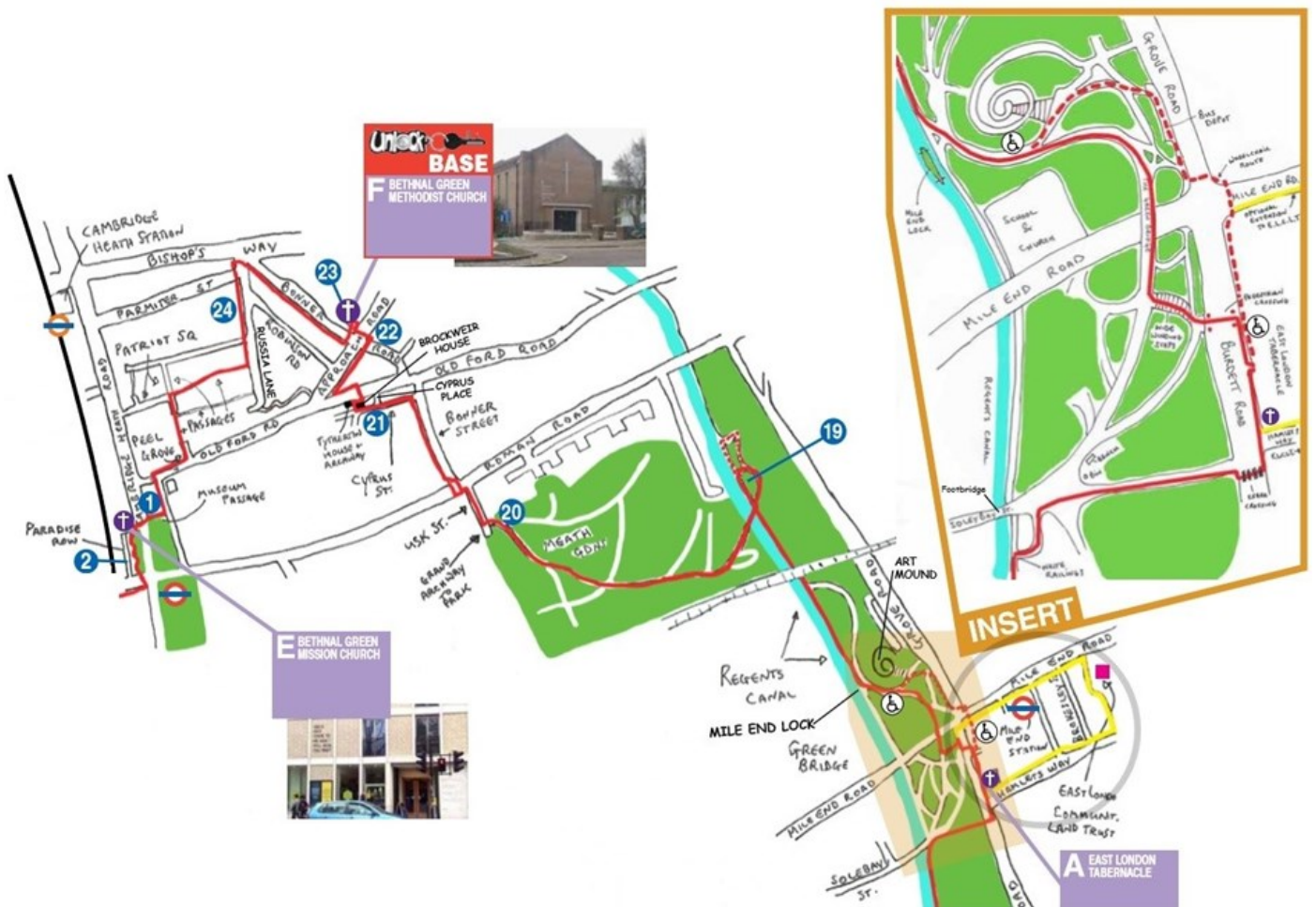


UNLOCK

STAY AT HOME LONDON WALK 2020

Stage 6 — Just Housing or Real Homes
East London Tabernacle Via Methodist Church
to the Bethnal Green Mission Church



The 2020 Walk in Tower Hamlets is postponed until **24th April 2021**. Please bring your 2020 map and support us then. For 2020 we are providing this 'armchair' version of the walk, in seven sections. We hope that you will enjoy it and then donate to Unlock just as you would have done if you have been out walking the London Streets for us this year, if not more so! See page 8 for details. Unlock needs the funding that you provide more than ever. When the COVID 19 emergency is over the poorest communities will have been hit the hardest and those are the places where Unlock's work will be needed more than ever! We are relying on you to make that possible.

Unlocking Real life stories of urban people
Revealing Good News of the down to earth Christ
Releasing life changing skills and confidence

WALK THIS WAY



Leaving the church, you cross Burdett Road, turn right then enter the park by a path on the left where you can access the Green Bridge over Mile End Road. The path will take you back down to the Regents Canal where you continue north.

Alternatively, you can turn left out of the church and then left again down Hamlets Way. After Brookesley Road on your left you will see a passageway, again to your left, leading you into a small, modern



estate. These are the grounds of St Clement's Hospital Mile End which was once a workhouse, then became a psychiatric hospital. At the heart of this new development is London's first Community Land Trust and probably the first urban CLT in

England (<https://www.londonclt.org/st-clement-s>).

Citizens UK had been seeking a site for a CLT in London and, after being promised a site by the Mayor of London, it was not until Citizens UK found and sought to develop the St Clement's site as a CLT and eventually, in partnership with developers Galliford Try, they began planning the site. The first CLT homes became available in 2016.

Citizens set up the CLT and ensured that the planning and development process was done with a large community involvement. The result is a lower density and much more sensitive development than is common on many such sites.

CLTs are a relatively new concept in affordable housing where the community holds ownership of the land and local people retain its management. Homes can be rented or bought depending on the local needs, but the affordability is ensured by the CLT's management of the rental process and by the separation of the ownership of the land from the building. So, rents on the CLT are set at a proportion of the average income of the local area and tenancies are determined by a tenant's relationship with the local area and by their income/needs. Cost of buying a home is based on the property, not the cost of the land it sits on.

After walking through the site and admiring the grade 2 listed hospital buildings fronting the site, turn left down Mile End Road and cross to the right before the large crossroad then cross over Grove Road to reach the park again. Follow the path in front of you as it curves first to your left past a grass stairway set into a hill then joins the path leading down from the Green Bridge and on to the canal.

Since first walking along the canal you will have noticed that much of the area across the canal from you has been newly redeveloped. Much of this is private with some Housing Association



Staircase inside St Clements Hospital



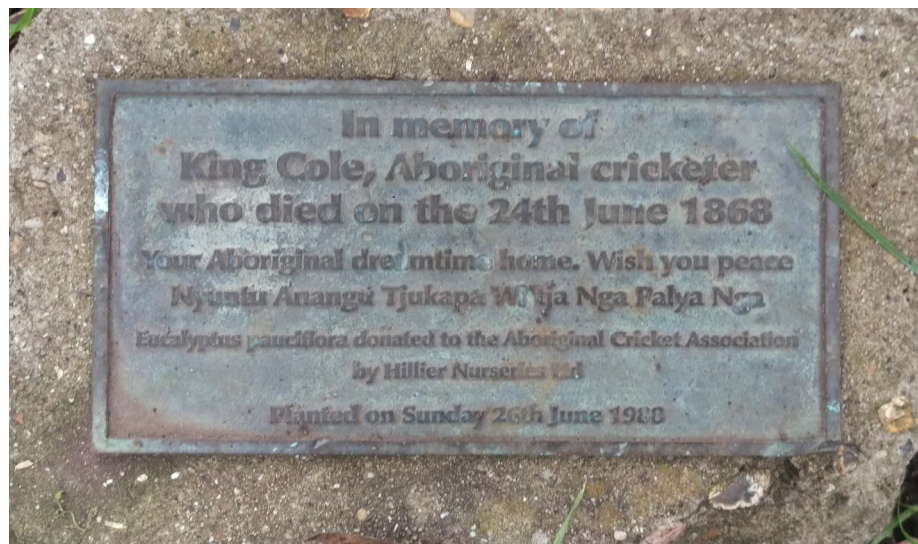
St Clements Hospital

and other social housing providers building there, too. On this section you will see a large blue block with what looks like some communal provision on the ground floor. This is “Stay QM”, part of the Queen Mary University of London accommodation for students. A lot of the new accommodation for students is owned by private profiteering from our undergraduate population but this is university owned and more affordable for their students.



Footbridge over Regents Canal

After passing under the railway bridge you will see a new pedestrian bridge. Follow the path up and onto this to cross the canal. The path will take you past even more new developments and into Meath Gardens (once a 19th century cemetery, you will pass through its grand archway entrance as you leave here). In the middle of your walk, at the junction with another path to



your right you may note a clump of bushes fenced off. Here you will discover that in June 1988, a plaque was placed there by the Aboriginal Cricket Association. It is in memory of Bripumyarrimin, known as King Cole, a member of the Australian Aboriginal XI.

This was the first organised Australian sports team to tour overseas – a decade before the 1878 Australian cricket tour that gave rise to what we know today as

Test Cricket. King Cole died on tour and was buried in the cemetery that eventually became Meath Gardens. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Aboriginal_cricket_team_in_England_in_1868)





Meath Park Archway

Leave the gardens through the arch and turn right onto Usk Street with the allotments on your right, then a 1950's council estate. At Roman Road you turn left and head for the pedestrian crossing which will take you over to Bonner Street (named after Bishop Edmund Bonner, a troubled figure from the 16th century who, as the Bishop of London, assisted in Henry VIII's break with Rome, then he eventually turned back to the Roman Catholic faith again https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Bonner).

As you walk up the road, you will see a number of tower blocks and lower blocks dressed with a pattern of green panels and white window sections set into

the brick structure. These are part of Globe Town – originally developed in the Georgian period, it became another impoverished area from the Victorian period up to post war times. Starting with the building of the Rogers Estate in the 1940s, a lot of social housing has been developed over the years to improve the area. Many of the buildings are now managed by Housing Associations.

Turn left at Cyprus Street and you are in a completely different townscape. Built in 1850/51 it was called Wellington Street until 1879 when it changed its name to Cyprus Street (but the pub retained its Wellington title).

There is a very moving War Memorial on this road up on the left close to the junction with Cyprus Place. It is worth reflecting on the numbers of young men that some of the families lost to war.

Continue along Cyprus Road and then past Bockweir Tower before turning right along a passage leading to Old Ford Road where you cross the road and turn left.



Cyprus Road memorial



Raines Foundation School

At the corner turn right into Approach Road which runs all the way to Victoria Park. You have gone from artisan dwellings to a road of more middleclass design. These terraced homes are taller, grander and more refined but, up until the eighties many were in very poor condition with dense, overcrowding. Multi-occupancy still exists alongside the many desirable, owner-occupied flats here.

As you pass the junction on the left with Robinson Road, look to your right. The fine building houses Raines Foundation School.

Continue to a crossroad with a mini roundabout. On your right, cross the junction with Bonner Road (where some of the Bethnal Green Housing Association, now Gateway Housing Association owned



houses between the wars) and you will see a fine Victorian building being redeveloped into housing. This was the London Chest Hospital, built in 1849, mainly by Quaker businessmen, to deal with the medical problems of the heart and lungs (and especially tuberculosis) rife in the community at the time). It was closed in April 2015 and will be expensive apartments soon. The hospital was built on part of the grounds of the one of the main residences of the Bishop of London, who was also the Lord of the Manor of Stepney, of which Bethnal Green was part.



London Chest Hospital

Turn left and cross Approach Road again to reach the Bethnal Green Methodist Church.



ACTIVITY

At this point in the walk you would have reached the **Unlock Base** for the day where you could have met some staff & discovered more about Unlock's work.

Now you can find out all about our work by visiting our website www.unlock-urban.org.uk/about. Also on the website you can find the Unlock activities that would have been offered as part of our walk event <http://unlock-urban.org.uk/documents/WalkWorkshop2020pdffinal.pdf>. Look for the one called **'Welcome'**.



Jenny Blake—Unlock National Office

Bethnal Green Methodist Mission UNLOCK BASE



Whitechapel Mission

The Mission day care centre is open 365 days a year and is currently serving an average of 297 breakfasts per day.

23,800 people used our showers during this year.

2,457 used our advice services. 566 were women.

15% of people supported by the Whitechapel Mission have been in the armed services.

24% are under 26 years of age.

32% have been in care at some point.

38% have been in prison.

Night shelter is not the norm but is offered when the temperature drops around freezing.

Running costs per day are about **£2,000**.

The Mission receives no state aid.

Here in the Tower Hamlets Methodist Circuit, we are people who are looking for a way to express their discipleship in the Methodist tradition, often through living out our faith by helping people. We have regular services for worship and opportunities for bible study, prayer and meeting together. Our work as a Circuit includes helping the homeless and rootless at Whitechapel Mission; providing a supportive environment for older people, and for those caring for someone at home, to enjoy a more fulfilled life at Zacchaeus; Band for Life gives opportunities for people to express themselves in music and song. In addition to the conventional congregation-based ministry, the Methodist Church has over the years founded a range of social ministries or projects to help meet the needs of this ever changing community. In the 21st Century engagement with the wider community, with emphasis on supporting those marginalised or in special need, continues. The following social ministries exist to serve the local community in the name of the Methodist Church:

The Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest –

175 years of service provides accommodation for seafarers, both active and retired, ex-servicemen and other adults. It runs a budget-priced cafe (available to the public) particularly good for an old-fashioned cooked breakfast!

The Zacchaeus Project is a social project of the Methodist Church in Tower Hamlets which works with older people and carers, offering advice, support and activities to improve the quality of their lives and address gaps in local provision. In 2019, we celebrated 21 years of service. It is a joint community and church initiative which offers a safe and welcoming forum for meeting, sharing experiences and accessing emotional, practical, financial, educational, recreational and health care support. Providing a range of services developed as a result of direct feedback from users, the Project equips older people to make informed decisions for themselves. It aims to empower socially or economically marginalised users to strengthen their individual and collective voices. The project runs daily and anyone and everyone over 50 is welcome.

Prayer points

Please pray that the rebuild of the church and community centre @ Bethnal Green goes well and the right design decisions are made.

Please pray that the Whitechapel Mission continues to meet the needs of the homeless community as we look to extend the services that we offer.

Please pray for Poplar Methodist Church as we look to develop our youth ministry.

Please pray for Bow Road as we look forward to developing new opportunities with our new pastoral assistant.

And please pray for Old Ford as we look to utilise the space by having a drop in/cafe on Saturday mornings.

Circuit community projects at Old Ford

Old Ford Church, Corner of Armagh Road and Old Ford Road E3 2LY, in conjunction with Age UK and Zacchaeus project, runs social knit and Natter sessions every Tuesday 13.30 - 15.00.

Band for Life meets at Bow Road Church on Fridays.

The weekly two-hour band sessions are rehearsals, but also social gatherings and a regular meeting space. The project is open to all over 18 but particularly those with mental health problems or suffering social isolation.

Circuit mission statement

As members of the Methodist Church in Tower Hamlets we are on a journey of faith; offering a welcome to all as we serve our neighbours and the wider world in the name of Jesus.

Bethnal Green Methodist Mission
(Unlock Base)
1 Approach Road, Bethnal Green, E2 9JP

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terryandsuestreet@hotmail.co.uk
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Minister: Rev John Hayes
Johnhayes2013@gmail.com
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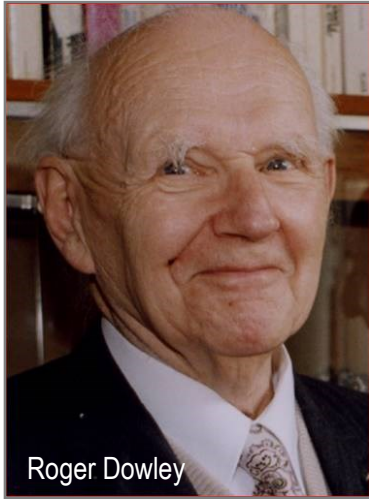
www.mcth.org.uk

After visiting Bethnal Green Methodist Mission, turn right up Bonner Road which has a range of ages of Council properties.



Along and behind the frontage on your right was the huge Bonner Rd Children's Home from 1871 until 1913 http://www.childrenshomes.org.uk/BethnalGreenNCH/?LMCL=MK_uip

At the corner with Bishops Way where you turn sharp left, pass the Nisa corner store and turn into Russia Lane, which has nothing to do with Russia but is rather a corruption of its older names - Russey or Rushy Lane.



Soon, on your right, on the corner with Parmiter St, you will see a modern low level block of flats with windows, balconies, doors, etc coloured deep red. This is Roger Dowley Court, named after the important theologian and urban worker for social justice. Roger Dowley, was an elderly Baptist solicitor who had moved by God's calling into East London before World War II; a member of East London Tabernacle and co-founder of Evangelical Urban Training Project (which is now) Unlock. He created a housing association BGVPHO <https://www.londonremembers.com/subjects/bethnal-green-and-east-london-housing-association-gateway> to help Christian workers to buy property in the East End making it possible for keyworkers to stay in the inner city. This association, now called Gateway, has named property after him: Roger Dowley Court.

Carry on and turn right into a car park beside the building marked 1-14 Jameson Court then, at the end of the redbrick block named Ebenezer Mussel House there is a passageway to the left.

At the end of this path you will find yourself at the corner of Patriot Square and Peel Grove with high metal railings fencing off a grassed area to your left. Continue along Peel Grove into a passageway with a park to your left and St John's Primary School to your right. The final stretch of Peel Grove opens onto Old Ford Road where you turn right and cross at the zebra crossing to take the minor road ahead called Victoria Park Square with the Church of Our Lady of Assumption on the left-hand corner. This RC church has been served by the Assumptionists (who live in the attached Abbey) since 1901.



Part way down along this charming road you will find another passageway, Museum Passage, that will lead you on between a large building and a large public garden. At the end turn left onto Cambridge Heath Road and use the pedestrian crossing to reach a modern, light bricked 5 storey block which holds both the Bethnal Green Mission Church and its café, the Beehive (<https://www.thebeehivelondon.co.uk/>).



Here is what they have to say about their origins and what they seek to do today...

"The Beehive was born out of a passion for community and hospitality. Annie Macpherson, the founder of Bethnal Green Mission Church, started work here in the 1860s by developing a 'Home of Industry', where children



experiencing poverty and disease in Victorian England could find shelter, food and drink, alongside an opportunity to learn new skills. Her building was known locally as 'The Beehive'. We're following in Annie's footsteps by using our profits to support those in our community looking to develop new skills in a safe, supportive environment."

The south of the café opens out onto Paradise Gardens (<http://www.londongardensonline.org.uk/gardens-online-record.php?ID=THM033>) which fills the space

between the main road and Paradise Row, a line of fine late Georgian houses where the philanthropist Mary James lived at No. 5 between 1900-43. She was nicknamed 'The Angel of Paradise Row'. Paradise Gardens is one small remnant of what was Bethnal Green Common Land, which was sold off in 1678. Bethnal Green Gardens and the Museum Gardens on the other side of Cambridge Heath Road are also surviving patches of this common land.



On the following pages you will find the factsheet for Bethnal Green Mission Church, a reflection, a Bible reading, an Unlock story, a prayer and an activity.



PLEASE DONATE TO SUPPORT UNLOCK'S WORK

- Online via Virgin Giving : http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk/support_donations.php
- By Bank Transfer to Account No: 65031179; sort code: 08-92-50; quoting ref: WALK
- By cheque to 'Unlock', mailed to: Unlock, Handsworth Old Rectory, 402B Handsworth Road, Sheffield, S13 9BZ

Due to COVID 19 the Unlock Office will be running on extremely minimal staffing over the summer of 2020.

Donations via Virgin Giving and Bank Transfer save Unlock money and time, and get the funds into our account much faster. Cheques will take considerably longer to process in the current circumstances.

For this year only, we will not be able to acknowledge individual donations (donations via Virgin Giving will be acknowledged automatically), as we will have neither the staff nor the necessary details to do so.

Please be assured that we are more grateful than we can possibly say for your generous and faithful support.

HISTORY

BGMC is a church and charity that has been rooted in the life of Bethnal Green for over 150 years. We are passionate about helping to make Tower Hamlets a peaceful, just and hopeful place to live and work through partnerships, activities and projects which are relevant to the needs of our diverse community.

We think it is important that faith connects with life in our urban situation. Therefore, in our complex and changing world, we seek to be a faith community who are welcoming and inclusive and where people of all backgrounds have an opportunity to explore with us the meaning of the Christian story.

Our new church building, which officially opened in November 2018, was the culmination of a five-year project to provide BGMC and the local community with a

new, accessible and welcoming space in the heart of Bethnal Green. Since our opening the building has interest in the new church culminated in it being given a RIBJA MacEwen Award Commendation for 'Architecture for the Common Good':



“ Within this rejuvenated view from the underground, the renewed Bethnal Green Mission Church – singlehandedly makes possibly the largest contribution to an improved, lighter, friendlier feel to the local area... the church acts beyond its walls by uplifting the area and creating a more hospitable environment around the caring and social spaces within. You can imagine a lot more people will cross its threshold as a result. ”

The Beehive

The Beehive is a not-for-profit café and community hub serving high quality food and speciality coffee. The Beehive was born out of a passion for community and hospitality. Annie Macpherson, the founder of Bethnal Green Mission Church, started work here in the 1860s by developing a 'Home of Industry', where children experiencing poverty and disease in Victorian England could find shelter, food and drink, alongside an opportunity to learn new skills. Her building was known locally as 'The Beehive'. We're following in Annie's footsteps by using our profits to support those in our community looking to develop new skills in a safe, supportive environment.



and are committed to living well with their neighbours as peacemakers for the wellbeing of society. The Feast Tower Hamlets is co-led by BGMC's Youth Minister alongside a team of youth workers and volunteers and is based in our new building.

E123 Welcomes Refugees

E123 Welcomes Refugees was formed by four local churches who wanted to do something practical to help some of the millions of people who are suffering as a result of war in places such as Syria. We are one of hundreds of Community Sponsorship groups around the UK who, with government support, are aiming to welcome a refugee family to the UK. Our mission is to raise the funds required, and meet the home office requirements, so we can welcome and house a refugee family in East London in order that they may begin a safe, secure and happy life here in the UK, fully supported by the local community.

GrowTH Night Shelter

GrowTH is an initiative by local churches in Tower Hamlets to respond to homelessness in our local community. The main project is an emergency night shelter which provides both immediate shelter for homeless men and women and assistance in securing more permanent longer-term accommodation. BGMC is one of the many local churches that provides accommodation and volunteers once a week to welcome, feed and support homeless men and women. GrowTH is a holistic response to homelessness addressing both practical and spiritual needs, so the guests are given the opportunity to engage with the Christian faith if they so wish.

Face-to-Face Mentoring

Face to Face Mentoring is a school and community-based mentoring project that promotes wellbeing in young people aged 11-17 by helping them improve their emotional literacy, by talking through challenges they face in their lives and by providing helpful strategies for self-care.

The Feast

The Feast is a leading, faith-based, youth-centred movement encouraging young people to be resilient and confident in their beliefs and identity, able to build meaningful friendships with people who are different from themselves, able to discuss beliefs and challenging issues

Bethnal Green Mission Church
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Reflection

If you ever invite a person from a homelessness charity to come and speak at your church they will most likely ask you the question, “What does a home mean to you?”. You will be surprised at just how many different things you and your fellow parishioners will end up adding to the list.

When your home is good and you are happy in it, you may occasionally feel thankful for some aspect of it; but it is not until you encounter bad housing, overcrowding, and homelessness itself that you begin to really see what a difference a home makes to your life.

The list you will create may involve money (a home you can afford and that you can afford to heat, light, ensure basic services etc), comfort (warm and dry, free of pests and dangers, furnished sufficiently, with all the things I need), safe (protected against strangers/intruders, not a fire or other hazard, in an area free of danger), with privacy (able to choose who enters, a place where I can keep my things and live how I want to) and stability (being able to stay long enough to feel secure and see your children through to adulthood, a place to come back to, a place where costs do not spiral out of control, a place where you have rights, where you are free to make it your own). There are more things you might want to add to the list but all we are describing is something so many of us just take for granted.

Of course, it is important to consider these things if you are struggling with your housing situation at the moment. As with our example above, you can think of them when you and your church are working out how to respond to homelessness and housing issues in your own community.

If you already have a good home, you can also contemplate and give thanks for the blessings your home gives you every day.

Take time to walk through your home, stopping in each room to remember some good things that have happened here. After each pause, thank God for those and all of the other memories that are housed there too.

Spend time thinking about the family and friends who have spent time with you here and of special occasions that have helped make this place so special to you.

Think of your neighbours and of their homes in relation to yours. Is being where you are also being able to be part of a community?

Then think of the important places you travel to from here and about what it feels like to return. Have you ever thought that the best holidays, the best journeys, and the best events and experiences have all finally finished up here, at your own home?

Now thank God for all of this and ask him to keep blessing your home every day.

Ian Smith—Unlock London Walk Team

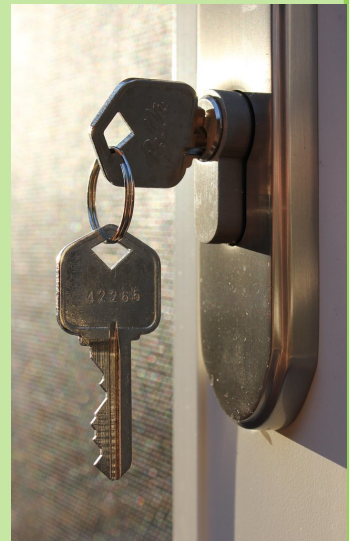
Unlock Stories:

A New Home and A New Start

After three years of living in her flat with awful memories of her daughter trying to commit suicide, Sylvia wanted a new start. Following attempted suicide, her daughter was put in a hospital for people with mental health problems, which was meant to be a safe environment but unfortunately killed herself whilst in there.

This poor mother really needed new beginnings and after three whole years on a waiting list, with doctors notes for her ill health and anxiety, could find no new way forward and no new home.

The Unlock group we were determined to see Sylvia blessed and we kept praying. We took her to visit a warden assisted housing block of flats where someone's mum had lived many years ago one of the other women in the group now lives. After less than two weeks Sylvia will now have a new beginning in a "new" home which has been decorated and new carpets put in. A seven month old fridge/freezer has been left behind. In Sylvia's own words 'I have been set free. I know I will now have peace. This is a miracle'. She keeps saying thank you to God.



Helping each other out.

After a long battle Patricia (who is elderly and frail) has just been rehomed by her local council because her previous flat was not up to standard. Will, from Patricia's Unlock group, went over to Patricia's today to help get things straight for her, and on the way stopped to buy some Polyfilla to use. He got talking to an electrician working on the doors at Sainsbury's, bought a length of cable from him for £1:00 and wired Patricia's cooker up and it is working! She is thrilled to bits. He plans to go tomorrow to paint her bathroom. That is the man that was lying drunk in the street when we went out to play minigolf last year and has a record longer than the number of books in the O & N Testaments combined.



Proverbs 31:8,9

Speak up for people who cannot speak for themselves. Protect the rights of all who are helpless. ⁹ Speak for them and be a righteous judge. Protect the rights of the poor and needy

Isaiah 32:17-19

Because everyone will do what is right, there will be peace and security forever. ¹⁸ God's people will be free from worries, and their homes peaceful and safe.

PRAY FOR

Father God, your children all need good homes that serve their needs and keep them safe and healthy. Please help us learn how to provide such homes to everyone and help me remember the blessing I already enjoy every time I enter my own home.

Pray for all who work to bring good, affordable homes to families and individuals who need them and for those who work with homeless people and strive to help them back into living stable lives in affordable homes of their own.

ACTIVITY

Although it has driven us apart in some ways, the COVID 19 outbreak is also bringing communities together in new ways. Many of us are probably seeing more of our immediate neighbours than we have ever done before.

- Who do you encounter now who you did not meet before?
- How can you get to know them better?
- What can you learn from each other?
- What are the good things that you would like to carry forward from this time into the future?



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