

Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness

DECEMBER 2018 NEWSLETTER



Wishing all our clients and supporters a Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year

KCAH 'Highly Commended' at Kingston Business Excellence Awards

What an evening we had at the Kingston Business Excellence Awards in October! The swanky event, organised by Kingston Chamber of Commerce, took place at Raven's Ait and celebrated the best of Kingston business. We were honoured to be nominated in the category 'Best Charity or Social Enterprise' and even more pleased to finish runner-ups, 'Highly Commended'. Thank you to the Kingston Chamber of Commerce for recognising our achievements and work and to all the team members involved in the application process. And of course, a huge congratulations to our friends at youth charity Oxygen who won!



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Health Day

When several organisations work towards a common goal, magic is often made and Health Day was no exception! Organised by RBK, KCAH and a host of other organisations, St Peter's Church opened its doors one sunny day in November to welcome anyone in the community affected by homelessness for a day promoting health and wellbeing. On offer was delicious food, flu jabs, health screenings, advice on mental health, employment, education and drug and alcohol services. Relaxation, head massage, hair cuts and our free second hand clothes store were also much appreciated! Thank you to all the organisations involved in the event and to all the clients making the day such a successful event!



Lucky to have you



Your support never cease to amaze us and this autumn we have been fortunate to have organisations and individual supporters organising fundraising events for us! The Gin and Art evening at Winkworth Estate Agent in Surbiton, together with No.97 Bar and Fusion Arts was a



wonderful event with lots of laughter and spirits (!) high. Thank you to everyone who came along, raising £300 towards the work we do!

In December, the United Reformed Church was filled with people enjoying a musical feast by local, exceptionally talented musicians Constance Chow, Sulhee Kim, Catherine Leonard and Mary Mundy

at the Sleeping Bag concert in aid of KCAH. Instead of charging an entrance fee, the visitors were encouraged to donate a sleeping bag at the door. The event raised 25 sleeping bags and £1174.85!

To all the organisations and individuals supporting us: Thank you. We are so incredibly lucky to have your support!



When little things mean a lot

"Anyone would have guessed that we were a normal, nice family but my dad abused me mentally and physically from as early as I can remember", Alex explains. "I can talk about it now without crying so I have come a long way. But my dad really was a horrid man. I was beaten, sometimes tied up, called horrible names and he took me out of school at the age of 13." Later on in life, Alex was in and out of temporary accommodation and even street homeless for a while. When he got into contact with KCAH, he was sceptical at first when offered a room at one of our Access Project properties but he accepted and soon felt very much at home.

"It was like winning the lottery! For the first time in eight years I could sit at a table on a chair eating my dinner that I had chosen!", he smiles. "The team [at KCAH] were absolutely brilliant and the care was unbelievable! Having settled in, Alex after a while felt confident enough and ready to apply for work again. He soon landed a job interview. But he only had a pair of worn trainers to wear, footwear he knew was not appropriate for the interview he had been offered. He felt stressed and worried and brought it up with Ali, our Tenancy Sustainment Officer. She suggested that KCAH could lend Alex some money to buy a pair of shoes.

"I was panicking but Ali kindly made sure I had a decent pair of shoes to wear.

I would have felt so self conscious and stressed that I wouldn't have gone. But instead I got a nice, new pair of shoes from Primark! And if I didn't get the job, I knew that I had a pair for the next interview!"

The impact of seemingly small gestures are not to be underestimated and we are pleased to say that Alex not only got the job, but recently passed his probation period too. Thank you Alex for sharing your story so generously. We wish you all the very best in your new job. We are so incredibly proud of you!



An evening of hope Friday 14th December



Get into the Christmas spirit with Big Sing, Kingsgate Church and KCAH, for a musical extravaganza on the theme of 'hope' on Friday 14th December. Amongst the acts performing are the Streetwise Choir, a choir made up of people who are or have been affected by homelessness. All money raised will go towards the work of KCAH and Big Sing Soul. The event will take place at Kingsgate Church and start at 19.30. Some tickets will be available at the door or you can book your tickets through Kingsgate.online/HopeChristmas or at www.billetto.co.uk (search for 'Big Sing Hope').

Please pray for

- For those who find Christmas difficult, who are lonely and who will be spending Christmas in temporary accommodation or on the streets.
- A **volunteer** to take rubbish to the Recycling Centre once a week
- For **partnership working** with other fantastic organisations to continue, making a real difference to our clients

The Haven

At the end of September, we opened up The Haven, a Night Shelter open every night in Kingston, held at Everyday Church and John Bunyan Church. Since opening up our doors, we have been able to offer 131 individuals shelter. Guests who would otherwise not have anywhere else to stay. Thank you to the Haven team, all our volunteers and anyone else involved in making it happen. We revert to the 'traditional' roaming shelter scheme using other church venues in February and March. Please get involved if you can.

We regularly run training sessions for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please email winternightshelter@kcah.org.uk.



In other news

- We are proud to be one of the homeless charities benefiting from the London Mayor's homelessness fundraising scheme, including the contactless TAP points in London raising £3.00 for every tap.
- The Rose Theatre in Kingston will raise funds for KCAH after every performance of Hansel and Gretel until 6 January. Thank you for the support!



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