

Move-on flats help homeless people to rebuild their lives

Catholic homeless charity Caritas [Anchor House](#) recently completed the construction of 25 move-on flats for previously homeless people.

Located in Newham, London, one of the most deprived areas of the country, Caritas [Anchor House](#) provides accommodation and support for up to 250 single homeless people each year.

It seeks to address the root causes of homelessness through training, education and personal rehabilitation.

As the move from the supportive environment of Caritas [Anchor House](#) to independent living can sometimes be difficult, the move-on flats will operate as a halfway point between the two states for residents, helping ensure that they are able to sustain their independence for the longer term.

Whilst in the flats, which are next to Caritas [Anchor House](#), residents will have full responsibility for all aspects of their everyday lives, such as money management and cooking, but they can continue to access Caritas [Anchor House](#)'s support services if they need to.

Each of the 25 studio flats is equipped with an ensuite bathroom, integrated kitchen, a dining table and chairs, a television and armchair, as well as a bed and wardrobe.

Debbie, one of the first residents to move into the flats, said "For me it is about being able to look after yourself again, being able to take responsibility for things like what you want to eat and when you want to eat."

Debbie says the physical proximity of having Caritas [Anchor House](#) next door offers "the confidence of knowing that someone is still here".

Keith Fernett, Chief Executive of Caritas [Anchor House](#) said: "I am delighted our move-on flats are completed and that 25 of our residents have now taken the next

step in their journey to independent living.

"Caritas [Anchor House](#)'s capacity has now increased, so we will be able to support more people than ever before."

The flats form part of the charity's £15.3 million Home and Hope Appeal, launched in 2011 to transform the organisation and provision of homeless services in Newham, East London.

The first phase involved refurbishing existing residential rooms into individual learning zones, complete with a bedroom and workspace.

The move-on flats form phase two and work has now begun on the final phase, the construction of facilities for training and education, as well as health and wellbeing provisions.

In 2015 the charity was informed by HMRC that it had to pay an additional £1million more in VAT on the building works of the move-on flats than it had originally been advised.

However, Caritas [Anchor House](#) successfully appealed to have the decision overturned.

Now it will not have to pay further VAT on the construction works until 2018, when the charity expects the development to be complete.

The completion of the flats comes at a time when figures show that homelessness has risen 16 per cent over one year in England, while in Newham alone, the rough sleeper count has increased by 46 per cent.

However, the Homelessness Reduction Bill aims to reform current homelessness legislation to provide support for those who are homeless or at risk of losing their home.





Caritas Anchor House, Newham, with the new move-on flats pictured to the right



Keith Fennett,
the Chief
Executive of
Anchor House



Resident Debbie
in her new flat