



The Friends Newsletter

2008 – A GREAT YEAR FOR BEACON!!!



This year has been busy and here are just some of the things we've managed to cram in...

- ◆ Counselling for 430 adults – which is an increase of 15% on last year
- ◆ Increased the numbers of counsellors who can deliver Consultations to more efficiently deal with our long waiting lists
- ◆ Introduced a quicker response time for all new clients
- ◆ Resumed our annual Open Forum
- ◆ Upgraded our web site
- ◆ Increased the number of supervisors
- ◆ Enlarged our Board of Trustees and given everyone their own responsibilities
- ◆ Enjoyed a successful first ever Fundraising Dinner
- ◆ Organised several training events for our volunteers
- ◆ Received £35,120 of funding for Beacon 2 from BBC Children in Need
- ◆ Delivered training to counsellors on a range of
- ◆ Introduced a new client monitoring and evaluation process
- ◆ Introduced an innovative one-to-one interview procedure with so that ex-clients to talk about their experience of counselling at Beacon
- ◆ Introduced Friday opening at the Bramhall office
- ◆ Produced an Office Manual containing all admin procedures
- ◆ And, of course, to top it offBeacon received a **Queens Award for Voluntary Service!**



Comments for our clients:

"It gave me strength to survive"

"It's a really good service for people to come and be understood and helped"

Bits and Pieces

- **James has recently attended training events on how best to write a funding tender and how Beacon might become a Social Enterprise**
- **We welcome new volunteer Danielle who has come to help us in the office**

More Top Tips for Positive Mental Health

Time for a cuppa? Maybe not! Tea, coffee, cola, other soft drinks and some tonic wines contain caffeine – a powerful stimulant drug related to amphetamine and cocaine. Even “decaffeinated” teas and coffees are not caffeine-free.

Too much caffeine can cause agitation, make it difficult to get enough sleep and can contribute to panic attacks. If you're feeling anxious, “keyed-up”, or can't sleep properly, try reducing your caffeine intake or cutting it out altogether for a while.

(Source: www.wellscotland)



Our New Year's Resolutions

- To celebrate our 25th birthday with exciting events and fundraisers
- To produce a strategic plan for the next 5 years
- Organise an Open Forum for everyone to attend
- Launch our Positive Mental Health Well-Being service from the office in Bramhall
- To investigate and decide whether to become a Social Enterprise
- Continue to apply for funding to improve access to counselling for anyone living in Stockport and surrounding areas
- Further improve the financial sustainability of Beacon
- Develop the Board of Trustees and its governance skills
- To offer specialised training events for all our volunteers
- Encourage volunteering
- Develop sustainable funding for our Wythenshawe project
- Pilot group counselling work in schools
- Commence working in a deprived area of Stockport
- And continue to give an efficient and caring service to the residents of Stockport and its surrounding areas

At last our clients can have their say

We have recently introduced an innovative addition to our service by setting up one-to-one confidential interviews between Manager James and clients who have just finished their counselling. This will enable our service users to influence our future services to the public as well as providing detailed feedback on their experience of counselling and of Beacon as a whole. As far as we know, no other voluntary sector counselling service in the area is offering this kind of initiative.

A Quality Standards Report for Beacon

Charlie Hanson, a student from the Manchester Business School, has recently presented us with a copy of his Dissertation on “Quality Standards in the Voluntary Sector”. This document was submitted to the University of Manchester towards his degree of Master of Science. Whilst Charlie was researching this project during the summer he interviewed 8 people from Beacon all of whom are mentioned in his project. Once we have digested his 102 page thesis the results of his research, and his resulting recommendations, will greatly assist Beacon with its ongoing decisions about how we go forward with our own implementation of a Quality Standard.



The Trustees and everyone in the Beacon office send their best wishes to you for a Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year