

Harsh reality of life as Greater Manchester's homeless to be portrayed in unique mockumentary



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The plight of Greater Manchester's homeless will be portrayed in a mockumentary – starring Tameside's homeless and charity housing staff.

The film combats a number of issues that the homeless face in their daily lives, including securing jobs and housing and dealing with poverty.

Characters are played by both users and employees of the charity Threshold and social housing provider New Charter. It is being produced by the group Acting on Impulse- a Manchester-based charity set up to give homeless and marginalised people a voice through film and theatre.

Mockumentary producer Lauren Pouchly said: “[The charity] works with marginalised people who wouldn’t otherwise get the opportunity to do something like this.”

“It has boosted their skills and confidence through what is quite an intense course, and it’s been very rewarding for all of us.”

Stacey Bell, an actress in the mockumentary, said: “I’ve always enjoyed acting, so to get the opportunity to do it again is really good. It helps keep my mind off other things and stay positive.”

It is being supported by the charity Threshold that works with the homeless and vulnerable to ensure they have greater independence and wellbeing.

The organisation is closely linked with New Charter, one of the North West’s largest providers of social housing, which manages over 19,000 homes.

New Charter Housing Trust Group Press and Marketing advisor, John Bowden told MM: “The film deals with difficult and emotionally powerful situations, often showing the tricky issues the homeless are faced with every day.”

One notable scene is where one of the homeless actors secures a job, only to find them being struck off housing benefit as a result – leaving them worse off than they were before.

The mockumentary is being filmed as part of the Great Lives partnership which is a service set up to train and provide support to housing customers in Tameside.

The organisation provides practical skills in the likes of cooking, health, community skills and DIY, as well as providing advice on medical matters, employment and wellbeing.

Great Lives operates in the areas of Tameside, Oldham and Glossop Mind, and works closely with Threshold and New Charter.

The cast of the mockumentary will receive a certificate for their performances, and a free copy of the DVD once editing has been finished.