

Birchwood Highland

Inverness Support Service



Annual Report 2009/2010

A Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in Scotland 105400

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www.birchwoodhighland.org.uk

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Inverness Support Service



Independence
Inclusion
Recovery

Annual Report 2009/2010

Inverness Housing Support team started the year with 36 service users and ended with 36, but within the year 9 people left and 9 new people joined, 4 of whom came from BHRC.

Out of the 9 who left the service, 1 died, 1 moved to 24 hr. care and 1 was admitted to hospital.

The service provided has been mainly housing support, with a small element of Home Care, which ended when the one service user receiving personal care died.

Service users' comments

"The service I receive from Inverness Support Service is excellent; all the ladies who I see are 100%. I think they are worth much more than they are paid"

H Cunningham

"Service is quite good, in my support time I can choose to go to different places in town. My support is helpful as I can sort out bits and pieces with my support worker"

G Hardie

"I have great admiration for the staff at Birchwood. I did not get off to the best of starts but, over the years they have helped me tremendously to achieve my full potential".

M McGill

"My care workers have all been very helpful in supporting me to find solutions to day to day problems, such as repairs to my home"

Anon

"The service is very good. I get plenty of notice if my visit time has to change for any reason. Although, I only have one visit each week I can talk to my support worker about anything I am worried about. I am very confident with my Keyworker"

A Cummings

"The service as far as I'm concerned is Class A, great. It's great if anything goes wrong all I need to do is phone for help. The staff are all good and pleasant"

M McKenzie



Training

There have been opportunities for service users and staff to share in training events.

Staff have attended training/development courses to enable them to deliver training to colleagues and service users, for example:

Wendy, a staff member who completed the educator's first aid training with British Red Cross said, *"I went on this training course to learn how to pass on basic first aid and how to deal safely with emergency incidents. I then helped to pass on information to some of our service users. We did 3 training sessions- which they found very useful"* Pics

Marie attended a facilitators training in WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plans) so that she could help service users and staff to complete their own WRAPs. She said, *"I first heard about WRAP at a recovery conference and thought it was a good way to help people take control of their own recovery. I was given the opportunity to do the first stage of WRAP and completed my own WRAP. It was a hard but very rewarding thing for me to do.*

"I also learnt the stages and concept of WRAP so was very keen to do the facilitators course when it came up. This was a 5 day intense

course with lots of laughter and some tears but very rewarding as I learnt more about myself and added to my own WRAP also I learnt more about how to support service users in general.

"After the course all the facilitators got together to agree how we could best share out the training to give all staff and service users the opportunity to learn about and complete their own WRAPs so that we all take control of our recovery. I am quite anxious about doing this as I've never done this kind of thing before but I am really keen to try."

Service user activities

Audrey, who supports the service users group says:

"Service users and staff have organised events throughout the year to raise funds for additional activities and social get togethers. The events have included a ceilidh and a sponsored walk. The ceilidh was held in the Columba Hotel in Inverness and was attended by many people, raising over £1000 which was divided between ourselves and the Recovery Centre. One or two of our service users were very active in organising the event, finding highland dancers, fiddlers, an accordionist, a piper, and even raffle prizes.

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One of the service users also sang a couple of songs himself which was brilliant.

He has vowed to do it all again this year so be prepared!

One ceilidh goer said:

"I found the ceilidh such a great night. It was so full of happiness and enjoyment. I'm already looking forward to the next one."

Another person said, *"It was areally good night out and great that there were so many service users family and staff there"*

We decided to do another sponsored walk as the last one went down well and raised the service users' group quite a bit of money. We decided that the walk should be on the same route as the previous year as it's a fairly easy walk. We all met at the Tomnahurich Street Bridge and walked up the canal side to Dochgarroch.

A quote from some people that took part:

"I found the walk a great way of getting out and about and doing some exercise. It was good to know that monies raised would be going towards the service user's fund. It was a great day and the walk was not a difficult one."

A number of fun activities have also taken place this past year. These have

included a guitar group which was led by a previous service user, crazy golf which always gives us a laugh – not as easy as you might think - and walks around the islands. The service users' A.G.M was held in Inverness in September. The venue was Merkinch Community Centre and a number of activities were enjoyed such as indoor football, table tennis and a walk around Merkinch Nature Reserve. This all followed the meeting and a lovely lunch.

In October we held another photographic competition ran by See Me Scotland. A great many fantastic photos were submitted and for the second year running we held the exhibition in the Eastgate Shopping Centre in which people voted for their favourite photo.

Mental Health Week also ran along side the photo competition. This included a visit to Roller Bowl and a quiz competition between T.A.G Inverness, Birchwood Recovery Centre and us.

In March a couple of staff and service users attended a two day Living Life to the Full course which was run by Depression Alliance. This was a very interesting course consisting of discussions and group work. It taught us how to use our life skills with the use of self help books.



The books were very easy to work with and made most things that we may find impossible seem possible for us to do and change the way we see negative things in our lives and to become more positive. We now plan to support people to work through the self help books – one lady has already started that.

In February this year, having received some funding from the Forestry Commission, a group of Service Users from Birchwood Highland Recovery Centre and Inverness Support Service joined forces to attend an eight week project with The Forestry Commission at Abriachan on the outskirts of Inverness.

Margaret, a support worker, said:

“We were able to learn some fantastic survival skills including how to build a shelter and light a fire with no matches or lighters. We had a great time cooking on an open fire and ate the sausages we prepared, funny how they always taste so good outdoors. This year we had an unexpected amount of snow and Abriachan was badly affected. Some weeks we could not get there at all and others we gathered at the bottom of the hill and continued to learn new skills.”

The group was asked to decide on a project

which they felt would be of interest and which would give them a sense of achievement. It was agreed we would build a bench which could be put to good use. Everyone got involved collecting wood that was lying about in the forest, that’s true recycling, Simon showed us how to tie knots and we practiced this in two groups. Everyone was delighted with the bench and it now has pride of place on the front lawn at The Recovery Centre.

Everyone who came along to this project said they were really enjoying the experience at Abriachan and felt a real sense of achievement. Many also felt meeting new people from another service was very positive, they said although they began the project as individuals they quickly became a team.

We hope to repeat this fantastic experience again soon if we can get the funding to do it.

Our standards

The Care Commission inspected us in December and we were delighted to score the highest grades of excellent in each standard. We are very proud of that but are not complacent and plan to work hard to keep our grades high.

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