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PRESS RELEASE: Rough sleeping charities call for the public to become Streetlink Champions

Over a year has passed since the launch of Streetlink in Wales. Streetlink allows the public to raise attention to people sleeping rough. Over 795 referrals have been received since the launch.

Rough Sleepers Cymru, a coalition of homelessness charities, is celebrating the success of the initiative and calls on people to sign up as Streetlink Champions.

Antony Kendall, Chair of Rough Sleepers Cymru, and an employee of homelessness charity the Wallich said, “Streetlink helps people make a real difference to people. Often we can feel helpless seeing the increase in rough sleeping. By contacting Streetlink, the public know that individuals are being noticed, and can be confident services will help them.”

Sharon Lee from Housing Justice Cymru added, “What we need now is greater awareness across Wales. There are areas with very low referrals, where we know rough sleeping is higher. For example, Wrexham has only 24 referrals, but estimated rough sleepers of 61. This has to change.”

To become a Streetlink Champion, people are urged to visit www.streetlink.org.uk, and sign up as a Champion. Once signed up, people can be sent posters and information about the service.

“The best way of ending rough sleeping is for us to notice it. We need to ensure that we don’t just walk past. Streetlink is a start. But more people need to know about it. We need the public to get involved, not to walk past,” said Lesley Phoenix, Vice-Chair of Rough Sleepers Cymru, and an employee of homelessness charity Adref.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors

1. Rough Sleepers Cymru is a coalition of organisations Chaired by providers of services, and includes the Wallich, Adref, Tai Pawb, Shelter Cymru, Housing Justice Cymru, and Cymorth Cymru. It aims to mobilise resources and information to fight rough sleeping across Wales.
2. Streetlink is a system through which the public can alert people to incidences of rough sleeping, helping ensure support is mobilised.
3. Figures on Streetlink referrals are correct as of 19/05/2017.
4. Figures on estimated rough sleepers are drawn from Welsh Government Rough Sleeper Count 2016: <http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2017/170201-national-rough-sleeper-count-november-2016-experimental-statistics-en.pdf>
5. Media enquiries should be made to



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