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MEDIA RELEASE

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East London homeless charity launches £9.3 million appeal

An award winning homeless charity located in the Olympic borough of Newham is on a mission to raise £9.3 million and bring regeneration to East London and its homeless residents.

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 also include 25 new transitional "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 Fernet, 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 Etchingham, 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).

For more information or to donate to the appeal please visit www.anchorhouseuk.org or call 0207 476 6062.

Photos and interviews are available by calling Jazmine Sandison, Fundraising and Marketing Executive or Samantha Johnson, Communications and Media Officer on 0207 476 6062, communications@anchorhouseuk.org.

EDITORS NOTE:

Media are invited to attend the Appeal Launch on Monday 17th October 2011, 6.30pm at the Inner Temple, Crown Office Row, London EC4Y 7HL.

Please contact the Anchor House Communications team to register your attendance. All electrical equipment will need to be accompanied with a PAT certificate which must be supplied prior to the event.

Background

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. Each quarter the centre attracts 2,500 visitors using its services.

The charity is located in Canning Town, in the London Borough of Newham, the third most deprived borough in England and Wales.

In 2010 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.

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