Cardinal Hume Centre Magazine

Centre Life

Cardinal Hume's Centenary Year Edition 2023

CENTENARY YEAR

CELEBRATING CARDINAL HUME'S LEGACY

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EVENTS AND CHRISTMAS NEWS

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Cardinal Hume Centre
Each Person Matters

Welcome — *Each Person Matters*

At the Cardinal Hume Centre we're serious about getting under the skin of the housing crisis and preventing young people and children from experiencing poverty and homelessness as early as possible.

This work can only happen because of you; our supporters, community and friends. With this and the combined strength of our client community we are confident we can make a difference. On behalf of our clients, and for your impact on their lives, we're hugely grateful for your support.

Your support for the Centre means that the most vulnerable in our local community get skilled, practical help to navigate an increasingly hostile system, and a spiralling cost of living that deprives young people and families of so much.

Speaking at an open evening in 1994, Cardinal Basil Hume said: "Each person matters. No human life is ever redundant." In such difficult times, we always come back to this belief; it grounds **all** of the Centre's work.

Thank you for standing with us.

With my very best wishes,

George O'Neill
Chief Executive Officer
georgeoneill@cardinalhumcentre.org.uk

Front cover: A child with her Coronation celebration castle, made with the help of volunteers at homework club in the Centre.

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Alex & Sarah's *story*

Sarah and Alex were homeless for 17 years, sleeping at the homes of friends with their children and helped by their church community to stay afloat.

By Alex and Sarah

My name is Alex. Me and Sarah, we married in 2009 and now we have our daughter and son, who are 12 and ten."

Sarah and Alex were sofa-surfing for years, staying in different friends' homes. They volunteered at their church, where they received support to get by.

Alex: "It was difficult. You don't have any access to work. You don't have any access to do anything."

Sarah: "Even though we had help it's not the same as when you are in control of your life. We couldn't really be ourselves.

"[I called the Centre in] August 2020 and they took our case. Fella worked on our immigration status and it took a year plus but she got citizenship for my daughter. The feeling was great – happy relief."

Alex: "We told Fella sometimes we have no food, she gave us some clothes for us and the children. She gave us supermarket vouchers."

In April 2022, immigration status was granted for the whole family.

Sarah: "We felt relief. I was looking at the email, I was looking at my phone like I have gold in my hands".

Now they entered the unknown territory of how to exercise their new rights. Fella advised them how to access help with housing and benefits from partner organisations. She also referred them to the Centre's Learning and Employment team, who helped them onto Health and Social Care NVQ courses to prepare for jobs in the care sector.

Alex: "We were a bit panicked when the council gave us temporary accommodation because we don't know when we might be moved. But my daughter is so happy that she has a room. She danced."

Alex: "At Cardinal Hume Centre it is a place where they take you as a family. They embrace you to see what [help] is necessary".

Below: Alex and Sarah at the Centre.

Celebrating the *Cardinal's legacy*

By George O'Neill

This year we celebrate the life and legacy of the Centre's founder, Basil Hume. One thing that is notable when I hear stories from those lucky enough to have met him is Basil Hume's ability to listen. And, through that, his ability to remind people that they matter. They mattered to him, to God and indeed themselves.

Above: Cardinal Hume. **Below:** A drawing by hostel resident, Fatma. This portrait won 2nd place in the Cancer Research Competition 2019.

A friend of the Centre once told me about an almost chance encounter with Cardinal Hume at an event. This friend was sure there were others vying for the Cardinal's attention, but still he was struck by how the Cardinal focused on him and gave his full attention. All these years later, he can still remember how it made him feel.

If you live your life on the margins, being heard is one of the first things that is taken away from you. Cardinal Hume built the Centre to share that powerful commodity of listening with young people, children and families – advocating for those left on hold, lost in stretched and underfunded systems, seen as a burdens or problems that are near impossible to fix and therefore need to be punished or contained.

Listening is not always easy. One of my frontline colleagues described it to me as requiring your whole body. You have to be willing to share in someone's pain and fear for the future. You need to build trust and work together.

As a supporter of the Centre, you share in this endeavour. Through your support, you show each person who visits the Centre that they matter. It is essential work, thank you for playing your part.

A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

This year, one supporter celebrating his 80th birthday asked his friends and family to give gifts to the Centre instead of buying him presents. The Centre has been close to his heart for many years; as a former Ampleforth student who remembers Cardinal Hume's election to Abbot of Ampleforth, and reluctant resignation as rugby team coach. During his time at school he was instilled with the Benedictine spirit of hospitality, and a faith which has remained with him throughout his life, even while he travelled the world and pursued his love of race horses.

He and his loved ones raised £4,193 to help vulnerable young people, and made a joyful birthday celebration into a generous occasion for giving rather than receiving.

Spread the word about Cardinal Hume's Centenary at your church or community group with the pull-out poster on the backpage.

LEAVE YOUR OWN LEGACY

By Stephen, fundraising team

Much of our work is sustained by people remembering the Centre with a generous gift in their will. One such remarkable bequest was left by Antony Freed.

Tony had attended St John's Seminary Wonersh, and was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in June 1960. In the mid-1970s he took a sabbatical and found his second vocation as a teacher in Hove, where he remained until his retirement.

He was aware of our work with vulnerable young people, and phoned our legacy team for advice on how to leave a charity gift in his will. I struck up a particular connection through our shared faith and we spoke many times; he shared his memories, and his love of art, music, and reading.

Through 2020, Tony bravely bore his treatment of Hodgkin's Lymphoma, and shielding from COVID-19, in his usual philosophical way and with characteristic independence.

His love for helping others was something he embodied in life as well as in death…" to act justly, to love tenderly". He was delighted that his legacy gift would help so many young lives.

An inspiration and a gentleman, he is fondly remembered by his family, friends, colleagues and pupils.

Tony Freed RIP. June 1934 - January 2021

Should you wish to know more about leaving your own legacy, or if you would like your loved ones included in the Remembrance book that is blessed at the Mass in Memory of Cardinal Hume each year (pictured), please contact us.

Working together *in Westminster*

ACTION ON TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Our research into the real experiences of families living in temporary accommodation last year (featured in the Centre Life 2022 and available on our website) showed us that families are living in crowded accommodation with inappropriate sleeping arrangements, rising damp and mould that lead to respiratory conditions and broken doors leading out to unsafe streets.

To address this, the Centre has partnered with Justlife and Caritas Westminster to start a Temporary Accommodation Action Group (TAAG) in Westminster.

TAAGs in Manchester have helped reduce evictions, and helped create a Standards Charter for providers, and a pocketbook of resources for residents In Bristol.

Approximately 3,600 children from Westminster live in temporary accommodation; that is a 26% increase in just two years. Much of the temporary accommodation stock is sub-standard or overcrowded. So we are convening landlords, social housing organisations, local council and others to take targeted action in Westminster to improve the situation of children and their families especially.

GETTING CITIZENSHIP FOR CHILDREN

In families like Sarah and Alex's (page 3), whose children were born in the UK, Home Office immigration fees are an insurmountable barrier. Those whose families can't help them to obtain citizenship before they leave school are unable to work legally or access Higher Education. Since the Home Office introduced the fee waiver for children's citizenship, we've taken on a new legal advisor who is working with families, putting together often complex applications.

A PLAN TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Last year 129,000 16-25yr olds presented as homeless or at risk of homelessness to their local authority.

So the Centre has joined a collective of 100 charities calling on the major political parties to commit to tackling escalating youth homelessness in their General Election manifestos. The proposed strategy uses our collective experience and evidence of what we know works, and prioritises the following areas:

- Prevention - supporting young people to avoid homelessness crises in the first place
- Housing- establishing better, safer options to identify and support those facing homelessness
- Finances - ensuring fairer pay and resources are available to empower young people to build successful, independent lives.

Immigration team volunteer.
Photo: Fergus Burnett Photography

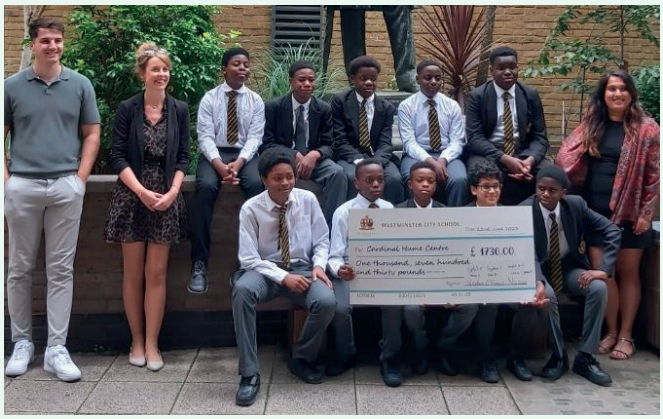
LEGAL AID EXCELLENCE RATING

The Centre has been awarded a Legal Aid Agency rating of 'Excellent'. The Centre is one of the last organisations providing free immigration advice. We also hold a Legal Aid contract, and are therefore subject to peer review by a panel of solicitors at the Legal Aid Agency.

Additionally, we are signatories to a joint letter with 13 other organisations to the Home Office advocating for changes to their online systems so that clients can see when their application to remain in the UK since Brexit is refused, and can exercise their right of appeal within the timeframe.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

In July 2023, Westminster City Council offered local students the opportunity to put their business skills into practice and give back to the community. A group of Westminster City School students (pictured) decided sell goods at the Pitch Ready Enterprise Market. They raised £1,730, with proceeds going to the Cardinal Hume Centre.



WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health problems are both a cause and consequence of the issues putting many of our clients at risk of homelessness. So we're offering mental health support to young people living in our hostel and children visiting the Centre.

Two psychotherapists available on-site at the hostel helps residents to get near-instant access in a safe environment. Some read poetry or raps they have written, others just wish to talk.

Music therapy for young children helps with communication problems, learning difficulties and developmental disorders, as well as many other challenges causally linked to homelessness which our young clients face.

These offerings aim to help young people manage trauma and grief, reduce social isolation, build confidence and expressive ability. In our annual survey, 86.7% of clients surveyed feel that their wellbeing has improved as a result of the Centre's support.*

*210 respondents aged 16+.

Sharon's *story*

Sharon* tells her story of how working, caring for her son and his disabilities, and dealing with her own health problems left her unable to take on the benefits system alone.

"I'm 38, married, and we have two children; one of them has special needs. Three days a week I'm an outreach worker at a charity for parents of kids with special needs. When I advise them, I'm a strong person. But when it comes to myself I need help.

I was trying to apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for chronic pain from a shoulder injury from carrying my son, and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for my son, but the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) said if I was carer I couldn't claim PIP.

But Angela at the Centre explained to me that just because I'm a carer doesn't mean I couldn't claim PIP for my own health. I try to be positive as possible, but the applications bring you down. I get anxiety even opening their letters; the way they word things is really upsetting. [It makes] you feel embarrassed. I thought I was going to back away from going to my tribunal.

The judge awarded me five years of PIP (£13,000). More than anything, I was relieved that it was over. I'm sleeping better now but I still worry about the review dates they've set in 2024. I would have given up without encouragement and support from Angela.

*name changed to protect her identity.

Top: Young people from the hostel on a hike organised to get our residents into nature.
Middle: *'The threads that bind us'* – A quilt created by clients, visitors and staff for Refugee Week.
Bottom: Families taking a trip in the school holidays.

From the *Hub*

Above: Ellie working at the Centre.

By Ellie, Trainee Advice & Assesssment advisor

My name is Ellie and I have recently joined the Centre's Assessment team. It is my job to be the first port of call for new clients, finding out about their situation and the best way we can support them. Some days I'll deal with lots enquiries in-person, over the phone and email, whereas other days, I might end up spending hours with just one client with a complex case.

In one instance, I was assisting a woman to fill out a Disability Living Allowance (DLA) benefit form for her daughter who has severe learning disabilities. It was an emotional appointment because this mum had faced many adversities raising her daughter alone with no support. She told me that she had never spoken to anybody about these struggles before so I made sure I gave her extra time. We agreed to continue the form in a second appointment a few days later so she had some time to process.

In the second appointment, we completed the DLA form and during our discussions, my client disclosed information about her housing situation. She and her three children live in poor quality temporary accommodation, with all sharing a double bed. Her daughter often hurts herself on sharp edges, trips over broken floorboards, and her asthma is exacerbated by mould.

I referred her to our housing team who are now helping her to sort out the disrepair issues by liaising with the council on her behalf.

People often approach us for help with a specific issue, but gradually we can unravel other underlying problems. The range of resources that the Centre has means that we can take a holistic approach to our advice and guidance, working with clients to get to the root of their issues rather than providing a temporary fix.

This work can be 'challenging, but it's very rewarding to support people to take control, gain confidence in themselves, and access the help they need along the way.

> *"…it's very rewarding to support people to take control, gain confidence in themselves…"*

What's coming up

Find out what's going on here, connect with other supporters and influence the way we work.

EVENTS

To reserve your complimentary tickets to any of our events please telephone **020 7227 1650**, email **events@cardinalhumecentre.org.uk** or write to us using your **freepost envelope** (enclosed with magazine).

ADVENT CONCERT 2023

Due to availability we're hosting our Cardinal Hume Centre Advent Concert a little early this year on **Wednesday 29th November 2023** at Sacred Heart Church, 112 Horseferry Rd, London, SW1P 2EF

Doors open from 6pm, for 6:30 start. Followed by a reception.

THE BIG CHRISTMAS GIVE

We are aiming to raise £150,000 for vulnerable families and children in a matched giving campaign. If you like to make your Christmas donation online, it will be **doubled** on the Big Give website **for one week only**.

Email the team on supporters@cardinalhumecentre.org.uk to request a reminder, or simply visit: www.biggive.co.uk and search for Cardinal Hume Centre between **28th November – 5th December**.

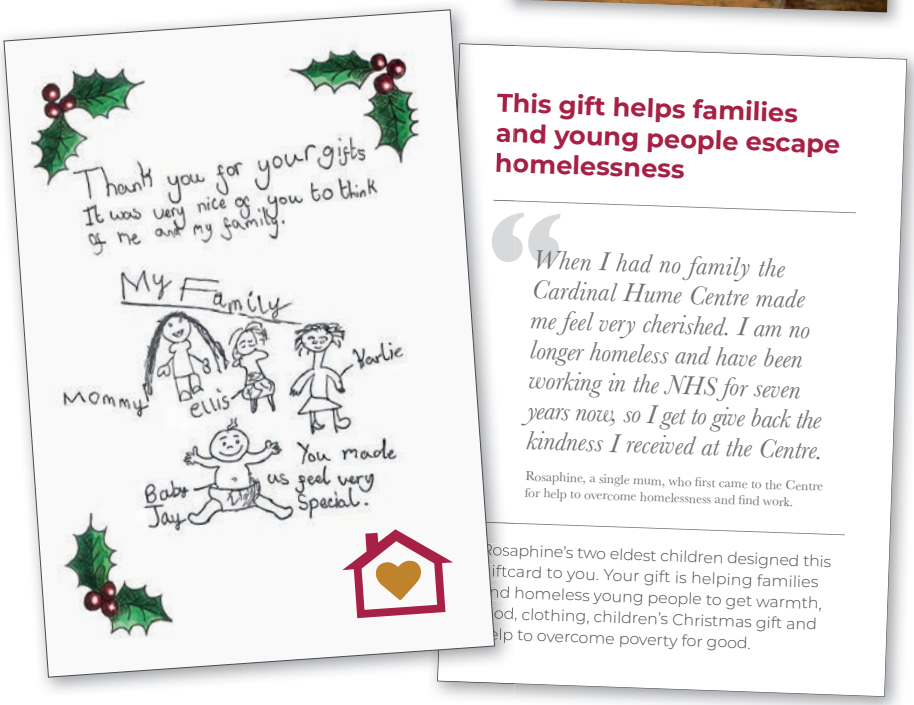
ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY MASS IN MEMORY OF CARDINAL GEORGE BASIL HUME

Tuesday 18th June 2024 at Sacred Heart Church, 112 Horseferry Rd, London, SW1P 2EF

Doors open from 6pm, for 6:30 start. Followed by a reception.

ORDERING CHRISTMAS CARDS FROM THE CENTRE

In a few weeks you may be thinking of ordering charity Christmas cards. If you'd like to order from the Cardinal Hume Centre, phone us on **020 7227 1650**, or use your **freepost envelope** to write to us and ask for an order form.



This gift helps families and young people escape homelessness

When I had no family the Cardinal Hume Centre made me feel very cherished. I am no longer homeless and have been working in the NHS for seven years now, so I get to give back the kindness I received at the Centre.

Rosaphine, a single mum, who first came to the Centre for help to overcome homelessness and find work.

Rosaphine's two eldest children designed this giftcard to you. Your gift is helping families and homeless young people to get warmth, food, clothing, children's Christmas gift and help to overcome poverty for good.

A STOCKINGFILLER THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Give someone the gift of helping local people escape homelessness this Christmas with a charity giftcard.

Simply contact us, make a discretionary donation of your choice, and receive a giftcard designed by a Cardinal Hume Centre family for your loved one at Christmas.

SOUVENIR CENTENARY BOOKLET

During the Centenary we have been reaching out to people who knew Cardinal Hume, including the Ampleforth community. We're delighted that Abbot Robert celebrated our Anniversary Mass in memory of Cardinal Hume this year.

Please contact us to order a free Centenary booklet to be sent to you.

Your support and *it's impact*

88% of our clients feel better able to meet their own or their family's needs, thanks to your support.

This last year saw greater pressure on our frontline, with a 12% increase in people coming to the Centre for help. In the last year we recruited four new advisors in our immigration, housing and welfare, and welcome teams to help meet this demand (see pages 6 and 11).

Despite the challenges our clients face, they tell us that we're upholding Cardinal Hume's ambition for a place of welcome, underpinned by the Benedictine ethos of listening with the 'ear of your heart'.

In Summer 2023 we invited all the people we had worked with in the previous year to share their opinions on our services and their impact. **84% feel less worried about their own or their families' future, and 96% said they would tell other people about the Centre if they needed help.**

We made the survey available to complete online and on paper at the Centre, and respondents had the choice of completing the survey in one of five languages: English, Arabic, French, Spanish or Tigrinya.

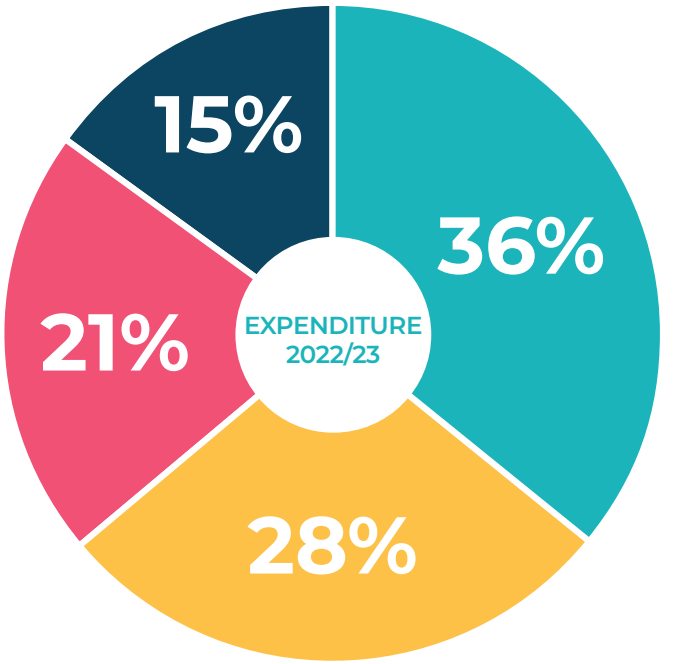
210 adult clients responded to our survey (a 21% response rate). They had accessed a range of services and represented the diversity of adult clients we work with.

COST OF LIVING

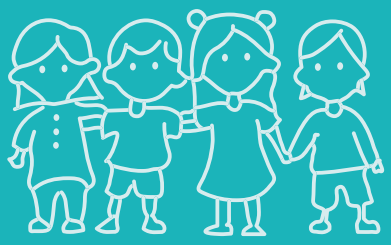
By Emily, fundraising team

We know from our conversations and correspondence with our supporters that the cost of living is affecting you too. We thank you for standing by vulnerable young people, children and families in whatever way you can, and keeping us in your prayers.

For every **£1 donated, 85p is spent** on service delivery.



3,600



children living in temporary accommodation in Westminster

48

young people living in our hostel and flats

170

people supported to secure or extend their right to remain in the UK

96%

*respondents agreed staff make them feel welcome and relaxed**

"I love the Cardinal Hume Centre; it has helped me several times when at my lowest. I'm not sure if I'd have survived without the kind people there. Thank you all for what you do."

12%

increase in people coming to the Centre for help

HOW YOU GAVE YOUR HELP

Legacies	£326,000
Donations	£2,075,000
Charity Shop	£21,000
TOTAL VOLUNTARY INCOME	**£2,422,000**
OTHER CENTRE INCOME	
Statutory Income	£690,000
Earned Income	£498,000
TOTAL INCOME	**£3,610,000**

Big 4000 *update*

Individuals and community groups are taking on challenges to add miles to our mile-ometer.

BRENDAN'S BIG 4000

In 2022, Brendan decided to take on a Big 4000 of his own. He is walking around the coastline of England & Wales without using ferries (apart from getting to and from the Isle of Wight!). At time of writing he has walked over 1,800 miles, and raised more than £10,000.

His challenge is self-funded, and he is making many new friends along the way who have added their donations to the Cardinal Hume Centre via his JustGiving page.

Brendan says: "At 71, I am a keen walker, though normally over shorter distances! Many people fleeing danger and persecution in their own countries will travel over 4,000 miles to reach safety in the UK. I'm helping the Cardinal Hume Centre support vulnerable people in similar situations."

100 MILES FOR LENT

By Chris, supporter

I'm a keen runner. Last Christmas [2022], I visited the Cardinal Hume Centre, where the story of one refugee, Mohsen, who fled Sudan when he was just 15, inspired me to set myself a demanding target to add to their Big 4000 Challenge whilst working towards my Duke of Edinburgh award.

The Big 4000 is a challenge to collectively cover 4,000 miles, the distance many refugees face to reach safety. So I ran during Lent 2023, aiming to reach 100 miles by Easter, raising money along the way.

It was difficult running in the winter, as days were short, but I was proud when my distance pushed the Big 4000 Mile-ometer over the 900-mile mark. I set a £500 target and contacted family and friends to ask for sponsorship. I was blown away to raise £1,188 on my JustGiving page!

Knowing that my running would help families, and particularly young people, to receive the support they need to survive and even, like Mohsen, to thrive, was what kept me going.

Visit **big4000.org.uk** to find out more and get involved.

Spread the word in your church/ parish/workplace/school with the tear-off poster opposite. >>

Cardinal Hume Centre seeks new volunteers

1,362 people, among them **546 families** including **282 children**, were helped to reduce their risk of homelessness at the Cardinal Hume Centre last year.

So much of this is supported by volunteers; scan the QR code or contact us on the details below to find a role that suits you:

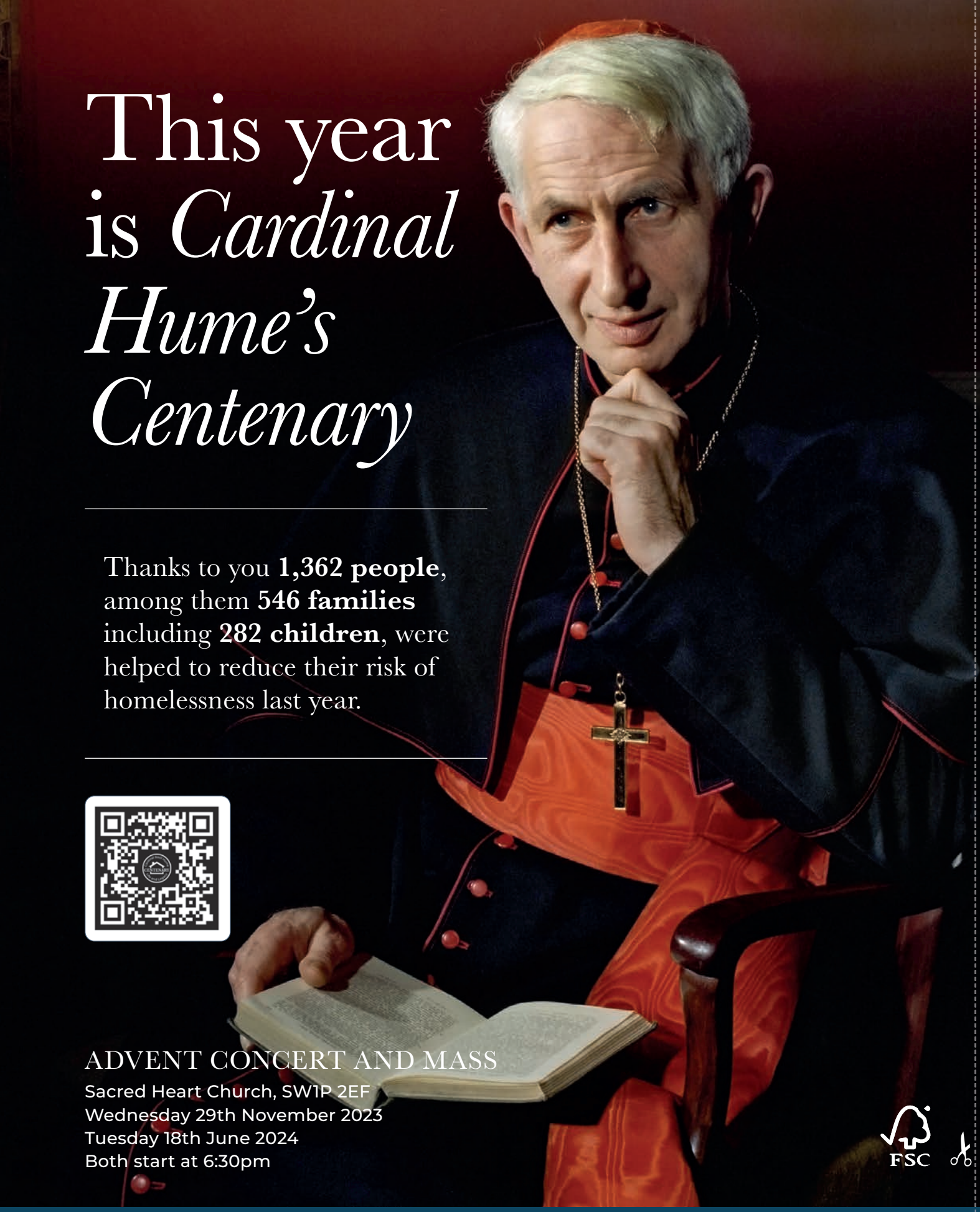
- Collect for our foodbank
- Join our charity shop team on Horseferry Road in Westminster
- Help at study clubs for schoolkids, weekdays afterschool, or play sessions on Saturdays
- Support to clients who want to improve their English

www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk/volunteer

Cardinal Hume Centre, 3-7 Arneway Street, Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2BG
W www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk | **T** 020 7227 1650
CardinalHumeCHC | CardinalHumeCentre
Company Number 04333875 Registered Charity Number 1090836

Cardinal Hume Centre
Each Person Matters

This year is *Cardinal Hume's Centenary*



Thanks to you **1,362 people**, among them **546 families** including **282 children**, were helped to reduce their risk of homelessness last year.

ADVENT CONCERT AND MASS

Sacred Heart Church, SW1P 2EF
Wednesday 29th November 2023
Tuesday 18th June 2024
Both start at 6:30pm

FSC

Cardinal Hume Centre, 3-7 Arneway Street,
Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2BG
W www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk | **T** 020 7227 1650
CardinalHumeCHC | CardinalHumeCentre
Company Number 04333875 Registered Charity Number 1090836

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