

**About Streets of London**

Streets of London (registered charity number 1155242) raises money to fund some of the great work being done to support homeless people in the capital. We provide grants to some of the many charities that offer advice and support to homeless people in London, but which people may or may not have heard about previously.

There are many small homelessness charities in London that do excellent work, but which often struggle for funding because they lack the profile and fund-raising capacity of the larger, better-known charities.

The need for more money is particularly acute at the moment. Funding cuts, coupled with a dramatic increase in the number of people sleeping rough in London in recent years (a 77% increase since 2010) means there are many more people homeless, and fewer specialist support workers available to help them.

We target the money we raise towards projects where we believe it will be of most benefit to homeless people. Using our knowledge and experience of the sector, we identify and select projects where we believe the funding (typically a grant of between £10,000 and £15,000) will make a real difference.

In the last year, our trustees have made grants totalling £45,000 to a number of great projects:

* £12,500 to fund the 'Out of Hospital, Off the Streets' project at Providence Row, a day centre near Brick Lane. The project arranges emergency housing for people who are about to be discharged from hospital following an operation, but who have nowhere to go and would otherwise be forced to sleep rough.
* £12,500 to fund the mentoring programme at The Passage, a day centre and night shelter in Victoria. They train carefully-selected volunteers in developing a coaching relationship with a homeless person. The mentors provide valuable one-to-one support to someone while they are looking for work, and on-going support as they get back into the workplace.
* £12,500 to fund the night centre at The Connection at St Martin's, a charity near Trafalgar Square. The night centre provides temporary shelter to vulnerable rough sleepers in central London (the elderly, young people, people suffering from physical or mental health problems).
* £7,500 to employ a housing support worker at Shelter from the Storm, a hostel in Islington. The grant funds the post of a part-time worker (10 hours per week) to provide advice to homeless people about their housing options, to make the necessary referrals, and to accompany clients on visits to flats that may soon become their home.

With your support, we now aim to provide a significant funding boost to the Women into Work project, a great project in central London delivered by one of our charity partners, to allow them to continue their great work helping 110 formerly homeless women each year to make positive steps towards the workplace.

**Women into Work project**

The Women into Work project is a multi-faceted employment programme developed

to engage and support 110 previously homeless women living in London.

Participants on the programme are seeking to secure employment, some for the very first time. The Women into Work programme aims to train, support and guide them on their journey into the workforce.

**Why is the project needed?**

Work is one of the surest routes out of homelessness. Flourishing in the work-place or being engaged in some other sort of meaningful activity allows the women helped by the project to grow in self-confidence and to experience a healthier level of self-esteem, by seeing for themselves the talents they have and the achievements of which they’re capable. Work is known to be an activity that not only provides much needed income but also a source of social support, as well as confidence and empowerment.

Unfortunately many of those the project works with face barriers such as language, IT skills, confidence, wardrobe and access to employment. Women into Work removes these barriers by providing the practical support and encouragement needed so that the women can make their first step towards employment and independent living.

Women into Work is the only women-only facility of its kind in London. It is therefore an extremely important place of refuge for women who have been subject to abuse and violence from men. In turn, it becomes a safe environment for them to begin to engage with their own journey towards work. This can often take some time, and the project gives the women that time they need (where, by contrast, the advice and guidance programmes offered by many other organisations are time-limited). Local job centres and larger welfare-to-work programmes certainly have their place, but can often be overwhelming for these women, which is why Women into Work is a vital source of support for the women it helps.

**How many women will benefit and in what ways?**

110 women benefit each year from the programme, by having their individual

needs assessed through the one-to-one mentoring sessions, being helped with: writing their CV; finding an appropriate volunteer placement, educational or training course; on-line job searches; writing application forms and covering letters. They might be referred to one of the in-house courses on offer, eg Literacy with IT, Introduction to IT or ESOL (English for speakers of other languages). They will gain the skills and knowledge needed in order to be confident when walking into an interview and be supported whilst they move on in their journey towards employment.

**Description of the project**

The Women into Work programme consists of:

**Mentoring** – These are one-to-one sessions where women are helped with: writing their CV; finding volunteer placements, educational and training courses; on-line job searches; writing application forms and covering letters. This one-to-one support is offered for as long as a woman needs it, which may be until they move onto a course or placement. For others they may need on-going support and encouragement while they are studying or training. The project is now looking to expand this aspect of the programme to include more focused support once someone starts a job as they may face other challenges in the workplace (eg working with colleagues). This targeted support ensures that women are able to maintain their employment with a view to building a long-term career.

**Weekly Group Sessions** – These supported sessions are a chance for women to continue working on their CV, applications and on-line searches for work, volunteer and training placements.

**Workshops** – In order to help women gain the skills needed to be successful at interviews, they provide a range of employability workshops in conjunction with partner organisations. These give women the opportunity, for instance, to learn about a range of interview techniques and how to adapt their CV to meet the criteria for a particular employer.

**Steps to Employment Course** – This is a six week “in-house” course designed specifically to meet the needs of residents that consists of four workshops and two one-to-one sessions. The workshops look at: CV writing; Job searching using the Government Gateway Universal Jobmatch website, Interview Skills and Confidence Building. There is also an initial one-to-one session to discuss an individual’s needs, the ways Women into Work can help them and a follow-up session to look at further support.

**Work Placements** – What often holds women back from being successful in getting a job is their lack of work experience. The project is working with partners to develop opportunities to gain ‘on the job’ work experience particularly in hospitality, catering, administration, retail, health and social care. Women have undertaken work experience with Land Securities and the Host Café, among other employers.

**Talks** – So that women are aware of the variety of opportunities available, the project invites organisations to come and give presentations on the programmes they offer (for example how they can find a volunteer placement).

**Visits** – Lack of confidence is a big barrier for many women and it can be very daunting to walk into a new organisation for the first time. To make it easier, the project arranges group visits to training organisations and colleges. By going as a group and finding out first-hand what is on offer, women will feel confident enough to then go by themselves and know that these are places where they are welcomed.

**Dress Facility** – It is also really important that women feel as confident as possible when walking into an interview or starting a job, placement or course. So that they don’t have to worry about what they need to wear and whether they have to try to save money to buy clothes, Women into Work offers a clothes facility. This is possible thanks to donations they have received, primarily from women who work in local businesses.

**Partnerships** – The project has developed partnerships with the voluntary, statutory and commercial sectors over the last year in order to expand the programme and provide opportunities for women, that have included: employability workshops; communication and financial awareness workshops; volunteer and work placements and talks from external providers. By way of example, the project has worked closely with Land Securities and the City of Westminster College. Land Securities has developed a construction course with City of Westminster College where participants can gain their CSCS card and are guaranteed a job interview. They are keen to encourage more women into the industry. Women into Work arranged a group visit to the Nova construction site at Victoria where women met and talked with a female site manager. This was followed by a group visit to City of Westminster College to see the campus and to attend a talk on their “Free Training for Work Programme” – the construction course is part of this programme. The project then invited someone from Land Securities to come and talk specifically about the construction course prior to the next one starting. As a result seven women expressed an interest in the course and one went on to enrol on the course, with others wanting to join the next course available.

**Training Courses** – There has been increased interest in certified courses such as Food Hygiene, Health & Safety, and Emergency First Aid. Getting a certificate in these areas will help these women in finding employment.

**Outcomes**

During the period January – December 2014, the following outcomes were achieved through working with a total of 127 women:

• One-to one mentoring appointments – 200

• Attendance at the weekly Women into Work session – 218

• Attendance at talks and workshops – 112

• Visits to external providers – 28

• CV’s completed – 55

• Applications completed for jobs, training and volunteer placements, education courses and education loans and DBS checks – 142

• Job interviews – 10

• Assessments and job screenings – 17

• Secured a place on a course – 36

• Secured a volunteer placement – 2

• Secured work placements – 2

• Own Business Start-up Programme – 9

• Secured employment – 5

**Outcomes 2016 – 2018**

The Women into Work project aims to achieve the following outcomes for 2016 – 2018:

**2016 2017 2018**

Total no. of women attending programme 110 110 110

Secured a place on a course 60 65 70

Secured a work placement 14 17 20

Secured a volunteer placement 10 15 20

Secured paid work 10 15 20

**Project Expenditure (in GBP** **Sterling)**

Education and training Project worker (28 hours per week) £18,500

Development worker (16 hours per week) £13,200

Staffing on-costs inc. NI £3,000

Employers pension contributions £750

Beneficiary travel for interviews etc. £1,500

Staff travel setting up placements etc. £500

Office running costs (incl office and training rooms) £10,000

Activities costs (training courses incl materials, providing computers etc) £5,000

External trainers for specialised courses such as food hygiene £1,000

Staff training £600

Management and clinical supervision £6,500

**Total £60,550**