



£1 million offered to homeless charity to aid expansion

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More than £1 million in pledges have been offered in support of a homeless charity at an event at the Inner Temple in London.

The charity, which provides accommodation for up to 180 single homeless people each year, recently launched a "Home and Hope Appeal" to help bring regeneration to East London and its homeless residents. The mission is to raise £9.3 million to create 25 "move-on" studio flats to help its residents back into independent living.

Anchor House – a residential centre for homeless people located in East London – held the event last night with the support of ITV's Julie Etchingham and former world boxing champion Barry McGuigan.

Keith Fernett, Anchor House director, said the event was "a tremendous success" with Barclays Bank pledging a substantial amount of support towards redeveloping the charity's 50 year old centre.

Mr Fernett said: "Last night was a historical moment for Anchor House. In a matter of one night, we now have enough funds to build five out of 25 new studio move-on apartments for our residents.

"We still have a long way to go, but we are confident that this is the start of big things to come."

Big Issue founder John Bird was also present at the event. A former homeless person himself, he paid tribute to the work of Anchor House.

He said it was important that people supported charities like Anchor House who provide the homeless with a "hand up, not a hand out".

"When you meet an organisation like Anchor House, it makes you feel really good because it shows what can be done when homeless people take control of their lives with the assistance of professionals and volunteers," Mr Bird said.

The £9.3m development includes new education, training and rehabilitation facilities. As well as 25 new transitional "move-on" studio flats to help residents achieve a sustainable transition back into independent living, and a new training kitchen for people to gain catering qualifications.

Recently Oxford Economics found that Anchor House saves society and tax payers more than £5 million a year by helping to turn around the lives of its homeless residents. Including saving society up to £3.2 million from lower crime.

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