



It's a cliché but Christmas does seem to get closer every year. Many people in recovery can feel a sense of panic rising with the onset of the holiday season, especially if it's your first Christmas or New Year's without a drink.

And it's not just the temptation of alcohol. The pressure to spend beyond your means or to overeat in a bid not to upset loved ones is much higher than at any time of the year. And for some people without close friends or family, it can also be incredibly isolating.

With all that it's easy to see Christmas as something to 'survive' not something to actively enjoy. But to truly stay safe in your recovery and carve out a new life for yourself, I genuinely believe you need to create a rewarding, fun environment wherever you find yourself. If that means having to turn down a meal at the local pub with friends or family that's fine, but doesn't it make more sense to replace that with something even better?

Maybe offer to hold Christmas Dinner at your place where you can control the setting, the food or the drink? Or you could stick with last year's routine but add in some extra fellowship meetings or some well-timed walks to give yourself a break from the family? If you can, bring a friend who's also in recovery to New Year's parties for mutual support.

Overleaf you can find extra support for this Christmas and New Year's Eve from other organisations in Hertfordshire and national helplines that can help you out if you find yourself struggling.

~ Adrienne, Chief Executive



In July, the Chris Frankish Trust held a garden party and music festival to raise money and awareness in memory of Chris, who died

earlier in the year after suffering from mental health issues and alcohol dependency. We're hugely grateful to everyone involved in the event and to Chris's siblings Steph and Stuart who presented The Living Room with a £1666.66 donation.



A massive thank you to the Stevenage Community Trust who's funding has enabled us to purchase 14 comfy new chairs (in a dashing The Living Room purple) for our group room at No.15 The Glebe.

Notes of Appreciation

We had an amazing day on Friday 15th November in the crèche with Pudsey Bear, celebrating Children in Need and all they have done and continue to do for us. We thank them very much for their generosity, support and commitment to our crèche as without them we would not be here.



Thank you to the Hertford and District International Soroptimist's for holding a quiz night in November in aid of The Living Room and Safer Places that raised £600.

Thanks to everyone who has donated so far to our Giving Tuesday appeal. Remember £12.50 can buy a day of group therapy at The Living Room for someone in need but any contribution is greatly appreciated.

A reminder of why we are here... A testimonial:

'A little thank you for all that you did for my son three years ago. You set him on the right path and he is now living a wonderful drug free life.' ~ Relative of a former client.

0300 365 0304

www.livingroomherts.org

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Support The Living Room this Giving Tuesday

You've heard of Cyber Monday, and you can't escape Black Friday, but what do you know about Giving Tuesday? Held on December 3rd every year, Giving Tuesday is a charitable antidote to the pre-Christmas spending spree that aims to give back to communities and help the charities that serve them.

On December 3rd, The Living Room wants to encourage as many people as possible to help us provide support to just one person for one day by donating £12.50 to our General Donation. It takes 10 months and costs roughly £2595 on average for a person to achieve lasting recovery with us and your donation can help someone take that first step towards changing their life.

Donate via www.livingroomherts.org/Appeal/donate

AND you can support us when you shop on Amazon by signing up to smile.amazon.co.uk and selecting The Living Room as your chosen charity. It doesn't cost you a thing and Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase to our fund.

GIVING TUESDAY
MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Give a person in need something to smile about

With Amazon Smile, you can help The Living Room entirely for free. With every purchase you make using the platform Amazon will donate 0.5% to The Living Room.

It's easy to sign up: just go to Smile.amazon.co.uk, enter your current Amazon account details and when prompted search for 'The Living Room' and select us as your chosen charity.

When shopping, just remember to log in at Smile.amazon.co.uk when you next go to buy something.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

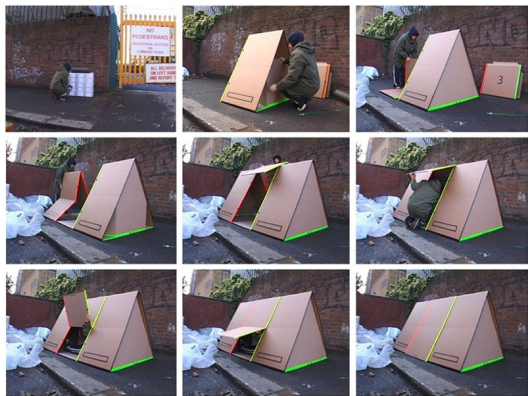
This year's Christmas opening times will be:

December 24th: 9:00am - 1:00pm
December 25th: Closed
December 26th: Closed
December 27th: Open as usual
December 30th: Open as usual
December 31st: Open as usual
January 1st 2020: Closed
January 2nd 2020: Open as usual



St Albans Sleepout 2019

This year's St Albans Sleepout is taking place on Friday 6th December at Oaklands College. The aim of the event is to raise awareness of homelessness in Hertfordshire and raise funds for The Living Room alongside other charities including Emmaus, Centre 33, Herts Young Homeless and Open Door.



As well as participants collecting sponsorships to sleep out on the night there will also be a cardboard pod-making workshop lead by St Albans Arts as well as music from local St Albans troubadour Sassa and Jazz-pop player Rae Kelly.

There's less than a week to sign up to take part but you can sponsor other participants by heading over to www.livingroomherts.org

Recovery Support at Christmas and New Year

Christmas and the New Year period can be a trying time when you're going through recovery but with good planning you can keep yourself safe and enjoy the festivities. Remember to be mindful of emotional triggers, take time out from the celebrations if you need to and don't be afraid to call any of these organisations for extra support:

Someone to talk to:	Addiction Support:
Samaritans: 116 123	Narcotics Anonymous: 0300 9991 212 Alcoholics Anonymous: 0800 9177 650 Cocaine Anonymous: 0800 689 4732
NHS:	Mental Health:
NHS non-emergency: 111 NHS emergency: 999	Single point of access (SPA): 0300 777 0707 Nightlight Crisis Service (7pm - 2am Friday to Monday): 01923 256 391 Mind: 0300 123 3393

If you have a smartphone, you can also download the Stay Alive app free from Google Play and the Apple Store which has tools and resources to manage your wellbeing and help you stay safe in a crisis.