

mind Annual Report

S C A R B O R O U G H

W H I T B Y

R Y E D A L E

Respect

1st April 2010 - 31st March 2011

We try always to value every person, to accept their uniqueness and to be considerate of their opinions and choices.

Participation

We work to ensure that everyone involved with us is supported and able to take part in our opportunities, services and activities.

Autonomy

We are committed to helping people to make their own decisions.

Equality

We want everyone to have equal opportunity to access our services and information.

Knowledge

We prize the knowledge we gain from the learning and personal experience of others.

Friendship

We believe that friendly support is the best way forward for all mental health services.

Uniqueness

We recognise, value and esteem each person.



 **challenging
the stigma of
mental ill health**

Chair's report

Lynn Kershaw

Another year has passed and so I reflect on the last financial year. It has been a difficult one in respect of so many changes within our country. Finance is always a major issue and will no doubt continue to be so, but our aim as trustees is to ensure that SWR Mind continues to provide excellent services in a way that our service users want.

This year has seen several changes in staff, and we welcomed new members Hazel Ettridge, Esther Hall, Tom Creasey and Stephanie Hearn. All have made a valuable contribution to our service. Also new this year was the first ever Mind Conference for Trustees in March. My fellow committee member Drew Brace and I attended the conference and were rewarded by the opportunity to meet with Trustees from many other Local Mind Associations (LMAs) and share experiences and frustrations with them, and to discover that SWR Mind is already doing many of the things conference saw as the right way

forward for LMAs in the current economic and political environment.

An updated Information Guide for people with mental health problems was produced in collaboration with Scarborough Survivors. I feel this is a very useful piece of work which is valuable to service users, especially new ones.

As always policies have been adopted and renewed and our Strategic Plan updated. This document is vital in guiding the organisation and keeping us all on track. We also began preparation for our Quality Management in Mind inspection. This ensures that all Local Mind Associations are well organised and managed to a high standard. A big thank you has to go to Emily Franklin for organising all of us and keeping us going with what does seem like an enormous task.

This was also a year which saw our



Social Prescribing service come to fruition. It is proving to be an excellent and well used service. Based at the Castle Health Centre it is in the heart of the community and keeps mental health issues in the public eye.

Finally, a big thank you to all the staff, trustees, volunteers and service users for their continued support. Without you all there would be no service. Please continue to help us by giving your comments (negative and positive) so SWR Mind can improve and be a service that is appropriate to your needs.

Benefitting the Public

SWR Mind aims to support people aged 16 and above with experience of emotional difficulties in the locality of Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale in order that they may achieve their goals and reach their full potential.

- Inspiring the development of and developing quality services which reflect expressed need and diversity
- Promoting social inclusion by supporting people in their own homes, neighbourhoods and communities.

It is now law that charities need to show how their work is of benefit to our beneficiaries and to the wider the public, and how we do this in the context of our aims. We hope that we have done this in this Annual Report, but if you have any queries or questions please contact us.

We work to do this by:

- Advancing the views, needs and ambitions of people with experience of emotional distress
- Promoting inclusion by challenging the stigma and discrimination facing people with mental health needs

Our major supporters

The Big Lottery
Lloyds TSB Foundation
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
The Rank Foundation
North Yorkshire County Council
Echo Access Ltd
Hull and East Yorkshire Mind
Mind

Other supporters

Deans Garden Centre
Boyes, Scarborough
Jennings Computer Services Ltd
Prontaprint, Scarborough

CEO's report

Julie Nichol

We've come a long way

Over the past ten years I have seen SWR Mind grow from a small, struggling organisation with just one part-time member of staff (me!) to one supported by a team of ninety-five active volunteers and employing thirteen staff, all of whom are committed to supporting people with mental health problems to lead full and active lives. I feel positive that this puts us in a strong position to move forward with confidence, and continue to provide needs led services for many years to come.

Thinking about where we are now leads me to reflect on what we have achieved since I became involved with SWR Mind in 2001. In 2002 we launched our befriending service. Since then this service has supported well over 1000 people and trained almost 300 volunteers, some of whom are still with us. Other services followed; the Scarborough Drop-In was also established in 2002 and during 2003 we developed our Housing service to help people live more independently in ordinary housing in ordinary streets, finally selling the property we owned in 2007. The Whitby Drop-In was opened in 2006, and in 2010 we launched our Social Prescribing service – a real milestone for us as there is no other such service in North Yorkshire and the opportunity to help people make use of the services and opportunities in the local community is truly in keeping with our ethos and aims. This year too, we were privileged to welcome Esther Hall to the team. Esther joined us from Hull and East Yorkshire Mind to help us support people in employment who are finding it difficult to keep their job because of a mental health problem.

You can read about all of these services in this Annual Report to find out what they have been doing throughout the

year, and how they have been supporting people.

Difficult times

The year has been difficult financially for many voluntary sector organisations, including SWR Mind, but we have remained positive and looked carefully at how we can both better help the people we serve, make sure our services remain attractive to funders and diversify our fundraising activities to make sure that we are still here in 10, 20, 30 years time. To this end we have done a number of things during the year. Our training service, SWR Mind Training, began to deliver mental health awareness training to a range of audiences; a programme of fundraising events was organised including parachuting, and our annual MindFest in October to celebrate World Mental Health Day; we employed a part-time Finance Officer in November 2010 to help streamline our financial systems and make sure our financial planning remained robust and thorough and, throughout the year, I and my colleagues have been submitting applications to funders so that we can continue to provide much needed assistance for those we serve.

Thank you

As always, it has been a busy year for us all here – and I want to say that I know and sincerely appreciate the hard work and commitment that my paid and volunteer colleagues give to Mind and to people with mental health problems throughout Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale.

Stronger Together

For me, the overall theme of the year has probably been **partnerships**. In the current economic and political climate it has become even more important to

work with others to help people with mental health problems to have better mental health. SWR Mind has pursued a range of partnerships throughout the year, with the Yorkshire and Humber Mind Consortium, North Yorkshire Centre for Independent Living, North Yorkshire Learning Consortium, Scarborough Survivors, North Yorkshire Police, Dean's Garden Centre in Scarborough (who chose us as their Charity of the Year), Castle Health Centre, Kirkbymoorside Surgery and Tees, Esk and Wear Valley's NHS Foundation Trust. Next year will be no different as we will work to develop and consolidate these partnerships and establish more.

A taste of what we did in 2010/11

- Continued to provide core services – befriending, housing related support, drop-in's
- Introduced a Social Prescribing service for the people of Scarborough
- Introduced an Employment Retention service to Scarborough and Whitby
- Built a new website
- Trained 81 volunteers
- Developed new partnerships

Some of what we plan to do in 2011/12

- Continue to provide core services
- Emphasise quality through National Mind's Quality Management in Mind tool
- Further improve our monitoring and evaluation of services
- Join our services more closely together so that we can improve the experience of support for service users and provide more opportunities for volunteering.

Service Manager's report

Shirley Hester



This year all the services provided by SWR Mind have been running at and sometimes beyond capacity. People are being signposted to us from a whole range of agencies and also are finding out about us themselves, through our media coverage and increasingly through use of the internet. Fortunately the number of people coming forward to volunteer has also increased and we have been pleased to benefit from volunteers from increasingly diverse backgrounds.

The introduction of our Social Prescribing service to Scarborough has been a real milestone in the year - it feels like a large missing piece of the jigsaw has been found and we now have a full range of support in the community. Because one person may be involved in several of our services at one time we have been moving towards a new way of working.

We know that it is important the journey through and between our services to feel seamless, particularly avoiding lots of unnecessary and frustrating repetition, a great deal of activity has taken place behind the scenes, especially relating to how the teams communicate with one another. This has been paying dividends for service users, as Caron's story shows.

It was disappointing not to be successful in our Ecominds bid, as there was such enthusiasm shown for it, but through the Growing Opportunities initiative in Scarborough, we are linking would be gardeners with gardens, and in Whitby we have a Community Garden space in Pannett Park. We also have close links with many of the "Friends of" parks groups and other conservation and environmental projects.

None of those delivering these services are content to rest on their laurels, but continually strive to improve, and be responsive to the needs of service users, despite the ups and downs of funding. They cannot do this without continual participation and feedback from those of you who use the services, and from our partner agencies, so please don't be shy in telling us where we fall short, or to suggest improvements, and don't be shy about telling we are always pleased to hear what works as well, so that we can build on this for you and others.. We all have the same aim: excellent, relevant and accessible services delivered with respect, in order to improve the lives of individuals and the health of the wider community.

Social Prescribing Service

Launched in April 2010 the Social Prescribing Service aims to help people with mild to moderate mental health problems find and use support available within the local community, thereby bridging the gap between statutory and community services. A team of two workers provided short-term help, usually over about six weeks, and worked with 68 people during the year.

Our first year has been a good one. Despite a slow start housed in temporary accommodation at Belgrave Surgery,

outcomes for service users have been positive. In September we moved in to Castle Health Centre, joining other specialist mental health services attached to the Equitable access Centre – Ryedale Counselling, the Cambridge Centre and Addictive Behaviour Services – since when referrals increased and we were able to plan for the recruitment of a third worker.

As a relatively new service it continues to evolve and, as we approach the new financial year, we are seeing an increasing number people experiencing financial

difficulties as a consequence of the current economic period.

Towards the end of the financial year the service was opened up from just GP referral to a wide range of other agencies, and individuals. Inevitably, this has resulted in an increase in demand and a short waiting list.

The work of the service is person-centred and so varies considerably from person to person. A flavour of what had been achieved is illustrated below.

Support provided	Percentage supported	Support provided	Percentage supported
Maximise income/benefits	43	Better manage mental health	47
Reduce debt	38	Batter manage substance misuse issues	9
Gain employment	3	Avoid eviction	35
Obtain bond for new accommodation	35	Obtain settled accommodation	38
Take up training or education	31	Comply with statutory orders relating to offending	6
Take up volunteering	29	Batter manage self-harm	12
Make contact with other services	44	Confidence building, and have greater choice/control/involvement	94
Use other services at Castle Health Centre	50		
Use other SWR Mind services	38		
Better manage physical health difficulties	28		

- A homeless, depressed person using cannabis heavily was helped by the Social Prescribing service to:**
- Find and move in to suitable private accommodation
 - Join the Credit Union to obtain a loan for the initial bond
 - Apply for a Community Care grant for furniture
 - Enroll on a welding course
 - Get help to explore a possible diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

"They helped me get my life back on track after being homeless."

Caron's story

When Caron became involved with our Housing Related Support Service, she was living temporarily with her daughter. Caron was depressed, anxious, sometimes suicidal, and unable to stop worrying thoughts. The situation rapidly became too stressful and she found herself homeless. SWR Mind Community Support Worker, Claire, accompanied Caron to Housing Options, and when the temporary accommodation she was offered turned out to be unsuitable, we advocated on her behalf for an alternative, and supported her to be reassessed by Yorkshire Coast Homes, who found her a lovely flat where she could be

reunited with her cat – an event of great significance for Caron.

Our Social Prescribing Service also helped Caron, supporting her to obtain grants for setting up her new home, receive Disability Living Allowance and find a permanent GP. Caron was also helped to find a dentist and face the world with a more confident smile. A bus pass opened up new horizons and, with support, she was introduced to the Art Gallery where she joined in a craft project and had a piece of work in an exhibition. Caron is a regular visitor to the SWR Mind Drop-in, and, having eventually reached the top of the

waiting list for counselling, is finding this useful.

Now Caron has rebuilt bridges with some of her family, is making friends, and is coping better when difficulties arise – so much so that she has her name down for a place on the volunteer training course. Caron's anxiety has lessened and her mood has improved.

Caron says "I don't think I would be in the land of the living now unless I'd been seen by Mind. It restored my hope for me and enabled me to go forward."

MindFest 2010

In celebration of World Mental Health Day MindFest was, yet again, a great success. The Tap and Spile pub in Scarborough was packed with members of the public – including many of our service users and volunteers – all enjoying fantastic music from a selection of the towns very own and very best musicians Stony, Glenn Coggin, Paul Tilley and Julia Wray.

MindFest aims to raise awareness of

mental health in a musical setting, bringing the townsfolk together to have fun and appreciate the uplifting power of music and togetherness. Now in its ninth year it has become part of Scarborough's musical calendar and we look forward to many more years of being entertained by our friends at the Tap and Spile and local musicians who donate their time and talent to us year after year.



Housing Related Support Service



Service users enjoying Bev's BBQ

This service supports people experiencing mental health difficulties to manage and enjoy life in their own homes and community. A team of three paid workers, supported by eight volunteers, supports twenty-three people at any one time, thirty throughout 2010 - 2011.

Often the starting point is helping people find somewhere safe and comfortable to live - good relationships with Yorkshire Coast Homes have resulted in reassessment of needs and more appropriate accommodation for three people, while two other people have been helped find private accommodation; for others it is about helping secure a care package so that they can continue to manage at home.

Despite the name of the service, though, housing is only a part of it. Together, the person and their Community Support Worker, plan what support is needed to help that person have the life they want and overcome the difficulties they are facing. We are also working with more people who have children at home or regular contact with their children or grandchildren, meaning we need good contacts with even more services. It

would take too long to describe all the things we do as part of the service but here is a flavour:

Introducing people to Art Therapy at SWR Mind, Printmaking with the WEA, Computer and cookery classes at Elder Street Day Centre, Walking the local footpaths and the Mere, attending the 'Getting your voice heard' course at Scarborough Survivors and Volunteering at SWR Mind's Scarborough Drop-In.

We have also helped people by accompanying them to meetings with Social Services, Scarborough's Community Mental Health Team, Sure Start, the Citizens Advice Bureau, Solicitors, Patient Advice and Liaison Service and NHS and Educational services.

Some changes have been made through the year in response to service user feedback. We now swap workers every few months in consultation with service users, so that people know at least two workers really well, and also have the benefit of a fresh perspective. A service user focus group also looked at what should be included in a new handbook, and this went through several drafts, taking on board feedback, and has now

been given to every service user.

Bev's Barbecue (in memory of Bev Dixon) was well attended and people also came to the Annual General Meeting and Christmas Party.

The service is funded by North Yorkshire County Council and so is subject to the same financial pressures they are. We achieved the new Level C in their Quality Assurance Framework ensuring we are eligible for funding. This involved a lot of hard work including redrafting our entire paperwork systems. A visit from the North Yorkshire County Council Commissioning Officer in January confirmed how highly they value our service, and they extended our contract to December 2011. There is a 10% funding reduction, but we have to deliver the same quality and quantity of service, so the team ended this year looking at creative ways of managing this, so we've started working even more closely with our Befriending and Social Prescribing services to create a more seamless approach, including better use of what volunteers can bring into the lives of service users.

Ros's story

While spending eleven months as a recovering alcoholic at Ark House in Scarborough, Ros received the news that her husband had died. Her son was in prison serving a long-term custodial sentence and Ros had no wish to return to the family home in Hull. Ros's key worker at Ark House contacted SWR Mind with a request that we support Ros in her transition to independent living in the Scarborough area.

SWR Mind support worker, Mark, accompanied Ros to view a couple of flats and in February she moved into a lovely, spacious, light flat with great views over Scarborough town.

Although Ros does not feel ready to

socialise or to make friends in the area, she does have many acquaintances. She knows other tenants in the house where she lives and has regular positive contact with the landlord. Ros is well known in local charity shops and in book shops as an avid collector of crime related literature. Staff in these shops often set aside books that they think might be of interest to her.

Ros has established a regular daily routine that includes breakfast in a café, browsing around charity shops, cleaning and tidying her flat, watching TV and reading. Ros has become very settled in her accommodation. She enjoys the landlord's chickens in her garden, the lovely views from her window, the proximity to town,

the security of good neighbours and a sympathetic landlord.

Ros hasn't had a drink in over a year and sees her move to a flat in Scarborough as the opportunity for a fresh start. She feels that she can really enjoy the peace and harmony of independent living and describes her flat as a 'safe haven'.

Ros has had difficulty in trusting people and has no motivation to make new friends at the moment. In relation to this, she has expressed her appreciation of the SWR Mind workers who have supported her in attending appointments and with whom she has been able to talk through problems and explore issues.

Ros says 'Mind is a real lifeline for me.'

Our Drop-In's

Our two Drop-in's in Scarborough and Whitby provide information and support to people with mental health problems with the aim of helping them to develop confidence and self esteem, benefit from peer support and appreciate the nature and value of the support on offer in the local community.

Scarborough

The Scarborough Drop-In entered its second year at Queen Street Methodist Central Hall with a team of one paid member of staff and six volunteers. During the year the service has been used by an average of 35 people each week. A steady but constant stream of new people are using the Drop-In, most of whom are signposted by the Community Mental Health Team, the Probation Service, the Rainbow Centre, Stoneham Housing and other SWR Mind services.

We are really pleased to have a strong volunteer team because, without them, we would not be able to run the service. During the year we developed a volunteer training module specifically for those wishing to help out at the Drop-In and this has added real value to both Drop-In's.

Two younger volunteers have joined the team during the year too, making the Drop-in a more appealing place for some of our younger service users.

Five Students from Hull University's Scarborough Campus did a work based placement at the Drop-In for around 6 months. The students worked with service users and staged a Christmas type production for the Drop-In's Christmas party - a great success with

seventy-five people coming along to watch the production, listen to Christmas carols sung by Graham's Community Choir and enjoy the 'bring and share' Christmas eats during the afternoon. Service users Barbara and Sandy are continuing to run the drama therapy sessions which are proving to be a popular activity.

Whitby

A keen horticulturalist, Drop-In worker Sarah Skidmore has been helping and encouraging service users to create our plot in Pannet Park's Community garden. Despite delays the garden was planted and is thriving, providing service users with a sense of pride in its beauty and visitors to the park the opportunity to enjoy its 'herb garden' theme.

Although Sarah is supported by two volunteers, Jan and Yvonne, whose support is invaluable, the service has been stretched this year - it would really benefit from more willing volunteers and this will be a priority for the coming year. Thanks to Sarah Carney-Anderson from the Scarborough Drop-In for stepping in over the summer due to our shortage of volunteers.



SWR Mind's Community Garden, Pannett Park, Whitby

Outward facing

Although both of the Drop-Ins are building based, we aim to help people look outwards towards the treasures and opportunities within their local communities and beyond. In Whitby this has included introducing six people to a local knitting group whilst others were supported to deal with housing issues, use the Citizen's Advice Bureau and volunteer with Whitby's MusicPort. A number of service users have participated in volunteering projects abroad too, including activities in Sweden, Norway, Greece and Holland. In Scarborough paid workers and volunteers have helped a service user into volunteering, assisted someone to get a diagnosis for their mental health problems, and support them at a benefits tribunal, and helped two service users find and move in to new accommodation.

The year saw the introduction of a broader range of activities at both Drop-In's too, including beat-boxing, WiiFit sessions, 'Laughter Yoga', Relaxation, art and crafts and healthy eating and smoking cessation talks by service users.

Money, money, money!

Money is the life-blood of any organisation - without it we could not provide the services and support that we do. As such, we are truly indebted to all those individual, businesses, trusts and foundations that support us financially.

As our organisation has grown our finances have become more complex and during the year the decision was made to employ a dedicated Finance Officer to help the CEO and trustees to enhance financial efficiency, reporting and planning. Steph Hearn joined us in

November 2010 to fulfill this role and so free up our CEO to concentrate more fully on bid writing and other fundraising initiatives, and to support the trustees in their decision making around financial planning.

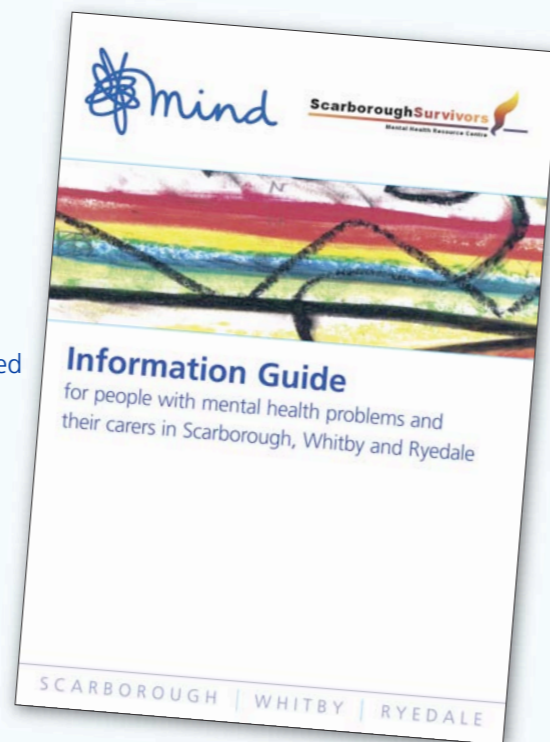
Information Guide

With funding from North Yorkshire County Council and in partnership with Scarborough Survivors the 'Information Guide for people with mental health problems and their Carers in Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale' was updated this year. Written by service users for service users, this is an important publication offering information on a wide range of topics including healthy eating, medication, accommodation and what we can expect from mental health services.

Service user and SWR Mind volunteer

Mat Watkinson was employed to update the Guide and we are indebted to him for his thoroughness and determination in this role. The Guide is now available in print and via both ours and Survivors' websites. On request audio versions are available or can be provided in Braille.

The first version of the Guide was published in 2003, written by Lindy Herrington and Denis Welch and illustrated by Eileen Heaton. Their 'stories' remain in the updated version, along with Mat's.



Mat's story

It was work that finally tipped me off the fine line I've trodden for many years between having the thickest skin you could imagine and with wondering why anyone would ever think the things I do have any real worth at all. Give me a job and some good company and I'm unstoppable, a winner, no contest.

I lost the job I'd had for twenty years as a journalist very much in the public eye after I couldn't cope with the work I loved so much and to which I would return, late into the night, perfecting, perfecting... I'd started to miss things, rich irony for a perfectionist and I came under heavy scrutiny and with an even heavier workload. I became stressed like I had never imagined possible, pulled every which way, a servant of more and more masters, waking up feeling terrified in the early hours of the morning, unable then to go back to sleep until finally, I went to my GP. He diagnosed work-related stress, anxiety and depression and prescribed medication and time off. But this was no holiday. I felt swallowed up by absolute despair, while even the simple act of going

shopping filled me with fear.

The pain simply of getting going, of walking up the garden on a sunny day, is hard to imagine but it is a real, physical feeling. But I persevered, took my medication and tried to get back to the job I loved, driven by financial need and the need to know I was still capable of putting together entertaining, informative and accurate news reports. My employers sacked me and I left two days after interviewing the heir to the throne. I felt relieved but later, quite devastated.

I had a project - a book to write - which I hoped would see me through the long days of isolation, my family being at college, at university and at work. But it took more than a year of fighting against the desperate pull of depression and the lack of any measure of what I was worth, because writing is a lonely thing and depression loves a lonely soul to suffocate.

I found friendship and understanding with a part-time post recruiting volunteers for Scarborough, Whitby

and Ryedale Mind, to support other people with mental health problems, a job with a real purpose. And when that came to an end, I agreed to help with much-needed fundraising. Oh, and I was lucky enough to get an hour of fame on Trafalgar Square's Fourth Plinth to shout about mental health and who are its unsung heroes.

What I have learnt from depression is not to be judgemental, to be understanding and even kind. Not to get impatient with the person in the supermarket who seems to be holding the queue up. Depression thrives on negativity and though some days I just want to hide, there are other better days. And the support of a family is something you can't buy, though we'd be fooling ourselves if we thought they didn't suffer almost as much. Updating the Guide has been a great help, reminding me of things I'd forgotten, offering simple ways to make changes, a bit at a time. What no longer surprises me is how many people I know who are in very similar positions.

Make it Work



This service provides help for people struggling to keep their jobs because of a mental health problem.

During the year 'Make it Work' has provided support to 21 people. Esther Hall, service worker, has helped people from a diverse range of sources, including the NHS, councils and private businesses. Most referral came from Scarborough's Community Mental health Team, SWR Mind itself and individuals referring themselves. Service users have included those with learning difficulties, those being bullied to others with historical and/or reactive emotional health problems.

Some that have used the service have not retained their employment, but these have been people who did not wish to. So, whilst this is not in line with the desired outcome of the project, individual wishes were put first.

Esther tells us how the service works

Example One

A man who works for a government body concerned with the fishing industry had been off work with depression and anxiety for a significant

amount of time. He had accessed Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) through his GP and found that, whilst it was helpful, it did not alleviate his depression.

I initially worked with him on his skills and aspirations to check the appropriateness of his current position. Once I had checked that he had finished his CBT, I began working with him using neuro-linguistic programming (NLP). Through this I was able to ascertain that the "fogginess" and associated symptoms reported by this person were a response to the denial by him of his creative side and needs. He was a creative man stuck in a very narrowly defined role. Once we had established this and worked with his creative part and the part of him that held this back, the "fogginess" subsided and he was able to go back to work. He began to introduce new ways of satisfying his creative needs in his spare time which alleviated the dissonance and subsequent mental ill health he experienced.

Example Two

I started working with a service user with learning difficulties who had been

absent from work and was involved in a grievance procedure concerning inadequate breaks. What became apparent through our sessions was that the issues stated in the grievance were not the issues that prevented him returning to work. The underlying issues were related to bullying by colleagues. This bullying was causing the service user to stay at home and fear going out, especially into town.

I gained agreement from this person to meet with his departmental manager to raise these issues. Through this and further meetings, it could be made explicit that while this bully still worked in the same area, it would not be possible for this service user to return to work. This service user did not want to lodge another grievance and pursue this matter (which was denied by the alleged protagonist). With this in mind, the course of action pursued was that of ill health dismissal. This would allow the service user to put this episode behind him and pursue other career options without putting himself through additional mental anguish.

I worked with this person to ascertain what these might be in both voluntary and paid work. We produced and provided copies of a CV that would help in pursuing work. Although I signposted to Supported Employment at North Yorkshire County Council, cuts in their funding prevented them from helping in finding work for this person. Redeployment opportunities were provided but it was evident that this person was not well enough to work - as reported by his GP.

So, although this was not a case that fitted neatly into the 'outcomes boxes' of this project, it provided a structure through which this person could find positive resolution to an impasse resulting from incomplete communication and lack of clarity of the way forward. It allowed this person to "manage" this situation rather than letting it "happen to him". This helped ensure that this person was not refused benefits as a result of the way in which he became unemployed. It also kept the person in control of his own fate to a greater degree.

Administrative Team

AGM Report 2011

The year has been one of consolidation for the admin team, Stephen, Emily and Tom. Let's have a look at what they have been working on ...

What's Emily been doing?

This year I have been working for the befriending service for 16 hours each week. My main focus has been to take as much pressure off Pat, the service co-ordinator, as possible by strengthening the befriending services administrative systems – this was a job that really needed doing because the service was working to capacity and needed to become more efficient in order to cope with the ever increasing demand.

I wrote my first funding application for SWR Mind this year too and was thrilled when we got the money. The bid was to North Yorkshire Learning Consortium and funding enabled us to have run additional volunteer training courses in Whitby and Ryedale, and pay a qualified trainer which released Pat to concentrate on maintaining a high standard of service to the record number of matches supported this year. We were also able to renew our IT equipment for the training which was really helpful.

I have also been busy with helping SWR Mind to implement a quality review programme called Quality Management in Mind (QMIM). With funding from National Mind I took on the role of part-time Quality Officer and in mid February began the rather daunting task of making sure that SWR Mind is achieving high standards of service provision, governance, human resources and financial management, service user involvement and equality of access. This has involved updating policies, procedures and management systems, offering training and guidance to trustees and staff and gathering evidence to prove to

Mind that we meet or exceed the expected standards. At the time of writing there remains much to do but I am confident that the process itself has helped us to look closely at what we do and how we do it, and has had a really positive effect on the whole organisation

Why does quality in Mind matter?

The quality of the services provided by the Mind network is vital in helping Mind ensure a better life for people experiencing mental health problems.

Quality has been defined as 'all the things that matter to a customer'. The Mind quality system aims to ensure minimum standards in all the things that matter to users of Mind's services, and to instill a culture of continuous improvement throughout the Mind network.

Continued affiliation to Mind is dependent on local Minds achieving 'level 1' of Mind's quality standards. This is written into the Mind membership agreement signed by both the local Mind and Mind.

What's Tom been doing?

My main focus this year has been helping SWR Mind to communicate with its service users and volunteers. I am the face behind our Facebook page and the quarterly newsletter which I hope lands in your 'inbox' or on your doormat.

Since August 2010 we have been maintaining an active presence on Facebook, using our page to inform our followers of upcoming events, and provide helpful information and stories about peoples' experiences of mental ill health. We've used it to promote healthy eating too and to request feedback on our services.

What's Stephen been doing?

The year has been a busy one with

consolidation of our existing services and development of new ones. The effect of this on the administrative team has been to keep us all very well occupied and out of mischief! I have been working with Emily to update some policies and procedures, making sure that we are keep pace with changes in legislation and best practice, and have spent a good deal of my time ironing out the many IT related problems we come across daily.

Much of our time in the office is spent answering the telephone. The sheer volume of calls we receive each day gives us a clear indication that there is still a long way to go in being able to support all those who are in mental distress in our locality. We are the first port of call for all telephone enquiries. On an average day Tom, Emily and I will deal with about fifty-two calls (that's about 13,000 a year!), most of the time providing callers with information and a listening ear. Calls range from an enquiry for a phone number to supporting a person in emotional crisis.

In September 2010 my role changed to that of Office Manager. I have found this position to be more involving, challenging and rewarding, even with the higher workload and responsibility.

It's now my job to make sure that the office runs smoothly and safely, and that the wider staff team have the administrative support that they need to do their jobs well, and to ensure that the admin team will continue to give as much support, advice, information and a listening ear to service users, volunteers and staff as is humanly possible in the coming year.

My sincere thanks go to the administrative team who work so hard and are so committed to our cause and those we serve.

Volunteers

Quite simply, SWR Mind would not be able to provide the range and richness of services without the hugely valued contribution of our amazing volunteers.

This year we have worked to improve on the support that we provide to volunteers with the recruitment of a Volunteer Training and Development Worker, Hazel, who has introduced a Volunteer Newsletter, new opportunities for volunteers to be involved – which has led to the development of a pilot volunteer 'peer support' programme – and plans to hold social events throughout the locality making it easier for more volunteers to attend events which are closer to where they live.

Our volunteer training programme has been enhanced with the introduction of new workbooks to support learning, improved evaluation, and an updated and professionally designed and printed Volunteer Handbook which volunteers can use for reference and guidance once they begin to befriend.

We have been thrilled to welcome volunteers from increasingly diverse backgrounds, including professionals and student professionals as part of their learning or continued professional

development, and to enhance their CV's.

Retired teacher Bridget, on completing her volunteer training said of the programme, "I really enjoyed the course run by Mind to become a volunteer befriender. It was well presented, in a variety of ways, which engaged our interest and participation. This included brief films, presentations by the course leaders, little 'skits', group work with exercises to complete and then share with the whole group, plus presentations by past service users. I found the latter particularly moving and inspiring.

We were led through a clear course of action with the ultimate goals clearly in mind throughout ... There was plenty of group discussion, both within the whole group and in smaller groups, with a good balance between taught sections, student activity and tea breaks. "

Another trainee befriender said, "The course was well structured and a different part was covered every week. This prevented it from becoming tedious. The message conveyed was clear and I feel confident and not daunted by the prospect of volunteering."



Emily Franklin
Administrative Support Worker/Quality Officer



Tom Creasey
Administrative Support Worker



Stephen Brady
Office Manager



Our befriending service welcomes volunteers and service users from aged 16 and above – there is no upper age limit!

Befriending

The Befriending Service has had a busy and productive year.

One hundred and fourteen volunteer enquiries translated in to eighty-two people attending one of our five volunteer training courses. Of these forty went on to become active volunteers with SWR Mind, helping to support the additional eighty-eight people who were befriended during the year.

Our volunteers are critical to the work of the Befriending Service - in fact it could not operate without their dedication, hard work and support and for that we are indebted to them. The volunteer team continues to provide social, emotional and practical support, information and advocacy, helping people with mental health problems to become more included in their local neighbourhoods and communities. Their support has included introducing service users to a 'Print-making for better mental health' course run by the WEA, accompanying people to take part in exercise including swimming and walking, and supporting people to take up volunteering - for example, one service user was supported to volunteer in the North York Moors National Park.

One volunteer accompanied someone to a tribunal hearing, making the event easier to cope with through companionship and support and helping to ensure that their voice was heard.

We have been very pleased to welcome volunteers from increasingly diverse backgrounds. For example the number of students and professionals taking part in our training has demonstrated how well respected both the service

Even when service users or volunteers end their formal connection with SWR Mind, we know that the effects of the Befriending Service continue to be felt in independent, ongoing friendships which are mutually beneficial, both to the individuals concerned, and their families, carers and communities. Have a look at Jane's story, below.

In October we were fortunate to partner with North Yorkshire Learning Consortium. This enabled us to update the equipment we use to train volunteers and to provide additional training sessions in Scarborough and Whitby.

This year we have received a record

forty-five percent of referrals from statutory services, which shows an increasing recognition of SWR Mind's Befriending Service as a trusted partner in supporting people with more complex mental health issues.

"When I joined SWR Mind as a befriender I must admit to being rather naïve about the importance of such a service and mental health in general.

It wasn't until I was introduced to my friend that I realised how important the work SWR Mind befrienders do is. After a period of mental ill health, sometimes people just need support getting out and back into their local community - and your friendship is just about the most valuable thing you can give.

You read a lot of commentary in the media that society is going 'to pot' but seeing all the fantastic befrienders that SWR Mind has just reaffirms my belief that people are generally good and caring and genuinely take pleasure in helping others.

*I really enjoyed befriending, it opened my eyes and enriched my life" **Tom***

Jane's story

Jane is ninety-five, in poor health, with vision and hearing impairments. Claire befriended Jane for over a year, but since that time their friendship has continued independently for over 18 months. Claire visits Jane twice a week, and speaks to her on the phone in between. She helps Jane with shopping, making telephone calls and attending hospital appointments and provides a listening ear when Jane becomes anxious and depressed. All of

this relieves the pressure on Jane's husband and daughter.

Jane says "I would be very isolated without Claire. It is so comforting to have someone available at the end of the telephone."

The Befriending Service Coordinator commented: This was an excellent match that has improved Jane's mood and given her a much better quality of

life at the end of her life".

Claire says: "Helping Jane and her family helped me deal with my own mental health issues. It improved my confidence and self-esteem to know that I can make a difference. It also gives me time away from the pressures of my own life, and I really enjoy Jane's company. Volunteering as a Befriender has been a really positive experience for me."

*names have been changed