



Brief Encounter



News from Adult Social Care
October 2011

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Another ChoicES success!

Meet Janet Bobins

Spotlight on ... the Sensory Impairment team

Older People's Day photos

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Cover photo:
Janet Bobins (centre) at Devonshire Children’s Centre Community Cafe

Produced by the Adult Social Care Communications Unit

Next issue copy deadline: Friday 11 November

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Editorial

Welcome to the October issue of Brief Encounter.

As ever, there's lots going on! To coincide with World Vision Day this month we're featuring the Sensory Impairment team, with a feature on page 8 and a compliment on page 9!

We're also still looking at how we can improve Brief Encounter so further to the survey we ran in July and August, if you received this copy by email please do let us know what you think by filling in the survey. Meanwhile enjoy this issue and if you've got any news or feature ideas for a future edition, please get in touch.

Flora Aldridge

Another success for our Meals on Wheels team

'Community Meals Week' was a great success this month with special meal deliveries and lots of different events in East Sussex.

There were taste-testings at Netherfield Primary School and Marshlands Primary School in Hailsham, England cricketer James Foster ran a training session at Hailsham Community College which included sports nutrition, and local Councillors and MPs delivered meals to some of our clients.

Cllr David Elkin, the Lead Member for Children's and Adults' Services, went out with our Meals on Wheels staff and delivered lunch to 101-year old Charlotte Fletcher in Ringmer – her favourite shepherd's pie!



The events, which ran from 3 to 9 October, were part of an awareness-raising week run by the National Association of Care Catering, which has recently given several awards to our own Meals on Wheels service.

Left: Cllr Elkin delivers lunch to Charlotte Fletcher.

Get online at your local library

Get Online Week runs from 30 October to 6 November 2011 with help on offer to those who want to learn how to use a computer and access the internet.

Whether it's following hobbies, gaining skills and qualifications, keeping in touch with family or just saving a bit of time and money doing the things you do everyday – the internet has something for everyone and the County Council's Library and Information Service can help you get online.

Our libraries offer 'Go On' computer courses, which include basic computer skills to help with job hunting and understanding shopping online. To find out where your nearest free, basic course is located phone Library Enquiries on 0345 60 80 196.

For people who want to gain qualifications, a wide range of learndirect courses are also on offer, which can be done online in Bexhill, Eastbourne, Hastings, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Uckfield libraries with friendly tutor support to help. There are free accredited courses in literacy and numeracy, free basic IT courses and, subject to status, free accredited IT courses. Other courses also include health and safety, food hygiene, business skills, leadership and management and languages. For details of learndirect courses telephone 01424 434301 or 01323 463903.

For further information please contact James Holland on 01273 482053 or email to james.holland@eastsussex.gov.uk.

Happy 100th!



One of Hailsham's oldest residents, Mrs Lucy Patt, celebrated her 100th birthday this month with a party for her family and friends at the Orion Day Centre.

Lucy moved to Hailsham from Islington with her husband Ben over 50 years ago, so they could have a better life. She really loves Hailsham and is a well known character around the town.

As a young girl Lucy had a variety of jobs – even driving a crane in the war – but her real love was dressmaking. Besides working as a seamstress for a tailor in London – where she met her husband who was also a tailor – she designed her own patterns and made clothing for her family and local people, doing everything from photo pattern to finished item.

Lucy is a great character and always has lots to tell of years gone by. She drove her Morris Minor into a ripe old age until it was no longer roadworthy and had to be scrapped.

Lucy had two sisters and four brothers. They were a very close family and always kept in touch with each other.

We wish her many more birthdays!

Older People's Day

This month sees the end of the celebrations for Older People's day – which ran from the launch on 1 September (see last month's issue!) right the way through to 26 October.

The events – put together by East Sussex Seniors Association and forums across the county, as well as Wave Leisure and Age UK – were really well attended.

We've featured some photos from other events across the region this month – from a talk on the Raj at Piddinghoe to singing at Downlands Extra Care centre in Peacehaven, with even laughter therapy and dance and movement featuring at 'Fun, fit and fifty plus' in Crowborough!

For more information on the events please contact June Pratley, Older People's Engagement Officer on 01273 335467 or email june.pratley@eastsussex.gov.uk



Another ChoicES success!



Walking, karaoke, going to the gym, cooking, oh, and befriending the internationally famous Irish singer Daniel O'Donnell... these are just some of the things Janet Bobin listed as her hobbies; it's surprising she has any time to volunteer at the Devonshire Children's Centre community café!

Brief Encounter first heard about Janet through Work For All, which is a project to improve employment opportunities at the Council for people with learning disabilities or ongoing mental health conditions.

Devonshire Children's Centre was keen to get someone to help at their Café – chef Marcus was under quite a strain! ChoicES Employment Services introduced them to Janet who, after a successful interview and induction, started work with great enthusiasm. Her passion for cooking made her ideal, and she was keen to take her skills from home to the kitchen.

Janet lives independently in Hailsham, surrounded by lots of friends. She travels to the Devonshire Community Café on her own, by bus, looking out for landmarks so she gets off at the right stop.

Her placement started after Janet had trained at The Pop-In Café, Milton Road, Eastbourne, where she undertook food hygiene, infection control and Red Cross first aid training, supported by ChoicES and

ASC Day Services. Janet's role at the Devonshire Community Café is to help out in the kitchen and dining room, keeping everything clean and tidy, and help with food preparation.

Café chef Marcus says; "I was on my own before Janet and Pat (another volunteer) came along,



Marcus with Janet (centre) and Pat

and I really struggled. Janet's brilliant – she sets up the front of house, clears plates and cleans.

"There's a wonderful atmosphere here now – the speed of service means I'm much less stressed and have time to develop Janet. Soon she'll be working more with food as well – she's already been cooking poached eggs and toast and is hoping to move on to sandwiches and how to use the till soon."

Janet's (very) busy working life is supplemented by her many hobbies, including cooking. Only recently she's made shepherd's pie, cakes, flans and spaghetti bolognese! Her love of music – and in particular Daniel O'Donnell – has taken her all over the UK to his concerts; she's seen him so many times that they're now friends!

Her work is going so well that she's looking at possible paid vacancies for the future. But for now she's happy at Devonshire Community Cafe. She says, "The best parts of the job are spending time with all the people at the centre, learning new skills, and being able to work right by the seaside."



Daniel O'Donnell

Small is beautiful!

We're holding four drop-in events next month to show what local 'micro businesses' (that's those with fewer than five paid staff) and members of the Support with Confidence scheme can do.

There will be opportunities to try out some of the services on offer and you can give your views about how the providers could develop their services in future.

The events are open to anyone, but are particularly aimed at service users, care managers, carers, and other service providers in East Sussex.

If that isn't enough to tempt you, there'll also be free tea and cake, as well start-up advice for anyone interested in starting a micro business.

- **Eastbourne: 21 November** – Age Concern Building (William and Patricia Venton Centre), Junction Road, Eastbourne
- **Lewes: 23 November** – The White Hart Hotel, High Street, Lewes
- **Uckfield: 24 November** – Foresters Hall, Harcourt Road, Uckfield
- **Hastings: 28 November** – The White Rock Hotel, Hastings
- **Crowborough: 6 December 2012** – All Saints Hall Coffee Bar, Chapel Green

All events are 10.30am to 2.30 pm.

For more information, contact **Samantha Tullett**, Micro Market Development Project Support Officer, on 01323 463410 or samantha.tullett@eastsussex.gov.uk

Stay up late and celebrate with Heavy Load

Heavyload are having an official launch party to celebrate their album, WHAM! at the Green Door, Brighton on Saturday 26 November.

Heavyload are a punk outfit subject to the combustible flux of ego, ambition, fantasy, expectation and desire that fuels any emerging band. But they're also uniquely, made up of musicians with and without learning disabilities.

Over the last 14 years they have managed to survive through their combination of raucous energy, attitude and sheer volume but now they are about to hit the big time with a feature length documentary being made about their journey from social care to stardom, and back again, and their mission to demonstrate that disability rocks.

Supporting the album launch on 26 November are the incredible Fish Police direct from Deptford, and Brighton's own rising indie stars Sparrow!

Tickets cost £10 (free WHAM! CD with each ticket purchased) though carers' entry is free. First 25 on the door receive CD and 'special' goody bag! For more information visit www.heavyload.org.



Spotlight on ... The Sensory Impairment Team

You might be able to guess that hearing and sight impairment affects many people, and that it increases with age. Sight loss affects one in five adults over 75, increasing to one in two people over 90. Research also suggests that people with learning disabilities are ten times more likely to have serious sight problems.

Adult Social Care's Sensory Impairment team (who we're featuring this month – in case you hadn't noticed! -Ed) offers services to help overcome these issues, including specialist equipment, case management for adults with a primary sensory need (usually deaf sign language users) and rehabilitation support for blind and partially sighted people.

Rehabilitation involves work on daily living skills, orientation and mobility training – services which, in many cases, can reduce or even eliminate the need for other services.

Brief Encounter talked to Grant Smith, a ROVI in the team, who explains what his role is all about.

So just what is ROVI? ROVI stands for Rehabilitation Officer Visual Impairment. ROVIs are specialist qualified workers who work with people who have a vision impairment to support and promote their independence.

What do you do? It's really varied work – anything from completing detailed assessments in a variety of settings (usually in clients' homes) to providing one- to-one training in a variety of areas. This might be independent orientation and mobility skills, independent living skills (such as safe kitchen skills), or how to use low vision strategies or specialist equipment.

Is that all? No! We also work with families, friends and carers of clients, providing awareness training to colleagues within ASC and staff in other organisations. They visit and work with other organisations involved in clients' cases. They're even qualified to teach Braille but unfortunately this rarely comes up in the adult social care setting. Oh, and of course there's the dreaded paperwork.

Why do you do it? It's a great job, and we're lucky enough to be part of a process that supports people to regain and maintain their independence.

The team have also recently held drop-in events for other staff across the council, to raise awareness of sensory impairment issues and to offer advice and information for anyone who comes into contact with sensory impaired people in their day-to-day work. [Continued on next page]



Some members of the team – In front L to R: Janet Knight, Admin. Assistant; Nora Maunsell, Duty Assistant; Angela Meidel, Senior Practitioner; Amanda Barley, Rehabilitation Officer (Visual Impairment). Behind L to R: Rachel Cripps, Admin. Assistant; Claire Kerley, Duty Assistant; Ann Clifton, Resource Officer; Kim Bryant, Resource Officer; Sally Lower, Assistant Resource Officer; Karen Finlayson, Social Worker, Lauren Bernard, Assistant Resource Officer.



Spotlight on ... The Sensory Impairment Team

What else?

Grant couldn't get through the day without... "the train to work, and the thought of going home and seeing my wife. Sappy I know but we only got married a few weeks ago."

He looks forward to... "getting home to my new house. We move in on Saturday and it's the first home we have owned. It's very exciting."

When he's not at work, Grant says he does... "a combination of exercise. Been a bit rubbish this year following a dislocated elbow in February but ran a marathon last year, did Judo, rock climbing and do pretty much anything fun that raises the heart rate. I'm involved with conservation (again haven't done as much as we would like this year what with the elbow, planning a wedding, my wife working full time, commuting and doing a foundation degree) oh, and couldn't do without seeing our friends."



Grant and Caroline
Beebee

Plus ... a compliment for ... The Sensory Impairment Team

Mr and Mrs S are both hearing impaired. Mr S cares for his wife, who has vascular dementia. Mr S's daughter contacted Adult Social Care as she felt her father was at breaking point, particularly as Mrs S had begun wandering.

Both her parents didn't want outside help; Mrs S had declined previous offers of a social care assessment and support services. Their daughter was concerned that Mr S would eventually become ill and her mother would have to go into a home.

Ann Clifton from the sensory team became involved, and encouraged Mr S to have a carer's assessment and a specialist assessment of his sensory needs. As a result of Ann's intervention, Mr S accepted specialist equipment including an alerting smoke alarm, and Mrs S eventually agreed to a social care assessment.

To allow Mr S a much earned break from his caring duties, it was agreed that Mrs S would attend Pinehill for a day. A carer's personal budget has also contributed to Mr S keeping his car on the road.

Mr S's daughter says: "Ann and the team have been brilliant – whenever I ring she is always there to give me time, when I know she is very busy. She has been a tremendous help and is always bright and cheerful.

"Dad really looks forward to the time off from his caring role and I am relieved to know that Mum is safe. I don't know how we would have coped otherwise. We are very grateful for all her help."

**Send your compliments to
Jo Canney in the Complaints
Unit at County Hall.**

Celebrating success

There is no formal awards event for staff this year. However, we still want to acknowledge and celebrate the effort and commitment of staff who have gained qualifications – so visit the intranet for the full run down on our achievements!

ESCC is still committed to encouraging continuous learning and improvement for all our staff. If you want to find out more about Adult Social Care training, contact the ASC Training Team on 01273 481444.



In contact with vulnerable people? Do you need a flu jab?

Yes, it's coming round to that time of year again – seasonal flu is a common and highly infectious viral illness, spread by coughs and sneezes.

Together with East Sussex Healthcare, we're encouraging health and social care workers to take up the offer of a flu jab – for their own protection and for the health and safety of the vulnerable people they look after.

Clinics will be run across the county providing free flu vaccinations to health and social care staff. For further information and a list of dates, times and locations, please contact julia.greig@eastsussex.gov.uk, or call 01424 726379 or 07557 565025.

More drop-ins from Alzheimer's Society

Following the success of their recent drop-in session at Eastbourne Library, the Alzheimer's Society and the Library and Information Service are pleased to announce further dates when people can drop in to the Library in Grove Road, Eastbourne and speak to a representative from the Alzheimer's Society. **Jane Smissen-Bell**, a Dementia Support Worker, will be there to offer free information and advice to people with Alzheimer's, their families and carers.

Tuesday 18 October 10.30-12.30

Tuesday 15 November 10.30-12.30

Tuesday 13 December 10.30-12.30

The Alzheimer's Society provides vital information and support for people with all forms of dementia, and for those who care for them. In East Sussex There is an extensive network of support services, all free and confidential. For more information come and speak to Jane at one of the drop in sessions or call 01323 727127.

Latest NVQ successes

Staff who have recently achieved NVQs in Health and Social Care are:

Level 2: **Steve Martin**, Hookstead;
Jenny Etches, Mount Denys; **Margaret Oxley**, Charter Centre; **Stephanie Foster**, Homefield Place; **Christine Knight**, St Davids Court;

Julie Smith, Milton Court Level 3;
Jackie Sellens, Mount Denys;
Stuart Funnell, Greenwood.

Plus ... **Sue Howell**, Training and Development Consultant Older People, has completed the VI award.

Staff

Arrivals and departures



Halloween is round the corner...

Arrivals

Beeching Park day centre welcomes **Emily Haines** as a Support Co-ordinator.

Paul Boyle has joined the Occupational Therapy Services Duty team, coming from Children's Services. **Kim Lamb** also joins the team, from OT services in Hastings. Both are Senior Practitioners.

Johanna Markham has a year's secondment from the OT Service in Hastings from 31 October to work in the pilot 'Reablement in the Independent Sector'.

St. Nicholas Centre welcomes **Matt Gurr** and **Naomi Watts**, Senior Support Co-ordinators.

Sensory Impairment Team welcomes **Ian Hebborn** who joins them as a Rehabilitation Officer (Visual Impairment).

The Eastbourne Living at Home Service would like to welcome **Seon Mill** who is joining them as their DPS (Directly Provided Services) Manager.

Jillian Spencer is a new Administration Assistant with the Older People's Mental Health Team at Newhaven Rehabilitation Centre.

Peter Dawson has joined the Complaints Unit, also as an Administrative Assistant.

Two temporary administrative assistants started with the Living at Home Service recently. They are **Jeffrey Rowse** at Firwood House, Eastbourne, and **David Kerr** at the Charter Centre, Bexhill.

Barry Goodwin will be joining the Central Support Admin Team while **Charmaine Bloor** goes on secondment to Organisational Development and Staff Information.

Mental Health Services have a student social worker on placement until May 2012. She's **Marie Lawrance**, who will be supervised by **Julie Payne**, Forensic Senior Practitioner in the Secure and Forensic Service.

Plus, ChoicES employment service are supporting **Christian Walmsley** to work with the Commissioning Team at County Hall on a three-month contract. [See more about ChoicES successes on page 6.]

Departures

Eliot Webb left the E-Business team on 12 October. All his team wish him well in his new venture.

Shirley Giles is leaving the Eastbourne and South Wealden ChoicES team at the end of October, to return to day services at the Conquest Centre. Shirley has been with ChoicES since July 2010 and the team there would like to thank her for all her hard work and wish her luck in her new post.

Eastbourne District General Hospital team wish good luck to **Bev Izzard** in her secondment to the Assessment and Reablement team, and say, "Thanks for all your work with the EDGH team."

Reporting an incident at work?

From 1 October there's a new online system for reporting Health and Safety accidents and incidents.

You can access the new system through the intranet, by going to 'Helping you at Work', then selecting 'Reporting and investigating a health and safety incident or near miss'.

The Last Word ... from Nathalie Calonnec



I'm ... Nathalie Calonnec and I work as an Equalities Officer.

A typical day at work involves ... research and reviewing EIAs (Ed: That's Equality Impact Assessments for those not in the know), doing a presentation, meeting with colleagues across the County to discuss and take forward a policy I am writing, then doing more desk-based research and organising training, such as the 'Equality Matters' road show.

The best part of it for me is ... using my research skills and working on an endless supply of projects with great people.

I couldn't get through the day without ... at least six cups of green tea and a short lunch time walk.

I look forward to ... visiting my sister who lives in French Guiana, and travelling on the Amazon River sometime next year.

When I'm not at work I ... like socialising and being active. This summer I took part in two sponsored sea swims and raised money for the British Heart Foundation, Teenage Cancer Trust and Surf Relief.

In the future I'd like to ... make time to do some volunteering again and swim across the English Channel, or as we call it in France 'la Manche', and have family and friends cheering me at the finishing line if I ever get there!

This column is a chance for anyone connected with social care to present a personal view. If you'd like to feature on this page, please contact Flora Aldridge. (Contact details are on page 2.)

Please deliver to: