SupportActionNet Awards 2007

Introduction

The SupportActionNet Awards were designed to recognise innovation and excellence in supporting vulnerable people to achieve their social and emotional aspirations. The judges looked for ways in which each organisation improved their service users’ quality of life in two specific ways: increasing the choices and freedom enjoyed by service users and giving service users a sense of optimism. This year 109 organisations entered for the Awards, which were kindly supported by the Ashden Trust.

The winner in the large providers category was Open Doors Creative Drop (City and Hackney PCT), a sexual health outreach and clinical service that provides an array of health and social welfare services for women who sell sex from the streets of Hackney, London. A team of outreach workers make contact with the women until the early hours of the morning, encouraging them to use the crisis drop-in that addresses their housing, drugs counselling, legal support and sexual health care needs.

In the small providers category the winner was Storybook Dad. The project operates from Dartmoor Prison – their simple but powerful idea is enabling prisoners to record stories on a CD to be sent to their children. The judges deemed this entry to be the winner because it has recognised the adverse
impact of an absent parent on a vulnerable child and used a straightforward technology to help show that their father still cares for them.

Our congratulations also to those who were highly commended:

Large organisations:

- Stonham Supported Lodgings Project
- Brinsford Prison and Youth Offenders Institute Safeguarding Department

Small organisations:

- Cardboard Citizens
- Sing Your Heart Out

Our thanks go to all those who entered the awards. We are pleased to recognise the work of the shortlisted, commended and winning entries in this document.

Gerard Lemos, Lemos&Crane

December 2007
Brinsford Prison

The Safeguarding Department at Brinsford Prison and Young Offenders Institution is a multi-agency team that provides support and assistance to up to 470 prisoners between the ages of 15-21. The team comprises prison and police officer together with probation and social services. The team areas of responsibility are anti-bullying, violence reduction, suicide prevention, child protection, and public protection. The Youth Justice Board has selected the team to run a pilot restorative justice project.

The anti-bullying project (BABS) provides a forum for young people and adults to report bullying without fear of retribution. Victims receive on-going support and reported perpetrators are dealt by sanctions, on-going monitoring and through interventions that address their bullying behaviour.

Suicide prevention ensures all vulnerable people in crisis, at risk of self-harm or suicide are appropriately cared for and supported. The agencies at Brinsford consider how individuals can have their needs addressed and how to reintegrate them so they feel safe among their peers. Families are also supported and kept informed.

Historical and current disclosures of abuse from adults and young people are managed through the Safeguarding team. The team acts to protect the young people/adults from further harm and provides assistance to police and social services. Everything is recorded in order to assess the situation and prevent a reoccurrence.
The restorative justice project undertakes mediation between young people and their families. Through mediation, the Safeguarding team facilitates communication between young offenders and their families and helps to be reunited on release.

A peer support group (Brinsford Crew) has been set up to befriend vulnerable under 18s to help them settle into life at Brinsford.

Once a month, the Safeguarding team organise a Safeguarding Day. Members of internal staff along with representatives of external agencies (e.g. Samaritans, Social services, etc) meet to discuss and share information relating to safeguarding young offenders.

Contact Details

HMP & YOI Brinsford, Safeguarding Department, New Road, Featherstone, Wolverhampton WV10 7PY T: 01902 532450 E: peter.knapton@hmps.gsi.gov.uk
Cardboard Citizens

Cardboard Citizens is the UK’s only homeless people’s professional theatre company whose programmes engage homeless Londoners through:

- performing arts workshops at hostels and day centres,
- performances with, by, and for homeless people and the public,
- information, advice and guidance.

Cardboard Citizen’s work is a collaborative effort, which affirms homeless people as valuable members of the community. In order to empower the homeless participants, Cardboard Citizens engage them in all aspect of the company:

- Hiring former participants as staff
- Collecting participant’s feedback
- Holding an annual company member’s meeting.

More than 30,000 homeless people have been involved so far.

The group’s mission is to use the performing arts to:

- Improve the self-esteem of homeless people
- Act as a catalyst for them to make positive changes in their lives
- Improve public understanding and awareness about the experiences of homeless people.
The workshops progress in difficulty, therefore requiring concentration and commitment from the homeless participants, which in return improve their social and practical skills. Participants are then more receptive to make positive changes in their lives. The participation in the creative workshops and public performances strengthens self-esteem and increases emotional wellbeing.

Personal experiences are often shared in the workshops, which bonds participants.

Of the 2,000 homeless and socially excluded people Cardboard Citizens engage each year, the primary benefits are to inspire and motivate them to do something positive in their lives, and to give them a voice with which they can improve the public’s perceptions of homelessness.

Funding comes from the Arts Council England and grants from trusts, foundations, and statutory sources. These pay for:

- Staff and professional freelance artists who facilitate participants’ work, advise and support their progress
- Materials and equipment
- Support for participants in reimbursement of travel costs, hiring interpreters and childcare costs.

**Contact details**

Cardboard Citizens, 26 Hanbury Street, London E1 6RQ, T: 020 7247 7747 E: mail@cardboardcitizens.org.uk W: www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk
English Churches Housing Group > Reflections

In 2006, Wellington Street hostel set up a project called Reflections. The project – for single homeless people – aims to raise self-esteem in order to live independently in the community.

The clients built up individual portfolios to showcase their achievement during their stay at the hostel. The portfolio encourages clients to set individual goals and targets. By achieving these goals and seeing the positive outcomes clients become more positive and proactive and therefore feel empower.

Through completion of the project, clients gain skills to access jobs, training or employment. It also ensure clients have the necessary basic living skills to sustain a tenancy.

The project has been evaluated by Supporting People scoring Bs in the Quality Assessment Framework.

Contact Details

English Churches Housing Group, 10 Wellington Street, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS2 1BN T: 01642 242534 E: joconnor@echg.org.uk W: www.echg.org.uk
London & Quadrant Supported Living > Rainbow project

The Rainbow project is a user-led project promoting healthy living for older people, independence and social inclusion. The project consults residents, encourages them to identify a range of activities and then works with local partners to provide them. Members of the community are also involved through referral and local publicity. Rainbow’s objectives are to:

- promote participation and consultation
- meet individual needs and aspirations
- encourage local partnership, integration and community cohesion
- provide a holistic approach to health and well-being and develop a range of social and health-related activities in response to the expressed needs and interests of service users
- increase access to local resources, advice and information.

The benefits for the service users are an improved quality of life; a sense of optimism and renewed confidence; improved mobility and fitness; independence, interdependence and restored social networks; programme of regular social and health oriented activities.
Contact details

London & Quadrant Supported Living, Wentworth House, 12th floor, 350 Eastern Avenue, Ilford IG2 6NN T: 020 8532 4011 E:

pgatward@lqgroup.org.uk
Manchester Methodist Housing Association

Manchester Methodist Housing Association (MMHA) is part of Great Places housing group and manages 5 supported housing projects for teenage parents and 4 floating support services. The scheme for teenage parents offers temporary accommodation with support for young mothers. During their stay, they develop life skills to enable them to move on and live independently with their children.

MMHA includes teenage fathers in the support services offered (e.g allowing them to stay overnight). MMHA encourages young fathers to play a significant part in their child’s upbringing and builds a family in a supported environment, which can then be maintained independently in the community. Fathers are also encouraged to participate in the various activities run by the scheme including playground activities and parenting courses.

Contact details

Manchester Methodist Housing Association, Southern Gate, 729 Princess Road, Manchester M20 2LT, T: 0161 4475000 E: zoe.oleary@greatplaces.org.uk W: www.greatplaces.org.uk

www.supportactionnet.org.uk
NACRO and Homelessness Prevention Mediation Service

The Homelessness Prevention Mediation Service, run by Nacro and Nottingham City Council uses mediation to sustain young people’s relationships with their parents or carers, as a means of preventing homelessness and vulnerability.

The service employs two full-time mediators who have substantial experience and have been trained to Mediation UK standards. As well as conducting mediation sessions, the project workers have also delivered mediation training to hostel staff who work with young people.

Through the mediation sessions, service users are helped in the following ways:

- Improvements in family communication
- Delayed moves from young person’s home into temporary or alternative accommodation
- Help for young people returning home
- Improved relationships between young people and their families or carers
- Use of conflict resolution as a tool for getting to the root of contentious issues
• Support in identifying alternative accommodation and other services if required

Contact details

Julie O’Farrell, Homeless Prevention Mediation Service, 16 Vivian Avenue, Sherwood Rise, Nottingham NG5 1AF T: 0115 985 7744 E:

Julie.ofarrell@nacro.org.uk W: www.nacro.org.uk
Novas Group > Action Works

Novas supports vulnerable and excluded people in Bristol through arts, enterprise and community support. Action Works is a customer-led empowerment network, which helps Novas’ service users to develop their skills and put something positive back into their communities. The project increases service-users’ participation in the community and the organisation as well as developing their skills, choices, confidence and independence.

Action Works’ objective is to enable service-users to become community leaders, to challenge perceptions, bring people together and ensure inclusion for all. Two hundred homeless and ex-homeless people have benefited directly from involvement in Action Works. It has assisted homeless people to move on, take up employment and become community champions. Through this project, staff and managers have learnt new ways to engage customers from diverse backgrounds and achieve organisational objectives.

Contact details

Novas Group, 68 Parkway, London NW1 7AH, T: 020 74243060, E: Alexandra.pryce@novas.org, W: www.novas.org
Open Doors > Creative Drop-In

Open Doors is a sexual health outreach and clinical service that provides health and social welfare services for women who sell sex from the streets of Hackney, London. Outreach workers make contact with the women, encouraging them to use the Crisis Drop-In that takes place Thursdays and the Creative Arts Drop-In on Tuesdays.

Open Doors’ Crisis Drop-In helps the women address their issues and take more control of their life. It is run to support street sex working women with their immediate needs: housing, drugs counselling, legal support and sexual health care and awareness.

Open Doors’ Creative Drop-In runs parallel to the Crisis Drop-In and aims to increase the women’s sense of wellbeing and rebuild the women’s relationships with their families and the local community through creative play and strategic gift giving of artwork.

The Creative Drop-In service provides the following benefits for its users:

- a general project idea with the women which they can work towards over a period of eight weeks
- weekly workshops ideas which link together and work towards completing the general project idea
- a responsive and warm working environment
• a space where the women can come and have a hot meal every week

• a record of every engagement that women makes through digital video and stills, reflecting constant achievement through updates every week

• the opportunity to share this documentation with their families and friends and supporting them through this process.

The wellbeing of women is increased and their confidence boosted. They have a positive sense of identity and leave the Drop-In feeling strong and optimistic. The warm atmosphere of the Drop-In and the emphasis on sitting down and eating together creates a sense of belonging and community.

The funds from City and Hackney PCT are allocated to the hall space where the Drop-in is held; hot meals provided every week; and staff time and materials.

**Contact Details**

Open Doors, St Leonards Hospital, 3rd floor, A Block, Nuttall street, London N1 5LZ, T: 07970956127 E: georgina.perry@chpct.nhs.uk
Rodney Housing Division > Paragon Project

The Paragon project is a floating support initiative for female ex-offenders in Liverpool. Most of the women referred to the project have drug and alcohol issues.

The project provides a short hold tenancy, which is converted in an assured tenancy after a year, providing the tenancy has been maintained and no problems have arisen. The support – provided by resettlement officers – includes helping women maintain their tenancy, dealing with correspondence, signposting towards advice and education, welfare and employment. The support compliments and reinforces the work made by Probation to ensure the successful resettlement of the women.

The women are referred through probation, social service and local agencies. The support runs for 12 to 24 months at the pace agreed between the service user and the resettlement officer. A key assessment and plan are established to reduce the risk of re-offending and sustain the independent tenancy. The key risks managed include drug rehabilitation, management of tenancy and finances, coordination support for families with children, reducing isolation and focusing on living skills.
Contact details

Rodney Housing Division (Liverpool Housing Trust), 4th floor, State House, 22 Dale Street, Liverpool L2 4TR T: 0151 2360010 E: kwynne@lht.co.uk W: 
www.rodneyhousing.co.uk
Scottish Association for Mental Health > Bridgework

Bridgework is a project developed in partnership between Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) and North Lanarkshire Council. It targets homeless men over 25 with alcohol dependency. The project supports its service users to break the cycle of chaotic lifestyle by offering a fixed-term accommodation. The services on offer include emotional support to address issue underline the alcohol misuse, advocacy, signposting to other agencies, social activities, promotion of health improvement and wellbeing. The service enables service users to identify their priorities and plan how to meet and regain control of their life. Staff engage by proactive persistence, encouragement and exploring choices.

The service has developed expertise in technical aspects of addiction, such as the physiological impact of alcohol and the human cost.

Contact details

Scottish Association for Mental Health, Hugh Hill, Cumbrae House, 15 Carlton Court, Glasgow G5 9JP, T: 0141 568 7000, E: hugh.hill@samh.org.uk W: www.samh.org.uk

www.supportactionnet.org.uk
Sing Your Heart Out

Sing Your Heart Out (SYHO) organises singing workshops that bring together vulnerable people – especially those who have suffered from or who have mental health issues – to enjoy the benefits and positive effects of organised vocal exercise and group singing. SYHO’s participants get a programme of sessions, guided by a professional voice teacher, that promote positive relationships between service users, carers and the healthcare professionals (who administer their treatment and social service needs) as well as with the wider community. In the supportive and caring environment of the workshops, no one is identified a service user, carer or healthcare professional. Thus, a service user who is a confident singer may be able to offer support and guidance to a less capable carer.

SYHO is funded by taking part in research and giving public performances. A professional musician, Chrissy Parsons-West leads the vocal exercise and songs. Some previous services user volunteers act as leaders and managers of the project. Transport for the service users to have access to the workshops.

An independent evaluation of the workshops was conducted in 2006 among, service users, carers and mental health staff.

- 93 per cent felt that the workshops were always fun and enjoyable
- 79 per cent felt that the workshops always had a positive effect on their mental health
• 93 per cent would attend another workshop

• 100 per cent of healthcare workers felt that it was positive for their professional development.

SYHO took part in a large-scale study commissioned by the Department of Health into the benefits of arts for health published in September 2007: *Mental Health, Social Inclusion and Arts – developing the Evidence base – Final Report.*

**Contacts Details**

Sing Your Heart Out, Kingfisher House, Hellesden Hospital, Drayton High Street, Norwich NR6 5BE, T: 01362 688754 E: pennyholden@tiscali.co.uk W: [www.syho.org](http://www.syho.org)
Stonham Supported Lodgings

Stonham Supported Lodgings provides lodging placements alongside a service that supports vulnerable people between 16 and 25 to sustain training or employment after they settle into their new homes.

The accommodation can be short-term, to enable bridges to be built and to provide a sense of space away from troubles, or longer-term whilst a young person preparers for independent living. Throughout the placement the client is given support to develop life skills as well as find and sustain employment/education or training.

The service has received, trained and paid over 30 householders throughout Hampshire to accommodate young people.

Each client/householder has fortnightly link working sessions and scheduled reviews of the placement. This includes monitoring progress made towards individual goals. The service works with clients, over issues such as benefits or helping them get funding for college or training.

Some young people can return to their family after placement because they have been given time and space to re-evaluate relationships.

Stonham Supported Lodgings achieves the following benefits for its clients:

- Provides role models for young people who may not have had many positive role models in life.
• Helps develop clients’ life skills, in particular cooking healthy meals and budgeting.

• Young people develop a sense of self-worth and a positive sense of identity

• Helps clients to break the cycle of social exclusion.

An evaluation in 2007 showed that 100 per cent of clients were in education/training/employment within three months of moving into supported lodgings.

Contact Details

Stonham Supported Lodgings, Chineham House, Chineham Park Court, Hampshire RG24 0BW T: 01256 347146 E: penny.diver@homegroup.org.uk
Storybook Dad

Storybook Dad is an independent, registered charity funded by large trusts and is based at Dartmoor Prison. Since 2003, Storybook Dad has worked in over 50 prisons and produced 4,000 story CDs and won seven national awards. The concept of prisoners recording a story for their children is not a new one but Storybook Dad uses digital technology to enhance the stories. Prisoners’ recorded stories are edited on computer, mistakes are removed, music and sound effects are added to the final product. Poor literacy is not a barrier to involvement.

Fathers and children can remain in contact through these stories during a time of enforced absence.

Storybook Dad’s work has achieved the following benefits.

- Maintaining family ties between prisoners and their families through the production of Story CDs
- Engaging prisoners in parental activity
- Building bridges and strengthening families bond in order to help with resettlement and reduce re-offending upon release
- Reducing trauma for the children and helping breaks the cycle of neglect and intergenerational offending
- Improving imprisoned parents’ literacy and IT skills
• Reaching as many families as possible and expanding the work through the prison estate.

Contact Details

Storybook Dad, HMP Dartmoor, Princetown PL20 6RR, T: 01822 892287 E: storybookdads@blueyonder.co.uk W: www.storybookdads.co.uk
# Appendix: List of all entrants

The following organisations submitted entries to the SupportActionNet Awards 2007:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>999 Club</td>
<td>Bedfordshire County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.W.S North Somerset Education</td>
<td>Bradford and District Association for Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Industry</td>
<td>Braintree Women’s Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Homeless</td>
<td>Bridge Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addaction Luton</td>
<td>Buckscc PSI Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone in London</td>
<td>Calderdale SmartMove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer’s Society</td>
<td>Cambridge Housing Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber Foundation</td>
<td>Cardboard Citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber Project, Edinburgh</td>
<td>Care UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyrenians</td>
<td>Centre Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber Valley Association for Mental Health</td>
<td>Chance UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquila Way</td>
<td>Chester Lodgings and Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARP</td>
<td>Providers (CLASP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashram Housing Association</td>
<td>Chissock Woodcraft Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augment (Scotland) Ltd</td>
<td>Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEAT</td>
<td>Colebrook Housing Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Campus’87
CRI
Disability Sport Academy
Diverse Pathways
Doncaster Alcohol Services
Eastbourne YMCA Residential Centre
English Churches Housing Group
Friends, Families and Travellers
Grampian Race Equality Council
Harvest Housing Group
Havering College
Help the Aged
Hestia Housing and Support
HFT
Hillcrest Housing Association
HMP & YOI Brinsford
HMYOI Impact Ascend
Hull CC Housing Support Service
Kidz Aware
LQ Supported Living
Manchester Methodist Housing Association (part of Great Places Housing Group)
Mediation North Surrey
MHA
NACRO
Network for Change
New Way Project
Next LInk Domestic Abuse Services
NomadE5 MH Services
Norcare
Norwich Community Alarm service
Norwich Mind
Novas Group
Open Doors (City and Hackney PCT)
Options For Life
Places for People Individual Support
Planet B drop in centre
Plymouth teaching Primary Care Trust
Powerhouse Foyer (part of ECHG)
Queen Elizabeth’s Foundation
Rethink
Richmond Upon Thames Churches Housing Trust/Paragon Community Housing Group
Rodney Housing Division (Liverpool Housing Trust)
SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health)
SAMH Connect
Sing Your Heart Out
Sojourners House
Sound Minds
St Anne’s Community Services
St Mungos
Stockport Homes Resettlement Service
Stonham
Stonham Supported Lodgings
Storybook Dad
Team First Community Interest Company
The Cambridgeshire Parliament (part of Speaking Up)
The Field Lane Foundation
The Gap Project, Oxford
The Irene Taylor Trust
The Kenward Trust
The Ley Community
The Meridian Programme
The Riverside Centre
The Salvation Army, York
Time For Me (part of Barnardo’s)
Tuntum Housing Association
Tyneside Cyrenians (GAP Project)
Warwickshire Domestic Violence Support Service
West Suffolk MIND
West Sussex DAAT
Weston Foyer
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wilf Ward Family Trust</th>
<th>YMCA Birkenhead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyre Forest Nightstop and Mediation</td>
<td>York Arts Council Biometron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your Homes Newcastle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>