

Doorstep

"Opening doors for homeless families"



Annual Report 2024 and Accounts 2023-2024

Director's Report

Last year was exciting and occasionally nail biting. In the fiscal year 2023-2024 we had been looking at a 64k deficit but managed to turn that around and ended with a 19k surplus.

With multi-year sources of funding, for our work with children and young people, ending in October 2023 a funding deficit meant we had staff shortages as we weren't able to offer any job security to recruit. This created some uncertainty about the future and anxiety about being able to maintain services, However, remaining staff have been flexible and with the support of volunteers, services have continued and we can now look to a much more secure future.

We were immensely grateful for a one off grant from the Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund which plugged the hole for 6 months and allowed us to concentrate our efforts on securing longer term/multi year funding. We were successful in securing four sources of multi year funding ranging from 3 to 7 years duration. This meant we were able to start working towards recruitment of the roles that will be needed to start the succession process and to underpin services. We have identified a role of Operations Coordinator and a lead role for work with children and young people. We aim to have these posts filled by April 2025 at the start of the next fiscal year.

Unfortunately, this upturn in funding didn't happen in time to save the unfunded post of Parent Support/Advocate which ended in February 2024. Another casualty of the funding deficit was our Youth Project, which we had to pause in the summer of 2023 due to lack of sufficient staff or funding. Thanks to two generous donations from our patron, Victoria, Coren Mitchell, we were able to restart the Youth Project in February 2024 and maintain it without further interruption.

Similarly, I give thanks to our chair Ali Jabeen and our trustees, both old and new, for their ongoing commitment and support.

The staff team has been small but mighty in continuing to deliver services and I am grateful to my colleagues for their hard work and their dedication to ensure this. We understand the positive difference we can make to families who are going through a difficult time and that is our driving motivation.

We also give sincere gratitude to our funders, who recognise the value of our work, their support has put Doorstep on a much stronger financial footing and given us a more secure future to look forward to.

We are looking forward to the developments in the year ahead with optimism and confidence.

Vicky Fox

Our services

Our services have been developed over the years in direct response to the needs that families have expressed:

- ★ Opportunities for children and young people to play, learn and develop at our after school club, crèches, Youth Project and drop-ins.
- ★ Joint activities with the partner organisations.
- ★ Regular creative & educational activities for adults.
- ★ Information, support and guidance for parents.
- ★ 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.
- ★ Supermarket gift vouchers, hygiene products, healthy snacks and meals

The average number of people we have supported over the last three years has been 213 different people, 64 families, 81 adults and 131 children and young people. Of the children and young people additional needs include-Autism Spectrum, Tourettes, Mobility Delay, Verbal Delay and Severe Allergies.

Through the Year

January- March - We created a dragon to celebrate Chinese New Year. We made Valentine's cards, and pancakes. Scaffolding was erected for an extensive programme of external works to commence on the hostel building. The Parent Support/Advocate post was wound down due to lack of funding. We relaunched our Youth Project and maintained all our other services while waiting for the outcome of submitted funding applications to inform future planning. By the end of March we had received confirmation that three sources of multi year funding had been granted, with a fourth still to be decided.



April - June -We received a bulk donation of good quality TVs from a hotel that was upgrading their equipment. We distributed these to families who were very happy to receive them. During the Easter Holidays we ran a programme of activities and distributed a huge amount of chocolates which we won in a competition run by In Kind Direct. We celebrated Eid with a day-long party for all ages. Another successful funding application meant we were able to give each family a £50 supermarket gift card. We also received the welcome news that the fourth bid for multi year funding had been successful.



July-September- We ran our usual programme of activities and outings during the summer holidays from July 29th until August 23rd. We ran different sessions for different ages with a range of age appropriate activities and one themed activity in Science, cooking, art and crafts, sports and games each day.

We had some very hot days when we enjoyed a variety of water games and we ensured a plentiful supply of cold drinks and ice lollies to cool down. At every session children and young people were provided with fruit and a variety of healthy snacks as well as being able to eat or take home what they made in cooking sessions. The Youth Project went go karting, had an evening barbeque and restaurant meal of their choice, as well as joining the family day trips.



The activities mainly took place on our premises and in our gardens. We also took children to parks and once per week we provided a coach for a day trip to the coast for whole families. We visited Clacton on Sea, Southend on Sea, Broadstairs and Stone Bay. We had picnics on the beach, the children dug in the sand, found sea creatures, swam and paddled in the sea. At Clacton and Southend we provided entrance to the pier funfairs. In September we resumed our term timetable. An application for 40 free refurbished laptops was successful and we were able to distribute these to our families.

October - December - The company doing the external works on the building put on a fantastic Halloween party for our kids providing all the refreshments and entertainment which the kids enjoyed very much.



At Christmas we held our usual three parties for the different age groups. One for parents and under fives with a hot meal cooked in house and games for the children. Another for the kids aged 5-11 years with face painting, games, snacks, pizza and treats. The youth group went ice skating and chose chicken and chips as their guilty pleasure meal with snacks and treats. Thanks to the generosity of various schools, businesses, a local church and kind individuals every child and young person received two gifts. Every family received a £50 supermarket gift card.

Throughout the year we provided every child and young person with a birthday gift and thanks to volunteer bakers at Free Cakes for Kids Camden they all received a beautiful customised cake. Beauty Banks donated toiletries and pre-loved clothing collections were donated by IBM, Warner Bros, SOLTs and the Village School who also raised funds for Doorstep.



Some examples of the impact of our work with children and young people

Creche- 0-4 years

Case Study 1

Abdul, 2 years and Fatima, one year are siblings who arrived in London from Syria with no English language. Their mother had only a few words of English. They started to attend Doorstep's services and the children started attending creches. At first Fatima would not let go of her mum even for a few minutes. They became very regular attendees and over time have become confident, engaging and exploring activities at Doorstep. They have also developed their English language skills. Fatima can now use single words whilst engaging in activities and

she imitates staff especially in role play activities. Abdul is now able to use simple sentences (3-4 words) eg; go away, come here, where is Kamal, whilst playing with his friends and staff. He now is able to show awareness of his peers and asks for his friends if they haven't come to creche.

Case Study 2

Ibrahim, aged 3 years, was very fearful of any men entering Doorstep and would hide behind an adult. It appeared he was afraid of men's voices. His mum told us that he was even scared of his adult brother who has a deep voice. Doorstep supported him to build his confidence by making a point of chatting with male visitors and shaking their hands or waving as they came into the premises. Gradually, Ibrahim stopped hiding and would also want to shake hands, wave and say hello. Now he runs to the door when the bell rings and shouts to the creche staff "look a man is here open the door."

After -School Club-4-11 years

Case Study 3

Henrique, aged 10, showed challenging behaviour. He would push other children and use bad language. We reviewed our rules for behaviour with the whole group and gave him some responsibility in the task. This helped him to engage with the rules and own them. He was praised and encouraged when he behaved well. He is now much more well behaved and friendly towards his peers. He doesn't use bad language any more and doesn't push his way into games but waits for his turn when engaging in sports and games.

Case Study 4

Telal arrived recently from Iran with very few basic words in English e.g hello, goodbye. He was buddied with another boy of the same age and we observed them managing to communicate, using hand signs or miming things. Telal soon learned more words and would repeat what others said. One member of Doorstep's staff was once in the same situation, arriving in England with no English and she explained that to him. He likes to sit with her doing art and crafts. The other children have welcomed him and do their best to include him. His confidence has grown and he is not afraid to participate in games even if he still has limited English and understanding. His language skills are constantly growing.

Youth Project-12-18 years

Case Study 5

Sayed, aged 12 and his family, came to England as refugees. He displayed very challenging behaviour, swearing and being extremely disruptive. His behaviour was also causing problems at school where he was frequently placed in isolation and sometimes excluded. While reinforcing our rules around behaviour we reinforced the positive aspects reminding him that he is bright, capable and could be funny. He opened up to staff saying he recognised that his

behaviour was often a problem but that he didn't seem able to control it, but that he was worried about being permanently excluded from school. We gave him some tools and techniques to help him control the behaviour. We also offered him a reward, of his choosing, if he managed to avoid any further isolations or exclusions for the rest of term. He decided he wanted to earn this reward, but he also wanted to earn it for the whole group, giving himself the responsibility of trying to succeed not just for himself but for his peers too. These tools and incentives worked for him and he was successful in earning the reward for the group.

(Names have been changed)

An example of the impact of our work with families

We were very pleasantly surprised and moved by an email we received just before Christmas, from a family who were living in the hostel and using our support services five years ago.

Dear all at doorsteps,

I know it's been a long time but believe it or not I think about you all, all of the time.

I'm Marinder, I used to live above the crèche at the hostel. I had 4 children and a disabled husband.

Since leaving the hostel we set up home on the other side of Camden nearer to UCLH hospital. It's taken time to furnish and make an empty shell a home but I think we have finally got there.

I was unsure of how to approach you and have also been up but just didn't know how to come down the stairs and knock on the door. I suffer from severe anxiety and I think it's stopped me from a lot of things. I just wanted you all to know how grateful my family and I are.

I have seen Kiki a few times in Camden and I grab and hug her every time!

I remember the Vickies! I remember Sahra and Kiki. I know I've forgotten some names but I do still remember you! My mind has taken a lot to fix and get on my feet. The children have grown the eldest now 14! And my little one 7!

I was hoping to ask if I had anything I could donate, how would I go about it?

I was also hoping to get in contact with Victoria Coren Mitchell as she came to visit me at the hostel. At the time I was wearing a Batman onesie and had a massive bag full of washing with my hair in a messy bun! Not my best but it was all I had. I felt embarrassed and was ashamed I couldn't look at her in her eyes and I was scared when she was kind to me. I would just like to say to her thank you for feeling something for me, I'm sorry I could not face you and have a proper conversation. I was worried, unsure, nervous discombobulated about the situation I was in but as long as you know we are very grateful I am very grateful. I hope I am able to thank

you in person. I'd like you to know I'm ok, my children are doing well and my husband is actually living and moving and enjoying life.

Please could you also let me know if you do still take clothes / toys electrical items as donations. And how do I drop them off, is it like it use to be?

Can I come in and say hello to everyone? I know that crèche use to be on so having people around was not always a good idea. I'd also like to volunteer my time if you have anything for me to do im hard working and I'm trying to do something for someone else like they did for me when I was there. I understand what it's like being in a situation you least expect to find yourself. To Sahra your kind words have never left me your kindness towards my children I will never forgot. To kiki thank you for feeding me I felt full when you use to cook your special dishes I felt like I had a guardian sat on my shoulder. You took dirty washing out of my hands and washed and dried it for me no one has ever done that for me. I was broken. To vicky thank you for the conversations and making me accept myself. And making sure my head stayed up high and I stood tall.

I finally have an email so this is it and I'm using it!

I just wanted you all to know I can honestly say I walk with my head high I actually try and make more eye contact and try and get counted instead of being on the side lines and disappearing into the crowd. It is all because I had some really level headed strong women. Sahra, Ebony, Kiki, yourself and Victoria. I've never asked for help and never expected it or even an ear to listen to me when I felt for the ground to swallow me up. Your kindness filled my heart and made me fight, and believe. I knew I was right but didn't have a voice and you all honestly pulled me outta of my shell, and made me push that little bit more and gave me the motivation that all is not lost. In our case we were mistreated and not heard and once our voices and stories were heard along with the evidence it changed everything.

(Name changed)



The Bigger Picture

The following article (truncated) appeared in the October 2024 edition of Prospect Magazine.

Temporary accommodation nation

Families spending years living in hotels, households moved miles across the country—why are we spending billions on a system that harms those it is designed to protect? An investigation into a national scandal

By Jack Shaw [October 29, 2024](#)

Temporary accommodation is the sharp end of England’s housing crisis. Official data shows that there are now more than 117,000 households in this unenviable situation—an increase of 23 per cent in the past three years—including 151,000 children under the age of 16. Together, they could occupy every home in Cambridge.

For years, this phenomenon has been a stain on British politics—but in the past decade it has become much worse. The number of households living in temporary accommodation has been rising, more or less, since 2010, but since 2014, the rate has steadily increased almost every quarter. Over the past three years, the number of households placed in hotels or B&Bs has risen by 74 per cent nationally. The UK has more people living in stop-gap housing than any other nation in the OECD.

Households facing homelessness can be placed in temporary accommodation, funded by their local council, until a long-term home is found. They might be offered a flat, house, shared house, B&B, bedsit or hotel. Ideally, households are relocated close to school, work and family, but in recent years the number placed further from home has reached record levels. Compared with three years ago, 10,000 more households are in temporary accommodation outside of their borough.

As councils across England struggle with underfunding and a trend of real-terms budget cuts, many are buckling under the pressure of sourcing accommodation. The housing crisis makes the problem only more acute, because the pool of available housing has

dried up. Greater London, where local authorities spend £1bn every 12 months placing people facing homelessness in temporary accommodation, was once disproportionately affected. These ballooning costs are seriously threatening the ability of many to function. But now the phenomenon is growing at a faster rate outside the capital.

Through a series of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, I have found that local authorities across England are now paying millions of pounds to hoteliers to keep up with the demand for temporary accommodation. In the absence of a joined-up, national approach to tackling homelessness, an absurd scenario has also developed, in which local authorities essentially trade residents who need temporary accommodation.

Across the country, temporary accommodation is far from temporary..... I can reveal that some households have been in temporary accommodation for more than a decade.

The trend is becoming only more dystopian—and the consequences for people in temporary accommodation, some of the country’s most vulnerable residents, are severe.

For years, councils have relied on private rental properties to temporarily house families. Local authorities receive a subsidy from central government to help pay for placing people in stop-gap housing—and for landlords whose properties were too poor quality to compete in the private market it was good business to rent to local authorities instead. But since 2011, the rate of this subsidy has remained static, set at 90 per cent of the 2011 local housing allowance (the amount of housing benefit available to households renting privately; the rate varies from council to council). If rents or a B&B or hotel stay cost more—which increasingly they do—the council must make up the difference.

For a two-bedroom property in London’s most disadvantaged local authority, Barking and Dagenham, where I am an elected councillor, the authority receives £176.47 a week for every two-bedroom temporary accommodation property. The council would be entitled to £258.90, an additional £82.43 a week for every household, if the government had increased the subsidy alongside the increase of local housing allowance since 2011, taking into account rising private rents. Instead, councils are struggling to cover the shortfall.

For hotel chains including Travelodge and Premier Inn, temporary accommodation has opened up a new line of business

Frozen subsidy rates and squeezed council finances—as well as rising private rents—mean that landlords are now converting their properties into more lucrative houses of multiple occupancy, where they can cram in numerous tenants all sharing kitchens and bathrooms and paying rent separately. In a seller’s market, some are simply supplying their accommodation to the highest bidder—which is rarely, if ever, a council. With many landlords now exiting the temporary accommodation market for more profitable alternatives, there is a shortage of places for households facing homelessness. In Barking and Dagenham, the number of private landlords housing residents in such accommodation has fallen from 1,400 in 2018 to 578 in 2024, according to official figures.

Meanwhile, authorities are routinely gazumped by neighbouring councils as they struggle to secure temporary accommodation for residents, often with very little notice. The subsidy that Westminster City council receives for a two-bedroom property is £412.86 a week: more than double Barking and Dagenham’s entitlement. What this means is that Westminster can afford to place households in pricier accommodation.....

This has created a slew of negative outcomes—from councils relying on expensive hotels to councils essentially exchanging some of England’s most vulnerable residents.....

Across England, while some families stay in temporary accommodation for a few days before entering a more permanent arrangement, other stays can stretch to about a decade.

In Hackney, one person has been in a hotel for 2,929 days—and remains there—according to an FOI request. Hackney council acknowledged in an email that the situation is “not ideal”. In the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, one household has been living in a hotel for six years and eight months, or 2,400 days. In Barnet, another household has lived in a hotel for 2,058 days.....

In the 50 authorities with the highest levels of temporary accommodation in England, nearly 14,000 households have been in temporary accommodation for more than five years, according to an FOI request. In London, that’s equivalent to one in five of the households in temporary accommodation.

One household in London placed in temporary accommodation in 2000 is still there. In Dartford, Kent, another has been in temporary accommodation since 2009. In Birmingham, one household has been in stop-gap housing since at least 2011, though the authority doesn't hold information predating that year. In Manchester, the longest a household has been in such accommodation is nine years.....

Imagine living for months, even years, in temporary accommodation, where pets are banned, you have to wash your clothes in communal areas, you might have no cooking facilities and your belongings are locked up in storage. Council-owned temporary accommodation—sometimes in buildings converted from previous use, such as office blocks—is often dated and colourless, with the feel of a hospital or an army base. In one English local authority, officers have an affectionate nickname for the site they use for temporary accommodation. It starts with “HMP”, after His Majesty’s Prison Service.

Temporary accommodation can be a refuge, whether from the cost of private tenancies, domestic abuse or from something else entirely. Hallways become sites of shared experience, strangers become friends. There is a sense of community. But this does not make up for the lack of certainty and routine, or the denial of agency and dignity over a person’s life, that comes with not having a stable home.

In the language of officialdom, many of these households are not living in “separate, self-contained units”. They have no access to a kitchen or washing machines of their own. Those staying in hotels tend to have their own toilets and showers, but that is not the case in other kinds of temporary housing.....

As many as 38 per cent of households living in such accommodation are classed as vulnerable.

Abul Uddin*, an Uber driver, spent more than 12 months living in a hotel, following three separate stints at two Travelodge sites. He told me that he hadn't been able to cook a meal in over a year because he had no cooking facilities. The hotels had rejected his request for access to their kitchens.

Uddin’s story reflects the chaotic nature of the system in which he is trapped. His wife suffers from epilepsy and has had several seizures while in hotel accommodation. His elderly mother-in-law has been placed in temporary accommodation with them. The NHS had said that the accommodation was causing his wife’s health to deteriorate and he instructed solicitors to issue a legal notice against Waltham Forest, his local authority,

accusing it of not meeting its obligations under the Equality Act. “I am dying,” he said of the experience.....

It would be difficult to design a system more complex than the current temporary accommodation regime: authorities place households wherever they can afford to, but with subsidies frozen since 2011, local authorities are increasingly placing households in more disadvantaged areas where rent is cheaper.

This has led to absurd, and often cruel, outcomes. For instance, from April to June 2023, the London borough of Haringey placed 260 households in temporary accommodation outside its area of responsibility, while at the same time 232 households from 15 authorities, principally across London, were placed in temporary accommodation inside Haringey. Croydon has experienced similar, with 420 households placed inside the authority by 16 other local councils.

Local authorities are increasingly placing households in disadvantaged areas, where rent is cheaper

This scenario breeds further injustice. Not only are people who already face hardship often moved away from lives they have built up over years, they are frequently placed in disadvantaged areas where employment prospects tend to be poorer and where public services struggle to meet demand. I can reveal details of this for the first time. For example, over the same three-month period, only eight households were placed in the wealthy borough of Kensington and Chelsea, but the authority placed 194 outside its local area. Meanwhile, leafy Richmond placed 121 households outside its local area, but only 18 were placed there.

Loretta Lees, a professor of sociology at the University of Boston, and the former chair of the mayor of London’s housing panel, has accused local authorities of “erasing, socially cleansing and hiding the poor, marginalised and homeless”. But this is less the fault of individual authorities, and more a structural flaw, an unintended consequence of a poor housing and homelessness policy.

The Supreme Court has taken a dim view on authorities placing households outside their boundaries. The 2015 case of *Nzolameso v City of Westminster* (then a Conservative-run council) is a pertinent example. Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide accommodation in their own area “so far as reasonably practicable” under the terms of the Housing Act (1996). Nzolameso was a 51-year-old single mother of five children under the age of 16. She was HIV positive and suffered from diabetes and hypertension. When Nzolameso’s private landlord kicked her out, she and her family moved into two rooms in a hotel in Kensington and Chelsea before being offered a permanent property in Bletchley, some 50 miles away. Nzolameso rejected the offer because of the distance. She relied on her support network to look after her children. She also wanted to remain with her GP, and did not want to pull her children out of their school.

Under current legislation, because Nzolameso had rejected the offer, Westminster was no longer responsible for providing her with accommodation. With few options available to her, Nzolameso’s children were placed in three different foster settings. It was not until the case was brought to the Supreme Court that the ruling was reversed. In fact, the court observed that Westminster provided no evidence that it had procured accommodation in line with the Housing Act.

In another case, a teenager with autism was days away from homelessness because Devon County Council failed to decide where he should live when he became 18 (the point at which the teenager needed to move into a residential facility for adults which offered the live-in care he required). Devon offered the young man a placement 40 miles away from his mother, who did not drive, and, according to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman’s ruling, the authority expected the teenager to “make his own way to school, unsupported” despite his additional needs. The teenager missed half a term of education before Devon put travel arrangements in place. The episode had “a major impact on his mental health” and “led him to be at significant risk of self-harm”.

Authorities are failing to meet these obligations for reasons that are well documented: significant under-resourcing, increasing demand, more complex cases and a struggling housing market. All of these are outside the control of a local council. Even in cases where councils do seek solutions, those solutions are often inadequate. Without addressing the root causes of the housing crisis, there can be no real long-term answer.

Some authorities have attempted to reduce the distance at which they place households in temporary accommodation, with varying success. Tower Hamlets has paused the creation of new “zones” outside its boundaries marking the maximum distance that it will place households, after significant backlash. Critics raised concerns that the proposal risked

creating a punitive policy, akin to differentiating between “worthy” and “unworthy” households.

Under statutory guidance, local authorities are meant to keep households within their local area for temporary accommodation wherever possible. But this is routinely ignored because of cost. Many authorities block-book accommodation, placing households in cheap lodgings, regardless of whether it suits their individual circumstances. In 2015, Tower Hamlets placed 71 households at Vantage House, a converted office block on an industrial site in Merton, more than an hour away from the east London borough on public transport.

This picture is complicated further by the asylum system. While asylum claims are processed, the Home Office places claimants into accommodation without coordinating with local councils. After claims are processed, asylum seekers lose their Home Office accommodation at short notice; at that point, with nowhere to live, they seek housing support from the local authority where they were placed. It is that authority which then picks up the bill for housing refugees. Under successive Conservative governments, the Home Office dispersed asylum seekers across the country, with little consideration for rates of homelessness or households in temporary accommodation in a given area. This approach has made it more difficult for authorities to manage demand.

The far right has made this a flashpoint. In August, as anti-immigrant riots spread across the UK, rioters mobbed a hotel in Rotherham which they believed was housing asylum seekers and tried to set fire to the building. On social media, the wife of one Northamptonshire Conservative councillor called for fire to be set “on all the fucking hotels full of the bastards”. She has since been sentenced to prison for stirring up racial hatred.

Under years of Conservative austerity, homelessness in Britain rose steeply. Today, households have limited means to protect themselves from this hardship. Local authorities, meanwhile, have few levers to pull.

Locally, campaigners are organising to make life better for people who end up in temporary accommodation—and authorities are becoming more aware of the serious health and educational costs of a life in temporary accommodation. In Camden, for instance, campaigners supported by a local charity, Doorstep, secured a concession from the local authority to provide temporary accommodation sites with wifi (though Camden still hasn’t delivered on that promise, 12 months on). Lewisham is also exploring how it can provide wifi through private sector partnership.

Doorstep's chief executive, Vicky Fox, told me that the households supported by her charity are being "penalised for a lack of understanding" over their statutory rights and the requirements placed on them. Support has moved online since the pandemic, making it even harder to get help. Fox wants local authorities to provide more support to families where English is their second language, and she wants to see caseworkers visiting households in temporary accommodation in person.

Labour has promised that growth will improve lives for ordinary people. Aside from boosting the economy, the government's goal of building 1.5m homes over the next five years is intended to provide an opportunity—through supply-side reform—to prevent more households facing homelessness and ending up in temporary accommodation. More homes will, eventually, provide an exit route for households in this precarious position, but that will not happen in this parliament.

Much of the interest in housebuilding has coalesced around economics. New homes, the government and economists insist, are key to "growth, growth, growth". The moral case for house building has been under discussed by comparison, despite adequate housing being recognised in international law as an essential human right. House Building should be "measured in problems solved" as well as homes built, as Bill Payne, the former chief executive of Metropolitan Thames Valley, a housing association with roots in building homes for Afro-Caribbean communities in the 1950s, said in 2011.

While people in temporary accommodation languish on waiting lists for new properties, the bill for local councils is skyrocketing—and some households are spending years in inadequate homes, often far from their communities, work, school, friends and family. Sarah Smith*, placed in temporary accommodation in Woolwich by Tower Hamlets more than seven years ago, is tired of waiting.

"All I do at the minute is cry," she tells me, recounting the bus and three London Underground trains she takes every morning to get her son to school—a two-hour round trip. "It's like I've been forgotten." *Jack Shaw is an affiliated researcher at the Bennett Institute for Public Policy*

Breaking- Eighty children died while living in temporary accommodation in England last year, shocking new figures that highlight the impact of homelessness have revealed.

Analysis from a group of MPs also shows that, over the past five years, 74 children have died with temporary accommodation listed as a possible contributing factor to their vulnerability, ill health or death. (As reported in The Independent 28/01/2025 -Holly Bancroft,Aine Fox)

Financial Report

The financial statements for Doorstep (or 'the charity') cover the financial year ending 31 March 2024.

The fiscal year 2024 ended in a secure position, with the reserve carried forward being sufficient to support the running of the charity for a minimum of six months. The management committee and director recognise the need for, and remain committed to, pursuing multi-year funding both to minimise the risk of disruption to the charity's services, for example in the event of a downturn in one or more areas of external funding

Careful financial and operating records have been kept throughout the financial year ending on 31 March 2024. The accounts for the fiscal year ending 31 March 2024 have been examined by an independent accountancy firm. Detailed records of financial documents 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 2024 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 15/10/2024 and were signed on their behalf by the chair, Ali Jabeen.

Ali Jabeen
Chair

DOORSTEP
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<u>Income From</u>					
Donations and grants	3	113,719	51,507	165,226	202,728
Total Income		113,719	51,507	165,226	202,728
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Fundraising	4	4,736	-	4,736	4,810
Charitable activities	4	88,636	51,507	140,143	206,903
Total expenditure		93,372	51,507	144,879	211,713
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	5	20,347	-	20,347	(8,985)
Net movement in funds	9	20,347	-	20,347	(8,985)
Funds brought forward		142,074	3,000	145,074	154,059
Total funds carried forward		162,421	3,000	165,421	145,074

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities.
There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above.
The attached notes form part of these financial statements.

**DOORSTEP
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible Assets	7	300	400
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>172,217</u>	<u>214,634</u>
		172,217	214,634
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year			
	8	<u>(7,096)</u>	<u>(69,960)</u>
Net current assets		<u>165,121</u>	<u>144,674</u>
Net assets		<u>165,421</u>	<u>145,074</u>
Funds			
Restricted Funds	9	3,000	3,000
General funds	9	<u>162,421</u>	<u>142,074</u>
Total charity funds		<u>165,421</u>	<u>145,074</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2024 the charitable company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and preparation of accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the trustees on
and signed on its behalf by:

Ali Jabeen (Chair)

Company Registration No. 02476922

The attached notes form part of the financial statements.

Chair's report

Doorstep remains an essential part of the Camden community. The charity continues to work for the children and families living in temporary accommodation. By connecting children and their families, who are living in one of Camden's largest hostels, to vital services Doorstep provides a lifeline for those in need. Over the past year the dedicated Doorstep team, led by its passionate director, has worked tirelessly to create joy, respite, and opportunities for children, young people and families.

Doorstep is a constant source of support, evolving to meet the changing needs of families without a secure home. Today's challenges, such as rising austerity and uncertainty, require innovative solutions, and Doorstep continues to respond. By fostering both economic and social development for children and young residents, Doorstep plays a critical role in nurturing future generations

Doorstep has also been instrumental in raising awareness about the importance of rehousing families appropriately, reducing upheaval and insecurity. Through sign posting families to the relevant services in Camden the charity supports their journey towards permanent homes and stability

Within the basement of the hostel, Doorstep ensures children can enjoy the simple pleasures often taken for granted. A large garden to explore and a safe, well resourced environment for play, space and support for completing their homework, holiday programmes, healthy snacks and meals. The charity provides vital resources for young residents and their families. Over the last year families again received supermarket vouchers, hygiene products and essential clothing, access to washing machines, and opportunities to connect with others to build mutually supportive networks. These efforts help combat loneliness and alienation, which are often exacerbated by homelessness and the rising cost of living.

I am proud to report another successful year for Doorstep. Special thanks to our Director, Vicky Fox, whose exceptional fundraising has improved Doorsteps' financial situation. I also extend my gratitude to the Management committee and Board of Trustees for their unwavering support.

This year, we welcomed three new trustees – Judith, Roger and Rakesh whose expertise will strengthen our efforts. At the same time, we bid farewell and give our heartfelt thanks to Celia, who stepped down after three years of service as a trustee.

I would also like to thank Doorstep's patron, Victoria Coren Mitchell, for her generosity and support. Finally, a sincere thank-you to our staff, supporters, individual donors, trusts, charities, companies' schools, and volunteers. Your contributions enable Doorstep to make a meaningful impact on the lives of children and their families in Camden year after year.

Together, we will continue to create lasting positive change for those who need it most.

Ali.F.Jabeen

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

AKO Foundation
Barnett & Sylvia Shine Charitable
Foundation
Beauty Banks
Benevity
Camden Council
Camden Giving
Crucible Foundation
Devonshire Hill School
Fitzdale Trust
Free Cakes for Kids Camden
Good Things Foundation
Hampstead Wells & Campden Trust
IBM
London Community Foundation

John Lyons Trust
Kajatawa Foundation
McLaren Group
Properly Properties
Reel Fund
Sarum Hall School
SOLTs
South Hampstead High School
St Mary's Church
StreetSmart
The American School in London
The Village School
Voluntary Action Camden
Waitrose & Partners
Warner Brothers

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

The Management Committee

Ali Jabeen- Chair

Reena Malharkar-Treasurer

Judith Trounson-Secretary- Joined 04/06/2024

Jess Reddell

Roger Burgess- Joined 17/09/2024

Rakesh Vithalani- Joined 04/06/2024

Lesley Adams

Tsedey Yilala

Celia Carr- Resigned-12/11/2024

The Staff Team

Vicky Fox - Director

Khadra Mohamed - Children's Worker (part time)

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

Dilly Hira - Children's Worker (part time)

Iryna Hulam- Sessional play support

Zinedine Belabbas- Youth Project sessional

Ayyoub Kawadri-Youth Project sessional

Volunteers

ASL teachers & Students

Bell Team

Rasheda Hussain

Mara Fischbacher Gibson

Daniel Parvez

Our Patron

Victoria Coren-Mitchell

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

Doorstep Homeless Families Project
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London NW6 3QX

Tel: 0207 372 0413

Email: hello@doorsteplondon.com Website: www.doorsteplondon.com

www.facebook.com/DoorstepLondon

https://twitter.com/doorstep_london

www.instagram.com/doorstep_london

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