

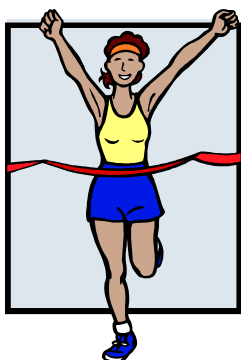
Supporting People Torbay

Issue 11

Summer 2007

Supporting People services give support to help people live as independently as possible. Services include a hostel for the homeless, supported and sheltered housing, a women's refuge and 'floating support' where workers visit people in their own homes.

Torbay wins 'Champion' status for involving service users



Torbay Supporting People has been awarded "Regional Champion" status for the way they involve service users. This was awarded by the department of Communities and

Local Government and was part of a national competition won jointly by Torbay and Bolton Supporting People Team. We are very excited about this award as service user involvement is at the top of the Government agenda for Supporting People.

Champion status was awarded because of the way service users are involved in the development and selection of new services and in all aspects of the Supporting People programme. Service users are supported to be representatives on the sub groups which work to develop services. The Supporting People Service User Group is made of people who use services and is going from strength to strength. They and the

Team will be sharing good practice with other areas through training, visits and a guide on how to involve service users.

Last August the Service User Group organised and ran a forum. Seventy service users attended from a range of different Supporting People services. As a result the Service User Group membership increased and many of the attendees said they would like to be involved in other ways such as visiting vulnerable people at home.

The group has been involved in making information and meetings easier to understand, gathering the views of service users and are developing a service user newsletter. Training is being developed for the group on areas such as group work and interviewing other service users as part of the contract review process.

We are advertising a post for a service user involvement worker to work with service users and share good practice – more on page 2

Newsflash! Referral Hub launches in September

The Housing Support Referral Hub will go into operation on Monday 3rd September 2007. This will be run by Housing Services, Torbay Council and will form a central point for referrals to all Supporting People services (except sheltered housing schemes for older people which are accessed through Homefinder Torbay).

The Hub will provide one central access point, with only one standard referral form to refer into both accommodation based and floating support services. This will prevent service users and referring agents from having to complete more than one form with the same information. Hub workers and referring agencies will

assess a person's support needs and match them with Supporting People services, or signpost to more appropriate services, ensuring people have maximum choice and involvement.

The Hub will gather information on the need for services and show where the gaps are. This will be invaluable in helping with the development of new services.

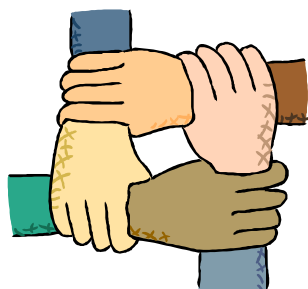
Contact details for the Hub are:

 **01803 208058**

 referralhub@torbay.gov.uk

Service user involvement worker post

Supporting People are advertising a year's post for a 'Regional Champions Co-ordinator (service user involvement)'. As Torbay has Regional Champion status for involving service users in the Supporting People programme (see page 1) this person will work to share Torbay's good practice in this area. They will find out how service users are involved in other organisations and services in Torbay and work with our Service User Group



to develop service user involvement for the future. They will write a guide on how to involve service

users. They will organise some training events on how to involve service users.

The closing date for applications for this role is 14 September 2007. Please visit www.torbay.gov.uk for details or contact First Stop Desk on 01392 383034 or at firststop@devon.gov.uk.

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New service! - for disabled people



Supporting People is selecting a new floating support service to start in early October. The service will be able to support thirty people with physical disability, sensory disability, acquired brain injury and/or a long term condition.

The contract for the new service will be for two years, and this time will be used to gather further needs data to help Supporting People identify what services are needed in the future. As part of the new service, the provider will also be asked to monitor barriers to move on and independent living. This information will be shared with Housing Services to help inform future service planning and developments.

The service will also pilot the use of a dormancy process in year two of the contract. This will involve the service provider contacting the service user after they have left the service, after an agreed amount of time. If it is identified that the person needs to re-engage with support, they will be able to access the support service quickly. The aim of this is to prevent housing crisis, and sustain the person's independence.

If you would like further information on the service, please speak to Shelley on 01803 208729

New Officer to help offenders with housing issues

Supporting People and the Probation Service have joined forces to create a new post to assist Offenders to find and keep accommodation. This post, which is initially for twelve months, is entitled Housing Interventions Officer and Ken Greening, a Probation Service Officer based with the Drug Offending Team has started in this role. Ken will be working with the Supporting People and Probation teams to improve links between them, sharing information and helping the teams to work really well together to house offenders. He will also spend time with staff in the Supporting People Referral Hub (see page 2) and with private and social landlords, to assist them to better

understand and meet the needs of offenders. Occasionally, he will help out with individual cases, setting up joint meetings if necessary and providing whatever help and support he can.

Ken is keen to develop a strong and successful working relationship with all those involved in finding accommodation for offenders and is happy to hear from anyone with ideas or concerns relating to this. He is based at Commerce House on Abbey Road and can be contacted either by phone on 01803 408517 or on email at ken.greening@devon-cornwall.probation.gsi.gov.uk

Independence and Opportunity the national strategy

The national strategy for Supporting People has been written. The aims are:

- **Keeping people who need services at the heart of the programme**
Involving service users in service development and making services more user focused
- **Enhancing partnership with the Third Sector**
Supporting voluntary agencies, charities and housing associations as providers of & referrers to Supporting People services
- **Delivering in the new Local Government landscape**
Delivering Supporting People through the new performance framework for local Government
- **Increasing efficiency and reducing bureaucracy**
Minimising administration, tackling unmet need for services, rolling out Value Improvement Programmes

The strategy can be found on the internet at: www.spkweb.org.uk/About_Supporting_People.



Learning disability strategy – feedback wanted

The Torbay Learning Disability Housing and Support Strategy is in draft form and we would like your feedback. If you would

like a copy please contact the Supporting People Team. Thank you to Mark Ford, a service user, for painting this picture for the front of the strategy.

Torbay Supporting People Team contact details

Housing Services, Torbay Council, Pearl Assurance House, 101-107 Union Street, Torquay, TQ1 3DW

☎ **01803 208729**

✉ supporting.people@torbay.gov.uk

🌐 www.torbay.gov.uk/supportingpeople

Supporting People Manager: Fran Mason:

✉ frances.mason@torbay.gov.uk

Homelessness and Criminal Justice Strategy 2007 to 2010

The Commissioning Body has approved the principles and key objectives of the Strategy for homeless people, offenders and ex offenders, and people with drug and alcohol problems. It endorsed the emphasis on crime prevention and the three levels of service described in the last newsletter: community safety and assessment; education and development; and resettlement and integration.

Background work by the Supporting People Team and other key commissioning agencies to specify the services required from 1 November 2008 is currently underway. There will be a strong emphasis on joint commissioning of services to ensure the integration of activity between housing, criminal justice, mental health and drug treatment.

Once commissioners have decided which services they think should be provided there will be a period of consultation with service users and providers in the Autumn before the process of letting contracts in time for November 2008 commences