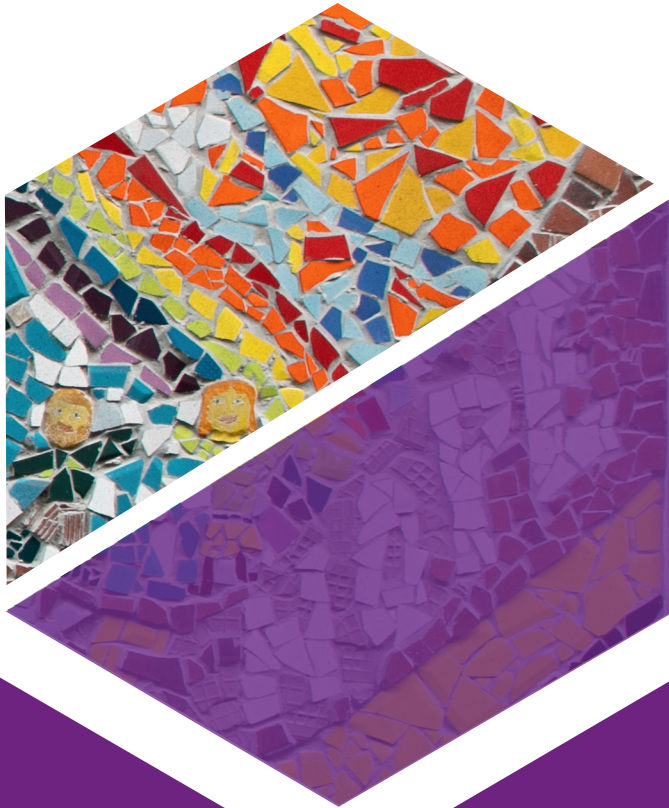




A COMMUNITY CENTRE RUN WITH PEOPLE AFFECTED BY HOMELESSNESS



# Annual Report 2022

[boothcentre.org.uk](http://boothcentre.org.uk)

# A message from the Chair of Trustees

Elena Fowler

This year, we continued to rise to the challenge of ensuring a welcoming environment for people affected by homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic, then faced the further challenge of replacing our Founder CEO, Amanda Croome. Although sad to lose her, we have been delighted to welcome Paul Newcombe as our new CEO. He brings considerable experience working in the homeless sector in Manchester.

Paul is committed to our core values and further developing co-production to ensure that the city's strategic approach to homelessness is informed by the people directly affected by it. Our shared aim is to help people achieve positive and lasting change.

I am proud of our range of creative and practical activities that provide people with the opportunity to recognise their talents and develop new skills, helping to build confidence and self-esteem. This year the garden has become an oasis of

calm, helping people to reconnect with nature, and giving huge satisfaction to those who tend it and those who visit it. Everyone who comes to the Booth Centre is assured of a warm welcome as a valued and respected individual.

At a time when the world faces great uncertainty with more people in Manchester feeling hungry and cold, and facing the possibility of homelessness, our work together with our partners and supporters is more important than ever.

On behalf of all the Trustees, I would like to thank our tireless staff and volunteers, and all our supporters for helping us through. We deliver transformative services alongside our partners, and I would like to thank all those in the voluntary and statutory sector, as well as businesses and community groups, who help us to fulfil our mission to ensure that the best possible services are available for people affected by homelessness in Greater Manchester.

# A message from the CEO

Paul Newcombe

Whilst we have fortunately moved past the initial challenges of the pandemic, we're continuing to see the huge effect it is having on our community. The uncertainties and isolation of this time have negatively impacted people's mental health, the end of the eviction ban has put many people's tenancies at risk, and the precarious job market has made it difficult for people to find and sustain work.

Meanwhile, as the cost of living spirals the homelessness crisis is predicted to worsen as people already experiencing poverty are impacted the most. We're focusing on our welfare and financial inclusion work to mitigate these pressures as much as possible. Leaving the EU has also had an impact on the services we can offer to European nationals, so we're continuing to work closely with key partners to prevent homelessness in this community.

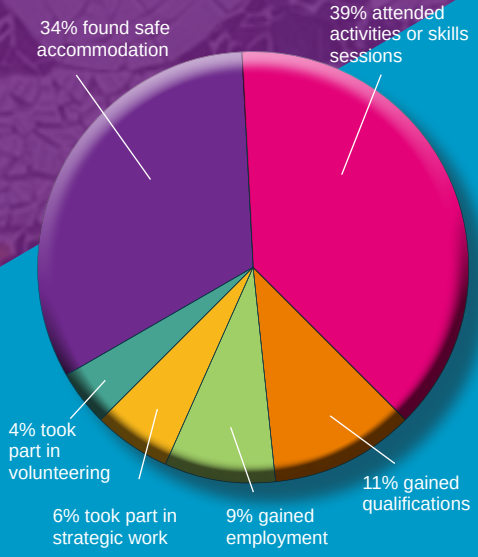
The response to the pandemic demonstrated that if there is both political will and resources, we can work together to end rough sleeping. Access to safe and affordable housing is a human right and we continue to express this principle through our daily work, as well as through partnering with Amnesty International as they campaign to make access to housing a legal right.

As we readjust, we're keen to increase our activities programme beyond pre-pandemic levels. We've seen the life-changing effect activities such as art,

drama, gardening and sport can have; creating opportunities for people to boost their mental wellbeing, build connections and develop the skills they need to transform their lives.

Working together with our visitors, we have redesigned our service many times over the past few years in response to the ever-changing environment, and understand that once again we will need to adapt to best serve our community. There is no place for standing still at this critical time and we're working to ensure we're both efficient and effective as we pursue meaningful change alongside those affected by homelessness.

## LAST YEAR WE WELCOMED 975 PEOPLE



# Contents



Vision,  
mission and  
values



Proudest  
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A  
great  
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A  
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role



Secure  
homes and  
quality of life



Influencing  
policy



Public  
awareness



Finances  
and  
supporters



Partners

## Credits

Photography - Matt Priestley, Booth Centre staff and volunteers

Featured artwork - Booth Centre artists

# Vision, mission and values



**OUR VISION** is for everyone to have a secure home and the opportunity to have a good quality of life.

**OUR MISSION** is to bring about positive change in the lives of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and help plan for and realise a better future.



## **INCLUSIVE**

We are welcoming and supportive. We provide the opportunity for people to socialise, share their experiences and learn from one another. We have an open-door policy and all our services are provided free of charge. We don't judge people and we never give up on anyone.

## **EMPOWERING**

We encourage people to take personal responsibility for making positive changes in their lives by providing opportunities, developing their talents, and helping to build their confidence and self esteem.

## **PARTNERSHIP**

We recognise the importance of working collaboratively with people who come to the centre to design, deliver and evaluate our services. We work jointly with other organisations to achieve the best outcomes.

## **RESPECTFUL**

We respect each other and celebrate diversity so that everyone can give their best. We recognise the importance of providing a friendly environment where people can feel safe.

## **INSPIRING**

We all inspire one another to discover our purpose and reach our full potential, celebrating our achievements and positive steps forward.

# Proudest moments

## RETURN TO THE EDGE THEATRE

Our performers returned to The Edge Theatre & Arts Centre for their first public performance since the pandemic started. The Booth Centre Theatre Company is a unique company producing high-quality theatre and offering people the chance to get involved in all aspects of running a theatre company. Sign up for our mailing list to find out when they will next be performing!



## BOOK OF OURS

Our artists took part in a two-year project with arthur + martha to create A BOOK OF OURS, an illuminated manuscript for our time, weaving their stories into something singular and beautiful. The book has now been accepted into the permanent collection at John Rylands Library, to live alongside the medieval manuscripts that inspired it.

## SPIRIT OF MANCHESTER AWARD



Our Greater Manchester Homeless Prevention Service for EU nationals provides a pathway from destitution and rough sleeping to settled homes and employment, with the legal right to stay in the UK.

Alongside our partners, we won a Spirit of Manchester Award for this project. We're proud to help welcome people from all over the world into our Manchester community.



# A great place

We're passionate about making sure the Booth Centre is a great place to visit, volunteer and work. We do this by creating a welcoming, positive and high-quality atmosphere, treating everyone with respect and empowering everyone to contribute their ideas.

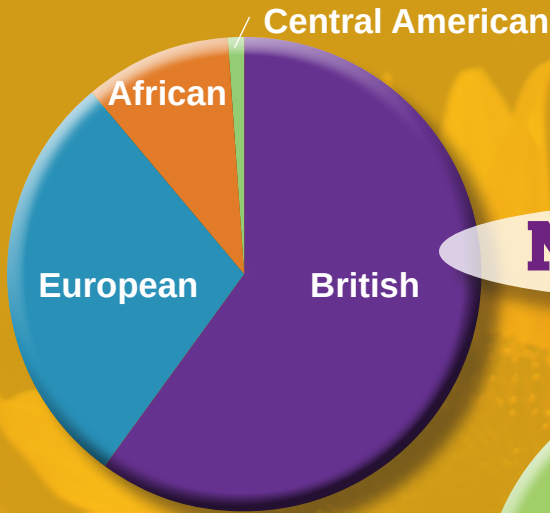
Last year, we were able to get all our services fully back up and running after the lockdowns and restrictions – it's been fantastic to welcome more people back in person and see the Centre a hive of activity once more! 100% of people surveyed during the

year agreed that the Booth Centre is a welcoming place where people can socialise and feel a sense of belonging.

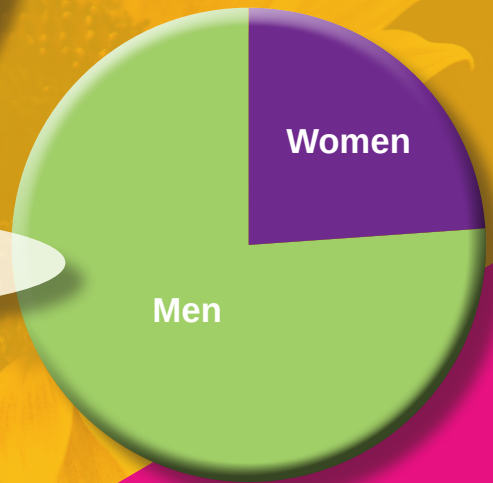
We also took the time to reflect on diversity within the Centre, through some important (and sometimes challenging) conversations – with people who attend, staff and volunteers. We're committed to making the Centre as inclusive as possible and our visitors created a beautiful new mosaic on the theme of diversity as a visual representation of this.

**“ Unity, relaxed atmosphere. Help and support on hand ”**  
Booth Centre visitor

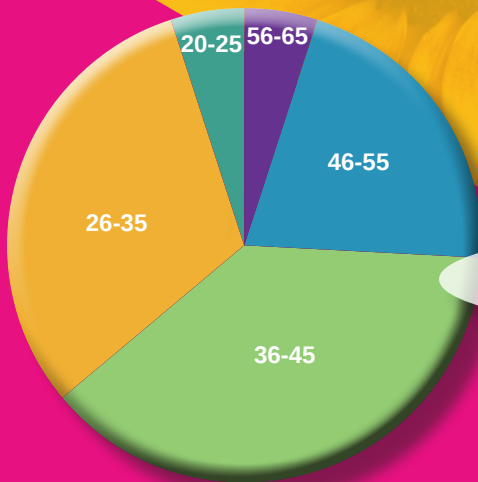
# Who got involved through Inclusive Volunteering?



**Nationality**



**Gender**



**Age**



# A leading role

People being involved in decisions that affect them is central to our service. People who've experienced homelessness take a leading role in planning, delivering and evaluating all of our activities, as well as getting involved through volunteering and recruitment.

helping out in the kitchen or café and supporting with activities – alongside one-to-one mentoring to help people achieve their personal goals.

People affected by homelessness contribute to recruitment practices by meeting interviewees and sitting on interview panels. We also aim to increase the representation of people who have been homeless within our staff team and trustee board, and always encourage people with experience to apply.

**“ Volunteering has given me something to do. I look forward to going home feeling I have achieved something ”**

Booth Centre volunteer

**“ I like helping people, and I feel like I'm giving something back as the Booth Centre helped me. ”**

Booth Centre volunteer

**“ Not all homeless people are the same. All are in different situations and deserve to be treated with respect. ”**

Booth Centre volunteer

We've been running an Inclusive Volunteering programme for over 25 years; creating opportunities for people to challenge themselves, develop self-esteem and learn new skills. Day to day, volunteering can include welcoming new people,

# Secure homes & quality of life

We believe that everyone should have access to a secure home and the opportunity to have a good quality of life. We offer a range of services to help people overcome

the practical difficulties they may be facing to resolve housing issues, secure qualifications and employment, and access nutritious food and healthcare.



We're also passionate about activities; we've witnessed the power they have to transform lives which is why we place them at the heart of our service. People experiencing homelessness have often been through trauma, feel isolated or suffer from mental health problems – difficulties which have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

**The performances made me feel good about myself. I would like more lines next time!**

**Booth Centre volunteer**

**It helps me relax and get in a good mood and then I pass that good mood on.**

**Booth Centre visitor**

Our activities help people to build relationships, gain confidence and improve their overall wellbeing. Last year, we were able to safely increase the number of activities that were on offer – running sessions such as drama, songwriting, art, bowls, walking, philosophy, gardening and more!

# Influencing policy

We want to effect positive and lasting change for people affected by homelessness. We do this by influencing local and national policy, supporting people with experience of homelessness to be involved in strategic work and sharing our approaches to co-production and partnership working with other services.

## **Volunteer Inclusion Partnership**

Our VIP project provided grant funding to four partner organisations to help them embed co-production and build stronger volunteer programmes in their services:

### **Cornerstone, Caritas**

### **The Edge Theatre & Arts Centre**

### **Greater Together Manchester**

### **Oasis Community Centre**

We trained over 50 members of staff in co-production and 49 new volunteers were recruited, taking part in activities such as gardening, publicity, food preparation, facilitating activities and more.

## **What is co-production?**

Co-production is partnership working - it means that staff, volunteers and people who visit the Centre work collaboratively in all aspects of our work.

**“** [Co-production] goes a long way to helping people improve their confidence, improve their self-worth and develop new skills... our volunteers are empowered when they can see that their suggestions, ideas, and actions are making a positive change to the programme. **”**

Partner organisation

## Homeless Link

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for organisations working with people who become homeless in England. They work to make services better and campaign for policy change that will help end homelessness.

- Our work with EU nationals was highlighted in Homeless Link's publication *Homelessness Provision for the Future: Best practice from the homelessness sector during the COVID-19 pandemic*.
- We're involved with Homeless Link's National Sounding Board which informs their policy and influencing work.
- We were featured on a podcast about co-production, which was promoted nationally.

## Winter Provision

We worked with partners to develop a coordinated plan for the winter period, including a new pathway for prompt homelessness assessments. We're currently involving people in planning for the coming year to improve pathways even further.

## Manchester Homelessness Partnership

We are closely involved with the Manchester Homelessness Partnership, regularly attending meetings and ensuring people who have experienced homelessness have their voices heard. We're looking forward to exciting new plans for the Partnership next year!

## Working well with women

Women are more likely to be considered hidden homeless (people without a home but not known to any services) and more likely to have experienced trauma and abuse both before and during homelessness. This is why a gender-informed approach is needed and why our work with women is so important.

We run a women's group at the Centre which is a safe space for women to relax, socialise, express themselves creatively, access support, contribute to the running of our services or get involved in volunteering. We create opportunities for women to get involved in shaping local policy and driving change in accommodation provision for women through the Women's Homelessness Involvement Group (WHIG – part of the Manchester Homelessness Partnership). We also partner with Manchester Women's Aid and other agencies to ensure we're working well with women.

**“ Being part of the Action Group has felt like we have space where our opinions are heard, and we can hear about what other support is available, and what's going on across the city for women! ”**

WHIG

# Public awareness

Increased public awareness will push forward changes that are vital to ending homelessness. We contribute towards a greater understanding through media coverage, speaking to our community about how they can effect change and creating opportunities for people affected by homelessness to showcase their skills. Last year, to raise awareness of both the issues and solutions to homelessness we:

**Hosted the Sleepout** – a virtual fundraiser and awareness sharing event

**Showcased talent** – provided opportunities for people to share their achievements through a theatre performance and an exhibition

**Produced resources** – including our toolkit for creating inclusive volunteering opportunities

**Worked together** – held sessions with companies and community groups

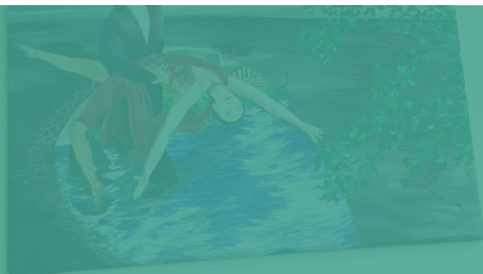
## Did you know?

You may have noticed we don't use identifying images of people in our updates.

This is a conscious choice to make sure we protect the identity and dignity of our visitors. Want to know more?

Just ask!

Get in touch with us at [info@boothcentre.org.uk](mailto:info@boothcentre.org.uk).



“

**Absolutely amazing exhibition - seeing the art and reading words written by people with experience of homelessness in what can sometimes be considered quite an elitist space was great.**

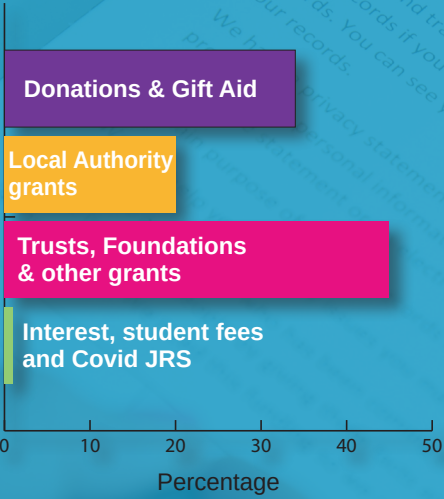
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**Exhibition attendee**

# 2021-22

## Finances

### Total Income - £890,552



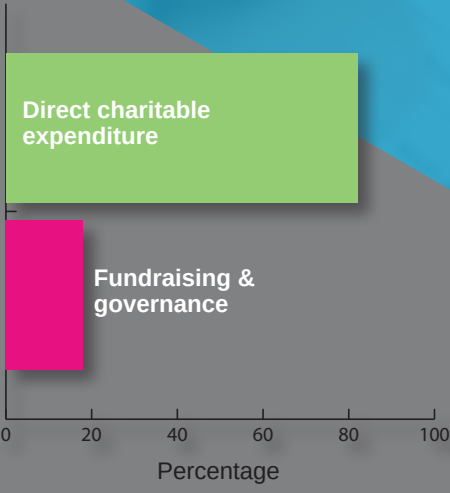
**As an independent charity, we rely on the generosity of our community. Thank you to the many supporters, volunteers, funders and partner organisations that make our work possible. You're the best!**

To make a donation go to [www.boothcentre.org.uk/donate](http://www.boothcentre.org.uk/donate)

### Thank you to our grant funders

- The Barnabas Charitable Trust
- The Booth Charities
- Cadent Foundation
- The Charity Service
- Comic Relief
- Cotton Industry War Memorial Trust
- Crisis
- Dickanson's Charity
- The Edward Holt Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- JTI
- Macc (Real Change MCR)
- Manchester City Council
- Manchester Relief in Need Charity
- Peter Sowerby Foundation
- Postcode Neighbourhood Trust
- Transport for Greater Manchester

### Total Spending - £904,861



# Thank you to our partners

Amnesty International  
Andy Burnham (Mayor of Greater Manchester) and his team  
arthur & martha CIC  
Back on Track  
Barnabus  
Big Life  
Boaz Trust  
Business in the Community  
Central Hall  
Centrepoint  
Change Grow Live (CGL)  
Coffee 4 Craig  
Cornerstone / Caritas  
Crisis  
The Edward Holt Trust  
Europa  
FareShare Greater Manchester  
Forgotten Feet Chiropody  
Greater Manchester Combined and Local Authorities  
Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit

Greater Manchester Law Centre  
Greater Manchester Police  
Greater Together Manchester  
Homeless Link  
Homeless Mental Health Team  
Hulme Garden Centre  
Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)  
Justlife  
Khizra Mosque  
Liberty  
Lifeshare  
MACC  
Manchester Action on Street Health (MASH)  
Manchester Cathedral  
Manchester City Council  
Manchester Homelessness Partnership  
Manchester Mind  
Mayday Trust  
On The Out  
The Passage

Reach Out To The Community  
Riverside Housing  
Salford Loaves & Fishes Shelter  
St Martins in the Fields  
Supporting People In Need  
Stop Start Go  
Stitched Up  
Street Support  
The Edge Theatre and Arts Centre  
The Growth Company  
The Men's Room  
The Mustard Tree  
The Oasis Centre, Gorton  
Urban Village Medical Practice  
Women MATTA  
Women's Aid

The other hostels, day centres and support services working alongside us.

## Get involved

Donate - Volunteer -  
Events - In your workplace

Find out more:  
[boothcentre.org.uk/  
get-involved](http://boothcentre.org.uk/get-involved)



Did you know?  
Our building at  
Pimblett Street

is owned by The Edward  
Holt Trust, who purchased  
this to provide a home  
for the Booth Centre.

This is provided  
at a nominal  
rent.



## For email updates



[boothcentre.org.uk/  
newsletter](http://boothcentre.org.uk/newsletter)

## Keep in touch



@BoothCentre

0161 835 2499

[info@boothcentre.org.uk](mailto:info@boothcentre.org.uk)

[boothcentre.org.uk](http://boothcentre.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. 1062674

Edward Holt House, Pimblett Street, Manchester, M3 1FU



Homeless Link  
Member



THANK YOU FOR READING!