

**Partner: Solace Women's Aid**

**Project: Ascent Housing Project**

**Case Study:**

I first called the Advice line with the help of my friend who speaks English, as my English is very limited. I called after I had just fled from my husband who had locked me in the house for three days with no food. I managed to leave by threatening to call the police, he then left the keys, and then I managed to make my escape. I had suffered verbal, emotional, financial and physical abuse from him, and he was very controlling, not allowing me to learn English or work in my profession as an artist.

After I fled, I was staying with a friend in Enfield but had to leave due to overcrowding, I was then having to sleep outside in the park and on the night bus. I had support from an IDVA in Enfield then I was referred to the Housing Project to work with a worker around housing support. I had previously approached several councils who found me not eligible for housing support due to having no recourse to public funds. I was also found to be not meeting the threshold for support from Adult Social Care, even though I am disabled and 62 years old. I was due to have a heart operation and an operation on my arm and couldn't recover from the operations having nowhere to live. I was so sad to become homeless as previously I had worked for over 40 years as an art lecturer and artist, now the only place I had to stay was the streets.

When I was referred to the Housing Project, the worker set up an appointment with a solicitor who took on my case with legal aid. He suggested that I could make a homelessness application as I would be eligible as a self-employed EU National. He also took on my case to help challenge the decision from Adult Social Care as I do have care and support needs.

The worker managed to secure the Ascent No Recourse Fund run by Southall Black Sisters for my accommodation and I was able to stay for 6 weeks in basic hotel accommodation with some subsistence paid for, so I no longer had to sleep on the night bus and in airports. Then the worker supported me to apply as homeless to City of London council, who accepted interim duty and housed me in a self-contained flat in Camden.

I am so happy to be able to be in my own place, and to have somewhere to recover after my operations, and to have somewhere to start painting again and continue with my business. I am really grateful for the Ascent Housing Project and Solace for supporting me through this difficult time in my life. Without it, I would still be street homeless.