

Press release: Homes England backing Samaritans as its new staff charity of the year

[Samaritans](#) provides round-the-clock confidential support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide. It offers a safe place to talk about problems without fear of judgement, and meets with Homes England's aim to create a greater awareness of mental health amongst its 750-strong staff.

Sam Gale, Corporate Account Manager at Samaritans, said:

"We are delighted to have been chosen as Homes England's charity for 2019. When someone is feeling overwhelmed, it's vital that they are listened to and supported to work through difficult thoughts and feelings. With our confidential 24-hour service, available 365 days a year, we are often the only place people can turn to, especially when other services are unavailable.

"We look forward to working with Homes England in the communities where its employees are based to raise funding for our service and promote the power of listening. Together, we will save lives."

This will be the second year the government's housing agency has chosen to support a charity in this way, and follows a successful 12 months which saw an impressive £18,400 raised for [Alzheimer's Society](#). Far surpassing their original £10,000 target, staff across Homes England's ten offices took part in a variety of fundraising initiatives; including raffles, bake sales and a host of sporting challenges such as sponsored walks, runs and bicycle rides – with some members of staff taking part in the London Marathon, Three Peaks Challenge and even a sky dive. Alzheimer's awareness sessions also took place throughout the year, alongside Dementia Friends training and creating a network for staff with caring responsibilities.

Hayley Woodyatt, Senior Regional Corporate Partnerships Executive at Alzheimer's Society, said:

"Homes England's achievements over the last 12 months are a testament to their staff and colleagues. They have been innovative with their ideas and have kept people affected by dementia at the heart of everything they do. Not only has this resulted in a phenomenal £18,400 being raised for Alzheimer's Society but they have also taken great efforts to raise awareness of dementia and our work which is just as valuable.

"The money they have raised will help so many people across the UK affected by dementia. By 2021 there will be 1 million people in the UK living with the condition and it is only through the support of individuals and businesses like Homes England that we can unite and take on dementia, together."

Tom Walker, Deputy Chief Executive of Homes England and the agency's staff charity project team lead, added:

"I'm incredibly proud of what has been achieved over the last year for Alzheimer's Society and the remarkable amount of money we've raised, which will make a real difference to the lives of people living with dementia and their families.

"By embracing Dementia Friends training we've also strengthened our understanding of this terrible condition and I'm excited to see what can now be accomplished over the next 12 months for Samaritans."

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