A Fruitful Year
It has been an exciting year for the Community Partnerships Team. So far in the project, almost 80 Home for Good partnerships have taken place, with Community Volunteers meeting regularly with clients in their local area. The Social Club is flourishing, the Berkshire project has enjoyed a successful year culminating in the Heart of Homelessness Conference, and in the summer we held an event to celebrate our work with day centres (as reported in the Summer Newsletter). Most recently we had a visit from Adam Frost from Gardener’s World to help our clients and volunteers plant herbs and flowers in The Passage’s new roof garden (see pictures below). Clients will play an active role in nurturing the plants and fruit trees, which we hope will be as nourishing and therapeutic an experience as the food produced!

Rose Hickman

Passport to Pimlico: H4G Social Club update
2016 has been a busy time at the club. Our regular Sunday sessions have been well attended, providing opportunities for members to share meals and a range of activities together. We’ve tried our hand at bingo, board games, origami and even flowerpot heaters! The club continues to act as a supportive and relaxing space to spend Sunday, see old friends and meet new people.

In recent months we have begun serving a breakfast for those who arrive early at the club and involving members in cooking the lunchtime meal. Several of our members have even led on the preparation of their speciality dish, such as Beef Bourguignon or Fish Pie. With the increased involvement of our members, we are also looking at new ways to reward the work of our client ambassadors, and recently made a trip to a Westminster Time Credits event to find out about the voucher scheme they run.

Alongside this, we have been running a weekly tablet workshop. Every Thursday we meet to learn about the tablets and how to use them. So far we have looked at downloading apps, taking pictures, using maps and email. This has been very popular and has helped a lot of people use the tablets to access their favourite music, videos and media.

The club has an exciting upcoming schedule. We run a monthly film club and a group of us will soon be going to the pictures to see A Streetcat Named Bob. We are looking forward to our Christmas Party on Sunday 18th December at Napier Hall. It has been a great year at the club and we look forward to a busy 2017.

If you are interested in attending the club, please contact Simon Campbell on 07711 596351 or simon.campbell@passage.org.uk
Oh we do like to be beside the seaside!

The H4G social club made a day trip to Brighton in the last week of October to make the most of the mild weather. Eight members came along on the outing which took in the Pier, the Royal Pavilion and the famous Lanes for a bit of window shopping. We arrived at lunchtime and headed straight to the Pier to take in the sea breeze and enjoy some fish and chips. Afterwards some of the group had tea and cake, while others had a look around the Brighton Museum. We finished off the day with a walk along the sea front, where we bought some rock as a souvenir. None of us managed to take a dip in the sea, but there’s always next time...

With sincere thanks to Premier Oil for their continued support this year. Simon Campbell
**Support & Food for Thought**

Every couple of months we get together with our wonderful Home for Good Community Volunteers for group supervision. The first part of the session focuses on a different learning theme. This year we have covered a wide array of topics including: Housing & Accommodation; Building Relationships; Understanding Mental Health; Causes of Homelessness; Coaching and finally Outreach Services. Speakers have included a mixture of internal and external colleagues, all of whom have given their time to share their expertise. We have lots of themes planned for 2017, from Trauma Informed Care through to Introduction to Welfare Benefits. An important part of each group supervision is time focused on reflective practice – an opportunity to feed back experiences, learn from one another and share ideas. I always leave these sessions feeling inspired at having such an enthusiastic and thoughtful team of Home for Good volunteers.

*Katherine Peter*

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**Client Testimony: Lee**

“I’ve been meeting regularly with my Home for Good volunteer Ania for around a year now.

It’s always a pleasure to meet up with Ania. She’s very friendly, smiley, bubbly and full of character. She’s been a great support, particularly through tough times over the past year.

In my experience and from what I’ve heard from others, moving into accommodation after living on the streets can be very challenging. The Home for Good scheme is a good way to help a client feel more settled in London.

My experience of being homeless is something that very few people are aware of, it’s something I kept and continue to keep to myself. This can be hard at times particularly when I don’t attend the day centre, it’s been good to have someone to talk to outside of The Passage about these experiences and any ongoing problems. On one of our meetings we planned to go (cont. on next page)
Lee (cont. from previous page) for a coffee and a walk around central London, however it turned more into a tour of homelessness in London. I enjoyed giving her more of an insight into it and I know from talking to her that she thoroughly enjoyed it herself.

Ania has been fantastic. She’s supported me through a few personal problems, encouraged me to sign up for another marathon, attended a tour of a gym with me which I’ve gone on to join and helped me look into volunteering.

I’ve really enjoyed my time on the Home for Good scheme, and hugely appreciate the support I’ve received from Ania and the rest of the Home for Good team.”

Lee Davey

Community Volunteer Testimony: Manuela (from Volunteer Centre Hackney bulletin)

Manuela has been volunteering at the Home for Good project (funded by Oak Foundation) at The Passage for 18 months. “Before I started volunteering, I was a manager for a software company in Shoreditch, but I wanted to do something different with my life while I still could. I wanted human interaction as opposed to interaction with a machine.”

Manuela visited a volunteer fair organised by Volunteer Centre Hackney at Dalston CLR Library, and it was there she met Katherine from The Passage who told her about the Home for Good project.

Home for Good assists and empowers clients to settle into their local community after they have moved into their own accommodation. They do this with the support of a team of volunteers. Home for Good operates in every borough of Greater London. Volunteers use their local knowledge to empower clients make the most of their community, help clients get to know the area and reduce the feelings of loneliness that often lead people to abandon tenancies and tragically return to the streets. They have volunteers from all walks of life, reflecting their diverse client group. The Passage provides full training and support to all their volunteers, with ongoing training and supervision.

Manuela said the “training has given me a better understanding of homelessness and how to cope with the complex issues connected with it.” When asked whether befriending combats loneliness Manuela replied “Yes, absolutely. The client I see now, before she enrolled at a local college, was very isolated. She had no contact with her family or friends and was new to Hackney. From personal experience, I know London can be a very harsh and isolating city if you are struggling.”

When asked what she gets from volunteering she said she “finds volunteering challenging and rewarding. It’s a way of gaining trust, letting someone know that they are not alone and have someone they can turn to for advice. I get to help someone take a small step towards their bigger goals.”

The Passage is looking for Home for Good Community Volunteers across London to support their clients through befriending to combat loneliness and isolation. We would love to hear from you! Contact us on 020 7592 1873 or homeforgood@passage.org.uk. Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and 2017.