

Supporting People Torbay

Issue 6

November 2005



An inspector calls!

As you know the Torbay Supporting People (SP) programme is being re-inspected this month by the Audit Commission. We are expecting to change last year's judgement to one of at least "fair with promising prospects for improvement".

These are just some of the important improvements we will be able to demonstrate to inspectors:

- Direction and support from the Commissioning Body and the Council's new Mayor and Cabinet as well as elected members
- Evidence of involving our stakeholders, in particular service users
- A programme that is focused on delivering outcomes for the vulnerable people of Torbay
- Increased resources for the team to improve delivery of the programme
- Creation of Core Strategy Sub Groups to inform Commissioning Body decisions in relation to specific service user groups
- A new strategy to improve access to and move-on from services (see page 4)
- Improved performance reporting & financial management
- An increased understanding of the benefits of the programme and how services can be accessed
- Completion of service reviews
- Tackling poor performance of SP services

And there's further work in progress, including:

- Working with service users, providers and other key partners to set "real" outcomes for services
- Addressing the needs of people who are harder to reach, such as disabled

- people, people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and travellers
- Ensuring that SP becomes part of the everyday work of the new Care Trust and the Council, as well as improving links to children's services, Probation and mental health services
- Developing steady state contracts
- Assisting providers in action planning for improvement
- Improving partnership working with service users through the new Service User Group and providers through the Forum

The SP programme only exists because we all work effectively in partnership. The re-inspection provides us all with an opportunity to show how much things have changed and to reassess the further work needed. We can only do this with your help so please contact the team with any queries you might have concerning the programme or the progress we have made. Inspectors will be on site in Torbay for one week from 28th November and they won't just be taking our word on the improvements, they will be meeting with many service users and stakeholders to assess progress through their eyes.

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Service review update

A national directory of SP services

The Torbay SP Team

Local directory of services

A directory of Supporting People funded services in Torbay is in production and will be available at the end of the month. The aim of the directory is to let people know the SP services that are available in Torbay and provide information about them. The directory is aimed at people wishing to find an SP service to suit themselves or another person, and for organisations wishing to refer people to a service. It is also aimed at those wishing to browse just to see what is out there. Each service within the directory has a page of information about it. Services are arranged into sections by their primary client group – the category of people they specialise in supporting, for example older people with support needs, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems etc. Therefore someone looking for a service to support a person with learning disabilities could look through the section for learning disability at the services available. There are also indexes by service name and service provider name for someone looking up a particular service or services provided by a particular provider.



The directory provides other information apart from a page on each service. Section one gives an introduction to SP, explaining what SP is, who can be helped and how, how to access services and charging. Section two provides definition of terms used in the directory that may not be familiar. Section three explains how to use the directory. Section fourteen provides a list of useful organisations, services and referral agencies. The back pages give information on providing the directory in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, and other languages.

The directory will be available on the SP web pages – www.torbay.gov.uk/supportingpeople - as well as in libraries, Council receptions and other venues within Torbay. A copy can be sent to you by contacting the SP Team.

SP on the road

This month the SP Team has taken SP on the road to raise awareness of the SP programme amongst colleagues in Torbay Council, Probation and the Care Trust. These lunch time road shows have taken place at various venues across Torbay and provided an information pack and lunch to attendees. The road shows have been hailed as very successful.



Service User Group

Involving service users in the development of the programme is at the heart of SP. In Torbay a Service User Steering Group has been set up. This is a group of service users from different services who will receive training and development to help them involve and consult with other service users. The Group's input will help the SP Team and service providers to improve SP services and the outcomes they deliver for vulnerable people in Torbay.

The group will give service users a voice so that they can

influence development of services, network with other service users and develop new skills. All policies and procedures will be looked at by the Group to ensure they are easy to read and accessible. The Group is currently developing a work programme and this is likely to include feeding back on the SP web pages and looking at the new directory of services.

The Group is in its early stages with lots of potential for the SP Team and service users. If you are interested in being part of this group please contact Claire on 01803 208729.

An SP success story

(This is based on a real service user's experience and all names have been changed)

Jim has a history of alcoholism and mental health issues. Over the years he lost his job, partner and home, got into financial difficulties and had a strained relationship with his family. He completed full rehabilitation for his alcohol problems and then required supported housing in order to gain life skills and support to prevent him from relapsing.

In January 2005 Jim moved into the Jatis Project (an SP service). Julie was assigned as his support worker and together they worked on developing Jim's life skills and future direction, with the eventual goal of him being able to live independently.

Jim is a qualified electrician but he needed to regain his confidence and relearn a routine in order to cope with the daily demands of employment. Julie referred Jim to local agencies for workplace support. She also helped to secure



funding so that Jim could update his qualification, enabling him to re-commence work as an electrician.

Jim was referred to Mental Health services by his GP for support with his continuing poor mental health.

Jim found communicating with fellow service users in the project difficult. This was largely due to bullying by peers when he was a child. Julie helped Jim to access local self help support groups to encourage Jim's interaction with others.

Jim met all the goals he and his support worker had set and gradually acquired the skills to sustain independent living. His main goal was to have a home of his own. With the support of Jatis, Jim achieved this goal and is now a responsible tenant, living in private rented accommodation since October 2005.

Core Strategy Groups

The role of the Core Strategy Group (CSG) is to be the key group in shaping the direction and priorities for SP in Torbay.

The membership of the group includes representatives of the SP commissioning partners:

- Torbay Council
- Torbay Care Trust
- Devon and Cornwall Probation

as well as:

- Devon Partnership Trust
- Torbay SP provider representatives
- users of SP services

This ensures the group is broadly representative so has direct knowledge and experience of services for vulnerable people. The group meets every six months jointly with the Commissioning

Body to ensure the strategic planning process is progressing well.

Sub groups of the CSG have been formed to address the priorities for particular service groups. The proposed groups are:

- Homelessness and criminal justice
- Older people and physical disability
- Young people (16-25 years)
- Mental health
- Learning disability and sensory impairment

Service user and provider representatives will attend all meetings. If you are a user of an SP service or know someone who does who may be interested in participating in a strategy sub group please contact the SP Team. We would be happy to discuss the roles and responsibilities of group members with you and the time commitment involved.

A new access and move on strategy for SP in Torbay

We have been working on a draft strategy that will make it easier to access SP services through one central point of contact. This new way of working will help to identify people who are ready to move on and how this will happen. The new process will minimise the time it can take to fill vacancies and ensure that people are more appropriately placed. It will also introduce an element of choice for service users.

We need your views on this and consultation on the strategy will take place in January, so watch this space!

Service review update

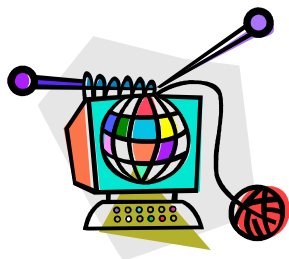
Most SP services have now either been reviewed or in the process of being reviewed. The deadline for completing service reviews is March 2006 and the SP Team are well on track for meeting this deadline.

A national SP directory

The national Supporting People team at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have created a directory of Supporting People services across England. This is available on the website:

www.spdirectory.org.uk

This directory can be searched to find detailed information about the SP services available – to find emergency supported accommodation and non emergency support and accommodation. You can search by needs of the person who will use the SP service, location of the service, type of accommodation etc. You can also search for a particular service provider or print a list of support services in a local authority area.



Torbay SP Team

The Team is part of Torbay Council

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