



## **Working together to end rough sleeping in Westminster.**



Welcome to the Westminster Homelessness Partnership (WHP) newsletter - This is our first newsletter and we will send one out four times a year. This edition is reaching you at a time when the WHP is creating a workplan for 2021/22, looking ahead after a year dominated by the Covid-19 response.

### **So, what's it all about? What's changed?**



As this is our first newsletter, we thought we would explain a bit about the partnership. Some of you will previously have had the Westminster

Homelessness Action Together (WHAT) newsletter and been in touch with WHAT, so it might be helpful to know how things have changed.

WHAT changed its name to Westminster Homelessness Partnership in July 2019. Around that time, it was decided by the leaders in the participating organisations that there was a need to work together more actively at a senior level – to put partnership at the very top of everyone’s agenda.

So, a new structure was put in place with regular Core Group and Strategic Group meetings and a new terms of reference. The organisations forming the Core Group are: Connection at St Martin’s, Great Chapel Street, The Passage, St Mungo’s, West London Mission and Westminster City Council (WCC). CEOs or senior officers/directors from these organisations attend. We are joined by Groundswell and Housing Justice for the Strategic Group sessions and other organisations including the police attend on an ad-hoc basis.

The Coordinator for the WHP, Becky Rice, took on the role of facilitating these groups. So, what do we do? We put in a successful bid for a systems change project being led by Connection at St Martin’s (CSTM); we comment on strategic proposals and developments presented by WCC; we identify areas where we could work together more closely on the ground (our blogs often focus on these areas); and we share information in an ongoing way.

Just when we had created a schedule of regular meetings and a structure... Covid-19 came along and saw the WHP pivot to form a more regular ‘touch point’ for those leading the Covid-19 response to rough sleeping from WCC, and the agencies working with those experiencing rough sleeping. Regular guests included the Deputy Director of Public Health and the local Chief Inspector.

Last week the Core Group convened to think about what comes next for WHP? As we move to this new stage of (hopefully) emerging from the pandemic, what do we need to work on together? We will be preparing our workplan and share more information about this in the next edition.

### **Our Practitioners’ Group**

The Practitioners’ Group is open to any managers or coordinators from WHP organisations; guest speakers come along to talk about their services or an issue of interest to the group. So far, we have had visits from Fat Macy’s, a

social enterprise, Glassdoor and also Faith and Volunteer Network Project Manager Saima Ahmed from WCC.

### **Blog**

Our latest blog is from Jenny Travassos, Head of Rough Sleeping for WCC for six and a half years, who describes her journey from “cynic to true believer”. Jenny is now the Director of Services and New Development at The Passage – everyone at WHP is delighted that she is still involved in our partnership work in her new role.



[Read Jenny's blog](#)

### **World Habitat**

The WHP is part of the World Habitat End European Street Homelessness Campaign (EESHHC). In the middle of last year it published ‘Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic: Case studies from the European End Street Homelessness Campaign’, looking at how local areas had galvanised partnership working in response to Covid-19. We are very proud to say that the work in Westminster features.

[Read more](#)

### **Systems change project – and an exciting job or secondment opportunity**

WHP has designed the new system change project to bring practitioners from different organisations and disciplines together to systematically challenge barriers to leaving street homelessness for people with complex needs. A team of ‘systems changers’ from homelessness, health and substance misuse services will be brought together and trained in systems thinking and

experimentation. They will create priorities for action with input from people with direct lived experience. The System Change Coordinator will manage this project, coordinate across the 'system changers' team and report to a steering group, ensuring influence on policy and practice.

We are recruiting for the role of Coordinator for the project! Please see the details on the [CSTM jobs page](#). **If you're interested, we would love to hear from you.**

### **Keeping informed – and your ideas**

We are working hard to keep people updated through Twitter. Please follow us at [@WestminsterHP](#) and encourage others to do so.

Questions, comments, feedback are welcome – please feel free to get in touch via Twitter or contact Becky WHP Coordinator directly at: [becky@accendo-consult.co.uk](mailto:becky@accendo-consult.co.uk). If you have ideas about what would be useful for the WHP to do or offer, or what you would like to see included in these newsletters, it would be great to hear from you.



Please note: if you have been in contact with WHP over the past year, we may have added your name to the newsletter mailing list thinking it would be of interest. Please use the 'unsubscribe' function below if you no longer wish to get WHP updates.