

## New direct access hostel for Norwich

***To celebrate the completion of the direct access hostel and move-on accommodation at Gas Hill, Norwich, Broadland Housing Association and St Martin's Housing Trust held an open day on 17th April.***

The day was very well attended and the feedback from visitors was extremely positive.

The total land, building and other associated costs equated to £2.1 million. The Housing Corporation provided £625,000 capital grant, Norwich City and South Norfolk Councils contributed £600,000 and £100,000 of their Housing Corporation Grant respectively, whilst Broadland District Council donated £100,000 Local Authority Grant.

St Martin's Housing Trust were successful in fundraising approximately £330,000, with generous donations received from several organisations and the local community. Broadland Housing Association will fund the remainder of the scheme by way of a private loan. St Martin's Housing Trust secured revenue funding for the day-to-day running of the

scheme from The Housing Corporation and Probation Service.

This scheme, which has been named Bishopbridge House, opened for business at the end of April 2002. St Martin's have now let 29 of the 30 bed spaces, and more than one resident has been quoted as saying "this

hostel will give me a real chance to get off the streets for good".



Above: Anna Hassan, Manager, in one of the kitchens  
Below: The official opening.



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### Double Celebrations for King's Lynn & District MIND

Two new major West Norfolk initiatives in mental health care and support were opened on the 8th April 2002 in King's Lynn. The 'A Piece of MIND Day Resource Centre' and 'North House' have been developed by MIND.

North House provides:

- Accommodation for the health and social work members of the two King's Lynn community health teams.
- Consultant space for emergency assessments, formal care programme approach reviews, informal drop in contacts with service users.
- Space for psychological therapies provided by the team and/ or staff from the newly-emerging psychological therapies service at the Fermoy Unit.
- Meeting room facilities for clinical teams and the wider health and social care community in West Norfolk
- A district office for the Alzheimer's Disease Society and a base for the outreach support worker.
- The office base for Norfolk Social Services Mental Health Team manager for West Norfolk.

'A Piece of MIND Day Resource Centre' replaces the day services housed formerly at the Pamela North Centre. Mick Ford, Chief Executive of King's Lynn and District MIND said: "We had been in the Pamela North Centre for several years, but now we are next to our own workshop, store and shop, we are closer to the town centre and we are saving about £10,000 a year in transport costs – money which can be spent usefully."

The two projects cost £400,000 to set up. Hilary Daniels, Chief Executive of West Norfolk Primary Care Trust spoke at the opening and praised the agencies:

"The project team have done extremely well to put everything together giving value for money." David Wright, Director of Norfolk Services said: "This is an excellent example of what can be achieved by various agencies working together, to overcome bureaucratic hurdles. I believe quite passionately in what you are doing here in West Norfolk."

King's Lynn & District MIND can be contacted by telephone on 01553 776966 or email [kingslynn.mind@lineone.net](mailto:kingslynn.mind@lineone.net).

## Newsinbrief

### St. Matthew's pass with flying colours!

Congratulations to St. Matthew's Housing Trust who passed their Housing Corporation pathfinder inspection with praise for the trust's standard of accommodation, value for money, resident participation and projects. John Miller, Chief Executive, applauded the new 'walk the floor' style inspections: 'For the first time, the inspectors went out and saw what we were doing on the ground and met the staff in our houses and our volunteers.'

### New websites for resettlement and social care teams

Shelter have launched a new online housing advice and information service [www.shelternet.org.uk](http://www.shelternet.org.uk). Another useful website is the National Care Standards Commission which provides information about its role in regulating social care and private and voluntary health care services [www.carestandards.org.uk](http://www.carestandards.org.uk)

### Women: Walking & Wounded

VHG are running the fourth in the managing inclusion series focusing on the accessibility of services to socially excluded and exploited women. This event is on July 4th 2002. This event is aimed at both managers and frontline staff. For more information please contact VHG on 01603 617299. For a copy of Shelter's report 'Homelessness: What's gender got to do with it?' (£12.50 + £1.50 p&p) contact Shelter's publications department on 020 7505 2043.

### Premises available for potential partnership

St. Martin's Housing Trust are requesting that agencies interested in renting the old nightshelter (St. Martin at Oak Church) or in potential partnership working with St. Martin's Housing Trust contact John Hales for an informal discussion on 01603 667706.

## Newsinbrief

# Networking Lunch event provides food for thought for Supporting Agencies

**The event was organised through the Supporting Agencies Liaison Group for Norwich City Council staff and councillors to meet with voluntary agencies who operate within Norwich.**

It was a lively event with fantastic displays from VHG member organisations. Some organisations brought their new recruits along to meet



with their colleagues and take advantage of the opportunity to view and discuss the work of their voluntary sector counterparts.

Staff from the housing, benefits and other sections of Norwich City Council enjoyed the informal occasion as these events provide a snapshot of the innovative work which the voluntary sector provides in Norwich.

Emma Daniel, Chair of the Supporting Agencies Liaison Group said, "For some agencies this event provided a valuable contribution to their induction programme and for others the opportunity to display and discuss their achievements and developments this year.

"I feel that the most important aspect of the day was the promotion of quality inter agency communication particularly between the voluntary and public sectors at a front line level."

Kevin Marshall of Norwich City Council agreed and added "City Council staff were enthusiastic about the opportunity to learn more about the work of their colleagues in the voluntary sector.

We have been asked if this

event can be held again next year and we would be happy to repeat such a successful day."

*Left: Kevin Marshall gives best value examination of Norwich City Council Tea*  
*Below: Pat Shaw of Archway, discusses their work.*



## Death of 'BIG ISSUE' vendor leads to free self defence classes for sellers

**Following the tragic death of a local Big Issue vendor - the Norfolk Autodefence team led by senior coach Stephen Woolston, teamed up with the city's Reiyukai centre and Sally Fox of the Norwich Big Issue Foundation to provide a free course of self defence training to the city's Big Issue sellers.**

Though the course has been offered in respect of the real dangers that sellers may face, Mr Woolston is keen to point out that the purpose of the training is not to encourage vendors to become

'have a go heroes'. He explains, "The emphasis was around building confidence and getting some light exercise while we worked on a few practical techniques." Mr Woolston told us why they decided to provide these classes for the vendors: "Big Issue sellers do face a risk and that's why we ran these classes. I emphasise that the first line of self defence is to avoid dangerous situations, and that the best solution to such a situation is to pacify it. The wisest thing is to comply with the assailant's demands if it is for mere money or property. Only when the threat is personal and there is no negotiable safe exit can these techniques be considered."

When asked if he felt that there was a possibility that this training could make trainees more aggressive Mr Woolston responded "If anything training in self defence works off any aggression that one might have. It can have a calming effect to train. My experience of the Big Issue sellers is positive and I think this will simply add to their self esteem." - Emma Daniel, VHG.

To contact the Autodefence team - Telephone 01603 721780 or email [teacher@norfolk-wingtchun.co.uk](mailto:teacher@norfolk-wingtchun.co.uk).

*If you would like VHG to organise self defence or Managing Aggression courses for your staff or your clients please contact Kerry Giles or Emma Daniel on 01603 617299.*



*Students of the Norfolk Auto defence team*

## Newsinbrief

*Going back to our roots VHG have moved offices and we are now back in St. Giles Street - our address is:*

VHG  
1st Floor  
36 St. Giles Street  
Norwich  
NR2 1LL

### This is our lives!

*This is our lives!* is a film made by young people who have been homeless and who mostly live in hostels at the moment. The film was made with the Mancroft Advice Project (M.A.P) and is being screened at Cinema City on the 16th July 2002 at 1pm. The film is 26 minutes long and will be followed by a discussion with the group that made it.

### Comment

*Peterborough Councillor John Holdich has faced criticism in the housing and local press for the comments made around Big Issue vendors in Peterborough. The important outcome of this situation is that it has led to a pledge to explore the facts and a way forward in challenging the stereotypes in the area. It is important that the statutory and voluntary sectors work together to meet this challenge. Holdich has assured VHG that he really is interested in trying to investigate the causes of homelessness in the Peterborough area and tackle this in co-operation with the voluntary sector. VHG is hoping that the next story involving Peterborough Councillors and the homeless will be a positive one.*

### From the Editor

*If you want to contribute to Raising the Roof or to tell us what you think of the publication. Please contact the editor on 01603 617299. Tell us if you would like to have several copies. Show it to staff and clients and let us know what they think. Send Emma Daniel article ideas for future editions. We intend to promote your work in a variety of ways - but this magazine is to be a vital part of that process. Let us help you by contributing your news and views. Send us your press releases, details of events and project updates. Emma Daniel, VHG.*

## Training Dates

WORKING WITH PSYCHOSIS

**20-06-02 9-30AM TO 4-30PM**

Norwich Trainer: Jane Wallace

INTRODUCTION TO WELFARE

BENEFITS

**25-06-02 9-45AM TO 4-00PM**

Norwich Trainer: Minerva Training

SUCCESSFUL KEYWORKING

(NEW COURSE)

**01-07-02 9-30AM TO 4-30PM**

Norwich Trainer: Clare Pastorius (Steve Morpew Associates)

ASSERTIVENESS AND CONFIDENCE

BUILDING

**03-07-02 9-30AM TO 4-30PM**

Norwich Trainer: Diane Woodhouse

MANAGING DIFFICULT PEOPLE

**09-07-02 9-30AM TO 4-30PM**

Norwich Trainer: Maggie Wheeler

INTRODUCING SUPERVISION

**10-07-02 9-30AM TO 4-30PM**

Norwich Trainer: Maggie Wheeler

## Events

WOMEN – WALKING & WOUNDED

**04-07-02 10AM – 4PM**

Norwich Trainer: Managing Inclusion Series Event

FURTHER INFO

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING OUR TRAINING PLEASE PHONE KERRY ON 01603 617299.

ADDITIONAL COURSES

ADDITIONAL COURSES THAT MAY BE RUN IF THERE IS ADEQUATE INTEREST: RELAPSE PREVENTION (A FOLLOW ON FROM MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING) AND WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENCE. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THESE COURSES.

IF THERE IS A NEED FOR A COURSE AND WE CAN ATTRACT DELEGATES WE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO ARRANGE IT IF YOU MAKE US AWARE OF THE NEED.

WE CAN ALSO ARRANGE "IN HOUSE" COURSES FOR YOUR STAFF FOR A SMALL FEE ADDED TO THE COST OF THE TRAINER. VHG IS WILLING TO HELP YOU SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS AROUND STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND IF WE CANNOT HELP YOU WE WILL FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN.

# Peterborough Council move to ban 'Big Issue' Vendors.

Peterborough Councillor, John Holdich, claims that Big Issue vendors are 'swamping' Peterborough and 'putting pressure' on the public to buy the 'Big Issue'. Holdich argued that the council should go for a total ban on vendors operating in Peterborough: 'If we can't control the numbers then we will have to go for a total ban'.

Holdich has faced criticism for his controversial comments in housing and social care press. The Big Issue Foundation said in response to these plans that they: 'were part of a rising tide of intolerance against the vulnerable and socially excluded'. Patrick Flanagan, Chief Executive of St. Theresa's House, distributors of the Big Issue in Peterborough, said to VHG: 'I am confident that reason will prevail and that the Big Issue vendors will go on selling to the public in Peterborough.'

Holdich emphasised his commitment to moving forward with voluntary agencies working in the Peterborough with the socially excluded and told VHG that he

wanted to base future action on homelessness on facts and dialogue. VHG are meeting with Holdich, representatives from the voluntary sector and Local Authority officers in June to begin this dialogue in earnest.



## A day in the life of...

Umbrella Housing provides accommodation for single parent families at times of crisis. The Umbrella staff consists of the Housing Manager (me), a tenant support worker, an administrator and two part time social workers seconded to us from social services.

One of the problems writing this is, there is no 'typical' day in the life of! My job is very diverse.

I can spend my days dealing with anything, from choosing the colours of carpet and paint, to filling in forms for the Housing Corporation.

We have an open door policy for tenants to drop in to the office between 10am and 1pm. Therefore from 10am onwards it is impossible to predict how the day will go. Tenants come in, workmen come in and people with donations come in.

I also have to visit our properties

during the week. This can be for any number of reasons. I see the tenants on a regular basis to make sure that everything is okay and carry out empty property inspections when they move on.

No two days are the same for me, that is what makes it an exciting and challenging job to be doing. I would find

**Beth Wright** –  
*the Umbrella Housing Manager*

my role at Umbrella Housing impossible without the constant support from my colleagues, both the Umbrella staff and the social workers seconded to us from social services. It would also be impossible without the input from our committee members, whose support and guidance has been invaluable.

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# VHG

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