

News and updates from the Emmaus Bristol community

Summer 2023

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You & emmaus

working together to end homelessness

25
YEARS



emmaus
Bristol

“Thank you for what you’ve done for me”

A positive update and story of moving on from a familiar face – Dapper Dave.

Long-time supporters may recall Dave’s story in our newsletter two years ago. For new supporters, Dave joined Emmaus Bristol in August 2019 after becoming homeless aged 62. Dave had struggled with years of depression following the passing of his parents and two children. It had become hard for him to hold down a job and he eventually received notice to vacate his flat, forcing him to spend a month sleeping in a tent. Now, after nearly four years at Emmaus Bristol, Dave has moved out to live independently. He continues to volunteer in our shops three days a week.

“The biggest thing Emmaus Bristol has given me is my self-esteem and confidence back. Before Emmaus, I didn’t really care about myself, was really badly depressed, and on anti-depressants. Emmaus got me over that and gave me a reason to live. I’m not on medication now at all and I haven’t been for a long while. Last year, I was even able to work on what would have been the birthdays of my two boys. I get a ‘funny day’ every so often, but I know it’s nothing

to worry about because I have a reason to carry on.

I moved out to a studio flat in June. My plan for the first two weeks was to get my flat up and running, but I still have things in boxes. As they say, Rome wasn’t built in a day! I bought my microwave and kettle from Emmaus Bristol as well as a lot of stuff over the years like my pictures, ornaments, and anything pink or tigers. I’m on a 12-month contract and if everything goes okay, my next one will be for life so I will have a long-term home.

I wanted to volunteer at Emmaus Bristol because I can never, ever repay them for what they’ve done for me. It’s just a small way of helping them because they’ve helped me, and I can’t thank them enough. I usually volunteer in the Stokes Croft shop and the Bedminster shop every other Saturday, but I go wherever I’m needed. When I’m in Stokes Croft, I always go into the office to have a laugh and giggle with the staff, just like I used to as a Companion*.

* formerly homeless members of our community

Something from my time at Emmaus Bristol that won't be topped is going to Clarence House to meet Terry Waite and Camilla. I was shaking when it was my turn to talk to Camilla, I was meeting royalty! I had taken my hat off and her first words to me were, 'I have been admiring your hat from the other room'. It broke the ice straight away and we chatted for around five minutes.

If people find themselves in the situation that I was in, and are **given the opportunity to join Emmaus, I would say go for it. Grab that opportunity because, no matter what, you'll come out of it a lot better.** Someone else might not have the same experiences I had – and I consider myself really lucky – but things will be better than they were. If you want to improve yourself and need help, it's there for you at Emmaus.

I think people should support Emmaus Bristol because they do such a good job. It's a brilliant organisation and it's not only the people in this country that benefit, but all over the world. Recently we've helped with the Türkiye and Syria earthquake appeal, and getting clean water for a community in India. We do what we can for others because everyone has a right to safe housing and water. All I can say is thank you very much to Abbé Pierre – Emmaus exists because of him.

I have always remembered important dates that are special to me and one date I will never forget is 5th August 1912. This is the date Abbé Pierre was born and on 5th August 2019 – what would have been his 107th birthday – I joined Emmaus Bristol. I think it was meant to be.

To Emmaus Bristol and the dedicated staff, thank you for what you've done for me. ”



Dapper Dave stands proudly at the gates of Clarence House on his never-to-be-forgotten day

Repairs & Energy Appeal

Our community is a safe and supportive home for those who have faced unimaginable hardships, offering a place of belonging, purpose and hope. Regular repairs and maintenance are essential to ensure the well-being and comfort of our residents.

Our **Repairs & Energy Appeal** calls on valued supporters like you to help us raise funds for vital repair work and maintenance on the homes we provide, including our 21-bedroom community house. The need for work has become increasingly urgent. Wear and tear and significantly increased expenditure on energy and food bills have taken their toll on our resources. Your generous donations will enable us to address pressing issues such as roof repairs, plumbing, electrical work and weather proofing, ensuring that our residents have a safe and well-maintained environment to call home as they rebuild their lives.

Your support is vital in making a difference in the lives of those we house. Every donation to our **Repairs & Energy Appeal**, no matter the size, will make a difference. You can support our appeal through a regular gift, one-off donation, fundraiser or payroll giving.

Please visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/repairs to donate or send a cheque to Emmaus Bristol c/o The Appeals Team, Backfield House, Upper York Street, BS2 8QJ.

Please share this appeal with friends, family, and colleagues – the more people who join us, the greater impact we can make.

Thank you in advance for your support

Adrian at home in our community house

Celebrating 25 YEARS



emmaus Bristol

In June, supporters and shoppers joined our incredible team of Companions, volunteers and staff to celebrate our 25th anniversary in the yard at our Stokes Croft site. The Kilo Sale – selling vintage and pre-loved items by weight – and BBQ raised more than £600 to support our work.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended, and to Satya, our Social Enterprise Manager, for organising the day!

It was a treasure trove of unique finds, with Companion BBQ-chefs and volunteer Steve acting as our expert DJ. The event was great fun, and promoted the sustainable re-use and re-purposing of quality goods while generating vital funds!

In July, our anniversary celebrations focused on our Companions who have always been the heart of Emmaus Bristol, living and working together as a community. To show our gratitude and celebrate their contributions, we organised two activities to suit different interests: one group went bowling, another went out for lunch.

Our anniversary is a time for celebration and a reminder of the transformative impact Emmaus Bristol has had on the lives of people who have experienced homelessness, poverty and social exclusion. Over the years, our community has seen incredible journeys of personal growth, resilience and empowerment thanks to the collective efforts of our dedicated staff, Companions, volunteers and trustees, as well as the unwavering support of customers, donors and supporters like you.

As we look ahead to the next 25 years, we remain committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for people to rebuild their lives. We hope you continue supporting us in any way you can – reading our newsletter, donating, volunteering, or simply spreading the word.



Sunshine and smiles. Celebrating 25 years!

New pop-up shop at Sparks Bristol

We are thrilled to be part of Sparks Bristol, the vibrant creative arts and sustainability hub. Since its grand opening on Saturday 13th May, this innovative venture has become a successful, bustling hub of creativity, sustainability and community engagement.

Sparks has transformed the former M&S building in Broadmead into a department store like no other, offering a unique shopping experience, advice, events and art installations. We have a dedicated section within Sparks, selling an array of homeware, pre-loved furniture, and upcycled treasures expertly refurbished by the talented individuals supported by Emmaus Bristol. So far our Sparks pop-up has saved 439 items from landfill, equating to 1,681.3 kg.

Earlier this year, we sadly had to close our Gloucester Road Vintage shop. As you know, our shops generate vital funds to provide accommodation, support and training for Companions; we were exploring alternative enterprises when the Sparks opportunity arose – perfect timing! As part of Sparks Bristol, we're helping to drive sustainability in our city and generating vital income for our work.

Thank you to everyone who has already visited us at Sparks Bristol



Wednesday–Saturday: 11am–6pm • Sunday 11am – 5pm



Meet Satya, our new Social Enterprise Manager

What does your role at Emmaus Bristol involve?

I line manage our three shops, eBay store, our treehouse eco pods, house clearances and delivery services. I also monitor our social impact and organise work coaching and job skill building. Sometimes it's writing financial reports, sometimes it's being out and about in the shops doing window displays with Companions, and sometimes it's organising events – I love that it is so varied. No two days are the same.

Why did you want to work at Emmaus Bristol?

I wanted a role that really makes a difference to people. I feel very aligned with the objectives of Emmaus Bristol and believe that community support is crucial – lifesaving in many cases. With many services restricted by the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis, people can fall through the cracks in the system. Access to safe homes, mental health support and non-judgemental professional development is so important.

What is one project you're excited to work on at Emmaus Bristol?

Working directly with Companions to develop specific skills within our enterprises.

What do you think is the most important thing people should know about Emmaus Bristol?

When you receive a delivery, go into our shops or book a house clearance, it is the Companions who fulfil all that. They really go above and beyond to help customers. They offer to extend phone line hours, try to deliver furniture into a room where people are less able, come up with creative displays for the shops and offer themselves out to solidarity projects that support people in need.



Satya in our Stokes Croft shop

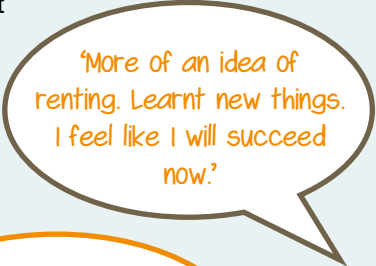
New training helps Companions to become 'Renting Ready'

Our Support Team Manager Fran and volunteer Ann jumped at the chance to learn to be 'Renting Ready' trainers to be able to help Companions prepare to move on into rented accommodation. A daunting prospect for anyone who had never rented before!

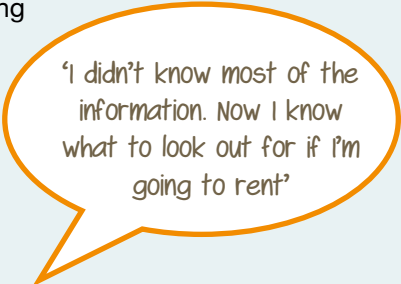
"The course, organised by Crisis, was absolutely relevant to Bristol. Topics included prioritising debt, paying for utilities and reading meters, understanding a tenancy agreement, recognising scams and so much more" Fran told us.

We offered our first 'Renting Ready' session to five Companions in March, several of whom felt able to share personal, sometimes traumatic, renting experiences in a safe, supportive setting. Feedback from participants was positive. They felt more knowledgeable about housing issues, and confident that they would be able to tackle problems should they arise – Companions said that finding out about advocacy and where to access support was key.

We are sure Renting Ready training will help Companions move out successfully and manage their tenancies with as little grief as is humanly possible.



'More of an idea of renting. Learnt new things. I feel like I will succeed now.'



'I didn't know most of the information. Now I know what to look out for if I'm going to rent'

Companions' comments after their 'Renting Ready' training session



www.emmausbristol.org.uk

Stokes Croft shop and office: Backfields House, Upper York Street, Bristol BS2 8QJ

Bedminster shop: 72 Bedminster Parade, Bristol BS3 4HL

Sparks Bristol: 78 Broadmead, Bristol BS1 3DS

Online shop: www.ebay.co.uk/str/emmausbristol or,

on eBay mobile app, search for "seller: emmausbristol"

Emmaus Bristol is a charity registered in England and Wales: 1071538 and a registered limited company: 03579001

working together to end homelessness