

# 21 years ago...



More than 20 years ago the Board of Guildford YMCA was strengthened by the addition of several Christian business people who were deeply concerned for the plight of young people in the area. At that time there was little housing provision for young people in Guildford. In fact the YMCA's Midway House was home to 10 young people but the local need was much greater.

Led by Mike Thornton, the vision developed for a Christian care centre on a scale not seen locally before. Mike was a remarkable ambassador and quickly developed strong links with the Borough Council who generously lent support and advice. The members of the Board were convinced that they were responding to God's leading, and it was amazing to see how the vision became reality. When the Bridge Street site was identified it was ideal.

The vision and all the hard work became a reality with the opening of Guildford YMCA's Y Centre in September 1989. At the dedication ceremony the then Bishop of Guildford said the purpose of the venture was to help people find their individuality in the security that the Y Centre will offer, to act as a springboard to independence, to help them make new friends and seek counsel when needed.

The financial outlay was enormous, and although the Board embraced the challenge they were heartened when the Borough Council offered to meet all bills as they came in and to translate any final deficit into a mortgage, which was eventually paid off in 2005.

Guildford

YMCA