

SP News in Gwent

Supporting People plans, commissions and monitors housing-related support services which maintain and develop an individual's capacity to live independently

Issue 21 – April 2016



Supporting Independence in Gwent
Cefnogi Annibyniaeth yng Ngwent



Gwent Supporting People teams win the Commissioning Excellence Award at the Promoting Independence Awards (PIAS) 2015.

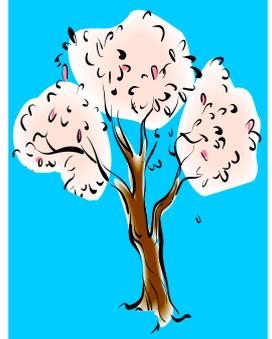
This award recognises local authorities that have forged positive relationships with service providers, and who have adopted a way of working that gives providers the freedom to be creative and innovative in the way that they deliver services. Supporting testimonials were submitted from

support providers and quotes from these were read out at the event. The judges were looking in particular for evidence of partnership approaches, transparency, good relationships and a strategic approach.

This is the second award won by the Gwent Supporting People teams having previously won the award for *Cross Border Commissioning at the PIAs in 2008*.

Gwent Supporting People is held up across Wales as an example of best practice for the well developed inclusive and strategic planning processes that are in place for commissioning services across Gwent. The ongoing willingness of both the Supporting People teams and Support Providers in Gwent to work together, to be flexible and innovative is ensuring that effective services continue to be delivered for those that need support.

A huge thank you to support providers that submitted supporting testimonials and well done to the teams!



Contents

-
- Pg 1. SP News
-
- Pg 2. Gwent RCC Updates
-
- Pg 3 — 5. News & Updates
-
- Pg 6. Focus on Rough Sleeping
-
- Pg 7. News & Updates
-
- Pg 8. Service User Postcards
-

Follow this link to view the latest research and evaluation publications on the Welsh Government website:

<http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/services-and-support/supporting-people/research-and-evaluation/?lang=en>

The latest publications include: Data Linking; Older People and Management Charges



If you would like to contribute to this newsletter please contact:

Angela Lee, Regional Development Co-ordinator ☎: 01495 355975

✉: angela.lee@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

🐦 @Gwent_SP

Gwent RCC Updates & News

Meet Your RCC Member... Hi my name is Alyson Hoskins. I work as a Service Manager (Prevention) within the Adults Services Division of Blaenau Gwent Social Services. My role on the Gwent RCC is to represent the five Social Services Departments across Gwent, ensuring that our agendas are aligned as much as possible, particularly with the implementation of the new Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and its emphasis on the role of preventative services.



What are your interests outside of work? ...I am a mum and grandmother (yes I know I am far too young!) so spend any spare time with my family. As a family we enjoy watching most sports, visiting the theatre and taking our dog (Ruby) for walks in the beautiful Welsh countryside. I am also a School Governor, so spend as much time as possible volunteering at a local primary school.

And what was your first job?.....My first job was with the Department of Works and Pensions. I only lasted in the Civil Service for about 2 years before leaving to become a Welfare Rights Officer employed by Newport Mind but located in the Blaenau Gwent Community Learning Disability Team. This enabled me to gain invaluable experience of working within the third sector, critical for when I later became Supporting People Team Manager.

Describe something that makes you happy?.... Good food, good wine and cosy pyjamas!

What's the best thing about being involved in the RCC?.....I have enjoyed the opportunity of witnessing how the RCC has matured over the past few years as people from varying professions, with differing opinions, agendas, knowledge and experience have combined to become a cohesive committee. Well done Gwent RCC - keep up the good work!



Minutes from the Gwent Regional Collaborative Committee meetings and other related documents are available to download from the Gwent RCC web pages at:

<http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/health/20495.asp>

A big welcome to Colin Jones who is recently appointed as the new RCC Support Provider Deputy Representative



The Gwent Regional Collaborative Committee recognised during 2014 that coordinating it's communications was essential to ensure that the benefits of the Supporting People Programme continue to be recognised and understood by all stakeholders. A task and finish group was established and from this the "**Supporting People: Improving Lives, Preventing Costs**" case study booklet was developed.

The case study booklet was launched and circulated widely across networks and to Welsh Ministers in the autumn of 2015. A copy of the booklet "**Supporting People: Improving Lives, Preventing Costs**" is available to view through the on-line link:

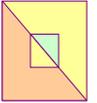
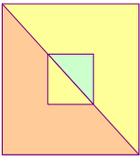
<http://online.fliphtml5.com/jtyt/ssff/>

cefnogipobl
supporting people

supporting independence in Gwent
cefnogi annibyniaeth yng Ngwent

Supporting People
Improving Lives, Preventing Costs





Welfare Rights Service

Mind Monmouthshire's Welfare Rights Service provides support to residents of Monmouthshire with mental ill health who require immediate help, advice and assistance with their benefit entitlements

The support we provide is face to face and at various locations in Monmouthshire throughout the week.

What we do

- Give advice and practical assistance to enable people to claim their full benefit entitlement.
- Assist clients in completing necessary benefit claim forms and correspondence.
- Provide advice and assistance in completing a Work Capability Assessment for Employment and Support Allowance.
- Assist with appeals against benefit decisions.
- Signpost to other agencies regarding debt counselling
- Communicate and negotiate on behalf of the client with third parties in relation to benefit claims
- Provide advice and assistance on the changes to benefits.

To book an appointment call
Mind Monmouthshire on 01873 858275

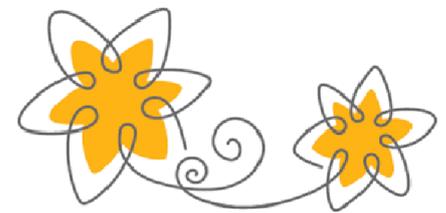
Cyfannol Women's Aid - DACC MARAC Worker Project

In January Torfaen Supporting People piloted a new DACC/MARAC Crisis worker with Cyfannol Women's Aid .

The worker will manage the increased demand in drop in's and referrals generated by the DACC. They will provide an immediate service to women and children in crisis, fleeing domestic abuse.

The creation of this post will also reduce the waiting list held centrally.

We are pleased to have been able to extend funding of this pilot scheme for a further 12 months.



CYMORTH I FENYWOD
CYFANNOL
WOMEN'S AID



JOINT WORKING WITH HEALTH

The success of Newport's Lighthouse Project's Hospital Support Worker has been recognised by colleagues in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and

Newport Supporting People are looking to expand the project run by Taff Housing Association for patients at the Royal Gwent Hospital who reside outside of Newport.

Funding has been secured from ABUHB for a pilot project to employ a full-time floating support worker to work alongside the existing support worker, social workers and health staff to support people to return home from hospital. Work includes: welfare benefit maximisation, securing rent and housing benefits, arranging for and signposting to other services, assisting with securing aids and adaptations, applying for more appropriate accommodation options and ensuring accommodation is ready for occupation.



"At the end of 2014 things were really beginning to change for me and my family. Towards the end of 2014 I went to view a property and signed the tenancy almost straight away. Myself and the children went away for a few days over Christmas with a spring in our step knowing that 2015 would be a much better year" N, Supported by Hafan Cymru, Blaenau Gwent



Torfaen & Blaenau Gwent MIND - First Contact Service Project

Since the opening of the Wellbeing Centre in Pontypool, Torfaen and Blaenau Mind have seen an increase in people that have contacted or presented at the Centre for help, advice or support. A high percentage of these people did not appear to be receiving mental health services at all.

In January Torfaen Supporting People piloted a new First Contact Service. This new project will be responsible for helping to alleviate the impact on all services and provide a clear pathway into appropriate services and support.

The project will produce and maintain a directory of local resources which would be relevant to the support needs of people with mental health and wellbeing issues. They will also help pilot a model of service that could reduce stigma, social exclusion and aid recovery. A priority reason for the role is to reduce the waiting times to access services and support and reduce pressure on the overall Mental Health waiting list for TFS.

They will also be working on improving interface between Torfaen Mind and Blaenau Gwent services and building sustainable partnerships with other agencies and community resources outside of Torfaen Mind. Torfaen Supporting People will be continuing to pilot this service until 31st of March 2017.



Young Peoples Accommodation Caerphilly Update

Refurbishment work will be starting soon on another young persons supported accommodation project.

The property owned by Charter was identified as in need of a facelift last year. The Supporting People team have been working with CCBC housing development, staff at Charter and Fairlake along with support staff from Llamau and the young people currently residing there to agree what the scheme will look like.

The work is beginning shortly and the young people have moved into temporary accommodation. The works is likely to take 6 months to complete with the young people being supported offered a chance to work with some of the contractors to learn some new skills.

Families First Housing Support Worker

Hafan Cymru have been commissioned from April 1st to locate a Family Support Worker within Blaenau Gwent's Families First team.

The post holder funded by Supporting People grant will act as a champion within identified housing support partnerships and forums to actively raise awareness, improve working relationships and increase referrals both in and out of services.

Their positioning within the Families First team will enable them to actively promote the work of the Welsh Governments Child Poverty Strategy 2010 by working closely with Supporting People, Flying Start and Communities First to work collaboratively in reducing the impact of poverty for children, young people and their families.

They will undertake Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFFs) assessments in accordance with Welsh Government Families First guidance and act as key worker to meet client needs in the following areas:

- preventing homelessness
- maintaining and sustaining their home
- tackling worklessness
- debt and financial management



NEWPORT SUPPORTED HOUSING GATEWAY SERVICES.

A number of changes to the two supported housing gateway services are currently being developed and will roll out over the coming months to most support provider schemes in Newport. The Supported Housing module of the integrated Abritas system, which is used for the Newport Gateway, is currently undergoing a number of changes and vigorous testing to make the process easier to use.



In addition more schemes will be added to the system on a phased basis over the next year, including more floating support projects. Newport's Supporting People Team will also be working to merge the large in-house generic floating support schemes with the new process.

Training on the revised process will be made available to support staff from all schemes as we would like to see a 'super user' in every scheme who will be able to train all other staff.

Needs Planning Day 2016: Lasts years regional planning day was a huge success and thank you to everyone who attended. SP teams will shortly be getting together to arrange this years event and once agreed the date will be circulated by the teams. If you have any suggestions to further improve the day please let us know. We look forward to seeing you on the day.



New Accommodation Projects in Caerphilly

After the success of our first Mental Health Supported Accommodation project in Caerphilly, a need was identified for a similar provision in the North of the borough. Evidence has been gathered and United Welsh have purchased the old Fire Station in Bargoed. Work is underway to develop 1 and 2 bedroom apartments for those affected by the 'bedroom tax' and an 8 unit supported housing scheme. The scheme is due for completion in September 2016.



During 2015 additional income of £233,243.47 was raised for people receiving support from TCBCs Financial Inclusion team. Well Done!



Check out the Gwent SP on-line publications library

And view our latest publications here:

<http://fliphtml5.com/homepage/ezex>



Focus on Rough Sleeping



Cornerstone Support Services Limited, have been working with Rough Sleepers and those vulnerably housed across Caerphilly

Borough, building great partnerships with CCBC Homeless and Supporting People departments and the award winning Caerphilly Churches Night Shelter Project.

Using an assertive outreach model, Cornerstone have helped remove barriers to accessing services for those who may have become disenfranchised. Helen Briffett, Homeless Prevention Manager said "It's certainly a different way of working, we are able to react quickly and respond to reports of those who are homeless across the borough"

Homeless Outreach Manager Stephen Dwyer added "This is housing support at the sharp end, we work with people in their tents, whatever it takes, only yesterday I was sat with a 20 year old female in a grave yard which was where she chose to sleep, she is now in a far safer place."

Cornerstone Director Andrew Clarke said "we set up Cornerstone to be a bit different, no matter what your job title in Cornerstone you'll always complete direct support work."

You can learn more about the way all this fits together by clicking the following link to view a documentary about the work in Caerphilly:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iq4yLe9vQrg>

Since December young people from **The Countryman** and **Maes Y Derwen** schemes have prepared, cooked and delivered, delicious hearty home cooked meals for people experiencing street homelessness, as part of the Night Shelter Project, Caerphilly.

Twice a week clients and staff at both schemes work together, participating in workshops to plan for the week ahead and the meals they are going to cook. These meals are usually made with food produce purchased from the Charity fair-share. The meals are then delivered to various churches around the Caerphilly area, where people who are street homeless are provided with shelter for the night, and receive support from local volunteers from across the Caerphilly Borough.



We asked one of our clients at The Countryman who has participated in the preparation and the delivery of the meals almost every week what they thought about the project.

They replied "*I think the project was an amazing idea, such a thoughtful and kind gesture and I think that it has been very successful. I really enjoyed helping out and would love to work on other projects like this one.*"

They also said that as well as the fun workshops and meeting new people they found they were learning new skills e.g. menu planning, food preparation, food hygiene and cooking the wide variety of dishes they prepared. We have cooked hearty meals e.g. lasagne, stews, pasta bakes and pies, all cooked from scratch including the sauces. Not only has taking part in the project improved my skills and knowledge but it has increased my communication skills, self-esteem and confidence.

solas
preventing homelessness

cre8
Paint, Repair, Refresh

part of **seren group**



Caerphilly Supporting People

have introduced a proforma for completion by its support providers since April 2015 which determines the amount of additional income generated by the work of support workers and also the amount of debt that has been successfully addressed, either by writing off or reducing outgoings to more manageable levels.

Initial figures for the first six months of 2015/16 indicated the following:

Debt Reduced - £1.4 million

Income Maximized - £1.8 million

The Caerphilly Supporting People team are working closely with providers to refine the manner in which the information is collected and to ensure that we have methodology to ratify the information received.

Congratulations on this amazing achievement!



**Please cascade
SP News in Gwent
to your
Service Users!**

The next
Regional Provider Forum
will be held on April 28th 2016.
9.30 – 12.30

At Tredomen Innovation and Technology
Centre, Caerphilly.

Contact:

JosieHenley-Einion@CymorthCymru.org.uk

To confirm your attendance



Generic Floating Support Service Blaenau Gwent

The Supporting People team in Blaenau Gwent recently remodelled a number of their floating support services and re-tendered for one generic service, which would be divided into two areas.

From April 1st the new generic floating support service will be delivered by **The Wallich** mirroring the Neighbourhood Care Network (NCN) geographical footprints of the borough i.e. one service will support people residing in the east of the borough and the other the west. This will also align the services to both Community Care and Housing Solutions Teams which operate within these geographical footprints.

The services will provide effective and innovative housing related support services to vulnerable people enabling them to live independently within the community.

It is hoped that the remodelled service will also deliver a number of other benefits including:

- Reduction in the administration burden on the SP Team in relation to financial, contract monitoring and evaluation processes
- Better clarity and consistency for service users

The services will support both single people and families and will not be age specific, so will be able to provide support to those eligible aged 16 and above. The services will also support people with varying levels of need such as crisis support, low level support and floating support.

Contact: Michelle Wyatt (West) and Claire Davies (East)
Blaenau Gwent
Supporting People



*"I am now in a place I could only dream of, a walk in shower and wet room, a gated community and great neighbours. A dream come true. I shall always be grateful for their help, understanding and for doing what they said they would try to do, a big thank you to my support worker for being such a great listening person and completely trustworthy. Many many thanks"
R, supported by Gwalia, Newport*



Gwent Service User Postcards

Newport Young Volunteer Award

Nicole came to Solas as a client at Hales House and it was recognised that Nicole is very talented in Art. Nicole started to regularly volunteer at the cre8 shop and from this we could see Nicole was very helpful and skilled in supporting others with art and textiles. Nicole went on to volunteer with John completing art around the schemes and supporting other clients with learning new skills in this area. Throughout Nicole's time volunteering she also supported Solas with interviewing new staff and attending meetings to help shape the service of Solas. Nicole is no longer supported as a client, but she has continued to volunteer her time with Solas.

Her time and dedication has been hugely appreciated and it was great to see her gain the award she truly deserved.



The Newport Volunteer Achievement Awards were organised by GAVO and were held at Rodney Parade.

Please email your service user postcard to angela.lee@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

My name is Lee and I'm a resident at Parkview in Blackwood I wanted to talk about my journey from alcohol abuse and using drugs to my recovery and where I am today. Hopefully my story can help others with substance misuse issues. As a child football was my passion; I started playing seriously at the age of 10 and by 14 I was signed by Portsmouth FC until I was released aged 16. After leaving school I found it hard to find a job, I couldn't cope with form filling due to my dyslexia and it wasn't uncommon for me to walk out of interviews due to embarrassment. At 17 my luck changed, I had trials for Newport County and went on to play a good level of football for them for 5 years, I also worked for the council as a grounds man.

Whilst playing for Newport I played against football legends such as Paul Gascoigne and world cup winner Juninho. Needless to say life was amazing at this point, I was fit and healthy with a good family life and I was doing what I loved to do as a job. It was the best five years of my life. Playing such a high level of football and working on top of that takes its toll on the body, I struggled with injury for a while and after a knee operation and hurting my back I was forced to retire from football. Having to stop something that you have a passion for can be damaging enough but due to lack of money it affected my home life and my marriage fell apart.

I started to feel anxious and depressed and it was at this point I started drinking and occasionally using cocaine to cope with my anxiety.

It got so bad that I wanted to end my life, somehow I survived but I was advised by the doctors that I needed to stop drinking. I tried to take my own life again in September 2015. I moved in with my sister upon leaving hospital not only for support but because my family didn't trust me to live on my own.

I really didn't want to start drinking again so with the help of my support worker I became a resident at Parkview and it's probably the best decision I've made in 10 years. I receive daily support with any issues I have, mostly with my anxiety. The activities on offer seem to help and I really feel comfortable and safe. I've got myself in to a good routine of using the gym and eating healthier. The biggest reason I'm doing this is for my children as I want to see them grow up. I've made some good friends at Parkview that can relate to my situation and this tends to make things easier, if ever I'm feeling anxious there's always someone to talk to whether it be staff or the new friends I've made.

