

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PORCHLIGHT

Porchlight was established in 1974. The organisation has established a central role as a main provider of housing, support and resettlement services for single homeless people in Kent.

The organisation has helped shape local services and works closely with service commissioners through involvement in the strategic planning process. We now provide a range of supported housing from emergency housing to second stage housing projects. We also have an outreach and resettlement service for rough sleepers and floating support for people in their own homes. We operate supported housing and resettlement services specifically for vulnerable young people and care leavers. We also have a team of staff who work with users of alcohol and drug services across Kent and Medway, to enable them to have more of a say in the way that those services are planned and delivered.

We are able to offer our service users choice and flexibility, and with improvements to the quality of our services, we are confident that we have firm foundations for the future. Constant reviews and improvements ensure we remain in touch with service users and funders requirements.

THE ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Porchlight is a registered charity, a company limited by guarantee, and is governed by our Board of Directors.

Porchlight employs over 120 staff. There is a senior management team of six, the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Development and Communications, Finance Director and Head of Human Resources. This team is based at our Central Admin Office in Watling Street, Canterbury.

THE FINANCIAL POSITION

Our annual budget is mainly made up from rental income and “Supporting People” contracts and grants as the largest single element. However, in addition, the organisation receives financial support from Canterbury City Council, the Department for Communities and Local Government (formerly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister), and charitable donations and grants including Comic Relief. The majority of our bed-spaces are managed in partnership with housing associations.

KENT OUTREACH SERVICE

The outreach and resettlement service provides access to housing and resettlement services across Kent, and advice to rough sleepers many of whom have mental health, drug and alcohol related problems. It allows some of the most vulnerable people to gain accommodation on an emergency basis and offers a follow-up resettlement service to find longer term accommodation.

The team operates through street outreach, county wide drop-ins and a freephone helpline 0800 567 7699.

ASHFORD SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

Simon Mead House/Floating Support

Simon Mead House – this provides supported accommodation to single homeless people in Ashford. There is also a 3 bedroom move on house. There is a floating support team providing move on support.

CANTERBURY SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

Adult Direct Access and Young Person's Direct Access

Our direct access hostels in Canterbury provide 16 and 9 bed-spaces respectively, offer up to 12 weeks stay and function as access point and assessment units. The service operates on a rota-basis, providing 24-hour cover, with two members of staff on either sleep-over duty or waking nights. Nine units are specifically for young vulnerable people aged 16 to 21.

New Town Street

New Town Street is specifically for 16-21 year olds. Of the shared houses properties, one is specifically for young people and two houses are dry houses for people recovering from addiction issues. There is also a floating support project providing move on support.

Craddock House

Craddock House is a 21-bedded hostel available to individuals aged between 18 and 65 years old. Residents can stay for up to 2 years on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy. The hostel is also the site for the organisation's emergency bed space (managed by the Kent Outreach Service) for particularly vulnerable rough sleepers.

Guildford Lodge

Guildford Lodge is a 21-bedded supported housing project available to individuals aged between 18 and 65 years old.

Residents can stay for up to 2 years on a non secure tenancy. It is staffed 24 hours a day and is for medium to low support needs.

Shared and Managed Houses (Move-on accommodation)

We have 7 shared houses providing low support accommodation as a move-on step for people before living independently within the community. The Shared Houses project can house 17 people at any one time.

Porchlight also acts as managing agent for 20 further properties in Canterbury which are home to 109 individuals. These properties are privately owned and Porchlight works alongside Canterbury City Council in providing this service.

The properties can be used as move on from supported accommodation, or for people who are of low support need.

Ultimately, we aim to support and resettle tenants into suitable long-term accommodation and successful independent living.

DOVER SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

Fern Court and Prospects

Fern Court – this provides supported accommodation to single homeless people in Dover. It opened up in December 2003. This project will provide 24 hour access from August/September 2006.

Prospects opened in 2005 and was named by one of the residents. The project accommodates single people aged 18 to 65 with enduring mental health issues. All residents will be engaged with the enhanced mental health team, and will be allocated a community psychiatric nurse or a social worker.

THANET SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

King Street

King Street – this small hostel opened in Ramsgate at the end of March 2004 and provides supported, short stay accommodation to single homeless men over the age of 18 with a local connection.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The community support service is a project in Thanet set up to provide practical and accessible support directly to residents of Trove Court, Kennedy House and Harbour Towers in Ramsgate and those living in the local community. These services are initially through one to one support, drop-in surgeries and resident and neighbourhood group meetings.

The aim of the project is to ensure that issues and concerns affecting the quality of life in the neighbourhoods are represented and tackled. The service aims to achieve this through advocating on residents' behalf to professional services and working directly in the community, ensuring practical support, advice and information is available.

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

Homelessness prevention support is offered to those living in their own accommodation whether temporary or permanent. It provides one to one support through allocation of a floating support worker who makes home visits to help people get their lives back on course. Floating support can be accessed in the Ashford, Canterbury, Thanet and Dover areas.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

'Supporting People' is the new funding framework for Supported Housing introduced in April 2003. Part of the requirement for receiving funding is to meet a number of quality standards. Porchlight is a recognised 'Investor in People' and we provide training and development for our staff as well as regular monthly supervision and an annual appraisal. We have also been successful in achieving Grade 'A's in the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) for housing with support, which includes tenant empowerment. We are working to continuously improve our services through the European Foundation for Quality Management 'Excellence Model'.