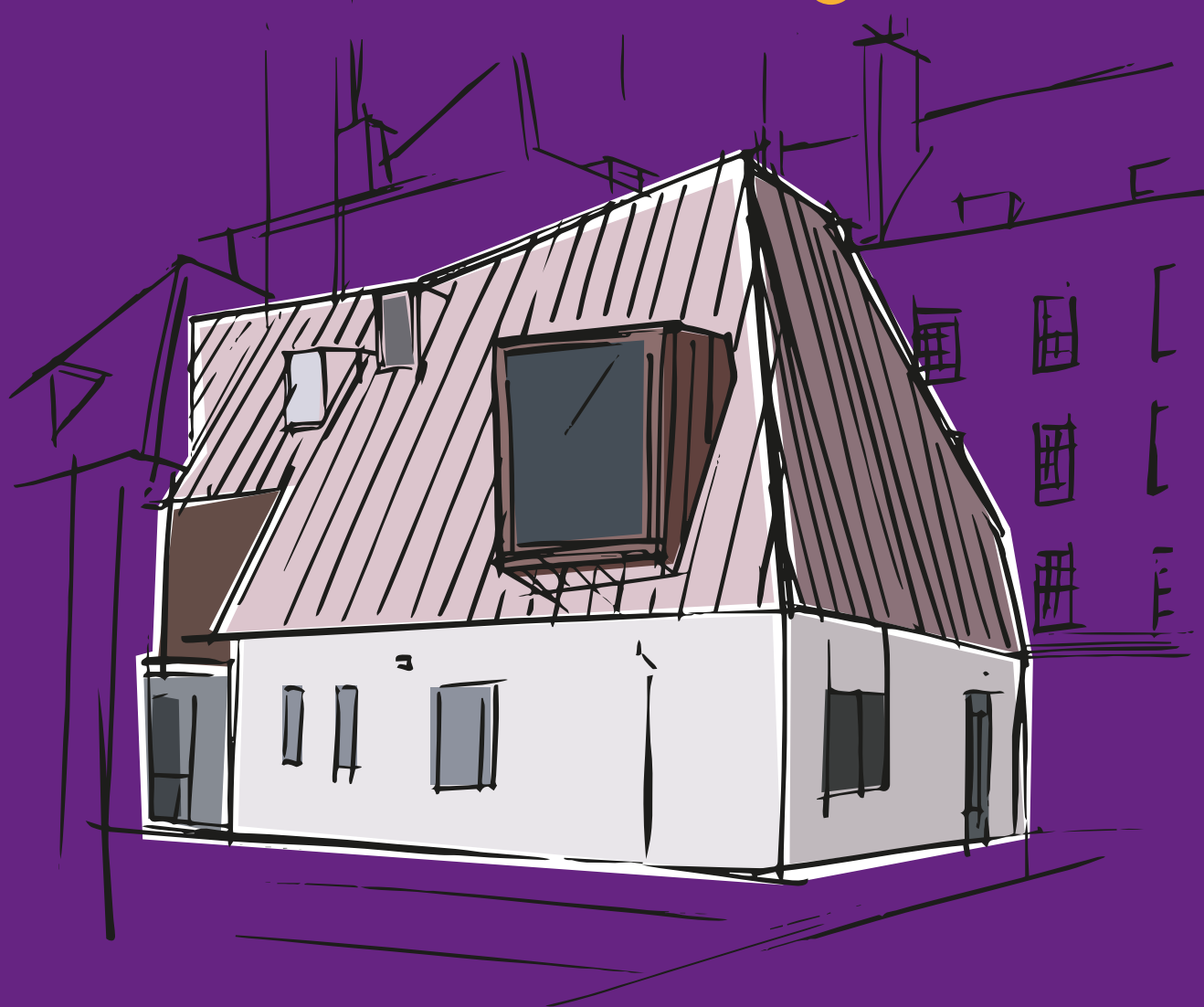




New Horizon  
Youth Centre

**2020-21**  
IN REVIEW

# Embracing Change and Ensuring Consistency



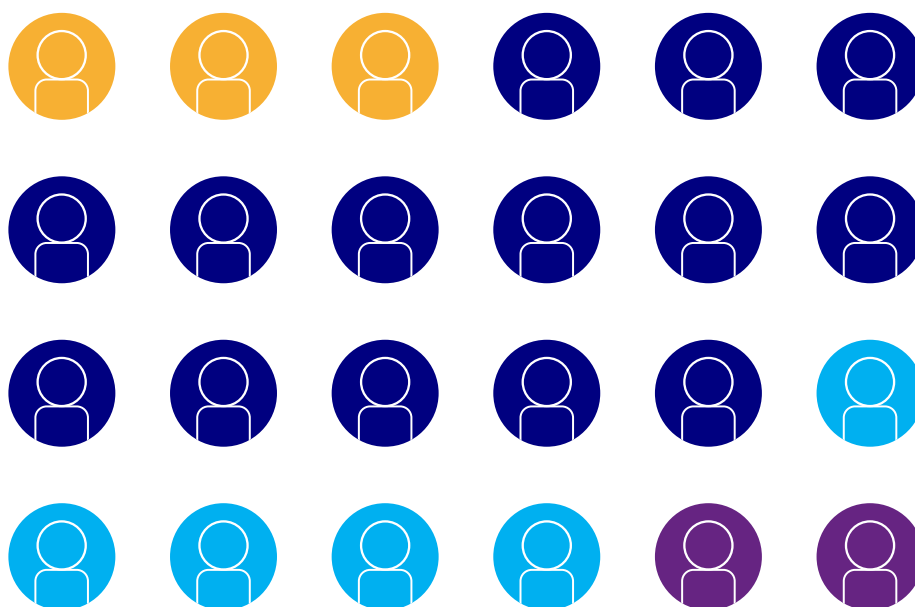
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# 01

## YEAR AT A GLANCE

867 young people in total



- **172** at our day centre
- **611** used our remote services
- **201** via street outreach
- **72** via prison outreach

**111**

young people placed  
in emergency  
accommodation

**1,015**

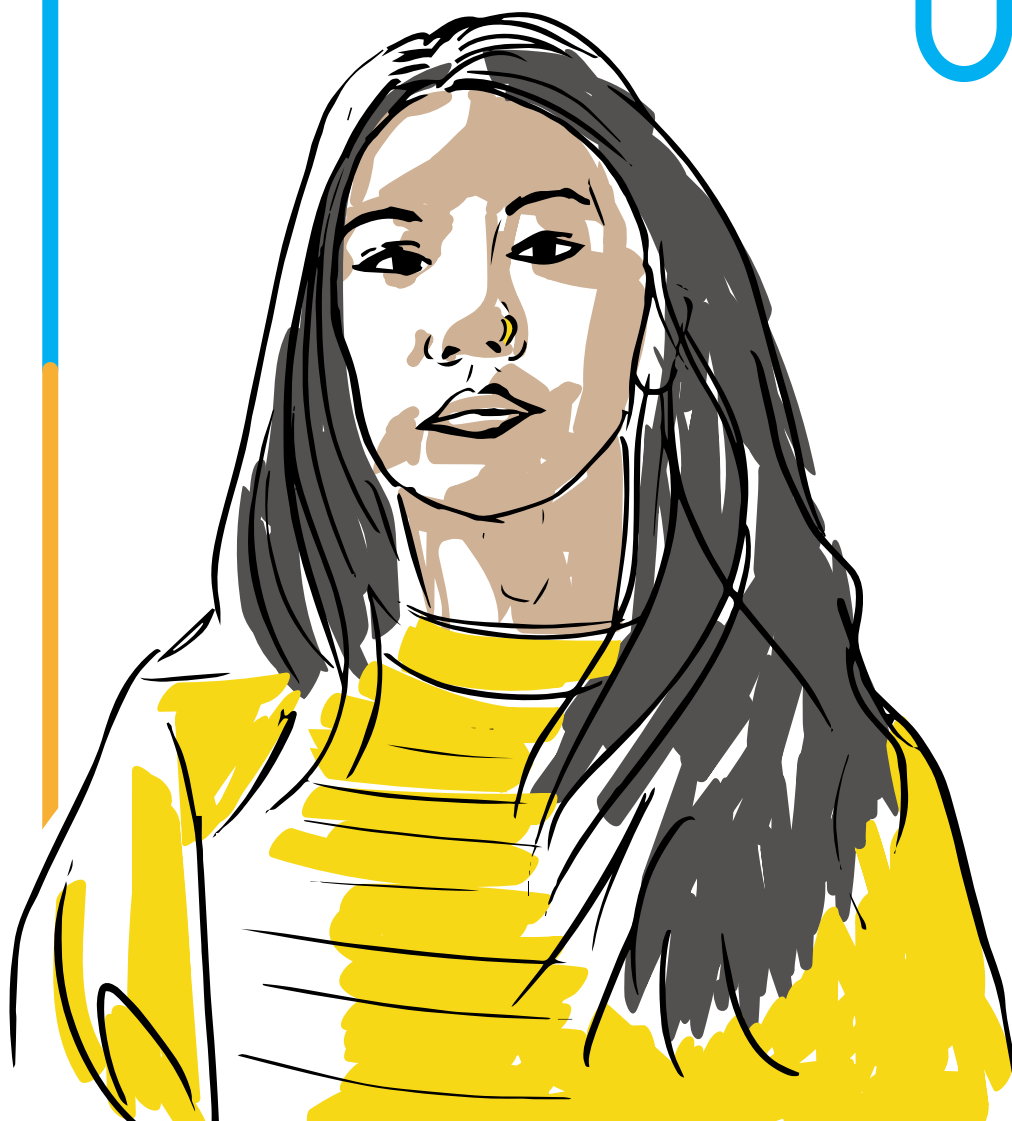
nights of emergency  
accommodation  
provided

**632**

visits to day centre

**569**

meals provided



**1,169**

advice appointments

**1,627**

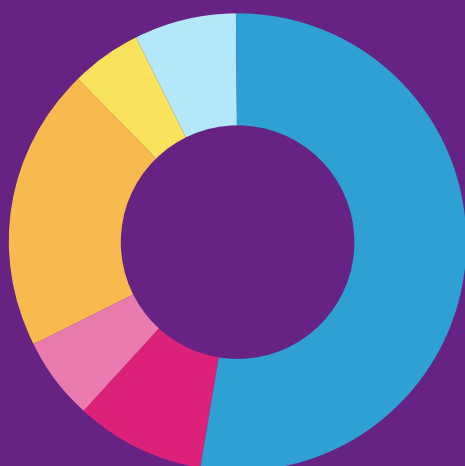
advocacy sessions

**785**

counselling sessions

**174**young people attended  
employment sessions**135**young people attended  
lifeskills sessions**105**young people secured  
jobs, education or training  
opportunities**115**young people moved into  
long term accommodation

## Ethnicity



**53%** Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

**20%** White

**9%** mixed/multiple ethnic group

**7%** Asian/Asian British

**6%** other ethnic group

**4%** prefer not to say

## Age



■ 16-17 ■ 18-21 ■ 22-24 ■ 25

## Gender identity



■ Male ■ Female ■ Other

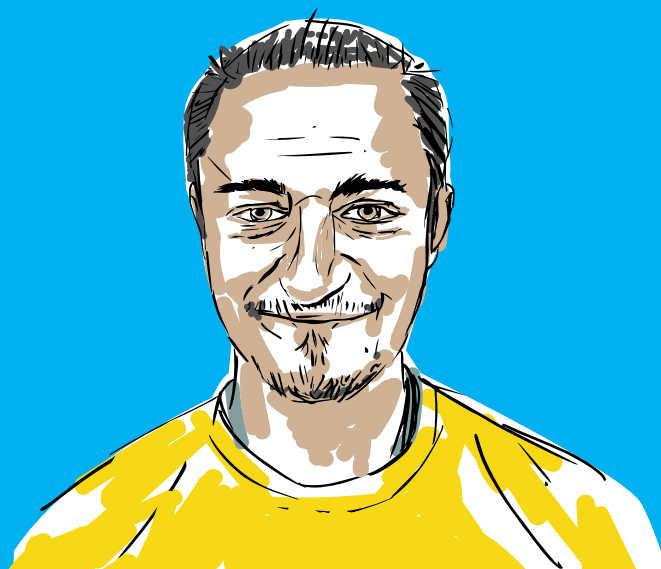
**30%**

have experience  
of the care system

**32%**

have experience of the  
criminal justice system

## 02

NOTE FROM A  
YOUNG PERSON

*I've been getting support from New Horizon for about two years now, before and during the pandemic. It's been a journey to say the least so I was more than happy to say yes when New Horizon asked me write the opening words of this annual report.*

*I was originally sleeping rough outside London when a friend told me about New Horizon, so I headed in to the city. A lot had happened and I was depressed and lost. I was so angry for quite a long time: drinking a lot, smoking weed and making bad decisions. When I first came to New Horizon's drop-in centre I was a bit shy, but after a few days I started opening up and telling my story.*

*I was still rough sleeping in London which was hard, especially in winter, but to be honest I got used to it. Coming to the centre I was able to get housing advice, food, spare clothes and a shower which was so important when I had no money and no other support. New Horizon helped me get into emergency accommodation, sorted my ID and referred me to other organisations so I could get everything I need. I've moved around a bit to different places but I have somewhere safe to stay now.*

*I found the Covid-19 lockdowns really hard. I couldn't find a job and nothing was open. I was struggling, I found it really difficult to be closed up in four walls. It was a frustrating time and I didn't know what to do with myself – I was drinking more and getting back into trouble. It was strange to work with New Horizon over the phone after being around 30 or 40 people in the day centre every day. When my worker finally told me on the phone that the centre was opening again, I was so happy.*

*I've still got problems now, but I'm working on them and New Horizon has always supported me. I think what's probably changed the most is that I'm a better person, as a human being, to myself and other people. I'm starting to believe in myself. I'm thinking about my future more and want to work towards that. It's been amazing working with New Horizon and I know they'll be by my side as I go forward into the next stage of my life.*

## 03

NOTE FROM  
THE CHAIR OF  
OUR BOARD

I was delighted to become Chair of the Board for New Horizon in January 2020, looking forward to developing the centre's work and ensuring that more vulnerable young people have the opportunity to build a better life and fulfil their potential.

Well, what a year it has been! Our mission hasn't changed, but how we delivered it transformed. Youth homelessness has risen and been aggravated by the pandemic to a degree no one could have prepared for. Virtually overnight and through the skill, passion and drive of the staff team we went from an entirely in-person service to a mixed, hybrid delivery, constantly adapting to meet the needs of young Londoners with nowhere safe to go.

Closing the centre doors for the first time in over 50 years, when we knew how badly we were needed as a lifeline to many, was a really tough decision to make and we were delighted to be back open again during the autumn, even with limited hours and rigorous safety procedures in place. We were so saddened to have to make the same decision when Tier 4 was announced making Christmas 2020 our first in decades that our doors couldn't be open. The team were facing enormous barriers, but have consistently gone above and beyond to continue delivery their amazing work. Despite all these challenges, we still successfully supported young Londoners by working hard

to refer young people without a safe home to emergency accommodation and enable their move on to longer-term accommodation.

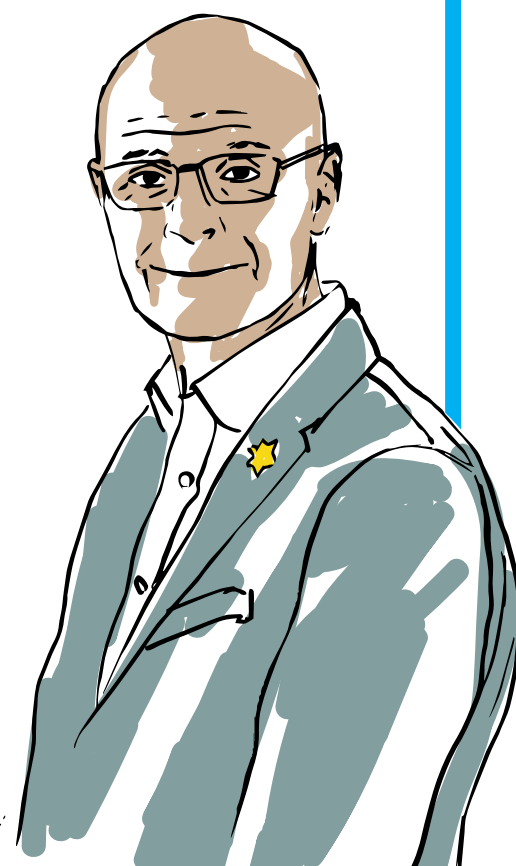
The hard lessons we learned over this year have given us invaluable insight. From the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, reminding us that we need to be ever more vigilant to achieve our anti-racism commitments, to being advocates for young people, getting them on the agenda in housing provision, during and beyond the pandemic. We've also gained a lot from further testing the hybrid delivery model of our services, which we're strengthening and taking forward.

This year has taught us so much, including many positive things that we'll be taking into 2021 to improve our offering and develop our resilience. A huge thank you to everyone who has found a way to so generously support our work, whether financially, in-person or online, as volunteers and trustees in these most challenging of times. And our huge thanks to Phil Kerry, our CEO, and all the staff team at New Horizon for their professionalism and passion and all they have achieved this year.

We value and appreciate each and every one of you very much indeed.

Thank you,

**Matthew Reed**





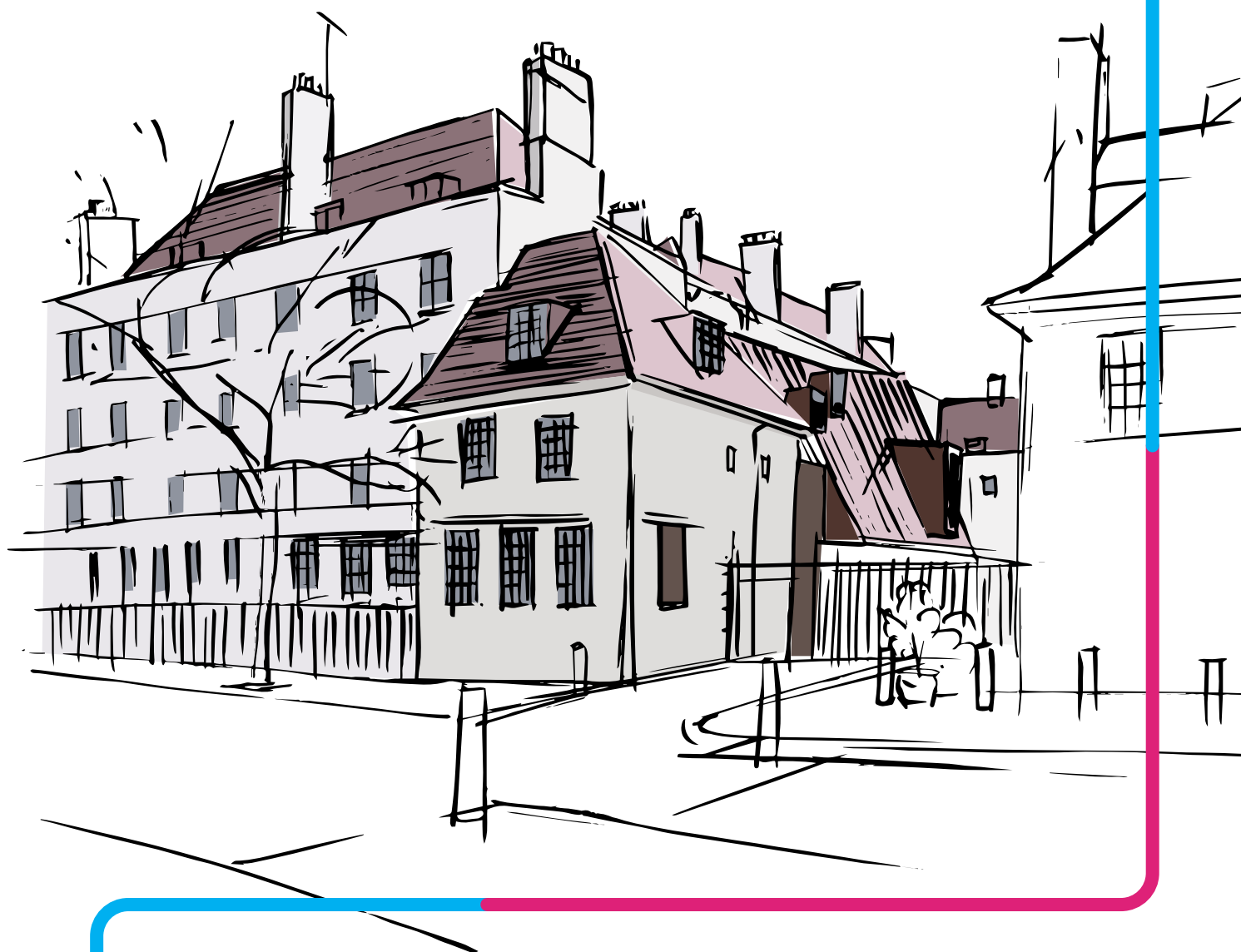
## 04

ABOUT NEW  
HORIZON

**Every year, thousands of young people become homeless through no fault of their own.**

**That's why New Horizon Youth Centre exists.**

We provide a vital support network for 16–24 year-olds with nowhere else to go. Through the 'one stop shop' services provided at our day centre, remotely, and via outreach we help young people experiencing homelessness in London to improve their wellbeing, improve their economic stability and find somewhere that they can call home.



## Our Mission:

For as long as young people are homeless and at risk in London, we will be on a mission to give their potential a home.

## Our Values:

1. **We see the best in everyone:** We all have strengths and the potential to make the best of our lives, when given a fair chance.
2. **We are dynamic in our approach:** We are always adapting because the world changes, and so do the needs and wants of young people.
3. **We collaborate on solutions:** We trust and work with diverse people and organisations so that we can achieve more together.
4. **We are our word:** We will do what we say we will because the young people we support, our team and our partners deserve nothing less.



## Our History

New Horizon was founded in 1967 to address the needs of young people who were involved in drug misuse in the West End of London. 54 years later we are still working with young people in London, now with a much wider scope.

During these 5 decades the centre has continued to provide a safe space for young people experiencing homelessness in the capital, whether in our original base in Covent Garden, or through our existing home in Somers Town, Kings Cross. The centre has always reflected the age-old movement of young people to London to both escape what

they left behind and to find work, safety and new opportunities.

Although a lot has changed over that time, our work is as necessary as ever, meaning that we have steadily grown from a team of 3 when the centre first opened, to today's diverse and multi-disciplined team of over 40 staff, delivering a wide range of wraparound services. If housing is the hook for young people to come to New Horizon then it is our holistic offer that keeps them coming back, providing the stability, safety and support they need to start rebuilding their lives.

## Our Strategy:

For the 2020-21 year we had 4 strategic objectives:

1. **Places:** Brokering more places for young people to stay in the short term as they find somewhere to call home in the long term.
2. **Provision:** Improving the breadth and quality of services at our drop-in, remotely and through our outreach.
3. **Partnerships:** Collaborating to ensure that young people's experiences are visible and acted upon.
4. **Platform:** Sustaining a well-run organisation that invests in staff and celebrates the diversity that makes us a success.

This strategy was developed before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. During a year of constant upheaval, we had to live our value of dynamism on a daily basis. Whilst how we worked may have changed, our 'why' did not, and we still delivered on our strategic goals and mission. We continued to serve the most at risk young Londoners,

innovating and adapting to deliver best practice and meaningful impact within youth homelessness. When looking back on this tumultuous year, the story of New Horizon is one of change and consistency. This report tells that story, and in doing so confirms the values at the heart of what we do.

## 05

## ANTI-RACISM

We have long been aware of the disadvantages and discriminations that racialised and minoritised communities experience. Young Black people are disproportionately represented among those we support, and we see and hear how they face inequalities in housing, education, employment, health services and the criminal justice system. Young people tell us survival is a talent. We know that for Black young people survival also means having to deal with routine and systemic racism in all its different forms: interpersonal, social, economic, political, cultural and institutional.

Anti-racism has always shaped our work but we can't be complacent. In 2019 we undertook a thorough organisational review to identify where we were falling short and how we could do better to promote diversity and equality in all that we do, to care for and celebrate our staff and young people, and to tackle racism wherever we encounter it. We defined our ethos and commitments in our

Equality and Diversity Statement and Policy, co-authored by staff and board of trustees. This will continue to inform our work.

The events of summer 2020 were an overdue reminder for us all to take stock and try to do better. As an organisation, we realised we needed to explicitly prioritise anti-racism in everything that we do. We developed a Diversity Leadership Programme, reinvigorated our staff and board Equality and Diversity working groups and delivered several rounds of antiracism training. You'll see more about this work and our commitments going forwards throughout this report.

We cannot achieve our mission to give young people's potential a home without taking on discrimination and racism. We will do what we say we will about anti-racism because the young people we support, our team and our communities deserve nothing less.



*Even though people will say we've come so far, still when I went into court with my supervisor as a student they always used to think I was the defendant. Now, when I go there in a professional capacity and I'm representing young people in court those same views still apply. The treatment of people of colour in this country has changed but racism hasn't gone away, it just manifests in different ways... I want for Black people to just be able to be at the same position as our white counterparts without anyone looking at us and making us feel like we shouldn't be here. I want to feel like the same opportunities are offered to me as anyone else who works as hard as me.*

Kai, Complex Case Worker

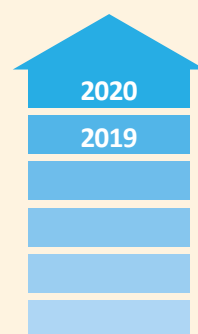
# 06

## CONTEXT

### Proportion sleeping rough

# 20%

increase of  
young people  
sleeping rough  
in 2020  
compared  
to 2019



### Scale of youth homelessness

There is a lack of understanding in the UK as to exactly how many young people do not have a safe home. The data we have shows an ever-escalating crisis and even these numbers do not paint a full picture. We know from our work and evidence, such as Centrepoin's Youth Homelessness Databank, there are serious gaps in the data that prevent us from grasping the full extent of youth homelessness across the UK. In our Life Off the Streets research 67% of young Londoners who had slept rough said they had not bedded down, making them less likely to

access essential services and to be verified as rough sleepers on the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) database. Not only are young people already sleeping rough less visible to outreach teams, but so many more are on the brink of sleeping rough, sofa surfing and experiencing other forms of hidden homelessness. Centrepoin's Databank statistics for 2019-20 showed that in London 1.2% of young people aged between 16-24 are homeless or at risk of homelessness. There is no doubt that this was aggravated by the pandemic.

## Challenges that young people face

Partnership for Young London's research in 2021 found that housing was one of the top 3 priorities amongst young people living in the capital. Vast numbers of young people face significant challenges around finding and keeping appropriate and safe accommodation, including the following:

- Affordability
- Insufficient welfare support
- Lack of information
- Unreliable support from statutory services
- Adverse childhood experiences and experiences of trauma
- Racism and structural disadvantages
- Lack of mental health support
- Inadequate support moving on from supported accommodation
- Lack of youth-specific accommodation
- Drastic funding cuts to youth provision



*Young people need a more direct route with detailed advice of the support that's out there and a more direct route for them to get permanent, safe housing – a permanent place to sleep.*

Rani



## Impact of Covid

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit young people the hardest, especially those already experiencing disadvantage. Young people were the most likely to lose jobs, due to many having been working on zero hour contracts. They lost out on a year's worth of education and employment, with many not being able to learn or work from home due to digital exclusion. We know that some of the most desperate situations came out of communities that have been severely let down – with overcrowded, poor quality housing and extreme pressure being put on people living in poverty with little additional support, offered. These challenges were compounded for the majority of young people we support as it has been widely documented that the pandemic disproportionately impacted minoritised communities, specifically Black and Asian communities.

Not only did the pandemic create and exacerbate some of the main drivers of youth homelessness, but it also restricted young people's ability to stay off the streets. At the same time that young people's risk of homelessness was increasing due to loss of employment or income, strained family relationships and overcrowding; lockdown restrictions made it difficult or illegal to stay with friends or extended family. As a result, more young people were left without anywhere to stay at all. Despite successful government policies such as 'Everyone In' whereby hotel rooms were offered to rough sleepers, the £20 weekly increase to Universal Credit and the furlough scheme, by the winter of 2020-21 we reported a 20% increase in young people with no other option than sleeping rough during the coldest months, while Covid-19 infections were at an all-time high.

All of this means that many more young people have faced homelessness, with many ending up street homeless. In the first three months of lockdown, according to the official CHAIN database, 449 under-25s were reported to be sleeping rough in London alone; an 81% increase compared to the same period in 2019. The full annual CHAIN report released in June 2021 confirmed what both our data and real life experience consistently showed over the 2020-21 year. One in ten of those forced to sleep rough in London was under the age of 25, with the pandemic putting extreme pressure on already disadvantaged young people. This was reported as "*a slight increase*". This isn't slight to us, that's 258 more lives at risk. Every single one of those people deserved better.

The pandemic also affected the support that was available to young people. The closure of youth clubs and youth centres took away a lifeline for many young people who rely on these for emotional wellbeing and connections to other providers. The shift to remote working meant that waiting times for many other services increased and accessing assistance from councils and social services became more difficult. Young people often have to interact with multiple organisations at once, and doing this all remotely whilst navigating complex processes is extremely challenging, therefore much of the work our staff did in the last year was to help young people in this respect. Our Winter Snapshot research tracked an increase from 42% to 65% in young people who had already contacted their council before finding us, the vast majority of whom were not offered support or accommodation.



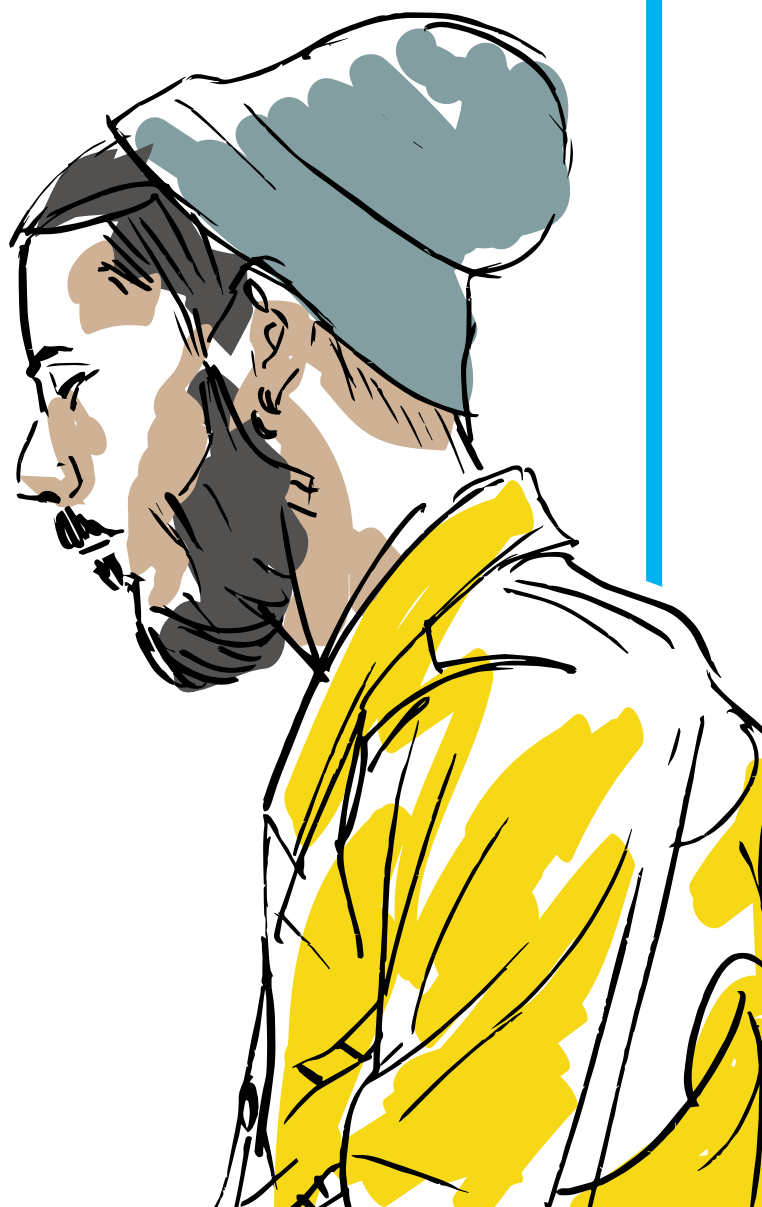
*I was made to leave the place I was living in sad circumstances. It was lockdown and I was working as a carer. I was looking after people and found it really stressful with PPE problems, but all the time I was also sleeping on the streets. It was hard to keep that going. And at night you wait and wait for someone from outreach who say they come to see you and then they don't. You're just stuck. The New Horizon team found me and I'm back on track. There's no shelter or something for me to stay in but I'm working on renting a room. Young people on the streets are being ignored by the system. It just doesn't work for them – the outreach services, there's hardly any temporary accommodation, the councils saying no. And we lose our job more quickly because of Covid too.*

Josh

This is a difficult picture to come to terms with and highlights how young people must be central to Covid recovery planning and homelessness strategies. Our messaging on this has stayed consistent since our creation: Youth homelessness is a different experience and needs a different response.

Many of the issues above are consistent with what young people have faced for decades, with the pandemic not only aggravating many of them, but also limiting access and resources needed to solve them. A lot of this stems from certain stereotypes and attitudes to homelessness as a whole, as well as the lack of visibility of youth homelessness.

**We want to change how the sector and public think about youth homelessness so we're testing a bold new project to 'reframe youth homelessness'.** To follow along with our progress, follow our social media accounts and we'll have more to share soon.





# 07

## WHAT DID 2020-21 LOOK LIKE AT NEW HORIZON?

### Places

**Improving the breadth and quality of services at our drop-in, remotely, and through our outreach.**

In the last year young people faced unprecedented challenges securing accommodation. They were more likely to be missed in the 'Everyone In' initiative, and increased demand and waiting times meant council support was even more difficult to access. The lack of appropriate bed spaces in emergency provision was compounded by limited capacity, and changes to young people's financial situations meant long-term options were increasingly unaffordable.

**Growing our 'emergency fund' so young people in crisis get better access to shelter, travel and support**

Throughout the pandemic it was more important than ever that we could help young people when they were in crisis, so we continued to grow our unrestricted emergency fund to improve young people's access to shelter, travel, food and support. Across the year we spent £25,500 on 1015 nights for young people in emergency

accommodation. We put £2,100 towards young people's travel and £12,700 towards food. Our teams also worked tirelessly and in extremely difficult conditions to get over 30 young people into hotel accommodation as part of the government's 'Everyone In' scheme.

**Securing new resources and partners to improve access to short-stay housing for young people irrespective of the levels of risk they may experience**

We continued to develop new partnerships to increase young people's options for short-term housing, including projects with Shelter Community and The Stay Club. Our Accommodation Project team opened a new site with Origin Housing, Project 62, and initiated 5 new partnerships with landlords, creating more accommodation pathways for young people. Advocating on young people's behalf, they worked with new and existing partners to negotiate acceptance of Universal Credit housing costs and to house young people who were unemployed.

This past year has highlighted the long-standing need for youth-specific accommodation, and after months of campaigning, we were delighted to open a new emergency accommodation project in partnership with the Greater London Authority, London Councils and Depaul. Hotel 1824, a refurbished 40 bed hotel in West London, will accommodate up to 350 young people over its pilot year and will save lives. This provision strengthens the safety net for the most at risk, giving young people in London at danger of sleeping rough a safe place to stay in the short-term as we find them somewhere to call home in the long term.

In collaboration with our partner Depaul, the project will give residents 24/7 wraparound support, tailored move-on options and a wide range of services such as: counselling, healthcare, independent life skills, education and employment, family mediation and immigration advice. Hotel 1824 is an encouraging first step towards permanent solutions for young people in London and exciting proof of what the sector can do when we work together.

### **Using our learning and networks to open up longer-term housing options across London**

We were excited to be part of the Together Alliance, a unique partnership between the Housing Association Youth Network (Clarion Housing, Hyde Housing, Metropolitan Thames Valley, Network Homes, Peabody), the London Youth Gateway (New Horizon, akt, Depaul UK, Stonewall Housing), HACT and Safer London. The partnership commissioned research to understand how to make more effective use of its collective assets (homes, support, funding and expertise) to create better pathways for supporting young people into stable accommodation, as well as preventing them from becoming homeless in the first place. The research completed by Campbell-Tickell was published in the [\*\*'Housing Solutions'\*\*](#) report that identified three projects for youth homelessness charities and housing associations to take forward together.

### **Refining advice and resettlement offers to open up access to services at more times in the centre and out**

We successfully implemented some of our pre-existing plans to increase access for young people to our services – including setting up an online referral form so that young people could self-refer. During lockdown this offered a vital means of access, and over the year we received 226 online self-referrals. Our advice team also grew to increase our capacity to support young people.

The closure of the centre radically altered the way that young people access our services, yet the move to remote support meant that we were able to reach many more young people who previously could not access the centre, whether because of travel or other risks.

Our Accommodation Project team quickly adapted to being unable to visit sites and meet young people face to face, moving their processes online. They continued to house young people in more permanent options, supporting 64 young people into long-term accommodation. They also continued to help

young people manage their tenancies whilst navigating losing their jobs, furlough, unplanned changes to their education and issues with housing costs and tenancy rights as a result of Covid. Despite this, **98% of young people already housed in our accommodation projects sustained their tenancies.**

## Our impact

1,015

nights paid for

64

young people housed by our Accommodation Project team in long-term accommodation

176

young people supported into short-stay accommodation

189

young people supported into long-stay accommodation

£4,460

of vital technology given to digitally isolated young people

## Provision

### Improving the breadth and quality of services at our drop-in and through our outreach team.

Closing the centre was a historic moment for New Horizon and radically altered how we delivered our services to young people. Remote delivery brought its own challenges and successes, and we learnt from these to evolve a hybrid model across teams, across teams – digitising our offer whilst continuing in-person services with reduced capacity.

### Continuing to evolve a supportive and stimulating drop-in, offering a holistic service seven days a week

This year demanded the evolution of our services in a way that nobody could have predicted, and whilst it may have been unplanned, our Youth Work and Youth Outreach Project teams quickly adapted to continue to support young people with a holistic service throughout an extraordinarily difficult time.

Adjusting to the immediate circumstances of the early months of Covid, our Youth Work, Advice and Youth Outreach Project teams adapted to remote delivery, upskilling themselves in new technology and ways of working. All staff were equipped with smartphones and laptops so that they could offer case assessments, check-ins, joint-agency work and advocacy over the phone and online. Responding to what young people wanted, the Youth Work team redeveloped and refined their offer, moving some established activities online, including women's and men's groups, independent living and communication workshops; and introducing new projects including a podcast and 'Round the Table'

(a regular virtual session on a topic chosen by young people). Our Jobs, Education and Training team (JET) continued to work with young people remotely and introduced two new employability projects delivered online: Back to Life and Back on Track. 51 young people were supported to secure employment or apprenticeship opportunities, 82 young people enrolled in education or training opportunities. Our nurse continued to consult young people and run health workshops, and set up a peer mentoring programme in partnership with Fitzrovia Youth Action.

Despite 12 months of changing restrictions and lockdowns, our Youth Outreach Project team continued to put the needs of highly vulnerable young people first, getting creative in their approach to offer face to face meetings. Whilst many other services shut down and young people were increasingly isolated, as a life-saving essential service they continued to run outreach services throughout the year, supporting the young people most at risk on the street. They continued to build and maintain relationships with young people, identify support areas, refer young people to appropriate services and advocate on their behalf. We also continued our vital partnership work, such as cross-agency legal work with Just for Kids law and the Children's Society, immigration services with the Cardinal Hume Centre and mental health service Regulate.

We listened to what young people were telling us and we undertook an internal research project into the impact of Covid on young people and what it meant for the support we offer. We paid attention to the successes of remote working, recognising that for some this was preferable and increased our capacity to support young people. Yet we also appreciated the need to offer as much in-person support as was safely possible. As the centre began re-opening from July 2020, the Youth Work and Advice teams returned to offer young people an essential drop-in service 3 days a week, navigating new and changing safety regulations.



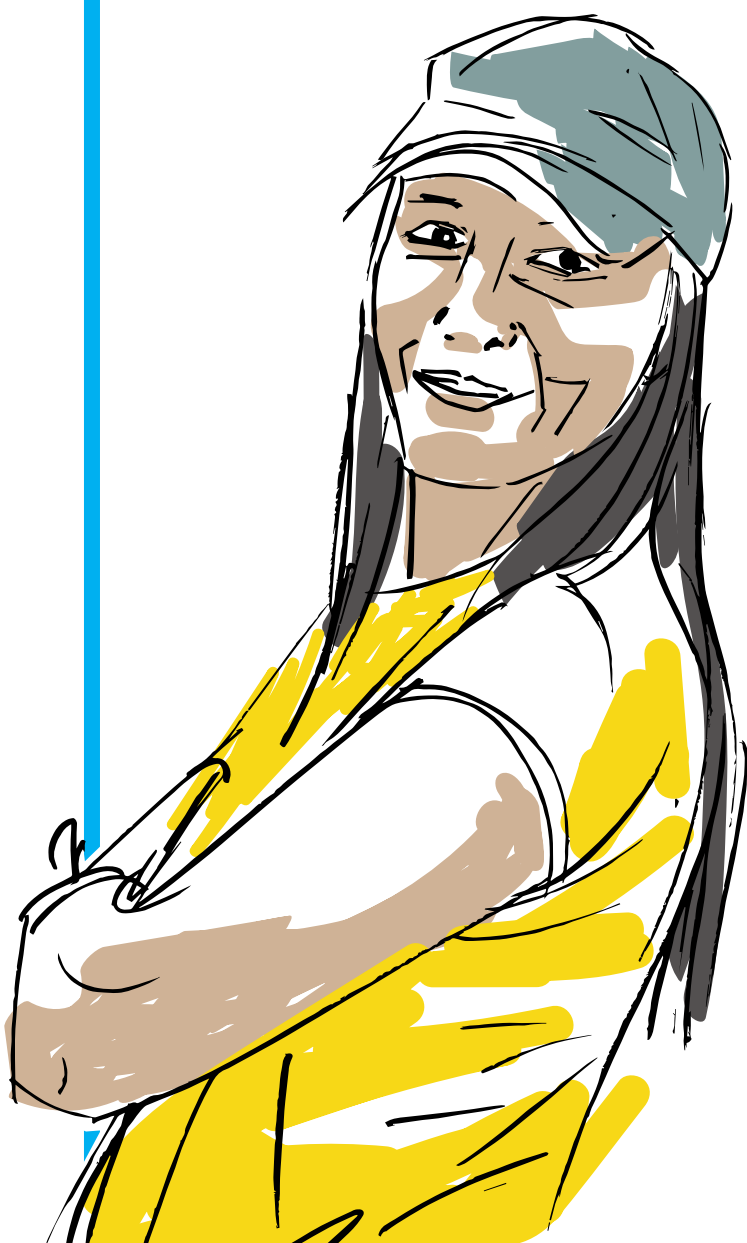
*New Horizon was an environment that I immediately felt accepted in. I was struggling with feeling accepted and having a voice but I felt like I was able to reclaim my voice when I came to New Horizon. It provides a support system. It allowed me to communicate my needs and wants. When I came to the centre I knew that anything I needed would be covered.*

Katie

## Growing our mental and emotional health offer across our work in and out of the centre

Further developing our mental and emotional health offer across all our services was already a priority, but the onset of the pandemic meant that this became a focal point of our work throughout the year. Both the Youth Work and Youth Outreach Project teams saw an increased focus on young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing in their work, offering emotional support and stability during a time of loneliness and isolation for many. Not only did more young people want to access our counselling service, but they wanted to do so on a more regular basis. Our counsellor found to remote support was hugely beneficial for young people's engagement, as they felt more comfortable accessing this via the phone. In total we delivered 785 counselling sessions over the year, a 134% increase on the previous year.

Young people told us they missed the social aspect of coming into the centre, and the informal mental health boost that activities such as music provided. Our teams sought new ways to improve emotional wellbeing. Our youth work team sent out self care packs, including special packs for important events that we would normally celebrate together in the centre, such as Eid and Christmas. They also tapped into young people's creativity and facilitated poetry projects, which wove together lines from young people across London to speak to the challenges they had faced, but also their hope and strength going forward.





*I've been staying at my best friend's house for 4 months now. I left home in February and only packed one bag of clothes. It's been really difficult to live out of one bag. Then quarantine came and it was difficult for me not only to live out of a bag but also somewhere that's not home. Leaving home was something I hadn't really thought about before and it's been really painful. It's been one of the most painful things I've had to experience to date. One of the more painful things that I've had to experience was also not being able to live freely, according to myself, and I didn't really get to do that at home. So having to be out here, even though it's over quarantine has been freeing. It's been liberating.*

Katie

## Case story

A young woman came to us in February having fled an abusive and coercive relationship. She had been homeless for 2 years after her relationship with her mother broke down – and had been staying with various friends and family. She was placed into a COVID-19 Everyone-In Hotel in 2020 but was not supported by her council, so her boyfriend encouraged her to go and stay with him. The relationship became toxic and abusive, so she fled for her own safety after around 6 months. The experience has had an extremely detrimental effect on her mental health, which resulted in panic attacks and having to go to hospital on a few occasions.

We supported her with emergency accommodation in a backpackers hostel and then other emergency accommodation through partners like Stay Club. A Duty to Refer was made to her council – she was offered a refuge but she felt she would struggle in this accommodation and chose to make a homelessness application to another borough, which we supported her to make. Her application was accepted, and she has since been placed in temporary accommodation.

Being in a new area and not knowing anyone resulted in her feeling very isolated and continuing to struggle with her mental health. She was offered on-going support with regular check-ins and also encouraged to come to the centre. Due to feeling isolated, having deductions from her Universal Credit and the need to furnish her temporary accommodation to make it comfortable, warm and homely, a grant was requested from Greater Change – she has now been able to make her accommodation feel like home. We made referrals to a number of internal teams and she has received support from our Nurse, Counsellor, Communications Tutor, Jobs, Education and Training and Youth teams, and has attended several youth voice sessions.

Since feeling settled in her accommodation she has been able to focus on taking medication for her mental health, engaging in counselling and is now in a much more positive space. This has enabled her to start going out which is also improving her wellbeing, she has started to attend church twice weekly where she has started to make friends.

# Our impact

The Youth Outreach Project team supported

**314**

young people who had been impacted by serious youth violence, offending and/or criminal exploitation

**92**

young people received support in prison

The Youth Outreach Project team supported

**201**

young people most at risk on the street

**80**

young people engaged with digital delivery of our programmes

**175**

young people attended sessions with our Jobs, Education and Training team

**682**

external housing referrals were made for

**298**

young people

**1,169**

housing advice appointments were held with

**325**

young people

## Partnerships

**Collaborating to ensure that young people's experiences are visible and acted upon.**

Working with others has always been at the heart of what we do, but it was never more important than in the past year. Amidst increasing challenges for young people we continued to fight to put them on the political and public agenda through our policy and media partnerships. We continued to leverage our learning to contribute to the youth homelessness evidence base. Making all of this work possible, our fundraising team worked tirelessly to develop new relationships and sustain a growing New Horizon.

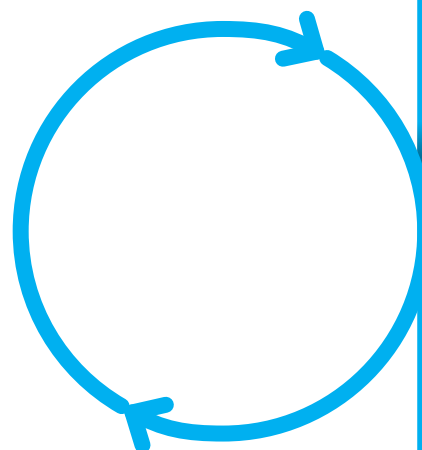
## Collaborations

In 2020-21 we worked even more closely with local authorities, statutory agencies, voluntary sector organisations, communities and London and national decision-makers to respond to the spike of young people facing homelessness and hardship. We collaborated widely through our service delivery, best practice sharing and working toward systems change.

This year we invested in our learning and evaluation functions and produced several high-quality reports to inform our service development and influencing activities. We made a lot of headway into integrating our fundraising, campaigning and policy work, which also shapes how we work towards 'reframing youth homelessness'. Our fundraising team raised a record amount, securing the future of our work.

New Horizon leads the London Youth Gateway, a partnership between Depaul UK, Shelter, Stonewall Housing, akt and Galop. Funded by London Councils, the London Youth Gateway supports thousands of young people facing homeless across London every year. In 2020, our eighth year, we continued to do so but, through our effective partnership, we found capacity to do even more: the London Youth Gateway assisted the Greater London Authority with the successful move-on from the 'Everyone In' emergency accommodation of under-25s. We supported boroughs more widely through provision, best practice and capacity-building. With its pan-London reach and holistic offer, the London Youth Gateway is best placed to support both young Londoners and boroughs during the pandemic recovery years to make sure they can bounce back quickly and safely in times of crisis or hardship to prevent or solve their homelessness for good.

We are committed to ensuring the experiences and voices of young people are heard and acted upon. We engaged widely in best practice and systemic change networks. We were a proud member of the London Housing Panel which feeds into the Mayor of London's housing policy and continued to be proactive members of the national Youth Homelessness Strategy Group facilitated by Homeless Link and the Alliance for Youth Justice. We made sure our learning and young people's experiences were also shared in London and nationally via conferences, communities of practice, round tables, All-Party Parliamentary Groups meetings, and consultation responses.





## Investing in our learning and using evidence to change policy

Much of our work has had to respond to changing circumstances, resources and opportunities. In 2020, implementing rigorous learning and evaluation was therefore a top priority, supported also by our very first Impact and Learning Officer. Over the 2020-21 year, with partners and alone, we delivered three reports, an internal review of the Covid-impact as well as numerous smaller but essential pieces of learning and evaluation content. We also contributed to external research and best practice works, supporting for instance the Partnership for Young London with its Mapping Young London survey and report. We're really proud of the three reports, which you can access below:

- [Report from the Young People Sleeping Rough Sub-Group](#)
- [Housing Solutions for Young People Experiencing Homelessness in London](#)
- [At risk and uncertain: winter snapshot of young people sleeping rough during the pandemic](#)

We knew that as the pandemic escalated, we need to use the evidence and learning to get a better deal for young people.

Together with Centrepunt, we led a successful multi media campaign, securing coverage in national media, including the BBC, Guardian, and the Independent. We created a youth-led podcast, passing the mic to young people so they could tell their own stories.

Alongside reaching audiences this way, we successfully championed change behind the scene via our policy and public affairs work, engaging stakeholders such as London Assembly members, the Greater London Authority, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and London Councils. This resulted in the London Assembly passing a unanimous motion that the Mayor of London must ringfence a substantial amount of its rough sleeping budget for under-25s.

Our Winter Snapshot report on young people sleeping rough during the Covid-19 winter, furthered the argument with funders and decision-makers. Our campaigning resulted in the launch of London's only youth-specific, Covid-safe emergency hostel for 18-24 year olds. This ground-breaking pilot project is a partnership between New Horizon, Depaul UK, London Councils and the Greater London Authority and will provide quality, 24-hour support for 350 young Londoners who would have otherwise ended up on the street.



*I think for people in my position it's really important to know that you have a voice. Just because there are certain factors that make you feel like you don't have one, you still have a voice. Everyone deserves to have a voice. It's your life. It's not going to be easy but I can promise you it's worth the fight.*

Katie

## Fundraising

As we get bigger, we have to connect with more supporters and funders to ensure we continue to be a viable, impactful charity. Our fundraising team went from 2 to 3 people and were a real powerhouse in securing the funds we need to keep doing our vital work.

Despite the financial strain of the pandemic, our amazing fundraisers have worked hard and secured the £2.4 million per year needed to run New Horizon's services and activities. This shows how essential our services are, often providing the only safety net for young Londoners in desperate need. Our fundraising team had some great successes with new multi-year funders coming on board as well as some Covid-19 specific emergency funding, enabling us to keep paying for emergency accommodation, basics like food, clothes and showers, and provide technology to digitally excluded people. We were chosen as one of the charities for the Mayor's winter fundraising drive alongside Centrepunt, akt and Depaul and we're really pleased to have been chosen for a second year running for Christmas 2021.

They delivered this whilst working remotely and still managed to run an impactful campaign for #NH10Days, our flagship campaign to 'take on youth homelessness' in partnership with locally based businesses such as King's Cross Central, Argent, Google and AutoTrader. This campaign had to completely shift online during what was a very challenging time for our supporters.

## Redefining our brand and messaging

As a 54 year-old organisation we've seen many changes and had many faces. It was a priority for us to look at our brand and messaging and if, after the events of 2020, they were really working hard enough to stand for everyone we employ, support or interact with. We entered a period of review, consulting all of our stakeholders, asking what New Horizon Youth Centre stood for in their view.

This led to some really exciting work around messaging, supported by a landmark partnership with world-leading firm Havas, investigating how we want to frame youth homelessness and who we want to prioritise on the platforms we have access to. This work is long-term, gradual and iterative, but we have made a great start and will hopefully have some really exciting updates to share soon.



***It was incredible to have the support of local businesses in King's Cross who helped us to raise over £40,000 to help young people experiencing homelessness get the equipment they need to access vital services online.***

Fadzai, Fundraising Manager



**Our fundraisers are looking forward to onboarding new staff and continuing find innovative ways to up our fundraising game so that we can concentrate on filling the funding gap for 2022/23 and beyond.**

## Platform

**Sustaining a well-run organisation that invests in staff and celebrates the diversity that makes us a success.**

This year more than ever it was essential that we invest in and care for our staff, so that New Horizon can support young people most effectively. The move to remote working required new equipment, skills and ways of working. We renewed our commitment to anti-racism and our responsibility to learn, develop and do better as an organisation. We continued our work to integrate a trauma-informed approach across the organisation and reinvigorated our youth voice activities.

We want youth voice to be firmly embedded across the organisation, with opportunities for young people to engage in ways that are accessible, feasible and valuable. We want to make it possible for young people who don't normally engage in youth voice to do so, and we want to develop clear feedback loops that allow us to respond to what young people say and ensure that our priorities are being set by those we are trying to support. Our staff have made great progress on this and it will tie in closely with our work around our external-facing brand and messaging.

## Reinvigorating governance and feedback

We entered 2020 with an appetite for change and growth. We had a new Chair of Trustees (who you will hear from later), a growing team and clear objectives of where we wanted to go next. Covid-19 threw us into the deep end but strengthened our resolve. We still delivered on our strategic aims, we just had to change how we did it.

As well as updating our leadership and internal management, we led a large piece of work around youth voice. Too often charities speak on behalf of their beneficiaries without empowering or enabling them to speak for themselves. Our understanding of youth voice is informed by definitions of youth participation – the ways in which young people are involved in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. We set the intention to involve young people through creating as many opportunities as possible for young people's voices to be heard throughout New Horizon and putting in place processes that ensure what they say is taken seriously.



## Our Youth Voice Working Group created the following mission statement:

*We want to seek out and amplify the voices of young people across the organisation, centring their experiences in the support we offer and ensuring that we are responsive. Through varied and appropriate channels we want all young people to feel heard and to feel capable of influencing change within their own lives, within New Horizon and beyond the organisation.*

## Living our missions and values

A key pillar of our strategy before, during and beyond this year has been our move towards trauma-informed care in everything we do. A large-scale project to research, implement and iterate this has been in place for a year already and is reaching the stage where we are choosing a model of best practice to roll out across our full offer. This will ensure that we are protecting and advocating for all young people who use our services, many of whom are carrying significant trauma, and prevent any further retraumatisation at the hands of services, which is all too common at the moment.

Following the events of summer 2020, we renewed and improved our commitment to anti-racism. As an organisation that employs, supports and advocates for all Londoners, we had to do more in actively fighting against oppressive structures and white supremacy. Our existing diversity and inclusion projects received more resources and we began more regular campaigning internally and externally to address the impact of racism on our work and our service users.

Our innovative response to the challenges of this year was bolstered by high-quality training, from how to use Zoom through to rigorous diversity training.

Our staff members received:

- **3 expert-led diversity training modules**
- **3 members of staff began our new Diversity Leadership Project**

## Investing in the centre and facilities

Before the onset of the pandemic, we had planned for a series of improvements and updates to enhance our services and spaces for the benefit of our service users. We pivoted in the wake of the first lockdown, reprioritising the tech and tools our staff needed to keep doing their jobs safely. This included the provision of PPE, technology, new cloud storage and online services to keep everyone's data safe in the new digital tools we started using.

As the year progressed we revisited some of the initial plans, including some updates to our day centre in King's Cross, as well as more long-term work around our service delivery methods and flexi-work. We want to maintain the blended service model we transitioned to while the centre is closed, as we found it to be more accessible for many young people who wouldn't feel comfortable or able to attend our day centre in person. Both services will run side by side and will be iterated and improved in line with the ever-changing landscape of our sector.

# 80

young people participated  
in workshops online



# 08

## PEOPLE: A CELEBRATION OF OUR STAFF



# 09

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH OUR CEO

Just before the year started, and as the pandemic reaching its peak, one of our partners at the council remarked to me *“everything has changed now”* and it is a phrase that has stuck with me throughout the last 12 months.

It would be easy to assume that because Covid has changed everything, we need to change our strategy wholesale too. In fact, the four pillars of our strategy (Places, Provision, Partners and Platform) have never felt more important, but we do need adapt how these are delivered given the new context we are all part of ensuring we better reach the changing demographic of young people who are coming to us and ensuring they have better choice in how to access.

What we do know is that the challenges facing young people have only grown through the pandemic and as a result youth homelessness – and on the sharp end, rough sleeping – has grown and will continue to grow.

There is a sense of urgency now that is not simply about scale either. As plans for ‘building back better’ are conceived and the new normal is written, it is critical that we ensure that young people, especially those experiencing homelessness, are front and centre of thinking and investment. The severity of the situation demands a bolder and bigger response than we might previously have conceived necessary, and

this response will require New Horizon to grow – in every sense of the word.

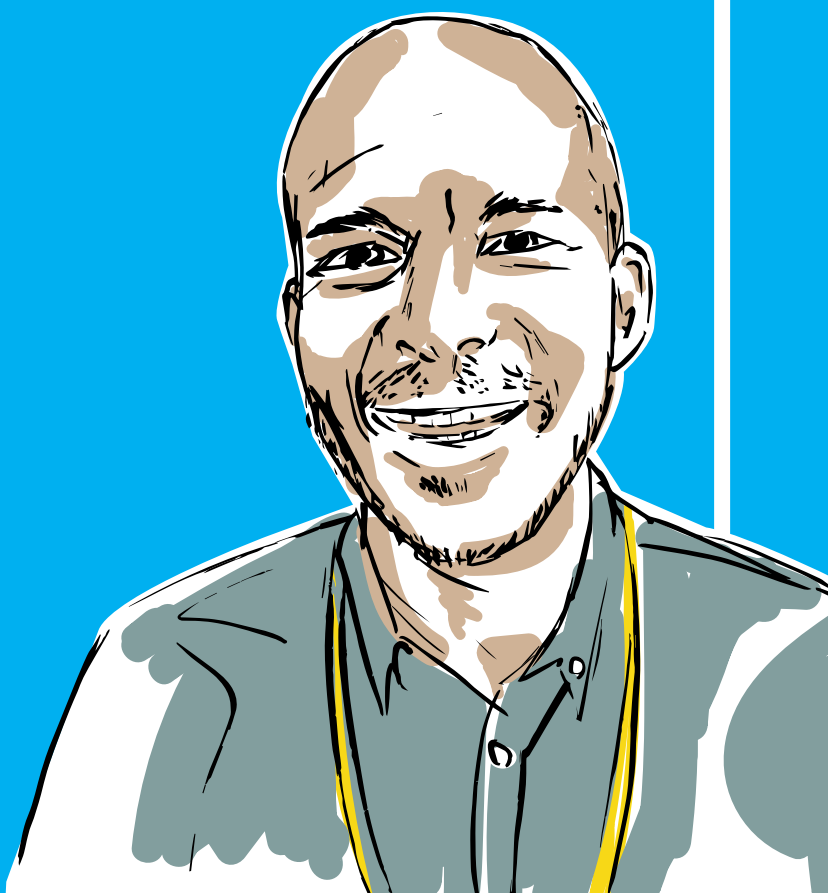
We need to grow our staff headcount so that we can keep up with the increased demand for our services. We need to further invest in our policy and communications work so that we make our campaigning even stronger. We need to invest in our staff and ensure they have all the support they need to take on the challenge. And we need to bring young people and all our partners with us on the journey.

Thank you to each and every supporter who has stood alongside us in this most challenging of years. Your donations, help and guidance continue to inspire us all. As one of the young people told us in October as part of our 10 Days to Take on Youth Homelessness campaign, *“we need to come back and come back stronger”*. We – and they – have never felt more ready.

### Phil Kerry

Chief Executive

#GivingPotentialaHome



## Thank you to the following donors for your ongoing support



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As well as our  
individual donors

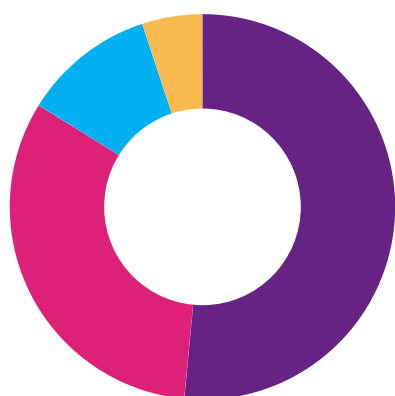
Thank  
you!

# 10

## OUR FINANCES

Our total income this year was £2,256,376. We continued to benefit from support from a wide range of statutory sources and charitable trusts and focused on growing our support from corporates and individuals, most notably the emergence of a new High Net Worth donor programme.

### 2020-21 Income



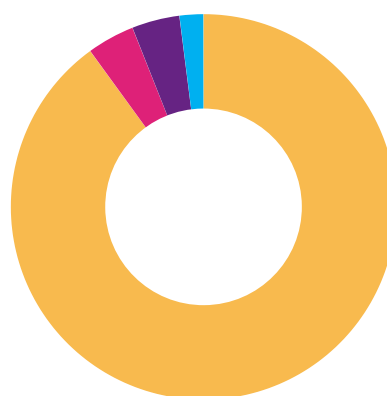
**51%** Grants from charitable trusts

**32%** Statutory Grants

**12%** Donations and gift aid

**5%** Other income

### 2020-21 Expenditure



**90%** Delivery of services

**4%** Raising funds

**2%** Accommodation project

**4%** Other expenditure





## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	Total funds 2020 £
<b>Income from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	685,971	1,442,660	2,128,631	1,938,994
Other trading activities Investments				55,732
Investments	10,488		10,488	12,011
Other income	117,257		117,257	92,843
<b>Total income</b>	<b>813,716</b>	<b>1,442,660</b>	<b>2,256,376</b>	<b>2,099,580</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds	143,562		143,562	63,367
<b>Charitable activities:</b>				
Provision of day centre services	356,083	1,436,590	1,792,673	1,879,583
Accommodation project	46,547		46,547	58,047
Depreciation of leasehold premises		77,621	77,621	77,621
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>546,192</b>	<b>1,514,211</b>	<b>2,060,403</b>	<b>2,078,618</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) before net gains/(losses) on investments</b>	<b>267,524</b>	<b>(71,551)</b>	<b>195,973</b>	<b>20,962</b>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	55,053		55,053	(22,054)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>322,577</b>	<b>(71,551)</b>	<b>251,026</b>	<b>(1,092)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>				
Total funds brought forward	879,526	893,086	1,772,612	1,773,704
Net movement in funds	322,577	(71,551)	251,026	(1,092)
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>1,202,103</b>	<b>821,535</b>	<b>2,023,638</b>	<b>1,772,612</b>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

## BALANCE SHEET

### AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	751,892	826,827
Investments	530,758	479,974
	<b>1,282,650</b>	<b>1,306,801</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	88,428	119,002
Cash at bank and in hand	1,164,078	873,362
	<b>1,202,103</b>	<b>992,364</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(511,518)	(526,553)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>740,988</b>	<b>465,811</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>2,023,638</b>	<b>1,772,612</b>
<b>Charity funds</b>		
Restricted funds	821,535	893,086
Unrestricted funds	1,202,103	879,526
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>2,023,638</b>	<b>1,772,612</b>

[Our full accounts can be found on the Charity Commission website.](#)



I'm looking forward to my new life. I know what I want to do and I'm ready for that to unfold.

Lorenzo



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Youth Centre

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 nhyouthcentre

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