



IMPACT HK

Annual Report 2019-2020

#KINDNESSMATTERS



**'WE ARE BUILDING AN
INCLUSIVE HONG KONG
WHERE EVERYONE HAS A
SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME
AND CARES FOR THEIR
NEIGHBOUR'**

#KINDNESSMATTERS

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ABOUT IMPACTHK

ImpactHK is a non-profit tackling the problem of homelessness in Hong Kong. We transform lives because we believe in kindness, care and opportunity for all – and that every person deserves a safe home. To do this we provide basic survival necessities, temporary accommodation and housing, training and employment opportunities and emotional support to people experiencing homelessness.

At ImpactHK we know that jobs and homes alone do not solve homelessness. Our holistic approach provides comprehensive support, from counselling to classes and housing to medical care. Above all, we create community for our homeless friends. Even those who go on to work elsewhere after graduating from our programmes, come back to visit us in our centre and stay part of our lives. We know that connection and friendship combats the isolation that forces people to become homeless.

Our journey started with a simple aim of doing one act of kindness a month for people experiencing homelessness; a group of friends going for a walk on the streets and delivering food. With the help of dedicated volunteers, loyal supporters and our growing team, we have expanded significantly. We are proud to be building community connections that improve the collective understanding of homelessness and empathy towards the people who experience it.

OUR IMPACT AT A GLANCE



800

Homeless individuals
supported weekly
via Kindness Walks



700

Meals served weekly
at The Guestroom



63

Homeless individuals housed



9

Areas served every week

*Data from April 2019 to March 2020



LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Nick Grenham

It is my pleasure to present to you our Annual Report for 2020. Reflecting over the last year, we have seen unimaginable growth in our team and the number of beneficiaries that we serve. This wouldn't be possible without the overwhelming support and generosity of our donors, volunteers, staff and partners – something for which we are all very grateful.

I am particularly proud of the establishment of our sports and counselling centre where we are now able to address the individual needs of the homeless, while creating a community through group activities.

Looking forward, a number of exciting programmes are in the works that will provide jobs and training opportunities for our beneficiaries as well as generating income. We are also looking to expand our front-line staff in order to help more people while maintaining the quality of support and care that we provide.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I'd like to thank you for your continued support in helping our charity serve one of Hong Kong's most vulnerable communities.



LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER & CEO

Jeff Rotmeyer

It gives me great pleasure to present our Annual Report for the period of April 1, 2019 to March 31st, 2020.

Another year has passed and ImpactHK has continued to grow and strengthen its ability to help people experiencing homelessness. This progress was only possible thanks to the thousands of caring volunteers, supporters, donors and staff. Thank you all so much for your kindness and care; we really couldn't do this without you. During this period, we expanded our reach through added Kindness Walks, increased food support from the Guestroom and provided shelter for 63 individuals. We kicked off the year with the opening of Place2be where we held and provided many more opportunities for training through our classes and emotional support through our counselling programme.

At ImpactHK we know that providing shelter is not enough. Many of the individuals we support have suffered serious trauma in their lives and housing or employment alone doesn't cure that amount of pain. This is why we continue to provide emotional support, as well as numerous opportunities for fun and human connection through our weekly schedule of classes. We can see that our approach is working. It has been a great privilege to provide opportunities and connection for people who had previously given up hope, people who deemed their lives unworthy of kindness. Now they spend their days in our centres - engaged, laughing and optimistic.

We have continued our education programme this year in order to improve understanding of homelessness in the community and empathy towards the people who experience it. Through our work in schools and universities, we watch time and time again as students go from believing the misconception that homelessness is the result of laziness or that it's a choice, to seeing the importance of using kindness to lift others. Our Kindness Walks have a similar effect, opening people's eyes to poverty in Hong Kong.

The fact is that we will never be able to stop people from becoming homeless in Hong Kong. People will always face hardships and go through times of crisis and the lack of affordable housing means we will continue to see new faces on the streets. This is why we must educate society and equip people with the knowledge that we are all together in this city; when people fall down, it's our job as a community to care for others.

We also look forward to starting a social enterprise in the coming year. We want to provide meaningful employment for those taking steps towards stable housing and the chance for those with experience of homelessness to give back to others in a similar position. We will start with a secondhand clothing shop that will employ and train people who are formerly homeless and save clothing from landfill. We believe in starting with strengths and focussing on the abilities and kindness that our homeless friends have.

The future of ImpactHK looks bright. We will continue to fight for those who are marginalised in society and ensure everyone in Hong Kong has a safe place to call home. We are only able to do this because of you. Thousands of you have gone out this year alone to support people who experiencing homelessness. I'm so proud of the ImpactHK community and grateful for your trust in our team. Now more than ever we are on the right path and using the power of kindness, we can change Hong Kong.

#KindnessMatters

Jeff Rotmeyer
Founder and CEO



HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING IN HONG KONG

THE NUMBERS

OFFICIAL FIGURE

22%

The number of registered street sleepers has increased to 1,423

IN REALITY



Agreement between non-profits serving the homeless is that the actual number is likely to be much higher



People sleep on the streets in public toilets, bus stations, flyovers, tunnels, parks, playgrounds, car parks



But a lot of homelessness is hidden; in - illegal rooftop dwellings, 24-hour restaurants and inadequate housing - such as the more than 200,000 people living in 'coffin homes'



1 IN 5

1 in 5 people in Hong Kong are living in poverty

\$4,000
monthly income

\$2,475

Monthly rent allowance from the Social Welfare Department, but the average cost of a bedspace in a coffin home is \$2,500

5.6 years

The average waiting time for public rental housing has climbed to 5.6 years - for single males it is significantly longer

18 years

The citywide housing crisis continues with a lack of affordable housing in the private rented market - the average person must save 18 years of pre-tax salary (spending that money on nothing else) in order to afford to buy a home.

#KINDNESSMATTERS

OUR CENTRES

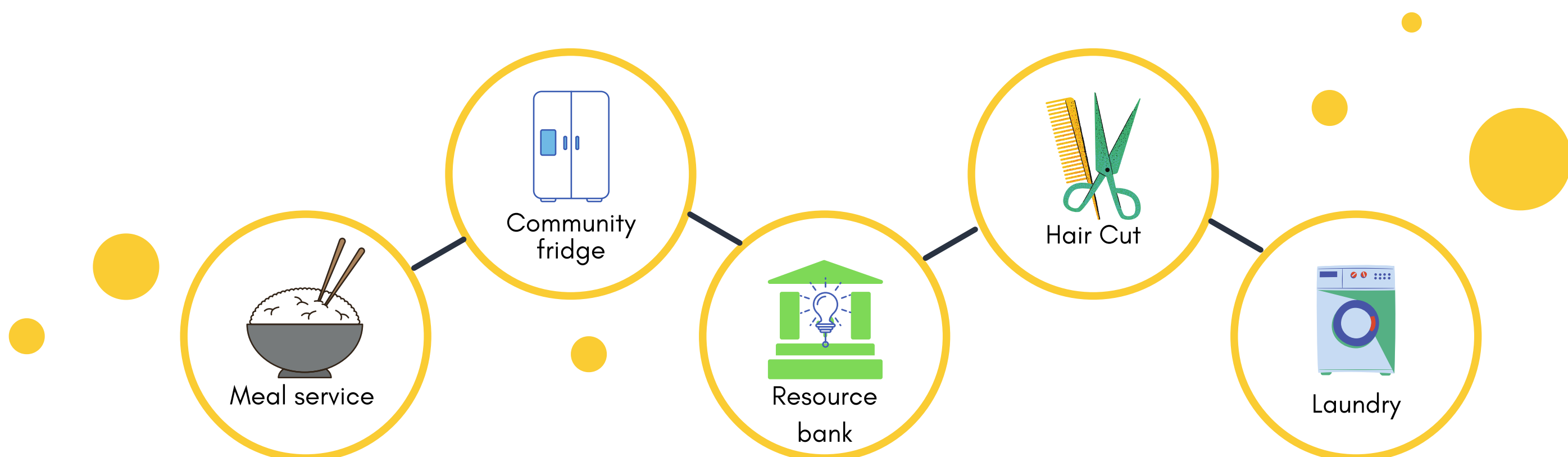
The place we meet our friends and volunteers

THE GUESTROOM

PLACE2BE

THE GUESTROOM

As the flagship centre of ImpactHK, we are proud to say that the Guestroom has had a successful first three years in the community. It has continued to be a place of sanctuary and a safe space where our homeless friends can have some relief from life on the streets and come to relax, seek comfort and socialise. Word of mouth has spread and we are now well known. It is the first place that we meet new clients and remains a place of community and friendship for our existing clients. After the outbreak of Covid 19 in February 2020 we had to slightly adjust the operations of the Guestroom, but we remained open throughout.



Our meal service continued to run, increasing to 300 meals daily by the end of the year. Our community fridge remains popular, serving items to local low income families and elderly. Our clients can continue to avail items from the resource bank, such as toiletries, sleeping bags, clothing and shoes – or come and get a hair cut or get some laundry done. It is also a starting point for our outreach programme and critical hub for preparation of supplies.

The Guestroom has become a valuable place of training and development for those experiencing homelessness, through our Community Helper programme. Our Community Helpers carry out tasks such as preparing Kindness Walk supplies, cleaning, packing masks, managing donations and serving the community. We also employ five Assistants at the Guestroom who used to be homeless. They are a critical part of the ImpactHK team and this position provides these individuals with the opportunity for professional growth, stable employment and to give back to the community.

PLACE2BE

We are excited to share that the first year of our new Sports & Counselling centre Place2be kicked off with huge success. At just a ten minute walk from the Guestroom, it is has become a popular and well attended place for our clients. Thanks to our network of volunteers who teach our classes pro bono, we have a weekly class schedule including:



Many clients drop in to play the piano or pick up a guitar or use the gym equipment. There are often people socialising, playing table tennis, pool or darts. Our computer corner is well used by our elderly clients who like to come and relax. It has provided a great space for team meetings and workshops, such as physiotherapist drop in sessions or mental health awareness talks. We also continued to have visits from the doctor, enhancing our medical service.

Place2be has become the starting point of private Kindness Walks or any talks delivered by Jeff to the community. These walks and talks are an important part of increasing understanding of homelessness and empathy towards the people who experience it, as well as fundraising for our projects.

Perhaps most importantly, having this new centre has allowed us to take on a full-time counsellor as part of the ImpactHK team. With a dedicated cosy counselling room, we now have a quieter space for clients to have conversations and help individuals on their road to rehabilitation and recovery.

#KINDNESSMATTERS

OUR PROGRAMMES & SERVICES

Outreach Programme | Housing Programme | Full Time Assistants |
Community Helpers | Employment support | Education Programme |
Seniors programme | Other service |



OUTREACH PROGRAMME

KINDNESS WALKS

Our Kindness Walks form the bedrock of how we help the homeless and make up our outreach programme. It is through these walks that we establish trust and friendship with the homeless community on the streets. In this challenging year and especially since the outbreak of Covid, we have seen more new faces and needs on the street. We distributed masks and hand sanitizers on our walks, as well as food and necessities. These daily walks enable us to connect with people living on the streets and offer them an opportunity. In this period we held an average of 60 Kindness Walks each month in locations across Hong Kong.

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, we are able to reach and serve more than 800 people on the street each week. Our 27 Walk Leaders are the stars of our Kindness Walks and guide the participants while showing care to our friends on the street. We adjusted our routes and developed new walk locations based on valuable feedback from our passionate volunteers.

- Sham Shui Po
- Fortress Hill
- North Point
- Mong Kok
- Happy Valley
- Tai Kok Tsui
- Yau Ma Tei
- Wan Chai
- Kwun Tong





PRIVATE KINDNESS WALKS

We have been offering private Kindness Walks to corporates, schools, non-profits, families and other groups. We are told time and time again by volunteers who have participated in our Kindness Walks that this is a truly meaningful experience. These tailor-made private walks also effectively introduce our work, with a talk from ImpactHK staff about homelessness.

Led by members of our staff, these private walks allow participants to understand our daily work and get a glimpse into the situation of homelessness in Hong Kong. There were an average of five private Kindness Walks every month this year. The outreach programme has an indispensable role in getting in touch with our friends on the street and planting seeds of kindness in the community.

HOUSING PROGRAMME

When a homeless individual has shown commitment and the capability to take responsibility for themselves, ImpactHK will offer to 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. Starting from one night where there was a typhoon no.3, the emergency needs of our homeless friends were exposed. We started booking temporary housing in B&Bs for a short period of time for them. We subsequently expanded this service and booking more local commercial hostels (賓館) for more guests who had urgent needs and engaged us through the Guestroom. A total of 63 people experiencing homelessness were hosted during this financial year. Of these, five were under 35 years of age, 12 were elderly (over 60 years of age) and 18 were female.



FULL TIME ASSISTANT PROGRAMME



We soon observed that some clients were in a position to seek open employment in the job market. However, we witnessed that these people were being marginalised and deprived of opportunities due to their experience of homelessness or their societal status, despite how diligent they may be and how well they perform. As a result, ImpactHK was excited to create its first Full Time position for an individual with lived experience of homelessness in November 2019. We aim to become an employer supporting the former homeless friends with love and friendship and new social networks. Since then until March 2020, 6 full time positions were created. The chief responsibility in this role is to serve other people experiencing homelessness, because they are better to help the homeless than others as they know exactly how tough it is to sleep outside. ImpactHK provides these Full Time Assistants with employee remuneration, accommodation assistance, psychological support and mentoring and various staff activities. And who better to help the homeless than people who once experienced it.

COMMUNITY HELPERS PROGRAMME

In this period, we modified and improved our Community Helper Programme. Instead of just giving shifts to the homeless, we spent time to talk to them one-on-one and get to know their past experience, abilities, interest and what they are passionate about to assign work duties that suit them better and play to their strengths. On the programme, participants would have 12 hours of training work shift every week, join the counselling program and attend mentoring and other leisure classes. We also have social activities, such as gatherings at the Dai Pai Dong, to help these individuals build up their community networks and make friends. We celebrate their birthdays with a cake and small gathering in the Guestroom, which is a great way to show these individuals that there is a community that cares about them. We also get out into nature for fitness activities such as hiking.



EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

We acknowledged the importance of employment in facilitating our friends to be independent and self-reliant, and achieve more sustainable life change for themselves. Not only did this provide them with the chance for regular routine and to generate income, but also a sense of their own competence and purpose in life. We started to develop a network of potential employers, such as Coin Dragon and Southside Pizza, who can offer working opportunities to our friends. In order to support these clients, we also offered an employment allowance, which included transportation and meal subsidies, for the first month of employment, in order to encourage them to stand strong by themselves.



EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The purpose of the education programme is to improve awareness about homelessness in Hong Kong and develop empathy in students, in order to ensure that future generations will care for the poor. It is underpinned by our core value, that #kindnessmatters. We hold talks and information sessions for students at primary and secondary schools and universities, attend community fairs and lead kindness walks. Often, the modern social narratives about the homeless, street cleaners and cardboard grannies are reevaluated and reimagined once the participants see these people through the lens of kindness, which empowers participants to help the poor and contribute to society.

SENIORS PROGRAMME

More and more homeless and lonely seniors are found on the street, many are experiencing health issues but lack the knowledge to seek social welfare or take medication. In the Seniors Programme, depending on their needs, we provide services ranging from providing safe accommodation and regular meal services, applying for social welfare and public housing, tracking of medical follow-ups, clearing hoarded items from unsafe apartments, providing counselling service, holding fitness and relaxation classes and retreats. We also offer opportunities to seniors to volunteer and serve the homeless community. We are seeing an ever increasing need among the senior group due to an ageing homeless population.



OTHER SERVICES

MENTORSHIP

In mentorship, regular one-on-one discussions are established between the mentors and mentees. The service users, who are now recuperating in our accommodation and meal programmes, are encouraged to express their ambitions and dreams and make steps to personal growth. Long-term and short-term goals in health, finance, emotion management and interpersonal behaviours are established on an individual basis. The mentorship programme aims to inspire, encourage, guide and empower individuals to making positive changes in their lives for a better future.



COUNSELLING

With the support of Hong Kong Polytechnic University and counselling interns, weekly counselling services were established in late 2018. From October 2019 onwards, the counselling service was supervised and led by our ImpactHK counsellor to provide more comprehensive counselling services like group and individual counselling. The service aims to help the service users to cope with different life crises, including those related to addiction or substance abuse, relationship management, mental health issues and self-identification. It is important to help establish an understanding about trauma or experiences from their past and facilitate acceptance for their current situation, in order to strengthen them emotionally and mentally so that they can move on with their life journey.

THE WANDERING AH LIK

Ah Lik works for ImpactHK as a Full Time Assistant and has been a valued part of the team since Nov 2019. He has first hand experience of homelessness and our programmes, so we interviewed him about his life.

ON THE STREETS

"I used to be homeless staying in the Happy Valley area for many years. It was a place with a small mattress, a few cabinets and my luggage. Although there were neighbours sleeping nearby, we seldom talked or chatted, because most of them were addicted to drugs, but I was not. Sometimes I went to the library or shopping mall to enjoy air-conditioning; sometimes I sat by the poolside or took a shower at the sports centre. I was alone most of the time. The most joyful thing for me at that time was watching TV; the unhappiest thing was having no food to keep me alive. The longest period that I ate no food was 15 days. That's why I eat like a bird now.



"I was alone most of the time."

The reason that brought me to my life on the street was my poor relationship with my family. I hung out with some bad friends, frequently going to amusement game centres and parks.

We were always making trouble: stealing, fighting and selling illegal products. Then I was arrested. In my 20's, I was in and out of jail many times. This situation lasted for about 10 years. Back then I did odd jobs and shift work for a living, such as washing dishes and cleaning. But nothing lasted longer than a month because I was not used to staying in one place for long. Once I had been paid, I always quit the job. As a teenager, I did not have dreams or plans for the future. I was just taking one day at a time."

ON A NEW PATH

"My life has changed since I met Jeff around seven years ago. He came on a Kindness Walk with some children and brought eggs and bananas. I was so touched to see children visiting us, because they were willing to come to such a dirty and stinky place.

After a few visits, Jeff and the team gave me a washing machine voucher and invited me to visit 29 Oak Street, the Guestroom. I was touched by their visits and kindness and it made me want to make changes to my life. So I travelled all the way from Happy Valley to Tai Kok Tsui to find out more and see how they could help. After a few visits, they asked me to help out in the Guestroom on the Community Helper programme. I was so surprised and happy. This led to me now working as a Full Time Assistant in the Guestroom, assisting in food and getting supplies.



I am no longer sleeping on the street and have hopes and plans for the future.



Unlike my previous jobs, I want to settle down and work in this place for a long time. I have a sense of belonging, friendship and care in this place.

Not only do I have a job, but I have my own place to live and my dearest animal friend, my dog Fafa. Compared with the life I had 10 years ago, I feel much better. I am no longer stealing and breaking the law.. Now I have a salary to pay my rent and have friends who walk with me in my life. I feel proud and happy because I am no longer sleeping on the street and have hopes and plans for the future. Now I want to help people as much as possible and I am proud that I am able to help others in the same way that I received help."

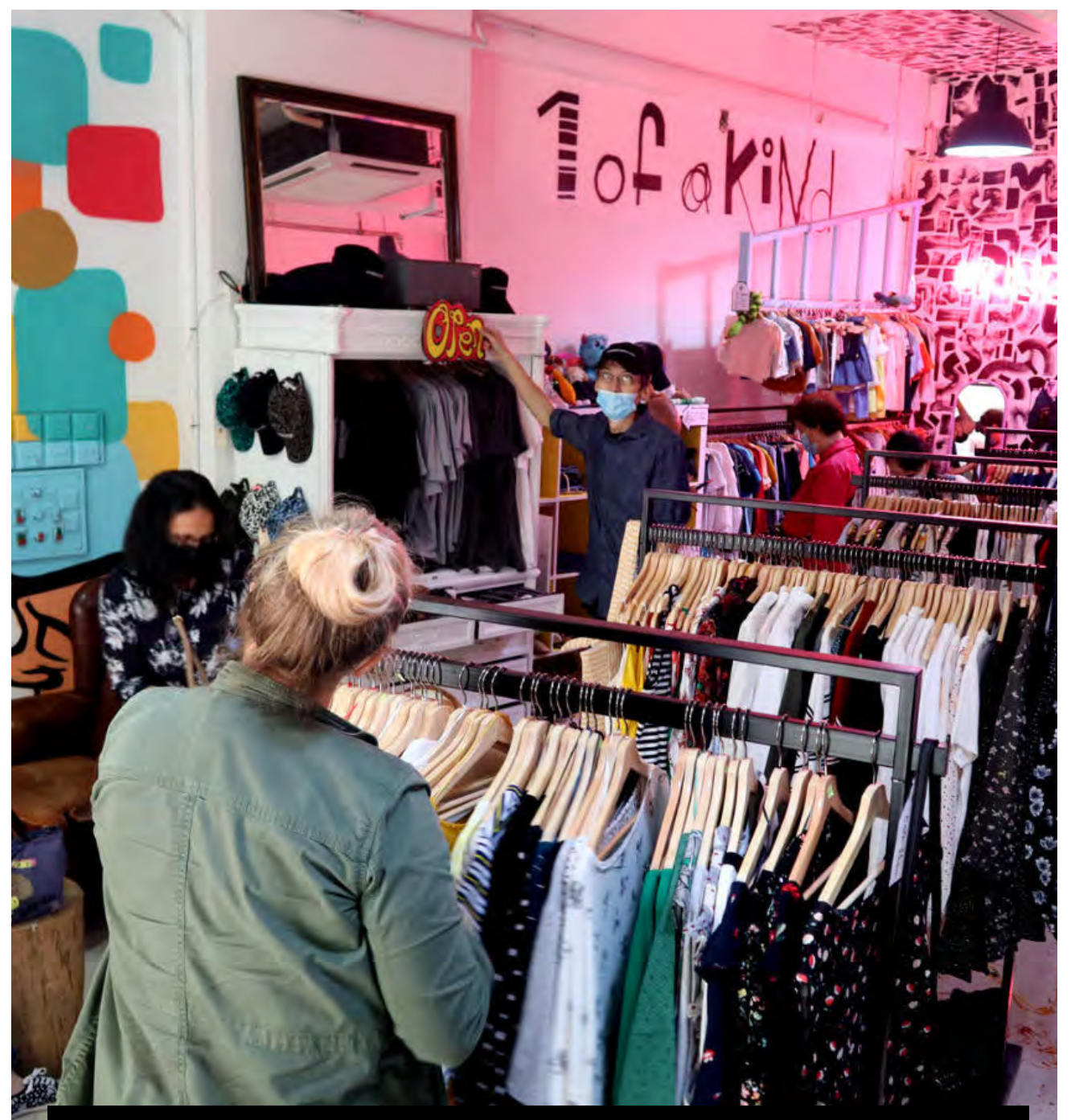
FUTURE PLANS

ImpactHK has expanded rapidly in just three years thanks to the dedicated volunteers and great champions of ImpactHK. We are very excited to develop more services and in diverse format 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.



Co-Living programme

On top of providing safe shelter, co-living programme offer opportunities for people who were suffering homelessness to build up friendship and companionship with people have similar experience.



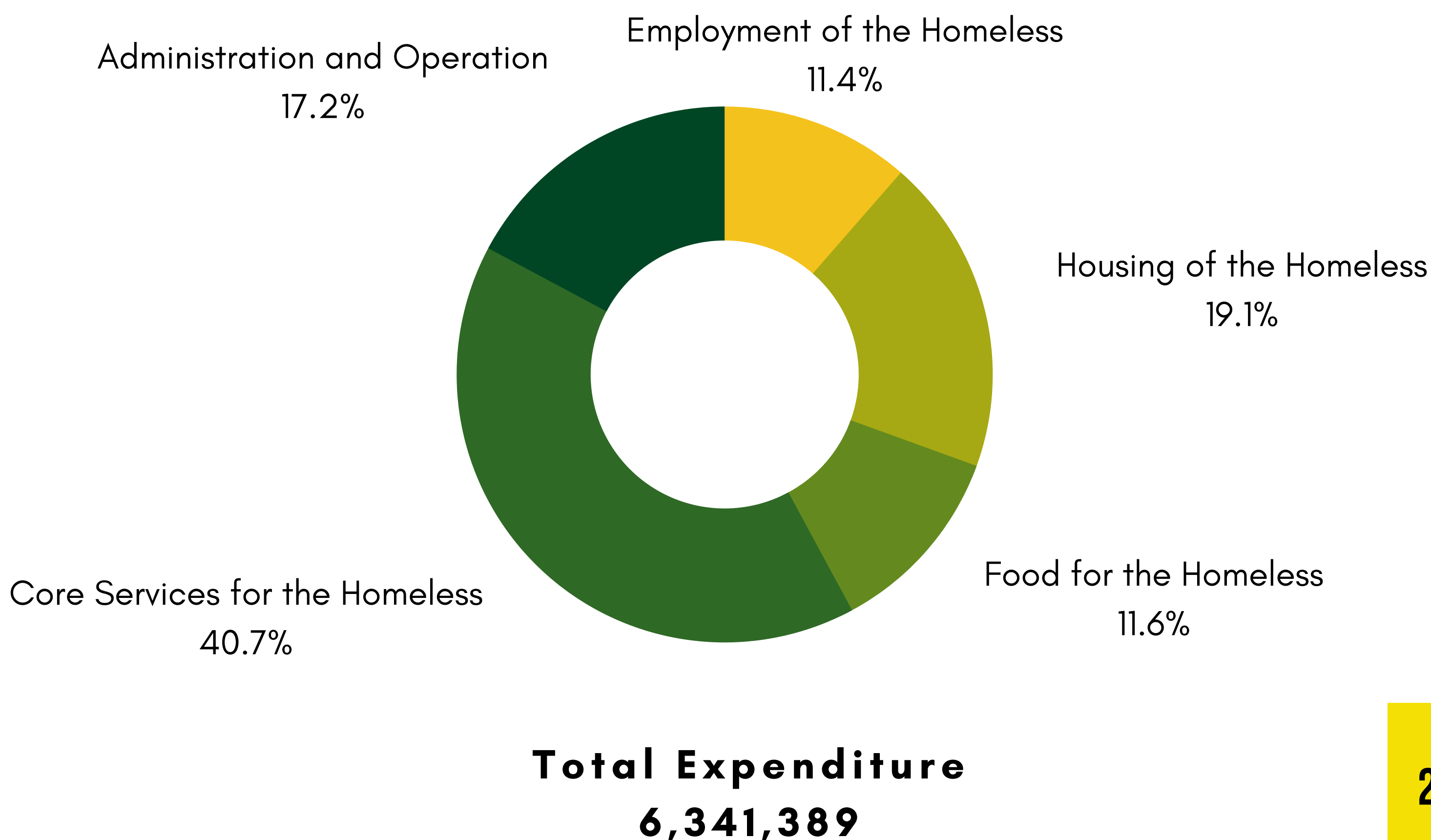
1ofaKIND store

A second hand clothing shop which employs the homeless in HK. Merchandise such as coffee, tea and snacks will also be available. All profits will go to provide more employment opportunities for the homeless.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

April 2019 – March 2020

	HK\$
INCOME	
Private Donations	7,229,166
Interest Income	2,836
<hr/>	
Total Income	7,232,002
EXPENDITURE	
Employment of the Homeless	724,048
Housing of the Homeless	1,212,791
Food for the Homeless	733,778
Core Services for the Homeless	2,580,499
Administration and Operation	1,090,273
<hr/>	
Total Expenditure	6,341,389
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	
	890,613



IMPACTHK LEADERSHIP

ImpactHK currently has seven
staff to perform the overall
day-to-day operations.

Jeff Rotmeyer

Founder & CEO



Michelle Wong

Programme Manager



Kathryn Yuen

Programme
Coordinator



Sharon Mak

Programme
Coordinator



Iran Fan

Counsellor



Annabella
Cheng

Head of Education &
Mentorship



Charlotte
Tottenham

Head of Partnership &
Development



#KINDNESSMATTERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Peter Wong



BOOK YOUR PRIVATE KINDNESS WALK

We can arrange your kindness walk in a maximum of 20 volunteers at a time and they are led by ImpactHK staff. Please contact us at hello@impacthk.org for booking and more information.



#KINDNESSMATTERS



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.

KEEP IN TOUCH

✉ : hello@impacthk.org ☎ : +852 2448 0011

Guestroom: G/F, Cherry Mansion, 29 Oak Street,
Tai Kok Tsui, Kowloon

Place2Be: Room 101, 1/F, Hang Cheong Center,
138 Bedford Road, Tai Kok Tsui, Hong Kong



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