



NEWS RELEASE

DATE: 10 June 2009

Up for the challenge in memory of our colleague

On Wednesday the 17th June Porchlight staff and service users across Kent will be completing challenges in memory of colleague Ness Powney who sadly passed away in August 2008, aged 51.

The Ness Powney Challenge will be an annual event aimed at benefiting homeless and vulnerable people in the county either directly or indirectly. Challenges this year include supported accommodation garden makeovers, a sponsored walk and river cleaning with advice and guidance from the Environment Agency.

Ness started work with Porchlight on the 17th June 2002, initially working in the adult and then young person's supported accommodation in Canterbury she moved to the Ashford floating support team. It was here she helped to prevent homelessness in the town by working with people in their own homes to address issues affecting their housing security. Above and beyond her main role Ness was a very active member of staff with writing staff training, studying for housing qualifications and taking responsibility as a staff rep.

Mike Barrett, Porchlight Chief Executive, said, "Ness was valued and highly respected by staff and service users alike. She was very persistent when it came to advocating for service user rights and she liked a challenge. She is greatly missed and it is hoped that the annual challenge will not only benefit our service users, as she would have wished, but also help keep her memory alive within the charity."

To find out more about the work of Porchlight visit www.porchlight.org.uk

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Notes to the Editor:

1. The various challenges taking place across the county are:

Project Name	Challenge location	Challenge
Adult Direct Access Hostel	Canterbury	Garden makeover
Head Office	Canterbury	Sponsored Walk
Ashford Supported	Ashford	Garden makeover

Accommodation		
Kent Outreach Service	Whitstable/Herne Bay	Beach clean
Young Person's Supported Accommodation	Canterbury	River clean
Service User Involvement	Canterbury	Healthy eating education
Dover Supported Accommodation	Dover	Coffee morning, BBQ and duck race
Prospects	Dover	Working with service users around sensory problems
Thanet Floating Support/Community Support/Supported Accommodation	Thanet	Staff, service users and partner agencies spending a day working at the Porchlight managed allotment in Ramsgate.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

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.

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