

# SAFE & SOUND

ISSUE 1 • 2023

## DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place

## All fired up

How Callum's achieving his fire service dreams, **p8**

Your support in action  
Together we're  
changing young lives

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# Welcome

**W**elcome to the latest edition of Safe & Sound, your supporter magazine. In this edition you can read about how your support is leading to safer, more hopeful futures for young people. These are challenging times, and I want to say a really big thank you for your support, which means we can get vital services to those who need it most.

With Nightstop, our network of volunteer hosts, we have a model that has proved its worth over 35 years. Spending even one night on the streets puts a young person at serious risk, and that's where Nightstop comes in, by providing a safe and warm place to stay in an emergency.

That's why I'm delighted to report we're expanding the Nightstop network, so we can keep more young people safe – read all about it on pages 6-7. And on pages 8-9 Callum explains how the caring welcome he received from his Nightstop hosts helped him change the course of his life.

Keeping families together is a key way to prevent young people from becoming homeless. On page 14, Chanice, one of our dedicated family support and mediation staff, describes how we're achieving that. And on page 15 you can read about the team who are taking interactive workshops in to schools to prevent teenagers from ever becoming homeless.

On page 4 and page 10 you will read about how young people are involved in shaping their own services. Please turn to pages 12-13 to hear about the business leaders, marathon runners and daredevil fundraisers who are going the extra mile to make sure young people who have had a tough start in life will have a brighter future. ■

With warmest wishes,

**Kristina Hedderly-Perez**  
**Director of Public Engagement**



# Lauren dives in to end homelessness

Lauren Bray was so affected by the young people she met as a Depaul volunteer that she took on a daring fundraising challenge.

**D**uring the 2020 lockdown, Lauren, a 26-year-old recruitment consultant from Newcastle, found the opportunity to mentor young people in Depaul UK's services. She helped them with budgeting, cooking and other skills they need to live independently.

Lauren says: "You take it for granted being able to cook, or pay your bills, but some young people don't have the opportunity to learn that from parents. I hope I built up their confidence a little bit and was able to give them skills to move forwards in what they wanted to do."

Lauren was so inspired by her volunteering experience that she decided to take on a sponsored

skydive. She says: "It was a crazy, once-in-a-lifetime experience. I used social media, my work channels, and family and friends all spread the word to their workplaces as well, so that's how I was able to raise more than a thousand pounds.

**“Meeting the young people will stay with me forever.”**

"I have seen first-hand where the money is going and it gave me a huge sense of pride to be able to give back to this fantastic charity. Meeting and working with the young people is something that will stay with me forever." ■

# Young people help shape services



▲ Young people helped make decisions about the services they receive.



▲ Lucy Adams

Who better to give advice and insight about services than the people who use them? That's why we asked young people to create a way to measure how well Depaul UK's services are helping them.

Last year we asked young people who joined our annual residential trip to take on an important task: to help us audit the services we provide.

It may sound like a job for a specialist department, but as Client Involvement Coordinator Lucy Adams says, the best people to measure services are those who receive them: "We want to hear from young people and get their expertise and insight about how well our services measure up against our values."

Like most organisations, Depaul UK's work is guided by clear values:

- We celebrate the potential in people
- We put our words into action
- We take a wider role in civil society
- We believe in rights and responsibilities.

"We know what they mean to staff," explains Lucy, "But we wanted to know what they meant to young people."

"Young people contributed their ideas through trips and through workshops. We visited tourist sites and we looked at the values of organisations like the National Trust for example," explains Lucy. "We then got the young people to see how well the organisation lived up to its values, and later we did the same for Depaul UK's services."

"What we have now at the end of the conference is what the young people think is most important about each value, how they want to see them in action, and a plan to implement their ideas. Services are stronger, and more effective when they're shaped by the people who use them." ■



▲ These images, which capture the landscape so beautifully, were taken by young people on the trip.

## What young people say

“It was absolutely fantastic. I really enjoyed it. It was absolutely wonderful to get away from Manchester for a few days and just relax, but also do some work that was meaningful.

“I think client involvement is the future of services. Everyone’s views were taken seriously no matter who they are. It’s a rare thing that Depaul UK as an organisation has created.

“People at Depaul UK come from different backgrounds, and it’s really important to be aware of that and how to deal with it. I’ve now suggested to Depaul UK that we could host workshops on communication skills. So it’s worked out really well.”

**Emma, 23, from Manchester**

“I liked that we were able to learn more about the different areas and understand the charity. I liked coming up with ideas, and how in certain activities

like cooking we were learning different skills that could help in our lives going forward.”

**Thomas, 20, from London**



# NIGHTSTOP

## A lifeline for more young people



▲ Ian Forster

Our Nightstop volunteers offer a room in their own homes for young people in danger on the streets. The service is expanding, meaning more young people will be safe.

Each year, thousands of vulnerable young people are at risk on the streets, and our Nightstop service helps hundreds of them find a place of safety. Volunteer Nightstop hosts provide young people a bed in their own home on the same night they are referred, removing them immediately from danger.

**77%**  
of Nightstop  
guests move on to  
somewhere safe and  
more permanent

In the last 18 months, we have launched Nightstop in Milton Keynes, Essex, and Aberdeenshire, and the Greater Manchester service has expanded into Cheshire. We are now reaching more young people whose safety is at risk.

We've seen a growing need for Nightstop all over the UK. In the first nine months of 2022, the numbers of young people being referred to the service increased by 22%. Ian Forster, Depaul UK's Senior Nightstop Network Manager says: "It's an essential emergency service for some of the UK's most vulnerable young people.

"Even the first night on the streets can be very dangerous for young people. We had one teenager who arrived in Manchester with nowhere to stay and within hours he was



*\*January to  
September 2022*

assaulted. That's why the same-day placement is really important – to prevent young people who are at risk spending even one night on the streets."

Ian says that in his 17 years working with Nightstop, he has seen its positive impact time and again. "It gives young people a breathing space, which sets them off on a path to success, rather than a downward spiral on the streets.

"One young man told me: 'We all sat down around the dining table and had a meal together.' That's the first time he had sat down with people who weren't shouting and arguing. They may not have experienced that sort of kindness in their lives – the impact on young people is huge.

"We have built a really good network that we want to expand, and we want to get into areas of need. We want to keep as many young people as safe as we can." ■

## WHEN A QUICHE IS MORE THAN JUST DINNER

Adele, 19, was referred to Nightstop after two years staying in a YMCA. She spent 11 nights with two host families in Essex. When the Nightstop team asked her about any food requests, she said she'd love a homemade quiche.

On the second night with her hosts, they decided they would cook the meal together. The next morning, Adele came into the Nightstop office, with the biggest smile, saying she had cooked a homemade quiche with her hosts. She showed photos of what she had made, saying: "I've never done anything like that before. I'm so proud of myself."



**WATCH 'HOW  
NIGHTSTOP HOSTING  
WORKS' VIDEO**



# NIGHTSTOP

## Callum's story

Three years ago Callum, 26, was at crisis point. Brought up in care, at the age of 18 he started living alone, but found he couldn't afford the rent. It started a downward spiral into homelessness and mental health problems. Getting help from a Nightstop host proved to be a turning point in his life.

**“E**ver since I was a little boy, I've always been really keen on helping people. I wanted to be a paramedic or a firefighter. Finally, I am getting there.

“I grew up in care since the age of six. I was moved about here, there and everywhere. I was with different foster carers, and different schools. It was very stressful, and very disruptive as a young child.

“What I think is hard is that as soon as you are 18, you are dropped from care like a sack of potatoes. I got my own flat through social services and a labouring job, but I couldn't pay the rent. That's when the homelessness started.

“It was then my social worker got us in touch with Depaul UK, who got me somewhere to stay with a

Nightstop host. They are volunteers who put you up in their own homes.

“I had one Nightstop host called Helen and I stayed with her for a few weeks. She was amazing. She made it dead homely and she'd have food on the table. When you're going through a tough time, it makes a real difference. I always used to say to her: 'When I become a firefighter, I'll come back knocking on your door with my uniform on.' And she said: 'Make sure you do!'

“After Nightstop, Depaul UK found me a flat in Oldham, ten minutes from a Depaul UK supported living place. What it does for you is fabulous. I used to struggle with my mental health and they used to say if you ever want to pop down, then just come down no matter when





▲ *Callum is working to achieve his ambition of becoming a firefighter.*

it is and we can have a chat and a brew.

“Marion, my Depaul UK support worker, she was a star. She would come to my flat and see how things were going and what we could improve on. Before, when I got bills through the door, I used to let it get behind, but Marion helped with all that and helped us get it sorted.

“At the time, I was waiting for my application with the fire service. I started off as a volunteer doing events and going round fitting smoke alarms in people’s houses. Now I’m part of the training team in this massive training centre. I’ve been here just over three years, but my end goal is to become a firefighter. It’s always something I’ve wanted to do; you’re making a difference to people’s lives.

## **Determination**

“To start my firefighter training I need to pass Maths and English tests. Obviously with my upbringing I missed a lot of school, so I probably

need to go to night school to improve enough to pass the tests. I’ve got lots of different driving certificates since I’ve been in the role, and I’m getting my HGV soon. They’re all transferable qualifications too. I’m very determined. I’ve always been like that.

“I’m living with an uncle at the moment, just because it’s cheaper. I hope I can save so I can go travelling. I’ve always wanted to go to America.

“I had help at a tough time but people I know who have left care have ended up on the street. One girl I knew ended up on the streets, taking drugs. She was really skinny, not looking her happy self. It’s really, really sad when you see someone you know like that.

“Now, I’m on the straight and narrow. I’m on the right medication and I’m in a good place to live, so that helps massively. Work is going good and life is going good. Touch wood.” ■

# Young people take charge of their future



▲ Maisie Black

An innovative questionnaire is helping make sure young people at risk of becoming homeless are in charge of their future.

**J**ust over two years ago we launched our Pathfinder programme, which has now supported nearly 300 young people under 25 at risk of homelessness in three boroughs of Greater Manchester.

Pathfinder's Service Manager Maisie Black says: "The young people we work with are not homeless yet, but things have started to go wrong. They have lost their job, leading to rent arrears, or had arguments with parents. Pathfinder is designed to prevent things from getting any worse.

"If a young person has a tenancy we will get in touch with the landlord, help them with arrears, set payment plans up. If they don't have a tenancy and are staying with friends or family in arrangements that can't be sustained, we help them find accommodation."

It's important to get a clear picture of a young person's situation when they start at Pathfinder, and what improves for them while being

supported by the project. The Youth Homelessness Outcomes Tracker (YHOT) is the tool we developed to do this. Made up of 30 questions, it gathers information on the changes that matter most to young people.

## Created with young people

The YHOT questionnaire was created with young people to ensure the questions are relevant and cover the areas of their lives where they want to see change. It's completed in a support session with a Depaul UK coach within a month of the young person starting with Pathfinder, and repeated at regular intervals.

Maisie explains: "Everyone referred to us has a housing need, but they may also need support with other things in their life, such as improving their financial stability, finding work, engaging in meaningful activity, or improving their support networks.

"The YHOT helps them think about themselves and where they want to be. It helps the coach get to know the young person and it opens up the conversation about lots of issues."



◀ Young people were involved in setting the questions in two sections, 'Me' and 'My Situation', to generate a picture of the areas of their lives they want to change.

When the questionnaire is completed, the software generates a dashboard of the young person's scores across the two sections, 'Me' and 'My Situation'. The different areas, such as financial stability, relationships and skills are colour-coded green, amber and red, depending on the score.

"Young people like it because it gives them a visual representation of where they are and guides the support plan we put in place" says Maisie. "One young person thought they needed to focus on getting a job, but when they saw the dashboard, they realised it would be better to concentrate on their mental health first. The coach then helped them access mental health support.

### Getting motivated

"Another young person scored quite low across all areas. But the questions are worded in a positive way – this is what we are going to concentrate on, and we can do this. The young person picked one area to work on, employment, and found a temporary job. When he came back to do the YHOT again all his scores had increased. The job gave him so much routine, social interaction and structure. The questionnaire really showed him how he was progressing and gave him motivation."

As a result of the success of Pathfinder, Greater Manchester Combined Authority have now commissioned the service across all ten boroughs of the Greater Manchester area. ■



▲ Dan Nelson, Depaul UK



▲ Lydia Kendall, Depaul UK and Julian McDougall, Bournemouth University

# Business leaders sleep out

Senior leaders and business owners are helping transform young people's lives by giving up one night of theirs.

**C**EO Sleepout is a yearly event, uniting business leaders who sleep out for one night in cities across the UK to support people facing homelessness. Last year we were delighted to have the support of senior leaders in Sunderland, Manchester and London.

Depaul UK's Regional Engagement Officer North, Lydia Kendall, reported from Old Trafford, where she joined a team taking on the sleepout challenge: "There was a unique atmosphere at Emirates Old Trafford among the team of regional business leaders bonding over their shared challenge. The experience can't mimic what young people face on the streets, but it is eye-opening.

"The concrete ground beneath you is incredibly uncomfortable and prevents sleep, while you are exposed to the sounds of cars, machinery, and people; the frequent changes in light, the wind and the cold. You feel more exhausted and agitated as the night goes on.

"We were all profoundly aware that this is only a fraction of what young people face when sleeping in unsafe places."

We are so grateful to the wonderful business leaders across the three regions who raised more than £10,000 to support young people. ■

**DONATE WHILE YOU SHOP AT THE CO-OP**



If you shop at the Co-op you can choose to donate to Depaul UK when you pay. Depaul UK's partnership with the Co-op in Manchester and the North East means the money is raised by local people for the local young people in Depaul UK's services. If you live in Manchester or the North East your support will make a profound impact on their lives. Scan the QR code on your mobile phone to get started.



# Our marvellous marathon runners

A huge thank you to the determined supporters who ran the TCS 2022 London Marathon to raise money in support of Depaul UK's mission to end homelessness among young people.



▲ **Liam Stannard**

**B**uster, Liam, Natasha and Gerard made up the team from United Trust Bank. Together they raised a magnificent **£4,632**. Liam says: "We at UTB are incredibly proud to have

run for Depaul UK. I managed to high-five all you guys around mile 12! I'll never forget running the biggest marathon in the world." Depaul UK is very thankful to UTB for giving £5,000 in matched fundraising. ■



**KAYLEIGH O'BRIEN**  
**RAISED**  
**£2,000**



**SINEAD CLARKIN**  
**RAISED**  
**£2,500**



**NIALL O'SHEA**  
**HIT HIS TARGET OF**  
**£2,500**

## WEIGHTED WALK 2023

It's back! Weighted Walk will return in 2023. Will you carry a load so young people don't have to? To find out more, scan the QR code or head to [depaul.org.uk/weighted-walk](https://depaul.org.uk/weighted-walk)






**57%**

of young people  
Reconnect worked  
with in 2021  
reported that  
family relationships  
improved

# Mending family relationships



 Chanice Page

A key way to prevent young people becoming homeless is to prevent family breakdown. Chanice Page, Family Support Worker and Mediator with Depaul UK's Reconnect service in the North East, describes her role in helping to keep families together.

**"I**'m just really passionate about bringing families together. We work to improve communication, reduce conflict and strengthen relationships, so we prevent young people from becoming homeless.

"We'll get involved because of a range of issues. A lot of our clients have a diagnosis of ADHD or autism. Sometimes it's trauma that has come down through the generations, or problems when step parents come on the scene.

"Where there has been a breakdown in communication, we'll work on building up those skills again. If a parent is shouting and using a particular language or tone, then the young person might start doing the same thing. So what we're always looking for is positive change.

"We work with Depaul UK's mental health team to support young people and their parents. We've been able to fast-track people to therapy.

"I see the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on families, and parents who have lost jobs. We can sometimes help struggling families with grants.

"One family have a young girl who suffers from anxiety and low mood. She goes to dance classes every week and she loves it, that's her passion. But it costs the parents a lot of money, so we put in a grant to have some of her dance classes paid for by us, and it's been accepted.

"It's amazing when you see families coming together and working out solutions for themselves. I just think that young people need to feel they belong at home." ■



# Starting early



Tens of thousands of young people go to their local authority for help every year because they are facing homelessness. Our pioneering work in schools aims to prevent that from happening.

**T**here's a compelling mystery at the heart of 'Missing', a hard-hitting workshop that uses digital media to help school pupils gain a better understanding of how young people can become homeless.

'Missing' is run by Depaul UK's staff for secondary school pupils aged 15-16. Pupils get involved in solving the mystery – why did a young woman, Ashley, go missing? It's a creative approach, putting young people in an active role of investigating relationships, conflict and risk-taking.

The team believes that tackling problems early in a young person's life can change their future by preventing them from becoming homeless. "We are really serious as an organisation about preventing youth homelessness," says Amy Smith, Depaul UK's National Prevention Services Manager. "And our learning is that the earlier we can provide support, the more impact we can have."

**We delivered homelessness prevention workshops to**

# 2,176

**young people in 2021**

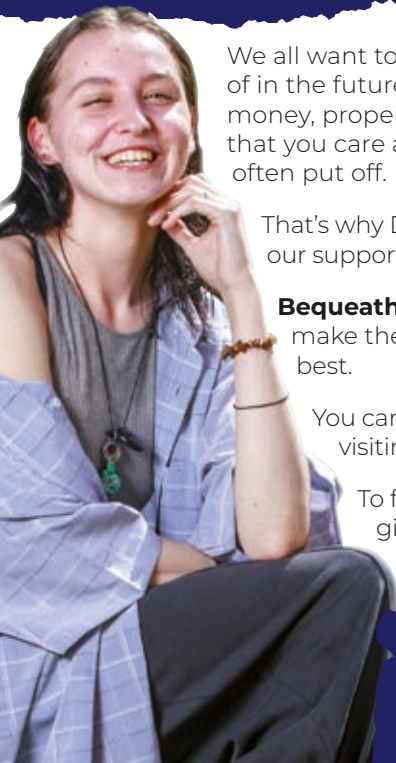
The schools prevention programme includes a series of targeted workshops for smaller groups of pupils who are at higher risk and promotes Depaul UK's family mediation service, Reconnect (read more on page 14). "We know that conflict at home can lead to relationship breakdown, and a young person becoming homeless," says Amy. Working in smaller groups, young people are encouraged to develop skills to manage their own feelings and emotions, enabling those who may be experiencing risky situations or relationships to make choices that will lead to a safer future. ■



**WATCH 'MISSING' VIDEO TRAILER:**



# You can give young people hope by including a gift in your Will



We all want to make sure that our loved ones are taken care of in the future. By writing a Will, you can make sure that your money, property and possessions go to the people and causes that you care about after you die. But it's one of those things we often put off.

That's why Depaul UK has teamed up with **Bequeathed** to offer our supporters a free, professionally drafted **Will For Good**.

**Bequeathed** is a free, convenient service that allows you to make the right Will for your needs in the way that suits you best.

You can get started straight away by visiting [bequeathed.org/depaul](https://bequeathed.org/depaul)

To find out more about leaving a gift in your Will we have created a free guide.



Download the free guide to Wills here: [depaul.org.uk/wills](https://depaul.org.uk/wills) or scan the QR code with your smartphone to view online.



Join the conversation at: [depaul.org.uk](https://depaul.org.uk)

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**DEPAUL**  
Homelessness has no place

**FR** Registered with  
FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR

**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE**

The stories reflect real life experiences of Depaul UK young people and their keyworkers. However their names and photos may have been changed to protect their identities. All information is correct at time of printing. Your donation will go towards helping vulnerable young people accessing one of Depaul UK's prevention services, wherever it is needed most.

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