

**TURNING
POINT**
turning lives around



Housing Link Annual Review 2009

April 1st 2008- March 31st 2009

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1. Introduction

Housing Link aims to provide an individually tailored service of community support to people aged 18-65, living in Dacorum with a difficulty in maintaining their tenancy, or at current risk of tenancy difficulties. These tenancy difficulties will be due to mental health, learning difficulties, or problematic substance use (drugs & alcohol).

Housing Link targets its service on people who may currently slip through the net of care services. They may have been assessed for other services at some time and been judged not to have met eligibility criteria for those services. They will be people who do not already receive any kind of housing support.

Referrals may be made by any individual or agency

2. Introduction

Short Breaks for Carer's

Short Breaks for Carers provides short periods of respite to carers of people with mental health difficulties living in West Hertfordshire. We help by spending time with the mental health service user so that the carer can take time out. The service is designed to complement rather than replace existing respite services. We provide timely, creative and flexible support to enable carers to actively and beneficially participate in the care of people with mental health difficulties and other complex needs.

We give carers breaks of between one to three hours per visit. The duration and frequency of breaks is agreed at the referral stage but could lead to a short or long term arrangement depending on the carer's individual needs and circumstances.

Referrals can be made via local Community Mental Health Teams

YOD Service

Our service provides short periods of respite to carers of younger people with dementia in Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere. We help by spending time with the dementia service user so that the carer can take time out. The service is designed to complement rather than replace existing respite services. We provide creative and flexible support to assist carers in their role

We give carers breaks of between one to two hours per visit. The duration and frequency of breaks is agreed at the referral stage but could lead to a short or long term arrangement depending on the carer's individual needs and circumstances.

The main route for referrals is via the Specialist Mental Health Teams for Older People

Carers are actively involved in the referral process and ideally they will have already had a carer's assessment, which will have identified a need for this service.

2. Staffing at Midland Road

All 5 services are now based in the same building and share the same line management structure.

Clare Buckmaster	Service Manager
Carol McNeil	Team Leader

Housing Link

Ann Norman	Project Worker (part time, 3 days)
Philip Brett	Project Worker

Short Breaks for Carer's

Bridget Butler	Project Worker (part time, 3 days)
Bob Githuku	Project Worker (part time, 2 days)
Elaine Kelly	Project Worker
Rebecca Plater	Project Worker
Hayley John	Project Worker

YOD Service

Dita Lewis	Project Worker
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Support Link

Gemma Davies	Project Worker
Andrea Parslow	Project Worker
Kat Heritage	Project Worker
Kathy Cole	Project Worker (part time, 4 days)
Levinia Franklin	Project Worker
Trevor Atkins	Project Worker (part time, 4 days)

Internet Project

Ann Norman	Project Worker (part time, 2 days)
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Having all of the services and staff within one building has had significant benefits for all of the individual services as we have been able to up skill the staff teams through working across role boundaries.

Staff have been able to share skills and experiences and request specialist help from each other around issues such as dual diagnosis, personality disorder, carers' issues, housing, benefits, dementia and general mental health knowledge.

It has also allowed us to provide better cover across the services when staff in the smaller services are on annual leave, training or sickness absence.

It has also helped staff retention as some staff have moved between services, rather than leaving the organisation.

3. Training

Staff have continued to attend a wide variety of training over the last 12 month period, which has been delivered by Turning Point, the Herts. Workforce Development Joint Training Unit and other external training agencies. This training has included working with Personality Disorder, Women & Mental Health, Self-Injury and Dual Diagnosis, the Solution Focused Approach, Introduction to CBT, Mental Capacity Act, Mental Health Act.

Staff have benefited from Turning Point's extended in-house training programme and attended mandatory training events in Working with Diversity, Health & Safety, the Protection of Vulnerable Adults, Managing Challenging Behaviour. We are also ensuring that all staff attend Solution Focused Approach training.

The teams have also attended In House training on Personality Disorder, Domestic violence, Turning Point Policies, Suicide, POVA, Lone working, Staff boundaries, Benefits (DLA) and risk management procedures.

Staff in management positions have also attended new Turning Point performance management training.

Turning Point are also about to launch a new set of mandatory training for all staff which will be accessed by our Project Workers

4. Organisational Support

Elissa Rampling is now the Mental Health Regional Manager and she supports the Service Manager and team.

The service also benefits from being supported by Turning Point's new Mental Health Sector Business Director, Zelda Peters. This new development within the organisation will mean that Turning Point's mental health sector will share skills and knowledge across the sector in a consistent way.

5. The other services at Midland Rd

The following information provides a brief summary of each of the other services based at Midland Rd

Support Link

Support Link aims to provide an accessible, intensive and individually tailored service of community support to people with severe and enduring mental health difficulties, who also have a history of associated offending and/ or difficulties with their drug/ alcohol use. The aim is to enable people to improve their quality of life and independence.

The support can be intensive community support where people need and would like this, or assertive outreach where service users need a flexible approach in order to access the service that they need.

Referrals can be made via local Community Mental Health Teams.

Short Breaks for Carer's

Short Breaks for Carers provides short periods of respite to carers of people with mental health difficulties living in West Hertfordshire. We help by spending time with the mental health service user so that the carer can take time out. The service is designed to complement rather than replace existing respite services. We provide timely, creative and flexible support to enable carers to actively and beneficially participate in the care of people with mental health difficulties and other complex needs.

We give carers breaks of between one to three hours per visit. The duration and frequency of breaks is agreed at the referral stage but could lead to a short or long term arrangement depending on the carer's individual needs and circumstances.

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Carers are actively involved in the referral process and ideally they will have

already had a carer's assessment, which will have identified a need for this service.

TP Designs

Is an Internet Gift shop selling arts and crafts that are made at the service.

The project is for people with mental health difficulties and our aim is to work towards increasing individual's skills and independence in a safe environment and it is hoped that it will provide a stepping stone to voluntary work, employment and/or further education

Referrals can be made by any individual or agency for people who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

6. Developmental Issues

a) Line management structure

Clare Buckmaster and Carol McNeil provide management support for Short Breaks for Carer's, The YOD Service, Support Link, Housing Link and TP Designs (The Internet Project)

b) Service User Involvement

Trevor Atkins is now our dedicated Service User Champion and he is taking a lead on further developing the level of service user involvement within our services in a meaningful way. The services will hold regular service user events over the next 12 month period. Service users from Support Link, TP Designs, Short Breaks for Carers, YOD and Housing Link will be able to attend. The service provides lunch and an opportunity for service users to get together and talk to each other in an informal setting

We are encouraging service users to get involved in the recruitment process in a variety of ways ranging from supporting us to devise interview questions, meeting with candidates informally prior to interviews, to taking part in the interview panel.

(c) Fundraising

We have continued to hold fundraising events throughout the year so that we can fund the groups and social events that service users asked for through their feedback.

The majority of donations or fundraising has been used to further develop TP Designs. They were able to purchase a Turning Point branded gazebo to use for their fortnightly market stalls in Hemel Hempstead town centre. This means that we meet Health and Safety requirements and are visible in the local community. We have now raised enough money to purchase a glass kiln for the project so that they can make their own glass pendants and beads for their jewellery.

We are also planning a sponsored walk to raise funds to hold more service user activities throughout the coming year.

We hope to further develop our fundraising activities when we move to our new premises in Watford. We would like to develop the dedicated service user activity room that we have and make our new premises a warm and welcoming place to come to.

(d) Website

Turning Point has a national website, which includes information about all of the services:

www.turning-point.co.uk

We also have a local website:

www.hertsmh-turning-point.co.uk

This site includes information about Support Link, Housing Link, Short Breaks for Carers, the Internet Project, YOD Service and Midpoint. As such, it represents all of Turning Point's mental health services in Herts. The site will continue to be developed over the coming year and will provide information for professionals and potential service users.

This site also contains the eShop

(e) TP Designs (The Internet Project)

This is an eShop selling arts and crafts that are made at the service.

The project is for people with mental health difficulties and our aim is to work towards increasing individual's skills and independence in a safe environment and provides a stepping stone to voluntary work, employment and/or further education. The project can be accessed by anyone who is experiencing mental health difficulties and as such it has received referrals for both new and existing service users.

The project has also been running market stalls in Hemel Hempstead Town Centre, selling jewellery made by service users and promoting mental health awareness in the local community.

The eShop can be found at www.hertsmh-turning-point.co.uk

From 20 participants involved in the service during the last year:

- 1 has found employment as an administrator.
- 2 have moved to Work Solutions to be supported in to employment
- 1 is doing voluntary work
- 1 is now looking at enrolling in a college course

- 1 is a service user who comes to the project for 2 whole days a week. The Community Mental Health Team has not been able to engage him with any services in the past.
- All have learnt new skills and developed their confidence
- Many use it as a safe place to come to and often we are the first point of contact if they need support.

We are currently trying to secure further funding for this project so that it can continue

(f) Newsletter

We have started to produce our quarterly newsletter again as a way of keeping service users, carers and other agencies up to date with what we are doing at the services. We are encouraging service users to contribute to this and the first edition of 2009 included service user accounts and poems.

We are hoping that this will be further developed over the coming year and hope to have more service user contributions. We would also like service users to be involved in making the newsletter through TP Designs and the Service User Committee. We hope that service users will write the newsletter and be involved in the printing and posting of it in the longer term.

(g) Groups at Midland Road

Art Group

Elaine Kelly set up an Art Group at Midland Road. This group can be accessed by any one who is using any of the services that we provide. This group has been very popular, particularly with the Short Breaks for Carers service and has also provided Carer's with additional breaks.

Update: The move to the new premises in Watford and some additional funding means that this group will now be able to run on a weekly basis. This will reduce the waiting list for the group and provide additional support for service users and additional breaks for carers.

YOD Group

YOD Service has been running a monthly group for service users. This has been enjoyed by those who attend regularly and also provides an additional break for Carers. The group have undertaken activities throughout the year such as bowling, visiting garden centres, lunches out, art and crafts and reminiscence sessions at Midland Rd.

Update: Additional funding for the next year means that this group can be further developed and can increase in frequency. This will provide an extended break for carers whilst at the same time providing a stimulating activity for people with young onset dementia.

Housing Link Tenancy Support Group

This group supports people with learning the skills to successfully manage their tenancy. We also run a drop in where people can come in for support with completing benefit forms, making phone calls to the Housing Dept and Utility Companies etc. This group is mostly accessed by the Housing Link service users, but anyone using the Midland Rd services can come to it for one off support e.g. with completing DLA applications or Housing Benefit forms.

This year the group has benefitted from having staff from Dacorum Borough Councils Housing Dept attending each week to offer specialist advice to service users. This has been a really positive service development and has shown how successful partnership working can be.

Update: This group now runs from the Herts Mind Network premises in Hemel Hempstead. It takes place every Tuesday from 3 – 5pm.

(h) Promotional Events

World Mental Health Day – We held an Art Exhibition to celebrate World Mental Health Day. This was at Midland Rd and was open for service users, external agencies and members of the public. This was very successful.

We are planning a joint event with Herts Mind Network at our new premises in Watford for WMHD 2009.

Carer's Rights Day – We held a Christmas Event to celebrate this. We had lunch and a quiz at Midland Rd. This was well attended and everyone had an enjoyable afternoon.

Carer's Week – We took part in promoting Carer's Week this year by having a stall in Hemel Hempstead town centre providing information and signposting and promoting awareness in the local community. This was a joint venture between Short Breaks for Carers and TP Designs and the stall and staff attracted a lot of attention from the general public. The Short Breaks for Carers staff were able to provide a listening ear, advice and signposting to individuals who came to the stall to discuss their caring role, or to ask for information for friends and/ or family. This proved to be a very successful event and showed that promoting awareness in the community on a small scale like this was very beneficial. The jewellery and crafts also attracted people to the stall and made it easier for people to come over and ask questions.

(i) Volunteers

We have started to use volunteers within the services to help support the groups and TP Designs. This has been a very positive development and one that we hope to expand on during the coming year.

(j) Holistic support

Having all of the services based in the same building has improved the way in which we deliver our services. We now have service users who are using two or more of the services eg Support Link and Short Breaks for Carers, Housing Link and the Internet Project. We also have people who are moving in to TP Designs now that they have less of a need for intensive one to one support in the other services.

Service users are also benefiting from the staff team being able to access the specialist knowledge of the other teams. For instance the Housing Link staff have been able to support members of the other teams with issues around benefits entitlements, tenancy issues, and in particular Disability Living Allowance claims.

We are also developing much stronger links with the Turning Point Hertsreach services that work in our area so that we can offer a seamless service for those service users who also have needs around their drug/ alcohol use.

(k) New premises in Watford

As of June 12th 2009 we relocated all of the services to Watford. We are now in a shared mental health resource building with Herts Mind Network. This is an exciting development for the services. We hope to establish closer partnership working with Herts Mind Network which will enhance service delivery to service users and carers.

This will have the biggest impact on the Housing Link service as this project only supports service users living in the Dacorum district. We will be working closely with service users and referrers to ensure that this move takes place smoothly and that it does not impact on service delivery.

The move will encourage closer partnership working with other organisations and as such it will be a positive development for the service. We will still be providing outreach to see service users in their own homes and will be able to use Herts Mind Networks Hemel Hempstead base to see service users who would prefer to be seen at an office base. The Housing Link Tenancy Support Group will take place at Herts Mind Networks Hemel Hempstead base. We are also hoping to work more closely with DENS.

We also have a dedicated service user activity room now which can be used for the Art Group, the YOD Group and TP Designs. We also have use of a garden and hope to set up a joint gardening group with Herts Mind Network.

7. Housing Link Outcomes

The Housing Link service has worked with 52 service users during the year

Referrals

The service received 51 referrals during this 12 month period

These referrals came from the following sources:

- 25 self referrals
- 12 from Dacorum Borough Council Housing Dept
- 10 from St Paul's Community Mental Health Team
- 1 from Dacorum Community Learning Disability Team
- 2 from Family members
- 1 from a GP

Many of the self referrals were people who were directed to the weekly Tenancy Support Group by other local services.

Outcomes

Face to face contacts:

1098 out of 1258 planned visits actually took place during this twelve month period, which is an 87% success rate in engagement with clients.

Telephone calls with service users (office hours)

There were 1253 phone calls with service users during office hours over this 12 month period

Contact with other agencies (with or without the client)

There were 874 phone calls with professionals during office hours over this 12 month period that related directly to our caseload.

The majority of these professional calls were to the Housing Dept at DBC and the Benefits Agency, but also with:

- DLA
- Community Mental Health Team
- Community Learning Disability Team
- Rent Aid
- Utility Companies
- The Sunflower Project
- Women's Aid
- Shelter
- GP's

And many other local services

Contacts at the Housing Link Tenancy Support Group

There have been 339 contacts at the Housing Link Tenancy Support Group

The table below shows the amount of support that has been given to enable service users to access or attend planned appointments with other key agencies.

Contact with other agencies

Outcomes: Contact with	No. of contacts across the year
Housing Dept	308
D & A Appoint	25
Police	7
Referrers	115
Benefit Agency	171
Utility/Debt	128
Hospital (Medical)	48
CAB	8
Dentist	3
Children Schools and Families	3
CMHT Outpatients/ CPA/ Prof meetings	27
Court	20
GP	46
Bank/ Post Office	25
Volunteer Bureau/ Voluntary Work	6
Repairs & Surveyors – Housing Dept & Housing Associations	48
College/ Employment Services	9
Shelter	12
Women’s Refuge	7
Meals on Wheels	10
Other (social activities/ shopping/ practical tasks)	185

However other areas of support have also taken place, such as:

- Budgeting
- Bailiffs
- Advocacy
- The Sunflower Project
- Psychiatric assessments
- Incapacity Benefit Medical appointments, with Department of Work & Pensions
- Any other issues that arise

Housing Link covers a wide area of support, and clients have responded very well to the flexibility that this project has to respond to their needs.

The type of support that clients receive from the Housing Link continues to vary from client to client depending on the aims of the support plans.

It is also important to note that Housing Link has continued to be involved with a lot of crisis work over the last year

Support plan goals met.

Clients have been asked about the support they have received in relation to Support Plan goals. These are set at review meetings with the client, care co-ordinator and Housing Link. Clients are asked two questions in relation to goals set:

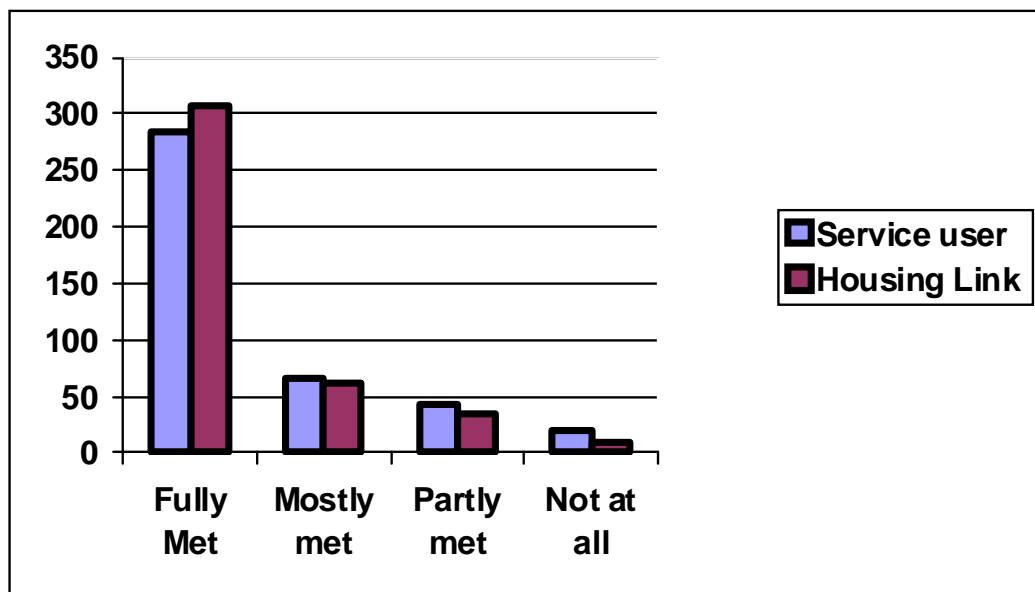
- **To what extent did you get what you were looking for in this period?**
- **To what extent did Housing Link do what was agreed?**

During this period **413 goals** were reviewed.

Service users reported that 283 of the goals enabled them to ‘fully’ get what they were looking for. With 67 of the goals, service users expressed that they ‘mostly’ got what they were looking for. 43 of the goals the service users partly got what they were looking for and with 20 of the goals the service user said they did not get what they were looking for at all.

Service users reported that Housing Link ‘fully’ did what was agreed with respect to 307 of the goals set. Housing Link ‘mostly’ did what was agreed with regards to 61 of the goals.

Housing Link only ‘partly’ did what was agreed with 35 goals and did not do what was agreed at all with respect to 10 goals.



Complaints, Concerns & Compliments

Complaints: None received during this review period

Concerns: None received during this review period

Compliments:

- A service user thanked us for the support that we gave him recently. He had attended the project and disclosed that he had stopped taking his medication 2 weeks prior. Staff contacted his psychiatrist and supported him to safely restart his medication with his agreement. He stayed at the service with us all day until his wife finished work. He expressed appreciation for the calm and sensitive way in which he was supported.
- A service user phoned to thank us for our support and “wise words” that stay with him when he is struggling
- “If it wasn’t for Phil I don’t know where I would have been” – service user
- CPN from Dacorum CMHT complemented Phil on how well he had handled a situation at a meeting with other professionals where a service user was present.
- A service user thanks Ann for helping with a crisis loan. Her new fridge freezer had broken down with food in the freezer. Ann supported with getting the faulty equipment replaced and organised a crisis loan.
- Service user said that without the help of Housing Link she would not have got this far – she is now able to leave her home and is working
- After helping a service user when he lost his bank card he said “I would love to give you 1 million pounds, as it would be worth every penny for the help you give me!”
- A service user said that he had turned his life around with the help he got from the service.
- A service user said “ You cheer me up and make me happy for the rest of the day”
- “You are a very good organisation, you do very good work” feedback from a service user
- “Without your support and help I don’t know how I would have coped” in reference to supporting her resolves housing issues with DBC.
- A service user thanked Phil repeatedly after he visited her and supported her during the heavy snowfall.
- Member of staff from Dacorum Borough Council – “If it hadn’t been for your service it would not have been picked up that he (a service user) needed urgent help from the Community Mental Health Team, your service is invaluable”
- Assistant Manager at St Pauls CMHT expressed how useful Housing Link is in providing support to some very chaotic clients.
- “Thanks for helping me understand and deal with my panic attacks” – a service user

8. Case Studies

* Names have been altered to ensure confidentiality

Case Study 1

Craig * came to our drop in group and was suffering mental and physical health problems. He was living in a tent and was not in receipt of benefits. He forgets appointments and he needs to attend the Community Mental Health Team, GP's for prescriptions and sickness certificates and hospital for his Crohn's disease.

The project worker liaised with Dacorum Borough Council in relation to his homelessness and managed to obtain temporary accommodation for him. In his first few weeks at the accommodation we also arranged for food parcels to be taken to him as he was waiting for his benefits to be sorted. We also managed to obtain some vouchers for him for clothing and essential items for his home. He is currently waiting to go into supported housing.

The project worker also sorted out his benefits and has managed to obtain incapacity benefit, disability living allowance with low rate mobility and high rate care. He now attends all of his appointments on time and is getting his life back on track and is looking at doing a college course later this year.

Case Study 2

Amy * was referred to our service to try and help her obtain accommodation in Harrow, where she originally came from. She suffers with agoraphobia, depression and lacks motivation. She has kept herself very isolated as she does not want to make friends in an area she hates. She forgets to take medication and quite often runs out of medication.

The project worker changed her GP surgery so it was one that was in walking distance and has a pharmacy on the premises. This enabled Amy to go to the doctors and pick up her prescription at the same time.

The project worker also liaised with the Community Health Team and attended Amy's CPA meetings. We have managed by writing letters and making phone calls to get her moved to Harrow. She has now settled in Harrow and is very happy as she can start rebuilding her life.

Case Study 3

Nicky * was referred to us by Dacorum Borough Council. She had large rent and council tax arrears and was not coping. Her housing benefit had been stopped as she had not supplied the relevant information. The bailiff's had been calling at her home for council tax arrears. She would not open her post but would burn it as she was too scared of what the letters might say. She suffers with depression and panic attacks and does not like leaving the home.

The project worker has managed to get her housing benefit backdated with supporting evidence from her doctor. Nicky is now also in receipt of correct benefits from department works and pensions. She is now able to go out for

coffee and has started attending a slimming club. She is saving up to buy herself a bike and is going to go to evening classes in September. She now opens her post and reads the letters and her tenancy is secure.

Case Study 4

Chris * was brought to our drop in group by a member of Dacorum Borough Council Homelessness Team, who wished to refer the service user to us. It transpired during the initial referral meeting that he had previously been living rough on the streets for some period of time, and had just been given a flat to rent, under licence, by the local council.

Chris had a history of alcohol dependency, combined with auditory and visual hallucinations. The project worker made referrals to the Community Mental Health Team and the Community Drug and Alcohol Team. We attended the initial appointments with him so that he was able to go. This ensured that he received the correct package of support for his needs.

Chris found it hard at first to adjust to having their own flat to live in, and felt they did not deserve to have the privilege, to have a home of their own. The project worker gave encouragement and support to Chris, and monitored his rent payments and gave support in sorting out their TV licence, Gas and Electric bills.

Chris also attended TP Designs and his confidence and self worth has grown enormously and he is now in paid work, four mornings a week. He also spends a half day doing voluntary work for "Dens", the homelessness charity. He is studying for a qualification in "Sage", which will benefit him in his work, and is currently taking driving lessons.

Case Study 5

Lucy * was referred to us by Dacorum Borough Council, due to her high rent arrears. This was not the first time she had been to our service. On her previous involvement with the service, she did not engage very well at all. The service user suffers from depression and uses alcohol and drugs on a regular basis.

It took the project worker a long time to build up a trusting relationship with the service user, who at times could be quite volatile and had a recent history of offending.

A re-possession order was served on her by the local council, for non payment of rent, and she had to attend a County Court hearing. The project worker attended this with her and gave a supporting statement to the court in respect of the work that Housing Link was doing with Lucy. Lucy had expected to lose her flat as this was not the first time she had attended for non-payment of rent. However, the court decided that as she was receiving support they would not repossess the property on this occasion. An agreement was drawn up as to how Lucy would make payments from that point forward.

To date Lucy has been keeping up with her rent payments, and engages very well with the project worker and Housing Link. She is trying to cut down on her alcohol and cannabis use, and is seeking letterbox access to her two children that got taken into care some years back.

Case Study 6

Max * came to Housing Link via the local County Council Offices. He suffers from depression and has had suicidal thoughts in the past. He had huge rent and council tax arrears, and wanted Housing Link's help to resolve this, as he thought he was entitled to rebates in respect to both of these.

Over a period of time, negotiating with the relevant departments within the Benefits Department of the local Council, Housing Link was able to get the service user a refund of over £3000.00 in housing benefit and council tax benefit.

Mark has since been keeping his front garden and general appearance of his council home much cleaner and tidier, as reported to me by his local Housing Officer. His tenancy is now secure

Case Study 7

Jane * was referred to the service via a professionals meeting that Dacorum Borough Council Housing Dept had arranged. Local services were anxious about the risks involved with this woman who has a personality disorder, severely ulcerated legs and a history of non-engagement with services. Jane has very complex needs and these were impacting on her ability to maintain her tenancy.

Housing Link agreed to try and work with Jane, but it was not expected that they would be able to engage as she has a history of being verbally aggressive to staff and services. Over a period of many months, the staff in the team built up a trusting relationship with Jane by being clear, consistent and positive in their approach with her. Jane's initial engagement with the service was initially very volatile but has now become much calmer.

She still experiences great difficulties with trusting services and staff, but over the month's staff have supported her to engage with the Urgent Care Centre to get her legs treated, the Community Mental Health Team, and Adult Care Services. These services are now all trying to work together to get her medical issues resolved and to arrange for Jane's flat to be cleared and cleaned.

Jane has now been transferred to the Support Link service as her needs are more appropriate for this service. However, without the work that Housing Link did, Jane would not have access to any of the additional support that she now has.

9. Future development

- To establish ourselves in our new premises in Watford in a shared building with Herts Mind Network. We hope that this will enable both organisations to develop some partnership working.
- To develop the Housing Link Tenancy Support Group. We will continue working with DBC Housing Dept who are attending this group on a weekly basis to provide specialist support. We are also working with Herts Mind Network. We are also making more literature available at this group as requested by service users during the policy reviews.
- To arrange some fundraising events with service users and carers so that we can fund the groups and social activities throughout the year as requested by service users through the policy reviews.
- To further develop service user involvement within the services and within our recruitment processes. This was discussed at the policy review meetings with service users.
- We now have a Service User Involvement Champion who is taking a lead on ensuring that this is developed across the services. This member of staff also links in with service user development within Turning Point as a whole.
- We plan to develop the role of volunteers within the services for all of the activities that take place at the building. This will be particularly helpful for the Tenancy Support Group.



10. Housing Link – Results from the Supporting People Questionnaire

19 people completed the service user questionnaire this year

1. Were you given information about the project before the support began? (Including Information Leaflet?)

Yes 17 No 1 Not sure 1

2. Has the service been available when you needed it?

Yes always 15 Mostly 2 Seldom Never

3. Are you made aware of the time when a project worker will next see you?

Yes always 18 Mostly 1 Seldom Never

4. Are you offered times to meet with a project worker that are convenient to you?

Yes always 19 Mostly Seldom Never

5. Does the project worker arrive at the expected time?

Yes always 19 Mostly Seldom Never

6. Overall, would you say you are satisfied with how respectful and courteous staff are in dealing with you?

Very satisfied 18 Satisfied 1 Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Don't know

7. Have there been any problems contacting the service?

Yes 1 No 18

Comments:

- Usually have to leave a message, but would expect that if they are out visiting clients. They always ring me back. Might be useful if there could be a time when phone calls are more likely to be answered directly.

8. Are you invited to plan and review the support that you receive from the service? (eg. Support plans)

Yes 19 No Not sure

Comments:

- This is done about every 3 months.

9. Did you express any need for the service to pay attention to any of the following: gender, race, culture, religion, preferred language, sexuality, disability or lifestyle

Yes 3 No 14 Not sure 2

If YES, have these needs been met by the service?

Yes 3 No Not sure

10. Do you know how to comment or complain if there is a problem to do with the support that you receive?

Yes 17 No Not sure 2

Comments:

- I would know who to contact
- Would discuss with project worker, then escalate to manager if necessary

11. How satisfied are you that you are getting the support that you need to help improve your quality of life and independence?

Very satisfied **16** Satisfied **3** Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
 Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Don't know

Comments:

- My weekly meetings are very important to me and help keep my mental health on track. I prefer them to my CMHT keyworker meetings as they are less formal

12. What do you feel has been the benefit of using the service?

Please tick all boxes that apply

Helping to prevent hospital admission **5**
 Quick response in crisis periods **8**
 Enabling earlier discharge from hospital
 Having someone to talk to **19**
 Helping to prevent re-offending (if relevant)
 Information **15**
 Helping to reduce substance misuse **5**
 Advice **16**
 Reducing isolation **15**
 Being a listening ear **18**
 Improving my Quality of Life **14**
 Help with access to other services **14**
 Providing practical help **15**
 Support with debts **15**
 Support with rent arrears **16**
 Support with budgeting **14**
 Help with benefits **19**
 Support with housing/ tenancy **19**
 Helping to prevent tenancy breakdown **11**
 Other (please specify)

Comments:

- The service has helped in more ways than one. I also feel they go out of their way to help, even at short notice.

Are you a Carer?

Yes **Please answer Q13 A and B.**

No **19** **Please go straight to Q 14**

13.

A) What has been the benefit of the service for the person you care for?

Increased confidence and motivation	Being a listening ear
Support to go out socially	Information
Support to access other services, activities	Advice
Improved mental health	Emotional support
Support around the home	Other

Comments:

B) What has been the benefit of the service for you?

Has enabled me to remain in work

Emotional support

Advice

Information

Other

Comments:

14. What do you like most about the support provided by the service?

- Project worker visits me in my home, as I wouldn't be able to go to the office
- Very supportive and nothing is too much
- Very helpful
- It is regular
- How they help with housing problems etc and the staff are always friendly.
- Getting out and having a chat with my support worker
- Regular contact with my key worker who I can talk to and have a laugh with. Regular contact with other service users. The encouragement and support I receive when needed, friendliness from all. I feel I can relax more knowing I have the support behind me.
- It's there all the time if you need it.
- Provides a regular opportunity to discuss issues on my mind and get advice and help. Takes away a lot of the worry, helping reduce stress levels and stabilise my mood. Somebody independent monitoring my wellbeing.
- Communication between myself and all the services that help me i.e. benefits etc. Also they are always there. If I need help I know what time Phil is in the office and he always returns my calls
- Regular support
- Help with my benefits and with going to other services when I am too nervous to go on my own
- Support from someone who understands my mental health issues. Support with my benefits
- Friendly service, always able to help and if they don't know the answers they will go and find out.
- I kept my flat

15. What do you like the least about the support provided by service?

- Nothing
- None
- No complaints
- None
- The service is very good and satisfying as it is

- There really isn't much I can say as I don't feel there is anything I don't like about the service
- Nothing
- Really can't fault it
- Nothing

16. If there was one thing that you could change about the support that you receive, what would it be?

- Nothing
- Nothing
- No changes
- That the office is open for drop-in more than just Tuesdays
- Sometimes it would be nice to have 1 ½ hours one to one (even though that's not possible)
- Keep the office in Hemel Hempstead
- Contact via email would be useful. Maybe a text message number as well (sorry I know that's 2!)
- Nothing, but I understand that they're moving to Watford which means I cannot get in contact locally
- More time

Clare Buckmaster
Service Manager

29/09/09