

# Doorstep

*"Opening doors for homeless families"*



*Annual Report 2017 and Accounts 2016-2017*

## Director's Report

It's been an extremely busy and productive year.

In the early part of 2017 building works to install new fire doors, detectors and alarms were completed. We also received funds to replace all the dryers in the laundry which has made a hugely positive difference to the efficiency of the facility.

We have continued to enjoy a colossal amount of support from the wider community. With weekly donations to stock our bazaars, as well as support from schools, community organisations and businesses that have provided food, toiletries, and Christmas gifts for children and raised money.

We have involved all our stakeholders in the process of developing a new strategic business plan to identify our priorities and goals over the next five years. We have found the process very energising and inspiring, especially hearing from our service users about the value Doorstep has in making a positive difference to their lives.

Four new members have joined the management committee each bringing valuable skills and knowledge. Our management team are very active and I am extremely grateful for all their hard work and support, particularly Stuart our chair.

For the last two years Victoria Coren Mitchell has given her support both financially with gifts in kind. She has regularly provided families with parcels of food and essentials, days out during the summer holidays and treats at Christmas. Imagine our delight when, this year, she decided to formalise her ongoing support by becoming Doorstep's patron.

The biggest challenge continues to be raising funds to secure Doorstep's security and long term sustainability. Being the only full time worker and the only 'backroom' worker, responsible for the organisation's day to day management and administration; it can be difficult to create sufficient time to devote to concerted bid writing. We have been well supported in one off gifts of money and now need to augment that with multi-year funding for staff posts.

Zoe has joined the team for a few hours per week to give some admin support and create space to enable me to do more bid writing. It is proving very beneficial as Zoe has responded to enquiries, helped to make systems more efficient and has significant skills in digital marketing. This has seen our profile raised on various social media platforms. Ultimately, it would be immensely helpful to have admin support for more hours and for this to be a permanent post. Raising funds for existing staff and the much needed new role of Family Advocate, which we have identified, will make a major difference and is crucial to our ongoing success. Better staffing levels will improve our infrastructure and thereby our ability to take our plans forward, utilise the opportunities to engage with organisations wanting to support Doorstep and to improve our services.

I give sincere thanks to everyone who has given support over the past year and to my colleagues who work so hard to support our families.

I look forward to the year ahead.

*Vicky Fox*

## **Our Services**

- \* Opportunities for children to play, learn and develop at our after school club, crèches and drop-ins.
- \* Joint activities with the partner organisations.
- \* Regular creative & educational activities for adults.
- \* A weekly exercise class such as Yoga.
- \* A programme of special activities and outings during the summer and school holidays.
- \* A weekly 'bazaar' giving access to free essential goods donated by the wider community.
- \* Free daily access to laundry facilities.
- \* Healthy snacks and meals.



A day out in the summer trying multi sports

### **What people say about Doorstep.....**

"I was there for a year and I found the staff were amazing, so friendly kind and helpful. My children benefited from attending, it helped so much, and they had fun and enjoyed their time. Unfortunately, I didn't get chance to say a proper thank you or goodbye as I was moved away all of a sudden.

I loved the fact you could stay or leave and you could relax and chat with volunteers, staff and other mums while kids were able to play with others in their age range.

I enjoyed the bizarre on Thursdays, it helped me find things to help my family and I found the washing facilities useful until I was moved and then had my own washing machine." CP

"Vicky, Where do I start? You and Doorstep have been there for me since I became homeless. Unfortunately, as time goes past, things are not getting any easier. Especially, these last two years, when I have been torn between my young children, my critically ill father and my elderly Mum, who lives thousands of miles away, it has been extremely sad and difficult.

I honestly don't know how I would have managed without the constant humble support from yourself and your staff. If only my low income allowed me to buy all you deserve in return, without a doubt you would have known how much I appreciate all you've done for me and how grateful I will always be.

From the bottom of my heart, on behalf of my family, I would like to say the biggest THANK YOU ever." BM



Christmas gift sorting

## Patron

I think Doorstep is a magical place. I know from talking to people in other temporary accommodation (places that don't have a Doorstep in the basement) how much difference it makes.

The practical things matter enormously; you see that so clearly as soon as they aren't there. Sometimes people actually cope better with huge difficulties and traumas than the small, exasperating practical challenges which seem so easily fixable. It's just a curious thing about the resilience of the human spirit. You might see a strong but struggling family coping amazingly well with being homeless and stuck for money, trying to keep children amused and engaged and happy and healthy in tiny spaces, even juggling an illness for the child or parent – and they cope so well but what pushes them over the edge is something like not having access to a washing machine.

Doorstep is there with those practicalities: washing machines, emergency nappies or food if you need it, a bit of vital crèche time. But equally (if not more) importantly, they offer activity and company and a social space. The wonderful women who work there are friends to the families and aunties to the children. It's a properly fun place to be. Doorstep and its staff are an antidote to loneliness and fear. They help level the playing field for children who have had an unlucky start in life. They make those children's lives happier, easier, more fun and more normal.

These are the small gestures that change the world.

I am very proud to have a relationship with this wonderful charity and I'm grateful for the friendship that Doorstep, its staff and the families who use it have shown towards me and my own little daughter.

*Victoria Coren Mitchell*





## Housing

### Extracts from Homeless Monitor Summary 2017

At nearly 58,000, annual homelessness acceptances were some 18,000 higher across England in 2015/16 than in 2009/10. With a rise of 6 per cent over the past year, acceptances now stand 44 per cent above their 2009/10 low point. However, administrative changes mean that these official statistics understate the increase in 'homelessness expressed demand' over recent years.

Regional trends in homelessness have remained highly contrasting, with acceptances in the North of England in 2015/16 some 6 per cent lower than in 2009/10 (the national low point), while in London the latest figure was more than double (103% higher than) that at this previous low point. However, there were also indications from our 2016 survey results that rising homelessness pressures have recently been bearing down most heavily on the South of England and, to a lesser extent, the Midlands. This might suggest that some of the extreme pressure that has accumulated in London over recent years has begun to transfer beyond the capital's borders.

Since bottoming out in 2010/11, homeless placements in temporary accommodation have risen sharply, with the overall national total rising by 9 per cent in the year to 30 June 2016; up by 52 per cent since its low point five years earlier. While accounting for only 9 percent of the national total, B&B placements have been rising even faster, and now stand almost 250 per cent higher than in 2009. Signs of stress are also beyond local authority boundaries: now representing 28 per cent of the national total, up from only 11 per cent in 2010/11. Such placements mainly involve London boroughs.

The absolute shortage of genuinely affordable housing for low income households in large parts of the country continues to be intensified by welfare policy. The welfare cuts introduced in this decade, and those planned for introduction in the coming years, will cumulatively reduce the incomes of poor households in and out of work by some £25 billion a year by 2020/21. This is in a context where existing welfare cuts, economic trends, and higher housing costs associated with the growth of private renting have already increased poverty amongst members of working families to record levels.

The new welfare reforms announced in the summer 2015 Budget and Autumn Statement will have particularly marked consequences both for families with more than two children, and for young single people. These groups will either potentially be entirely excluded from support with their housing costs (if not subject to an exemption), or subject to Shared Accommodation Rate limits on eligible rents in the social as well as the private rented sector. Consequently, these are the groups that local authorities report greatest difficulty in rehousing.

The capacity of the social rented sector to meet housing needs will continue to be tested in the years ahead, despite the new Government's injection of funds to modestly increase the supply of affordable housing from 2017/18, and the allowance of a degree of tenure flexibility over the use of grant.

Despite a continued growth in the overall size of the private rental sector, which is now larger than the social rental sector in England, half of all local authorities, and virtually all in London, described it as "very difficult" to assist their applicants into private rental tenancies. These difficulties were attributed to the combined effects of rising rents and welfare benefit restrictions, particularly frozen

Local Housing Allowance rates.

From our research evidence it is clear that welfare reform has been making both private landlords and housing associations more risk averse with regard to letting to households in receipt of benefit.

One local authority representative neatly summarised the difficulties this could conjure up for councils seeking to discharge their homelessness duties:

“Where are people going to go where local authorities... don’t have any stock themselves... and the local [registered] providers... are using affordability assessments and are quite happy to refuse a tenancy on the grounds of affordability... with the problem around affordability for the PRS, with LHA rates, it’s really almost impossible to think where a lot of these people are going to go.”  
(LA Respondent)



A day at the beach away from the stresses of London

## **On October 9<sup>th</sup> 2017 Radio 5 Live reported the following:**

The number of homeless UK households placed into temporary accommodation outside their local area has increased by 59% in five years.

A Freedom of Information request revealed that numbers rose from 10,651 in 2012/13 to 16,914 in 2016/17.

The London Borough of Southwark placed the most households out of their area in 2016/17, a total of 1,143.

The government pledged last week to "fix the broken housing market".

It said it would invest an extra £2bn in affordable housing.

Of the 383 authorities across the UK which were sent the FOI request, 267 provided figures and six refused.

Southwark said it was inevitable that its figures would be higher than most as it is the largest social landlord in London and Cllr Stephanie Cryan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, said: "With hundreds of homes being sold through right to buy every year, we are running just to stand still."

Of the 78,180 households in temporary accommodation in England on 30 June 2017, 22,050 (28%) were in accommodation in another local authority district - an increase of 7% from 12 months ago.

### **Rising costs**

In 2016/17, the London Borough of Harrow moved people to Bradford, Wolverhampton and Glasgow.

A council spokeswoman told the BBC it would never force or expect anyone to move against their will and added: "We are happy to offer good quality homes in the Midlands to our Harrow families in temporary accommodation, because in many cases they can get good quality, bigger, better-appointed properties than in London."

The London Borough of Ealing has placed some households in Birmingham and, in a statement, told the BBC: "Ealing, like many other London boroughs, is forced to look further afield for suitable accommodation to ensure that the council continues to meet its legal responsibilities.

Authorities say they are forced into moving households by rising temporary housing costs, which figures show have increased every year over the past five years.



Research by BBC Radio 5 live has shown that some councils outside London have similar issues with Newcastle-Under-Lyme, South Derbyshire and Trafford all seeing the number of households they have had to move outside their area increase.

Local authorities told BBC 5 live that some people are moved out of the area if they were at risk from domestic violence or if they were on the sex offenders register and there was no suitable accommodation in the local authority area.

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### **FOI submitted in August 2017 also found:**

- 7,550 households across the UK were living in B&B accommodation at the time
  - Almost 1,500 of those households had been there for longer than six months, which is against government guidelines
  - Southwark had the highest number living in B&Bs in August: 792 households
  - Harrow and Camden in London had households who had been living in temporary accommodation for 19 years
  - More than 100 councils had households who had been living in temporary accommodation for longer than a year.
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### **"No connection to local area"**

Nadia Sultani, 53, was evicted by her landlord in the London Borough of Hackney in August 2017 and was then moved to a B&B with her teenage son. They are now living in temporary accommodation in a one-bedroom flat in the London Borough of Haringey.

She said, "This is pure hell and I can't believe this would happen to us. I used to work from home and I can't work here. We have no connection to the local area".

Mayor of Hackney Philip Glanville said: "We do all we can to find the right sort of accommodation for families who need it most.

With 13,000 households on our housing waiting list and 3,000 in temporary accommodation this is increasingly challenging, however we always listen to individual circumstances and try and meet the needs of families as close to the borough as we can."

Anthony and Neridah Lowe, and their five-year-old son, rented privately in Brighton in a home covered in mould. After complaining to the landlord, the family was evicted and moved into a hostel by their local council. The family is now living in temporary accommodation in Brighton in a one-bedroom flat.

Neridah says she worries about where her family might live in the future.

"My fear for the future housing situation in Britain is that families such as ours will continue to be the last in line for suitable and sustainable housing."

In a statement, Brighton & Hove City Council said: "We are doing everything we can to build more homes and increase the supply of affordable housing. However, we have an acute shortage of affordable housing as well as intense demand for it."

### **'Urgent demand'**

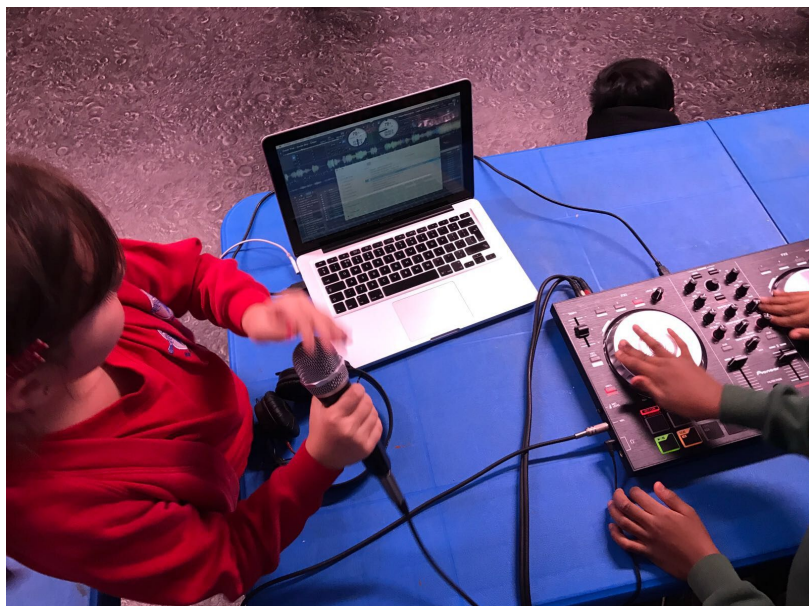
Cllr Martin Tett, the Local Government Association's housing spokesman, said: "Councils want to end homelessness by preventing it happening in the first place, but these findings reveal the challenges for communities as housing in their area becomes unaffordable."

"While it is encouraging that the government has indicated it will support councils to build more homes, these new homes can't appear overnight and the demand is urgent."

The government has announced a £2bn funding boost which it says will be used to build more social housing, including council homes.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said: "It's unacceptable in this century for anyone to be stuck in unsuitable temporary accommodation. That's why I'm taking action to fix the broken housing market, making sure there's a safe and suitable home for people renting, as well as helping those aspiring to own their own home."

Polly Neate, Chief Executive of Shelter said: "Every day at Shelter we speak to homeless families who facing agonising and unacceptably long waits in cramped and dingy emergency B&B or hostel rooms, because over-stretched councils simply can't find them anywhere else to go."



Making music at After School Club

## Treasurer's Statement

The financial statements for Doorstep (or 'the charity') cover the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2017.

Fiscal year 2017 ended in a stable position. However, it is important for Doorstep to prioritise fundraising to maintain services for children and to increase staffing levels to meet our service users' growing needs.

Careful financial and operating records have been kept throughout this financial year. If further clarification of any financial matter is required, copies of any bank statements, receipts, invoices, etc. may be obtained from Doorstep Homeless Families Project, 13A Broadhurst Gardens, London NW6 3QX.

The Management Committee members are satisfied that **Doorstep** is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

The Management Committee members acknowledge their responsibilities for:

1. Ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and
2. Preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Doorstep as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to **Doorstep**.

These financial statements were approved by the members of the committee on the 11th of December, 2017 and are signed on their behalf by the chair Stuart Wollach.

*David Hightower*

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Notes:

**Companies Act 2006 Part 16, Chapter 1** requires an audit unless the company is exempt under S477 because it is a "Small Company".

**S145 of the Charities Act 2011** stipulates that a charity is subject to an Examination if its income exceeds £25,000 but does not reach £250,000. This Examination may be conducted by "an independent person who is reasonably believed by the trustees to have the requisite ability and practical experience to carry out a competent examination of the accounts."

**S382 Companies Act 2006** defines a "Small Company". The qualifying conditions are met by a company in a year in which it satisfies two or more of the following requirements:

1. Turnover of not more than £6.5 million
2. Balance sheet total of not more than £3.26 million
3. Number of employees of not more than 50.

Doorstep satisfies all three requirements, thereby falling within the definition of a Small Company.

**S386** Every company must keep adequate accounting records.

1. That means that records are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions;
2. To disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the company at that time;
3. To enable directors to ensure that any accounts required to be prepared comply with the requirements of this Act.
4. Accounting records must, in particular, contain:
  - 4.1. Entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the company and the matters in respect of which the receipt and expenditure takes place, and
  - 4.2. A record of the assets and liabilities of the company.

**S393** requires that the directors must not approve accounts unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit and loss of the company. Doorstep provides an "Independent Examiner's" review and statement, not an audit. Accountability Europe Ltd ("AEL") do not express an opinion on whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view'. However, AEL goes on to say that "I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached." To my knowledge all material tangible issues are reflected in the accounts. Intangible issues of import, like the future of the lease are under periodic scrutiny and the Management Committee keeps this issue in its focus.

**S477** provides for exemption from audit for Small Companies. As Doorstep is a Small Company, it is exempt from the requirement for a full, annual audit.

**S476** identifies the right of Members to require an audit, even if the company (Doorstep) qualifies for an audit exemption. To my knowledge, no Member has requested an audit.



A Summers day in the garden

**DOORSTEP  
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
(INCORPORATING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE  
ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2017	Total 2016
<b>Income From</b>		£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	3	62,057	28,829	<b>90,886</b>	79,300
<b>Total Income</b>		62,057	28,829	<b>90,886</b>	79,300
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Fundraising	4	75	107	<b>182</b>	75
Charitable activities	4	64,440	31,962	<b>96,402</b>	89,248
<b>Total expenditure</b>		64,515	32,069	<b>96,584</b>	89,323
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	5	(2,458)	(3,240)	<b>(5,698)</b>	(10,023)
Total funds brought forward		45,132	3,240	<b>48,372</b>	58,395
Total funds carried forward		42,674	-	<b>42,674</b>	48,372



**DOORSTEP  
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE  
BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 March 2017**

	Not e	2017 £	2016 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible Assets	7	614	1,691
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	8	50	3,749
Cash at bank and in hand		44,570	47,742
		<u>44,620</u>	<u>51,491</u>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	9	<u>(2,560)</u>	<u>(4,810)</u>
Net current assets		<u>42,060</u>	<u>46,681</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>42,674</u>	<u>48,372</u>
<b>Funds</b>			
Restricted Funds	11	-	3240
General funds	11	42,674	45,132
<b>Total charity funds</b>		<u>42,674</u>	<u>48,372</u>

## **Chair's Report**

This is my second Chair Report I would like to start by discussing all of the positive things that have taken place at the Doorstep Homeless Families Project this past year.

Four new members joined our Management Committee bringing the total to 11. We are also excited to announce that Victoria Coren Mitchell is Doorstep's first ever Patron. As a nationally recognised celebrity, she will continue working with us to raise Doorstep's profile.

Although we weren't able to break even financially this past year, we recorded our smallest deficit since become fully self funded and we are hopeful that we are closer to breaking even and eventually replenishing our reserves. There are a number of fundraising initiatives underway which should bear fruit in the near future.

Some of our objectives for the upcoming year include: renewing our 5-year business plan, selectively adding new MC members, focusing on securing multi-year funding, increasing our online and social media presences, and ensuring we are compliant with new data protection laws which come into force in May 2018.

Doorstep wouldn't have the same impact were it not for a number of individuals and groups. First I would like to recognise and thank the staff (Sarah, Ebanie, and Belkize). A new staff member joined this year (Zoe) who will be working on easing Vicky's administrative burden, as well as ensuring that our online content is kept up to date.

Vicky continues to amaze me by not only keeping Doorstep funded and running smoothly but by always being available to users who need a sympathetic ear. For this, the entire MC thanks you.

The Management Committee continues to meet every 6 to 8 weeks and I would like to thank you all for your support.

Finally, I would like to recognise and thank all of our other supporters: individuals, trusts, charities, and schools. Your donations, whether money, goods or time, are the reason we continue to positively impact our community year after year.

In closing I would like to wish everyone who is in any way touched by the Doorstep Homeless Families Project all the best for 2018 and beyond.

*Stuart Wollach*

*We give our most sincere and grateful thanks to the following organisations for their support of Doorstep and our families:*

*AKO Foundation  
Abercorn School  
BBC Children in Need  
Broadhurst School  
Challah for Hunger  
Emmanuel Church & School  
Fitzdale Trust  
Free Cakes for Kids Camden  
Hampstead Wells & Campden Trust  
JW3  
London Community Foundation  
Maida vale Mums  
Margaret Cropper Trust  
Mitzvah Day UK  
Nationwide Building Citizenship Team  
Pret Foundation  
Reel Fund  
Royal London  
Simon Dodds Trust  
Snap  
St Mary's School  
South Hampstead Junior School  
Sports Relief-Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund  
StreetSmart  
Teacher Stern LLP  
The American School in London  
University College School  
Voluntary Action Camden  
Waitrose  
Xander Lily Fund*

*Also, to the very many kind and generous individuals who donated money, food, toys, clothes, books, and their time.*

### *The Management Committee*

*Stuart Wollach- Chair*

*Swetha Ramachandran*

*David Hightower- Treasurer*

*Leanne Dimant*

*Jo Cunningham –Secretary*

*Amit Unadkat*

*Phoebe Stamford-Kamps (appointed 15/05/17)*

*Sara Katchi*

*Ellen Murphy (appointed 15/05/17)*

*Alpona Banerji (appointed 26/06/17)*

*Caroline Garkisch (resigned 26/06/17)*

*Gabriel Brooks-(appointed 30/10/17)*

### *The Staff Team*

*Vicky Fox- Director*

*Sarah Lough & Ebanie Kajue-Children's Workers (part time)*

*Belkize Banjica-Housekeeping & sessional play support (part time)*

*Zoe Fox- Admin support*

### *Volunteers*

*Teachers and students from ASL*

*Kiki*

*Zoe*

### *Patron*

*Victoria Coren-Mitchell*

*Not forgetting the hundreds of other individuals who took part in occasional projects to help Doorstep and our families- we give our sincere thanks to each and every one!*

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13A Broadhurst Gardens  
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Fax: 0207 625 8684

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