

FEATURE ARTICLE: KEEPING IT LIVE MIND IN BEXLEY'S AGM



Mind in Bexley's AGM took a musical turn with live performances by a string quartet composed of students from the Trinity College of Music and a busking folk singer from Bexleyheath. They played or sang both traditional, seasonal and modern numbers to enthusiastic audience and brought a refreshing air to the lunchtime and concluding sessions. There was also a reading of poems by Jean Lucy and Michael Armstrong, members of the Creative Writing Group, which meets every Friday at Mind in Bexley.

In addition to the ordinary business of an AGM presentations were made by our two invited guest speakers.

Cllr Teresa O'Neil, Leader of Bexley

Council, spoke of the importance of Partnership working within Bexley and the significant role played by the Voluntary Sector in delivering services to Bexley's residents.

She spoke about the difficulties facing Bexley in the current economic downturn and the impact on employment for many of Bexley's residents, many of whom worked in the banking and IT sectors. She spoke of her commitment to the work being done by the Local Strategic Partnership in helping the Council deliver vital services and finding local level solutions to the issues facing Bexley.

She concluded by saying despite the difficulties facing Bexley she remained optimistic about the future for Bexley.

Brendan McLoughlin, the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Regional Coordinator, gave a background to the development of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies Programme along the lines of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines on delivering psychological therapy. He emphasised the importance of a holistic approach to providing care and referred to MiB beyond Red – a debt counselling service as an example. He was pleased that the Bexley programme was being funded in partnership with GPs

Presentation

Alan Greenshields who was retiring from the Board gave his final presentation of MiB accounts, followed by presentation to for all his hard work as a befriender and Treasurer.



New Board Members

New board members elected at the meeting were Sofie Aman, Treasurer and Charity Chenga, Ordinary Member.

Volunteers awards

Volunteer certificates were presented to: Tehmina Aziz, Sandra Saunders and Bill Warren, for three years of service, with five year certificates being awarded to Hugh Botterman, Claire Cuthill, David Johnson and Maureen Modlock.

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SPRING INTO SUMMERTIME ARTICLE, UPDATED MIND IN BEXLEY CONTACTS

BEING WELL IN BEXLEY.

BEXLEY PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES AND WELL BEING SERVICE (IAPT)

'BEING WELL IN BEXLEY' IS MIND IN BEXLEY'S AND BEXLEY CARE TRUST'S RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S PROJECT TO INCREASE ACCESS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES

The service occupies the entire top floor at Mind in Bexley's new premises which have been comfortably refurbished with light and airy interview rooms offering a welcoming confidential environment for people to be seen in.

All referrals to the Being Well in Bexley service come into Mind and people are then allocated to the appropriate strand of the service. Currently people are referred directly to this service by their GP. It is envisaged that by 1 May people will also be able to self refer to the service.

The overall aim of the service is to provide a high quality standard of care, to enable people to access the services without unreasonable delays and to decrease dependency on, and minimise referrals to, secondary mental health services.

It also aims to empower and provide those referred to the service with long-term life skills which will reduce isolation and enhance independence and well being.

The Being Well in Bexley service is holistically based, meaning that people are able to access a whole range of services – see side bar. This is in recognition that all sorts of issues impinge upon mental health and dealing with the issues of, for instance, debt or employment, alongside receiving a psychological intervention, significantly improves peoples well being, assists with their integration full participation in the wider society.

BEING WELL IN BEXLEY ELEMENTS

LOW INTENSITY, SELF HELP CBT

This is a guided programme which offers different methods of delivery of self-help CBT. These include workbooks and computerised CBT.

HIGH INTENSITY ONE TO ONE CBT AND COUNSELLING.

This is a more intensive level of intervention and may follow on from the Low Intensity Self Help intervention or may be the initial intervention if Low Intensity is not appropriate. Currently this aspect of the service consists mainly of CBT and counselling and is the strand that is delivered at GP surgeries.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

This provides an individualised assessment of need and a support package to assist people to either retain or obtain employment whilst dealing with issues regarding their mental health, working closely with employment services and employers to offer a seamless service.

HOLISTIC WELL BEING SUPPORT

This provides an individualised assessment of need and a support package to assist people to gain access to a variety of services whilst dealing with issues regarding their mental health. The support services are either provided directly by Mind in Bexley or by other agencies within Bexley

DEBT – SUPPORT

This provides a Debt and Budget Advice service to people experiencing mental distress and accessing the Being Well in Bexley service. It supports their recovery processes by assisting them in managing current finances, budgeting for debt avoidance or to prevent further debt problems with the overall aim of taking control of their financial problems.



BEING WELL IN BEXLEY SERVICE ELIGIBILITY

The service is available for all Bexley residents who are:

- Over 18
- Registered with a Bexley GP
- Experiencing Mental health difficulties

The service operates Monday to Friday and currently also run two evening sessions a week to enable people in employment during the day to fully access the service

Mind Research Success - Self-help CBT

Mind in Bexley undertook a major piece of research into the effectiveness of various forms of Self-help Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) mild-moderate depression and/or anxiety.

The aim of the programme was to compare the impact of three self-help cognitive behavioural therapies: Beating the Blues[®], a workbook and a free access internet based website.

The results of the research demonstrated that within a two-month follow-up period, all three different tools delivering self-help CBT produced significant clinical benefit for adults with mild to moderate depression and anxiety. None of the methods for delivering supported self-help CBT appeared superior to another. There was no evidence to suggest that any of these interventions would be likely to reduce subsequent service uptake. Nevertheless, this pilot study has shown sufficient benefit from each of the self administered CBT tools to justify larger trials of their use.

The research has now been published and is in the latest addition of Mental Health in Family Medicine.

SUPPORT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Support and Social Inclusion covers a whole range of groups and activities, all work towards improving well-being, reducing isolation and empowering people towards recovery.

Some of our activities are briefly outlined here.

Please contact Mind in Bexley for further details on all of our services.

Life-Skills Courses

We offer courses of varying lengths which:

- Improve mental well being
- Encourage personal development

Women's Activity Morning

The Activity Morning is a support group run by women for women, who are experiencing mental health distress and alternative therapies such as Reiki and Keep fit are available during these sessions.

Culturally Specific Self help Initiatives

Our culturally specific self help initiatives promote positive mental health by reducing social isolation and exclusion.

They also provide opportunities for skills development via access to I.T. workshops & culturally specific activities.

Phoenix Group

This is a Self help Support Group for people that have completed therapy with the Being Well in Bexley service..

Choices Forum

The Choices Forum is a group run by 'service users' for 'service users' that exists for user empowerment.

The forum gives a voice to service users around service planning, development and provision.

Volunteering and Co-Production

Co-production enables us to move out of traditional roles as experts and providers, into partnership models that work with users, volunteers and communities.

Volunteers work as an integral part of the team, that build or strengthen social networks and in turn motivate people to learn about and exercise their powers and responsibilities as citizens.

Befriending Scheme

This service is provided by volunteer befrienders to support service users living in residential settings and accessing secondary services. Befriending helps to reduce isolation and promote social inclusion and companionship, increasing self esteem and confidence.

Expressive Arts

Expressive Arts can be relaxing uplifting, and therapeutic.

We provide structured groups and self help initiatives which help to rebuild confidence, self esteem and empowerment.

If you are interested in any of these groups please contact Sue White our

Social Inclusion and Support manager on 20 303 5816 (option 3)

Mind2Mind Peer Mentoring

Mind2Mind Peer Mentoring Project is an innovative project which draws on the understanding and skills of people who have experienced their own mental health issues to help others.

According to the Home Office Active Community Unit, mentoring is a one-to-one, non-judgemental relationship in which an individual voluntarily gives time to support and encourage another.

Who are our volunteers?

People who are living positively with or after mental health issues are trained to act as mentors for others who are starting their journey to (re)gain a quality of life. They offer one to one support and guidance over an agreed period of time, focussing on achievable goals, confidence-building and shared experiences. This helps to break down the feeling of isolation and stigma often associated with mental health issues and provides a safe space for people to talk, discover who they are and where they want to be.

Training

Mentors receive full induction to Mind in Bexley and skills training such as active listening, goal-setting and remaining non-judgemental. Ongoing support, supervision and training are also provided to ensure they are carrying out the role effectively and dealing with the demands of a mentoring relationship. Benefits are not just aimed at the mentees: through positive community development and access to training, Mind2Mind aims to provide a gateway to employment for volunteer mentors.

Who do we help?

Potential users of the programme are engaged through various methods, some are already service users of Mind in Bexley and some learn about the project through the Mental Health Teams and other organisations. The important factor is that they have a desire and commitment to live positively with mental health issues and develop their own definition of 'recovery'.

People are already being matched and the relationships are working well so far.



NEW HORIZONS PROGRAMME LAUNCHED TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND WELL-BEING

A cross-Government programme of action has been launched to improve the mental well-being of people in England and drive up the quality of mental health care.

New Horizons: a shared vision for mental health is a comprehensive initiative that will be delivered by ten national Government departments.

It also brings together an alliance of local government, the voluntary sector and professionals, as well as local communities and individuals to work towards a society that values mental well-being as much as physical health.

New Horizons covers a lifetime - from laying down the foundations of good mental health in childhood, through to maintaining mental well-being into older age. It also emphasises the importance of prevention through to effective treatment and recovery.

New Horizons also outlines the benefits of reducing the burden of mental illness and unlocking the benefits of well-being in terms of physical health, educational attainment, employment and reduced crime.

The document has been launched alongside plans to support people with mental health problems back into employment.

Work, Recovery and Inclusion: is a cross-government delivery plan for England to support people in contact with secondary mental health services into work. It forms part of the Government response to the Perkins Review, an independent review of how we can strengthen employment, health and wider state support to help people with mental conditions on out of work benefits..

Working our way to better mental health: is a cross government framework designed to improve well-being at work for everyone, and deliver significantly better employment results for people with mental health conditions, supporting them into work, helping them to stay in work and assisting them to return to work more quickly after sickness absences.



A CELEBRATION



The picture below taken at Mind's new premises is of celebration of one hundred residents benefitting from the support of the Bexley Health Trainers scheme, which is an initiative funded by Bexley Care Trust and delivered by Mind in Bexley in partnership with Inspire Community Trust, Age Concern Bexley and Bexley Council for Equality and Diversity. For further information about the programme, contact Haile on 020 8303 5816 (option 5) or 0795658 3286 at Mind in Bexley.

"Since being a Health Trainer, it has opened my eyes about how many people in the local community need Health Trainers to motivate, help and educate them to change to a healthier lifestyle. Having clients, helping them and seeing a change in their behaviour towards being healthy is very rewarding. Overall, I feel that my role as a Health Trainer is making a difference in someone's life, for them to stay healthy, stay active, live longer and have fewer visits to the GP surgery." (Jane - Bexley Health Trainer)



STOP PRESS

We are pleased to report that we have been awarded £1900 from Bexley Councils small grants fund to run a Photographic Group.

We aim to provide equipment and outings to undertake projects for eventual display at libraries and other sites across Bexley. More information about the plans for this activity will be produced shortly. But, if you are interested please let us have your name now.



LIFE BEFORE ADVOCACY

WORST MOMENTS IN A PAST LIFE

It does not always go as planned, Let me set the scene, Gibraltar is in the background the Royal Navy ship is leaving port, the sailors are lining the ship in their No 1 Uniforms – the nice white ones, the sea is a little choppy, but the sun is shining, we are on our way to Senegal in West Africa.

I am below deck, not dressed up like the seaman but in my boiler suit. I am a Marine Engineering Mechanic, and joined HMS Fife in Portsmouth; this was my first seagoing ship. I had been assigned to the shipwright party and was doing a fire hydrant check.

Life in the Royal Navy up to this point has been good, but all was about to change! I had checked probably around 6-7 hydrants, this entailed putting a cut down fire hose on to the hydrant. The hose was about 6 foot long the open end was then placed into a dustbin, so as when you cracked open the fire hydrant the water went into the bin. The reason for checking the hydrants was that the water was sea water pumped straight out of the sea and you get all sorts of creatures sucked up and they could block the hydrant.

Well I arrived at the seamen's Mess (the place they live) and proceeded to connect the hose to the hydrant; we were probably two miles out by now and the Procedure Alpha, by which the procedure for the seamen to line the ship is known, was coming to an end. About the same time I was just cracking open the fire hydrant. I opened it very slowly and waited for the water to empty from the end of the hose into the bin, Nothing! so I opened the valve a little further and still nothing, So I then opened the valve about two full turns but still nothing, so I opened it another turn, but still nothing. Then what sounded like a champagne bottle cork popping came from inside the pipe. Then my world collapsed.

The rancid water came out of the hydrant as if it was connected directly to Niagara Falls, the hose pipe which was in the bin became like a Boa constrictor, it jumped out of the bin and went solid, The hose was alive, I fought with the hose whilst trying to turn of the valve. Then peace arrived the water stopped running.

I had about 30 seconds to reflect on the situation, but in that time I had obviously gone in to shock as I did not see the three foot of water at the end of the mess, and the whole wardrobe full of smelly waters sodden clothes. After the 30 seconds I was back in the real world as the seamen came down the ladder and saw the mess and their smelly sodden clothes and the items floating in the water.

The initial barrage of insults cannot be

written, in fact I don't think some of the words had been invented, but for sure I had made no new friends.

The clean up took about four hours, needless to say it was a long four hours. The next few months barrage of insults eventually died down, and the ship paid for the onboard Chinese laundry to wash all the sailors' civvy clothes.

The thing about this disaster is that the trip could only get better and did, We had a great time on the west coast of Africa

An Advocate



NEW FACES

Over the past couple of years Mind in Bexley has grown from some nine staff to 20. Lots of new faces so we thought we should introduce two of our new recruits.

My name is Christine Parkes and I started at

"Mind" in

December

2009 and work

with the Being

Well in Bexley

team. My

role at Mind

is a Holistic

Well Being

worker. This

is a new role

which involves

helping

people that

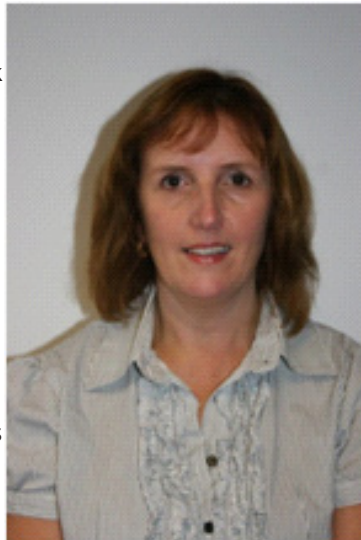
have mild

anxiety or depression with their social needs

such as housing, loneliness, fitness and general

well being.

My background has always been in the public service industry. I have been a Veterinary Nurse and managed a car rental branch. My last job was as a Courier delivering mail order catalogue items. Before this current job I undertook training with Bexley College to become Health Trainer. My placement was with "Mind" so I had already begun to working in a voluntary basis within Mind in Bexley before I took on this new role. My new job is very interesting and rewarding and I am enjoying helping people to regain their confidence and self esteem.



SPRING INTO SUMMER TIME

Spring brings warmer, longer days. BST (British Summer Time) helps us enjoy this better weather both earlier and later in the day. Outdoor leisure activities are then possible in daylight. The story of BST is the story of William Willett.

William Willett was born in 1856 at Farnham, Surrey and was a builder by trade. He is best remembered for his simple but ingenious invention that changed the world. He noticed valuable hours of daylight were lost in the early spring mornings, that people rise more easily in the lighter months, and he spent thousands of pounds on his idea of a national standard time.

William estimated more than two million pounds would be saved on fuel if his leaflet, 'The Waste of Daylight,' was adopted. At first, in 1908, and then 1909 and 1911, Parliament rejected his proposals for BST. Willett had intended a spring advance of eighty minutes, four moves of twenty minutes each.

Gradually, support for BST of one hour's advance, increased. Edward VI I declared Sandringham a 'daylight saving zone,' later Balmoral and Windsor advanced clocks one hour in the spring. Churchill saw a military use for the new time. Willett died March 4th 1915, a year before BST became a reality at 2am on May 21st, 1916, William's birthday. Summer time became permanent in 1925 and, although suspended briefly in the 1960's, similar systems are widespread abroad. The esplanade at Hastings has a memorial to William, near the bowling green. In Petts Wood

stands a sundial memorial with the Latin inscription, 'I only count the sunny hours'; a lasting tribute to springtime.

Remember

Spring Forward Fall Back

Michael J Armstrong



POEM

As I wandered down

In Bexley town

I saw on a stall in golden gown

bunches of daffies still in bud.

It filled me with joy

I felt good. Around the corner, waiting is
Spring

I skipped along I wanted to sing.

The stress I was feeling

Began shrinking away

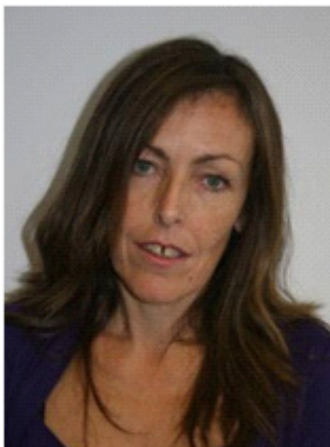
I'm looking forward to the first Spring
day.

Joan Scher -

Mind Creative Writing Group

My name is Amanda Hunt and I joined the Being Well in Bexley Team shortly before Christmas as the Employment Lead Worker. My role is to help those clients of our Being Well in Bexley service to keep or find employment. Unemployment is a significant casual factor in many cases of mental illness and therefore a major target for help.

So, I'm really looking forward to helping Being Well in Bexley service users. For 10 years I worked in various roles for the in Learning Disability Services finally working as a Community Nurse where I developed an interest in supporting people who also had mental health problems. I am looking forward to the challenges of my new and exciting role helping people to find and retain their jobs. For relaxation I'm learning to tap dance and I belong to a reading group. I am currently reading 'The little Stranger' by Sarah Waters



WHO ARE WE?

WHO USES MIND IN BEXLEY'S SERVICES?

We invited two of our service users to tell us their story of how they came to Mind in Bexley

Claudette's story

I have battled with depression and anxiety since my mid-twenties and have had two major breakdowns. The last one resulted in me being bullied at work and being unfairly dismissed from my job I fought back though and took my case to an employment tribunal and won an out of court settlement for unfair dismissal and workplace bullying.

It was my Community Psychiatrist Nurse who recommended I became involved with Mind. So, I went along to the day's services team and met Sue White. Sue encouraged me and been so supportive. I got involved with the Women's Group on a Friday morning. Since joining Mind I have made new friends and gained confidence in myself.

This has led me to campaign about mental illness issues especially discrimination. Last year after writing to the Prime Minister I was invited to 10 Downing Street to meet his Senior Advisor on Health Policy, Greg Beales. I met Greg in November and we discussed the Time to Change Campaign which has been set up to eliminate mental health discrimination and stigma.

We also discussed the issue of the disclosure of mental health problems on job applications. So you can imagine how excited I was to get an email the Government has introduced an amendment to the Equality Bill. This will stop employers from asking job candidates about their health (physical or mental) until after a job offer has been made.

I also campaign for Mind and have just been nominated onto the National Advisory Panel for Mind. My other interests include the women's institute the Town women's Guild and making hand crafted cards. So please do not let your mental health hold you back, we can make a difference

Richard's Story

I was born in Woolwich and after school got an apprenticeship with London Transport to be a mechanic. I learnt my trade on the famous Routemaster.

I slowly crept up the promotion ladder and in time became the service manager for one of LT major depots with 18 staff and 300 vehicles. Unfortunately a major reorganisation and increased management responsibility was also the catalyst which brought to head a major breakdown exacerbated by a long habit of heavy drinking picked up from a drinking culture in the family, friends and work.

So, after a time, I emigrated to Australia and worked as a motor mechanic at various locations including a time at the Sydney Bus Museum repairing there only Routemaster. But, this change did not solve my distress and drinking pattern and because of work permit conditions I had to return to Britain.

By now, aware that my lifestyle was extremely damaging I began to attend AA and regained a post as a mechanic with LT. Unhappily, because of my past history I was unable to gain a passenger carrying vehicle driving licence – a condition of my employment - and consequently lost my job. This major setback derailed me and I returned to a damaging life style. It also drove me to attempt suicide – fortunately the rope broke.

So in late 2009 I found myself in Woodlands the acute mental health wards at Queen Mary's Hospital. It was at this time that I encountered Mind in Bexley and with their help I have sorted out my benefits and the management of my debt. But, it was not only the practical help from Mind that I received that helped me but

the non-judgmental attitude of those who helped me. They also took a huge amount of pressure off my shoulders, meaning I could concentrate on getting well. I was able to speak openly about my problems. I saw hope return and began to straighten out my life. I have returned to the AA and have become an active Christian. 2010 is turning out to be the happiest for 30 years.



You can find out more about Time to Change at: www.time-to-change.org.uk

Getting to Know YOU: Mind in Bexley Befriending Scheme

A service provided by volunteer befrienders who are trained to provide companionship and support to individuals accessing secondary services and to those in residential settings.

"Well I like it because it's something different. You get to chat and talk to a friendly person. You know it's something that I can look forward to each week."

For further details contact Pam

(t) 0208 303 5816 (Option 3)



CHANGES TO STATE PENSION

STATE PENSION AGE

There is to be an increase in the state pension age for women born on or after 10 April 1950. Pension age rises by one month for every two months between 2010 and 2020, so that by 2020 the state retirement age is the same for men and women i.e. 65.

However things don't stand still because from 2024 until 2046 the state pension age for everybody will slowly rise to 68 for everyone born on or after 6 April 1959

CIVIL PARTNERS AND MARRIED MEN

Currently, some married women can get an increased basic State Pension based on their husband's entitlement. From 6 April 2010, married men and Civil Partners will also be able to do this. And you will not need to wait until your Spouse or partner claims their State Pension

ADULT DEPENDANTS

From 10 April 2010 it is no longer possible to claim an adult dependents addition to a state pension for new claimants. People already receiving this addition will retain it until April 2020.

NATIONAL INSURANCE CREDITS

People reaching state pension age will now qualify for a full state pension after they have paid National Insurance for 30 years rather than over 40 years.

PARENTS AND CARERS

Many parents and carers do not build up enough National Insurance contributions because their earnings are too low or they are unable to work because they are caring.

From April this year a new system of credits are to be introduced which entitles many people NI credits if you do not pay NI contributions and

- Get child benefit for a child/children under 12 years of age ,
- Are an approved foster carer,
- Care for at least 20 hours per week for someone who gets DLA at the middle or high rate of the care components, Attendance Allowance or constant attendance allowance.
- Where the need for care is certified by a health or social services professional

If you receive IS as a full time carer or because you have child / children under 12 you do not need to apply for these new credits,

Otherwise you need to apply for these credits; you need to do this as soon as possible as late applications may be rejected. So, if for example, you wish to apply for credits during the tax year

2010 /2011 you need to apply no later than 5 April 2012. The exact details of how to claim will be available soon.

FIT NOTES REPLACE SICK NOTES

A very important change to come in April 2010 which will have a significant impact on those currently signed off as sick. Sick Notes issued by GPs are to disappear to be replaced by FIT NOTES which aim to focus on what someone can do rather than what their medical limitations are.

In the past GPs have either said that you "should refrain from work" or "you need not refrain from work". The fit note offers a new option: "may be fit to work taking account of the following advice".

The G.P. will; consider suggestions for assisting an employee to return to work. This may mean discussing:

- A phased return to work
- Flexible working
- Amended duties
- Workplace adaptations

Why The Change

For many workers work is more than just a salary. Studies show that work and a routine is good for health, and that prolonged sickness absence can result in problems such as

- Isolation ,
- Loss of self confidence
- Depression and anxiety.

- De-skilling.
- Social exclusion.

This is a major change and we will report further on this issue as the rules and application of the new system begins to impact on our service users.

Welfare Rights Officers Fran Hetherington



If you cannot fit this in yourself see someone else to do so and sign it for you

A. TO BE COMPLETED IN ALL CASES - PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS

Surname Initials

First name

Present address

Date of Birth

National Insurance Number

Works or Clock Number or Department

B. If the doctor has given you a date to resume work

Date you intend to start (or date you will be employed by) as a self-employed person

FOR SIGNATURE WORKERS ONLY: Sick will begin at Time and end next day at Time

C. FOR STATE BENEFIT CLAIMANTS ONLY

Full name and address of employer of employee

DECLARATION

I understand that if I give incorrect or incomplete information action may be taken against me.

I declare that because of incapacity I have not worked since the date of my last claim. I also declare that my circumstances and those of my dependent(s) will have been as last stated. If there has been a change since our last declaration and attach a signed and dated statement of the new facts.

I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.

I agree that the Department for Work and Pensions or a doctor acting on their behalf may get in touch with my doctor so that they may give the Department for Work and Pensions any information which is needed to deal with this claim and any request to look at the claim again.

Signature Date

If you have signed this form for someone else, please tick here.

MINDING HISTORIES

With the summer approaching, Minding Histories is entering its final stage and preparations for the exhibition and accompanying material are beginning to take shape. Hall Place has been confirmed as the venue for a one month period from mid August to mid September and we are in discussion with them regarding archiving the interviews, providing public access to our research.

Trinidad, Jamaica, British Guyana, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Uganda are just some of the nationalities of our interviewees. In the past three months we have conducted over twenty interviews taking our total over the half way mark - our target being sixty interviews from various BME communities.

Since joining the project in February as an oral history project worker, Carmel King has conducted four focus groups with The Vietnamese and Chinese Well-being Group (see photo below), Belvedere Asian's Women's Group, Humrahi (Asian mental health group) and a group interview at the Greenwich Hindu Temple. These discussions have provided an invaluable insight into the communities within Bexley and the resources available. We found that group discussions created an opportunity for wider debate and discussions about shared experiences. It emerged that those who did not feel comfortable doing an individual interview felt confident enough to contribute in a group setting, as the focus was shared.



These focus groups have allowed us to gain a broader understanding of the community as a whole - what it was like for the first Bangladeshis to arrive and for the family and friends that followed, descriptions of their personal and collective experiences as well as how the borough has changed over the decades.

We will be presenting extracts of these discussions alongside individual interviews at the exhibition this summer. Volunteers have been donating many hours of their time; conducting interviews, transcribing, collecting archival images and photographing interviewees. With their help we are hoping to display a wide range of objects, old photographs, memorabilia as well as interview extracts in order to make the exhibition educational and visually interesting. The aim to make the project accessible to a wide audience, of all ages and cultures.

There will be a preview evening in August where all those of have participated and contributed to the project will be invited to Hall Place to celebrate Minding Histories. The press will be invited and school visits will be arranged once schools have returned in September.

Over the next few months we will be completing our final interviews and working on the accompanying material such as the DVD and booklet. The website www.mindinghistories.org.uk will continue to be uploaded with new information and photographs and there will be a publicity campaign in the local press advertising the exhibition.

If anyone would like more information on the project or knows someone who would like to be interviewed please get in touch with Carmel King or Charu Bassi.

cking@mindinbexley.org.uk (tel: 07866218531)

cbassi@mindinbexley.org.uk

Mind 2 Mind

Could YOU become or would YOU benefit from a Mentor?

Helping someone else to reach their potential change and development

Contact Angie Underwood

(t) 0208 303 5816

www.mindinbexley.org.uk

Supported by



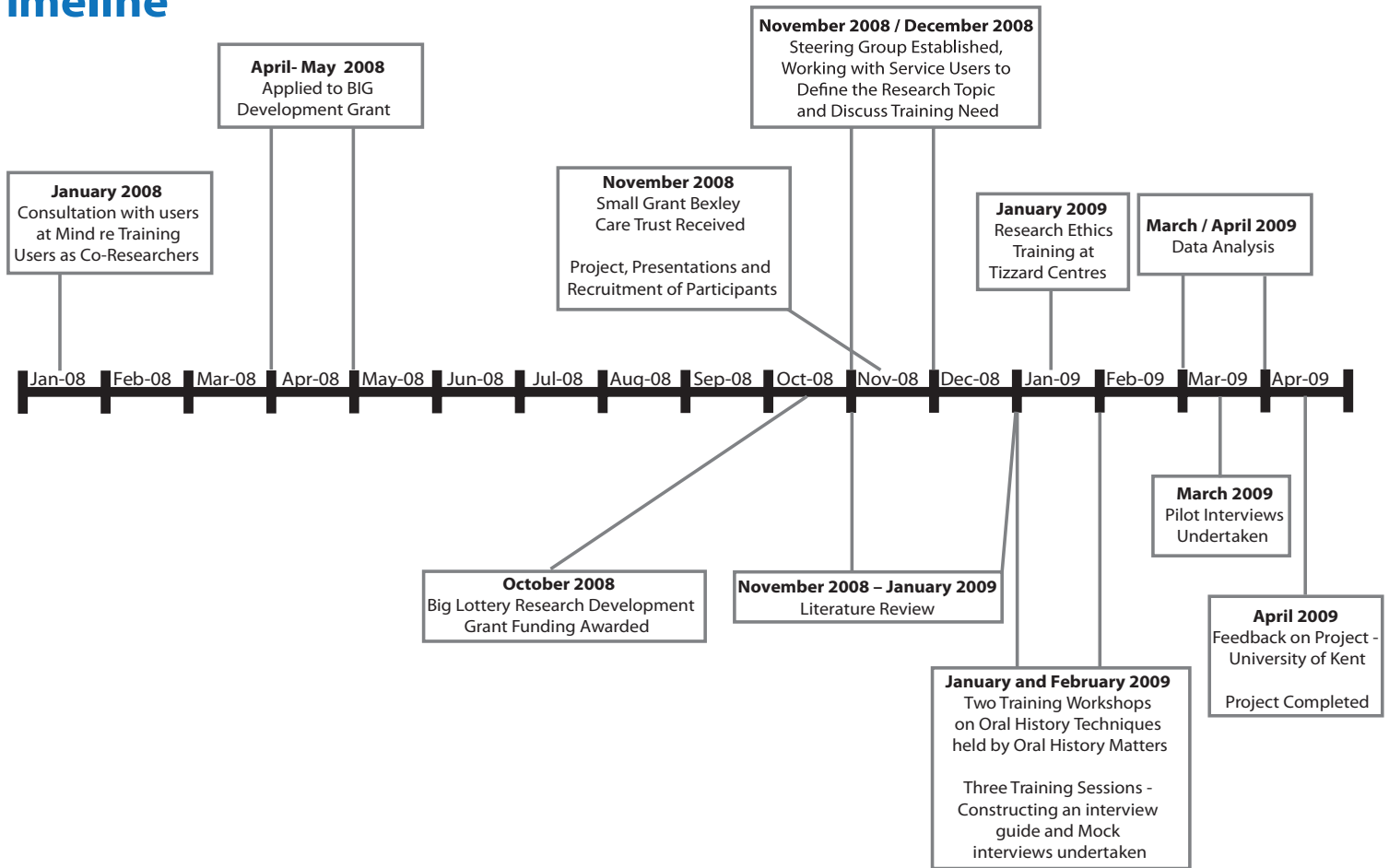
A Mentoring Scheme for those suffering from disadvantage due to their mental health.



‘NO ONE KNOWS LIKE WE DO’ — THE NARRATIVES OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USERS TRAINED AS RESEARCHERS

In 2008, Mind in Bexley received a research development grant from the Big Lottery Fund and a training grant from Bexley Care Trust to empower service users to participate and contribute to a pilot research project. The project aims were to work with, develop, train and support service users as researchers, in order to record the narratives of service users who have common experiences of mental health distress and treatment. The research development project set up an advisory group, created and developed a partnership with the University of Kent and provided workshops and training sessions to explore some of the principles of research and ethics. In addition, the group undertook a preliminary literature review, developed and refined a research questionnaire and piloted interviews with six service users. Many issues were raised and lessons learned during the planning and conduct of the project. A paper based on the project has been published in the Journal of Public Mental Health and discusses the process and reflects on aspects of the project’s design and delivery. In addition, this paper highlights some of the difficulties in undertaking service user research and suggests recommendations as to how to overcome some of these complex issues. The paper is available in the Journal of Public Mental Health (2009) Vol 8, No 4: 18-28. The Chief Executive of Mind in Bexley is presenting a paper based on the scheme at the Institute of Psychiatry (IOP) annual conference in June

Timeline



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