

Centre Life

September 2021 edition

Gabrielle's story

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HELPING TURN
YOUNG LIVES
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Welcome



Welcome to the Cardinal Hume Centre's magazine. I am so glad you are reading it!

Everyone coming to the Centre gets a special and simple welcome: a smile, a listening ear and time. This special welcome is what Cardinal Hume instilled in the Centre and is at the very heart of every client's experience here. It is only possible thanks to you. You make this time and the professional support possible.

The pandemic has meant we have had to change how we maintain this warm welcome to all our clients, but thanks to our supporters our frontline services have adapted and responded. Last year we remained a safe home for young people and provided advice and support to over 1,100 people.

Sadly, the impact of Covid-19 is still making things more difficult for the people we help. It is those who are on the margins who are at the greatest risk and this includes children, young people and their families. For many building a life will not be easy but your support helps make it achievable.

I hope this magazine shows the difference that you make. We are forever grateful for your care.

With huge thanks

George O'Neill,
Chief Executive Officer
georgeoneill@cardinalhumecentre.org.uk

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Front cover: Gabrielle
studying in the hostel /
Fergus Burnett Photography.

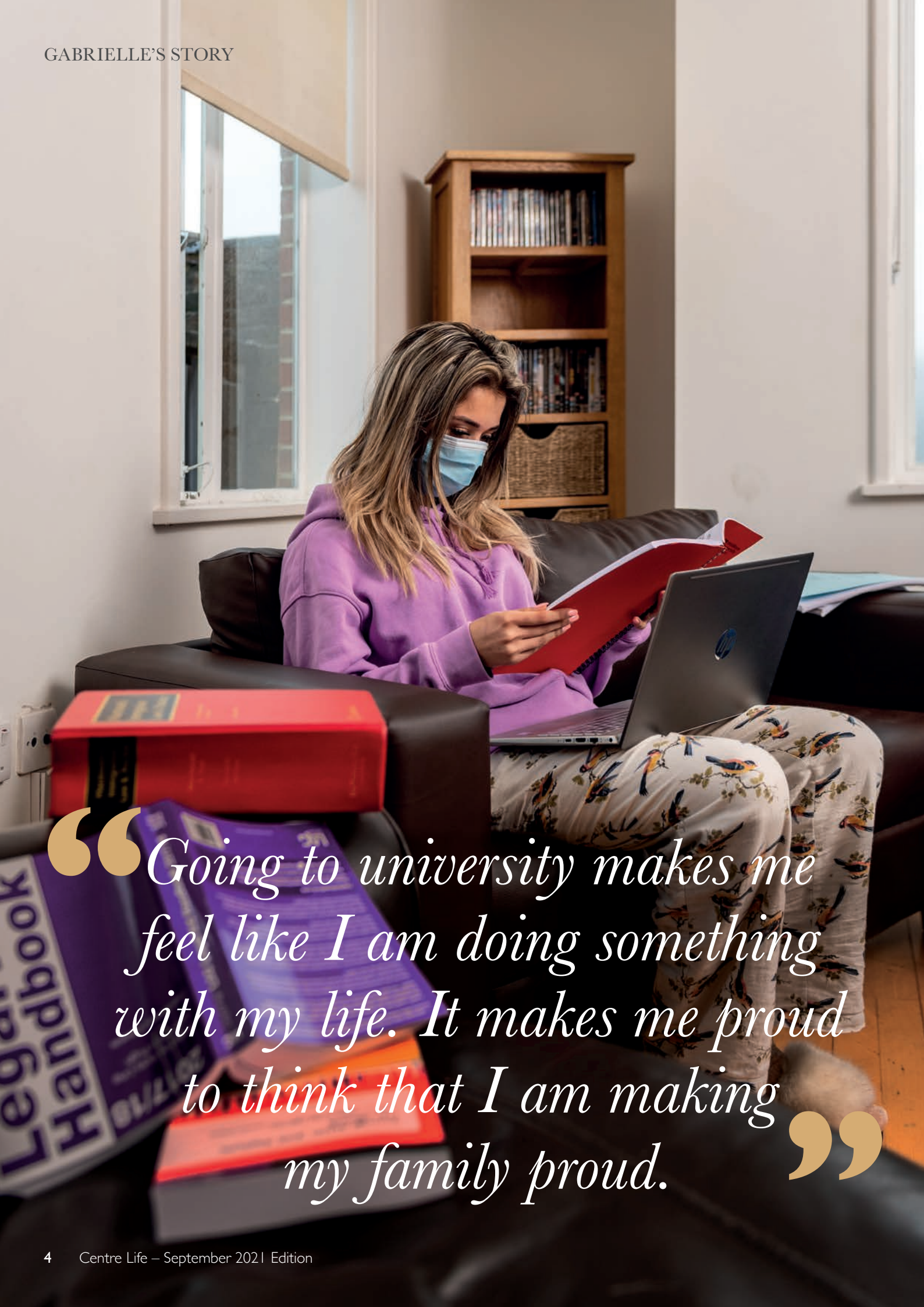


Summer holiday *fun*

Thanks to people like you, the school holiday club was a hive of activity this summer. Children and families have enjoyed trips to museums and the seaside, musical workshops, games in our garden and playground, and free meals provided by generous partner organisations.



Clockwise from top left: A trip to a park; making music at the Centre; playing in the park and group picnics.



“Going to university makes me feel like I am doing something with my life. It makes me proud to think that I am making my family proud.”

A lasting legacy

Much of our work is supported by people remembering the Centre in their wills. Valerie Watkins wanted her husband Peter's legacy to help young people into education, and is delighted that their gift enabled one student to study for her degree throughout the pandemic.

During lockdown many hostel residents needed to study online but, without ready access to internet and computer technology, have had problems with remote learning.

Gabrielle (not her real name), a hostel resident studying Law at university, said: "It has been difficult working remotely, I have only been on campus three times this year."

But in July 2020 the Centre was able to fast-track a planned upgrade to its internet infrastructure and also, thanks to a gift left by Peter, a longterm Centre supporter, in his will, the Centre was also able to buy Gabrielle her own laptop.

It made a world of difference to her studies: "Having the laptop meant I could work when it suited me. I didn't need to ask a staff member to escort me down to the IT suite. It meant that I could access documents I needed and apps that have really help me improve my writing.

"Going to university makes me feel like I am doing something with my life. It makes me proud to think that I am making my family proud. Completing my first year has given me even more belief that I can make something of myself. I believe that having studied will give me more options."

Peter's wife Valerie said: "The Covid 19 virus has made us much more aware of social inequalities. When my family heard that my husband's legacy had helped Gabrielle to continue with her degree studies the joy we felt was quite overwhelming. We understood that his legacy was going to the right place."

Main picture:

Gabrielle studying with her new laptop.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY

The Centre is proud to be a founder member of Your Catholic Legacy, and partnered with the National Free Will Network. The means that you can write a simple will for free with trusted solicitors and provide for those you care about.

To find out more, visit our website cardinalhumecentre.org.uk/legacy, call Emily on 020 7227 1650, email legacies@cardinalhumecentre.org.uk, or use your freepost envelope to write and request more information.

Blooming *together*

Over the past year families living in otherwise isolated conditions have been able to grow food and enjoy the outdoors in safety, thanks to generous supporters making the Centre's garden a special place.

When people think of play areas in the inner city they don't usually think of places to grow plants and learn about nature, but that is what the gardens at the Cardinal Hume Centre in Westminster offer. Aided by green-fingered grownups, children have grown in confidence while learning about worms, bees and ladybirds and how to tend their own crops of herbs, beans, cress, radishes and sunflowers.

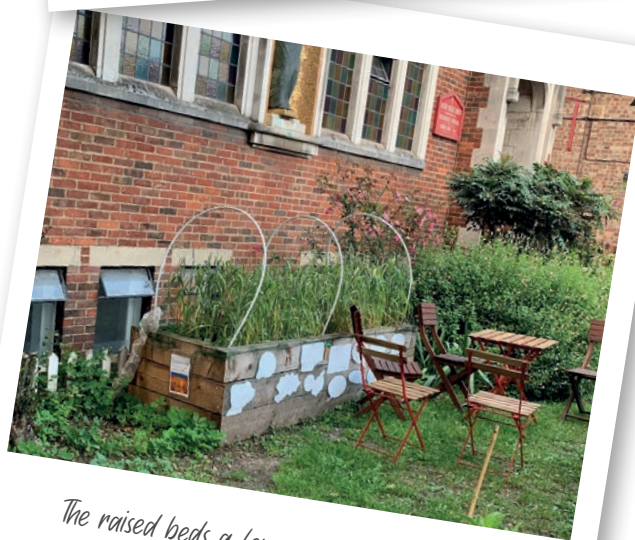
Some families who are here to seek safety in the UK, lived on and worked on farms in their home countries. In March a group of 15 children and parents, and volunteer Imogen (Page 7), planted wheat in the garden, and the children made scarecrows to protect the seedlings from wildlife. For most, the opportunities for parents to speak to other parents and children to play with other children had been rare.

And at the end of August, they met again to harvest the grain by hand and make corn dollies. The families shared out their own small but precious amounts of flour to take home.

The old convent garden outside the family play area and flowerbeds outside the neighbouring church were planted up in May 2019 by volunteers from HSBC and they have really come into their own this year.



Planting wheat in springtime.



The raised beds a few weeks before harvest.



Grinding the wheat.



“Plants are a connection to back home.”

Left and above: Imogen working in the gardens.

Gardening goodness

Retired science teacher and gardener Imogen has been sharing her skills with clients at the Cardinal Hume Centre since 2019. And this summer, she has had a vital role to play in helping children missing out on schooling.

“During lockdown, I helped with one-on-one teaching, and during our breaks we used to visit the garden. Children need experiences of getting outside and growing plants, and it supports the curriculum.

I see my role as engaging Centre users in the garden. It's important in valuing their culture, especially for families who are receiving help. The garden gives parents empowerment over what they're receiving. There's not a lot of that in their lives. Whereas here they get a say in the design of the garden, and can cultivate things that they want – for example, we're planting grapevines to supply families with vine leaves to use in their cooking.

“It's important in valuing their culture and especially for families who are receiving help. The garden gives parents empowerment over what they're receiving.”

I see that the children get more confident in the garden. The little ones can start off scared of getting dirty in the garden, or afraid of bugs, but now they run about saying hello to the bees!

When we all garden together, adults who used to be farmers tell me how much fertilizer to use. When we picked the rhubarb, some of the mums introduced us to peeling and eating it with salt.

Plants are an international language and universal connection to back home. People teach me about different ways to look after

the garden. The smells, tastes and opportunity to share food give people a way of remembering home and getting to share something.”

Sara's story

Sara, a who fled to the UK from Azerbaijan with her three children and partner, was struggling to care for her family whilst unemployed but was determined to “do something of value”.

“It is painful to talk about the challenges I faced after coming to the UK. I felt so embarrassed to be unemployed when I had my qualifications. My fears about my employment status left me isolated. Lockdown made me feel things were even more hopeless.”

However, despite these anxieties, Sara made an appointment at the Cardinal Hume Centre. “The welcome galvanised me,” she says. “I was encouraged to talk about my experience and career goals with an employment specialist who supported me with job searches and tailored applications.”

Sara says this relationship was key: “My advisor believed in me and my career aspirations –

which helped me to regain my confidence and to stand out from the crowd. I began to get interviews!

“When I was offered work as a lab operators for UK Biocentre, an institute analysing Covid-19 samples I burst into tears of happiness.

“Now, I look forward to qualifying as a biochemical scientist. I am a caring and a working mum who can now spend quality time with my family and three children.

“My children have taken this experience as a lesson to never give up: like me, they aspire to be strong, diligent and dedicated.”

28 clients *were supported to gain or sustain employment.*

16 clients *were supported into training or volunteering.*

New ways into employment

In 2020, the Employment team created a fast-track a six-month mentoring scheme, matching job-seeking clients with mentors from among the Centre's corporate partners. The scheme has been so successful that additional mentors have been recruited to make the scheme available to more clients.

Kate, one of the volunteer mentors, said: “My aim was to support my mentee into

employment and work towards building confidence – her lack of confidence was the main barrier, leaving her too anxious to seek employment and communicate clearly. But from our weekly catch-ups and small tasks set in-between, we have built a strong CV, explored careers in animal welfare, prepared for interviews and, finally, successfully secured a role within a veterinary practice.”

BIG BED DOWN

Right: Victoria gave up her bed for the night and raised a whopping £1,050.

Total money raised:

£1,050



SPONSORED WALK

Below: Amelia walked 12km around Richmond Park, and raised an impressive £307

Total money raised:

£307

SLEEPING OUT

Dozen of fundraisers, including teams from Channel 4, Intuit and LandBay raised more than £40,000 by sleeping out for the Big Bed Down.

Total money raised:

£42,000+

THE CARDINAL HUME CENTRE
BIG BED DOWN
SLEEPOUT CHALLENGE



Fantastic fundraisers

BIG BED DOWN

Right: Worth School students slept outdoors for the Big Bed Down raising awareness and £2,500 to tackle homelessness.

Total money raised:

£2,500



DONATIONS

Left The incredible families at Westminster Cathedral Choir School donated hundreds of Christmas gifts and raised £10,000 in a year.

Total money raised:

£10,000

If you're interested in fundraising or having someone from the Centre visit your school or community group, get in touch with us on:

**fundraising@cardinal
humecentre.org.uk**

Turning young lives around

Hostel team leader, Louisa, shares how vital your support is to helping residents find their feet.

“There are some misconceptions about young people who live in hostels. Like that they are all criminals, all misuse drugs or that they act a certain way. But that’s not the case,” says Louisa, hostel team leader at the Cardinal Hume Centre.

“Through day-to-day interactions and sessions with keyworkers, we help residents build the skills they need to gain independence. Most young people who come to us have not had this sort of support before,” explains Louisa. “We work with people from different backgrounds with different needs, treating everyone as individuals: no one is marginalised.”

Covid-19 and the lockdown brought their own problems: “The pandemic had a noticeable impact on mental health in the hostel - ranging from low moods and reduced interaction with staff to diagnosed conditions such as psychosis.

“In the first lockdown there wasn’t online education provision available straightaway, so in the summer we upgraded our wifi system to make it easier for students to access classes online. They could use the Centre’s IT suite, too.”

“Young people are just like you and me, they come here with different goals and aspirations. They just happen to live in a hostel.”

“There were a lot of differences in how the residents engaged with going online. Some did really well, and two started degrees. But for others, like those trying to learn English, it was a struggle.”

Many young people have now returned to in-person lessons at college, and others have moved on from the hostel.

“Throughout the pandemic, young people were still moving to more independent living but at a slower rate. The backlog means it will take a while for young people to be able to move on as quickly.”

47 young people
*have been supported by
our accommodation services.*

12 moved on to
more independent living.





Clockwise from top left:
Cardinal Hume at opening
of Centre in 1986; Rooms
being cleared and prepared
for renovation.



Building on Cardinal Hume's legacy

Work will begin on creating two new studio flats in
autumn 2021.

In 2020 London saw a 47% increase in the number of young people sleeping rough.* The Centre plans to provide short-stay accommodation to at-risk young people with high support needs by creating two new self-contained studio flats in our hostel.

This new accommodation will be placed on the first and second floor of the Centre's existing 32-bed hostel for homeless young people, so the short-stay residents will benefit from the 24-hour care and specialist support of our staff.

These flats will be prioritised for two seriously vulnerable groups of 16 to 24-year-olds: where this might be their first experience of entering homelessness services; and those with additional needs such as mental-health issues or autism, who might struggle in a communal environment. These new flats will help be critical to welcoming young people with different needs.

*Source: Homeless Link, Analysis
of rough sleeping statistics for
England 2020.

Need to know

Here are the ways that more people are being welcomed to the Centre, and how you can get involved.

WELCOMING FAMILIES FROM AFGHANISTAN

Many families fleeing Afghanistan have arrived in Westminster and for the moment have been placed in various hotels in the borough. Until more permanent accommodation is found elsewhere in the country we are offering the Centre's support.

Naturally hotels have few places designed for children and lack cooking facilities and respite at the Centre gives families space to escape

the cramped conditions. Children have the opportunity to play and parents can cook for themselves, with food provided.

The Centre's staff are working closely with the local authority and other organisations to ensure the families are receiving adequate support for all of their needs, and coping with what they have left behind and the uncertainty ahead.



ADVENT CONCERT

The Cardinal Hume Centre Advent Concert at Sacred Heart Church, 112 Horseferry Rd, London SW1P 2EF is taking place at 6:30pm on Wednesday 1 December 2021.

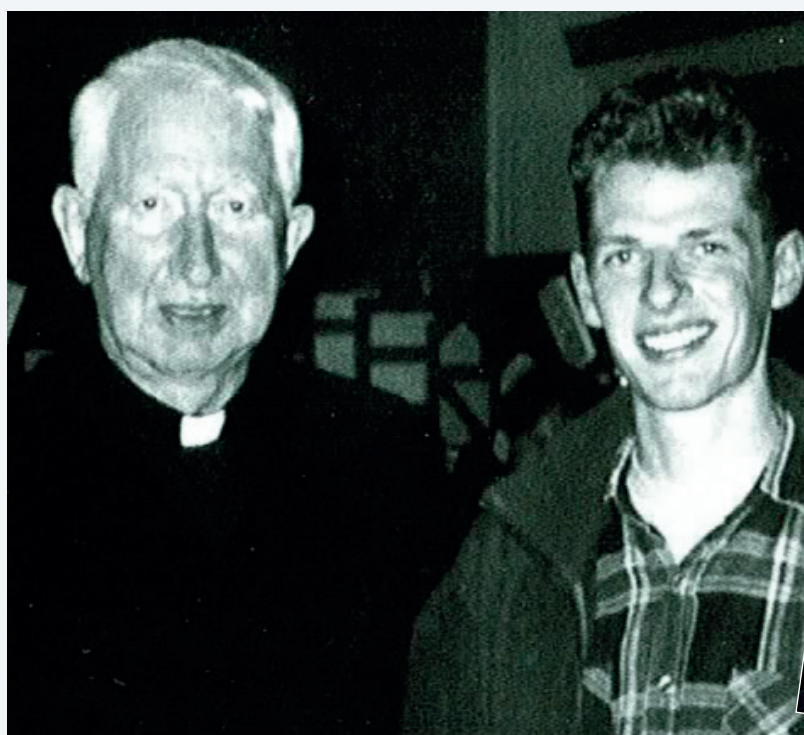
Doors open from 6pm. Numbers are limited, so contact us early for your complimentary tickets by phoning **020 7227 1650** or emailing **events@cardinalhumecentre.org.uk**



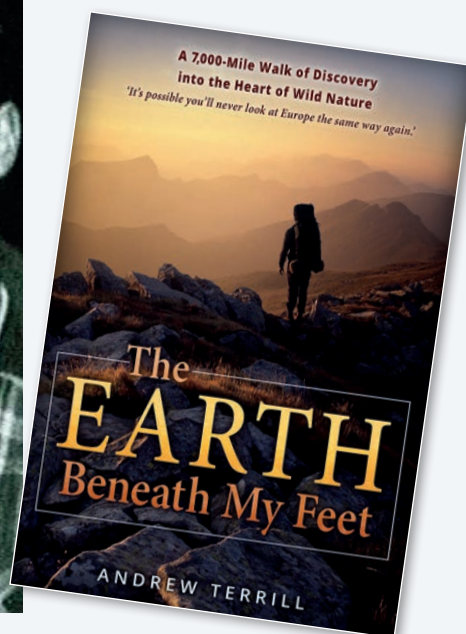
ORDERING CHRISTMAS CARDS

In a few weeks you may be thinking of ordering charity Christmas cards. You can call us or write to request an order form. Phone us on **020 7227 1650** or use your **freepost envelope** to write to us.

Packs of 10, £5 each.



Left: Cardinal Hume
with Andrew Terrill 1998.



BOOKS FROM OUR COMMUNITY

25 years ago Andrew Terrill walked 7,000 miles, raising money for the Centre and The Passage. This year Andrew has published his first book 'The Earth Beneath My Feet' describing his transformative experiences. Recommended for anyone who feels the

call of adventure, who has the urge to travel, who loves nature, and who feels a desire to live the life they know deep down they are meant to live. Join Andrew Terrill on an extraordinary journey into the wild, and find his book on Amazon.

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a bright pink long-sleeved swimsuit, is the central focus. She is standing in shallow, rippling water on a beach, looking down at her hands which are holding several small seashells. In the background, a woman wearing a white headscarf and a patterned skirt stands further back in the water. To the left of the woman, a large yellow buoy with a green base is partially submerged. The beach is wide and sandy, with a row of colorful houses and buildings visible in the distance under a cloudy sky.

Thank you!

Thanks to you, **1,163 people**, among them **465 families** including **202 children** were helped to reduce their risk of homelessness last year.

How you gave your support in 2020/21

As a charity, over 70% of our income comes from our supporters. Our work is only made possible because of the incredible generosity of donors. Statutory funding from Westminster City Council also enables us to provide essential services to our clients.

How you gave your help

Legacies	£191,000
Donations	£2,217,000
Charity Shop*	—
TOTAL VOLUNTARY INCOME	£2,408,000

Other Centre income

Statutory Income	£417,000
Earned Income	£635,000
TOTAL INCOME	£3,460,000

*The Charity Shop has been closed, owing to Covid-19.



Children playing catch on a trip to the park.

Our donations



For every **£1** donated,
85p is spent on service delivery

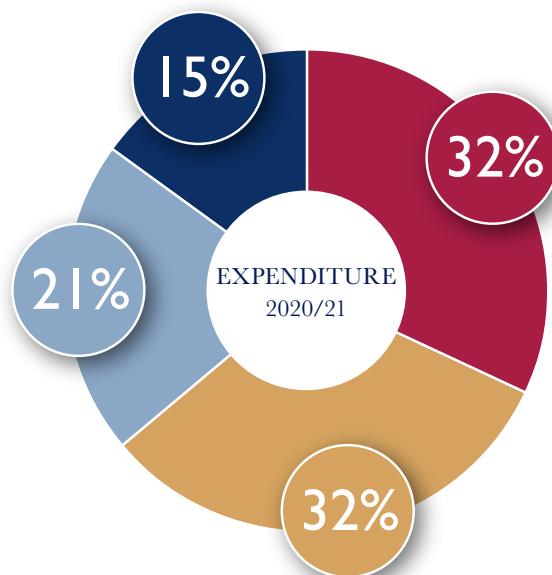
For every **£1** we invest in
fundraising we raise **£5**

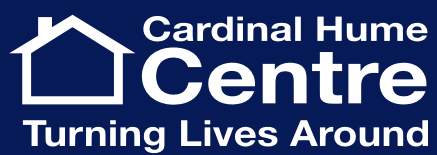
How your money is spent

Our expenditure in 2020/21 was £3.2m of which 85% was spent on delivering services. The chart here shows where this was spent across our core activities.

- Advice and assessment
- Housing and Residential Services
- Learning, Employment and Family Services
- Raising Funds

Opposite: A daytrip to the seaside, made possible by Centre supporters.





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