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A link to the community

Porchlight has been commissioned to deliver an innovative service for adults with mental health needs in Kent.

The Primary Care Community Link Service, which has been commissioned by Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups and Kent County Council, will work alongside GP practices across the county to support people who are experiencing social isolation and exclusion.

Support can last for up to 8 weeks and trained professionals from the charity will help to link people into sports, education, safe accommodation, visual and performing arts and volunteering opportunities.

We have successfully run a pilot scheme in Thanet since 2009, which has proven to reduce pressure on local GP surgeries. Last year that service supported 240 people.

Chris Coffey, head of community and youth services at the charity said: “Everyone who experiences mental health issues has the right to engage in mainstream activities, in ordinary settings, alongside other members of society.

“This initiative is part of a range of community services provided by Porchlight to help address issues that may appear to be separate from homelessness but without intervention could lead to individuals losing their housing.”

The contract has created 18 new roles at the charity.

Champions

Porchlight has been crowned a Private Renting Champion by Crisis, the national charity for single homeless people.

Last year our Private Rented Sector Team helped 135 homeless people find and keep private rented housing, and is supported by Crisis which runs a national advisory service for organisations that help single homeless people find and keep a private-rented home.

Leslie Morphy, chief executive of Crisis, said: “Homeless people really struggle to overcome so many hurdles when trying to find a decent place to call home. The work of organisations like Porchlight is crucial. Crisis is really pleased to acknowledge their efforts through this Champions award.”

Chris Coffey, head of youth and community services at Porchlight, said: “We are delighted to have been awarded PRS Champion status. It is a real recognition of the hard work that has gone into setting up our schemes and in particular our approach to using trained volunteer mentors to ease the transition to the private sector, ensuring people can sustain their new tenancies. We are looking forward to offering advice to other organisations that are helping vulnerable people to move forward with their lives.”

Hello from the Editor

Another six months have passed and I’m sure you will agree that summer has disappeared all too quickly.

People find themselves facing homelessness throughout the year but rough sleeping in cold weather is particularly dangerous. We will be working closely with the councils and independent winter shelters across Kent to ensure people are quickly found somewhere safe and warm. We are also continuing to focus our efforts on a range of services that prevent homelessness and stop as many people as possible from having to call the streets their home.

We are delighted to have been crowned a Private Renting Champion by Crisis for our work in helping people secure and keep private tenancies. And we are really excited to be delivering a new mental health service throughout Kent after a successful pilot in Thanet.

This issue we can also bring you the results of an independent piece of research which shows just how much some of our services save the taxpayer and the social value they add to society.

Dig deeper and you will find some great fundraising stories, from businesses going ‘Purple 4 Porchlight’ on World Homeless Day, to primary school children helping vulnerable people with their pocket money. You can also read Shaunagh’s personal story of homelessness and how, with our help, she has been able to turn her life around.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support. By the time I write to you again in the spring we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary – watch this space!

With best wishes,
Mark Parry, Public Relations Manager

The Porchlight Post is produced by the Porchlight Fundraising and Communications Team.

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The right environment is key

A new approach to helping our service users succeed in employment is proving to be a vital part of our jobs, education and training pathway.

Porchlight's Working Hostel in Canterbury provides accommodation and support for service users who have entered paid employment. The idea is to put in place extra support at a time when people may feel they have to move away – helping with the transition to working life.

Dave Webster, head of service user development, said: “This initiative is helping people with limited or no work histories to sustain employment at a time of high unemployment. These are people who have found jobs in spite of their circumstances and initially very low levels of employability, and we want to make sure they have every chance of keeping them.”

The concept has been created in response to the need for working service users to live in a suitable environment to help them maintain their employment. Normal supported accommodation projects are home to people who are at varying stages in their lives and who are still dealing with complex issues whereas living with other service users who are employed allows for peer support.

The Working Hostel accommodates 3 people at a time for up to six months. Since April, Porchlight has been able to support 89 people into paid, unpaid and voluntary work. The project is being supported by Orbit Charitable Trust, Sanctuary Grand Ideas Fund & Kent Housing Group Innovation Fund.

We will be looking for businesses to support us by funding places in the hostel.

My Streets

A unique tour business has been set up in Canterbury to give tourists a view of the city through the eyes of our service users. My Streets is the brainchild of two University of Kent students, Rachael Turner and Nikki Tulhotra, who are part of the Enactus society which aims to use the power of entrepreneurial action to transform lives.

The 90-minute tours take place every Saturday from 10.30am and take in the history of the city from Canterbury Cathedral to the castle wall. The format follows that of a normal tour with the added twist of real homelessness stories and the history of homelessness in Canterbury.

Richard Barnard, jobs, education and training manager at Porchlight, worked with the students at Enactus to make the idea a reality: “Porchlight has a firm focus on employment and education and this is an innovative way to help our service users gain a host of skills that will stand them in good stead for the future. They have been involved right from the start, from financial decisions to marketing and route creation. It is their social enterprise and hopefully something that will become an essential part of the tourist trail.”

To find out more visit www.mystreetscanterbury.co.uk or follow @MyStreets1 on Twitter

The Lost Room

After a successful funding bid to the Arts Council, Kent-based arts organisation FrancisKnight set up a unique project with Porchlight’s service users. Partnering with The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge in Canterbury they commissioned two artists to work alongside the charity to explore the relationship people have to belongings; what they represent both in terms of collecting/collections in a museum and those personal items that people carry or keep as memories.

Laura Knight, Director of FrancisKnight said, “We selected artists whose work resonates with both Porchlight and The Beaney. Nicola Flower uses textiles, embroidery and drawing to look at the everyday to which she attaches her intimate thoughts. Mark Hewitt is a writer, director and theatre maker who has experience of working with young, vulnerable people and people in recovery from addiction.”

For more information visit www.francisknight.co.uk
Putting a Figure on it

Independent research commissioned by Porchlight has shown that every £1 invested in our young persons’ services produces £5.95 of social value.

We commissioned social impact consultancy CAN Impact to evaluate one of our Canterbury-based young persons’ services using a Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology.

The consultancy spent a year carrying out research involving extensive interviews and surveys with major stakeholder groups including charity staff, service users and partner organisations.

Rohan Martyres from CAN Impact said: “Through its vital work, Porchlight’s young persons’ service delivers a range of both economic and social outcomes to all stakeholders. SROI is about value rather than money, but we used monetary terms to communicate the different outcomes and the value Porchlight created because money is literally a ‘common currency’ and a widely accepted way of conveying value.”

Mike Barrett, Porchlight Chief Executive, said: “As far as we are aware, this is one of the few times that a homelessness charity has been able to put a reasonable figure on its benefit to society and the taxpayer. It is essential for us to be able to demonstrate our value to funders at a time when services are being cut.

“We are offering much more than a roof over somebody’s head. We are working hard to reintegrate people into society and make sure they can live independently in the future. We do this by focusing on education and employment and giving young people the lifeskills they need to make a valuable contribution to our communities and achieve their aspirations. The result of all that is less pressure on local authorities, the criminal justice system, the NHS and, perhaps most importantly, putting young people back into society with a renewed outlook on life.”

We will now be using the SROI model to evaluate the rest of our services. To read the full SROI report visit www.porchlight.org.uk/publications

The Numbers

It is forecast that Porchlight’s Canterbury-based young persons’ services will require funds and social inputs valued at £726,000 in 2013/14 and this will create approximately £4,322,000 worth of social value.

- £1,900,000 of social value will accrue to the young people themselves (£12,300 per individual), who experience a range of benefits including increased likelihood of employment, better social networks and a reduction on long-term homelessness.

- £2,248,000 of social value will accrue to Local Authority Housing and Social Services (£45,000 per individual) who see a reduction in costs of housing homeless individuals and can allocate resources to support other groups in need.

- £101,000 of social value will accrue to young service users’ families due to improved relationships and savings on food, accommodation, leisure and recreation costs.

- £73,000 of social value will accrue to the NHS due to factors including improved physical health, reduced alcohol and drug misuse and improved mental and emotional health.

“...more than a roof over somebody’s head.”

Porchlight Chief Executive, Mike Barrett says that Social Return on Investment is a vital tool to demonstrate the value of Porchlight’s services. Read his blog at www.porchlight.org.uk/blogs
Why I am leaving a legacy to Porchlight

Her grandmother, Jan Wood, has included Porchlight in her will and we asked her to tell us about making the gift of a lifetime to us.

“I originally heard about Porchlight through my position at Canterbury Job Centre and by talking to a couple of customers whom they had already helped. When Jess was struggling and was estranged from her mum and step-dad, I suggested she give Porchlight a ring. I thought there was nothing to lose and yet maybe everything to gain. I was right, they gave her all the help and support she needed at a down time in her life and she has gone from strength to strength.

“Porchlight does a first-rate job in guiding and supporting the homeless who come to their doors asking for help. I know it is impossible to take in everyone and some tough and difficult decisions have to be made. That is why I want to make a legacy to this fantastic charity so that more homeless and vulnerable people can be helped. Jess has taken away with her some tough but also some very happy memories of her time with Porchlight.

Homelessness can happen to anyone, you don’t have to be an alcoholic or have a drug addiction, it could happen if you lose your job, lose your home or become estranged from your family; no-one is really immune.”

Jan Wood

If, like Jan, you have made this kind choice and you are happy to let us know, we would like to hear from you.

If you need a will or an updated will, the Co-operative Legal Services offer a convenient service over the phone, and a discount for our supporters with a simple will costing only £100 (a saving of £25). Simply call 0844 252 9965 and quote RACWILLS01.

If you have any queries about leaving a legacy, you are very welcome to contact Audrey Pie on 01227 813199 or at audreypie@porchlight.org.uk

40 Year Anniversary

From April 2014 we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary as a charity and there will be plenty of exciting fundraising activities and events for you to get involved in.

We already have lots of ideas about how you can support us... perhaps you could combine a special event such as your 40th birthday or ruby wedding anniversary with a fundraiser; maybe it’s time to give up that nasty habit for 40 days; you could even organise a roaring 1940’s party or a 40-mile bike ride with your work colleagues!

In the next issue we will bring you lots of information, ideas and resources, but in the meantime we would love to hear from you if you have any 40-themed fundraising ideas. Give us a call on 01227 813199 or email getinvolved@porchlight.org.uk to let us know what you’ll be getting up to.

Brighton Marathon

Take on a personal challenge and make a difference by joining Porchlight for the Brighton Marathon 2014 on Sunday 6th April.

Brighton Marathon is quickly becoming one of the most popular running events in the country. General entries are now closed so the only way to take part is to run on behalf of a charity – why not do it for us? You’ll receive a marathon pack full of useful training and fundraising tips plus an exclusive Porchlight running vest.

The minimum sponsorship target is £500 and there is a registration fee of £25.

Download an application form from our website www.porchlight.org.uk/brighton or call 01227 813199. The deadline for applications is 10th February 2014.
Deeson Group chooses Porchlight as Charity of the Year

We’re delighted that the Deeson Group, which has its head office in Canterbury, has selected Porchlight as its Charity of the Year. The company will be providing creative support to us and organising fundraising events.

Tim Deeson, Deeson Group’s Managing Director, said: “Porchlight provides unique services aimed at getting people back on their feet and helping themselves, breaking a cycle of dependency.

“We will be helping them with design and strategy support; we’ve already created a poster campaign and designed fundraising packs. We’ve also got a few creative ideas for raising money!”

Employees have already taken part in Picnic 4 Porchlight, which saw the team enjoying delicious home-baked cakes and pastries and raising a wonderful £200, and Purple 4 Porchlight featuring the Great Deeson Purple bake-off!

Barclays get their hands dirty!

A huge thank you to Barclays branches across Kent that supported Purple 4 Porchlight. Raffles, cake sales, book sales, and the creative use of the colour purple could be seen across 30 branches this October!

We are thrilled to be working with Barclays on a long-term basis across the county. Employees will be using their skills to deliver tailored monetary and budgeting advice to the people we support through their Money and Life-skills programme, which includes helping our young people with mock interviews and CV advice.

In addition, a team of 16 Operational Specialists from the Kent Coast Group recently took up tools and helped transform the garden at one of our shared houses in Canterbury. The team worked so hard and did a fantastic job – thank you!

End of a great year with Sainsbury’s

Sainsbury’s and Porchlight staff enjoying a reception hosted by Sainsbury’s Canterbury to celebrate the amazing £8,200 raised during our Charity of the Year partnership.

Everyone enjoyed the Taste the Difference drinks and cakes.
**Serco supports Porchlight**

Canterbury City Council’s environmental services partner Serco has selected Porchlight as one of three local charities to benefit from its new Waste Collection Guarantee Fund. The fund is part of Serco’s commitment to residents in the Canterbury District to provide a reliable waste and recycling service. If they miss a collection, residents can sign up to nominate a charity to receive the cost of the missed collection. Porchlight will receive a minimum of £5,000 a year for the next two years through the partnership.

**Could your company help to change a life?**

There are so many ways your company can get involved in helping to change the lives of vulnerable and homeless people across Kent and Croydon. We work with companies of all sizes and here are some simple ideas to show your support:

- Could you organise a Christmas fundraising event at work this year? Last year, Mylan Group in Sandwich raised over £1,000 through linking their staff Christmas party to fundraising for Porchlight.

- Winter is a tough time for people who are sleeping on the streets – maybe you could show your support by organising a sponsored Sleep Out to raise money for us? Contact us to receive your sponsored Sleep-Out step-by-step guide.

- Could your company make a donation to Porchlight instead of sending a corporate Christmas card?

- Or could you run a “last-hours” initiative encouraging employees to donate the equivalent amount of their last hour’s wages of 2013 to Porchlight?

We’d love to hear from you if you think you can help; contact us today to receive your Employee Fundraising pack on 01227 813199 or at getinvolved@porchlight.org.uk

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**Spacemaker Architects**

We are one of Spacemaker Architects’ adopted charities, where you can choose to donate your initial consultation fee of £40 to Porchlight. For more information, visit [www.spacemakerarchitects.wordpress.com](http://www.spacemakerarchitects.wordpress.com)

**Tenants for Landlords UK (T4L)**

Tenants for Landlords UK is a brand new online property agent, matching tenants to private landlords. Porchlight is their adopted charity for 2013/2014 and T4L will give 50p to Porchlight for every tenant who pays to register on their site. For more information visit [www.tfl.uk.com](http://www.tfl.uk.com)

**The Co-operative Membership Community Fund**

We are thrilled that a grant from the Co-operative Membership Community Fund will allow us to set up an employability programme across our adult accommodation projects in Ashford, Dover, Ramsgate and in our shared houses in Canterbury. Helping the people we support to take part in volunteering, training, education and employment is a key focus of our work, as we believe they are the main routes out of poverty and homelessness.

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Join the scheme, it’s really simple!

1. The easiest way is online, go to [www.canterbury.gov.uk/wcg](http://www.canterbury.gov.uk/wcg) and complete the simple online form.

2. Alternatively, call the Serco helpline on 0800 031 9091
Shaunagh, 17, has just moved into Porchlight's newest young persons' project in Sittingbourne. A relationship breakdown with her family led her to some very dark and depressing times, but now, with the support of Porchlight, she is a confident and articulate young woman who is looking forward to starting work.

"Me and my mum got to spend a lot of time with each other but my dad worked away so I only saw him every other weekend. When he got made redundant things started to go wrong at home. There were always arguments. One day, there was a violent argument about me smoking and my dad hit me. One side of my face was purple and swollen.

"The next day at school my teacher phoned child protection services. My mum lied about what had happened to protect my younger sister. One side of my face was purple and swollen.

"I went to stay with my boyfriend, missed my train home, and realised that I didn't want to go back anymore. It gave me the incentive to make the break. After what had happened with my mum and stepdad I became severely depressed. When you have depression, you have to be really careful about triggering a downward slide. I knew that moving out was the right thing to do for my health.

"I stayed with an old school friend for a while before Kent County Council referred me to Porchlight. Within a month I moved into a high support hostel in Canterbury. Initially, my depression got really bad. I wasn't eating, lost a lot of weight and started to cut myself. I couldn't contact my grandparents and my parents had moved to Scotland by this point. My mum had gone out of her way to tell everyone who ever cared about me that I was a liar. I had no one to talk to and I felt so alone.

"I see depression as a pile of books that gets higher and higher until they topple over. It took me ages to realise that I wasn't well and I knew that if I didn't sort myself out I'd end up in hospital.

"I decided to pick myself up and really engage with my keyworking sessions. I even got involved in cookery classes run by the staff. It helped me to start eating proper meals again. The staff could see that I was improving so I moved to a lower support hostel.

"I decided that enough water had passed under the bridge for me to call my mum. I thought it might help me. It didn't go down well, my mum just shouted down the phone. It set me back quite a bit. I was supposed to start a new year at college but I didn't go. It's my depression; I can struggle with time-keeping and workload and there are some days when I just can't get out of bed. The staff at Porchlight were brilliant and phoned the college to explain my situation. They understood what I was going through and didn't give up on me.

"I moved in with my grandparents and pressed charges about the assault because I was angry that my parents were denying that it had happened. It was then that my nan told me that the person I was calling my dad, wasn't. My mum had been married to someone else and fell pregnant just before meeting him. I was so upset and hurt that my mum hadn't stuck up for her own daughter.

"It's really important for me to have friends and family around. People I can trust. I had connections in Sittingbourne with my boyfriend's family and asked to move to the new project. Initially the staff were concerned about letting me go somewhere with a lower level of support but decided that having a support network would be a positive thing.

"Since moving closer to people I trust, I feel so much better. I'm eating, not cutting myself and not getting depressed all the time. It still comes up from time to time but I'm getting counselling.

"Porchlight staff are there for me whenever I need them. They keep me busy with life-skills classes and activities and if I need to get things off my chest,
they will always listen. The charity has got me to where I am. I didn’t realise that there was anyone out there who could help. I assumed I’d be on the streets.

“I’m starting a retail work experience placement soon that will hopefully lead to a proper job or apprenticeship. I’ve also built a relationship with my mum’s cousin and started to build bridges with my grandparents. I think more time needs to pass before I can make contact with my parents again. At least I have people around me who care now.”

Right: Old Johnson House in Sittingbourne supports 10 young people aged 16-25.

Please Help Us to Change More Lives

Please support us to help people like Shaunagh and the hundreds of people we work with across Kent and Croydon to get their lives back on track. Simply complete the donation form or you can donate online at www.porchlight.org.uk If you would like to set up a regular donation please contact the Fundraising Team on 01227 813199 for more information. Thank you!

£5 Could pay for a bus ticket for someone to go to college, a job interview or a GP appointment.

£10 Could pay for a birth certificate. Many people come to us with no proof of identity. They need this proof of who they are for many things such as opening a bank account in order to receive benefits, to register with a GP or to find work.

£20 Could buy a basic welcome pack (of food, toiletries and cleaning products) for someone moving into a hostel. Many people come to us with very little and this pack helps to get them started.

£40 Could provide a room and staff support to a 16 year old for a day, to help them turn their life around in one of our accommodation projects.

I will help change lives with a gift of: £

Title: __________________ First name: __________________ Surname: __________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________

Postcode: ___________________________ Tel: ___________________________

Email: ______________________________

I enclose a cheque or CAF voucher made payable to Porchlight.

Please charge my card (please circle):

Visa / MasterCard / Amex / Maestro / Delta / CAF Charitycard / Other Card

Card number: ___________________________ Security Code: _____________

Expiry Date: ___________ Start date for debit cards: ___________

Issue No. (Some Maestro cards): ___________

Today’s date: ___________ / ______ / ______ Signature: __________________

I want Porchlight to claim tax back on all donations I have made in the last 4 years, and all future donations, until I notify you otherwise. I have paid/will pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax each tax year (6 April – 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount that all charities and CASCs that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts. I understand that VAT and council tax do not qualify and that the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 donated.

I am not a UK taxpayer.

Today’s date: ___________ / ______ / ______ Signature: __________________

We will keep in touch with you and let you know how your support is helping to change lives.

Your personal data is stored in Porchlight’s databases and used for the purposes of communicating with you. We may contact you by post, telephone or email about our work, fundraising, volunteering, events, etc. We also use our supporter information for administrative purposes. You may contact us at any time and by any means if you would like to set specific contact preferences or make changes.

T: 01227 813199  E: getinvolved@porchlight.org.uk

Please return to: Porchlight, 2nd Floor Watling Chambers, 18-19 Watling Street, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 2UA

You can also donate on 01227 813 199 or online at www.porchlight.org.uk/donate

Porchlight Post | www.porchlight.org.uk | Issue 4 Autumn / Winter 2013
Purple 4 Porchlight

Once again we asked individuals, community groups, schools and businesses to stand out from the crowd and do something ‘Purple 4 Porchlight’ on World Homeless Day (10th October). We couldn’t have asked for a better response. Support from Whitefriars Shopping Centre and the Canterbury City Partnership ensured that plenty of retailers joined in.

We can’t thank everyone who got involved enough. They have not only raised awareness of homelessness but also vital funds to support our services. Here are just a few of our purple fundraisers!

The chaps from EAT in Canterbury led the way with purple balloons throughout the café.

Boots in Canterbury organised an in-store raffle offering the winner a hamper of goodies!

Some people like to go the extra mile to stand out from the crowd!

The ladies from Karen Millen in Canterbury put our collection tin front and centre.

Canterbury McDonald’s gave flyers to customers encouraging them to make a text donation.

Nancy looks puuurrrfect with a purple rinse.

Body Shop in Canterbury offered skin consultations to customers for a donation.

Bev and Kate from our fundraising team led by example to encourage people to get involved.

Freddie said he wanted to help people who’d had a ruff time of it.

Amphenol staff raised £243 for Porchlight by coming to work dressed in purple and purchasing home-baked goods from the ‘purple’ cake sale.

Derek didn’t mind making an ass of himself for a good cause.
A special thank you to...

The Canterbury District Angling Association held a fishing weekend and raised a whopping £2,530 for Porchlight. Several residents from our projects in Canterbury went along and had a wonderful day fishing and enjoying the BBQ.

Kent Business School staff, friends and family ran the White City 10K in aid of Porchlight and raised over £1,000 for us!

The Rotary Club of Thanet made a donation of £3,000 raised at their annual Boxing Gala earlier this year.

Harvest Festival in Kent

We had an excellent response to ‘Pennies 4 Porchlight’ this autumn with 35 schools and over 10,000 primary school children decorating and filling cardboard houses with coins. We are still counting the money but hope to have raised around £13,000.

This just goes to show that everybody, no matter how young, can help us to change lives.

If you would like to get your school involved visit www.porchlight.org.uk/pennies for more information.

Kent Union Charity of the Year

A year of fundraising from Union staff has resulted in an amazing total of £1,300. Kent Union will also be supporting Porchlight in the coming year by sharing best practice on employability skills and student volunteers will be coaching football training sessions for our service users.

We would like to say a huge thank you to the Union for their on-going support.

Spotlight on Our Fundraisers

A special thank you to...

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The Rotary Club of Canterbury Sunrise organised a hugely successful sponsored Sleep Out in the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral, raising over £26,000 for Catching Lives and Porchlight. Among the 53 participants were Bishop Trevor Wilmott, the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, business and community leaders and our own Chief Executive Mike Barrett.

A big thank you to the Club for the effort that went into planning and organising this fantastic event!

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If you would like to get your school involved visit www.porchlight.org.uk/pennies for more information.

(Left) Top effort from Northfleet Nursery in Gravesend.
(Right) An amazing collection from St. Mary’s Island Primary School in Medway.

Jim Gardner, CEO of Kent Union presenting a cheque to Porchlight’s community fundraising manager, Kate Lumley.
It’s just over a year since we made a commitment to recruit volunteers and since then almost 80 people have given up their spare time to change the lives of others.

Dave Webster, head of service user development at the charity said: “We made a decision at Porchlight to offer specific roles to volunteers in order to have a direct and positive impact on the lives of the people we support.

“We estimate that the time people have given has so far been worth over £150,000 to the charity. That’s an impressive figure but doesn’t tell the full story. The way we have structured our volunteering means that volunteers are helping our service users to build the life-skills necessary to enter employment and live independently. It’s hands-on volunteering that allows our volunteers to really see the difference they are making.”

Over the past year, volunteers at the charity have helped to run educational workshops, supported people to adjust in the private-rented sector as well as allowing more regular outreach sessions to take place within the rough sleeper team. Others have become a ‘buddy’, helping people who are socially isolated to improve their support networks and some volunteers have organised sporting activities.

We invited our volunteers to Whitstable Castle to thank them personally and recognise the important contribution they are making.