

Social Inclusion at The Haven



**The First Year
2007-2008**

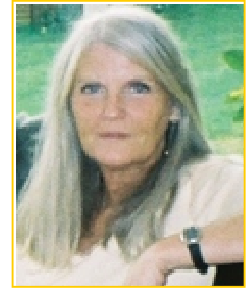
Cover photograph by Vikki

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INTRODUCTION

*Heather Castillo,
Chief Executive, May 2008*



People who have attracted a personality disorder diagnosis suffer significant social exclusion and this has a high impact on health and other public services. In a client group beset with attachment difficulties, words such as 'discharge' or 'through-put', and even 'study' and 'work', are likely to produce high anxiety and often instant relapse. Short-termism in personality disorder can result in swift loss of progress as it threatens the fragility of recovery. For many of our clients The Haven is their safe place and for some it is the home they never had as a child.

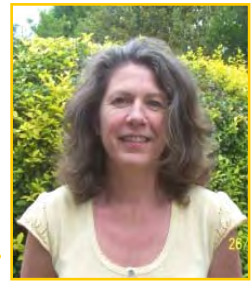
In late 2006, as a response to what we felt were the fairly unique needs of people with this diagnosis, and who often struggle with issues of trust, attachment and abandonment, we decided to create a new category at The Haven called Transitional Recovery. This concept separates recovery from cure and it may not be about getting rid of all symptoms, but about learning to understand and manage difficulties better, beginning to take control of one's life, and learning to live well. When someone graduates to the Transitional Recovery category they are likely to be engaged in study or work, or pursuing life in the community that fulfils that person's unique individual goals, however, at this stage, they are able to remain registered at The Haven as a safety net if they wish.

The concept of Transitional Recovery was discussed and explained and, once clients understood that progress did not mean they would lose their place at The Haven, an unprecedented twenty-five percent of those registered signed up to the group.

By Easter 2007, in addition to the four clients who had already begun courses, five more group members started college. By this time we had received the wonderful news that the Social Exclusion Task Force at HM Cabinet Office were willing to fund a Social Inclusion Unit at The Haven over the following two years. Our Business Plan for this venture is included as an Appendix, page 24. Our Social Inclusion Co-ordinator came to post in July 07 and we have never looked back. Currently there are fifty-six Haven clients signed up to Transitional Recovery and engaged in different aspects of social inclusion and their wonderful progress is reflected by the chart on page 5. This report largely consists of stories from our clients about their progress on the Journey of Recovery over the past year.

WELCOME TO SOCIAL INCLUSION AT THE HAVEN

*Inez Davies,
Social Inclusion Co-ordinator, May 2008*

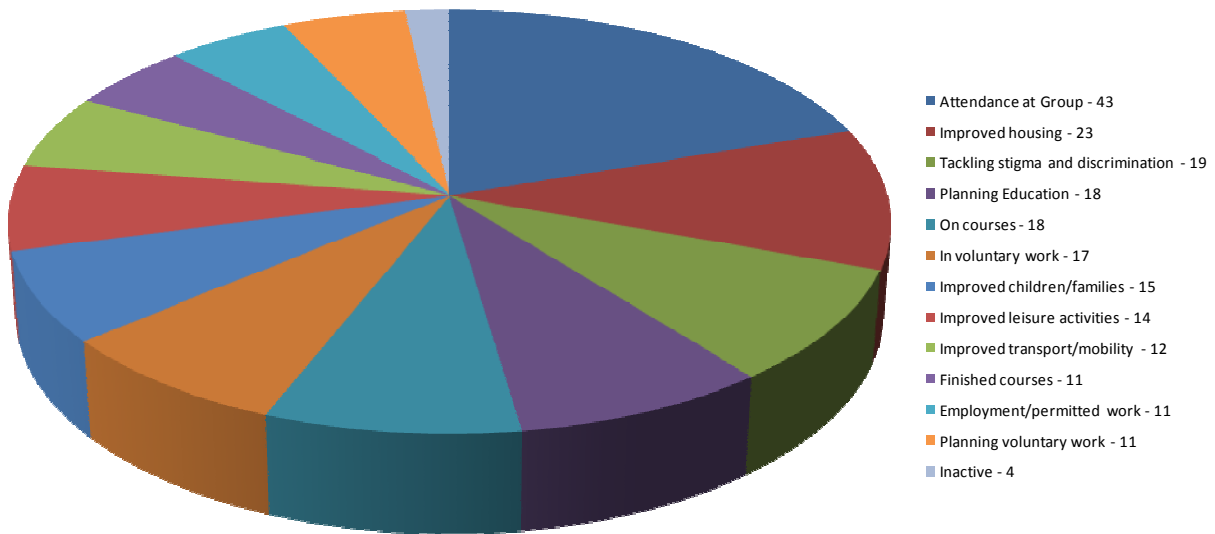


Social Inclusion means different things to many people with personality disorder. Often it is about letting go of a label, a role of being unwell and looking outwardly. More importantly it is about creating choices and living a full life. Social Inclusion supports the social model approach to personal development rather than the medical model approach; celebrating peoples' gifts rather than trying to fix a condition. Social Inclusion focuses on the individual domains that all of us appreciate and seek to involve ourselves in at given times in our journeys through life including; having a home; leisure and recreation; vocational and educational; family networks and social support. For The Haven, Social Inclusion focuses on reducing the barriers that marginalised people, with a personality disorder diagnosis, have usually faced for many years. Often clients have been victimised and stereotyped as well as frequently dealing with major rejection. This coupled not only with low self-aspirations, but equally significantly, others having low aspirations and expectations for them. Also, sadly, this at times has included professionals. What a battle to have to fight, but we face it together at our clients' pace, in a safe environment, taking it step by step to improve self confidence, self esteem and motivation. We help them raise the bar, raise their aspirations, and help them realise and maximise their potential.

The Social Inclusion Unit has become an integral part of The Haven community and has been developing fervently since July 07. The Unit works along side existing day and shift services as well as the crisis services of The Haven. It acts as an intrinsic cog to a holistic and therapeutic approach, supporting clients actively involved in transition. To say it is complementary is an understatement; staff have embraced Social Inclusion and the ethos of recovery long before the Unit was established and we have been fortunate to build on an outward facing approach by continuing to identify potential opportunities in the community to inspire the clients of The Haven. It provides an added dimension to many of The Haven's therapies, groups and counselling services. Although placed physically upstairs, the unit and the various Haven services work closely together, sharing information and collective solutions. All staff work on progress planning and long term support planning with clients but an invaluable differentiation is that the Unit doesn't usually get involved in direct clinical support. This concept enables clients to concentrate their self directed personal development and transitional growth within the social inclusion sessions.

The pie chart overleaf reflects the current achievements of The Haven Social Inclusion Unit, in numerical terms, and shows that 56 of our current 116 clients are signed up to the concept of transitional recovery and are progressing in various aspects of social inclusion.

Social Inclusion and Transitional Recovery
Fifty-six Haven Clients



The Social Inclusion Unit Team consists of a Full-time Co-ordinator, a Part-time Assistant and overall support on various aspects of social inclusion from the full Haven staff team. Clients approach social inclusion and their transition with a new mind-set when they begin their work as they have already tentatively begun exploring what the future may look like. We see clients leaving their 'sick role' downstairs whilst visiting the Social Inclusion office for a chat and find that they often present themselves in a very different way – more able and receptive to change.



Tracy

My role as Social Inclusion Assistant has involved supporting and encouraging clients, both in The Haven and on outreach visits, to move forward positively in their life, either into paid employment, voluntary work, college or social activities. Being involved in running The Transitional Recovery Group has been encouraging and it has proven to be such a useful group in which clients have the opportunity to look closely at their experience, skills and attributes, working towards creating their CV. It's not all been work and no play though as there have been some fun sessions and outings, which have provided a good social bonding opportunity and a chance to relax.

Clients are offered a menu of support, from the Social Inclusion Unit, to reflect their particular needs at a certain time in their transition. Some seek information, advice and guidance on what opportunities are available in terms of occupation of time, others wish to explore their strengths and explore potential pathways. For many it is researching and applying for voluntary work, part time work, writing CVs, completing application forms and discussing motivations. For others, it is exploring likes and dislikes together with some gentle inspiration. Both Tracy and I meet clients regularly for one to one sessions to consolidate this work and review their progress.

The Transitional Recovery Group has been meeting weekly since December 2006, enabling clients who feel ready to look at future options to explore new possibilities with the guidance of staff and some brilliant peer support. It is a group based on positive thinking, fun and team building. The group is a place to be inspired, a place to share experiences and ultimately celebrate successes. Although not all clients signed up to transitional recovery attend the group, many have attended at different times. Forty-three clients have used the group and weekly sessions have seen an average of seven clients attending each session, which has shown a real commitment to taking huge steps towards new challenges and decisions about potential opportunities. The group has travelled a fair bit of road over the last year. It mainly works on a range of practical tools and exercises to harness shared enthusiasm and build trust with each other. A series of Personal Development workshops were held from late July, covering topics in confidence and self-belief – to identify personal skills, knowledge and abilities – to raise aspirations and highlight potential areas for further development and action planning. Follow up sessions explored the development of writing a CV which we are hoping will lead on to interview skills and some role play when the group feels ready. The workshops are full of positive approaches to transition, whether clients identify a future goal in education, volunteering, recreation, or simply share their endeavours with others to inspire. The peer support is immense and many get a huge sense of achievement from attending.

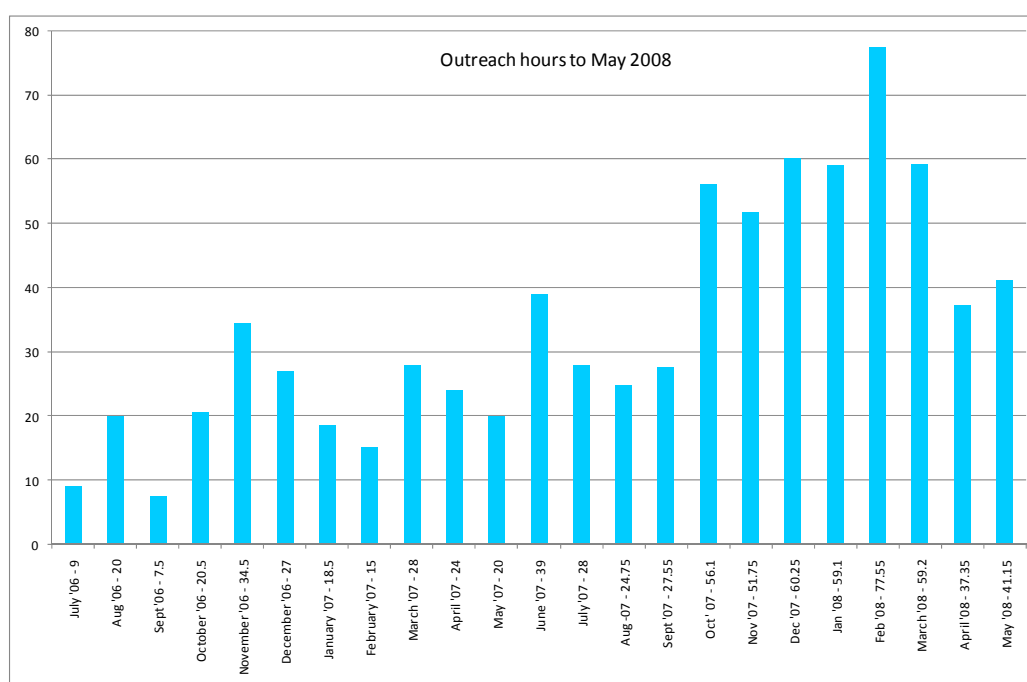


I love transitional recovery, I absolutely love it. I think it's the group I get the absolute most out of, and I know that quite a lot of people here feel the same. It's a very empowering group, it's a group that gives you a chance to move on, it helps give you the tools to move on.

Networking with agencies from the voluntary, statutory and private sectors has been paramount in relationship building and resource finding. Signposting clients to community resources is particularly relevant for personal empowerment and building confidence. A range of guest speakers have come to Transitional Recovery Group to talk about their work and the support they offer that may break down barriers to access. Several speakers have revealed real opportunities for hungry clients who were ready to try out something new. Speakers to date: Job Centre Plus (JCP), Incapacity Benefits Advisor presented information about JCP services and pathways - 'In work support' 'Return to Work Credit' 'Choices' – Support to help overcome barriers to work, 'Permitted Work' 'New Deal' 'Access to Work' other opportunities on offer. A local Welfare Benefits Advisor talked about entitlements and changes to legislation. Colchester Borough Council, representative from community development, shared information about Learning Champions and so far five clients have signed up to train as local champions to encourage others to participate in learning. Our local Volunteer Centre manager talked about volunteering opportunities and the processes of becoming a volunteer.

A representative from CSIP (Care Improvement Services Partnership) gave an extensive presentation on the benefits of having direct payments. NEST (North Essex Stronger Together), a voluntary organisation supporting people with mental health problems, sent a speaker to present information on Permitted Work and volunteering legislation. The group have already planned ahead with future guest speakers from Further and Higher Education, Adult Education, private training providers and a host of voluntary organisations. It has also travelled widely to job fayres with employment agencies and training providers, to voluntary agencies that assist long-term unemployed or vulnerable adults.

Social Inclusion work is also complemented by Social Work students who come for placement at The Haven for approx 100 days. Students have brought added enthusiasm and a fresh dynamic when working directly with clients. Some exciting work in the form of outreach has been implemented by the students over the year and a total of forty-six clients have benefited from outreach support since its inception in August 2007; meeting on average thirteen clients per month in their own homes or locations in the community (see graph below). The Haven supports many parents and has offered maximum assistance with parenting and managing mental health issues alongside personality disorder. Outreach has also taken the form of supporting clients to travel independently, manage phobias, practice role play in stressful situations and assistance with budgeting, cooking and providing moral support at appointments. Clients have gained support to improve their housing situation by accompaniment to estate agents, benefits advice and multi-agency meetings. One-off Outreach arrangements involve introducing clients to new activities e.g. accessing classes at Adult Community College, Job Centre Plus, volunteering projects, leisure pursuits, church, gym, sports clubs, further education colleges, private training providers or working on personal development and confidence building.



The future is bright and exciting in breaking down barriers of exclusion together and many successes are described in the following sections of the report; tackling Stigma and Discrimination and Community Involvement will reveal the many outward facing activities that clients and staff have presented and participated in; Income and Benefits, Housing and Leisure has interesting quantitative and qualitative data; Social Inclusion also involves various forms of informal and formal support for clients as seen in the Carers, Families and Children section of the report; and the report rounds off with a wonderful medley of Education, Voluntary Work and Employment opportunities, illustrating the incredible distance travelled by many clients. To set the scene, the story on the opposite page takes us through one client's personal journey in all the aspects of social inclusion work at The Haven. Last, but not least, the final section focuses on funding.

I joined the Haven project when it first opened nearly four years ago, at that time in my life when I was feeling very alone and on a regular basis I was self harming and putting myself in danger because life had no meaning to it for me. I struggled to see any point in life because I always believed no one was going to give me a job, because all I really was doing at that time was living in a hell of total darkness and emptiness. I had no real support from my family in fact you could say it was a bad relationship. My family had a huge impact on the state of my health and I couldn't see a way out from all the pain and sadness I felt.

By joining the Haven, I was given time and space and lots of support to help me manage my illness and with their help, I started to work really closely with staff on the issues that caused me to feel the way I do. I learnt to try and control the urge to self harm and not to put myself in places that I knew weren't going to be safe for me. I used to attend a number of groups at the Haven, the writing group where I wrote about my feelings; it was my way of telling anyone who cared enough how I was feeling, but now I use the Haven for one to ones and the only group I now attend is Transitional Recovery on a Thursday because for me, it is the only group I find helps me achieve my goals in life. I choose to do this group as it gives me the chance to fulfil my dreams and is a safe place to vent my fears for the future and there is always someone around to talk to and someone who understands my fears for the future. It's a very close group, who support one another and this is clear to see when looking at the team building work we have done. I have found myself working with people I would not normally do and people I would shy away from as I didn't or maybe don't want them to think I am thick. As a group we have had days out, all very funny but all very important when helping us to boost our confidence. From the day trip to Mersea Youth Camp where you had to work as a team to complete the course, to the day at Jimmy's Farm and the fun afternoons bowling, all very normal things you would say but not for me or other people. It was a chance to blend in, be like normal people, and not just be someone with a label some people turn their nose up at. Along with other Haven clients, I have also been involved in tackling stigma and discrimination about personality disorder and have done everything from giving talks to helping at Open Days, writing articles for the newsletter, being involved in the Personality+ Campaign and talking to the newspapers.

On a regular basis, I see Inez at her office where I am given support and advice on how to fulfil my goals; whether it be going to college and doing my Access Course or whether it be me looking for a job. At times it is hard to see the future but we are never sent away, we are always supported in whatever

dream or goal we have. Inez listens and talks through the steps in a simple and easy-way-to-understand language, which makes it all feel a little bit safer and manageable.



At the moment I am receiving support with helping to fill out job application forms and writing to a number of care homes to see if there are any jobs going or anything else I can do as I would like to have career in nursing one day. With Inez' help I now see a tutor on a Wednesday afternoon who helps me with my English as this has been a issue for me since I was little but I have never had the chance or been given the support to look at my English till now.

Whilst in group on a Thursday afternoon we work on personal development and for me this has been very beneficial as I have learnt lots about my qualities and what I have to offer if I was to gain employment. Transitional recovery has helped me look at my life and pull the positives out because my life wasn't all pain and sadness. It was full of things I did from helping people in their gardens, cooking meals, raising money for charities, nursing my sick father whilst he was dying. I feel the work on Role Preference has helped me a lot. It's about finding your true working preferences and this has helped me amazingly because I am currently looking for jobs and this helps when filling out job application forms when I am being asked about my strengths and what I can bring to any job I am looking for. The work on personal development has been good too because I have learnt my strengths and weakness and I have taken steps to improve my weakness and pulled on my strengths to make life more positive for myself. I feel Transitional Recovery Group has given me the chance to be open and honest and boost my confidence in a social setting.

I feel I have moved mountains in my own life since starting the group. Though the past has not left me and there are a number of issues I still have to address, I am starting to get the life I now want, the life I have dreamed of since I was little. I am not doing what others ask of me I am following my dreams and my dreams alone. I now attend college and am currently seeking employment. I feel that I have lots to give and would be able to manage a job as well as my illness and I will still seek the support from the Transitional Recovery Group and staff to support me if I ever have a difficult patch and need



TACKLING STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

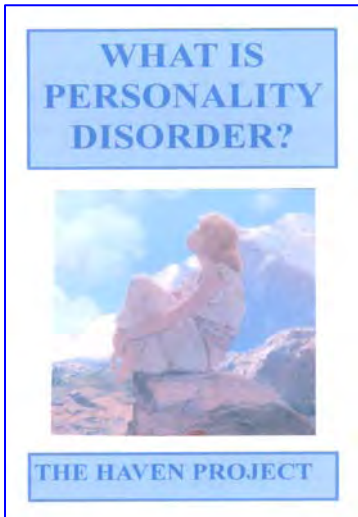


Nineteen of our Transitional Recovery clients have worked in various ways to help to tackle stigma and discrimination about personality disorder. The two pages below are aimed to give a flavour of the wide and exciting variety of events, open days, publications, and teaching they have been involved in, and the community engagement this has necessitated.



Articles in the local and national press about The Haven and about Personality Disorder.
We have had seven newspaper articles published in the past three and a half years.

Creating leaflets from the clients' perspectives explaining about self-harm and what it means to have a diagnosis of Personality disorder.



Over the past three years we have had hundreds of visitors, local and from far a field, to our Open Day afternoons each month.



Personality + aims to draw public attention to positive achievements and stories of people with the diagnosis, in particular through creative and expressive work. Clients from The Haven submitted art, photography, poetry, and writing for exhibition at the Tate Modern in October 07.



PRESENTATIONS AND TEACHING

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Mental Health Trusts | Samaritans |
| Social Services Teams | Housing Providers |
| Citizens Advice Bureau | Night Shelter |
| General Hospital and A&E | Universities |
| Commissioning Groups | User Groups & Forums |
| Carers and Families Groups | Job Centre Plus |



Personality Disorder Newsletter with a circulation of 450

At Christmas time we invite our local neighbours for mince pies and in the summer for strawberry teas. For the last two years we have taken part in Open Gardens for the Church with over 150 local visitors.



Check out The Haven website on www.thehavenproject.org.uk

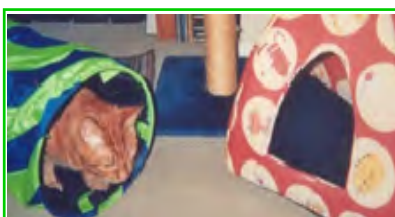
Creating a Haven Web Site with lots of information. Our site also has a film about the project which viewers can watch on their own computer.

INCOME AND BENEFITS, HOUSING AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Many of the Haven's clients have been disempowered through life experiences, society or services and staff have worked tirelessly to maximise clients' income, entitlements to benefits and improve their housing situations. Forty-nine of our current clients have received individual support in the form of information, advice and guidance in housing, welfare benefits and debt related issues, since joining the Haven. Twenty-nine clients have received practical support regarding Welfare Benefits and entitlements and have maximised their income. The support ranges from giving advice, assisting with form filling, Welfare Benefits checks and guidance in obtaining personal entitlements dependent on circumstances. The support has been variable, from a series of one to one meetings to one off form filling sessions. Clients have successfully secured a variety of benefits and entitlements – bus passes for independent travel, Housing Benefit, Family Tax Credits, Incapacity Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, Accessible Parking, Income Support, Learning Funds and Bursaries. Seventeen clients have received a range of assistance with Debt related issues. Many have received support with budgeting their weekly income and expenditure, some have been working on specific difficulties with particular debt in relation to arrears in utilities and rent or mortgage, credit cards, finance loans and housing benefit overpayment. Twenty-three clients have improved their housing situation. The support takes various forms and an array of opportunities are covered, e.g. moving to more appropriate accommodation, working with other agencies regarding anti-social neighbours, maintaining tenancy agreements, and outreach work providing practical solutions regarding personal space or household skills improvement.



This is the first time I've had a place that feels like home. It's therapeutic in itself to be at home with my cat and potter about in the garden. I've never had a garden before and you never know what is going to grow and some things surprise you when they grow. It's such an excellent de-stressor. You know Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the pyramid, I've always tried to live on the point and things have been upside-down. At last I'm getting my foundations correct. In addition to my home, a fundamental of wellness is knowing that The Haven is there to fall back on. I am now getting what it would have been nice to have when I left home at seventeen. I always knew a few things; I always knew it was trauma related; and I knew that a community driven by Experts by Experience, with a sense of family and home, together with having my own place, would do me more good than any medication or therapy.

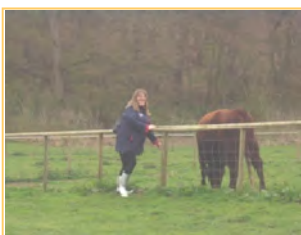


The Haven helped me to get new housing and it's very comfortable with support when I require it which is just what I needed. This has really given me stability. If I look back to how I was a year ago, and how I am now, it's so much better. I'm even considering starting voluntary work now.

I've just moved house and now I've got a garden. What I love is that, for some reason, a duck and a drake keep visiting the house. They come to the front door to be fed as they are so tame. This move has given me a new zest for life.



There have been numerous outings organised by The Haven and the Transitional Recovery Group. We believe this has helped to inspire clients to get out and about and significantly improve their leisure activities. Fourteen transitional recovery clients have improved leisure activities.



I've been on theatre trips, Kew Gardens, Zoos, Garden Centres, Wild Life Centres and other towns and cities like Norwich. It's just nice to have found friends who have the same interests. I feel more part of the outside community. I have widened my horizons and it has definitely increased my confidence and enjoyment in life. I feel I can socialise more because I have interests and hobbies. I have things to talk about other than mental health. In fact I don't talk about it anymore and I have been discharged from mental health services now .

CARERS, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

At The Haven we felt it was vitally important to include carers, families and children as part of our Social Inclusion Initiative. Work has ranged from the setting up of a Carer' and Families Support Group, to outreach work for parents and their children and, more recently, a series of Parenting Classes aimed to meet the needs of parents with a personality disorder diagnosis.



A group for Carers and Family members is held monthly at The Haven. This is a friendly and informal group and anyone who is a carer or a family member of someone at The Haven is very welcome to come along.

I have to say that I just think The Haven is just a calm, happy, caring place to be honest. I found the hospital a hustle and bustle, and just total chaos. It just did not help my son at all, and if I asked for help, I don't really think I got any help, I got nowhere, absolutely nowhere, so I have to say that The Haven is just a wonderful place, really, I really mean that.

Many of our clients are parents, some have children who are adopted or in care, others care for their children and are very good parents. Outreach statistics, shown on page 7, include a considerable number of hours devoted to the support of parents in their home. This is usually carried out by our social work students. The outreach service has been greatly appreciated by our clients and provides a unique and valuable placement for students and this has been acknowledged by the local university.



2007: I'm learning how to be a mum. Another big skill I'm learning is to try and stand on my own two feet and try and deal with stuff, instead of asking The Haven for so much support. I'm learning how to be patient, how to interact with someone who can't talk, and how to love someone who's so dependent on you, learning to love, you could say. I spent 11 years in hospital, you know, and the thought of people trying to rush me into recovery when I've had it done so many times before where people have tried to make me recover, where it hasn't been at my speed but now, since coming to The Haven, I can dream about what I'd like to happen in ten years time.

I have actually got a future to think about and it's not just a one minute thought, it actually feels like there is going to be something..... just to be happy, a future of being happy, seeing my son happy, and just watching him grow. I have never met such a wonderful bunch of people, and staff especially, and the kindness and everything that you can imagine really, that a lot of people haven't had, it's just out of this world and if it's okay I would just like to add a great big thank you, and I hope this is the way it will always stay.

2008: I now have another lovely baby boy. One of The Haven social work students comes out most weeks to give us support and comes to any meetings I have. Because of this I don't feel secluded and I can still be part of The Haven. It's really nice to have someone to talk to, even if she is a chatterbox! But that's good distraction too. This has given me real practical and emotional support and I'm very grateful.

As one of the social work students who provides outreach to families, this has given me the opportunity to work closely, and in depth, with families who have severe mental health problems. What I am doing is trying to get Haven clients, who are parents, more involved in the community and supported so they don't feel overwhelmed by their parenting role. I think it is good that they can see a different side to social work and to realise it isn't all about child protection and taking your children away. It can be a delicate balance in that I have to be mindful about the welfare of the children and the need to keep statutory services informed. I have found that working alongside clients, beyond their personality disorder label, I am viewing the problems they have as simply those that most parents encounter e.g. stress and tiredness, and a lot of what I do is normalising fears and anxieties and helping to build self-confidence. A big part of the role is also practical, like helping people to learn simple life skills like shopping and budgeting and organising their time. In my opinion, this is real social work and outreach work is a reciprocal relationship in that we students also learn a huge amount by providing it. What I have learned here will always stay with me in my future role in statutory children's social work.



This year, in an effort to directly address the needs of parents with a personality disorder diagnosis, we have worked with a parenting classes instructor to formulate classes for our clients which attempt to address some of the issues around confidence building, self-esteem and the emotional triggers inherent in parenting. At the end of this first course of lessons we will be carrying out an evaluation with a view to continuing to structure classes on an ongoing basis.

One of the traits of having personality disorder is seeing things as black or white, good or bad, so it was hard to relate to the lessons to begin with. I think we've all learned a lot of positive tips and positive practice, like not rewarding negative attention seeking. I think we are here to learn to see our children as human beings who are owed respect and, in that way, they will learn to respect us.

Communication has been the big positive thing for me and has really helped my relationship with my teenage son. It's been better than any social services parenting course and I feel hopeful for a very good future for us.

I like the way she gets everyone to join in and promotes discussion. She doesn't say this is black and this is white, she helps us to come to our own conclusions. She is very thought provoking. Using "I" language is particularly helpful. I've given up this "you" accusative stuff

I've done a social services parenting course and this is in a different league. I did a six week social services one and it was like a kindergarten one – "don't pick your children up by the ears"!! – kind of thing. The content of this course is fuller and an adult-based one. It's targeted at adults and it's looking at things from both sides to bring adult and child together. It has also confirmed some of the good things we are doing. After you've been poked and prodded by social services this course validates and gives confidence in what you are doing that is right

The parenting classes have given me better understanding of relationships. I think I now phrase things differently and find things I say are more likely to be taken on board.

It's been hard concentrating each week for two hours. It's been a very long time since I've done anything like this and I'm learning and gleaning bits from it that I can take back into my life and my family.

I have a diagnosis of PD. I think I've been a good Mum. As far as I've been able to, I've kept the worst of my difficulties away from the children. I used to self-harm but never when my children were around. There have been times in the past when I've been hospitalized and they have known about that, but never the details. My husband and family have rallied round at these times. All the children have known is that Mum suffers from depression. But it wasn't until I came to The Haven that anyone ever sat with the children and told them what depression is. One of the staff at The Haven did that and it helped to explain to them that sometimes I might get grumpy or tearful and it wasn't their fault. There is a couple of times that social services have been involved with my family. This was instigated by my CPN because of hospital admissions and stays at The Haven. I hated their involvement because they were coming into my family and potentially judging anything they found to be non-optimum as related to my mental health problems. But we had to allow them in to prove them wrong. I was lucky that one of the staff at The Haven is a qualified social worker and that, with her help, I was able to talk at meetings in their terms. In his first year at secondary school my son has won two prizes for being smartly and correctly dressed and he's just won another award for his good manners and hard work at school and for consistently completing his homework. My daughter gets awards all the time for being helpful. Her teacher has just said what a lovely, polite little girl she is, and who is a pleasure to teach. Some children have parents with mental health problems but it doesn't mean they can't thrive and I'm so proud of mine.



EDUCATION, VOLUNTARY WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

Eighteen of our clients are in education. The introduction of an in-house tutor, who provides three hours rolling support for Maths and English each week, has provided just the kind of missing step that some of our clients needed. Three clients who have left us over the past year have completed a Degree Course, Animal Care training, and one has been awarded Learner of the Year. Others are engaged in courses from Post Graduate and Graduate Degrees to Nail and Pedicure Courses, and from Access Courses to Catering Training. Seventeen are involved in voluntary work ranging from conservation work, charity shops, Bikes for Africa, animal rescue centres and care work. Eleven are employed, full-time, part-time or are engaged in permitted work. The ten clients in the following pages share some of their wonderful achievements.



2007: I started Access Planning Period on 17th April. At first it was quite nerve wracking – sweaty palms – I could hardly hold a pen for the first two weeks. During the first week, after the first two sessions, when I got home I had a panic attack. It's improved now and I'm starting to relax more easily. The academic side is fine. I'm not struggling too badly and came second in the class for English test – not too bad. That was A to C standard GCSE – the best you can get, and I got that for English and Maths. I didn't do too badly at school, so for me it's not so much course content, it's more about confidence and managing anxieties. I feel good about it. I kind of feel proud I suppose, that I've managed to get this far.

2008: I am now on the Access Course and I've got an exam next week which means I'll be finished the first year. I've decided I want to go into Occupational Therapy and I'll be applying for the degree course in October. I've come so far but it just feels right. At first it was as if I was on alien territory but now I feel part of the group, part of college, and I do feel more part of life. It's not that I'm not still struggling with some aspects of my life, but I'm determined to get there.

Up until recently I was admitted to psychiatric hospital at least once every month for a year. As a child everything was “our little secret”. In secondary school I was told I had no hope in life and I believed that, but now I am accepted for who I am, and not what I was, which is unbelievably heart-wrenching. I have started college and I’m looking at voluntary work. I felt like the ugly duckling but am transforming into a swan and even startling myself. All I have ever wanted is to be shown love and be accepted.



I’ve been on a hairdressing course for the last few months. To start with it was really difficult and this was the fourth or fifth time I’ve tried and never got past the second session (second minute!). I’d just go in there and say “ah, I need the loo” and I was gone. This time I went with the pain and the panic in a way. It’s like a drama in your head, a self-whipped-up drama. I toughed it out this time. It’s different when you’re not influenced by any intoxicants in your system. There was the beginning, the middle and the end. The beginning was very intense. The end is just as intense because it’s closure, and the huge bit in the middle passed so quickly I can’t even remember it. I can only gauge I was there for a long time because of all I learned. I even cut the teacher’s hair this month – she asked me to do it. I’m now looking to do my next course and I’m just as scared. It’s the responsibility and commitment, but I’m going to do it anyway. I feel confident now. I just cut four people’s hair this morning. It’s not really confidence, it’s being absorbed with the skill you’ve learned, but it comes across as confidence. I used to be like an oak tree with twisted roots. Now I’m a sapling beside the old oak tree and sometimes I still live in the shadow of it. But the sapling is growing. I’ve even planted an oak tree in my garden to symbolize it.



One of the problems I have faced, as a person with personality disorder, is a frequent crisis of confidence that can, in a rational head, be quite ridiculous. Since the Social Inclusion department has opened at The Haven it has encouraged me to find the person I was before I became ill. I have been in college for almost a year and I have had considerable help from the Transitional Recovery tutor with my numeracy and I have passed my level 2 in this subject. Transitional Recovery has aided in re-affirming my strengths and weaknesses in all areas of life, sometimes it's been hard work I have never found self-reflection easy. However, despite frequent breaks, and the worry that I'm "bigging" myself up, it has been a very useful exercise. I believe that one of my biggest crises regarding the work in CVs was the reminiscing over past achievements.



I recently went to 10 Pin Bowling and made my own way there. This was my first time ever at 10 Pin Bowling and I was a bit concerned about making a fool of myself. I needn't have bothered too much, it was all fine. I met the transitional recovery group inside, at the bar after having a drink... alcohol free of course!! After my 1st bowl, I got one skittle but as time went on I felt

more confident and at one point I managed to knock 8 down, but I didn't get a strike. I enjoyed myself and it was good to be with other people. I would like to play again. I have been attending the group for about 4 weeks now, it is still early days and I'm getting to know people slowly but surely. I already volunteer at a local charity shop three and a half days a week and I often share my volunteering experiences with clients at The Haven at the group. It gives me some experience of work as this is my first time working and I can write these experiences on my CV to prove that I have skills. I don't want to volunteer for the rest of my life. I just want to find a paid job. I am hoping to look at some training in Customer Care that I can do while volunteering. I think it is through Train to Gain but I will get some help from Inez and Tracey finding out more about it. I am living in shared accommodation at the moment and I would like to eventually live independently in a one bedroom flat and have a place for my friends to come and visit.



I am a Mother of 2 grown up children and have 3 grandchildren. I have been in and out of hospital probably about 30 times over many years being treated by mental health services for borderline personality disorder, anxiety, panic attacks and depression and also severe agoraphobia. I came to the Haven about 2 years ago for support; I have been having regular stays booked every 3 months for 2 weeks at a time. I enjoy coming to friendship groups and I can honestly say that without the help of the Haven, I would have been overdosing and harming myself more. During my stay, staff have helped me go shopping, which I couldn't do before. Social Inclusion has given me a new lease of life – I use it for different things, different needs, I have had one to one meetings, a lot of support, finding out about new places to volunteer or visits to college and now I am feeling confident enough to try new social things – I recently went speed dating, a makeover in London and using the train!!. I have been able to travel on buses and trains, something I was frightened to do. I got outreach work for financial help and was supported through the Haven on visits to Citizens Advice Bureau. Initially I wanted to learn more about computers at my local Adult Education College, but this was put on hold and we talked about the idea of volunteering. A visit was arranged to a local Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre. I successfully secured a place for 2 days a week which I thoroughly enjoy. It has given me a routine, some structure to my week and most of all increased my confidence. When I work with animals, I feel different, I know that I will not get any hassle, any abuse, I get unconditional affection and love which I sometimes do not get from my family. I had no purpose in life but over the 2 years of being here at The Haven and getting support and working with animals. It has helped me to overcome my agoraphobia, my panic attacks. The Centre recently gave me some feedback which makes me feel good and realise that I am not useless as I believed I was....



"...To say she has become a most valued member of our team would be an understatement, we feel she is a positive asset to our Centre. She is extremely hard working, quick and thorough in whatever job she does for us. On numerous occasions she has taken charge of new volunteers and work experience students of all abilities including mental impairment and taught them how to do the job. She is always cheerful, reliable and prepared to work extremely hard in all weathers, keen to learn and apply what she has been taught. The rest of the volunteers get on well with her, she is popular with all of them without exception. Her passion and commitment to the Centre has meant that at times we do not know how we would have managed without her. She has been our rock in times of need, all in all she is a positive gem and we give thanks for the day she joined us." (Owner/Manager of Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre)



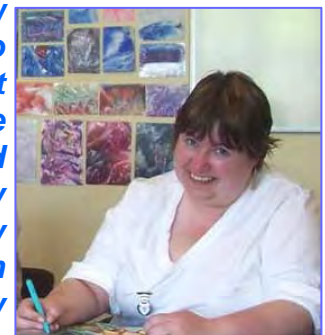
2007: I work two days a week at the Conservation Centre. We work with foxes, sheep, turkeys and chickens, pigs, hedgehogs and rabbits. I also have a pet rabbit called Arthur who I think may have personality disorder as well! I used to be so depressed. I used to feel a physical pain or ache in my chest that was there constantly and I got no relief from it. It was like a hurt, as if

something was missing, but I didn't know what it was. My passion and love for the animals, and the love you get in return, has made the pain go away. I feel like I'm needed now. I feel as if I'm transforming. I'm so much more confident and assertive. I feel like people outside treat me differently. I use buses now – I have to, to get to work. I've been popping into town on my own and enjoying it. I've got lots of goals to work towards and I'm just looking forward to the future now.

2008: I am no longer under mental health services. I'm also hoping to take my driving test this year. My social life has picked up i.e. I've got one now! I've got another rabbit, as well as Arthur, she's called Belle. But best of all is that I'm going to college in September to do a course in Animal Care. I have found my passion in life and I hope to get a placement with the RSPCA.



Through talking to staff I found my natural skills base was in teaching and public speaking and I wanted to do whatever I could to fight the stigma and discrimination experienced by people with a personality disorder diagnosis. Through my involvement in Experts by Experience Groups I have been working with Runwell Hospital to deliver Personality Disorder Awareness Training throughout Eastern Region. We have spoken to Youth Services, Secure Mental Health Units, Learning Disability Teams and I've also presented to psychologists, psychiatrists, the police services and many multi-disciplinary teams. I have received therapeutic earnings (permitted work earnings) for my time and have considered myself to be in employment. My work gave me an interest in extending my education and, through the Social Inclusion Unit at The Haven, I have begun a post-graduate course in Disability Equality Practice which I hope will allow me to help even more people. I always wanted to go to university but never thought I could do it because I thought I was deficient in English. However, due to badgering by the Transitional Recovery Group, I took an English test and surprised everyone by getting 100%, especially myself. My confidence has grown and grown and I feel I am fulfilling my long-term goals and doing exactly what I want to do. I am in control of my personality disorder rather than my personality disorder controlling me.





I used to overdose on a reasonably regular basis, I used to cut myself when ever anything went wrong, and I used to stop eating when anything went wrong. It was a whole host of maladaptive coping mechanisms, and, since coming to The Haven, I have sort of redressed these. I think the biggest part of recovery certainly is actually learning to adapt to how the situation is in the real world, and how to be able to stop and question the reality of the situation and the most logical conclusions, and the most logical assumptions, and to think the whole situation through, rather than jump into the first panic stricken thought that comes into my head and act on it. It's the actual stopping and analyzing the situation for what it really is, not what emotionally it's built itself up to be, that's the best skill I've learnt. I actually can stop and talk myself out of it, or find something to do, or actually find my own solutions and I got to the point where I didn't have to fall back on The Haven all the time. I'm actually working now and earning a reasonable amount of money, but there is a massive stigma around this diagnosis and I wouldn't disclose to any of my colleagues that I had personality disorder. I have been working in the education sector for over a year now. The Haven was instrumental in helping me to make a breakthrough in my life and learn to stand on my own two feet and support myself financially. Working gives me a sense of purpose. It's very easy to slide into the diagnosis and not try to do anything. Although it has been difficult, so difficult, my self-esteem and confidence have risen massively. Also my self discipline, because when you have a job you have to keep going. You don't just lose a day, you lose your self-respect, the respect of others, and potentially your source of income. There's a lot of incentive to keep going. Under the current benefits system you are either at work or on benefits, there doesn't seem to be anything in between. There have been some welfare rights concessions, but this needs to go much further. I could not have gone part-time and back to work gradually. I live on my own and organising partial benefits isn't an option, yet a staged introduction to work would encourage many more to try it. Instead it's a complete paradigm shift. Where's the middle step?



I had to fight within an NHS Trust to be treated fairly as a Mental Health Service User and gain successful redeployment of my choice within that Trust, conducive to my well-being. I won my case under the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) in December 2005 and was redeployed April 2006. My new position has changed my life from a mental health point of view. I think employers should be more accepting and aware of mental health issues. I don't want to be ashamed of my diagnosis. I want to be honest about how I am feeling. I don't want to be treated differently – just fairly. I want employers to recognise, that given a supportive working environment, mental health service users are employable, reliable and responsible people. I feel very strongly about the lack of involvement and choice I had when my mental health issues first became known to my employers. There was a lot of stigma around mental health at that time. I feel it is now up to mental health Service Users to be more open and honest about their diagnosis and have a say. It is up to us who we tell and what we say but by being open and honest I feel I have started my journey of recovery. My sick leave through mental health has been 2 working days in 2 years. I was honest when I phoned in sick and had the opportunity to talk through any issues with my line manager when I returned to work. I am still on my recovery journey and have outside support for my diagnosis from The Haven, which is helping me to stay well. The ongoing support is imperative from people who understand the diagnosis and know how to treat everyone as an individual and encourage their own personal growth at a pace that is right for them and does not exert pressure or make one feel a failure if there are setbacks. I am learning new skills and coping strategies which hopefully will enrich my life.

BUDGET AND FUNDING

Our funding for the Social Inclusion Unit at The Haven is £120,000 over two years. The Capital Expenditure and Profit and Loss Report for 2007/08 is displayed on the page opposite. Because social inclusion staff did not begin to come on post until July 2007, this does not reflect a full year's expenditure. To the right is displayed the projected budget for 2008/09 which has been calculated on a very realistic basis, after nine months of operation of the unit and a build up of activities.

Although this report is a celebration of achievements by our clients, its purpose is also to look at continuation funding for the Social Inclusion Unit, from 2009/10 onwards.

As a service The Haven began to prove its effectiveness in the support and treatment of people with a personality disorder diagnosis from the outset. In 2006 it was highlighted in CSIP's guide to the 10 High Impact Changes for mental health services as a personality disorder service demonstrating the impact of good practice that puts service users at the centre of decision-making. It fulfilled its original promise, as a Department of Health National Pilot, by engaging the client group and proving cost savings in the wider service area, not least by effecting an 85% drop in hospital admissions for its clients. However, in addition to crisis services, therapy and day services, it has been the concept of transitional recovery and the Social Inclusion Unit, as the third part of our service, that has completed the support we believe is needed to achieve true recovery and citizenship for people with a personality disorder diagnosis.

We believe it is vital that the Social Inclusion Unit at The Haven continues after its first two years, and that there are lessons to be gleaned, nationally, from what is being achieved.

Social Inclusion Budget 2008/09

Capital Expenditure	Budget
Refurbishment	
Fixture & Fittings	1750.00
Furnishings	250.00
White Goods	
Professional Fees	
Total	2000.00
Profit Loss Expend	Budget
Activities	1000.00
Sessional Work	7500.00
Permitted Earnings	500.00
Audit	250.00
Communications	3000.00
Subscriptions	200.00
IT	500.00
Insurance	700.00
General Office	3000.00
Salary	40000.00
Property	650.00
Recruitment	750.00
Research	
Training/Supervision	1500.00
Staff/Client Travel	3000.00
Bank Charges	50.00
Volunteer Expense	400.00
Total	63000.00
Bank Interest	
Donation	
Total	0.00
Profit Loss Total	63000.00
Total Expenditure	65000.00