



unsung heroes

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2008

January 2009



The Beacon Friends Newsletter

Welcome to 5 new Trustees... and farewell to 2 long-standing ones.



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Our thanks to Ann Tunwell for her contribution of 65 Counselling reference books towards our new library!

2008 Stats

During 2008 we saw **386** clients: **132** males and **254** females.

- **129** in full time employment
- **70** unemployed
- **11** retired

2744 appointments were offered during the year.

We were very sorry to see Max Longton and Sue Miller depart from our Board of Trustees recently. Max (Company Secretary) and Sue had worked very hard and had shown great dedication for several years. However, December's meeting saw 5 new Trustees joining the team and below is a brief profile of each person and the role they will be doing:

Alan Hewitson:

A qualified Associate of the Chartered Insurance Institute, Alan is now retired and joined Beacon as a Receptionist a couple of years ago, and is our current winner of the Dorothy Boardman Volunteer of the Year. He now brings to the Board his vast experience in management, staffing, appraisals, training, face to face meetings with outside representatives and departmental budgets. He will sit on the HR and the Business Planning subcommittees.

Kathryn McGuire:

Kathryn works for Scottish Widows as a Senior Account Manager. She will bring her expertise from the sector, and will sit on the Events and the Appeals subcommittees

Figen Murray:

Figen is a qualified counsellor, supervisor and independent trainer running a private practice in

Stockport. She supervises a number of qualified and trainee counsellors outside of Beacon. Figen also runs professional development workshops for counsellors covering a variety of topics and is training staff at various organisations. Figen will sit on the HR subcommittee.

Joanna Tipa:

Jo is Operations Director for Daresbury Innovations Centre, part of the National Skills Academy. She is bringing her experience of tendering to the Appeals subcommittee and will also sit on the Events subcommittee.

Linda Tunnard:

Linda has worked as a teacher and then Deputy Headteacher at Bramhall High School for 28 years. Presently semi-retired, she now works as the school educational visits coordinator. For the past 12 years she has been involved in links with schools in many parts of the world, but in particular a school in Africa. She will bring her experience and expertise helping to organise fundraising events.

We hope that all our new Trustees enjoy their work with us and find it a rewarding and interesting experience.

Our Positive Mental Health Resource opens

Our Bramhall client waiting room has now been transformed into an information centre containing self-help leaflets and books about positive mental health for our clients and counsellors to access. There is information for people to take home on depression, anger management, sleep problems and tips on healthy eating, etc. Have a look at this new initiative when you can.

A week in the life of James Harper (Manager)



First week in January 2009:

Following Olivia's requests for some words on my typical week in work for the newsletter, I have briefly jotted down what this week has brought.

Monday - back into the office from Christmas. Day spent catching up on a vast array of emails and letters. Afternoon spent meeting with a counsellor regarding their research project at Beacon.

Tuesday - Telephone bust! Rang supplier, tried various solutions ourselves but to no avail, and then contacted BT to request an engineer. Landlord Brian Hill visited us to read the water meter and I talked with him for a while about the building and possible future improvements; sorted out a problem with a client who had turned up when the counsellor hadn't; later met with counsellor Yvonne Shelmerdine regarding B2 (Beacon 2) and organised plans for next month.

Wednesday - All day spent finishing off the 2 complex funding proposals for submission to Stockport MBC. We've been working on these for the last couple of months and I then hand delivered them to the Town Hall to ensure they were received into the right hands.

Thursday - office meeting with the staff all morning; wrote up summary of meeting and then we had problems with the main entrance door so the door people were called out and I met with them. In the afternoon, had a conversation with the contact at Stockport MBC regarding the applications, spoke with Sam (Finance Manager) about the financial year end and the preparation of the accounts.

Friday - planned the next recruitment for the permanent schools counsellor post that starts in the summer term and started working on it. Spoke with Barbara (Friday Appointments Administrator) regarding the office meeting and other important issues.

That's this week. Most weeks involve quite a few external meetings. The ones I attend regularly are with the Stockport PCT Local Implementation Team - it's important to build links with the PCT - and also MOVES, which is a meeting of voluntary sector managers. There are regular meetings regarding our Wythenshawe project, and I have formed good partnerships with organisations like Beechwood Cancer Care, Stockport Women's Centre, North West Centre for Eating Disorders, Stockport Christian Counselling, Manchester PCT, Mental Health Promotion, You and Yours Counselling Service, and a range of other one-off meetings. I've also recently attended some training with the GMCVO on funding tendering and strategic planning. These pieces of training will enable Beacon to set the direction of its longer term development and to start competing more effectively for contracts to provide counselling. Finally, there are a range of regular internal meetings, from the monthly trustee meeting, the various subcommittees, to the office meeting and Initials Meeting (which looks at the waiting list and training for assessments). All seems a bit meeting-y but it does help with the smooth running of the organisation!



Some goodbyes...

We were sorry to see volunteer Counsellor Terry Moore and Receptionists Annabel Macauley and Emma Bailey finish their work with us and thank them sincerely for all their dedication.

And a big Welcome to...

A contingent of new Counsellors namely: Gill Becque, Christine Caffrey, Eleni Dimitrellou, Catherine Lister, Zoe Nangah, and Charlotte Rolph. We hope you enjoy your work with us and that Beacon in some small way can help you develop and grow in your career.

Funding news

- ⇒ James has just submitted two long and complex funding applications to the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council Main Grant Scheme for 2009-10. One is seeking funding for our existing service and to organise and run a new counselling venue for the residents of Adswood and Bridgehall and its surrounding areas. The other is a joint project between Beacon, Stockport Women's Centre, and the North West Centre for Eating Disorders. In both cases we are looking for 3 years funding. We anticipate hearing a result mid March.
- ⇒ The tender we submitted recently to offer a counselling service to the GP's in Marple and Werneth (mentioned in our last Newsletter) was unfortunately unsuccessful. Bids are, of course, extremely competitive so the Funding Team have to be prepared to try multiple bids before any success can be achieved.
- ⇒ The annual grant we receive from the Stockport Primary Care Trust will unfortunately remain unchanged for 2009 despite James's strong plea for an increase. They currently fund us £3.39 towards each counselling session that costs Beacon over £30 to run.
- ⇒ We will shortly be applying to the Cheadle Royal Hospital Trust for salary funding.

As you can see from the above, and despite our best efforts, external funding is very difficult to get and so this is why we are appealing to all our supporters and volunteers to think of some fundraising ideas during our 25th year. Your initiatives need to be run past James first, who will then forward them to the Events Sub-committee and then we will be able to give you full support.



Olivia has a change of direction

Departing Client comments:

"You all provide such a feeling of care and hope. Everyone has an aura of gentle friendliness and kindness. I can never Thank you enough"

"My very sincere thanks for all your help and kindness during my sessions with you in Bram-hall. I am indeed lucky to have met you."

"Many thanks for all your kind support and attention throughout my time with you – it has been much appreciated and valued."

Trustee sub-committees

We now have 5 new sub-committees! They are: Appeals, Business Planning, Events Fundraising, Governance, and Policies.

James writes:

After 11 years of writing appeals for us, Olivia Hunt has stepped down from this role. Until the last 2 years, her contribution was a solo one, with Olivia first gaining a detailed understanding of Beacon's funding needs, then identifying fundable projects, researching funders, and finally constructing in depth and persuasive proposals to send to the funders. If you consider that the average appeals writer has a success rate of less than 5%, then you might see that it takes great perseverance to continue to write appeals when most responses are going to be NO! Olivia was, however, remarkably successful and helped Beacon gain funding for its training programmes, to buy its computer and IT equipment, buy furniture and security items when we moved into our current premises, fund the printing of our

information leaflets, and to gain funding for Beacon 2 on several occasions. Perhaps her most important success was in getting funding from the Tudor Trust, where she obtained £20,000 spread over 2 years. This was in August 2006, at a time when Beacon had literally run out of money and was about to close its doors.

As manager for the last 2 years, I have worked with Olivia in writing proposals and I would like to say that I have really enjoyed the experience, finding her skills, experience and good humour in the face of slim chances, a great help. So, I would like to say a huge thank you to Olivia for her contributions to appeals, since without her Beacon would not exist today. This is not the end for Olivia though, as she continues to write the superb Friends of Beacon Newsletter you are reading now – and long may that continue!

**BEACON
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To everyone who used the internet site "EveryClick" to send their email Christmas cards and who nominated us to receive a nice bonus. Thank you so much. Good for the environment, good for us, and good for you too we hope.

Recipes for positive mental well-being

A body of evidence linking diet with mental health well-being is growing at a rapid pace. As well as its impact on feelings of mood and general well being, the evidence demonstrates its contribution to the development, prevention and management of specific mental health problems. So - Beacon has decided to gather together some feel good recipes and food tips and publish them in a small book for eventual sale in our Bramhall office. If everyone submits one idea or recipe for inclusion this could be a good fundraiser for Beacon as well as something clients and volunteers could take away with them to use at home.

A tasty fundraiser for Beacon!



“ BEACON’S FEEL GOOD FOODS”

Recipe Book

Do you have a favourite recipe that helps to promote positive mental health?

and / or

What foods, or recipes, simply makes you feel good?

Come on, let's have your ideas. Your suggestions will be made into a small book which will go on sale in the Bramhall Waiting Room and the money collected will go straight into the running of our service. Please email your suggestions to Olivia at olive.hunt@ntlworld.com or hand in to the office, together with your name.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Friends subscriptions now due

DON'T FORGET! January is the month to renew your subscription to "Beacon Friends". We plan to have some extra birthday events this year, plus our Newsletters being issued more frequently and focusing on many of our volunteers, plus more news, up to date articles about counselling, and invitations to all our public events. Your subscription helps to fund the running of our service to the people of Stockport. Please complete our separate renewal subscription form.