

Progress Report for the General Purposes Committee at the Court of Aldermen

Prepared by Tom Hill (Head of Philanthropy)



Thank you very much to the General Purposes Committee for the very kind Livery Cloth Grant of £1,700 in 2022/23 to help Providence Row tackle the root causes of homelessness and support people to get off, and stay off, the streets of East London.

Introduction to Providence Row

Founded in 1860, we help some of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and excluded (financially/socially) people in society to get off, and stay off, the streets. Our Mission is to support more homeless people:

- Who are most at-risk and least likely to access other services, to begin their journey to recovery.
- From times of crisis through to when help is no longer needed.

How the Livery Cloth Grant has helped?

Thanks to your generosity, we successfully completed another challenging year. 2022/23 has been very busy with our client numbers increasing by 45% from 1,048 in 2021/22 to 1,515 in 2022/23.

The last 12 months were also particularly difficult due to:

- A greater proportion of our clients being complex, chaotic rough-sleepers compared to previous years where we have supported a larger proportion of people with less severe needs. In reality, this has meant that more of our clients over the last 12 months were experiencing greater levels of mental health and substance use issues as well as leading more chaotic lives.
- The rise in inflation has meant our costs increased hugely. As one example, our budgeted food costs alone (forecasted prior to 2022/23) went up from £15,000 to around £40,000. These costs increased partly due to inflation and partly due to the sharp rise in client numbers.

Despite these challenges, we had a very successful year and increased the number of clients supported through our: Health Fairs, Employability & Progression service, and Food Programme, as a few examples.

We also won the tender to secure the delivery of our Outreach Psychotherapy (mental health) project for five years while expanding the service's reach beyond Tower Hamlets and into the City of London and Hackney. This has helped achieve one of our key, three-year strategic aims of expanding our most innovative services outside of Tower Hamlets; helping more people to get off, and stay off, the streets.

You helped us support people like Ty (not his real name)

Ty was rough-sleeping when he first came to Providence Row for some food and a shower. Our Advice & Support Team assessed Ty and helped him access accommodation and his Universal Credit entitlement, while making a referral to our Employability & Progression (E&P) Team as he was keen to find work.

When our E&P Coordinator met Ty to discuss his employability needs and past work experience, he said he had worked in catering before and that he wanted to get a job straight away.

Our E&P team helped Ty update his CV for catering job applications and develop his interview technique as there were a few jobs available immediately. One opportunity was for a temporary role in a Hotel in Cornwall (including accommodation) that Ty was very interested in. The E&P Team helped Ty get an interview and paid for his travel to Cornwall where he was successful in getting the job and a room to stay in during his contract.

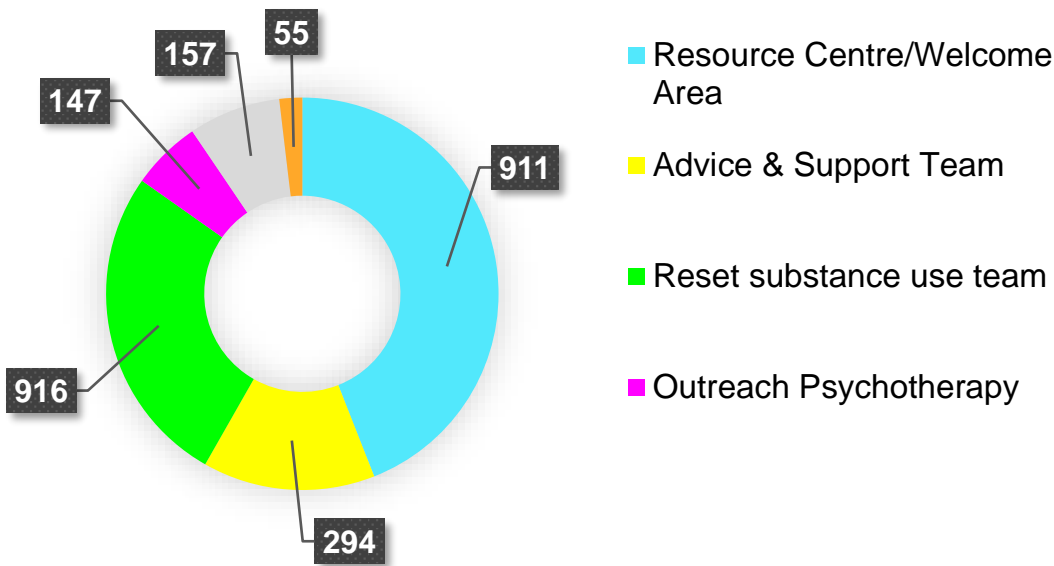
Unfortunately, the post only lasted for four weeks. However, the experience helped Ty gain the confidence to apply for other jobs. Our E&P Coordinator stayed in contact with Ty during this time and helped him update his CV again so he could apply for the next role straight away, avoiding a return to unemployment and homelessness.



Ty managed to move straight into several other temporary roles in London and is now working as a full-time Chef for an agency where he has several jobs on the go.

Ty told us recently that he was very grateful for our support and that he was really enjoying his new role and life. Ty's E&P Coordinator said "over the last few months he has excelled in his confidence and his approach to life and it's nice to see that he is thriving in his new role".

Crisis services (client numbers)



Crisis services breakdown

- Resource Centre/Welcome Area supported 911 clients** via triage assessments and access to showers, food, access to our IT provision and access to our phone and a care/of address.
- 294 of these clients received more in depth support from our Advice and Support (AST) Team** via: full needs and risk assessments; access to accommodation, benefits and ID documents; health referrals; and additional mental health and addiction support as required.
- Reset substance use team helped 916 clients** via: advice and support; ensuring they took their medication and attended appointments; access to harm reduction material/equipment like our needle exchange service and overdose reversal kits; with 158 referred for structured treatment.
- Outreach Psychotherapy team supported 147 rough-sleepers** experiencing trauma, depression and anxiety. All clients were supported to improve their mental health and engage with other services to access accommodation, addiction support and treatment and GP appointments, as a few examples.
- Routes to Roots hospital discharge team received 157 referrals** from hospitals in Tower Hamlets and Hackney. Post-treatment, these clients were helped to avoid homelessness by access to: accommodation, benefits, ID documents, opening bank accounts, and, receiving tailored emergency packages with food, clothing and essential items like a bed, chair or fridge to help settle into their new homes and communities.
- We provided our **Severe Weather** service over 33 nights in support of 55 rough-sleepers. 2022/23 was particularly challenging, and, for the first time, we provided the service for several days of the summer when temperatures exceeded 40°C. We also experienced a very lengthy cold spell in December 2022 when we provided 12 consecutive nights' accommodation and support when the temperatures dropped below 0°C.



344 people entered accommodation over the year.

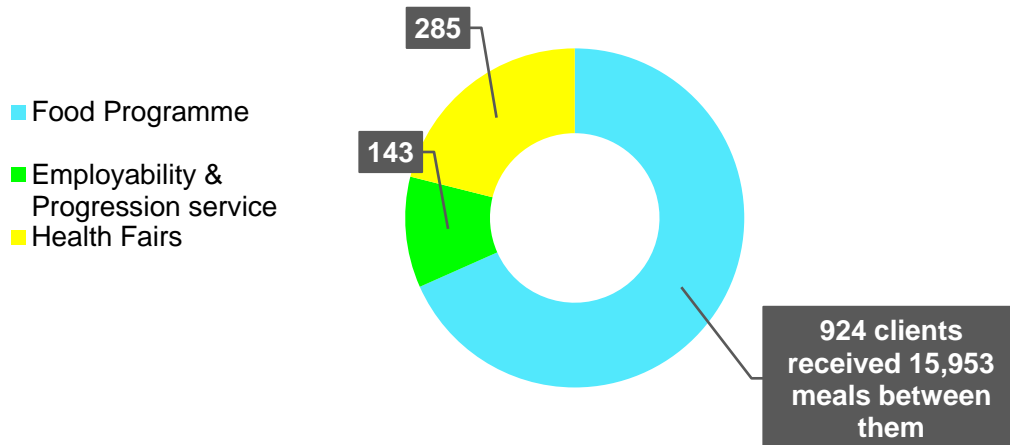


14 clients secured paid employment with **38** completing one or more of our learning and training opportunities.



158 people began structured substance use treatment.

Recovery services (client numbers)



Recovery programme breakdown

1. Our **Food Programme** provided 924 people with 15,953 hot, healthy and nutritionally balanced meals so they could avoid hunger and maintain their energy levels and immune systems over the year.

2. Our **Employability & Progression programme** significantly increased its capacity thanks to some generous support that meant we could employ a new team member. Over the year, we helped 143 homeless people via the following areas of work: starting delivery of new Digital Skills and Financial Health programmes and re-establishing our Garden and Catering Trainee Schemes (giving clients access to work placement opportunities). We helped 14 of our complex clients secure employment.

3. We continued providing '**Health Fairs**' connecting 285 clients with a wide range of health and wellbeing services including:

- 23 clients accessed the Covid-19 or Flu vaccine with 103 clients speaking to a Groundswell Vaccine Peer to help them overcome their fear and lack of trust in vaccines.
- 24 people received a GP assessment.
- 66 clients accessed NHS mobile support services including: dental, hearing and opticians services, podiatry and kidney screening.
- 31 people received appointments/screenings for HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- 41 people accessed our substance use service and also received mental health support.
- 77 people had a massage, 45 got haircuts and 12 took part in relaxing yoga sessions.

What's the ongoing need

With the current rise in homelessness and the cost of living crisis impacting our clients (and Providence Row's organisational costs) our clients need our support more than ever before.

In line with our experiences at Providence Row, homelessness generally is rising sharply with around 170,000 homeless/vulnerably housed people in London (Shelter, 2022). Tower Hamlets had the ninth highest number of homeless people at 7,974 and our neighbouring boroughs of Newham and Hackney had the first and sixth highest numbers (respectively) at 24,129 between them. The most recent CHAIN database figures showed 3,570 people were rough-sleeping in London between October and December 2022, 21% higher than the same period in 2021.

According to Shelter (2022), one in 58 Londoners are homeless which is far higher than the national rate for England of one in 208 people.



How the General Purposes Committee of the Court of Aldermen could help

I hope you have found this report interesting and informative. If the General Purposes Committee felt there could be the possibility of continuing to work in partnership with Providence Row in support of our clients in 2023/24 then we would be delighted to hear from you.

Some ways you may like to consider supporting our work this financial year include:

£2,500 will enable numerous **clients to receive help from our Advice and Support Team** so they can: have full needs assessments; access accommodation and any benefit entitlements; use our showers and access breakfast; be referred for a wide range of health, substance use and progression related support; all enabling them to move on towards independent lives in the future.

£3,500 will enable our **food programme to provide around 1,500 hot, healthy and nutritionally balanced meals** to several hundred homeless people so they can maintain their health and energy levels.

£5,000 will help us **support some of our 1,500 clients to get off, and stay off, the streets** and provide access to our wide range of crisis and recovery services, as well as our community of support, so they can get their lives back on track and work towards achieving their potential.

Thank you very much, once again, to the General Purposes Committee of the Court of Aldermen for granting the generous sum of £1,700 to our work via the Livery Cloth Grant in 2022/23 and for taking the time to read this report.

If you have any questions about this report, our services in general and/or how we may continue working together in support of our clients in 2023/24 then please don't hesitate to get in contact with Tom Hill (Head of Philanthropy) via thill@providencerow.org.uk or 07968 148 990.