Dear member and supporter,

This edition of the SUF newsletter celebrates our project *Hidden Talents* and the conference on pages 4 and 5. This project has been so successful SUF are looking at options to continue the great work with employers, large and small, in Suffolk.

We are encouraging you to complete the online survey to have your views heard regarding the Wellbeing Service, see details below.

As always we want to hear your views about mental health services in Suffolk.

Jayne Davey, SUF Manager

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**Suffolk Wellbeing Service – mental health survey for your views**

Over the last three years the Suffolk Wellbeing Service has been offering services to people with common mild to moderate mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. The service is for people who need some support, therapy or treatment, however do not need a referral to a specialist mental health service. It is a service contracted jointly by NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Suffolk County Council.

In order to ensure that they are providing the best service, they would like to find out what has worked well and what they need to improve. They want to hear from as many people as possible between now and **30 April 2015** to help shape their future plans. They want to hear about your:

- Personal experiences of using existing mental health services for common mental health problems.
- Views about the proposed new approach.
- Ideas that will make services for common mental health problems better.

The survey is 11 questions and can be found at the website: [www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk](http://www.ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk)

then click the tab “news and events” then “features and campaigns” then “NHS Mental Health Survey”.

If you cannot access the website or would like to discuss the questions contact Carla Pinto Communications and Engagement Officer at Tel: 01284 758010 or SUF on Tel: 01473 329307

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This is your chance to have your say in future services in Suffolk
Ipswich VASP meetings 2015

The Suffolk VASP (Voluntary and Statutory Partnership) for Mental Health is a Suffolk-wide network for anyone with an interest in mental health. Locality based VASP meetings regularly take place throughout Suffolk and focus on issues of particular interest to the local area.

The Ipswich VASP meetings are held at the Suffolk Mind offices at Hintlesham, near to Ipswich, with Chair David Grimmer. Jayne Davey, SUF Manager, is Vice Chair to these meetings and minute taker.

All meetings are 10am to 12pm. Dates of future meetings:-

8th April 2015, 13th May 2015, 10th June 2015, 8th July 2015

If you would like to attend the meetings you can talk to Jayne and arrange to go together.

Previous minutes are on the VASP website with details of the other VASP locality meetings.

www.suffolkvasp.co.uk

Thank you to NSFT for donating £500 towards the admin costs of taking the minutes at the Ipswich VASP meetings.

Appointment of Alan Yates as Improvement Director

Alan Yates has been brought in as “improvement director” by regulator Monitor at the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust which is in special measures.

Alan Yates, an NHS troubleshooter, who was employed to investigate and manage the crisis at Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust, has been brought in to improve the region’s mental health service.

Mr Yates will take up the role of improvement director at the troubled trust which was judged “inadequate” by regulators earlier this month, amid concerns about staffing levels, safety of services and leadership.

Mr Yates has over 27 years NHS experience, over half of which he has spent working for mental health trusts. He will be based at the NSFT part-time and will work alongside the trust’s leadership. Alexandra Coull, deputy regional director at Monitor, said: “This extra support will help Norfolk and Suffolk make the improvements to its services that patients need.”

www.nsft.nhs.uk

Experts by Experience

The Experts by Experience Network is a new and exciting development in Adult Social Care. Bringing together the community and Suffolk County Council to ensure that services work best for those that use them. The Network gives you the opportunity to have your say in the services that you receive. See

www.scodp.org.uk

for more information

SUF welcomes this move and is pleased that Alan Yates has joined the Trust.
Open Space: a space to drop in to listen, chat and think…

- Contribute your views and ideas
- Try out new activities and provide feedback
- Get to know others
- Find out about free local events and resources

Free tea and coffee provided

Wednesdays between 1pm and 3pm
Starting March 4th

Ipswich Library in the Open Space Area on the ground floor
Drop by and see us

A joint project between Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, Suffolk Libraries and Julian Support

Happiness Workshops

Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich and Lowestoft

These free workshops are a relaxed and informal way to consider what can make us happy and what we can do to become happier!

Action for Happiness helps people take practical action to improve mental wellbeing and to create a happier and more caring society.

For further information contact
David Grimmer Mental Health and Wellbeing Information Coordinator,
on 01473 263819 or
email david.grimmer@suffolklibraries.co.uk
www.actionforhappiness.org

Feedback and SUF

Feedback is the service user Forum for the Gt Yarmouth & Waveney area. Like SUF the organisation offers support and opportunities to local people to voice their needs, views and experiences of mental health services in their area.

On Monday the 2nd March 2015 SUF attended the engagement event held at the Lowestoft Aspire Centre the home of Feedback. These events are known as ‘Shedding the Light’ and on the 2nd March comprised of presentations that charted the experience in the locality of setting up a mental health service user group from its beginning, its achievements, its current set of challenges and its expectations for the future.

Also like SUF it was reassuring for Feedback and its members to hear from their CCG its commitment that Feedback continues its role in supporting its service users in Gt Yarmouth & Waveney. Importantly too it was to thank Kevin Pull for his work as the Feedback coordinator over the past six years and to introduce Lianne Smith who is taking over from Kevin this month.

It was a delightful day with a packed audience and SUF too wishes Kevin a long and happy retirement.

Feedback, Aspire Centre, Yarmouth Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 4AH
www.feedbackaspire.co.uk
Hidden Talents – a conference for employers was held on 11th February 2015

The conference focused on mental health awareness in the workplace and was organised by Suffolk User Forum. It was well attended by a variety of local employers who shared a concern about the well-being of their staff.

This event was the culmination of 6 months activity by “Hidden Talents”, a Suffolk User Forum project funded by the national charity Time to Change.

The project has involved over 50 networking events and presentations reaching hundreds of employers and employees across Suffolk. Its message about the importance of businesses needing to support staff on a mental as well as physical health level has been universally accepted and welcomed. However many employers are either not aware of the resources available to help them achieve this or are unsure of the employment laws that relate to this area. The objective of the conference was to address these two concerns by hearing from experts who have experience in helping businesses provide an effective well-being strategy.

**Lina Hogg**, Director and Founder of PicassoHR, raised a concern shared by many employers about what they can and cannot ask at the recruitment stage but also options available to manage an employee off on long term sick leave due to mental ill health. Her presentation answered these issues and covered employment law support/advice for mental health in the workplace.

**Sadie Lofthouse**, Head of Human Resources at Adnams, gave a clear and inspirational insight into the wellbeing practices that Adnams have introduced. This well known local employer has a strong wellbeing ethos running right through the organisation. Sadie gave a candid account of what has worked and how any organisation will stand or fall by the way they motivate, nurture and engage with their employees.

“**I liked the range of speakers with effective presentations giving room for thoughts and suggestions employers can take on board to make a difference**”

“**Speakers were inspirational and provided clear and helpful information**”
Hidden Talents - conference

Neal Atwell, Leadership and Performance Coach, explained how important it is for companies to understand how employee health, well-being and engagement are essential to sustain a successful operation.

After a short networking break, Ezra Hewing of SuffolkMind presented the workplace resources that Suffolk Mind offer. Ezra trains and coaches Directors, HR Managers, CEOs and front-line staff to secure immediate improvements for employees and customers, by reducing the cost of sickness absence and increasing productivity. See page 6

Left Jayne Davey SUF Manager and Kate Kelly the Business Plumber. Thank you to Kate and the Women In Business Network for the continued support and fundraising.

Waveney MP Peter Aldous commented:
“I applaud the new initiative of the Suffolk User Forum to highlight the importance of tackling mental health issues in the workplace. With the proper support and in the right conditions, people with mental health problems perform vital roles in the workforce and it is very important to provide them with the necessary encouragement to succeed.”

Time to Change celebrate the 861 conversations about mental health in the workplace from our Hidden Talents project.

BIG thank you to volunteers Jane and Annette, pictured right with David Jay.

Ashok Bhatt, SUF member and supporter praises the SUF multi lingual banner.
Get to Know - Ezra Hewing
Workplace Wellbeing Consultant at Suffolk Mind

Ezra is a workplace wellbeing consultant and trainer for Suffolk Mind. His sought after expertise has helped Fortune 500 companies, local government and statutory agencies, public and private sector healthcare and emergency services to resolve mental ill heath in the workplace.

Tell us about your current job? What attracted you to it?
Having the opportunity to do good work can really benefit our mental health and emotional wellbeing. Being able to help shape the way employees think about the link between work and emotional health and wellbeing is of huge importance.

What are the biggest problems faced by people in your area of work?
Managers who lack the skills and therefore the confidence to support employees with their mental health and wellbeing.
Organisations whose customers and clients are stressed, most significantly a lack of clear understanding about how we can respond to the pace of change and demands of daily life.

What is most rewarding about your job; what makes it all worthwhile?
I feel privileged that working at Suffolk Mind gives me the opportunity to fulfil my passion and commitment for mental wellbeing which I hope will improve the society that we live in both now and in the future.

How do you keep a healthy work/life balance?
I love playing games and dancing with my children, going for walks in the park and having a long hot soak in the bath.

What makes you laugh?
Other than banter with my colleagues at Suffolk Mind I love Stewart Lee stand up.

www.suffolkmind.org.uk
Tel Suffolk Mind for more info call 0300 111 6000

Thank you to Green Shoots learning for donating £25 to SUF
David Jay was pleased to speak at the networking event on 5th February as part of national time to talk day. The morning attendees enjoyed the presentation and donated £25 towards the project.

www.greenshootslearning.com
**First Steps to Wellbeing**

A completely free to attend course! This is a useful foundation course which will help you to make changes to better support your emotional health and mental wellbeing.

Useful information and skills for managing personal wellbeing and better supporting others.

Get in touch for further details of this course and other services available.

Tel: 0300 111 6000

For a full list of courses and workshops run by SuffolkMind

www.suffolkmind.org.uk

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**PASTEL Cooking & Singing Clubs.**

For that feel-good feeling that lifts your mood and boosts your confidence.

Everyone welcome, even if you don’t think you can cook!

Adults with additional needs especially welcome.

Cooking Club every Tuesday, 10am to 1pm £10 per session

Singing Club every Friday 10am to 12pm £6 per session

Taster sessions are available

Should you have any queries / suggestions or news please contact

Don Tricker
Volunteer Director & Parent Carer
PASTEL Community Interest Company
The Fromus Centre
Seaman Avenue
Saxmundham
IP17 1DZ

Tel: 01728-604944

www.pastel.org.uk

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**Hadleigh Local Dementia Action Alliance (HLDAA)**

Hadleigh LDAA recognised as the first town in South Suffolk to be working towards creating a dementia friendly community.

The work was started by forming a steering group that became known as the Hadleigh Local Dementia Action Alliance (HLDAA). The group includes local business leaders, Babergh District Council, and other voluntary organisations along with people affected by dementia. The HLDA has come together to facilitate positive change in the community.

To get involved in the Hadleigh Dementia Action Alliance or to find out more you can visit the website or contact

Veronica.Waterman@alliedhealthcare.com

http://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/local_alliances/9401_hadleigh_dementia_action_alliance

Contact information

Tracey.Loynds@ssleisure.co.uk

Chair of Hadleigh Local Dementia Action Alliance
Tel: 01473 823470 or 07837220779

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**Mental Health Awareness Week May 2015**

For one week each May, we campaign around a specific theme for Mental Health Awareness Week.

This year, the week runs from 11-17 May and the theme for Mental Health Awareness Week 2015 is mindfulness.

www.mentalhealth.org.uk
SUF Trustee meetings

The board of trustees meet regularly as part of the governance of the Charity. These board meetings discuss the operational aspects and strategic direction of Suffolk User Forum.

These are open meetings and the board welcome guests. Over the past two years guests have included amongst others:- Gary Page of NSFT, Brian Parrott NSFT Governor, Ravi Seenan Equality and Engagement Manager NSFT, Robert Nesbitt NSFT Trust Secretary, Elaine Thomas of Stepping Stones and Carl a SUF supporter.

The format is friendly and fun with a lot covered in the 2 hour meeting.

Most meetings are held at the SUF office in Kesgrave and occasionally at Stowmarket. If you are interested in attending please contact Jeannie Wright Chair of Trustees Tel 01473 329307

Save the date

SUF AGM
Tuesday 20th October 2015

Do you have a story to tell or news you would like to be included in this newsletter? We welcome contributions and will try to include as much as we can.

Email: hello@suffolkuserforum.co.uk

This March join us in saying I’m Alright with Human Rights

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that every person has simply because they are human; they are not privileges to be earned or gifts that governments can give or take away at will. At a time when powerful voices want to change the rules rather than obey them, March for Human Rights is your chance to join with others and say I’m Alright with Human Rights.

www.bihr.org.uk

My Fundamental human rights … … How I can say “I am me & how I choose to express myself!”

A full list of the 12 SUF Human Rights is available on our website with the first right as follows:-

1. ‘I have the right to state my own needs and set my priorities as a person, independent of any roles that I may assume in my life.’