



EXHIBITION SUCCESS!

Thank you to everyone who visited Arc's very own art exhibition, 'Unseen', at the Brewhouse in early October. Our wonderful clients created over 40 pieces of artwork for the event in a variety of media, including acrylic on canvas, poetry, drawing, collage, graffiti, photography and cross-stitch. In case you missed it, here are a few examples:



Having a creative outlet at a time of crisis can allow someone a break from the stress in their life, as well as helping to improve their confidence and learn that it is fine to make mistakes. Our artists really enjoyed exploring their creative side, and are so proud that people came to view their work! A huge thank you to our artists! Thank you also to everyone who helped to make this possible, including the Brewhouse for offering their foyer, and to those who donated towards the equipment. We will definitely be looking to host a similar event in the future!

HOW YOU ARE FUNDING FUTURES

At Arc, we work to reduce or remove any barriers which may prevent a client from moving forwards, and this includes our Rent in Advance (RIA) scheme. Moving home can be a costly venture with many financial considerations, which can be overwhelming for someone who has experienced homelessness. By offering a range of support for this huge step forwards for our clients, we aim to reduce the initial costs of moving and make it more achievable and affordable for all. Our RIA scheme assists clients who are ready to move into their own independent accommodation by helping to pay rent in advance or deposits via an interest free loan from Arc.

Initially, the client would advise their Pathway Worker that they have been offered a property, at which point they are usually met with many 'congratulations' and much excitement! This will then lead to a discussion about their need for RIA support from Arc. If the client does need help, a full financial assessment is completed which assesses their situation and expected outgoings. If this is approved, an affordable and gradual repayment plan is created which is based fully on each individual's circumstances. With average rent in advance costs being approximately £350 for our clients, this can be such a huge help for someone who has taken that last big step to independence.

Since January, 21 Arc clients have been assisted with RIA when they have moved into their new homes. That is 21 people who have been able to have a fresh start in their lives, and all of them were able to because of YOU. Our RIA scheme is fully funded by your thoughtful donations, meaning that each time you donate to Arc, you could be helping someone reach the final stage in their journey with Arc. For this, we are forever grateful.

We asked a former client Martin what difference it made for us to provide him with the rent in advance, and he answered:

"You wouldn't believe how much. I didn't have a penny to my name and I was really worried as I had accepted a flat offered to me, but I didn't have anything to fill it with. I received the rent in advance and the white goods and it was a life saver. Arc and their donors started me off, they put me on the road and I'm ever so thankful. What Arc and supporters of Arc are doing is really important and you've made my life. I've got my own place again, in a lovely area, I have no hassles and everywhere I walk is beautiful. I can only thank Arc for that. Whatever help these supporters provide to homeless people, they're doing an important job, I don't think they realise how important and how much I respect them. I can't thank everyone enough."



"It was a lovely place to live, and I'd happily go back if I became homeless again"

Mark endured some difficult months before finding Arc, and sadly found that life can change in an instant. Having recently moved into his own flat, we caught up with him to hear his story with homelessness.

"In February 2021, just two weeks before my 40th birthday, my life suddenly came crashing down. My partner of 13 years had been caught cheating on me. I had everything I needed at this time in my life, but it was taken from under my feet. I hit the bottle hard and, using the last of my savings, I bought myself a rather large coach to live in. It seemed perfect!

My plan was to live in my friend's shed for a couple of months to fix it up. However, I went to check on it after a week of solid rain and unfortunately everything had been soaked right through. Literally everything ruined.

I had a choice to make, and I decided to try and sell the coach. I had paid £5,500, but I couldn't get a penny for it now. I ended gifting it to someone else in need.

Still drinking heavily, I was in the shed for 3 months in total before I was offered a room in temporary accommodation (not associated with Arc). I met somebody there who was an amazing friend at that time. We drank together and I started on a few different substances.

We ended up in a relationship. It was unexpected to say the least! Finding a new partner in a homeless shelter was not my plan. Anyway, we moved into a tent during December as he had been evicted. I didn't want to lose the only thing I had left.

During our nine months together, we were gifted many things. We lived in tents, had a couple of weeks at a hotel, lived in caravans on the side of the road and in campsites where we worked as cleaners for a free space. We basically made the most of our homeless journey. Unfortunately, those were our good days.

We both had mental health issues. Long story short, we split, but it was for the best. After I moved into a tent again, I went to Arc for support. Everyone was so helpful, after struggling to get help elsewhere, and I was offered a space at Norie House at Arc.

Arc were amazing. They have been phenomenal in helping me. They made sure I was placed in suitable accommodation which enabled me to stay away from alcohol. It was a lovely place to live, and I'd happily go back if I became homeless again - it has a real family feel. I'm quite independent but knowing that my Support Worker, Ben, was there if I needed him was nice. Having a base was great, I wasn't living in a tent, carrying my belongings and having to move around. It meant I could save money, stay sober and helped me to move onto the next stage.

After just 3 months, I was offered a flat to call my own and have recently moved in. I am now four months sober and absolutely loving my new place. They say life begins at 40, mine just happened to be a year late."

We are so pleased that we were able to offer Mark the assistance he needed to get back on his feet. Thank you for helping us to help him.



Mark took part in our art exhibition, creating this piece called "Mouse ate my pad".

Send hope this Christmas with DontSendMeACard.com

Although it can be lovely to receive a Christmas card in the post, wouldn't it be better if that thoughtful gesture was having a bigger impact? Well, we have the answer!

Instead of sending physical cards, we are asking that this year you send an e-card to your friends, family or colleagues and make a donation to Arc, via DontSendMeACard.com. If you visit their website and find Arc, you simply select one of our designs, enter the recipient details and a message, and make a small donation.

Not only will your e-card be doing great things for those experiencing homelessness, but you'll be saving on purchase and postage costs and it will be kinder to the environment.

Arc's Homeless Shoebox and Hamper Appeal

It's our aim to put a smile on our client's faces at Christmas, but we need your help!



Christmas can be a difficult time of the year for those experiencing homelessness, so each year, our shoebox appeal supplies every Arc client with a shoebox filled with gifts and every Arc property with a Christmas hamper to spread some Christmas magic to those who may have lost their sparkle.

Shoeboxes

What to include in your box:

- 500ml drinks bottle
- Roll on deodorant
- Shampoo
- Shower gel
- Loofah/flannel
- Sweets
- Chocolate
- Pack of biscuits
- Novelty socks/socks
- Christmas decoration
- Gloves
- Notepad and pen
- Keyring

You could even include a Christmas card to wish the person receiving your gifts a Happy Christmas!

If you choose to wrap your shoe box, please wrap the lid and box separately.

Possible extras if space: puzzle books, crossword books, colouring books, games, e.g. board games, pack of cards, jigsaws

Shoeboxes can be delivered to our dedicated drop off locations between 21st November - 11th December

Drop off locations:

Bridgwater
Asda,
East Quay

Taunton
Co-op,
169 Cheddon
Road

Wellington
The Emporium
Somerset,
Clifton House,
Mantle St.

Nigel K Ford
Funeral Services,
45 Station Road

More may be announced before November 21st, so please keep an eye on our social media for these!

Hampers

What to include in your hamper:

- Nuts / Crisps
- Crackers
- Fruit
- Boxes of chocolates
- Biscuits
- Yule Log / Christmas Cake
- Mince Pies
- Jams / Spreads / Chutneys
- Breadsticks
- Hot Chocolate, Marshmallows etc
- Soft Drinks (Bottles, Cans)
- Croissants / Pastries

If you would rather give the money to make a hamper, we suggest a donation of £30

Hamper drop off by appointment ONLY between 5th and 15th December - please contact Rosie on 07736043403 rhather@arcinspire.co.uk

Please do not include items containing alcohol or refrigerated food

If you would rather make a monetary donation towards the cost of Christmas at Arc, please do so by visiting our website: www.arcinspire.co.uk/donate

DECEMBER DELIGHTS

We make sure that no one misses out at Christmas! We offer all properties a Christmas tree and decorations to put up should clients want to, something that many clients enjoy taking part in!

As well as your incredible shoeboxes and hampers, each client will be offered a full Christmas meal, either delivered by our Pathway Workers through 'meals-on-wheels', or the ingredients will be given so that clients can enjoy cooking their dinner together.

There will also be plenty of opportunities for clients to get together and play games or enjoy a buffet over the Christmas period, ensuring that lots of festive cheer is spread throughout Arc during December.



Thank you Frances!



Clients are now offered haircuts once a month by our fabulous new volunteer hairdresser, Frances.

The impact that a fresh haircut can have on a client's wellbeing is huge, and it may be just enough to boost their confidence and help them to feel themselves once again, possibly prompting someone to take that next positive step forwards.

On her first visit to Lindley House, 10 clients received haircuts and each was thrilled with their trim!

Congratulations James!

We wanted to say a huge WELL DONE to James who recently passed his driving theory test!

James has been working at our social enterprise, Crescent Cleaning Services, for over a year now and is taking great strides forwards in his employment. You may have read his story in our November 2021 newsletter (which you can find on our website if you missed it).

James' next step is to take his practical test, and will hopefully be able to drive the Crescent Cleaning Services van in the near future.



RETURN OF THE CARNIVAL

We were excited to be back out collecting donations for Arc alongside the processions at Taunton and Bridgwater carnivals for the first time since 2019.

We have yet to hear how much we raised at Bridgwater, but we collected £478.94 at Taunton. This total is shared 50/50 with the carnival committee, meaning we raised £239.47 for our clients!

A big 'well done' and thank you to our volunteers!



Save THE Date

4th December, 3pm - Crescent Funeral Services carol service at St. John's Church, Taunton where the team are kindly raising funds for Arc

Are you hosting a Christmas event? Get in touch if you think you could raise some much needed funds! We can supply buckets and printed materials

Coming soon... TOWER HOUSE

We are delighted to announce that we have recently purchased a new property in Bridgwater that will help to house an additional 8 people experiencing homelessness. Our Property Team are currently working flat out to get the building ready for clients - watch this space!

AS EVER, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT THIS YEAR. WE COULD NOT LOOK AFTER OVER 170 INDIVIDUALS EACH DAY IF IT WASN'T FOR YOUR GENEROSITY. ALL OF US AT ARC WISH EACH OF YOU A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR!