



EPIC Trust

Empowering People through  
Independence and Choice

# Resident and Service Users Review 2008/9



## EPIC Trust Resident and Service Users Review 2008/9



*Anne Anketell*

This has been a year of preparing for future changes. As many of you will already know, the way that services are funded has been rethought by the government. Our priority over the last year has been to understand the new funding agendas, and review our services to make sure that the support we offer will continue to be relevant for our service users in the future.

In all areas of EPIC over the last year however, there has been forward movement too. In our recent inspection by the Commission for Quality Care we received a 3 Star 'Excellent' rating, which made us very proud.

EPIC has also continued to grow. We took over responsibility for seven schemes for people with learning disabilities in the Camden area this year, as well as entering into a partnership with the Richmond Fellowship and Carr Gom to successfully win a tender for mental health support in Haringey. Looking forward to the coming year, we will be preparing the organisation, our services users and our staff for the funding changes. We will be providing our residents and customers with as much information

as possible to explain the developments and to help them make decisions. We will also be working closely with seventeen local authorities to develop and shape EPIC Trust's services in order to prepare for new ways of working. Our service users should not be worried about the changes. We promise to keep you up to date with the information you need and we are always there to help if you have any problems.

I hope you enjoy this review of some of the things that have happened over the last year, and I want to reassure you of our continued commitment to all our services users for the coming year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. Anketell".

**Anne Anketell,  
Managing Director**

*Pictured on the front page is  
Vineries Project Manager, Annita  
Barker, with Vineries residents*



*Listening to our residents*

## Involvement Improving services

"EPIC has spent a lot of time this year on service user consultation and involvement."

### Steady improvement in satisfaction

We are pleased that our commitment to continuous improvement is having results. Overall satisfaction with the support services provided by EPIC increased from 77% to 79.3% over the last year.

### Getting involved

EPIC has spent a lot of time this year on service user consultation and involvement. This has led to the establishment of a number of very important groups, formed to obtain feedback, and to identify ways in which EPIC can improve the support it provides. Here are the ways service users have been involved

- Sheltered Housing Advisory Panels: one in London, and three outside London
- Policy Forum: Service users can get involved by giving their feedback on policies that are under review. Some service users give feedback by email. Others attend local meetings at our offices
- These are carried out with services users on a face-to-face, basis across all services

### New initiative

The Islington Families project got off to an excellent start this year. It is already up to full capacity with 200 families taking part.

### Media success

The Alone in London project and its service users made a DVD about preventing homelessness this year. Funds of £13,000 were raised to support the production of the DVD which will be used in schools. It is an excellent piece of work.

### Firm financial foundations

Securing new contracts over recent years means that EPIC is well placed financially to deliver support for service users despite the current economic climate. Over the last two years, new contracts worth £7.3 million have been secured, taking EPIC's turnover to £21,857 million for 2009/2010.

*Alone in London's Behind Closed Doors DVD has been a huge success*



## Building safer, stronger communities

### EPIC Trust provides:

- Care and support services to more than 5,800 people.
- Sheltered housing to more than 2,000 older people.

### In 2008/9:

- Independent Living Centres and Foyers provided accommodation and support for 329 young people.
- We supported 151 with mental health issues in our supported housing
- 1,311 people benefited from support to help them maintain their tenancy during difficult times, including bereavement, debt and relationship issues.

### Improving Life Chances - Sam's story

Sam applied for a property through Choice Based Lettings. He had been living in his car for a long time and felt that at his 'time of life' he needed some stability and to get himself off the streets and away from a life of drinking alcohol. He wanted to stay sober and had been abstaining from drink for two years prior to applying for sheltered housing. He came to Chestnut Close

(part of Firlands sheltered Scheme) in July 2008 with only very few possessions and was not registered with a GP or receiving the correct benefits.

The scheme manager arranged for him to meet with the Pension Service to sort out his entitlement and completed paperwork with Sid for a Community Care Grant. He was later awarded over £600. Some neighbours and their families were very helpful to Sam and gave him various items of furniture for his bungalow for which he was extremely grateful.

Since January 2009 Sam has got himself involved in various church projects and is volunteering with grounds maintenance and repair works and gives a lot of his time to charitable causes. Sam has also expressed an interest in training in Health and Safety at Work for tradesmen. This has been raised on his support plan and he will seek support from the SSM when he feels he is ready to make enquiries.

Sam strongly believes that being part of the scheme with support from the SSM and other members of the team has encouraged him to continue in the positive manner and not to return to alcohol.



*A learning disabilities resident and his carer*

## Life chances

“I was shown around The Vineries and told about the project and I knew that I wanted to be offered a place.”



*Natalie at the Vineries*

## Improving Life Chances - Natalie's story

“I was aged approximately 15 when problems first started at home between me and my parents. We were constantly arguing about things such as what they wanted me to do as opposed to what I wanted to do. This led to a bad atmosphere which, in a vicious cycle way, led to more arguing, which in turn led to me becoming homeless. My parents told me to leave when I was 17 as the arguing and the overall atmosphere in the house was getting too much for any of us to bear.

“I was shown around The Vineries and told about the project and I knew that I wanted to be offered a place. The staff told me they would be in contact and I heard from them a few days later and was pleased and excited when they confirmed that they were able to offer me accommodation and that I could come for induction.

“I have now lived at The Vineries for 18 months and have found my time here to have really helped me in gaining my independence. When I moved here I was attending college and through support and encouragement I have completed my course and gained my

qualification. I have now been accepted at London Metropolitan University and will be attending in September 2009.

“I largely credit the support I have received for the steps I have taken into my adult life, such as being able to care for and look after myself and be self sufficient. I have used support, I feel, in the necessary ways and have addressed issues that have affected me and stood in my way of moving on with staff. I have worked through these and feel I have learnt a lot from these experiences. I can prioritise and budget with my money, something I know will be very handy for my student life!

“I have found The Vineries a safe and supportive environment and am grateful for my time here and what I feel it has given me. I have had the chance and opportunities to get involved with the service delivered at The Vineries and have had my say on issues such as outings, development of communal areas, attended residents meetings and been able to express my opinion, which I feel has always been heard.”



*Highly trained staff have enabled EPIC  
to improve customer satisfaction*

## Life chances

“Ron has found a solution by making full advantage of his new IT skills - having chosen a customised computer”

## Improving Life Chances - Ron's story

Ron, a resident of Cutbush House, has a learning disability and impaired speech, which in the past has made communicating difficult for him. With the help of EPIC staff, Ron accessed a speech and language therapist and Makaton was identified as a system Ron could use.

Through signing, pictures and diagrams Ron is now able to let people know how he's feeling and what his needs are. Ron has also developed his verbal skills in addition to using a speech device which he uses by pressing picture buttons which are then converted into the words Ron wants to say.

All this means Ron is better able to express his choices around what he wants to do. Recently, this has included joining computer literacy classes at the City Lit, where Ron also studies music. As a lifelong Arsenal fan, Ron has been frustrated in the past by not always being able to attend games due to his limited mobility.

Ron has found a solution by making full advantage of his new IT skills - having chosen a customised computer Ron accesses the internet for updates on how the games are going and all important league and cup updates.

*Elders at Northfield, Puckeridge*





*Vineries resident, Francis*

## A bit about us

EPIC stands for Empowering People Through Independence and Choice, an ethos which underpins and informs all our services. EPIC Trust provides high quality care and support services and specialist housing management services to more than 5,000 people with a wide range of needs living in 10 London boroughs, as well as Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk and Suffolk.

EPIC's care and support arm has an established approach to support and care planning and facilitates service user involvement in all areas of its work, while EPIC's Specialist Housing Management team provides housing management services and works in partnership with a number of support providers. The Specialist Housing Management team also provides an adaptations service and manages contract compliance for Managing Agents.

### Circle Anglia

EPIC Trust is one of 10 partners within Circle Anglia. 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 independence, and run our services to suit the specific needs of our residents.

### EPIC Trust Board

The EPIC Trust Board represents all EPIC Trust service users and residents living in Supported Housing and meets six times a year. It includes two service users, with a vacancy for one more.

The members of the Board are:

Jitinder Kohli (Chair)

Gaynor Quilter (Vice Chair)

David Gee

Pamela Mitcham

Chander Hingorani

Sheena Woods

Liz Anderson

David Fisher

Stephen Williams



*Staff at Alone in London taking time to build relationships with service users*



**EPIC Trust**

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