

Spring 2018

ISSUE 133



THE  
*Simon*  
STAR



[www.simoncommunity.org.uk](http://www.simoncommunity.org.uk)





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THANK YOU

Bloomsbury Baptist Church  
Dylan's Bakery  
St Martin's Gospel Oak  
St Giles in the Fields  
Pret a Manger  
Fareshare  
Time Out  
The Cruise Portfolio  
The Leatherseller's Foundation

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# AGM

**Our AGM will be on Saturday  
14th April 2018 at 11am  
at St Martin's, Vicars Road  
Gospel Oak NW5 4NL**

**For further information or details please  
contact Rachel in the office on  
0207 485 6639**

Thank you for reading this spring edition of Simon Star and for supporting the Community. We use this newsletter to let you know what is going on and invite you to share your stories.

If you would like to update, edit or remove your contact details then please get in touch.

You can email us on [admin@simoncommunity.org.uk](mailto:admin@simoncommunity.org.uk) or call the office on 0207 485 6639

# WELCOME TO THE SIMON STAR

Welcome to our winter Simon Star. We are sorry that it has been a while since you heard from us (circumstances beyond our control) but we are still here and bring you news from the Community.

Since our last edition we have survived another winter, we have unleashed more residential volunteers back into the wild and we have all got together to celebrate MT's incredible 50 years at Simon!

Sadly there have not been so many changes for our guests on the street. We are still seeing high numbers of guests on outreach services and new faces joining the queues all the time.

We have had to make a few changes lately to our services, but this has resulted in some changes for the better too. We are now having different food on our tea runs (see page 10) that is going down well.



**Alan's Birthday!**

# MT's 50 YEAR CELEBRATION

**Alan shares his gratitude and appreciation of MT's work and we mark her 50th Simon anniversary with a Community party!**

MT joined The Simon Community fifty years ago on the 7th November 1967. Since then she has had respect from everyone for the way she got on with the work and would stay with it till it was finished.

Some would say she was the best we had as a volunteer. Most people who volunteer with The Simon Community want to help the homeless to the best of their ability, the only difference with MT is she has done it for 50 years

MT has a commitment and drive to helping homeless people rebuild their lives and that dedication comes from her complete passion in helping others

MT continues to be not only be a mentor but someone I class as a good friend and has had a huge impact on not only my life but the lives of many others.

MT has helped change my life for the better not only in external ways but also personally and for that I am very blessed to have her in my life.

*Thanks Alan and everyone who came to celebrate with MT, everyone had a lovely day! And thank you MT for all your years of commitment to the Community*



# Museum of Homelessness

## State of the Nation

### **The Museum of Homelessness is on the move!**

Between 22-28 January Museum of Homelessness presented State of the Nation – the culmination of a year-long response to the homelessness crisis in the UK.

As part of the programme, the museum took over Tate Exchange in Tate Liverpool for a week to present projects, installations and events that explore the issues.

The focus for the week was Frequently Asked Questions, a project developed in collaboration between artist Anthony Luvera and Gerald McLaverty. This work presented the findings of a project that reaches out to local authorities and responds to questions asked from the point of view of homeless people enquiring about a homeless individual's right to access to basic living provisions such as shelter, personal safety, health, food, and communication.

During the week MoH also be shared A Soldier's Story, an installation created by artist David Tovey that responds to the experiences of servicemen and women who become homeless. The Soldiers have already appeared in London and Gloucester.

The whole week included events sharing stories from Liverpool and across the north. Taken together the week offered snapshot of what's happening on the streets, hostels, and in people's lives.

With all forms of homelessness increasing, State of the Nation brings together people who have been homeless and those who haven't to examine what we can learn from the past, what's happening today, and how art and creativity can improve things in future.

For more details about the exhibition please see <http://museumofhomelessness.org/2017/07/26/state-of-the-nation/>



**Our old gigantic soup pot donated to the museum as an installation!**

# WHAT'S GOING ON...

Thanks to the resourcefulness and commitment of our residents and part time volunteers we have been able to keep services running and providing outreach support for our guests on the street even though we have been very short handed.

As ever our part time volunteers have been an unstoppable army, but we found ourselves in a position where we had fewer people than usual in the house so didn't have enough people on the ground to prepare services to go out. We talked to our guests and each other about how to resolve this and we changed a couple of things where we thought that we may be replicating an existing service.

We also did a bit of creative thinking about what we take out and how we could cut preparation time and take out hot food instead of cold where possible. This led to the 'great porridge experiment' one Tuesday and now our guests are getting hot breakfasts instead of sandwiches!

The evening centre continues to go from strength to strength with Chelsea creating lovely hot meals for everyone. There is also a laundry facility at Bloomsbury Baptist Church

now. The Church volunteers take in washing for the guests that can go in the wash and be dry by the time they leave after dinner.

We have also changed the way we serve food there, with guests being waited on at tables rather than queuing up, a nice touch added by our volunteers.

In other news we painted the front room yellow (this took a long time to decide!) and we now have a tea meeting on Friday instead of a morning meeting. This is a nice way to end the week and make sure things are in place for the weekend. If anyone would like to visit us we would be happy to hear from you!



**Chelsea making lasagne for the evening centre**

# Fundraising Activities

A huge thank you to Covington who chose The Simon Community as their charity of the year last year. Their fundraising activities have included a jeans day, charity lunch and a holiday raffle. They also held a 'Bake Off' event complete with Star Bakers!

The combined total raised by these events has been well over the £3,000 we needed to run the winter shelter at the beginning of 2017.

Thank you also to Time Out (especially Ben) who have been raising money via their tuck shop to fund our evening centre meals.

Thank you also to all our individual fundraisers, donors and supporters who give us the opportunity to carry on with our work.

There has been a lot of change in the house since our last issue in the summer.

We have since our last issue said hello and goodbye to the following full time volunteers:

Lena from Serbia, Kriszti from Hungary, Joe from 'up north', Mark from Norwich, Alex from the US, Annie from Winchester, Skye from Denmark, Rhys from Wales, Elena from Russia, Carmen from the US, Conor from



## HELLO & GOODBYE

Birmingham and Soran from Norway. We have also said goodbye to Julie and Harry who have both been Community Support Workers.

We have recently been joined by the lovely Lyndsey who came to us from Glasgow Simon Community. She has been affectionately nicknamed Mary Doll by our regulars and is taking to community life swimmingly! Sandra has also joined us from Germany, welcome Sandra!

