Connect

Residents' newsletter

December 2016

FEATURING:

Your views and stories
Xmas trips and activities
Reports from recent events
Staff corner

St Martins
PARTNERS IN MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY

Welcome

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of Connect.

We have lots of contributions. Thank you to Sean, Mussa, Michael and someone who prefers to remain anonymous for your views, updates and willingness to share.

A willingness to share experiences, good, bad, funny or sad, helps us to form stronger and more positive relationships. It's great to hear about Michael's work in the café, Sean's trips to galleries and shows, Mussa's determination to take up his tools again and plans for another of our residents to write a book! Well done all of you.

As always, if there is anything you wish to speak to me about, my door is always open to you. Season's greetings and best wishes for a positive 2017.

John Thompson, Chief Executive
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Healthy food, freedom and my book

Word from Wilton Villas

I don't want to give my name. But I'm happy to talk and to be in Connect. It's good at Wilton Villas. The staff are good here. There is healthy food here and freedom. Well, I'd say half freedom. Do you understand? You have to let staff know where you are, otherwise they report you to the police as a missing person after 24 hours.

I am happy to speak now. And I want to write later. I want to write a book about my experience: to get the truth down. It's something to look forward to.

Staff Corner

Hi, I'm Dawn Burlton and I've been with St Martins as a Recovery Practitioner since 1st August 2016. I've already had the opportunity to meet and work with a number of residents and staff from Chalkhill Road, New North Road and Wilton Villas. I hope in the coming weeks to be able to meet and work with many more of you!

The purpose of my role is working individually with residents, facilitating them to think about, explore and identify their desired recovery interests, achievements and choices. Encouraging residents to search for a self-defined goal which will help give meaning to their lives and enrich their personal recovery experience.

I believe we all have the choice to lead a meaningful life, a life beyond survival and existence. When given the time and space to explore our inner ideas and wishes and encouraged to listen to ourselves, we are better positioned to discover and understand what we think or feel could really make a positive difference to our life and give our life more meaning.

My aim is to provide residents with that time and space to search and discover their own personal self-defined goal and develop this into their future achievement. I work in a person-centred way, listening to and exploring residents' views, interests and experiences, encouraging hope whilst maintaining the belief that the more meaningful life which awaits us can definitely be achieved. We just need to listen to ourselves and take the courage to seek and see!

"Encouraging residents to search for a self-defined goal which will help give meaning to their lives and enrich their personal recovery experience."

Comments from Caledonian Road

A number of you have been curious about St Martins' new home at Caledonian Road. Here are a few photos and some comments that two new residents made, to give you an idea of what it's like.

"The garden is great!" Mary

"We have house meetings once a month and everybody who lives in the building comes." Neville

"You aren't allowed pets of any sort. Not even fish. I used to have cats and dogs and I miss them." Mary

"We went on an outing to Southend which was nice." Neville

"It's warm and comfortable and the storage space for putting things is good." Mary

"It's a bit lonely having your own flat. I'm used to having more people around." Neville

Getting out and about

Connect
caught up with Sean over a cup of tea and a sandwich

I went to a couple of shows recently. I also went to the Tate Modern. I saw Vamos Cuba and The Lion King. Cuba was better. It was at Sadler's Wells. There was dancing, music. It was good. I'd seen The Lion King in Birmingham before. I used to live in Birmingham. They did it better there.

My sister lives in Dublin but she comes to see me. I was in Dublin years ago. I remember we had about twenty pigeons in the back garden, in a coop. I like birds. I saw some at London Zoo. They were all in cages. I got up close. I saw monkeys, big cats. But the most impressive animal was the camel.

Michael has been volunteering at a new café.

This is what he said about the experience

I just want to say that I'm happy. I can walk to the café where I work. It's just a few minutes away from where I live. I work two days a week, for 4 hours. Maria who runs the café is very happy with me. I've been learning how to chop things well, so they look nice.

Maria has two cafes. The one I work for is still quite new. It's quiet because not that many people know about it yet. But it's very nice. People like it there. I like it too. And I feel I am doing well.

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Mussa the mechanic

I am happiest when I have tools in my hands and I am fixing cars. I feel comfortable. I like opening up the engine and finding the problem. I've worked on big trucks too; Scania, Volvo, Mack ... the big trucks are fun.

I'm getting help at St Martins to write a CV. I want to send my CV to garages and ask if I can do voluntary work. I am studying English and IT. Next year I want to study mechanics. Although I have worked on lots of cars, I don't have qualifications. So much of cars is about computers now. So mechanics and IT is important.

I had to leave my home country Somalia because it wasn't safe. I was in Tanzania for two years where I learned English. When I came to the UK, I went first to Glasgow, then Liverpool, before London. People were more friendly in Glasgow and Liverpool, where I did some work fixing cars.

People in London are out for themselves, always chasing money. All capital cities are like this. But I have met good people in London. And there are so many parks, cafes, restaurants. It is really nice to walk around places like Angel and see people enjoying themselves outside the cafes.

"So much of cars is about computers now. So mechanics and IT is important."

Christmas trips and activities

The build up to Christmas offers you all plenty to do. Thanks to those who have got involved in making suggestions and planning lots of activities throughout December.

There will be meals out, trips to Winter Wonderland and the theatre, quizzes, films, crazy golf, Christmas card making and carols, amongst other things. And that's just the build-up. Each of St Martins' services will also have Christmas and New Year's celebrations, with food, music and good cheer. Have a fabulous time!

Spot the Difference

Can you spot ten differences?