

NEW HOUSING AND TRAINING CENTRE OPENS IN CATTERICK

A housing and training centre for those leaving the armed forces who are at risk of homelessness was officially opened by the Rt Hon William Hague, MP for Richmond, Yorks, at the end of March. The Beacon is a new housing, training and support centre based near Catterick Garrison, that provides specialist support to single homeless veterans from around the country. It is the latest and most comprehensive addition to a national network of support provided by Riverside English Churches Housing Group (RECHG) in partnership with the Ministry of Defence.

The Beacon specifically targets single ex-Servicemen and women who are most at risk of homelessness, providing them with temporary accommodation for up to 18 months. The centre has top-of-the-range training facilities which are used by residents to help them gain employment and permanent housing. More importantly, local health and complementary practitioners are also utilising The Beacon to tackle the very pressing physical and psychological issues that some veterans have, such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Since The Beacon started operating at the end of 2011 it has helped 31 individuals and is currently operating at full capacity. Among the training opportunities at The Beacon are a landscaping service and an on-site bakery, where residents can learn a new trade and get qualifications. There is also a multi-gym where the first five veterans to have attended have already gained Level 2 Gym Instructor accreditations.



Veterans young and old together at the official opening of The Beacon, Catterick. From the left: Ross Allison, Ray Lawton, Les Fitton, Tonya Punter from Riverside ECHG, Dennis Broadhead, Phil Garbutt, Russell Dads and Anthony Readman.

"It's the best thing I've ever done"

Amber Barker, a young resident from the Cangle Foyer in Haverhill, completed a GOALS (Gaining Opportunities and Living Skills) training course. Here she tells us about her experience.

"GOALS is about motivation, and getting more of what you want, less of what you don't want. It gives you the tools you need to change your life forever, for the better.

It helps you to overcome obstacles in ways that are so simple, anyone can follow. It opens your eyes and makes you realise that you are worth something and that you can reach your goals. If you ever get the opportunity to take part in GOALS, take it, grab it with both hands."

Church Housing Trust is grateful for £41,000 from The Dulverton Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation and Allchurches Trust, which has enabled us to help fund the first year of this inspirational training programme.

Facilities also include a multimedia suite for those like Mike (see story top right) who are more artistically inclined.

RECHG's Managing Director, Derek Caren said: "We believe that those who've served their country deserve to have the most up to date support possible if they find themselves facing homelessness."

Church Housing Trust, RECHG's charity partner, raised a total of £65,152 to help towards furnishings and equipment for the flats, employment and training centres, social areas, training kitchen, and the gym and fitness centre and we continue to fundraise for other needs within the project.

Pleased to be of service!

Earlier this year we had a phone call from someone who had rung us in November worried about her grandson who was depressed and suicidal after being invalided out of the army after an injury and who was experiencing homelessness. We had put her in touch with Mike Jackson House* in Aldershot and she had "never felt more relieved in her life" that her grandson was now living somewhere where he can get the help he needs. We were glad to be of service!

**Mike Jackson House houses 25 ex-Service personnel. Facilities include a training and employment centre, a technology centre, a health resource facility, and a training kitchen and bakery.*

Thanks to so many churches who gave us proceeds from your Christmas service collections and carol singing. Your support makes a real difference and enables us to continue to support over 80 projects throughout the country.

"Thanks for the funding which meant we had a wonderful time going bowling. It was very enjoyable for all the residents and I'm looking forward to the next time. It helps people who have troubles mixing with others and breaks down a lot of their barriers. Thank you again!"

from a resident in Gloucester

"Church Housing Trust's grant was crucial in helping 'Heather' successfully enrol at Wigan college on the barbering course. She now has all the equipment she needs and with the extra funding was able to buy her first week's bus ticket! 'Heather' has now been successful in securing her own local authority flat and feels her life is moving in the right direction at last. This has been helped in no small part by the CHT grant that she received and for which she sends her heartfelt thanks."

from a support worker in Wigan



When Mike* lost his friend and fellow soldier alongside him while on active service, it signalled the start of a dramatic decline for the Coldstream Guardsman after 23 years in the armed forces.

"After the incident my life started to change dramatically. I became like Jekyll and Hyde and ended up being discharged from the armed forces, having a nervous breakdown and being diagnosed with post-traumatic stress. That's how I came to The Beacon."

"I love my music," said Mike, "and because I've been able to use the music production studio here I've been producing my own radio jingles to try and get work in radio. I'm now regularly volunteering part-time at the garrison radio station doing some shows there and I'd really like to get into this line of work."

**Mike is pictured above with Rt Hon William Hague MP at the opening of The Beacon in Catterick.*

Getting involved

Funding from Church Housing Trust enabled residents at the Homeless Families Unit in Barnsley to take part in a variety of activities over the Christmas period.

All the residents with their children enjoyed a Christmas party, and some also went to see Cinderella at the local theatre. Others were able to get up close to a host of animals on a day out to Wigfield Farm, and all of them appreciated the generosity which enabled them to change their routine and forget their troubles for a while. Team Leader Heather Brennan said: "We are all grateful to Church Housing Trust who make such a difference to our lives."



Visit to Imperial War Museum



Mike Jackson House in Aldershot provides accommodation and support for 25 single ex-Service men and women as they move back into civilian life after leaving the armed forces.

A resident standing next to a piece of the Berlin Wall.



Church Housing Trust recently provided funding for a group of them to leave the routine of the hostel for a day and visit the Imperial War Museum in London.

One of the residents said: "The museum is a fantastic place to visit with something to interest everyone. Unfortunately, there is far too much on display to list here, but all of those who went agreed that it was a worthwhile day out and everyone enjoyed it immensely. Thank you CHT!"



New training kitchen opened

In April Church Housing Trust proudly opened Willow Walk's* new training kitchen. Visitors and residents braved the April weather for a BBQ and tucked into the delicious food prepared by both staff and residents.

CHT provided funding for the new kitchen facilities which will help residents learn and develop kitchen skills. Most residents who come to the hostel have an unhealthy diet, little to no kitchen skills and no experience of budgeting.



Prior to the opening the hostel had a poorly equipped kitchen which was unsuitable for training sessions and in desperate need of a revamp. Staff are now holding cooking and food hygiene lessons, which have been well received and there is even a residents' breakfast club. The sessions provide opportunities for residents to acquire the crucial skills they need for independent living such as healthy eating, practical cooking skills and working as a team, as well as being involved with communal meals.



**Willow Walk is a hostel in the heart of Cambridge for 22 single homeless people with a wide variety of needs. Residents are offered the support they need to help them overcome their problems and gain the confidence and skills they need to live independently.*

I should like to support Church Housing Trust.

Please accept my donation of £ _____

I enclose Cheque Postal Order Charity Voucher (payable to **Church Housing Trust**)

or charge my Visa/Mastercard/Maestro/CAFCard (please delete as applicable)

Card No: _____

Expiry Date: _____ Maestro Issue No: _____

Security code: _____ (the last 3 digits of the signature strip on the back of the card)

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Email _____

Gift Aid. Please tick if you are a taxpayer and you would like us to reclaim the tax on your donation at no extra cost to yourself. Please note that in order for us to reclaim tax we need your address, and you must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax for each tax year at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities to which you donate will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year.

giftaid it

Please send me the following:

- Standing order form for regular giving
- Payroll Giving information



Please return to:
Church Housing Trust,
PO Box 50296,
London EC1P 1WF

Summer 2012

Cold weather support

During the coldest weather this winter RECHG supported over 55 cold weather beds each night across the country.

Teams in London, Leeds, Wigan, Derby, Cambridge, Bristol, Bolton, Reading and Manchester did their best to help ensure no one died on the streets from the cold weather. Specialist support was also provided, which not only helped keep people alive in the short-term but also helped them move off the streets long-term.

Specialist support workers identified health problems and distributed 'keep warm' packs, which included socks, blankets and thermos cups and they greatly appreciated CHT's funding.

MARATHON WOMAN

After months of hard training Denise Ellis tackled 26.2 miles in the London Marathon. Here's why...



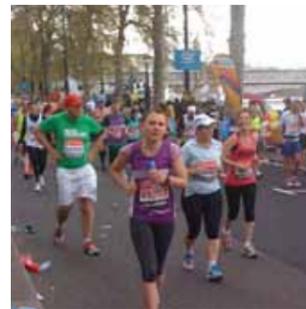
"As many parents, relatives and friends of addicts will know, there comes a point where you feel like you're all out of options - desperate to see the person you love get some help, whilst also wanting some much needed respite for yourself. After years of doctors, referrals and not much else, our family reached this breaking point in September 2006 after a much-treasured family member spiralled downwards into a very bleak place.

Our help came in the form of Vaughan House* in Guildford, where the offer of in-patient treatment came as an absolute godsend at a time where desperation knew no limits for all concerned.

The staff's kindness and dedication working to rehabilitate someone who had lost their way in life needed repaying and it was for that reason why I chose CHT, who support Vaughan House, as my London Marathon charity as a way of thanking them for laying the foundations towards a brighter more positive future for our family.



Vaughan House does not provide a quick fix and those concerned must truly want to find a way out of the darkness, but the facilities provided give a troubled soul a non-judgmental route back into society and create many opportunities to rebuild their self-worth and re-establish themselves as a valued citizen in life.



More than five years on life has brought us all to a point where we are beginning to make tentative steps to repair what we once thought was irreparable. It has been a very long, exhausting and desperate struggle on both sides to arrive at the position where we find ourselves today, although much more work needs to be done to re-establish the trust and respect that is so essential for a relationship to flourish.

I was delighted to gain a Marathon place, after several years of applying, in what is to be such a memorable historical year. The day proved to be

just as fantastic as I imagined it would be, made all the more special by many family and friends coming to line the route - especially if they were clutching jelly babies!

I had a great pacemaker in Bagpuss and managed to avoid being overtaken by the entire herd of rhinos which was a relief. The camaraderie and banter along the route was great for lifting spirits and hearing so many inspiring stories of how people came to be running that day was very humbling.

Lump in the throat moment came when we approached a huge Virgin banner which read 'in 2.5 miles time you will be making history'. Amazing!

I have been overwhelmed by the amount raised on my VirginGiving webpage and know that it will be used wisely to continue giving much needed help to those individuals who encounter daily battles with life."



CHT would like to say a big thank you to Denise, who has raised nearly £2,000. If you would like to sponsor her great achievement please visit our website:

churchhousingtrust.org.uk/londonmarathon

**Vaughan House provides a home for 47 men and women in Guildford. It includes a specialist alcohol detox unit and post-detox care for recovering alcoholics.*

CHT has a new website!

You can find us at the same address www.churchhousingtrust.org.uk but with new features and information



Keep up to date with our latest news and stories

Watch our videos and see why CHT funding is so important

Sign up for our e-newsletter online

Patrons: Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop of Manchester, Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, Sir Martin Berthoud KVCO CMG, David P G Cade, Peter Cooke CBE, Ian Hay Davison CBE, Sir Philip Mawer, Rt. Revd. Christopher Mayfield, Michael Nicholson OBE, Rt. Revd. Michael Turnbull CBE, The Ven. David Woodhouse
Trustees: The Revd. Canon Ian Gaskell (Chairman), Susan Briscoe, Derek Caren, Commander Robert Cribb MBE, RN (Retd.), Christopher Daws, Revd. Preb. Graham Earney, The Ven. Dr. Colin Hill
Church Housing Trust is a registered charity (no. 802801) and a company limited by guarantee (no. 2453957)