



NEWS RELEASE

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MURAL GIVES SOMETHING BACK

A Canterbury mural project has been completed in a joint effort by service users from charities Porchlight and Chaucer Homecare and two young men working on community arts project as part of a conditional caution for graffiti offences.

The mural, located at Craddock House, one of Porchlight's supported accommodation projects in the city, measures nearly 6 meters in length and has taken 2 months to complete.

Homeless charity Porchlight and Chaucer Homecare, which supports people with mental health problems, both run art groups for their service users producing a wide variety of pieces. Some of their art was displayed recently at the HorseBridge Art Gallery in Whitstable.

Yus Tunkara, Porchlight Strategic Area Manager for Canterbury, said, "It's great to see different organisations and initiatives coming together to produce something that benefits so many people. A lot of hard work and dedication has gone in to this project and the result is something really positive."

Craig Scott and Daniel Singer were arrested for spraying a 'Road Kill' tag on buildings and other property in Tankerton earlier this year. After admitting their guilt, they were given conditional cautions, and spent three months cleaning graffiti from public places before becoming involved in the mural project. The completion of the mural brings an end to their community work, but the caution will remain on their records.

Canterbury City Council's Community Safety Officer, Graham Simpson, said: "Reducing criminal damage is one of the priorities of the Safer Canterbury District Partnership. Using conditional cautions is an innovative way of making graffiti artists give something back to the community they have defaced. We are pleased that Craig Scott and Daniel Singer were able to use their artistic creativity for something much more worthwhile during this mural project and it is great to see it come to a successful conclusion."

For more information about Porchlight visit www.porchlight.org.uk

For more information about Chaucer Homecare visit: www.chaucerhomecare.co.uk

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Notes to the Editor:

About Porchlight

1. Porchlight is a Kent wide independent local charity that works to support single, vulnerable homeless people or those at risk of homelessness. It was established in 1974 as Canterbury Cyrenians and works throughout Kent.

2. Porchlight has accommodation based projects in Canterbury, Dover, Ashford and Ramsgate. The outreach team works with street homeless people as well as supporting former homeless people in their own homes, to prevent them returning to street life. Other services support people in their own homes who are at risk of becoming homeless.

3. In 2008-9 Porchlight helped over 1,600 vulnerable people. Porchlight projects include:

Kent Outreach: Our street outreach team work across Kent including working within prisons to help offenders who will be released from prison homeless. They operate a 24 hour free phone helpline for help and advice with housing emergencies - 0800 567 7699

Young Persons Services: This includes a direct access hostel, longer stay hostel and shared house, providing support for a number years, until each individual is ready to live independently.

Mental Health: We run a housing project in Dover specifically for people with enduring mental ill-health. We also provide support to 7 clients in another purpose built accommodation project in Margate. In addition we also have a young persons' mental health service that enables young homeless people with mental health problems to better access the health services they need.

General Accommodation: We have hostels in Canterbury, Dover, Ashford and Ramsgate. They range in the levels of support provided from high support needs with staff available 24hrs a day, to medium support with staff available on a 9-5pm basis.

Floating Support: This is a preventative service that provides support to vulnerable people in their own home who are at risk of becoming homeless. Many of these clients have been through the hostel system and are almost ready to live independently but just need a little support every now and again.

Training and Service User Involvement: We have a team that works with people accessing any of our services and helps them develop their skills and education. We provide tailored training and encourage people to get involved in the running and improvement of their project, or volunteer on a more formal level in the organisation. Porchlight is committed to involving our service users throughout all the activities of the charity. They are actively encouraged to become involved in education, employment, volunteering and service user involvement opportunities.

For more information about Porchlight visit www.porchlight.org.uk or contact Mark Parry on 01227 813196 / 07734 595308 or email markparry@porchlight.org.uk

About Chaucer Homecare Ltd

Chaucer Homecare Ltd is an independent local charity that works to support vulnerable adults primarily with mental health problems in East Kent. It was established in 1997.

Chaucer Homecare has a Community Support Service delivering services to maintain people's independence in their own homes and a Vocational Service supporting people into employment training and volunteering.

In 2008-09 Chaucer Homecare worked with over 280 people. Chaucer Homecare services and projects include:

Domiciliary, Personal Care and Social Support: We assist and support people with both long and short-term problems, who due to illness or disability, require domiciliary, personal care or social support to aid their recovery and reach their maximum potential for independent living

Mental Health Floating Support: This specialist service supports vulnerable individuals, aged 18 plus, and living in the Canterbury area to maintain their tenancy at times when their mental health problems may be affecting their ability to live independently.

Individual Placement and Support (employment services): Our service promotes social inclusion through individual placement and support. Personalised education and employment advice and guidance is provided in a supportive environment. The service is available to people who have a current mental health problem and who are actively seeking paid employment through educational opportunities and volunteer placements. We also provide ongoing support once you are in work or education for as long as you or your employer/training provider need it.

Let's Get Started: The project is about getting people to believe in themselves by introducing them to a wide range of exciting social and sporting activities that they may not have considered before, or may not have had the chance to take part in. The groups will be taking part in 2 to 3 different social or sporting activities each week.

One in 4 Drama Group: The 1 in 4 Theatre Group was started in 2007-08. The aim is to use the therapeutic value of the arts and drama in particular to improve well-being. We offer a safe and supportive environment in which people have the chance to express themselves creatively and learn dramatic skills. We also aim to raise awareness of mental health issues among the general public. The group meets every Wednesday morning in Canterbury.

Mustard Seed Choir: A community choir group where staff, carers, service users and public can come together for rehearsals and performances. The group sings a broad spectrum of music ranging from show tunes to African spirituals. The group aims to promote a sense of inclusion, self-confidence, commitment, enjoyment as well as the learning of new skills for all involved. The Choir meets every Thursday in Canterbury.

Life Coaching: Life Coaching is a practice of assisting people to determine and achieve personal goals. Life Coaching also focuses upon confidence building, enabling the person to move forward with a more positive 'can do' mindset. Our qualified life-coach offers up to 6 sessions on an

individual basis to anyone with a mental health problem wanting to make positive changes in their life.

Young Person's Group: The group is open to 18 - 35 year olds who would like to feel more confident and meet new people but don't want to do that on their own; find it difficult to start new interests or keep up with existing ones; want to try something new and who want to know more about what's going on in the local community. The group decide together where they would like to go and what they want to do. The group activities take place across East Kent and the South East.

For more information about Chaucer Homecare visit www.chaucerhomecare.co.uk or contact Jacqui Davis on 01227 451834 or email enquiries@chaucerhomecare.co.uk