

# THE PLYMOUTH ALLIANCE



Newsletter - February 2023 edition

Welcome to the latest edition of the Plymouth Alliance Newsletter.

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# ALLIANCE HOMELESSNESS PRIORITIES 2023

## Preventing and Reducing Rough Sleeping

- Constant work to engage with people who are street homeless, get them to PCC (in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act) and support them into temporary accommodation (temp)
- Provision of night shelter, in addition to hostels and other temp (BCHA, Path & the Salvation Army providing over 300 rooms alone; more from Livewest and others)
- Severe weather provision to keep people safe when it's freezing

## Preventing and Reducing B&B Use

### Families:

- Adding to temp for families (BHCA, Path)
- Building a families team to respond to and support families (led by BCHA)
- Maximising move on options (including the 15 Homes scheme with Plymouth Community Homes)
- Commissioning Westward for temp for single parents

### Single people

- A2A: maximising and coordinating use of temp
- Support to people in temp
- Housing and advice and support, inc HISS (including hospital discharge)

## Getting and Keeping People into suitable temporary accommodation

- Getting and keeping people into suitable temporary accommodation
- Work with non-commissioned services to improve standards and keep people accommodated (inc Oasis)
- Using funds to support people struggling with debt

## Support for Prison Leavers

- PRS access work funded by Probation adds to use of above services
- New funding for TASS team to add capacity and funds from April

## Developments

- Work with developers, landlords and partners re additional accommodation

## Move on from temp and generally into tenancies

- Weekly PRS (private rented) vacancies bulletin to all staff and provision of tenancy training
- Using funds for cash deposits and rent in advance (RIA) to maximise options for people
- Work with PCC re banding for social housing
- Ten Homes scheme (with PCH)

# UPDATE FROM HARBOUR

The Department of Health and Social Care have awarded additional grants to improve substance misuse services over the next few years in line with the ambitions of the 2021 drug strategy and the recommendations from Dame Carol Black's Independent review. Whilst Harbour, Hamoaze, Livewell and Shekinah will benefit directly from this funding, we are of course part of the Plymouth Alliance, working with some of the same people, so this funding will be used to improve the whole service provided by the Plymouth Alliance.

Harbour/Hamoaze/Livewell and Shekinah are meeting monthly to determine an action plan as to how we meet Dame Carol Black's recommendations.

In line with this increased funding, Harbour have just completed our business and implementation plan for the coming 12 months and I wanted to let you know some headlines:

## Recruitment plan

More staff to be recruited in next 12 months (in line with Dame Carol Black's review) to:

- Reduce caseloads for staff as Harbour caseloads are very high and complex
- Help reduce/prevent drug related deaths
- Increase capacity to increase people accessing our services by 20%
- Increase young people's capacity by 50%

## Harbour's service delivery

What we learned during Covid was that the people who use our services do not necessarily respond well to having to attend a central building for their appointments. DNA rates improved by 67% during Covid with Harbour offering a digital and virtual offer and by meeting people outside of Hyde Park House. Our plan in the next 12 months therefore is to improve our digital offer and go back out into the community meeting people where they are, in their postcode areas either in wellbeing hubs or GP clinics. Harbour and Livewell have agreed that all new parents will be seen at home for their prescribing appointments.

- Harbour is looking at setting up more groups to support the people who use our services.
- Covid put our plans for a service user forum on hold but that will be established in the coming months.
- Our volunteer program will commence on 1 April, and volunteers will support with the service user forum.
- Harbour is setting up transitional groups for 18–25-year-olds to support them to move from young peoples to adults' services.
- We are looking at starting groups working with staff's own caseloads. For example, rather than seeing everyone individually, if there are a group of people stable on their scripts, requiring minimal support we may offer them an opportunity to be supported in a group setting, thus increasing contact time, and offering them peer support.

# UPDATE FROM HARBOUR CONTINUED...

## Harm reduction

Sean Gray, Harbour's harm reduction coordinator is writing a business plan currently around Hep C with a view to connecting with the national Hep C eradication strategy. We are looking to eradicate HEP C in Plymouth completely over the next 5 years.

Naloxone is now being offered as a nasal spray and Harbour are offering training in how to use this. Needle exchange clinics are offered with Harbour and pharmacies in Plymouth. Mobile needle exchange kits are also available out on outreach and in the hostels. Safer injecting training is available.

## Alcohol offer

Harbour has created an alcohol MDT which is working well with other partners. We are looking to recruit an alcohol specialist in the coming year to take this work forward.

## Homeless Intervention Team (HIT)

HIT is currently in its infancy and still being developed. This team is working closely with partners and is looking, in the next 12 months, to improve and develop our work in the hostels to continue supporting with substance misuse training and development opportunities, identifying risks to the projects, and looking at the unmet need of the people who access our services or helping them to if they do not already.

So, a busy year ahead for Harbour and for all Alliance services. We continue to do our best to offer a 'no wrong door approach' to the people of Plymouth and work together in a proactive and supportive way.

*Julie Howes*

Harbour Chief Executive



# PARTNERSHIPS AND PATHWAYS SESSIONS

Partnerships and Pathways sessions aim to get staff from Alliance members and subcontractors together. We want people to learn more about other services, build relationships and links and understand and improve pathways. These are a follow on from Big Buzz, being regular, facilitated and themed sessions for Alliance staff and other partners.

We will use a similar, participative format where staff members talk and work together to understand each other's services and how they do and can work together. We'll aim for people to leave more confident about other services, more able to work together and potentially with ideas to follow up.

Importantly, they will be based around themes, with people from relevant organisations talking about their services but anyone welcome. Initially the themes, one at a time, will be the core Alliance areas of:

Substance Misuse  
Homelessness  
Young People

We aim that:

- Services working in those areas should be particularly represented
- Every Alliance member should have at least one rep at each event
- Sub-contractors are asked and expected to attend
- One ALT member and one manager will facilitate each session, the ALT member and manager working in the field designated as the theme
- They will be face to face sessions, with an offer of coffee and pastries.
- Timings will alternate to maximise participation: one session at 9:30 – 11:30 and next at 1:30 – 3:30, alternating and ensuring different days for the two sessions on each theme.
- Sessions will be bimonthly, different days of the week so the sessions are flexible and accessible.

Approach

We intend for these sessions to be based around mutual respect, participation and shared learning. We ask that people listen to and value each other, using a positive and problem-solving approach.

To book a place, please talk to your manager and then email [amy.mackay2@nhs.net](mailto:amy.mackay2@nhs.net)



# DAMP IN OUR HOMES

Paul Green\* from Path recently attended a meeting with Luke Pollard MP and others in the local housing sector to discuss the problem of damp within homes and social housing. From the 3 social housing providers who attended, there were a total of 400 properties they were aware of which had a damp problem. One of the guests was Bob Horne who is a damp specialist, working for Damp Detectives - <https://www.dampdetectives.co.uk/>. Bob had a number of reasons for and solutions to damp which he has shared here:

## What is damp?

Damp is a common term used to describe damp patches, mould and condensation in the home. However they are all symptoms of moisture. Condensation is the result of an imbalance between the temperature of surfaces and the temperature at which the air can hold the moisture. It can vary anywhere between freezing and boiling.

## How is it produced in the home?

A hot radiator next to a damp wall will evaporate moisture out of the wall into the air and create condensation elsewhere. Likewise a cold water supply tank fitted above a hot water cylinder will evaporate moisture from the tank in the air. This is worse if there is no lid on the tank.

## What can be done as soon as black mould spots are seen?

Surface mould can be wiped down with a damp soapy cloth and rinsed away down the sink. The cloth stops any spores or mould debris from entering the air and there is no need to buy products that contain bleach which will vapourise in the air when you spray the surface and you will breathe in the bleach.

## What prevention techniques would you recommend?

Wiping down early any mould that appears will improve your situation although the most effective way is to find what is actually causing the problem with a survey. Every evening before you go to bed open two windows on opposite sides of the property for 1 minute before closing them again will remove a lot of damp air and reduce the risk of condensation and mould. This will have little effect on the temperature of the property. If you have central heating set it for about 14C at night and any empty rooms set the thermostat on the radiator to 1.

## With the cost of living crisis, are there any affordable solutions to people on a tight budget?

If you are using central heating have it set to start at around 3am and shut off at 7.30am. This ensures the home is warmed during the coldest parts of the day and allows you to get up to a warm property. During the daytime the property will have a tendency to warm with sunlight.

## How can you insulate a cold wall in an older property?

With much older properties there is a problem that using modern non-breathable materials creates more problems. There is a society called SPAB - The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, who can advise on the best process and right materials. Sometimes just putting a curtain in front will cut down the heat loss and cold radiation effect of the wall.

## Are you aware of any grants for landlords/home owners?

There are government grants for energy efficiency improvements and home repairs for those who are eligible. Look up [ukenergysupport.co.uk](http://ukenergysupport.co.uk)

Bob has produced 2 podcasts on damp which you can listen to here –

Part 1 - <http://clients.freshairgroup.co.uk/showjobdetails.php?passcode=dampdete328&jobid=8174>

Part 2 - <http://clients.freshairgroup.co.uk/showjobdetails.php?passcode=dampdete328&jobid=8182>

\*Paul is a Property Standards Worker, accrediting providers of temporary accommodation commissioned and non-commissioned by the Alliance, and assessing the standards of temporary accommodation.

# TRAINING COURSES

## Tenancy Training

Path are offering Tenancy Training for staff. They have in person and an online sessions available. If you would like to book on, please e-mail [David.Ringwood@pathdevon.org](mailto:David.Ringwood@pathdevon.org).

Dates:

Tuesday 14th March  
10am-1pm in person

Thursday 13th April  
10am-1pm in person

Monday 15th May  
10am-1pm - Teams

There is a limit of 12 people for in-person sessions at the Path offices in the Harwell Centre. There will be facilities for tea and coffee.

We hope this is a good way to help arm Plymouth's workforce with the knowledge needed to assist people with housing issues. These sessions will cover:

- Legal requirements of landlords
- Legal obligations of tenants
- Different types of eviction notices
- Finding and securing private rented accommodation
- Getting deposits, rent in advance and applying for benevolent funds
- Finding furnishings, white goods and other local resources.

## The Learning Exchange - Shekinah

The Learning Exchange and Training teams have lots of exciting courses happening over the next few months, please click on the following links to check out what is happening:

[Learning Exchange Prospectus Spring 2023](#)

[Learning Exchange Prospectus Spring 2023 - extra courses](#)

[Training-newsletter-Spring-23.pdf](#)

## Free Domestic Abuse Training

The National Centre for Domestic Violence has a team of dedicated specialist trainers located around the country. They provide interactive remote training and bespoke in-house training to the police and support agencies, free of charge.

## Introduction to the Alliance

The next Introduction to the Plymouth Alliance session will take place on Wednesday 19th April at 12noon at Hyde Park House. To book on please contact Ellie Jarvis at [ellie.jarvis@nhs.net](mailto:ellie.jarvis@nhs.net)

LEARNING  
NEVER  
ENDS



# GOOD NEWS

## Naloxone Kits

In the week before Xmas Harbour staff distributed over 60 Naloxone kits from their festive Naloxone sleigh (which acted as an excellent conversation starter!). Naloxone is the medication used to support someone until medical help arrives in the event of an opiate overdose. The team had the goal of preventing any avoidable or accidental deaths in Plymouth over the Xmas period and succeeded in this goal achieving a really positive end to 2022.

If you or your team are interested in learning how to administer Naloxone and save lives please contact Sean Gray, Harm Reduction Coordinator at Harbour - [seangray@nhs.net](mailto:seangray@nhs.net)



## Doggy Presents!

In December, Harbour were lucky enough to be successful in its application to distribute "doggy" presents to the furry canine friends of our service users. We were provided with warm dog coats, tasty treats and a variety of toys. As you can see from the photos the pooches were thrilled with their surprises.

For some of those that we work with their dogs (and other animal companions) can be a constant source of love and comfort. They maybe a reason for getting out of bed in the morning or leaving the house. It was therefore lovely to be able to reward them in this way



The Dogs Trust are going to use some of the photographs and a quote from our application in their future funding campaigns.





# GOOD NEWS

## Social Hub/Cafe

A shout out to George House for successfully securing funds from a BCHA community fund to open a Social Hub/Café every Monday afternoon at the hostel. The Café is open between 1pm - 3pm serving toasted sandwiches, tea and coffee to the residents, providing them with an opportunity to mix socially whilst encouraging them to sustain this themselves and, in doing so, to gain a Food & Hygiene certificate.



This has proved extremely popular with the residents with an average of 30 attending each week as well as many wishing to get involved with the running of the cafe.



## Warm Packs

Harbour worked with Transforming Plymouth Together to distribute "warm packs" to those they were working with. The packs included hot water bottles, thermal blankets, socks, hat and snood and a thermos mug. They have been much needed in the cold weather of recent weeks.

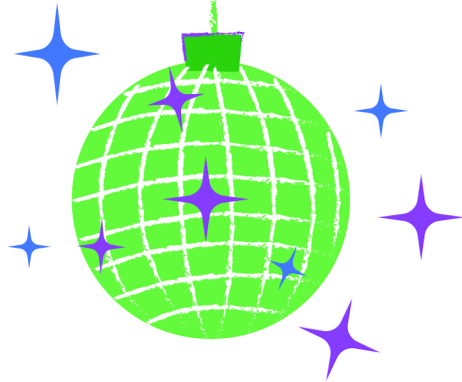


# EVERYTHING ELSE...



## Shekinah's Annual Ball

If you would like to attend the Shekinah's Annual Ball on Saturday 29th April 2023 please email [Kristy.winters@shekinah.co.uk](mailto:Kristy.winters@shekinah.co.uk), the poster at the end of the newsletter has all the details for the evening.



## The Prince's Trust

The Prince's Trust, Devon and Cornwall programme delivery schedule: Jan-March 2023 Get Started programmes If you're 16-30 and out of work, education or training, we'll give you the chance to take part in a week of activities with help from inspirational experts. Working with a range of partners you'll work towards a group challenge while developing your skills and confidence.



**TAKE PART IN OUR FREE THEATRE PROGRAMME**

**INFORMATION**  
Starts Day 16th March  
Course Dates: 16th - 20th March  
Venue: Shekinah Plymouth and St Leonards Plymouth  
Email: [trp@princes-trust.org.uk](mailto:trp@princes-trust.org.uk)

Supported by:



**GET INTO RETAIL WITH M&S**

**DATES AND LOCATIONS**  
Programme Dates: 4 weeks starting 16th March with a Taster Day in February  
Contact to find out more!

**HOW TO GET IN TOUCH**  
Programme Contact: Ashleigh Crockett  
Ashleigh.Crockett@princes-trust.org.uk  
See us at:

Supported by:



**LOOKING TO GAIN EXPERIENCE IN FILMMAKING?**

**INFORMATION**  
Taster Day: 16th February 2023  
Course Dates: 20th - 24th February 2023  
Location: Shekinah Plymouth  
Email: [mark.frost@princes-trust.org.uk](mailto:mark.frost@princes-trust.org.uk)

Supported by:

Free phone: 0800 442 882  
Mobile phone: 07784 303223  
[www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)

## Shekinah Charity Shops

Just another reminder of Shekinah's wonderful charity shops - please visit if you can! If you are thinking of donating unwanted items, please consider Shekinah as your first option.



[Please click here for the most recent Shekinah Prayer Letter](#)

# **Shekinah's Annual Charity Ball**

## **Saturday 29th April 2023**

**Music till late from Ashes to Ashes**

**Venue**

**Boringdon Park Golf Club**

**55 Plymbridge Road**

**Plympton**

**Plymouth**

**Devon**

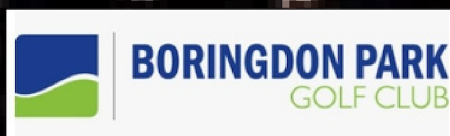
**PL7 4QG**

**£50 a ticket or £500 for a table of 10**

**6.30 pm arrival for 7.00 pm sit down**

**Please dress to impress**

**To book tickets please email  
[kristy.winters@shekinah.co.uk](mailto:kristy.winters@shekinah.co.uk)**



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