



SYcD volunteer network Newsletter

1st edition

Welcome:

Welcome to the 1st edition of the Somerset You can Do volunteer newsletter. We would like to Thank Richard who is an IT & 1:1 support Volunteer with SYcD for his help in putting this newsletter together.

We have already had 1 suggestion for a name which is: "Can Do – Will Do" (thanks Tom). We welcome any further suggestions.

We hope that this will become a useful bi-monthly resource for you and help keep you in touch and up to date with what is happening in the project and any developments. We have listened to your ideas of what you would like included at the last round of network meetings – keep those contributions and ideas coming. Please remember that this is a newsletter for YOU therefore we would welcome:

any ideas for future articles

Contributions from volunteers – send us your good news stories about things you have achieved with the member you are supporting or information about things happening in your community that may be useful to other volunteers and members.

Questions from you to other volunteers e.g. "does anyone know of a group in" or "has anyone tried the Centre?"

It was suggested that we include something from a SYcD member about the support that they have received and we are hoping to include this in a future issue.

If you would like to make any comments or contribute to future editions please contact: Sue Hunter 01278 664180 or e-mail: sue.hunter@careerssw.org

Introduction to the team:

The SYcD project sits within the Nextstep Volunteer Bureau – our office is in Huntworth, Bridgwater and we cover the whole of the county of Somerset. We are a small staff team and the office is also supported by a team of volunteers who assist us with many roles including office administration.

The staff team:



Back Row Left To Right

Peter , Bryan , Brenda

Front row Left To Right

Marilyn , Pattie , Sue , Meg (Office Volunteer)

Bryan Mitchell – Nextstep Voluntary Service Manager

Peter Wood – Senior Service Development Officer – role includes: induction training with volunteers, members/volunteers matching, on-going support for volunteers

Sue Hunter – Service Development Officer – role includes: member's visits (more complex or not sure if meeting project criteria), members/volunteers matching, on-going support for volunteers

Marilyn Stephens – Service Development Officer/Older Peoples Champion – Marilyn will be joining us soon (her official start date here is 1st October 2012)

Patti Hodgson – Placement Support Officer – role includes: members visits (to complete risk assessment and agree aims of volunteer support)

training and meetings :

Engaging with People with Mental Health issues

Tuesday 9th October, 10.30am to 1.30 pm – Frome, Venue to be confirmed

If you would like to know more about or attend the above course please contact Peter on 01278 664181 or peter.wood@careerssw.org

Network Meetings:

The next network meetings will be held in October & December – dates and venues to be arranged.

Overview of the Somerset You can Do project so far: (figures shown are correct as of mid-August 2012)

Number of volunteers recruited: **140**

(please note this is the number of people that completed application – some did not go on to complete the full paperwork and/or induction, some volunteered for a while then opted out)

Current number of active volunteers: **66**

Number of referrals to the project to date: **301**

Number of members currently being supported by a volunteer (“matched”): **85**

Number of members who have had volunteer support and have reached their aims (completed their journey): **27**

Number of members waiting for volunteer support (“to be matched”): **43**

Number of referrals waiting for initial visit from staff before agreeing membership: **13**

Please note that not all people referred to the project go on to become a member; some members “opt out” either before they receive volunteer support or before they reach their aims. Some referrals are for people who do not meet the project criteria and therefore we are unable to offer support to.

Some members are supported by more than 1 volunteer e.g. 1:1 support and IT support

Good News re Contract: Bryan Mitchell

It's gives me a great feeling to be able to announce that we have won the new Somerset Integrated Community Support Services contract . The whole service will be branded 'Somerset You can Do' (SYcD) and we will be saying good bye to the name we have been known by for more that 4 years, but I expect people will still call us 'nextstep' or 'nextstep volunteer bureau'

This contract, which will be for two years in the first instance, will enable us to continue to develop all aspects of our contracts with the council and in particular it will enable us to develop the You can Do concept.

We have a number of existing things coming up that have been developed out of the ideas that You can Do volunteers have put forward at network meetings and volunteer reviews. Some of the things on the way include:

An introduction card with a picture of the volunteer, the idea is that members will be able to have the card and get to know a little about their volunteer before they meet for the first time. This will be particular useful for members how will be supported by phone, text or email volunteers.

A brand new SYcD website which will focus on social media and volunteer support and communication. This will be a private site with a volunteer area accessible by registered volunteers only.

We are shortly building our own Facebook page (if any of you would like to offer your assistance with this we would love to hear from you)

Closely followed by our Twitter account and possible a Somerset You can Do 'YouTube' page (if any of you would like to offer your assistance with this we would love to hear from you)

The team hope to have this in place between January and March 2013 in time for a number of SYcD volunteer road shows where we hope to meet all our volunteers and to launch the new service.

Moving Forward:

Eligibility Criteria

In readiness for the start of the new contract we have developed an eligibility checklist for referrers to the project. The objective is to help referrers assess whether the person they would like to refer meets the criteria for volunteer support from Somerset You can Do.

The eligibility checklist considers the current levels of support that an individual is receiving, whether there is a clearly defined outcome which meets the expectations of SYcD, as well as medical condition, mobility and communication needs.

The hope is that this will cut down the number of inappropriate referrals that we receive. Once a referral is received we mark it against the criteria as a double checking mechanism.

Keeping in Touch – volunteer updates

We are aware that as a very small team we have difficulty keeping in touch with you as regularly as we would like. We were hoping that we would be able to do this with more of you through the Network meetings but unfortunately only a small number of you have been able to attend.

What has been useful is the e-mail and telephone updates about your volunteering that some of you have been providing on a regular basis. This gives us a good indication of the progress that the people you are supporting are making towards their aims. We are also able to pick up on any issues that may have arisen and support you with these. We would encourage more of you to update us in this way at least once a month.

For those of you who find it convenient to use e-mail these are our e-mail addresses:

Sue.hunter@careerssw.org

Peter.wood@careerssw.org

If you would prefer to give us an update via phone we can be contacted on:

Sue – 01278 664183

Peter – 01278 664181

We will always respond to either your e-mail or phone calls.

Reviews

Some of you will have been supporting people for quite some time now without a review taking place. Our objective is to have contacted each of you to discuss whether these particular matches need to continue or if the individual has reached their goals. We hope to do this by the end of September 2012.

We are currently testing a new approach to reviews with both members and volunteers. We aim to have regular 3 month reviews, dates for which will be set at the time of the first meeting with the member you will be supporting. This is ensure that the support we are offering remains short to medium term and doesn't develop into long term befriending. This will enable us to manage the waiting list more effectively.