

VOLUNTEERS' NEWSLETTER

June 2007

New Volunteers

Please welcome:

- Maxine Plowden at the Women's Group and Art Workshop
- Mike Molnar at Rainbow

We hope they will be very happy with us.

Brighton Outing

This will be on Saturday 21st July, leaving Fairfield Halls at 11.00 am returning from Brighton at 6.00 pm.

Travel will be in CAT minibuses
43 seats are available.

Volunteers willing to be responsible for a whole bus are needed.

Tickets will be on sale shortly.

Next support and training group

will not now take place on 7th July as our diaries are just too crowded.

A new date will be arranged for September.

High Beeches

On 25th May a party of 12 went by minibus to High Beeches Gardens, paid for by the jumble sale proceeds - a great time was had by all.

Bethlem Sunfair - 14th July

APCMH hope to have a stall, run in conjunction with the Chapel.

If you would like to help or have **craft / art / produce for sale** please let me know.

Thank you to our volunteers

You are invited to the Boulevard Restaurant on Wednesday 14th July at 7.30 pm for a 'thank you' meal.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you are able to come.

Crisis support.

- There is now a recognised process for us to access professional support. Out of hours, that is from the drop ins ring MayDay switchboard and ask for Mental Health Liaison. The instructions are in a red plastic folder in the Drop ins.
- At St Andrews ring duty at Central Team at Tamworth Road. The number is in the red folder at St Andrews.
- Major emergency always ring 999.
- There is a problem with emergency telephone access at the Rainbow as we no longer have access to the office. Ester normally has her phone and if other people especially key holders also bring theirs this would be helpful. Perhaps we should check at the beginning of the session who has their phone.

People who are under the influence of Drugs and or Drink.

We agreed that while it is not desirable to have people who are inebriated in the drop ins if they are not causing problems than it is best just to keep an eye on them and not to seek a confrontation. Disruptive behaviour should be the issue. If people are behaving in an unacceptable manner they should be asked to leave and if there are any problems again call the police. Generally avoid confrontation if possible.

Boundaries

The issue of personal questions and the use of personal experiences when talking with people. You do have a right to privacy and do not need to tell members anything about you personal life try to deflect unwanted questions and use generalities. How you use personal experience is very much down to judgement it would be wrong to say that it is never helpful but needs to be used with care. Your personal revelations may not be treated confidentially so care involves looking after yourself as well as considering whether it is really helpful to another.

Relating to people expressing paranoid ideas and people upsetting each other.

- People who have paranoid ideas will not respond to being told that they are nonsense. Perhaps ask about why they feel as they do and suggest other interpretations of the situation. You may be able to communicate that you have heard them and appreciate their distress but from your point of view it does not seem quite like that.
- If people are upsetting each other volunteer team work comes into play if both parties can be given attention it may relieve the pressure and affirm the value of both. Encouraging one party to remove themselves from the situation e.g. helping with something may be useful.

After session support

This has been brought up at many support sessions and is a difficult one to resolve especially after the evening and Sunday drop ins when volunteers want to get home. Use the clearing up time fruitfully to talk issues through and respond positively to colleagues who need to share something. Key holders be especially mindful of this issue. People should not be going home worried.

Miscellaneous

- The idea of a Saturday drop in was not really practicable at present - it would be difficult to find volunteers and the Fairfield Club is open all day Saturday.
- We rejected the idea of volunteer identity badges as this would lead to a 'them and us' culture which we try to avoid.
- We talked about the ways in which APCMH relates to other voluntary organisations.
- The difficulty with the back door at St Andrews was revisited. We will try to get a handle for the door so it is easier to push and pull open. However we are not likely to be there in the long term.
- There was praise for the atmosphere at the Rainbow and the positive effect of the smoking ban.

In the second half of the session Andrew provided us with valuable insights into effective encounters with others. If people missed the session and would like hand outs please let me know.

A Reminder of the Diary Dates

11th July Meal at the Boulevard for all volunteers
21st July Outing to Brighton