



Paxman's praise for homelessness charity

Tom Lomax

JEREMY PAXMAN has praised an East London Catholic charity's work to provide a sustainable path out of homelessness as "the only answer to a worldwide problem".

The former BBC2 *Newsnight* presenter's comment came at a reception to mark World Homeless Day at the House of Lords.

Paxman urged guests to consider how incredibly narrow the line is between a settled, ordered life and one of utter chaos, whether the tipping point is losing your job, a family breakdown or simply struggling to pay the bills.

"Caritas Anchor House does exactly what is needed. Any person who is reconstructing their life, after a period of homelessness, is doing something that is much bigger than anything I've ever had to do. It's a major challenge for them and Caritas Anchor House helps them to do it through a tailored programme of activities."

Every year, Caritas Anchor House provides support and accommodation to single homeless people, giving them so much more than just a roof over their heads. Last year alone, it provided a home for 232 people, helping 64 into independent living and supporting 86 into employment.

The charity is based in the London Borough of Newham, the third most deprived borough in the country, and was commended by event host Field Marshal Lord Guthrie on their ability to adapt to a challenging environment.

Mgr John Armitage, chair of Trustees at Caritas Anchor House, said that the charity now needs help to ensure that every person who walks through their doors has access to the best care and support possible, making the hope of independent life a reality.

"Ordinary people with a great heart recognise that all of us have to work together, and that in that greatness of heart, we can make a difference to people's lives."