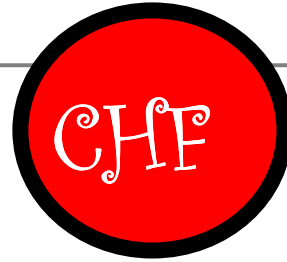

CAMDEN HOMELESSNESS FORUM



E-Bulletin February 9th 2011

Dear Camden Homelessness Forum (CHF) members, welcome to the February 2011 CHF E-Bulletin

Date for the Next Camden Homelessness Forum meeting

Tuesday **8th March** 2011 (10-12.30pm)

FREE Service User Involvement Training Sessions are here again!

In February and March 2010, Camden Homelessness Forum co-ordinated a number of training sessions for service users and for staff on Service User Involvement. The training sessions were successful and the staff training in particular was oversubscribed. Please see below (CHF News) for more information.

Camden Homelessness Forum (CHF) Funding discontinued

Just to say a thank you to those who wrote in to express their sadness and concern at the imminent closure of Camden Homelessness Forum because of the discontinuation of its funding from March 31st 2011.

I will be pulling together your responses (and those of the advisory group of Camden Homelessness Forum) into a response which will go to CHF funders and also more widely to communicate the feelings and concerns of forum members, which need to be registered. Indeed many of you are concerned about the loss of the voice of the homelessness sector at a time when numbers of homeless people are likely to increase and when the case for a Homelessness Forum or Network is even stronger than it was in the past.

We have planned one last meeting for the forum on 8th March 2011 where we hope to look at how the work of the forum can continue into the future. I hope to see you all there!

Note that all other dates set for 2011 CHF meetings (in July and November) no longer apply.

Please see below some more information that might be of interest to you, colleagues and/or your service users.

Kind Regards

Gloria Oham
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1. CHF News

FREE Service User Involvement Training Sessions for Service Users and also a session for Staff

Limited spaces so respond ASAP!

There will be another Service User Involvement training session on how service users (in the Pathway and within drugs and alcohol services) can get involved in the Commissioning process & Co-production. The training is scheduled for Friday March 4th

For more information or to sign up service users, please contact Gloria Oham on 0207 284 6577, or goham@vac.org.uk

There are only a few spaces so please do get back to me as soon as possible to secure a place!

In addition

There will also be another round of the Staff Training on Service User Involvement on March 22nd. The training will cascade the learning from the service user training sessions held 2010 and 2011.

The last staff training was well received (and also oversubscribed!) so do get in touch as soon as you can to reserve a place.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Gloria Oham on 0207 284 6577, or goham@vac.org.uk

2. Consultations, Policy, Strategy, Research and Good Practice Examples

Consultation on the new housing strategy

LB Camden would like to hear from you. Your views which will help to shape Camden's housing strategy 2011 - 2016. [Click on this link for the housing strategy consultation on the Council website](#). Please complete the short online survey by the 20th February 2011.

Camden Homelessness Forum conducting Outreach/Mapping around Training Needs and User Involvement Initiatives

Camden Homelessness Forum is continuing outreach to organisations working around homelessness, to gather information on organisational training needs and to understand the range of user involvement initiatives and good practice examples within the borough. If you would be open to having Gloria Oham, the forum worker come to your organisation to have a brief chat with you, please contact her on 0207 284 6577 or email goham@vac.org.uk

3. Meetings & Events

Camden's Housing Strategy Conference-19 March 2011

Camden is developing a new housing strategy. The conference presents an opportunity to find out more about the housing challenges facing Camden over the next five years. It's a chance for everyone to share their ideas and hear different points of view.

When: 9:30am – 2:00pm, Saturday 19 March 2011

Where: Camden Town.

Special guest speaker-Professor Anne Power, Head of Housing and Communities, London School of Economics

Speaker Councillor Julian Fulbrook, Cabinet Member for Housing, Camden Council

Workshops

There will be a choice of workshops on key housing issues.

Lunch is provided

Spaces are strictly limited due to the size of the venue, so book now!

To find out more and for information about how to book your place please or to book now: Call the housing strategy unit on 020 7974 5519
Email housing.scu@camden.gov.uk

What is CamdenShares and how can it be of benefit?

A free event on Tuesday 15th February 11am - 12.30pm will introduce people to the concept of CamdenShares and to demonstrate how collaborating and sharing resources can be of real benefit to you and your organisation.

The event will show how timebanking and CamdenShares fit into a national and local context. There will also be case studies from some of the organisations already involved. There will also be an "asset mapping" exercise, looking at some of the resource available in the borough, as well as the "ask".

Following the meeting at 12.30pm there will be some food and a chance to network. The event is taking place at [Lumen](#) on Tuesday 15th February, between 11am - 12.30pm. Please visit the [website](#), or contact Gavin Atkins; gavin.atkins@hcct.org.uk if you are interested in attending.

4. Learning & Development Opportunities

FREE Mental Health courses at VAC

All Mental Health courses at VAC are FREE from January to March 2011, except for Mental Health First Aid (£15). For more details and an application form go to www.vac.org.uk

Ignore the published price and on the application form just write 'Free' in the fee column.

What are the Future Housing Benefit Funding Arrangements for Supported & Sheltered Housing?

Support Solutions is holding a series of highly informative half-day Briefings to set out the implications for Providers of supported or sheltered housing in the light of the Department of Works and Pensions Working Party Report on Exempt Accommodation. Support Solutions are recognised national experts

on Housing Benefit for vulnerable tenants and the Providers that accommodate and support them.

The Context

Non-profit organisations that accommodate & support vulnerable tenants are assessed as "Exempt Landlords" and are thus entitled to higher levels of Housing Benefit revenue to reflect the more intensive housing and management costs incurred when providing supported and sheltered housing. The DWP has recently concluded a Working Party report which has reviewed the status of Exempt Accommodation and will report its findings in mid to late January.

Outcomes from the Briefings

The briefings aim to provide:

- Clarity as to the exact nature of any changes
- Clarity as to the financial and operational implications of any change
- Ability to identify how your organisation responds
- Awareness of the relationship of such change with the wider Government policy agenda, including but not limited to:
 - The Comprehensive Spending review
 - Wider changes to the benefits system upon which Providers and vulnerable tenants depend including the development of the Universal Credit
 - The relationship with other revenue streams such as Supporting People
 - The impact on preventative services and the Big Society
 - The relationship to the Personalisation Agenda
 - Ability to address the implications of any change in business management and business risk assessment terms

Who Should Attend?

Supported & sheltered non-profit housing Provider management and staff involved in financial, operational and service management roles: Provider agency directors and trustees; staff from Housing Benefits departments who manage Exempt Accommodation claims or who manage people who do.

London (AM & PM): 17th March

Each Briefing has a maximum of 50 places and demand is likely to be very high.

How Much?

The cost is £50 + VAT per delegate.

Refreshments will be provided.

To book please click [here](#) to download a booking form or call on 0121 707 7766/8881. Completed booking forms can be faxed to 0121 707 4449, emailed to training@supportsolutions.co.uk

5. Activities/Services for Service Users

Free Six Week Film Project for 16-25

Set the Scene 2011, is a drama and film project for 16-25 year olds with experience of homelessness or living in a hostel.

Two open day taster sessions days are to be held at the Roundhouse on Thursday February 10th, from 2-4pm and Tuesday February 15th from 12-2pm. You can sign up any young people that you know by forwarding their names to Stacey Williams at Stacey.Williams@roundhouse.org.uk

If you are interested, roundhouse could possibly arrange an in-house taster session or to come down and have an informal chat with any young persons that are interested and cannot attend a taster session. Please let Stacey know if you would like to arrange either of these. You can also reach Stacey on 020 7424 6793.

Street League Women's Academy

Starting on 14 February and welcoming applications now, the Street League Academy is an 8 week training programme run 3 times a year where 16 - 25 year olds not currently in education or employment can gain qualifications and employment support.

The academy is led by a Street League Coach and a Progressions Co-ordinator. Using football and physical activity as a common language, they move participants into education or employment by developing employability skills, gaining formal qualifications and developing valuable life skills.

[Download the factsheet \(Word format\)...](#)

[Or email Street League directly...](#)

6. Resources

Promoting Healthier Lives

A new Public Health Strategy outlines government plans to prevent many of the health and well being needs which people who are homeless experience at a higher rate than the general population. A quick digest of the main points is available for download. [Download the Word document from the Homeless](#)

[Link website...](#)

European Journal of Homelessness Volume 4

The European Journal of Homelessness, Volume 4, Homelessness, Poverty and Social Exclusion, can now be downloaded from FEANTSA's research website. [Read the Journal online...](#)

Good Practice Notes on Working with Central And Eastern European Rough Sleepers

Good Practice Notes to support local authorities and their partners to develop a strategic response and offer for Central and Eastern European rough sleepers are now available on the Homeless Link website.

[Read more on the Homeless Link website...](#)

CHF February 9th 2011