

A PLACE OF CHANGE

April 2009



A building to lift the spirits

SIFA Fireside and Crisis UK have been awarded £2,000,000 through the Government's Places of Change Programme to create a new environment for Birmingham's most marginalised adults, particularly those currently or at risk of rough sleeping.

Our vision is a high quality and inspirational building which acts as a springboard for homeless people. Rebuilding lives; reconnecting people with services, and inspiring them to develop new skills, explore vocational opportunities, move into work and leave homelessness behind.

Above: help with job applications and vocational training will take place at the new Crisis-SIFA Fireside building

Crisis Skylight: the learning and activity centre

Crisis Skylight will be a new facility for Birmingham. Already open in London and Newcastle, the award winning Skylight is an inspirational learning and activity centre for homeless and vulnerably housed people.

Recognised as a model of good practice by the department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) and a City & Guilds, OCR, & Matrix approved centre, Crisis Skylight offers practical and creative workshops including art, music and drama, vocational workshops such as bike maintenance and carpentry, accredited learning opportunities in literacy, numeracy, IT and ESOL and tailored employment programmes.

Funded in part by voluntary donations, Crisis Skylight also delivers contracts

directly or, as we prefer, in consortium for:

- FE colleges
- DWP, information, advice and guidance
- Local authorities, Working Neighbourhoods
- LSC, Skills for Jobs

“ They should have one of these places everywhere. ”

Gary, Crisis Skylight member

SIFA Fireside: bigger and better

Operating across a split site near the city centre our day-centre facilities are old and no longer match the aspirations of our service users, staff or volunteers. We plan to relocate all our day services to our new building.

With us come a range of partnerships, including with Heart of Birmingham PCT, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, the Probation Service, City College, Aquarius, and the Irish Welfare and Information Centre.

“ It’s brilliant here – we need more of the same but more space. ”

SIFA Fireside service user

We’ll continue to provide a specialist service in addressing alcohol issues; work with people referred to us by



Drumming workshop at SIFA Fireside

the courts and West Midlands Police; provide literacy and IT classes; our service user volunteering scheme; and accommodation in our residential units – a key step towards resettlement and fully independent living.

Unbound by the limits of our current facilities we can extend and enhance, still further, the opportunities for people in need of support.

What to expect from Crisis Skylight

Crisis Skylight London’s informal workshops

Vocational

Job club, Construction Skills Certification Scheme card training, gardening, bicycle maintenance skills, sewing, plumbing, introduction to Macintosh computers, law clinic, Microsoft Word and Excel skills.

Creative arts

Creative writing, reading group, open access art, playwriting, jewellery making (beginners and advanced), surface design, hatmaking, painting, photography, music production, life drawing, mosaics.

Performing arts

Songwriting, theatre improvisation, musical theatre, cardboard citizens choir, cardboard citizens dance, theatre acting, guitar for beginners, musicians workshop, singing workshop, contemporary music, Streetwise opera singing.

Body, mind, spirit (health activities)

Creative thinking, brain gym, yoga, pilates, qi gung, tai chi, reflexology



Bicycle repair class with Bikeworks

Crisis Skylight London’s accredited courses

- Numeracy
- Literacy
- Certificate in self development through learning.
- Beginners IT
- Computer literacy and information technology
- European Computer Driving Licence
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- ESOL & citizenship
- British Safety Council health and safety at work.



Crisis is the national charity for single homeless people. We are dedicated to ending homelessness by delivering life-changing services and campaigning for change.

Our innovative education, employment, housing and well-being services address individual needs and help people to transform their lives.

We are determined campaigners, working to prevent people from becoming homeless and advocating solutions informed by research and our direct experience.

We have ambitious plans for the future and are committed to help more people in more places across the UK. We know we won't end homelessness overnight or on our own. But we take a lead, collaborate with others and, together, make change happen.

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Crisis UK (trading as Crisis)
Charity no: 1082947
Company no: 4024938



SIFA Fireside is a Birmingham-based charity, created by the merger of two well-established social care providers.

We work alongside those who are socially excluded or disadvantaged, addressing alcohol issues and homelessness and empowering and supporting people to meet their short and long term goals.

We run a specialist alcohol service as well as offering social support, counselling, and advice and practical help with accommodation accessed through our daily 'drop in' sessions.

Additional activities include mental health and well being groups, our 'Healthy Lifestyles' project, and life skills and debt advice.

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SIFA Fireside
Charity no: 1049728
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GET IN TOUCH

To get involved or to make sure you are the first to hear any news, email johnpaul.wares@crisis.org.uk and we'll do the rest! We won't pass your details to anyone else. Any questions, please call John-Paul: 020 7426 3836

IN BRIEF

Our home: Digbeth

We would like to develop this project in Digbeth. Digbeth has been identified for City centre expansion and has been earmarked for regeneration as part of the Eastside project.

The area has also become associated with arts and culture, with the Custard Factory being developed into a centre for New Arts and Music.

But it is also in the UK's poorest constituency and continues to face multiple challenges, including:

- High unemployment
- Low skills
- Long term limiting illness
- Entrenched poverty
- Vulnerable housing

We want to change this; and we believe we can.

Birmingham: a city in need

- 80% of Birmingham's single homeless population are economically inactive
- And two-thirds of those have not worked for over a year
- 45% of Birmingham's single homeless population have no qualifications
- Only 3% take part in any training or activities
- 66% have mental health needs

Open to all

We will be open to all; a facility for the whole community to develop new skills, build friendships and find work.

What is more, if you run an art club, dance class, karate class, are in a band or theatre group, or just need space, our fabulous new facilities will be available for hire.