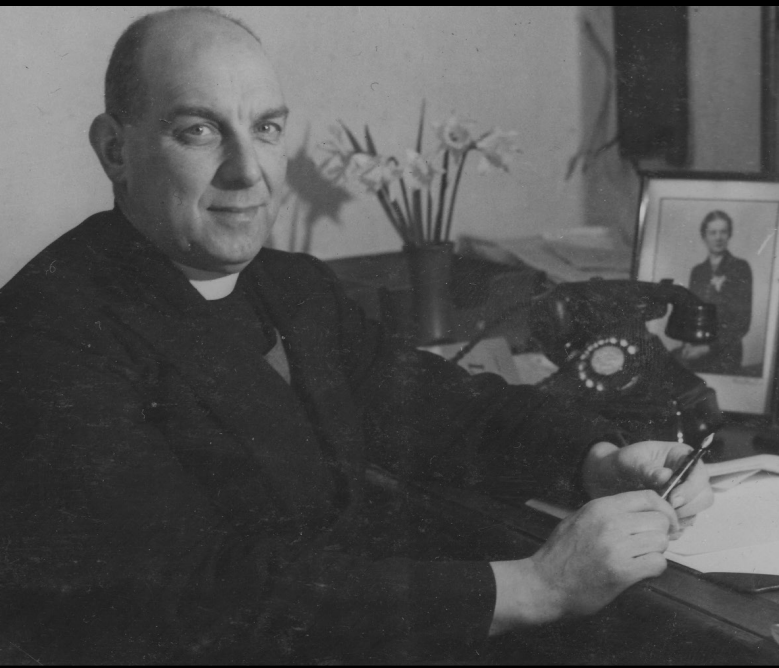


@CryptLeeds

SUMMER EDITION 2023

DON ROBINS - A LEGACY



St.
George's
Crypt

Welcome

to our summer newsletter

Chris Fields
Chief Executive Officer



Hello everyone and welcome to another newsletter filled to the limit with news and stories of our ever-growing Crypt family.

As always, we are looking as to how we can help more people and make an even bigger positive impact upon homelessness and deprivation in and around Leeds.

I have to start my personal succession planning because if I stand on my tiptoes, I can see my retirement about five years away - that's just over the horizon in Crypt time!

The questions I have to ask myself and of others is what has been our personal legacy to the Crypt and what do we want to do with the next five years to leave an even better, stronger and resilient legacy for those to come?

I always look back to our history to see the amazing heritage, reputation and footprints that our founders left. We often talk about the bricks and mortar and how a massive asset register leaves a memorable legacy.

That's certainly true to a degree but look back even further, what did Jesus leave behind? Giant temples? Treasures? Bricks and mortar? No.... just his love and compassion and the promise of eternal life. That needs to be remembered.

Getting back to our founders... I have yet to give a talk or attend a meeting where someone doesn't come up and say, "my neighbour/ mum / dad/ aunty/ grandparents were helped by the Crypt 50 years ago and we have never

forgotten it". I suppose we could build a brick wall with that emblazoned upon it but that's not the legacy. It's how people feel about the charity.

Our teams are just amazing in how they minister and mentor people into changing their own lives or just offer the "one off" assistance such as a food parcel (or years ago, a sack of coal as I read the other day) when it's most needed. No questions asked. Just do it with love. That obvious kind and loving attitude Don Robins and Don Patterson actioned in their time here left an imprint within the DNA of the city and long may that reign.

It's said that most people don't know the names of their great grandparents. I have been told but cannot recall as I write this, so I am no different. I can recall my late mum laughing at stories of old such as my great grandad buying some dodgy perfume and great grandma pouring it in the mop bucket to wash the floor, chuntering about kennels and stables and giving him a hard time. He didn't leave a massive asset register, but like Jesus left love, kindness and memories which gets talked about much more than the house he lived in.

Leaving a pathway for future generations is a great gift to leave behind when we are called home. Our latest build, Don Robins House, is no longer spoken about in the terms of its magnificence and quality of build, but now the discussions are around the amazing outcomes and lives improved by being there. The same goes for the *Growing Rooms*, we have five typical

terraced houses but the magic that happens from there is far superior to the humble houses our guys live in. Neither of those two projects (and now the ladies' project) could have happened without the gifts in wills or legacies (you choose the term) that kind, thoughtful and selfless people made to the Crypt. We do invest our good fortune in homes for those in need. Yes, it builds the asset register, it makes the charity stronger on paper, but the real legacy is that people like you and me have left a gift of any size or amount to help those less fortunate than ourselves. If 60 people left £500 that's £30,000 equal to a deposit on another house for *Growing Rooms* (the remainder, we can do by mortgage) but essentially that's four more people living safely and addressing their addiction.... four more lives saved.

If I have got this right, you will now have guessed where I am coming from. You, me, and thousands of others could help the Crypt by leaving a legacy, a heritage and a hope for the future.

I read the Bible every day and wonder at the miracles, legacies and wisdom our Lord and Saviour left behind for us to learn and grow from. I don't expect anyone to be reading about us in 2,000 years, but I hope the legacy we have left, with your help so far, continues for another 100 years - helping, saving, changing, improving, and loving unconditionally. Just as Christ instructed.

With all blessings, Chris



A Legacy of Love

Don Robins probably had no idea about the legacy he would leave. When he walked into the Crypt in 1930 and saw the need, he was walking a path of Faith. He saw abject poverty, and did what he could, worked as he was called; to offer homeless and vulnerable people of his generation the helping hand they needed to find stability, moving on to a more stable foundation. Working on stony ground, he tilled, removed the obstacles and furrowed a path that has saved many lives.

Throughout its history, St George's Crypt has innovated. Not for the sake of innovation, but because it has identified a need, built up experience around how to support the individual and developed services to bring about change. Before the advent of the NHS we were working with doctors and nurses to support our clients for free. Before the Welfare State we offered housing and support to homeless and

vulnerable individuals and families. More recently, we have worked with partners across the city to develop a range of holistic healthcare pathways for homeless individuals.

As we have progressed, we have developed a clearer understanding of the needs facing our clients. We build one service, and that solves one issue, but also uncovers other unmet needs. We work to meet those needs and others appear; not everyone can be supported in the same way, and what works for one doesn't necessarily work for the other.

During COVID, we completed two developments offering 38 units of accommodation; flats with 24/7 onsite support for the most vulnerable and marginalised in our city. You may have read about some of the successes from these two projects in previous newsletters but this is about legacies.

The legacy that we want to create is to build a new foundation for the next generation. We do not want to see people sleeping rough. We do not want people to fall through the safety net. We want to move the safety net, from the street to self-contained flats with support on site that offers hope and the ability to change. The ability to put down roots, lay stable foundations, and work towards independence.

When Don Robins dug out the Crypt, little did he know that he was laying the cornerstone of the organisation today. We feel that he would be proud that we are carrying on his vision; to offer people who have nothing, who are broken, down on their luck and in need of help, care, compassion and support, the framework to change, the tools to develop and grow, the good soil in which they can thrive.

Mary's House; A Living Legacy



We always talk about how we are entertaining angels; we've even written books about it! Who are we to judge the people who come daily to use our services? Sit down for a minute to chat and it quickly becomes apparent that the people we serve have hit a hurdle or a number of hurdles back-to-back that have left them broken. Generally, all they need is some stability, support and guidance; love and compassion to listen, and experience and knowledge of the system to help them work through their concerns.

We have an amazing team of volunteers who support us to deliver these services, who form the backbone of our organisation. This newsletter we are focusing on legacy, be it the 90 years and legacy of change within the organisation over time, on how clients have developed and changed, on how volunteers have left a living legacy through their time.

There is another form of legacy, the living legacy of a transformative gift or grant. These can dramatically change the way

we offer our services and allows the donor to see how the gift they give works to support the charity.

When one of our kitchen volunteers found out about our ambitions to develop a new residential rehabilitation service specifically for females, he asked for more information. Knowing that intimate relationships are exceptionally triggering in the early stages of recovery, we developed a male-only service. This, our *Growing Rooms* service, has proved successful, with many of the cohort becoming free of drink and drugs, building solid foundations of independence and moving on positively into their own tenancies. We wanted to do something similar for females, but we did not want to mix the cohorts and create a space that could lead to relationship anxiety and potentially relapse.

Because *Growing Rooms* houses 22 individuals at any one time, we require suitable accommodation for that number. Thinking about a female programme, we also had to plan for a similar level of residential provision, which put a pause on proceedings; four houses cost a lot

of money!

When this volunteer found out that the only thing that was holding us back was money, he donated enough to purchase a 4-bed house to get us started. Not only that, but his two sisters also donated so that we were able to purchase new furniture, fixtures, and fittings. This living legacy will allow us to move forward with our dreams, and the volunteer and his immediate family will be able to see the effect their donation has supporting people wanting to change.

This was an exceptionally generous gift that has allowed us to do something amazing, but it is also the small gifts that grow into something much bigger and are as valuable. Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves, just look at the story of the Widow's Mite. It is not how much we give, but the fact that we do give, and that we want to support those less fortunate than ourselves that is important. Every gift helps us develop new and innovative services that change the lives of vulnerable and homeless people who use our services.

The Positive Legacy of Recovery



Carl



Jim

St. George's Crypt offers care, compassion, and hope to homeless and vulnerable people and those living with substance dependence. We provide a safe and supportive environment where people can receive the care and guidance they need to turn their lives around. However, St. George's Crypt is more than just physical spaces; it is the embodiment of the legacy left by its founder, Don Robins.

His vision and dedication created a legacy that lives on long after he is gone. His legacy is one of hope, of perseverance and of a commitment to helping others. We are inspired by his legacy and strives to continue his work of making a positive impact in the lives of those who need it most.

Former service users, Carl and Jim, are just two examples of individuals who have benefited from the legacy. Both men have struggled with addiction in the past but with the help of *Growing Rooms*, St. George's Crypt's abstinence-based drug and alcohol recovery programme, they have turned their lives around. They are now working at the Crypt, supporting others to overcome addiction in order to create their own legacies.

Carl, who had been using substances since the age of 17,

found himself in the hospital at risk of losing a leg. A friend referred him to *Growing Rooms*, where he has been clean for 13 months. He now volunteers in the Crypt kitchen on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, and has a paid job as a Weekend Warden. Carl credits St. George's Crypt with giving him a sense of belonging and an opportunity to give back to others.

He says:

'I was on my own, isolated for many years. At St. George's Crypt I feel like part of a family. I enjoy coming here. It reminds me of where I come from and where I don't want to go back to. It also gives me the opportunity to share my life experiences with those that are still dealing with addiction. I am grateful to the Crypt and It makes me feel good giving back.'

Jim had prior knowledge of St. George's Crypt, having accessed it as a child to get food parcels. Later, while in rehabilitation, he heard about *Growing Rooms* and felt it was the best place for him to get long-lasting help. Jim spent 13 months at *Growing Rooms*, working through the programme alongside like-minded people. He secured a job as a Weekend Warden, then became bank staff, and now is in full-time employment as a Support Worker. Jim enjoys working with clients and guiding

them through his lived experience.

Jim says:

'I enjoy working with our clients; through lived experience I understand where they are, what they are feeling and I try and guide them. They, on their part, know my past so they trust my advice because they know I have been where they are.'

St. George's Crypt supported me from being a user to now being a full member of staff. The greatest feeling for me comes when I help people and witness the change; from chaos to citizenship.'

Carl and Jim's stories are a testament to the importance of legacies and the impact they can have on individuals and communities. Don Robins' legacy is the foundation upon which they are now creating their own living legacy. Their work highlights the importance of giving back to those who have helped us in our time of need, so they too can pay it forward.

St. George's Crypt continues to honour Don Robins' legacy by providing hope, care, and compassion to those who need it most. We serve as a reminder of the positive impact each one of us can have on the world and the lasting legacy we can leave behind.



FUNDRAISING 2023

St. George's Crypt has been at the forefront of homeless provision since its inception in 1930. It has continued to be a beacon of hope in the centre of Leeds; caring for the most vulnerable and destitute, offering a warm place to stay, food, clothing and all the additional services to help people move on to a better life.

In the past five years we have reflected on the services offered across the city and identified the gaps, through which so many people fall and lose hope.

Through doing this we have now identified five areas we believe we have the skills and knowledge, gained over 90 years, to transform and save lives; emergency accommodation at the Crypt in the centre of Leeds, trauma - informed care, residential addiction recovery services, move-on accommodation, and stop - gap housing to end the revolving door of failed tenancies.

As a charity, we dream big. We want to end homelessness. We want to give everyone who comes through our doors the opportunities to grow and succeed. If someone wants to change, we want to be able to identify their need, working with them to offer a bespoke service that suits them. We want people to leave our service with the ability to sustain a tenancy, to live a positive and fulfilled life and move on. When former clients return, we want this to be because they want to show us how far they have progressed, how well they are doing,

so we can share in their positive journey. Achieving these dreams, changing people's lives for the better comes at a charitable cost.

It can be a difficult thing to ask for money, even for a charity. People have a habit of moving out of the way when we see people collecting for charity in the street, branded in their charity's clothes, making a beeline like sheepdogs herding their flock.

It is important to relay how vital all forms of funding are to support the ambitions of the charity. Without these donations, we would not have been able to achieve any of the successes that we have over the years. The houses for our Growing Rooms drug and alcohol rehabilitation project were supported by gifts in wills. Our Growing Rooms Ladies house has been supported, as you have read, by a substantial donation for a living legacy. Our wider building ambitions, to create pathways for some of the most vulnerable citizens in Leeds, will be supported by gifts in wills.

When we are brainstorming about new projects, developing better ways to support the hardest to reach, innovating with partners to create new pathways that support our clients back onto a positive path, it is often gifts in wills that act as the foundation for further funding.

Every little helps. A gift to sponsor a brick. A donation to support an individual along their recovery journey. A bequest of meals for an individual over the course of a

week. A month? A year? Every time we receive word of a gift in a will, we are blessed that someone has considered and decided on us as the organisation to bear their legacy. As good stewards, we will ensure that your gift is used to support homeless and vulnerable people as they move on.

We are here to support you make this very important decision. If you need advice, we can direct you to a suitable lawyer. If you want to discuss what your gift would be used for, we can give you details of our strategic plans and how your support will help us achieve this. We can point you in the direction of someone who can talk through the tax implications of donating.

As we focus on the many different types of legacy that the charity has created over its 90 year history, it is important to remember the people who have acted as the pillars of support, enabling the charity to offer hope, compassion and love to so many broken people.

If you want to find out more, or have been thinking about a gift in your will and would like to talk it through with our team, please get in touch with:

Martin Barry,
St George's Crypt,
Great George Street,
Leeds, LS1 3BR,
or
martin.barry@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk
on 0113 245 9061. Thank-you and God Bless.



Rev. Andy Muckle

It is a great privilege to introduce myself as the next Chaplain to the Crypt. It feels very much like coming home for me as I spent a month here on placement with Roger and Jon during my ordination training. The experience of being at the Crypt, having the opportunity to serve and to walk alongside our sisters and brothers who seek care, compassion and hope within these walls, has stayed with me over the years and is the reason I feel God is calling me back. At the moment I am a vicar in a parish just north of Bournemouth,

but I will be starting at the Crypt in August...so if any churches or schools would like me to visit at any point from then, please do get in touch with me through the Crypt.

As I write this, I am thinking about the reading for Sunday, which is the lovely story of 'the road to Emmaus.' It is an odd one in many ways because Jesus appears, walks alongside the two disciples, and then quite abruptly he vanishes from their sight. Jesus disappears but the lovely thing is, the disciples have been transformed by him being there. I think the 'road to Emmaus' mirrors the story of the Crypt because we are called to walk alongside people too, maybe only for a brief season in their lives, but as we do and as we show God's love through acts of kindness, that is a legacy that stretches on and can bring about transformation and hope.

That is what the Chaplains who have gone before me have done, particularly the wonderful Roger, with their care and compassion bringing hope to so many. Yet there is another legacy that I am honoured to hold dear, and it is the stories of our sisters and brothers, their stories of joy and struggle, their laughter, and their tears. Their stories leave a legacy which we always carry in our hearts, and it is their legacy which is calling me back to the Crypt.

Let us thank God for the gifts that have formed our past.

Let us thank God for the resources that secure our present.

Let us thank God for the legacies that will shape our future.

Amen

Become a Trustee: St. George's Crypt is actively recruiting Trustees to support the charity as it continues to develop. If you have senior executive or Board level experience, especially in marketing and supported housing, are an active, practising Christian and have an interest to support homeless and vulnerable people in Leeds, then please get in touch with martin.barry@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk on 0113 245 9061.

Please Donate

1a. For one-off donations, please complete this side.

Full name.....

Home address.....

City.....Postcode.....

Email.....

Telephone no.....

I enclose a cheque / postal order
(made payable to 'St. George's Crypt') for £.....

2. Gift Aid Declaration

Please claim Gift Aid on all donations I have made within the past four years of this date and all donations I make in the future. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and / or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after the date signed below, or in the preceding 4 years.

3. GDPR Consent:

Do we have your consent to send you our quarterly Newsletter and other interesting updates about the Crypt? Tick all contact methods that apply; we are happy to send you our newsletter by post and by email if you wish

Standing Order

1b. For regular donations by standing order, please complete both sides.

Bank / building society name:.....

Bank address:.....

.....Postcode:.....

Please pay St. George's Crypt (HSBC, PO Box 105, Leeds, LS1 1LD. Sort code 40-27-15, account number 54703537)

The sum of £.....
each month / quarter / year (please delete as applicable)

commencing on.....(date) and until further notice.

Name of account to be debited:.....

Account number:.....Sort code:.....

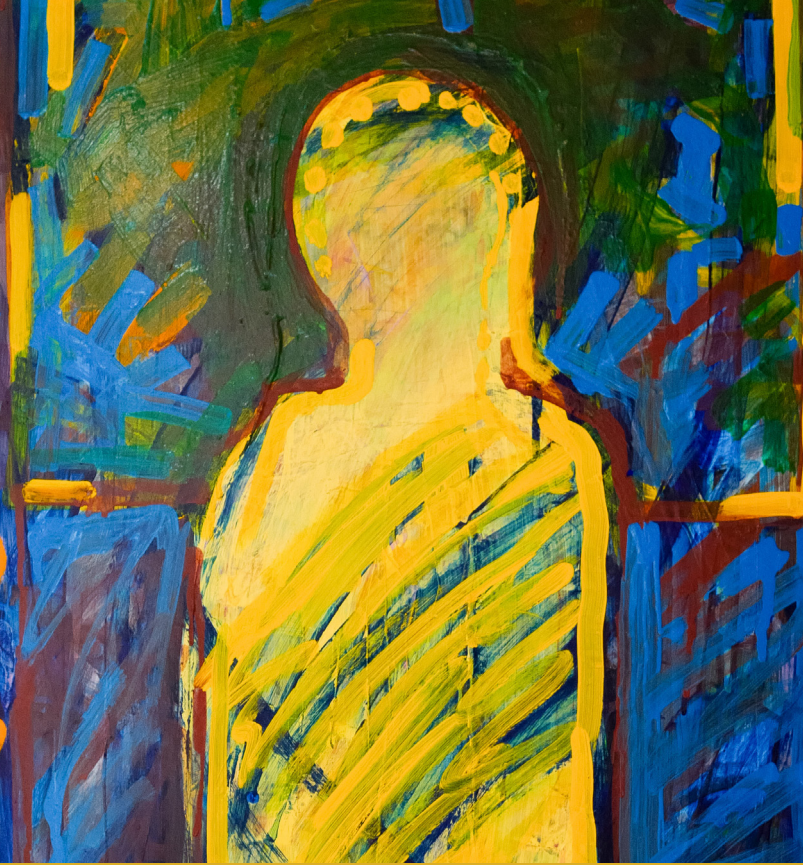
Signed:.....Date:.....

Signed:.....

Date of declaration:.....

Please let us know if your address or your tax circumstances change.
(Post your completed form to: St. George's Crypt, Great George Street, Leeds, LS1 3BR)

- Yes by post
 Yes by email
 No



Legacy of art

It is amazing that local Leeds artists have dedicated their time and energy creating amazing works, some specifically for the Crypt and others donated, that have impacted and changed the places where we offer our services.

Having a legacy of art is more than just creating something beautiful. It is about leaving behind something that will inspire our clients for generations to come

and that will be remembered for years to come. It is about creating something that will stand the test of time and be appreciated by many. Art can also bring people together, cross divides and inspire change.

Art has been used to empower individuals living in poverty for centuries. It is a powerful tool that can be used to express emotions, stories and beliefs. From street art to public murals, art has been used as a form of self-expression

by those who don't have access to other forms of communication.

Art raises awareness of the needs and struggles of our clients in an engaging and descriptive manner. It can form a focal point that starts debate that changes opinions and builds inclusivity. And it brightens the place up! A massive thank you to Steve Simpson and David Moss for their artistic contributions; a legacy of art that will live and breathe the Crypt.

If we send more than one copy of our newsletter to your address, please let us know and help us to reduce our mailing costs. If you would prefer to read it online, please provide your email address to: martyn.croft@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk

For more information, please contact
The Fundraising Team
Email: john.child@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk
Post: Great George Street, Leeds, LS1 3BR
Tel: 0113 245 9061

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