

Name of Project: Star Partnership
Lead partner: Shelter
Borough: Kensington and Chelsea

“Before I went to Shelter, I had been homeless for 10 years and had lived for 5 years in a hotel. This had seriously impacted my mental and physical health. I experienced regular episodes of acute mental health crisis with strong suicidal ideation. I am also alcohol-dependent. Although I tried to get help from a lot of other services before I went to Shelter, none had managed to resolve the situation. I had been offered a sheltered housing placement, but I turned the offer down because it was not suitable for my needs. This resulted in the council finding that I was homeless intentionally. This was a major blow because they said I would have to leave the hotel.

This was when Shelter got involved. I had two workers supporting me, one who was advising on my housing situation, whilst the other was going to help me link in with services. It took a while to build trust and to agree on a way forward. Shelter drew on their partnership with EASL to obtain a full mental health assessment and clarification of my mental capacity. Using their borough-specific partnerships, Shelter was able to negotiate at a management level with the council and secure a further discretionary offer of sheltered accommodation. Shelter then assisted me in understanding this offer. They attended the property with me to look around. After that, they started helping me gather all the documents needed to process the move. Because I trusted my Shelter advisors and because I wanted to leave the hotel and move somewhere more suitable, I accepted the offer. I moved in January 2023, bringing to an end a decade of homelessness. I am now engaged with alcohol support services locally, and I volunteer on a weekly basis with local groups. I am really focused on rebuilding my physical and mental health.”