



Anchor House
working at the heart of homelessness

London E16 4HB

Tel. 020 7476 6062

info@anchorhouseuk.org

www.anchorhouseuk.org

PRESS RELEASE

Issued under EMBARGO to Wednesday 4th May 2011

HOMELESS IN HIGH SPIRITS OVER UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE TROPHY

For homeless resident, Richard Luiki, holding the UEFA Champions League Trophy has always been a life-long dream and one that will be within his grasp thanks to Anchor House.

The award winning residential/life skills-centre in East London will have the honour of hosting the prestigious cup on Wednesday the 4th of May from 12 pm – 3 pm.

With the UEFA Champions League Trophy having been handed over to the city of London, the UK capital will be showcasing the famous silverware at various high-profile venues. As part of its grand tour to Wembley, the trophies of the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Women's Champions League will stop at Anchor House.

The event will also be attended by local schools and community members, with performances throughout the afternoon by two professional football freestylers.

Richard, who is also captain of the 'Anchor House Warriors' football team, says he just can't believe it.

"It is such an honour for us to be able to have the chance to see it," Richard said.

"When I became homeless and arrived at Anchor House, I thought it was the worst thing that could have happened to me, but now it looks like all my wishes are coming true."

Located in Canning Town, in one of the most deprived areas of the country, Anchor House provides accommodation for up to 180 single homeless people each year. It also addresses the root causes of homelessness through training, education and personal rehabilitation.

Anchor House Director, Keith Fernett, says he is very pleased that Anchor House has been chosen to host the event because sport, and in particular football, has played a huge part in the rehabilitation process for its residents.

"Football has been a great friend to our residents. It has given them the opportunity to meet new people, focus on their health and wellbeing and provide them with new hope," Mr Fernett said.

"It has also aided in breaking down the stigmas surrounding homelessness, racial, as well as religious backgrounds.

"On the football field our residents are 'team players' not homeless people. This gives them the confidence to be themselves and break down social barriers between other residents and community members."

The Olympic and Paralympic Games will also be taking place on the doorstep of Anchor House next year, which Mr Fernett says will hopefully bring with it great opportunities for its residents.

"The Olympics definitely has the potential to bring regeneration to the East London area and we hope our residents will have the chance to take advantage of new job opportunities through the training and education we provide them," Mr Fernett said.

EDITORS NOTE:

Anchor House is a nationally acclaimed flagship project addressing the root causes of homelessness: deprivation; drug addiction; mental illness; unemployment; lack of skills/education and crime.

It is a registered charity providing accommodation for up to 180 single homeless people each year. It also provides a wide range of accredited vocational training courses in construction, electrical, plumbing and distance learning for both residents and the local community.

Over the last 12 months to 31st March 2011, Anchor House achieved:

- 95% of residents were involved in positive transitional activities
- 32 residents obtained part-time or full-time employment
- 58 residents moved on to independent living.

Anchor House been so successful in helping homeless people back into work that in November 2010 it won four National Training Awards by the UK Skills Centre and Anchor House's Employment and Training Officer Aggie Chikiwa (former resident) was awarded UK National Trainer of the Year.

It was also awarded the Charity Times Award for Best Use of Technology and was a finalist in the Third Sector Excellence Awards for Financial Management. And in 2006 and 2008, it won the Michael Whippman Award for Innovation in Homelessness.

Media are invited to attend the event. Photos and interviews are available by calling Samantha Johnson, Anchor House Fundraising and Marketing on 0207 476 6062.