



# emmaus Brighton & Hove

working together to end homelessness

Winter 2018

## THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE STATISTICS

### How was 2018 for you?

Emmaus Brighton & Hove can boast some proud achievements this year – we increased our Community capacity to 53, thanks to our cottage refurbishment project that added five new places.

- More local people than ever discovered Emmaus, bringing in more custom and pushing us closer to our goal of complete self-sufficiency.
- Our vans have had their busiest year yet, with donations and collections both up, allowing us to support both Companions and the local community.
- More Companions have taken up training opportunities and achieved nationally recognised qualifications, in hospitality & catering and in first aid.

### But the homeless crisis continues to deepen.

- Rough sleeping in our city continues to rise every year - up almost 25% on recent figures, the second highest in the country.
- Thousands more make up the unseen homeless – people who are sofa-surfing with friends, living in bed & breakfasts, or dependent on the kindness of strangers.

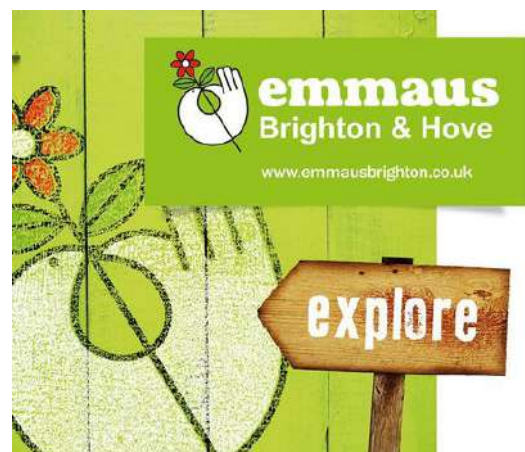
- 1 in 69 people in our city do not have secure accommodation.
- Local outreach workers in the city deal with 30 new cases of street homeless each week.
- Government plans to cap housing benefit for places like Emmaus, without which we may not survive, have not yet been discarded.

Statistics source: Emmaus UK, Shelter and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

### How can you help

So this Christmas, please support us however you can – by making a donation, by attending our Christmas Fair, or by choosing to do your gift shopping here. We can't do it without you.

***Merry Christmas to all our supporters and customers !***



## OUR NEW COMMUNITY MANAGER



Nick Eaton has a long history with Emmaus Brighton & Hove – not only does he remember the building when it was still a convent, but as the partner of CEO Christine Squince he's been a regular visitor to the Community for many years. Now the new Community Manager, replacing longstanding Community Leader Mathieu Delarue, he's keen to make his mark and oversee the organisation's continuing development:

*"The Community's always evolved, from day one. I don't think the ethos is any different from when it started, but changes have to be made."*

Nick, previously a horticulture lecturer at Plumpton College, is particularly keen to improve training and personal development for Companions, both in practical areas such as benefit claiming and online form-filling, and longer term skills such as I.T. and money management. And with the demands on all homeless charities growing each year, he wants to create a distinct organisation for more long-term and mid-term Companions – those who will use the Community to develop and thrive, rather than those just looking for a temporary hostel.

*"The Community's never suited everyone. We want to make sure that we're right for the Companions and that they're right for us."*

Nick is keen to help out in the shop or café on busy days, to get to know all the Companions and encourage a bond between Companions and staff. But he knows managing the largest Emmaus community in the UK is no easy task:

***"Just finding out how the building works and remembering all the names is hard! But my challenge is to get Companions to engage, and make use of the opportunities we're going to create."***

## Thinking about volunteering?

The size of our Community means that additional support is always required - whether that's helping to sort donated goods, work in the cafe, tend the gardens or just assist with events on an occasional basis. If you are interested please complete a form via our website or ask at the counter in our Secondhand Superstore or Emmaus by the Sea in Southwick.

We need people who share our ethos - that we should help those whose needs are greater than our own. People who don't judge, who like to be useful, and who would enjoy being part of the Community we've built here over 22 years.

Have a think about it. It could make a big difference to us, and to you.

## MARTIN'S STORY

Martin is the first one to tell you that his recent experiences have taught him a lot.

***“It’s really opened my eyes. I had no time for people before. My attitude to the homeless was ‘get a job!’ Now I know anyone can lose everything.”***

Just a few years ago, Martin was living in a detached house in Essex. Married with a daughter, his transport business was doing exceptionally well – the family even bought a car just to use at weekends. He had everything that his working class background had taught him to value – material possessions, and pride in his role as provider.

But his work, along with his love of football and rugby, also enveloped him in a drinking culture. As his dependency on alcohol grew, his health deteriorated; hospitalised five times for drink-related issues, he could no longer hold down a regular job, and at one point lost eight in a 12 month period. By then, he was drinking two litres of vodka plus several strong lagers each day:

*“I’d walk through the snow to buy drink. I’d pay for it in notes because my hands shook too much to handle change.”*

Then a series of personal tragedies brought the watershed moment. The death of his father, the breakdown of his marriage and the death of his brother by drug overdose brought Martin to rock bottom. For a while he moved back in with his mother, but when she found his drinking intolerable, he found himself on the street. And it was here that Martin was found by two volunteers from the Bethel Christian movement. When they offered him a place in their community, he had few other options.

It became Martin’s turning point. The community offered a strict, Spartan regime of

work, prayer and a zero tolerance policy to drink and drugs. He ended up staying for 15 months and rediscovering his lapsed faith, embracing the whole philosophy of a self-supporting community – so much so, that he found it quite hard to move away from its protection. But knowing that he needed to test himself back in the real world, he eventually took the next step.

Despite his physical presence – Martin’s a big guy who looks like he could take care of himself – he found the sheer size of the Emmaus Brighton & Hove Community a challenge. For his first few days, he ate alone in a corner of the Companions’ dining room, unsure of how and where he’d fit in. But six months on, enjoying his work in the shops and on the vans, he feels pretty settled.

***“It’s a big old place, but there’s a lot of love – people that care.”***

He admits that at some point he’d love to own his own property again, find a job he enjoys, perhaps start another relationship. But for now, he helps out with the soup run once a month “to remind me where I was,” and is taking things one step at a time.

*“I need to set my parameters in life, know that I’m ready. But I’m a lot happier with myself”*



## Christmas at Emmaus

Love it? Hate it? Whatever your view, we all have extra things to buy at this time of year. So why not do it all in one place, and support a great cause while you're at it?

New and quality second hand toys for the kids? We've got tons of toys, games, books and children's DVDs, from larger items to stocking fillers, starting from 50p.

Guests to stay over the holidays? Beds, mattresses and linens, plus tables, chairs and sofas – all at fantastic prices. And should you need an extra casserole dish, replacement wine glasses, an odd number of extra plates or some spare cutlery, it's all here.

So whatever you need this festive season, drop in to our main site at Portslade or at Emmaus by the sea in Southwick – whatever you spend, it'll go to support our Community of previously homeless Companions.

## Christmas Fair Saturday 1st December, 10am- 5pm

December is always a busy month, so put Saturday 1st in your diary now!

We've got a whole hamper of festive treats lined up for you including:

- Christmas trees
- New toys stall
- Music and entertainment
- Original arts & crafts
- Cakes and mince pies
- Tombola
- Festive specials in the Café
- Hot fruit punch

Plus Christmas lights, loads of special offers and tons of seasonal cheer – check our website and Facebook page for further updates. So come and eat, shop and have fun while you support our Community – 'tis the season to be jolly.



## Christmas Trees

All our trees are locally grown in Sussex and freshly cut, and being Nordmann firs have glossy thick needles so they won't drop. And starting at £30 for a 4ft tree, up to only £45 for a 7ft, we're pretty competitive too.

Come and pick out your own from our main Portslade site, or Emmaus by the sea in Southwick.



## GEORDIE'S STORY

Geordie, as he's known to everyone at Emmaus, has done a load of different jobs over the years. Furniture removals, hotel work, long distance lorries, carpentry – he even worked with a travelling fairground. He's had a broad life experience and a number of what he calls "lovely homes." But his philosophy is that nothing lasts forever.

Some years back David (his real name) lost his job and his flat and, as he puts it: "woke up in the gutter." He tried to hold it together by maintaining a full time job, even whilst he was sleeping rough, but, as he says, trying to put in a day's work when the cold has kept you awake till 4am is near impossible. Eleven years ago he came to Emmaus Brighton & Hove for the first time, after meeting other Companions on the monthly soup run. He's been in and out of the Community several times since, returning eighteen months ago in what he suspects may be a permanent move.

The place certainly seems to suit Geordie, who works on the home team, keeping the communal areas clean and tidy. He also recently became a Community Assistant. The CA role, a bridge between Companions and management, means extra duties and being available to any Companions who need support, a position that Geordie seems to relish:

**"There's always someone with a problem. It's good to care about people, and nice to keep them safe. Like BT says, it's good to talk."**

Emmaus has provided a stability for Geordie that he hasn't found elsewhere. It's given him a home, and a place to get his life back in order. He says that the management has been great with him, and that he has good mates to share stories with. He currently has no plans to move on, and has made his peace with that idea. "If I'm a lifer, that's fine with me."

## TOMBOLA APPEAL. We need your donations.

Would any of you kind people be able to help us with gifts for our tombola stall, for our Christmas Fair on Saturday 1st December?

Our Christmas Fair has become a big day in the Emmaus calendar, as well as a vital fundraiser for our Community. And the tombola stall is one of our biggest attractions.

**We urgently require new, as new or unused:**

- Toys, games and puzzles
- Toiletries
- Sweets, chocolates and biscuits (within BB dates)
- Stationery
- Unwanted gifts (boxed or packaged)

The only things we don't accept are alcohol or anything violence-related, such as toy guns.





## SIAN'S STORY

**“If it hadn't been for this place, I don't know where I'd be.”**

Sian is sitting in the Revive café, taking a quick break from serving customers. She's had some useful experience, having worked in the restaurant of a BHS store some years ago. But since becoming an Emmaus Companion, she's really embraced catering, and plans to get some qualifications to work in the hospitality industry. At some point she'd like to get a flat of her own and become independent again, but she's in no hurry to leave the Community – probably because she's aware of what the alternative can be.

At the start of this year, Sian, a middle-aged woman, was living on the streets. After losing her job at a care home where she'd worked for over four years, Sian and her partner couldn't afford to keep their Worthing home, and in under six months found themselves sleeping behind Argos. The local council were unable to offer them any accommodation as a couple; Sian tried to find work, but even applying for jobs in such desperate circumstances became impossible. Eventually she was offered a place at Emmaus, while her partner was put in temporary accommodation in Worthing.

“The first day, I hated it. They put me in the guest room, and I just sat and cried.”

But once she was given her job in the café, things began to change. Six months on, she's made friends, settled in, and sees her partner every couple of weeks. She enjoys her job, and the only extras she wants each day are her cans of Coke and her tobacco.

“It feels like home here,” she says. Then she looks around the café, which is starting to fill up with customers wanting morning coffee and snacks, and smiles. “I should really get back to work.”



## Events @ The Greenhouse



selection of indoor and outdoor plants, many of them lovingly grown here at Emmaus in our onsite polytunnel.

Throughout the year we have been thrilled to hold a number of art and craft workshops on our Greenhouse terrace. Local artists have been invited to come and teach botanical-themed classes to raise money for our Greenhouse project.

From macramé plant hangers to botanical illustration and paper cutting, the events have proven extremely popular, with tickets selling out each time! We're looking forward to hosting a series of festive workshops during December so keep an eye out on our Facebook page for more details.



The Greenhouse is a magical space in the conservatory at the back of the Secondhand Superstore. Here you can find everything you need for your garden – tools, plant pots, wellies and patio furniture as well as a



# 2018 WINTER APPEAL

Here at Emmaus Brighton & Hove, we strive to be as self sufficient as possible. But there are times when we need to rely on the financial support of our wider community - and this winter we are in dire need of three big-ticket items.

## The Boiler

One of our two boilers, essential to run our growing Community, is now unfit for purpose. Without it, we risk losing hot water and heating, not only for our Companions accommodation area, but also in the retail space in the Drove. Replacing it and getting a new one fitted will cost around £70,000.

## The Minibus

Although our Companions live and work on site, there are times when we need to move several of them around together. To community events (like Paddle Round the Pier) ... Solidarity events (where we support other charities)... our regular Soup Run, and occasional leisure activities. So a reliable vehicle is essential. Unfortunately, our last one is no longer roadworthy - and even decent second-hand ones cost around £15,000.

## The Freezer

In our Revive café we serve hundreds of customers every week with all-day breakfasts, delicious lunches and afternoon teas, all with a top Food Hygiene Rating and great service from our Companions. But professional kitchens need regular equipment updates, and this time it's our freezer. At a cool £500 to replace, it's a hefty chunk out of our budget.

These are big purchases for an organisation like ours. So if you are able to help, or know an organisation that might be able to assist, please get in touch with Joel at [joel@emmausbrighton.co.uk](mailto:joel@emmausbrighton.co.uk) or on 01273 426 470.

Every donation really does make a difference. Thank you.

## How to find us

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