

SHAD Newsletter - Expanded & Better!



support & housing assistance for
people with disabilities

SUPPORT AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

VOLUNTEERS' NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first edition of the SHAD Volunteers' Newsletter. Although, by popular demand, the name 'Volunteers' Newsletter' remains unchanged the publication has been expanded to include items that will be of interest to everyone at SHAD whether they be volunteers, service users, staff or other interested readers.

The old favorites are still here; 'Important Bits', 'Hello and Goodbye', 'General Information', 'Jakki's Bit' and 'And Finally'. To these are added new topics such as 'CSCI News' and 'Volunteers Corner'. We hope you enjoy the expanded publication and find it both useful and informative.

The Editors are always looking for items to include so if you wish to supply copy for future issues please do not hesitate, get writing and pass your article to either Vitalis or Ambreen.

SHAD volunteers, we are happy to announce to you that the next SHAD Volunteers' Social evening is fast approaching. Wow!

I can't wait for it to come. It is going to be exciting. Be prepared to meet other volunteers and make friends. All who are not working on Friday 5 October 2007 are invited. The venue is 17 Hawthorn Crescent Tooting SW17 9SU. The hosts are the

volunteers living in this flat with the assistance of Bogdan Cristea. The gathering starts at 8.30pm prompt to end not later than 11.30pm to enable those who are on shift the next day get to bed to catch some sleep.

*The
Newsletter
is now
published
at the end
of every
month!*

SHAD is providing some refreshments but if you would like to bring some food from your part of the world for others to taste please do so to add colour to the event. You can also take along some CDs if you want for the music.



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Editing:

Vitalis & Ambreen
Volunteer Managers

Important bits

The Cleanest & The Untidiest Flat - is it yours?

Richard is happy to announce that 11 Chaplin House has won the coveted 'Best Flat' award. Congratulations and well done to all who live there!

SHAD encourages the 'Best Flat' award with a £5 gift voucher for each volunteer in residence.

If, on the other hand, your flat is not kept as well as it might be (and you know who you are!), perhaps it is time to reflect and see if you can win the 'Best Flat' award next time around!

*Recommend a volunteer to SHAD
and (if they obtain a placement)
win a token!
Call Vitalis or Ambreen for details*

Visitors in Volunteer Flats!

Please remember that friends and visitors are only allowed to stay occasionally for short periods of time (up to a maximum of five days) and only with the agreement of the Volunteer Managers.

If permitted we will require you to provide us with the name of your guest for security and health and safety reasons.

Remember—Please do not use radiators to dry your clothes!

CSCI News!

This is a new section of the newsletter intended to bring you up to date with what is happening with regard to the requirements of the commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).

As many of you will know, at the beginning of this year SHAD registered with CSCI which is the regulatory body responsible for domiciliary care agencies which is what SHAD is currently deemed to be.

Following registration, a number of randomly selected service users, volunteers and staff received questionnaires from CSCI as part of the lengthy and ongoing registration process. Subsequent to that stage, inspectors from CSCI then visited the SHAD office to carry out an initial inspection in order to assess how well SHAD complies with the requirements of CSCI as



defined by the Care Standards Act 2000. As expected, the inspectors have found SHAD to be a unique organisation that does not fit the standard profile of a domiciliary care agency. As a result CSCI are considering how SHAD might be expected to comply with its requirements before issuing an initial assessment report. Further news on this subject will be provided when it is available.

General Information

How do I become a volunteer?

*Call Vitalis or Ambreen on
020 8675 6095 or see our website
at:
www.shad.org.uk*

Staff Meeting

The next staff meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th October 2007.

Please note that the office will be closed between 10.30am and 12.30pm and all telephone calls will be directed to the answering service.

Cover! Cover! Cover!

SHAD is always keen to hear from volunteers who have the availability to carry out cover shifts in addition to their normal sessions.

If you are interested in additional shifts please notify either Vitalis or Ambreen.

Volunteers' Corner - *express yourself positively*

Welcome & Good Bye:

We warmly welcome Wang, Till & Matthew to SHAD. We are sure you will enjoy your time with us.

We say a fond farewell to Augustina, Imran, Kathryn, Verity, Hazel & Brenda. We really do appreciate your immense contribution to SHAD and wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

SHAD Birthdays. Hurrah!!!

Very Happy Birthday wishes to our 'September people' : Bernard, Cecilia, Tobias, Victor, & Nasilele.
Ad mutos anos!

*Enjoy & let others enjoy the flat!
only with the permission of the
Volunteer Managers are you allowed
to bring a guest into the flat!*

Next Allowance Payments!

Remember, October is a 'five week month' and the next date for payment of allowances is **Wednesday, 10 October 2007**, when volunteers will receive £120 personal allowance plus any processed transport reimbursements.

Volunteer Views

Energy Wise by John Walker

Dear fellow volunteers, staff and service users at SHAD, I would like to contribute something to the organisation by exploring ways in which we can change our use of gas, electricity petrol and other fuels. We use gas and electricity as a fuel for heating our homes, our volunteer flats and our office space. We also cook with these fuels. We use petrol for our cars and electricity for our televisions, com-

puters and mobile phones. It is possible for us to act both individually and collectively. Individually we should try to reduce the amount of fuel we are using. For example there is usually a control on the gas boiler which should be set so the boiler is only using 50 – 75% of its full capacity, or we can remember to switch off electric lights when we are not using them. It is also important not to take the attitude that our gas and electricity are free in the SHAD flats.

We can also act collectively, i.e. as an organisation. For example we should carry out a review, or audit of all the fuel we use in SHAD. We could use fuel bills to help us do this. This review will help us identify how we can take collective measures to reduce our use of fuel. For example it may be that we should install some more energy efficient cookers and fridges in some of the flats, or the organisation may be able to provide bicycles as an alternative to bus and car transport.

"Fun corner! Enjoy London"

Making the most of London.....

For a free guide to the London night scene check the following sites:

www.clubseekers.com

<http://www.viewlondon.co.uk>

There are loads of great films out, too many to mention – see Time Out for details..

The latest copy of Time Out will be in the office from this afternoon. Please feel free to come and browse. There are lots of free and cheap events going on throughout London. You can use the office photocopier to copy any information you find of interest.





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**SHAD is supported by Wandsworth
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We're on the Web!

www.shad.org.uk

**This issue is also available in other
formats for visually impaired readers.**

And Finally...

Autumn is here, and whilst to most people that means the nights are drawing in, the leaves are changing and the weather is becoming cooler, to me it means just one thing - it's time for my annual Social Services review.

I have received varying support from Social Services (SS) since I was fifteen years old, and every year, without fail, they pay a visit to review me and check that I'm still alive, still disabled and still in need.

My first SS experience was a painful five-hour ordeal with a forty-two page assessment form and a well meaning social worker called Pamela. She interrogated me with questions such as: "How many times do you go to the toilet each day?", "Do you ever feel suicidal?" and "Do you have any skeletal deformities?". I answered that last question by silently looking down at my arthritis-esque joints before looking incredulously back at her.

Since this first SS awakening, I've been around the bureaucratic block many times and have learnt how to play the game. They may not teach us these essential crip life skills at special school, the day centre

or in rehab, but after years of dealing with the Benefits Agency, Job Centre Plus, Access to Work and every conceivable branch of the NHS, I think most disabled people become street wise in the ways of handling professionals in order to get what we need.

So, armed with my twenty years experience, I prepared for my 2007 review. I had to appear as disabled as possible, so I decided to act as though I could do nothing for myself except blink, erratically. I instructed my PA to sit attentively beside me throughout the assessment and to translate each blink as though she were my voice. After this performance, I was sure that I would receive my Oscar nomination in the category of 'most convincing stereotypical cripple'.

I wanted to dress in such a way that I would impress upon the social worker that I still needed SS support. My fashion statement was a cardigan made out of knitted squares from a charity shop, the ubiquitous jogging bottoms and a pair of huge sheepskin slippers. It's a look I like to call 'cap-in-hand chic'.

I also gave my home a pre-review makeover by removing everything that

suggests I have a life beyond being a 'service user'. Gone were my travel guides, the photos of me looking happy and the handcuffs. My PA put the finishing touches in place by not hoovering, by tipping the pot-pourri out of its wicker basket and by littering the place with dirty cups, plates and take-away cartons.

I was playing a game - and it was a dangerous one. By making my home and myself a mess in order to emphasize my need for more SS support, I was running the risk of the social worker taking one look at me and then scribbling on my form, 'Client unable to cope at home - requires immediate residential care'. It was clear that I was playing 'Assessment Russian Roulette'.

I was ready for battle, but when the social worker finally arrived, she totally disarmed me. She apologised for having to do yet another review and ask the same questions as last year and the year before and the year before that, she said she would be as quick as she could because she knew I was busy, and then she complimented me on my cardigan of knitted squares ...

© Liz Carr

Jakki's Bit

Summer (such as it was!) is now over and Autumn is upon us. The days are getting shorter and very soon we will be celebrating the festivals of Halloween (Samhain) and Christmas.

Did you know, Samhain (pronounced 'sow'inn') is an important date in the Pagan calendar for it marks the Feast of the Dead. Many Pagans also celebrate it as the Celtic New Year. It is also celebrated by non-Pagans who call this festival Halloween.

Samhain has been celebrated in Britain for centuries and has its origin in Pagan Celtic traditions. It was the time of year when the veils between this world and the Otherworld were believed to be at their thinnest: when the spirits of the dead could most readily mingle with the living once again. Later, when the festival was adopted by Christians, it was celebrated as All Hallows' Eve, followed by All Saints Day, though it still retained elements of remembering and honouring the dead.

To most modern Pagans, while death is still the central theme of the festival this does not mean it is a morbid event. For Pagans, death is not a thing to be feared. Old age is valued for its wisdom and dying is accepted as a part of life as necessary and welcome as birth. While Pagans, like people of other faiths, always honour and show respect for their dead, this is particularly marked at Samhain. Loved ones who have recently died are remembered and their spirits often invited to join the living in the celebratory feast. It is also a time at which those born during the past year are formally welcomed into the community. As well as feasting, Pagans often celebrate Samhain with traditional games such as apple-dunking.

Death also symbolises endings and Samhain is therefore not only a time for reflecting on mortality, but also on the passing of relationships, jobs and other significant changes in life. A time for taking stock of the past and coming to terms with it, in order to move on and look forward to the future.

Ancient Celtic celebrations

Not only did the Celts believe the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead dissolved on this night, they thought that the presence of the spirits helped their priests to make predictions about the future.

To celebrate Samhain the Druids built huge sacred bonfires. People brought harvest food and sacrificed animals to share a communal dinner in celebration of the festival.

During the celebration the Celts wore costumes - usually animal heads and skins. They would also try and tell each other's fortunes. After the festival they re-lit the fires in their homes from the sacred bonfire to help protect them, as well as keep them warm during the winter months.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Organisation