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WEATHERING THE STORM

Impact Report 2023-24



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**NEW
HORIZON
YOUTH
CENTRE**

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A letter from Chloe, aged 25*

To all staff at New Horizon Youth Centre ,

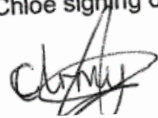
I just wanted to write you this letter to thank you for all you have done since I have started coming to NH. You have all helped me differently and you have made me feel so welcome and safe. I got to be honest I didn't think my last day would be dawning on me so quickly but it is what it is. It will be an adjustment that I will have to adjust to. I will miss coming into the center every wednesday and seeing you all. I am going to miss you all, I know your staff but I feel like its friends. I never thought i'd be able to achieve some of the things I have achieved. And it's with the help of you guys that I have been able to do that. Coming in has been great for me getting out the house and now I'm leaving. I'm not sure if that will continue.

Staff you bring so much joy and happiness. Doing what you do everyday its inspirational. I will eventually find my way in life. I felt like I had people on my side for once and it felt nice to have that support. I've cried so many times writing this letter for you all. Yes im an emotional person but i'm so grateful for you all. I wouldn't be who i am without any of you and I thank you so so much. Doing music with Pascal has been amazing such a great teacher. Rosie and the JET team. Stephan with the budgeting (really helped me loads). Holly and the counseling , having those sessions helped me. Rest of the staff , you helped me too, the kindness and encouragement has been the best. Almost feels like a speech but thats all from me now.

Im going to miss you all greatly but where a door shuts another must open. I just wish it didn't end right now.

Thank you all

Over and out from me
Chloe signing out



P.S You are all inspring doing what you do every day for people who come to New Horizon.

*We work with young people aged 16-24. Once someone turns 25, we support them to leave our service positively and find routes into housing support if needed, other support services, youth clubs, employment, training or education.



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About New Horizon Youth Centre

Every year, thousands of young people across the Capital become homeless through no fault of their own. That's why New Horizon Youth Centre exists.

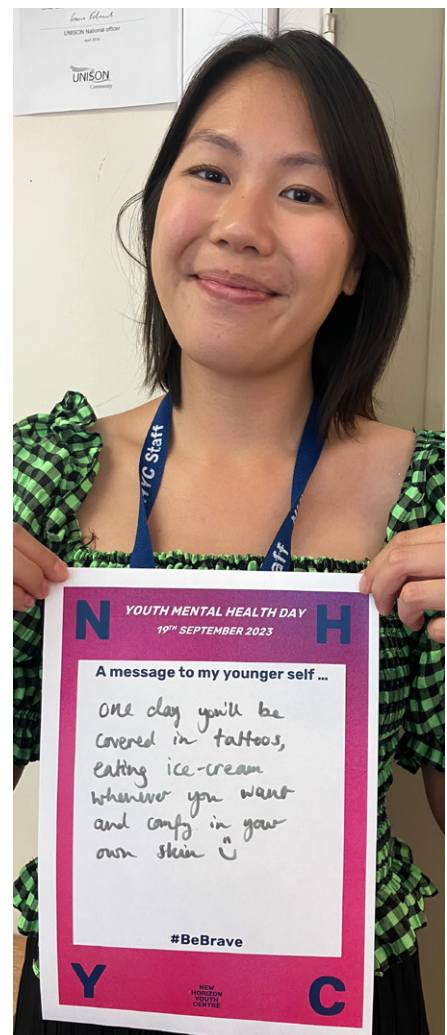
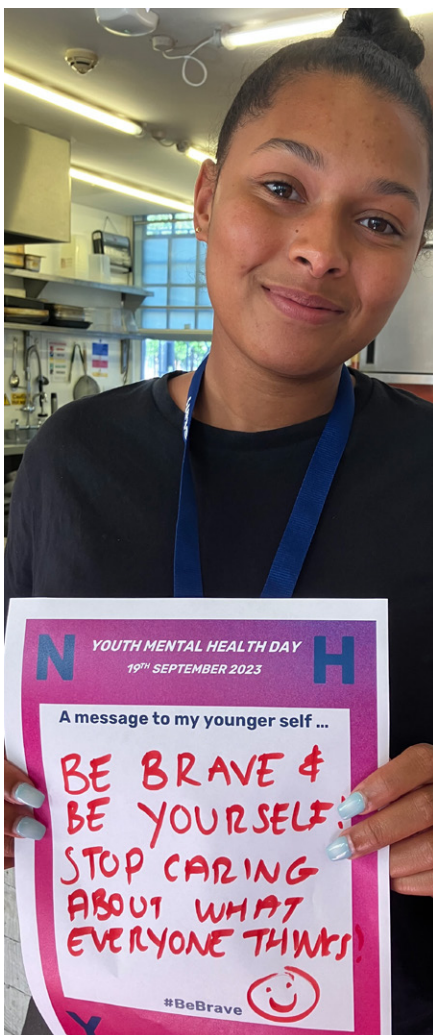
We are a vital support network for 16-24 year olds with nowhere else to go. Through the services we provide at our day centre and in the community across London, our multidisciplinary team support thousands of young people experiencing homelessness in London to find safety, improve their wellbeing, develop skills for life and ultimately find somewhere that they can

call home. We help young people to improve their housing, health, safety and life skills. We deliver our frontline work through five teams: housing, health, youth work and outreach (now youth justice and rough sleeping).

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

Our work is guided by three values:

1. We **champion** young people
2. We **collaborate** for impact
3. We are **determined** to find a way



A note from our Chair of Trustees



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This has been another extraordinary year for New Horizon.

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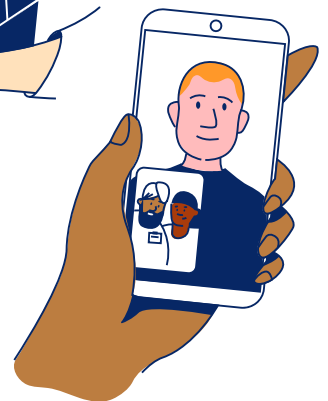
We had, of course, known that the compounding effects of the pandemic, cost of living crisis and political uncertainty would see more young people become homeless, but nobody – us included – foresaw what would begin in August and continue all autumn and winter. It seemed that every week brought a new high of daily visitors. When I became Chair in January 2019 the centre used to average 39 young attendees a day but in February 2024, we had a week in which daily numbers were double that. It is why, when the year came to an end, the team had supported nearly 1,500 young people – an astonishing rise in demand of 29% in a single year.

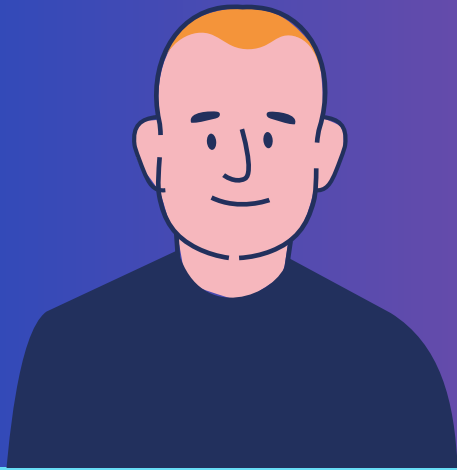
With the challenges surrounding us, we have recalibrated how we can best apply our vision and resolve to these new realities. The team at New Horizon is united in our mission, our pride at what we can achieve, our zeal to support young people experiencing homelessness and our fight to remove the structural issues that cause it.

Thank you for all you do, every single day to ensure young people's potential has a home.

Matthew

MATTHEW REED
CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES





In total we worked with

1,479
young people

(29% higher than 2022-23)



From summer 2023 we had over

60
young people

per day in our centre

(a third higher than 2022-23)

3rd January 2024

Our busiest ever day with

65

young people queuing outside before
we opened in dire housing need



10,847

visits to our day centre

and 9,762 hot lunches were served

(double from 2022-2023)



29%
female

(down from 37%)



67%
male

(up from 56%)



80%
**Black, Asian or
minority ethnic**

(up from 57%)



9%
LGBTQ

(down from 14%)

NHYP in Numbers 2023-24

The numbers explained

The context

We are seeing the highest rates of youth homelessness ever. The cost-of-living crisis, housing and rental crises and disinvestment in youth services, employment and education have left far too many young people struggling. In London, young people are the highest growing demographic of people who sleep rough (Chain year end data, March 2024) and in 2022-23 20,200 young people went to their council as homeless, up 20% on the year before. (Centrepoint databank, 2023).

Supporting refugees

On top of this, at the centre we began to see a big spike in refugees approaching us for help last year. Most of these young people had been evicted from Home Office accommodation after receiving their refugee status; some were given 28 days' notice of eviction, others only 7 days, and received very little support from the Home Office or councils to find work or education and housing. From August 2023 - April 2024, we saw an average of 1-2 new young people a day who had been evicted from Home Office accommodation.

Women and LGBTQ+ people

At the same time, numbers of young women and LGBTQ people accessing our services and support fell slightly. We believe that this is due to two factors:

- we closed online self-referrals and reduced our remote offer, due to the unprecedented demand on our in-person services
- our day centre became busy, sometimes crowded, with young men which many women or LGBTQ people may have found overwhelming

We are continuing to run our weekly women's and non-binary only space, and are reviewing different ways to support this cohort of young people better over the next year.

"I had a good feeling when I came to New Horizon, everyone was nice, and I've made new friends. New Horizon is helping me find a home so that I can go on to study at University, get a job, earn money and see my Mum and family again."

- M, aged 20, a Syrian Refugee



How have our teams supported young people this year?

Housing

747

young people supported by the housing team (up from 492)

3,487

individual advice appointments held (up from 2,456)

234

advocacy sessions delivered (supporting with social services, housing options, health, youth justice, immigration)

732

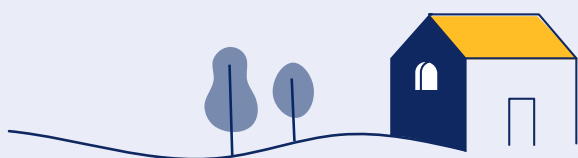
young people supported with benefits advice

357

young people were placed in short term or emergency accommodation

210

were able to secure longer term housing or a safe return to their family home



We had originally budgeted £28,250 for emergency accommodation in 2023-24 but due to unprecedented demand by the end of March we spent £102,794 on hotels, hostels and bnbs. This number alone shows the level of the crisis we are facing and how much the third sector is plugging the gaps in the statutory support systems.

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NHYC has helped me to find accommodation, having stable accommodation has meant I've been able to go to college and am studying Maths and English - since being at college my English has really improved.

//

- Noor, aged 21



Rhona, a housing advice worker who retired after 28 years of service to young people at New Horizon.

Outreach

232

young people supported

77

young people supported in prison

101

young people supported via our twice weekly street outreach services

In addition to supporting young people who are rough sleeping, caught up in the criminal justice system or at risk of violence, the team created '5 Blueprints for Change' by consulting over 100 youth justice professionals to create better, safer housing for young people affected by serious youth violence.

The decision was made in winter 2023 to restructure by splitting into two teams: rough sleeping team and youth justice team. This will enable better support of staff, clearer roles and for both teams to grow sustainably.

**“
New Horizon helped me fix my situation. I’m off the streets so I’m not sleeping rough, and I don’t have to worry about doing anything illegal. It stops my mind thinking strange, and I can move forward. New Horizon has helped me a lot, they’ve helped me stay clean, get referrals when other places were not helping me. So I appreciate New Horizon a lot.
”**

– R, aged 22, working with our Youth Justice Housing Caseworkers



Health

241

young people had appointments with our nurse about their physical and sexual health

69

young people benefitted from 360 counselling sessions

The Health team worked closely with Brook to provide regular sexual health advice and guidance for our young people, FWD in Camden to support individuals around alcohol and substance abuse and local NHS services to provide advice and vaccinations. They ran many brilliant workshops and awareness campaigns about different aspects of mental and physical health, such as creating 'hope' boxes for World Suicide Prevention Day and a workshop on sickle cell disease.



When I am feeling stressed, I come to New Horizon and they put on activities and the stress goes away.



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Youth work

438

young people engaged with our Life Skills programme

385

young people received jobs, education & training support

479

young people attended our women & non-binary space

92

young people took part in a wide range of youth participation opportunities

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My hostel room didn't have WiFi so I had limited access to data on my computer to do my college work. NYHC applied for a small fund to help me with topping up my mobile phone each month, I now have enough funds to buy data each month - this has really helped me with being able to attend online college lessons and keep up with my work. I can also spend time on my computer to connect with people via social media and I feel less lonely, it has also relieved my boredom as I am able to watch things online. With the current cost of living crisis, the £20 monthly top-ups has really helped me a lot.

//

- Noor, aged 21, who received a Winter Relief Fund grant

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I like the women's space because it only has women so we can talk and play freely, without the interruptions of men. We do activities that only concern women, and it is so free. We can talk, and do so many activities. So I enjoy the women's space.

//

- Basku

The youth work team run our day centre and weekly sports, arts and life skills activities. Highlights from the year include: launching a women and non-binary football team, starting weekly basketball and boxing sessions, new drama and arts workshops, expanding our ESOL offer for young refugees and the growth of sunflowers in our garden!

In addition, we gave out £34,000 in cash grants to 129 young people through our Winter Relief Fund in partnership with Greater Change and our London Youth Gateway partner organisations. Grants of up to £300 each gave young people autonomy and choice for the essentials they needed to rebuild their lives and keep out of homelessness.



"They [the sunflowers] bring you in, and they slow you down."
- young person

Working in partnership

On Our Side Report with LSE

We teamed up with London School of Economics (LSE) to find out what really happens when young people go to their local councils for housing support. The researchers spoke with young people with experience of homelessness, local authorities, the Government and voluntary sector organisations. The report highlights ways to vitally improve services that are currently failing young people. [Find it here.](#)

The 10 Thousand Daffodils project

Artisans and volunteers in Cumbria handmade 10,000 clay daffodils and 'planted' them at Lowther Castle. The daffodils were then sold online and the proceeds were donated to 6 charities, including NHYC. It raised over £75,000 for New Horizon.

London Youth Gateway

London Youth Gateway supported **3977** new young people across 2023-24. Collectively, Gateway partners supported **667** into crisis/short-term accommodation, with a further **482** housed in secure and stable accommodation. The Gateway specialist services have supported an increased number of young people with often complex, intersectional needs that necessitate collaborative multi-agency work to solve homelessness. It has been invaluable in supporting a breath of young people who find themselves locked out of local authority advice and support, and would struggle to self-advocate without skilled, empathic caseworkers who guide young people towards sustainable and long-term solutions of their housing needs.

Housing Solutions for young people fleeing violence

In 2023 we joined an alliance with Safer London, Anna Freud Centre and St Giles's Trust to deliver MOPAC's (Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime) serious youth violence services. This means that from Summer 2024, all serious youth violence interventions in London will have the option of specialist housing support for the first time ever, provided by a new team at NHYC.

NHYC 10 Days to Take Charge of Change

From October 1st - 10th 2024, we dedicated ten days to ending youth homelessness in collaboration with our amazing corporate partners and supporters. We encouraged local businesses to take action, engage in discussions, and donate to help drive change. These included several Lunch & Learns, a 'Behind the Headlines' workshop at the Guardian offices, a cooking masterclass at Google and a chai and buns breakfast from popular restaurant Dishoom.



Young people making pasta at a cooking masterclass at Google

Campaigning for change



#PlanForThe136k

In 2023 we created a collective call for a government strategy to end youth homelessness, called #PlanForThe136k because **136,000** young people approached their council as homeless in 2022-23 (Centrepunkt databank). The campaign began as a group of **11** charities but the collective has quickly grown to over **140** organisations across the youth and homelessness sectors.

In January 2024 we launched a Parliamentary petition. This gained over **15,000** signatures across every area of the UK! We delivered **175** pieces of coverage and media, including live and recorded TV interviews, articles in national and local press, national radio, and podcasts – with an estimated **2.8 million** people viewing the campaign. We worked with **20** celebrities and at least **40** MPs, Ministers, senior Parliamentarians and civil servants.

// ***They need to wake up. There are people out there who need help, who are trying to get out and have difficult situations but can't really express it.*** //

– Ben, from an interview with the Big Issue

In Spring 2024 we headed into the Houses of Parliament for the first government debate on youth homelessness in 40 years. The campaign was also mentioned in the Greater London Assembly and the House of Lords. The campaign continues on into 2024-25 as we strive for an end to youth homelessness.

Read more in the Big Issue here.



Young people take the campaign to end youth homelessness to No. 10 Downing Street

Unwrapping Solutions to Youth Homelessness

We held a Christmas panel event for our partners, funders and supporters. With speakers from housing associations, councils, sector partners and young people with lived experience, the event was well attended. We discussed the ways different sectors and services can collaborate to effectively end youth homelessness.



Panellists including Stella, a young person with experience of homelessness

Preparing for the road ahead

We are in the midst of an ongoing housing crisis and London is experiencing the very sharpest end of this with 40% fewer Private Rented Sector properties than before the pandemic and every type of accommodation full and with long waiting lists. Demand for our services has never been so high, whilst we are struggling more than ever to find short- and long-term housing to move young people into. We have seen record breaking numbers of young people – the highest in our 57-year history – coming through our doors. This includes unprecedented numbers of newly recognised refugees and a growth in the numbers of young people rough sleeping. This is not likely to change any time soon.

The severity of the situation demands a bolder and bigger response that will require us to grow. We will be growing our staff team, increasing our budget and seeking a second

delivery site – ideally within quick walking distance of our Somers Town home – in an ambitious move to try and support the growing numbers of young people that come to us for help.

As our services grow so will our campaigning. We will use the #PlanForThe136k campaign to work with a newly elected Labour Government to ensure they take our call for a national strategy to end youth homelessness seriously and embed young people in all their housing plans.

The challenges ahead are daunting but we believe change is both necessary and possible. For as long as young people find themselves homeless in London, we will remain resolute in our mission to ensure their potential has a home.

If you would like to be part of our journey, please **get in touch**.



Thank you to all our funders and supporters

We are so grateful to all the individuals, charities and companies, including those who wish to stay anonymous, that have generously given their time, their money and their commitment to our vital work.

29th May Charitable Trust	Fidelity Foundation	Nationwide
4BYSIX	Fine & Country Foundation	Oak Foundation
Abstract Foundation	Foyle Foundation	Palatine Private Equity
Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation	Fusion21 Foundation	Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Albert Hunt Charitable Trust	Garfield Weston Foundation	Peter Cruddas Foundation
Ambassadeurs Group	Google UK	Phoenix Court Works
Argent LLP	Havas UK	Progress Foundation
Ashcroft Charitable Trust	Henry Smith Charity	Sam and Bella Sebba Trust
Bain & Co	Irish Youth Foundation	Santander Foundation
Berkeley Foundation	John Armitage Charitable Trust	SCS Railways
Better Green	John Lyon's Charity	Sir Paul McCartney Foundation
Bleu Blanc Rouge Foundation	Jongen Charitable Trust	Springer Nature
BNP Paribas	Kusuma Trust	StreetKidz
Brian Woolf Trust	Landaid	StreetSmart
Calleva Foundation	LHA Ltd	The Goldsmiths' Company
Charles S French Charitable Trust	London Borough of Camden	The John Coates Charitable Trust
City Bridge Trust	London Councils	The Mercers' Charitable Foundation
Depaul	Mary Kinross Charitable Trust	Titan Wealth Holdings
Drapers' Charitable Fund	Matrix Causes Fund	Two Magpies Fund
Eurostar	Mishcon Family Charitable Trust	Urban Partners
Farrer and Co	MSD in the UK	Wellcome Trust
	National Lottery Community Fund	

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