

SOUTH LONDON YMCA

.....

# OUR ANNUAL REPORT

.....

**ANNUAL REPORT 2013**

THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES IN THE WORDS  
OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED THEM.

.....

# WHO ARE WE?

.....

South London YMCA offers a wide range of supported housing services to 480 vulnerable, homeless people in the London Boroughs of Croydon and Lambeth, and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

We also offer mentoring and volunteering opportunities across all three boroughs to a further 300 people. Our vision is to make a lasting difference to lives and communities through the provision of excellent housing and community services.

South London YMCA was formed in 2005 by the merger of Croydon YMCA and the YMCA of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. Earls Court YMCA joined us in 2013. We have a long history of work in South London – Croydon YMCA was established in 1861.

#### **A LOT MORE THAN HOUSING**

Nearly all the homeless, vulnerable and socially excluded people we work with need support, advice and guidance over and above their basic housing needs.

We provide supported housing and support into employment or training. We also deliver a broad range of services to prevent homelessness and social exclusion for those at risk in the communities we serve.

We also meet the health needs of our customers. This includes support to recover from drug or alcohol addictions, or a period of mental health. We offer advice and support on diet and healthy living.

#### **THE YMCA IN ENGLAND**

The national body YMCA England, supports, represents and develops the work of the 100-plus YMCAs across the country, which in turn provide services to over a million people every year. Each YMCA is autonomously managed and works to meet the specific needs in their local community.

#### **THE YMCA WORLDWIDE**

The YMCA works in over 120 countries and has over 160 years' experience of working for social change. It is the oldest voluntary organisation in the world. Although it remains a Christian organisation, the YMCA aims to work with all sections of the community irrespective of religious, racial, gender or cultural background.

.....

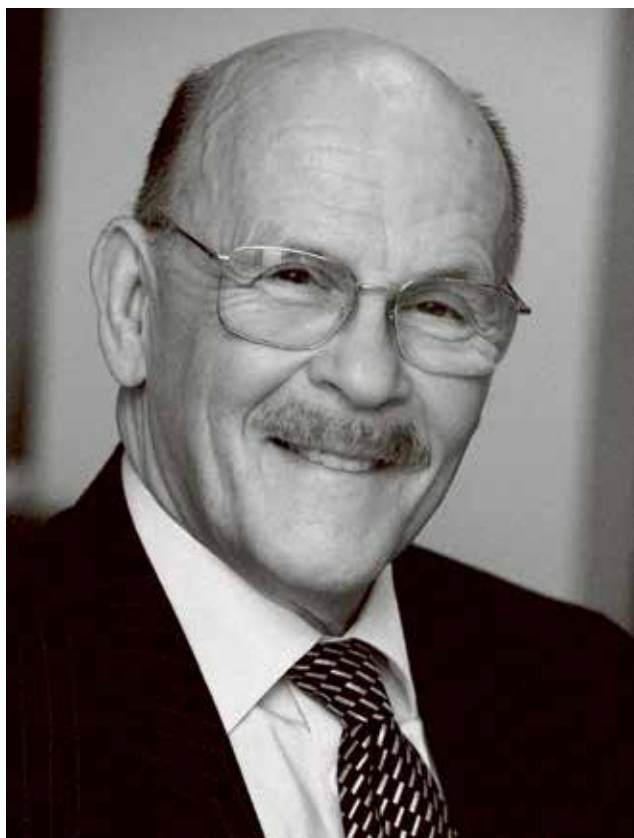
## BUT ABOVE ALL WE ARE PEOPLE, LIVING AND WORKING TOGETHER. IN THIS REPORT WE HEAR FROM THEM.

.....

Looking back over the last 12 months, the consistent theme was one of change. Huge changes continue to impact on the people and communities we serve, with a great deal of uncertainty about the future. Our supported housing customers are increasingly being sanctioned following welfare reform changes; they also face more challenges than ever when moving on to private rented sector accommodation: reports published this year by Homeless Link and Crisis suggest that less than 5% of private rented accommodation is available and affordable for young people on a low income. Major increases in rent, energy and food prices conspire to make positive moves forward more complex than ever.

All these factors mean that high quality accommodation with effective support from well-trained staff is more important than ever, and that homelessness prevention through our mentoring and community programmes is increasingly important. This year has seen us break ground on our final redevelopment, a replacement for our Knights Millennium Foyer service in Upper Norwood. When it opens in 2015, the new South London Millennium Centre on Sylvan Hill will provide 80 units of purpose-built, self-contained accommodation with communal spaces for training, workshops and events.

In 2013 we also launched our Community Offer: a promise to the communities and people we serve to provide more services to help people sustain their tenancies; to prevent homelessness for those at risk, and a helping hand into independent accommodation and work. One personal highlight for me was meeting our new Trainees and Apprentices: the latter are 6 new employees who all have personal experience of homelessness. This sustainable employment provides a real future, a career for these new colleagues and it inspires



our current residents. This year has also seen the growth of our Croydon Counselling Service and the launch of our Horizons Mentoring Programme.

None of this would be possible without the hard work and dedication of all our staff, volunteers and Board members; I would like to take this opportunity to pass on my thanks for everything we have achieved together this year. Our customer testimonials on our new video and blogs have also helped to demonstrate the very real difference that everyone makes. I would also like to extend my thanks to all of our funders and supporters of our work: it would not be possible without you.

Finally, we are delighted that Earls Court YMCA joined us this year. Their 24 bed specialist young people's service in Kensington and Chelsea is already well established and highly respected locally. We look forward to working with the local community and key local partners to develop more YMCA services in the area.

As the economy slowly starts to improve, our focus for the next year is to continue to grow and provide more opportunities to support our customers to reach their full potential and become active citizens in south London communities.

.....

# OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS, TOGETHER WITH OUR CUSTOMERS, HAVE BEEN CONTINUING TO DO GREAT WORK IN THE FACE OF INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

.....

**DAVID FITZE**  
CHAIRMAN

**PRESIDENT**

LORD PETER BOWNESS

**BOARD MEMBERS**

- DAVID FITZE – CHAIRMAN
- DAVID FORD
- RICHARD HOWGEGO
- ALLAN HUDSON
- HILARY KNIGHT
- SHARON LEWIS
- ANDREW LOWE
- DAVID SHRIMPTON
- VISAKHA SRI CHANDRASEKERA
- PHILIPPA THOMAS
- TONY TUCKER
- SUZY TWERDOCHLIB

.....

**CONTENTS**

- 04 – BRIEF INTERVENTION SOLUTION FOCUSED THERAPY
- 06 – VOLUNTEER THERAPISTS
- 07 – APPRENTICE SUPPORT WORKER SCHEME
- 07 – TRAINEE SUPPORT WORKER SCHEME
- 08 – COMMUNITY HOSTS
- 10 – HORIZONS PROJECT
- 12 – OTHER NEWS
- 14 – WHAT WE DO AND WHERE
- 15 – KEY FIGURES

.....

.....  
**EACH TIME I'VE LEFT  
THE COUNSELLING, I LEFT  
HAPPY RATHER THAN SAD.**  
.....

ONE TIME, I WAS FEELING  
REALLY LOW AND ON THE  
WAY TO COUNSELLING I  
WAS TEMPTED TO HAVE A  
DRINK. BUT AFTER TALKING  
ABOUT MY FEELINGS AND  
BEHAVIOUR, THAT IDEA  
LEFT MY MIND COMPLETELY.  
.....

IT'S HELPED ME REALISE  
WHY I DID THINGS, WHY I  
DRINK, AND WHAT I CAN DO  
TO STOP MYSELF DRINKING.  
.....

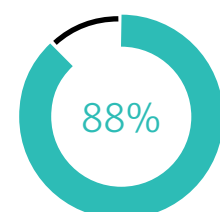
**MICHAEL**  
RESIDENT OF ELIZABETH HOUSE,  
JANUARY 2013

Some of our customers have entrenched issues affecting their lives, self-esteem and motivation to make changes. To support them to make positive and lasting changes, we have trained all staff in 'Brief Intervention Solution Focused Therapy'.

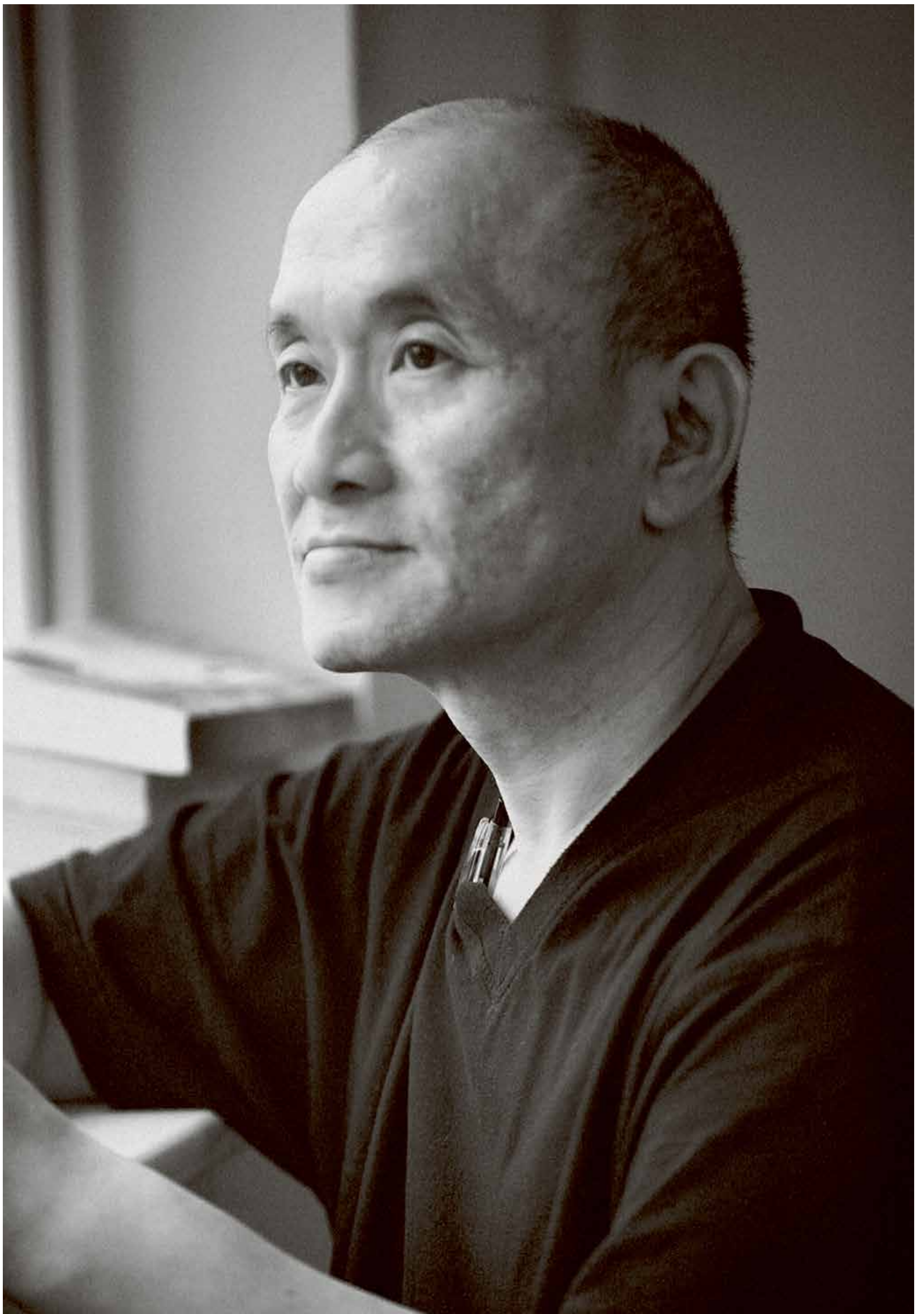
This combination of motivational interviewing and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy helps customers struggling with addiction and other issues identify behaviours that are stopping them achieving their goals and begin to change.

For Michael, who has had a drink problem since he was 14, been in and out of rehab, and lost his job and family along the way, the help has proved invaluable.

.....  
PERCENTAGE OF NEW CUSTOMERS  
RECEIVING 'BRIEF INTERVENTION SOLUTION  
FOCUSED THERAPY IN 2013 (2012- 10%)



SOURCE: SLYMCA DATABASE  
.....



Talking therapies can be a big help for people with mental health or drug and alcohol issues, but there are often long waits for treatment. To get around this, we have recruited volunteer psychotherapists who, as part of their training, offer free therapy to any of our customers who feel they need it.

Brian, who lives at Keystone House, is seeing major changes thanks to the weekly sessions.

.....

I'VE SPENT A LOT OF MY LIFE  
HATING MY MUM AND MY DAD,  
AND CARRYING ALL THAT HATRED  
HAS REALLY AFFECTED ME.  
I'VE HAD BAD DEPRESSION ALL  
MY LIFE, BUT THE COUNSELLING  
HAS HELPED ME TO GET IN TOUCH  
WITH THE ANGER.

.....

**I'VE STARTED TO FEEL LIKE  
A WEIGHT'S BEEN LIFTED OFF  
ME. NOW I CAN CONTROL MY  
FEELINGS MORE RATHER THAN  
BEING CONTROLLED BY THEM.**

.....

**BRIAN**  
RESIDENT OF KEYSTONE HOUSE,  
JANUARY 2013

APPRENTICE SUPPORT WORKER SCHEME  
**A REAL JOB WITH REAL PROSPECTS**

Edwin's life has changed dramatically since South London YMCA took him on as an Apprentice Support Worker. He's busy every day, helping customers with things like cooking, cleaning, budgeting, and making appointments with the GP or dentist – skills that help them on their journey towards independent living.

“Finding work had been a nightmare before this,” says the 22 year old, who lives at South London YMCA's Knights Millennium Foyer. “I'd done one training course after another, but none of them seemed to lead anywhere, and I was feeling disappointed and frustrated. I didn't know where to turn.”

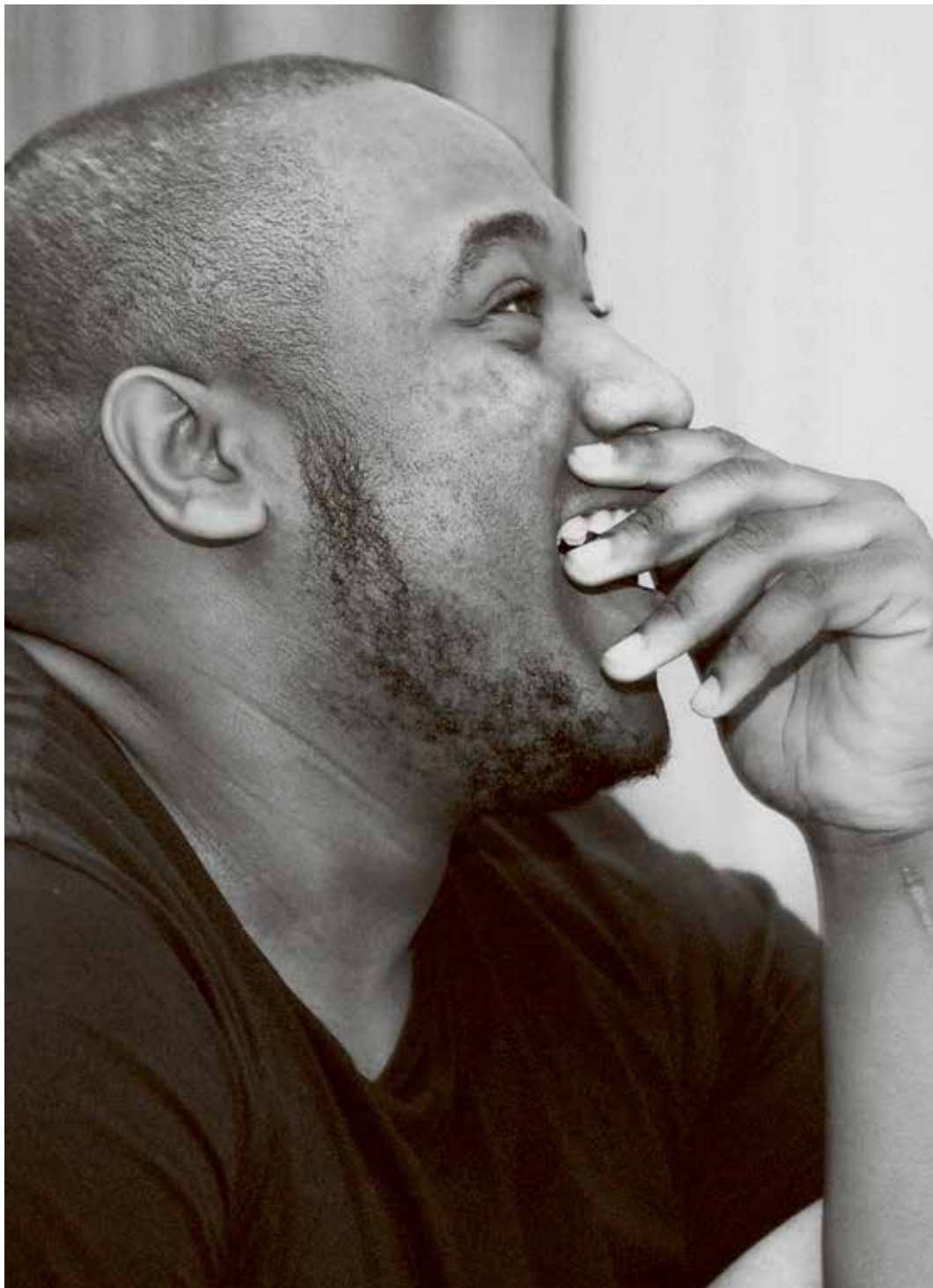
South London YMCA staff suggested Edwin apply for our Apprentice Support Worker Scheme, which offers a decent wage, the chance to get a marketable qualification, and the possibility of a permanent job after 12 months.

.....

**I'M GOING TO BROADEN MY HORIZONS AND LEARN MORE ABOUT AN AREA I'M INTERESTED IN. I KNOW IT'S DOWN TO ME AND I'LL NEED TO WORK HARD, AND I APPRECIATE THAT SOUTH LONDON YMCA ARE WILLING TO TAKE THIS RISK ON ME.**

.....

Apprentices are recruited London - wide via our Customer Employment Partnership, which encompasses homelessness agencies across the capital. At the same time as delivering practical support to our customers, apprentices study for a level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care and, if all goes well, are encouraged to apply for a permanent post at the end of the apprenticeship. A 'buddy', an experienced support worker, is on hand to coach and mentor them throughout.



TRAINEE SUPPORT WORKER SCHEME  
**A NEW HOPE FOR JOB SEEKERS**

We want to attract the best people to work with us, but we also want to help people struggling to find employment. Our new Trainee Support Worker Scheme targets recent graduates, ex-military staff and people who live in the communities where we work. Trainees learn on the job, getting involved in things like support planning, risk assessment and work with outside agencies, as well as studying for a level three Diploma in Housing.

“I was worried I wouldn't find a job in social care because I didn't have a qualification in that area and every job needed one,” says 24 year old trainee and Law graduate Katie. “When I saw this job I'd been unemployed five months and was starting to lose confidence.”

After six months trainees can apply for a permanent job.

.....

**I'VE MET REALLY NICE PEOPLE HERE WHO HAVE PUT ME AT EASE AND MADE ME FEEL LIKE I'M WORTH INVESTING IN. THEY SEEM REALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT THEY'RE DOING, WHICH HAS MADE ME WANT TO DO THIS JOB EVEN MORE. I HOPE I'LL BE ABLE TO STAY.**

.....

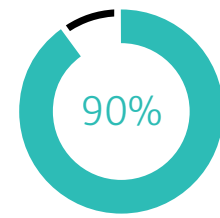
Ava and her mum just weren't getting on. Things got so bad that by the time she was 16, Ava moved out: "We were having so many arguments, I couldn't stay," she says.

There were problems at school too. "Some of the girls were ganging up on me and I was being bullied. Coming from that to a hostile environment at home was horrible. I was depressed and couldn't see a way out."

But instead of facing homelessness and having to fend for herself, Ava was referred to the South London YMCA Community Host Scheme, which offers 16 and 17 year olds in Lambeth who can't stay at home a safe place to live with carefully selected and trained hosts.

Ava has just started an Access course and is applying to University – she wants to become a barrister.

PERCENTAGE OF 16-25 YEAR OLD CUSTOMERS WHO GAINED OR IMPROVED CONTACT WITH EXTERNAL SUPPORT NETWORKS



SOURCE: SLYMCA DATABASE

MARGUERITA, MY HOST, IS A LOVELY LADY. SHE'S VERY UNDERSTANDING, CALM AND CARING. SHE DOESN'T JUST GIVE ME A ROOM, SHE MAKES ME FEEL LIKE FAMILY.

**SHE'S ANOTHER MUM TO ME.**

**AVA**  
LIVING WITH COMMUNITY HOSTS SINCE  
JANUARY 2013







.....  
**I WAS KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL BECAUSE I HAD A KNIFE ON ME. I LIKE TALKING TO LAUREN BECAUSE SHE HELPS ME WITH THINGS I FIND DIFFICULT. SHE GAVE ME A BOOK BECAUSE I COULDN'T READ WELL.**  
.....

**AMARIE**  
HORIZONS PROJECT MENTEE

Our ambitious Horizons project matches black teenage boys from troubled backgrounds in Croydon and Lambeth with volunteer mentors who act as role models, helping the young men find their way in the world.

Amarie, a 15 year old from the Brixton area, has been meeting 30 year old barrister Lauren every fortnight for four months. They do things like going to the cinema, go-karting and having something to eat together.

A former swimming teacher, Lauren has also taught Amarie how to swim. "I never went swimming before," says Amarie. "But now I can do two lengths on my own."

Launched in March, the initiative aims in its first year to match over 170 boys aged 10 to 16 with a mentor who will meet with them regularly over twelve months, offering support, guidance and encouragement.

Horizons is funded by the GLA, the Walcot Foundation and the John Cowan Foundation. It is run in partnership with the Association for Black Engineers and anti-gang initiative Lives not Knives.

.....  
**AS I'VE GOT TO KNOW AMARIE WE TALK ABOUT DEEPER THINGS, LIKE HIS FEELINGS ABOUT HIS HOME LIFE AND ANYTHING THAT'S TROUBLING HIM. IT'S TAKEN TIME TO BUILD HIS TRUST.**  
.....

**LAUREN**  
AMARIE'S MENTOR



WHAT ELSE HAVE WE BEEN DOING THIS YEAR?



# LIFE SKILLS CLASSES HELP CUSTOMERS SUPPORT EACH OTHER

There is nothing like helping someone else to boost your own confidence, which is why our new Life Skills programme includes workshops run by our customers as well as sessions led by volunteers, staff and partner agencies.

Classes and workshops are offered at Ingram House and Alexandra House and cover a huge range of skills from cooking, mediation and anger management, to training for budding entrepreneurs, sexual health advice and help with managing your tenancy.

As well as boosting the self-esteem of customers who help deliver it, this programme combats isolation, which can be a major problem for the people we work with.

# BRINGING JOBS TO OUR CUSTOMERS

Our customers sometimes lack the skills and confidence needed to seek out work without help, so in April we organised our first careers fair. The well attended event at Alexandra House, our hostel for 80 people moving towards independent living, included CV workshops, live job searches and mock interviews. The careers fair was delivered by volunteers from Close Brothers Asset Management and other City firms under the banner of the 'Princeton Alumni'.

# THEATRE SKILLS AND DEBATES AT CUSTOMER CONFERENCE

Our first ever Customer Conference in June was a lively affair which celebrated customer achievements and encouraged creativity and discussion. Over 50 people took part in workshops including debating skills, entrepreneurship, and improvisation and theatre skills. A question and answer session involving Board members (including a former customer) and our CEO raised thought provoking discussion. No less engaging was a performance by Chicken Shed Theatre Company which took a 'no-holds-barred' look at how young people can get caught up in gang crime.



# PRAGUE TRIP INSPIRES YOUNG LEADERS

'Life changing' is how one of eleven young customers who represented us at the YMCA International Festival in Prague described a week in the Czech capital.

For most it was their first time outside the UK, and participants were visibly thrilled to be taking part in leadership training and other workshops alongside peers from around the world. A walking tour and river cruise introduced the visitors from South London to Prague's rich history.

Since returning, three members of the group have completed leadership training, one has been inspired to start a degree in Youth and Community Work at the YMCA George Williams College in London, and another is applying to study at YMCA University in Massachusetts.



# WORK STARTS ON NEW FOYER

Building work has started on a high specification replacement for our Knights Millennium Foyer, home to 80 young single homeless people aged 16 to 25. The new foyer is being built alongside the old one, which will then be demolished when the new building is ready.

The same number of young people will be housed, but accommodation in the new South London Millennium Centre will be self contained, with private bathrooms and kitchens. The new building also includes training facilities to help customers move towards independent living, and these will be

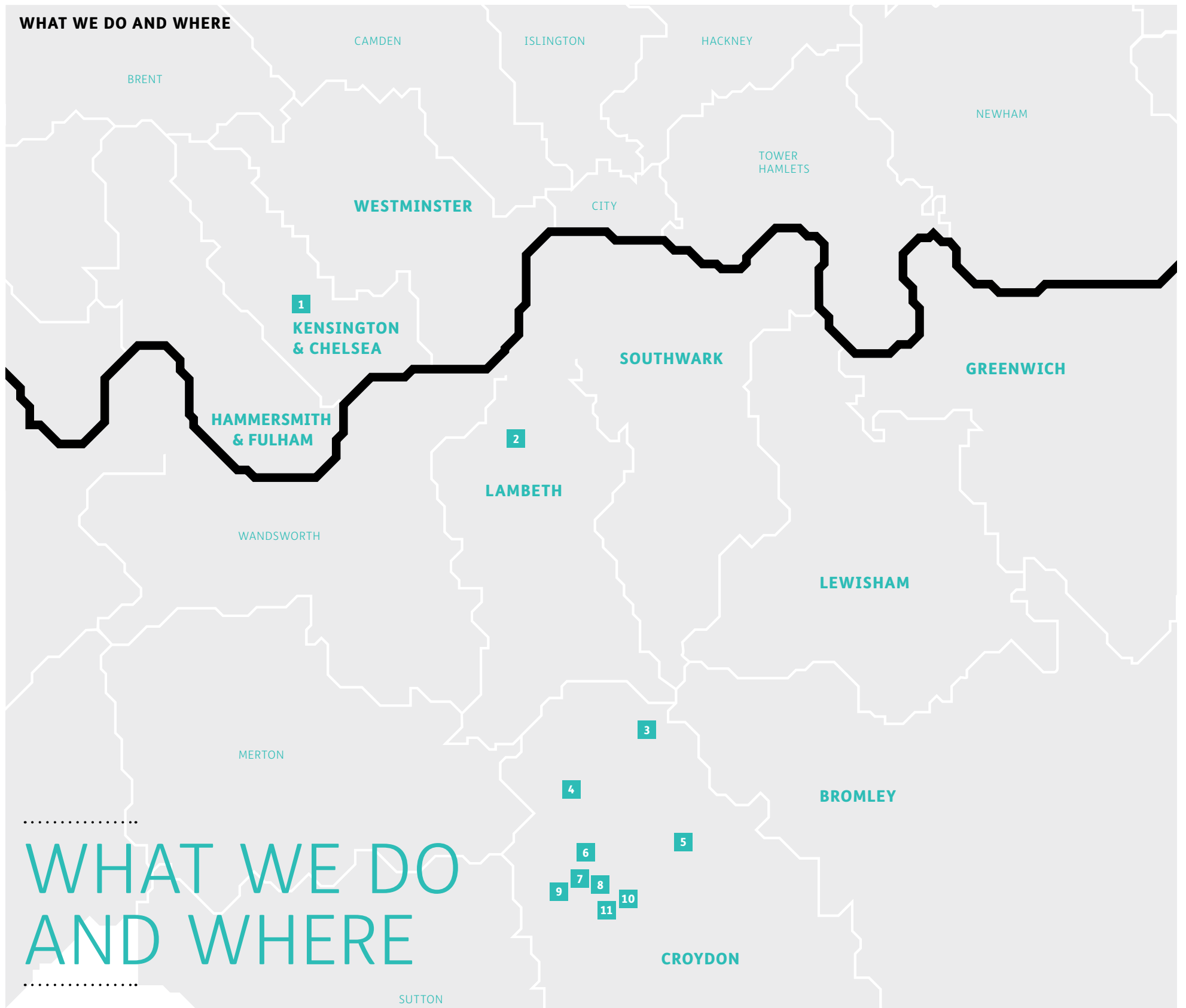
open to local people. The project will be funded in part by the sale of 48 private flats to be built on the site of the existing foyer.



## EARLS COURT YMCA JOINS THE FAMILY

Earls Court YMCA has become a wholly owned subsidiary of South London YMCA to help secure its long term future. Earls Court YMCA operates a service on West Cromwell Road, providing housing and support for 24 vulnerable young people. It also runs a mentoring scheme in partnership with charitable trust Campden Charities.

## WHAT WE DO AND WHERE



# WHAT WE DO AND WHERE

**1 EARLS COURT YMCA**  
BURTON-WHITE HOUSE, 10-12 WEST CROMWELL ROAD SW5 9QJ  
ECYMCA is a wholly owned subsidiary of SLYMCA. Burton-White House provides 24 bed spaces for homeless young people.

**2 KING GEORGE'S HOUSE**  
40 STOCKWELL ROAD, LAMBETH SW9 9ES  
Our multi-purpose centre comprising: 87 bed spaces for single homeless young people, plus 21 move on flats for young people in training, education or employment. The site is also home to our 7 bed Teenage Parents' Service, and our high quality conference facilities for use by community and voluntary organisations. The Community Host Scheme is also run from the Stockwell site.

**3 KNIGHTS MILLENNIUM FOYER**  
8 SYLVAN HILL, CRYSTAL PALACE SE19 2QF  
Provides accommodation for 80 young single homeless people aged 16-25. 50 customers receive support, and 30 bed spaces are for customers in 'step down' and their only support is around move on. The Foyer will be rebuilt to a high specification on the same site by 2015.

**4 CROCUS HOUSE**  
PO BOX 2708, THORNTON HEATH CR7 8WP  
Mental health step down service comprising five flats for people with long term mental health issues.

**5 KEYSTONE HOUSE**  
9 AKABUSI CLOSE, CROYDON CR0 6YL  
Abstinence based 10 bed hostel providing a therapeutic programme for people with problematic drug and alcohol use. The service provides group work and counselling.

**6 EMILY HOUSE**  
86 ST SAVIOUR'S ROAD, CROYDON CR0 2XB  
Mental health step down service for 9 people with long term mental health issues comprising studios and 2 bed shared flats.

**7 EVA HOUSE**  
31-33 ST JAMES'S ROAD, CROYDON CR0 2DS  
Mental health step down service for 13 people with long term mental health issues comprising studios and 2 bed shared flats.

**8 ELIZABETH HOUSE**  
97 ST JAMES'S ROAD, CROYDON CR0 2UU  
Move on accommodation for customers who have completed the abstinence programme at Keystone House. Customers receive support from the staff team and there are 13 bed spaces with shared kitchens and bathrooms.

**9 INGRAM COURT**  
57-61 SUMNER ROAD, CROYDON CR0 3LN  
Supported accommodation for 44 young people aged 16-21 with a variety of support needs. The service is the first assessment centre for young people in Croydon, providing 10 bed spaces in the assessment centre, which are all en-suite with shared kitchen facilities. The remaining 34 bedspaces are made up of cluster flats for 2 or 3 people.

**10 PALMER HOUSE**  
105-107 LANSDOWNE ROAD, CROYDON CR0 2FL  
High support accommodation for 60 homeless people, including rough sleepers, comprising self-contained studios and 2 bed shared flats.

**11 ALEXANDRA HOUSE,**  
32 DINGWALL ROAD, CROYDON CR9 3LQ  
A medium support hostel for single homeless people of all ages providing 80 bed spaces, 50 of which are supported, and 30 which are non-supported for customers ready to live independently. Accommodation is a mixture of studio and 2 bed shared flats.

**12 CROYDON SECOND STAGE PROPERTIES SE19/CR2**  
3 general needs properties comprising 12 units of move on accommodation.

**13 CROYDON COUNSELLING SCHEME**  
This service is for customers (residential and non-residential) who are engaged within Keystone House's abstinence programme, those that have moved on to second stage accommodation in Elizabeth House, and customers (with or without a substance misuse issue) in other SLYMCA services. Counsellors are volunteers and members of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

**14 HORIZONS MENTORING PROJECT**  
This project provides mentors for young black boys aged 10-16 who are at risk of poor educational achievement and/or gang involvement. It is part of the Mayor's Mentoring Fund and delivered in conjunction with the Association for Black Engineers (AFBE) and Lives Not Knives (LNK).

# OUR RECORD IN 2013

## LETTINGS

Including re-lets and new units

Alexandra House	118
Crocus House	1
Croydon Second Stage	14
Eva House	6
Emily House	6
Ingram Court	73
Keystone House	29
Keystone 2nd Stage	19
KMF	93
King George's House	75
Lambeth Second Stage & Young Offenders	22
Teenage Parents' Service	10
Community Host Service	9
Palmer House	61
<b>TOTAL LETTINGS</b>	<b>536</b>

## MOVING PEOPLE ON

Planned moves per quarter

1st quarter	79.6%
2nd quarter	84.6%
3rd quarter	64.9%
4th quarter	84.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78.3%</b>

## REPAIRS

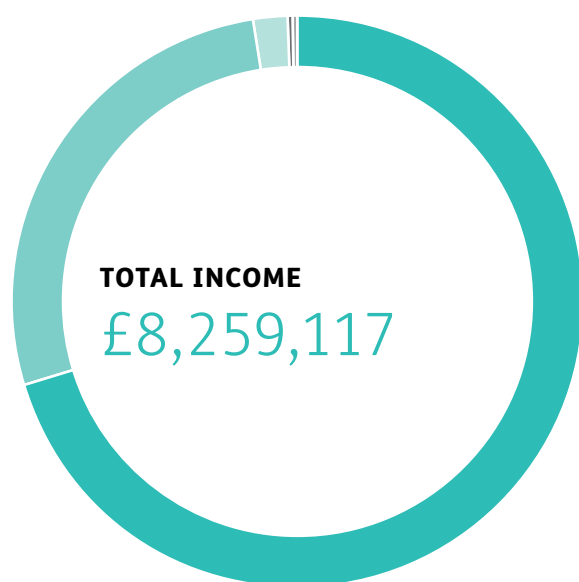
Number of repairs	2207
% completed in target time	85.8%

## NEW UNITS COMING INTO MANAGEMENT

2012-13

Alexandra House	80
Ingram Court	44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124</b>

# MONEY IN AND OUT



INCOME		£
Letting Activities	5,815,798	
Housing Grants and Other Income	2,240,422	
Conferencing	168,447	
Other Donations and Grants	5,021	
Non Housing Property Income	17,310	
Interest received	12,179	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>8,259,117</b>	

**SURPLUS**  
£296,223



EXPENDITURE		£
Letting activities	7,382,114	
Conferencing	224,040	
Governance	96,353	
Other Expenditure	65,737	
Interest paid	194,710	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>7,962,954</b>	

# SOUTH LONDON YMCA

.....

## REGISTERED OFFICE:

King George's House  
40 Stockwell Road  
London SW9 9ES

.....


## HEAD OFFICE:

Marco Polo House  
3-5 Lansdowne Road  
Croydon CR9 1LL

T: 020 7101 9960

E: [enquiries@slymca.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@slymca.org.uk)

 [@slymca1](https://twitter.com/slymca1)

 [www.facebook.com/slymca](https://www.facebook.com/slymca)

.....

.....

## TO MAKE A DONATION:

Please follow the link  
on our website.

**Thank you for your support**

.....

[SLYMCA.ORG.UK](https://slymca.org.uk)