

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

IMPACT HK



#KindnessMatters

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ABOUT IMPACTHK



ImpactHK is a charity tackling the problem of homelessness in Hong Kong. We transform lives because we believe in kindness, care and opportunity for all. We believe in the power of kindness in tackling the pressing problem of homelessness in Hong Kong. Our journey started with a simple aim of doing one act of kindness per month for the homeless - a group of friends going for a walk on the streets and delivering food. We have grown significantly since then and have been a registered charity in Hong Kong since March 2017.

Hundreds of volunteers have contributed their time and energy in support of the less fortunate and together we have evolved into a powerful humanitarian movement making a positive impact on the plight of the homeless in Hong Kong; in just two years we have housed and employed almost 100 people.

ImpactHK's goal is to earn trust and develop friendships with the homeless in Hong Kong. After which, we house our homeless friends and they work part-time for ImpactHK, serving and supporting the homeless and elderly at our centre, the Guestroom, and out on the streets.

Their job is showing kindness to individuals in need and this meaningful act further helps them on their journey.

But we know that providing homes and jobs is simply not enough. We have demonstrated time and time again that a holistic approach is needed; while employed part-time for ImpactHK, our beneficiaries must take part in classes, which include counselling (both in groups and one-on-one), mentorship and goal-setting, nutrition, sports, english lessons and art therapy. By attending these classes and coming to our Centres everyday, we are able to get to know each individual on a one-to-one basis and help make a truly tailor-made plan for them.

When our employed beneficiaries are healthy, happy and able to find independence, some graduate to work elsewhere and others stay on to work for us. But whatever the situation the priority for us is to remain in their lives. We know that connection and friendship can combat the isolation that forces people to become homeless. This is the magic ingredient in everything we do; treating everyone as a friend and building a community.

OUR IMPACT AT A GLANCE

800

HOMELESS FRIENDS SUPPORTED WEEKLY ON THE STREETS

The number of homeless individuals served on the streets by our dedicated volunteers

46

HOMELESS FRIENDS HOUSED

The number of homeless individuals for whom we have provided shelter

8

AREAS SERVED WEEKLY

Fortress Hill, North Point, Sai Wan Ho, Happy Valley, Sham Shui Po, Tai Kok Tsui, Yau Ma Tei and Mongkok

700

MEALS SERVED WEEKLY AT OUR CENTRE

The number of meals we serve each week at our centre The Guestroom

30

HOMELESS FRIENDS EMPLOYED

Homeless individuals employed as part of our Community Helpers programme to date

1

MAGIC INGREDIENT

The only commonality amongst all homeless individuals in Hong Kong is that they are all in need of a great friend

LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER & CEO

**Dear friends of
ImpactHK,**



It gives me great pleasure to present our Annual Report for the year ended March 31st 2019.

It has been another incredible year of growth for ImpactHK; we increased our outreach to over 60 Kindness Walks per month and we served an average of 700 meals every week at our centre.

It was also a year in which we continued to learn and quickly adapt to better support our homeless beneficiaries. Our first centre, the Guestroom has been busier than ever, proving that our approach to earning the trust of the homeless on the streets is working. Having this space gives us the opportunity to build on the friendships that we make on the streets and get to know our homeless friends on a one-to-one basis.

We know that it hurts having your friend sleeping outside and when we have homeless friends demonstrating a willingness and ability for change, we have acted on it with great urgency. During this period we helped 46 individuals into permanent shelter and employed 30 of them.

Our model for helping the homeless off the streets by earning trust, building friendships, housing and employment is working. Our holistic support programmes with daily sport and art classes, counselling and mentorship further strengthens their opportunity to find a new path towards health and happiness.

But above all, our understanding of the important role that friendship plays in empowering individuals has remained unwavering. We continued to focus on ways to better support our beneficiaries with opportunities for connection, fun and happiness.

Looking ahead, ImpactHK strives to create massive impact in Hong Kong and to do this we have broadened our remit. This year we launched our education programme, which has gone from strength to strength and now we work with over a dozen schools. In this programme we teach children and young adults the importance of caring for individuals in need and how they can create positive change in the world. We are getting great feedback from schools, who are truly benefitting from this lesson. This is part of our long term theory of change; we believe that empowering and educating our youth will go on to contribute towards ending homelessness in Hong Kong.

We have many more plans in our mission to help end homelessness. We aim to open our second location in the next few months, which will be a sports and counselling centre. Here we can dedicate more time and space to our holistic support programme, which is essential for homeless individuals on our programme. Attendance at daily art or sport classes, for example, can provide a great indicator of someone's willingness and ability to change.

We will also continue to expand our outreach to new neighbourhoods, adding Kindness Walks so that we can serve new homeless communities. This will in turn create further volunteering opportunities, which helps to build the momentum when it comes to destigmatising homelessness and educating the wider public.

ImpactHK didn't start with the ambition of becoming a charity, but by taking that first step to help those in need we have been able to achieve so much. Our ImpactHK team will continue working every day to do all we can to fight for the less fortunate. The homeless in Hong Kong are facing unbelievable adversity and pain. Together we can and will save so many lives.

As ever, we couldn't have done it without such widespread support from our volunteers, donors and staff. We are grateful to our partners, especially HandsOn Hong Kong who galvanise dedicated volunteers to participate in our Kindness Walks.

It is this kindness that keeps the ImpactHK ship afloat and I would like to thank all of you who have contributed for your love and care.



Jeff Rotmeyer

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OUR WORK



The homeless in Hong Kong

The situation for the homeless in Hong Kong is severe and people are dying everyday. The number of registered homeless individuals in Hong Kong is at 1,270 according to the government Population and Household Statistics (2019). But through our work we know that the actual number is far higher. Very few individuals actually register as homeless, in fact, less than 20 per cent of the individuals we've helped were officially registered.

The situation is also getting worse; there has been a 51 per cent rise in registered street sleepers over the past five years (according to 2019 research from LegCo). Thousands of individuals are homeless on the streets of Hong Kong, alone and without hope.

Kindness Walks

Our Kindness Walks make up our daily outreach to people in need on the streets, where we distribute food and necessities to the homeless and spread kindness. They form the bedrock of ImpactHK's charitable work and it is here that our journey began. We've come a long way in just a few years; we now run close to 60 Kindness Walks in different locations throughout Hong Kong each month, serving roughly 800 meals on the streets each week. Along the way, we also support others in need, such as the elderly, street cleaners and the poor.

We couldn't do this without the contribution of our volunteers who play a vital role in helping to build trust on the streets by showing kindness. Since March 2018, we have partnered with HandsOn Hong Kong to extend the reach of our Kindness Walks and volunteers can register via the HandsOn Hong Kong website. We have 20 dedicated Kindness Walk Leaders who are educating and supervising participants and allow our Kindness Walks to be run every single day all across Hong Kong in the following locations:

Sham Shui Po, Fortress Hill, North Point, Mong Kok, Sai Wan Ho, Happy Valley, Tai Kok Tsui, Yau Ma Tei and Wan Chai.

Building on the popularity of our Kindness Walks, we have also started offering Private Kindness Walks to organisations, which is proving to be an effective way to introduce organisations to our work. It is through this outreach that we make the initial connection with our homeless friends and start to build trust. Here we can inform them about our services and gradually, once they're ready, they come to our Centre.



The Guestroom

In just over a year, the Guestroom has become a well-known place of sanctuary and support for the homeless community. The day centre in Tai Kok Tsui serves over 700 meals a week and anyone in need can come in and have a tea or coffee. The space has enabled us to establish a permanent physical presence in the area and according to one beneficiary, it is now 'famous in the nearby community'.

We offer a range of support services here, from a clothing bank to laundry services and feminine hygiene items to hairdressing. It is a safe space where our homeless friends can have some relief from life on the streets and come to relax, seek comfort and socialise. Outside on the porch we have a community fridge full of donated food and beverages and anyone can help themselves.

At ImpactHK we believe in a holistic approach and the Guestroom has allowed us to build on this. It has become a hub for all of ImpactHK's programmes and activities, including fitness, yoga and english lessons. This is where we carry out our one-to-one mentoring, weekly counselling and goal-setting, helping beneficiaries to think about their future. Above all it has continued to be a space of community and connection, where we get to know our homeless friends and get them the help they need.



Housing Programme

When a homeless individual has shown commitment and the capability to take responsibility for themselves, ImpactHK will house them. We are committed to helping our homeless friends gain independence and move into a home of their own. This is done on a case by case basis and we offer financial assistance for their housing deposit and first month's rent. Thereafter, these individuals will have to manage their own finances and pay their own rent. Since ImpactHK was founded we have housed 46 individuals. We are also able to offer temporary housing relief to those in desperate need.

At ImpactHK, we believe that providing housing first is critical in helping someone to get back on their feet. It's impossible to look after health and wellbeing if you're living on the streets, let alone to hold down a job.

Community Helpers Programme

We understand that having meaningful and paid work underpins the road to independence for our homeless friends; we believe in empowering people with a hand up, rather than just a handout. At the Guestroom, we offer employment to Community Helpers who are paid to carry out ImpactHK's work. They cook food at the Guestroom, prepare and deliver items for our Kindness Walks, keep our Centre clean and a number of other duties, which involve serving the community and giving back. These individuals are also provided with a nurturing environment, in which they can improve and grow their transferable work skills. And on a practical level this helps our homeless friends with a reliable and stable source of income for them to pay their rent.

This year alone we are proud to have employed 30 community helpers. As we grow we will be able to create more jobs, which will not only allow us to help more people, but also allow our members to have more diverse options for employment.



Education Programme

This aspect of our programme has developed in response to demand from schools who were requesting speaking and information sharing sessions. ImpactHK now visits a range of primary and secondary educational institutions for which we ask for a donation. We inform young people about homelessness in Hong Kong and the work that we're doing to tackle the problem. It is an important facet of our work, to raise awareness among the next generation and one that we will build on as we grow.

"The lessons our kids learnt today are beyond those that I can teach in a classroom and I just wanted to let you know how much it was appreciated. I hope that this work will educate our kids so that they can continue making a difference for our future"

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SUCCESS STORIES

Success Story one: Por Por



Por Por in Mong Kok garden



Por Por in her new apartment

We first met this sweet-natured lady in a garden near Mong Kok during our regular Kindness Walks. Her smile and gentle demeanour was always inviting, despite her tough surroundings.

Every day we'd return to the garden and Por Por would be there with her friends selling whatever random items so that she could afford food for that day. Sadly this is a very common scene in Hong Kong, with many seniors struggling to find work.

We knew that Por Por was in great need, but we didn't think she was homeless. Then one of our team was passing by the garden early one morning and we saw her sleeping there. The garden is right next to a refuse centre and a wet market, so Por Por was surrounded by rats. It's heartbreaking to see anyone in such a situation, but it is completely unacceptable for a lady of her age to be in this situation. We knew we had to act.

The very next morning we went to have a conversation with her, so that we could better understand her situation. We found out that she'd been sleeping in either the garden or McDonalds for a long time. She also mentioned that she used to be a street cleaner for nearly twenty years.

We explained to her that we could help her by getting her into shelter that night. Thanks to the trust we had already earned, through our outreach on the streets, she felt comfortable with us. She allowed us to check her into a nearby hotel. She had no identification or money. Since that day, our team and dedicated volunteers take her to the doctor monthly. We have been paying for her apartment near to her garden in Mong Kok so that she is in a familiar area. We have applied for her public housing, but we have been told it will take a minimum of two years.

Although the investment to house and support Por Por is a big one for us as a charity, we take our role in caring for her very seriously. We will continue to ensure she is well looked after and not alone.

Success story two: David



David with founder Jeff Rotmeyer after signing his work contract



David at work at Love 21 Foundation



Ka Man and David taking part in our sports programme

When we first met David, he was alone and sleeping in the park in West Kowloon. Sleeping outside for nights on end is extremely difficult, but unless you've been through it, it can be hard to really imagine what it must be like. In the summer you are bitten to shreds by bugs and in the winter it's cold and damp. You're disturbed throughout the night and there is always the risk that you're going to get hurt or injured by passersby. Fundamentally, wherever you try to lay your head, you are unwelcome. Coupled with terrible diet from a shortage of food, this has a crippling effect on your physical health and your mental health.

David was also incredibly frustrated at not being able to find work. It was a constant cycle of challenges, with most employers requiring that you have an address, being homeless can make it impossible to get any sort of work. The hurt and hopelessness one feels sleeping on the streets - not to mention having nothing to do with your day because you can't get work - really traumatises and damages people.

The tragic truth is that though David was lonely and isolated, he was actually not alone in his pain and suffering. We have seen stories like David's time and time again among our homeless friends.

Despite the odds being stacked against him, when we met David he was chatty and keen to connect. We soon housed and employed David and he instantly became our hardest worker. He loved cooking and did everything he could to help out at the Guestroom. It was clear to see how much he wanted to prove his worth. It was also great to see how much he liked helping people. David worked with us for many months and during that time he continued to see our counsellor and have mentorship. He also voluntarily joined a lot of our extra classes.

David has now graduated from ImpactHK and is working full time as a centre Caretaker for disability charity Love 21 Foundation. In this role David is helping the Down Syndrome and autistic community and it's been amazing to see him smiling and laughing.

Often society and also these homeless individuals make the mistake of thinking that simply a job can solve all their issues. In fact, having steady income or a job is just one piece of the puzzle. Friendship and connection is also crucial. David has told us how lonely he was when he was living on the streets, isolated and abandoned and let down. But now, not only does David have a community in his place of work, he also comes to visit us at the Guestroom during his holidays. He is a friend for life and a rewarding example of how important the component of friendship is when it comes to empowering individuals off the streets.

FUTURE PLANS

ImpactHK has achieved so much in just two years of operation as a charity. We are very excited about growing even more in the coming years, so that we can offer more kindness to those in need and arm them with the resources to transform their lives for the better.

Our plans include:

STAFF TEAM

In January 2019 we were able to take on a full time Programme Manager. Next year we intend to employ a Programme Coordinator, Education specialist and full time Counsellor. This will allow us to provide further support for all of our homeless friends by strengthening our programmes and developing services.

SENIORS PROGRAMME

In our outreach and at the Guestroom, we are hosting an increasing amount of elderly guests, individuals who might have a home but are very lonely and isolated and often unable to cook for themselves, for example. We will develop our services so that we can help this group and also seek funding that can directly help homeless seniors.

PUBLIC KINDNESS WALKS

We added a new public Kindness Walk in Wan Chai in February 2019 thanks to the dedicated help of our volunteers and next year we will build on this and expand our offering to include new locations.

ANOTHER CENTRE

The Guestroom has been a roaring success but it is so popular that we are looking to open a dedicated sports and counselling centre. In March 2019 Kadoorie Charitable Foundation approved funds to establish this and we are very excited to collaborate with them. It will have a full programme of classes in order to continue our holistic approach and will have the space for fitness, table tennis, music classes and much more. It will also have a private space for counselling.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

We will build on the popularity of the ImpactHK education programme and will also introduce Kindness Walks for schools.

PRIVATE KINDNESS WALKS

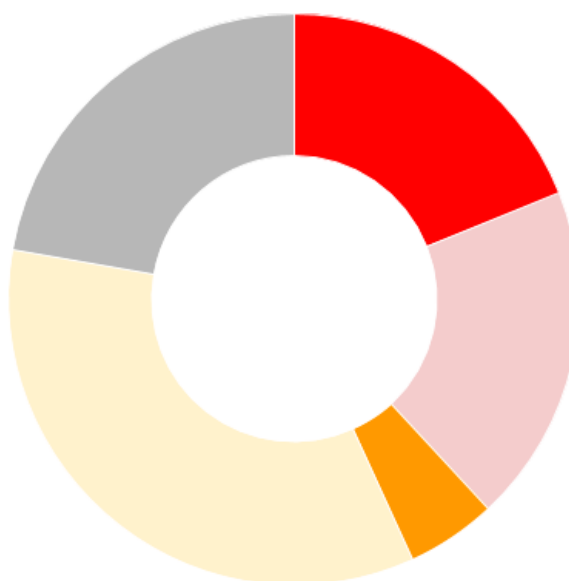
Next year we will seek to offer more private Kindness Walks for corporates and other organisations, which can be tailored to their needs and will provide a great source of unrestricted funding.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

April 2018 - March 2019	ITEMS	AMOUNT (HKD)
Income		
	Private Donations	5,625,889
	Total Income	5,625,889
Expenditure		
	Employment of the homeless	609,252
	Housing for the homeless	614,195
	Food for the homeless	164,325
	Core services for the homeless	1,110,408
	Administration and operations	714,614
	Total Expenditure	3,212,794
	Surplus for the year	2,413,095

Use of Donations

- Employment of the homeless
- Housing for the homeless
- Food for the homeless
- Core services for the homeless
- Administration and operations



LEADERSHIP

Staff Team

Jeff Rotmeyer - Founder & CEO

Jeff is a former secondary school teacher who founded ImpactHK because he saw an urgent need for fresh ideas for solving homelessness in Hong Kong. He has seen that multiple connections are essential for overcoming difficult times and is extremely passionate about giving people in need an opportunity for happiness.



Kathryn Yuen - Programme Coordinator

Kathryn came to ImpactHK with a wealth of experience in coordination and administrative work and was the charity's first member of staff. She does an expert job of managing the Guestroom, working closely with our many Community Helpers to welcome the dozens of visitors who come everyday. Her friendliness and sense of humour has fostered a kind and loving space where our beneficiaries feel supported.

Michelle Wong - Programme Manager

Michelle has a background in worker's rights and trade unions and joined the team in January 2019 bringing over a decade of experience in the social sector. She has a masters degree in grassroots rights and is inspired by the strength of the underprivileged. She is passionate about strengthening programmes for the homeless and has done a masterful job of finessing our services and implementing new ideas as we have grown.



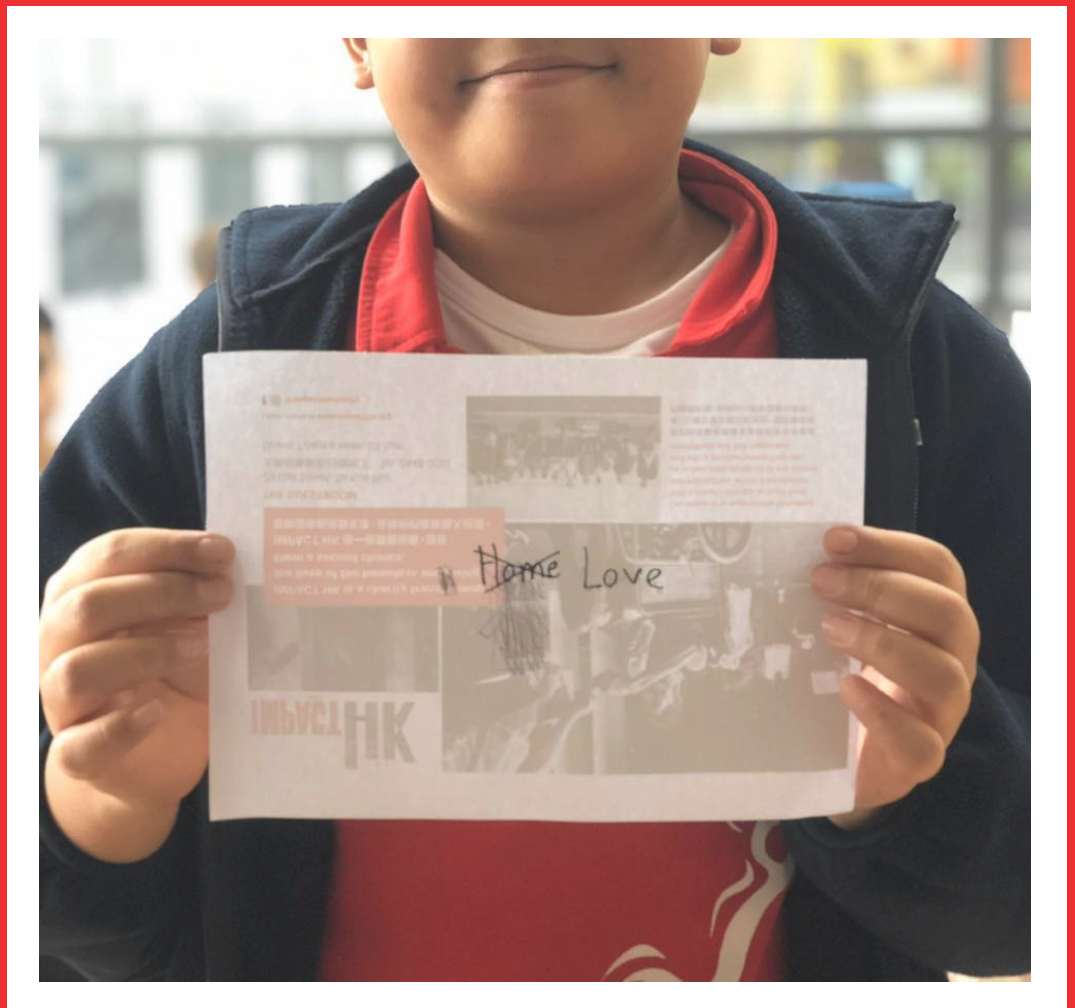
Board of Directors

We have appointed an experienced and diverse Board of Directors who are dedicated to the ImpactHK mission, provide advice and counsel and oversee operations. They are:

- Appel, Terri Crystal-Gibbs
- Coenka, Geet
- Seymour-Jones, Elizabeth Ann
- Sujanani, Sunil N.
- Syngkon, Clifton Andrew Jones
- Wong, Peter Wai Heng

THANK YOU

We would like to say an enormous thank you for your support and passion in helping the homeless in Hong Kong. It has enabled us to push forward with our vision for saving lives. ImpactHK relies on Kindness and we couldn't do this without you.



GET IN TOUCH

Visit our website: www.impacthk.org

Follow us online: www.facebook.com/impacthkcharity/

Instagram: @ImpactHKCharity

Twitter @ImpactHK

Send us an email: hello@impacthk.org

Give us a call: +85224480011

Or best of all, drop by the Guestroom: G/F, Cherry Mansion, 29 Oak Street, Tai Kok Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong

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