

# DIRECTION FOR BEDFORDSHIRE

NOVEMBER 2019



**Direction**  
for Bedfordshire

## DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS

Since our launch in April 2019 we have slightly shifted the focus of *Direction for Bedfordshire*. Initially, we were centred around being a resource for ex or current offenders, their support networks and the professionals who are working with them. We recognised that this limited the view of the community as to who our service can support. The core of *Direction for Bedfordshire* is to contribute to the reduction of crime and re-offending in the county, and in doing so we needed to widen our audience beyond those who have been through the Criminal Justice System. The knowledge and partnerships that we have can also be valuable to those whose socio-economic situation may lead to criminality. We therefore want to work as a reactive and proactive service. In order to convey this in a simple and effective way we have re-designed our leaflets to have four separate ones to grab the attention of different audiences we can work with. The new leaflets explicitly explain how *Direction for Bedfordshire* can work to support on an individual level, and on a pan-Bedfordshire partnership level. I have attached copies of the front covers of the four individual leaflets. Please get in touch if you would like physical copies to display in your organization, or PDF copies emailed to you to circulate to staff and other contacts.

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 November 2019.

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

As another month goes by, we have been business as usual with our referrals increasing and our profile continuing to grow.

## So, what have we been up to?

- This month we have focused on the professional development of *Direction for Bedfordshire* through various **safeguarding training**. As we are working with vulnerable and marginalised individuals, we want to be confident in not only signposting them, but also protecting them should the situation arise. We have therefore undergone a number of training sessions this month including Awareness of Safeguarding, Working Together to Safeguard Adults at Risk and online training covering a number of different subjects. As we are being more active in the community delivering face to face drop in sessions, we feel that this training will help improve our service and professional knowledge.
- We attended a meeting with **Women's Aid** in Luton to find out about the work they are doing to support those in need. Women's Aid nationally is an advocacy service for women experiencing domestic violence, and locally they have five refuges and run courses. We wanted to discuss how we can work together to better serve the women in the local community, and we hope to be working more closely on an initiative in the new year so watch this space for more information!
- We spoke to the **Liaison & Diversion Team** at Luton Police Station to let them know more about *Direction for Bedfordshire*. They offer screening and triaging to vulnerable adults going through the criminal justice process. They can make referrals to other agencies and also help divert people away from the Criminal Justice System. We recognised that we could add extra value to their referrals by liaising with our contacts and partners to suggest further agencies that can support an individual's needs.
- The '**Departure Lounge**' at HMP Bedford has been a topic on everybody's lips for a number of months and during November we saw the project progress with a final launch date set for 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019. This month we took part in various preparation activities to support the promotion and development of the Departure Lounge. We took part in the trial run and the subsequent discussions of what went well and what could be improved before the project goes live. We have also used our drop-in session at the Visitor's Centre to promote the Departure Lounge to the loved ones who visit HMP Bedford. We designed posters and information leaflets which offered the opportunity for people to give their feedback on what the Departure Lounge should provide those leaving prison and make comment on the practical organisation of the scheme.

# YouTurn

Restore, Reform & Reintegrate



**Bedfordshire**  
Police & Crime  
Commissioner

# CASE STUDY

We attended the **Groundwork's Green Team** presentation which celebrates the completion of the course and the great work that the participants undertook. We spoke to 'Damien' to find out what further help he needed to progress. 'Damien' was disheartened by the fact that he was not getting the help he needed. He has been receiving support from quite a few services for a long time, but felt he wasn't getting the straight answers and practical help he needed. He was struggling to upload his CV online in order to apply for jobs. He stated that he has asked several other services but felt he was simply being bounced around or sent from one course to another. There and then we sat with 'Damien' to help him begin to upload his CV. There were some issues with connectivity on that day so we arranged to meet in the library in the next few days, so that 'Damien' could also bring his tablet and we could show him what to do. This second meeting was more successful and 'Damien' appreciated the time we took to listen to his queries and give the practical support he needed.

**Do you need any student volunteers? Can you offer work experience to young people from Luton or Bedfordshire?** Att10tive works with schools and colleges to enhance the learning experience for young people. We are looking for a range of opportunities which could be a varied number of hours for students.

For an initial conversation please contact Montell Neufville at

[Att10tive@gmail.com](mailto:Att10tive@gmail.com)



**ATT10TIVE**  
Social Enterprise

**WEBSITE:**

<https://directionforbedfordshire.co.uk/>

**EMAIL:**

[info@directionforbedfordshire.co.uk](mailto:info@directionforbedfordshire.co.uk)

**PHONE:**

0800 917 5579/ 01582 721010

**FACEBOOK:**

[@direction4beds](https://www.facebook.com/direction4beds)

<https://www.facebook.com/direction4beds/>

**TWITTER:**

[@Direction4Beds](https://twitter.com/Direction4Beds)

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- This month we spoke to the **Friends of Hightown Committee** at their monthly meeting to let them know about *Direction for Bedfordshire*. The group works to conserve and enhance the life of the High Town community in Luton. We wanted to make them aware of our service to spread the word so that vulnerable and marginalised people in the area know that we can support them.
- We connected this month with the **Anti-Social Behaviour Team** in Luton Police Station to create a partnership with them and support the work they do in the community. *Direction for Bedfordshire* can assist the staff in the ASB Team to link their clients with services that can help them get back on track.
- Our partners at **JCP Bedford** provided us with some basic training around **Benefits and Universal Credit**. During our drop-in sessions we have had a number of conversations with people about their worries and queries around money and the benefits that they should be receiving. There has also been concerns voiced around Universal Credit, as it is a purely online system and some of our clients are not fully confident using computers. This training gave us an overview of the changes in the benefits system and how it works now. Our partners at JCP Bedford have offered ongoing support for our professional development by inviting us to forums to keep us fully updated on this subject.
- We received a wealth of knowledge this month following a meeting with **Grand Union Housing Association's Scott Gamble**. This meeting allowed us to both share more about our services and Scott also enlightened us to a number of services that we had not yet heard or/connected with. He was able to make us aware of some crucial organisations that cater for some of the common needs that we have been asked for help with over the last few months. This is a perfect example of how partnership working and information sharing is essential to ensure that the valuable services in Bedfordshire are known and being used effectively.
- Our meeting with **YMCA Bedfordshire** helped us learn more about their hostel on Kings Street, Luton. They can provide housing for 78 low risk vulnerable people, aged 18-65 years old. They work with individuals for up to 2 years in order to help them move from crisis to stable permanent housing. We want to support their work by being an extra resource to identify other services that can support someone gaining stability in their lives.
- This month marked the first **VARAC Training Day** and it was a big success. We were able to learn a lot more about what the various agencies and groups are doing to help the most vulnerable and high demand adults in the county. We were able to present to the group and received a lot of positive feedback on the need for a service like *Direction for Bedfordshire*, and some opportunities to further spread awareness of our work.
- Over the past 8 months we have acquired a wealth of knowledge about the services and organisations operating in Bedfordshire. We want to give our partners and opportunity to connect and network with each other, and therefore have begun discussions of some **Direction for Bedfordshire Events in 2020**. We will keep you updated as our plans progress.
- The end of this month saw the launch of **YouTurn Future's new and improved website!** YouTurn creates safer communities by working with professionals, communities, families, offenders and vulnerable people. Follow this link to find out more: <https://youturnfutures.com/>





**Do you have a history of offending?  
Are you looking to make a positive  
change?**

**Does having a criminal record make this  
hard for you?**

**Do you know who to turn to for help?**

Direction for Bedfordshire want to help reduce re-offending and crime in Bedfordshire by lending our services to individuals with links to crime and their support networks. We have the knowledge and connections to a variety of organisations who can with a number of pathway needs

**Telephone:**  
0800 917 5579

**Email:**  
[info@directionforbedfordshire.co.uk](mailto:info@directionforbedfordshire.co.uk)

**Website:**  
[www.directionforbedfordshire.co.uk](http://www.directionforbedfordshire.co.uk)

**f Facebook:**  
@direction4beds

**Twitter:**  
@Direction4Beds

*The way forward – here to help vulnerable and marginalised people; including individuals with offending histories and those around them*

**Do you work with vulnerable people or  
offenders?**

**Is it a struggle to find services and contacts  
that can cater for your client's needs?**

**Are you limited by your time and  
workload?**

**Do you know who to turn to for help?**

Direction for Bedfordshire want to contribute added value to the great work happening throughout Bedfordshire. We recognise that workloads are getting harder to manage, and we therefore want professionals to utilise our capacity and time for extra support

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**Are you getting the support you need?  
Are there areas of your life that you  
would like to change?**

**Do you find it difficult to access  
services?**

**Do you know who to turn to for help?**

Direction for Bedfordshire want to help people when they are struggling with elements of their lives. We have the contacts and the knowledge of valuable services in Bedfordshire to connect you to. We want to empower individuals to access resources that will make a positive impact

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**Do you have a loved one in prison?  
Are you concerned about a loved one's  
links with crime?**

**Are you dealing with your own issues  
with little to no support?**

**Do you know who to turn to for help?**

Direction for Bedfordshire recognise that a person's behaviour and choices can have an adverse effect on their loved ones. We want to be a friendly face and helping hand to fill this gap in support and link you with services that understand your needs.

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