

Maidstone Weald Mental Health Action Group (MHAG)

Meeting on 25th January, 2018 at 2pm

At Maidstone Community Support Centre, 39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, ME14 1HH

PRESENT	ORGANISATION
Ali Marsh - Chair	ThinkAction/Co-Chair Maidstone MHAG
Sue Sargeant - Minutes	West Kent Mind, MHAG co-ordinator
Phil Davis	DWP Disability Adviser
Maureen Belcher	Involve Carers
Lizzie Lowrey	Involve, Volunteering & Engagement Manager
Buba Cooper	KMPT, Maidstone CMHT Service manager
John Littlemore	Maidstone Borough Council
Amanda Sidwell	Making a Difference to Maidstone (MADM)
Rob Edwards	Making a Difference to Maidstone (MADM), Outreach Centre Manager
TM	Sanctuary Supported Living
Kathy Davis	Sanctuary Supported Living, Project worker
Margaret Bell	Samaritans (Outreach)
Shaun Neaves	Stonham part of Homegroup
Gavin Burt	Switch Café, Youth worker

APOLOGIES	ORGANISATION
Marilyn Mitchell	Involve Carers
Steve Bennett	KCC Primary Care Social Work Service
Lindsay Prestage	KCC, Libraries, Business Development Officer
Sarah Wheal	Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company (KSSCRC)
Heidi Bunting	Maidstone & Mid Kent Mind
Scott Joiner	Shaw Trust Live Well Kent, Network Development Manager
Zena Watson	West Kent CCG

1. Welcome Introductions & Apologies

The Chair welcomed the group and apologies were noted.

2. Housing Services, Maidstone Borough Council: John Littlemore

John Littlemore is the Head of Housing and Community Services. His presentation can be found here: <https://westkentmind.org.uk/mental-health-action-groups/mhag-maidstone-weald> with some additional points below:

National context:

John talked about the Government white paper in which Theresa May talked about the broken housing market.

- After 1981, local authorities were stopped from building housing themselves with affordable housing being the responsibility of Housing Associations and leading to a gap in affordable homes being built.
- There has been a gradual reduction of first time buyers at the same time as private renters have increased.
- Overall diminishing resource of social housing despite increase of affordable housing

Local picture:

- From 2009 to date, Maidstone has delivered more affordable housing than any borough in Kent.
- Social rent has dropped significantly
- The affordable rent model introduced by the Government in 2010 enabled housing associations to charge up to 80% of the social model (up from previous 30%) to invest into housing.
- Since 2010 the cap paid by the local housing allowance (LHA) has not kept up with market rent, making it difficult to assist people into affordable housing.
- Even affordable rent is becoming too expensive.
- Increase in homelessness decisions
- Increase in people losing accommodation from the private rental sector with landlords realising they can get more rent letting to local authorities to use as per night rental. Also due to
- Parental/friend's evictions are no 1 reason for homelessness, although violent relationships are also on the increase.

Allocation scheme:

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 – Homelessness. Local authorities were given more scope in the Localism Act 2011 and there are nuances particular to different authorities due to this

Maidstone's Banding Scheme:

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) is different from other local authorities in that it doesn't use bands to prioritise. It looks at how to contribute to the overall strategic plan of council which is based on the overall wellbeing of community and allocates a greater ratio of properties is to Band A – Community contribution.

The Housing team works with Jobcentre Plus with the message that taking a part time job or volunteering will increase priority. The total priority is how long someone has been on the list.

Kent Home Choices bidding scheme has an algorithm which works out how many properties go to each band. Properties are advertised, people bid and are sorted into date order. Then the list goes to the housing associations.

MBC does not operate a system of keeping back any properties for those leaving supported housing.

Question: Will a client with high vulnerability need get priority?

Response: No it is purely on date order. The previous points scheme was very confusing. We consulted with everyone ie stakeholders, people on housing list, and first come first served was the preferred route.

Question: Gavin sees parental problems first hand. Is there anything in place to open up something like Trinity Foyer?

Response: We have been debating with KCC and central government about funding for supported housing. Local authorities want to take out a 20 year mortgage to build but there is no certainty for them to do this. There is no long term idea of how to fund this. KCC is consulting about this as they want to give priority to younger people.

17 or under are assessed by social services and we will then work with them.

Homelessness Reduction Act is anticipated to go live in April 2018:

There will be a new prevention and relief duty for council's to work with people earlier to prevent need. They will have 56 days to work with someone to prevent them from losing accommodation and then 56 days to work with them on new accommodation before joining the housing allocation list. This will be better than the previous 28 days definition of being threatened with homelessness.

Personal housing plan is a contract for people to agree that they will work with the council on this.

MBC already have a Prevention team in place.

Question: How many properties will be built this year?

Response: MBC transferred housing stock in 2004. 200-250 units are being newly built, working with housing associations. MBC is now building on Brunswick St car park and another 100 new units are expected. For new builds, at least 30% has to be social housing. However, 3 or 4 years ago the government introduced rules to convert office space to residential under permitted development. No planning permission is needed for these and there is no requirement to provide affordable housing.

Question: Is there a new legislation about empty homes?

Response: Empty dwelling management orders were introduced a couple of years ago but are very impractical. The government is talking about amending this in their white paper, however, empty homes in Maidstone are below national average.

3. Minutes from the last meeting were approved with no amendments.

4. Action Points

a) From previous Maidstone Weald MHAG:

From September 2017

1. *Speak to Porchlight about LWK referral process for updating service providers.* This has also been brought up at the Interface meeting. Scott advised that "At present this is not possible to do due to the number of referrals that are being received. Providers could put a read receipt on the email referral if they wanted."
2. *Report back on the Live Well Kent Porchlight phone message.* From Scott: "As Porchlight manage the referral line, it goes into their call centre which also hosts all the other services that Porchlight offer. At present it is not possible to change the message."

From November 2017

1. *Forward Lesley Clay's contact details at Maidstone Borough Council.* Completed.
2. *Invite Housing at Maidstone Borough Council to have a dialogue about their challenges, banding classification and how we can help.* Completed – John Littlemore is giving a presentation today.
3. *Forward any electronic information to Sue for circulation to the group.* This is an ongoing reminder.
4. *Check the status of the services timetable.* Lizzie confirmed she has taken over from Juliette but hasn't been able to do anything with this yet.

b) Response to question taken to County MHAG: None taken

5. Service User & Carer Questions

From the pre-meeting:

A service user was concerned about moving on from secondary care and supported housing at the same time and not sure of the support given.

Buba confirmed that there would be a discharge plan and a GP would always refer back to secondary care if necessary. Primary Care nurses are also available if medication is needed for someone not in secondary care.

Take to County: None

6. Information Sharing

1. **County Mental Health Action Group Update:** The County MHAG minutes and local questions are all available at <https://westkentmind.org.uk/mental-health-action-groups/mhag-county>

Ali highlighted the update by Emma Hanson, KCC about the approach for the review of the grant funding for the MHAGs and service user forums, starting from 1st April 2018. The funding will transfer to Healthwatch, the consumer champion for health and social care and the funding envelope will remain the same for 1 year whilst a period of redesign takes place in 2018-19. Healthwatch have been tasked to design a structure that can engage patient voice to drive positive change and hold services accountable for the quality of care.

Healthwatch's draft proposal for consultation of the service redesign has been circulated.

2. **Commissioners Reports:** The reports have been circulated separately and are also available at <https://westkentmind.org.uk/mental-health-action-groups/mhag-maidstone-weald>

a) **West Kent CCG**

- b) **Live Well Kent – Scott Joiner** is keen to receive feedback on what people like to see on the report.

3. **Service Update/Introduction for new members**

CMHT, Buba: The Choice and Partnership Approach (CAPA) was introduced on 4th December 2017 and helps us to better understand demand and capacity with 42 assessment opportunities per week. Admin can book referrals into set sessions for assessments and give people choice of when they can attend.

We are now able to respond to referrals for people to be seen within 2 weeks and are working on the non attendances.

Someone can self refer through Single Point of Access (SPoA) but most referrals are through the GP.

More information about this approach is available here: <http://capa.co.uk/what-is-capa/>

Staffing: We are fully recruited but have some staff on maternity leave. People are now wanting to work in the team and we are getting students and qualified staff coming through. We have 2 permanent consultants instead of the previous locums. Consultants have divided up GP catchment areas so people are able to see the same consultant. We are making good progress and have been rated as a high functioning team.

Thinkaction, Ali: We have been working alongside Maidstone & MidKent Mind and less since December but have over 800 people on the waiting list which they inherited. Our main base is at the Maidstone Community Support Centre. We are expecting 10 new full time staff to join our team. We are also introducing Step 2 and 3 and CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) support groups as well as making risk calls and availability checks on the waiting list. Please continue with referrals and encourage flexibility for appointments. Telephone counselling is also an option (for mobility issues, agoraphobia etc) as well as face to face.

DWP, Phil: Claimants for ESA (Employment Support Allowance) are being invited to health and work conversations, for help filling forms in, letting people know they need to continue to send in certificates and availability of appointments. If someone has social anxiety and cannot leave the house they get a call from Pauline who will let them know that someone will call in 2 days to book appointment for 2 days time. Their fares are paid and they get the help they need. One of their claimants is now doing an Accountancy exam.

From April, the Work and Health programme run by Shaw Trust, will be mandatory for anyone who is long term unemployed (2 years or more). The programme will give help with training, managing medical conditions signposting.

Phil is attending the Mental Health conference on 25th April at Lees Cliffe Hall, Folkestone.

Sanctuary Supported Living, Kathy: We are accepting referrals for our young people's service which has 5 properties; 3 are 2 bedroomed and 2 are single occupancy.

Switch Café, Gavin: We offer various groups including anger management, crime reduction, substance misuse, gang related, healthy relationships and also one to one support. We provide a safe environment for people to share experiences and support each other and would like to hear from providers to link in with.

MADM, Robert and Amanda: Just set up the Outreach Centre underneath the Chequers Centre. There is a Prayer room and we provide clothes, household items, crockery, tents, sleeping bags etc. We have an open door policy with referrals being sent from a number of agencies, including Pheonix Supported Living, Social Services and the Council. We also have a 5 day a week foodbank operating from the Outreach Centre.

Samaritans, Margaret: We link in with Cruse to help with their waiting lists. We set up “Brew Monday” at the community hub in the Mall on 8th January and gave tea to 60 or 70 people. We have a nationally agreed signposting list for calls received but want to provide a local signposting for any visitors who turn up at the door. Kent County Council has a new directory with search criteria: <http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?adultchannel=0> Live Well Kent is also developing a new directory.

Stonham, Shaun: We have just filled a vacancy for someone as a step down from hospital

8. Task & Finish Group

- 1) Lizzie confirmed that the next date for the Maidstone Service Provider Networking meeting is Thursday 8th February, 2018, from 9am to 10am at The Involve Shop, Ground Floor, The Mall (Chequers Centre), Pads Hill Maidstone, ME15 6AT. The following one is on Tuesday 17th April, 2018.
This meeting is for any organisation who provides a service and support to people living in the Maidstone area and who would like to network with other organisations, share information and generally create more awareness about their service and how to refer.
- 2) Services timetable. Currently on hold.

9. Vacant co-chair position

Rebecca Slight, lesa is no longer able to take up the position but Lizzie Lowrey, Involve, kindly put herself forward and was voted in by the group.

9. Date of next meeting

15th March, 2018, 2pm at Maidstone Community Support Centre, 39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone ME14 1HH.

The meeting finished at 3.46pm

NO ACTION POINTS

Administration :

Phone: 01732 744950

Email: mhag@westkentmind.org.uk

Minutes posted on <https://westkentmind.org.uk/mental-health-action-groups/mhag-maidstone-weald>

