

RIPON & LEEDS DIOCESAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL CONCERN

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October 2009

Dear Incumbent

As a charity closely linked to the Diocese of Ripon & Leeds, we think that it is important to keep people in the Parishes informed about our work.

Until last year it has been our practice to send a copy of our Annual Report to all of the parishes in the Diocese. However, changes to charity law mean that this document is now mainly worded to meet SORP standards, and consequently is less appealing to the casual reader.

We have therefore endeavoured to produce a more attractive document in the form of a Newsletter which will keep people informed about our work. We aim to produce this on a 6 monthly basis.

The first two editions of the newsletter were mailed to PCC Secretaries, but we have been encouraged to e.mail the Newsletter to clergy via the Parish Mailing system. We hope you find it interesting and would be very grateful if you could make a copy of the Newsletter available in your church.

We would also ask that your PCC consider financial support for our work when they next review their charitable giving allocation.

yours faithfully

Susan Teet
Secretary to the Trustees

Our aims:
promote acceptable
standards of social
behaviour, and
rehabilitate criminal
offenders and those
addicted to drugs,
alcohol, gambling, or
otherwise in need of
help.

Another Successful Year

At the Trustees' Annual General Meeting, held earlier this month at the Diocesan Office, the Chair of Trustees, Jill Dilks, was pleased to report on another successful year for our two Approved Premises, Ripon House and Cardigan House, in their work to rehabilitate offenders.

The year has, at times, been fraught from a management point of view, with uncertainties over funding levels and our service agreement with the Ministry of Justice.

There have been a number of farewells this year. Four long serving Trustees have retired: Peter Rhodes, Ann Nicholl, Liz Williams and Martin Plimley. Also, the two Management Committees amalgamated in July, allowing four members to step down early – Angela Senior, Hugh Baker and Joseph Lee from Cardigan House Committee, and Alison Morley and Lloyd Davies from Ripon House Committee.

Jill paid tribute to all of the Committee members and her fellow Trustees who freely give their time and expertise so generously.

After the business part of the AGM, Sherry Ashfield from the Lucy Faithfull Foundation gave a very informative talk about her work with female sex offenders. This is an area which society finds difficult to acknowledge. The Foundation works with offenders to help them face up to and change their behaviour.

The Annual Report, which is prepared in advance of the AGM, records the work of the charity. A copy of this and the Audited Accounts are sent to the Charity Commission and Companies House.

In her hostel reports, General Manager, Louise Cantley, records how staff are working with residents to address their offending behaviour, look at their lifestyle choices, and work towards positive out-comes from their stay with us. An extract of Louise's report can be seen below.

If you would like a full copy of the Annual Report please contact the Secretary. The report can be posted or e.mailed out as preferred.

Positive Outcomes

The past twelve months have seen some exiting initiatives introduced in both hostels to encourage residents to make better use of their time and develop skills for when they move on.

In summer of 2008 Cardigan House, working with the Cardigan Centre, introduced the 'Active for Life Programme'. This gave advice to residents on things such as exercise, diet and making healthy choices. Participants were taught how to make meals on a budget and were each given a basic book of recipes for healthy meals.

Spring 2009 saw an allotment established at Cardigan House. There is a greenhouse and a plot growing vegetables and salads. Residents can be involved in growing things and then enjoy the fruits of their labour. Louise plans to develop the project further by helping residents gain qualifications, and potentially employment, in horticulture.

Cardigan House also hosted an event as part of West Yorkshire Probation's diversity celebrations, attended by probation staff and partner agencies. Some residents displayed art

work and poetry, showing significant talent. Staff and residents led three work-shops, including orienteering in the grounds and preparing a meal on a limited budget. The day was rounded off with a lovely meal – West Indian Lamb, Baked Aubergine and Couscous, made by a member of staff. It was a very successful event promoting diversity and improving self-esteem and was enjoyed by all.

The Ministry of Justice directs that residents in APs engage in a number of hours of purposeful activity each week, to reduce risks and better re-integrate them into the community.

Ripon House has developed a range of activities for its female residents. Groups are run weekly and deal with issues such as: Substance Misuse, Tenancy Support, Money Management, and Fire Awareness. There are also Craft, Relaxation and Drama Groups.

All residents attend these groups according to risk and need. Attendance is agreed in a plan drawn up with their link worker.

There is a monthly events programme of quizzes, bingo, pool competitions, film nights and karaoke. These activities provide safer alternatives to drug/alcohol use and help residents deal with boredom. The women are also encouraged to use community facilities which will continue to be available when they move on.

The 'Esteem' programme has continued, motivating offenders through outdoor activities including canoeing, orienteering and caving.

All of the above have had positive results and proved successful for residents.

"I am particularly pleased to see the project up and running. Making better use of the garden was one of my aims on arrival."
Louise Cantley



A couple of residents' stories....

(names have been changed to maintain confidentiality)

Kelly appeared in court charged with trying to abduct a child. She was found not guilty but given a residency order.

Kelly lived at home, reliant on her parents. She moved in with her partner, whom she also relied on. Both her parents and partner have died and Kelly is afraid she cannot cope on her own.

Kelly settled in well at Ripon House, but when she goes out she is known to associate with section 1 offenders. She is being closely monitored by the Probation Service.

It has been difficult to find suitable accommodation for Kelly to move on to. A housing association which previously provided her

with accommodation has refused to have Kelly back as she previously caused damage whilst living with them.

Social Services have now found a flat for Kelly and her keyworker is helping to introduce a phased move.

Kelly is still feeling very vulnerable as she has not been used to being alone. Staff at Ripon House have assured her that she can come back to visit.

Staff are always willing to do their best for residents, but they also know that it is important to maintain a professional distance so that vulnerable people such as Kelly do not become too reliant on their support.



Mark is 30 years old and came to Cardigan House on Licence from prison. He is MAPPA level 2, which means he is a high risk offender and is subject to curfews.

He received a 60 months sentence for robbery and attempted robbery whilst under the influence of alcohol and drugs. He also has previous convictions for assaulting his partner and battery against his son.

While in prison Mark signed up to do the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) and is also being encouraged to join Alcoholics Anonymous.

He has not presented any management problems whilst at Cardigan House. Mark was previously on crack cocaine, but all drugs tests at Cardigan House have shown negative.

He is looking for work and training options. Mark is also being encouraged to develop skills and deal with issues and he is making good progress.

It is hoped that Mark will have a successful move on. He is quite determined to improve and knows that he must complete the IDAP programme before he can return to his family.

Ripon House —DDA update

The project to provide access and accommodation for people with disabilities is progressing well and work is expected to start this month.

A new side entrance will give access to a lift to the ground and lower floors.

Two adapted bedrooms will be provided on the lower floor suitable for people with ambulatory disabilities.

There will also be a toilet and shower room, both equipped to meet the needs of people in wheelchairs, available for the use of any residents, visitors or staff who may need them.

Completion of the work will see a high standard in the provision of accommodation for women offenders who are disabled.

Unfortunately, with few female Approved Premises available, women offenders with disabilities, may have to be placed a considerable distance from their families to benefit from this facility.



Cardiganhouse.org.uk
Riponhouse.org.uk

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Through your prayers—Please pray for the residents of the hostels, that they will use their time positively to look at their lifestyles and take up the better options offered to them. Also pray for the staff who work closely with residents to address their offending behaviour, and for the Trustees and voluntary Management Committees who carry responsibility for the organization.

Practical help – Trustees and Management Committee members are appointed for fixed terms of office, renewable with mutual consent. To ensure planned succession, we are constantly seeking new Committee members and Trustees. You do not need to have past experience of the Criminal Justice System. We aim to recruit volunteers from diverse backgrounds and with a wide range of skills.

Financial support – it is increasingly difficult for us to raise money to cover the 'value added' extras that are not government funded. Some parishes in the Diocese do give financial support through their mission giving. We also have a small number of charitable trusts and individuals who support our work. We are very grateful for any donations, as we realize there are many demands upon limited resources.

If you feel able to support our work financially, it would be much appreciated. Cheques should be made payable to the Ripon & Leeds Diocesan Council for Social Concern, and sent to the Secretary, Mrs S E Teet, at our registered office: 20 New Market Street, Leeds, LS1 6DG.

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