



THE MANNA DAY CENTRE

(Registered Charity 294691)

**Working With Homeless People
and those in need**



The Manna Society

The Manna Society is an ecumenical Christian Charity founded in 1983. We run two projects: the Manna Day Centre and a hostel for migrant workers.

The Ethos of the Manna Society

Our vision is the creation of a just society that respects the dignity of every individual.

The Manna Centre is a place of unconditional acceptance. We try not to judge but to love.

We aim to respect the dignity and worth of each person with whom we come in contact. Each and every one has an intrinsic value that deserves to be respected. No one is dispensable.

Our task is a practical one, to respond to the most immediate needs of those who seek our help. However, we cannot be content with this. We must also seek to challenge the structures of society that lead to homelessness and poverty.



About the Manna Day Centre

Its task

The Manna Day Centre cares for around 120-150 people a day - mostly men. About 50% of these are homeless, either sleeping rough or living in hostels for the homeless. The other 50% are living in Council and Housing Association flats. Many of these were formerly homeless. Most are long-term unemployed. Their sole source of income is their social security benefit.

Why was it called the Manna Centre?

Manna was the food from heaven that appeared miraculously each day to feed the Israelites as they travelled through the desert. The Manna Centre opened in 1983 and offered food for the homeless who wandered through the urban desert. At that time, there was a great need in this area for a Day Centre to meet the many needs of these people – food, shelter, clothes, toilet facilities, etc. Thus the Manna became a kind of oasis in this desert, freely offering bread - manna - to the hungry.

An ecumenical endeavour.

The people who established and still support the Manna Centre are from different Christian Churches. The RC Diocese of Southwark provides the buildings. Manna's patrons are Michael Bowen, the RC Archbishop of Southwark and Peter Price, the Anglican Bishop of Bath and Wells and also a former chairman of the Manna. Much of our funding and most of our foodstuffs are donated by the Christian community in the Greater London area.

What does Manna offer?

Food and Clothing

The Manna Centre is now open **seven days per week**. The times of opening are weekdays and Saturdays 9.30 to 1.30 and Sundays 9.30 to 2.00. Breakfast and lunch are provided and hot drinks all day. Clothing is available twice a week. **All services are free.**

The chance for a shower

One female and three male showers are available, as well as wash basins and toilets. The chance for a shower is greatly welcomed.

A range of health care

Homeless people find it difficult to get registered with a doctor, in spite of their inevitably high health risk.

So at the Manna Centre there are:

Three **Nurse/Nurse Practitioner** surgeries every week

A fortnightly **Dentist's** surgery

A fortnightly **Chiropody** service

A weekly chance to talk to a **Mental Health Worker**

Attendance by an **Optician** once a month

An **Osteopath** clinic each week

A fortnightly **Reflexology** surgery

Help with finding a bed for the night

Manna wants to see homeless people get off the streets - we attempt to find immediate accommodation in Direct Access hostels. Our experience is that this is extremely difficult - there is a grave shortage of beds available.

Help with maintaining tenancies

We do this through the provision of furniture and through our housing and welfare advice service.

Housing and Welfare Advice

We help service users with housing benefit, Council Tax, rent arrears and social security issues. The *Department of Work and Pensions* provides a weekly advice surgery on social security benefits.

There is also a weekly housing advice surgery for those who are homeless and have been in the Armed Services.

Furniture provision

We provide second-hand furniture both to those who have recently moved into flats and to those whose furniture needs replacing.

A place to feel at home

Manna staff, supported by dedicated volunteers, aim to offer respect and loving care to those who come to the Day Centre. In addition to meeting the practical needs of our service users, we try to create a warm and welcoming environment.

Manna's plans for the future

Continued care for those in need

Since 1983 the Manna has tried to respond to the most immediate needs of some of the most disadvantaged people in our society. We will continue as long as the need persists and we have the necessary support to do so.

Pressing for policies to end homelessness

Manna has welcomed the Homelessness Act 2000 and the requirement for local authorities to produce by July 2003 a strategy to prevent homelessness. The Act also extends priority status for local authority help to groups of single homeless - 16 and 17 year olds, under 25s who have been in care, ex-servicemen, people coming out of prison and other institutions, as well as to victims of domestic violence. We are promoting action among Manna supporters to press for the full and generous implementation of this Act. Manna's Campaign Worker is playing an active role in all this.

Support needs of the Manna Day Centre

Help in kind.

We are always in need of the following items:

- Food
- Men's clothing
- Crockery
- Towels
- Blankets

If you want to help, Manna will provide an up-to-date list of most needed items.

Cash needs

The annual running costs of the Manna Day Centre are approximately £233,000 (£19,416 a month). This includes an additional £40,000 a year to cover the costs of increasing our services from five to seven days a week from January 2003.

The greater part of our funding comes from the Christian community – mainly in Greater London. We also receive some help from Charitable Trusts and a few Companies.

We receive no government or guaranteed funding. **We rely almost entirely on voluntary donations!**

Financial donations are always necessary and much appreciated. These can be made on a once-off basis, or for those of you who wish to support us on a more long-term basis, by making a standing order at your bank/building society. By Gift-Aiding any donation you can increase your donation by 28% (reclaimed tax from the Inland Revenue).

Both the **Standing Order** and **Gift-Aid** Forms can be obtained either from the Manna Director or from our Website (addresses below)

Volunteers

Volunteers are always needed for the running of the Day Centre. If you would like to volunteer your services then please contact the Director.

However you choose to help, it is warmly welcomed.

