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*Mick Clarke, The Passage Chief Executive, with The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, at The Passage on Monday 13 August 2018, to launch the government's new Rough Sleeping Strategy.*

**We welcome the Government's new rough sleeping strategy, but we believe that it is only a start: to end rough sleeping, sustained commitment and funding will be needed over the next few years.**



**Autumn newsletter, 2018**

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## Welcome to The Passage's Autumn newsletter

When I last wrote to you we were just coming out of the grips of one of the coldest winters the UK has had for many years; now for the past few weeks we have seen the hottest summer since 1976.

Both extremes are very dangerous for people who are on the streets. That's why I am pleased to share with you some of the work we are doing to help people off the streets; particularly new projects, such as our modern slavery work and a new street outreach service. We also share the interesting reflections of one of our supporters.

Enclosed with this newsletter is our most recent Impact Report (produced at no cost to The Passage), which I hope you will enjoy reading. Also enclosed are details about our "Night Under The Stars" concert, on 6 November. We will be also be holding our Carol Service at St Margaret's, Westminster Abbey, on 14 December. I do hope you will be able to come to both events.

The demand for our services continues to increase; since I last wrote to you our Resource Centre alone has helped more than 1,600 people and had nearly 14,000 visits!

**Without your support our work would not be possible, so thank you so much; your support really does transform lives.**

Yours



**Mick Clarke**  
Chief Executive

## Supporting The Passage

I have been involved with The Passage for seven years – since 2011 when I happened to meet someone who worked for The Passage and they encouraged me to find out more.

I am a volunteer and my family's charitable trust is a donor. Over the years I have worn many volunteering hats, from helping with the Victoria Station collection, to organising events and helping to create and maintain the roof garden.

The Passage's extensive volunteer base enables people from various backgrounds, talents and nationalities to brainstorm on initiatives to support its work. The "alchemy" that takes place is as a result of a shared compassion for those in need.

I have huge admiration for the frontline staff. For more than a year I took the minutes at the Service Managers' Meetings and, through that, gained a view of the day-to-day challenges that these people face. The Passage serves many clients with incredibly complex needs; the Managers' ability to keep positive, combined with their willingness to help each other on a particular issue when each of their own responsibilities was so consuming, was impressive.

The Passage's head chef, Claudette Dawkins, is also an inspiration. Each day she provides tasty, healthy "comfort food" that the clients enjoy. Always smiling, she has an incredible "can-do" attitude to solving any setbacks, such as power cuts or a broken freezer,

The Passage has a heart that transcends bureaucracy. While necessary rules enable it to function at an organisational level, when a

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particular client has a need that falls outside those rules, compassion take precedence.

**From a donor's perspective, if you are looking to support a charity that has the fundamental goal of helping homeless people (without prejudice) off the streets for good, The Passage is an excellent choice.**

**From a volunteer's perspective, I encourage people who want to help the homeless to get in touch with The Passage.** Volunteering opportunities are posted on its website, but even if there were nothing listed that

*Gina, left, with Adam Frost the designer of The Passage roof garden, and volunteer Pamela De Ridder.*

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you think would suit you, there is likely to be some way in which you can help. Volunteering can be an incredibly rewarding experience and it's well worth an initial meeting and discussion. **Gina Wyles**

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***There are many ways that you can support The Passage. If you are interested in getting involved or to find out more about becoming a volunteer, please contact [volunteering@passage.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@passage.org.uk)***

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## Tackling modern slavery



**The Passage works with the increasing number of homeless people who are affected by modern slavery. Modern slavery and human trafficking affect thousands of the most vulnerable people in the UK, including those who are homeless.**

The Passage witnesses it through service users telling of their experiences of being approached; by victims arriving at our services for help; or by seeing service users being approached as they leave our building. In 2017 The Passage produced a report, *Understanding and Responding to Modern Slavery within the Homelessness Sector* (<http://passage.org.uk/modern-slavery>), and has recruited an Anti-Slavery Co-ordinator to implement the report's recommendations.

This national work, funded by the London Housing Foundation, involves our Anti-Slavery Co-ordinator giving modern slavery guidance to organisations, police and local authorities that work in the homelessness sector. In addition to collaborating with other outreach teams, we create awareness among rough sleepers, ensure we support those affected by this crime, and work to bring about the wider systemic change needed to address this issue by working with the Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, the Home Office's Modern Slavery Unit and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

**The Passage is determined to play its part in bringing an end to this horrific crime.**

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## Night Under The Stars

**Our gala fundraising event, Night Under The Stars, will be held at The Royal Festival Hall on Tuesday, 6 November.** "Northern Lights", will celebrate the natural wonders of the Nordic lands, with ever-popular pieces by Grieg and Sibelius.

Hosted by BBC Radio 3 presenter, Petroc Trelawny, it will feature outstanding musical performances from renowned soloists, the Orion Orchestra and Streetwise Opera.

Themed receptions, before and after the concert, will include Nordic-inspired food and drink, making for a magical evening.

A flyer is enclosed. We do hope that you will be able to attend and encourage your family and friends to purchase tickets for what promises to be a very special night and to raise much-needed funds for The Passage.

**Tickets are available direct from the Southbank Centre; [southbankcentre.co.uk](http://southbankcentre.co.uk) or from the ticket office 020 3879 9555**

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## The Community Intervention Team



For many years, The Passage has provided street outreach services, going out directly to people on the streets to help them take their first steps out of rough sleeping.

In April this year we launched an additional Community Intervention Team, supported by the Victoria Business Improvement District (VBID), to respond further to the rising numbers of rough sleepers on our streets. Scott, one of the team, shares his experiences.

Our three-strong Community Intervention (Outreach) Team, operates during the day in the Victoria area. In partnership with VBID and other Outreach teams, it encourages street-homeless people to engage with The

*The team, from left: Scott Hamilton, Josh Brown and Mabel Aganga-Williams.*

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Passage Resource Centre and to end their homelessness. Our aim is to help homeless people get back on their feet and, with the help of specialists, show them the best way of turning their lives around.

The day typically begins with checking emails from our partners (other Outreach teams, etc) and responding to emails from members of the public and local businesses before going out, either to follow up messages of concern about someone seen on the streets, or to interact with people we find on the streets and to try to help them off the streets.

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The rise in recent years in the number of people ending up on the streets and the number we see who are suffering from mental health and drug issues are big challenges, as is the lack of available accommodation options, but dealing with very unwell people in that situation is even more challenging. We are having to be increasingly innovative in our approach to helping people off the streets.

It is early days, but we have already helped many people off the streets. The biggest reward in being part of this team is to be able to help someone who, through no fault

of their own, is sleeping on the streets; to get them into accommodation, and to see them work to a plan that gets them into employment. Often that starts with small steps, but it is achievable and is the best route out of homelessness.

**Anyone of us can become homeless. After a shaky period in my teens and twenties, I found the strength to rebuild my life and subsequently went on to spend much of my working life as a police officer. I now really enjoy helping others to rebuild their lives and to take the first steps to a better future.**

*Scott Hamilton*

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## **Karen's story**

**One of the key features of the government's new rough sleeping strategy, *Housing First*, aims to help the most entrenched rough sleepers off the streets and into a sustainable future.**

**Karen** has benefited from The Passage's *Housing First* project, Montfort House accommodation scheme, which it has been running for many years. Suffering from alcoholism and substance abuse to cover up the trauma of childhood sexual abuse, Karen had been sleeping rough for seven years; had been sectioned many times, and arrested for aggressive behaviour. When she gave birth to a son, he was taken into the care of her sister and Karen attempted suicide by jumping from the second storey of a building. She suffered severe injuries, including a broken back and pelvis.

Just before arriving at The Passage she and her partner decided to turn their backs on

drink and drugs. We understood the importance of her relationship with her partner and allowed him to stay with her at Montfort House three nights a week. She was initially shy, anxious and traumatised, but we slowly built a rapport with her and increased the support to help her manage her significant health issues, which have improved with her higher standard of living.

She got back in contact with her mother and sister, began speaking to her son more often, and eventually began visiting and staying with her mother, and (while there) visiting her sister and son. When she was ready for more independent accommodation, she moved to another part of the country where she could be closer to her son and where her partner had secured employment. She and her partner recently got engaged and both are still abstinent. Karen now sees her son on a daily basis. **After it seeming that she would never get off the streets, Karen has achieved what we all want; happiness, security and a purpose in life.**

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