

Ms I Omideyi  
216 West Carriage House  
Royal Carriage Mews  
LONDON  
SE18 6GB

## Help turn someone's life around this Christmas



*Ian has turned his life around with the help of Thames Reach*

Dear Ms Omideyi,

I've spent most of my life battling alcohol addiction. All my family were heavy drinkers. My mum, dad and my brother Andy were all fond of a drink.

When my parents split up, my dad took Andy and me to live with him in north Wales. But we didn't have a good relationship and at the age of 13 I ran away, hitchhiking to London to live with my mother again.

But when I got there I struggled to settle. I started drinking more heavily and began experimenting with drugs.

---

**"I've just turned 50 and for the first time in my life I have hope for the future."**

---

Over the years I never managed to make a proper home for myself or keep a steady job. Eventually my life spiralled out of control and my main goal each day was to find my next drink. Then in early 2008 my mum died from complications relating to her alcohol addiction. Just months later one of my best friends passed away, again alcohol problems were the cause of his death.

Up until this point I had been able to hold down a job, but I felt so overcome with grief that I stopped working. I wasn't eating and my drinking was spiralling out of control. I developed severe problems with my heart which led to me being hospitalised twice. I don't know how I survived. I battled deep depression and even considered suicide. I was afraid to leave my flat. I had no income and the fact I was now deep in debt made me feel even worse. It got to the point that I was simply too afraid to open official looking letters and I had nearly a hundred piled high on my kitchen table.

Last year my landlord contacted Thames Reach and told them about my situation. Phil, my Thames Reach support worker, began to visit me regularly. He listened to me as I explained my problems and all that I'd been through. Phil helped me open all those letters sitting on the table and helped me to plan a way to address my debts. Most importantly, Phil offered me the support and encouragement I needed to get my life back on track.

*Continues overleaf...*

**"Thames Reach is a dynamic charity committed to transforming the lives of homeless people by giving them a second chance. I've seen first-hand the impact that their work has had on men and women who've had an unlucky start in life; with the right support they have been able to turn their lives around. Please show your generosity and make a contribution this Christmas."**

*Joanna Lumley has supported our work for many years and we are honoured to have her as Patron of our 2011 Christmas Appeal.*



In April this year, in memory of my mum's birthday, I decided to give up drinking for good. Since then I've done so much with my life. I've completed bricklaying and carpentry refresher courses at college and I hope to find work in the construction industry again. I'm getting fit again after taking up cycling, which I love.

But the activity that I've enjoyed most is gardening. I've always had a keen interest in nature and I love spending time outside. Since I quit drinking I've been managing my local communal garden. I've grown peas, broad beans, runner beans, parsnips, beetroot, potatoes, carrots, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, tomatoes and sweet corn. I love sharing the produce with my neighbours and nurturing and taking care of the vegetables as they grow is immensely satisfying. I'm taking care of myself again too and with the support and friendship of Thames Reach staff, I feel confident and happy again.

I've just turned 50 and for the first time in my life I have hope for the future.

**Please support Thames Reach and help someone else turn their life around this Christmas.**

Merry Christmas,



**Ian Ward**  
Thames Reach service user



Ms I Omidayi  
216 West Carriage House  
Royal Carriage Mews  
LONDON  
SE18 6GB

**“I will turn someone's life around this Christmas by making a donation of £5 / £10 / £25 / £50 or £\_\_\_\_\_”**

- I enclose a cheque to the value of the donation amount (*cheques payable to **Thames Reach***)
- please charge my credit/debit card to the donation amount

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Card type</b>	Maestro/MasterCard/Visa/Visa Debit/Electron or <i>other</i> (please state):		
<b>Name</b> (as on card)		<b>Issue no</b> (if applicable)	
<b>Card number</b>		<b>Start date</b>	
<b>Expiry date</b>		<b>Security code</b>	



Using Gift Aid can make your donation worth more, for every pound that you donate to us; we can claim an extra 25 pence from the Inland Revenue. To qualify, you must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year that is at least equal to the amount Thames Reach will reclaim in the tax year.

- I am eligible for Gift Aid; please Gift Aid my donation

**THANK YOU!** Please return your donation to Freepost RSKZ-XZUZ-HGTT, Thames Reach, 122-126 Backchurch Lane, London E1 1ND. Alternatively, you can make your donation online at [www.thamesreach.org.uk/help-us](http://www.thamesreach.org.uk/help-us)  
Thames Reach is an Industrial & Provident Society Register No. 24377R and is an exempt charity.