

Stef's Story

I didn't find the choir myself - a friend asked me if I would like to join. I love to sing, but hadn't sung in front of anyone since school, so my first reaction was worrying that I would need to audition. My friend assured me that the Choir with No Name was not like that or, come to think of it, like any choir I'd heard of before. It has a simple and inclusive ethos, for anyone who has suffered homelessness, vulnerability or is otherwise on society's margins. I have fitted each of those descriptions at some point, so I didn't feel awkward and what's more, I was accepted for who I am.

During that first evening I sang like nobody was listening, and had a thoroughly good time. After each rehearsal we have a cooked meal which for me has sometimes been the difference between going hungry that day or not, but more than that, we bond - like a family where a conventional one doesn't always exist.

I joined the choir as someone who was trying to change their life and in doing so I have gained self-confidence, belief in myself and the opportunity to re-integrate into society through the Moving On Up programme at the North London choir.

Now I have the confidence to move forward with my life. I am starting drug rehabilitation soon and plan to become a peer mentor. There are a lot of positive things happening for me right now. We don't know what is around the corner, so I take life one day at a time, but with the love, friendship and trust the choir offers, I think the moon and the stars are now somewhere within my reach.