



Transforming Social Work

West London Mission Social Work
Annual Report 2010-2011



West London Mission
Transforming lives since 1887

What is the West London Mission?

The West London Mission (WLM) is a Circuit of the Methodist Church. Within the West London Mission there are two city-centre churches at Hinde Street, Marylebone and King's Cross. WLM has also developed a wide range of activity as part of its mission – such as the Social Work outlined in this report, a student community at King's Cross and Chaplaincy to the University of Westminster. These are expressions of the WLM's commitment to serving God's people.



Hinde Street Methodist Church where WLM has its central offices



Welcome from the Superintendent

Whatever your reason for reading this annual report - whether you're actively involved in the WLM's work, support it through prayer or your financial contributions, or are interested in becoming involved – thank you and welcome.

The last year has been a year of transformation for WLM's social work. There have been some significant changes of staff – including the appointment of a new Executive Director Jon Kuhrt - and we have undertaken a major review of our strategy. There has been no change, however, in the underlying purpose of our work and this report highlights the way we continue to express God's transforming love for all people through our social work.

I hope that you will find the work of our five services, and the stories of those they work with, both inspiring and challenging. If you are, and would like to support us or share more fully in our life and work, you are welcome.



Rev Sue Keegan von Allmen
Superintendent
Minister of the WLM
and Chair of Social
Work Committee

West London Mission





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Transforming Social Work

Transformation is a key theme in the work of the West London Mission. For over 120 years we have worked with some of the most marginalised people in society and our vision is to see lives transformed and changed for the better. In this report, we have highlighted the difference we have made to some individuals whose lives have been affected by homelessness, addictions, offending and personal crises. If you don't have time to read the whole report – make sure you read the story of change and quotes. This is why we do what we do.



We operate in an environment of constant change – for WLM this year one of the most significant changes has been the loss of the HARRT service due to a change in the commissioning arrangements with Westminster. We are grateful to Helen Duncan and her team for the great work they have done over many years with the most challenging of clients.

A key priority is to ensure our services remain as transformative as possible. Of course, in a changing world this does not mean doing things the same way as we have always done them. I am very pleased with the way that everyone has responded to the need to modernise aspects of what we do, both centrally and at our services, and be united around a shared vision.

As one of our Managers, Ronnie Stockton memorably put it at our staff conference, 'We are in the Change Business'. And as Ronnie emphasised, change is not just for those we serve. It is for each one of us – whether staff, volunteer or committee member - to examine our practice and be committed to continual learning and development. This will be the way that we will grow and strengthen the West London Mission: by staying focussed on transformation and shaping our work accordingly.

I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who serve WLM so well and also all of our partner agencies, funders and companies who support our work. We are truly grateful.

And finally, thank you, for your interest and vital support for the work that we do – I hope you enjoy this year's Annual Review.

Jon Kuhrt
Executive Director of Social Work

Our vision...

Our vision is **the transformation of those affected** by destitution, personal difficulties and destructive cycles of behaviour.

Our mission...

We seek to **transform the lives of people** affected by homelessness, personal difficulties, offending or chronic addiction, **empowering them** to lead more fulfilling lives.



Our values

WLM is firmly committed to embodying these values in our social work:



1. Focused on our clients & residents

We keep the needs of those we serve at the heart of everything we do

2. Promoting wholeness

We offer creative, responsive and holistic services to address people's physical, emotional and spiritual needs

3. Empowerment

We support and challenge people to take personal responsibility for themselves and lead fulfilling lives within the community

4. Equality and diversity

We affirm the worth of every person and we will seek to ensure that all of our services are free of discrimination or prejudice



5. Transparency

We are open and honest in the way we work and seek to build trust with clients, colleagues and other agencies



6. Excellence

We want all our staff and volunteers to be committed to the best quality of professional practice possible

7. Transformation

We are committed, as we work for the transformation of others, to the continual improvement of our services and our own individual practice

The ingredients of transformation...

At our 2010 Social Work staff conference, we discussed the question 'What are the ingredients of transformation - what helps people change?' These were the key themes that emerged from the discussion:

Love
 Accepting personal responsibility and knowing consequences of actions
 Empathy
 Small steps
 Listening
 Perserverance
Honesty
 Hope on both sides
 Building self esteem
 Person centred
 Hope
 Understand rationale to change
 Practical guidance
Transparency
 Learning
 An environment of support
Desire for change
 Staying positive
 Trusting relationships
 Integration of range of services



On the left is a picture of Kevin when he first moved into the Haven. On the right is Kevin 6 months later.

Our services

Please note that some of the names in the case studies have been changed in the interests of confidentiality.

WLM runs five different social work services. They are:



Big House

Supported housing for formerly homeless people, specialising in ex-servicemen



The Haven

A sanctuary for men with long-term alcohol dependency



Highbury Counselling Centre

Low-cost counselling to the local community



Katherine Price Hughes House

A hostel for men leaving prison



West London Day Centre

Providing health, housing and education services for rough sleepers





Big House

Big House has ten studio flats providing supported accommodation to people who have been homeless. It specialises in supporting ex-servicemen from the Armed Forces and receives funding from the Royal British Legion and works in partnership with other agencies including Veteran's Aid and SSAFA (Soldiers Sailors and Air Force Association).

Big House offers a calm and stable environment for its residents, many of whom have had chaotic and difficult experiences. The average stay is just over a year and during that time we see residents grow in self-esteem and make valuable, sustainable changes in their lives. We encourage residents to take

personal responsibility as much as possible and make the most of the opportunities available. We are proud of our great success rate in seeing people move on positively, and we stay in touch and visit many former residents to see how they are getting on.



Case Study...

Terry was discharged from the Army in May 2010. He was young, very confused and not at all sure what to do next. He was estranged from his family and had nowhere to go. Feeling very lost in London he contacted Veterans Aid and was placed in Bed and Breakfast.

He was referred to Big House from Veteran's Aid. After settling in, he decided that he would like to pursue a career in nursing. He gained a place on an access course at College and Big House helped pay the course fees. Terry is also very keen on training and fitness and earlier this year he was offered the chance to become an instructor with British Military Fitness. We managed to secure the funding through Royal British Legion (RBL) and he has now qualified. He works this around his nursing studies as it is very flexible work.

The best news is that Terry has just found out that he has won a place at Liverpool University which was his first choice. At the moment we are helping him secure accommodation in Liverpool.

Big House has given Terry the support and time to turn his life around. He is leaving us with confidence, clearer direction plus new skills. He has the tools with which to live a fulfilled future.



It is great to see ex-residents move on from Big House and continue the process of change: we have seen people get back to work, gain qualifications, complete higher education, get married and start families. For our staff, it is rewarding to see someone make such positive changes in their life.

Martyn Hine
Service Manager, Big House



The best thing about Big House is how approachable the staff are, any problem I've had they have been able to help me with.

Brian





The Haven

The Haven is a Registered Care Home which is a sanctuary for 25 men with long-term alcohol dependency. Many of our residents have experience of street homelessness and sometimes prison. Many have been suffering from untreated illnesses and injuries, as well as the long term effects of poor diet and the mental health conditions associated with chronic alcoholism. Sometimes these things have been compounded by a lack of attention to hygiene and safety.

The Haven provides a stable environment and sympathetic support allowing them to make real positive steps in their health, their well-being and personal lives. Our qualified staff team help residents to reconnect with their family and make positive links within the community. We help them recover their confidence within the friendly atmosphere within the Haven through activities, trips and holidays. They are encouraged to take steps to improve their diet, personal care and medical health.



My story...

Stephen, a resident at the Haven

When I was 14 years old I became depressed because I had severe acne and other children picked on me at school. I took an overdose of sleeping tablets and was admitted to hospital, this was the first time I had contact with a psychiatrist. Throughout my teenage years I had a number of bouts of depression and left school and drifted from one part time job to another.

When I was 24 I was about to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act when I ran away from home and lived in a corridor of a block of flats. I had a spell in a mental Health unit but was discharged from hospital when I took alcohol on to the ward and I became homeless from that point onwards.

At this time I was drinking 9 cans of 'Special Brew' a day, and begging too. I was eating cold chips from dustbins and the voices in my head were constant. Whilst on the street I was frequently abused by others and bullied by teenagers. I caught pneumonia and ended in hospital for 6 months. When discharged I was housed in a flat in Bethnal Green, however I didn't like it there and got rid of the keys down a drain. I was then moved to a homeless hostel with over 200 other men, but I was thrown out of there when someone set fire to my bedroom. I got the blame but it wasn't me. I moved back to the streets. I was living from one day to the

next. I continued to drink. I had no life. Then in December 2003 I moved to the Haven. It was difficult to adapt at first, I was so used to doing my own thing but I'm now at a better place. My physical health has improved and my mental health is much better. I haven't broken the law in years and I no longer beg for money to buy alcohol. I now have a better outlook and more of a future.



Gerri Anderson, Stephen's key worker at the Haven adds:

When Stephen first came to The Haven he did not want to interact with staff much at all. The voices in his head were really bothering him and he could often be heard shouting at them. Since then we have seen a real change - he has slowly grown in confidence and the real Stephen has emerged. He is always willing to either show visitors around or help another resident in need. He is personable and polite and amazes staff with his in-depth knowledge of football - especially the times and dates, scores and scorers. And on a holiday to Belgium with the Haven, staff were gobsmacked when he started speaking fluent French to the shopkeepers! Stephen has made incredible progress and is a pleasure to have at The Haven. It has been an amazing transformation.



We are a specialized project dealing with some of the most marginalized people in society. It is wonderful to see residents who have experienced such chaos become more at peace with themselves, rebuild their lives and look more positively towards what the future could hold.

Sei Parry
Service Manager, The Haven





Highbury Counselling Centre

The Highbury Counselling Centre (HCC) offers low-cost, short-term counselling to members of the local community. The service was established as a response to the growing need for affordable counselling where the statutory agencies cannot meet the demand that exists. The number of people suffering from depression, anxiety, spiritual confusion and other emotional crises are very much on the increase.

HCC partners with a number of the counselling courses including Regent's College, Roehampton University and London Metropolitan University. Students who are on the final year of their therapeutic courses are placed with us to gain experience and complete the necessary hours for qualification and accreditation. We currently have 18 counsellors.

HCC has been running for over 22 years now and is firmly established as a cherished local resource for the community. Clients are referred to HCC from GPs, other parts of the NHS and voluntary agencies. Our counsellors reflect the highly diverse local community and this year we have been able to offer counselling in many other languages.

“

HCC provides a crucial service - high quality, low-cost counselling to a section of society that would not usually be able to afford such a service. We assist people to better understand themselves and to make significant changes in their lives – it's a privilege to be involved.

Ronnie Stockton
Service Manager, HCC



What HCC clients have said:

“



It is not too much to say that your service has saved my life. I walked into the centre in a state of despair and now six months later I feel like a different person, with a totally different outlook on life. My counsellor showed me how to trust and care again and my family see the difference in me now. I'll be forever grateful.

Male, aged 30
Finsbury Park

“

I have been crippled with shyness all of my life and had almost given up hope of living a normal life. I'm still shy, but I have an idea of the reasons behind it and know it better. I know that it isn't a condition that can paralyse me anymore and this is because of the awareness that I've gained in counselling.

Female, aged 26
Archway





Katherine Price Hughes House

The residents of Katherine Price Hughes House (KPH) House have all been convicted of criminal offences and have been released to serve the rest of their sentence within the community. Many residents arrive with very little insight into their own behaviour – and common underlying factors can include low self-worth, perceived lack of choice and a background of childhood neglect. Our work focuses on transformation and change – helping the men to emerge from the shadows of long – established patterns of damaging behaviour.



We encourage residents to accept support, develop tolerance and understanding and engage in positive activities. We challenge all residents to take personal responsibility for the process of transformation and cultivate new attitudes to factors such as health, self-care and relationships.

KPH's staff team comprise fully trained psychotherapists and experienced support staff. We also offer residents practical assistance, such as help with housing applications, job seeking and training. The majority of residents move on from KPH to stable semi-independent housing.



The aim of our work is to reintegrate offenders safely back into the community, and give them the skills and motivation to make this change sustainable for the long term. It's greatly rewarding to see residents move on from a negative past and make positive steps towards a better future.

Ted Owen MBE
Service Manager KPH House



Case Study...

Simon arrived at the hostel after serving 2 years in prison for domestic violence. He was plagued with remorse about what he had done and the subsequent loss of contact with his wife and children. Early on in his stay at KPH staff had to work hard to dissuade him from making contact with his family as this would have been a breach of the terms of his release and would have resulted in him returning to prison.

With guidance, Simon explored and then finally pursued the option of legally acquired access to his children. This seemed to go well for all concerned. The change in his outlook was notable. He found voluntary work doing gardening for the elderly and started a course in landscape gardening. He also took part in the KPH 'in house' Job Club and although he didn't find work, he did attend several interviews and found this to be a confidence building process.

At KPH Simon also completed the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) to reduce the risk of further violence against his ex-partner, which was delivered 'one-to-one' with him by one of the team. Through this Simon developed skills and coping strategies -the process of letting go of the past was not an easy one but he left KPH with a sense of optimism for the future.



West London Day Centre

The West London Day Centre exists to provide health, housing and education services for rough sleepers in the Westminster area. It has offered vital sanctuary and resources to people in such situations for over 30 years. We see an average of 80 clients a day and as well as using the basic services, over 70% of our clients use the specialist advice services and other groups.

What does WLDC offer?

Basic services

These include a canteen for breakfast and lunch, showers, laundry, clothing store, luggage storage and mail collection

Advice and support

An on-site Homeless Health Team, mental health support services, accommodation advice, jobs and benefits advice, drugs and alcohol support and reconnection services

Social and recreational services

Including an allotment group, an Art group, a chess group, computer sessions, creative writing group, a music group, a resettlement group for clients who have been rehoused and a spirituality discussion group.

Construction Skills

There is also a popular Construction Skills course held in the basement workshop led by a tutor from City of Westminster College.



We have had an exceptionally busy year at the West London Day Centre with almost one third of our clients being new to us this year. We are pleased that over 70% of clients have gone beyond using our basic services and have engaged with the centre's advice and specialist services to address some of the issues behind their homelessness.

John Deacon
Service Manager, WLDC



West London Mission is an exciting and dynamic place to work. We don't just follow the crowd and have an inclusive can do attitude which is carried through all of our work.

Jono Callender
Project Worker, WLDC



During the year there have been a number of new developments:

- The centre acquired an allotment in South Harrow and groups of up to 5 service users at a time participated in regular sessions working on it.
- In September our Seymour Art group held an exhibition in the local Subway Art Gallery.
- Some new activity groups were started including a chess group and a creative writing group – both of which are regularly attended by up to six service users at a time.
- There has been a significant increase in the amount of advice work being undertaken with over 2,000 interviews in the first six months of the year – a 50% increase on 2009-10.
- A new regular newsletter has been launched with contributions from service users.



Key statistics about the work this year:

Last year

1,426 clients

received individual advice and support at the day centre with...

4,736

one-to-one advice interviews taking place.



529

individuals who were rough sleeping or precariously housed accessed the Nurse or Doctor.

184

clients were referred into accommodation or accommodation schemes.

132

clients engaged with ongoing resettlement support.



“

I enjoy working for the Mission because it allows me to be creative in my approach in working with clients. It's all inclusive, compassionate yet strong, and all importantly client focused.

Karen Mwaniki
Project Worker, WLDC

Case study... Andres

Andres had been sleeping rough on the streets for a number of years. He claimed political asylum when he first arrived in London back in 2001 but this was initially rejected by the Home Office. Unable to return home he became destitute and depressed, sleeping on the streets around Victoria, Hyde Park and Marylebone. "It was basically horrible and I'm going to do everything not to go back to that situation."



He first came into contact with us when he heard about the West London Day Centre. "I was on the street. Some guys said "Come with us" but I said that I had no money. They said it was no problem and that you can have a shower and eat breakfast for free there." Andres began using the showers, the canteen and the health services at the Day Centre before eventually Karen, one of project workers, was able to offer him more assistance. "She talked to me. She said "What do you need?" I said "I want to live here!" So she contacted immigration." Karen then initiated an appeal on his asylum claim and Andres was soon after granted Indefinite Leave to Remain. "This was when my life changed!" The team at the Day Centre then helped sort out his benefit claim, moved him into temporary accommodation in Victoria and then on to Big House in Camberwell. "Homeless people have to talk to someone. I was always praying "Please God help me!" I think God helped me, especially Karen. She is very nice. She found out a good way for me. I always pray for her!"

"If you have a chance to change you need to catch that chance! Now I'm here and I'm quite happy with that and thanks to everyone, many thanks!"

Andres has been living at the Big House for the past five months. He is about to start another English Language course but is anxious to start working as soon as possible. "It's not good living without a job. It's quite difficult for me. If you don't work you can't find good friends. You need to join with people. If you don't do that it is very difficult." Martyn and the team at the Big House are supporting Andres in his continued journey and are helping him look for work.

“

If you have a chance to change you need to catch that chance!

Volunteering with WLM...

I wasn't sure what to expect when I began at WLM. I knew a bit about the Haven, but had little idea about what the day-to-day work involved or anything about the rest of the work carried out by the Mission. From my first meeting with Diane at the Haven I felt really involved – although it was also made clear that I should brush up on my coffee-making skills!

I've enjoyed beginning to get to know some of the Haven residents such as Tom, Dilwyn, Richard and Steven. I'm now looking forward to my first outing next week which is to the local swimming baths. Our hope is that residents will come up with ideas for what they'd like to do in future. What is most important is that I am consistent in my efforts so that people know they can depend on me.

Along with getting to know the residents at the Haven, I have been on a grand tour of WLM's other projects - taking in Hinde Street, Big House, the West London Day Centre and KPH House. It has been great hearing the passion of WLM's staff for their work as well as meeting clients and residents. I have been impressed and inspired. My thanks to everyone who has made me feel so welcome!



Howard Pullen
Volunteer at The Haven



It has been great hearing the passion of WLM's staff for their work as well as meeting clients and residents. I have been impressed and inspired

Volunteers needed!

We need more volunteers for our work. If you are interested please contact Carol Turner: carol.turner@wlm.org.uk – details on www.wlm.org.uk

Social care practice within our Christian ethos

WLM's Social Work is rooted in its Christian ethos. Since 1887, our work has embodied the distinctive Methodist emphasis of socially engaged and transformational service. This heritage is something we are proud of and we want to celebrate the prayers and practical support that the church continues to support us with.

Many organisations who are working with homeless and vulnerable people have a Christian background. However, rather than seeing this simply as something historical, we believe that it is dynamically relevant to our work today. Across social care there has been for many years a concern that services are 'holistic' and there is growing understanding of how spiritual needs are supported. At WLM, we believe there are strong connections between best practice in contemporary social work and our Christian ethos and are committed to an on-going engagement between the two.

We are committed to an inclusive Christian ethos and offer our services to all people

regardless of their belief. We cherish the fact that WLM is a mixed community made up of people with a wide range of beliefs. All the staff and volunteers at the West London Mission respect the Christian ethos in which our work and values are rooted.

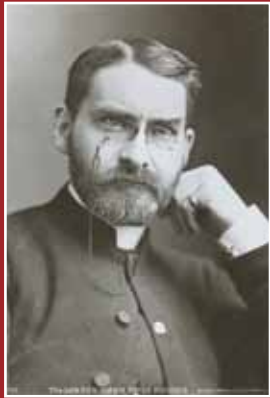
On a practical level, we will be developing our chaplaincy service within the mission – to provide spiritual and pastoral support to our services in an appropriate and thoughtful way. We will be building on our own experiences as well as learning from others about how to integrate more effectively our Christian ethos within the professional services that we run.



The Spirituality discussion group at the WLDC

Looking back...

West London Mission's history in social work



The West London Mission was established 124 years ago as part of a new initiative within Methodism – the mission movement, which combined evangelism with radical social action. The driving force behind WLM was the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, an energetic proponent of 'Social Christianity', the title of one of his books.

The opening service was held in October 1887 in St James' Hall, Piccadilly and regularly over 2,000 would come to services each Sunday. At that time the West End was rife with poverty and vice alongside great wealth and riches. WLM developed a wide range of 'social rescue' alongside their religious activities. Early work included ministering to the sick, a dispensary, a crèche, children's clubs, a soup kitchen, a 'poor man's lawyer' and a hospice. Specialist medical and other staff was used, and the Superintendent's wife Katherine Price Hughes led a group known as the 'Sisters of the People'. Thousands of poorer people were touched by WLM's activities. This is the origins of the social work that WLM runs today.



Later in 1912, WLM opened Kingsway Hall as its headquarters. The famous open-air preacher Donald Soper was Superintendent for 42 years from 1936 to 1978 and developed much of the social work that continues today. After the Second World War initiatives were developed over a wider area beyond the West End. Hostels and homes were run for unmarried mothers and their babies, ex-offenders, those on bail, elderly people and recovering alcoholics, all pioneering projects in advance of general public provision. Professional social work of high standard, alongside a worshipping centre and a strong Christian motivation are WLM principles that continue today

Alan Brooks
Social Work Committee

Looking forward...

Plans for the coming year WLM will aim to:

- Complete the building process at the new Haven site in Holly Park, Islington and move the service back into its brand new building.
- Implement the findings of a review of the West London Day Centre service.
- Expand our Counselling Services beyond Highbury.
- Develop a new service within the St Luke's building in Kennington.
- Develop and launch a new website with the new branding.
- Develop our volunteer base and connections with other churches.
- Implement new a Human Resources and management system.
- Develop an appropriate form of Christian presence within our services.
- Play a more visible role within the homelessness and social care sector.

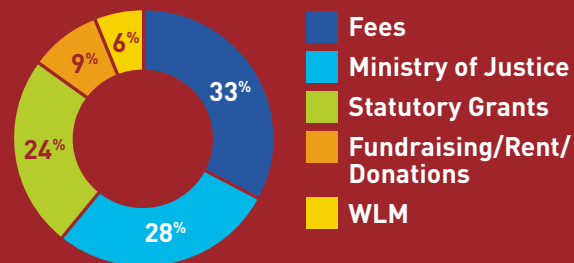


The building work for the new Haven in Holly Park, Islington

Financial information

Income

£2.208m



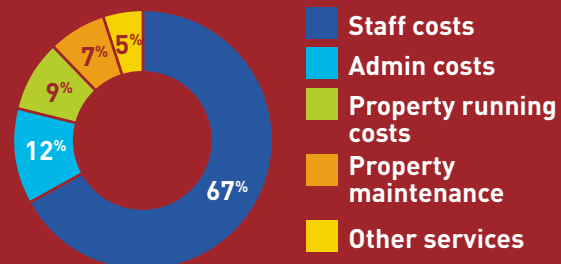
We aim to recover the full cost of services provided for central and local government departments, but Big House and the West London Day Centre in particular depend crucially on grants and voluntary income from WLM and from many sources (see opposite page).



We are grateful to both the Ministry of Justice and London Councils for their on-going partnerships with us

Expenditure

£2.230m



WLM runs a very small central office – and we seek to keep administrative and central costs as low as possible. This is to ensure the majority of our resources are focussed towards the front line services that we manage.

Gordon Slater
Social Work Committee

Thanks to...

West London Mission would like to express great thanks to the following companies, organisations and funding bodies who have offered great support to our work:

- Abbott Mead Vickers
- Maurice & Hilda Laing Charitable Trust
- Islington & Shoreditch Housing Association
- Homes & Communities Agency
- London Councils
- The Department for Communities and Local Government
- The Communities Development Foundation
- Henry Smith Charity
- The Portman, Montagu and Bryanston Squares' Garden Parties
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Pret a Manger Foundation
- Rose Foundation
- Westminster Amalgamated Charity
- Streetsmart
- Portman Foundation
- St Cyprians Church
- All Souls Church
- Albert Hunt Trust
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Fine Foods
- Visa Europe
- Development Securities
- Waitrose (Edgware Road)
- Statoil UK Ltd
- The Subway Gallery
- Olswang
- The Royal British Legion
- Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association [SSAFA]



The WLDC minibus purchased with generous donation by the Portman and Montagu Square Garden Parties 2010



AMV have had a long relationship with the West London Mission through Big House. It's a great opportunity to get involved with something so completely different from my day job, and with people facing very different challenges in their lives. It's sobering, inspiring and very fulfilling to contribute in even a small way to this amazing work.

Rebecca Tickle
Board Account Director, Abbott Mead Vickers





“

I am proud to work for an organisation like WLM which sees the person first and the homelessness second.

Lorraine O'Hare
Project Worker, West London Day Centre



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



West London Mission
Transforming lives since 1887

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