

Supporting People Torbay

Issue 21

Summer 2010

Supporting People services give support to help people live independently. Services include supported and sheltered housing, a women's refuge and 'floating support' where accommodation is not included- workers visit people in their homes.

Introducing the new Quest Team!



Eleven people who are using or have used Supporting People (SP) services have been recruited as Project Workers. Their role is to help make sure that the views of clients are properly listened to in the reviewing of services through talking to clients about their experiences of their service. This will form part of the SP review of each service.

They have named themselves the Quest team and have completed 8 days training which was mostly provided by Wolf and Water arts company. They have been trained in confidentiality, boundaries, communication skills, protecting adults from abuse etc as well as learning about SP reviews and the quality tool we use. They have also completed some practice interviews.

They are contributing to the reviews of services which specialise in supporting offenders, homeless people, people with drug/ alcohol issues and people who have experienced domestic abuse. They will be interviewing 10% of the people in these services as part of the review and asking them about the quality of their service. They will ask questions on issues such as support plans and whether they are reviewed regularly, how to make a complaint and do they know how to do this, and what top up they pay for their service. The information gathered will be used as part of the service review and contribute to the decision as to whether a service continues with its contract or has to follow an action plan for improvement.

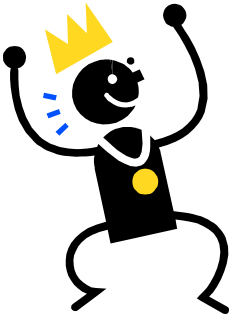
Quest work alongside the Supporting People team but are managed and supported by SPOT (Speaking Out in Torbay). SPOT is a user led organisation and community group and can provide a service in a way requested by clients- from peers not professionals.



Quotes from Quest:

"Quest has changed my life"
"Hopefully we can change people's lives"

Supporting People success stories!



Supporting People helps people build independent lives. This can happen in all sorts of ways depending on people's needs and aspirations. Supporting People services have sent us some good news stories about achievements of their clients and they will be published in each edition of the newsletter. Names have been changed to maintain confidentiality.



Andrew suffered from poor mental health from the age of 15 and went in and out of institutional care. However, he managed to turn his life around with the help of support services and now has a full time job.

Andrew was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia at the age of 15 and spent 17 years in hospital and mental health secure units.

He became institutionalised and unable to cope with living in the community. His behaviour got out of control. He felt safer locked away and when he moved into residential care and then a Supporting People service he at first felt he wanted to go back to hospital. He found it very hard to go out but with the help of support workers he started to build his confidence. Workers taught him to be independent, to cook, clean and budget his money.

The turning point for Andrew was when he became a volunteer driver for a charity. He was given a chance and could see opportunities opening up in front of him. He carried out voluntary work in his accommodation and was offered a paid support worker post. He has completed qualifications in health and social care, and completed courses to improve his reading and writing as he had missed a lot of schooling. He uses his personal experience to help people with mental health problems through counselling and passing on techniques to deal with their issues before they get to crisis point.

He has achieved a full time job and career despite not having lived in the community or worked for 17 years. He believes that the key to his success is self awareness of the illness, working with staff to improve, and being given a chance to live in the community.

Another success story follows on the next page ...



Jessica had had a traumatic childhood and by her early teens had left home. She lived anywhere she could including sleeping on the streets. She got into trouble due to hanging round the streets with groups of people, drinking. She moved into a supported lodgings service at 17 years old. After some time she established a good relationship with the landlady and landlord of mutual trust and understanding. They helped her find the best way to pay off her debts and she began volunteering with the Prince's Trust and did a college course which she passed with ease. This gave her motivation to stop drinking and provided her with some good social and support networks. The supported lodgings service also helped Jessica to rebuild her relationship with her family. Jessica has since joined the army and recently had her passing out parade.

Jessica said 'I couldn't be any more grateful to two people than I am to them. They are amazing landlords helping girls like me do something with their lives and not waste it'

Help with training and support into employment

Jobcentre Plus is working in a number of ways to help people back into work. Lee Tozer is the Social Inclusion Manager for Jobcentre Plus in Torbay and works with groups that support Carers, people with poor mental health, parents living in low income households and people with drug or alcohol addiction. He helps them access employment.

Lee works with drug treatment agencies in the NHS. These agencies send people to a job adviser who will support and work with them to find the most appropriate options for them.

Help can be available with job related training and basic numeracy and literacy, this can depend on length of time in receipt of benefits.

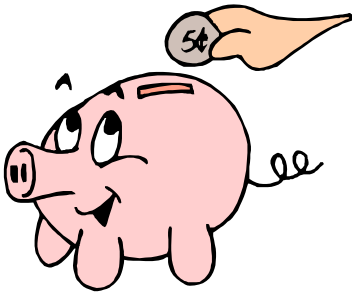
People can take up a Work Trial for up to 3 weeks while remaining in receipt of benefits. This allows the person and the employer to see if the work suits them. There are also voluntary opportunities for people making steps back into work.

Jobcentre Plus advisers can calculate how much financially better off a person is in work than on benefits. There is also a calculator on-line at the website below.

To receive help from Jobcentre Plus, people need to be a Carer or receiving Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance or Disability Living Allowance.

To access the above services please use the following link to the Direct Gov website <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm> or if having difficulties ring Lee on 01626 325448.

Supporting People estimated to save £8.19M a year!



A new report has estimated that Torbay Supporting People (SP) programme saves approximately £8.19M in other public sector spend per year. The report 'Evidencing the benefits of the Supporting People programme in Torbay' uses a Government commissioned financial benefits model to look at how much money the SP programme saves for other agencies. This calculates an approximate estimate, for each client group (i.e. learning disability, mental health etc), of the financial benefits of SP funded services. It does this by considering a scenario where people in the client group are supported with SP services and an alternative scenario, where these people are not supported by SP services.

The Model examines all costs surrounding the individual, including costs in the areas of Housing, Homelessness, Social services care, Residential care, Health, Benefits, and Crime. Local costs for Torbay have been used where possible. The Model also calculates the financial costs for a wide range of incidents and interventions that may occur. These include for example: becoming a victim of crime, re-offending, entering an acute mental health ward, suffering tenancy failure, visiting Accident and Emergency and so on. The Model calculates the costs for the scenarios with and without an SP service. The impact of SP is calculated and the difference between the two scenarios is the financial benefit of SP.

The largest savings are made in residential care costs where it is estimated that £14M is saved a year by preventing people entering residential care and long stay hospitals. Big savings are also made by preventing re-offending, health deterioration and homelessness. The report contains numerous case studies that illustrate how the programme has helped people (while saving money) and changed their lives for the better.

The long term benefits of SP cannot be measured- SP results in the long-term reduction in the risk of problems such as social exclusion and repeat homelessness- producing an unquantified long term reduction in the cost of supporting individuals and their children in the future.

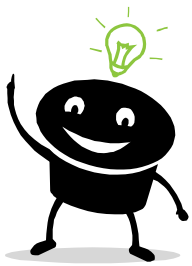
The huge estimated savings made by the programme show its value, but, as the case studies in the report illustrate, the biggest benefit is the improvement that SP can make to an individual's independence, welfare and quality of life.

The report can be viewed at www.torbay.gov.uk/supportingpeople or contact Claire on 01803 208377 for a copy.

Housing Services are inviting customers to have their say

Torbay Council Housing Needs Service:

- Gives a range of housing advice especially around preventing homelessness
- Assists people and families under the housing and homelessness Acts
- Provides the Referral Hub (the single point of access for customers and those agencies referring customers to Supporting People services)



Housing Services is looking for people who have been/ are customers of the service to take part in quarterly customer forums. Forums give customers the chance to air their views and help shape the future of the service.

If you have experienced the service as a customer, or know of anyone who has, and would like to be involved please contact Ben Thairs:

- Email: ben.thairs@torbay.gov.uk
- Telephone: 01803 208015 / 07775 827480
- Address: Ben Thairs, Service Development Officer, Communities, Torbay Council, Pearl Assurance House, 101-107 Union Street Torquay, TQ1 3DW

The proposed date for the next customer forum is Thursday 7 October 2010, venue to be confirmed. This forum will specifically look at promotional material- developing ideas and content for future publicity information.

Supporting People contact details

Housing Support Referral Hub – The Hub is the access point to Supporting People services (except sheltered housing). If you need a Supporting People service you can contact the Hub and they can meet you where it is easiest for you, in order to assess your needs

 **01803 208723**

 referralhub@torbay.gov.uk

Torquay Connections, Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DS

Torbay Supporting People Team – for information on development and monitoring of services, and to contact the newsletter editor

 **01803 208729**

 supporting.people@torbay.gov.uk

 www.torbay.gov.uk/supportingpeople

Supporting People Manager: Fran Mason

 frances.mason@torbay.gov.uk