

News and updates from the Emmaus Bristol community

Winter 2022



You & emmaus

working together to end homelessness

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Pawel welcomes Green Party co-leader to Emmaus

Support to get through the cost of living crisis

Ready for business – our new eco-enterprise

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... and more!

Cost of living impact: Call for donations!

Emmaus Bristol has continued to be committed to providing the accommodation, support, training and companionship that helps people rebuild their lives following homelessness since 2003. Despite the significant loss of income from closing our shops during the lockdowns, we maintained our support during the pandemic.

We are now facing the cost-of-living crisis. The crisis is affecting us all, with those who are already struggling to make ends meet disproportionately affected. Thousands of people across the country, and many here in Bristol, feel the very real threat of being thrust into homelessness if they cannot keep up with spiralling costs. This is why the work of homelessness organisations like ours is so vital. Over the coming months and years, we expect to see an increase in demand from individuals facing homelessness for the very first time due to the rising cost of living, and will work tirelessly to continue our support, without cuts.

We have 26 bedrooms in three houses for Companions*, who have a safe, stable home with us for as long as they need it. Whilst living with us, Companions gain experience of full-time work in our social enterprises and undertake a whole range of training courses to learn new skills for their future: Peter has just completed his PAT Testing Level 1 qualification and Pawel earned his CSCS card and completed three Level 2 courses in Catering, Food Hygiene, and Food Safety

through Emmaus Bristol. When a Companion is ready to move-on, our on-site support team do all they can to ensure that person is set up to successfully live independently.

With rising costs, we need your help to continue providing support to our companions now and in the future.

During the July to September quarter this year, the cost of food, supplies, water, light and heat for our community increased by 42% compared to the same period in 2021 – we are expecting energy costs to increase even further.

Emmaus Bristol is a charity that aims to be as self-sufficient as possible by operating several social enterprises to generate income. These activities do not cover all of our costs; it is the generosity of our supporters that allows us to continue being there for everyone who needs us. If you are able to, making a one-off or monthly donation will make a huge difference to our small charity and to each of the people we support.

**To donate, please visit
www.emmausbristol.org.uk/help-us**

* Companions are formerly homeless members of our community

Cover photo:

Companion Peter has just completed his PAT Testing qualification through Emmaus Bristol.

Emmaus Companions in the communal kitchen of our community home with Support Team Manager Fran Blishen

EMMAUS BRISTOL



Emmaus Bristol's costs have risen 42%

Are you able to make a one-off or a regular monthly donation to help Emmaus Bristol continue its work to move people on from homelessness?

www.emmausbristol.org.uk/help-us/donate-money

In each issue of **You & Emmaus** we invite you to meet the staff, Companions and volunteers who make up our team.

Meet Julian, our Online & Retail Manager

I had worked in the charity sector for quite a long time before Emmaus, but wanted to work where I felt more in tune with the organisation's mission and values: when I saw the Emmaus Bristol job, I was ready for a change and went for it.

I started in the eBay team, sorting and listing donated items to increase our income and profile, also supporting the Companions who helped out. One, Anita, works in eBay regularly and is always very focused and helpful.

When I joined, in November 2021, we were getting about £500 a week in sales and we pushed that up to £1000, so we're going in the right direction.

As Retail & Online Manager, I manage our three retail shops, Stokes Croft, Bedminster and Vintage, alongside running our eBay operation.

What I like about Emmaus Bristol is the eccentricity of the place – I'm quite eccentric myself! As a small charity, there's a lot more freedom and I enjoy the company of the Companions, volunteers and staff. I don't quiz Companions about their history, but obviously there are some stresses and strains that I'm aware of. Companions have different interests and abilities within the social enterprise, so that's something you have to work around too.

The most important thing to me is that, as a charity, we are doing something positive with people. Working in the

social enterprise is so important for Companions' well-being, self-esteem, confidence and empowerment. The work is a massive part of their time and is crucial to the support we give as a charity.

In our five-year plan, there's a lot about training and that's something I want to help bring to the charity. I would also like to get more volunteers involved and visit other Emmaus communities to see how they run their social enterprises.

To volunteer in our shops or eBay team, please email julian@emmausbristol.org.uk



Julian taking our e-cargo bike for a spin to deliver eBay purchases.

Walk for Water

On Saturday 3rd December our Companions are leading a very special solidarity event – Walk for Water – to raise money to provide access to fresh, clean water for an Emmaus community in India.

One of the The Florence Home Foundation's local centres, The Killai Centre in Tamil Nadu, needs our help!

The Foundation has many wonderful projects including micro-industries for women; a sustainable multi-farm; youth, education and training; a community fridge to support impoverished local people; a Covid relief centre, and much more.

The Killai Centre supports 75 orphaned children, 25 destitute women and 200 local families. Due to climate change, unsustainable agriculture, and the effects of a tsunami some years ago, the ground water has become contaminated, leaving only salt water available – local people have to buy water or collect it on foot from many miles away.

By Walking for Water, Companions, staff, trustees, friends, family and supporters

will help to raise money for a water purifier, which costs £2,350 to provide many hundreds of people with fresh drinking water. Solidarity is an important part of the Emmaus ethos and, by demonstrating that everyone has the capacity to make a difference to the lives of others, can be very valuable for Companions to help rebuild self-esteem.

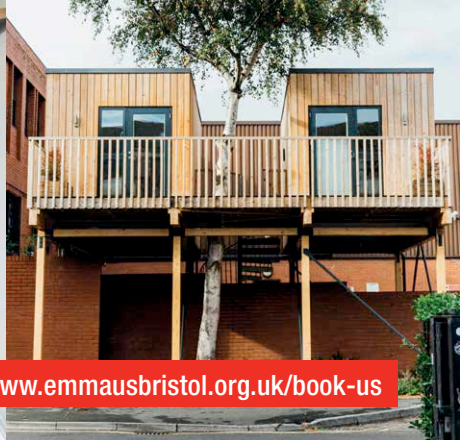
Starting at Dings Park in St. Phillips, we will walk to Bristol Harbour to collect a symbolic container of salt water that represents our solidarity with the local people of Tamil Nadu who face the negative impact of climate change and unsustainable agriculture first hand.

We will have two walks, a shorter flat walk for those new to walking of approximately 5 to 7 miles and a longer walk of 15 miles (or more if anyone wants it!). The route will be scenic, taking in many lovely Bristol areas.



Please sponsor our
Companions for their
Walk for Water
fundraising event,
by visiting

[www.justgiving.com/
campaign/
EmmausCleanWater](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/EmmausCleanWater)



Book our 'Carmen' or 'Delores' eco pods by visiting www.emmausbristol.org.uk/book-us

Lift Off for our Holiday Eco Pods

Emmaus Bristol's new social enterprise is now open for bookings!

Thank you to all our supporters who suggested names for our newest social enterprise – holiday eco pods.

The names Carmen and Delores were chosen by our Companion team: named for inspirational local activists, Carmen Beckford and Delores Campbell. Born in Jamaica, they both grew up and lived in St. Pauls and fought against racial discrimination and inequality.

Key factors for the eco pods' building project were its social impact and eco credentials as well as not taking homes or land away from current housing stock: the pods take up a small amount of air space over our working yard.

Made from renewable, carbon-capturing materials to minimise energy costs and CO₂ emissions, the pods were manufactured at HMP Leyhill in Gloucestershire through a programme that provides prisoners with work.

Now complete, letting the eco pods to visitors will generate long-term income for our charity. Every night's stay will help Emmaus Bristol to prevent homelessness

for those we support. If you visit Bristol or know someone who is, we hope you choose to stay with us.

Visitors to the pods will enjoy a studio-style bedroom, private shower room and a spacious balcony. There's a chiller, tea and coffee making facilities, smart TV and wi-fi. With Stokes Croft and Gloucester Road a stone's throw away, visitors can enjoy many cafés, bars and nightclubs or venture easily to other areas of Bristol.

Income from the eco pods will support our community and ensure we can plan for the future. One plan is to create affordable housing in Bristol for Companions who are ready for more independent living. One opportunity we are exploring is to build one and two bedroom units on our roof at Backfields House, using the same principles as our eco pods. We already have planning permission to develop this accommodation that would provide an option for Companions moving on from our shared homes to remain closely connected to our community.

Our defibrillator is installed!

We are very pleased to say that a defibrillator has now been installed on our premises in Stokes Croft thanks to our Lifesaving Challenge fundraising appeal earlier this year.

Emmaus Bristol Companions and staff members took on fitness and health challenges to raise £1,700 so we could provide accessible life-saving equipment for the Stokes Croft area. A huge thank you goes to all individual donors who made this possible and Bristol Junior Chamber for donating £1,300.



Green Party visits Emmaus Bristol

We were delighted to welcome Carla Denyer, co-leader of the Green Party, councillor for Clifton Down ward and MP candidate for Bristol West, to our Emmaus community in November. Carla visited our Backfields site – home to our biggest shop, offices, business incubator, warehouse, recycling yard, eco pods and our e-cargo bike.

Companion Pawel led Carla's tour, telling her about our charity, the social enterprises we operate and the reuse and recycling work we do. She was pleased to hear that last year, we diverted 84 tonnes of reusable items from the waste stream in Bristol. After the tour, Carla enjoyed browsing around our Stokes Croft shop!

Companion Vincent visits Bosnia & Herzegovina

This summer, Companion Vincent volunteered for two weeks at the MSF-Emmaus community in the Srebrenica area of Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Vincent was one of 70 volunteers from Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Turkey, France, England, Romania and Jordan who helped to dig foundations and lay concrete for new accommodation.

The community supports children, the elderly, victims of human trafficking and illegal migrants by running assisted accommodation, soup kitchens and a boarding school.

As well as helping out, the volunteers took part in activities including a visit to the Srebrenica Memorial Centre, history classes, creative and art workshops, an international evening, fun activities, and tours of the local area.

Vincent, wearing a Liverpool FC t-shirt, with co-volunteers



Fundraising through music

We're grateful to the six Bristol friends and DJs who recently held the 'Dare to Club' fundraising music event for Emmaus Bristol. £400 was raised through ticket sales, and the booking fees – kindly donated by the ticket platform, HeadFirst.

George Foster, one of the six DJs who helped to organise the event, said "we're all ecstatic with how it went".

The friends chose Emmaus Bristol because they wanted to do something that would have a local impact in light of the cost-of-living crisis and rising homelessness.

If you are hosting an event, or fundraising, for Emmaus Bristol, please get in touch so we can help promote your activity.

www.emmausbristol.org.uk

Stokes Croft shop/office: Backfields House, Upper York Street, BS2 8QU

Bedminster shop: 72 Bedminster Parade, BS3 4HL

Emmaus Vintage: 332 Gloucester Rd, BS7 8TJ

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

eBay app: search seller: emmausbristol

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

working together to end homelessness

