

Editorial Commentary

We are delighted to bring you the Winter 2003 edition of the *Riverside Review*.

It is a time for us to reflect on some of the events of the past three months and to try and bring the highlights to you.

Since our Summer newsletter, we held a very successful Annual General Meeting in September. Our guest speaker was **Tom McCabe, Deputy Minister of Health & Community Care**, who launched the new Young Person's Befriending Service (14–18 years) for people with mental health issues. Coupled with this, Hannah Hutchison has now joined us to take up the post of the

Young Person's Befriending Co-ordinator. You can read her article later in this newsletter.

At the beginning of October, our attentions turned towards Scottish Mental Health Awareness Week and it was, as always, a busy time for SDAMH. We wish to thank *Stirling Council* for the *Community Fund Grant*, which part-funded the week of events. In addition, it could not have been a complete success had it not been for the all the time and effort put in by clients, volunteers and staff alike — thank you one and all!

We said a fond farewell to Pam Campbell, our Rural Access Worker, who has now moved on to full-time employment. This means that we are currently recruiting for a new Rural Access Worker along with some other vacancies within SDAMH. Our campaign has stretched far and wide and our 'Recruitment' page on the SDAMH website has attracted over 175 visits on its own!

We are also pleased to be welcoming into SDAMH another 13 volunteers to add to the other 37 that are already an integral part of SDAMH's Service provision. Welcome on board and happy volunteering!!

Over the next few pages, there is an overview of what all has been happening at SDAMH. At this time of year, it is understandable to reflect on the year gone by and I believe we can safely say that we have had another "successful" year at SDAMH. My sincere thanks go to the clients, staff, volunteers and our Funders and our best wishes for a Happy Christmas and Prosperous 2004.

Christine Bauer

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Young Person's Befriending Service	2
Artlink for Karen's Sake	2
Festive Holidays	2
Mental Health Awareness Week 2003	3
'see me' Network Event	4
New Volunteers	4

Annual General Meeting - 1 September 2003

The Association held its AGM at the Stirling Council Chambers. The event was especially important as it marked the launch of the Young Person's Befriending Service by **Deputy Minister of Health & Community Care, Tom McCabe**. Mr McCabe, in his speech, highlighted that mental health is a priority for NHS Scotland and the Scottish Executive is committed to improving efforts on the promotion of well-being and prevention of mental illness, tackling stigma and discrimination and preventing suicide.

Mr McCabe also emphasised, in particular, the 'Choose Life' National Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Scotland, launched in December 2002. It is this Strategy that will fund the Young Person's Befriending Service and he gave particular reference to the fact that he was delighted to lend his support to the launch of this Service. A full transcription of Mr McCabe's speech and a copy of our Annual Report can be found on the SDAMH website - www.stirlingmentalhealth.org.uk, where you can follow the links for the AGM 2003.



Mr McCabe in conversation with Stirling MSP, Dr Sylvia Jackson

Young Person's Befriending Service



The Review's sub-editor, *Brian Young*, recently caught up with SDAMH's new Young Person's Befriending Co-ordinator, Hannah Hutchison to glean more information about the Service.

BY: How did the Service come about?

HH: Over the years, statistics were being kept by SDAMH

about the number of referrals that had to be turned away concerning young people under the age of 18 and this led to a student, Kimberley Coleman, from Stirling University undertaking a research assessment as part of her Psychology degree.

BY: The research assessment sounds very interesting, can you elaborate on it?

HH: It provided SDAMH with a comprehensive insight into some of the unmet needs of young people aged 14 - 18 year olds and focussed, in particular on aspects of mental health issues such as anorexia, self-harming and suicide. It was very interesting to note that all the way through the research project, the referral agencies, parents and teachers questioned, all revealed that there was nothing similar out there for young people with mental health issues. Although it is true that some people are already receiving psychiatric help, this is formal and clinical and would be complemented by the social/community setting of befriending.

Artlink for Karen's Sake

"Someone said to me that there was an drop-in in Stirling on a Thursday afternoon held by Artlink and I thought that's not for me! However, curiosity got the better of me and I decided to go along to one of the open afternoons where there was lots of different "taster" sessions, like silk painting, pottery etc. Thanks to my curiosity, I am really glad that I went along. I have recently made a clay pot, two small sun-catchers that were made on pre-cut plastic shapes and my latest masterpiece is a large glass painting of a sea view.

What I found was that it does not really matter if you are artistic or not. The artist who takes the friendly group is really good and takes time to explain and show you different techniques. The time just flies by and I really enjoy being there".

Karen, SDAMH Drop-In Client

[Artlink Central organises high quality arts projects for all kind of special needs groups. They can be contacted on 01786 450971]

BY: What will the Service provide?

HH: The Service aims to assist young people to build up their self-esteem, through the support of a consistent and reliable befriender. A relationship that is independent of a teenager's social network of family and friends has shown to be beneficial when it offers the individual an opportunity to confide in someone they can trust.

BY: Can you be a bit more exact about how the Service will operate?

HH: It will be working, initially, with twelve 14 - 18 year olds and is for people who live in the Stirling Council area. It will offer same sex one-to-one befriending, provided by trained volunteers. The young person and their befriender will have regular (weekly/fortnightly) contact and it will be decided mutually how that time is spent. It could be trying out new activities in the community or simply having a chat over a cup of coffee. The partnership will be supported by the Co-ordinator.

BY: So what about the immediate future for the Service?

HH: As yet, the Service is not at the stage of taking referrals as there is still some fine tuning to be done on policies etc but things are looking really good in this regard. We now have in place our Reference Group and the next piece of exciting work is to have a volunteer recruitment campaign right at the beginning of 2004. So watch this space!

FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

Thursday 25th, Friday 26th December

Drop-In Closed

Sunday 28th December

Drop-In Closed

Monday 29th, Tuesday 30th &

Wednesday 31st January

Drop-In Open

Thursday 1st January 2004

Drop-In Open

1pm - 3pm

Soup & Sandwiches

Friday 2nd January 2004

Drop-In Closed

Sunday 4th January 2004

Drop-In Closed

Mental Health Awareness Week 2003

Traditionally the first week of October is Scottish Mental Health Awareness Week and this year was no exception. The aim of the week is to ensure, through promotion, everyone's good mental health, both adults and children by providing a wide range of activities.



SDAMH threw itself in, in its usual inimitable style and carried out an eventful week.

On Monday 4 October, the Association went "Rural" by taking the Stirling Council Playbus out to Killin and Tyndrum. The activities included beauty treatment, massage, information sessions, play activities and Money & Benefits Advice etc.

Tuesday 7 October saw SDAMH hosting a Pampering Day at its offices in the Riverside. There was beauty treatment, massage, hairdressing (for men and women), Indian Head Massage, Aromatherapy, relaxation etc. A lunch, with the emphasis on 'healthy' and 'tasty', was provided.

A significant milestone was made on Wednesday 8 October.

Following an invitation from **George Reid MSP and the Scottish Parliament's Presiding Officer**, and Stirling MSP **Dr Sylvia Jackson**, representatives from both Stirling & District Association for Mental Health (SDAMH) and Falkirk & District Association for Mental Health (FDAMH) went to the Scottish Parliament. The occasion was to launch the **Intouch Forth Valley** website, which is the result of a piece of collaborative work between the two organisations.



SDAMH and FDAMH representatives with George Reid MSP and Scottish Parliament's Presiding Officer

Both SDAMH and until recently FDAMH, have been running their computerised community information databases called InTouch

These have been run in a range of settings through Information Surgeries in local and rural venues, e.g. Benefits Agency, Libraries etc. In addition to the Development Workers, volunteers also assist in a variety of tasks. Both projects have given the opportunity for a number of volunteers to go onto paid employment.

The database enabled website has been designed in such a way to be the one-stop place for community information on mental health matters in the Forth Valley area, e.g. resources, services, facilities, prescribed drugs, accommodation etc.

The development work is well underway and the site will openly be available towards the end of December 2003.

It was the rural areas of Drymen and Strathblane that benefited on Thursday 9 October, with a visit from the Superbus and a similar programme to that from Monday was provided. In both locations, the bus was well received, as was the activities.

The week was rounded off with a Treasure Hunt on the Friday. The aim was to find an complete a range of clues and tasks, up and around the old town area of Stirling.

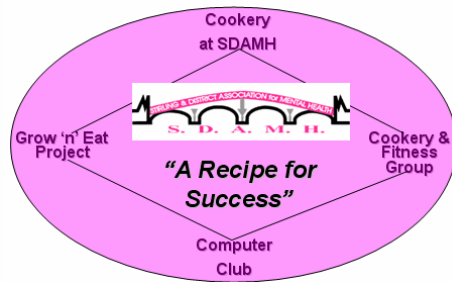
Four teams, of various numbers, namely Team Bingo, the Riverside Girls, Wolfcraig and Magpies, gathered for the event and they made their way towards the old town area to seek out and find the ten clues.



Davey & George from Team Bingo

It was Team Bingo that landed the first place, after completing the hunt in just under an hour and a half. Second place was drawn between the Riverside Girls and Wolfcraig, with the Magpies taking fourth.

Yet another successful Mental Health Awareness Week 2003!



SDAMH's Director Christine Bauer and Intouch Information Worker Brian Young, were invited to speak at a conference in Glasgow called *Healthy Body Healthy Mind*. It was the perfect

opportunity for the work done by and on behalf of the SDAMH Services' users to be highlighted to others, where this involved aspects of healthy eating, diet and exercise.

The conference was run by the University of Glasgow and the attendees were wide ranging and included professionals from some of the NHS Health Boards, other voluntary mental health service providers etc.

In her talk, Christine was able to highlight some of the good work that had been achieved over the past years. This included a focus on the Cookery & Fitness Group, which is currently running on a Thursday afternoon at the Raploch Community Centre. This is where some people go along each week and try and get that bit fitter and eat more healthily. Christine also made mention of the Computer Club, which runs each Tuesday at SDAMH, where clients can learn the basics of computing by doing such things as cards, posters and the recipes achieved Cookery Group.

Of course the success of the SDAMH Garden Project could not be left out and this is where various types of produce are grown, eaten and in some cases frozen for future enjoyment.

All in all, such things would not be possible at SDAMH without the work of the clients and the funding organisations - the Scottish Community Diet Project, Forth Valley Food Links and Stirling Council, which enables this to take place.

Brian Young

·see me' Network Event

SDAMH's Drop-In client Karen and Intouch Information Worker, Brian Young, went along to the recent 'see me' Network Event in Edinburgh.

The 'see me' campaign was launched in October 2002 to challenge stigma and discrimination around mental ill-health in Scotland. It was a two half day event that brought together over 40 people from various mental health organisations throughout Scotland.

Four base groups were established and each one went along to different types of anti-stigma workshops that included sessions from NHS Grampian, Positive Mental Attitudes' and the 'see me' National Anti-Stigma Campaign for Scotland. It was also a great opportunity for the organisations involved to be part of the network.

There will be in-depth coverage of the event in the next issue of the *Riverside Review*.

The Venture Fund

The Venture Fund offers the opportunity for funding to both large and small groups, in the Stirling area, who work with people suffering from mental health issues. Two service users and one Social Worker represent the Stirling area and meet up with representatives from Falkirk and Clackmannanshire to consider bids put forward from each area. Meetings are held on a quarterly basis and consider such projects and initiatives within the mental health field that are proposed by local groups.

If you have a project in mind for which you need funding, we would like to hear from you.

Further details and Application Forms can be obtained from **Rosie Cranfield, Community Care Senior, Stirling Council, on Tel: 01786 434093.**

New Volunteers – Welcome On board!



Some of SDAMH's new volunteer recruits, along with Aileen Balkwill, Violet Kirkwood and Hannah Hutchison on completion of their training.

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