

Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness

AUGUST 2018 NEWSLETTER



The Night Shelter: Expanding from six weeks to seven months

We hope that you are enjoying your summer and the warmer temperatures. As we look towards autumn and winter, we are pleased to announce that Kingston Council is receiving an injection of funding from the Ministry of Housing to tackle rough sleeping in the borough. Just one element of this funding is to task KCAH with expanding the Night Shelter Scheme and running it from September 2018 to March 2019. Exciting and daunting too! Two venues will be used – the Everyday and John Bunyan Churches in Kingston – up to February and then we shall revert to the normal seven-venue scheme for the last two months. We have recruited a Co-ordinator to oversee this piece of work. For this to work, we are dependent on volunteers coming forward, including to cover the Christmas period. The next two training dates for NEW volunteers are 22 August and 12 September. Visit www.kcah.org.uk and follow the link to Eventbrite where you can sign up for your free ticket.

Slime for homelessness

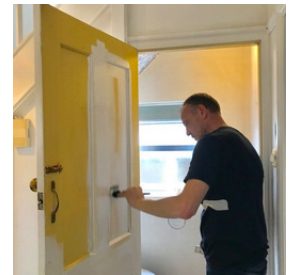


Thank you to Ella, Amelie and Mia from St Luke's Primary in Kingston who raised £73 for KCAH by setting up a slime stand one Saturday in June. Your creativity and entrepreneurial spirit inspire us and we are so proud of you girls!

If you too would like to fundraise for KCAH, please visit our website or email camilla.w@kcah.org.uk

Community Day

On a hot July day, staff from British Land and Eden Walk Shopping Centre joined forces with KCAH to give one of our properties a much needed makeover. Several of our tenants from the Access Project were also involved. The day finished with a BBQ prepared by some of the volunteers which was enjoyed by over 40 KCAH clients. Thank you to everyone involved: Three Hands for putting our Community Day proposal forward and to British Land/the Eden Walk Shopping Centre for funding the day. Above all, to their volunteers for giving their time!



"KCAH saved me"



"I've always gone out of my way to help other people and this feels like karma", says Rachel, smiling from ear to ear. Now safe in a KCAH property that she shares with two other women, she remembers a time when she lived in fear.

"I have always worked and I never thought I'd be in this position. But then I met my husband who was bipolar and very jealous and I was in an abusive relationship for 18 years."

It was only when Rachel's mum died that she found the strength to leave her abusive husband. Despite a restraining order against him, Rachel was stalked and assaulted by him again until he eventually went to prison.

"At that point I was so low that I didn't feel I was worth anything. My mum and nan had passed away and it was downhill from there."

After spending some time in a squat and getting in with a bad crowd, Rachel got a place at the Joel Community Project who subsequently put her in contact with KCAH.

KCAH managed to secure Rachel a room at the YMCA and after a while, Ali, our Tenancy Sustainment Officer, told her about a vacancy in one of the Access-project properties and Rachel was offered it.

"I suffer from panic attacks but I'm happier now. I've got stability and me and the two other girls are like a family."

With the enthusiasm of someone who knows not to take anything for granted, she beams:

"I'm growing plants like tomato, peppers and avocado again. I bake and cook and I have somewhere I can paint water colour portraits again. I even have somewhere to keep my Star Wars collection!"

She adds: "I know I can always come to KCAH if I need to make a phone call to my doctor or if I need someone to talk to. It's those little things. At the time I was in a really bad place and KCAH saved me."

Thank you Rachel for sharing your story so generously and with such bravery. You are remarkable and we wish you all the very best for the future.

'Recycle' volunteer needed

We are looking for a Friday volunteer to manage the extra rubbish we generate. Do you have a car that you are willing to use to make a weekly journey to the recycle centre on Villiers Road? If you are interested, please email matt.h@kcah.org.uk

New Chair

After many years of service, our very dedicated Chair - Ken Lowes - is stepping down from the role this October. KCAH is putting in place interim measures. However, we are looking for someone to join the board who will be interested in being involved in future leadership responsibilities. If this sounds like you, please contact Operational Director Matt Hatton at matt.h@kcah.org.uk



Cycling heroes

On that one day so far this summer when it poured down with rain, our riders John, Tim and Nik completed the 100 mile Prudential Cycle in aid of KCAH. And they did it in style too, seemingly unfazed by the sudden change in weather. We are so grateful for your efforts and for the money raised. Thank you and congratulations guys!

Quiz Night Bonanza

We feel really grateful that both **Winkworth Estate Agents** in Surbiton and the **Willow Restaurant** in Kingston organised quiz nights in aid of KCAH in June and July. Thank you so much to everyone involved. Everyone had a fantastic time and we feel so lucky to be part of such an amazing community! Combined, over £1573.00 was raised.

Please pray for

- **Funding** - KCAH is responding to the new demands and challenges relating to combating homelessness in Kingston. Nevertheless, the harsh reality is we can only do this if we are able to maintain our existing team of dedicated staff. And we do not currently have the funding streams to look beyond the short term. We are working really hard to secure much-needed grant funding so that we can sustain the work we do. However, at this time, we are reliant on the financial support of individuals and churches while we try to overcome a significant shortfall
- **The new work in the borough to combat rough sleeping**, including a seven-month-long night shelter scheme
- **A successful funding bid to the Big Lottery** – we're through to Round 2!
- **A new trustee** willing to consider, with time, the role of Chair of KCAH

