



**emmaus**  
Village Carlton  
working together to end homelessness

# Annual Review 2020/2021



Working together to end homelessness

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“...we face a new reality, we are planning carefully to ensure our survival while looking outwards to see opportunities to increase our support for homeless people.

”



## Welcome to our latest annual review...



**Lucia Smith** Chair of Trustees

It gives me great pleasure to present this annual review. Emmaus Village Carlton is thriving and healthy. You will see in this review that we have been busy and been able to welcome new companions. We thank them for being willing to self-isolate when they first arrive, thus keeping us safe.

This extraordinary year has given us the opportunity to develop resilience, imagination and to recognise the commitment so many companions, staff, volunteers, and trustees show towards EVC. A big thank you to all concerned.



**Angela Foll** Chief Officer

This year has been dominated by the pandemic. We started the new financial year soon after we had opened on 17th June 2020 following an eleven-week closure, and we would see a further two closures throughout the year. In total during the financial year, 1st July 2020 to 30th June 2021, our shops were open to the public for 31 weeks and closed for 21 weeks.

The bistro was impacted throughout the entire year. Due to government restrictions, we were either closed to customers on site with only the offer of takeaways, or open with reduced table numbers due to social distancing or outside eating only.

The restrictions and closures all took a toll on our trading. However, it was important to maintain some routine and a sense of purpose and meaningful activity for the physical and mental health of the companions. We therefore approached the closures as an opportunity to refurbish and decorate throughout the site; activities we never normally have time to progress.

Apart from the fantastic work undertaken by staff and companions, it also gave some companions the opportunity to work in different areas and learn new skills.

Together as a community we kept everyone fit, healthy, supported, and safe. Thankfully, we only had one confirmed COVID case and they recovered well; a real testament to the spirit of the community.

Our customers and supporters remained incredibly loyal throughout, returning to site as soon as we reopened, and we were all delighted to see their return. The companions and the whole community thrive on the interaction with our customers, and we had all missed that.

Despite the inevitable financial impact of the pandemic, we minimised our losses by accessing national and local financial support, including furlough payments and business grants. Donations from our supporters were incredible during the year.

Although it has been an incredibly challenging year, we have lots to be proud of and I hope you enjoy reading about our amazing charity and the highlights of our year.



# About Emmaus

## Who are we?

Emmaus Village Carlton was set up in 2001 on the former St Margaret's approved school site. Occupying a large plot on the outskirts of Carlton, 10 miles west of Bedford, less than 20 miles from Milton Keynes and on the border of Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire. We offer a home, support and meaningful work for people who were formerly homeless or at risk of homelessness, known as companions.

## What we do

For many people who have found themselves homelessness, losing their self-esteem can be the most damaging part of their experience. Being on your own, with no support can be soul destroying, leaving you feeling worthless.

Finding a way out of that situation isn't easy, particularly when the only options are temporary fixes, a bed for the night with little to occupy your days or restore your self-worth.

Emmaus is different. We don't just give people a bed for the night; we provide a home for as long as someone wants or needs it, meaningful work, and a sense of belonging.

Emmaus gives people the time and support to deal with any issues they might have, restore a sense of purpose, confidence, and self-esteem through work, and, where possible, re-establish relationships with loved ones.



# Highlights 2020/2021

## Companions

Average length of stay for those companions that have left during the year

**263 days**

**14** Planned / Unplanned positive move on's



**216**

Counselling sessions offered



## Solidarity

Solidarity is central to the Emmaus ethos. This is when our companions (and staff and volunteers) 'pay it forward' by helping other people in need.



A lot of our Solidarity activities were paused due to the pandemic but we still donated:

**£13,893**



**£10,512**

Value of goods donated to a range of organisations

## Rucksack stomps:

A group of companion volunteers in Northampton and Wellingborough town centres every week, offering help to those sleeping rough.

Volunteer hours

**262**



Individuals who were offered help

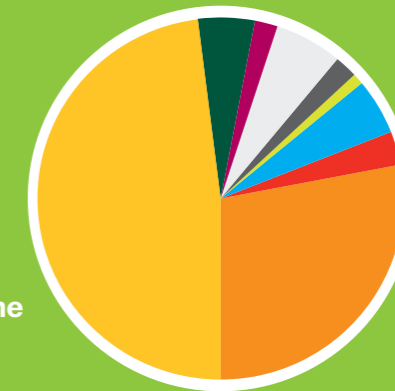
**1,085**



## Trading



Our Trading Income for 2020/21 was greatly reduced in comparison to previous years because of the pandemic. However, we have been supported with additional receipts through the Government Job Retention Scheme Payments (£56.2k), Local Government Grants (£33.1k) and generous donations (£65.8k)



- Trading
- Recycling
- Renewable Heat Incentive
- Donations
- Rental Income
- Interest
- Job Retention Scheme
- Grants
- Housing Benefit

## Volunteering



Many of our volunteers could not come to site during site closures.

**34**

Volunteers had returned by the end of the reporting year

The amount of volunteer hours per week they offered was

**160**

## Environment

\*based on trading days

Reduced our costs on waste by

**14%**

Recycling increased by

**87%**

Reduced non-recyclable waste by

**6%**



## Marketing



Increase in Emmaus Village Carlton web page views

**46%**



Increase in social media impressions

**12%**



# More highlights... & future plans

## Capital improvements

- Installed a new Electronic Point of Sale system
- Completed the upgrade of our CCTV across the site
- Decorated and replaced tables and chairs in companions' dining room
- Refurbished companions' kitchen to commercial standard



## Refurbishment

During lockdowns we took the opportunity to decorate and refurbish the site.

## Keeping in touch

Communication was incredibly important during periods of lockdown. Questionnaires were completed by staff, companions, and volunteers to seek feedback on how we communicated during the pandemic. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive by those that completed the questionnaire:

- 100% felt the amount of communication was about right
- 100% of those staff furloughed, still felt an important member of the team.
- 100% of companions felt safe and supported during lockdown

## Appreciation

We received a Certificate of Appreciation from our Patron Helen Nellis, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire.



## Strategy

- Developed our Strategic Plan 2021–2026: Our Mission: To grow our community for people who are homeless and to provide hope, opportunity, and solidarity to those in need.
- Developed our Marketing Strategy 2021–2026

## Trustees

We said goodbye to Maria Fordham and welcomed Lucy Dryburgh to the board:

Lucia Smith, Chair of Trustees, James Stewart, Treasurer, Dean Bourke, Martin Clitheroe, Ian Kavanagh, John Lockley, and Alistair Tusting. Roger Wansborough as Company Secretary. They all bring their knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm.

The pandemic still looms and continues to bring challenges and uncertainties for the future. However, the virus is not going anywhere soon, and we will have to learn to live with it, so we will continue to adapt and remain focused on the central reason why we exist; for our companions.

There is much to be done in our social enterprise, making full use of our new Electronic Point of Sales system by introducing Gift Aid, a loyalty card, linking our developing database for more targeted marketing, an extension of our online sales and ongoing site improvements including the refurbishment of The Chapel.

Our mission in the 2021 – 2026 strategic plan, is to grow our community for people who are homeless and to provide hope, opportunity, and solidarity to those in need. Central to this is providing support to

more people in need, and to extend our move-on support including, potentially, opportunities beyond the site at Village Carlton.

As the Chair of Bedford Homeless Partnership, our Chief Officer, will be working with Bedford Borough Council and partner organisations to develop a long-term strategy to reduce and hopefully end, rough sleeping in Bedford.

Homelessness is devastating, dangerous and isolating. The 'Everyone In' scheme introduced in response to the pandemic, demonstrated what can be achieved. It would be morally wrong to return to the levels of rough sleeping seen in the UK before the pandemic. We must continue to work together with all partners, to work towards ending homelessness in the UK.

## Thank you...

...to all the organisations and individuals that have generously donated to us during the year, including, Argos, Bedford Borough Council, Bedford Golf Club, Fourth Precept Limited, John Lewis, Northwick Trust, Serco Foundation, and St Andrew's Church Bedford.

And to all our hardworking, and committed community of companions, staff, volunteers and trustees, our patrons, partner organisations, and of course our customers. Your valuable and loyal contribution, however small, has enabled us to make a real and positive difference to people who were formerly homeless.

We could not do it without ALL of you.



# Our impact

## Improving people's lives

### Karl's story

Before I came to Emmaus, my life wasn't good. My childhood was difficult. I lived with my nan, but she died when I was 11 so I went into care. I spent some time at boarding school and went back to my mum for a while, but it was all really patchy. At various points I had nowhere to go and lived on the streets.

Fighting, drinking and drugs were my life then and I was in and out of prison. There were good bits: I'd get a job and things would go well, but then I'd get in trouble again, and lose it.

I finally decided in 2012 that I'd had enough of prison, and in spite of everything, I've not been back since.

When I look back, I know I hung around with the wrong crowds, drinking and taking drugs.

I eventually went to the Winter Night Shelter Milton Keynes, and this made being on the streets more bearable, because of the help and support they give. I moved to Cranfield, but there were still problems until neighbours there told me about Emmaus Village Carlton and referred me.

Now, I feel I have a lot going for me. I have a son, who is 20, and I am trying to keep contact with him and my mum.

Emmaus has made me reflect on my life and what I want now that I've turned 40. I feel much more positive. It's not perfect trying to live in a community, but I'm doing courses with Aspire called 'Running your own Business', and have a college place, doing Painting and Decorating Level 1 Diploma.



*I recently completed a 'Giving Back' sponsored walk, raising £700 for the Winter Night Shelter Milton Keynes. The walk was my way of saying "thank you" to the charity.*

I recently completed a 'Giving Back' sponsored walk, raising £700 for the Winter Night Shelter Milton Keynes. The walk was my way of saying "thank you" to the charity. They were there for me when I needed them. I'm planning another sponsored walk, this time to raise money for Emmaus Village Carlton.

Looking ahead, I would like to have my own Painting and Decorating business.



*Coming to Emmaus has opened up my mind again. It's given me a chance to refocus. I can see clearly and I'm looking forward to the next chapter.*

### TJ's story

I was homeless but now thanks to Emmaus Village Carlton, my life's back on track.

A few years ago, my relationship broke down and I had to move out of our home. I'm originally from another country, so I had no relatives around to help me and I didn't have many friends.

I ended up homeless and living on the streets of Northampton. With no address, I quickly lost my job as a builder too. It all just crumbled away.

I was rough sleeping for over two years; it wasn't easy. It was dangerous and I saw a lot of horrible things. It affected me a lot and eventually it got to the point that I was suicidal.

One thing led to another, and I started misusing drugs and got into trouble with the police. For me, and I think for many homeless people, using drugs was a way to seek some comfort and block everything out.

I sometimes managed to find a sofa to sleep on in someone's house, but that came with a price. The people there were often involved in drugs, so you had to go out and work for them, in exchange for the roof over your head.

One day back in November 2020, I met some guys from the Emmaus Village Carlton 'Rucksack Stomp' team, who visit Northampton every week to bring supplies and offer advice to rough sleepers. They're companions who've been homeless themselves, so they know what it's like. They offered to help me apply to get a place here and soon afterwards I moved in.

I couldn't have asked for any place better than Emmaus. I've got my own room and importantly I feel safe here. The team supported me through my drug addiction; I've worked hard and now I'm proud to say that I'm completely clean. It's good that we have a strict ban on illegal drugs here and we get randomly drug tested. It's also helpful that Emmaus Village Carlton is in the countryside, away from city living.

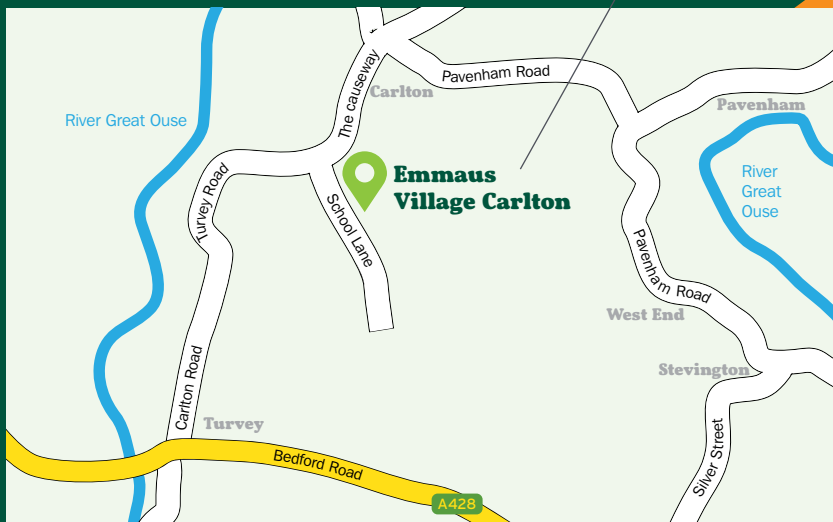
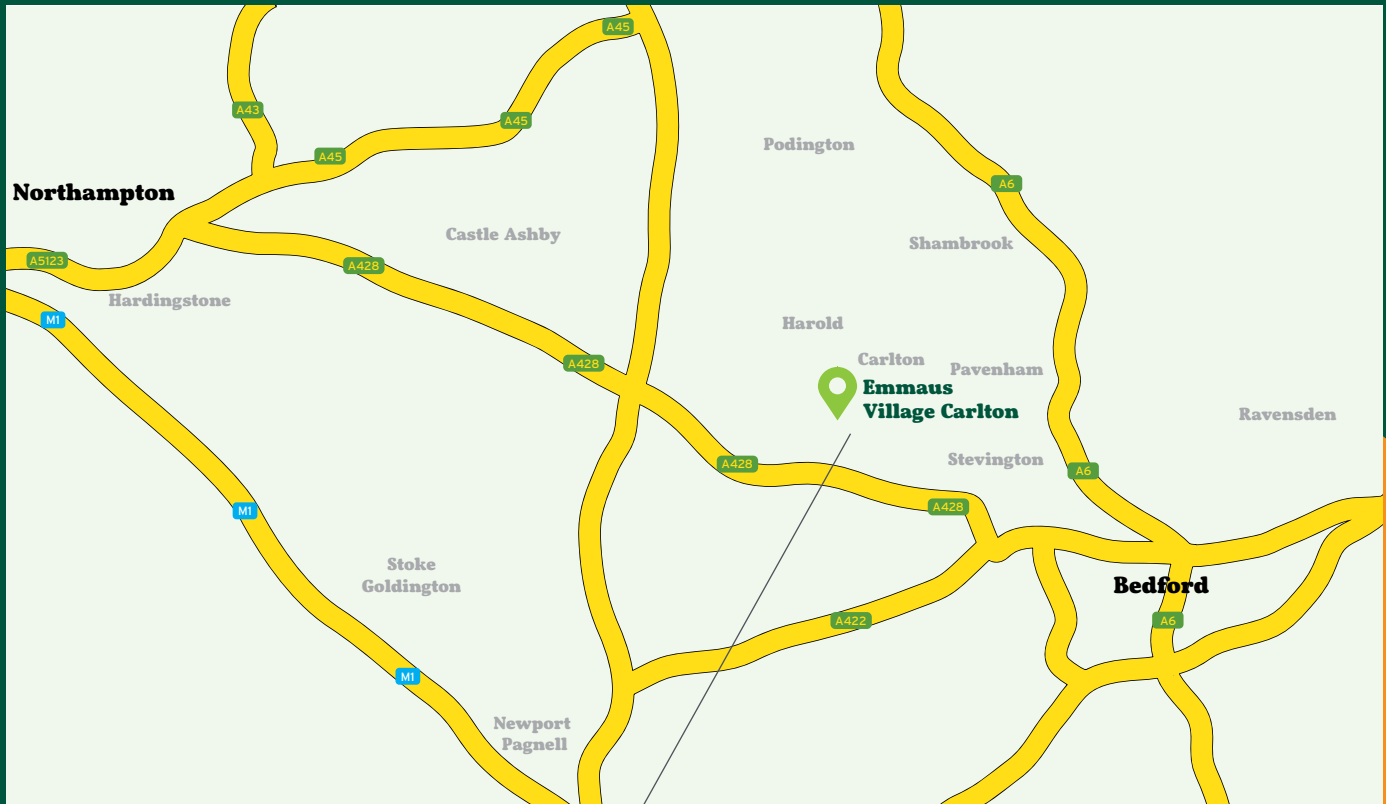
The work routine helps me keep busy, which is good. I like people so I enjoy serving customers in our shops and bistro, but I'm happy doing anything really.

Emmaus has offered me many training opportunities and I've pretty much said yes to everything. I've done a PAT testing course and I've got my forklift truck licence, food handling and allergens certificates and a warehousing qualification.

Every week I volunteer with the Rucksack Stomp team; we go out to Northampton and Wellingborough to help rough sleepers. That's my way of giving something back, for all the help I've received.

Looking to the future, when I'm ready I'd like to get a job and my own place. I want to go back into the building and construction trade, but now I also have new skills to fall back on too.

Coming to Emmaus has opened up my mind again. It's given me a chance to refocus. I can see clearly and I'm looking forward to the next chapter – but for now this is home, until I'm ready to fly.



### Our Home Store & Bistro opening times:

Wednesday – Saturday: 9.30am – 4.30pm | Sunday: 10am – 4.00pm.

### How to find us

**By Car:** From Bedford take the A428 towards Northampton. When you get to the village of Turvey take a right just after the Village Hall on to Carlton Road then take the first left and follow this road until to get to School Lane where you will see a signpost for Emmaus, follow the lane all the way to the top.

If you are travelling from Northampton direction when you arrive in to Turvey take a left before zebra crossing on to Carlton Road then take a right and follow this road until to get to School Lane, where you will see a signpost for Emmaus, follow the lane all the way to the top.

**Public transport:** Buses run from Rushden and Bedford for timetables see the Grant Palmer website, bus route 25 stops in the village of Carlton and you would need to walk ½ mile along Turvey Road to get to School Lane from the bus stop. There are no buses on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

### Emmaus Village Carlton

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Bedfordshire,  
MK43 7LQ

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