

ROTA VISIT REPORT BY MEMBERS

Visits are undertaken to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the service provided and the general environment of the premises.

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| Visit to: | Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea | | |
| By: | Caroline Ellis | | |
| Date of visit: | 27th March 2006 | Time of visit: | 2.30pm |
| Is this | | | |
| a) a directly managed Council service | | | |
| or | | | |
| b) an independent sector service | b) Funded by a variety of sources, including the borough, lottery & PCT | | |
| Who did you meet? | Menghi Mulchandani other Project staff and volunteer | | |
| How many users were there? | Members were not present during my visit however they currently have a membership of 1097 people and have regular contact with approximately 200 people per month. | | |
| Client group (e.g. Older People): | People with a disability | | |

What services were being provided for users?

The Project aims to assist people to be able to assess work opportunities, education and leisure activities by working with people with a disability identifying needs and with organisations to raise awareness and actively encourage integration by supporting policies and action to make this possible.

The Project runs an IT class for members to introduce them to new skills and then assists them to move on to either further education in the community or into work.

They have a Life Long Learning Co-ordinator, which is funded through Community Education; the funding is agreed on an annual basis. They have just appointed a person to this post subject to funding for the year starting July to be agreed, once this is confirmed arrangements can be made for this person to commence work.

At the Project they run a regular 'seated work out' session for members and they also

have facilities to offer massage.

They have an Access Committee, which works closely with planners to ensure plans are drawn up providing full access and take into account the different needs of people with a disability.

They provide Information and Advice and this has been funded by the borough for 3 years and it is hoped this will be extended for a further year. They have a good success rate with applications for Disability Living Allowance.

They have a very successful Volunteer Project and I met the worker who co-ordinates this service. They have some 50 volunteers to call on and about 20 people volunteering on a regular basis. They provide assistance in tasks which are non statutory but enhance life, for example escorting a person to an appointment or help with a household job. The volunteers also work on a one to one basis where the co-ordinator matches the volunteer to a person where they share common interests eg cinema or exhibition trips. The service does check the volunteers' references and CRB and offers training.

They have a Head of Policy post funded by the lottery and an Office Manager and are looking to pilot a project looking at the use of 'individual budgets for care packages' to people.

The Project base also has facilities for wheel chair users to be weighed and have passport photo's taken and has a wheel chair loan service.

The Project Director is very hard working and to relieve some of the pressure on her, she plans to appoint a PA.

What were your impressions about the care given to users by staff?

(eg. courtesy shown to clients, adequate staff, quality of food, activities provided, etc)

The Projects premises act as a base for the organisation and is fully accessible. A lot of the Project's work is to ensure people with a disability can integrate with able-bodied people so much work is done in the community.

The workers at the Project are very positive in their approach and seek to find realistic solutions to difficulties people may face as a result of their disability.

What did you consider were the overall strengths of the service?

The Project has over recent years increased its profile in the community and raised membership numbers. It is hard to say how many people in the borough are living with a disability and some may not require support services.

The Project has continued to grow and develop making a positive contribution to the community, raising awareness and understanding of disability issues in a very constructive positive manner.

What, if any, improvements might be made to services or facilities?

The Project listens to their members and I think it is for them to say what improvements they think might be made to the service, rather than me.

Other Comments?

The Leader of the Council and the Kensington and Chelsea Partnership along with ADKC have arranged a reception to celebrate the launch of 'Inclusive Kensington & Chelsea' (A report on the inclusive needs of people with a disability) and the new ADKC website on 19th April.

Response by Centre Manager (where applicable)

ADKC welcomes the interest from the Borough to support disabled people to live independent lives and work towards removing barriers to enable people to live inclusive lives within their community.

ADKC and the Borough work closely in partnership to support the above.

The main barrier for the organisation is managing a resources centre that is fully accessible, but the running costs are very high.

Officer Comments

ADKC staff and members play an important role in the move towards a more inclusive community and the development of services in Kensington and Chelsea. As a grant funded organisation they attract a range of funding. ADKC works both with individuals and in partnership with a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

Paul Rackham
Head of Disability Services