



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**DATE: 18 August 2009**

### **Porchlight Road to the World Cup**

After months of trials and training sessions Matt Evans, who is currently using Porchlight services, has been hand picked from 1,200 hopefuls to be the England goalkeeper for the 2009 Homeless World Cup, hosted in Milan.

After suffering from violent attacks and fear of a gang culture whilst in London Matt, now 20, moved to Porchlight supported accommodation. It was at this point that Matt's talent for football shone through after he found safety and engaged with the activity worker. Not only has he secured a spot with the national squad but also a first team place with Canterbury City Football Club.

Matt said, "Housing is obviously the main thing Porchlight have done for me as well as my key worker being there for me whenever I need them. On top of that the activity worker linking me with the Homeless World Cup and Canterbury City Football team has been the greatest part of my move away from the violence in London.

"Representing my country at the Homeless World Cup will be an amazing feeling. When I heard 1,200 people were applying I considered not entering but the activity worker encouraged me to go for it. If it wasn't for Porchlight and their encouragement I wouldn't be where I am now."

Richard Barnard, Porchlight activity worker, who supported Matt through his training and trials said, "I am very proud of Matt. It was obvious he has a great talent for football and I'm glad that has been recognised. Sport has always been an excellent catalyst to encourage vulnerable people to change their lives for the better. It gives individuals the confidence and skills to move forward positively. Playing for your country couldn't be a more positive move."

A spokesperson for the Homeless World Cup said, "Over 70% of players at the Homeless World Cup experience a significant life change; coming off drugs and alcohol, moving into homes, jobs, education, training, repairing relationships, becoming coaches or players with semi-pro teams and social entrepreneurs. Since 2003 the Homeless World Cup has engaged over 100,000 players and has triggered football programmes in over 70 nations."

The Homeless World Cup is now in its seventh year and takes place between the 6-13 September involving 48 nations.

To find out more about the work of Porchlight visit [www.porchlight.org.uk](http://www.porchlight.org.uk)

For more information and to follow the Homeless World Cup visit [www.homelessworldcup.org](http://www.homelessworldcup.org)

For more information on Canterbury City Football Club visit [www.canterburycityfc.com](http://www.canterburycityfc.com)

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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 contact Mark Parry on 01227 813196 / 07734 595308 or email [markparry@porchlight.org.uk](mailto:markparry@porchlight.org.uk)

## **About Homeless World Cup**

1. The Homeless World Cup requires players to have been:

- Homeless or vulnerably accommodated at some point after the 1st December 2008
- Or are in rehabilitation and have been homeless at some point since 1st October 2008
- Or are asylum seekers currently without positive asylum status or who were previously asylum seekers but obtained residency status after 1st December 2007

2. The Homeless World Cup is a world-class international football tournament that uses football to energise homeless people to change their own lives. It has triggered and supports grass roots football programmes in over 60 nations engaging 30,000 players who are homeless all year round. Over 70% change their lives coming off drugs and alcohol, moving into jobs, homes, education, becoming football coaches, players and social entrepreneurs.

At the 7th Homeless World Cup in Milan 6-13 September, Arena Civic, Sempione Park 48 nations will be united. The inaugural Homeless World Cup kicked off in Graz, Austria uniting 18 nations. Since then it has gained great momentum in Gothenburg, Sweden (2004), Edinburgh, Scotland (2005), Cape Town, South Africa (2006) and Copenhagen, Denmark (2007) and Melbourne (2008). It will be in Rio 2010, Paris 2011, Asia 2012 and Poznan 2013.

Founded by world-leading social entrepreneur Mel Young, the Homeless World Cup is supported by UEFA, Nike, The Vodafone Foundation, Global Ambassador Eric Cantona and international footballers Didier Drogba and Rio Ferdinand.

Log on to [www.homelessworldcup.org](http://www.homelessworldcup.org) for more information. For more information about the Homeless World Cup contact: Kat Byles, Homeless World Cup Mobile: +44 (0)7901 701 33 4 or Email: [kat@homelessworldcup.org](mailto:kat@homelessworldcup.org)

## **Manchester United Foundation**

Since 1992 Manchester United has funded and run a Football in the Community Scheme, benefiting thousands of young people throughout Trafford, Salford and Manchester.

Manchester United Foundation was set up in 2006 to celebrate 50 years of the Club playing in Europe. The Foundation uses the passion for Manchester United to benefit our communities and inspire young people through: educational programmes, promoting a greater understanding of social issues through education, and by developing unique partnerships with like-minded organisations.

The Football in the Community scheme encourages all sectors of the community to become involved –this equates to over 200,000 local people taking part in the programme in any one year. The Schools programme was re-launched this year, providing free coaching to primary, secondary and tertiary education on a local level, along with teacher training and resources to ensure the Foundation has a lasting impact on school sport. Last term alone the Foundation came into contact with over 11,000 children, working in 40 schools for a half-term duration.

Manchester United's commitment to the Homeless World Cup Team includes hosting and managing squad selection events through to training and managing the team up to and including the World Cup.

For further details please contact Rachael Pilsbury on 0161 868 8120 or email [rachael.pilsbury@mufoundation.org](mailto:rachael.pilsbury@mufoundation.org)