

# commonweal housing

Housing Solutions to Social Injustice



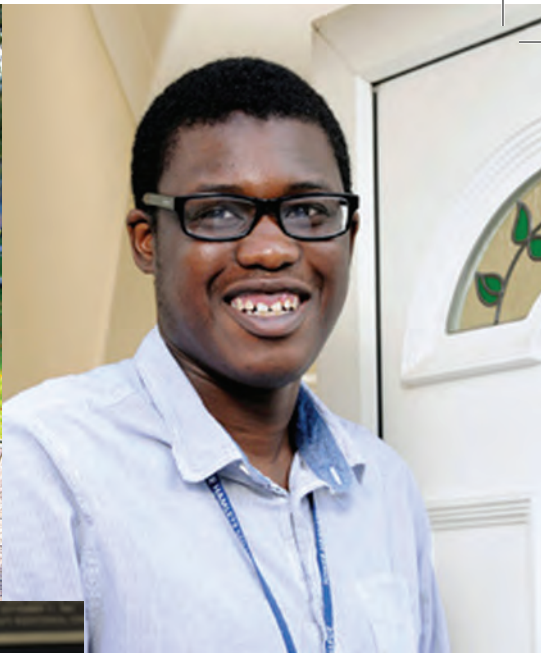
10 years of housing solutions to social injustice

ANNUAL REVIEW 2015/16











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# Annual Review 2015/6



**Rt Hon Fiona Mactaggart MP**  
Chair of trustees

Commonweal's ambition is to make a positive impact, not only on the people we support through our projects, but also on partners who deliver those projects and ultimately on policy. This distinguishes us from many other charities which help lots of people. We have too, but we have also pioneered new ways to tackle old problems and we have passed on the results, so that others can adopt new strategies, this makes Commonweal unique. We are very grateful for the support of our main benefactor Grove End, and the social investors, whose support has made it possible for us to try out housing solutions to social injustice, and then to share what we have learnt. Their support and sponsorship has been vital to our ability to make a difference.

In our first decade we have provided nearly £10M worth of properties in 9 different London boroughs to 9 different organisations, which have provided good quality homes for hundreds of people (including dozens of children). Crucially these homes have given residents the opportunity to move their lives on from difficult circumstances. The impact on those people is clear as is shown by the case studies in this report.

In addition Commonweal has provided hundreds of thousands of pounds of direct and indirect revenue support to partner organisations across the country who are now using what we learnt through these pilot projects to replicate provision elsewhere. We have published project evaluation reports to share findings as well as other publications which share what we have learnt about social injustices and also social investment – an area where Commonweal has been at the forefront of developments over recent years.

Our culture which offers support, encouragement and a desire to learn as much from failure as from success has given our many project partners the opportunity to take risks by offering new ways to support and provide opportunities for their clients. The Trustees hope that through the work of Ashley and the staff team, Commonweal provides sufficient challenge and empathetic encouragement to enable partners to be imaginative and open in identifying what has worked well – something most are happy to share – as well as to be frank about that which didn't go well. We know that when that works the quality of learning and the changes we are able to make can be exceptional.

So thank you again to all our project partners for their endeavours and honesty. Our work has influenced policy, Reunite has provided a model of support for mothers leaving prison which is being replicated around the country, but our most significant future challenge is to use what we have learnt from our pilot projects to change policy and practice as it impacts the lives of the people whose needs are addressed by projects we have sponsored.

I wish to thank all the Trustees for their help, expertise and support over the decade which Commonweal has been in existence, and my fellow trustees especially for the last year. Thanks also to our advisory panel, our critical friends; our social investors for putting their faith (and money) in to Commonweal and principally to Grove End Housing without whom we simply would never have existed and whose ongoing support we wear as a badge of pride.

*Fiona Mactaggart*

# Chief Executive



**Ashley Horsey,**  
Chief Executive

“So what is Commonweal exactly?” is one of the hardest questions I get asked. Hard because it can be difficult to pin down precisely what we are mainly because when we describe what we do the response is often “oh that sounds really interesting, I don’t know anyone else that does that, how unique!”

I don’t know whether we are unique, different certainly. We do bring together activities that not many others do (at least not all together):

- Independent housing based action learning charity
- Using capital funding from social investors
- Helping others to test new models and new ideas seeking to find housing solutions to different manifestations of social injustice
- Providing bespoke housing to give projects the best chance of succeeding
- Commissioning independent external evaluation
- Encouraging partners to capture the learning and to share that with others so that through replication more people can be helped

Maybe I should just summarise who we are as – a charity that finds ways to get things done.

In last year’s Annual Impact Review we produced for the first time a pictorial representation of Commonweal Project Journey – a cycle from sourcing a good idea, through development, testing, evaluation and ultimately replication based on the lessons learnt from our pilots. We have been busy at several points around that cycle over the last 12 months. We have reached the end of phase 1 of our ambitious Peer Landlord project with a challenging evaluation report produced for us by University of York. We have diversified how we support new projects and new ideas – providing cash support for Stonewall Housing’s feasibility study in to the needs of older LGBT individuals as well as our new project supporting Elmbridge Rentstart deliver their Freedom2Work project; Commonweal not providing the housing in this case but helping ERS better use the stock already available to them. Commonweal has also enabled the learning from our Chrysalis project to be taken forward to a new service meeting the needs of women exiting prostitution as well as moving towards our eventual withdrawal from day to day engagement with Re-Unite. Details on all of these and more are included in this Impact Review.

A key feature over the last year has been our work with IVAR – the Institute of Voluntary Action Research – as our Learning Partner; and it has been great. Their help to reflect on what being an action learning charity really means, how that is perceived by those we work with and how we embed reflection and constant development in to the organisational psyche has been tremendous. I keep coming back to something Trustees said back in 2010 the year I first joined Commonweal “delivering projects is good but it is not good enough.....replication of what we learn is the true measure of success for Commonweal.” And long may that continue.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ashley Horsey'.



# Mission & Values

Commonweal Housing seeks to challenge social injustice by incubating new, innovative solutions, centred around housing.

We give these pilot projects the space, time and insulation from risk to be able to grow and most importantly to learn from where things don't necessarily go right.

From each pilot project we aim to start a ripple of change for beneficiaries that spreads through practitioners and policy makers. As the project is replicated the social injustice is tackled at the front line while a momentum builds around policy change.

Leadership, partnership, action, learning.

That's how we tackle social injustice.

## 2015 Performance

**Promote the learning and evaluation from the Peer Landlord project and encourage more supportive shared housing models to develop.**

Full agreement from investors and partners to drive forward the Phase II of the model addressing issues raised by the York evaluation report. New Commonweal projects with Elmbridge Rentstart and Quaker Social Action based on shared housing models.

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**Build upon our existing positive reputation with social investors and others to secure further capital funding, enabling the delivery of yet more Commonweal Housing supported projects.**

£2.3M of new social investment identified for the Quaker Social Action – Young Adult Carers project including funding from two new social investors to Commonweal.

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**Complete our property acquisitions for the NRPF project and support our partners to provide quality accommodation for those destitute with insecure immigration status.**

Six good quality homes have been provided and are in use for this project. Final property still to be acquired.

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**Ensure that the learning from Chrysalis helps to shape violence against women and girls strategies specifically for helping women exiting prostitution.**

Recent London Councils' recognition that exiting prostitution should be higher up on the VAWG agenda. Sharing the learning of our 2016 report on the landscape of women's services specifically concerning the lack of knowledge and provision of women involved in sexual exploitation.

Submitted written evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee Inquiry into Prostitution, specifically around strengthening exit provision.



## Targets for 2016/17

Secure tangible evidence of replication and use of lessons learnt from pilot projects in shaping policy and practice including encouraging next stage progression from the outcomes of Commonweal supported feasibility studies.

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Successfully commence the new Elmbridge Rentstart Freedom2Work project and Quaker Social Action young adult carers projects.

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Drive forward the key lessons learnt and delivery of the Peer Landlord Phase II business plan

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Further raise our profile in the field of social investment, developing an agreed future funding strategy and investing some of our own capital for direct mission related social investment – expanding ways of delivering more action learning opportunities.

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Successfully recycle the former Chrysalis housing units to the Amari project delivered by Solace Women's Aid.

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# Re-Unite



## **Could dedicated housing and support for mothers involved in the criminal justice system reduce re-offending and improve outcomes for the service user?**

Re-Unite is a partnership between Housing for Women and Commonweal Housing. The project began in 2007 aiming to demonstrate that when provided with the correct support and stable housing, families separated by imprisonment could once again resume family life. It sought to break the pernicious catch 22 of mothers, homeless after leaving prison unable to regain care and custody of their children because they don't have a family house and unable to access family housing because they don't have care and custody of their children.

The setting for the Re-Unite Project was the publication of an influential review into the challenges facing women who had been involved in the criminal justice system. The Review, chaired by Baroness Corsten, highlighted the

particular difficulties faced by women leaving custody to reform a sustainable family life for themselves and their children. The principle reasons behind this were the inadequate support structures within the criminal justice system and inflexible housing policies.

The Re-Unite approach was originally piloted in South London and rigorously evaluated by independent researchers at the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge University. It has since been refined and re-evaluated based on the researchers' recommendations and is now being replicated across the country.

In October 2014 Commonweal handed over the day to day coordination and future development of Re-Unite to a partnership between Anawim and Women's Breakout. This experienced Midland's based partnership

## £93,646

Cost benefit of Re-unite per service user over a ten year period

## 11

Number of areas where Re-Unite has been replicated



brings many years of expertise supporting women in the criminal justice system. It has an effective network and proven ability in delivering both strategic and local excellence and helps embed this specialist service in the wider women's support and criminal justice agenda. Commonweal will end support for the network at the end of this year.

### What we learnt

The evaluation of the pilot project was provided by the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, in 2009. The evaluation conducted several interviews with service users, including the children of the mothers whom the project helped to house. The qualitative data was impressive with a large proportion of mothers and children citing the benefits of the high quality accommodation, the clustering of properties enabling informal support networks to develop and perhaps most crucially the importance of holistic support. Some concerns were raised however about the anxiety around move on, particularly for those children who had started attending a school, this could affect the propensity of the child to settle into a school in the first place. In terms of re-offending there were no re-convictions during the initial two year evaluation period, there was one recall and one service user was charged with further offences.

The evaluation also made a powerful business case for the Re-Unite project. Re-Unite's annual support costs of £14,825 per client, compared well with New Economic Foundation's estimate of the annual cost of female prisoner places (excluding building costs) of £41,084 for open prisons and £32,529 for closed prisons.

The cost benefits of the Re-Unite project to society were suggested as being £86,084 per service user over two years or £93,646 per service user over ten years.

### Replication

Re-Unite has been a hugely successful project. It demonstrates the Commonweal project cycle from inception through to incubation and successfully into replication. ■

### Case Study

Sarah grew up in North London. Her dad died when she was ten and as a result Sarah spent time in care. This was a huge challenge for her family.

Sarah had never been in trouble with the police before the incident that led to her prison sentence. Her younger sister had an altercation with several friends. Pushing and shoving occurred and Sarah got involved. The main victim received injuries to the face from a broken bottle held by Sarah. Although Sarah acknowledges that she was the perpetrator of the injuries, it was not her intention to injure the victim, and she was trying to protect her younger sister.

Sarah was sentenced to 20 months for GBH, and spent 10 months in Holloway prison. Her daughter, Catherine, was just over three years old when her mother went to prison, and lived with her dad.

Sarah and Catherine's father separated whilst Sarah served her sentence. When Sarah was due to be released she faced homelessness, and with minimal employment experience and no qualifications she had very few options to improve her situation.

Sarah was referred to the Re-Unite program by Holloway Prison, and following an interview to assess her, she was accepted. This meant that upon coming out of prison there was a home for her and her daughter to move into, and support services for her rehabilitation.

It was a huge step for her to leave her support network in North London, but Re-Unite helped to find her a new school and move her in. The broader support services that Re-Unite provide proved invaluable for Sarah to help her to establish routines and reduce anxiety about separation from her daughter while she was at school.

The hours that the support worker put in were clearly beneficial. Sarah is now in education, training as an accountant. She is ready to move on from the Re-Unite scheme when a property becomes available, and she is excited by this. She has engaged well with the Re-Unite program and benefited not just from being provided with a home, but from the dedicated support that allowed her to uncover some broader challenges related to her rehabilitation.

**Since 2007** the Re-Unite project has successfully grown from one small pilot project in South London to now being delivered in eleven locations across England and Wales.

### There are now projects in:

North East • South Yorkshire • West Yorkshire • Greater Manchester • Humberside • Gloucestershire • Birmingham • South London • Sussex • Derbyshire • South Wales

# 11

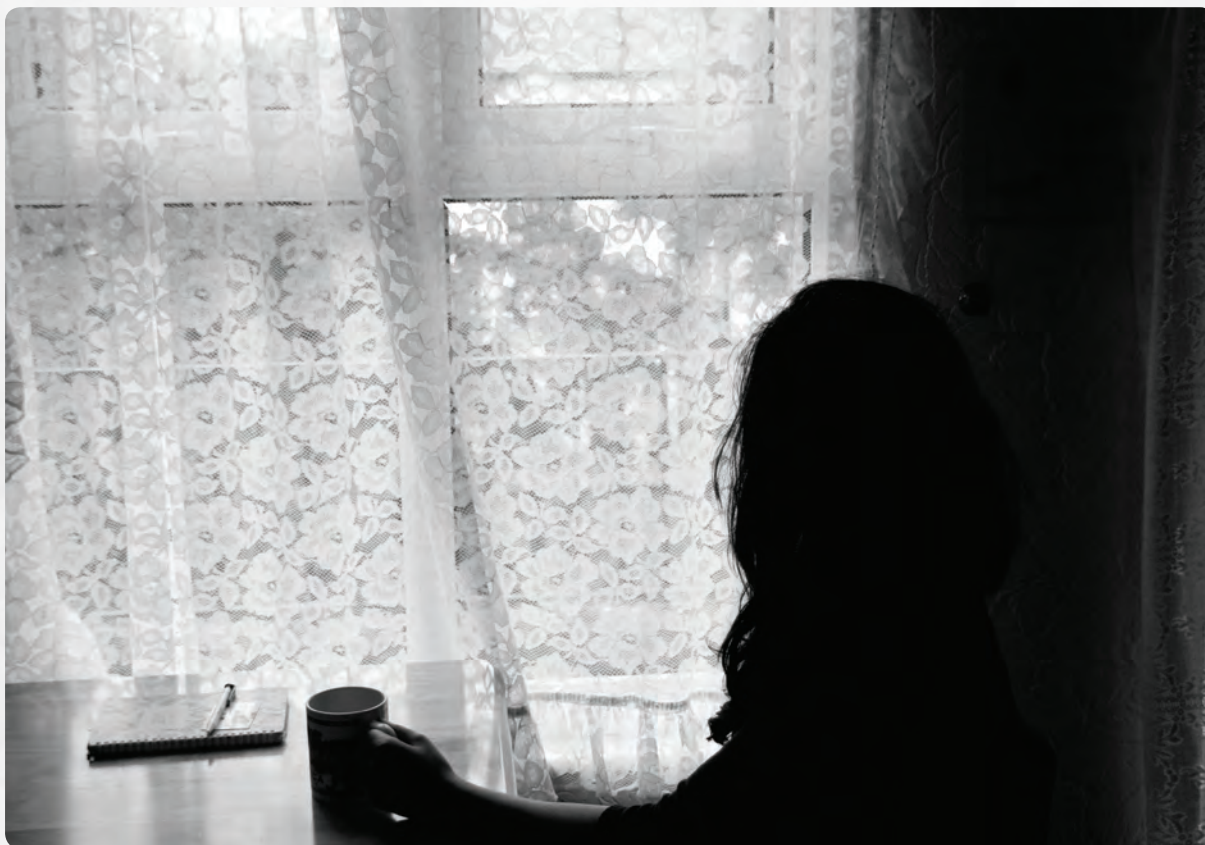
Commonweal properties used in the pilot project

# 10%

re-call /re-offending rate in the 2 year evaluation period



# Chrysalis 3rd Stage



## Can secure accommodation after crisis aid a woman's journey to exit prostitution?

Commonweal has enabled the third stage of the Chrysalis Project, a staged model of support for women to exit prostitution, since 2009. The project was run in partnership with St Mungos and situated in South London.

The project sought to test research showing one of the main barriers for a woman to successfully exit prostitution can be access to housing. In particular the third stage of the Chrysalis project aimed to demonstrate that secure accommodation after crisis can prevent a relapse. The project provided a tenancy and support for women who are ready to move out of crisis accommodation in a hostel, but needed support before accessing independent living in social housing or predominantly in the private rented sector. The accommodation provided consists of small, anonymous, dispersed one bedroom flats in the London Borough of Lambeth.

One of the most powerful aspects of the Chrysalis project is that it takes a proactive

approach to exit, supported by a clear policy stance from other organisations in the borough. Chrysalis openly encourages women to consider exiting and provides them holistic tailored support to do so.

In 2015 we learnt that the third stage of the project was to be decommissioned by the local authority. While a blow to the principle of the hypothesis Chrysalis was testing, Commonweal began work with new partners to help the third stage evolve into an exciting new venture.

### What we learnt;

The Chrysalis project was evaluated in 2012 by academics Prof. Roger Mathews and Helen Easton for the University of Kent. This review was founded on extensive qualitative analysis of the lives of those women on the programme, as well as input from key stakeholders. The report sets the Chrysalis model in context in terms of the dearth of any other specialist accommodation and support services aimed specifically at helping

**“Although I like to think that I would have remained abstinent no matter what happened, in reality, had it not been for the opportunity I was given in the Commonweal flat, I don’t know if I would be making the plans I am today.”** Chrysalis 3rd Stage service user

women exit prostitution.

In 2016 Commonweal published a follow up report looking at how the policy and practitioner landscape had evolved in the period since the 2012 report. It found that there remained significant barriers for women to exit, primarily around the reluctance among some mainstream services to take a proactive approach to exit, and a postcode lottery of support with only a small number of local authorities prioritising prostitution and in particular exit in their Violence Against Women and Girls strategies.

#### **What the project partner learnt; St Mungos**

“The self-contained environment provided by Commonweal properties comprising stage 3 of the Chrysalis Project have enabled women to develop effective support networks and maintain contact with agencies and support services. They have also offered respite and a resource for escaping violence, pimps, and have provided a place of safety to build positive relationships. The self-contained nature of the properties has allowed women to manage their own space and manage emotional and practical issues more effectively. A staged model provides a framework and set of objectives to which women can aspire.

However during the project it became clear that more emphasis needed to be placed on throughput, in the final months of this incarnation of the third stage referrals to Lambeth’s private rented sector scheme were being made upon entry to the third stage, with a woman’s referral being placed on hold if they experienced unexpected difficulties that could undermine independence in the PRS. “■

#### **Case Study**

I first came into contact with St Mungo’s back in January 2011 when I was placed in a large mixed Hostel with capacity of over 100 men and women. I had relapsed on alcohol after an 18 month sobriety. The size of the hostel meant that there was not the staffs available to offer the type of support they deemed necessary for me at the time. I then subsequently went back and forth between stage 1 and two accommodation and various detox units, rehabs and dry houses during my periods of being abstinent.

My goal has always been to be 100% drug and alcohol free. I am not one of those people who can even afford to dabble every now and again. My drinking and using has been so serious that I have suffered double organ failure and was hospitalised for 6 weeks. Drugs and alcohol took everything from me. I went from being a university graduate with a career earning £35k +commission, telephone and travel expenses to unemployed IV drug user living in a hostel with nothing to show from my former life.

In April 2013, following a relapse and returning to London after getting clean with a friend up North, I moved back into stage 2. Although it is not so chaotic in this hostel, there are still people using and other girls would frequently knock on my door for money, tobacco etc, and a constant reminder that drugs were easily accessible.

If I remained in a using environment, I would return to using. When I was told that there was a Commonweal flat about to become available, I was desperate to get it! Although the responsibility of a tenancy was not new to me, I had been financially secure at that time. I knew managing a flat while on benefits would be a struggle, however, I knew it was just what I needed to keep heading forward.

Since moving into the flat I could not have been happier! It has given me confidence and a feeling of permanence I had not felt in years. Thorough my using and constantly feeling trapped in a cycle of relapse and wet hostels, my life just seemed transient. I feel I am building a home for my future. I am now looking to go back to university next year to do my PGCE to become a Teacher and have a safe drug free environment to do this from.

Although I like to think that I would have remained abstinent no matter what happened, in reality, had it not been for the opportunity I was given in the Commonweal flat, I don’t know if I would be making the plans I am today.

**7**

Number of Commonweal properties used in the project

**8**

Cumulative number of women in stage 3 in last quarter of 2015

**12**

Number of women in the life of third stage of the project



# Amari



## Replicating the principles of Chrysalis: an adapted staged model of support for women escaping sexual exploitation

In late 2015 Commonweal received the news from St Mungo's that following a review by Lambeth Council they were unable to continue with the third stage of the Chrysalis model in its current format as scarce resources were being focussed on the emergency and high support stages of the project. The seven Commonweal flats are now in a phased process of hand back. Whilst this was disappointing, the nature of any commissioned project is that it can always be subject to change by the commissioning body.

Over the last 2 years, we have been in contact with Solace Women's Aid, an organisation

providing expert services around Violence Against Women and Girls. Initial discussions with Solace centred on the replication of the Chrysalis model. Solace in particular have expertise in supporting trafficked women and women involved in prostitution.

In 2014 Commonweal had provided funding to Solace for a feasibility study into replication of the Chrysalis project. The study made an assessment of need and the likely provision required to meet it across a number of London boroughs. While the study identified appetite from Solace and a number of boroughs,

**7**

Number of Commonweal properties used in the project

**61%**

Of women report violence from buyers of sex

(source Eaves / London South Bank University)

**50%**

Of women involved in prostitution experienced coercion to enter or remain in prostitution

(source Eaves / London South Bank University)

there were significant obstacles over likely sustainability and funding and at the time these obstacles were judged as too substantial for that funding environment.

By the time Commonweal was informed of the decision taking by Lambeth, Solace had begun working with VAWG partner agencies nia and Ashiana to investigate what they could do to provide the type of next stage support offered by the Commonweal flats in the Chrysalis project. They had begun to create a new model that specifically supported trafficked women and helping to support women exit prostitution. They then created the semi-independent move on for the 2nd stage of the model, and these will now be provided by Commonweal. This has been funded by London Councils.

The new project will launch in the autumn of 2016.

### What we hope to learn

The learning from this new project will seek to implement some of the lessons from the third stage of the Chrysalis project and the points raised in the evaluation of the project. It will seek to build upon the positive effect the project and in particular the Commonweal housing stock had on encouraging independence but there will be a renewed focus on throughput and achieving a better move on rate in the properties in order to encourage greater independence. ■



**“Our 2nd stage accommodation will enable support to be delivered over a longer period of time within a stable environment so women can recover at their own pace, whilst moving towards long-term independence and reintegration into the community.”**

**Solace Women's Aid**

### What our Partners hope to learn

Solace Women's Aid is really excited to be working in partnership with Commonweal to develop the Amari Project, a 2nd stage housing project for women exiting prostitution or those who have been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The housing crisis in London create challenges for effectively supporting women who have experienced violence and abuse. A safe, secure place to live plays a vital role in aiding women's recovery and Solace's research 'The Price of Safety' highlights barriers women face when fleeing violence in accessing long-term secure housing. Women who have exited prostitution or trafficking are some of the most marginalised in society and there are few specialist housing projects specifically tailored to this client group.

Research examining women exiting prostitution is supportive of the use of a staged model of support, such as that being used by the Chrysalis Project in Lambeth (Matthews et al, 2012; Bindel et al, 2012). Recovery is often not a quick or linear process and women who are exiting prostitution or trafficking have often suffered trauma and may have multiple and complex needs. Whilst it is vital that emergency and 1st stage accommodation is available for these women to be safe and to begin the recovery process, in reality this recovery process can take a long time. Our 2nd stage accommodation will enable support to be delivered over a longer period of time within a stable environment so women can recover at their own pace, whilst moving towards long-term independence and reintegration into the community.

### Also Supported

Commonweal also support the creation and work of a new online network, Stand Against Sexual Exploitation (SASE). This network was established by Helen Easton, who worked with Commonweal on the 2012 Chrysalis evaluation. SASE is a voluntary network of individuals, professionals and services supporting women involved in and exiting prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation.



# Miscarriages of Justice



## Could a housing pathway aid the resettlement of victims of miscarriages of justice?

In 2012 Commonweal began work on a project with the Royal Courts of Justice Advice Bureau's Miscarriages of Justice Support Service (MJSS) around housing solutions for victims of Miscarriages of Justice. The problem was straightforward, although staggering. Those released from the criminal justice system for a crime they did not commit, often find they have less support on offer than those who were guilty. Many are released from prison with just a £50 release grant as their only asset. Housing is a key part of the problem for those wrongfully convicted, with cases such as that of Victor

Newlan who spent his first night as a free man homeless and faced multiple moves in his first 18 months out of prison.

The Commonweal/RCJ Miscarriages Of Justice project set out to test whether it was possible to offer stable housing to this client group and whether in so doing better outcomes could be achieved for service users. In the first stage Commonweal provided one housing unit and took referrals from the MJSS unit based at the Royal Courts of Justice.

The pilot proved the difficulties involved with the client group and the housing

1

Commonweal property used in the pilot

12

Number of people who have their conviction quashed each year

element of support. Commonweal provided accommodation in one location. However, the disparate nature of the cases, spatially removed from one another and geographically precise in terms of the housing sought by individuals, meant that whilst the initial flat was in exactly the right place for client number one it was unlikely to be so useful for subsequent clients. At the end of the first stage of the pilot a decision was taken not to roll out the project further – it was clear at an early stage we had over-engineered and over-complicated the solution we had put in place. However the original injustice was still there so with colleagues at the CAB we sought to investigate the underlying policy issues that the pilot had uncovered but was unable to address.

### What we learnt

Commonweal published the findings of an academic study by the London School of Economics into the support available for victims of miscarriages of justice in September 2015

The report detailed the lack of support available for victims of miscarriages of justice when they are released from prison. While many victims faced complex issues arising from their conviction including post traumatic stress, social withdrawal and enduring personality changes, there is less official support available to them than there is to offenders through the probation service. In particular it highlighted a “compounding injustice that the state does not provide imprisoned miscarriage victims with at least the same level of support offered to ex offenders” (p6).

The startling lack of statutory support available to victims can mean many who hope to receive social housing are rejected. Some fail a local connection test owing to their imprisonment, others can be deemed to have caused their own homelessness (a strange notion indeed given the circumstances) or reject the one offer they receive from the local authority because of particular issues relating to their circumstances.

The report recommended increasing awareness across housing support services and intervention from the government to encourage local councils to recognise the vulnerability of miscarriage victims. In particular it called on the Housing Minister, Brandon Lewis MP to follow the example set out by the Department Of Work and Pensions, which has explicitly recognised in its Work Capability Assessment that those who have experienced a miscarriage of justice should be entitled to special consideration due to the

impact of their wrongful imprisonment.

The campaign was backed by the Chartered Institute of Housing the professional body for the housing profession. With Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) head of policy Melanie Rees arguing: “It’s important that people who have been the victims of miscarriages of justice get the support they need to secure a stable and affordable home when they are released from prison to help them get their life back on track. CIH is pleased to support Commonweal Housing’s campaign and we would urge the government to take note of its recommendations.” In correspondence with Commonweal, the government maintain that local authorities have the power to ensure that the particular vulnerabilities of victims of miscarriages of justice be taken into account when housing allocations are made in social housing.

### Update

In February 2016 the UK Supreme Court ruled that the law around so called joint enterprise, where an appellant can be convicted for murder without striking the fatal blow had been wrongly interpreted for more than 30 years. The decision could pave the way for hundreds of prisoners to seek appeals in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Commonweal remain in contact with the Citizens Advice Bureau about implementing key learning from the report and project. ■

### Case Study

Peter was 22 when his conviction was quashed, he had spent up to 4 years in prison up until that point.

After his release, Peter faced a range of housing issues but found a complete lack of clear housing advice for his situation and almost no support pathway. This lack of housing advice and support meant that Peter experienced frequent moves and constantly had to rebuild new networks and various mainstream services.

As a young single man his vulnerability was not recognised by the local authority, Peter found himself sharing accommodation with people who made his assimilation back into the community difficult.

Commonweal Housing began the pilot project with the Miscarriages of Justice Support Service to provide Peter with accommodation in an area he felt safe in and where his outlook for his future could become more positive.

# 400

Number of people who’s belated innocence has been established since the establishment of the Criminal Cases Review Commission began its work

# £500,000

level of Commonweal investment in the project



# Peer Landlord



## Can shared housing be part of the solution to Britain's housing crisis?

Peer Landlord is a partnership between Commonweal, Thames Reach and Catch 22. Commonweal also procured social investment from Bridges Ventures, Trust for London and the Esmée Fairburn Foundation for the project.

The project essentially has 2 different cohorts of service users, young people and former street homeless in work. The project had two different initial drivers: for Catch 22, too often they would find that many young people would fall in between the gaps. Young people who didn't require total support as provided in hostels or larger supported housing schemes but weren't able to be totally independent either.

For Thames Reach the issue was for the clients they were successfully helping back in to employment, were finding it increasingly hard to sustain their jobs due to the pressures they too often faced from other residents in hostels or traditional pathway accommodation. Also the Peer Landlord project offered them a non commissioned housing provision and the opportunity to test a shared housing solution (previously thought of as un-popular ) with a nominated tenant (Peer Landlord) to manage

the household (utility bills payments) liaising between the project partner and tenants for maintenance issues and supporting the other tenants in life skills as a peer.

A range of issues prevent people from progressing in their housing and indeed in their lives; high rents and tapering benefits, particularly in city centres where employment chances are greatest. Welfare sanctions, insecure work and hostel environments are not always conducive to moving into, and sustaining employment, education and training. These client groups traditionally receive housing support that encourages dependency rather than independence.

With soaring rents and house prices in London, alongside the increasing scarcity of social housing, Peer Landlord aimed to develop a model of more affordable shared housing. The initial model being that one of the tenants undergoes some training in basic housing management, financial literacy and acts as a peer mentor to his or her co-tenants.

The model used social investment from Esmée Fairburn Foundation, Bridges Ventures and Trust for London to procure six out of thirteen three-bed properties. These properties are leased variously to Thames Reach and Catch 22. Each property has a 'Peer Landlord' who provides informal support to the two other tenants in the property, and acts as a contact point for respective project partner's property manager. The remaining seven properties have been gifted by Grove End Housing Limited, Commonweal's original and ongoing principal benefactor.

The project aims to create 'good homes' through the use of better quality properties in good neighbourhoods, with close links to transport. The houses are not standard 'houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs), and include areas for social and communal activity.

The model aims to meet the requirements of

## £1.38 million

social investment utilised

	Catch 22	Thames Reach	Overall
<b>Properties</b>	6	7	13
<b>Current Tenants</b>	17	21	39
<b>Percentage of current tenants in Employment, Education or Training</b>	67%	86%	77%
<b>Average length of stay (months)</b>	17	22	19.56
<b>Total tenants housed to date</b>	27	45	73
<b>Percentage previously homeless</b>	46%	81%	64.86%

Figures correct as of Q2 2016

low-needs individuals.

### What we learnt

The first evaluation of the Peer Landlord project was conducted by Anwen Jones and Julie Rugg, Centre for Housing Policy, University of York over 2012-2016. The evaluation challenged the developing model to better demonstrate outcomes, although it recognised that the model was delivering greater quantum of affordable housing in a sustainable manner. Social investment interest in residential property available for rental is likely to increase. An as yet untested element of the model is its feasibility outside the capital, in a slower housing market.

The evaluation particularly challenged the model to better identify how it will save management costs. The Peer Landlord model has clearly indicated that tenant satisfaction was most clearly expressed with the quality of property on offer at the LHA rate.

In particular the evaluation recommended that for the second phase of the project:

- the model be tested outside London;
- a key element of the model to retain as essential is a commitment to the quality of the property;
- the model should test a house share without a

peer landlord;

- the model should be tested by a long-standing access scheme to see how far more experience in property management may result in a more robust financial model;
- there should be a continued focus on meeting the needs of marginalised, homeless clients to ensure that the model meets the demand for impact, as required by social investors. ■

### What our project partner learnt: Thames Reach

"Peer Landlord's good quality, low cost accommodation has provided an alternative to an accommodation 'pathway' that leads from an assessment bed in a hostel, into supported housing, and on eventually to shared accommodation in the private rented sector. We think of this as a 'diversion' – away from homelessness – that allows people to get on with their lives (not least getting back into work), rather than spending months and years in supported housing where rents are much higher.

We've learnt that getting into work while claiming benefit is much more difficult than it should be, and means that you are much more likely to accrue arrears and other debts than someone who is 'stable' on benefits.

We've learnt that running what is effectively a private rented sector housing programme means that we need to focus directly on the housing management contract, where we provide good quality accommodation at a reasonable price, and in return, tenants make sure that they pay us on time and in full.

We are reminded that while we hope to be a 'supportive' landlord in Peer Landlord, we cannot afford to provide 'support', and that we need to be consistent and straightforward about working within this contract. This in turn has led us to explicitly separate the housing management role from that of providing support, and as a result we've employed a professional housing manager, who's background is in the private sector.

Our model is still a hybrid between social housing and the private rented sector. Our social rather than purely commercial aims make this inevitable. There is room for us to get better at identifying who this type of accommodation works best for, but within this we can still do more to move away from the more controlling aspects of social housing while retaining the social purpose. We need to do more to explore the role of residents in selecting new tenants, in choosing how many people live in a house, and in agreeing whether they need a peer landlord.

The final and most important lesson is that there is a need for Peer Landlord London or something like it. The private rented sector in London continues to become less affordable for people on a low income, and the quality of accommodation continues to decline. In London, competition from local authorities providing temporary accommodation for people who are statutorily homeless; students; and better paid professionals, means that there is little room for people on low incomes who have experienced homelessness."

### Case Study

*Keirone was the first to move into the house in September 2013, after being referred by a family friend. He sees himself as a live in property manager, which has helped develop his organisational skills and made him an expert on rent statements. He is keenly aware of how his responsibilities here can translate positively onto his CV.*

*The 23 year old who has a degree in business management was working at a bookmakers until October 2015, and recently started agency work in data entry. He hopes to do a masters degree in a couple of years to help build a career in marketing.*

*The security and comparative safety of his house has been important to him given past trauma. In 2012, Kierone was living with friends in Lewisham when he was burgled. He was forced out of his bedroom window at gun point, falling 40 feet and suffering extensive injuries. He moved back to his mother's house to recuperate.*

*When asked how his current home compares with the flat he shared with friends, he gives unequivocal thumbs up.*

*"There's no 40 foot window to drop from so that's a start. It feels safer here because I had a bad habit of letting people know where I lived before. My previous flat was on a main road and my mum's house was on a main road. I had associates rather than friends coming round and I was a bit lenient about who came over.*

*I have more responsibility here, more to lose and more to look out for, because I have people to look after as well as myself. It's not just about me"*



# No Recourse to Public Funds

**No  
Recourse  
to  
Public  
Funds**



## How can housing and outcomes be improved for destitute migrants?

*No Recourse to Public Funds* is a project run in partnership with immigration experts Praxis Community Projects. The project began in 2014 and aims to meet the needs of two client groups. Firstly, households referred by local authorities under their duties to provide accommodation for families with children under section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 and secondly those who have insecure immigration status, often following an initial negative asylum application with no recourse to public funds and trapped in destitution. They are not permitted to work to support themselves and unable to access benefits but who do have the ability to submit new applications or appeal a previous decision.

Commonweal secured more than £2 million in social investment from a slate of investors to facilitate the purchase of a range of suitable properties in which to test the model. Commonweal in turn leases the properties to our delivery partner, Praxis.

Some of the rooms are spot purchased by local authorities who use them to house families owed a duty under section 17 of the Children's Act as the household contains a child who would otherwise be homeless. Properties are provided on a shared housing basis under licence agreements.

The income derived from that contracted service to local authorities enables Praxis to make available whole properties or individual bedrooms within the property portfolio (on a mixed household basis) to those with NRPF. These will be let to destitute migrants where Praxis believe there is a *prima facie* likelihood of a positive appeal or fresh application if clients are provided with appropriate support and legal advice.

### What we hope to learn

- Whether a sustainable business model can be delivered, that is able to support the provision of more free NRPF destitution accommodation.
- Whether the provision of additional support from a secure accommodation base enables those destitute migrants to make successful

**6**

Number of properties

**£2.3M**

Social Investment utilised

**Commonweal secured more than £2 million in social investment from a slate of investors to facilitate the purchase of a range of suitable properties in which to test the model. Commonweal in turn leases the properties to our delivery partner, Praxis.**

new applications or appeals whilst building their self-confidence and well being.

- Whether the provision of section 17 accommodation by specialist and expert asylum and migration support organisations (such as Praxis), and the added value they bring to the service offers an attractive and replicable model for local authorities to use.
- Whether the empathetic support available to section 17 clients has a positive impact on their well being, confidence and ability to settle in this country.
- Whether provision of specialist support and advocacy with the section 17 accommodation results in faster / better decisions by the Home Office for these households.
- The costs, management and support structures needed to deliver a successful model and to capture with Praxis a clear 'how to' summary of the model, that would enable other organisations to replicate the model (where it is successful) or to learn from and adapt the model to best meet their local circumstances. ■

### Case Study

Kwame is a 31 year-old male who comes from Ghana. He arrived in the UK with his mother in 1994 when he was 12. His mother made an application for asylum which was refused. She was subsequently removed from the UK, however Kwame was not. Instead he was taken care of by a neighbour whilst an appeal was lodged.

His case was lost in the UK Border Agency backlog (eventually known as Legacy cases) – cases that were started and due a response before 2007. In the meantime, Kwame established his life in the UK. He met his wife and had two children, all the while supporting himself by doing cash-in-hand work.

Kwame lodged a Human Rights application in 2008 based on the Right to Family Life to ensure that should the Home Office decide he can remain in the UK, his family would also be able to remain. Kwame and his family were renting a house found for them through his church until recently when his landlady told him he had to leave.

At this point he sought housing advice from Praxis, and discovered that his landlady was subletting illegally from an estate agent. Although the situation was discussed with the landlady, she refused any compromise or negotiations. The letting agent was made aware of the situation and so was the Police.

Unfortunately it was too late for Kwame and his family as the landlady changed the locks whilst they were out and removed all their belongings to a storage space. Praxis provided Kwame and his family with accommodation in their temporary accommodation for people with NRPF, during which time his caseworker at Praxis requested an emergency assessment under s. 17 of the Children's Act.

As a result of Praxis' intervention with Social Services, Kwame and his family were subsequently accommodated pending the outcome of his Human Rights application.

### Praxis Community Projects

*"Praxis is based in Bethnal Green and we've been helping vulnerable migrants for over 30 years. We support migrants who are having difficulties here in the UK, often because of the way they have arrived or because of previous experiences. We're seeing increasing numbers of people who are victims of human trafficking or who have been enslaved, as well as long-standing residents caught in the complex bureaucracy of the immigration system and excluded from mainstream support. Our focus as an organisation is to support individuals so that they are able to live in safety, meet their human needs and overcome the barriers they face to integrate and thrive in the UK. Commonweal has brought the housing and investors and created the physical infrastructure that we need. We couldn't have done that alone as a small organisation. What's been really beneficial is that Commonweal has such a strong interest and passion to tackle social injustice. We got involved in this project because mainstream homelessness agencies and housing organisations actually weren't interested in trying to resolve what is a huge and growing problem. The fact that Commonweal is bold and actually wants to find solutions is great."*

Sally Daghlion OBE – Chief Executive - Praxis Community Projects



# Freedom2Work: Buying the Future



## How can housing help to incentivise work?

*Freedom2Work: Buying the Future* is a project in partnership with respected private rented access charity Elmbridge Rentstart. The project launched in Spring 2016 and aims to break cycles of homelessness by offering holistic support to tackle systemic disincentives to re-entry into the labour market.

The pilot project offers a stable tenancy and the ability to save through building up a credit on their rent account, in order to insulate the tenant from the risk of welfare withdrawal tapers and aid sustainable tenancies in the private sector.

Clients rent a room in a shared house, a studio flat or a bedsit. The clients will be drawn from a cross section of need but whom project partners

Elmbridge Rentstart feel are able to sustain a tenancy with support. It is open for age groups 18-60 inclusive.

The majority of clients are referred by the local authority, although some will come from the CAB and other agencies.

Intensive support is provided over the initial six months of the tenancy; tenancy sustainment training, CV writing, budgeting support and any other identified support is provided.

Tenants are encouraged to save a small sum from their welfare payments, to build up a credit on their rent account.

Once the tenants have secured work, a further credit is applied to their rent account, which

creates an early incentive in the transition to the labour market. The anticipation is that the credit will mean 100% of salary can be retained, with the exception of the contribution to the saving scheme.

Each tenant aims to save £40 a month and Freedom to Work then match funds this.

The built up credit on the rent account is matched by Freedom 2 Work, and can eventually be used as a deposit for private sector accommodation at the end of the tenancy.

#### What we hope to learn / test

The project seeks to address a perceived injustice that despite the will of many to work and leave homelessness behind them, the hurdles are too large to overcome without help. Specifically it looks at testing;

- Whether practical support, financially and emotionally can “buy the future” and encourage sustainable housing, wage progression and secure housing help individuals find a meaningful place in society.

- Whether the central concept of expecting people in receipt of welfare to save is feasible, sustainable and replicable.

- Whether credits on rent accounts mean that clients are more financially stable in the initial stages of new employment, and therefore it's more likely to aid the sustainability of the employment and tenancy. ■

**Freedom2Work seeks to address a perceived injustice that despite the will of many to work and leave homelessness behind them, the hurdles are too large to overcome without help.**

#### Case Study 1

J has been a tenant of Elmbridge Rentstart for just under a year. He is 33 and has not worked for some time though is a radio DJ through the night! He desperately needs direction and knows that he would love to be in paid work; he has previously been employed as a courier which he enjoyed but has his heart set on becoming an HGV driver. He lost his driving licence some time ago whilst moving house and the cost and organisation of requesting a new one has become a daunting task to him. We are helping him to sort that out and also looking into the courses he can take to become an HGV driver, possibly looking at funding for this from local charities.

#### Case Study 2

Due to a relationship breakdown and subsequent job loss, M ended up street homeless. He came to ERS in February 2015 and we found a bed for him in the night shelter, however there was trouble in the shelter and he felt very intimidated so left and went back to sleeping rough. In April we found him a self-contained bedsit and kitted him out with all the necessities (bedding, some basic kitchen equipment, towels etc). He loved the property and maintained it beautifully. M then managed to get on a volunteer training scheme with the Queen Elizabeth Foundation shop, learning how to use the tills, cashing up, merchandising etc. He really enjoyed the training and in January of this year he applied for and was appointed as a manager (a full time paid position) in another branch. He hopes that within the next few months he will be in a situation where he can move on and into a property of his own choosing, nearer to the shop he works in.

**£1,295 Q3 2015 median average rent in Elmbridge** *source Shelter Databank*

**Up to £150,000 action learning investment from Commonweal Housing over 5 years**

**20 individuals' capacity of the project at any one time**

**Private renters spent an average of 43% of their income on rental payments. Owner-occupiers spent on average 19%. Source; The Money Charity**

**71% of households have less than £10,000 in savings Around 9.61m (36%) of these households have no savings, while a further 3.47m (13%) have under £1,500. Source The Money Charity**



# Older LGBT housing



## Are the housing needs of older members of the LGBT community being met?

In summer 2015 Commonweal joined forces with Big Lottery and Stonewall Housing on a pioneering feasibility study investigating the demand for dedicated housing for older members of the LGBT Community in the UK. This will be the first detailed investigation into the housing need of the older LGBT community in the UK.

Stonewall Housing approached Commonweal through mutual acquaintances St Mungo's.

How we as a society meet the needs of an increasing number of elderly people in general is

one of the key challenges of our time. From 2012 to 2032 the populations of 65-84 year olds and the over 85s are set to increase by 39 and 106 per cent respectively, whereas 0-14 and 15-64 year olds are set to increase by 11 per cent and 7 per cent respectively.

Stonewall Housing lead on the National LGBT Partnership's work on producing an LGBT Companion to the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) in 2015 which included the largest survey to date of LGBT experiences of social care. When asked about residential

### What our project partner hopes to learn

Stonewall Housing has experienced a rise in the number of older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people enquiring about their housing options.

LGBT communities face particular challenges that impact on their housing, care and support needs as they age. Evidence shows that older LGBT people are statistically more likely to live alone and are less likely to have children or extended family networks they can call on for support. The reality is that older LGBT people are often living in unsuitable and

unsupportive environments and there is no dedicated older LGBT housing provision in the UK. As such we fall behind the rest of Europe and America who have successful projects.

In 2015, Commonweal Housing and the Big Lottery agreed to fund a Feasibility Study by Stonewall Housing to consider a range of housing options for older LGBT people. The aim is to influence institutional change and to make the dream of dedicated older LGBT housing a reality.

Commonweal Housing supported the venture by

paying for consultancy costs that brought in the expertise, advice and support required for the study. We were impressed by Commonweal Housing's collaborative approach which has helped us formulate a number of solutions. Our findings will be launched in June 2016 and we look forward to continue to work with Commonweal Housing and other partners to take forward the recommendations to ensure that 'good quality housing and support recognises the particular circumstances of older LGBT people; something we could show some pride in'

settings, 33% felt unsafe and only 13% were satisfied with the care. In other published research, Stonewall Housing found that 73% of older LGBT people said they wouldn't feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation to care staff, which has implications of how older LGBT people access services.

Big Lottery Fund is a funding partner on the project, but support also comes from the Homes and Communities Agency and law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP.

The research is being conducted by Julia Shelley, a former Stonewall Housing CEO and will report back in the summer of 2016.

### What we're hoping to learn

Commonweal's support for this piece of work is an example of how we are expanding the range of support we can provide to partners seeking to find housing solutions to social injustice.

This was a classic example of where intuitively it seemed that there was likely to be an issue where housing was likely to be part of the solution. However there was a dearth of hard evidence to suggest what form or what model such a solution should take.

The feasibility has certain parameters, in particular Commonweal hopes it will encourage a greater understanding of the issue of the housing and care needs of older members of the LGBT community, and the impact this issue has on individuals and society more generally. We also are hoping to see some empirical data assessing housing need and leading from this any suggested areas where future projects might succeed.

It is hoped the study will build on previous work, such as the Scottish Government assessment of need (2006) around barriers to accessing quality services. Stonewall Housing recently engaged in a fact finding mission to visit dedicated housing schemes for older members of the LGBT community in the United States. ■

### Case Study

Diana is 73 and had lived with her partner Alice for 43 years. They hadn't told anyone they were a couple but thought that most people on their close circle of friends knew.

Alice died quite unexpectedly and Diana decided that she could no longer bear to live in their house with all its memories. She sold the house and moved into a retirement apartment in the heart of her local city close to all the things she needed (shops, GP etc).

Stonewall Housing were doing a number of workshops in the area about older LGBT housing and Diana attended one of these.

Not long after, the coordinator of the older LGBT network received an email that said *"thank you so much for the event, I wanted to share with you how things are for me now. I have probably more money in the bank than I've ever had from the sale of the house. I have everything closer to hand that I need, a beautiful apartment in a beautiful building, but inside I feel like I am dying. There is no one I can talk to about my Alice, I can't identify anyone like me here or no one I feel it's safe enough to talk to. I hope the work you are doing will change things if not for me then for others that come after me. I really hope the people that can do something listen."*

We contacted Diana and were able to put her in touch with a local support service which helped but didn't resolve her housing issue. Two years on she has moved into a different housing setting, but still feels unable to disclose her sexual orientation to people around her.

**Commonweal hopes the study will encourage a greater understanding of the issue of the housing and care needs of older members of the LGBT community**

### £10,000 support from Commonweal for the feasibility study

**39% projected increased in number of 65-84 year olds in the UK between 2012-2032** source ONS

**106% projected increased in number of over 85s year olds in the UK between 2012-2032** source ONS

**33% of LGBT people felt unsafe in current care settings.** Source National LGB&T Partnership's LGB&T Companion to the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) Survey

**13% of LGBT people were satisfied with the care.** Source National LGB&T Partnership's LGB&T Companion to the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) Survey



# Young Adult Carers



## Would an available housing option help young adult carers better reach their potential?

Over the last year Commonweal has been working with Quaker Social Action, to develop their new shared housing project looking to work with young adult carers. We are raising over £2M of new social investment funding to acquire flats and houses in east London for QSA to use. We aim to formally commence this project in 2016 which will be called “Move On Up”.

The Carers Trust estimate there are 240,000 young carers aged between 18-24 years old in the UK. They spend a lot of time caring; 12% undertaking over 50 hours per week, and 25% undertaking over 20 hours per week. Unsurprisingly, this has an impact on what else they do with their time; about a quarter of them are not in education, employment or training, which is double the national average. Their caring role has a significant emotional impact, with young carers talking of “the burden of maturity” and describing bullying outside the home and

strained relationships within.

They are an overlooked group whose life chances are currently adversely affected. They cope, they cope extremely well – but putting others ahead of themselves from a young age frequently means they miss out on ‘normal’ transitions to adulthood and the platform on such transitions lay for future growth and opportunities.

When Commonweal and QSA researched how well supported young adult carers were with regard to moving into independence, we found no evidence of specific housing provision or targeted initiatives to meet this need. This was confirmed by the Carers Trust, which has a dual role; advocating for the needs of carers to government, and acting as an umbrella organisation to approximately 100 of the 300 local carers organisations, offering practical support on the ground.

The unpaid support provided by UK carers saves the taxpayer £87 billion per year, according to The Carers Trust. They provide a valuable social service, but it exacts a price on them, in terms of their own health, wellbeing and life chances.

Pragmatically, housing for benefit dependent people within this age group has got to be shared accommodation, due to housing benefit restrictions, but there are also advantages and opportunities to sharing. This new project will benefit from some of the learning from Commonweal’s previous shared housing project; Peer Landlord. In addition, many of the other services delivered by QSA positively promote group settings. We see evidence of the benefits of people sharing their experiences, realising that others may have similar hopes and fears, of sharing their own burdens, but also experiencing a sense of reciprocity, that just as others may listen and support them, they too have something valuable to offer to their peers.

The absence of any clear housing options or indeed research for this group has been highlighted in informal discussions with the leading academic in the field in the UK, Prof. Saul Becker of the University of Birmingham who expressed great interest in the potential for such a project to shape practice and policy.

## £2.3M

Of social investment raised by Commonweal

## 4

Flats and houses to be purchased in Bethnal Green

### What we are seeking to learn

As we look to commence this project over the coming year we have agreed with our delivery partners QSA, the core hypothesis we are seeking to test with this model:

Does a shared housing pathway for young adult carers aged between 18-24 years, alongside empathetic and specialist support, enable:

- The best outcomes for the young people in terms of increasing the future options available to them measured by increased personal sense of well-being, education and employment options
- Beneficial planned transition to new care relationships for those being cared for avoiding or minimising emergency or catastrophic breakdown in caring or family relationships (NB. This could be maintenance of care by YAC or transfer of care responsibility to others).
- Likely net positive (financial) benefit to the State in terms of increased education / employment options for YACs and reduced emergency care provision.
- They are better able to transition into the private rental sector / independent living.

This is not to suggest that all young adult carers will want to move out from their family home, but to explore how many want to and how best they can be supported, how to support a planned move and ensure the residual caring responsibilities at home are met, or how to support young people whose caring needs cease, due to bereavement or a move into residential care.

There is a much wider range of policy questions surrounding this issue; Commonwealth with QSA and our external evaluators will ensure we remain alive to and how these may impact upon the project. This includes questions around should legislation address the particular need of young carers to be supported to transition from caring and into their own adult lives? What role does the provision of housing play in that? What can carers organisations do better to support young adult carers to move towards greater independence? Is there merit in specialist housing provision for young adult carers, to ensure their distinctive needs are met? What advice and support can be offered to mainstream housing providers, to understand and better support young adult carers? ■

### Case Study

My name is Jon. I started caring for my mother when I was three years old, I did not realise I was a carer until I was around twelve years old when the social worker to my mother put me in touch with the young carers project....

The impact of being a carer on my personal life whilst I was younger was high; I lost a lot of school friends and it also had an impact on my school. This was because mum was always sick or unable to do things herself. Due to this I had to look after her at home and do the things that she could not do. This ranged from cooking and cleaning to keeping on top of her personal hygiene and dressing her. As I got older this got harder and happened a lot more often. This was difficult because I was getting older and I began to realise a lot more about what I was doing, and about how embarrassing it could be if people found out. It was also hard as I did not want my siblings to go through the same as things as I was going through. I used to think it was hard enough for one child doing the caring without having to teach my siblings what to do, and also about how to deal with the way people tease you because you are a carer.

Because of my caring role my school grades suffered – I know they could have been a lot better than they were. Same as my college grades, and university grades. Sometimes it can be hard to tell the person you care for that the reason your grades are bad is because of them, so we have to lie to them so they do not feel so bad. When I was kicked out of university because of bad grades, I had to lie to mum. I failed due to looking after mum and the family on a full-time basis.

When I was in school I had no help from the staff at all. They had the attitude that I should leave the caring for somebody else; they also said that it was not their problem as I was old enough to stand on my own two feet and say I don't want to care for my family. If I had had even a little support from school or the university I would have been happy, but I didn't.

The first time I really received any help was when I joined the young carers and the young adult carers project. I received help and support from the staff and also the other carers. Because of this

I became very close with some of the other carers and we became the best of friends; we are always there to help each other in any way we can.

## 25%

Of Young Adult Carers not in employment, education or training source; carers trust

## 1 in 20

young people in the UK are a young adult carer source; carers trust



**2016 is Commonweal Housing's 10th year of innovative housing solutions to social injustice. To mark this milestone Commonweal is celebrating by holding a new competition, Starter for 10, a call for research proposals to receive £10,000 in seed funding for a feasibility study into a potential solution to a hitherto under investigated area of social injustice.**



## Starter for 10

The competition was open to any charity, research body or organisation with an interest in a particular social injustice. Proposals had to involve a social injustice that was not being currently addressed or that current solutions did not adequately address and for which housing could unlock part of the solution.

Entries opened at the end of March 2015 and closed in the first week of May. The response was encouraging, a high

volume of applications were received, each of which was of an exceptionally high standard.

11 applications were shortlisted from organisations of varying size, dealing with a range of client groups.

The Commonweal Advisory Panel, made up of industry leaders in housing and the third sector more generally then joined trustees and staff to debate and decide the winner.

**£10,000**

Support from Commonweal for feasibility study

**11**

Longlisted applications

**12 months**

Length of time winner has to complete the study

## The Shortlist

Brighton Women's Centre

Encompass South West

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

The Foyer Federation

PATH: Plymouth Access to Housing

Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research Department of Land Economy

Stand Against Sexual Exploitation

Thames Reach

Kineara

Bio Regional

Furniture Resource Centre

## The process

Commonweal received a tremendous response to our Starter for 10 project. A shortlisting meeting was then held on Tuesday 17th May 2016 in central London. The expert panel considering the shortlist consisted of housing and third sector leaders. The panel were impressed with the geographical split, broad range and the high standard of the applications which ranged from domestic violence, various client groups associated with rough sleeping, furniture poverty, shared housing, housing for under 25s and much more. After three hours of deliberations the expert panel made a recommendation of three exceptional applications for the board of trustees of Commonweal from which to select an overall winner.

## The winner

### Thames Reach

#### Could a housing model be developed as an alternative to migrant tent encampments?

Thames Reach is a leading homeless charity operating in London. Its vision is to end street homelessness by assisting homeless and vulnerable people to find decent homes, build supportive relationships and lead fulfilling lives.

Thames Reach outreach teams commissioned by the Greater London Authority and London Councils have identified a group of individuals who do not fit into the traditional rough sleeper cohort. The client group has no recourse to public funds but are European Union Nationals who are able to live and work in the UK. They do not have significant support needs; are not interested in reconnection; are deemed to be exercising their treaty rights (being in the UK for less than three months and looking for work); and are choosing to sleep rough in groups. The majority of them are male aged between eighteen and fifty and appear to be working cash in hand and sending money earned back home.

Thames Reach's application was to fund a feasibility study to gather information and test assumptions based on the previous outreach work with a view to developing a housing model that enables Thames Reach to work in partnership with others to offer an alternative to sleeping rough for those currently living in encampments.



# Governance

**Commonweal Housing Ltd** is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its Memorandum and articles of association. The directors of the charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law.

**Company registration number:** 5319765

**Charity Registration number:** 1113331

**Principal address** Unit 311, The Blackfriars Foundry, 156 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8EN

**Registered Office:** 2 Bamaes Street, London, SW1 6HD

## **Directors/Trustees**

Rt Hon Fiona Mactaggart MP

Sir John Mactaggart Bt

Gary Medazoumian FCA

Jane Slowey CBE

Laurence Newman

Robert Nadler

Steven Douglas

**Company Secretary:** Gary Medazoumian FCA

## **Bankers**

Barclays Bank PLC, 7th Floor, 180 Oxford Street, London

## **Solicitors**

Bircham Dyson Bell, 50 Broadway, London SW1H 0BL

Bates Wells and Braithwaite, 2-6 Cannon Street, London, EC4M 6YH

## **Auditors**

Haysmacintyre, 26 Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4AG

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# Acknowledgements

## **Commonweal Housing wish to thank;**

Our project partners Housing for Women, St Mungos, Anawim, Women's Breakout, Thames Reach, Catch 22, Praxis Community Projects, RCJ Citizens Advice, Solace Women's Aid, Stonewall Housing, Elmbridge Rentstart, Quaker Social Action for their continuing support and positive contributions.

Members of the Commonweal Chief Executive's Advisory Panel: Keith Jenkins, Jeremy Swain, Hether Petch, Elizabeth Carson, for their ongoing advice, insight and enthusiasm.

Commonweal is also grateful to our social investment partners for their confidence in our work; Bridges Ventures, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Trust for London, City Bridge Trust and Big Society Capital.

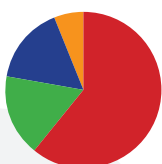
We are grateful to the Trustees of Bircham Byson Bell Charitable Trust and the Blyth Watson Charitable Trust for their generous grant funding for our work.

Last but by no means least Commonweal remain grateful to Grove End Housing Ltd for its generous and continued support.

# Financial Review

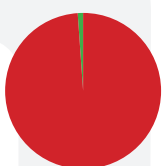
Year ended 31 December 2015

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE



### Income

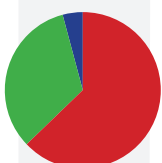
Voluntary income	£623,474	61%
Donated Assets	£172,500	17%
Rental income	£166,494	16%
Other: Investor refurbishment contributions	£59,430	6%
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£1,021,898</b>	



### Expenditure

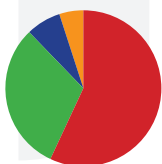
Charitable activities	£799,817	99%
Governance	£5,894	1%
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£805,711</b>	

## BALANCE SHEET



### Assets

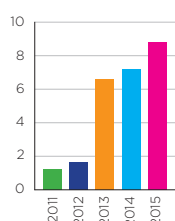
Uncharged Assets	£5,477,606	63%
Charged assets	£2,930,000	33%
Net current assets	£367,164	4%
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>£8,774,770</b>	



### Long term liabilities and funds

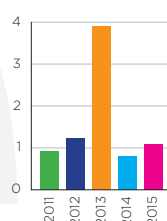
Designated funds:	£4,978,355	57%
Social Investment - Loan notes	£2,757,560	31%
Deferred Income - Covenants	£613,840	7%
General Funds	£425,015	5%
<b>Total long term liabilities and funds</b>	<b>£8,774,770</b>	

## TOTAL ASSETS 2011-2015



<b>2015</b>	<b>£8,774,770</b>
2014	£7,160,000
2013	£6,575,000
2012	£1,669,000
2011	£1,211,000

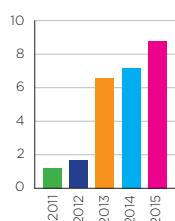
## INCOMING RESOURCES 2011-2015



<b>2015</b>	<b>£1,021,898</b>
2014	£800,000
2013	£3,900,000
2012	£1,120,000
2011	£927,000

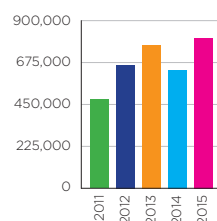
Note: In 2013 Commonwealth received approx £3m in donated assets

## TOTAL LONG TERM LIABILITIES AND FUNDS 2011-2015



<b>2015</b>	<b>£8,774,770</b>
2014	£7,160,000
2013	£6,575,000
2012	£1,669,000
2011	£1,211,000

## EXPENDITURE 2011-2015



<b>2015</b>	<b>£806,000</b>
2014	£645,000
2013	£736,000
2012	£662,000
2011	£476,000

Full details of Commonwealth's financial statements are available at [www.commonweal.org.uk](http://www.commonweal.org.uk)





Charity Registration number: 1113331