



Circle Support

Enhancing Life Chances

2010 - 2011 In Review



Foreword

Welcome to Circle Support's 2010/11 review. Our mission is Enhancing Life Chances, and this review provides an insight into our work over the past year and some of the people we support. It has been a busy and productive year!

We launched our new name Circle Support, expanded our services, dealt proactively with the funding pressures caused by Government cuts and continued to provide the high quality services you expect from us.

I'm really proud of our achievements this year and would like to thank those of you who agreed to share your stories in this review. These stories show how many of you are reaching your goals and achieving your potential which is great to see.

We always monitor and evaluate our work to make sure that you are at the heart of everything we do. We look forward to continuing to work with you and receiving your feedback in the coming year.

Best wishes

Anne Anketell
Managing Director: Circle Support



Key Achievements 2010/11

In response to reductions in funding we changed our Family services in Islington and Haringey and in doing so we:

- Continued to provide a life changing service to 600 families at any one time across these services.
- Kept our community based service models and increased our volunteering, financial inclusion and parenting work within the existing resources in Islington.
- Set up our Rapid Response service in Haringey which helps families under immediate threat and the aim is to resolve crisis at the first contact, before referring to our longer term support team.

We continued to deliver high quality care and support services:

- We retained Care Quality Commission(CQC) Excellent Status following an inspection of our Learning Disability services.
- Following reviews from our funders Supporting People; we achieved an over all A rating for the HARTS service for families in Haringey and for Floating Support services in Kent.
- We retained our Foyer accreditation status.

We made sure residents and service users could be involved in improving services and scrutinising our performance by:

- Continuing to develop the role of our service user Service Improvement Groups.
- Setting up a readers panel with service users to ensure documents are easy to read and understand.
- Organising regional policy forums for residents and service users to shape and influence policy reviews and decisions.
- Making sure that residents and service users had input into the development of our Life Chances Plan which sets out our work priorities for the year ahead.
- Working with residents and service users to review our Care and Support services standards.
- Organising the Mystery Inspecting programme which gives us regular feedback on the resident and service user experience.



Enhancing Life Chances: Older People

What we did:

3145 older people in London, Kent, Merton, the Midlands, Norfolk, and South Anglia were supported to maintain independent lives, in a safe and secure environment with a flexible package of support tailored to meet individual needs.

How we did it:

- Our scheme managers and support co-ordinators provided regular on site or floating support.
- Volunteers at schemes worked with on site staff to carry out a range of tasks. From gardening to befriending; promoting social activities, offered guidance on using computers and provided good company for residents who have limited mobility and sensory loss.
- We held many events for residents. Our Well-Being event in London featured massage, line-dancing, healthy eating and an opportunity for residents to have their blood pressure checked by staff from the Stroke Association.
- We supported residents to keep up to date with the 'Digital Age' by holding Silver Surfers events and got funding to provide computer equipment in schemes. Residents were encouraged to write blogs on projects they were involved in.
- We involved residents in the recruitment of scheme managers and managers to make sure that we selected the best quality staff.
- We listened to what residents had to say at quarterly Sheltered Housing Advisory Panels and used the feedback to help improve services.

What service users told us:

90% were satisfied with the support service overall

76% were satisfied with their support plan

70% satisfied with opportunities to be involved



SPIES GO RUNNING
OLGA QUINN

KX4, a new and deadly germ warfare discovery, has been hijacked by Arab guerilla leader El Doshiki. Israel is in grave danger and British agent Marianne Payne is ordered to recover the stolen bacteria. She approaches Hitchin Smith, a millionaire gunrunner, who unwilingly agrees to her proposition, eager to prolong his affair with the beautiful Marianne. But she takes him deeper into danger and the Middle Eastern conflict until finally her search for KX4 explodes into open warfare.

Large Print
LINFORD
OLGA QUINN
SPIES GO RUNNING

Florence at Cutbush House

Impact - Case Story:

Florence aged 85 has very poor hearing and was finding communication with others very frustrating. She is registered blind and her mobility is limited. Florence loves her sheltered flat and wants to remain as independent as possible for as long as she is able to. She receives care three times a day for daily tasks including washing, dressing, meal preparation, shopping and cleaning.

Florence's sheltered scheme manager contacted the local Sensory Team to arrange an assessment to find ways to meet her diverse needs. Following the assessment Florence was provided with a telephone with large numbers and higher volume to enable her to hear who is calling her and has had flashing lights fitted on her wall so she knows when the phone is ringing. Florence has also had a remote door opener fitted so she is able to let in her carers as her mobility is very limited.

As Florence loves reading books her scheme manager also arranged for the mobile library to visit her at home every month and source books in very large print. The RNIB conduct home visits to carry out eye tests and the Community Matron visits Florence fortnightly to check on her oxygen levels and assess her health.

Florence is doing very well with all the support and care she is receiving, she loves company and we are currently looking for a befriending volunteer to add another support dimension to her life.

Enhancing Life Chances: Mental Health

What we did:

60 people with mental health problems living in London were supported and encouraged to achieve the best quality of life, be more socially included and move successfully onwards on their recovery journey.

We use the Recovery Star approach in our mental health service and the following successful outcomes were achieved:

100% improved financial position

86% in training, employment or education

100% healthier life

100% safe and secure

100% greater personal choice and control

What service users told us:

Julie – “I love the star, it really helps me to see how far I’ve come even just in the three months I’ve been using it”

Owen – “The service has really helped me to move on with my life”

Lucy – “The Recovery Approach is great, I really like the fact that I’m in control. The support worker listens to me and really understands my problems”

How we did it:

- We recognise the importance of supporting all areas of a person's life in achieving a sense of well being, independence and hope for themselves and their future. We believe this approach encourages trust and supports service users to feel that their opinions matter and that their voice can create change.
- We recognise that adults with mental health problems are experts in their own care and treatment. To help get the most from this expertise we introduced the Recovery Approach and the Recovery Star tool which is now essential to all our mental health services.
- The Recovery Star helped service users to:
 - Use their own expertise in a guided way to achieve their goals and outcomes.
 - Take the lead in the process or journey of recovery and to see the progress they were making.
 - Take ownership of their needs and the goals they wanted to achieve with support staff working alongside offering expert advice and a supportive shoulder.

Impact - Case Story:

Henry is 53 years old and lives in our Camden Supported Housing Service. Due to his diagnosis of schizophrenia Henry regularly hears and responds to voices. Although this is not particularly distressing to him in itself Henry often experiences discrimination and unwanted negative attention in public. Henry's Support Co-ordinator Sam suggested some ways to deal with this himself. Henry chose to wear mobile phone earphones when he was out in public so that people would think he was engaged in a phone call not responding to his voices. Although this is very simple it has made a huge difference to Henry's day to day life, meaning that he can now go out and about without the fear of any unwanted attention.



Enhancing Life Chances: Floating Support

What we did:

2060 families and single people living in London, Kent and Suffolk received practical support and advice on maintaining or obtaining a settled home. They were also supported to access community based services to help improve their financial wellbeing, health, employment and training prospects.

Our largest Floating Support service based in Kent provides support to 795 people. These include people experiencing domestic violence, people with substance misuse problems, people with a learning disability, young people at risk, vulnerable parents, care leavers, older people, single homeless people and homeless families. Of the 457 service users who left the service during the year:

435 obtained maximum benefits

364 maintained their tenancy and avoided eviction

354 reduced their debts

213 obtained settled accommodation

80 obtained paid work

76 were supported to achieve a qualification

189 made positive steps towards dealing with or overcame substance misuse

382 reported positive outcomes linked to more choice, involvement and control

What service users told us:

72% were satisfied with the support service overall

82% were satisfied with the service provided by their support worker

82% were satisfied that we took their views into account

How we did it:

- We used a ‘team around the family’ approach. That is where, having developed a level of trust we will, with the family bring in others’, professionals or otherwise to manage the whole needs of parents and children. This might include schools, health visitors, and mental health professionals.
- We worked in partnership with agencies who provide extra opportunities for families and individuals. Eg: Fair Finance (helping vulnerable people to access affordable financial services), Temporary Housing and Homeless Person Units.
- Training and events were provided on a range of topics. For example in our Islington Families Service the Money Matters course offering creative fun advice on getting the most from money were very popular.
- We supported family groups to work on parenting.
- Volunteers delivered English as a Second Language (ESOL) training.

Impact Case Story:

“I first came to Islington Families when I was pregnant, and my partner and I were on the brink of being homeless. We had just moved to Islington and had no idea that the house we moved to was about to be repossessed. We didn’t know anything about Islington services and I felt isolated because I didn’t know anyone. Our support co-ordinator, Sonia provided us with advice on our housing options and supported us to get the right benefits. I had lost my confidence, felt that I was useless and there was no point to anything. Sonia encouraged me to attend Stay and Play groups with my daughter and to come to the Islington Families weekly coffee morning. When they said we were looking for volunteers to help run the coffee morning, I decided to apply.

I’ve been volunteering with Islington Families for a year now. I look forward to going every week. Volunteering has enabled me to build my confidence and my communication skills as I need to be able to relate to people from all walks of life. Some of the parents are going through similar things that I’ve been through so I encourage them. I have made friends at the coffee morning and it feels amazing to be able to give back to the community.

Although volunteering is unpaid work, getting out in the community and feeling part of something worthwhile is payment enough! My daughter now attends nursery and I am at college one day a week studying childcare and will soon be starting my work placement at a children’s centre. I feel like my life has started all over again.” (Yolandah).



Enhancing Life Chances: Young People

What we did:

167 young single people living in our Foyers, Independent Living Centres and supported housing schemes in London, South Anglia and Norfolk were supported to achieve their aspirations through training, advocacy and advice.

83 moved on successfully into their own independent accommodation.

18 took up employment.

3 became volunteers.

51 started education.

11 undertook Government training.

49 achieved an externally recognised qualification.

How we did it:

- In our Foyers we provided weekly life skills training, cooking, job club, counselling sessions, and additional training sessions on basic first aid, IT, CV writing, drugs and alcohol awareness training.
- Set up a Residents Council to ensure young people have a voice and are empowered to be actively involved in service improvement.
- We facilitated training in partnership with others:
 - We engaged young people in the Princes Trust 12 week training programme to improve confidence, team work and promoting further education.
 - YMCA training provided a summer activities programme promoting team building and basic self defence.
 - Education Taster days and Apprenticeship information sessions provided by local colleges
 - First Aid Training provided by British Red Cross
 - Conflict Resolution Training aimed at empowering young people to resolve conflict with a positive outcome
- We provided placements for six social work students to work with our staff.

Impact - Case Story:

My name is Francis. Two years ago I found myself homeless and getting into trouble. I was scared of losing my lovely mother whom I adore as she was suffering from a terminal illness. I was constantly getting arrested because I had no stable way of life. One day I got a phone call to invite me to an interview for a place at the Vineries.

During my stay in the Vineries even though I was being supported by staff to settle into my new home and to address my support needs I was still hanging out with the wrong people and ended up getting arrested and remanded for six months.

My room was kept open for me and I received a lot of support from staff while I was in prison, had regular visits to continue addressing my support needs and this really helped me because I was going through a hard time and felt my life was over. The support I received from staff whilst in prison motivated me to start a course in Construction Skill Level 1 and I will be starting a Level 2 in Construction in September at Barking College.

I am now preparing to move out of Vineries into my council accommodation and am not getting into trouble anymore. If I wasn't living here in the Vineries I wouldn't be in the position I'm in now so thanks to the staff at the Vineries for believing in me.



Francis and friends

Enhancing Life Chances: Alone in London

Alone in London works to support young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness; providing a wide range of services, from advice and mediation through 'First Contact' to schools work to increase understanding of the risks of homelessness.

Information Advice and Guidance

What we did:

171 new enquiries to the service were taken during the year.

1544 of enquiries by phone, 25 by e-mail and 202 young people came straight to the Alone in London drop in centre in Hackney.

675 young people received face to face advice on accommodation and were provided with options.

253 young people were supported into safe and appropriate accommodation.

12 young people were supported into permanent housing.

Family Mediation

What we did:

142 young people received the support of a Family Mediator to help them manage their home situation and their relationship with their family.

36 young people were supported to return home or remain with their families.

97 parents were supported in resolving their conflict and rebuilding their relationship.

106 young people reported improved family relationships since receiving support.

124 young people and parents reported improved conflict resolution and communication skills.

163 young people reported now knowing where to go to seek help if they find themselves unable to cope.



Alone in London

Schools Work

What we did:

672 young people attended the prevention of homelessness workshops and had the opportunity to explore and discuss the causes of homelessness, how to prevent getting into that situation and where to go for help.

85.7% of young people reported an increased knowledge of how to deal with conflict.

92.5% of young people reported an increased understanding of the causes of family conflict.

97.3% of young people involved in our feedback survey reported that they now know where to go for help if they become vulnerable to the risk of homelessness.

Impact Case Story:

Over the last few years we have seen a significant increase in the number of young men coming to us who have become homeless as a result of fleeing gang violence. A recent case is that of Steven, a 21 year old young man, who came to us after being shot in a gang related incident.

Steven's parents separated when he was six and because of his mother's drug addiction, he didn't get the attention he needed so spent much of his time on the streets with older boys. From the age of 13, Steven started running drug related errands. By the age of 16, he became one of the gang leaders and was living in a cycle of violence and crime.

After being shot, Steven knew that his life was in danger if he were to return to the area, and was told by police that they could not guarantee his safety. This proved to be a turning point in Steven's life, he had a two year old daughter to think of and knew something needed to change.

Steven learned about Alone in London through a friend, and we were able to refer him to emergency accommodation whilst we looked at longer term options. Following sensitive negotiation and support, a multi-agency support package was put together enabling Steven to turn his back on his gang lifestyle.

Steven has made great progress and has since done voluntary work abroad. He has met with politicians and the Mayor of London to talk about gangs, and has engaged in community work. Steven says 'Alone in London helped me change my life for the better'.

Enhancing Life Chances: Learning Disabilities

What we did:

78 people with learning disabilities received specialist support to get the most out of their life, achieve their goals and live independently with the right amount of support.

31 service users were supported to go on holiday.

78 service users were supported by staff to go to college or structured daytime activity.

How we did it:

- Staff supported service user's to make a choice about the activities and educational opportunities they wanted to be involved in e.g:

- College
- Day Centres
- Garden centres
- Advocacy groups
- Music therapy
- Communication session using puppets

- Service users were supported to regularly attend a wide range of leisure activities such as:

- Swimming
- Massage
- Music
- Reflexology
- Sensory room
- Cinema
- Theatre
- Thames boat ride
- Cooking sessions
- Bingo
- Snooker club
- Thai chi sessions
- Dance session
- Bowling
- Music therapy





Graham

Impact - Case Story:

Graham is in his 50s and has high complex needs. When he moved in he was refusing to leave his bed, therefore his quality of life was severely restricted. Graham would spend 24 hours a day in bed and refused support from staff to complete any day to day tasks such as eating, going to the bathroom and any daytime activity.

We worked with Graham and his social workers, psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist to help meet his specific support needs in a personal centred way. A support plan was drawn up to motivate Graham to become actively involved in his day to day support.

The step by step approach we took included:

- Arranging meetings with everyone involved in Graham's care and support.
- His designated key worker oversaw and co-ordinated the people around him to facilitate his support.
- Discussing guidelines with Graham around his developing relationship with staff, personal care, and developing his self confidence to achieve the tasks he has chosen.
- If one approach didn't work we tried a different one and slowly over time Graham gained confidence in daily living skills and now feels confident that he is able to take more control over the things that he does.

Using this approach and involving everyone in Graham's Circle of Support has enabled him to slowly find the confidence to get out of bed and become more actively involved in the community and his home. Graham's mum recently said that she has not seen him this happy in years.

Enhancing Life Chances:

Volunteers

What we did:

106 volunteers complemented and added value to our work.

20 different volunteering roles were promoted across services in all of the regions we work in.

30 applications on average were processed per month (and countless more enquiries) from people wishing to offer us their valuable time.

How we did it:

- We offered volunteers the opportunity to make a difference to someone's life
- Provided them with the tailored one-to-one support from an experienced staff, quality in-house training and an interesting range of volunteering activities.
- The skills and commitment of our volunteers helped to enhance our services by providing:
 - English as a Second Language (ESOL) teaching classes for Vulnerable Families in Islington
 - Befriending Project for people with Learning Disabilities
 - Training & Employment guidance for homeless Young People
 - Food Growing & Gardening Project for Older People
- As well as offering face-to-face support volunteers are also carried out research work, administrative activities and helped produce our service user newsletters.
- The Volunteer Service are responsible for recruiting, screening and inducting volunteers and ensuring the volunteering experience continues to be one of mutual benefit for both volunteers and the organisation.
- We were proud to be awarded the London's Volunteer Management Charter recognising our commitment to good practice in volunteer involvement.

Positive outcomes for volunteers:

60% of volunteers left us to take up paid work.

73% of volunteers reported increased self-confidence.

91% of volunteers would recommend volunteering with Circle Support to a friend.



Volunteers at Cope House

More about Circle Support

Our mission is to enhance the life chances of the people we support.

We provide services to more than 5,000 people with a wide range of needs living in London, Kent, Merton, the Midlands, Norfolk, South Anglia and Suffolk. We have an established approach to support and care planning, and facilitate and promote service user involvement in all areas of our work. Our Specialist Housing Management team provides housing management services and works in partnership with a number of other support providers.

Circle Group



We are one of 12 partners within Circle. Being part of a much larger organisation means that we have more financial security and can continue with the investment projects in our business plan despite the economic climate. It also means we have the financial muscle to negotiate good deals with suppliers and combine our resources to do things more efficiently. This is essential if we are to get good value for money and use the cost savings to benefit our service users. Even though we are part of a large Group, we are first and foremost a charity. We retain our individuality and run our services to suit the specific needs of our service users.

Circle Support Board

The Circle Support Board represents our service users and residents living in supported housing and meets six times a year.

Circle Support Board Members in 2010/11:

Stephen Jacobs (Chair)
Gaynor Quilter (Vice Chair)
David Fisher
Liz Anderson
Richard Blakeway
Helen Duckworth
Chander Hingorani
Charlotte Pomery

