



PROVIDENCE ROW

A PLACE OF REFUGE, A PLACE OF HOPE

This is a transcript of Providence Row's short fundraising film "Rebuilding Lives, Restoring Dignity"

Opening Captions

There are hundreds of people sleeping rough in London every night.

The number of single, homeless women has increased in recent years.

40% of homeless women have been abused.

The average life expectancy of a homeless person is 42 years.

No one we help chooses to be on the streets.

Montage

Images of corporate buildings, city shots, and homeless individuals.

Voice Over

Steven Lee-Foster

Chief Exec of Providence Row

We were founded in 1860. We provided accommodation in the east end of London. Since the war our services have gradually changed. We are increasing our focus on people's immediate needs. For example food in our café on the ground floor at the Dellow centre, giving people clothing, toiletries, and making sure that they don't go hungry. A lot of the people who turn to us are in a crisis and they need help. They are on the streets. They don't know where to turn to. They are wrestling with drugs or alcohol.

Mike Sturla

Centre Dir of Providence Row

People using the day centre are mainly homeless people either rough sleeping or living in squats, derelict buildings, or living on busses that are travelling through the night. Many have other problems, mental health issues, substance misuse, and alcohol related problems. We connect them with counselling and with other services, again as providence row, which will enable them to move on with their lives and build confidence and self assurance.

Tom
(Day centre user)

I have lived here near enough all my life. I have moved to this area in the last 2 years and became homeless because of a breakdown in my relationship.

Jim
(Day centre user)

It came as a hell of a shock initially. Especially the first couple of nights because when it starts getting dark you actually realize that you have no where to go.

Aaron
(Day centre user)

It is a fact that about 2 years ago I started getting into drugs, heavy drugs. And I lost it (flat) for not paying my rent.

Gladys
(Day centre user)

I was in a relationship for 4 and half years and then we went on holiday. When I came back we lost our home.

Scott
(Day centre user)

I have had a few bad experiences in life. When my dad and my brother died I ended up on the drink and the drugs.

Mark
(Day centre user)

I basically put myself on the streets because my drinking got so bad and I just couldn't deal with it. I had a family, a young son, a nice flat, and a nice job. But I couldn't deal with life and I basically ran away.

Jim
(Day centre user)

I just turned 46. Originally from Wales, I grew up in Gloucestershire and then moved off to Australia and then, later, to South Africa. To speed up to more recent times I was involved in radio and television production, mostly environmental programming of the great outdoors, wildlife conservation, and so on and so on. I had a great 10 years doing that. Then one evening I was victim of what you could call a violent crime. I was not insured properly. Pretty much lost everything that night and things just kind of snowballed from there until I found myself in my current situation: homeless.

Tom
(Day centre user)

You tend to drink. You might binge drink, you could be using drugs, you know all the stuff in life that makes you really vulnerable.

Gladys
(Day centre user)

I was really frightened especially me being a women. I was the only one and there were lots of men around.

Scott
(Day centre user)

It is just like falling. Free falling. You hit the ground and you are on the streets. Its cold, its miserable, its depressing, its lonely, its scary! Very scary. Especially in London. Bloody scary on the streets. It really is.

Gladys
(Day centre user)

Everything is taken away from you, you don't have any rights anymore. Just on the road. You feel like your life is worth nothing. There you go.

Scott
(Day centre user)

You sleep on a bench. It is nice to see a magpie make its nest. Things like that. Little things like that kept me going. I liked little things like that.

Gladys
(Day centre user)

Three months ago I was sleeping and living in the Aldgate tunnels.

Tom
(Day centre user)

Being in a place like this (the Dellow) it takes all of that away. It is also a positive as well because you can get on to try to look for a job. You can try to improve your life.

Scott
(Day centre user)

I started to come here every morning for about 2 weeks to get some food, get some shelter. I got an advisor. Her name was Luthfa. Lovely Indian lady and she got me a place in here (the Dellow).

Gladys
(Day centre user)

Imogen does anything for anybody to help them out. You know? She gave you support. She is there when you need it.

Imogen Nay
Women's Development Worker
Providence Row

I am the women's development worker here and my role is to ensure that all the services that we provide are applicable to the women that come to our centre. In the mornings we are working with women that are rough sleeping or are living in squats and crack houses. A lot of the women are involved in prostitution. A lot of the women have quite severe drug addictions, heroin and crack. My role is to engage with those women and build trusting relationships with them over a period of time and also encourage them to come to some of the groups

in the afternoon. Building up social contact and getting involved with different activities.

Gladys
(Day centre user)

I do my painting and my drawings to keep me sane. So I will be ok. I will be alright. But you still come back to them for help. When you have time you come to talk to them and they give you the help that you need.

Imogen Nay

Obviously as women they are particularly vulnerable on the streets. They are particularly vulnerable to abuse and attack so I think being a woman on the streets is very difficult.

Gladys
(Day centre user)

If I wasn't here (the Dellow) I don't think I would be...well I can't say I would be happy. I also can't say that I would be still alive either.

Roxanne Timmis
Mental Health Worker
Providence Row

With the clients that I have they are generally presented with some sort of mental health need. We get clients that come in already having a diagnosis like schizophrenia and generally in those cases they are already receiving treatment. It is more about guidance and being a point of call for that client as I understand their needs. We get clients with depression. We get clients with psychiatric disorders and substance misuse. We get a lot of anxiety as well. To help them I generally meet with them first and do an initial assessment and I will do a document where we can decide on their support needs together or what they think their support needs are. They have had bad lives, broken homes, broken families. They come from backgrounds of violence and maybe sexual abuse. They just have had really tough lives and it make you realize how lucky you are. They have never had anyone ask them what would you like to do in life, what are your goals, your hopes, and your dreams.

Mark
(Day centre user)

All the staff that are here have been absolutely brilliant. Luthfa, Roxanne especially. They are friendly and they make you feel so welcome.

Roxanne Timmis

Mark was coming in here continually for a couple of weeks. And I was meeting with him for emotional support, alcohol dependency, and his

depression. And he decided that during that time he would like to address his alcohol dependency. So we referred him to Acorn House which is an alcohol rehab and he attended an interview there a couple of weeks ago and he was accepted so now we are just waiting for a place.

Mark
(Day centre user)

If it wasn't for Roxanne I would not be in a detox centre in the next couple of weeks.

Reshma Hafiz
Advice Worker
Providence Row

My name is Reshma and I work as an advice worker here at Providence Row. My job entails me to do housing advice or health and benefits on the general side but mostly focusing on housing. In the mornings I see about 5 people during drop in session between 9:30 and 11:30 and then in the afternoon we have appointment bookings. If someone requires advice, mostly in housing welfare benefits, we give half an hour for each person. And from these sessions you find out more information. You get clients with various problems; you can get young clients with mental health issues plus drug issues so it's a multiple dual support they need. We need to identify what help they require and from there I do some advocating for them.

Steven Lee-Foster

The art groups that we have run over a number of years now have been done with the help of local artistic community in the east end.

John
(Day centre user)

The art that is done in that room over there (the art room) is very, very important because it gives you something to do.

Nick
(Day centre user)

I come to the art group on Tuesday and the over 50s on Wednesday.

John
(Day centre user)

They introduced me to painting and that is one of the most important things that I have gained from here (the Dellow) and continue gaining because they are now doing picture framing.

Steven Lee-Foster

To see a client that has managed to get a drawing done and turn up to the day centre day after day and commit themselves to doing something and then for us to get it framed and put on a wall so that they

can, if they like, stand back and look at their work is one of the really good feelings about doing my job.

Mike Sturla

We build confidence and self-assurance in people so that they can get control of their own lives.

Steven Lee-Foster

And very, very importantly we make sure that no one is judged and we will give them the space so that we can look at their needs and try to find a way to start tackling some of the very deep feelings of unhappiness that they might have.

*Chris Marshall
Pro bono & Community Manager
Reed Smith Richards Butler LLP
(corporate supporter)*

We support Providence Row in two ways: the first through internal fundraising and making donations to the Dellow centre; and the 2nd is through a legal advice clinic we run here. We have 6 solicitors who supervise the clinic and provide advice to clients.

*Michelle Milnes
Community Manager
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
(corporate supporter)*

We provide pro bono advice, legal advice to the homeless clients. We also provide office space for providence row for use in their meetings and also provide small cash donations as well.

*Dr Steve Waygood
Investor Responsibility
Insight Investment
(corporate supporter)*

If you are having a partnership with a charity it is not just about donating money and walking away. It really should be an integrated partnership based on equals and it is nice to know that there will be Insight people volunteering within Providence Row. We are currently helping at the moment with work on the redevelopment of their website.

Michelle Milnes

Freshfields believes that we should put something back into the community to make a tangible difference.

Dr Steve Waygood

There are a range of reasons why a firm like Insight should support charities like Providence Row. The main one I think is that we operate as an enlightened business and in this day and age we ought to give back to the community at the same time as giving to our corporate partners.

Chris Marshall

We looked at the range of charities that we could work with and we were very much impressed by the quality of service and the people involved here (Providence Row). We felt that it was an

organization that we could build a long standing relationship and one that we are very happy to work with.

Michelle Milnes

It is fantastic to see the new centre up and running and see that space being used in such a meaningful way for clients and for them to use all those essential services.

Steven Lee-Foster

Providence Row is a small charity. We have a low profile compared to many of the bigger charities and we desperately need to expand our services.

Mike Sturla

People seem to think that sometimes charities are just given money and they spend it how they feel. A great business accretion is needed within the charitable sector.

Steven Lee-Foster

It costs £20,000 every week to keep the day centre running and we do need companies to give us financial support.

John
(Day Centre user)

It has saved me from going down completely. Down and out.

Aaron
(Day centre user)

This centre is helping me get a better CV, get a job, get myself another flat, pay my bills. See my little girl grow up.

Mark
(Day centre user)

My aim is to sort my drinking out. Get my life back. Get myself a place to live, get myself back into work.....and see my son again.

Tom
(Day centre user)

Being in here has given me the chance to go on further. You know..... just try and build up the rest of my life.

Gladys
(Day centre user)

It is important because they can give you help that you want and if you want to go further in life you need someone to talk to, someone to advise you and they are here for that.

Jim
(Day centre user)

Within a week you are a complete mess. That is when you start losing your dignity and your pride and, to me, that is one of the most important things that I have ever got from the centre here.

Scott
(Day centre user)

If it wasn't for this place I would be still on the streets. Down in the gutter. Depressed, miserable, tired, cold, angry, despondent, you know what I mean? But this place has helped me tremendously. Helped me to start again. Gave me a platform to build on and I will build on it and that's it.

Mark
(Day centre user)

Without this centre I honestly could not tell you where I would be right now. I don't want to think where I would be, what I would be doing right now or in the future without the Dellow centre.

Closing credits

This film was made by Redshark TV and Sweet Images at no cost to Providence Row.

www.providencerow.org.uk

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