

Newsletter

SPRING 2004 • ISSUE No 1

Employment...is a key part of the solution to homelessness



Welcome...

...to the first Newsletter of SHEN. We are a new network, set up to improve opportunities for people facing homelessness in Scotland through engagement with education, training and employment opportunities. We will make links between organisations and individuals working in homelessness services, education and training providers, policy officers and statutory organisations responsible for developing strategies in this field, and business and employers wishing to develop practices which will enable vulnerable people to gain employment.

In our first year our main aim is to create opportunities for members to share information and good practice and influence policy development. We will be working together towards mainstreaming our practices and establishing secure long-term funding.

Members can contact each other and exchange ideas through this quarterly newsletter and a series of seminars to be held across Scotland. There will also be an annual conference in Spring 2005.

The first seminar will be held on 15th June at Stirling. It will formally launch the network and we are hoping that the Minister, Margaret Curran will be able to attend. Members can participate in a series of workshops which will establish links between different areas of expertise. Our final session offers an opportunity to develop the agenda for future seminars and the conference.

We hope to see many of you at the first seminar. Do send us ideas and information about your work to include in future Bulletins.

Routes into Employment

Recent action research from Communities Scotland highlights the practices which successfully provide routes into employment. Given the multiple personal and social issues that often face people with experience of being homeless, real progress towards employability can only be developed once individuals have moved from crisis to stability. Employability skills have to be built on a basis of trust and good relationships with service providers, and the acceptance that individuals may be unable to sustain

employment. Employers also need to become aware of these difficulties and need the resources to help them develop workplace strategies to support vulnerable workers.

The research also raises awareness of the way in which informal learning programmes can develop the traits which employers seek. "Core skills" such as communication, reliability, teamwork and problem solving are actively sought by employers. These skills can often be developed in non-traditional areas of learning such as music and sport,

especially with individuals who have had negative experiences in traditional education.

The report also identifies the skills needed by agencies to support positive progression towards employability. It also acknowledges that agencies are working in a financially insecure environment, with many barriers to effective partnership work.

"Routes into Employment for Homeless People" is available from Janette Campbell on 0131 4795 or at www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk



Capacity building for employability

Agencies often find that a serious barrier to effective provision of employment opportunities is the lack of contact with potential employers. Wise Move in Edinburgh are working with other agencies in the field and supportive employers through a co-ordinating employment agency. This specialist resource ensures that a diverse supply of employment and other opportunities is on offer to clients of all agencies.

Agencies can call on this specialist service to clients who are “in the frame” for employment. So they can concentrate their own resources on what they do best; nurturing people from a situation of crisis to the point where they can “move on” to sustainable employment. Clients benefit from the increased opportunities offered by the service. Agencies achieve outcomes which they may lack the expertise and contacts to provide themselves.



Funding

With the New Futures Funding coming to an end in 2005, many organisations are feeling anxious about the future of their projects. Although agencies are expected to provide comprehensive long-term business plans in order to meet the criteria of main funding streams, they are generally offered only short-term funds. This creates difficulties in maintaining confidence in long-term programmes. This situation is unlikely to improve in the short run - despite the commitment to mainstreaming made over a year ago, Scottish Enterprise is not yet able to establish funding criteria for the future beyond March 2005.

However, projects which are currently funded under the NFF have been offered financial support from Scottish Enterprise Network until March 2005. The funding offered is on a contingency basis - existing NFF projects will be supported where no other financial resources can be identified. However, the funding will not reflect the total requested by each project, and if alternative funding is secured SEN monies will have to be repaid.

The agencies involved in the “Routes to Employment” research highlighted the feeling that short-term and piecemeal funding creates insecurity within individual agencies. This may make partnerships difficult to manage as agencies are often in competition for funding. These agencies stressed the benefits of longer term funding as they may find that their ability to form effective partnerships and meet clients’ needs will be compromised by their uncertain financial future.



Identifying the resources

The provision of services to homeless people comes from diverse sources. At present there is no guarantee that this provision is either coherent or equally accessible to all who need it. Identifying available provision, and which agencies have specialist expertise in each area, is becoming a priority.

Within the Community Care structure in Glasgow the Homelessness Planning and Implementation Group have a sub-group investigating issues related to employability and homelessness. This group has produced a scoping paper of available services in the area. The Training and

Employment Research Unit at Glasgow University has also been commissioned to map the provision for jobless people in the city. This should identify which clients lack access to these services. It will also show if there is under-provision of services in some parts of the city, and whether some key services are unavailable or too poorly resourced.

Wise Move in Edinburgh has also carried out an innovative mapping exercise specifically related to employment services for the homeless. In conducting the exercise they devised an employability skills map or framework with which to explore agencies’ employability activities. The

framework is in three sections, combining all the elements necessary to access and secure an opportunity. The distinct aspect of this exercise is the application of a measure in terms of the quality and scope of the employability programmes in the city. This feature is a result of the development of a common employability assessment within homelessness developed by a sub-group of the Edinburgh Employability Forum.

A mapping exercise is also planned in Aberdeenshire. Aberdeen Foyer has funding for the task of mapping the education and training support in the area for the homeless.

Getting to work SHEN seminar 15 June 2004 at the University of Stirling.

This seminar will launch the new Scottish Homelessness and Employability Network. It will be an exciting day, initiating a new level of contact between agencies, education and training providers, statutory authorities and supportive employers. We are inviting the Minister, Margaret Curran, to launch the Network, and a keynote speech will also come from an employer with experience in offering a supportive employment environment to vulnerable workers. This will be followed by a series of workshops which will enable us to share good practice and develop a coherent approach to a range of issues. You can choose to participate in two of the following workshops:

Workshop 1

Providing services and working in partnerships - this workshop will address the following issues:

- How and why do we form partnerships between homelessness service providers and other agencies?
- What skills are needed to provide the best service to clients, and who can provide them?
- What outcomes can be measured?
- How do we assess our skills and exchange expertise?

Workshop 2

Work as a supportive environment - this workshop will address the following issues:

- How can employers and agencies work together to create sustainable work environments?
- What support may vulnerable workers need in the workplace, and how is this best provided?
- What are the main concerns of employers in taking on vulnerable workers, and how should these be addressed?

Workshop 3

Mainstreaming the provision - this workshop will address the following issues:

- How will local authority Supporting People Strategies work with the mainstreaming process?
- What will mainstreaming mean for agencies and other service providers?
- How will mainstreaming be funded?

Workshop 4

From "sustainable lifestyle" to "job readiness" - this workshop will address the following issues:

- What are the skills needed by training and education providers enable people facing homelessness to enter sustainable employment?
- What is "job readiness" and how can it be measured?
- What is the range of outcomes that can be expected from training and education programmes?

BOOKING FORM:

Please return by 1st June 2004

Scottish Homelessness and Employability Network

Launch Seminar: "Getting to Work"

15th June 2004

VENUE: Stirling University

Name.....

Position.....

Organisation.....

Address.....

.....Post code.....

Tel..... Fax.....

Email.....@.....

Special Requirements.....

Rates: Seminar (including lunch and coffee) £47 member*

£95 (non-members)

I enclose a cheque for £.....

OR

Please invoice my organisation for £.....

**(please see next page for membership fees)*

Places are limited, so please book early to ensure your place.

Please return your completed booking form to:

Geraldine Wooley

SHEN

C/o Scottish Council for Single Homeless

200 Cowgate

Edinburgh EH1 1NQ

Tel: 0131 226 4382

Fax: 0131 225 4382

Thank you, we look forward to seeing you on the day.

booking form

SHEN

Joining Form

I wish to subscribe to the Scottish Homelessness and Employability Network at the following rate:

Individual £35 ☐

Local Voluntary organisation £35 ☐

National voluntary organisation with up to five named local project addresses £150 ☐

National voluntary organisation with up to ten named local project addresses £250 ☐

Statutory Organisation £200 ☐

Registered Social landlord £100 ☐

I enclose a crossed cheque payable to SHEN for £.....

OR

Please invoice me for £.....

Name.....

Position.....

Organisation.....

Address.....

.....Post code.....

Tel..... Fax.....

Email.....@.....

Date.....

Please return to:

Geraldine Wooley

SHEN

C/o Scottish Council for Single Homeless
200 Cowgate

Edinburgh EH1 1NQ

Tel: 0131 226 4382

Fax: 0131 225 4382

Email: SHEN@SCSH.org.uk

SHEN

Scottish Homelessness and Employability Network

Join the Network and keep up to date with the latest developments.

Help influence employability related policy, funding and legislation in the interests of people experiencing homelessness.

The Challenge

Education, training, employment and other meaningful activity is increasingly recognised as an important part of the solution to homelessness. Identifying and supporting the best ways to respond to these needs has never been more important.

The Aims

The Scottish Homelessness and Employability Network aims to improve opportunities for people facing homelessness by;

- Promoting the role of education, training and employment as part of local and national strategies to tackle homelessness in Scotland
- Identifying and sharing models of good practice that support engagement with education, training and employment opportunities
- Influencing related policy, funding and legislative developments

What SHEN can do for you ?

Joining the Network will give you access to up to date information and new contacts through:

- A quarterly newsletter highlighting recent developments, policy changes and funding opportunities in the field and showcasing good practice examples.
- An annual conference creating links and sharing practice.
You only pay half price.
- Regular seminars across Scotland exploring aspects of employability and homelessness. **You only pay half price.**

The Network will appeal to:

- Statutory and voluntary sector homelessness services seeking to develop and deliver services that meet the needs of their clients;
- employment, education, careers and training providers seeking ways of ensuring their services meet the needs of the most excluded,
- policy officers responsible for developing strategic responses to homelessness and unemployment at national and local level

The Network is promoted by Communities Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Business in the Community, Scottish Council for Single Homeless, Scottish Foyer Network, Youthlink, Scottish Simon/Cyrenian Alliance, Scottish Adult Learners Partnership and Scottish Churches Housing Network. A Steering Group of interested members oversees Network activity.

Join now!