

## KCC proposals to cut homelessness support

People who are homeless need more than a roof to help them get back on their feet. In Kent, funding cuts are removing specialist housing and support that helps people recover and rebuild their lives.

Kent County Council is proposing to decommission Kent Homeless Connect, a service delivered by Porchlight and others that works with some of the county's most marginalised and excluded people.

We know the council faces difficult decisions to balance its budget, but the need for this service is greater than ever.

That's why we're doing what we can to keep this vital safety net in place, using our expertise to develop new support that will help people stabilise their lives and break the cycle of homelessness.



## Specialist support to help most vulnerable off the streets

Helping people off the streets isn't always straightforward – some need extra support to escape homelessness.



We've employed specialist outreach workers for groups we've identified with particular needs – young people, women and those with high mental health needs.

Our workers understand what people have been through, building trust and offering them personalised support.

**"Sometimes, women on the streets have been abused or exploited. I tell them I only work with women... it makes them feel safe and they open up about those things to me" – Simone, one of our specialist outreach workers**

If you see someone rough sleeping in Kent, visit our website to let us know [porchlight.org.uk/tell-us](https://porchlight.org.uk/tell-us)

## Helping young people to manage their mental health

The mental health of young people has been significantly impacted by the pandemic. But lack of capacity in specialist services means that many children and teenagers struggle to access the support they need.

Young adults experiencing loneliness are more likely than their peers to have mental health problems, engage in behaviour that puts their physical health at risk, and use more negative strategies to cope with stress.

We have services that help young people tackle the issues they are

facing – such as feelings of isolation, anxiety or family relationship breakdowns – and give them the best possible start in life.

Find out more about some of our services for young people at [porchlight.org.uk/youngpeople](https://porchlight.org.uk/youngpeople)



## "I'm feeling happier and more confident"

Until recently, regular teenage activities like socialising would leave 'L' overwhelmed with anxiety. It was impacting every aspect of the 14-year-old's life – he wasn't attending school, was feeling isolated and felt nervous around other young people.

Things have turned around since he began working with Porchlight's adolescent wellbeing service. We taught L coping strategies that helped him understand why he felt anxious and develop ways to manage these feelings.

L is now back at school and has made lots of progress. He's also made a friend and they often visit each other's houses – something that wouldn't have been possible before.



**"I can do more things now. If someone asks me to do something, I can just say yes without panicking. I'm feeling happier and more confident." – 'L'**

## Clare's half marathon for Porchlight



It's the perfect time of year to take on a fundraising run for Porchlight.

Clare recently ran the Hackney Half Marathon for us, raising an amazing £720. She works for MKA Architects who have

chosen Porchlight as their charity of the year. Clare's running triumph is one of many ways MKA will be supporting us.

Clare says: "I can't believe I did it! It has been a real pleasure to raise money for a charity with similar values to those of MKA Architects. I can't wait to sign up for the next challenge – it will be a team event this time."

Are you looking to take on a challenge and fundraise for Porchlight? Visit [porchlight.org.uk/events](https://porchlight.org.uk/events)

## Join team Porchlight

### Royal Parks Half Marathon

**Sunday 9 October, 2022 – London**

Join team Porchlight for one of the most beautiful half marathons in the UK – and help change the lives of homeless and vulnerable people in Kent.

Sign up for your place at [porchlight.org.uk/royalparks](https://porchlight.org.uk/royalparks)

Registration deadline:  
**15 July 2022**

Registration fee **£25**  
Sponsorship target **£300**

Free running vest for all Porchlight runners!



# Porchlight



## THE PORCHLIGHT POST

PORCHLIGHT.ORG.UK | ISSUE 18 | 2022



**Last year, your support helped more than 8,300 people across Kent.**

**Now, more people than ever before need our help.**

**Thanks to your continued support, we can be there for them.**

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The Porchlight Post is produced by the Porchlight communications team.  
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## New scheme supports homeless hospital patients

When someone who is homeless is discharged from hospital they often return to the streets, where the cycle of poor health continues.

We're part of a pilot scheme at the QEQM hospital in Margate which aims to prevent this by combining the expertise of Porchlight, the charity Pathway and the NHS.

It ensures patients who are homeless or at risk of becoming so have access to support for housing, mental health, drug or alcohol problems and debt once they leave hospital.

The scheme is being piloted until the autumn. If successful, we hope to

make it a permanent service at QEQM and roll it out to other Kent hospitals.



## Building support networks in the community



Strong relationships and support networks make a big difference to people's health and wellbeing.

The aim is to help people connect with the services and support networks they need within their local community.

To find out more about the service, visit [porchlight.org.uk/pod](https://porchlight.org.uk/pod)

Our Porchlight Open Door service, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, runs meet-ups where people can socialise, learn new skills and get advice for issues they are facing – whether that's housing, debt or challenges gaining employment.

The meet-ups also offer activities ranging from fitness sessions and cookery classes to art workshops and guest talks.



## The clients helping to shape our work

Input from the people who use our services makes us better at what we do. Our involvement service gives Porchlight clients a meaningful say in how the charity operates.

Bob is a former client who now volunteers with our involvement team in an administrative role. He finds opportunities for

people we're currently supporting to have their voices heard.

"They have life experience to share," he explains.

When Bob was a Porchlight client, he sat on job interview panels and took part in steering groups.

He's passionate about giving others the same opportunity: "I really enjoy seeing people after they've taken part in our involvement opportunities. They're always happy."

Learn how you can volunteer with us at [porchlight.org.uk/volunteer-with-us](https://porchlight.org.uk/volunteer-with-us)



## Look out for our LGBTQ+ team at Pride

If you're attending a Pride event in Kent this summer, keep an eye out for the team from the BeYou Project.

It's our service for LGBTQ+ young people. We provide advice and safe spaces where they can be themselves, find a sense of community and get support to help them overcome any challenges.

Our friendly BeYou team will have a stall at Pride events across the county, so please do come and say 'hi'.

You can find out more about the service and the support we offer at [thebeyouproject.co.uk](https://thebeyouproject.co.uk)



## Michael's legacy of kindness

To leave behind a legacy of helping others, some people kindly include a gift to Porchlight in their will.

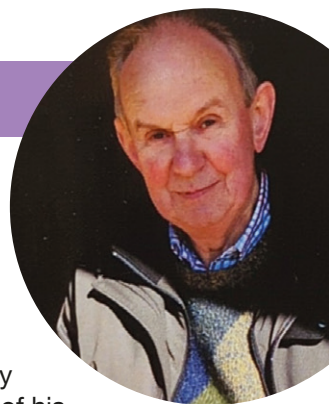
Michael Head was someone who very generously did this. He was a businessman who was committed to helping others. Michael was involved in many projects that benefited the community and began supporting Porchlight a few years ago.

Upset by the number of people who had nowhere to live, he decided to help as much as he could. He purchased a property so Porchlight could house more vulnerable people but he wanted to do more.

By leaving a gift in his will, Michael has left a legacy of meaningful and long-lasting change to people's lives. Michael's family are extremely proud of his decision and we're so grateful for everything he's done for Porchlight.

If you are considering leaving a gift in your will to Porchlight, we would be happy to talk about this with you.

Visit [porchlight.org.uk/legacy](https://porchlight.org.uk/legacy) to find out more.



## The local businesses supporting our cause

Brilliant local businesses raised more than £110,000 for Porchlight last year.

Some took on fundraising challenges, others made donations or chose us as

their charity of the year.

We'd like to thank every business that showed its community spirit by supporting our work.

Could your business help us make a difference? [porchlight.org.uk/companies](https://porchlight.org.uk/companies)

## Spotlight on: Millwood Designer Homes

We're excited to be partnering with local homebuilder Millwood Designer Homes, who has chosen Porchlight as its charity of the year.

As well as employees taking on challenge events and office fundraising, the company has committed to make a

donation to Porchlight for every successful house completion over the course of the year.



## How the cost of living crisis is affecting Kent

The cost of living crisis is intensifying and Kent residents are among the worst affected:

- rental costs are higher than in many other parts of England but wages remain low
- rising energy bills are causing people in the poorest households to skip meals and go into debt

- in many areas, housing benefits no longer cover cheaper one-bedroom rental properties and single rooms in shared houses
- people struggling to pay their bills are being evicted from their homes at levels we haven't seen in several years.

## "Before I met Porchlight I was in debt with no way out"

David is regularly forced to skip meals and leave his electricity and heating off.

"It's something I've got used to but I'm not proud of it."

David is searching for jobs after losing his a few years ago. He makes big sacrifices, prioritising the cost of running his computer – allowing him to keep looking for work – over the cost of eating.

Despite this, he's fallen behind on energy bill payments. He also struggles with his mental health.

Our community mental health team is helping David. We spoke to the electricity, gas and water companies on his behalf and have arranged repayment plans for his debts. We've also been helping him to improve his mental health.

"Before I met Porchlight, I was in debt with no way out. I was depressed and not talking to

anyone. Now, I'm being brought back to the person I used to be."

If you, or someone you know, feels trapped by debt as David did, visit our website to find out how we can help [porchlight.org.uk/money](https://porchlight.org.uk/money)

