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**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE**  
We invest in people Standard



Certified for ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management, ISO 27001:2013 Information Security and ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management.

# Porchlight

Changing attitudes • Changing lives



## The difference we're making

### OUR ACHIEVEMENTS 2020-21



## Thank you

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Special thanks to our patrons, trustees and volunteers for giving up their time.

Thanks also to the Kent and Medway CCG, local authorities and councils, as well as our corporate ambassadors, media partners, fundraisers and donors too numerous to list.

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[Porchlight1974](#)

Porchlight is a limited company registered in England and Wales.  
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Established 1974.

# The difference we're making

WE HELPED  
**1,850**  
PEOPLE  
WHO WERE  
AT RISK OF  
LOSING  
THEIR HOME

MORE THAN  
**9,300**  
INDIVIDUALS WERE  
SUPPORTED BY  
PORCHLIGHT AND  
OUR PARTNERS

OUR LIVE WELL KENT  
SERVICE SUPPORTED  
MORE THAN  
**2,000**  
PEOPLE LIVING  
WITH A SERIOUS  
MENTAL ILLNESS

OUR STAFF MADE  
**70,000**  
PHONE  
CALLS AND  
**7,154**  
VIDEO CALLS  
TO CLIENTS  
OVER THE YEAR

OUR COMMUNITY  
MENTAL HEALTH  
SERVICE  
SUPPORTED  
MORE THAN  
**5,800**  
PEOPLE  
ACROSS KENT

OUR FREE  
HELPLINE  
RECEIVED  
**33,678**  
CALLS

WE SUPPORTED  
MORE THAN  
**619**  
PEOPLE WHO WERE  
ROUGH SLEEPING  
IN KENT

## "Women find it easier to trust me, to talk about the issues they're facing"

Rough sleeping is dangerous for everyone but homeless women face increased risks of violence and abuse. Covid-19 has posed an even more urgent threat for female rough sleepers and women at risk of homelessness.

The risk of serious harm from domestic abuse rose sharply during lockdown. Many women were trapped in unsafe homes facing a choice between homelessness or staying with their abuser.

Lockdown also ended temporary housing arrangements for many, leaving women with even fewer options for safety. Porchlight clients say they've been forced into staying with people they barely know or engaging in survival sex, just to keep a roof over their heads.

As part of an ongoing project, we employed a women's services development manager to help us design services

in a way that homeless women can feel safe. We've also employed specialist outreach workers to work with women on the streets.

We've set up a rapid rehousing fund which is being used to buy essential and discretionary items such as rent deposits, clothing, nights in B&Bs, ID, travel to support groups and counselling sessions.

Our experiences of supporting homeless women through the pandemic have informed our new three-year strategy for developing our women's services.

We're running training sessions for other organisations on best practices for working with homeless women; we've established a stakeholder's group to share learnings and champion change; and we've published a toolkit for professionals, which can be downloaded from our website.

We're hoping to build on this important work through our Safe Place appeal so that we can help more women move off the streets as quickly as possible and give them the chance to live with dignity and respect.

"A lot of women I support have fled domestic violence. They find it easier to trust me, to talk about the issues they're facing, and to think about moving forward with their lives."

*Simone, outreach worker*

## We're proud of our reputation as Kent's leading homelessness charity



We're here for people who have nowhere to go and no-one to turn to. Some are living on the streets, others need our support to prevent or resolve any issues that could put them at risk of homelessness.



### We prevent

We stop people from losing their homes and help others to live safely and independently in the community.

### We provide

We work with people on the streets, in our supported housing and in local communities. We help people with their mental health, housing, education and employment so they can get where they want to be in life.



### We challenge

We're fighting for a fairer society and we won't give up until everybody has a safe place to call home and the chance to make a positive contribution.

## "Our work has never been more needed"

It's been a year of uncertainty and upheaval. The economic impacts of the pandemic are falling most heavily on those who can bear them least; the people we support are facing even greater hardship.



The government's protection measures that were keeping the poorest and most vulnerable people afloat have come to an end. And our work supporting people who are most at risk of poverty, social exclusion, mental ill health or homelessness has never been more needed.

We've been a consistent presence throughout the pandemic – using our local knowledge to respond to the effects of the crisis in ways that really make a difference to communities across Kent.

A new strategy will guide our work through the challenging years ahead and help us tackle the inequalities that are being intensified by the pandemic.

We're focusing on four main goals. We want people to have a safe, stable and affordable place to call home. We want people experiencing poverty and inequality to get the support they need. We want people to be supported to have good mental health. And we want to make sure that Porchlight is a strong and effective organisation so we can be here for everyone who needs us, for as long as we're needed.

It's an ambitious plan and we can't do it alone. That's why we're strengthening our engagement with other organisations and partners, and making new links across local housing and healthcare systems.

We want to grow our reputation and influence as one of Kent's leading charities, forging new relationships to secure much-needed funding and resources. We'll inspire people to join our cause so that together we can build pressure for bigger change.

The effects of the pandemic will cast a long shadow into the future. But this is an opportunity we cannot miss. With investment in affordable housing, employment, mental health services and social safety nets, we can build back a fairer society that works better for everyone.

Mike Barrett, chief executive



## Rough sleeper service

Our team goes out to find people who are living on the streets. They help them into suitable accommodation and find them support for any problems they are facing.

## “People on the streets didn’t ask to be homeless” Audrey

Audrey\* became homeless when she fled a violent relationship. For six months, she lived in a tent on one of Kent’s beaches.

“Being homeless means you’re always on edge and the loneliness eats away at you until you start to lose faith in society. It does a lot of damage.”

Thankfully, things started to change when Audrey got in touch with Porchlight.

“The helpline adviser couldn’t have been kinder. And when I moved into one of Porchlight’s supported houses, it felt so strange knowing that the staff were being nice to me – not because they had to, but because they wanted to.”

We helped Audrey adjust to her new life and she slowly began to trust again. She made a new friend in our supported housing, and they became housemates when they were ready to leave Porchlight.

“We support one another and understand what each of us has been through. I spend more time with my daughter and grandson now, which is so lovely.”



## Porchlight Open Door

Porchlight Open Door helps people to connect with the services and support networks they need within their community.

Working out of local spaces, anyone can come along to access the information and skills they need to build a healthy, independent life.

We provide a range of support and activities to help meet people’s needs, whether that’s help with housing, getting new skills and finding a job, or improving their health and wellbeing. We work with other local charities and service providers to make this happen.



## Helpline

A lifeline for people in crisis, our free helpline is the only service of its kind in Kent.

We’re there for people who have nowhere to go and no one to turn to. We help people to access our own services, as well as food banks, drop-in centres, places of safety, mental health support and more.

We’re the voice on the end of the phone giving advice, support and empathy and reminding callers that someone still cares.

Call 0800 567 76 99

## The BeYou Project

The BeYou Project provides safe spaces and advice to young people in Kent who identify as LGBT+ or are questioning their sexual orientation and / or gender identity.

We also offer advice to friends, parents and carers about how best to support young people in their lives who identify as LGBT+.

We started The BeYou Project because we know that young people who come out to parents or carers when they are still living at home are at greater risk of homelessness.

By creating a culture of understanding and inclusivity where everyone feels free to be themselves, we can give more LGBT+ young people the chance of a brighter future.



Supported accommodation



Homelessness prevention



Rough sleeper service



Helpline



Porchlight Open Door



Housing First



Porchlight adolescent wellbeing service



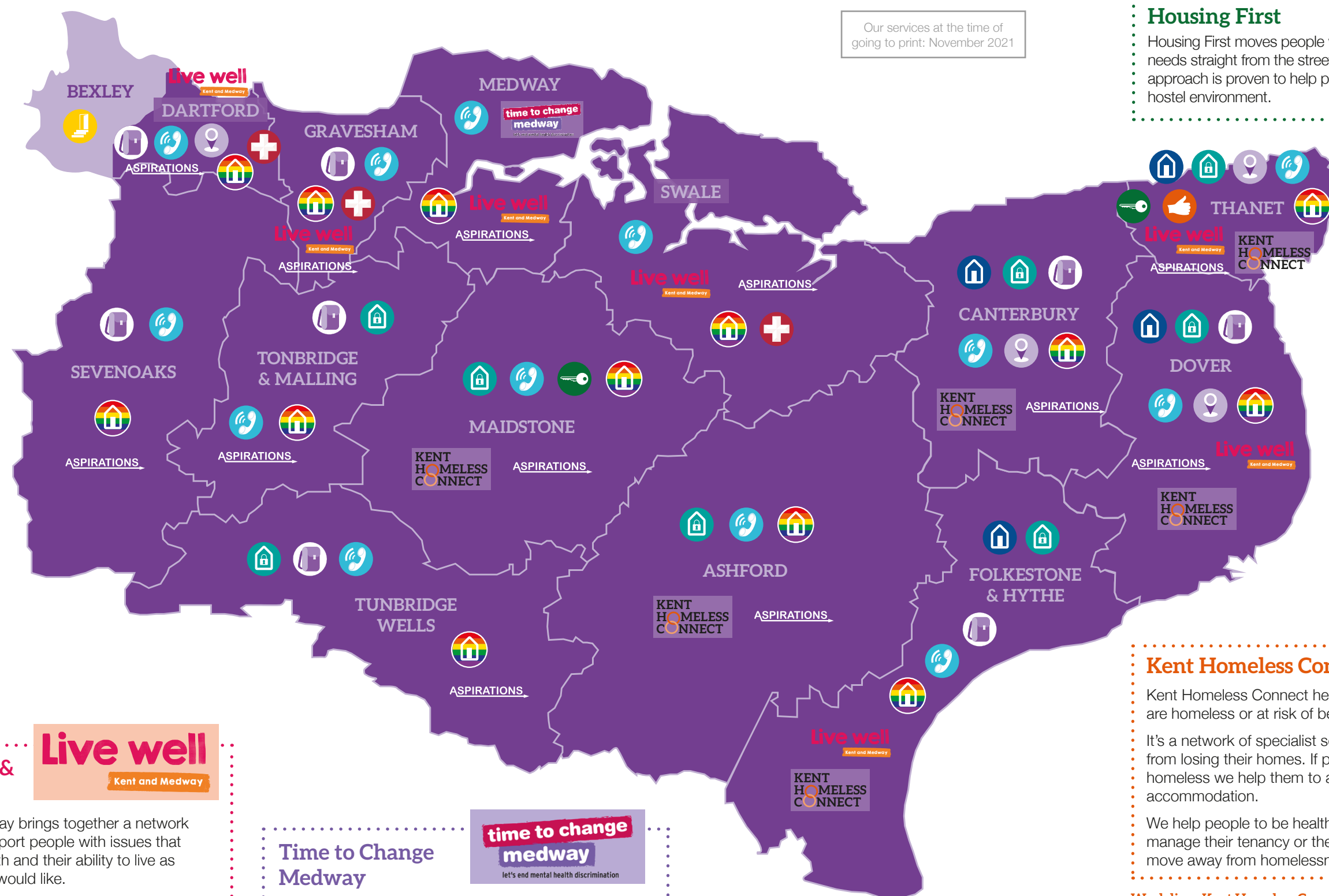
Stepping Stones



The BeYou Project



Severe mental illness service



Our services at the time of going to print: November 2021

## Housing First

Housing First moves people with very complex needs straight from the street into their own home. This approach is proven to help people who struggle to live in a hostel environment.

## Kent Homeless Connect

Kent Homeless Connect helps vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

It’s a network of specialist services that prevents people from losing their homes. If people have already become homeless we help them to access and maintain accommodation.

We help people to be healthy, find a stable home, or manage their tenancy or their finances so that they can move away from homelessness for good.

We deliver Kent Homeless Connect with our partners Riverside, on behalf of Kent County Council. In west and north Kent the service is delivered by Look Ahead.

## Supported accommodation

As part of Kent Homeless Connect we provide supported housing. Our hostels and shared houses are a safe environment where people can recover from the chaos and stress of homelessness and take steps to rebuild their lives.

Supported accommodation isn’t just about housing: we provide the emotional and practical support people need to plan for their futures. Residents have regular meetings with their support worker where they discuss their next steps, whether that’s learning new skills, getting employment advice or reconnecting with family and friends.

To end homelessness, we need more housing that people on low incomes can afford. We’re working with local investors to increase the number of Porchlight homes available.

## Homelessness prevention

We want to prevent homelessness wherever possible. As part of Kent Homeless Connect, we provide specialist support to help people maintain their home, or manage any problems that are putting them at risk of homelessness.

## Live Well Kent & Medway

Live Well Kent & Medway brings together a network of organisations to support people with issues that affect their mental health and their ability to live as independently as they would like.

For example, our community link service works alongside GP surgeries to connect people with support in their local area – and helps to reduce pressure on the NHS.

Our community housing service helps people with mental health issues to access appropriate housing, while our new mental health recovery service offers longer-term, bespoke support to help people get back on their feet.

## “This was the light I needed in a dark place” Sharona

Sharona was experiencing anxiety and agoraphobia and felt that the world was moving on without her. Now, for the first time in years, she finally feels confident enough to leave the house.

“I’d lost all hope, but I’ve never felt more supported than I have with my Live Well Kent & Medway worker. She’s really gone above and beyond to make sure I’m getting the right help and to give me encouragement.”

We invited Sharona to online social groups, anxiety workshops and activities, where she made new friends and learned new ways to manage her mental health. We also helped her access talking therapy.

“This service was the little bit of hope and light I needed in a dark place when I wanted to give up completely. There are people who are willing to help you get through a hard time in your life.”

Live Well Kent & Medway is delivered in west Kent, Ashford and Canterbury by our partners Shaw Trust.

## Time to Change Medway

Our Time to Change hub supports the community to help end negative attitudes and behaviours towards people experiencing mental health problems.

## Aspirations

Aspirations supports people whose mental health is a barrier to them gaining employment. The service operates right across Kent and Medway.

Aspirations is a project funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund.

## “Things are really looking up” Berni

Berni’s mental health suffered during lockdown. We gave her emotional support and provided a laptop so her daughter could learn from home and Berni could access online social groups.

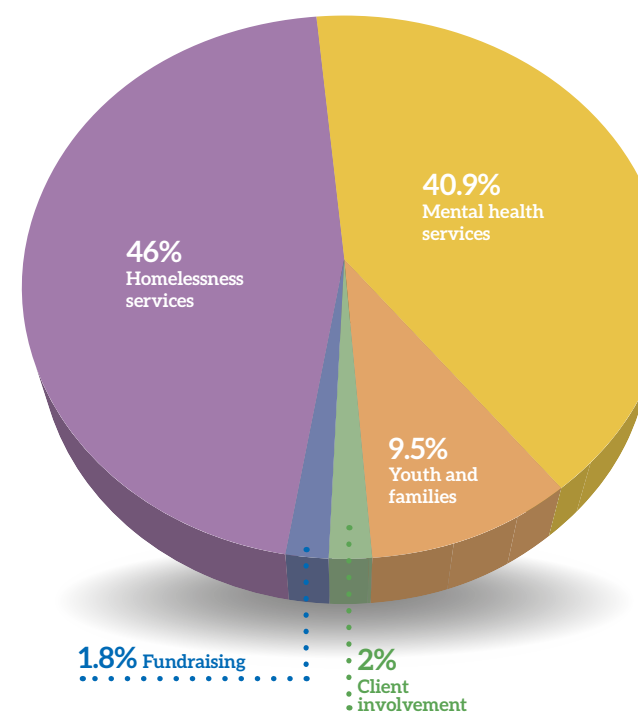
“When I first spoke to Paul from Aspirations, I was relieved because I didn’t feel judged at all. He asked me about my interests and what I wanted to do in the future.”

We helped Berni apply for a cake decorating course, and she now plans to start her own cake business when the pandemic is over.

“I am so much more confident now and things are really looking up.”

**Porchlight**  
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## Expenditure breakdown 2020-21



To find out more about how we spend our statutory and voluntary funds, visit our website to view our impact report and financial statements [porchlight.org.uk/our-publications](http://porchlight.org.uk/our-publications)

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## How your donations help

Many of our vital services rely on donations to keep going. Will you help us support some of the most vulnerable people in your community?

**£25** could pay for a basic starter pack of food and toiletries, helping someone feel cared for on their first night in one of our hostels

**£61.50** could fund a three-hour outreach session, helping people who are sleeping rough to move off the streets and start rebuilding their lives

**£112.50** could cover the cost of five personal support sessions to help someone keep their home

Donate on  
**01227 813199** or at  
[porchlight.org.uk/donate](http://porchlight.org.uk/donate)