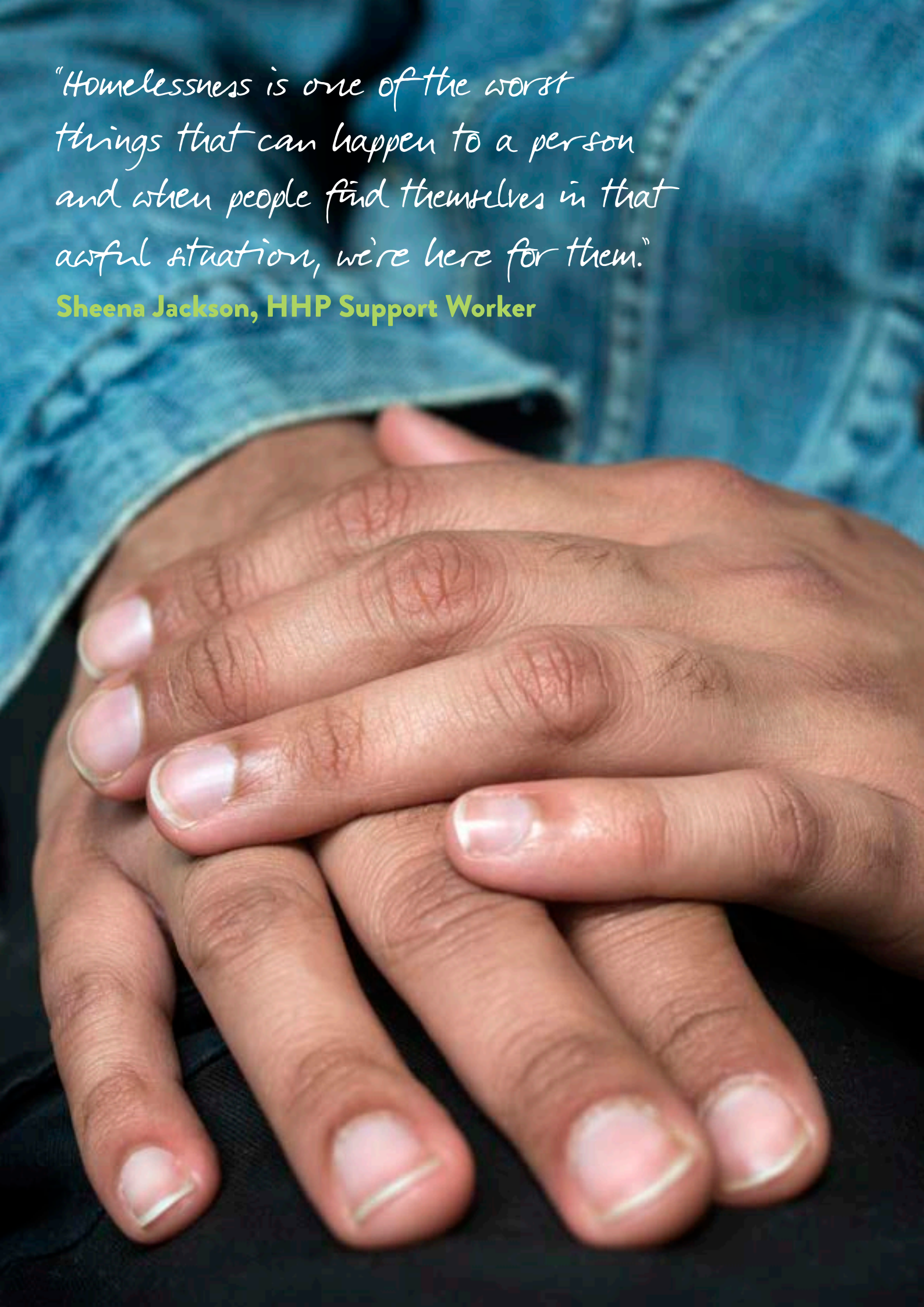




**HARROGATE**  
**HOMELESS PROJECT**

# **IMPACT REPORT**

## **2022**



*"Homelessness is one of the worst things that can happen to a person and when people find themselves in that awful situation, we're here for them."*

**Sheena Jackson, HHP Support Worker**

# HARROGATE HOMELESS PROJECT

Harrogate Homeless Project provides people experiencing homelessness with a safe place to stay and the support they need to build confidence and move towards independent living.

Our vision is that nobody in the Harrogate District has to sleep rough and people experiencing homelessness will have all the necessary support they need.

As we mark our 30th anniversary, we take a look at the difference we have already made to people's lives and how we plan to increase our impact in the future.

## *Who we help?*

We work with a variety of people ranging from those in need of support through relationship breakdown or financial issues to individuals with multiple complex needs such as substance misuse, mental health issues and offending behaviour.

We believe that nobody deserves to be homeless and with the right opportunities, guidance and support we can help those who are experiencing homelessness towards a life off the streets.

# Keith's Story

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## Housed and employed after just 10 months

Keith grew up in Harrogate and developed issues with alcohol and his mental health when family relationships broke down. He moved to the south of England, stayed with friends and had several failed relationships. His alcohol issues worsened, acting as a trigger for violent offending. He ended up in London rough sleeping where outreach workers referred him to Harrogate Homeless Project due to his local connection.

He arrived low in mood, dishevelled and anxious. We provided emergency accommodation, support to resolve benefit issues and referral to local alcohol treatment services before offering him a hostel room. Keith stabilised in the hostel and received psychotherapy, advice around anger management and relationships, encouragement to open communications with his family and registered with a GP and a dentist.

He continued alcohol treatment in our move-on accommodation. Abstaining from alcohol, in full time work and fully supported, his confidence developed enough for him to reconnect with his family. Just 10 months after being referred to us as a rough sleeper, Keith received an offer of a Housing Association one bedroom flat in Harrogate and we helped him furnish it with donated furniture.





# OUR IMPACT

**We are a high impact local charity which serves the whole Harrogate District, passionately working on combating homelessness and providing the following services for those in need.**

Our day centre, Springboard, provides food, shower and washing facilities, skills workshops, activities, psychotherapy, GP and other medical and therapeutic services. Our staff are on hand to offer people support with

their housing situation and practical help with applications and access to other services.

We run a homeless hostel on Bower Street in Harrogate, which offers temporary accommodation for 16 people and also provides 5 emergency bunk spaces for those with nowhere else to stay.

When our hostel residents are ready to take the next step we can help them get settled into one of our move on homes or other accommodation. Move-on houses provide a stepping stone to independent living with added support from our staff and volunteers.

**8** In 2021 we acquired 8 new self-contained move-on flats on Bower Street, next door to the hostel, where residents can gain greater independence with support still close at hand.

## GP Service

Our hugely successful weekly GP service was launched at Springboard at the end of 2017. In the first 36 weeks, 227 patients were seen. Mental health problems featured in just under 30% of visits, whilst 13% required medical help for a chronic disease such as asthma or diabetes and 16% for acute infections. Many cases presented with multiple issues, and an estimated 7% of visits to the GP resulted in the homeless person avoiding having to be admitted to hospital.

Primary care records for homeless people are often missing, or have large gaps, raising the acute need for these records to be shared and therefore accessible across all medical services. The high level of mental health problems points to the need for improved mental health team support for the homeless. The service has highlighted the vulnerability and risk to health which homelessness, and a lack of easy access to primary and secondary medical care services, presents.

In the year to August 2020 **we provided 4,584** nights of accommodation to people experiencing homelessness. The figure dropped to **2,652** nights of accommodation the following year as we had to restrict occupancy as a result of the pandemic. We started 2022 close to **full occupancy** and expect this to rise.

**Springboard (pre-pandemic) typically has over 700 monthly visits with 360 hot meals being served each month.**

Due to the pandemic we unfortunately **could not serve hot meals.** In December 2021 we had **39 people** presenting **107 times.**



# John's Story

## Homeless for 40 years

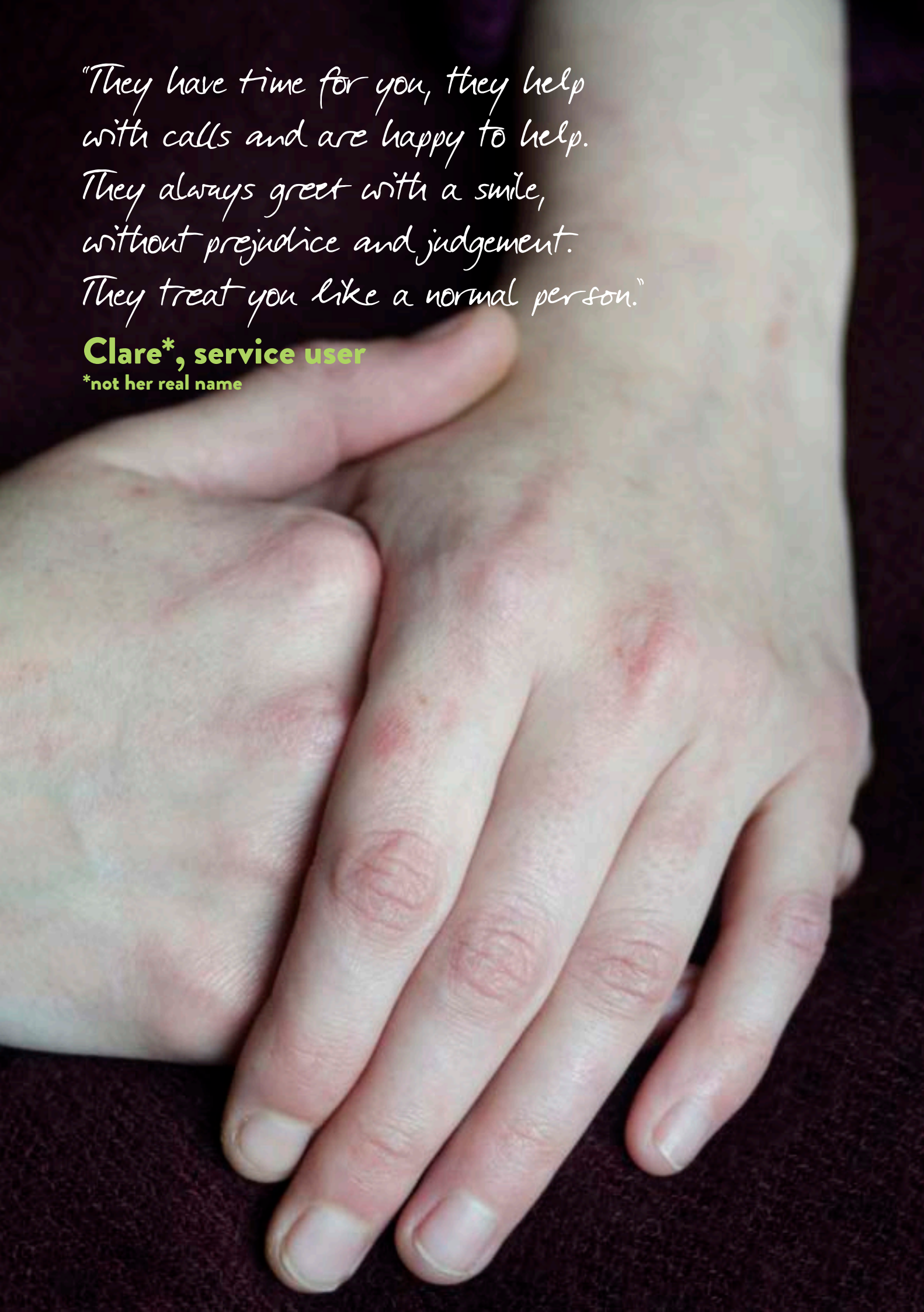
John had been homeless for 40 years, travelling all over the UK, occasionally staying in night shelters but mostly on the streets. He never claimed benefits and relied on finding occasional work on farms and scrapyards.

After a troubled abusive childhood, he had joined the forces to get away from his family and served in Northern Ireland as a young man. He left the Army at the age of 20, homeless and with PTSD. He turned to alcohol as a coping mechanism and has had no contact with his family since.

His dependency on alcohol became chronic and over the years, despite his resilience, his health started to deteriorate. He received numerous convictions over the years for being drunk in a public place and theft. He refused all offers of help or support.

Our staff got to know him gradually over a number of years. He refused to come indoors, even in winter, and staff would keep checking on him and taking him hot drinks. Over time we built trust and started to provide him with one to one individually tailored support.

With our help, John eventually moved into his own privately rented tenancy for the first time in his adult life.



*"They have time for you, they help with calls and are happy to help. They always greet with a smile, without prejudice and judgement. They treat you like a normal person."*

**Clare\*, service user**

*\*not her real name*

## Chair of Trustees & Head of Services joint statement

People we speak to in other parts of Yorkshire, or even further afield, are often surprised when they hear our charity's name. Does a town as affluent as Harrogate really have a need for a charity to support people experiencing homelessness? The reality is that having nowhere to stay – nowhere to rest, feel safe, prepare a meal or keep your belongings – can affect anyone, anywhere. Even in Harrogate. Having nowhere to call home can happen suddenly or it can come about gradually due to a range of circumstances. Bereavement, trauma, mental health, illness, injury, unemployment and addiction are just some of the life circumstances that can pull the rug from under someone's feet. When that happens, Harrogate Homeless Project is there to help. We offer a range of services, from emergency accommodation that makes sure nobody has to sleep on the streets, to long term psychotherapy to tackle trauma.

In 2022, as we mark our 30th anniversary as a charity, we are proud to celebrate how much we have achieved and how many people we have helped. Recently there was a knock at the door of our Springboard day centre and we were delighted to see one of our former clients standing there, smiling. He had come to say thank you. Now living down south and running his own business, he was in the area and took the time to call in and show his appreciation for the role we played in

changing his path. His is one of many similar stories and, as we expand our services in the years ahead, we hope to change more lives and create real hope for people at a time when they feel they have nothing left at all.

There are three things that enable us to have an impact on those who are at their lowest ebb – our incredible team of staff, the generosity of our donors and volunteers and the compassion of our community. All of the staff covering the hostel, supported accommodation, move on house and the Springboard day centre have the skills, patience and experience to build trust with people who are vulnerable and show them a way forward. It isn't always easy; it doesn't always have a positive outcome. Whatever comes their way, they manage it with humanity and resilience. Our thanks also go to our volunteers and those who fundraise for us or donate money to support our services. Without them, Harrogate Homeless Project would not be here for those in need. Finally, we are grateful to be part of a community that recognises that not everyone in Harrogate has a lovely home or a comfy bed to go back to at the end of the day. As one resident put it recently, after seeing someone making a donation at the hostel: "People really do care about us, don't they?"

**Jenni Moulson**, Chair of Trustees,  
& **Charlotte Fortune**, Head of Services



# REPORT

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This report details the journey, achievements, and goals of HHP, across more than 30 years of working in the community, and more recently over the last 5 years culminating in the current services provided and why these are needed and how these services make a powerful impact within the local area.



# Emily's Story

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## **Bereaved and homeless**

Emily was made homeless when her partner died and his family took possession of the home they'd shared, leaving Emily at an incredibly low ebb, feeling as though she had nowhere to go and with little hope. After spending a few nights in our emergency bunk accommodation she moved into a hostel room.


Our psychotherapy service, Streetlight, helped Emily deal with past trauma and the loss of her partner. She started addressing her alcohol issues through counselling and with her support worker. Over time, Emily regained her sense of self, revealing a lovely sense of humour and an appreciation of the support that was offered.

Thanks to her positive approach to hostel life, Emily was offered one of HHP's move on properties – a one bedroomed flat - which she loved and made her own with little personal touches such as ornaments and plants. With support, Emily went from strength to strength. She stayed on top of her bills and budgeted her limited funds. Her dream was to secure a council flat as a permanent home, which she achieved just over 18 months after coming to HHP.

Emily is really happy with her new flat and extremely grateful to the staff at HHP for getting back on her feet. She says they always had time to talk and joke with her and she doesn't know where she'd be without our support.





A photograph of a middle-aged Black man with glasses and a grey beard, smiling warmly. He is wearing a blue and white plaid button-down shirt. He is sitting in a kitchen with dark wood cabinets. Several cardboard boxes are visible around him, suggesting a move or a new home. The lighting is bright and natural, coming from a window in the background.

# EMPLOYMENT / MOVE ON

Through our wide range of services, in the Harrogate district, we offer tailored one-to-one support to each of our members. Every year we work with a growing number of people to help them rebuild their lives and leave homelessness behind for good. HHP offer expert help to find secure employment and safe housing.



# Will's Story

## Employed after a decade without a job

Will's life was chaotic. He had various stays in the hostel which never worked out in a planned way. Then he received a community order for criminal activity and a curfew. He'd struggled in the past but decided he was ready to try again. He turned to HHP for support to stop him reoffending.

With structured input from our support workers and medical support for mental health and sleeping problems, Will's behaviour improved. After two months in the hostel, he decided he wanted to improve his literacy and numeracy skills and find employment, despite not having had a job for 10 years.

Will started feeling more confident and began to have stable contact with his son. He now lives independently, continues to receive support from various agencies and has recently secured his first job.

# THE LAST 5 YEARS

2017

5 years ago saw the launch of the GP service at Springboard. In the first 36 weeks, 227 patients were seen for a range of reasons and it quickly led to a reduction of people having to be admitted to hospital.

The 5-year funding programme SAFE (Service for adults facing exclusion) also started and provided a backdrop to the last 5 years. SAFE was developed to provide a safety net and give a direct response to individuals experiencing severe and multiple issues aged over 25 years old. Those who, historically, have had poor contact, disengagement or failed to meet the threshold set by individual services and exclusions with mainstream services.

2018

The Big Lottery Bid provided a partnership opportunity with Harrogate Theatre to start a theatre group for the homeless and the vulnerably housed. HHP was also heavily involved in the Homeless Not Faceless Exhibition in Ripon which aimed at supporting the changing narrative surrounding homelessness.

2019

HHP ran a series of fundraising events across the Harrogate Borough district including pop-up shops at the Victoria shopping centre and a hugely successful supporters event at St Peters Church to raise funds and awareness.

2020

Covid disrupted the year, but the team at HHP worked swiftly to adapt our services that help those experiencing homelessness in the Harrogate District, as they were affected especially hard by the unprecedented situation.

2021

The acquisition of 8 new move-on flats on Bower Street & the move from Wesley House to larger space in the Lower Halls allowed for an expansion of much needed services.

# THE TEAM



## SUPPORT WORKERS:

HHP support workers provide direct help to individual clients who are experiencing homelessness and are responsible for assessing their situation, providing crises intervention advice, and offering support via a range of social work plans.

Their primary aim is to assist clients in obtaining access to all forms of primary health care, and other specialist agencies and guide them towards safe accommodation before working with them on employment and move on housing.

## HOSTEL WORKERS:

HHP hostel workers provide cover to the hostel during the day and overnight (Night Wardens) to ensure the safety and security of the residents and the building. Hostel workers are the point of contact for residents when needed and provide advice and support; working alongside support workers. Hostel workers provide office cover, complete administrative tasks such as hostel admissions and ensure concise logs are completed on a daily basis.

Hostel workers deal with members of the public, face to face or on the phone, handling enquiries appropriately along with accepting donations and issuing receipts. Hostel workers work on a rolling rota to ensure the project is staffed 365 days a year.

## VOLUNTEERS:

Our team of dedicated volunteers play an essential role in supporting staff in our facilities, and we rely on their help to keep many of our services running. There are lots of ways volunteers support us, such as by offering occasional support during fundraising events and campaigns or more providing more regular help at our hostel to sorting through donated items.

When the **COVID-19 pandemic** first hit and the nationwide lockdown was introduced, we worked swiftly to adapt our services that help those experiencing homelessness in the Harrogate District, as they were affected especially hard by the unprecedented situation.

The team mobilised with the support from the local community, sourcing facemasks for use in all communal areas, providing hand sanitizer and hand washing facilities across all services and increasing daily cleaning of touch points on all premises. Checking in with service users daily to establish if they had any COVID-19 symptoms and daily temperature monitoring allowed the services to continue running within a safe environment.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus restrictions, put in place across the country, had an effect on reducing the occupancy provided at the hostel and those able to access Springboard facilities at one time. We adjusted throughout the pandemic and continued to provide outreach and access facilities as well as food provision and support to those experiencing homelessness. Expanding our move-on accommodation offer in response also proved successful and allowed an opportunity to offer self-contained accommodation that was COVID-19 safe.

From 2021 we have been able to provide LFT testing to all service users along with specific COVID-19 vaccination clinics to remove barriers to access to these services.

The situation throughout the pandemic created challenges that the staff and volunteers at HHP met with enthusiasm and efficiency. It did however cause effects, such as reduced funding and a worsening economic situation which will create new challenges in 2022 and beyond.

# COVID REACTION





*Everyone deserves a safe place to stay*

HHP provides emergency overnight accommodation, a 16 bed hostel and move on housing whilst we support those experiencing homelessness with a chance to gain skills, build confidence and move towards independent living.



## FUNDRAISING & PARTNERSHIPS:

**The last few years has seen a shift in how HHP fundraise and work with local businesses and foundations to provide our services.**

We hugely appreciate our long lasting partnerships as they not only help fund our services and programs but also offer further enhanced support allowing the opportunity for organisational growth.

We believe in listening to our corporate partners and working with them to curate a relationship that is multifaceted, strategic and transformative. Focusing on how we can work together to bring about lasting change.

In 2022 Harrogate Homeless Project will be marking 30 years of supporting people

experiencing homelessness in the Harrogate District. The 30th anniversary will provide a backdrop to a fundraising campaign that will include both events within the community as well as a strategic aim to grow partnerships with local businesses.

Over the course of 2022, we aim to also bolster our individual giving programme by running a variety of campaigns within the local Harrogate community including, 30 Stories. We are also currently reviewing our data strategy, which allows us to get to know our donors in greater depth and provide them with the up-to-date information on what impact their donation has on people lives. An ongoing dialogue with donors will offer a better supporter journey and subsequently lead to more involved partnership with the community.

# Sara

from Violet / HGTE

## Fundraiser Story

In 2016, small business owner, Sara, was noticing the worsening homeless situation in Harrogate and decided to try and give a little back. In doing so, she created the “HGTE” brand, A collection of high quality organic cotton unisex branded sweatshirts, hoodies and t-shirts and has since expanded the range to include a HGTE reusable coffee cup made from sustainable materials. To date she has raised well over £13500.00 for Harrogate Homeless Project by making a donation from every item sold in the HGTE collection.

“Harrogate is a little bubble, on the surface it’s very affluent but you only have to scratch beneath the surface of any town and the social issues are the same wherever you go.”

In 2022, Sara with the use of the HGTE brand hopes to increase the products on offer and raise even more awareness and donations for Harrogate Homeless Project.

“By creating a brand championing the town HGTE, it’s all about Harrogate but equally it’s the town looking after it’s more vulnerable people. That’s how I see it.”



# Streetlight

## Psychotherapy and counselling service

The work we do goes beyond providing emergency food and shelter and temporary accommodation. We are focused on providing people with long term solutions and to tackling the causes of homelessness. In the past 12 months our resident psychotherapist has provided tailored interventions and psychotherapy to 25 individuals experiencing homelessness and needing support.

Started in 2013 the Streetlight scheme has allowed us to employ a Psychotherapist who provides a flexible, innovative therapy service for clients of HHP. This is a vital element of the services we offer as many of our clients have multiple complex needs and the waiting lists and criteria for mainstream services is a barrier to these people receiving the support they vitally require.



# THE FUTURE 2022/23

## As we move forward from the pandemic, we expect an increase in people experiencing homelessness.

A shortage of affordable housing and a worsening economic situation with the cost of living set to rise, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to see an increase in how many people are homeless. Many services too that people have traditionally relied on are struggling. It has become easier to become homeless and harder to make the journey to get off the streets and get and maintain an independent life.

We operate in a tough and increasingly competitive world. Many of the organisations and individuals that traditionally have supported us are under greater pressure. We need to maintain and build a strong, efficient and flexible organisation offering a consistent quality service and providing excellent support for our staff and volunteers in their demanding and challenging work.

### **HHP FUTURE PLANS AND VISION: Develop and enhance the services at Springboard**

One of our big ambitions is to expand the services at our Springboard day centre in the Harrogate town centre. It is here where we build trust and meet people's basic needs.

Our strategic plan is to increase our impact by developing further therapeutic services and skills training to support our clients and help them access other services and providers. These services should be able to provide early support to people who are at risk of homelessness.

### **Expand our counselling service, Streetlight**

Our Streetlight therapeutic process helps to support clients in accessing skilled counselling. This can enable people to tackle the root causes of their situation and support their journey from temporary to more permanent accommodation where appropriate.

### **Volunteers**

Our volunteers are vital to our organisation's ongoing success. They dedicate time, skills and a passion to delivering the best possible services for people experiencing homelessness. We aim to build on the solid foundation of volunteers that we rely on and help them further their skills therefore providing a better service to those in our care. By offering positive and rewarding volunteer opportunities, with quality training and support,

we can tackle homelessness, enable people to move on and build a strong and vibrant local community. Clients can also support others as part of their personal development.

### **Fundraising & partnerships**

We aim to rise to the challenges posed by COVID-19 by furthering our long-standing partnerships with local businesses and increasing our network of supporters who share our values and goals.

Our 30th anniversary is a unique opportunity to raise our profile, thank our current supporters and build links with new supporters across the district. We are reaching out to communities and businesses that might be interested in being part of our work and in supporting us.

*How are we going to make this happen?*

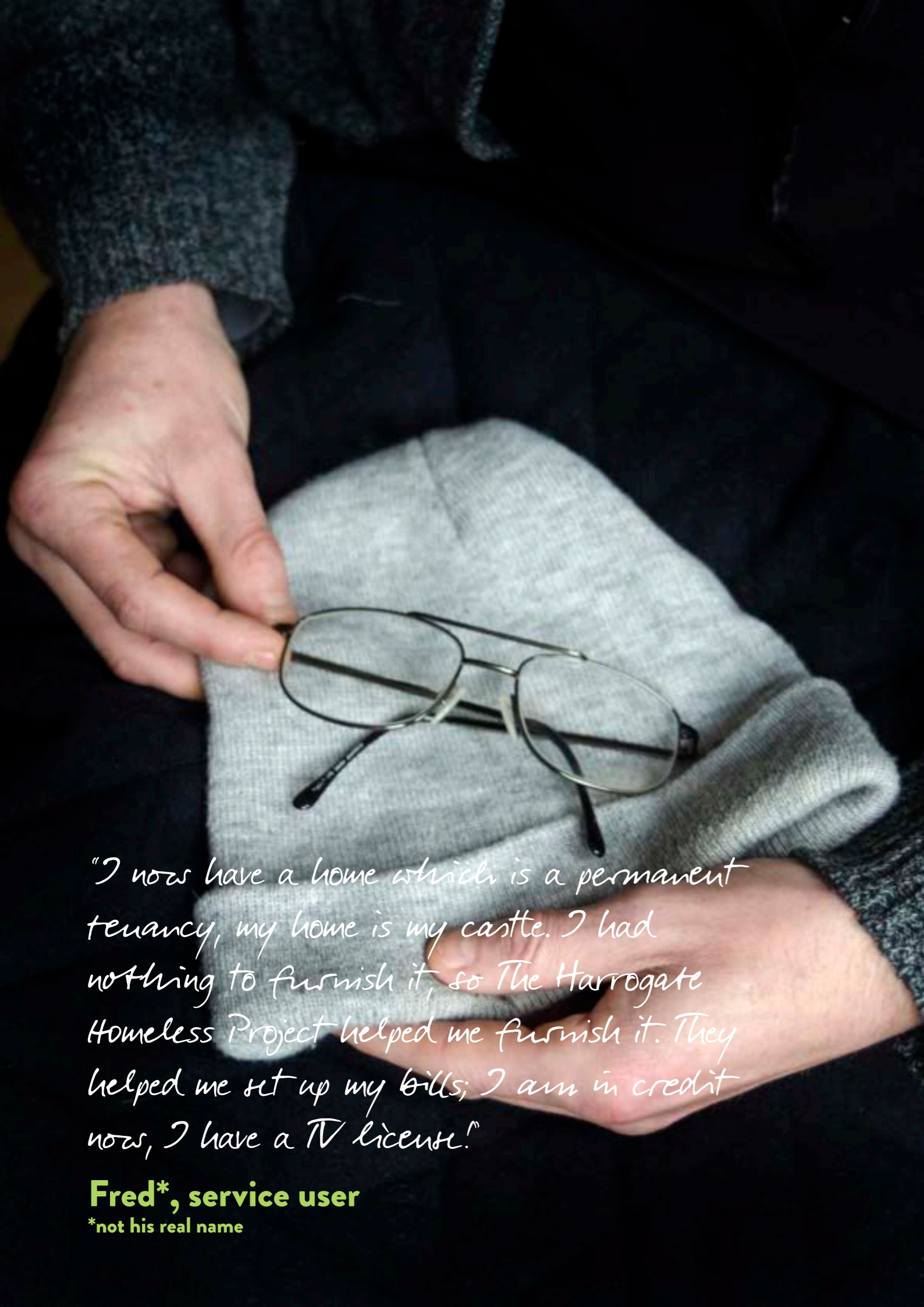
We will work to develop services that treat the causes of homelessness and not just the effects and work in collaboration with other agencies to avoid any potential duplication, increase effectiveness, build better services for all and deliver stronger outcomes. Gap analysis will also assist in exploring other areas where we can provide services that are needed.

We will work with our funders to create real change, maintaining low overhead costs to ensure resources are spent on meeting our client needs. We will monitor our impact, identify trends and report back on key themes to be a constructive and informed influence on future policy and service design.

We will work to play a key role in the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to reduce homelessness.

Building on the community support we have developed over the past 30 years, we will develop new ways of involving people, creating volunteering roles and opportunities to support an effective and local charity. We will provide high quality support and training to local volunteers so that local people have an opportunity to play a part in tackling homelessness. We will maintain our roots as a local and independent charity.

Our organisation will be flexible, outward-focused and continue to demonstrate best governance and management practice.



*"I now have a home which is a permanent tenancy, my home is my castle. I had nothing to furnish it, so The Harrogate Homeless Project helped me furnish it. They helped me set up my bills; I am in credit now, I have a TV license!"*

**Fred\*, service user**

\*not his real name

# THANKYOU

We understand that it is only by working together that we will end homelessness. We're grateful for the generous support from hundreds of people and organisations who have helped us over the last few years. Here are a select few organisations who have helped us immensely over the last couple of years especially.

**Chadwick Charitable Trust**

**Frank Pearson Foundation**

**Harrogate BID**

**Harrogate Borough Council**

**Hartley Charitable Foundation**

**Liz & Terry Bramall Foundation**

**Lloyds Bank Foundation  
of England & Wales**

**North Yorkshire County Council**

**The A M Fenton Trust**

**The Bartlett Foundation**

**The Bostock Foundation**

**The Ian and Fay Elliot Trust**

**The McDevitt Family Trust**

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Alex McLean

**Support Team Manager:**

Giuliano Achilli

**Fundraising Manager:**

Thomas Richards

**Business Support Officer:**

Julia Houseman





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