

## Open Day goes with a splash!

**For the first time, our Open Day in July included the baptism of two residents. This is John's story:**

**"I started taking drink and drugs at the age of about 10 or 11** because I never felt right in my own skin. There was always something missing, and that was love. I can't remember a time when my alcoholic mother and father didn't argue. We were lucky if she stayed sober for an hour and made us dinner. Drink and drugs were a coping mechanism to forget about my fears. I left home and got married at 18 just to get away from my parents.

**I used to steal to fund my drink and drug habit** and spent most of my life in prison. I've been in addiction for 45 years and wasted my life in some respects. But my life has just started from today.

**When I was young, we only went to church for funerals and weddings,** which were just excuses to get hammered. When I arrived at Yeldall, I came looking for God, but I now believe God found me.

**I felt an overwhelming sense of peace flood over me** as soon as I stepped through the door. I felt safe and secure; everyone here has been so kind, loving and caring. And they were the things I was lacking in my life. I needed these things to make me better.



John gets baptised. Photo (c) Dee Tee Photography

**I didn't really get the God thing at first,** because I couldn't understand about a God who died so my sins could be forgiven. My father never gave me any love and I could see him! So how could a father in heaven love me without seeing him? It was mind-boggling.

**All I know is today I am becoming a new creation.** I'm being forgiven for my past. I have another chance of becoming a proper father to my daughter and grandchildren. I'm not this frightened child anymore. I'm comfortable in my own skin and this is all due to my faith in Jesus Christ my Saviour because He has saved me in ways I could not have dreamed of.

**If I put God first in all things, I know my life will become better and better and better.** My journey has only just begun! But, like I said before, I now have hope for the future and I know God is with me every single minute of every single day.

**I needed to change because my life was getting out of control.** It was either going to end in another long prison sentence or death. So I am truly grateful for Yeldall and extremely grateful and humbled by my Saviour, Jesus Christ. I have put my trust in Him and for me to trust someone is a miracle in itself."

*(Read Gabriel's testimony on p3)*

# Ride for Recovery 2018

Over 80 cyclists young and old took part in this year's Ride for Recovery, cycling from ten to sixty miles to support Yeldall's work.

As the participants gathered at the beginning of the day, they were moved to see eight of those cycling who had themselves benefitted from the Good Samaritan Bursary Fund. Without this Fund, for which the event was raising money, many of them would still have been in active addiction.

Everyone came home safely and many residents and supporters experienced a real sense of achievement from managing previously unattained distances.

Paul Harfoot from Sprocket & Gear (part of the Coach House Works), who helped organise the event for the second year running, reflected: "Seeing so many smiling faces made it all worthwhile."

Another rider added, "What a privilege to be part of this event. Words cannot say what was in the lads' mind, but it shows in the pictures. Emotional stuff!"



All photos (c) Dee Tee Photography



## Help Yeldall residents keep warm this winter

Thank you to everyone who has helped raise in excess of £44,000 so far (target: £100,000 per year for two years) to help replenish our Good Samaritan Bursary Fund.

The Fund needs continued replenishing as we seek to help all who need our services, so your donations are very welcome.

[www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/yeldallmanor/replenish](http://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/yeldallmanor/replenish)

This summer we were faced by the fact that the heating system in the residents' annexe was old and no longer fit for purpose. Some radiators and pipes were choked with debris, so not getting hot. Others had rusted through and were leaking onto the carpet.

There was also a problem that caused water to leak continuously out of a header tank overflow. In addition, the system was inefficient by modern standards, so costing us more than it should.

Now beyond economic repair, we realised we had to replace the whole annexe heating system before the autumn, otherwise some bedrooms would not be heated anymore! A local plumbing firm gave us a good price for the work, but it is not something we had budgeted for. If you can help us towards the cost of £23,394, every contribution will be greatly appreciated by our residents as winter comes. Thank you.

[www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/yeldallmanor/heating](http://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/yeldallmanor/heating)



# Open Day goes with a splash! Gabriel's story

**One of my earliest memories is taking toys to church** and playing with them on the pews. I believed in God from a very early age but, as I entered my early teens, fear started to dominate. Fear of rejection, fear of confrontation, fear of failure and loss weighed heavily on me. Whilst I never stopped believing in God, I didn't so much stray as completely tumble from His path onto one of self-destruction, seeking to change the way I felt through self-harm and substance abuse.

**Despite how lost I became, the degree to which God saved me will never cease to amaze me.** Working for five years in Forestry and Tree Surgery as an active alcoholic, it is nothing short of a miracle that I never maimed or killed anyone. Add to this surviving a suicide attempt, a serious drink-drive incident, an accidental overdose, ending up in a river whilst drunk,

and being found well against the odds during numerous attempts to disappear, I can honestly say that God has been pursuing me for quite some time.

**Last year, whilst at rehab in South Africa,** I came to understand that, although I had given up on myself, God had not. The effect this had on me was incredible. As I began to grasp God's unconditional love for me, the burden of fear that had plagued me and kept me sick for so long began to lift. The fact I can stand here and say this to you all is a testament to that in itself.

**After leaving that rehab, the realities and struggles of life hit me hard.** I fell apart into relapse and gave up again, but God did not give up on me. Nor did my mum, who found Yeldall Manor. I was then incredibly blessed to be granted funding by the Bursary Fund to allow me to come here.

**During my time at Yeldall, my faith has grown ever stronger.** To come from feeling completely without hope to being filled with hope by God is an amazing change. I am able to hand over my worries and fears in full to Him, and to trust in His will for me, which gives me a true, and previously unimaginable, sense of freedom and security.

**I have had many prayers answered over the last few months,** the greatest of which is having contact with my two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Ezme. Despite having not seen her for three and a half months, this has gone better than I could ever have imagined.

**So I am getting baptised because I am not the sins of my past; I am a child of God.** He has saved my life through Yeldall Manor, and it feels perfect to be baptised here in this place of transformation.

**He blessed me with a mum who never gave up on me,** and a beautiful daughter whom I now have a relationship with. I have a sense of self-worth, self-belief and an inner peace like I have never known before in my life. And so my prayer for the future is to be able to pass on the peace, the hope and the love God has shown me to others. To follow His path, to be the father my daughter deserves and to use the gifts He has given me to reach my true potential and become the man He wants me to be. "In love there can be no fear, but fear is driven out by perfect love" (1 John 4:18)

**Thanks be to God, Amen.**



(c) Dee Tee Photography

# Graduated support for two years and beyond

The Yeldall Phases have recently been renamed, with the former First-Stage being divided into two parts. Each phase comprises the following elements to offer up to two years' support to all our residents.

## PHASE 1 GROUNDING 12 WEEKS

Incorporating detox for those who need it, Phase 1 enables residents to stabilise physically, mentally and emotionally. As they get to know the programme and build relationships with staff and residents, they also return to better physical health after the rigours of drug or alcohol abuse. They share their life story with their peers, and start to take ownership of their addiction and explore what lies beneath this. The weekly programme balances counselling, group work and work in the house and grounds. Christian elements are also included, but this viewpoint is not imposed - recognising freedom of choice in faith, as in other areas.

## PHASE 2 GROWTH 12 WEEKS

Phase 2 also takes place in the main house, and used to be part of the First-Stage Programme. This phase enables residents to grow in recovery skills as they become aware of their core needs, cognitive/behavioural patterns and develop an understanding of the personal drivers underpinning their addiction, along with an awareness of their own relapse triggers. This is achieved through weekly one-to-one counselling, teaching and interactive groups, as well as the immense benefit of living and working in community.

## PHASE 3 APPLICATION 18-24 WEEKS

Phase 3 residents live in semi-independent accommodation in the Lodge building on Yeldall's grounds. This gives them the opportunity to adjust to some of the pressures of independence whilst remaining abstinent in a safe and supportive environment. As well as regular key working, interactive groups and fortnightly counselling, residents undertake voluntary work with local businesses or charities and are encouraged to continue attendance at a church and recovery group of their choosing.

## PHASE 4 RE-INTEGRATION 6-12 MONTHS

The Re-integration phase provides a stepping stone to independent living, with five Yeldall recovery houses in the local community. Living with other ex-residents, men get a chance to live out their recovery whilst still receiving support from staff and peers. Aftercare is available for men on and beyond this phase, plus the option of supported voluntary employment with our Grounds Maintenance Service.



### Celebration services:

7.30pm, Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September

7.30pm, Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December

An uplifting time of worship, news and testimony followed by time to chat over tea or coffee (and biscuits/mincepies).

We also hold **prayer meetings** on the first working Monday of every month at 8pm to hear from and pray with some of our residents.

Yeldall Manor, Bear Lane, Hare Hatch, READING, Berkshire, RG10 9XR. Tel: 0118 940 4411

E-mail: [info@yeldall.org.uk](mailto:info@yeldall.org.uk) Website: [www.yeldall.org.uk](http://www.yeldall.org.uk) Find us on [facebook](#)

Yeldall Christian Centres is a registered charity no. 1000038.