



## **SOVA / ESSEX DRUG & ALCOHOL ACTION TEAM PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

### **END OF YEAR REPORT 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010**

## **drug interventions programme **essex****

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## ***Introduction***

This Annual Report covers the Essex Drug & Alcohol Action Team/Drug Intervention Programme Mentoring Project for the period 01/04/09 – 31/03/10.

# drug interventions programme **essex**

## ***What is the Drug Interventions Programme?***

The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) was introduced by the Home Office and its partners in 2003, with new elements phased in each year since. Most interventions operate right across England and Wales, while additional 'intensive' elements operate in those areas with the highest acquisitive crime.

Over £900 million has been invested in DIP since 2003 and there is continued central funding to ensure that DIP's processes become the established way of working with drug-misusing offenders.

DIP is a key part of the government's strategy for tackling drugs and reducing crime. And it's working: acquisitive crime - to which drug-related crime makes a substantial contribution - has fallen by almost a third since the programme started and record numbers of people are being helped with their drug misuse.

The programme involves identifying Class A drug misusing offenders as they go through the criminal justice system and putting into action a range of interventions to deal with their behaviour, getting them out of crime and into treatment and other support. This begins at an offenders first point of contact with the criminal justice system and continues through the journey that can include custody, court, sentence, treatment and beyond into resettlement.

The programme is successful in helping reduce drug-related crime in England and Wales (since it began, acquisitive crime - to which drug-related crime makes a substantial contribution - has fallen by 32 per cent)

It is a key component for delivering against a range of cross-government targets and indicators concerned with reducing offending and drug misuse, improving health and fighting social exclusion (it also sits at the heart of the national drug strategy)

DIP offers a win-win solution: drug-misusing offenders get help through treatment and support; communities suffer less crime and criminal justice costs are reduced

More than 4,500 habitual drug misusers are entering treatment and rehabilitation programmes through DIP every month and many are now back in the mainstream of society. Many DIP clients are among the hardest-to-reach and most problematic drug misusers and have not previously engaged with treatment in any meaningful way.

DIP incorporates partnership working across the criminal justice system, healthcare and drug treatment services and a range of other supporting and rehabilitative services. As the benefits are realised in evidenced crime reduction, some areas are now showing interest in investing local funding to operate the 'intensive' elements of DIP that cannot be centrally funded

Key partners to the Home Office are the police, prison, probation services and courts, along with the Department of Health, the National Treatment Agency and treatment providers, as well as those who offer rehabilitative support such as with housing, training and family issues.

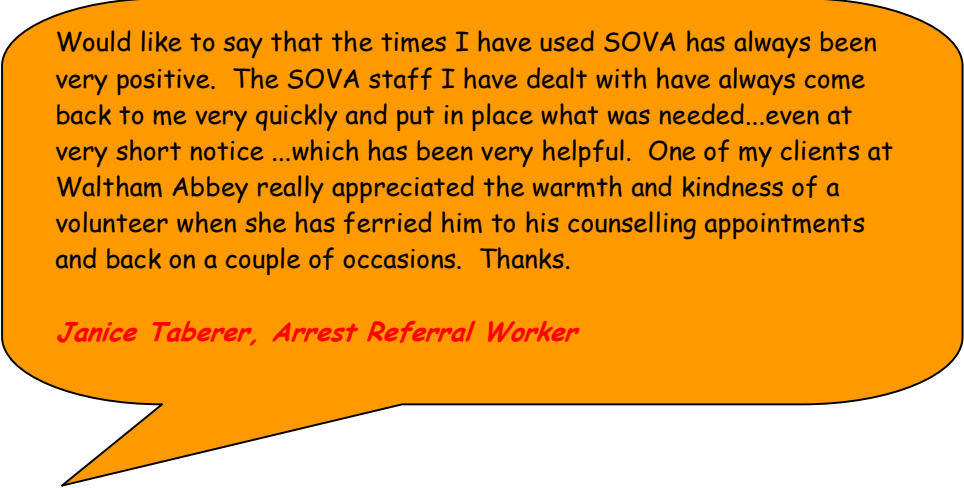
Delivery of the service is at a local level, through Drug Action Teams (DATs), using integrated teams (known as Criminal Justice Integrated Teams, or CJITs) with a case management approach to offer access to treatment and support.

### **Throughcare & Aftercare**

DIP works with offenders to help them resettle into society. This is a process known as "Through care" and "Aftercare". Case practitioners working for Westminster Drug Project provide access to services that will provide offenders with the means to make a positive difference to their drug use offending behaviour – The DIP is a crime reduction initiative primarily but also aims to reduce problematic drug use, re-offending, drug related death and the other problems that Class A drug use can cause in communities.

Drug misusers are often vulnerable people with complex needs. A range of additional flexible support is needed to help rehabilitate and re-integrate former drug-misusing offenders, such as access to and help with housing provision, skills development and access to employment, help with mental health issues, family issues, managing finances and debt and building social and peer networks. Re-establishing stable lives, and reducing re-offending which often arises from successfully completing treatment in community and prison might be lost if ongoing support is not provided.

Throughcare is the term used to describe arrangements for managing the continuity of care provided to a drug misuser from the point of arrest through to sentence and beyond. Aftercare is the term for what happens after offenders are released from custodial sentences, complete community sentences and/or leave treatment.



Would like to say that the times I have used SOVA has always been very positive. The SOVA staff I have dealt with have always come back to me very quickly and put in place what was needed...even at very short notice ...which has been very helpful. One of my clients at Waltham Abbey really appreciated the warmth and kindness of a volunteer when she has ferried him to his counselling appointments and back on a couple of occasions. Thanks.

*Janice Taberer, Arrest Referral Worker*



## ***The Westminster Drugs Project***

Westminster Drug Project (WDP) is a leading substance misuse treatment provider, across London and the South East of England.

WDP aims to reduce the social exclusion of drug users and minimise the harm that they may cause to themselves and the wider community. They work towards achieving a society which is well informed about drug issues and where individuals with drug related problems receive the care and support they need without fear of discrimination or stigmatisation.

### ***SOVA and Essex DIP***

This project is based with WDP at New Street, Chelmsford, which is central to the county of Essex. SOVA provides a countywide\* volunteer mentoring service for DIP clients and in some instances their families. While the volunteers may not be experts in any particular field, they can give individual support, encouragement and motivation to the clients trying to re-establish themselves or those with any personal difficulties. They can assist with transport problems, housing issues, form filling, or simply being someone to talk to and who offers a good supporting role model.

It is stressed to all the DIP practitioners that volunteers are not expected to undertake or replace the work of the DIP staff. Equally they are not expected to perform tasks for which professional training is required, e.g. counselling, however they can take part in a wide range of tasks which compliment and enhance the work of the DIP staff.

I have always been very pleased with the service offered by SOVA when you remember that they are volunteers they often show a great deal more professionalism than some of the other 'professional' agencies that we have to work with.

*Tony Pearson, Arrest Referral Practitioner*

*Southend and Thurrock area's are unitary areas of Essex and have decided not to use SOVA volunteers within their DIP.*

## ***Achievements***

### ***Volunteers***

**Referrals for the year have decreased very slightly from last financial year to 217 – a decrease of 11 %.** Although there is a very slight decrease on referrals this year, the referrals still stand at a very respectable amount for the project and if referrals had kept increasing at the rate they did last financial year, the project may have become a victim of its own success. The referrals this year do not take into account the clients that were worked alongside at the Fast Track Prescribing clinic, by way of a drop-in service.

**SOVA volunteers have contributed 2478 hours, working with clients on this project which equates to almost 354 working days.** Again this is a drop on last year's hours, but this is reflected in the slight drop in referrals.

Four volunteer training courses were held during the year - covering Core Skills for volunteers and Substance Misuse. The courses were undertaken in the evening, as most volunteers find it easier to be available then.

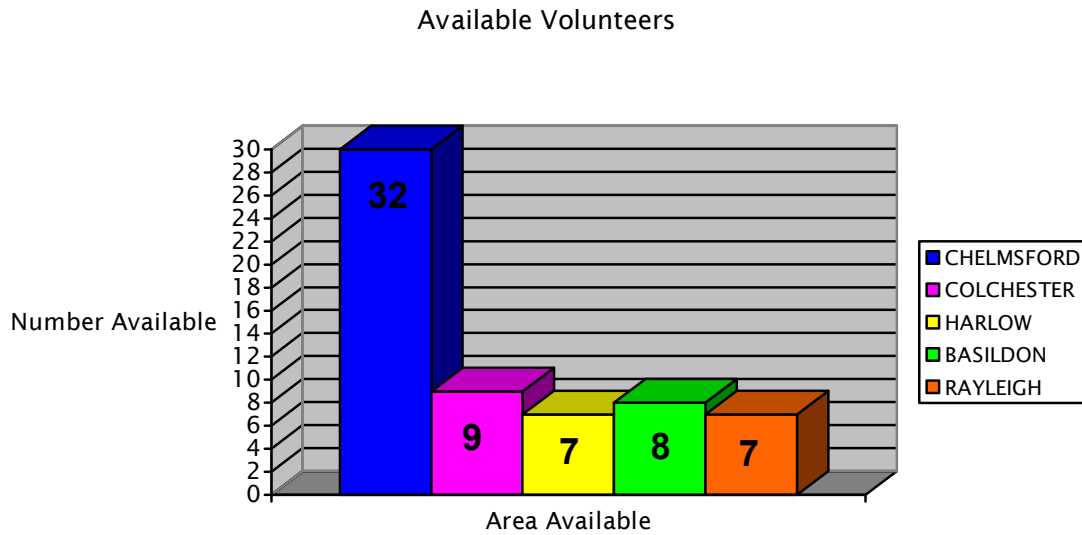
The training programme incorporates sessions from WDP senior practitioners and the County Manager. They have two sessions covering the role of the volunteer with WDP and the integrated working partnership, substance misuse and the client group.

The turnover of volunteers is relatively high and there is a constant need to recruit and train more volunteers in order to ensure there are sufficient volunteers to cover the referrals. Volunteers are recruited via volunteer agencies around Essex, which have proved an invaluable source in the past, by word of mouth and also ex-service users (drug and alcohol). 96 application packs were sent out to potential volunteers, resulting in 57 applicants being interviewed this financial year.

*Figure 1* shows the number of volunteers available to work in each of the six DIP sites around Essex (HMP Chelmsford and Chelmsford Town have been amalgamated).

The location shown is where the volunteer resides. Most of them have their own transport and work with a flexible approach.

**Figure 1**



For Colchester/Clacton clients the benefits of having a volunteer escort them to their first appointments in regards to FTP has been valuable in reassuring and supporting the client. I know it has not always been easy to find volunteers in our area but it has gone reasonably smoothly on most occasions which are beneficial to our more chaotic clients who are usually not very good at getting to any appointments unless it's with their dealer!!  
*Colleen Milbourne, Arrest Referral Practitioner*

## Referrals

The DIP teams have six teams around Essex and are based within the following Police Stations in Essex:

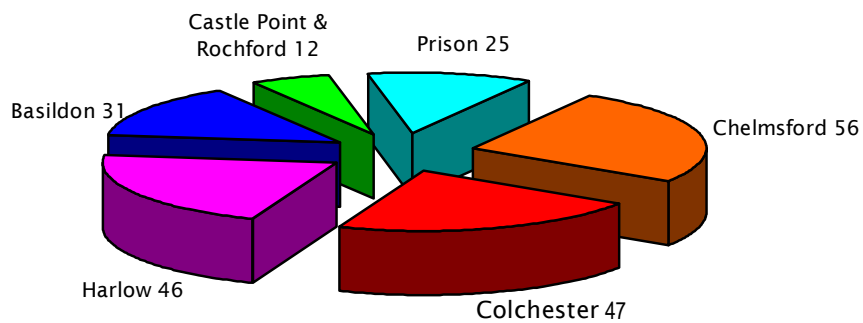
Colchester & Clacton  
Basildon & Brentwood  
Castlepoint & Rochford  
Harlow & Loughton  
Chelmsford & Braintree  
HMP Chelmsford

Figure 2, shows the number of referrals, during the contract year, by the area in which the client resided.

Figure 2

### Referrals by Area in which the Client Resided

■ CHELMSFORD ■ COLCHESTER ■ HARLOW ■ BASILDON ■ CASTLE POINT & ROCHFORD ■ PRISON




## ***Fast Tract Prescribing Service (FTP)***

The service is for DIP clients who are opiate dependant. An appointment is offered to the client within 48 hours of initial referral to DIP. Clients can be prescribed either Methadone or Buprenorphine (Subutex) for up to two weeks and then will be supported into continued prescribing with their local Community Drug and Alcohol Teams (CDAT).

SOVA volunteers play a vital role in assisting getting the clients to these appointments. The client is often afraid to face change and a volunteer can reassure them during the course of their journey.

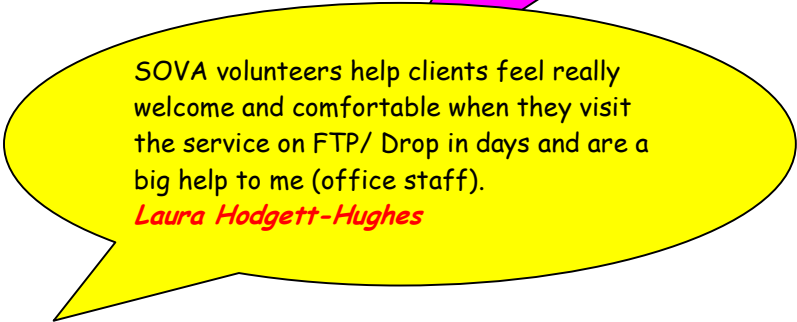
Once the client arrives at the WDP building, they are greeted by a SOVA volunteer, who makes them a hot or cold drink, and will talk to them about what to expect from their appointment, answer any question they may have, talk about their week and generally try to settle their nerves. This service was introduced in August 2009 and has really complemented the FTP service.

SOVA helped 64 clients get the treatment that they require, and worked with 239 clients at the FTP drop-in.



Without SOVA's help FTP would not have been successful as it has been. Their help with FTP drop in, mentoring and transportation has been invaluable. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you and all SOVA volunteers for all their help and support.

*Carly Stevens, FTP Coordinator*



SOVA volunteers help clients feel really welcome and comfortable when they visit the service on FTP/ Drop in days and are a big help to me (office staff).

*Laura Hodgett-Hughes*

## ***PRISON LINK***

Prison link Workers work with DIP clients, alongside the CARAT substance misuse teams, to support them through the prison system. These workers can refer clients directly into treatment once they are released from Prisons, this can include prescribing appointments, 1:1 support, counselling and complementary therapies. Prison Link workers can also support clients in applying for residential rehab.

Prison Link Workers meet with clients while they are in prison, to offer advice and support. WDP liaises with prison based services and works in conjunction with them so that on release, the individual quickly finds the treatment they need.

The Prison Link workers at HMP Chelmsford are very pro-volunteering and can see that it does significantly support the offenders inside the prison and upon their release into the community. Volunteers have assisted with 19 clients having a friendly face to meet them at the gate and get them safely from A to B.

SOVA has three volunteers based inside the prison, who have keys to the Prison and are free to come and go and move around the prison at the direction of the CARAT team. The volunteers based inside the prison worked alongside 64 prisoners, providing them with assistance in group work and with one-to-one mentoring service whilst inside prison and then engagement into the community.

My Retirement from S.O.V.A.

There comes a time when we have to move on in life and it is my time to move closer to my family near Bournemouth. Before I go I would like to thank Alison and SOVA for allowing me to work as a mentor in H.M.P. I knew that I would give 100% to the lads I was to meet and work with and it gave me a chance to give others some support that I needed when I was a lad. I know that the process that I used would be alien to some people, maybe even Alison, but she trusted me to do a good job. Alison did not interfere with the way I worked, although she was on the end of a phone if I needed help and support. I am more than pleased that the mentoring in the prison is being extended and I hope that the powers to be will allow it to grow as I feel that it is so worthwhile.

The process I used involved honesty on both sides, my helping them to be responsible for themselves, pointing out where their goodness is rather than show them where they had been leading an inappropriate life (in their stealing etc) that was for the courts and authorities to deal with. I would support them in some of their difficult and sad stories that they chose to share with me. I believe our honesty helped them come to terms with what had happened in their lives, then move on with their lives. It is my hope again that SOVA expands and expands; I believe with all my heart that the lads that wish to change should be given a chance. If you can sow the seed of hope in them it will grow.

**Regards Chris Camp**



## ***Triangle Tenancy Scheme***

Nacro Essex Triangle Project helps people with substance misuse problems to access good supported housing. They provide a resettlement plan tailored to the individual needs of the client, which will enable a more stable life and enable them to manage their recovery programme and engage with the Drug Interventions Programme Services in Essex

NACRO has a contract to find landlords who are prepared to rent out their one bedroom units to the vulnerable adults on the DIP. NACRO act as the tenant and on behalf of the client. The client then has a chance to work towards taking up their tenancy independently with a private landlord

Each client that is placed within a house receives help and support from the WDP Case Practitioner and the NACRO housing officer. They are also offered a SOVA volunteer. The volunteer assists the client to develop independent living skills - manage their household budget, help furnish the premises, make sure it is kept clean and tidy. Volunteers can also assist with help with claiming benefits, accessing services and finding work

SOVA provides a valued support to them, working alongside other agencies in assisting them in maintaining their tenancy and remaining drug free.

## Conclusion

***SOVA is making a valuable and significant contribution to the work of the DIP programme in Essex, the Essex Community and clients and their families. The project has had another extremely successful year working alongside 495 clients and providing 2478 hours of volunteering.***

The year ahead is going to be another very exciting and challenging year for SOVA within Essex DIP. In December 2009, the main DIP contract went out to re-tender and WDP were successful in gaining this contract again. Essex is now working under the System change pilot, and WDP now incorporates the CARATS team inside Chelmsford Prison and also will be delivering the DRR (Drug Rehabilitation Requirement) service. The service is now known as the Criminal Justice Intervention Service (CJIS). Under this new service certain aspects of SOVA 's roles will be changing – we will no longer be offering a drop-in service for Fast Track Prescribing clients as they will now be going to their local Community Drug and Alcohol Team for these appointments, although clients will still require transport to their appointment.

Work within the prison should now significantly rise due to the transfer of the CARATS team becoming part of CJIS. There will now be a more enhanced communication and referral stream between SOVA and the prison. The client should have now a more seamless approach - a volunteer will engage with them in prison, meet with them at the gate, upon their release, and then engage with them in the community to reintegrate them back into the community and society.

I just wanted to email you in regard to feedback on SOVA Volunteers and the service you provide. I work closely with a volunteer who currently has two of my clients on her books. She has been a tremendous help to me and my clients. She contacts me on a weekly basis to keep me updated on what is happening with my clients and over the past weeks, I believe she has worked above and beyond her duties. We have had a great deal of issues with one of the clients and she has continued to offer substantial support and assistance for him and she should be proud of her achievements and rapport that she has built up with a very difficult client. Both my clients talk highly of her and she is a credit to your service.

I have only had to refer to your Services on two occasions to date and although the other referral did not materialise for various reasons I can say that your service has been very efficient and indeed, of valued help. I have recently met up with the a member of SOVA staff who came to Castle point & Rochford to see how we operate in Rayleigh and this also was of help so she can see what services we may need in this area and also inform me of what SOVA has to offer.

Just wanted to say thank you again for assisting me & my clients.

*Mo Foksett, Arrest Referral Practitioner*

## Appendix A

### Volunteer Information

- ◆ Once contact has been made with a potential volunteer they are sent a Volunteer Information Pack with an accompanying letter. This information pack contains an application form.

Once the application form has been received then the potential applicant is then called for interview at their nearest DIP office. The informal interview lasts about 1 hour and a questionnaire is completed by the project manager. On completion of the questionnaire a decision must be made to accept or reject the applicant

If successful a letter is sent to the applicant confirming their acceptance onto a training course. If unsuccessful a letter is sent outlining the reasons as to why they have not been accepted onto a training course.

Once the training course of generally six weeks is completed, an evaluation interview is held. This interview will lead to a pass or reject response by the project.

- ◆ Volunteer mentoring involves working on a one-to-one basis with the client, or their family, who need either general support, or assistance with specific needs. Some of the areas where the volunteer can assist are:

Befriending/mentoring  
Debt counselling / Budgeting  
Benefits advice and claims / welfare rights  
Housing and Accommodation  
Literacy and Numeracy tuition  
Training for work / Job search  
Corresponding

- ◆ The project ensures that volunteers get the support and supervision that they need while assisting the clients and their families. Bi-monthly support meetings are arranged by the project so the project manager has an opportunity to meet regularly with all of the volunteers. Regular supervision to also arrange for the volunteer and client monthly.

- ◆ On going training can be offered to respond to a particular need of a volunteer or relevant to a task they perform.
- ◆ The project manager has made personal contact, and registered, with all Volunteer Bureaux's within Essex, in order to attract suitable applicants. she has also placed advertising literature in all colleges, libraries and larger GP surgery's within Essex. This advertising has proved a very good source of prospective volunteers and continues to do so.

## CURRENT VOLUNTEERS

- ◆ The 63 registered volunteers consist 32 of male and 31 female.
- ◆ The ages are:
  - 18 - 25 = 6
  - 26 - 35 = 18
  - 36 - 45 = 19
  - 46 - 55 = 14
  - 55 - 65 = 6
- ◆ The ethnicity of the volunteers are:-
  - 53 White British
  - 3 Black African
  - 2 Indian
  - 2 White mixed
  - 3 European
- ◆ The employment of the volunteers are as follows:
  - Full time employed - 16
  - Part time employed - 11
  - Students - 12
  - Retired - 4
  - Unemployed - 20
- ◆ 23 volunteers have previous convictions. 12 with substance misuse
- ◆ 4 volunteers are registered disabled.

## Appendix B

### Participant Information

- ◆ Participants are referred from DIP staff to the project manager via the email system and telephone.

- ◆ The 217 participants consisted of 159 male and 58 female.

- ◆ Age Range -

18 - 25 = 38

26 - 35 = 87

36 - 45 = 34

46 - 55 = 10

56 - 65 = 2

Age Unknown = 46

- ◆ Ethnicity

White British = 162

White Asian = 1

Other mixed = 1

Unknown = 53