



Menu

- Home
- News
- Sport
- Letters
- Blogs
- Features
- Videos
- What's On
- Family Announcements
- Special Publications
- About Us
- Contact Us
- Advertising
- Jobs
- Property
- Motors
- Classifieds
- Send Us Your Stories
- Links
- Holidays
- Dating
- TV Listings

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- Basildon
- Brentwood
- Castle Point & Rochford
- Chelmsford & Mid Essex
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- Thurrock
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News

Celebrities sign up to support Anchor House

Thursday, 26 May 2011



APPEAL: Director Keith Fernett with staff, volunteers and residents at Anchor House. Picture by Roy Tillet

By Pat Jones

ACTRESS Barbara Windsor and former world boxing champ Barry McGuigan plan to carry on fundraising for award-winning homeless charity, Anchor House. They will help raise the £9million its Home and Hope appeal needs to equip the former seaman's mission, in Canning Town, with learning and training workshops and 'move-on' accommodation. The new patrons will also be expected to publicise the charity.

It is a return to her roots for ex-EastEnders star Barbara, who was born in Shoreditch and started her acting career in Stratford's theatre workshops. She said: "I was stunned by the work of Anchor House and look forward to working for the appeal.

"It operates a programme designed to help people help themselves." Irish-born Barry was struck by how happy and respectful Anchor House residents are, and how the house has transformed lives.

He said: "I believe fitness and education plays a big part in this and I want to help. It's not just about giving people a bed, but giving them the skills to take responsibility for their lives." Anchor House has 118 quality study bedrooms with computers and TVs, but wants to refurbish its kitchen, workshops and learning zone.

Anne Cooper, Anchor's corporate trust manager, said: "We offer life skills training, plus vocational training courses in construction, electrics, plumbing and distance learning for the local community as well as residents.

"We also host pensioners' lunches twice a week, after-school art clubs, arts and drama clubs and sporting activities, for residents and the community.

"It's great to see them working side by side, but we need more money to improve facilities." Anchor's other celebrity backers include Jeremy Paxman, ITV news presenter Julie Etchingham, and former MP Ann Widdecombe.

Email: stratford@yellowad.co.uk

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Poll

Geordie star Cheryl Cole has allegedly been dumped as a host of the US X-Factor because of her thick accent. Can you understand what she says?

- Of course I can, I'm British
- I do find her accent quite tricky
- I can't understand her at all
- I've never heard her speak

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