

GOOD WORK NEWS

The Working Centre, 58 Queen St. S. Kitchener, ON N2G 1V6

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September 2023

Subscription: A Donation Towards our Work

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Breaking Ground at 97 Victoria for the Making Home Project

By Katherine Bitzer

On August 28, about 100 people gathered at 97 Victoria Street for the official groundbreaking ceremony for our Making Home project. The event was a celebration of the many partners who have come together to make this project possible: government, corporate and community donors and supporters, as well as design and construction partners.

Under sunny skies, words of support and encouragement for this project were shared by local politicians: MP Mike Morrice, MP Bardish Chagger, Regional Chair Karen Redman and Mayor of Kitchener Berry Vrbancic. Jim Hallman, Chair of the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation also spoke to affirm his support of this project, and to recognize all those who have generously donated so far. The event was hosted by Craig Beattie, CEO of Perimeter Development, a true champion of this project, who has been with us every step of the

way.

The groundbreaking ceremony gave us opportunity to celebrate the \$9.8 million dollars in federal funding, received under the Rapid Housing Initiative-3 Cities Stream, to enable the construction of the 44 new units of supportive housing for this project.

The community's financial support of this project must be mentioned here as well. To date, over \$6 million dollars has been raised, and we have been heartened by major commitments from:

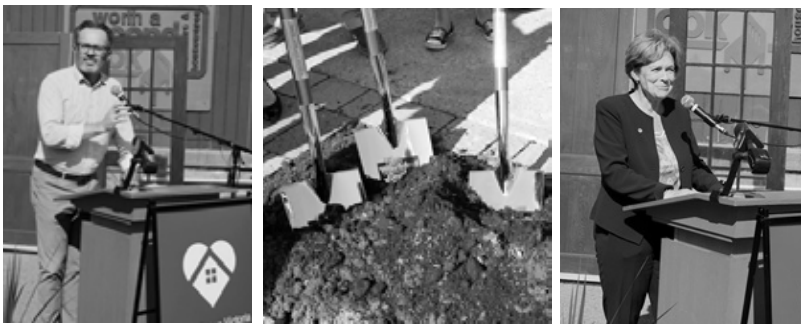
- Lyle S. Hallman Foundation
- Perimeter Development Corporation
- Auburn Developments
- The Savvas Chamberlain Family Foundation

A big thank you to everyone who has donated to Making Home - we appreciate and respect the generosity of all people who share with us to make our work possible.

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On August 28th, The Working Centre hosted the official groundbreaking for the Making Home Project at 97 Victoria St. N in Kitchener. Pictured from left to right: Joe Mancini (The Working Centre), Tim Louis (MP Kitchener-Conestoga), Karen Redman (Waterloo Regional Chair), Jim Hallman (Hallman Foundation), Bardish Chagger (MP Waterloo), Mike Morrice (MP Kitchener-Centre), Stephanie Mancini (The Working Centre), Berry Vrbancic (Mayor of Kitchener), Craig Beattie (CEO Perimeter Development)

Photo above courtesy of Josh Goeree/CityNews 570



Above: Craig Beattie from Perimeter Development speaks; shovels in the ground; Karen Redman, Waterloo Regional Chair speaks; a crowd of community supporters and media attending the groundbreaking ceremony

Photos above by Douglas MacLellan

A King Street Shelter Perspective

Nestled there in your sleep space at the King Street Shelter, you cling to any remnants of sleep you can gather. In your 6' x 8' space, are surrounded by all the belongings you have to your name. Your changes of clothing, shoes, warmer clothing as the weather changes. The items you have gathered on your journey - items you found that can be repaired and resold, items stolen to feed a growing addiction that has consumed your life.

A dog barks, a couple nearby is

arguing as they work to navigate a relationship in these uncertain conditions. Someone walks by to check on you, making sure you are still breathing well after a recent drug use. You can't seem to fight the persistent cough that has plagued you since the weather changed. You will need to check in with the health team that comes by tomorrow.

Tomorrow is the day everyone is being asked to clean out their sleep spaces - there needs to be less stuff,

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Learn more about the Making Home Project by visiting:

97victoria.theworkingcentre.org

Thirty Ninth Year

Issue 154

September 2023

Good Work News

Good Work News was first produced in September 1984. It is published four times a year by The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen as a forum of opinions and ideas on work and unemployment. Four issues of Good Work News constitutes our annual report. There is a circulation of 13,000 copies. Subscription: a donation towards our work.

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A King St. Shelter Perspective

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less clutter. You need to give up one of the two bikes that have come your way. Loss on top of loss through your life makes it so much harder to give up anything. You cling to what you have.

There are lots of good people around you, offering to help. But what if you can't do it? Will you have to leave this place where you have found some stability, some comfort? Will you once again become one of the almost 200 people in Kitchener-Waterloo and Cambridge who now live outside in encampments, without a chance for shelter this winter? You don't think you can face another winter outside. You know what it is to live in a tent, to crash at a friend's place in severe weather, to face risking your physical wellbeing just to be warm.

Your bunk neighbour was asked to leave the other day – he had taken over a corner in the shelter and couldn't agree to the basic terms to limit stuff enough to share the space. It helps to cut down on all the clutter but you worry it could be you asked to leave next. Here you get a warm meal, help to look for housing on days when you have some hope, space to do your laundry. There are people who work here who are trying to help you hold the balance of what it means to live together with 100 other people feeling despair and frustration, no longer feeling like a place of your own is possible; You talk together about good times and bad times and are reminded that people care about you and your story, even as you are lost in a sea of people described as homeless.

Giving up on the thought of sleep, you wake to hear some people making

music – sharing donated instruments that sound pretty decent, here in this space that was once a beer and dance hall. You walk past the big TV, where 10 people gather around the latest movie. Outside, you sit against the front of the building, catch a few moments watching the cars go by, and enjoy a smoke.

Some of you, facing the psychosis of drug use, or the desperation created by the need for drugs, have made some people in the neighbourhood afraid. When others drive by they see some pretty rough looking folk sitting around with little to do, and watch the lights of emergency vehicles that have come to provide care for another overdose, a severe medical issue, or a fight that couldn't be easily resolved.

Your neighbour in the next bed has found some work, a lucky break. He gets a wake-up call early so he can head out to his work which hopefully helps him to collect enough income to pay for housing – housing that is no longer affordable on a social income. Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support housing allowances are not enough to pay for the few housing options that become available, and there are lots of people applying before you can get there to apply for housing. The shelter team helps you to hold on to the idea that housing is possible.

The new housing at St. Mark's Place is starting to fill up. What is needed is more places like that – housing designed for people with less income.

You tuck into a delicious hot meal, grab a coffee, and join the group around the TV. Grateful for the place you have, you tell some stories, and settle in for another night at the shelter.



HOCKEY HELPS THE HOMELESS

10TH ANNUAL WATERLOO REGION TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27TH, 2023

RIM PARK IN WATERLOO

The tournament day is free to attend and anyone is welcome to come. 18 teams will be playing games from 8am until 5pm. Full game schedule will be available at:

hth.akaraisin.com/ui/WR

SUPPORTING LOCAL CHARITIES

Over the last nine years, Hockey Helps the Homeless Waterloo Region has granted \$1,903,000 to the local charities (oneRoof, House of Friendship, Lutherwood, Cambridge Shelter Corp, YW of K-W, and our newest edition, The Working Centre) who run the Region's emergency shelter network. These funds have resulted in over 24,714 safe shelter beds being provided.

Help us this year to provide the funds for over 3,000 Shelter Beds annually for the homeless in Waterloo Region.

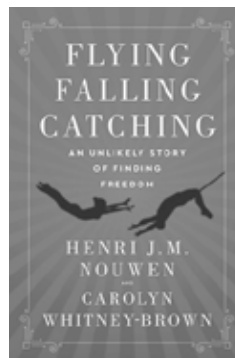
LEARN MORE AT WR.HHTH.COM

Hockey Helps the Homeless (HHTH) leverages Canada's affinity for hockey to raise awareness and financial support for the homeless through education, fundraising, and by partnering with solutions-based local homeless support agencies.

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT ERIK LUCZAK | ERIK@HHTH.COM

Public Reading Event

Join author Carolyn Whitney-Brown for a special reading of her book *Flying, Falling, Catching: An Unlikely Story of Finding Freedom*



Co-authored with the late Henri Nouwen, *Flying, Falling, Catching* tells the story of Nouwen's five year friendship with the Flying Rodleighs trapeze troupe, and why his last manuscript was left unfinished at his death in 1996. Best-selling spiritual author Henri J. M. Nouwen became close to The Flying Rodleighs, a traveling circus troupe. Like Nouwen's own life, a trapeze act is full of artistry, exhilarating successes, crushing failures and continual forgiveness. He wrote about his experience in a genre new to him: creative non-fiction.



Friday, October 20, 2023 | 2pm
Fresh Ground | 256 King St. E in Kitchener

Event is free to attend

Sponsored by the Canada Council and Writers Union

How UA Interim Housing Offers Integrated Supports

By Stephanie Mancini

History and Context of University Ave Housing

University Ave (UA) Housing emerged out of the triple emergencies of Covid, high homelessness, and a severe opioid epidemic.

- In 2017 to 2020 homeless rates were going up, shelters were full and increasingly unable to meet the needs of people experiencing drug overdose, violence, police calls, etc.
- On November 19, 2019 The Working Centre opened an unfunded emergency shelter as a severe snow storm hit our community – over 200 people came to St. Mary’s church over 3 weeks.
- Shelter spaces were mostly full and there was a need to present new ideas to serve the growing group of homeless.
- There was a growing encampment on the properties surrounding and including St. John’s Kitchen.
- House of Friendship’s shelter work was precarious and searching a new location.
- The Working Centre leaned in with the Region of Waterloo to model and demonstrate a number of innovative and highly responsive solutions.
- We visited the University Ave site for the first time on August 4, 2020, hired and trained staff by September 29, and started moving people in by October 5, 2020.

Homelessness

The reality for those facing homelessness was becoming increasingly intense. The Working Centre was witnessing these issues through our work with St. John’s Kitchen, Street Outreach, and SOS. We spent 2019 trying to draw system attention to these issues, and by 2020 and the arrival of Covid we leaned in to create and deliver practical responses. We worked constantly to help draw attention to the fact that our current frameworks were no longer meeting the needs of this growing group of people experiencing homelessness.

The Working Centre worked closely with the Region of Waterloo and other community partners to ensure the Point in Time count was reflecting the urgencies we were seeing on the ground. These numbers have grown by 2023, but in September of 2021 the Point in Time count was able to report 1085 people experiencing homelessness:

- 412 people living rough. (Living in encampments, on the street, or staying in their vehicle.)
- 335 people experiencing hidden homelessness.
- 191 people in Emergency Shelter.
- 84 people in transitional housing.
- 63 people in institutions.



(Hospital, Police Custody Women’s Crisis Services.)

By November of 2021 The Working Centre worked with the Region of Waterloo to open a congregate shelter at St. Andrew’s Church, serving 60 people, and we supported extended hours at St. John’s Kitchen to support unsheltered homeless drop-in. By the fall of 2020 we had moved the shelter to Edith Mac and then to King Street Shelter, serving 100 people by December of 2022. By Spring 2023 we launched, together with the Region, 50 cabins of shelter at Erbs Road Shelter. This has led to a total of 230 people in shelter/interim housing, which does not count the 60-80 in motels.

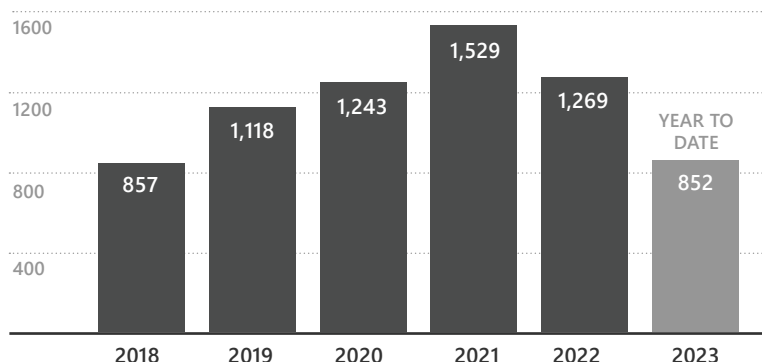
Opioid Crisis

The opioid crisis was at an urgent peak – we saw the highest number of deaths in 2020 and 2021. Across the system we have implemented a number of responses that have helped to mitigate the overdoses and the overdose deaths in the community including:

- Bringing more people in stable shelter/transitional housing options (overdose rate goes down when people move indoors, and further when people access shelter/housing that is not congregate.)
- Training our teams to respond to overdoses; deep harm reduction, naloxone administration, ambulag training, collaboration with EMS and WRPS.
- Creating use-friendly spaces where people can use safely, observed by their peers or by staff, allowing for a less furtive use of drugs that encourages people to use smaller amounts more often without judgement.

The number of people using drugs has not gone down, and in fact grows every year. We have changed our supports and coping strategies in order to keep people alive.

COUNT OF SUSPECTED OPIOID OVERDOSE / DRUG POISONING RELATED CALLS IN WATERLOO REGION (2018-2023)



Source: Waterloo Region Police Services (August 2023)

The challenges we continue to face centre around the amount of theft, violence and damage to property that come along with housing people who are active drug users and who are constantly seeking money to support their drug use. As well, there is the added hoarding challenges faced by those who are active users of crystal meth; and the deep drug induced psychosis that leads to deeply erratic behaviours.

These issues continue to challenge our work as we work to build a Housing First approach that does not quickly evict people for behaviours that stem from their substance use.

The Accomplishments of UA Housing Over This Time Period

University Ave is a place where people want to live. It brings a very deep harm reduction approach that has successfully bridged people from complex and long-term encampment/homelessness and into shared living. We have been successful in:

- Building a community of trust;
- Residents do not feel at-risk of eviction at every moment because of the deep harm reduction approach;
- We have kept people who have faced chronic homelessness housed.

The focus on Recovering from Homelessness within a Housing First approach has offered us a stable platform to build on this trust and engagement and allow for a more proactive model of Transitional Housing that moves beyond emergency interim housing and moves into housing that supports next-stage housing.

What We Know About UA Housing

- Most people have stayed for close to 2 years.
- The most likely and successful next step for people is Supportive Housing.
- Half of the people leaving UA are leaving to housing.
- People are staying at UA as a viable option, the challenge is next-step housing options that work for this complex group of residents.
- We need to focus now on readiness for next-step housing in order to keep this housing as Transitional.
- We are responding to the people

UA: By the Numbers

- 130** Total residents
- 80** Current residents at UA
- 70** People listed as chronically homeless
- 53** People who are housing ready
- 25** People moved to supportive housing
- 564** Average days stay of UA residents

UA staff supported off-site appointments:

- 306** Medical appointments
- 111** Dental appointments
- 222** Legal appointments
- 35** Job Search appointments
- 81** Addiction and Mental Health appointments
- 63** Work, Pets, Family & Child Services, family connections

who are facing deep and chronic homelessness and new strategies and approaches are needed to support their next steps.

Recovery Approach

Studies have shown that the long-term effects of homelessness on individuals often fall into two categories - health and personal issues.

People experiencing homelessness encounter many health issues throughout their lives. Due to the inability to access necessities, they are more likely to live with multiple afflictions, including: cold injury/frostbite; cardio-respiratory diseases; nutritional deficiencies; sleep deprivation; mental illness; physical and sexual assault; drug dependency; HIV/AIDS.

It is challenging for anyone when they are forced to face the fact that they may become unhoused. This is often complicated by the fact that many experiencing homelessness are dealing with psychological challenges such as:

- Becoming institutionalized,
- Loss of self-esteem,
- Increase in substance misuse,
- Loss of ability and will to care for oneself,
- Increased danger of abuse and violence,
- Increased chance of entering the criminal justice system,
- Development of behavioral problems.

At University Ave Housing most of the resident have experienced chronic homelessness and we have seen the primary issues faced by residents as:

- Deeply oppositional behaviour and trust related challenges.
- Chronically feeling unsafe.
- Mental health issues combined with drug induced psychosis.



Working Centre staff and volunteers celebrate at the groundbreaking event

Ground Broken at 97 Victoria

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First conceived as a response to homelessness in the community, the Making Home project will fully transform the site at 97 Victoria Street. As described by our architects (BNKC): “The new design builds on the good work already happening and develops the site to its full potential”.

The existing heritage building – long the home of St. John’s Kitchen and Worth a Second Look furniture store – will have a new 3rd floor addition built on top to create 22 units of supportive housing. The 2nd floor will be completely renovated to create an additional 22 units of supportive housing, and the ground floor will be transformed into a medical clinic and public-access washrooms, showers and laundry facilities. A ground floor addition will also be built out from the west side of the building to create a bright and dynamic community centre that will be the new home of St. John’s Kitchen. A central feature for both residents and guests of 97 Victoria Street will be a beautifully designed and accessible courtyard. In short, we’re building an integrated campus that combines housing, community, healthcare, meal service, and access to a wide range of wrap-around supports.

To make this transformation possible, Worth a Second Look (WASL) furniture store is relocating to 37 Market Lane, Recycle Cycles is relocating to 256 King Street East, and St. John’s Kitchen will be sharing space with St. John’s Anglican Church during construction.

Much background work has been happening over the summer months as we move towards site plan approval and the issuance of our building permit. In addition, construction tendering is well under way. We remain grateful to our key partners who continue to support us and drive this project forward with their commitment, skills and expertise: Perimeter Development, BNKC Architects and Govan Brown.

As the construction phase begins this fall, you will see a fence go up around 97 Victoria Street and some initial site preparation before we begin to build the 3rd floor addition, followed by the community centre.

Many people have come together to bring this vision to a reality, and we still need your support. We are re-launching our capital campaign with a fundraising goal of \$3 million dollars. Please join us in creating a welcoming and inclusive space where the most vulnerable in our community – who are housed or unhoused – can find community connections, resources and meaningful involvement.

Find out more about the project at: 97victoria.theworkingcentre.org

Community Dental Update

By Ian Shantz

After being put on the back burner out of pure necessity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, The Working Centre’s Community Dental Clinic is once again open.

This news has The Working Centre Director Joe Mancini smiling.

Food and housing became the immediate priorities throughout the pandemic. Those needs combined with complexities surrounding health regulations, led to the dental clinic, which had been operating since 2014, being temporarily shuttered in 2020.

“We were always committed to it,” Mancini said. “It was only in the last year that we were able to start planning out how to put our resources towards that.”

A significant portion of those resources came courtesy of GreenShield’s GSC Sherry Peister Community Impact Fund held at WRCE, which effectively allowed The Working Centre’s dental clinic to re-open in February 2023.

“It was the key ingredient,” Mancini said. “We wanted to have a little bit of a base of funding. The clinic operates with volunteer dentists and hygienists, but we do employ a dental assistant who serves as the office manager. That was the one role we needed to get things going. When that was confirmed, that was a bit of a relief that we



Delmy Rodriguez, Dr. Eathar Noureen and Nory Gamboa working at the dental clinic

could move forward.”

The funding allowed The Working Centre to hire a dental assistant who performs the role of full-time clinic coordinator. They were also able to purchase dental software that allows for easy documentation of services.

“What I have seen in the experiences of folks I walk with through dental care is it gives them a feeling of hope that they can turn things around. Appearance is big to everyone. So having nice teeth again whether that’s with the dentist fixing the ones that are fixable or doing extraction to prepare them for dentures. This provides people with confidence, better self esteem and most importantly better over all health.” (Working Centre Outreach Worker).

Our gratitude to GreenShield and WRCE for supporting this project. And we are grateful for the dentists and hygienists who lovingly do this work. We welcome more dental professionals.



In the period between March 1st to June 30th there were 110 appointments for services like New Patient Exams, Restorations, Extractions, Fillings, Emergencies, and Cleanings. Root Canals were first offered in early July.

We are grateful for the 7 volunteer dentists:

Dr. Yasmin Al-latar, Dr. Sandy Tse, Dr. Glynn Manchester, Dr. Chhavi Saxina, Dr. Lauren Doherty, Dr. Eethar Noureen, Dr. Mernoush Ghobady.

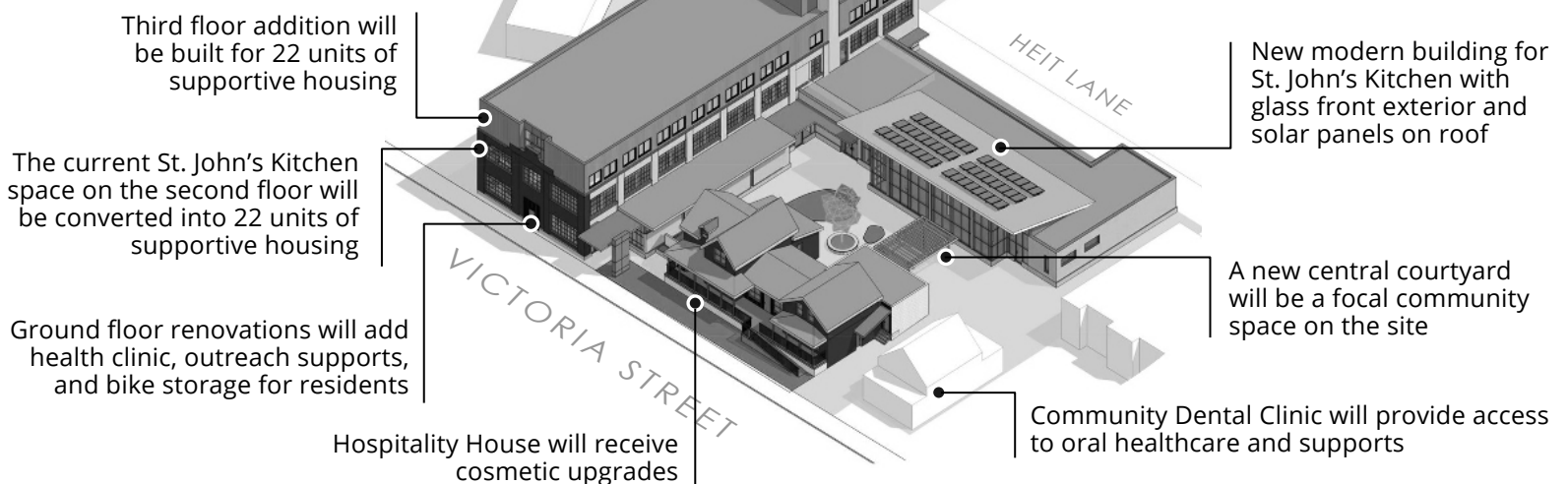
Dr. Kerr Banduk, retired dentist, is our main recruiter of dentists and he provides oversight to the clinic.

We also thank dental hygienists Zohra Zakhizada, Jessica Harlock, Krista Kneisel and Nory Gamboa for their work at the clinic.



Making Home Project at 97 Victoria

Target Occupancy Date:
December 2024





St. John's Kitchen Returning to St. John's Anglican Church

By Joe Mancini

As St. John's Kitchen prepares to return to St. John's Anglican Church, it is fitting to reflect on our long journey together. For 21 years between January 1985 and July 2006 a continuous free weekday meal was served at lunchtime in St. John's gym. During those years, every weekday between 100 - 200 people came through the church gym.

The Working Centre had started using the St. John's gymnasium two years earlier in January 1983 for the St. John's Unemployed Workers Centre. The project was part of a worker adjustment program aimed at supporting unemployed workers laid off from the auto industry.

The Unemployed Worker Centre project helped to teach us the reality of long-term unemployment. We realized quickly that those who came to the gym despaired for the possibility of work. Underneath family breakdown, physical injuries, lack of skills, or addictions, as a group they understood they were not the winners in the labour market.

The St. John's Unemployed Worker Centre became a refuge during the day for coffee and friendship. The space was always busy. The total attendance at the end of August 1984 was 9277 visits. The report on the project's ending described the learning:



"The people of St. John's Unemployed Worker Centre are the refugees of the economic crisis. Many have lost hope and are highly disillusioned[...] We are quite aware that money for this type of program is scarce, but we also know how important the program is and how deep the need is[...] Where can funding come from to provide this important service? Who else is prepared to respond to those most deeply affected by the stagnant economy?"

The answer appeared less than six weeks later at a meeting of the Core Area Ministry Committee, when it was announced that the Ontario Progressive Conservative government would allocate project funding to community-based food projects. It was agreed that The Working Centre would work with the churches to establish a place for a daily meal and drop-in centre. We quickly went back to St. John's Anglican Church and met with the wardens and Archdeacon Cy Ladds who agreed they would host the

project in the church gymnasium, building on the recently closed Unemployed Worker Centre.

By November 1984 we had a name – St. John's Kitchen, we had secured funding and we had joined the newly established Foodbank of Waterloo Region. The only hold up was complying with building and fire code regulations. Everything was cleared up by the time we served the first meal on January 15, 1985.

Long before we moved to 97 Victoria N in July 2006, St. John's Kitchen had developed its daily rhythm of opening at 8:00 am while the meal was prepared in the open kitchen. Most importantly, St. John's Kitchen was dependent on the effort of so many giving of their time and energy to ensure a free daily meal was served. The last 15 years has seen increased responses to on the ground mental health and homelessness issues.

In the fall of 2019, a marked change had taken place in the community. For the past few years more and more patrons of St. John's Kitchen had no choice but to live on the street in the face of precarious housing options while at the same time there was an overwhelming level of mental health and addictions issues. The last three years through the pandemic has been the most challenging as we have adapted to primarily serving the homeless community while distributing takeout meals from the SJK garage.

Many changes happened during the pandemic when we were no longer able to produce the meal on-site in the open kitchen. We started by cooking in the evenings but quickly shifted and upgraded the commercial kitchen on Queen



Three members of the SJK team host the space at 87 Victoria St. North, which complements services at St. John's Church.

SJK at St. John's Church offers drop-in, coffee, meals and snacks, hamper goods, harm reduction supplies, washrooms, health care and community connections.

SJK at 87 Victoria offers washrooms, showers, laundry, and an observed use room.

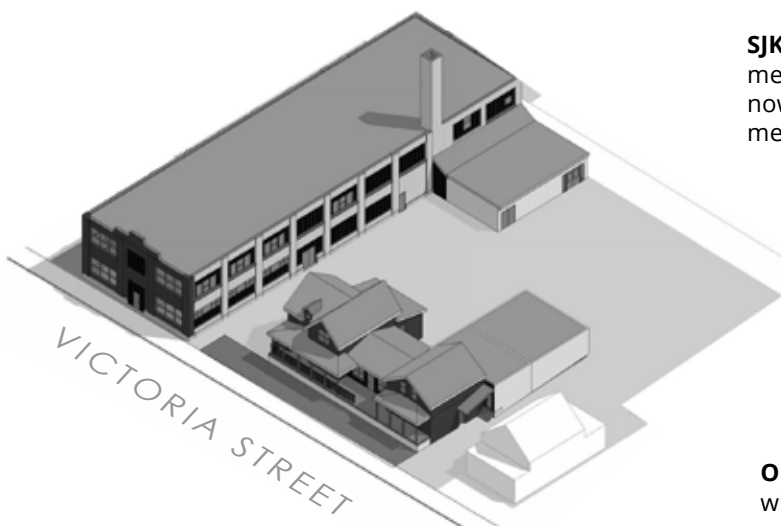
Street South, where 700 meals each day are prepared for distribution, including for St. John's Kitchen.

In our 40th year, we are embarking on another change as the 97 Victoria campus undergoes a dramatic renovation with a new ground floor home for St. John's Kitchen, the addition of 44 units of housing and a dedicated medical area for primary care, mental health, addictions and counselling support.

We are deeply grateful that St. John's Anglican Church has welcomed St. John's Kitchen back to the church gymnasium during our year of construction. We come back under substantially different circumstances, so much of our community has changed over 40 years. Yet the gym at St. John's Church is still there, ready to welcome the people of St. John's Kitchen.



Changes at 97 Victoria



St. John's Kitchen will move to St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church at Duke and Water streets. The Church originally hosted the kitchen from 1985 until 2006.

SJK Garage was set up during the pandemic to distribute prepared meals, packaged food items and bottles of water. The Food Pantry is now set up at St. John's Anglican Church where distribution of take-out meals and pantry items will continue

Worth A Second Look which first opened in 2006 on the ground floor of 97 Victoria is moving to our 37 Market Lane location behind Fresh Ground (256 King St. E) near the Kitchener Market.

Hospitality House residents have moved to nearby Water Street House during construction at 97 Victoria. The front portion of Hospitality House will serve as a temporary access for those in need of showers, laundry, washrooms, and prepared meals.

Outreach teams, healthcare supports, and housing supports will continue to be offered through St. John's Kitchen.

International Climate Justice

By Isaiah Ritzmann

Canada's fair share of climate action is greater than what our governments are promising, let alone doing. In fact Canada's fair share of climate action is greater than our society's capacity. The amount we would need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to be fair to other nations is greater than our ability to do so, technically and physically. The gap between what we should do and what we can do becomes what we owe - our climate debt - to those countries whose fair shares we are, in effect, borrowing. The realities of our tight climate timelines means that more emissions from some means less emissions for others. In this zero-sum situation when we take more than our fair share we take from other nations the time and opportunity to develop. What we owe in return is financial reparations.

This, of course, begs many questions. Let's start at the beginning - our unyielding climate timelines. We know that to have a reasonable hope of avoiding catastrophic warming we need to cut global greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and get to net-zero by 2050. This will be an immense challenge - even more so with the many wasted years of inaction. This requires switching from coal and oil to wind and solar as fast as we can. At the national level it means massive home retrofits, more heat pumps, better building standards, more electric vehicles but less cars overall - with more walking, biking, and taking the bus. It means less meat-eating, more shopping at farmers markets, but less shopping overall. At the global level it means immense, unprecedented cooperation and coordination. It means real emergency action. We need all nations to act like our house is on fire, because it is. Yet not all nations are equally responsible for climate change. Neither do all have the same needs. How do we take these differences seriously? And can we realistically expect the cooperation we need when some nations - especially those most responsible - aren't doing their fair share?

Globally we have a collective

Globally we have a collective carbon budget of about 300 GT (gigatonnes) of CO₂ we can burn and still have a chance of remaining below average warming of 1.5°C. The key question is how do we allocate this budget fairly among all people given our very real, and very relevant, differences?

carbon budget of about 300 GT (gigatonnes) of CO₂ we can burn and still have a chance of remaining below average warming of 1.5°C. The key question is how do we allocate this budget fairly among all people given our very real, and very relevant, differences? After all 300 GT of carbon isn't just an abstraction. It means something concrete. For one nation having less carbon to burn may mean the end of private jets. For another, it may mean the end of warm winter nights.

Think about a group of five people who have a budget of \$1,000 dollars for a month. How would you divide the money? Would you give each person \$200? Or would you consider differences in need and responsibility? Let's say the group has only \$1,000 because one member wasted \$3,000 last month - would they get the same as everyone else this month? And let's say one or two members have expensive, life-saving medication they take every day. Should they only get \$200? That doesn't seem fair given their needs. This metaphor gives you a good picture of the moral complexities of climate change. We need to act, but some of us need to act more quickly. We all need to cut our collective emissions in absolute terms, but some of us need to cut our emissions drastically.

What does climate justice look like between nations? Specifically, how do we think about each nation's fair share of our carbon budget? Perhaps we could divide the 300 GT based on the number of nations. But that won't do. It seems fair that countries with bigger populations get a bigger allocation than others. China, with a population of 1.4 billion people, would get a bigger allocation than

smaller countries like Canada. Yet even this is too simple as such proportioning ignores important distinctions. The world is already facing over 1°C of average warming above pre-industrial levels. More warming is locked in at this point, no matter what we do. Who, historically, is most responsible for this warming? Those most responsible should bear the greater burden of reducing emissions. Likewise, we need to consider what countries are doing with their carbon budgets. Some nations spend their budgets on basic needs like housing and food. Other nations, like Canada, spend our budgets elsewhere.

In 2015 an international network of civil society organizations came together to compare each nation's fair share of climate action to their promised action (NDCs - National Determined Contributions) under the Paris Agreement. The network, called the Civil Society Equity Review (CSER), produced a standardized framework with which they could quantify each nation's fair share based on historic responsibility, present development, and capacity to adapt to climate change. In this framework wealthier, western countries are required to do more to respond to climate change. Wealthier, western nations, after all, are more responsible for the crisis and have less to lose than the rest of the world. Differentiated responsibilities and needs means each country's fair shares are weighted differently.

This framework shows quite clearly that justice requires that countries like Canada will need to cut our emissions much faster than our governments are currently promising. In fact, justice requires us to cut emissions more than we actually can. That is to say we are morally obligated to reduce emissions faster than we physically are able to do so - a capacity limit that the Civil Society Equity Review calls "mitigation potential." Whatever the gap will be between Canada's fair share and our actual emissions is what we will owe as climate debt. For what it's worth, under the CSER framework Canada would need to lower its emissions by over 90% by 2030 to align with its fair share - or triple our current pledges.[1]

Some of this is not physically possible. On the bright side, the corresponding climate debt we owe would amount to about \$1,400 per Canadian.[2] This is a manageable debt relative to our GDP and to the costs of inaction.

Knowing about this climate

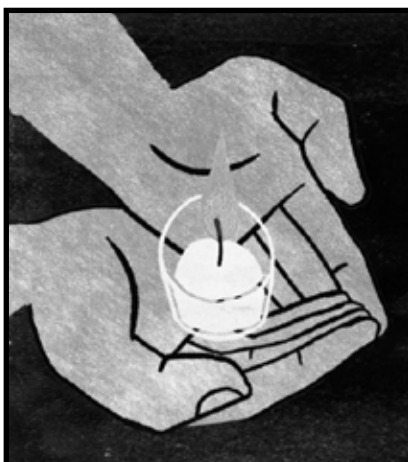
injustice is one thing. Knowing what to do about it is quite another. What can we do as citizens of a country abdicating its moral responsibilities? After all if systems transformation were easy or straightforward we wouldn't need to transform the system, it would already be done. Nevertheless here we are. In our current context what can we do to raise awareness, to advocate, to act on international climate justice? Here are a few initial ideas:

- Educate yourself. Understand what Canada's fair share of climate action would look like both abstractly (measured in tonnes of CO₂) and concretely (how society would look different if implemented).
- Educate others. Find opportunities for conversations at work, with family, and in community settings.
- Advocate. Find ways to urge elected politicians to acknowledge both Canada's fair share and the fact that we will owe climate debt.
- Financially support (when able) groups in Canada and abroad working towards international climate justice.
- Organize. Join with a small group of other citizens who are committed to work for climate justice. Small group action is more sustainable than individual action. As the saying goes "if you want to go far, go together."

Climate change is marked by profound inequality. This profound inequality exists not only between nations but also within them. What does climate justice look like across class differences? In Canada we already see great class inequality, even without considering the climate crisis. We have cities where thousands of people own multiple homes while thousands more are unhoused. We have billionaire grocery store owners who make record profits as food banks see record numbers of people who are food insecure. While Canada may have a greater responsibility to reduce our collective carbon emissions, it is not true that each Canadian has the same fair share. In this article I explored the inequality of responsibility and ability that exists between nations. In the next issue I explore what climate justice looks like between groups of people.

1. <https://calculator.climateequityreference.org/>

2. *Ibid.*



CLIMATE EMERGENCY VIGILS WATERLOO REGION

FRIDAYS 8-9PM | SEPT 1ST – DEC 15TH, 2023 | WATERLOO PUBLIC SQUARE

Together we grieve - for all the past and present inaction over climate and for the hypocrisy of governments who declare climate emergencies but continue with business-as-usual. And together we hope. We remember that not all is lost. Time is running out but we can still act. And we can act with justice and compassion.

Learn more at: www.faithclimatejustice.ca/climate-vigils.html

Community Support for Queen Street Apartments



The Queen Street Apartments were possible because of a Rapid Housing Initiative grant through the Region of Waterloo and the Federal Government's CMHC. The funding provided capital contributions for the rapid construction of new housing and/or acquisition of existing buildings for rehabilitation or conversion to permanent affordable housing. This project achieved its goal when the new tenants all moved in during June 2023, one year after construction started.

The project mainly renovated the second and third floors of 54-44 and 58 Queen Street South. Over the years these floors were primarily used for office or studio space for dance and yoga and in the 1990's was the home to Pop the Gator Blues Club.

In June we welcomed the new tenants, all of who were living in shelters or precarious housing. The tenants, all single woman, many with children, have come from all over the world including Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Albania, Kosovo, and Iran.

Before the move-in, the Waterloo Rotary Club made a big commitment to support this housing project. During the Waterloo Mayor's Breakfast held at RIM Park the proceeds from the event - a total of \$18,000 - were contributed to the Queen Street Apartments capital fund. On May 16th, members of the Waterloo Rotary Club helped unbox and set up 21 sets of fridges and stoves. Just before the June 1st move-in the Club dropped off 21 house warming baskets that were delivered to each unit. Another greatly appreciated gift was the sharing of 21 kitchen tables and 21 end tables from members of the Kitchener Waterloo Woodworking and Craft Centre, creatively made from left over hardwood flooring.

We welcome capital donations to help completely pay down the costs of construction.

Thank You for Your Support!

- Region of Waterloo CMHC Rapid Housing Initiative
- City of Kitchener and the Region for waiving Development Fees
- Robert J Dyck Architect and Engineer Inc.
- Just Working Construction
- Waterloo Region Community Foundation Housing Fund
- Trinity United Church Legacy Fund
- Waterloo Rotary Club
- Mamie Beilstein Charitable Foundation
- Kathie Keefe
- Lee Horton

The Power of Pets

By Alison Harris

I have a huge passion for pets, and have been witness to them bringing people together in magical ways on many occasions. When I first started working at the University Avenue (UA) interim housing project, one of the things I absolutely loved was that folks were welcome to bring their pets to live with them. Knowing how deeply attached many community members are to their pets, it brought me immense joy to know they didn't need to be separated from them or choose to remain on the street to stay with their pets.

Fast forward, I am now working at the King Street Shelter, which is also pet friendly.

Many pet owners at the shelter don't have the luxury of photographs of their pets, their phones are often stolen or lost, and they lose any pictures they may have.

I also work at Community Justice Initiatives. On Saturday, May 26th they held their annual fundraiser, The Super Sweet Stride Retreat for their Stride program.

Stride helps women at Grand Valley Federal Prison build informal networks of support that assist them as they reintegrate back into the community. The program also helps the community to receive the women safely and supportively.

The fundraiser is a spa day offering a wide range of services. Women from the prison are able to attend and donate their time and services for the day, along with service providers in the wider community. All proceeds raised go to support the Stride program.

This year, they decided to offer Pet Photography!

My friend Ashley, who owns Happy Tails Ayr, didn't hesitate one bit when asked if she would be interested in donating her time and

offering up her creative photography skills.

I began to think that this could be an opportunity for the pet owners at the King Street Shelter to have their loyal companions photographed. We switched gears, two sessions were booked and paid for which allowed every pet at the shelter that day to be in the limelight.

Ashley brought along a great selection of accessories for the dogs to wear, and some delicious treats. The pet owners were thrilled to hear

they could get free photos of their pets. The owners were also invited to be photographed with their pets and gladly accepted.

The fun took place at beautiful Rockway Gardens, on a sunny Saturday morning.

Their owners were so engaged in the whole process, and stuck around to chat and get a sneak preview of the pictures through Ashley's camera. The pets brought the event together in such a beautiful way, everyone was happy with how the day turned out. The pet owners were also really happy to learn that this initiative would support women from Grand Valley Prison.

Each pet owner will receive all of their pictures emailed to them, and they can choose their favourite one to be printed and framed.

A little idea that grew brought much joy and support to the shelter residents and the Stride program.

A big thanks to Ashley, all the pet owners and pets for going with the flow and making the day so fun and meaningful.



The Working Centre: Community Snapshots



People wait in line for the Income Tax Clinic at the Resource Centre at 58 Queen St. S; The Local Democracy class engaged in discussion



Opened in Spring 2023, Erbs Road Shelter is home to 50 cabins that provide interim housing for individuals previously unsheltered



A view of the encampment site at 100 Victoria St. N; Francis playing music at the encampment site



Workers move items into the new Worth A Second Look location at 37 Market Lane which is scheduled to open in October

UA Housing Supports

continued from page 3

- Injuries from fights and self-harm.
- Conflict related to theft and/or drug debts.
- Challenges in moving past street justice to handle conflict; learning how to approach conflict in new ways.
- Engagement with justice system due to thefts, violence, etc.
- Inability to care for themselves and their space.
- Hoarding related to crystal meth use.
- Wound care and infections that result from injury and active drug use.
- Intense attachments to pets that add to the support needed.
- Relationship and domestic issues
- Complexity experienced through pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Deep trauma from past experiences as a child or living without housing.
- Brain injury and consequent self-management challenges created by overdose, injury, childhood trauma.

UA Interim Housing Supports A Housing First Approach

- Providing immediate access to interim housing, combined with flexible, community based supports embedded within, with a goal of finding next stage housing.
- Following a deep harm reduction approach designed to keep people as safe as possible as they respond to the multiple challenges

of homelessness, addiction, dislocation, lack of access to services, etc.

- Following an approach of recovery from homelessness – building opportunity for engagement, inclusion, working toward a feeling of safety, and supporting choice in living arrangements
 - Focusing on activities that support a strength-based approach, including skills-building, improved health outcomes, reduced engagement with police, and increased community connections.
 - A preson-centred approach guides the work as achievements are individualized and achievable and recognize the challenges of people facing long-term homelessness, substance use, brain injury, and mental health.
- Now post-Covid we hope to build on these learnings, refresh the space, intensify our one-on-one supports, and connect people with emerging housing opportunities.

Core Principles of Housing First

- Immediate access to permanent housing with no preconditions.
- Consumer choice and self-determination.
- Individualized, recovery-oriented, & client-driven supports
- Harm reduction.
- Social & community integration.



A dedicated staff team help to support 80 residences at the University Ave. site

Updates for Recycle Cycles and Worth A Second Look

The Working Centre campus at 256 King East has been undergoing significant renovations as we prepare the spaces for a substantial re-creation. There are three paths of change that we have been navigating.

The first is the necessity of moving Worth A Second Look Furniture and Housewares Thrift Store from the main floor of 97 Victoria N to make way for the housing construction project that will start in early October 2023.

The good news is that Worth A



Bikes being repaired in the former Recycle Cycles workshop

Second Look will relocate to 37 Market Lane where formerly Recycle Cycles and the Green Door Used Clothing Boutique operated from. Worth A Second Look will have two integrated retail spaces on the two floors with two entrances, one off Market Lane and the other off King Street East through the laneway behind 256 King East. We will also have news soon on the opening of the Green Door at 54 Queen Street South.

The second path is the re-locating of Recycle Cycles from 37 Market Lane to 256 King East Unit B. The community bike shop will have 6 public access bike stands on the main floor. The basement has been transformed into a bike shop designed to refurbish and repair used bikes. The new Recycle Cycles Community Bike Shop will be opening in early October in its new space.

The third path has been the



uncovering of substantial structural issues as we started renovations at 256 King East. The first problem area was related to a deteriorating back wall that had been compromised by a change in grading of the parking lot some 30 years ago. For various reasons the whole back structure where the walk-in cooler and freezers were located required either re-bricking or repointing. Other structural repairs followed including shoring up the front basement foundation, and the replacement of

large window lintels on the side of the building. Finally, we decided to complete the restoration of the front façade which we had been doing in a piecemeal way since 2015. As of October 1st, we are still waiting for the new coolers/freezers which will enable the completion of the Fresh Ground kitchen and the long awaited re-opening of Fresh Ground Café.

It will be an exciting Fall as these three projects redevelop together in their new spaces.