



Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness



DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

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

KCAH 'Best Charity or Social Enterprise' at the Kingston Business Awards

When we came runners up at Kingston Excellence in Business Awards in 2018, we were over the moon to be recognised and in many ways we considered it a win for everyone involved in the work we do. But we also felt spurred on and inspired to apply again in 2019 and of course try to improve on previous year's position. And we were beyond excited and proud to be crowned 'Best Charity or Social Enterprise 2019' at the Awards ceremony at Raven's Ait this October! Thank you to everyone involved in the work we do supporting people in housing crisis - staff team, volunteers, supporters, Trustees and local community organisations and businesses. We are always striving forward and for better things. With your help, we will be able to help more people than ever before in 2020.



Roger, Irek, Georgie, Camilla and Derek from KCAH at the Awards



The Night Shelter doors are now open

In November, we once again opened up The Haven, our Winter Night Shelter for those in our borough with nowhere else to stay than on the streets. This year we host the shelter at KingsGate Church and All Saints Church and can sleep up to 30 people every night throughout the winter. We are at capacity every night.

One night of cover requires 19 volunteers spread out over four shifts. Without volunteers it simply wouldn't be possible to remain open. We have trained hundreds of volunteers and we would like to thank each and everyone for making the Haven what it is. A huge thank you as well to our funders and the local restaurants who donate delicious meals to our guests every night and to all our supporters donating sleeping bags, clothes and other useful items.

Of the 251 people staying at our Night Shelter last year, our Housing Crisis Intervention team have helped 65 of these off the streets, into secure accommodation - an amazing achievement by the team. If you would like to volunteer at the Haven, please contact winternightshelter@kcah.org.uk and keep an eye out on our website and social media for the next volunteer training date.





Welcoming Ailsa



We are so pleased to have welcomed Ailsa Oakes to our team as Office Co-ordinator this autumn. Ailsa began her KCAH journey by volunteering in the Night Shelter team in the summer and has become a much liked and integral part of the KCAH team in a very short space of time. She says:

"I am so excited to become a part of the team at KCAH as Office Co-ordinator. I have been volunteering here since July and have gained some insight into the incredible work that the charity does. I am particularly inspired by the dedication of the staff, their commitment to the cause and compassion for our clients. In splitting my time between working at the office and the night shelter I have been able to meet so many wonderful people. I have witnessed the generosity of a community coming together to donate clothing, food, and time. Though many of our clients have suffered hardships, their resilience inspires me every day and in my new role I hope to be able to support a team that supports them! I feel privileged to be able to contribute in to an organisation that truly cares."



Accessing so much more than housing



Our Access Project provides supported housing for up to 47 of our clients but the project is about so much more. The focus is on the client as an individual, his or her positive qualities, ambitions and interests. As part of this, this autumn has seen a wide range of activities on offer. Fishing, museum trips, vision boarding and cycling in Richmond Park were some of the activities we held, bringing challenges and opportunities to try something new or revisit something not done for many years, as well as lots of laughter. One of our clients taking part in the fishing trip said: *"I have never ever gone fishing or even caught a fish but that day I caught four fish with some really, really fantastic people. A day I'll never forget."*



A gift in your Will

Have you considered leaving a gift for KCAH in your Will? KCAH is dependent on donations and even a residuary gift of 1% in your Will can make a huge difference to our work with some of the most vulnerable people in our borough. Visit www.kcah.org.uk - 'Can you help?' - 'A gift in your Will' to find out more.

Please pray for

- For everything to go well at the Haven over Christmas. For safety and success and for KCAH to be able to make a dent in rough sleeping in Kingston
- For those who find Christmas a difficult time, who are lonely and who will be spending Christmas in temporary accommodation or on the streets

A new home



Rachel and Access Project Support Worker Meghan

We are so pleased to let you know that Access tenant Rachel, who has so generously shared her inspiring and emotional life story with us previously, has now moved in to her new home. Rachel was recommended by Access for a Rapid Rehousing Pathway property through the Council and was successful. *"To have my own place and knowing that I had a place that was permanent was... I couldn't believe it! It's perfect and I can have my plants here and cook whenever I want to. It's just wonderful!"* she says. We wish Rachel all the very best in her new home!



The London Homeless Collective

We are proud to be part of the London Homeless Collective together with 22 other charities. The LHC is a campaign by the *Evening Standard* and the *Independent* which aims to raise awareness and funds towards homelessness in London.

