

Kent Housing Group

*‘The Voice of Housing in Kent’*

**KENT HOUSING GROUP HOMELESSNESS EVENT**

**17TH JULY 2019, ASHFORD**

**Programme**

**1.45pm Welcome**

 Jo Ellis, Chair of Kent Housing Group

 Marie Gerald, Kent Housing Options Group Chair

**1.55pm Housing First England**

 Joanne Prestidge, Homeless Link

**2.25pm Housing First, Threshold Project**

 Anita Birchall, Threshold

**2.50pm Ending Homelessness across Britain**

 Trish Connolly, Crisis

**3.15pm Kent Perspective**

**3.35pm Questions for the Panel**

**3.50pm Closing Remarks**

**Speaker Biographies**

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for organisations across England working on the frontline of homelessness and supported housing. With over 700 members they support organisations to improve services for vulnerable people with housing, health and social care needs.

**Jo Prestidge**

Jo is a senior project manager in the Innovation and Good Practice team. Since 2016 she has led the national Housing First England project, which provides support and advice to those wishing to develop and deliver high fidelity services. The project also undertakes research and policy activity to ensure that Housing First can be viable for all of those that need it in England. Prior to joining Homeless Link Jo worked for several years in frontline services, including an innovative outreach model for people entrenched in rough sleeping.

[**www.hfe.homeless.org.uk**](http://www.hfe.homeless.org.uk) **@joanneprestidge @hf\_england**

Anita trained as a Registered Mental Nurse specialising in the rehabilitation of long stay patients who were preparing to re-settle back into communities following the closure of hundreds of hospital beds. The experience of working with people through such a difficult transition highlighted the links between a stable and secure home and mental health and wellbeing, eventually prompting a career move to homelessness services.

**Anita Birchall**

For the last four years Anita has worked for the homelessness charity, Threshold, developing and delivering specialist services which improve outcomes for homeless people. Anita also set up the first Housing First service for women offenders in 2015, and Threshold now deliver 60 Housing First places across three local authority areas in Greater Manchester.

[**http://thp.org.uk/**](http://thp.org.uk/) **@threshold76**



**Trish Connolly**

Trish Connolly is the Best Practice Development Manager at Crisis and currently supports 5 local authorities to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act in the spirit it was intended.

Trish has a background in homelessness and domestic abuse service design, implementation and service system reform within an Australian context where she had various roles across different sectors including the NSW State Government, non-government/frontline service providers and consultancies.

[**https://www.crisis.org.uk/**](https://www.crisis.org.uk/) **@crisis\_uk**