

THE WORKING CENTRE



VOLUNTEER INSPIRED AND COMMUNITY FOCUSED SINCE 1982

SERVING OTHERS • WORK AS GIFT • REJECTING STATUS • LIVING SIMPLY • BUILDING COMMUNITY • CREATING COMMUNITY TOOLS



St. John's Kitchen & Outreach

St. John's Kitchen welcomes 400 people a day serving as a place of rest and belonging. The daily meal along with public washrooms, showers, laundry, outreach supports, medical and dental care are essential services for those without housing. St. John's Kitchen has been providing a daily meal in the downtown since 1985, and this fall we returned to our original home at St. John's Anglican Church, which has welcomed us back while 97 Victoria undergoes construction for the Making Home project.



Meal Preparation & Distribution

Our commissary kitchen on Queen Street prepares 700 meals each day for distribution to St. John's Kitchen and the three emergency shelters – University Ave. Dorms, King Street Shelter and Erbs Road Shelter. This huge daily effort is supported by many volunteers and the Waterloo Regional Foodbank. We also continue to deliver hampers to motel rooms.



Employment & Financial Supports

Our Job Search Resource Centre remained open during COVID and broadened its role as a vital hub for job seekers, especially new Canadians, who are looking for job search supports like job postings, resume support, employment counselling, links to employers, and connections to community resources. Our Money Matters Hub is a vibrant space working with thousands of people using the service as they cope with the increasing cost of housing. People connect with the Financial Inclusion Outreach Workers for assistance with income tax, budgeting, community resources, government support programs, and problem solving.

Safe Affordable Housing

The Working Centre provides housing to over 80 people at 11 locations. This year we added 21 units as part of the Queen Street Apartments renovation which is now home to 34 residents, including new Canadian woman and their families. This past year we recreated the Louisa Street house into a place for hosting refugees. 9 people have used the house as part of their journey to settle into Canada.



Community Tools

The Community Tool projects have been under significant pressure throughout the pandemic for multiple reasons. This fall, the changes necessitated by the Making Home project has served as a catalyst for regrowth. Worth A Second Look and Recycle Cycles are putting the finishing touches on new spaces at the 256 King East campus. These dynamic projects recycle and refurbish bikes, housewares and furniture with the help of many volunteers. Both are looking forward to operating in their new locations.

Look for the reopening of the Queen Street Commons Cafe, Fresh Ground Cafe and Green Door Used Clothing Boutique in the new year.

Emergency Shelter Beds and Cabins

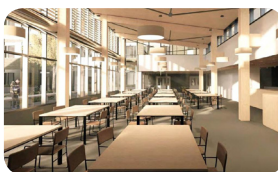
We provide 100 beds at King St. Emergency Shelter and 80 beds at University Ave (UA) residence. Both locations include a food servery, washrooms, showers, laundry, primary healthcare, and housing supports.

In April 2023 the Erbs Road Shelter opened providing 50 individual cabins that include a bed, desk, chair and heating/cooling. A central community building at the site provides washrooms, showers, laundry and space for food distribution.



Making Home Project

In August ground was broken at 97 Victoria St. N to begin work to add 44 units of supportive housing, a space for expanded outreach and healthcare supports, and construction of a new modern building for St. John's Kitchen. This project will recreate 97 Victoria into a hub offering comprehensive services to help the most marginalized move safely indoors, stabilize, access supports and become sustainably housed.



Project updates at: 97victoria.theworkingcentre.org



Your generous support helps continue our community building efforts

donate.theworkingcentre.org



3000+ job seekers supported annually



5000+ people assisted with financial supports



200,000 meals prepared and distributed in 2023



100+ people living in affordable housing



80,000 shelter bed stays annually



400+ people daily supported at St. John's Kitchen

Dear Friends,

The Working Centre is now offering **230 beds** as 24/7 emergency shelter. This came together through an effort of sheer will to support the daily operation, the culture of the space and the team working alongside the residents.

The 230 beds are located at three sites, providing 24/7 shelter, supporting people until their housing search yields a new place to call home. This important work has been done in cooperation with the Region of Waterloo in an effort to expand needed shelter beds.

The **University Avenue Dorms** ensures 80 people have housing and a place to build on new opportunities. The supports, meals and housing have made tremendous differences in the lives of many residents.

King Street Shelter provides 100 beds in a congregate shelter with three sleeping areas, a central community gathering area and a 24 hour servery.

Erbs Road Shelter opened at the end of April with 50 cabins, offering a single cabin along with a community centre with showers, washrooms, laundry and a gathering place for meals and a 24 hour servery. This is a safer place for a group of people who were all without housing and living in encampments.

This new shelter work is in addition to the interconnected web of services and projects that have grown out of the Working Centre community.

St. John's Kitchen is a primary place for the unsheltered and precariously housed providing access to meals, showers, laundry, public washrooms, outreach and medical supports. In a regular month St. John's Kitchen has over 1000 visits of different people.

The **commissary kitchen** on Queen Street produces over 700 meals each day that are served at St. John's Kitchen and the three shelters.

In the first three month of the newly opened **Community Dental Clinic** there were 110 appointments for services like New Patient Exams, Restorations, Extractions, Fillings, Emergencies, and Cleanings.

Outreach supports for those facing homelessness are crucial. Everyday our outreach workers are supporting people in encampments, motels and precarious living situations, helping with access to housing, medical, mental health, addiction supports, and legal issues. These same supports in our housing and shelter locations provide up to 400 different appointments per month.

This year, we completed construction at **54 Queen S** creating 21 loft units for new Canadian single parents. We were also able to start construction of our major building project at **97 Victoria N** to build 44 single units for those dealing with long-term homelessness.

On Queen Street, the **Job Search Resource Centre** continues to be a place where job searchers know that they will get ongoing assistance. Last year, over 2500 different individuals accessed the service as an integral part of their job searching.

Money Matters is an essential service and last year the project supported 2,627 financially struggling individuals in our community to connect to financial education, free financial coaching, or help solving urgent financial problems, and 3,142 individuals to access income tax filing securing over \$8,422,950 in critically needed new income.

Your donations help us support people with creative projects that respond to growing poverty and housing instability. Supporters of The Working Centre have proven, year after year, that community donations are vital to respond to local issues. We are grateful for your ongoing support in building our community of support.

Sincerely,

Joe Mancini,

Director

P.S. We share our quarterly newspaper Good Work News with our contributors. Learn more about our community-based initiatives by visiting our website at www.theworkingcentre.org

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The Working Centre**

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