

7 November 2006

HIGH SHERIFF OF EAST SUSSEX AND HASTINGS MP VISIT TOMORROW'S PEOPLE

Amanda Hamblin, High Sheriff of East Sussex and Michael Foster, MP for Hastings and Rye, visited employment charity Tomorrow's People in Hastings, today (Tuesday 7 November 2006)

They met Tomorrow's People Chief Executive, Debbie Scott and Charles Sheldon, Regional Operations Manager for the South East, who explained the role of the charity, which has had a presence in Hastings for 22 years.

Formed in 1984, the charity opened its very first office and headquarters in Hastings. The Hastings operation is highly successful, to date helping in excess of 20,000 people. Tomorrow's People has since expanded across the UK, including operations in Brighton and Eastbourne. The charity currently has fifteen operation centres in major cities and hundreds of outreach centres helping people into work.

During the visit Mrs Hamblin and Mr Foster dropped in at one of Tomorrow's People's outreach projects helping the long-term unemployed get back to work at East Hastings Children's Centre, Chiltern Drive, Hastings.

Tomorrow's People supports job seekers within the heart of their communities by providing 'outreaches' at libraries and community centres like East Hastings Children's Centre. By targeting premises that people are likely to visit already, job seekers are made aware of what Tomorrow's People can do to help. These outreaches tend to be in areas of Hastings with high levels of unemployment and related disadvantages.

At the outreach they saw first hand the work of the charity when they met Tomorrow's People Employment Adviser, Amy Wallwork who helps job seekers in their pursuit to find employment.

The charity provides unemployed people in Hastings with free one-to-one confidential services, including basic skills assessment to explore options and training needs, CV writing advice, intense job search, help with application forms, confidence building, interview techniques, work placement, and volunteer opportunities.

Once a client has successfully found a job the support does not end there. Tomorrow's People advisers remain in contact with their clients and their new employers for as long as required, to ensure a smooth transition to full employment.

Tomorrow's People also provides a specialist Black and Ethnic Minority programme, which it runs across East Sussex, specifically targeting minority ethnic groups who are eligible to work in the UK but who face many barriers to finding, and keeping, a job.

The Tomorrow's People advisers help clients every step of the way along the path way to employment, through one-to-one support ranging from helping with language difficulties, filling out application forms, to opening a bank account for the first time.



Debbie Scott, Chief Executive of Tomorrow's People, said: "We are delighted to welcome the High Sheriff of East Sussex and the MP for Hastings and Rye to Tomorrow's People in Hastings and to share our 22 years of experience in helping people find employment.

"They were able to see first-hand the work we do in helping anyone who is struggling, to find a job, and more importantly, to keep one. Tomorrow's People is particularly successful at targeting people with significant barriers to employment, and we do this by being present in the heart of their communities, like the outreach they visited today.

The visit finished at the Tomorrow's People Hastings operation centre in Cambridge Road, where Head of Project, Rosemary Bryant gave an overview of the centre and introduced staff involved in the delivery of support services for the unemployed.

Michael Foster, who is a member of the Select Committee on Work and Pensions said: "I'm delighted to see first hand this project which is designed to help unemployed people in my constituency get back into work. Projects like this are essential in giving much needed help to those excluded from society by unemployment and giving them customised support. Work is not only often the best way out of poverty and exclusion but can also help with a range of health disadvantages too."

Amanda Hamblin said: "I have been most impressed by the quality and quantity of resources being put into improving the lives of vulnerable people in East Sussex. Tomorrow's People is a successful and invaluable initiative to help those who most need it to develop the skills needed for successful employment and guide them into work."

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Notes to Editors:

Tomorrow's People is a national charity that has helped change the lives of over 400,000 people across the UK who had been resigned to long-term unemployment and welfare dependency, since it was established in 1984. It engages with the people who are the hardest to reach by giving them one to one support in their own community, helping them find the right job and to keep it long term. On average, 76% of people helped by Tomorrow's People are still in employment 12 months on.

Tomorrow's People specialises in one-to-one support for unemployed clients who face significant barriers to work such as welfare dependence including incapacity benefits; childcare issues, debt problems, health barriers to work, a history of offending, low basic skills, drug/alcohol abuse and homelessness.

Its head office is based in Hastings, and it runs programmes helping the long-term unemployed back to work across East Sussex in Hastings, Bexhill, Brighton and Eastbourne. It does this through interview skills training, confidence building, welfare advice, help with CVs and by providing work placements.