

DIRECTION FOR BEDFORDSHIRE

JULY 2019



Direction
for Bedfordshire

HMP BEDFORD COMMUNITY EVENT 16/07/2019

We returned to HMP Bedford this month for a second Education and Employment Event hosted by The Learning and Skills Department. The residents were provided with information on what skills and training are available inside the prison, and also what opportunities there are for them once released. Once again, we were able to reassure residents being released back into Bedfordshire that we are a support service designed with their needs at the forefront. This occasion also opened the discussion for myself and Sasha to possibly attend Release Boards, be involved in the prospective 'Departure Lounge', and be regularly based in the Education Wing. Our presence at HMP Bedford will make our service more familiar amongst the residents, and hopefully will encourage them to confidently contact us upon release if they need further support.

This newsletter is an overview and update for partners of all that has been going on with regards to the Direction for Bedfordshire Offender Hub in July 2019.

Written and Edited by: Lauren Cox (Offender Hub Coordinator, YouTurn Futures)

In surpassing our first milestone of 3 months of service, we have continued to grow our knowledge and partnership base. We are frequently coming into contact with valuable individuals and services that are influencing how we can best deliver our Offender Hub. We are also delighted to welcome **Sasha Austin-Seade** as the second coordinator for the Hub. Her background in Youth Work and mentoring is an invaluable addition to our small but ambitious team.

So, what have we been up to?

- In connection with the Signpost Victim Hub and Bedford Youth Offending, I attended the **Restorative Justice Awareness Training**. This will lead onto a further 2 days of training which will qualify me to facilitate Restorative Justice conferences and practices. This training can help our service progress, as in the future we will be able to set up proxy conferences between our service users and victims of crime who want to come to a resolution for harm that has been caused.
- We have also been in contact with Michele Rigby at the **Luton Law Centre (LLC)** who is hoping to secure funding to support ex-offenders and their families with housing, immigration and asylum issues. We hope that the funding bid is successful so that we can utilise this extended service to cater for particularly vulnerable individuals that would normally sit outside of the working remit of the LLC.
- Sasha and I were fortunate enough to take part in **Reactiv8's** Two Day Mindset Workshop which focuses on promoting positive attitudes and solutions to achieve success. Reactiv8 teach that change can only come from within an individual and that we must surround ourselves with constructive people and environments that discourage bad habits. The course instilled that we are all responsible for our choices and that we must understand the consequences that accompany them. It was highlighted that we must not accept the labels people apply to us as fact, but rather break out of our comfort zones to defy them. Goals, and the correct way of setting them, are essential to this workshop and we used this training to write productive goals for our Offender Hub. Thank you to Michelle and all the team for having us!

YouTurn

Restore, Reform & Reintegrate



Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

reactiv8
learning - education - training

CASE STUDY

A BeNCH CRC probation officer made a referral for his Luton based service user who wanted to gain access to training for a CSCS card to be able to work on building sites. From the outset there was a setback with the £199 cost that comes with this training. Therefore, we needed to find an agency in Bedfordshire that could provide this service at a lower cost or even free. Initially the only providers that seemed to be available in Bedfordshire were going to charge the full fee, which was not financially feasible for this service user. When speaking to the probation officer once again after some time had lapsed without a solution, he mentioned that the charity **NOAH** based in Luton previously organised training for this qualification. After speaking to Courtney Cuffy at **NOAH** I was able to suggest a solution to this situation to the probation officer. Whilst **NOAH** themselves no longer facilitated this training; they are able to place individuals on a one-day course in Milton Keynes which is funded by a third-party provider. As the probation officer was able to arrange transport to this course, it was plausible to pass on Courtney's details to the probation officer to get this service user registered onto the course. We hope that this will result in a qualification gained, and eventually employment secured to rebuild this individual's life.



- We popped in to see the **Path2Recovery** Dunstable Team this month and the staff there were pleased to know that there is a central hub that they can refer their service users to tackle the issues in other areas of their lives beyond their substance misuse.
- Montell and 3 Youth Ambassadors from **Att10tive Social Enterprise** came to speak to us about how they can best utilise our service. They recognized that we will be an essential tool for the Youth Ambassadors when they are working in close contact with specific individuals who may be facing vulnerable or complicated situations.
- We went out and spoke to both professionals and the public at the **Central Bedfordshire Council Community Engagement Event** in Biggleswade. This was a great opportunity to get our name and service out into Central Bedfordshire, as many people we spoke to had not yet heard of what *Direction for Bedfordshire* has to offer. We were able to both inform and create new working links with other professionals that were also in attendance.
- Our meeting with **Mary Seacole Housing Association** in Luton highlighted concerns around the extra support needed when housing ex-offenders that are no longer being statutorily managed. They expressed the need to be put in touch with a service or body that can confirm suitable housing for individual cases that raise uncertainty.
- Noelette Hanley from the **Luton Irish Forum** gave us an insight into the welfare services that they have available. They are able to give support to vulnerable individuals in the town, not just those of Irish decent. A need for awareness of more advocacy services within Bedfordshire was also raised, in which we will go away and find this information and distribute it amongst our partners, as this has been a common query amongst professionals.
- The **Luton Adult Learning** Team are a great resource for providing local employment opportunities to local people. Their links with Vauxhall and construction companies makes employment a realistic possibility rather than being trained without a means of progression.

Here's some of the valuable services we've added to our website this month:

Drinkline	Relate	Samaritans	Anger Management	Papyrus/HOPELineUK
Skills-Tu Employment	Respect	Galop	Qwell	National AIDS Trust
Veterans Aid	Bipolar	Veterans UK	Combat Stress	The Hepatitis C Trust
Terence Higgins Trust	Kooth	National Self Harm Network (NSHN)	Rethink	Walking with the Wounded

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, WANT US TO COME AND SPEAK AT YOUR TEAM MEETING, OR WANT TO MAKE A REFERRAL CONCERNING AN INDIVIDUAL PLEASE GET IN TOUCH THROUGH ONE OF OUR PLATFORMS:

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