



Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness

KCAH, St Peter's Church Hall,
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Press Release for Kingston, Surbiton, Chessington and New Malden areas

For Immediate Release: 23 May 2024 (High resolution image attached)

'Big Sleep Out' in Kingston to Combat Rise in Local Homelessness

Supporters of Kingston's homelessness charity both old and new are being invited to a sleep out under the stars in a medieval church courtyard this autumn. Failing that, the comfort of their own garden; all in a bid to help raise vital funds.

Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness (KCAH) recently delivered Kingston's winter night shelter, giving rough sleepers a warm, dry, safe place to sleep in the coldest months from January to the end of March.

The charity is now seeking 70 people to raise sponsorship money while bedding down in the grounds of All Saints Church in Kingston town centre overnight on Friday the 4th October for the Big Sleep Out 2024.

Georgie Forshaw, KCAH CEO, said: "Sleeping rough and homelessness has become normalised and yet there is nothing normal about being homeless in a modern, wealthy society.

"Many of the people we see have been faced with a series of circumstances that led them into homelessness. KCAH's vision is to help those that need us have a safe and stable home and to build a happy life.

"We couldn't have run our recent winter night shelter without our army of overnight volunteers. Now we are asking for fresh help. If you sign up to take part in our Big Sleep Out or help raise money for this great cause in any other way, you will be playing your part in helping change somebody's life."

The charity has seen the number of individuals presenting to its housing crisis centre in Norbiton almost double with an increase of 88% in the past two years with the steep rise being attributed to multiple factors including the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

If you want to help but can't attend the main event, KCAH are encouraging anyone who can to set up their own sleep out challenge (or similar) to take place from the 4th of October up until World Homeless Day which will be on Thursday the 10th.



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If you represent a school year group, Scout or Guides group, residents' association, place of worship, work team, company or any other group, please contact Dan at KCAH on enquiries@kcah.org.uk or 020 8255 7400 for more information on how to get involved.

Sign up for the Big Sleep Out as an individual at www.kcah.org.uk/sleep-out/
Make a donation toward the target of £35,000 via www.justgiving.com/campaign/big-sleep-out-24

Ends

Notes to editors:

KCAH was set up as a charity in 1993, its staff and volunteers have now served the people of Kingston borough for 31 years. From its small offices in the grounds of St Peter's Church, Norbiton, it runs four key departments:

- Housing crisis intervention service (HCIS) which is the first port of call for anyone who comes to its front door because they are homeless or in immediate danger of becoming homeless
- Temporary supported accommodation provided and managed by KCAH (Access Project)
- Specialist unit for clients with alcohol and drug problems (The Bridge)
- Winter night shelter (WNS) for rough sleepers at Kingston town centre

For further information about the sleep out or any other aspects of the work of KCAH, please contact Dan Whittingham, marketing and communications manager of KCAH on dan.w@kcah.org.uk or 07915 249918 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm).