



CROYDON

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

NEWSLETTER

April / May 2007

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Hold the front page! A warm welcome to a new colleague

We are pleased to inform you that the vacant Administrative Assistant post has now been filled. Ernest Abonche will start work on Monday 30th April. Ernest will be in contact with many of you over the coming weeks as part of his induction process.

Return Dates

A reminder that the 4th Quarter performance returns are now overdue

Returns should be emailed to hsg-supportingpeople@croydon.gov.uk
(Not to Dhana Bala)

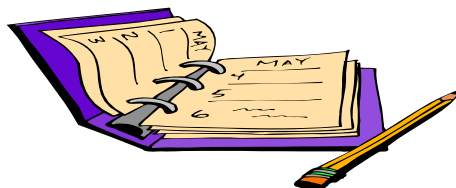


1st Quarter 07/08 returns are due on 13th July

Dates for your diary

Ernest will be in contact in April with a date for the next Providers' forum.

There will be Procurement & Outcomes event at the Braithwaite Hall on 24th May 2007 – invitation to follow soon.



Mental Health Law News

There are 2 significant developments in mental health legislation evolving:

Mental Capacity Act 2005

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 came into force 1st April 2007. The Act will support and empower people who are unable to make certain key decisions about their lives. Please follow the links below for more details:

<http://www.dca.gov.uk/menincap/mca-act-easyread.pdf>

<http://www.dca.gov.uk/legal-policy/mental-capacity/mca-summary.pdf>

Mental Health Bill 2006

The Government give 3 main reasons for an amendment to the Mental Health Act 1983:

- 'Help to ensure that people with serious mental disorders can be required, where necessary, to receive the treatment they need to protect them and the public from harm'
- 'Bring mental health legislation into line with modern service provision'
- 'Strengthen patient safeguards and tackle human rights incompatibilities'

One aspect of the bill that has caused some concern from mental health charities is in regard to compulsory community treatment. Simeon Brody posted the following on Community Care's web-site on 27/2/07

'Peers inflicted further defeats on the government's Mental Health Bill yesterday by voting to ensure compulsory community treatment is only used on people who would otherwise be in and out of hospital.

The House of Lords voted by 173 to 140 to ensure community treatment orders, which would previously have applied to anyone who had been sectioned, could only apply to "revolving door" patients.'

Please follow the link below for further details:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/14/04/99/04140499.pdf>

The Supporting People section will continue to provide updates on progress and implementation of both the Act and the Bill.

Focus on Homelessness

HOUNDED HOMELESS DOG OWNERS OFFERED PEDIGREE SOLUTION

The Supporting People section has received an information booklet from Dogs Trust – an organisation that has been working since 1994 with dog owners who are homeless or in housing crisis. Dogs Trust state “it’s a sad fact that most hostels, shelters and day centres in the UK still do not accept homeless clients with dogs. This outdated policy means that many people are being denied access to the shelter and support they so desperately need, simply because they have a dog.”

The booklet gives useful information, including a guide to developing a policy on how a service/scheme could successfully support service users who own dogs.



Please follow the link for further details:

http://www.dogstrust.org.uk/press_office/pressreleases/2006/homelessnesswinter2006.htm

“What is Homelessness?”

At the end of last year, November 2006, London Metropolitan University and Centrepoint, the youth homelessness charity launched a summary of the research report ‘What is homelessness’. The full detailed research report was published in March. The report is the culmination of partnership working between Centrepoint and the London Metropolitan University and was funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

The aim of the study was to consider methods of early intervention in the lives of young people that could help prevent homelessness in the future. The report which used a variety of research methods including group and individual interviews concluded that much more information at a younger age was needed as well as long term funding. Key recommendations from the report include:

To aid prevention of homelessness

- Practical information on leaving home should be given in the top year of primary school
- non-stigmatising local services for parents
- expanding school anti-bullying programmes to non-stigmatising training in mediation and communication skills
- a link to websites that advise on problems at home or leaving home that picks up the words/terms that young people would enter into search engines

To improve communication

- Funding should be made available to work with runaways in London from central London funds
- Funding should be made available for mobile phone contact for runaways

One of the aims of the research was to understand the reasons behind the young people running away: this varied, for some young people they needed a break, others wanted to initiate a change in their circumstance and others were escaping abusive situations. As a result services for young runaways must identify why the person has run away and respond to meet these different needs. To aid services in this work the report includes a model of the purposes of running away as described by young people (respite, change, and escape), appropriate intervention strategies and likely outcomes.

Overall, the research indicates that early intervention strategies are best delivered by local agencies. Young people and parents both wanted someone who could act as a 'trusted adult' who they know and who could be alongside them to support them during their difficult times.

Dr Joan Smith, Director of the Centre for Housing and Community Research, Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University said:

"The report explores why young people leave home early, runaway or stay away from home with friends and relatives. It also tries to understand how such experiences can be avoided. Government policy has introduced a series of measures recently to tackle the phenomena of homelessness and running away. However, despite this activity this research project demonstrates that long-term prevention of homelessness is most possible through early intervention strategies. For young people the best type of services is those that engage with them before they leave home, when they are first excluded at school or first running away."

Reviews Update

Floating Support

The review has now been completed and recommendations made by the SP section have been agreed by the Commissioning Body. Letters detailing the recommendations are being sent out to providers, service users and other interested parties this week.

Older People

This review has begun and initially a pilot scheme is being discussed on how a small section of the Older People community may be helped by a floating support scheme.

Mental Health

A review of mental health services is starting this month. Letters have been sent out to providers of mental health services detailing the review process. The review will have a strategic focus, although those providers who have yet to be reviewed on the 6 core objectives of the Quality Assessment Framework will undergo a full quality review

SP Client Record Data submission – new requirements from April 2007

A Special Announcement from the CLG:

Electronic Submission

CLG has announced that Client Record submissions will need to be completed electronically from the beginning of April 2007. This move will bring Client Records in line with other data collection being performed by the Government and will hopefully allow for a faster, more efficient and less error prone means of reporting important data.

We currently offer three methods of electronic submission. SP Digital, a Microsoft Access based program that can be installed on PCs and networks of submitting organisations, CROSS, a web based online submission system and SPOD, which is a specification to allow housing management systems to extract data which can be sent directly to us. SP Digital and CROSS are discussed in more detail in the PDF files linked below. Please take some time to look over these before deciding which method is most suitable for your organisation. If you have any questions about using the SPOD specification to extract data from your existing housing management system, please contact Neil Albrock on 01334 461766, or send an email to nma1@st-andrews.ac.uk.

If you decide to use our online submission system, you can register your interest on this web page: [CROSS Signup](#) which will allow us to set you up with a username and password to access the system.

If you require any further information, or just want to talk over the options, please contact the SP Helpdesk on 01334 461765, or send an email to sphelp@st-andrews.ac.uk.

[Official CLG Announcement Letter](#)

[SP Digital Information Leaflet.](#)

[CROSS Information Leaflet.](#)

Outcomes

A new outcomes framework for Supporting People has been developed by CLG in partnership with a working group, which had representatives from a number of Administering Authorities and Providers. Providers will be responsible for electronically submitting this information to the Centre for Housing Research at St. Andrews University. The Supporting People Section will be organising an event on 24th May to fully explain this and answer any questions. For further details please follow this link on the SPKweb <http://www.spkweb.org.uk/search/channels/www.spkweb.org.uk/subjects/outcomes/backgroundtospoutcomesframeworkdevelopmentfeb07.doc>

CROYDON BRING HOME THE BEACON



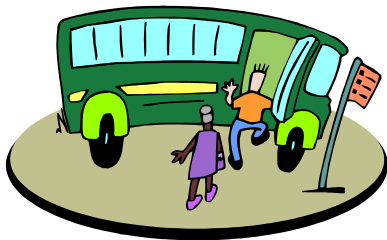
Croydon has been awarded prestigious Beacon status for the third year running, this time for 'Increasing Voluntary and Community Sector Service Delivery'. Many sections within Housing will enjoy a positive and productive relationship with voluntary sector organisations.

Beacon status is regarded as the highest accolade a local authority can earn from central government. In 2005, we were awarded Beacon Status for 'Getting Closer to Communities' and in 2006 for 'Improving Housing Services by Involving Tenants'.

Providers' corner

Addiscombe Catholic Housing Association has asked that we publish the following request:

'A very small local housing Association is looking for a person(s) with some experience of working with the elderly, tenancy law and housing management to join their committee. The association is run mostly by volunteers. The Committee meets 4 times a year. If you have experience in one of the above areas and would be interested in volunteering some of your time please contact Janet Thomas on 020 8654 9792 for further details.'



'POP STOP' PRESS!

In response to a request by older people & with a grant from the Dept. of Health, the council has launched a mobile information & advice service. The bus will carry a range of information on local statutory & voluntary sector services. For further details and info on where people can 'catch' the bus see:

<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/services/forolderpeople/594645>

Poetry Please!

ERoSH (Essential Role of Sheltered Housing) celebrates happiness through poetry

Launched to celebrate UNESCO's World Poetry Day on March 21 2007, ERoSH's 2007 competition is for happy people and budding poets living in sheltered and retirement housing across the UK.

The title of the competition is **'I lead a sheltered life'** – through which ERoSH hope to affirm that sheltered and retirement housing tenants have led and continue to lead very active lives that they enjoy to the full and one popular pastime is writing poetry.

If you write poetry or fancy penning some positive prose - limericks, funny poems, upbeat verses or ones that recall good times and happy memories - then, get writing and send them to ERoSH. You can write a poem about anything that makes you happy:

- Why you love living in sheltered housing, your life today, childhood memories, your greatest love, your favourite hobby, your family, your friends, what makes you smile or laugh, or what matters most to you.
- You can write in any format that you wish: ballads, ditties, epics, limericks, lyrics or odes.
- You can use any style you wish: achieve affect with alliteration or conclude with couplets. Revel in rhyme or forget the beat with blank verse. Hexameter, pentameter, metaphors and meters - the choice is yours.

The list above is by no means prescriptive, but your chosen subject should be about things or people that make you happy. All short-listed entrants will be notified in September 2007 and will receive a commemorative certificate. Plus, there will be one fantastic prize of £100 for the overall winning poet.

http://www.shelteredhousing.org/folder:news/1174494736_document_1_poetry_competition_entry_form.pdf



Croydon Supporting People Section

Staff Names & Telephone Numbers

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Nigel Vangrove	SP IT and Finance Officer Ext 63817
Ernest Abonche	SP Administration Assistant Ext 63834
Deborah Burrows	Team Leader SP Contracts & Review Ext 62198
Greg Davies	SP Contracts & Review Officer Ext 61481
Warren Gilbank	SP Contracts & Review Officer Ext 63124
Jane Ward	SP Contracts & Review Officer Ext 63711 (Mon, Tues, Wed)

Please note we have moved to the 14th Floor north side



This newsletter is designed to keep you informed and updated with information relating to Supporting People.

It is issued every two months and circulated to Providers, the Supporting People Commissioning Body, Steering group, stakeholders and all those with an interest in the work of the SP section.

We ask that all Providers share the newsletter with service users.



Telephone numbers

General Housing Department Number
020 8726 6100 ☎

Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit
Enquiries Telephone
☎ 020 8726 7000

Fairer Charging Helpline- 020 8760 5676

Adult Protection Hotline- 020 8760 5697

