

St Mungo's frontline

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ SUMMER 2011



John Gani, Construction Skills Tutor (right), and Bricks and Mortar trainee, Ali Boag (left), at St Mungo's Action Week Garden Party

- Preventing homelessness
- Homelessness: still rising
- A look back at Action Week 2011

St Mungo's 
Opening doors for homeless people

Welcome

Welcome to your latest issue of Frontline.

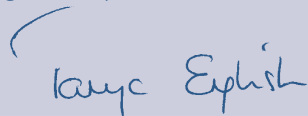
I would like to start by thanking you for your huge support of our recent Action Week. It was a great success!

We were delighted that Prime Minister David Cameron lent his support to the campaign and over 30 MPs endorsed our Action Week pledge. And it was fantastic to meet so many of our loyal supporters at our Garden Party at Westminster Abbey. You can read a full Action Week update on page 8.

Unfortunately, with this positive, comes a negative. We are very concerned that, once again, homelessness is rising. Recent figures show that the number of people sleeping rough on the streets of London has increased 8% since last year. As we feared, more people are in need of our help at a time when funding cuts have reduced the services available to them.

As we endeavour to help those most in need, your support remains crucial.

Thank you so much for your generosity.



Tanya English
Executive Director
Fundraising & Communications

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2. Join us on 
[Facebook.com/StMungosUK](https://www.facebook.com/StMungosUK)
3. Follow us on 
twitter.com/StMungos

Frontline news

From sleeping bag to designer bag

London Marriott, Marble Arch and new social enterprise company, Sleeping Bags, have come up with a novel and eco friendly idea for supporting local communities and homeless people.

Luxury bed linen no longer needed by the Marriott at Marble Arch is collected by the people at Sleeping Bags and made into shopping bags by a local manufacturer. Local artists then add their own unique design. St Mungo's is really excited to be involved in this new partnership and we are delighted to be receiving a generous donation from the sale of each bag.

The bags are available from the reception at the Marriott Hotel Marble Arch for £30 (phone 020 7725 5923 for more info).



(l to r): Andy from Sleeping Bags with Tanya from St Mungo's and Govett, General Manager of The Marriott at Marble Arch

Adult Learners' Week

This year, our Skills and Employment Team used Adult Learners' Week (14-20 May 2011) as an opportunity to promote online IT training to our clients. Roadshows took place at seven St Mungo's hostels, supported by Learning Champions, clients who promote learning to other residents within their own hostel. We were pleased that 25 new people signed up to our online computer training course.

The course is run by Roger Hamilton, St Mungo's Volunteer Activity Worker & IT Tutor, who has experienced

homelessness himself.

"I'm very pleased that so many clients have completed training so far", Roger said. "Homeless men and women have low literacy levels generally, and have often lacked access to computer and IT training."

The week ended with a special ceremony to recognise the achievements of clients on St Mungo's training programmes such as Bricks & Mortar and Putting Down Roots. Trainees were proudly awarded certificates to mark their brilliant achievements.



Roger Hamilton, (front row, second from the left) and St Mungo's trainees with their certificates

A spotlight on homeless women

One in four of the 1,700 clients that St Mungo's works with are women. So to further develop the support we can offer our female clients, St Mungo's recently appointed a Women's Strategy Coordinator.

And in support of our Women's Strategy, we are delighted that International photographer **Georgina Cranston** has begun working with some of St Mungo's female residents and staff on a multimedia project, *Where from? Where now?*, to highlight the stories and experiences of homeless women.

You can follow her project at www.wherewithwherenow.org

The Reel Deal

Members of St Mungo's film group, The Reel Deal, celebrated some time in the spotlight recently when a selection of their short films were showcased at the Curzon cinema, Soho. Their productions, which included a music video and a film trailer, were shown on a continuous loop in the foyer for five weeks over July and August.

The group meets every week to learn film making techniques from film tutors funded by the Workers' Educational Association (WEA).

One member said: *"Going to the Reel Deal Film Group has given me a renewed view in life and a chance to connect with people who have been in a similar situation to me. At the end of each film making process we all get a real sense of achievement as well."*

You can see some of their innovative work for yourself at www.youtube.com/reeldealfilm

The Lodge wins Housing Excellence Award

We are delighted that a year after its opening, St Mungo's and The City of London have been awarded the 2011 Housing Excellence Partnering Scheme of the Year Award for The Lodge – our innovative B&B-style accommodation project specifically aimed at helping long term, older rough sleepers.

Guests at The Lodge have more independence than they would in a traditional hostel, but support is available from staff on site to help them seek options for moving on into more permanent accommodation.

This approach has been a fantastic success with 33 of the guests coming from the '205' group – a group identified as the most entrenched rough sleepers in London.



The Lodge

John, an ex-serviceman in his 50s, became a Lodge guest after over 20 years sleeping rough. *"This is the first time in my whole life on the streets that I have actually seen a hostel that has been designed specifically for people like me who live on the streets,"* he said. Our congratulations go to all the staff and clients involved.

Eden Project Rooftop Garden in London

Volunteers from St Mungo's WoodWorks workshop and Putting Down Roots (PDR) gardening programme helped create a fantastic new rooftop garden on top of London's Southbank Centre - a project led by landscape designers from Cornwall's the Eden Project.

Whilst Woodworks' volunteers took pride in meticulously building the garden's wooded walkway and raised beds, five volunteers from PDR helped with planting and landscaping.

James, one of the PDR volunteers commented: *"It's really good therapy – you can talk to the plants and they don't talk back! The best thing is seeing the*

positive public reaction."

The garden was created as part of the Southbank Centre's Festival of Britain anniversary celebrations and is open to the public until 4 September.



Keep up to date with the latest news from St Mungo's at www.mungos.org/news



News from the South West

St Mungo's is delighted to be able to offer two new services to support vulnerable people in the South West.

Building Bridges to Wellbeing is a new community health project covering Bath and NE Somerset. This project will link people with mental health needs into community based activities such as training, leisure, education and volunteering. The new service will be managed from St Mungo's mental health project, Mulberry House and Mews, in Bath. Its aim is to help people integrate into the community, as well as increase their independence and wellbeing. We are also planning to deliver training to community groups to help address any barriers and prejudice that may occur when clients with mental health issues start to

access mainstream services.

Bridge the Gap is a new project being run in partnership with Business in the Community. It will offer support and advice to clients who are interested in getting back into training, education and employment, but are not yet ready to join St Mungo's existing Pathways to Employment programme.

Weekly workshops will be run at St Mungo's Compass Centre in Bristol with an aim to getting clients one step closer towards being ready to work. The workshops, which will start in October, will involve addressing fears,



aspirations and barriers and include visits to local Bristol companies.

We asked and you answered - what now?



Some of you may remember receiving an email earlier in the year asking for your views on how we communicate with you, what areas of work are of most interest and what we could do to improve the services we offer to homeless and excluded people.



We received a fantastic response to this survey with over 300 people responding and giving us some great feedback on how we are doing, and more importantly, how we could be doing better.

We were asked to make sure that homeless people have support to stay in accommodation once they have been housed - we agree that ongoing support to prevent homelessness is hugely important.

You can read more about how we work in this area on our website www.mungos.org/tenancysupport

Extending services to other towns was one idea to reach more homeless people - this is something that St Mungo's is looking to do in a sustainable way. We're very proud to have two new services recently opened in Bath and Bristol.

Some of you suggested we spend less on marketing materials - so we have made it even easier to sign up to receive regular email updates. Visit us at www.mungos.org/account/subscribe and leave your email address. This is the most cost effective way to keep up to date with what is happening at St Mungo's.

Unfortunately, as the survey was anonymous, we won't be able to act on specific suggestions about how we communicate with you. But please do tell us again by contacting us at donorrelations@mungos.org or on 020 8600 3000.

Read more about the survey on our blog <http://blog.mungos.org/supportersurvey/>

Preventing homelessness

Many of you will know about the work we do with people who are homeless and sleeping rough on the streets. But this only represents some of what we do.

We know that if we are to truly tackle homelessness we need to do much more than just get people off the streets – we have to find ways to prevent the most at risk people from becoming homeless in the first place.

That is why St Mungo's provides a range of services aimed at preventing homelessness.

Meeting our clients' complex needs

Of the people that come to St Mungo's for help we see many that have complex and multiple needs. St Mungo's runs over 60 projects that are specifically set up to provide specialist care for a wide range of clients including former rough sleepers, people with drug and alcohol issues and/or mental health problems.

One such place is Mulberry House in Bath. This project works with people who have a diagnosed mental health illness and would otherwise be vulnerable to a life on the streets.



Paul Hudson, the project manager says:

“Our aim at Mulberry House is to support our clients in developing the key living skills that will help them on their road to recovery and move them towards a more independent life. Our project has a larger staff team than others which means we can dedicate considerable time and attention to each client. I think that being able to provide this extra attention makes a really big difference to our clients’ recovery.”

Tenancy sustainment

Even when somebody has moved on from a St Mungo's housing project we know that they are still going to need ongoing support.

Our Peer Advice Link (PAL) service helps people move on from St Mungo's housing to independent living. What makes this service so unique is that it is staffed almost exclusively by volunteers who themselves have had experience of homelessness.

Our volunteers are able to provide practical help that can range from helping to resolve housing benefit issues to advising where to buy essential items on a budget. But more importantly they can offer emotional support during a time of great upheaval and uncertainty.

Paul at Mulberry House, says:

“People who are cut off from their friends and family are much more vulnerable to becoming homeless again. So we help our clients build new support networks and re-integrate with their community.”

We encourage peer support as a way of helping our residents establish social networks which can give them access to leisure and work opportunities that they may not otherwise have had.”

St Mungo's is committed to preventing homelessness; you can read more on how we are working towards this on our website at www.mungos.org/preventinghomelessness



Homelessness: still rising

In February, we reported that the number of homeless people was rising and we, along with a number of other homelessness organisations, predicted that circumstances were likely to get worse.

Alarmingly, the latest figures show that the number of people sleeping rough in London last year was 3,975. This is a worrying increase of 8% from the previous year. In fact, London has the highest rate of street homelessness in England.

What the Government is doing

The Mayor of London's housing advisor, Richard Blakeway, has repeated a pledge made in 2008 to end rough sleeping in London by the end of 2012. And despite the increase in rough sleepers, some progress is being made.

Improvements have been made through targeted projects for some of the 'most entrenched' rough sleepers living on London's streets. Also, the **No Second Night Out** project (a rapid response assessment centre for

rough sleepers, hosted by St Mungo's) has helped 135 people off the streets since it began in April. Housing Minister Grant Shapps has made a pledge to work with councils and charities to roll out the **No Second Night Out** initiative nationwide and will be making a £20 million Homelessness Transition Fund available, to help the voluntary sector deliver this.

The Coalition Government has brought in a range of measures to address homelessness including more accurate rough sleeper counts and a cross government working group on preventing and tackling homelessness

But are they really addressing the root of the problem?

Crippling cuts

St Mungo's is concerned that the Government may not be taking into account the impact of all of its policies on homeless people. As we recommended in our Action Week report, they need to take a systematic look at all policy to ensure that reforms are not pushing more people into homelessness.

With cuts to housing benefit, it is likely that more people will be forced into temporary accommodation or onto the streets. A recent report has said that the number of homeless families in London could increase by 5,000 as a result of changes to housing benefits and about 9,000 families could be forced to leave their homes. And with some London Boroughs having no space to accommodate all of these families, many will find themselves having to leave London completely.

The Government suggests that landlords will bring rents down to meet

the reduced benefits, but research conducted by the National Landlords Association suggests 84% of landlords will not consider cutting rents. Instead they will replace existing tenants with people who are not on benefits.

The cuts don't stop there. From 2012 anyone under 35 on housing benefit will be expected to move out of even a modest one-bedroom flat and find a room in a house. One in five of those affected will be disabled, according to housing charity Crisis. The Government have made a small concession on this reform and those who have spent over three months in a homeless hostel will be exempt; however, this still leaves many vulnerable people with limited housing options.

And as many services for homeless people are now being cut, this could mean more people needing help with less services to support them.

The 'Supporting People' budget previously ringfenced to just help vulnerable people, including homeless men and women, is now being used to fund other council services, and some councils have cut their 'Supporting People' budgets by 50%.

St Mungo's services have already been hit with the closure of our largest hostel, Cedars Road, this year.



St Mungo's severe weather emergency shelter

The real effects

Homeless Link's Survey of Needs and Provision on homeless services nationwide has revealed the hard hitting effects that cuts are already having:

- Half of the organisations providing services for homeless people have seen their income cut
- There are at least 1,169 fewer hostel beds
- 77% of accommodation services have no empty beds on an average night
- 26% of hostels are turning homeless people away
- Drug services are down 6%
- Homeless health services have been cut by 4%
- The numbers turning up at soup kitchens and day centres are increasing, yet day centres and advice services are closing

Charles Fraser, Chief Executive of St Mungo's comments: *"In London there's been good progress with long term rough sleepers, and we are hosting the No Second Night Out hub at one of our emergency shelters. However, cuts to supporting people funded services, the loss of hostel beds, and the squeeze on benefits are making the ambition of ending rough sleeping in London by the end of 2012 all the more challenging."*

Yet rough sleeping is just the tip of the problem. Britain is beset by the 'hidden homeless' – people in temporary accommodation, such as B&Bs, squats, and on friends' sofas. In a survey carried out by Crisis, as many as 62% of the 437 people they surveyed in day centres were 'hidden homeless'.

Broken promises

Housing was high on the Government's agenda last year. Although some changes have been welcomed, there are a few that have failed to materialise. The Government promised to:



St Mungo's outreach worker

- Increase house building to 450,000 new homes a year – UK new builds fell by 13% in the last half of 2010 and the affordable housing budget was halved
- Invest £1.2 million to bring 250,000 empty homes back into use – no funding has been allocated
- Introduce a 'foot on the ladder' programme to offer an equity stake to good social tenants – no programme has been introduced – nor are there any plans to do so

■ “Sixteen of the 32 London boroughs are preparing for a rise in homelessness.”

Sixteen of the 32 London boroughs are preparing for a rise in homelessness. Nationwide, 45% of councils facing spending cuts are cutting a little less from homelessness budgets to accommodate the expected surge.

London could see a rise in rent arrears, eviction, homelessness and families needing temporary accommodation, which is a real and immediate concern. St Mungo's will continue to lobby the Government to ensure that the needs of homeless men and women are addressed.

A look back at Action Week 2011

Parliamentary Reception – Tuesday 28 June 2011

Richard from
Outside In



Charles Fraser, Chief Executive of St Mungo's, welcomed guests, which included MPs and peers from the three main parties. Local councillors and voluntary sector representatives also attended, as well as St Mungo's clients, staff, volunteers and supporters.

We used this opportunity to launch our report **'Enough Room: Is society big enough for homeless people?'** which highlighted the risks faced by homeless people of even greater social exclusion without 'Big Society' muscle. The report called for both central and local government to adopt the report's recommendations and in particular those around social inclusion.

So, we are delighted that the Housing Minister has agreed to put our Inclusion Checklist on his agenda.

Richard, a member of St Mungo's client representative

group, Outside In, spoke about his experiences of being homeless and how he passionately believed that homeless people are eager to be given the opportunity to contribute to local communities, and the importance of volunteering.

Central to all this is the opinion of our homeless clients and it was fantastic to see so many of them there in person, making sure that the politicians and policy makers listened to what they had to say.

Frank from Outside In with
Dame Anne Begg, MP



The MPs pledge

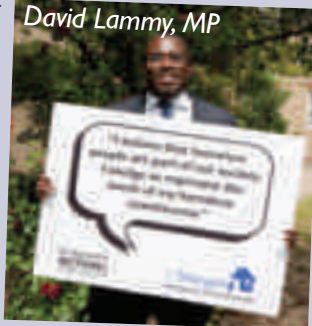
The Prime Minister David Cameron also lent his support to Action Week, saying: *"I am delighted to be supporting St Mungo's Action Week. The journey into work is a big challenge for homeless people, and it is great that St Mungo's is using their Action Week to highlight the huge amount of support that they need. I am committed to helping homeless people play a full role in society, ensuring they have secure homes and good health and can progress towards stable jobs."*



And we received fantastic cross party support from over 30 MPs who endorsed our Action Week pledge. Go to www.mungos.org/MPsPledge to find out if your MP took part. If not, you can ask your MP to pledge their support by visiting us at

www.mungos.org/WritetoyourlocalMP

David Lammy, MP



Garden Party Reception

Two days after the launch of our report we held a garden party in the beautiful College Gardens of Westminster Abbey. As our Action Week report pointed out, rough sleeping is rising and we are deeply concerned that cuts to services for vulnerable people will mean many more will end up homeless. So we launched our Big Appeal, which over the next two years aims to raise £5 million so that we can help even more homeless people.

Nigel with his mother
and sister at the
garden party



It was a pleasure to meet so many of our generous and loyal supporters. The highlight was awarding a certificate to Nigel, who you may remember braved a 500 foot abseil down Guy's Hospital and in doing so raised an amazing £40,000 with the support of our donors. A big thank you to our donors!

Breaking down barriers to employment

We know that a poor education can often contribute to homelessness and unmet mental health or substance misuse needs can seriously affect a person's employability. This is why St Mungo's offers a range of skills and employment services to our clients.

Are our skills and employment services working?

The Single Homeless Enterprise Project (SHEP) ran from 2007-10 in three St Mungo's hostels, with the support of London Borough of Camden and the Department of Work & Pensions. A full evaluation of this innovative project has just been published by The Centre for Social and Economic Inclusion.

SHEP's goal was to break down the barriers to employability training felt by homeless people and lead to a more work focused culture within hostels.

Through training and social enterprise projects in three skill areas (painting/ decorating, construction and music production) St Mungo's clients could work towards recognised qualifications and also receive support in employability training, CV help, literacy and interview training. There was additional support for clients who had other barriers to employment which

included mental health problems and substance misuse.

But it was the social enterprise element of SHEP that was most innovative – St Mungo's provided work experience to help service users gain the necessary skills that would enable them to move on into full time work.

■ “Some clients reconnected with family members who they had previously lost contact with”

The SHEP programme outperformed a number of its targets, namely:

- The number of clients on the SHEP training programmes totalled 117 which exceeded it's original target of 87
- We saw 62 clients go on to achieve Open College (OPN) qualifications which was nearly double the expected number

- 21 clients enrolled in SHEP moved on into work following completion of the programme. That's almost a fifth, which is an amazing result.

But it's not just by these hard targets where success of the programme was measured. There were also a number of recovery outcomes that made a huge difference to the client's confidence, motivation and self esteem.

“My life has come back up again and so has my confidence” said one client of St Mungo's Endell Street Recording Studio.

We found that in some cases:

- Clients reconnected with family members who they had previously lost contact with
- Clients improved their self care such as hygiene and money management
- Clients who had substance misuse or mental health problems found that SHEP helped them control, and in some cases, overcome these problems.

What is the future of SHEP?

Although the funding for SHEP only ran for three years, it is thanks to your generous support that these three hugely successful projects can continue to provide the innovative and pioneering support that has made them a success.

You can read more about St Mungo's skills and employment services - which includes the three areas included in the initial SHEP project.

ReVive (painting & decorating)
Bricks & Mortar (construction)
Endell Street Studio (music production)

Go to www.mungos.org/SkillsandEmployment



ReVive painting and decorating project

Who Cares?

Over the past three years, St Mungo's and Marie Curie Cancer Care have been working together to improve the care received by our homeless clients who are facing the end of their life.

Of the thousands of people that St Mungo's supports each year, around 50 will die while they are in our care, with advanced liver failure being the most common cause.

Their last weeks of life can be distressing and their physical and psychological symptoms are often accompanied by a reluctance to be admitted to hospital. In some cases staff, friends and family may not be aware that the person is in the final stages of life and their death often comes as a shock.

This is why we participated in a recently published study that is a powerful testimony to the experiences of people with advanced liver disease who die whilst living in hostel care.

By discovering what the key signs of deterioration are, we can work to ensure they receive the right palliative care at the right time, whether it is pain relief, psychological support or discussing future needs and wishes. By understanding the journey that person is on we can better prepare them and their families and friends.



Wendy Greenish, Project Manager - Development and Care Research at Marie Curie Cancer Care with Peter Kennedy, St Mungo's Palliative Care Co-ordinator

We feel that homeless people already face many difficulties and that appropriate care at the end of life is as important for them as it is for anyone else. This study looks at the issues, where gaps could be filled and gives some good insights into how services could develop further.

You can read the full report at www.mungos.org/EndofLifeReport

Will you still be there for homeless people?



Jim Sawyer, of Thrings Solicitors, kindly volunteers his time to speak at our supporter lunches about leaving a legacy to St Mungo's.

Jim says, "I enjoy volunteering at these lunches because it

helps me to pass on two important messages. One is the importance of having a will and the other is the choices and benefits available if you did decide to include a charity in your will. The implications of both are widely misunderstood."

Claire Creighton, St Mungo's Legacy Officer, says

"We are currently well below the UK national average on legacy income and I think it's because many of our supporters don't realise that they can make a gift to us in this way. After looking after family and friends first, a share of whatever is left can and does make a real difference to St Mungo's."

Income from legacies last year financed schemes such as our Skills and Employment programme which helps and supports clients back into work, and our health services, which are essential."

If you would like to know more about leaving a legacy to St Mungo's or to join us at a legacy lunch, contact Claire at events@mungos.org or on 020 8600 3000.

"A very interesting, enjoyable and informative event - and delicious lunch!" commented one St Mungo's supporter.

Did you know it's the first **International Legacy Giving Day** on **Tuesday 13 September**?

Read more at www.mungos.org/legacy

HATS ON FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE



Woolly Hat Day is returning on **Friday 4 November** and like top actor Martin Freeman we need you to get your hats on to help homeless people!

All you need to do is get your work place, school, church and your friends involved by wearing their woolliest, silliest or fanciest hats for the day and make a small donation to help St Mungo's work.

For more information please contact us on:
Call: 0845 2 WOOLLY (966559)

Email: woollyhatday@mungos.org
Website: www.woollyhatday.org

You can also follow us on Twitter

twitter.com/WoollyHatDay

or join our Facebook group

facebook.com/woollyhatday

St Mungo's
 Opening doors for homeless people

Friday 4 November 2011

St Mungo's Spooky Halloween Abseil 29 October 2011

Abseiling down **Reading's** tallest building is going to be terrifying in more ways than one!

We are calling all zombies, witches and ghouls to don your spookiest Halloween gear and join us for an adrenaline pumped drop down all 13 floors of The Blade.

Whether this is your first abseil or one of many, it will be an experience you won't forget.

Husky Sledging in the Arctic Circle 20-26 February 2012 5-11 March 2012



Join the Arctic Challenge 2012 and spend five days sledging with your own team of huskies, through rolling highlands and deep forest, into the heart of Lapland. This is an extreme challenge and not one for the faint hearted. Imagine the sense of achievement you will experience when you complete this incredible trip!

Christmas Carols and Collections 20 December 2011

Please save the date for our annual **Christmas Carol concert on Tuesday 20 December**, which will take place at the beautiful St Bride's Church in London.

Special guests will include HRH The Duke of Kent and actress Juliet Stevenson.

We are also looking for people to lend a hand with bucket and tin collections around London in November and December, as well as choir singers to add some festive cheer.

You don't need any previous 'collecting' experience as we will be there to provide support on the day. Whether you can help us for the whole day or an hour or two, we would love to see you!

Add more value to your gifts

giftaid it

If you're a UK tax payer, you can make your donations worth even more to St Mungo's.

If you haven't already completed a Gift Aid declaration (and you're eligible), please remember to tick the Gift Aid box when you next make a donation. Alternatively, you can download a Gift Aid form from our website at www.mungos.org/GiftAid or call us on **020 8600 3000** for more information.

Last year alone, we were able to claim an incredible **£500,000** in Gift Aid. Thank you!

For more information on St Mungo's events or to offer your help, email events@mungos.org



George's story

In 1997, George was living in his own flat in east London and had a steady job working for the Royal Mail.

Like many people, George enjoyed unwinding with his friends after a long week at work. But things started to go terribly wrong when peer pressure led him to start using drugs. **“I just wanted to fit in”**, he recalls.

His life soon spiralled out of control. He started taking time off work and was unable to pay his rent. He was sacked from his job and evicted from his flat.

George had nowhere to go. His father passed away 16 years ago and his mother was living in West Africa. He couldn't turn to his brother and sister as he felt ashamed of his behaviour.

He headed to central London and ended up sleeping rough. **“It was my first experience of being on the streets. It was really scary.”** George slept where he could and made use of day centres and soup runs.

He was desperate to make money to pay for his next fix. After a traumatic year on the streets, a street outreach worker found him a place at a hostel. But unfortunately George's chaotic lifestyle got him evicted and he returned to the streets.

In desperation, he started shoplifting to fund his drug habit.

His shoplifting offences soon caught up with him and he was given the option of treatment or prison. He chose treatment, but the treatment failed to work and he ended up in prison. After leaving prison in 2004, he managed to get a room in St Mungo's Cromwell Road hostel. He completed a drugs treatment programme and even got his own flat. Sadly it wasn't long before George had a relapse and began taking drugs again.

■ **“I feel like I've had a second chance. St Mungo's has given me my life back.”**

“I realised I needed to sort my life out once and for all.” George was determined. He completed a detox programme and got a flat share in Broadway's supported housing.

With St Mungo's help, he built up new skills and qualifications to increase his chances of getting a job. He then became a Peer Advice Link (PAL) volunteer, providing advice and support to other homeless people who had recently moved on into independent housing. George has now been a PAL volunteer for six months, **“I feel like I'm**

making a difference to people's lives” he says.

George has been clean of drugs for a year and his biggest aim is to get back into employment and be a productive member of society again. **“I've applied for St Mungo's Apprenticeship scheme, but if I don't get a place I plan to attend a course in supporting vulnerable people.”** He is in contact with his brother and sister again, and thanks to the kindness of his sister, he is looking forward to visiting his mother in Sierra Leone, who he has not seen in many years.

George is positive for the future. **“I feel like I've had a second chance. St Mungo's has given me my life back.”**

About Frontline

Frontline is produced in conjunction with staff and clients at St Mungo's. The aim is to keep you informed of the issues that homeless people are facing today, and to show you how your support is making a difference. If you have any comments or suggestions about this or future issues, please send them to Zoe Flynn at St Mungo's, Griffin House, 161 Hammersmith Road, London, W6 8BS.

020 8600 3000
www.mungos.org/donate

St Mungo Community Housing Association is a charity exempt from registration

I&P Society No.20598R Housing Association No. LH0279

Thank you to all the St Mungo's residents, volunteers and staff whose photographs and histories appear in this publication.

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