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MULTIPLE NEEDS & ROUGH SLEEPER SERVICE OPEN DAY

The decision of Coventry Primary Care Trust and Coventry City Council to continue funding the Multiple Needs Service for a further twelve months was marked by an open day held at our Norton House centre. A number of agencies and service users attended with staff and volunteers providing food and displays outlining the services provided by the centre which include advice, food, showers and laundry facilities as well as supporting service users to deal with more critical support issues such as mental health, learning difficulties, substance misuse etc.



The Rough Sleeper's Service is funded through a contract with the City Council and together with the Multiple Needs Service offers a more focussed and holistic approach to the problems faced by this most vulnerable of groups. Team Leader Lloyd Woolcock makes the point that the cost to the NHS, social services and the criminal justice system of neglecting a

client group that is increasing in number far exceeds the funding required to make a real impact. For example, it is estimated that the cost of a night in the cells can be up to £460 and an ambulance call out up to £190.

Coventry Cyrenians is hugely grateful for the sustained commitment of the City Council and we will continue to ensure that the issues facing this client group are not neglected.



A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The staff and clients of Coventry Cyrenians would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those individuals and organisations that supported our work in 2010/11 through their generous donations of cash and goods, such as furniture and food. There are too many to list here, but special mention should be made of

major contributions from;

- The Dr Dharry Trust
- Newfield Trust
- The 29th May 1961 Trust
- The General Charities of Coventry
- The Company and Fellowship of Cappers and Feltmakers
- Asian Trade Group
- Orbit Housing Association

Also

- Stratford Garden Centre
- Longlea Nursing Home
- JCI

And not forgetting the generosity of the many church groups in Coventry and donations from the public whose support ensures the continued success of the Christmas Lunch for homeless and vulnerable people.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

We have decided to devote a large part of this newsletter to the issues facing rough sleepers and those with multiple needs and the services available to them in the current difficult financial climate. Coventry Cyrenians have a contract with the City Council's Supporting People team to find and identify rough sleepers and place them into short term accommodation. Our Rough Sleeper's team do regular early morning visits to known "hot spots". They operate in pairs for safety reasons and are often accompanied by representatives from the police or CV One.

Contrary to popular misconceptions about people forced to sleep rough, many do not seek

this life and are desperate to find a way out of it. The alcoholism and substance misuse that is commonly associated with this client group is often the effect of homelessness rather than the cause. Find accommodation for that person and you are well on the way to dealing with any other issues.

It is those other issues that are at the core of a contract we have with the Coventry City Council PCT and Social Services. It is termed a Multiple Needs service and deals with individuals with three or more needs, including homelessness, alcoholism, substance misuse, mental health, disability, learning difficulties and offending.

Our staff worked with over 120 rough sleepers during the past twelve months. We managed to find short term accommodation for nearly half of them, the first step towards eventual independent living. This represents a very high success rate for this client group.

These groups are amongst the most vulnerable in society and the least understood in terms of the underlying reasons for their problems and the potential for resolving those problems. We have been extremely successful for rough sleepers, but the funding commitment has to be maintained as the Coalition's deficit reduction programme threatens to include this client group amongst its casualties with the

inevitable impact that will have on the budgets of the health service, social services and the criminal justice system.

We have included in this issue two case studies that illustrate important elements of dealing with this client group. Client A's experience supports the argument that sometimes sleeping rough can be an almost inevitable consequence of a dysfunctional upbringing.

Client B's story shows that there is a way out if the will and the support is there.



Mike Fowler
Chief Executive

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS CONTINUED

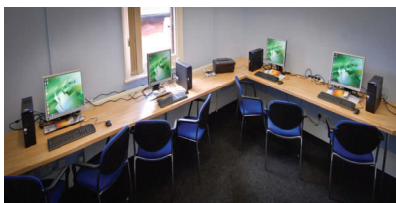


The Asian Trade group Costcutter based in Elm Tree Avenue, Coventry presented a cheque to Mike Fowler (Chief Executive) pictured here with the group.



Residents at Longlea Care Home in Nuneaton kindly knitted blankets for our clients. Pictured with staff members Kim Demulder (YP Team Leader in Nuneaton and Jen Gordon (Housing Support Team Leader).

Our project at Stratford has been given a greenhouse, gardening tools and plants by Stratford Upon Avon Garden Centre and a further £700 towards this gardening project by Orbit Housing Association. The idea to set up a greenhouse and grow their own fruit and vegetables came from the residents at the project. According to Stratford Team Leader, John Avill pictured below with support worker Jac Moroney, they are now looking for some local gardening/horticultural groups that can come to the project and give some help and advice on how to successfully grow fruit and vegetables.



JCI donated their time painting, carpeting and gave donations of computer equipment, an electronic white board, a printer and photocopier machine.



CASE STUDY ONE (CLIENT A)

In the "Message from the Chief Executive" the point is made that many of the people who sleep rough and have substance misuse issues do not seek that life but are the victims of circumstances that not everyone is capable of coping with. Mr M is a 32 year old who had a happy childhood as part of a loving family. He settled down with a partner and they had a son together. On Christmas Day in 2010 his partner informed him that she was in a relationship with someone else and asked him to leave the family house. Mr M's life spiralled out of control from that point.

On Christmas Day in 2010 his partner informed him that she was in a relationship with someone else and asked him to leave the family house.

By the time he arrived in Coventry he was an entrenched rough sleeper as his experience with hostels had brutalised him and left with him with alcohol dependency. Our Rough Sleeper's team found him during one of their regular early morning walks and after a number of false starts managed to persuade him to come into our Norton House premises with a couple of friends he had made on the streets. Availing themselves of breakfast and laundry facilities encouraged Mr M to engage with our staff. His dependency on alcohol was reduced dramatically and we were able to place him in one of our shared houses with a dedicated support worker who helped him with advice on health and benefits issues.

Mr M agreed to take part in an in-house art project making greeting cards for family as a way of reconnecting with relatives with whom they had lost touch. He did not realise that his mother had registered him on the missing person's list and she was overjoyed to receive a card and discover where he was. She visited Mr M in our premises and gave him a mobile phone so he could keep in touch. Mr M is now settled in his new accommodation after initially finding it difficult to adjust to life away from the streets. He is now in a much better position to address the other issues in his life and our staff regard him as one of our success stories.



CASE STUDY TWO (CLIENT B)

Miss K is in her twenties and has learning difficulties and mental health issues. She has been in the care system throughout her teenage years after suffering sexual abuse from the age of five. That abuse was only acknowledged when she became pregnant. She was taken into care when the baby was born with the child also going into care.

Miss K was lonely and extremely vulnerable. She became a prostitute to fund a class A drug habit and she was subject to both physical and mental abuse by fellow drug users. She was often only allowed to stay with "friends" if she helped them obtain drugs. She finally came to Cyrenians and asked for help when one of these "friends" threw her out because she refused to get drugs for this person. Finding accommodation had proved almost impossible because she refused to give up her dog who had become her constant companion. At the time she was sleeping rough.

The first task for our staff was to provide food and clothing while they searched for emergency accommodation. She was buddied up with a couple of rough sleepers known to us who promised to look after her. Their experience as ex drug users encouraged Miss K to meet with the Community Drugs Team in Coventry. With perfect timing a private landlord came forward and offered her a property on a short term basis and with added bonus of being able to keep her dog.

Miss K is finally starting to adjust to living in a tenancy and in an environment free from drugs. She has been clean for about a month and is actively addressing her addiction.

Miss K is another example of how a young life can spiral out of control through no fault of her own, particularly with no family network to support her. She has undoubtedly made some bad choices in her life, but she had the courage to escape from a cycle of abuse and exploitation and seek our help. We were only too happy to provide it.



ADULT HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES

Men's Residential / Women's Residential:

Accommodation with Housing Support for 25 single men / 16 single women, over the age of 25.

Low level Support Residential:

Accommodation for 18 single homeless men or women in Coventry with low support needs.

Single Homeless Floating Support:

For 20 men or women who need support to manage their own accommodation.

Mental Health Floating Support:

For 30 men or women with housing issues and mental health needs.

Rough Sleepers Service:

Support for men or women who are rough sleeping and need help securing their own accommodation.

Norton House Multiple Needs:

Anyone over the age of 18 with either, mental ill health, learning disabilities, drug or alcohol abuse, or addictive behaviour.

Stratford Upon Avon: Accommodation for Single

Homeless Adults (SASHA), for 8 women or men, over the age of 18.

YOUNG PERSONS HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES

Young Persons Direct Access Hostel (YPDA):

Accommodation and support for 15 homeless 16-24 year olds.

Young Persons Mediation:

Help for 16-25 year olds and their parents/carers who are experiencing conflicts at home.

Young Persons Residential:

Accommodation and support for 21 single homeless 16-24 year olds.

Young Persons Floating Support:

Help for 45 16-24 year olds who need support to manage their own accommodation.

Youth Accommodation Project (YAP):

Accommodation and support for 7 homeless 16-24 year olds, plus floating support for 2 clients. Based in Nuneaton.

If you would like leaflets on any of our services - please contact Head Office on 02476 228099.

If you no longer wish to receive a copy of this newsletter, or would prefer an emailed copy; please email jo.page@coventrycyrenians.org

REMEMBER COVENTRY CYRENIANS IN YOUR WILL

For nearly forty years Coventry Cyrenians has been helping homeless and vulnerable people in the Coventry and Warwickshire area to secure and maintain a home. There has never been a more pressing need for our services than in the current financial climate. You can help us to develop our services to meet this demand by leaving a legacy in your Will.

FREE CODICIL

In the event that you already have a Will and would like to amend it to include a legacy to Coventry Cyrenians, we have joined forces with our legal advisers, Keelys Solicitors in Lichfield, to offer a free codicil service. The cost of drawing up all of the codicil documentation, which would normally cost £75-£100, will be met by the charity. All you have to do is contact us with details of the proposed legacy and we will do the rest. Keelys also offer a discounted Will writing service and we can put you in touch with them should you wish to avail yourself of this offer.

Leaving a legacy will cost you nothing today, but will make a difference to lives in the future. Furthermore, with a local charity you can be sure that your legacy will go directly to support people make the transition from homelessness to a settled home.

We're on the Web! www.coventrycyrenians.co.uk

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Making a donation will directly help someone to change their life. Every year we help hundreds of people to change their lives and we could not do that without your support.

Making a donation to Cyrenians allows us to plan for the long term. It helps us to meet future challenges and develop new and innovative ways to help change their lives for better.

There are a number of ways in which you can donate to Cyrenians. If you would like to send a cheque, please make it payable to Coventry Cyrenians Ltd and send it to our registered office at Oakwood House, Cheylesmore, Coventry CV1 2HL. You could donate by making a direct debit payment on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis. You can download the direct debit form from our website.