

Alabaré Newsletter

Spring 2022



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Offering people non-judgmental support in their time of need.

Challenges within the homeless sector since the pandemic have produced a landscape that continues to unfold.

The government's 'Everyone In Scheme' and the cap on landlord evictions provided much needed temporary relief and effectively reduced the number of people due a Local Authority duty of care.

What though is not evident from today's statistics, which are always retrospective in nature, is the true nature of day to day demand for homeless services from those on the brink of crisis.

Statistics that are increasing though, when looking at the reason for loss of home, is where either domestic violence (up 6.7%) or friends or family being unable to accommodate, is mentioned, (up 29.2%) year on year. A third of people facing homelessness last year, which totalled over 85,000

people, are those aged 25-34 years.*

We encourage you to visit the website and search 30 Years, 30 Voices to learn and listen to more on our clients stories.

Economic uncertainty, fuel poverty, family breakdown and mental health issues will continue to impact our domestic homeless demand. To help we have a pre-preventative support programme 'Somewhere To Go' which operates on a drop-in basis from Alabaré Place, that provides support to those seeking guidance on debt management, rent arrears, utility costs and benefit claims.

Undoubtedly, as the situation in Ukraine continues to sadly unfold we will receive referrals. In recent months we have housed several young unaccompanied children 16 - 24 years, who have fled Iraq and Iran with often harrowing stories to share. Your support has enabled us to support them as they

begin slowly to rebuild their lives, helping them get into college, learn English and adapt to a new way of living.

Within our team we have colleagues with friends and family in Eastern Europe while others have loved ones serving with the British Armed Forces in the Baltic States. We send everyone our thoughts and prayers.

Riverside Sanctuary - freephone 08082 803528

- Last year 7,871 support calls were made by our Riverside Sanctuary team*
- 83% of our clients are male and the average age is 42*
- 307 people received 2,401 hours of team support*
- The drop-in is available by appointment at The Sanctuary to the rear of Riverside House, 2 Watt Road SP2 7UD

*Alabaré Impact Report 2020/21

Mental health service goes from strength to strength

Our mental health and wellbeing service based at Riverside Sanctuary in Salisbury continues to develop its service, with key initiatives developing with other local agencies.

The Sanctuary provides a free mental health telephone support line and a drop-in centre offering immediate support for people with mental health need every evening from 16:00-23:00, seven days a week. Although we cover Wiltshire postcodes, we also support people beyond this by providing links to their local support teams.

A new service together called 'Access Mental Health' will link up with GP practices to ensure that people with mental health difficulties receive holistic, ongoing support in their communities. Wellbeing Practitioners and Senior Peer Support Workers 'walk alongside' those referred and connect them with local community support while continuing to provide ongoing support through our telephone service.

Our team are skilled in supporting people in emotional distress, and linking others to necessary support.

Please donate at www.alabare.co.uk/donate



Gibraltar Veterans Heritage Project

This May ten veteran staff and clients from across our services are heading to Gibraltar to be involved in a special heritage restoration project. Gibraltar has a place in the hearts of many who have served in the Armed Forces.

The team will help restore the historic Lord Airey's Battery at the top of the rock itself by way of a gift back to the community of this UK territory.

The collaborative effort involved in the

restoration work aims to build the confidence and morale of our veteran clients, which will help them as they move forward towards independence.

They will be working alongside the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, which will be overseen by Pete Jackson MBE who is a veteran and passionate advocate for the restoration of militaria on the rock.

The eight-day project will run alongside Alabaré's Race to the Sun cycle event, which completes in Gibraltar 22nd May.

Pete said "I am so happy to receive the support from Alabaré in the ongoing restoration of the Battery. This work is much needed to bring this artillery artefact back to a standard where it can receive future visitors. Without this kind of input, we would sadly face the loss of this unique piece of Gibraltar's military history".

Alabaré's Greening Group



The group continue to review and improve our charity approach to sustainability by reducing waste wherever possible, by implementing new recycling facilities at Riverside House, and a waste management for items from homes and services. Energy for Alabaré's larger properties is now from renewable energy sources, and sustainable energy providers are being considered across all services.

In the summer we worked with **Breamore Primary School** on an up-cycling fashion project, with transformed salvaged clothes creating a window display at our Salisbury shop in November.



Over 170 people supported The BIG Sleep at Salisbury Cathedral which included St Josephs, Stonehenge, Bishop Wordsworth and Sherborne Girls schools.

Alabaré Upcoming Events



The BIG Sleep, Gwrych Castle, N Wales

Go behind the scenes at the location of ITV's I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here! Become a fundraising high roller to take part in challenge activities to delight and entertain!!

The evening will be cold and harsh but also thought-provoking and humbling. On the night, you will hear from veterans who will share their experiences of homelessness and hear more about how your sponsorship money will have a positive impact on vulnerable veterans in Wales, so they may begin to rebuild their lives once more. Are you up for the challenge?

Date and Time:

Fri 22nd April 20:00 – 07:00

Location:

Gwrych Castle, Conwy LL22 8ET

Registration: £15.00

[Register - bigsleepcastle.co.uk](https://www.bigsleepcastle.co.uk)



The Marathon Walk Stonehenge

Join us on our rural marathon walk, taking in the world-famous sights of Stonehenge and Salisbury Cathedral as we trace a 26-mile route through the Wiltshire countryside.

This is a tough event over the rolling downs and steep valleys that lie between Salisbury and Stonehenge and back. At 26 miles, it provides an enormous challenge for walkers but represents a huge sense of achievement!

There is also a half marathon option available.

Date and Time:

Sat 21 May 06:30 – 14:30 (approx)

Register:

This event is coordinated by Discover Adventure - a local events team

Registration: From £29.00

[Info - alabare.co.uk](https://www.alabare.co.uk)



Chippenham Firewalk

The ultimate motivational fundraising evening. Triumph by walking barefoot over hot coals to end homelessness.

Are you brave enough? Would you like to build mental strength and have a huge sense of achievement, or like to build self-belief and prove to others how fearsome you are?

With a long history going back centuries around the world, isn't it time you experienced this ultimate test of courage?

Date and Time:

Sat 17 Sept 2022, 17:00 – 20:00

Location:

Hardenhuish School, Chippenham, SN14 6RJ

Registration: Age 16 years and over registration £15

[Info - chippenhamfirewalk.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.chippenhamfirewalk.eventbrite.co.uk)

The Atlantic Nomads Cross The Atlantic As World Record Holders

Following 40 days and 37 minutes at sea, the Atlantic Nomads completed the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge raising over £30,000 for Alabaré's Homes for Veterans during the race which commenced in December. The team also managed to land a **world record** as the fastest mixed trio.

Although the team, James Woolley, Tom Rose and Taylor Winyard are no strangers to adventure challenges, this was the ultimate test for them as they battled sleep deprivation, salt sores, physical extremes, sickness, as well as being left on their own to tackle the continuous challenges that the ocean and the isolation threw at them.



Facing incredibly stiff competition they maintained 10th position out of a total 36 teams. Unlike other crews, they had not set out to break any records, which they described as “the icing on the cake”. Taylor was also the first woman to cross the finish line this year.

Find out more about our events:
[alabare.co.uk](https://www.alabare.co.uk)



Update on the Veteran Self-Build Scheme as a new site is launched

The Plymouth Sterling House self-build which includes 19 flats and 6 houses has been making great progress since July last year despite material delays caused by the pandemic.

The build is developing and we hope to finish phase one of the build this year. Work on all the flats has commenced with block work being completed and steel structures now installed.

We have six veterans onsite. Since the build started all veterans onsite have been learning new skills, allowing them new career choices.

Supervisor Course with another two courses in the pipeline, which will allow them to progress into the construction industry of their choice.

Another has just been given an opportunity to learn tiling with a local builder and now aims to become fully qualified once the build is completed.

As we develop connections with other organisations, we are now looking at gardening and landscaping opportunities for two of the veterans who wish to go down a horticultural career route. All our veterans also have the opportunity to get involved with volunteer work across Plymouth.

The self-build is not just about bricks and cement; it includes building positive mental health and self-belief to practical skills and managing time and finances. The team also receive support with courses and help getting them into employment.

We are also excited to be a part of a new £100 million, five year housing scheme in Ludgershall Wiltshire, with housing developer Lovell and Stonewater a leading housing association. As part of the development, a new veteran self-build project will shortly get underway providing an opportunity for three veterans every year to build their own home. Each veteran will have the chance to learn new skills in the construction industry with a potential apprenticeship thereafter. It is a great opportunity with of course a place to live at the end of it.

Veteran Self-Build Scheme

- VSBS was borne from the Community Self-Build Agency which has completed 178 projects since 1980s
- In 2020 nine veterans moved into their own self-build home in Leominster, Herefordshire
- We work alongside housing associations and construction companies to provide structured support and training



***“Watching the veterans achieving new skills is fantastic. Some have already achieved one thing, being able to talk and trust people again while working on site.*”**

My job is extremely rewarding which drives me to make sure they succeed with the right support.”

Karl Arrowsmith - Project Manager

“This is a unique opportunity for me to learn new skills and to have a fresh start and to seek new challenges ahead.”

Adrian Self-Build Veteran

Watch veteran Adrian's story in full, along with many others at <https://bit.ly/3ChYn8D>



Creative Spirit

By Lisa Thomas

As a charity, our values lie at the heart of our work with clients, while our mission is to support people to find purpose, hope and meaning in their lives. One way we hope to achieve this is through our work in Creative Spirit.

Since introducing this to young people in Supported Housing we have found this way has been highly effective in adding to the wellbeing of colleagues and young people. The purpose of Creative Spirit is to extend this learning to other Alabaré projects. Lisa Thomas, Alabaré's Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator Lead, explains more about her role and how small touches have yielded bigger results as we work towards what is best for our residents.

"The way I see it, there are certain parts of the support role which need to be at a desk, but that is not always the best approach for residents. A desk can be intimidating and residents can clam up, and it may need a different kind of atmosphere to release them to share things they feel are sensitive.

"At Unity House, we received a donation of nail varnishes. There was a belief that one of the residents, who had Bi-Polar, was not taking her medication. I offered her some nail varnishes. I asked her which colours she would be using. We talked together as she tried out different colours and slowly, slowly, she explained that she was not taking her medication and was feeling very erratic. It was a critical step on her journey. Due to her opening up, it meant that we were able to arrange a multi-agency meeting and together we could take her support forward.

"I had another client at Unity House. His background was in catering. He was struggling with addiction to both alcohol and drugs, and he was not eating. I asked him if he would like to cook a fish pie. The client had not cooked fish before. We went food shopping together he chose three sorts of fish and made a fish pie for 18 residents. When he received text messages asking for seconds, his confidence grew enormously! He has now moved out with his girlfriend, who was also a resident, and they now have a baby and he is working for a local housing provider.

"As an alternative support session, I suggested to one resident that we go for a walk as she was struggling with her anger. She was encouraged to take her telephone so she could take photos. The walk took in nature, odd-shaped buildings and graffiti. This enabled her to feel in a safer place and able to disclose what was troubling her. It was an important step for her. Following that she made a collage for her bedroom. Going out enabled her to deal with her anger and gave her the confidence to deal with situations going forward. Being able to support clients with dealing with situations has had a positive effect on her journey ahead."

A desk can be intimidating and residents can clam up, and it may need a different kind of atmosphere to release them

Meetup with Sajid Javid



In February, Karen Langley from the Boots on the Ground team received an invitation to join 20 others at a ministerial Q&A at Bourne Hill to put a question to Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

Karen raised the issue of access to veterans aid and said, *"It is great money has been made available for Op Courage (a new NHS service for Armed Forces veterans suffering a mental health crisis). However, although the veterans we support require Op Courage we find they are unable to access it for several reasons, which include feeling unable to ask for help, talk to a stranger, get out of bed, low self-esteem or feeling unworthy for example. The Government need to look at how we can get the veterans to access the help that is out there, or the statistics reported will be false and we will end up losing the support for this already hard to reach group."*

Mr Javid thanked Karen for her work, agreed she had a valid point and invited her to contact his aides with more information. Well done Karen.

New Senior Chaplain joins Alabaré

We are delighted that the Revd Gill Turner-Callis has joined us as Senior Chaplain. Gill has most recently been a parish priest for four churches in the Derby Diocese.

Gill grew up a Baptist but felt called to Anglican ordination when she was a student. She says that she 'has never had a proper job'!



"Having been a parish priest for 15 years, I have increasingly felt called to chaplaincy and working for Alabaré felt like a really exciting opportunity. I am looking forward to working with our volunteer chaplains and to embedding spirituality in all its fullness across the organisation."

If you would like to make a lasting difference to homelessness, why not consider sponsoring a room or leaving a legacy?

Our sponsor a room scheme costing £12 a month enables you to help someone escape the devastation of homelessness for good.

Alternatively, by leaving a gift to Alabaré in your Will, you can help us be there for homeless and vulnerable people who have nowhere else to turn, long into the future.

www.alabare.co.uk / **01722 344484**

Free Wills Scheme

We have a fantastic partnership with Wiltshire based estate specialists Steele Rose and the national online Guardian Angel team where you may also take advantage of our Free Will Scheme!

With the cost of a straightforward will averaging £150, this service is completely free and whilst there is no obligation to make a donation instead of payment or to leave a gift in your will, we hope that after looking after your loved ones you may consider this.

Contact **Steele Rose LLP** on **01722 410009** for an appointment, or visit www.guardianangel.network to start the process online.

Images are used for illustrative purposes only and names have been changed to protect client confidentiality. Models have been used.

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