



Charity No: 1080634

CIO No: 1175541

December 2023

We've been feeling festive this month and it has been a whirl wind of Christmas activity at The Living Room. We've enjoyed some fabulous events, and we'd like to thank you all for supporting us by coming along and helping us to raise vital funds to help us help those living with addiction in Hertfordshire.

However, we know that Christmas isn't always tinsel and fairy lights, it can be tough and the pressure to have a good time can be overwhelming.

If you are struggling, please don't be alone during this period. Please reach out to a friend or family member or use some of the helplines and resources we've added below.

There are many amazing people and organisations out there to help us feel less alone and help us cope, which are especially important this time of year.

We'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Christmas and peaceful new year from all of us at The Living Room. Thank you for your continued support and love for what we do, and we look forward to seeing you in January for a hopeful 2024.

Adrienne, Chief Executive



The Living Room Christmas Quiz

What a fabulous evening! Our Stevenage Christmas Quiz brought in over £750.

To put that into perspective, it costs £49 per week to treat one client, so fundraising events like this are enormously important to us. We're extremely grateful to each and every one of you that came along to support us, and we hope you had a great time - because we absolutely did.

A very special thank you to J, our wonderful client who took the reins as Quiz Master, you did a brilliant job!

And thank you to all raffle prizes donated from Nat's Cheesecake and Bakes, Rachel's Holistic Temple and Skincare Clinic, Regency Barbers, Time Square Pizza and Kebab, The Entertainer, Stevenage cycle shop, the Co-op, and Davide who donated children's book *The Shrew with the Flu* signed by author Will Hamilton-Davies.

We're also grateful to Reverent Peter Orton, who we kindly donated the use of All Saints Church at The Oval, Stevenage.

And finally, thank you to all the wonderful volunteers and staff who made this successful event happen.

Santa Float spreads Christmas cheer in St Albans

The St Albans Santa Float is an absolute joy for us to take part in every year.

Our staff and volunteers certainly spread festive cheer from Santa's Sleigh as it travelled through Marshalswick in St Albans in early December.

A huge than you to St Albans Round Table who organise the yearly event, and who provide the float for us and other local charities.

Thank you so much to our wonderful staff and volunteers who took part.



Networking at Stevenage Community Conference

It was wonderful to be with so many inspiring people and organisations at the Stevenage Community Conference put on by North Herts and Stevenage CVS.

The event included interesting talks from guest speakers from Citizens Advice Stevenage and Stevenage Borough Council.

Together we talked about what community means to us all, income generation, volunteering, and the Stevenage Inclusion Partnership. It was great to share ideas, talk together, and network.

Life at The Living Room



"I came to the living room because my eating disorder and alcoholism had made me mentally and physically ill and had taken too much from me and I wanted help."

"Before I came here I was completely controlled by my addictions, I had no life and was suicidal and mentally done."

"It has changed my life being here, I feel I have a voice and have learnt a lot of skills to develop so I can start to work with my addiction."

"The main thing it has helped me with is learning about boundaries, co-dependency, take responsibility and taught me about myself."

"In the future I want to be able to manage life with better coping skills, be able to hold down a job I enjoy and help other people with my experiences."

- A current client
-



Santa does a spot of shopping

At the end of November, we welcomed Santa and his Elves to our Stevenage charity shop for our Late-Night Shopping Evening.

A huge thank you to everyone who came along, your support is very much appreciated, and thank you so much to our wonderful staff and volunteers who worked so hard to make it happen.

Upon meeting Santa, one mini customer was overheard to say; “Wow, this is the best shop ever, and I can’t believe ACTUAL Father Christmas is here!” (We must say, we are very pleased with this review.)

Dean Russell MP welcomed to our Watford Hub

We were pleased to welcome Dean Russell MP to our Watford Hub recently.

He came to chat with Counselling Manager and Clinical Lead Debbie, our Counsellor, Marcel and Lucy, our Business Manager about what we do to help those living with addiction in Hertfordshire.

Watford has been Mr Russell’s constituency since 2019 and the visit gave us a great opportunity to talk about what we do.



Our Cheque from Co-op Local Community Fund

We were so pleased to meet with the Co-op's Local Community Fund Organisers in London Colney in November.

We would like to say a big thank you to them for the £1,500 they raised for us as part of their scheme to help local charities. Every time Co-op members buy selected Co-op branded products and services; the organisation gives local causes a helping-hand.

We are grateful to the Co-op and its members for this support.



Help to manage the cost of living

HertsHelp Trained advisors offering free, confidential advice on local services and support Call: 0300 123 4544 Email: info@hertshelp.net www.hertshelp.net	Community spaces Find a community space near you, locations all across Hertfordshire www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/communityspaces	Mental health Advice and support for your happiness, wellbeing and mental health www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/mentalhealth
Money and benefits advice Free guides on debt and benefits, disability, bereavement, housing, retirement and carer support www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/moneyadvice	Citizens Advice Free, local and confidential advice on benefits, money and credit problems, employment, housing and family issues Call: 0800 144 8848	Help for households Central government is offering support with energy bills, transport, childcare and household costs www.helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk

We're with you this winter See all of the support, advice and services available to help you stay safe and well. Visit: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/winter-help

Hertfordshire

Useful Helplines and Resources

Samaritans – call or text **988**

Family Lives – **0808 800 2222**

CGL Spectrum - **0800 652 3169**



Thank You!

As a local charity we rely on donations and grants to continue to deliver our services. We are very thankful to everyone who donates either as a single or regular giver. Your generous support helps us to break the cycle of addiction in Hertfordshire. We want to give a special shout out to the people and organisations who have donated to us over the past month:

Codicote Masonic Lodge – £500
Soroptomist International of Hertford –
£650
The Hodge Foundation – £5,000
Co-Op Community Fund – £1,500

Hertfordshire Community Foundation –
£5000k
Locality Budgets (Councillors)
Mark Watkin – £500

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