

Doorstep

"Opening doors for homeless families"



Annual Report 2018 and Accounts 2017-2018

Director's Report

Every year feels busy but some seem busier than others and 2018 was certainly a year that stands out with lots going on and much being achieved.

Having installed new dryers in our laundry the previous year we were able to further improve the facility with the installation of two new washing machines funded by Pret Foundation.

New office equipment and our preparation for compliance with the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation, in May 2018, involved us in reviewing how we collect and store information as well as embedding new systems to improve our efficiency.

We collaborated with Homeless Link, Young People's Health Partnership, the Queen's Nursing Institute and others to include participation by our service users in a focus group. The purpose was to develop a learning and resource tool kit for public health nurses working with homeless families.

We also collaborated with St Giles Trust to provide support for our service users to help them find work through the Aim Higher Project.

We have also benefited from the continued support of local schools, businesses, community organisations and individuals in the wider community who donate gifts in kind and help to raise funds.

Alpona Banerji was elected Chair of Doorstep's management committee and a number of subcommittees have been working to support specific areas of work e.g. Digital Marketing and Fundraising.

We are immensely grateful to our Patron Victoria Coren Mitchell who continues to support and promote Doorstep's work in numerous ways. She demonstrates real insight into the needs of both the families we serve and Doorstep as an organisation. She gives generously of her time and resources and will be hosting a fundraising event in early 2019.

We are a small staff team but the hard work and dedication of my colleagues ensures that the maximum possible is achieved, for our children and families, with the resources we have. We still need to expand the staff team to meet more of the needs we have identified through our consultations and to meet the demands of yearly increases in the numbers of homeless families needing our support.

We were successful in securing a new source of multi year funding and it is a high priority to find others to sustain and develop Doorstep.

I give sincere thanks to my colleagues on the staff team, the members of the management committee, our Patron, funders and supporters for making it possible. A year of admin support has made a big difference and is added to our permanent staffing needs going forward.

Here's to another creative year ahead.

Vicky Fox

Homelessness and Housing

The homelessness monitor England 2018 is the seventh instalment of an annual state-of-the-nation report looking at the impact of economic and policy developments on homelessness. The following is an extract:

Drawing on statistical analysis, insights from a large scale survey with local authorities and in-depth interviews with key informants, this year's monitor reveals how desperate the situation has become for homeless households trying to find somewhere to live. Councils across the country are struggling to house people because of a decline in social housing, spiralling private rents, and welfare cuts. Councils also reported a growing reluctance among landlords to rent to people on welfare, with many worried that formerly homeless tenants would struggle to pay rent and bills.

Consequently, the number of homeless families and individuals placed in temporary accommodation jumped to 78,000 last year, an 8% rise on the year and a massive 60% rise since 2012. The number of homeless households placed in B&Bs – which are often cramped, unsuitable, and sometimes even dangerous – rose particularly quickly, with a 10% rise on the year. If trends continue as they are the research reveals that 100,000 households will be living in B&Bs, hostels and other temporary accommodation.

The vast bulk of the recently recorded increase in statutory homelessness is attributable to the sharply rising numbers made homeless from the private rented sector, with relevant cases having quadrupled over the period – from less than 5,000 per year to over 18,000.

As a proportion of all statutory homelessness acceptances, such cases had consequently risen from 11 per cent in 2009/10 to 31 percent by 2015/16, remaining at this unprecedented level in 2016/17. With homelessness acceptances prompted by mortgage repossessions or by social sector rent arrears remaining at historically low levels, it is beyond doubt that statutory homelessness is now far more closely associated with ejection from the private rented sector than from either of the other two major tenures.

All available evidence points to Local Housing Allowance reforms as a major driver of this association between loss of private tenancies and homelessness. These reforms have also demonstrably restricted lower-income households' access to the private rented sector. The number of Housing Benefit/Universal Credit claimants who are private tenants is now some 5 per cent lower than when the Local Housing Allowance reforms began in 2011, despite the continuing strong growth of the private rented sector overall. This policy has also, as intended, had a particularly marked impact in inner London. (Homeless Monitor 2018)

....So things haven't got any better in fact they have become a whole lot worse. What that means to a family is diminished hope for a settled home and future. For a child living in a hostel it means your living room is your bedroom, your bedroom is your dining room, your space to play is your storage space. It's when you just want to go to sleep but Mum wants to watch that TV programme she's been looking forward to.

The daily grind of hostel living on a very low income, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, fifty two weeks a year takes its toll. The uncertainty of how many years you might be in “temporary” accommodation and the knowledge that it could be up to ten years or more impacts feelings of well being and the ability to plan for the future.

Shelter says “Children and families – particularly single parents – are disproportionately affected when they experience homelessness, squalid or unsafe living conditions, or the insecurity of emergency and temporary accommodation. Schoolwork suffers, children’s development can be delayed, and often the reasons for homelessness in themselves have caused trauma that can only heal with care and support.

It’s essential that children are given the help and the space they need to recover. If our childhood is blighted, we never get it back, and the effects last a lifetime – one of them being the risk of becoming homeless again.”

A landmark report by Shelter’s social housing commission published on 14th January 2019 calls for 3.1 million new homes, extending the offer of social housing to many more people.

Building for our future: a vision for social housing recommends the government invests in a major 20-year house building programme, which would offer a social home to millions who fail to qualify under the current system. It includes:

- **1.27 million homes for those in greatest housing need – homeless households, those living with a disability or long-term illness, or living in very poor conditions.**
- **1.17 million homes for ‘trapped renters’ - younger families who cannot afford to buy and face a lifetime in expensive and insecure private renting.**
- **690,000 homes for older private renters – people over 55 struggling with high housing costs and insecurity beyond retirement.**

Responding to the report by Shelter calling for government to invest in a 20-year house building programme and extend the social housing eligibility criteria, Cllr Martin Tett, Housing spokesman for the Local Government Association, said:

“There is an acute need to address the escalating housing crisis which would deliver huge benefits for families, communities and the economy. We have estimated investment in a new generation of social housing could return up to £320 billion over 50 years.

“Only by triggering the renaissance in council house-building can we put in place the long-term reforms that will help make homelessness a thing of the past and remove housing insecurities for current and future generations.

“The last time we built enough homes councils built 40 percent of them. We need to get back to those levels if we’re to tackle our housing crisis, building a new generation of at least 100,000 high quality social homes a year.

“However, every housing market is different and resolving the challenge must mean allowing every council to ensure that new and existing social housing best meets local need. Critical to this goal will be allowing councils to keep 100 per cent of their Right to Buy receipts and to set discounts locally.”



Our Services

Our services have been developed over the years in direct response to the needs which families have expressed. We aim to provide services for the whole family and during the workshops held to develop our new Strategic Business Plan the following quote was from a user participant.

“Everything a family needs under one roof and more”

- * 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.

Over the last few years the numbers of people accessing our services has grown each year. Between April 2017-March 2018 a total of 234 people comprised of 143 children and 91 adults. From April 2018 until December 2018 the numbers increased again to 261 people comprised of 162 children and 99 adults representing a 11.5% increase in 9 months.

Our work with children

Using a rolling rota, children’s workers complete observations of all the children every 4-6 weeks to measure their progress in the areas of individual developmental need identified when originally assessed and the specific differences we aim to achieve. Time-Sampled and narrative observations, as well as the summary observation sheets Children’s Workers completed for each child every half term clearly show the improvements children have experienced throughout the year.

- (70%) of the children who used Doorstep’s services have experienced a significant amount of progress in the reduction of their feelings of isolation. Children who have been attending the setting for a long period of time are now inviting their new neighbours to After-School Club as they don’t want them to miss out.
- (72%) of children using Doorstep’s services in the last 12 months have experienced a significant increase in their confidence with learning activities.
- (72%) have experienced a significant improvement in their communication skills.

Case study 1

A 20 month old girl (C) started using Friday Drop-ins after her Dad had been encouraged by hostel staff to use the services on offer at Doorstep. They had recently been staying with family out of the UK, and had been placed in a single small room as emergency accommodation. C's mother had died just before her first birthday and Dad was dealing with his grief and their circumstances.

After using the Friday Drop-ins with her Dad for 3 weeks she was left at a Crèche session for the first time, she was already familiar with the setting from attending regularly, and the Children's Workers, who she felt comfortable with, however the crèche sessions were busier than the drop-ins she was used to, and she found it difficult seeing other children use 'her' toys. Throughout the first 2 sessions she stayed next to familiar adults and tried to take her favourite resources from the other children. With 1-to-1 support she quickly settled-in properly and starting to copy the other children, using builder role-play toys, and playing alongside using ride-on toys, painting or Aquadraw (Dad proudly took home her first painting to put on their wall). While his daughter was busy in Crèche, Dad was able to get laundry done as well as start to make their temporary accommodation feel more like a home for them. During the following month C started to talk more clearly and used 3-4 word sentences, as well as the pointing and gestures all small children use. She also felt settled enough to start sharing resources with the other children, working together with a girl of a similar age to create a painting on the easel, as well as watching what the other children were playing with and then playing alongside them with similar resources to join-in their activity, and helping them to fix together the train tracks.

The family lacked many resources that more settled families had – like small kitchen appliances and cooking utensils, which Doorstep provided for Dad to keep. In September Dad decided to return to work again and asked for advice from staff and other service users to look for a childminder for his daughter. C started being looked after by a childminder 2 mornings a week while Dad worked and still used our crèches 2 mornings a week. She still remembered where all of her favourite resources were kept and asked for them by name, opening cupboard doors or drawers to find what she wanted to use. C played alongside all of the other children attending the sessions, and let the children she knew share the resources she was using. Dad has applied for nursery places and feels confident she will settle-in quickly (as she did with the childminder) as she'd had such a positive experience at Doorstep.

Case Study 2

A 4 year old girl (B) started attending Doorstep's crèche in June 2018 with her younger brother. Her Mum reported that she had started to speak in her home language at the age of 2, but had suddenly stopped talking and now only made noises occasionally as she played. Although she attended a school nursery 2 mornings per week the teachers were finding it difficult to work with her. Children's Workers noticed that as soon as she was allowed to let go of her Mum's hand she ran around the room trying to open the doors and to get out of the building. She would pick-up boxes full of toys and pour them over herself, this would be repeated until all of the toys from the shelving had been over her head and onto the floor around her, she then ran around the room ignoring other children and pushing people out of her way.

B was only brought to the crèche twice in June and once the following month as her parents were finding the settling-in period too stressful. She would ignore Mum calling her and hit out at Dad if he

tried to stop her throwing toys around. In August B was booked to attend the summer programme in the afternoons with her slightly older brother. Children's Workers decided it would be safest to assign a 1-to-1 worker with her each day to support her while she joined in with her brother and 5 other children of a similar age in a small group. The end of the first day an exhausted staff member reported that B had been running around the garden for 30 minutes trying to pour water on herself that the other children were using for an activity, and her brother had been the only person able to get her attention, he had helped to engage her in a game of Tag around the garden for 5-10 minutes, during which time she had been smiling and laughing.

This was the first sign of communication that anyone had seen from her, but later the same session she had pointed to the trampoline, clearing showing she wanted a turn, she had enjoyed using the trampoline so much that she kept coming back for another turn, trying to push her way into the enclosure every-time someone was getting on or off. By the end of the first week she had started to settle-in and staff were no longer reliant on her older brother to communicate for her, instead learning to decipher the noises she would make when she needed the toilet, or wanted a resource some-one else was using, and able to stop her pushing people over or snatching the items she wanted – although she still couldn't wait for her needs to be met.

By the end of the summer programme she was able to join-in with some of the group activities – especially sports and messy play, rather than just playing in the same room as the other children. As soon as the doors were opened at the start of the session she rushed inside to hang-up her jacket and bag, then ran to 'join-in' the opening game, grabbing a ball or balloon and playing by herself. She would look at any adult who used her name and started to use the same sounds repeatedly to try and communicate. Although she still liked her brother and his friend to be near, she would tolerate other children playing alongside her, as long as they didn't touch her resources. B attended every afternoon session throughout the summer and the family coach trips, she especially enjoyed the Clacton-On-Sea trip, tipping sea water or sand over herself and watching it pour back into the sea. Her parents told members of staff that they had really appreciated B being somewhere safe to play every afternoon; they finally had time to give attention to their youngest son, who had been spending most of his time in his pushchair so B wouldn't accidentally hurt him. They also said that her sleep had improved as well because she had been so busy throughout the afternoon that she was exhausted when they got back to their room and slept most of the night.

By September she was expected to join Reception at her brother's school but the teachers would only allow her to attend 2 mornings each week. She started using morning crèches at Doorstep with her younger brother again, attending 2 sessions a week – giving her parents time to arrange a place at a nearby special school that would be better able to meet her needs. During the morning sessions B was once again looked after 1-to-1, hanging up her jacket and bag and looking at the resources set-up around the room. She rarely joined-in the activities, preferring to find the toy horses on the shelving and playing with them alone. B had started to walk around the other children to reach the resources that she wanted to use and allowed them to sit in the ball pond with her. She now attends the special school full-time.

Treasurer's Report

The financial statements for Doorstep (or 'the charity') cover the year ended 31st March, 2018. The fiscal year 2018 ended in a secure position. It remains incumbent upon Doorstep to pursue stable multi-year funding to support stable staffing and to sustain the crucial services provided for children and families who constitute the users of the charity. Careful financial and operating records have been kept throughout this financial year. Detailed records of financial documents (such as bank statements, receipts, invoices, etc.) are available and may be requested 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 in accordance with 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 the charity as at the end of the financial year 2018 and of its profit or loss for the aforementioned 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 the charity.

These financial statements were approved by the members of the committee on the 29th of October, 2018 and are signed on their behalf by the chair Alpona Banerji.

Dr. Gabriel C Brooks MD MAS FACC

Reference:

Companies Act 2006 Part 16, Chapter 1 requires an audit unless the company is exempt under **S477** (see below) 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.

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.



DOORSTEP
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2018	Total 2017
		£	£	£	£
<u>Income From</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	82,196	32,550	114,746	90,886
Total income		82,196	32,550	114,746	90,886
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Fundraising	4	75	-	75	182
Charitable activities	4	102,311	1,000	103,311	96,402
Total expenditure		102,386	1,000	103,386	96,584
Net income / (expenditure) before transfers	5	(20,190)	31,550	11,360	(5,698)
Transfers between funds		9,500	(9,500)	-	-
Net movement in funds		(10,690)	22,050	11,360	-5,698
Total funds brought forward		42,674	-	42,674	48,372
Total funds carried forward		31,984	22,050	54,034	42,674

DOORSTEP
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2018

	Note	2018	2017
Fixed assets		£	£
Tangible assets	7	9824	614
Current assets			
Debtors	8	2,595	50
Cash at bank in hand		48,539	44,570
		51,134	44,620
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	(6,924)	(2,560)
Net current assets		44,210	42,060
Net assets		54,034	42,674
Funds			
Restricted Funds	10	22,050	-
General Funds	10	31,984	42,674
Total charity funds		54,034	42,674

Chair's Report

I am privileged to write my first report as Chair for Doorstep. I joined as a Trustee for Doorstep in mid 2017 and was nominated and appointed as the Chair in July 2018. My time at Doorstep has reinforced my initial impression that Doorstep is indeed a very special place. Over more than 30 years Doorstep has been quietly and very effectively helping, supporting and bolstering vulnerable families in our local community. Doorstep's impact is wide ranging from support for parents who receive a sympathetic ear and helpful advice, access to laundry facilities and goods donated by the community, to children who enjoy a safe space for constructive and playful activities and days out during the summer.

What is most commendable is that this level of impact has been maintained despite stretched financial resources. For this the Management Committee joins me in thanking and acknowledging the commitment and involvement of Director Vicky Fox, who is Doorstep's only full-time staff. She keeps Doorstep running smoothly, remains responsible for keeping the organisation funded and is always available to users and the Management Committee. Vicky is assisted by a small but incredibly efficient team and I would like to thank our childcare workers Sara and Ebanie, Zoe who has been a huge support to Vicky and the Management Committee in helping with administrative matters and revitalising the social media and online content for Doorstep and lastly, Kiki who provides much assistance to Doorstep not least by helping to sort through the generous weekly donations by the community for our bazaars.

Although Doorstep received adequate funding this year, and reserves increased relative to last year, the organisation continues to face resource constraints, especially in the context of increasing demands on Doorstep's services. Doorstep's financial independence is important so that it can build and develop services to meet the users and community's needs. It is thus recognised as a main challenge and objective in the Five-Year Business Plan (2018-2023) that was prepared last year. A number of funding initiatives are already underway which include focussing on applying and securing multi-year funding and using and leveraging various online funding resources, such as Facebook, Amazon etc, the latter has also led us to comprehensively improve our social media presence. Lastly, we are also exploring community fundraising events which aim to increase Doorstep's profile in the community.

Doorstep's Patron, Victoria Coren Mitchell is a generous supporter of the organisation. Not only does she donate goods and services personally, she has been very active in spreading the work of Doorstep which is incredibly important because it helps increase the profile of the organisation within the wider local community. The Management Committee thanks Victoria for all her support and generosity.

The Management Committee is made up of a group of dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers which continues to meet every 6 to 8 weeks, with several ad hoc meetings over the year to further the work of sub-committees. I would like to thank you for all your help and support.

Finally, thank you to all our supporters: individuals, trusts, charities, companies and schools that help us in a plethora of ways, and that allows us to continue to positively impact our community year after year.

I would like to wish all friends of Doorstep Homeless Families Project all the best for 2019.

Alpona Banerji

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

Abercorn School
AKO Foundation
Beacon Lodge Charitable Trust Ltd
Broadhurst School
Challah for Hunger
Charities Trust
Emmanuel Church & School
Darjeeling Express
FPHFP
Fitzdale Trust
Franco Manca Pizza
Free Cakes for Kids Camden
Hampstead Wells & Campden Trust
Holy Trinity School
INK
London Community Foundation
MACE
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Northwest London Jewish Day School
Palm Tree Gallery
Per Pro Tail Wind Advisory & Management Ltd
Pret Foundation
Reel Fund
Rosella Restaurant
Royal London
St Mary's School
South Hampstead Junior School
StreetSmart
Teacher Stern LLP
The American School in London
The Barnett & Sylvia Shine No2 Charitable Trust
The Roundhouse
UCS
Voluntary Action Camden
Waitrose
Wednesday's Child
Whipsnade Zoo
Xander Lily

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

The Management Committee

Alpona Banerji - Chair

Swetha Ramachandran

Phoebe Stamford-Kamps - Vice Chair

David Hightower

Gabriel Brooks - Treasurer

Leanne Dimant

Jo Cunningham - Secretary

Sara Katchi

Ellen Murphy

Alexa Brummer (joined 23/07/18)

Kate Gaertner (joined 17/09/18)

Lesley Adams (joined 17/09/18)

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 (part time)

Khadra Mohamed (occasional session Children's Worker)

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!

Doorstep Homeless Families Project
13A Broadhurst Gardens
London NW6 3QX

Tel: 0207 372 0413

Fax: 0207 625 8684

Email: Vicky@doorsteplondon.com Website: www.doorsteplondon.org

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