

NEWS RELEASE - For immediate use

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URBAN YOUTH CHARITY – XLP, ARE THRILLED TO WELCOME THE DUKE & DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE ON A MOMENTOUS VISIT TO THE CHARITY.

ROYAL COUPLE WILL MEET AND TALK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FROM INNER CITY LONDON ESTATE, AND HEAR THE ISSUES THAT MOST AFFECT THEM.

ROYAL COUPLE’S FINAL OFFICIAL EVENT BEFORE THE BIRTH OF THEIR SECOND CHILD

Friday March 27th 2015 will mark the first royal visit to urban youth charity XLP. For the young people involved with the many XLP projects across London’s inner city, this important day will be considered one of the biggest and most exciting events in XLP history!

During what will be the royal couple’s final official event before the birth of their second child, the Duke & Duchess will have the opportunity to watch a very special performance by young people from the XLP Arts project at Christ Church, Gypsy Hill. The royal couple will then spend time talking with the young people at XLP’s community bus project on the Hazel Grove Estate in Sydenham about the issues that most affect their daily lives.

XLP has been a leading charity, working with young people in some of the most deprived areas of London since 1998. The charity’s founder, Patrick Regan OBE won the Mayor of London Peace Award for Outstanding Contribution to Peace in the Community in 2010, and also sits on the advisory board of the Centre for Social Justice.

Many young people in these inner city communities are dealing with issues such as poverty, family breakdown, unemployment, gang life and educational failure which can have a dramatic and hugely negative effect on their futures. Many of them cannot, or do not know how to ask for the help they need. However, every year XLP helps thousands of them recognise their full potential, and a more optimistic, hope filled future through positive, consistent relationships and empowering and supporting young people, their families and communities.

For these young people to know that the royal couple is interested in their lives and wants to hear what they have to say is hugely significant, as well as incredibly inspiring for them.

“Thank God XLP came along. I started to realise that I could take charge of things...that I am the person who determines my fate, and I think that’s what XLP has done for me. They won’t do it for you, they give you the opportunity to do it for yourself”- **Cherry (XLP young person)**

There is always hope of a better future for young people. In the words of the charities founder and CEO, Patrick Regan OBE: “I refuse to believe this is a lost generation”.

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Note to Editors

In 1996, in response to a stabbing in a school playground, the school’s headmaster asked Patrick Regan, a local church based youth worker, to come into the school and work with their students and teachers to help with difficult behavioural issues. This was the beginning of XLP, a Christian charity that has an emphasis on being faith-based, but not faith-biased.

Over the past 16 years XLP has grown from working in a single school to operating in over 75 schools and communities across Southwark, Lewisham, Greenwich, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Islington and Camden. In the early days, Patrick began by hosting a lunch-time club on school premises that taught the kids more about their own heroes, and in particular how those heroes behaved. Today, on a day-to-day basis, XLP has projects working with over 1800 young people 1-2-1 and in small groups each week and engages with over 12,000 each year.

CEO Patrick Regan has travelled to over thirty countries working with and on behalf of some of the poorest communities. His passion is to see children and young people, from the most deprived and challenging backgrounds, succeed in life - helping them to avoid making wrong choices and to overcome the challenges they face - to realise their amazing potential. To do this he has engaged with politicians and gang members, victims and perpetrators, police, councils and housing associations, and most particularly with the young people themselves and their families. Patrick founded the charity, XLP that today is committed to fighting poverty, supporting education and serving hundreds of young people and their families weekly in inner London. He is also the author of three books including No Ceiling to Hope. He lives with his wife and four children in South East London.

Patrick, who won the Mayor of London Peace Award for Outstanding Contribution to Peace in the Community in 2010, is also on the advisory board of the Centre for Social Justice. In 2012 Patrick received an OBE in the Jubilee Queens Birthday honours list.