

Kensington and Chelsea Supported Housing Commissioning Team

Service User Newsletter

MySay Kensington & Chelsea



Welcome to the Summer/Autumn
edition of My Say K&C



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Welcome from the Editor of My Say K&C! Toyin Fani-Kayode

What an incredible year so far! Earlier in the year we celebrated The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and this summer London played host to the world – The Olympics. All this against the backdrop of budget cuts and the Tri-boroughs' tireless efforts to increase the quality of our services. K & C has certainly been put through its paces. Service users in the borough no doubt rose to the Olympic logistical challenge by personalising their way through it all. Putting to the test the much advocated Personalisation: choice and control over the delivery of the services they receive. It really would be great to get some feedback on service user experience during the Games. If this summer has been pretty much business as usual, we'd like to hear from you too, so important that you have your say!



Toyin Fani-Kayode

Keeping apace with all the changes - we bring you up to speed with news of **two new work and housing schemes** and **Apprenticeships**, all are potential lifelines. Also in this issue - **new employment and training opportunities** - you really never know where the training you decide to undergo might take you but one thing is for sure accredited training will open doors. Which brings us to **The West London Training Programme** which is back again this year and the good news is that it has once again received accreditation! In this edition we update on developments in the forthcoming **Peer Mentoring Training** and last but certainly not least we hear from some of the staff and residents of a new service - **Richardson House**.



Trainee Peer Consultants —
hard at work

One thing that won't change is that you can still have your say! Get in touch and come to the next My Say Service User Forum! Email your say to hideo.ikehara@rbkc.gov.uk, we would love to hear from you.

Toyin Fani-Kayode
Editor

Welcome from the Chair of My Say K&C! Lola Amusan



As the Chair of the Service User Forum, I would like to update you on what we are currently doing. We met in May and there are notes from the meeting on the next page.

The Royal Borough's Supported Housing Commissioning Team, part of the Housing Commissioning Team, is organising peer mentoring training for trainers. Hideo Ikehara will be teaching prospective trainers across various service providers in September/October 2012 so the trained staff trainers can teach service users and ex-service users in developing peer mentoring skills. This will be part of the local programme "Getting Ready to

Move". This is a new scheme run in partnership with the Council's Social Inclusion Team (SIT) and St Mungo's. Samantha Braddish from SIT introduces it on p8 of this newsletter.

Other trained service users are now actively involved in developing the Supporting People Programme, as they are already participating in: writing articles for **My Say K&C**, the Service User Newsletter, helping to review the strategy, reviewing services by interviewing service users, participating in procurement exercises and supporting tutors in teaching the West London training programme.

The latest graduates attended the graduation ceremony in March 2012. Miriam Peck, a graduate, writes about her experiences in this newsletter.

Lola Amusan
Chair of My Say K&C

My Say K & C Service User Forum Meeting 9 May 2012

On the agenda was:

- **Service User Strategy;**
- **Peer Mentoring Consultation Update; and**
- **The Peer Consultants Training Programme.**

Service User Strategy - Hideo Ikehara gave an update on the Royal Borough's Supported Housing Commissioning Team's Service User Strategy. The team is now consulting the Learning Disability organisation, Equal People, on the draft strategy to make sure learning disability service users do understand it.

Quality Assessment Framework - Service users have the right to know what grades their providers received on the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). Hideo has been making sure service users understand the QAF through the training programme. Registered Providers (RP) need to cascade information of how QAF works. The question was raised over the criteria of awarding marks in the QAF (currently A-C). Hideo gave us examples of the type of things that would achieve an A grade - things such as having clear policy and procedures in place and evidence of this, coupled with demonstrating that RPs involve service users in reviewing their policies and procedures and management decisions, and have a service user on their management board, as well as ensuring service users understand their complaints procedure.

Peer Mentoring Training Update - The Royal Borough's Supported Housing Commissioning Team (SHCT) is looking into developing peer mentoring training linking into the 'Supported into Work and Housing Scheme. Hideo Ikehara facilitated a group consultation on the peer mentoring training. Service users, peer consultants as well as service providers gave suggestions and feedback on the content and organisation of the peer mentoring. Hideo will make a recommendation to the Royal Borough's SHCT.

The Peer Consultant Training Programme which started four years ago saw service users trained up to become involved in the Supporting People programme and conduct community research and service reviews. Lola described the benefits of becoming a peer consultant, and of the experience and benefits she had gained from working as a peer consultant. Lola also emphasised the options and opportunities peer consulting can create in the job market.

Toyin Fani-Kayode

**My Say K&C
Dates for your Diaries!!**

**My Say K&C Forum
12 December 2012 12 to 2pm**

**Lunch will be
provided!!**

New Service - Richardson House

Richardson House opened in February 2012. It has 11 bed spaces, eight male and five female and provides a very high level of support for people with mental health problems.

Matthew Rossor of London Cyrenians, Richardson House Manager explained "We're helping people to grab back their independence. We have art programmes, nature walks, a baking group, cooking group, museum trips, trips to working farms, social trips such as going for a coffee - generally being part of the community." Resident meetings are held every Friday and barbecues are also a regular feature. Residents have put a lot of work into the garden, which is a peaceful oasis, with a herb and vegetable garden and a new lawn, laid by residents themselves. A recent resident inspired trip to Brighton was a great success.



Residents are usually placements from outside the borough who are most likely to have been hospitalised for a long period under section 37-41, and highly likely to have 'done something' whilst being very unwell. "We like to give everyone a chance" says Rossor, "a chance to achieve a good quality of life, to be stable and doing well, confident, with a healthy self-esteem. It's quite frightening having your own independence. We are very recovery focused, letting residents make decisions to empower them, enabling them go in the right direction." Mathew is protective of his residents - always a good sign - but adds "We have to take calculated and sensible risks. We can give support for two or possibly three years and in some cases six, supporting people to move on if we can".

Delroy, a resident, told me "The hospital locked me up most of the time. I lost my freedom for three years. When I heard about the possibility of coming to Richardson House I was excited. My first impression was that I had a small room and everyone else's was bigger than mine. The staff are OK. Approachable. Being free is the best experience. I can go to the cinema, museums - I can walk out onto the streets at anytime. I am on a pre-access humanities course as a precursor to University".



The garden was the place of choice by both staff and residents to talk to me. Francis who I met there, along with Hugo whom I was to meet later, did the best part of the work. "The garden was in disrepair. There was moss, no grass and it was all weeds and there wasn't a vegetable patch. Hugo and I went shopping one day to buy the tools we needed" he says, "We dug up the mud and levelled it out. If you look down on it (the garden) from the top of the stairs, it's beautiful! Then we made an application for

a lawn mower and we got it, though Hugo has to use it as I am not allowed to. The Herb garden was my idea. Look at the chillies!"

New Service - Richardson House (continued)

Honestly speaking – I had been drawn to the vibrant red and golden orange colours amidst the various shades of green and hadn't realised they were chillies, let alone edible.

"It's a good home to be in" Francis continued "everyone's nice, a couple of residents are troublesome but apart from that it's alright, good support. Hospital is terrible, sometimes you get treated badly by nurses and patients as well. My room is the best thing. My own bathroom, kitchen and front room." And back to the happier discussion of the garden "We're going to build a little wall between the seating area and the lawn" Francis paused and said "It'll look better."

Ljubomir is a maths whizz kid, who does voluntary work four days a week and is very good at art. He plays chess both in and out of Richardson House and by all accounts he is exceedingly good at it. Though I didn't get to meet Ljubomir, he was mentioned by everyone and is evidently such an integral part of the house that not to mention him at all would miss a vital ingredient in a much loved recipe.

"The attitude is one of family" Hugo, a key worker tells me: "There's a communal meal every Sunday and we all decide who will cook and who will wash up. Roast dinners go down well as does Ngozi's Nigerian food. We are very lucky as we have Kensington on our doorstep. We are working with a corner garden local initiative, which will mean, if all goes well that the produce we grow here in our garden will be sold locally. Building up a relationship with our community and empowering at the same time. Francis and Lyle are very active in getting this going. Therapeutic earnings – the idea is that in helping out in the project you get vouchers for food. In the long term the aim is a working garden. We take our produce to World's End Market and sell it. How much you get will depend on how much work you put in".

Key worker Akinwale was a project manager at Revolving Doors when he was made redundant and was immediately snapped up by London Cyrenians. He has worked at Richardson House for three weeks. Akinwale gives support through group activities. "Because of the various histories, we start by identifying residents' various skills. A good starting point is through storytelling. We are setting up a joke group, by cracking a joke or telling a story, that way people are able to share their experience in different forms. The Olympics here in London has revealed that residents may have interest in one particular sport and we build on that and organise activities. Some people may need one to one sessions outside the project, we identify what they are good at and support it". Akinwale concludes: "The longer residents are in hospital the more their skill sets may be in the background and the harder it is to see the good in themselves. Everyone has a strength it's just a matter of finding it. At Richardson House, London Cyrenians are training staff members in how to identify skills and how to take those skills to the next level."

Toyin Fani-Kayode

Being a Apprentice

By Khimarn Joseph-Vitalis

Hi my name is Khimarn Joseph-Vitalis. After applying to the London Apprenticeship Company (LAC), I started working for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea as an apprentice in March 2012. I work in the Housing Department where I undertake a range of administrative and procurement duties with the team.



I decided to do an Apprenticeship because I wanted to get into the world of work whilst getting nationally recognised qualifications and a salary. Although I gained three A-Levels, I didn't enjoy the traditional academic structure to education, so I did not apply to University. Being an apprentice, I am constantly motivated by the fact that I will have necessary experience, skills and a range of options open to me once I finish.

I also really enjoy meeting residents and service users in our supported housing and trying to identify their various housing and employment related needs. I take part in house meetings which involve discussing issues which are raised by tenants and scheme managers and take minutes for the meetings. I am now looking to develop employment activities for residents.

During my time here I have learnt many new skills, while supporting residents, and understanding more about the different issues they face.

All my colleagues have been very supportive, and I've learned a lot. Not only have I become more confident, I have been able to test my abilities in different situations.

I would like to say a massive thank you to my team!

Khimarn Joseph-Vitalis

Getting Ready to Move The Supported into Work and Housing Scheme

“Getting Ready to Move” is a local programme developed with service users and is designed to break down the barriers into training, education and work for people living in our supported housing. The programme - through having an overview of training, employment and health improvement opportunities - seeks to maximise the outcomes we achieve through the money we spend on housing-related support. The programme will be run in partnership with providers, the Council’s Economic Development Team, our Social Inclusion Team and a wider Kensington and Chelsea Homelessness Network.

This programme links directly to a recently implemented project linking housing to worklessness developed by the Housing Strategy and Regeneration Team. It will, through mentoring and volunteering, provide a launch pad into training, education and employment for people in our supported housing. This is a part of a holistic approach to enablement encompassing well-being, housing and meaningful activity.

The “Supported into Work and Housing Scheme” complements this programme by offering people who are in employment, vocational training or education, who are homeless or in housing need, accommodation for 12 months at a rent below the current average in Kensington and Chelsea.

With support and advice provided by St Mungo’s, the scheme gives people a period of time to save and plan their move into affordable, longer-term accommodation.

To be eligible for the scheme you must be over 18 years old, live or work in Kensington and Chelsea, be living on a low income and not be in a position where you can secure accommodation independently.

The scheme currently has two locations:

Westgate Terrace SW10. 10 bedrooms with shared kitchens and bathrooms.

Whitchurch Road W11. Six bedrooms with own kitchen and shared bathrooms.

The buildings are owned by London & Quadrant who are acting as the landlord and managing the buildings.

The first building opened in January 2012 and so far four service users have already moved on to affordable accommodation; ending their involvement with the Supported into Housing Scheme six months earlier than anticipated.

If you are interested in the scheme, please contact the Social Inclusion Team to find out more about how the scheme works and whether you can apply.
By email SIT@rbkc.gov.uk or telephone 020 7938 8211.

Samantha Braddish
Supported Placements and Move on Coordinator

West London Training Programme — My experience: Miriam Peck

From February to March this year I attended the West London Supporting People Service User Involvement Skills Training course. This was run by LIFT (formerly Brent Homeless Users Group) on behalf of seven West London boroughs. The course is designed to enable current and former users of supported housing to become peer consultants and get involved in helping to improve services for themselves and other people in supported housing.

The Supporting People programme funds housing-related support to prevent problems that lead to hospitalisation, institutional care or homelessness.



It is committed to providing a better quality of life for vulnerable people to help them live independently in the community. Peer Consultant Graduates

In assessing bids for funding, the programme uses the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) to assess standards and ensure that service providers keep to their contractual expectations. In the seven West London boroughs that funded the training course, service users who have completed the training, interview other service users about the services they receive. They may also be asked to help in other ways, such as sitting on tender assessment panels assessing bids for funding supported housing.



Miriam presenting the findings from the service review

The training course was very interesting, and I can thoroughly recommend it to any other service users who want to improve their people skills and get involved in improving services.

We learned better communication skills, including active listening. We also learned about teamwork and how to hold meetings and facilitate focus groups. We were taught interview techniques and how to ask probing

West London Training Programme — My experience: Miriam Peck (continued)

questions without suggesting answers. We also considered different types of criticism and how to be constructive in giving feedback. We studied the QAF and learned about equality and diversity issues, health and safety and safe-guarding adults.

We were taught about how to do community (or “peer”) research, including how to decide between different research methods. Peer research is preferred by the boroughs because service users know the issues which are important to other service users and are likely to have a good understanding of which questions are relevant to them. They are also more likely to obtain truthful answers because the interviewers can better understand and empathise with the issues faced by the people they are interviewing.



Peer consultant trainees - hard at work

We then did some community research of our own. We were sent out with peer observers to conduct interviews with service users and staff at a number of different supported housing locations in Kensington and Chelsea. We were all nervous to begin with but once we’d done a couple of interviews the process became easier. We collated our research and gave a presentation of our findings to a number of service providers.



Tutors and peer consultant tutor assistants

I gained confidence from being on the course and it was great to see other service users on the course gaining confidence too. I would like to thank Hideo Ikehara, the Supported Housing Commissioner for Kensington and Chelsea and Matt Tudge from LIFT for organising and delivering the course so professionally.

Miriam Peck

Employment and Training Opportunities

Are you thinking about joining the job market but a bit stuck on where to go for help? There is a plethora of organisations who offer various types of information, advice and guidance which may help you get into work.

Going back to work may feel a challenge. You might want to consider doing some training first, or even some voluntary work to help you get into a routine. The Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea www.voluntarywork.org.uk has many fantastic volunteering opportunities with something for everyone. Training courses galore, from painting and decorating, to business administration are run by many organisations in the borough, including Kensington and Chelsea College www.kcc.ac.uk

The National Careers Service can get you started in thinking about different types of jobs which are out there, and what skills you need for these roles: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx> The website also has tips on CV writing, an assessment tool to check your strengths, and to find out whether you are eligible for funding for training.

Roxy Hotten
Employment Initiatives Officer

Supported Housing Newsletter

Please call us ...

If you are interested in telling us what you think the newsletter pages should be like, or if you would like to help us develop our newsletter. Also, if you enjoy writing, we could perhaps include some of your work in a future edition of the newsletter.

Please contact Hideo Ikehara on: 020 7361 3094, or email:

spteam@rbkc.gov.uk. If you would like to write to us, or send us some of your writing, our address is:

Supported Housing Commissioning Team, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX.

Thanks!!

This information is available in the following languages, as well as braille, very large print and on tape. If you would like more copies of this leaflet in English or an alternative format, please contact Supported Housing Commissioning Team on **020 7361 2544** or **SPTeam@rbkc.gov.uk**

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