

## Training Dates

**ASSERTIVENESS  
& CONFIDENCE BUILDING**  
14-03-03 10AM TO 4PM  
Norwich

**ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES**  
21-03-03 10AM TO 4PM  
Norwich

**LONE WORKERS PERSONAL SAFETY**  
28-03-03 10AM TO 4PM  
Norwich

**SUPPORTING PEOPLE FOR ADVICE  
PROVIDERS**  
02-02-03 10AM TO 4PM  
Norwich (Only £20! - subsidised by  
Norfolk Supporting People Team)

**COMMUNICATION & ACTIVE LISTENING**  
09-04-03 10AM TO 4PM  
Norwich

**INTRODUCTION TO WELFARE BENEFITS**  
16-04-03 10AM TO 4PM  
Norwich

**RACE AWARENESS & EQUALITY**  
30-04-03 10AM TO 4PM  
Norwich

**All training, unless otherwise  
indicated, costs £75 members  
and £125 non members.**

**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.

## A day in the life of...

I work for Norfolk Rural Community Council as Rural Housing Enabler. The main aspect of my job is talking to parishes of fewer than 3,000 in population regarding affordable housing for local people in their village.

A typical day consists of arriving at the office at about 8.30am (ish)!!! to check my post and inbox. On most days, I have at least one appointment, which means that I am out of the office for a large percentage of the working day.

This morning, I visited a local Parish Councillor in King's Lynn and West Norfolk to collect 73 Housing Need Surveys, which we distributed to every household in the village.

I will analyse the results in the next couple of days, and this will determine if there is a need for a small affordable housing development for local people in the village.

I then pop home for a quick cheese sandwich and to assess the damage my dog has done!

I then go off to Norwich to meet with Shelter to discuss ways we can work together to distribute information to remote rural areas. The meeting is very productive, and various ways forward have been determined.

After battling against the city's traffic, I

arrive back at the office to work on this article.

Tonight I am attending a Parish Council meeting in Broadland to talk to them about the Rural Housing Enabling process. My talk will provide details of how parishes can assess if there is a need for affordable housing for local people, and the processes they can undertake to obtain a small development managed by a local Housing Association. I will answer any queries they may have, and provide them with a Guide to Affordable Housing.

The project aims to help residents such

**Melissa Adcock –  
Norfolk Rural Community Council**

as Sons or Daughters who currently live in their parental home, but wish to set up their own home in the village; or a family who are currently in privately rented accommodation and are perhaps insecure in their tenure.

It is a very worthwhile process, and helps to ensure that key members of communities are not forced to move away.

When I get home this evening, I will unwind in a hot bath, and hope that my Husband has cooked the dinner!

## Change a life...

The Crisis Changing Lives programme provides financial awards to people who have been homeless or settling into a home, to return to work, set up their own business or study for future employment.

Changing Lives aims to get people involved in activities that raise their confidence, improve their skills and enable them to live independently and contribute to society.

Supported by Barclays, the project was piloted in 2001 and rolled out nationally in January 2002. To apply clients must have

a support worker able to act as a referee, be free of alcohol and substance misuse, unemployed or underemployed. Individuals can be awarded up to £2000 depending on need and strength of application.

### ■ How to apply:

Application packs are available from the Crisis website: [www.crisis.org.uk](http://www.crisis.org.uk) or by contacting Kaye Poole on **0870 011 3335** or [kaye.poole@crisis.org.uk](mailto:kaye.poole@crisis.org.uk). The application period began on 3rd March and ends on 25 April 2003

**VHG**

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Tel: 01603 617299 Fax: 01603 621521  
Company Limited by Guarantee No. 3384777  
Charity Reg No. 1063142



providing help where needed most

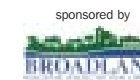
raising the roof

VHG

the bi-monthly publication of VHG MARCH 2003 Issue 9



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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## Providers Prepare for Supporting People Reviews

**All Supporting People services must be reviewed within the first three years of the start of the programme (April 2003). Rebecca Kemp of SITRA reports on what providers can expect when Administering Authorities (A.A.s) review their service.**

The Supporting People Monitoring and Review framework provides general advice on the process for undertaking service reviews. The process is not mandatory for A.A.s but the guidance says that first reviews should at least focus on the minimum requirements i.e. 4 core service objectives and the 3 interim performance indicators.

### Service Review

First reviews for interim contracts will follow the same basic process as those for steady state contracts and will assess services on 5 criteria:

- Strategic relevance
- Demand for the service
- Quality
- Performance
- Cost effectiveness

### The Process

There are four stages to the review process though not all services will have to go through each stage.

### Stage 1 – Strategic Relevance

Services will be judged on their ability to contribute to the objectives and priorities set out in the SP strategy or other significant strategies within the locality. Along with performance data, information from the SP Strategy on existing and future needs will be used to assess the demand for the service. Where the service meets these criteria the review process will go to stage 2. Alternatively if Stage 1 identifies areas of concern then the review should move to Stage 4 with a recommended course of action.

### Stage 2 – Desk Top Review

This Stage is primarily a desk top exercise to review:

- Quality
- Performance
- Cost-effectiveness

A.A.s will ask providers to produce self assessment summaries on each of the four core service objectives within the QAF. Results of validation visits that have already taken place can also be used in this assessment. Information on performance can be gained from the common management information and the 3 interim contract Pis.

Further guidance is still to come on the recommended process for assessing cost-effectiveness but it is likely that A.A.s will use information they have on the contract price to assist in this analysis.

If the results of Stage 2 recommend that a service should be re-commissioned (sometimes after small changes) then the process will move to Stage 4. Where further investigation is needed then Stage 3 of the process will be triggered.

### Stage 3 – Further Evidence

This stage involves a more detailed assessment of the criteria. Further evidence may be obtained through meetings with providers and stakeholders and by visiting the service. It will also provide an opportunity to obtain views on the quality and performance of the service from a service user perspective.

The results from Stage 3 will provide recommendations for Stage 4 of the process.

### Stage 4 – Outcome of a Service Review

At this stage any recommendations from Stages 1,2, and 3 will be considered by the A.A. Decisions will be made in line with the

SP Strategy to do one of the three following alternatives:

- Re-commission
- Remodel
- Decommission

Another possible outcome is the implementation of an action plan that could be linked to a short term contract.

Preparation for First Reviews – what should providers do?

- Confirm when the first service review is taking place
- Find out what process the A.A. intends to use for reviewing services
- Decide who has overall responsibility for review preparation
- Assess services against the 4 core service objectives and ensure there is evidence to support the assessed performance level
- Check how information for the interim Pis can be collected
- Determine how service users, staff & stakeholders can be involved and their views sought
- Consider the possibility of bench marking against other similar organisations.

By Rebecca Kemp, SITRA ([www.sitra.org.uk](http://www.sitra.org.uk))

## Newsinbrief

Supporting people provider helpline

SITRA have set up a telephone help-line for Providers needing information and support through the Supporting People process. The number is 0870 162 0746 or email [sphelpline@sitra.org](mailto:sphelpline@sitra.org). The helpline is open 2pm-5pm Monday to Friday. SITRA promise to respond to every enquiry within 4 working days.

Increased pressure on local authorities to reduce B&B use

Barbara Roche, Homelessness Minister, has announced plans to bring in legislation to ban councils from using B&B accommodation for families with children for longer than a 6 week period. She said that she wanted to "give teeth" to current targets. [www.homelessnessact.org.uk](http://www.homelessnessact.org.uk) Shelter's website for the voluntary and statutory sector to discuss online issues around implementation of the Homelessness Act. Log on to take part and view messages. This is a resource widely used by the voluntary and statutory sectors.

VHG wins Investors in People' status

In January 2003, VHG were officially awarded status as an 'Investor In People'. Steve Chaplin presented the plaque to Gary Barnes, Chair and Joan Kinnings-Smith, Acting Chief Executive. This award reflects the culture of VHG and the commitment of staff, trustees and volunteers to quality personal and professional development.



## Newsinbrief

# Section 55 Asylum Law branded 'INHUMANE' and illegal by High Court

**The High Court denounced Section 55 of the Government's Nationality, Immigration & Asylum Act 2002 that denies asylum seekers the right to food, shelter and support as 'inhumane'. The judgement ruled that it was illegal to deny welfare support to asylum seekers who make 'late claims' for refugee status.**

In the ruling delivered last week, Mr Justice Collins stated that 'treatment which can be described as inhuman or degrading or which interferes with a person's private life by adversely affecting his mental or physical health to a sufficiently serious extent' violates the European convention on human rights.

The ruling delivers a direct blow to the government's package designed to halve the number of asylum seekers entering the United Kingdom by September. The new measures which came into force last month were challenged under article three of the European convention on human rights in a test case of six asylum seekers fleeing regimes from around the world. None had

should be faced with the bleak alternatives of returning to persecution or of destitution.' In addition, he said government must ensure that its policy accorded with the fundamental rights enshrined in the ECHR and other treaties which this particular piece of legislation had failed to do.

In response to the judgement the home secretary, David Blunkett issued a statement declaring 'We don't accept what Mr Justice Collins has said. We will seek to overturn it. We will continue to operate a policy which we think is perfectly reasonable and fair.' While Mr Blunkett may think the policy 'perfectly reasonable and fair' there is strong opposition to it and if the decision is upheld in

their claim for asylum determined; one had spent nights sleeping in a telephone box and a tunnel and others had been forced to sleep rough. Mr Justice Collins added: 'Parliament can surely not have intended that genuine refugees

the Court of Appeal, the Government will be forced to rethink its tough new measures. Already underway are Tony Blair's plans to reassert the primacy of parliament by introducing new legislation to limit the role of the judiciary in the interpretation of human rights obligations. If we are to rely solely on our government in deciding what is 'reasonable and fair' let's all hope that justice prevails!

VHG members will receive an email update on this issue. To order a copy of VHG's Managing Inclusion Briefing 'Refugees, Asylum Seekers & the Law' please telephone 01603 617299 or go to [www.vhg-east.org](http://www.vhg-east.org). VHG is running training on Refugees & Asylum Seekers on 21st March 2003. Please contact Kerry Giles on 01603 617299 to book your place.

Meryl Alexander, VHG



## 'Personality Disorder: No longer a diagnosis of exclusion' – Report promises better services

New policy guidance from the National Institute for Mental Health has been issued to steer the development of services for people with personality disorder. The title of the Report 'Personality Disorder: No longer a diagnosis of exclusion' reflects the Government's aim to improve the provision of services and to ensure a more co-ordinated response to people with personality disorder who often fail to receive adequate support from statutory services. The report states that:

"As things stand today, people with a primary diagnosis of personality disorder are frequently unable to access the care they need from secondary mental health services."

The overall aim of this guidance is to set out how the National Service Framework for Mental Health will apply to people with a personality disorder.

The guidance has a particular focus on those people with more severe personality disorder, who are referred by primary care services for more specialist care and has

three key aims designed to ensure that once referred, people receive care appropriate to their needs.

- The three key aims are:
- To assist people with personality disorder who experience significant distress or difficulty to access appropriate clinical care and management from specialist mental health services.
  - To ensure that offenders with a personality disorder receive appropriate care from forensic services and interventions designed both to provide treatment and to address their offending behaviour.
  - To establish the necessary education and training to equip mental health practitioners to provide effective assessment and management.

All Trusts are required by the Government to consider how they will meet the needs of patients with personality disorder and extra funding is being made available over the next three years from April 2003 to assist with implementation.

HLG ([www.hlg.org.uk](http://www.hlg.org.uk))

## Mancroft Advice Project (MAP) Norwich

Registered Charity No. 1016125

### Working with Connexions Norfolk

We are seeking to fill 3 new full-time Housing Advice posts based in Great Yarmouth, Thetford and Kings Lynn. These are key posts within the new county-wide homelessness service for 13-19 year olds.

The successful applicants will work as part of a team offering high quality advice, information and support on complex housing issues. Some out-reach work will be required.

**Salary Scale JNC2 i-iv (Starting salary £17,211)**

For further information and/or an application pack please contact M.A.P. on 01603 766994 (10am-6pm Mon-Fri) and ask for Justine Hipperson. Previous applicants need not apply.

**The closing date for applications is Friday 21st March 6pm. Interviews will be held on Monday 7th April in Norwich.**

Mancroft Advice Project (MAP)

St John's Housing Trust is a growing local charitable organisation providing accommodation, support and resettlement services for single homeless people across our projects in Lowestoft. We are looking to recruit the following staff:

**Operations Manager Lowestoft**

**Full-time – 37 hours per week  
Salary JNC PT 31-34 - £22,689 – £24,726 per annum.**

We wish to appoint a dynamic manager ideally with significant experience and background in working with socially excluded groups. You will be responsible for the operational effectiveness and efficiency of the Trust's projects. You will have a good knowledge and understanding of the issues facing homeless people and a working knowledge of homelessness legislation and supported housing, including an awareness of the various applicable funding regimes.

The successful candidate will have excellent communication skills and be experienced in staff supervision, risk assessment and management and health and safety. Experience and skills in budgeting, financial management and control, spreadsheets, data bases and IT skills are essential.

If you can demonstrate the above skills and experiences, have a sound educational background, preferably to graduate level, are self motivated, flexible and committed to equality of opportunity, we would like to hear from you.

To request an application form and information pack for the above position please apply in writing to Bob Russell c/o The Fyffe Centre, Belvedere Road, Lowestoft. NR33 OPR.

**Closing date for applications:  
14th March, 2003**

**Interviews to be held week commencing:  
31st March, 2003**

St John's Housing Trust