



ANCHOR HOUSE

London Inter Diocesan Council
Working at the heart of homelessness

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PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 20th January 2011

Celebrities support award winning homeless charity

BBC journalist Jeremy Paxman and former MP and Strictly Come Dancing star Ann Widdecombe have joined the growing list of celebrities rolling up their sleeves to combat homelessness in East London.

They have agreed to be Patrons of the award winning homeless charity, Anchor House, located in the Olympic borough of Newham.

Anchor House director Keith Fernet says the Canning Town charity is very excited to have them on-board.

“Jeremy and Ann are strong advocates of finding long-term solutions to homelessness and we are very pleased to have their support,” he said.

“They will be working with us to help raise £15.6 million through our capital appeal to ensure our much needed work in the Newham community continues.”

The London Borough of Newham is the 6th most deprived borough in England and Wales. In 2009 there were 1122 homeless applications and 409 homeless acceptances.

More than 300 homeless people have been helped back on their feet over the past two years thanks to Anchor House, but now the 50-year-old hostel and life skills centre is in dire need of a new facility.

“Our mission is to build a new 21st century building, with a purpose built block of 25 move-on studio flats, workshops, a new catering training facility, leisure and recreational areas,” Mr Fernet said.

“Full planning permission has already been secured and we have raised £6 million so far, but more support is needed.

“We’ve come a long way, five years ago we were at risk of closing down, but we have reinvented ourselves— providing accommodation support for more than 180 single homeless people each year.”

The organisation has been so successful in helping homeless people back into work that in November last year it won four National Training Awards by the UK Skills Centre and Anchor House’s Employment and Training Officer Aggie Chikiwa 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 2007 and 2009, were winners of the Michael Whippman Award for Innovation in Homelessness.

In support of Homeless Sunday on January 30th, Anchor House’s fundraising team and volunteers will be collecting from Monday the 24th through to Friday the 28th January at Waterloo, Liverpool Street, London Bridge Railway Stations and the Canary Wharf Shopping Centre.

All monies raised will go towards supporting Anchor House's £15.6 million capital appeal.

For more information or to donate online: www.anchorhouseuk.org.

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