

Reliable House

Background

This space in Park Street/Festival Street in Hatfield was a very negative space in close proximity to UP's Hatfield Campus. It was used as a dumping site, was a crime hotspot with drug dealing and prostitution taking place, and many homeless people were living there. In 2016, the CE Unit targeted the spot to turn it into a positive space.

Our positive approach in solving the problem

The idea was not to drive the homeless people out of the community, but to find a solution for them. The site was cleaned up and nine Wendy houses serving as transitional housing, a clinic, a sickbay and training centre were built. An ablution block on the site was renovated.

Who we became

The homeless people renamed the place and it is now called Reliable House. The previously homeless people also renamed themselves and choose to be referred to now as "change makers". In short, Reliable House was established upon realisation that society continues to ignore the fact that men need help. If homeless men keep on becoming a social problem and a threat to the community, then the focus should be on them. Reliable House was turned into a drug rehabilitation and training centre and almost all UP faculties are involved through their curriculum-related community engagement activities.

Our vision

To become community oriented by: reducing the harm that is caused by using drugs (nyaope) and alcohol and developing or learning new skills for these "change makers" to find work, with a focus on moral regeneration.

Our mission

Recommending free remedial action by encouraging "change makers" to change voluntarily rather than being forced to change.

Integrating these men back into society to fulfil a positive role in society.

Faculties involved and our core values

- Spiritual needs (Tuks Mission-Theology)
- Motivation and evidence-driven physical appearances and communication and consultation (social workers and psychology students – support groups)
- Health (Faculty of Health Sciences – health practitioners and students)
- Food gardens (NAS sustainable development)
- Helping (external stakeholders – soup kitchen)
- Infrastructure – TUT and EBIT civil engineering students – WIL
- Skills training – various

Community partners

- COSUP – community support structure for people using drugs
- Narcotics Anonymous (NA) – share their experience on how to manage the process of quitting drugs with a mentor
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) – share their experience on the consequences of alcohol and encourage people to quit drinking or to learn to drink responsibly
- Churches – partnership with five different churches around Hatfield providing spiritual assistance to Reliable House
- Peace force security company – linking with security guards on crime prevention around Hatfield Plaza and surrounding areas

