

20th January 2022

Dear Supporter,

As announced in our last Bridge Bulletin, The Bridge Trust will be embarking on an exciting new chapter in the development of our services by merging with YMCA West Kent which is part of the wider YMCA Thames Gateway Group. I can now tell you that the merger will happen on 31st January so as from the 1st February The Bridge Trust will become "*The Bridge Trust Project – Part of YMCA Thames Gateway Group*". By integrating into YMCA West Kent we will not only be securing the long-term future of our service but it will give us an opportunity to grow and therefore meet the increasing demands of homelessness in our community.

Our service will continue as it is now; in the same region, using the same properties with the same staff supporting the same client group. However, we are excited about the new possibilities there will be for our staff and clients to leverage YMCA's expertise and broader projects for homeless people. We are already learning a lot from them as I'm sure they are from us and together we will be a stronger force for homelessness in our community.

The current Bridge Trust staff will transfer to YMCA West Kent, with at least the same employment terms and conditions that they enjoy with The Bridge Trust and as part of the merger we have now moved everyone out of our office in Quarry Hill Road to YMCA's Head Office in Tonbridge. We have set up a Royal Mail redirection but it would be helpful if your future correspondence is addressed to **The Bridge Trust Project, YMCA West Kent, Tower House, Tonbridge TN9 1TB**.

One desk that hasn't moved to YMCA's office is mine as after 14 years at the helm I have decided to leave The Bridge Trust. There is much I could say about my journey with the Trust, but what I will say is that it has been an honour to play my part in changing the lives of so many people in need. It has been a privilege to work alongside a dedicated and hard-working team and to get to know so many of you, our loyal supporters.

We also say goodbye to three of our long-serving trustees; David Glynn, Bruce Pugsley and Erica Ffrench. We are indebted to them for giving up so much of their time and for their dedication over many years. We are however, very pleased that our other three trustees will be transferring to YMCA West Kent's Board, giving continuity and representation of the Trust's service at a strategic level.

Any support you continue to give to The Bridge Trust Project will continue to be allocated specifically to our service and there will be no need for you to change any bank account details you have for us. The details we hold for you (name, address, phone numbers and email addresses etc) will transfer to YMCA, but they will not use your details for any other purpose than The Bridge Trust have used them previously.

Although this is a big change for us, it's actually not changing very much at all; it will just be that we operate from a different office and have the combined resources and experience of another local homeless charity to draw on.

Thank you all for your continued interest in our work and for the messages of support we have received for this next step in our journey to help the homeless people in need in our community.

John Handley



Chief Executive

The Bridge Trust, Tower House, Vale Rise, Tonbridge TN9 1TB
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