Connect

Residents' newsletter
December 2017

FEATURING:

Ronald the Baker
World Mental Health Day
An interview with Sam
Christmas trips and activities

St Martins
PARTNERS IN MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY

Welcome

Welcome to the Christmas edition of Connect

I can't believe it is nearly Christmas. Where did the year go? Whatever you're up to this Christmas, have a good time. Me? I will put my feet up and watch television. George Michael's 'last Christmas I gave you my heart...' will be on the radio as usual no doubt!

I do give credit to St Martins. They know how to celebrate. When I was a resident at Chalkhill, they organised a number of fun outings and activities for their service users and residents. I hope you get involved and enjoy!

If this is your first Christmas with St Martins, congratulations, I wish you have many more Christmas' here.

It is not all about Christmas. Some of you will be reflecting back on the year gone and setting goals for the New Year. I often wonder where I will be this time next year. So much can happen and change in a year.

I would like to thank all who have helped me to put this issue together.

We have some excellent articles in this issue. We cover St Martins' recent World Mental Health Day. The staff vs residents football match and we highlight those who have enjoyed successes like Carlos and Nathan who have moved on to independent accommodation.

Remember, if you have any ideas for 'Connect' then contact me via staff at your project.

Thank you,
Harpreet

Ronald 'the Baker'

Ronald lives at St Martins' Davenant Road. He has been living there for 9 months. Connect was told he is a skilled baker and also sells his goods. We went to Davenant to meet Ronald and this is what he had to say:

"I am the kind of person who takes things day by day. I like living here. It is very peaceful. The staff and residents are very friendly. I used to live at a place called 'High View' which was a bit like a hospital. My baking began at High View, so I continued it here at Davenant

I can manage to make most baked goods. Orange is my favourite flavour. I bake cakes for the residents here on their birthdays and get paid. It keeps me busy and helps my recovery. My goal is to have my own flat and be more independent"

We also spoke to Joanne who is a Support Worker at Davenant. She said:

"Ronald is a shy guy. The baking has helped him come out of himself. He is teaching other service users how to bake cupcakes. We are all happy for Ronald."

World Mental Health Day 2017

Mental Health in the Workplace

On Tuesday 10 October, St Martins celebrated World Mental Health Day. A programme of events was hosted at Head Office, for which staff, service users and visitors were invited. It was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Dawn and Harpreet made some stalls for the event. We had information on WMHD history, a football and a St Martins football shirt on display to encourage people to sign up for the team. Dawn and Musa did a good job decorating the room with quotes and other information.

John Thompson opened the event with a welcome speech. Then we had a guest speaker from Peter Bedford Housing Association. PBHA offers great opportunities, skills and training to local people via social enterprise schemes, designed to get people back into work. Dawn presented her 'Employment & Wellbeing' course and Harpreet presented his 'Leadership' course. People were encouraged to sign up to both.

World Mental Health continued...

Next, Barbara, St Martins' HR Manager, gave a presentation on wellbeing at work. The working environment can present challenges when it comes to mental wellbeing. **If you have a cold or flu, you can call in sick. But what if you're depressed or stressed?** Are there systems in place at work to support people? Do employees feel fear of being stigmatised?

After the presentations it was time for the talent show! So has 'St Martins' got Talent?! From what we saw... yes it does! First up was Musa. He presented himself very well in an excellent speech.

Musa told us how he is now achieving things, working as a mechanic and going to college, far from the drug-fuelled life that he was previously living. It was very inspirational and uplifting for everyone.

The next two acts were singers. Phillip sang very softly to reggae style music. It sounded fantastic. Jonathan sang two songs, with a little rap mixed in. One of these was his own composition, that he has uploaded to SoundCloud. He too sounded brilliant. Then it was time for people to enjoy the food.

It was great to see people having a good time. The event went really well. A special thank you to Dawn, for all her hard work and effort. And congratulations to all who participated and attended.

In the chair

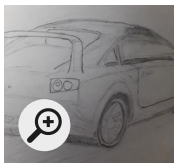
Harpreet interviews Sam from VCC.

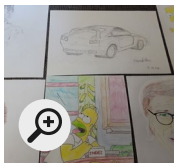
St Martins is rich with talented artists. Art has also been part of my recovery. I went to visit a bright young artist, from Vivian Comma Close called Sam. We began with some introductions, and Sam told me:

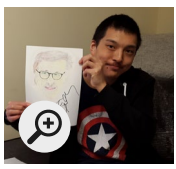
"I grew up in Manor House, Hackney. Before coming to VCC I have had two other placements. The first was in the countryside. I love the countryside. It gives me peace, fresh air and the food was free at this placement! My next placement was Arcadian Gardens in Wood Green."

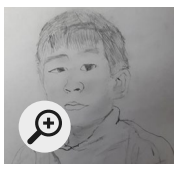
Sam had a portfolio of impressive sketches.

"I love drawing Simpson cartoons! There is an art club that I go to on the weekend called Art Box. I used to do pottery and weaving, when given the choice I went for weaving."









I asked Sam about sport.

"I am not that interested in football, however I have a brother who supports Man United."

Sam has another hobby:

"I love going down to Leicester Square for (red carpet) film premiers. I get to take pictures of film stars! I have met Jason Statham and Steven Speilberg."

I asked Sam if there is anything else he would like to say to our readers.

"I want people to understand my epilepsy and autism and how hard it is"

St Martins
318-320 St Paul's Road,
London N1 2LF

T 020 7704 3820 **F** 020 7704 3832
www.stmartinoftours.org.uk

Notice Board

"It feels great to achieve another goal and get more independence"

David

Congratulations David, on passing your driving test! Watch out other road users!

Mansur

Well done to Mansur on getting permanent residence to stay in the UK. It has been a long hard battle for Mansur, he speaks highly of St Martins staff who helped him through.

He has a bio-metric card which entitles him to claim for benefits. Light at the end of a dark tunnel, congratulations Mansur.

Nathan & Carlos

Hello to everyone at St Martins. We used to live at St Martins' Chalkhill Road. We had a good stay there and we were looked after very well.

Thank you to all residents and staff, you made our stay very pleasant. We have now moved onto Maison Moti in Kingsbury. It is fantastic because we have our own studio flats. We have settled in, feeling happy and safe. Good luck to all St Martins' residents. Thank you.
Nathan & Carlos.

Staff v Service Users Football Match

Due to popular demand, St Martins' staff did battle against the service users' team on 13 October, under the famous Wembley arches.

The venue was the Wembley Power League, in the shadow of Wembley stadium and home turf to the service users' team and a number of other residents.

This was no friendly match. Bragging rights were on the line. The staff were a bit short of players, although they managed to scrape five people together. John Thompson had, in his words, "hanged up his boots," and instead, did a good job refereeing the match. It was a close contest for much of the game. It was 2-2 until near the end, when the service user team started to hammer in the goals. A late surge of energy and goal scoring meant it finished 8-2 to the service users. Well done to both teams. We are all looking forward to the next game.

Christmas Plans

We hope that there will be something for everyone this Christmas at St Martins. We don't want anyone to feel lonely or isolated so please come and join in. At Chalkhill there will be meals, crazy golf and bowling.

Wilton Villas and New North Road will have their famous Christmas party. At Davenant and Caledonian Road there will be a variety of Christmas cooking, card and decoration making activities. Look out for posters promoting all of this and more!