



East London homeless charity launches £9.3m fund to develop 25 'move-on' studio flats

Published by Jon Land for 24dash.com in Housing
Wednesday 12th October 2011 - 9:14am

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A homeless charity located in the Olympic borough of Newham is on a mission to raise £9.3 million to create 25 'move-on' studio flats to help its residents back into independent living.

Anchor House is launching a 'Home and Hope Appeal' to redevelop its 50-year-old centre and provide new education, training and rehabilitation facilities for its homeless residents and local community.

The development will include 25 new 'move-on' studio flats to help residents achieve a sustainable transition back into independent living, and a new training kitchen for people to gain catering qualifications.

Keith Fernett, Anchor House director, says the only way to break the cycle of homelessness is to address the root causes of why someone became homeless in the first place, which is the sole aim of the appeal.

"Mental health, drug and alcohol abuse from as early as eight years old, reoffending and escape from war and rape from the Eritrean army –these are the types of problems our residents are facing," he said.

"While the local community continues to contend with soaring unemployment, high levels of deprivation, teenage pregnancy and a second generation out of work.

"Our waiting list for new residents grows longer every day, but this development will ensure that over the next 50 years we will be able to support an extra 20,000 people in the community to turn their lives around."

The charity has enlisted the help of an 18 member Appeal Board recruited from the business sector, including chair Michael Dawson (Chaucer plc) and vice chair, Simon Hall (Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP).

It has also attracted a high calibre of support from its patrons, including Lord Patten, Lord Glasman, Rt. Hon Ann Widdecombe, Jeremy Paxman, Julie Etchingam, Barbara Windsor MBE, Barry McGuigan MBE, John Bird MBE, the Archbishops of Westminster and Southwark, the Bishop of Brentwood, Sir George Bull, Sir Christopher Benson and Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank.

Monsignor John Armitage, the charity's chairman, says despite Anchor House being a small charity with limited resources and operating in one of England's most deprived boroughs, the results are astounding.

"Last year 58 of our residents moved on to independent living, 32 were in employment and we trained more than 1,249 locals within the community," Monsignor John said.

"Anchor House is a charity worthy of investment, not only because it succeeds and makes a difference, but because it is focused on helping society's most marginalised and vulnerable who are often over looked." Recently Oxford Economics found that Anchor House saves society and tax payers more than £5 million a year by helping to turn around the lives of its homeless residents.

Last year, the charity was recognised as a National Centre of Excellence and was awarded five National Training Awards by the UK Skills Council, including UK Individual Trainer of the Year, which was presented to its Head of Employment and Education, Aggrie Chikiwa (a former resident).



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