



*Home
from Home*

*Collected Poems
and Writings*

*Edited by
Kim Wiltshire*



Home from Home

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Introduction

Home from Home is a very special project; artists and writers explored the intersection between hospital acute care and social care through the lived experience of both patients who are spending time in the intermediate care centres and the staff who work in them, to create the poems and writing in this pamphlet as well as the artwork in the accompanying exhibition.

The project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and run by Lime Art and Edge Hill University. The aim of the project was to creatively explore the realities of living and working in the community wards for both staff and patients, and how those experiences can be expressed through co-created artwork.

During 2023 and into early 2024, the Home from Home project ran over twenty-five workshops in three Manchester Intermediate Care Centres and at Dermot Murphy NHS Continuing Healthcare Unit. Professional writers ran workshops with patients and their families and carers, encouraging people to join in with simple drawing and sketching exercises, storytelling, poetry readings and creative writing. The idea was that the Home from Home project would inclusively explore people's recovery journey from hospital to home and their experience of using an intermediate care centre, and their experience of making a continuing healthcare centre their home. The writers asked questions such as: What makes a home comfortable? How do you make yourself comfortable in your life and what are the things that you have in your life that give you comfort?

People were encouraged to respond creatively to these questions, to help put themselves at the centre of where they are now, what their hopes are and tell their own story, in their own way, fostering increased autonomy, whether that was as they began their transition from a hospital setting back to the community and their own home, or coming to terms with somewhere new becoming their home.

Storytelling and working creatively also gives a holistic view of the social and healthcare environments people navigate and the perspectives of NHS staff. It was important that the creative workshops were inclusive and led by the interests of patients and that the staff working with those patients were also involved.

In Spring 2024, a Home from Home touring exhibition provided fresh insight, learning and discussion about the nature of health and social care in Manchester, by telling the story of patients and staff at Buccleuch Lodge, Crumpsall Vale, Delamere House in Gorton Park and Dermot Murphy Close.

The exhibition premiered this collection of poetry commissioned in response to the project from authors Helen Harrison, Zayneb Allak, Rebecca Hurst and Kim Wiltshire, alongside a sound installation co-produced by artist Caro C, Kim Wiltshire and NHS staff. This exhibition shared the voices of patients, friends, family members and NHS professionals to celebrate the diverse, colourful and complex lives in our Manchester community.

Kim Wiltshire, 2024

Home from Home

A home is full of love and memories, pets, conversation, food, books, and music. Shut the door behind you. Home becomes a place to retreat, like a snail into its shell.

A home *looks* like a house. Strong. Four walls. But it's not belongings, it's not bricks and mortar. A home is what you make of it; where everything is ok.

A home *smells* like my nana's cooking; like my mum's cooking. Family altogether, different perfumes and smells intertwined.

A home *sounds* very peaceful AND very loud! Full of laughter. Dogs barking. That clock ticking reminds me—what I want right now is to be home.

A home *feels* like a warm hug. Feels like a safe space, comfortable and warm. Like my favourite blanket. A happy place.

A home is sanctuary, where you sit on your red sofa or comfy old chair. Look out onto the street. Watch birds at the feeder while rain drips down the windowpane.

Written by Michael & Stacey. Composed by Rebecca Hurst, with additional text provided by staff, patients & volunteers at Crumpsall Vale

On Mantelpieces

These small brass trinkets can turn an eye,
cast gold in the irises of tinkers,
beckoning to be manhandled,
caressed, cherished, exhibited,
stilled on lintels above coal fires,
and three bar electric heaters,
miniature models of things found at home,
as if home comforts could ever be forgotten,
a doll-house-sized mangle,
ceramic pill box with a bouquet lid,
Toby jug with a cartoon face of a man,
grotesque, exaggerated, comically appealing,
a retired butter dish, empty vessel,
now replaced by fridge-kept spreadable,
porcelain bell that rings for assistance,
in the ears of those who provide kindness,
a second-hand pot to decant jam,
unfashionable heirloom, an unused wedding present,
dusted weekly, showy oojahs, gewgaws,
placed on mantelpieces to make a home.

Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas provided by staff and patients at Buccleuch Lodge

all the houses ready

when I asked them they all said home is behind us and far away
if you want to know how we think of it picture a night

some black tarmac that's wet and steps to a plane
think of me as I hoist my case and go up backwards and disappear

through a door that closes like an eye blink picture me
as I stow my case and lean into the seat and grip the arms

and watch from the window all the earth recede
and clouds appear and a sunrise bloom as I unstow

my case and file off the plane to security
with everyone at the gate saying we are fine we are fine

we will see you soon here is some food in a box with all our faith
in you here we are and we won't cry

we will see you soon inshallah goodbye
goodbye goodbye goodbye goodbye—

I can't say when I stopped listening or if I ever really heard
or if when I asked they ever really said the words

home is behind us and far away or if I just put it in
their mouths if I just pressed rewind on them

maybe all they did was lean back and grin and I knew
they meant it's not here lady but you'd better believe

we're going back we're not going to stay
and if you could feel that sunrise you'd feel no need to say

what is home because all I could think was that they were lucky
to believe in a homecoming with everyone at the airport

waiting for them all the houses ready and the beds prepared
and how the weeks of it would stretch in front of them

like you'd stretch your whole body out for a rest
after a really long journey

*Written by Zayneb Allak with words and ideas provided by staff and patients
at Delamere House, Gorton Parks*

Alexa

Early January, biting cold
single-storey setting
garden in hibernation
double doors lead to warmth
home-made crafts pinned to gentle walls
T-shaped corridors
private dwelling bedrooms
a man with twinkling eyes, radiant smile
Encyclopaedic Britannica memory
listens to Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody*
voted the greatest song of all time
his message to the world
is just to be happy
any misgivings, ask Alexa.

*Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas
provided by staff and patients at Dermot Murphy
Close*



Carol and Frank's story

*I've got six grandchildren, and
Six great grandchildren
All girls.*

After her stroke, she was in the Lodge and I wanted her home. The social worker here told me I couldn't manage. Well, I thought I could - but I couldn't.

*I was 75 in June and he was 75 in August.
I'm six weeks older than him.
He always reminds me he's my toyboy.*

Before she came home, the social worker gave me a sheet with all these telephone numbers on. One day, I had trouble transferring her, so I called the first number, the council, and the lad there was saying he could get someone from North Manchester to me in a couple of days, and I said, 'That's no use, I need help now!'

*I've still got my wedding dress.
I've still got the canteen of cutlery from our wedding.
Our wedding photo was in the Wythenshawe Express.*

Finally, this lad from the council gave me the number of the Lodge again and I spoke to Rachel. She said, 'Wait there, I'll be with you in twenty minutes.' Rachel and Amy turned up at the same time as our daughter and they sorted it all out, and brought Carol back into the front room. They were brilliant.

*I worked at the Co-op,
I got made up to supervisor on
The men's department,
At the Civic Centre,
But it got closed down,
And I got made redundant.*

And then someone phoned me from Wythenshawe Hospital the other day and they've sorted out a care package, four times a day from Thursday.

*I might miss making friends here.
I've got names and addresses
And phone numbers.
But I'm going home,
On Wednesday.
I'm going home.*

Written by Kim Wiltshire with words provided by patients and family members at Buccleuch Lodge

Buccleuch Lodge Jigsaw

Piece by piece we are put back together,
bones and pride restored,
slotted neatly next to one another,
in a setting of caring yellow walls
that look out to tendered gardens,
amongst the tranquillity of lowered volume
from a TV set, and the slow squeaky wheels
of a tea trolley gently rolled past,
a semi-circle of wing back armchairs,
and a light touch of a hand on a shoulder,
a bended whisper in an ear
calls time for physiotherapy,
or ability tests that stretch independence,
and provide support for living,
until bit by bit a picture forms,
showing Buccleuch's guests preparing
to be in their own homes.

*Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas
provided by staff and patients at Buccleuch Lodge*



Automatic House

there's a gate and that gate is automatic
there's a driveway and that driveway has cars that gleam
like a shoal of fish in sunlight—
because there's sunlight you know

it'd be good if there were bluebells or aster

there's a door and clap your hands *bam*
it opens to an inside: there's a glow like a morning
and there's a double staircase—
one side for up one side for down

why have one if you can have two

and as you go up there's a cushy carpet with a bounce
your feet sink into it like they're sitting on a chair
and if you sit on a chair there you're in heaven and all of you is
smiling music is needed so let's have speakers everywhere
and let's have a fifty inch TV, a hundred inch TV
a cinema, let's have a cinema room, let's have it all
plush, velvet and silver screen sheen

I can see myself, reclining

we're going to need popcorn

let's have anything we can dream
let's have a dreamhouse

let's have a magic cupboard: it comes to you
open it and inside you find everything you want
all you do is *bam* clap your hands and it's open

no more searching for the lost door key

there's a chef (five-star Michelin) in the kitchen
and a fridge: all you do is *bam* clap your hands it's open
automatic fridge automatic food
from every culture

the chef claps his hands not me

let's have an island let's have a skylight

you dream it you got it

let's have a winter bedroom like a cave
for when it's snowing outside
a summer bedroom with doors to the beach
for a sunlit silver swim you clap your hands
and *bam* they open

give me a bed like a cloud

give me a door to a dream

(and you know the toilet will flush itself
you don't even need to clap your hands
you just glance behind and *bam* it's fresh)

*we don't deal with manual
those days are gone*

let's have a bath tub to stretch out in let's
go feet knees torso neck head under the foam—

*you won't see me for bam bam bam
all the tiny bubbles*

indoor swimming pool outdoor swimming pool diving board
adjustable automatic let's have it all

you dream it full of sunlit water and it is

Music Lovers

It has been sung to the world x 10
that we cannot buy love
for a place or, its people
it is given readily
through vanilla acts
like, a cup of tea in an armchair
or photographs – those memory holders
with every picture housing a song
lifting us out of the frame
beyond the physical body
unfettered melodies sailing across ceilings
windows, doors, over rooftops
harmonies aloft
composed through affection.

*Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas
provided by staff and patients at Dermot Murphy
Close*



Instructions on Settling In at Crumpsall Vale

Imagine you've been repotted; new soil
and a new spot on the windowsill.

Maybe you didn't have time to pack.
Maybe they had to break down the door,
or pick you up off the floor. Maybe some nights
you can't remember why you're here at all.

You've been repotted; and you're still not sure
about this new soil, this new spot on the windowsill.

Home from home is what you've learned.
Start by saying hello. Get to know people.
Even though you're a bit green, unfurl your
leaves. Acceptance helps to put down roots.

Yes, you've been repotted; new soil
and a brand new spot on the windowsill.

Feel the welcome embrace. Be honest, even
when you'd rather be furled up tight shut,
a winter bud. Relax. Build trust. Yesterday
three deer visited the garden. The sun shone.

You've been repotted; new soil, new growth,
and this sunny spot on the windowsill.

First, get the bed and room comfortable. Rest.
This new place, it's not so bad. You're part of a team.
And remember, you still have a safe, quiet space
to sit and take a break—this bright window ledge.

You've been repotted; new soil and hope. Safe here,
home from home, you smile as the warm sun turns.

*Written by Rebecca Hurst, with words and ideas provided by
staff, patients, and volunteers at Crumpsall Vale*

Gaff Lads

At Silcock's fair, weekends began on Thursdays,

- quick sharp,
carried on through to Sundays,
- with an alternative to worship
Saturdays were always bob on for dancing,
- jiving & fighting off lasses,
whose heads still spun by Waltzer cars,
- cocksure teddy boys, hanging cigs,
from curled lips, hair licked with Brylcreem,
- quiffs, with legs in drainpipes, crepe souls
slick lapel suits, hips hinged like sets of drafting compasses,
- straddling and knocking
against the screams of spinning girls
- to go faster, faster, faster,
expertly jumping in the whip of G-force,
- whacking cars at every dip
making them whirl, showing off for a few quid more,
- chasing daughters, swerving mothers.
wonderful, wonderful, wonderful,
- the music, the lights, the girls,
good fun to be had to a Northern Gaff lad.

Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas provided by staff and patients at Buccleuch Lodge



Question

Holding my hand in the caring skin of your hand
corn flower blue gloves removed
you ask me **what home means**,
I answer, **people – its people**
who line magnolia walls
as good as any paintings, or pictures
because smiles brighten miserable days
adding yolk to otherwise clear shells
fill up rooms with belonging
next to framed family photographs
you ask me **what else**
I answer, **comfort – its comfort**
it's where I'm most comfortable
as though slipping into something familiar
worn slippers, a plush dressing gown

a soft place to relax, recharge
as though my atoms are batteries
powered by cells of compassion
you ask me, if I have **anything to add**
I answer, **love – its love**
filling spaces, every nook and cranny
wrapping its way, in and out of rooms
infectious like catching a cold
breaking through lines of defences
it engulfs you whole, rendering
you powerless to put a stop to it
you ask me, for a **final word**
I answer, **here – it's here.**

*Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas provided
by staff and patients patients at Dermot Murphy Close*

Home Again

A home smells like home,
Feels comfortable and warm.
Full of pictures of family
It looks lived in; a home is
What I want at the moment.
I know I'm home again when it's dark out—
Curtains closed, fire on, my two cats close by.
Home feels welcoming and warm.
Leave your troubles at the door!
Sit down, feet up, a cat on my lap,
My favourite chair, and now
I'll take a nap.

*Written by Maureen, a patient at Crumpsall Vale.
Composed by Rebecca Hurst*



Being Home

Living alone does not mean you're lonely,
my cats are my family,
occupying windowsills, statuesque
brushing against cold glass,
each one of their nine lives,
remembers homes differently –
mangles, camp coffee, dolly blue pegs,
Axminster carpets that hide scratches,
small black & white T.V sets.
Donkey stones for scrubbing front steps,
tough women dressed all day in pinny's,
hung up and softened by visitors,
unannounced visiting on Sunday afternoons,
ornaments sleeping on white lace doilies,
and kids swimming in Manchester's canals,
when scraps from the chip shop were the best bits.

If genies could really grant wishes,
I would like to return for a smidgen,
24hrs back with the homes,
the streets, the people,
when communities had time for one another,
with chat, helping hands, and laughter,
I'd be thankful for all that we had,
although in here, four walls of wrapped care,
supporter of personal bests
has all of that –
only beating being home, by a whisker.

*Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas provided by
staff and patients at Buccleuch Lodge*

There's Nowhere (Quite Like Home)

There's no place like home,
Is there?
Friends, family, comfort.
You can do what you want,
When you want.
Home is where you rest your head,
It can be one room,
It can be a big mansion.

An Intermediate Care Unit is
Very unique.
A home from home atmosphere.
We're more or less the middlemen.
A bridge between the hospital and home.
Rehabilitating people back into their own home
And live their best lives.

The patients make the work
Not Work.
You see a change in patients,
You can see them relax.
They've got goals,
And they achieve them.
You can see them improving,
And then they go home.
It doesn't feel like you've come to work,
It's not a chore.
I never dread coming into work.

The hardest part is seeing young people
Who should have had their whole lives.
When we look at their pictures
And what life they had previously.
When people can't go home.
Managing their expectations
And family expectations.
Explaining to someone that they might not
Be able to manage
At home.
Coming to terms with a new normality.
Then waiting.
They're waiting for a place,
Or their waiting for carers.
They're waiting, waiting,
And there's no certainty in that.
Sometimes it's raindrops
Other days it's thunderstorms.

We're a family here.
We encourage people to do for themselves,
We enable them.
The outcome is to go home from here.
Letting them know there's hope for the future.
Seeing the patients progress,
And be where they want to be.
To be part of that gives me
Great Satisfaction.

Home is everything to our patients usually,
But then you get the other end of the scale
Where patients don't want to go home,
Because they're going to be isolated.
They've got that social isolation,
That they've not had here,
It's a massive adjustment.

I think for a lot of people,
Home is the safe place,
Where they can do what they like
Where they're happy,
Most of them.
Where you feel your heart belongs.
Home is where the heart is.

There's nowhere else that's quite like home.

This is a Verbatim Poem, created by Kim Wiltshire and Caro C through interviews during January 2024 with staff at Buccleuch Lodge, Crumpsall Vale, Delamere House, Dermot Murphy Close. A verbatim poem uses the spoken words from the interviews to create a written piece. The audio version can be found at www.nhsverbatimpoems.blogspot.com

Return, Recover, Review

Eons ago, there was a pulling together,
when the weather snapped cold,
seizing and kidnapping pipes,
putting the blockers on hot water,
and people would look-in on one another.

Away back, with real Father Christmas's
in Lewis's grotto, children on knees,
off phones, excited to be in department stores,
before now, shopping local meant neighbours,
stopped to chat in roads,
grocers knew your name and family,
communities mattered, hub of lives,
a cornerstone of living life,
not left crumbled by the wayside,
- it's the same in here, people care,
everyone helps one another to do well,
get better, get stronger, get home.

Written by Helen Harrison with words and ideas provided by staff and patients at Buccleuch Lodge

What are YOUR thoughts of home?

Use this space to write your own poem about what home means to you:



Artist Biographies

Zayneb Allak is a poet and Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at Edge Hill University. She publishes poetry and creative-critical writing and is interested in writing that defies expectations and categorisation. She's currently working on a creative-critical project, Spider Poetics, that explores writing 'spiders' into being, uncanny themes such as privacy, darkness and the strangeness of our own voices. As a teacher of writing, she believes that everyone has a story to tell and that we can all find the right words to tell it.

Caro C is a composer, producer and performer of adventurous electronica. Caro only started making music thanks to being laid up and living in a double-decker bus in the late 1990's. Described as a "sonic enchantress" (BBC Radio 3), Caro employs electronic and acoustic instruments, including her voice and found sounds (non-musical objects) to blur the boundaries of sound and music. She loves how everyday objects and sounds uncover the magic in the mundane and provide a unique atmosphere.

Helen Harrison is a poet and lecturer in Creative Writing, she has taught poetry and fiction writing at Lancaster and Edge Hill Universities. She mainly publishes poetry, but also creative non-fiction. She is currently working on her first collection of poems, that explore the North-west region and beyond, from an angle of exile and return. She is interested in the dynamic space that poetry opens to explore connections to places, memory, and the self, with the past stacked in the present.

Rebecca Hurst is a writer, opera-maker, and illustrator. She is the author of *The Fox's Wedding*, a poetry pamphlet published by the Emma Press in 2022, and her poetry has appeared in various magazines and anthologies, including Carcanet's *New Poetries VIII*. Rebecca has a PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Manchester, and in 2022-23 was a Creative Manchester post-doctoral fellow researching creative writing for well-being.

Dr Kim Wiltshire is a writer and academic. In 2022-2023, she was funded by the British Academy as an Innovation Fellow to explore ways of embedding the arts into healthcare settings, working within Manchester NHS Foundation Trust and Lime. As a playwright, her work concentrates on participatory process and working for social change; she has two plays published by Aurora Metro, *Project XXX* (2014) and *The Value of Nothing* (2017) and was co-writer and co-editor with Billy Cowan on *Scenes From the Revolution* published by Pluto (2018). Kim is a Reader and Programme Leader for Creative Writing at Edge Hill University.

Thanks to all patients and staff members in Buccleuch Lodge, Crumpsall Vale, Delamere House and Dermot Murphy Close who shared with us so honestly, and thanks to all the Staff at the Manchester Local Care Organisation for supporting us when setting up the Home from Home project.

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Home from Home is an Arts and Health Project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and run by Lime in partnership with Edge Hill University.

During 2023 and 2024, workshops were run with staff and patients in three intermediate care centres across Manchester: Buccleuch Lodge, Crumpsall Vale, Delamere House in Gorton Parks and at Dermot Murphy Close continuing healthcare unit.

The project centred on the intersection between acute health care and social care using storytelling, poetry and art to explore the lived experience of patients and staff in the centres.

The project team would like to thank all the staff at Manchester Local Care Organisation and Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust as well as all the staff and patients who worked with us in the creative writing workshops, helping us to produce this collection of poems and writings about what *Home from Home* means to us all.

