

### Welfare Benefits Service passes AQS 2 year renewal with flying colours

Organisations with the AQS are audited every two years and have to demonstrate that they are accessible, effectively managed, and employ staff with the skills and knowledge to meet clients' needs.

We were particularly pleased that the auditor reported that Mind in Croydon's WBA Service, '... exceeded the requirements of the AQSv2 to a significant extent.'

Furthermore the report stated, 'Welfare Benefit Advisers (WBA's) have been at Mind for a substantial length

of time and share a vast amount of expertise and an unswerving dedication to clients, recognising the holistic approach that is required to support their well being and mental health.'



We were also pleased to see that Mind's Welfare Benefits team 'demonstrated an excellent understanding of the issues faced by clients and the sensitivity required in sometimes extremely difficult circumstances.'

### Hoarding Project

We have just completed the pilot hoarding programme in conjunction with Croydon Council, who funded the project.

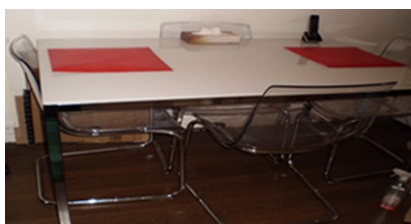
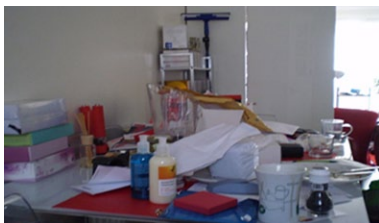
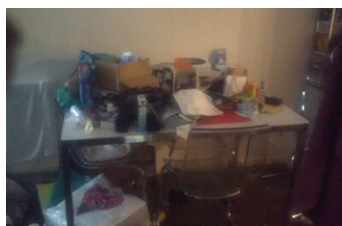
The project was acclaimed as a great success with the participants attending 100% of the time, (except for known absences).

6 fortnightly group sessions were held with weekly one to one buddy sessions at the participants' homes.

The participants communicated their satisfaction with the project, extolling the virtues of having a hoarding Buddy; with one client saying that they felt empowered for the first time by having their buddy help them.

We were extremely surprised and pleased at how well the project developed. The majority of the participants' made significant changes to their home and lifestyle as a result of having engaged in the project.

It is hoped that future funding will be forthcoming.



### The Hub is celebrated at the 2017 Mayor's Civic Awards

Mind in Croydon's project, the Hub, was shortlisted for a Mayor of Croydon Civic Award.

On the 17th of October staff and members attended the ceremony to celebrate the exceptional people who make Croydon a brilliant place for people to live, grow, work and visit. More than 200 nominations were made across ten categories and after careful consideration 25 nominees were shortlisted for the community awards. Although we were pipped at the post for the award, everyone had a brilliant time and it was a great accolade to have our work recognised in this way.

Councillor Toni Letts, Mayor of Croydon, said: "Croydon is full of unsung heroes, people who selflessly give their time and put others first to the benefit of their neighbours and the wider community. This is evidenced by the incredible number of nominations we received across the categories. I'd like to congratulate all of the finalists and thank everyone who submitted a nomination and for those who weren't shortlisted on this occasion, thank you for what you do for our town and its residents."

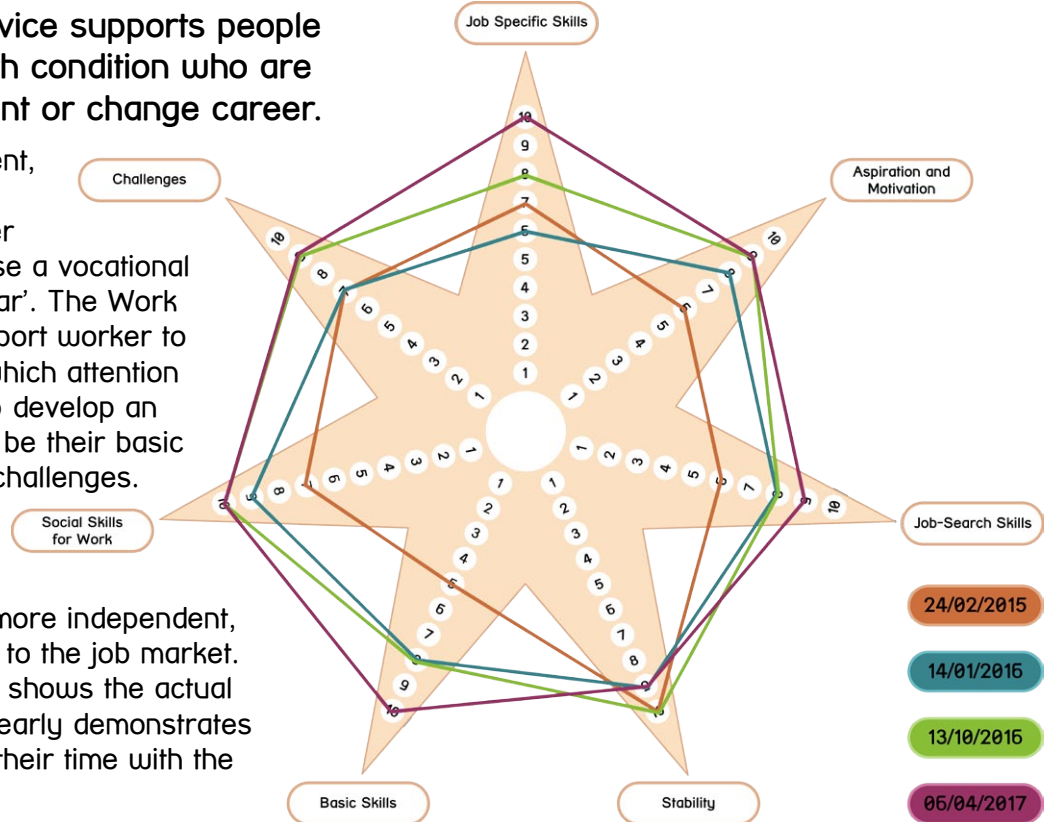


The Mayor of Croydon with some of our Hub members

# Employment Support Service Update

The Employment Support Service supports people diagnosed with a mental health condition who are looking to return to employment or change career.

From an individual's first appointment, and throughout their engagement with the service, the support worker will conduct regular reviews and use a vocational recovery tool known as a 'Work Star'. The Work Star enables the client and the support worker to quickly identify the main areas in which attention should be given and is used to help develop an action plan. For example this could be their basic skills, aspiration and motivation or challenges. There are a total of seven key areas (scales) covered in a Work Star and for each scale a score is given, the higher the score the more independent, resilient and closer the individual is to the job market. The Work Star diagram to the right shows the actual results from an active client, and clearly demonstrates the changes for each scale during their time with the service.



## Vocational Hub

The Vocational Hub started in June 2016 and is an extension of our Employment Support service that also utilises our new IT suite at Orchard House.

Service users who attend have access to a computer and can get support from a Digital Champion\* (\*Volunteer/Service User) to help achieve their objectives. These could include setting up a professional

email address, starting or updating your cv/cover letter, researching further education/volunteering or employment opportunities, completing a paper or online application form and so on.

The Vocational Hub is open to service users on alternative Mondays and Thursdays, and we will soon be incorporating the vocational workshops from the Activity to Work group on a Thursday.

For more information about Mind Employment Support Service please contact us on 020 8253 8203/4/7 or [ess@mindincroydon.org.uk](mailto:ess@mindincroydon.org.uk).

## Soul Symphony Choir

In October The Hub had the pleasure of Soul Symphony Choir visiting and giving all the members, volunteers and staff a lovely selection of songs with their beautiful voices.

Their presence and performance put a smile on everyone's faces on a Saturday afternoon.

Hub members Quetan, Daniel & Sandra felt confident to stand up and perform with Soul Symphony, while others watched on and appreciated the delightful music. The singing offered a calming balance to the usual business of the Hub.



Hub Members Daniel & Quetan



Hub Member Sandra

We are very grateful for Soul Symphony continuing to join us at The Hub and their continued support for Mind in Croydon.

So a big thank you to Soul Symphony Choir.



# Shaka and the Croydon Eagles

Shaka is another success story from the Croydon Eagles, the football team that Mind in Croydon runs in partnership with the Palace for Life Foundation.

Shukhan (Shaka) Scanlan, grew up in Norwood, and loved playing football when he was younger, with his mum taking him to Pelo FC in Dulwich. Here, he enjoyed the little tournaments and went on to play for one of their League teams. Shaka went to school in Gypsy Hill, which he really liked and then after school went to study at Bromley College. However things started to take a turn for the worse around this time and Shaka dropped out of college pretty quickly.

He began to experience "sadness and bad dreams" which has taken his focus away from his interests. Shaka began to spend more and more time at home and the bad thoughts continued to grow. His sister helped Shaka to get in touch with Mind In Croydon, whose Active Minds project supported Shaka to join the football programme that the Palace for Life Foundation supports for adults who have experienced mental health problems.

Thinking back to his first day with us just over a year ago Shaka says he "liked it straight away. I liked being active and the boys were all good to me." Now a regular member of the group, Shaka thinks the best things about coming to the program are "the matches we play in training every Wednesday, the league games we play and the camaraderie amongst the players." Shaka does see some of the other lads in Croydon outside of these sessions from time to time, but he is happiest just coming and playing rather than trying to make a new group of friends.

Shaka acknowledges that coming to our football sessions has made a positive change to his life. He now also plays for the mental health football team that has grown out of these weekly training sessions, the

Croydon Eagles. He says: "Getting active, getting out and doing things is good for the mind. It brings back good memories of when I used to play. I feel fitter and stronger and am improving again, trying to get back into playing." If he was not involved with the programme and the Croydon Eagles, Shaka states that he would "probably be at home, not doing anything" which he believes does not help him maintain good mental health.



Things are still not easy for Shaka but he knows that these sessions are helping him do things that he thought he couldn't do anymore. "I really look forward to coming every week." he says. When asked if he would recommend this to anyone else who is experiencing mental health problems Shaka suggests that anyone interested should "come along and see it for themselves."

Palace for Life Foundation Disability Manager Michael Harrington, who runs the weekly football sessions at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, offers the following insight: "Shaka was very quiet when he first came to us, and he still can be today. It was clear from day 1 that he had a great touch but his fitness levels and strength were low, leaving him struggling at times to keep up with others in the group. However attending regularly, and working hard when he is with us, has brought these levels up remarkably and he now can train and play for two hours straight through without the need for additional breaks. It is not just the football side that we aim to focus on, the social side of programs like this are equally as vital. This was highlighted to us when Shaka continued to come to recent training sessions even when he was out injured with a fractured wrist so he could see what was going on and to feel part of the group. His wrist is now healed and he is back doing what he loves the most – playing football!"

## Our CEO features in ITV News London

Our CEO, Richard Pacitti, appeared as part of an ITV News London feature on the importance of peer support for young people. The report was about two young women from Croydon who have experienced mental health problems who have set up a peer support group. You can watch the clip at: <https://youtu.be/0cUB4OFL5cE>



## Thank You to HM Land Registry

HM Land Registry raised £230 for Mind in Croydon.

To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of their Croydon Office, Land Registry decided to hold a hamper raffle to raise money for us. The draw took place on World Mental Health Day and they presented us with a cheque shortly after for the money raised.



# The Body Shop Makeover

Sometimes, out of the blue, an offer of help is received which exactly hits the mark.

For ages, we've been aware that the building where we do our counselling and advocacy was in need of a clear up. As we've started a hoarding project, it seemed only appropriate for Mind in Croydon to look at its own space, to clear it up and get rid of things that have collected over the years. In particular we had a shed bursting at the seams with old tins of paint and office furniture which was new in 1986 but now had missing legs or broken doors. It was all gathering dust amidst spider webs and old mouse droppings. We'd got to the point where we couldn't even find the brooms and salt we use to clear the driveway when there's snow.

Added to that a forest of trees and shrubs overhanging the car park, and front steps which had developed their winter coating of algae and there was lots to be done.

Then, as if by magic, the Body Shop e-mailed offering a small army of willing helpers from their Croydon office for a day's work. It was more like hard labour! On a thankfully sparkling, sunny day, they swept leaves, chopped ivy, hauled unmentionable unrecognisable things from the back of the shed into the light of day. They pressure washed the steps and disabled ramp until everything was transformed. They painted the shed an uplifting blue covering the old uninspiring brown and even re-painted the white lines in the car park. They filled two large skips



and left us cleansed, cleared, and spick and span. Thankfully they were fuelled by Keeley's home made cakes which seem to have a secret energy-giving ingredient. We are incredibly grateful to them for all their hard work, enthusiasm and goodwill. They've even said they'd be happy to come back again, the next time they want to devote a day to charity.

Thank you Body Shop for a much needed makeover.

## Christmas & New Year Opening Times

### Advocacy

Closed: Monday  
18th December  
2017

Reopens: Tuesday  
2nd January 2018

Any new referrals taken after Friday 15th December will not be allocated until Tuesday 2nd January 2018 when normal service will resume.

### Active Minds

Closed: Groups  
end Friday 22nd  
December 2017

Reopens: Monday  
8th January 2018

### Carers' Support

Closed: 25th, 26th  
December & 1st  
January

Evening groups  
will be 5.30-  
7.30pm on 28th  
Nov, 12th Dec, 9th  
Jan and 23rd Jan

### Counselling

Closed:  
Wednesday 23rd  
December

Reopens:  
Wednesday 3rd  
January

### Employment Support

Closed: Monday  
25th December  
2017

Reopens:  
Wednesday 3rd  
January 2018

### Fairfield House Friends in Need & The Hub

Closed: 25th, 26th  
December & 1st  
January

Please see the  
in-house schedule  
for detailed  
opening times.

### Shop

Closes: Saturday  
23rd December  
2017 at 3pm

Reopens: Tuesday  
2nd January 2017

### Welfare Benefits

Closed: Monday  
25th December  
2017

Reopens:  
Wednesday 3rd  
January 2018

Charity no: 1073880

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