



Birchwood Highland Easter Ross Support Service



Annual Report 2010/2011

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Statistics (Cath MacInnes)

During the year from April 2010 - March 2011 we started with 27 service users and ended with 29.

Within the year, four new service users joined the service and two left. Of the leavers one returned to hospital then 24 hour care, and the other left the service as he was not engaging.

The number of hours delivered to individuals were:

5 hours and under per week = 13 people.

6 - 10 hours per week = 9 people.

11 - 20 hours per week = 4 people.

One person who came from the closure of a care home to his own tenancy received 35 hours per week. Unfortunately, despite all the support, this person did not manage to cope with living in his own home. After 10 months we ended the service as he had been hospitalised for several months and had decided to give up the tenancy.

Report on First Aid training (Sheila Low)

Sheila Low and James MacGibbon underwent First Aid training approximately two years ago. The instructor, Ian Ferguson, arranged training days for us and I must say he was very good, he put you at ease and the demonstrations were simple and effective.

We had quite a few days of training and then it was the big test! James and I passed to go onto become First Aid instructors. We held a few First Aid seminars with Service Users and staff in the office. One Service User who came along thoroughly enjoyed it. We were all surprised as this service user was not in the habit of coming out and mixing with people.

In November last year myself and James attended training at Red Cross house in Inverness. There was a good turn out, and this training was nothing like we had done before. The instructors had a different and



Staff and service users at
the Black Isle Wildlife Park



Sheila

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very basic way of teaching First Aid. We were given workbooks called First Aid key skills. The workbook contained picture cards of injuries, broken bones, a person having a stroke etc; on the back of the card it would tell you the main key skill, and what action to take. Then to call 999.

This was a very enjoyable day and basically it was common sense put into actions.

Befriending (Julieann Pirie)

I am a Support Worker at Birchwood Highland Easter Ross and I have recently taken on the role of Befriender Co-ordinator. I was slightly hesitant when I was first asked to do this as I am not a very confident person and I was not sure how I would manage. Emily asked if I would like to go on one of the training courses that they run for Volunteer Management. I was a wee bit apprehensive but I agreed to go and see if it would help me.

The course did help and I am now the proud owner of four befrienders. All of our befrienders are really nice, friendly people and they all enjoy the work that they do with our Service Users.

Mary is one of our new befrienders and she and Francis have had lots of days out. Mary befriends Francis once a week for two hours, and they go to the library in Alness and Invergordon. They have also been on the bus to Inverness to meet Francis's brother and sister-in-law for lunch. Francis likes to read books and quite often they will find a new book shop for him to have a browse around. They are going to the circus in Inverness very soon and Francis is looking forward to this.

Francis's comments: *"I like when Mary comes to befriend me she takes me out for coffee and cake and we go lots of nice places. Mary takes me to lay flowers on my late mothers grave, she is very kind."*



First aid training



Julieann



Mary

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Alison is another new befriender, who befriends Ian once a week. Ian travels to Dingwall to meet her, where they have been to the leisure centre and gone on quite a few different walks in and around Dingwall.

Alison's comments: "I enjoy befriending. I feel like I am giving someone a bit of a boost in their life and I feel like I am helping someone who is a wee bit less fortunate than myself. Befriending has also helped me with my confidence; Ian is quite a chatty man and likes to tell me lots of different stories."



Steve

Steve is our longest serving befriender. Steve was a befriender with Birchwood before he became a Support Worker. He is an outdoor man and enjoys all the outdoor activities including going hill walking, yachting, and abseiling. We all call him our very own Action Man! He tries to get the staff to go abseiling but as yet no one has actually done it. But I think I may just take him up on his offer very soon. Steve befriends David and he goes to see him once a week. David enjoys Steve's company as they can talk about things that us women don't know anything about! David and Steve go out for breakfast/lunch quite often; they go to Morrison's or Skiach and sometimes take a trip into Dingwall.



At the puppet story workshop

All in all, our befrienders are happy with the work they are doing and we at Birchwood Highland recognise that befrienders are very precious people and we appreciate every one of them for giving up their own time to be a befriender to our Service Users.

Comment from Mr George Finlayson - *"I have got on very well over the past year with Birchwood Highland, its great support!"*

"The Puppets I thought were very clever, they made me feel satisfied with my life as it made me think of how far I have come since my tough times."

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Invergordon Service Users - Friday Drop In Group. (Fiona MacDonald, Drop In facilitator)

Our Service User Group has been very active over the past year, with an average of ten attending each Friday.

Everyone who attends the group has something special to give to each other.

Service Users utilise the group to discuss current affairs, relax and chat with friends, speak about subjects that have an effect on their lives and any new Birchwood Highland policies or procedures.

During the winter months the group meets in our office in Invergordon. During the summer months we like to get out and about, thanks to the Free Church who donate the use of their mini bus.

Service User Group activities, April - December 2010

9th April - A Healthy Eating Day held in the office. Everyone helped to provide healthy snacks for others to share.

16th April - Outing on the Free Church mini bus to Blythswood in Evanton and for a meal to the Skiach Café.

23rd & 30th April - Drop In held in the office to organise and discuss outings and fundraising during the summer months.

7th May - Service Users Group visited McRae's Tea Room in Invergordon.

14th May - Discussion in office to finalise the summer season list of activities - printed out and available to all Service Users.

21st May - Visit to Blythswood charity in Evanton.

4th June - - Visit to Skiach café in Evanton.



Service user group outing to Black Isle Wildlife Park



Healthy Eating Day



Blythswood Evanton depot

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At Falls of Shin



On the boat trip



Seen from the boat

11th June - Visit to the Falls of Shin, Lairg on the Free Church mini bus.

18th June - A boat trip on the Cromarty Firth to go dolphin watching and have high tea in Cromarty. Mr John Ross a local businessman, kindly let our group have a day out on his large boat.

25th June - Mini bus run to Kildary and then a walk in the Milton Woods.

26th June - Fundraising - Life Boat Open Day. Stall attended by three staff, one volunteer and five Service Users.

2nd July - Outing on the mini bus to the Wildlife Park in the Black Isle.

9th July - Fundraising - Isobel Rhind Summer Sale. Stall attended by five members of staff and six Service Users, taking it in turns throughout the day to man the stall.

16th July - Wii Fit Challenge in the office. Seven service users took part in this enjoyable challenge. Everybody had great fun.

23rd July - Final of the Wii Fit Challenge. Ian Merrick and Carol Hudson were worthy winners of the competition.

30th July - Service Users had afternoon tea in the office.

6th August - Sally from Befrienders Highland came to give a presentation to our group.

13th August - Outing in the mini bus to Dingwall

14th August - Fundraising - Invergordon Raft Race.

20th August - A visit to the Fire Station in Invergordon.

26th August - Annual Service Users' AGM in Wick.

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27th August - Feedback from AGM to Service Users who could not attend.

28th August - Fundraising - Invergordon Highland Games.

3rd September - Wii Fit Challenge in office.

10th September - Healthy Eating afternoon - everyone brought a fruit that they have not eaten before to share with others.

17th September - Shared Communication Training, in the office.

24th September - Discussion in the office about the activities that people would like to do over the winter months.

29th September - Eden Court puppet show.

1st October - Discussion in office about Christmas lunch and where to book.

8th October - Visit to McRae's Tea Room.

15th October - Bus trip to Blythswood in Evanton and tea at the Skiach café.

22nd October - Bus trip to THE Spa town of Strathpeffer, outside Dingwall.

29th October - Halloween Party in the office.

5th November - Festival of Diwali led by Grace.

12th November - Fire Drill held with all Service Users in the office.

19th November - Discussion about everyone's Christmas plans.

26th November - Cancelled due to bad weather.

3rd December - Christmas card making, in office.

10th December - Finishing off making the Christmas



Visit to the Fire Station



Festival of Diwali - that's Grace's daughter next to Stephen

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cards.

17th December - Christmas Lunch, mini bus to the Shandwick Hotel. Lunch and a visit from Santa.

31st December - New Year's Party in the office, buffet and soft drinks.

The Friday Drop In seems to be an enjoyable afternoon for all who attend.

Health and Safety Report (James McGibbon)

As the Easter Ross Service member on the Health & Safety Committee I hope you will find this report of interest.

A representative from each Service and the Recovery Centre meet every six to eight weeks at Head Office in Inverness where we discuss various issues that affect service users and staff. These could include Lone Worker, Medication, Risk of Fire and guidance on what to do should we have a Swine Flu / Flu pandemic. These policies are discussed in depth to consider whether they need updating or left alone. Updated policies are passed on to the Board for their approval.

Some of the policies discussed are very interesting and can grab one's attention; all are important for the protection and wellbeing of both service users and staff.

A lot of interesting discussions take place, as what suits one Service might not suit another. For example the Recovery Centre works in a different way from the Services due to nature of their users.

I enjoy meeting up with the other Committee members and it is satisfying to know that the policies and procedures we discuss are of benefit those who work for Birchwood Highland and those who receive support.



Christmas lunch



James

**Birchwood Highland Easter Ross
Support Service**

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