

Actively supporting those at risk of homelessness through adversity to security

"Working with you has shown there is hope for things to get better, and someone cares"



Introduction to the Annual Review, by the Chair of Trustees, **Antonia Lancaster**



Welcome to Ipswich Housing Action Group's Annual Report for April 2019 to March 2020.

The last twelve months has seen a period of change for ihAg as we welcomed Jools Ramsey, our new Chief Executive Officer to the team.

Like many organisations, the Covid-19 pandemic has changed how we work, and we constantly review, adapt and respond to needs as they arise. The Board of Trustees are conscious of our future and so, along with stabilising IhAg, we recognise the need to develop a new strategy with a focus on investment and sustainability for the future to continue to achieve our desired outcomes.

I hope you will enjoy reading the new style report and can see the positive impact we continue to have on the people we meet. We know none of this can be achieved without our staff and volunteers, who have all worked incredibly hard over the last year.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank two people who dedicated their time to the charity, John Grierson IhAg's Chairman for six years and Halford Hewitt, IhAg's long standing Director.

We have exciting times ahead and I look forward to updating you all next year.



Our Board of Trustees and Managers, meeting to discuss performance, strategy and funding.

Reflections on the year and looking ahead, by the Chief Executive Officer, Jools Ramsey



Although I have only been in post since the end of 2019, the past few months have seen such an extraordinary amount of change, for all of us, in such a short space of time, it feels incredible to say it has been less than a year.

I would like to say a personal thank you to every member of staff, volunteers and supporters who have worked so hard over the past few months to ensure we continue to offer care to those facing hardship and homelessness in our town.

COVID-19 forced our hand and made us stop and think. We had to evaluate what was important, not only in our own lives but also as an organisation. It's vital we continue to review our services to ensure they remain relevant and valuable to those we serve. The next twelve months will, I'm sure, see our ideas become reality as we adapt to the 'new normal' and respond to the changing needs of the residents of Ipswich and beyond.

Over the next few pages read more about how our organisation has helped those who come to us for advice and support. This time next year, I hope we again reflect on our successes and I look forward to working with you all to achieve our goals and aspirations.

Thank you for making me feel so welcome at ihAg.



The Chapman Centre

The Chapman Centre is an Advice Hub, open seven days a week, providing an informal and safe environment for those at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness to access a range of advice and support services including:

- Emotional and practical support
- Health and welfare support
- Housing and Benefit advice
- Social and meaningful activities
- Postal address service
- Laundry facilities
- Free showers
- Food and toiletries provision

During week days, our Outreach Workers walk the town, finding and supporting people who are rough sleeping, inviting them to the Centre for breakfast and practical support.

The Centre also offers a confidential space for partnership agencies, such as mental health, dentistry, substance use support and housing options, to meet the people they support.

Our advice service consistently achieves the Advice Quality Standard.

Action this year

- 798 people used the Centre during the week, visiting a total of 10,496 times
- 453 people used the Centre at weekends, visiting a total of 2,520 times
- 214 meaningful activities held, attended by 709 people
- 3,900 hot lunches served
- 260 rough sleepers supported by outreach workers

Thanks to the generous donations received throughout the year, we have distributed toiletries, small items of clothing and food parcels to those most in need. Thank you.



B had been sleeping on the streets of Ipswich for over four years, and despite concerns for her physical and mental wellbeing, would not engage with any service. Our workers slowly began to talk to her and enabled her to feel able to visit the Centre. She would use the washing facilities, stay for lunch and over time allowed staff to advocate for her health needs. B has now settled on a medicated regime to improve her health and feels able to look forward. She has since moved to her own flat but continues to visit for lunch, to socialise and for the activities.

K became homeless after his relationship broke down and he drifted away from his family. He sought general advice from the Centre before agreeing to look at how he could find suitable housing. K was assessed for a property with the ihAg Housing Team and moved in last summer. With support from our staff, he has accessed other services to address his health needs and has made steps to contact his family. He continues to visit the Centre for lunch and to socialise.

Your staff are so understanding and supportive

If this wasn't here, I'd be in the library to keep warm, or out stealing

This is the first Christmas dinner I've had in at least three years - it means so much

These are just two examples of the work undertaken by the staff and volunteers at The Chapman Centre.

For more, please visit www.ihag.co.uk

Housing Services

The Housing Service provides 55 bed spaces across 14 properties in Ipswich for single homeless people. Support is person-centred and assessed on individual need. Residents can stay for up to 18 months before moving to independent living.

Our support programme includes:

- Independent living skills
- Money management
- Tenancy sustainability
- Income maximisation
- Health and wellbeing
- Support into volunteering or training

Residents also receive resettlement support as they move into independent living, to ensure they are able to settle within their new community and connect with services providing support for their ongoing needs.



Action this year

- 73 single homeless people were assessed for a space within our supported accommodation
- 24 people were offered and accepted accommodation
- 25 people were assessed as having high support needs which could not be supported safely
- 87% of people in ihAg property fully engaged with the support offered, maximised their income and gained confidence in their ability to live independently
- 14 people were successfully supported to move on to secure accommodation
- Short-term support was provided to help settle them into their new community

When T became homeless, he decided to buy a boat and sail around the coast. Unfortunately, he had to be rescued by the Lifeguard and could not afford to pay his mooring fees. His boat was impounded, and he became street homeless. He engaged well with ihAg and was offered accommodation. He has worked with the Money Advice team to manage his debt and, with encouragement, has taken forklift truck lessons, becoming qualified just before lockdown. He is actively looking for employment.

I felt ashamed of my situation, but believed and supported by my key worker

When life got really difficult, I just wanted to sail away from it. It was hard to ask for help. I'm glad I did

With help, I have begun to look after myself and my room. I'm looking forwards not back

M was signposted to ihAg for supported accommodation after becoming homeless due to a long-term relationship breakdown. M disclosed she was being supported by her GP with an addiction to prescribed medication and wanted to rebuild her life. M was offered a room and is obviously committed to her own recovery – she engaged in all support offered, paid her rent and is proactive in engaging with the other residents in the house.

With your support, I've been able to face my worries, deal with my debt and achieve something for myself

These are just two examples of the work undertaken by the Housing Service.

For more, please visit www.ihag.co.uk

Housing First

The Housing First project stands independently from the Housing Services team as it specifically targets people who have experienced long periods of homelessness, whose needs have not been met by more traditional Housing Service support.

The fundamental principles of Housing First are:

- Access to housing is a right, not a reward
- 'Housing' and 'support' are separate
- Support is for as long as it is needed
- Support is offered in a way suited to each person
- Individuals have choice and control
- Support is strengths based and personalised
- Support is offered for harm reduction

Through Housing First, support is offered in a more intense and strengths-based way, individualised to each person. The ultimate outcome is for tenancy sustainability. However, the model provides significant Social Return on Investment, as it actively reduces the need for crisis intervention from other agencies, including Primary Health services and Police.

ihAg's Housing First has been operating in partnership with Anglia Care Trust (ACT)

Action this year

- Staff have provided intense support to a maximum of seven people at any given time
- All those helped previously slept rough for an average of two years
- Four people have now sustained their tenancy for over 12 months
- Four people have now sustained their tenancy for four months



J was known to a number of Ipswich services over an extended period of time. He was sleeping rough and using drugs as a mechanism to cope. J was mistrustful and felt unable to engage with those looking to support him.

Through Housing First, J was offered accommodation without risk of it being withdrawn if he chose not to engage with his support worker. This helped J to engage on his own terms and he began to build a trusting relationship.

J showed a deep pride in his flat, painting it and adding personal effects. Initially J struggled to manage the people who visited him, but with proactive support from his worker and the local Police, became more able to protect himself and his property.

When he was ready, J worked with Turning Point and began a supportive programme to reduce his substance usage.

He also engaged with Mental Health services and agreed to take medication to improve his sleep and mood swings.

His longer-term health needs are now being monitored regularly by healthcare professionals.

J has successfully maintained his tenancy for 14 months.

His Housing First worker is still in regular contact and he continues to engage with other agencies.

I've managed to do things I didn't think I could

If it wasn't for Housing First and the support of my worker, I'd have been found dead on the streets somewhere

My worker genuinely believed in me and I can start to believe in me too

This is just one example of the work undertaken by the Housing First team.

For more, please visit www.ihag.co.uk

Money Advice Service

The Money Advice Service offers free, confidential and impartial money and debt advice to anyone living in Ipswich. In addition, the service offers advice to men leaving four of the region's prisons; HMP Highpoint, HMP Hollesley Bay, HMP Warren Hill and HMP Wayland.

Our trained welfare and benefit advisors provide advocacy and support on a range of financial concerns, including:

- Repaying debts within a budget
- Debt related court proceedings
- Debt Relief Orders
- Bankruptcy
- Dealing with bailiffs
- Money management
- Maximising income
- Welfare benefit
- Applications for support grants
- Unpaid mortgage or rental payments

The service has achieved the Advice Quality Standard, and the advisors are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Action this year

- 1,363 referrals for help received
- 730 cases assessed
- £170,147 additional income secured for those struggling
- 541 men supported with debt management prior to their release from prison
- Average debt per person £8,905
- Support provided for £5,661,444 of total debt
- 79 Debt Relief Orders secured for those with little or no income





Worrying about my debts really affected my health. Thank you for supporting me to improve that

Your support has stopped my home being taken from me. I have time to decide what to do next

I thought I would go to prison or lose all my belongings

P contacted the Money Advice team as she was struggling with debts and was looking for support to apply for a grant.

Following a review of her income, she was supported to reduce her debt payments. Additionally, her advisor successfully applied for a grant to support the purchase of essential household items, including a cooker and a bed, and now she and her son enjoy home cooked meals again.

A approached the Money Advice Service for support with her mortgage arrears. With only 18 months left on her mortgage term she had fallen behind with payments due to a recent stroke and the lender had written with threats to take action.

Following advocacy on A's behalf, the mortgage provider agreed to withhold further action until a grant relating directly to A's arrears was in place. An appropriate and affordable repayment plan was agreed, A continues to recover from the longer-term effects of the stroke.

These are just two examples of the work undertaken by the Money Advice Service.

For more, please visit www.ihag.co.uk

Financial Statement

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2020</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2020</i>	<i>Total funds 2020</i>	<i>Total funds 2019</i>
	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>
<i>Income from:</i>				
Donations and legacies	19,157	-	19,157	18,454
Charitable activities	890,627	359,482	1,250,109	1,218,700
Investments	5,587	-	5,587	3,472
Total income	915,371	359,482	1,274,853	1,240,626
<i>Expenditure on:</i>				
Raising funds	29,169	147	29,316	33,089
Charitable activities	902,322	350,576	1,252,898	1,226,147
Total expenditure	931,491	350,723	1,282,214	1,259,236
Net movement in funds	(16,120)	8,759	(7,361)	(18,610)
<i>Reconciliation of funds:</i>				
Total funds brought forward	957,447	10,781	968,228	986,838
Net movement in funds	(16,120)	8,759	(7,361)	(18,610)
Total funds carried forward	941,327	19,540	960,867	968,228

Please contact ihAg to request a copy of the full Financial Statement.

With thanks to our partner agencies:

Ipswich Borough Council

Suffolk County Council

Anglia Care Trust (ACT)

Ipswich Police

Ipswich Street Rangers

Town Pastors

Turning Point

Selig

Genesis Housing

Sanctuary Housing

Start Afresh

Health Outreach Teams

Mental Health Outreach Senior Practitioner

Emmaus

Suffolk Access Community Trust

Advice UK

Citizens Advice

Orbit Housing

Home Group

Novus

Sodexo

HMP Hollesley Bay

HMP Highpoint

Homeless Link

Housing First England



With enormous thanks and gratitude to:

Trustees

- Antonia Lancaster
- Jeremy Hennell James
- Elaine Webb
- Tracy Murphy
- Gemma Bloomfield
- Tom Jell
- David Jackson
- Christopher McEwen
- Daniel Bristow
- John Grierson (retired)

Volunteers

- Rosie Walker
- Graham Walker
- Keith Etherington
- Steve Morgan
- Val Stephenson
- Bradie Constance-Poole
- Diana Guest
- Carole Vellacott
- Roger Jarrold
- Kay Latham
- John Edgar
- Dawn Farr
- The late Clare Augarde
- Lou Jarrett
- Jo Andrews
- Phil Archer
- Tracey Clarke
- Jamie Scorer
- James Allen
- Jemma Jones
- Chris Self
- Lyn Colbear
- Belinda Farrell
- Mick Nichols
- Sam Smith



Supporters and Donors

- Claydon High School
- KMA Solicitors
- Barclays Bank (Ipswich Branch)
- Sweffling White Horse
- Alan Road Baptist Church
- Bethel Church
- Inner Wheel Club of Ipswich
- Orwell
- Darsham Ladies
- Ipswich Building Society
- Royal Hospital School
- Mrs H Glasscock
- Mr B Loader
- Miles Row
- Ann English
- Julia Williamson
- Tobias Siltoe
- David Copeland
- Thomas Cross
- Ann Matthews
- Mrs Christine Galbraith
- Dr Flores
- David Lewis
- J A Smith
- Mr & Mrs Butler

Funding: Grant Making Bodies, Trusts and Foundations

- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Mulberry Trust
- The People's Postcode Lottery
- Albert Hunt Trust
- Cloth Workers Foundation
- Suffolk Community Foundation
- Mrs Smith and Mount Trust
- Ipswich Borough Council Communities Grant
- Hill Family Grant Fund
- Hopkins Homes
- The Lord Belstead Charitable Trust
- L D Rope Trust
- Ama Jean Henry Charitable Trust
- 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- Roger Vere Foundation



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www.ihag.co.uk

@IHAG_Homeless

Registered Charity Number: 1107841

Company limited by guarantee

Registered in England Company

Number 5268499

Registered Address:

22 - 24 Carr Street Ipswich Suffolk IP4 1EJ

Registered with the Funding Regulator

Member of Homeless Link

Advice Quality Standard holder