

The Marylebone Project
Annual Report 2007/08
Portman House Trust



'Empowering homeless women into independent living'

A partnership between
Portman House Trust & Church Army.
Charity Commission Registration No. 226226-67



A welcome from the Director of the Marylebone Project



It is a privilege through the Marylebone Project to lead a service which has opportunities to develop and to become involved in the issues facing thousands of women across the city of London and beyond. We are inspired daily by the strength of the women we serve within the project.

A highlight of this year has been the visit of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the President of Church Army. He brought us a message from God – that we are all "very special people" – and this has been an inspirational and constantly-repeated phrase ever since. To see the joy on everyone's face upon meeting him and receiving his kind words, provided me with an everlasting memory of the 11th June 2008. How wonderful to meet, face-to-face, such a great man.

Many of the experiences of women in today's society are those of lack, and of poverty. There is a lack of knowledge of the housing systems and this often means that women accept inadequate housing. For women who are fleeing domestic violence, having a lack of knowledge about their rights to accommodation can lead to them staying in police stations overnight or on friends' or family sofas. We are able to help women who have suffered many forms of abuse by offering an emergency bed at our Cosway Street hostel. 4 emergency beds are available to women fleeing domestic violence, who may have permanent tenancies but need a place of safety. The beds are also available to all homeless women. We carry out brief assessments and the beds are a great resource to the city of London. There are very few services who have this provision and we are proud to say that churches across the country offer their support through donations of food, clothing and toiletries to help the women during their stay.

We have fostered good relationships with partner agencies within the borough of Westminster. The local police force tell us how important access to the emergency beds is for their service. A warm bed is far more welcoming than a prison cell and many of the women who they remove from abusive situations have no option but to stay in the cells when no alternative can be found. We offer a place of safety and support to the women who are placed with us.

Across the project we are accomplishing some great outcomes for the women both through the Women's Day Centre and through the Valentia Suite (mental health). The Day Centre sees more than 600 women coming through our doors each year. The support offered includes housing advice, support for rough sleepers and classes in a range of interesting subjects. The Valentia Suite provides a stable living environment for women with severe and enduring mental health issues. We have targeted move-on for some of the women who have lived in the hostel for more than 3 years and successfully re-housed two long term residents during the last six months. We continue to work closely with Westminster's Supporting People team and through their support in prioritising the long-stay residents we will continue to develop our working relationships with Community Mental Health services right across the borough. It is important to show that we are able to empower women towards living independently but also, for the women leaving Valentia Suite, we aim to help them to achieve long term independence, living as part of the new communities they enter into.

The Day Centre's role is far-reaching and the support we provide to women crosses over faith and cultural barriers by showing how we can create new communities. We are raising the expectations of the women we serve by treating them equally and with dignity and respect. This will encourage them to raise their own expectations of other services when seeking advice or support. During Poverty and Homelessness Action Week, the women were encouraged by their keyworkers to tell their stories. They spoke about their past and their hopes for the future. What better way of communicating what the Marylebone Project is about, than to set out, in their own words, a sample of their stories? Please pray for all of the residents and the staff at the project as we pray for their strength and happiness as the future unfolds.

Carol London-Baptiste

Project Director





Chairman's introduction

A cynical journalist once said to Mother Teresa that her work was only a drop in the ocean. She replied with a smirk that the ocean was made up of many small drops. The Marylebone Project day after day is dropping water in the ocean, as one by one we impact the lives of women who find themselves homeless.

The Marylebone Project has an impressive array of services, residential, support, and practical, which aim to empower homeless women into independent living. The Day Centre does fantastic work helping resource and equip women through education, recreation and fun!

Driving all we do is the Christian ethos of the project. We believe each of the women we work with is unique and loved by God. Our President Desmond Tutu made an inspirational visit to the

project and coined the phrase that the women were "very special people". The Bridge Project provides an interesting programme of groups and events and creates a way for all residents and clients to explore their own spirituality.

The Marylebone Project has a fantastic staff team, and we are grateful for their hard work and commitment.

I am delighted to endorse this report, and would ask you to support us financially and in prayer. We need your help to continue to keep changing lives, empowering women, and dropping water in the ocean.

Mark Russell

Chief Executive - Church Army
Acting Chair of The Marylebone Project Board



The vision for the future of the Marylebone Project is for women to continue to find a safe haven and a place of peace to remain until they are able to move into more independent accommodation. We provide temporary accommodation to homeless women and the women have varied experiences. Westminster is a difficult borough to become homeless within. Women's hostel services are few and far between and the mixed hostels provide medium to high support services which includes housing people with dependencies in a mixed (male/female) environment. In keeping with the Project's history, we seek to maintain the women-only service, delivering accommodation and support services but also to add on services that will help the women to improve their abilities and employment and skills base.

The women we house come from varied backgrounds. They have gone through some harrowing experiences that have led to their homelessness and our role is to help them to come to terms with their recent past and to move forward. Poverty and the lack of knowledge of housing systems often mean that women fleeing violent relationships, or following the breakdown in relationships, seek refuge on the streets. To seek refuge on the streets means that they may have had no alternatives; estrangement from families and long/short term relationships, drug and alcohol dependencies can all lead to women becoming destitute and homeless. The Marylebone Project seeks to support all homeless

women whatever their need or circumstances by providing two hostels with a total of 112 beds, 4 set aside for emergency use in any 24 hours and a Day Centre for homeless women at Portman House, which is owned by Portman House Trust, Bradbury House and Elgood House, which are leased from Church Army, and the Eileen Carey Day Centre within Bradbury House.

As a Trust, we don't run just hostels but a fully integrated homeless project that sees lives changed and women positively resettled back into the wider community. During the year, as part of our efforts to avoid creating dependency, we have been helping our residents to take a more active role in finding their own move-on accommodation, and the results have been encouraging. The residents and clients of the Project are involved in a variety of ways in influencing the management of the Project through participation in steering groups to discuss new developments within the Project and involvement in resident meetings.

The partnership between Portman House Trust and Church Army has continued to produce very positive results. Church Army is investing in the resources of the Bridge Project which seeks to develop appropriate ways for the residents and day visitors to explore faith and spirituality. In relation with the Bridge the Project seeks to develop community within the project and communities of move-on accommodation for residents.





Staff stories - the reasons why we are here



Esther Irving gives emotional support in the Women's Day Centre



Thérèse Robertson helping to make a difference with residents experiencing mental health issues

Esther Irving gives a Project Worker's perspective on the Women's Day Centre

A big part of my work is giving advice and talking to women who have just been made homeless or are sleeping rough. They often need emotional support which can include problems in their past and the difficulties they are experiencing now; we are a friendly face they can talk to about what they are going through. We provide practical advice about benefits, paying bills, managing debt and finding somewhere to live. Twice weekly I help small groups of women learn about computers and to use the internet during Open Access sessions. The women use these sessions to look for accommodation and employment; they also love keeping in contact with friends and family.

The project touches so many women's lives across a very broad age range; older ladies who can often be very lonely and socially isolated can find friendship, and rough sleepers can access a warm safe place to escape from the streets. The women can make use of a wide range of services such as laundry facilities, showers, food, advice and activities.

Nothing can beat the feeling of being able to find accommodation for a rough sleeper or when women who have mental health issues or turbulent pasts start to join in with groups and interact with staff and other service users.

The Day Centre team has helped so many women to overcome so many problems and only recently we added another fantastic achievement to the list. Jan was a rough sleeper for 10 years, which had major implications on her mental and physical health. She started to access the day centre and over the space of 2 years we tried desperately to house her; however she was very suspicious and scared about taking steps towards independent living. The Day Centre team helped her with managing her mental health issues, found her accommodation and supported her to make the transition from the streets and into independent living.

Lots of friendships are made through the Day Centre, and the women flourish knowing that they have somewhere to go where people will help them to deal with life. My team are awesome and I really love working for the project.

Mental Health Key Worker Thérèse Robertson takes time out from her work on the Valentia Suite to share her experiences 3 months on from starting at the unit.

We have 14 residents living on our unit and 4 permanent staff members, my job involves helping residents to maintain and improve their mental health and to become more independent. We work very closely with our clients and have manageable caseloads of 3 to 4 women at any given time, which means we can provide a high level of personal support. Sometimes residents need general support such as help with making phone calls, carrying out daily tasks, reading letters, etc. We are also on hand for when things don't go well and often have to manage a number of issues relating to clients' mental health.

The unit gives very vulnerable women real stability through secure housing, and the high provision of support means that residents are able to access the level most appropriate to their needs. Many will start off needing a great deal of support and we often find that as they become more independent they visit us less and less. The unit has great links with partner agencies and internal units, and we are able to refer clients onto other activities/occupations that will further aid their mental health. We help clients to build routine in their lives; when some clients start at the unit they might for instance sleep all day and need help engaging in meaningful occupation.

The best bit about my work with the Marylebone Project is being able to spend time with the residents and seeing them being able to do one thing independently that day and the impact it has on their mental health.

Since starting at the unit in September I have seen lots of small changes with our clients. One client I supported had a relationship breakdown and drug addiction issues; this eventually led to a breakdown in her mental health and a psychotic episode. Through the work of the Valentia Suite, she stabilised and started to attend Westminster Drug Project, she also started music therapy and art therapy which allowed her to express herself in a much safer way whilst giving her a goal in life. She is now about to move on from the unit, has changed her peer group and is determined to stay drug-free. She is also rebuilding relationships with her son and daughter and is starting to provide a parental role for them. She is now working with employment agencies and is on the road to securing employment.

Staff Team at 31 March 2008

The project has 45 much valued staff members, key contacts include:

Carol London-Baptiste - Project Director

Carol Jones - Unit Manager, Bradbury House and Valentia Suite

Joyce Garton - Housing & Administration Manager

Angie Mack - Unit Manager, Elgood/Portman House

Monique Williams - Valentia Suite Team Leader

Maria Hagi-Pavli - Day Centre Manager

Sister Heather Dadds and

Captain Mark Dadds - The Bridge

James Marlow - Fundraising & Marketing

Achievements by residents - rebuilding lives



“When I separated from my husband I could not afford to stay at the same flat simply it was expensive. I had to find another place. I went to the council and ask their advice; they did not help me because they thought I intentionally made myself homeless. I ended up in tears.

I called "women's link" they were great. Immediately the lady there called a few hostels and she got a same day interview with Church Army.

My project worker Hanna helps me with everything and bore my depressive mood.

She advised me to take up a course and introduced me to a career advisor. At the end I made up my mind to study Conservation at the London Metropolitan University. I am a part time student this is my third year and one more year to go to finish.”

“I came to live in England in 1991 as a refugee escaping the harsh reality and the mistreatment I have witnessed just because I am a woman. Recalling back my homelessness history, since I had arrived here I never owned or lived in a council flat. The norms were to let a flat or studio from private landlord, when I live and get a job and feel stable for a period of time, then I had to leave and mainly the reasons will be a notice from the landlord wanting his/her flat.

The Church Army hostel is my very first experience of hostel living. At the beginning of it I was a bit nervous and worried of sharing and living with others but as time went by I came to like it and felt happy that I am not alone as there are women who

share my situation and going through some emotion, hope and desire for a new start. Being in this hostel for nine months I start to gain confidence in myself by opening up to others and getting the support I need from the management and my keyworker.

I am very optimistic towards my future and my plans. My priority is being rehoused; having my own place after all these years of homelessness means total security and sense of belonging which I am longing to.

Meanwhile I am working hard on my childcare course and I hope to finish it successfully and follow it by attending work placement and then start working in my chosen field.”

“The reason why I became homeless is because I couldn't look after myself and I was a mother of a 7 year old at the time. I couldn't cope with life. I could never have imagined being like this. I had a nervous breakdown through prolonged depression.

Eventually I went into a supported hostel. I was so scared this was how my life

would be forever. At the time I was trying to make them understand what was happening, because anything connected to mental health means madness, which made me scared. My fellow residents understood.

Whilst I was there a worker encouraged me and I started to study art and I volunteered at the British Museum in the Education department. I stayed there for 2½ years. I was responsive to staff and felt staff put a lot of energy into me.

Everything bad that's happened has had consequences but also benefits. I am still trying to reach the potential of the person I could have been when I was young through a support network. Before I didn't know why things happen but now I do. Now I feel confident. This nervous breakdown has made me aware of the necessary support that I need if it happens again. I know what to do to look after myself now, trust in myself, make decisions and choices and in between time when feeling unwell, to get help.”



Young Girls Health and Well-Being Group

A new initiative where girls between the ages of 11 to 14 will receive cookery classes, mentoring, invited speakers, homework support and access to gym facilities and yoga classes, all within the Marylebone Project. Referrals will come from schools and youth support agencies.



Our vision for the future

The vision of the project is:

- To work holistically with homeless women to enable them to live life to the full
- To empower women to address and move on from the experiences that have led to their homelessness
- To provide shelter and support to assist women to maximise their access to benefits, employment opportunities, training and independent living skills
- To empower staff to deliver a high quality service to our client group
- To enable women to explore their faith and spirituality and to develop communities throughout the project
- To work with young people and families with a view to preventing future homelessness
- To inform Christians and others to influence their attitudes and actions towards homeless women

Key achievements 2007-8

Service user involvement:

Health & safety committee, residents' reps, H&S training, staff recruitment, protection of vulnerable adults training, health training

Activity groups:

Cookery classes, study groups, swimming group, film nights, pampering nights, walks, keep fit, get - together, dance group, activity evenings

Clients into hostel

Number in emergency beds	267
Of which, number moved into hostel:	61
Bed occupancy:	94.7% average for year

Move on/resettlement:

Planned moves:	69
Average length of stay:	15 months

Day Centre:

Successful external tenancy sustained:	107
Resettled into the hostel:	63
Advice for first stage accommodation:	153
Numbers accessing rough sleepers drop-in:	257
New referrals to Day Centre:	178
Clients attending Day Centre:	446

Spiritual activities:

Monthly Holy Communion, resident led weekly prayer group, bible study group, seasonal events for Christmas and Easter, homeless action book created, involvement with local church, prayer diary



The members of the Marylebone Project Board during the year have been:

Mr Mark Russell (Chair)
 Mr James Archer
 Mr Neil Biles
 The Revd Wendy Saunders
 Mr Des Scott
 Miss June Simpson

The members of the Liaison Group are:

Mr Neil Biles (Chair)	Mr Grahame Hindes
Mrs Annette Mellish	Mrs Yvonne White
Ms Iman Achara	Mrs Gladys Meka
Sr Theresa Pountney	
The Revd Graham Buckle	
Mr Des Scott	
Cllr Barbara Grahame	
Mr Marco Torquati	

Income and expenditure account for the year to 31 March 2008



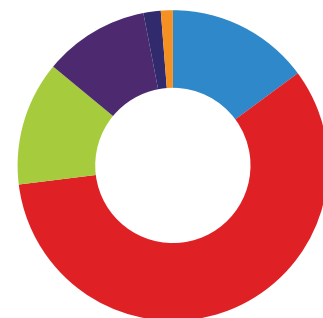
	2008	2007
Income		
Supported Housing	844,744	806,367
Supporting People	926,793	905,071
Donations	178,722	97,224
Legacies	20,906	85,246
Other income	32,353	27,522
	2,003,518	1,921,430
Expenditure		
Management and administration	308,590	256,064
Services	1,205,947	1,202,658
Routine maintenance	198,427	179,300
Planned maintenance	70,127	31,972
Property lease charges	227,500	227,500
Depreciation	37,248	37,248
Fundraising	25,814	21,147
Total operating expenditure	2,073,653	1,955,889
Interest payable and similar charges	1,074	1,269
Total expenditure	2,074,727	1,957,158
Deficit for the year before and after taxation	(71,209)	(35,728)
Revaluation (losses)/gains	(103,573)	22,427
Total recognised surpluses and deficits for the year	(174,782)	(13,301)

Total staff costs were £1,159,491 (2007: £1,142,394) and are included under costs of services and management and administration.

Balance sheet at 31 March 2008

Fixed assets		
Housing properties at valuation	1,556,000	1,682,000
Other fixed assets	59,282	74,103
	1,615,282	1,756,103
Current assets: debtors	224,775	275,739
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(15,329)	(29,286)
Net current assets	209,446	246,453
Total assets less current liabilities	1,824,728	2,002,556
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(4,701)	(7,747)
	1,820,027	1,994,809
Capital and reserves		
Restricted reserves	26,998	81,214
Revenue reserves	353,674	370,667
Revaluation reserves	1,439,355	1,542,928
	1,820,027	1,994,809

Expenditure breakdown



Management and administration	15%
Services	58%
Routine/planned maintenance	13%
Property lease charges	11%
Depreciation	2%
Fundraising	1%

Statement of the Trustee

The summarised financial statements set out here are the responsibility of the trustees. They represent a summary of information extracted from the full annual financial statements of Portman House Trust for the year ended 31 March 2008 which were approved on 12 September 2008 and which have been audited by BDO Stoy Hayward LLP and have received an unqualified opinion. The financial statements have been submitted to the Housing Corporation. These summarised financial statements cannot provide a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity.

For further information the full annual financial statements should be consulted. Copies can be obtained by contacting Portman House Trust, 1 - 5 Cosway Street, London NW1 5NR.

Mark Russell
on behalf of the Trustee

Auditors' statement to the Trustee

In our opinion these summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements which received an unqualified audit opinion.

BDO Stoy Hayward LLP
Chartered Accountants and
Registered Auditors
Epsom, Surrey



Thank you to our supporters

We remain ever grateful to our financial supporters, many of whom have made significant long-term commitments to our work, enabling us to provide vital services for homeless women.

Companies

Aegis Group PLC
Alan Day Holdings Limited
Associated Tower Cinemas Limited
Big Yellow Group
Cattles Plc
Compass Group PLC
Deutsche Bank
Doughty Hanson & Co
Go-Ahead Group plc
Haynes Publishing Group PLC
Hikma Pharmaceuticals
John Lewis Partnership
Johnson Matthey PLC
Land Securities PLC
Persimmon PLC
Smith & Nephew PLC
Spectris PLC
Stannah Management Service Limited
Telford Homes PLC
The Lotus Group
Timbmet Limited
Tissue Science Laboratories PLC
VISA Europe
Waterside Partnership Limited
WM Morrison & Sons

Trusts & Foundations

City of Westminster Charitable Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
Grainger Charitable Trust
Home the Homeless
J Paul Getty Jr. Charitable Trust
John Laing Charitable Trust
Land Aid Charitable Trust
MODCARE
Parador Properties Charitable Trust
Sir Cliff Richard Charitable Trust
St James's Place Foundation
The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
The Beatrice Laing Trust
The Calleva Foundation
The Carron Charitable Settlement
The Coutts Charitable Trust
The Gilbert Edgar Trust
The Huggard Charitable Trust
The Joseph Rank Trust
The Linbury Trust
The Mrs I. D. Rope 3rd Charitable Settlement
The Niniski Trust
The Queen Anne's Gate Foundation
The Rowan Charitable Trust
The White Oak Charitable Trust
The William Allen Charitable Trust
Wates Foundation
Westminster Amalgamated Charity

Livery Companies

Carpenters' Company
The Company of Security Professionals
Leathersellers' Company Charitable Trust
Worshipful Company of Fan Makers

Churches

All Saints, Findon Valley
All Saints, Margaret Street
All Souls, Langham Place
Christ Church, Epsom
Hendon Baptist Church
Holy Innocents, Kingsbury
Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, Hampstead
St Andrew's, Catford
St Andrew's, Roxbourne
St Andrew's, Worthy Down
St Columba, Collingtree
St George's, Beckenham
St James' Church, Emsworth
St Johns, Felbridge
St Lukes, Hampstead
St Mary the Virgin, Horsell
St Mary the Virgin, Purley on Thames
St Mary's & St Luke's, Spring Grove
St Mary's, Cheshunt
St Mary's, Kippington
St Nicholas, Chislehurst
St Paul's, Marylebone
St Thomas-a-Becket, Warblington & Emsworth
Swedish Church

Statutory

Westminster Supporting People
Communities & Local Government, Places of Change
Voluntary Action Westminster
Westminster Primary Care Trust
The Housing Corporation

Individual Supporters

Mr Alexander Badenoch
Cllr B Grahame
Lord & Lady Carey of Clifton
Mr & Mrs Eric Clapton CBE
Mr Charles Howson
Mr & Mrs D Witter
Mr E H Bonham-Carter
Mr Rory Bremner

The project thankfully acknowledges the continued financial support of Church Army and the Portman House Trust.



Edited & Produced by
James Marlow, JM Professional Fundraising

Photography: Peter Stevens

Design: Red Kite Design

The Marylebone Project Bradbury House, 1 - 5 Cosway Street, London NW1 5NR

t. 020 7262 3818 f. 020 7402 8752 www.maryleboneproject.org.uk