



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

Charity number 1100358
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Member of Community Money Advice,
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NARTHEX
SPARKHILL

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PRESS RELEASE

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Sparkhill's Queen's Award winning charity is given £450,000 to combat poverty

Birmingham charity Narthex Sparkhill has been awarded nearly £450,000 by the National Lottery to continue running a Foodbank and help local people in crisis.

Since 2011 the Charity has been operating Sparkhill Foodbank from premises on Bard Street. This grant will allow it to move to larger premises and extend its services supporting local people in crisis.

Earlier this summer the contribution of the Charity's 100+ volunteers was recognised when it was given the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The official presentation of the Queen's Award by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant Simon Topman MBE will also be taking place in Sparkhill today.

On the announcement of the Queen's Award Mr Topman said "They are changing the culture in Sparkhill and creating a community spirit to confound those who thought that such values were lost"

Mr Topman went on to say

"Narthex has a quite exceptional group of volunteers, admirably led and all working towards a vision that goes way beyond the provision of sanctuary, food and clothes. They are highly innovative, as demonstrated by their satellite food and clothes banks at the QE Hospital and in Fire Stations (it speaks volumes that so many want to copy this initiative). They are changing the culture in Sparkhill and creating a community spirit to confound those who thought that such values were lost. After many years of assessing Queen's Awards for voluntary service, I have never found an organisation who deserve it more or whose very existence ushers in profound change for the better in an area that so badly needs it".

At the presentation the Charity will also be announcing that the Rt Revd Anne Hollinghurst, the Bishop of Aston is to become the Charity's new Patron.

END

Notes to Editors:

1. Members of the media are invited to the Presentation of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service taking place at 6.30pm on Thursday 15th September at St John's Church, St John's Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham B11 4RG

2. Further enquiries can be made through the Charity's CEO Mr Nigel Brookhouse 07725278636 or 012175311959. Email: nigelb@narthex.org.uk

3. Lord Lieutenants are the monarch's representatives in their lieutenancy. There are 98 Lord Lieutenants who cover all areas of the UK.

4. This year there were 193 winners of The Queen's Award Voluntary Service from across the UK. More information on the winners can be found at the London Gazette <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>

5. Spotlight on Bishop Anne

<http://www.cofebirmingham.com/news/2016/06/27/anne-hollinghurst-bishop-aston/>

6. Narthex Sparkhill runs the following projects from 3 centres in Sparkhill;

- Sparkhill foodbank with 2 satellite centres in Balsall Heath and Yardley Wood with a satellite due to open in Hall Green in the autumn.
- An emergency clothes and foodbank distribution point at the Queen Elizabeth hospital
- A Resource centre for Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- Support for Domestic violence victims and survivors of modern slavery in partnership with the Adavu project
- A lunch club and support network for Senior Citizens
- A weekly boys youth club
- A men's drop in
- Clothes Bank
- Carers support
- Debt Advice, job search and Advice & Guidance
- Narthex as part of the East Birmingham Collective is the lead for the Sparkbrook Aging Better Hub helping reduce isolation amongst the over 50's.

7. Narthex Sparkhill was previously awarded lottery funding in 2011 to establish and operate the foodbank project for 5 years.

8. The charity was founded in 1998 by St John's Church as an expression of its care and social outreach, Narthex became a registered charity in 2003. The administrative offices remain at St John's Church in Sparkhill.