



For better
mental health

update

Spring 2011

Mind in Taunton and West Somerset

Mind TWS continues to flourish and expand

In these difficult economic and political times it is more important than ever that we get our message out there, and reach as many people as possible. As you will see, a number of recent developments have helped us to do this.

Chris Rugg, one of our volunteer advocates, was a winner at the annual CARE focus awards. Meanwhile, the people of Chard got to hear about Mindline during a highly successful street collection, and we have launched the Walk on the Wild Side challenge to raise funds for the Go Wild, Stay Well project.

Read about all of this and a lot more inside.

Please ask if you would like this information available in another language or alternative format such as large print, CD or Braille.

Our objectives are:

- ▲ To promote mental health and emotional well-

News in Brief

QUIZ NIGHT FOR GWSW

Sue Habgood from Somerset Wildlife Trust organised a quiz night at the Old Pier Tavern in Burnham on Sea to raise funds for our 'Go Wild, Stay Well' project on Tuesday 1st March. £100 was raised for the project, including £20 for a bottle of Cava that was auctioned off at the end. It was an extremely enjoyable night, the winning team containing our PR Champion Dave Urwin!

HOUSE OF ST MARTIN

A new ecotherapy project that will launch in April, in partnership with the Langley Trust, who provide resettlement accommodation for ex-offenders and disadvantaged homeless people by offering a range of care, support and supervision services tailored to meet individual

Our objectives are:

- ◆ To promote mental health and emotional well-being.
- ◆ To encourage greater understanding of mental ill-health and distress.
- ◆ To provide high quality mental health services.
- ◆ To enable mental health service users to participate in the planning and delivery of services.

Mind in Taunton & West Somerset is committed to providing high quality services. We participate in the Quality Management in Mind scheme

For more information please visit our website at:
www.mindtws.org.uk

homeless people by offering a range of care, support and supervision services tailored to meet individual needs in the areas of mental or personality disorder. This project will allow people to take part in horticultural activities in order to ease their mental distress. This is aimed primarily at persons experiencing stress, depression or anxiety. People can be referred through their GP, through Somerset County Council or can self-refer. They will be assessed for suitability by the project co-ordinator. For more information please e-mail: - beckycrabb@mindtws.org.uk

Go Wild, Stay Well

Walk on the Wild Side Challenge

Do you like a challenge? Do you want to raise funds for an inspirational project? Why not combine the two? Join us and walk 30 miles or 15 miles on the Quantock Greenway on Saturday July 2nd to raise funds for the 'Go Wild, Stay Well' project. Both walks will take you through a mixture of stunning scenery, including forest trails, expansive hillside with amazing views over the Bristol Channel, sweeping parkland, country lanes and picturesque villages with some important historical buildings. It will be a real challenge, but represents a fraction of the struggle that many who experience mental distress face on a daily basis to be listened to, treated with respect and to be able to participate fully in life.

There is a sponsorship target of £250 for the 15 mile walk and £500 for the 30 mile walk, with the final amount due by three months after the challenge and two thirds to be guaranteed by eight weeks prior to the event.

If you did not wish to take part but would like to make a general donation you can do so at : - www.bmycharity.com/walkonthewildside

In other news, the evaluation has recently come back for the second set of ecotherapy sessions; it has again been positive, with some of the most striking comments being "I generally feel quite isolated, this group helps me to feel less isolated" and "Being in the countryside is more

SUCH Project

By Maggi Rowan

Many years ago I went through a long period of mental distress. During this time, the most powerful therapeutic experience I had was when a hospital visitor simply held my hand at a time when I felt utterly cut off from all other people. I will never forget this experience of physical connection to another person, the realisation that I was no longer isolated, and that someone was really caring for me despite me feeling somehow excluded and untouchable.

From this experience I became aware that *appropriate* touch was a powerful component of healing, and I became interested in learning about 'touch therapies' As result I decided to study and gain qualifications in a range of complementary therapies, in order to help others who were experiencing difficult times when all hope begins to fade.

In 2001 I won the Mind Millennium Award, and this gave me the opportunity to begin developing ideas of how to help people in need of the therapies I could deliver, regardless of their ability to pay for it. Out of this came the birth of the SUCH project in 2002. We became a charity in 2005.

When the opportunity to merge with Mind TWS arose in February 2011, we dissolved our charitable status and became affiliated to Mind. We are now continuing with our work

Mindline Somers Street Collection with Chard Intentional Peer Support Group

On 30th October a collection place in Chard for Mindline at which our assistant director Pritchard and one of our volunteers Sandria King, spoke to the public in Chard about the service. £850 was raised, including one donation. Andy said, "I am very grateful to the people of Chard for their support and for listening to us at Mindline Somerset."

The collection was organised by the Intentional Peer Support Group. We are a group of adults who have experienced mental distress. Shery Mead, who trained the group initially, comments that, "In taking care of each other and supporting each other as 'sick', in practice we build a sense of family and a community that is mutually supportive and focused on recovery and action. Julie Matthews, a member who took part in the street collection, said "We are a group that has built trust each other and through our support are able to begin to challenge negative thought patterns and to form healthier relationships. I have gained a lot from being part of this group."

most striking comments being “I generally feel quite isolated, this group helps me to feel less isolated” and “Being in the countryside is more therapeutic; it helps you think differently.” These comments indicate that the ethos of the project; helping people who experience mental distress to feel the therapeutic benefits of nature and to participate fully in life, is successful. To apply for the challenge, or for more information, please e-mail:

DaveUrwin@mindtws.org.uk

For more information on Go Wild, Stay Well please e-mail: **Davidt@mindtws.org.uk**



When the opportunity to merge with Mind TWS arose in February 2011, we dissolved our charitable status and became affiliated to Mind. We are now continuing with our work as part of a team within Mind TWS.

Merging with Mind has enabled us to concentrate more on the delivery of complementary therapies, by benefiting from access to Mind’s administrative and personnel resources. It has enabled the close relationship that has always existed between the two organisations to develop further.

(This is an edited version of Maggi’s article: for further information, please e-mail: **maggi.such@mindtws.org.uk** **www.suchproject.org.uk**

patterns and to form healthy relationships. I have gained from being part of this group assisting others in making changes.”



Pictured(l-r):Sandria King, Ju Matthews, Andy Pritchard.

Mindline Somerset Street Collection with Chard Intentional Peer Support Group

On 30th October a collection took place in Chard for Mindline Somerset, at which our assistant director Andy Pritchard and one of our volunteers, Sandria King, spoke to the people of Chard about the service. £85.74 was raised, including one donation of £5. Andy said, "I am very grateful to the people of Chard for their generosity and for listening to us talk about Mindline Somerset.

The collection was organised by Chard Intentional Peer Support Group, who are a group of adults who have all Experienced mental distress. Shery Mead, who trained the group initially, comments that, "Instead of taking care of each other and thinking of each other as 'sick', in peer support we build a sense of family and community that is mutually responsible and focused on recovery and social action. Julie Matthews, a member who took part in the street collection, says "We are a group that has learned to trust each other and through this we are able to begin to challenge our old patterns and to form healthier relationships. I have gained so much from being part of this group and

Advocacy in Mind Care Focus Award for Advocacy Vol- unteer

One of our volunteer advocates Chris Rugg was recently selected from over 200 nominees as a finalist in the Care Focus Somerset awards and was the winner in the 'Outstanding Volunteer' category. The annual awards, to recognise outstanding contributions in the field of health and social care in Somerset, were hosted by the BBC's Chris Vacher and were held at Wellsprings Leisure Centre in Taunton on Friday 15th October. Chris was overwhelmed by his award. He said "I'm not used to being a winner, and it didn't even sink in until the next day when I saw the trophy."

Chris has previously faced stigma due to a speech impediment and clinical depression, and at times says he could have done with an advocate himself but at the time the service wasn't available. "I enjoy being able to use my life experiences to the benefit of others and also the satisfaction of knowing that I have helped someone to be heard where they have previously been ignored," he says, "It is the best, most satisfying job I have ever had, paid or unpaid. I am passionate about mental health, equality and inclusion."

The Advocacy in Mind project has Comic Relief funding for 3 years and aims to enable individuals who experience mental distress to become more independent and have more of a say in decisions affecting their day to day lives, and to challenge discrimination. It has gone from strength to strength since its inception in March 2009. Chris

patterns and to form healthier relationships. I have gained so much from being part of this group and assisting others in making positive changes.”



Pictured(l-r):Sandria King, Julie Matthews, Andy Pritchard.

affecting their day to day lives, and to challenge discrimination. It has gone from strength to strength since its inception in March 2009. Chris feels that the project is so effective because “We are non-judgemental, independent and only ever say what our clients ask us to say. We are always on our clients’ side.

For more information
email:bethanf@mindtws.org.uk



Pictured: Chris Vacher (BBC news presenter), Chris Rugg (Care Focus Award winner) and Carole Hewitt (St. Margaret’s Hospice.)

Somerset Community Care Matters

Somerset Community Care Matters is a registered charity whose aim is to provide free of charge specialist Community Care advice in Somerset.

Community Care Advice is a very complex subject with many laws, regulations and guidelines. It is an area that requires specialist advisors who can understand the complexities of individual cases.

They aim to provide advice on the following issues:

- Health and Social Care
- Mental Health
- NHS Healthcare (Continuing Care/Hospital Discharge.)
- Older people, care choices and care charging.
- Accommodation issues around health and care.
- Carer's rights and services.
- Drug and Alcohol dependency.
- Disability, rights and entitlements.

Somerset Community Care Matters have recently started working from the Mind TWS office on Mondays and Fridays, and provide advice sessions at the LINK centre on Wednesday mornings. The advice sessions take place between 9.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. on Wednesdays, you can leave details for an appointment on 01823 254 735.

For more information contact Rav Avars:

World Book Night

Suzie Grogan was recently chosen as a 'giver' for World Book Night, and will be distributing 48 copies of 'Fingersmith' by Sarah Waters on behalf of Mind in Taunton and West Somerset on Saturday March 5th.

World Book Night represents the most ambitious and far-reaching celebration of adult books and reading ever attempted in the UK and Ireland. 20,000 selected 'givers' and their helpers will deliver 48 copies each of their chosen book to whomever they choose. The remaining books will be distributed by World Book Night itself in places that might otherwise be difficult to reach, such as prisons and hospitals.

Some reviews will hopefully appear on the Mind TWS website in the coming weeks, and anyone who obtains a copy will be encouraged to pass it on to a Charity shop or to a friend, so look out for one.



Contact us

For more information on any of our work you can contact us at:

TAUNTON



details for an appointment on 01823 254 735.

For more information contact Ray Avards:
rayasccm@mindtws.org.uk

FROM THE ARCHIVE:



Above left: - The 'Time to Change' sofa tour 2009.



Above right: - Stand in the town centre with Rethink as part of World Mental Health day 2009.

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