facing rough sleeping shortly after we got to know him as he was in accommodation which was unsatisfactory, neither what Bill wanted or needed and not right for his health conditions.
- With some hard graft from Bill and multiple Streetlink referrals plus support to Bill from Restart at external meetings with a charity partner (who was helping to rehouse Bill) we were able to get Bill housed.
- As much as possible we will take a housing first approach but in this instance, Bill was ready and wanting to balance the goal of ending his rough sleeping with working on some personal challenges in counselling. He was having anger issues arise which held him back in meetings with those who were trying to sort his accommodation, as well as some other mental health issues.
- So by Autumn-Winter time, after 6-7 months of getting to know Bill (and him getting to know us), he put himself forward for and committed to the opportunity of weekly counselling.
- Bill had 12 counselling sessions in total. Initially we offered six, but to meet Bill's needs we were able to extend this to 12.
- Despite not having a place to stay for half the sessions, Bill invested fully in the mental health sessions with Mind and set himself some really specific goals around managing his emotions/anger.

We saw genuine change and progression with how he spoke about his challenges and dealt with them. The housing element of Bill's barriers fell into place about mid-way through his counselling journey and he still remains confident and in accommodation, pursuing the next steps of his life as someone with countless entrepreneurial ideas and a passion and determination for being a self starter.

## THE PRACTICAL AND EMOTIONAL BENEFITS OF GETTING INTO TRAINING TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT

- In January 2024, Rob approached me at the drop-in asking for assistance to find employment. He was staying in a night shelter and had some support from the organisation who ran it, who had suggested he browse particular websites online for jobs. He hadn't had any luck.
- He told me he was open to working in any sector.
- I organised a follow up appointment with Rob to go through the options as I saw them and he picked out construction work as the avenue that appealed most to him.
- At the next appointment, I presented him with two options for courses that I thought might work well for his situation.
- He filled in an application form himself, and returned it to me to send on to the organisation, commending him for their course. By the end of the month he had been enrolled and was on his way to gaining the skills he needed for employment.
- Because of limited availability on the course in his area, he was enrolled in one that involved travel across London each day. The course provider paid for his travel, but there was still a large time commitment involved. When I heard there was now an opening on a closer course, I let Rob know. He told me, though, that being part of the daily commute made him feel 'normal' and part of life with other people also travelling for work. He chose to keep that travel rather than switch courses, recognising the positive lift it gave to his self esteem and happiness.
- We stayed in touch and he knew I was on hand to talk anything through or help to iron out any issues, though none arose.
- He graduated and got his certificate at the start of March and I look forward to seeing where he takes this new qualification and where he goes in this new career.

This case was all about supporting someone who showed awareness of what was involved in training and looking for work, who showed change-readiness despite their ongoing homelessness, to take that step. All that was needed was background emotional support and some logistical guidance in taking those first steps, but this person was capable of taking this opportunity once it was found.

**BY ASHLEIGH JONES, CASEWORKER**



## STEPPING IN EARLY TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

- Anthony was a mid to long term Restart guest, regularly visiting the drop in, and of pension age .
- He was supported as an urgent case over the period a few weeks to dissolve a court order and repair relations with the housing association where he stays.
- Restart got involved as the thought of calling the housing agency overwhelmed him and sent him into a downward spiral, so Restart and Anthony sat together and broke down the actions needed little by little, eventually making the call together.
- Whilst Anthony remained sceptical at how the housing association might react to the attempt to reach a compromise, the phone call went ahead. Together we managed to balance the needs of this guest who was facing some challenging health concerns and limited availability to let someone into the property, and the housing association who were requesting an important health/safety check go ahead.
- We managed to negotiate and work out how this could be resolved without having to involve the Court. It took a few calls and casework over a few weeks with follow ups in the following months but things settled down once some open communication and dialogue was created between the guest and housing association. Ultimately, we're glad that the guest managed to keep his property without having to take legal action, which might have been more stressful for him and out of his reach due to cost.

Although the individual was a few steps away from being homeless, a chain of events that we know can take a person to that end had commenced: the court order and Anthony's overwhelm and avoidance were symptoms of the start of a concerning process. We understand that to prevent homelessness, this is the stage at which you need to intervene, as early as possible, to put brakes on the momentum in the wrong direction. We're also happy to see, from this case, that guests at the drop-in know and feel they can come to us with a range of issues and we'll get stuck in quickly and fully to the best of our abilities - not only working to rehouse people but also ensure people keep and maintain their current homes and are happy in them, gaining confidence in liaising with landlords or others who hold the power over their housing situation.

**BY OLIVIA PYLE, PROGRAMMES MANAGER**

# CASEWORK

## CONCRETE OUTCOME AREAS

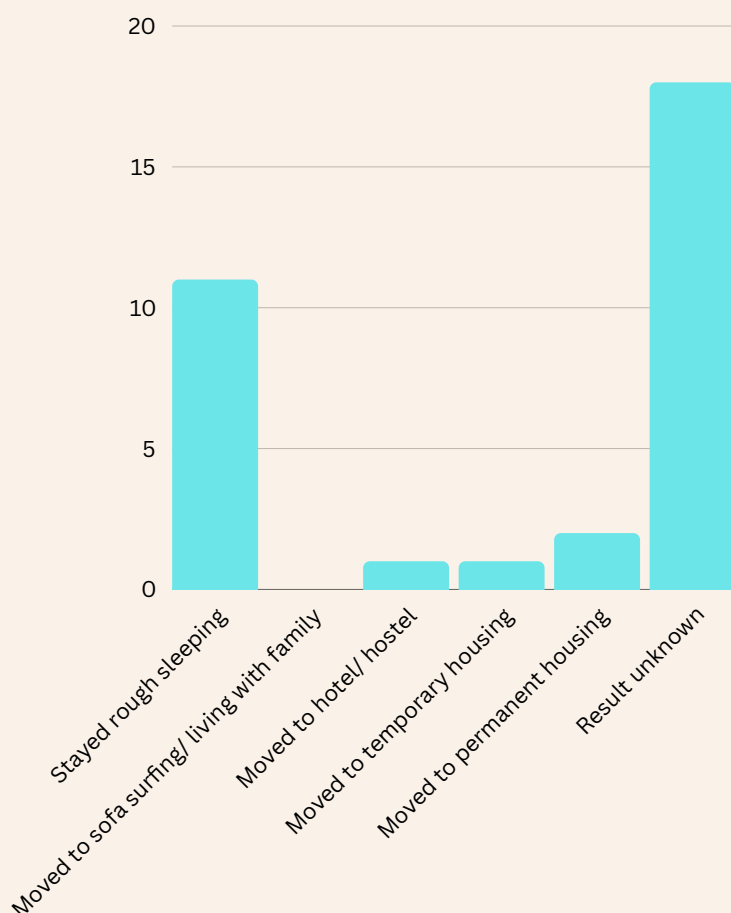
We measured concrete outcomes in the areas of housing and employment. Again, because this was our first year collecting this kind of data in a systematic way, and because we did not have a big enough team to balance front line and reporting work until late in the year, there are gaps in reporting. In some cases, where results are currently unknown, guests will update us, but have not done so in time to be recorded in this report.

Following up with homeless and formerly homeless men and women to determine concrete outcomes is very hard for a range of reasons even with a full team. These reasons include:

- shame around not having managed to 'succeed' and get into work or housing
- overwhelm and poor mental health resulting in avoiding follow ups and appointments
- other priorities around meetings needs and making progress competing with the need to report back to caseworkers
- loss of methods of communication like access to phone or email, and change of contact details
- doing well and no longer needing our support

Nonetheless, our data shows some trends and some notable successes. **A key success is that, of those seeking casework in any type of homelessness other than rough sleeping, 0 people fell into rough sleeping, showing a 100% track record in preventing homelessness becoming more severe for someone in casework.**

## HOUSING: ROUGH SLEEPERS

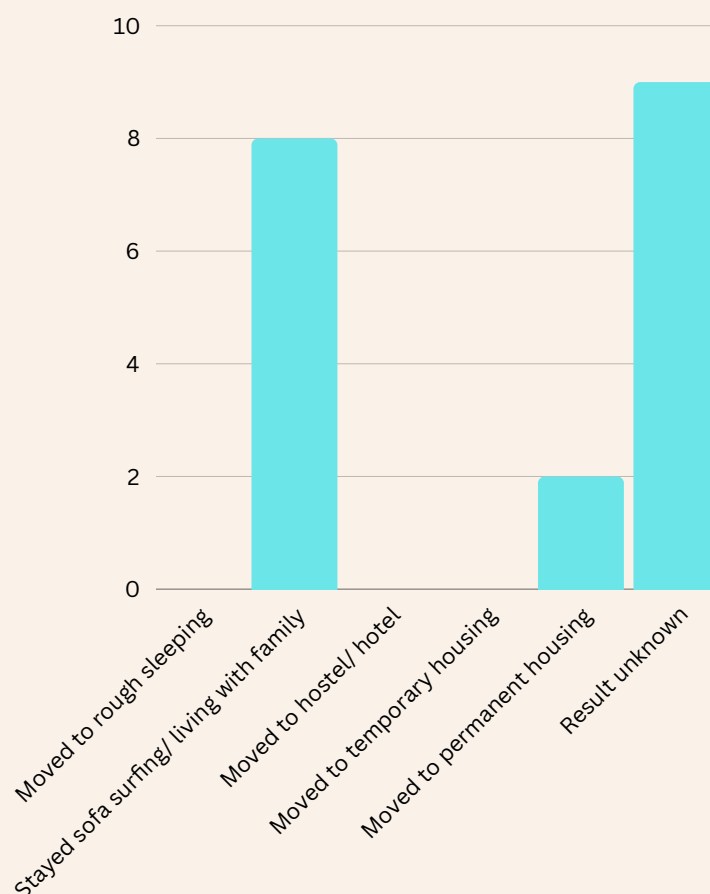


The majority of guests who we supported through one to one casework were rough sleepers. There were 42 rough sleepers who sought out casework support. As might be expected due to the extremely difficult living circumstances faced by rough sleepers, many did not stay the course of casework, and dropped out of support before we were able to record a definitive 'end status'.

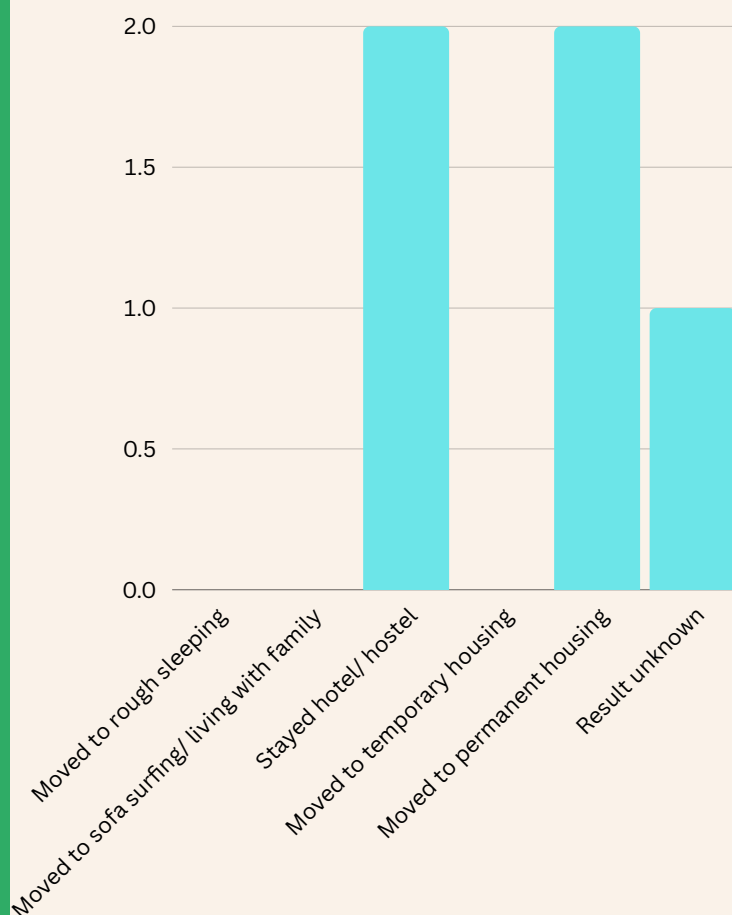
There were, nonetheless, some notable successes. Two guests made it into permanent housing, which is a huge amount of progress within the space of a year. One moved into temporary accommodation, one into hotel/ hostel accommodation, which again is a qualitatively huge step from sleeping outside. Eleven guests remaining rough sleeping, but still in touch with us and seeking to make progress is also a positive finding.

## HOUSING: SOFA SURFING/ LIVING WITH FAMILY

The second largest group were those who started casework with us while staying with family or sofa surfing. Again, we have a high proportion of unknown results, but we can also see that we have two people who were supported to gain permanent housing which is a potentially life changing success for those individuals. The qualitative weight of those two results is far greater than the number in itself. We also have eight individuals who stayed in the same situation, which is partly due to the fact that those individuals were able to pursue other goals first, not being in the most crisis-like state of homelessness. For example, guests in this category were able to pursue goals in employment rather than change in housing status.

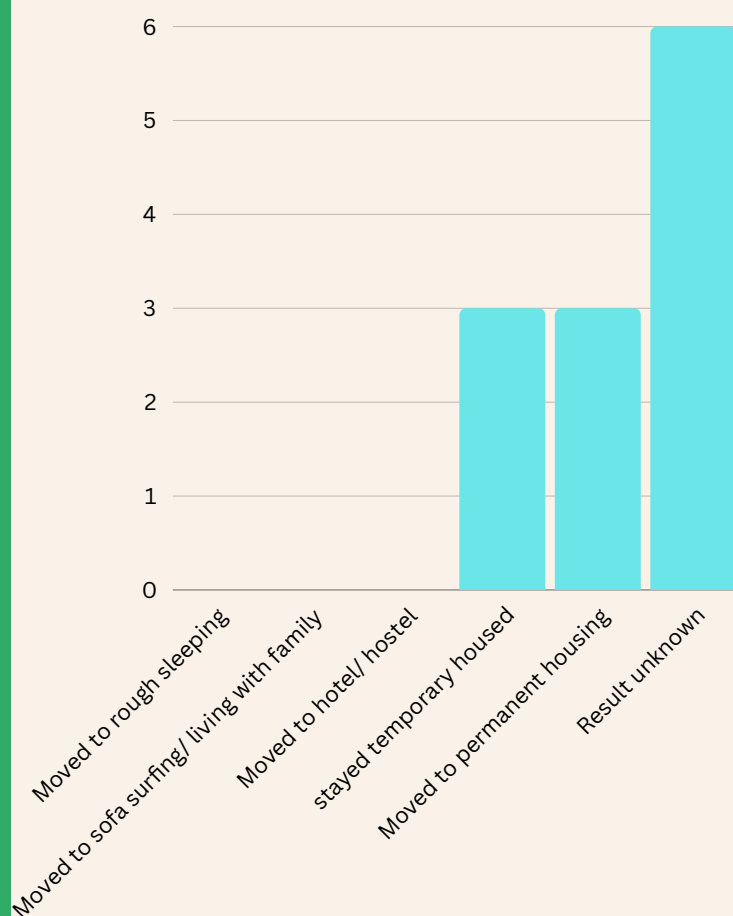


## HOTEL/ HOSTEL OUTCOMES

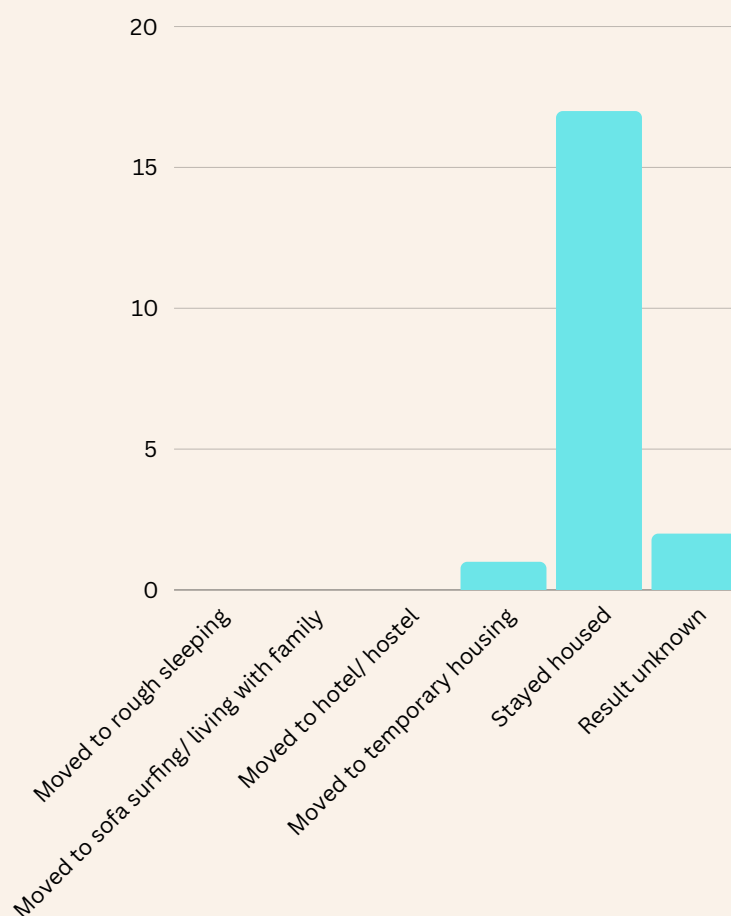


Half of those starting casework whilst living in a hotel or hostel were living in Home Office accommodation given for a particular time, so the important thing was not that they moved on right away, but that they would have the support in place to change their living arrangement when they needed to. Those who moved on, moved on to permanent housing which is a really solid result. Again, one person did not have a known housing result, and the reasons for that are as already discussed.

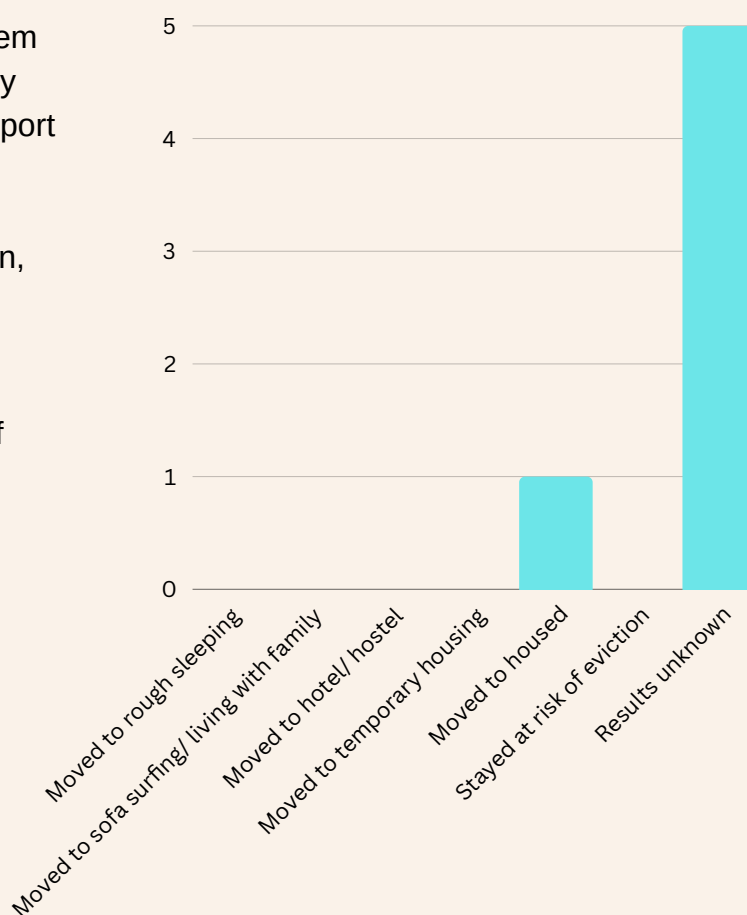
## TEMPORARY HOUSED OUTCOMES



## PERMANENTLY HOUSED OUTCOMES



## RISK OF EVICTION OUTCOMES

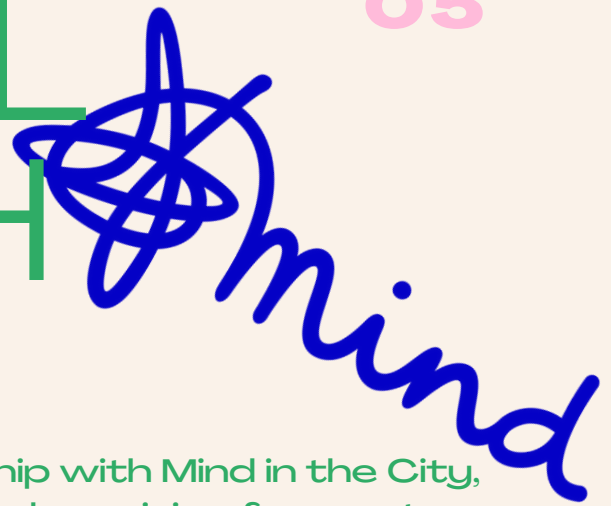


Of those guests who started casework while temporary housed, the aim was to support them to remain in that situation if that was what they wanted and if it was stable to do so, or to support them to move on to a permanent home. For those in permanent housing, the aim was to support them to remain in that stable condition, and for those facing eviction, the aim was to prevent that eviction notice resulting in homelessness.

Some guests with the starting status of risk of eviction are still working with us so result unknown.



# MENTAL HEALTH



In 2023/2024 we started a paid partnership with Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest. This included provision for one to one and group therapy for guests, supervision (reflective practice) for staff, training for staff, consultancy to the CEO and capacity for ad hoc mental health support.

We ran

1. one six week group therapy programme for guests
2. twenty 1:1 therapy sessions for guests

“

**“THE [THERAPY] SESSIONS WITH HANA ARE WORKING, I’M FEELING CALMER AND I’M NOT HAVING THE ANGER OUTBURSTS ANY MORE.”**

“

**“IT’S RESTART LIVES THAT HAVE GOT ME THROUGH THE DARK TIMES. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ALL YOU’VE DONE AND DO.”**

We were also selected as a chosen charity by Mind to receive free training in Mental Health Awareness and Signposting which they have a contract for on behalf of Public Health, Hackney Council, this will commence in April 2024/25

This year, although we had a qualitatively and anecdotally impactful partnership with Mind, it was a challenge to collect data that more objectively assessed mental health improvements. Filling in the PHQ9 proved a barrier to some guests wanting to access support and we chose to offer the support and drop that criteria rather than force data collection and therefore put a barrier in place for those who needed the service. In our assessment, this was partly a staff issue. Rather than a concrete barrier that could not be surmounted, this barrier was in part because there was not enough support or encouragement to complete the assessments, or enough follow up to prompt completion of and collect the surveys. Our two new caseworkers joined in December, and one of those is a qualified psychotherapist who is also co-ordinating our mental health offering so this coming year we will have more capacity and a more robust process in place to collect the information we need to assess impact.

# PROGRAMMES

## RESTORE - WELLBEING

This year saw Restart Lives start to offer pilot wellbeing programmes aimed at personal development, confidence building as well as physical and mental health improvement.

From April to October 2023, the charity ran weekly football skills sessions open to Restart Lives guests as well as referrals from partner organisations. A football coach met weekly with a group of up to 8 men at the Hyde Park football pitches to do drills, kick a ball together and speak freely about anything going on in the guests' lives. Restart staff could then refer onto other services if issues surfaced, such as therapy, or external health, addiction or other services.



“

**“THIS [RESTART WELLBEING PROGRAMME] IS MAKING THE DIFFERENCE TO BE WELL ENOUGH TO TAKE MY GRANDKIDS TO THE PARK FOR A KICK ABOUT.”**

During the Winter months, the charity switched to offering Men's Boxing with a trauma informed coach at his Hammersmith Boxing Gym again weekly on Wednesdays.

# PROGRAMMES<sup>06</sup>

## RECRUIT - EMPLOYABILITY

In 2023/24 Restart Lives once again offered a group employability programme imparting skills like CV writing, job searching, acing an interview, amongst other topics. In Q1, these were hosted for the first time at our Tower Hamlets office location.

In April 2023, the charity also started a partnership with Hoxton Job Centre Plus, to offer background, wraparound support to those receiving benefits and seeking work. As well as imparting work-related skills on the Recruit programme, our work with the Job Centre was intended to support guests in other areas of their life such as with finding accommodation, or dealing with mental health issues, so that they were in a better position to attend Job Centre appointments, avoid sanctions, and ultimately take advantage of any training, job fairs, or work opportunities that may come up.

The partnership with the Job Centre is testament to the Restart Lives understanding that approaching work, finding work and keeping work, is about more than skills directly relating to employment, and just as much about other barriers being under control if not overcome, and a person being 'ready' in a range of ways to take that step towards self-support.

The logo for Job Centre Plus, featuring the words "jobcentreplus" in a sans-serif font. "job" is in white, "centre" is in yellow, and "plus" is in white, all set against a green rectangular background.

As of the first quarter of working with Job Centre Plus in Hoxton, 50% of our guests in casework were guests who we met there, demonstrating a need for the kind of wraparound support that we offer.

As of the first quarter of working with Job Centre Plus in Hoxton, 50% of our guests in casework were guests who we met there, demonstrating a need for the kind of wraparound support that we offer.

**"RESTART DID THE ONE THING THAT I COULDN'T DO FOR MYSELF. I WAS TOTALLY LOST, I WAS FRIGHTENED. I HAD WORK, GOOD WORK, AND THEN A STROKE AND I COULDN'T GET BACK I JUST HAD NO IDEA HOW TO. THE CONNECTION RESTART MADE FOR ME HAS JUST OPENED IT ALL BACK UP AGAIN AND I HAVE A WHOLE PLAN."** A GUEST WHOSE POOR HEALTH LEFT THEM HOMELESS AND WHO LOST ALL CONFIDENCE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES BACK INTO WORK.

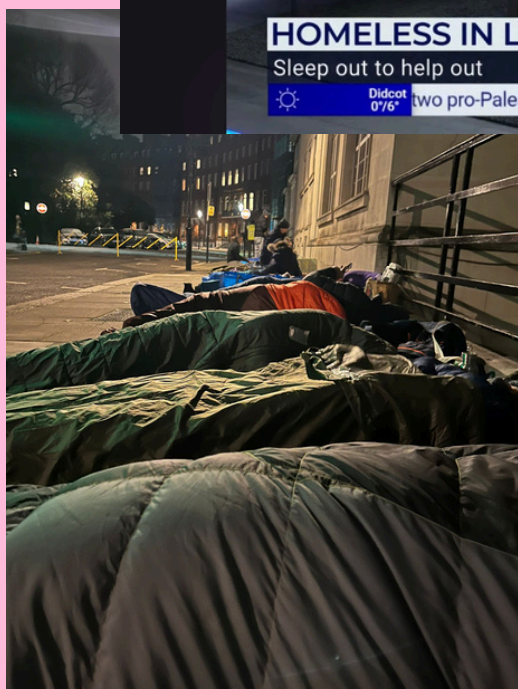


# SPREADING AWARENESS

In 2023/24 Restart Lives continued to show commitment to raising awareness about homelessness and offering educational experiences to schools to make sure this awareness starts young. To raise awareness amongst the general population, the charity again organised a Sleepout event, this year taking place on 1st December.

Participants slept on the street outside the drop in service location for one night, and in the morning reflected together on their experiences and what new thinking they might have developed around homelessness and rough sleeping. The Mayor of RBKC opened the event and shared her thoughts on homelessness in the area, and the Chair as well as CEO shared their thoughts.

As part of publicising the event, the CEO joined a panel on GB News promoting the event and discussing homelessness, its causes and solutions, thereby reaching a potentially totally new audience.





# EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE

**Haileybury School** organised an event for their students in the same location on week after our main Sleepout, and our Programmes Manager shared information around homelessness to contribute to school work on the topic in the lead up and time after the event.

**Brighton College Prep** and **Weald Community School** both ran their own 'Sleep In' events in partnership with Restart Lives. The Programmes Manager and CEO delivered two lessons, one to years 5 and 6 and one to year 7 at Brighton Prep. The same staff had a zoom call with the Head Boy and Head Girls at Weald Community School, answering questions so that the students were then in a position to lead an assembly and pass the knowledge on to their peers. The students at Weald School also made a display reflecting on homelessness as shown in the image below.



Students from **Knightsbridge School** regularly set up the tables and chairs in the Friday night Drop In space, and the CEO delivered an assembly at the school sharing the newly developed Restart Lives Charity Champion award to student who had made an outstanding commitment to helping make the Drop In happen each week.

At the start of the new financial year, the CEO delivered an assembly at **Garden House School** to celebrate the volunteering work that one little boy had done alongside his mother in December 2023, handing out residents letters about the Sleepout event. The boy was given a Restart Lives Charity Champion award for this support and for keeping homeless men and women in mind by things like handing out hand warmers in cold weather and starting conversations with those on the street, supported by his mother.



# MEET THE TEAM



**CATHERINE FLAY**  
CEO



**OLIVIA PYLE**  
Programmes Manager



**PHIL NUGENT**  
Drop in Manager

# MEET THE TEAM



**ROMAN SUMAROKOVS**

Chef



**NATHAN BABER**

Programmes Executive



**ASHLEIGH JONES**

Caseworker



**PAULA MAZZEO**

Caseworker

# VOLUNTEERS

In 2023/24 Restart Lives maintained a large pool of volunteers with around ten regular and long term individuals making programmes like REACT possible.

Volunteers undertook work like serving food, checking guests in at reception, registering new guests, promoting programmes and services, helping guests to fill in feedback forms for the charity, serving teas and coffees, running a haircuts list and waitlist, distributing resources at resource fairs.

# TRUSTEES



Andrew Marshall  
Founder



Sonya Leydecker  
Chair



Nick Gandon  
Trustee



David Pyle  
Trustee



Pete Gibbons  
Trustee



Rob Mills  
Trustee



Mark Veldon  
Trustee



Marina Abel-  
Smith  
Trustee



Anand Dani  
Trustee

# STAFF WELLBEING

Working on the frontline with people who are struggling, or working behind the scenes to try to bring in the required funding to provide that vital support, or co-ordinate all of the complex efforts Restart Lives mounts to meet the challenge of tackling homelessness can be stressful and affect mental wellbeing.

In recognition of this, in 2023/24, the charity launched a staff wellbeing allowance; a monthly amount for staff to spend on activities that boost their mental health. This could be something like therapy, or it could be a trip to visit family, a gym membership, or some form of TLC that works for them.

As part of the partnership with Mind, caseworkers have weekly reflective practice sessions, and the whole team benefit from taking part in group sessions, learning mindfulness techniques, and other techniques from Mind's Radical Self Care and ACT modalities.



# PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

The works that Restart Lives does is only possible thanks to the support of individuals and organisations who fund the charity's work.

In 2023/24 the charity was nominated as one of three chosen charities of **Canaccord Genuity**, benefiting through their donations and support throughout the year and into the next financial year. One of the Canaccord team joined the Restart Lives Sleepout, for example, and took the awareness he gained back into his office to his peers as well as raising funds for the charity.

Restart Lives also continued to be supported by **Alix Partners**, and was this year nominated as a Social Enterprise Partner. The organisation provided funding, in kind donations, expertise and training to the charity and welcomed Restart Lives staff into their supportive team in the Alix Partner offices on more than one occasion.

**New Line** made a one off donation through a former volunteer which was gratefully received.



# PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

This past year, the charity enjoyed the support of a multi-year **Lloyds Foundation grant**, including both financial and other support. Whilst the funding was transformative and allowed for much of the team growth and development of the breadth and depth of the charity's services, the foundation also made a huge impact by organising a consultant from **Safeguarding Momentum** to work with the CEO to improve the charity's safeguarding policy and then train the team on that new policy. Lloyds Foundation organised a fleet of laptops for Restart Lives to use as a laptop library with guests, allowing them to search for work, create CVs or fill in any online forms necessary to progress their situations. The Drop In continued to benefit from food donations from **City Harvest**, as well as support from **Thomas Franks, Country Food**

**Trust, and Mandarin Oriental Hotel** who all made feeding an average of 89 homeless men and women every Friday possible. Resources we donated by individuals, **Alix Partners, Wrap Up London, Only a Pavement Away and Atheneum Hotel**, which were gratefully received by guests. Individuals in the incredible supportive community that surrounds Restart Lives gave generously both in support of the Sleepout and throughout the year in an incredible show of generosity.



# PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

RESTART LIVES FORMED NEW PARTNERSHIPS THAT SAW THE CHARITY'S TEAM SET UP AN OUTPOST AT THE PARTNER LOCATION WITH **JOB CENTRE PLUS IN HOXTON** (AS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY) AND LIGHTHOUSE AT ST LEONARDS. **LIGHTHOUSE AT ST LEONARDS** IS A SMALL SCALE FOOD SERVICE OPERATED FROM A CHURCH CLOSE TO THE EAST LONDON OFFICES OF RESTART LIVES EVERY THURSDAY LUNCHTIME. RESTART SENDS ONE CASEWORKER EACH WEEK, TO SHARE A MEAL AND OFFER CASEWORK SERVICES TO THOSE PRESENT.

RESTART LIVES ALSO FORMED A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH **MIND** (AS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY).

**THE CHARITY CONTINUED BEING OPEN TO REFERRALS BASED ON PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES' CRITERIA TO ALL OF OUR FELLOW HOMELESS CHARITIES IN LONDON.**

RESTART LIVES CONTINUED TO BENEFIT FROM THE JUNIOR LEAGUE SENDING THEIR VOLUNTEERS TO THE CHARITIES SERVICES AND DONATING MUCH NEEDED ITEMS SUCH AS HYGIENE KITS.

# PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

## OUR AIMS

- Take on 30 or more new cases every quarter
- Support 70% or more of those guests to move at least one stage on the progress pathway and to achieve at least one milestone from their personalised progress plan.
- Beat our 2023/24 result and support more than 10 individuals into permanent housing
- Make our support more accessible
- Reach 90 guests as the average per week at drop in
- Serve 15000 meals
- Attract more rough sleepers to the drop in
- Bring our knowledge and our guests' experiences to bear on those in power and political decision makers

## HOW WILL WE REACH THOSE

- Build on the success of outposts at the Job Centre in Hoxton and Lighthouse at St Leonards, by working in partnership with Hackney Night Shelter and Lighthouse in Hackney.
- Take referrals from other Job Centres via the Hoxton Job Centre.
- Create a new programme, 'Represent' aimed at training guests in self-advocacy and personal storytelling to create impact, and supporting guests to visit or communicate with their local MP to have their voice heard and influence decision makers directly.
- Run our new programme, 'Represent', from a partner location, focusing on working collaboratively to support more people who need it.
- Continue running REACT and RESTORE.
- Turn RECRUIT into an online programme available for anyone to access for free via our website any time and from any place, and available for Restart as well as external caseworkers and support workers to draw on with their clients.
- Further invest in training our growing team, taking advantage of NCVO, Homeless Link and other external organisations.



# PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

## OPERATIONS, SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

- There will be an even greater focus on data collection, and the categories of data recorded will be honed further to allow for better understanding of the causes of homelessness for our guests, and of the demographics of those we support.
- As the team has expanded and received further training, there will be new tactics for more effective follow ups with guests.
- Systems development will continue.
- New referral pathways with housing organisations such as Docwra are a priority to arrange, as social housing via councils is almost non-existent.
- Safeguarding training from Safeguarding Momentum will take place in April.
- An organisation-wide values consultation, resulting in a honed mission statement and up to date code of conduct will conclude in April.

## FUNDRAISING

- Restart Lives will be focusing on increasing the support received from schools and corporates, encouraging organisations to run their own Sleepouts or Sleepins based on the model of working with Haileybury, Weald and Brighton College schools in 2023/24, and with Alix Partners and Canaccord.
- The charity will continue to manage relationships with individuals in the Restart community and hope to continue to benefit from individual giving support, with a view to developing a giving scheme towards the end of the financial year.
- Restart Lives will make applications for grants and funding both for specific programmes and to cover core costs.
- The charity will run its winter fundraising event as it has done each year.



# RESTART LIVES

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