

swanton news

Personnel matters

Sector News

News from Swanton services

Spotlight on...

Building the
right support



Plus:

Communications –
getting it right

Hi and Happy Christmas from Alison

Hi everyone,

Well it's that time of year again. Where have the last 12 months gone? As we approach the festive season it's a time of reflection on the ups and downs of the last year and there have certainly been a few. We, like most organisations, have a tendency to focus on the negatives and highlight problems and challenges, but when I reflect on this year I can see momentous change from where we were to where we are now. It has certainly been a year of change! Here's just a taster.

Thanks to all for your hard work and commitment. We now deliver a higher quality service to those we support and their families across all our services; some are further ahead than others but all are heading in the right direction. We have a comprehensive auditing process, led admirably by Rachael and her team, that highlights weaknesses and supports the local team in addressing them. We have service users and carers actively engaged in supporting the auditing process to keep us in touch with what we should be focusing on. We have better management information on which to base decisions, tighter HR and financial controls and are able to respond more quickly to Commissioner requests for information. We have greater transparency on the training gap and a far more effective training programme that is aligned to the Care Certificate, national standards and our Philosophy of Care. By now you will, I am sure, be familiar with the recently launched Swanton Philosophy which clearly outlines the Swanton values, our collective and individual beliefs and how we should ALL



behave at ALL times. It also links directly to outcomes for our service users; this will be a focus for next year.

On the business development front, we have raised the Swanton brand in the health and social care market and are starting to be seen as a company who can deliver and can be trusted to change lives. We are driving forward with growing our Supported Living services in all three regions, progressing the two new build ABI services in East Anglia as well as a new build LD Supported Living service in Corby and responding to the never ending stream of tenders.

Not bad for 12 months' work! But we are only at the beginning of our journey. We must fill the current service user vacancies if we are to have the ability to invest further in our services. We must also recruit more high quality staff to avoid the current high use of agency at some services. These are our two critical issues as we come to the end of 2015.

2016 will no doubt bring further challenges, not least the impending cuts to Social Care funding. We will certainly need to ensure that we are looking after and effectively deploying our most valuable resource – YOU. Hence the introduction of Swanton Hapi. I hope it will help ease some of the additional expense we all face at this time of year. More about next year's challenges in the next edition.

It's great to read so many good news stories about what is happening in our services around the country and particularly poignant to read Martin's story by his daughter. I remember meeting Martin and noting his amazing blue eyes – there is certainly a lot more going on behind those eyes than he is unfortunately able to convey. This article reminds us that all our service users have a past history, particularly our more elderly residents. It would be fantastic to hear more about the lives of those we support – please keep them coming.

Well I had better sign off now or I'll exceed my space allocation! I wish you and your loved ones a very safe and happy Christmas. Thank you for all your hard work in 2015. I very much look forward to working with you all to continue our progress in 2016.

Dr Alison Rose-Quirie

CEO, Swanton Care and Community



VISION:

Empower our **people** to build and **grow** our services, to enable individual **progress** in **partnership** with families and other like minded organisations

Our address is:

Number Three, Siskin Drive,
Middlemarch Business Park,
Coventry, CV3 4FJ

and our main switchboard is available on:
024 7621 4427

Personnel matters

Hapi benefits means happy employees!

We are extremely pleased to announce the launch of our new employee benefits programme, as detailed in our special booklet which is on its way to you if you haven't already received it.



The 'hapi hub' – found at: <https://swanton.hapibenefits.com> – is a one-stop-shop where you can find out about the following excellent range of benefits, company information and discounts:

- **Courtesy of Swanton** – the nitty-gritty details of training opportunities, annual leave entitlement, pension details, and the Swanton Service Philosophy
- **Salary Exchange** – various schemes to help your money go further
- **Policies and Procedures** – all you need to know about Swanton's policies and procedures
- **Reward and Recognition** – find out about Long Service Rewards and our Pick a Star scheme
- **e-Vouchers** – discounted vouchers for immediate use online or in store
- **Card Linked Offers** – another great shopping and savings scheme
- **Holiday Savings** – find some fantastic deals. We'll search every tour operator for their best price and apply a further 10 per cent discount to their published rates!
- **Everyday discounts** – check out the offers and discounts from top brand retailers such as B&Q, Argos, Boots, Sainsburys and more...
- **Health and Wellbeing** – find out about the magnificent range of plans and programmes to support you both in mind and body
- **Employee Assistance Programme** – this gives you instant access to a 24/7 confidential phone counselling and legal service 365 days a year
- **Personal Group Hospital Plan and Personal Group Death Benefit Plan** – two excellent plans to give you and those you love peace of mind in difficult circumstances.

The employee enrolment programme is being implemented over the next few weeks so watch out for more information and for the visit of the Personal Group representative who will be explaining the Personal Group plans.

Any questions? Simply call the Helpline on 0333 400 0844 Mon to Fri 8.30am to 5.30pm

Angela Johnson
HR Director

Refer a Friend or Relative

Do you know someone whom you would recommend to work at Swanton?

If you introduce them to the company and they are successful in obtaining employment with us you could be rewarded with up to £150* (terms and conditions apply**).

Simply ask your friend or relative to complete an application form, remembering to put your name on the top, and hand in to your Service Manager.

* Payment is made as follows: £50 on the start date, £50 on completion of probationary period, and £50 after six months, providing both new recruit and introducer are still employed

** Subject to the following terms and conditions:

- There will be a thorough interview process, which must not be influenced by the person recommending the individual.
- The individual preferably does not work in the same service as the introducer, or at the very least does not work on the same shift.
- The introducer must still be employed when the payments are due.
- No referrals prior to 12 October 2015 will be included.

Full details of the scheme are available from Maura Murray. Email HR.Queries@swantoncare.com or call 024 7621 4414.

The company reserves the right to withdraw this scheme at any time.

Festive period pay arrangements



- Any hours worked from the beginning of the night shift on 24th December to the end of the night shift on 27th December will be paid at double time.
- Any hours worked from the beginning of the night shift on 31st December to the end of the night shift on 2nd January will be paid at double time.
- Normal contractual arrangements apply.

sector news roundup

Sesame Street includes first autistic character

Much loved children's franchise, Sesame Street, has introduced a new character, Julia, who is on the autism spectrum. It is part of a pledge to make their stories more inclusive and to create characters others can look up to and learn from.

Julia has been described as doing things 'a little differently' when playing with her friends, including Elmo and Abby. The launch of the character is aimed at raising awareness of autism among both the autistic community and also the wider general public. The character will be included in digital and printed story books, as well as in a range of learning resources on Sesame Street's website.

Sesame Street is also producing online tools as part of its 'See Amazing in All Children' initiative, to help people affected by autism manage everyday activities. Their guides, aimed at families with children aged between two and five, include ones on brushing your teeth, visiting a restaurant and crossing the road.



Petitioners demand government to reform fit for work assessment

Nearly 20,000 people signed a petition urging the Department for Work and Pensions to act on its promise to make changes to its fit for work assessment.

The first autism-specialist residential school in the world celebrates 50th anniversary

The National Autistic Society's Sybil Elgar School in Middlesex, Greater London, celebrated its 50th anniversary on 18th October. The facility was opened in 1965, and became the first autism-specific school in the UK. Since then, Sybil Elgar has paved the way for supporting both children and adults on the autism spectrum.



Plans published by the NHS to promote 'homes not hospitals' for people with learning disabilities

The NHS has published plans which outline how they aim to better support people with a learning disability and/or autism to lead more independent lives and have a greater say in the support they receive. This is part of the Transforming Care Programme; our CEO represents independent LD organisations on the Provider forum that is helping to support the transformation programme. The plan sets out the need for:

- local housing that meets the specific needs of this group of people, such as schemes where people have their own home but ready access to on-site support staff
- a rapid and ambitious expansion of the use of personal budgets, enabling people and their families to plan their own care, beyond those who already have a legal right to them
- people to have access to a local care and support navigator or key worker
- investment in advocacy services run by local charities and voluntary organisations so that people and their families can access independent support and advice.

See more about this in the Blog on page 11.

Learning Disabilities Work Experience 2015



LEARNING DISABILITIES
WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK



Learning Disability Work Experience Week 2015 took place between 9th and 15th November. Fifty companies pledged their support to offer inclusive work experience opportunities to people with a Learning Disability.

Mencap founded the Experience Week in 2013 in a bid to promote inclusivity in the workplace. Companies involved in the project operate across a wide range of sectors, including finance, law and housing.

Government launches pilot scheme for people with learning disabilities

The government has given the green light to pilot a scheme which will see people with learning disabilities provided with named social workers, who will be able to 'challenge' NHS decisions. This scheme has been proposed in response to the consultation on the 'No voice unheard, no right ignored' green paper, which outlined proposals to strengthen the rights of people with learning disabilities, autism, or mental health conditions, and their families.

Meeting the Challenge: guide series for families and supporters of people with a Learning Disability

Mencap and their partners have produced a series of 'Meeting the Challenge' guides. The guides are helpful resources aimed at the families and supporters of people with Learning Disabilities. These can be accessed at: www.mencap.org.uk/meetingthechallenge.

sector news roundup

The Duchess of Cambridge pledges to support children with mental health issues

In a keynote address to a headteachers' conference in London, the Duchess of Cambridge stated that she is committed to championing the cause of children in Britain who are suffering from emotional or mental health problems.

Special Olympian launches social enterprise

A new socially focused business has been launched by Kiera Byland, a Special Olympian gold medallist, who competes in cycling. The

Kiera Project will deliver a series of educational sessions to schools which have students who have learning difficulties and disabilities.

THE KIERA PROJECT
"Making new memories, making new friends"



The Government's Transforming Care programme continues apace with the news that up to half of the 2,600 hospital beds for people with learning disabilities in England will close in order to move care into the community.

The changes will see the closure of some units altogether, including the last remaining NHS hospital for people with learning disabilities in England. The news that 'hospitals will be replaced with homes', in the form of supported living, has been roundly welcomed by many in the sector as a move that is not before time.

Many commentators, including Jane Cummings, chief nursing officer for England, argue that people with learning difficulties have been failed for too long. For years these individuals have been saying that they would much rather live in their own homes but for many it is only now that that call has been answered.

Could poor communications and patient/service user advocacy be partly to blame

Good communications must be at the heart of learning disability care changes

Alistair Clay, Director, Arc Seven Communications

for this historic inaction? I would argue yes. Without the pressure of a clear and loud voice change is often slow to materialise. To ensure the same mistakes are not made in the future robust communications strategies and feedback systems must be put in place by the NHS, local authorities and providers to ensure that the views of service users are taken into account.

Here I would urge providers to be innovative and gather much more 'real time' data to monitor, evaluate and drive improvements. Technology should play a pivotal role in giving a meaningful and impactful voice to service users. Platforms such as WhatsApp allow for ongoing broadcasts to a closed user group so channels of direct communication are always open for advice, help and support. Video messaging services such as Skype, FaceTime, etc, also offer a vital platform to ensure individuals with learning disabilities are empowered and connected to the people and organisations who have a say in their day to day lives.

Of course giving someone a megaphone is just one part of the equation; views and opinions should also encourage action, but there is now a wonderful opportunity to give a voice to a group of people who have been denied for far too long. Effective two-way communications will ensure community

providers deliver support that is personalised to reflect preferences, aspirations and the choices of each individual.

Homes not hospitals should be as much about the change in the physical buildings and services as the rights and freedoms of the people who live in them – I would argue that the right to a voice is chief among them.

"Giving someone a megaphone is just one part of the equation..."



Stories from across Swanton services

Happy 21st Scott!



On 3rd October Southfields had a special celebration for one of the residents, Scott Hamer, who was celebrating his 21st Birthday. He had a fabulous day. His family joined the staff and other young people at Southfields.

Scott loves ice cream vans and his family arranged for an ice cream van to come and serve all the young people ice cream. He also loves bagpipe music and one of the staff, Gordon McMurtrie, who plays in a pipe band, came up to play some music for Scott, which he thoroughly enjoyed.



Tenth anniversary celebrations



Glangarnant House recently celebrated the tenth anniversary of its opening so a party was organised for the staff, service users and their families, Cedi Frederick, Director of Operations, and Jacqui Orrells, Regional Director for Wales, came along. It was a great occasion, marked by a superbly decorated cake, complete with the Swanton logo!



Seasonal socialising at Sudbury House

In October, a group from Sudbury House went to Butlins in Minehead, Somerset. They went swimming, played crazy golf, went to the fair, saw the night shows and generally had a right royal knees up! Here's Karl, Lisa and Natalie soaking up the sun.



Lisa and Gareth (in the picture) recently joined a local 'Friends of the Young Disabled' club and attended their Halloween party where they enjoyed karaoke, a disco, hot dogs and fireworks. They had a fabulous evening. Lisa won best female fancy dress costume and Gareth won best male fancy dress costume. Needless to say, both were over the moon!



Stories from across Swanton services

Pumpkins galore at Trinity House

Trinity House recently organised a Halloween party, held at its sister service Murton Grange, which is located on the same site. It gave the guys a perfect opportunity to socialise with one another, and with friends and peers from other services. They had a great time baking and creating small pieces of artwork to decorate the house. It really fired their imagination, and working together doing fun activities brought them closer to one another.

There was even a Pumpkin Competition. Murray Brown, the young man who is painting the pumpkin blue, came 3rd. Well done Murray!

The guys put in a great effort and a fantastic night – and buffet – was enjoyed by all.



Halloween at Seaham View

A great Halloween party, organised by Lyndsey Shackler, took place for both Seaham View and Eastholme service users, and staff not on shift also attended. Maria Johnson put together an excellent buffet and everyone enjoyed it immensely.

Kirsty Laverick, one of our service users, initiated the conga several times, encouraging both staff and service users to join in, and made sure that there were plenty of photo opportunities. Christopher from High Dependency popped in and danced the night away, as did all our other service users.

In the run-up to the 'do' all the service users went out and purchased their own costumes for the evening and Ian Askew bought a disco ball to add ambiance. Midian Johnson was responsible for the painting, which both service users and staff enjoyed as part of the preparations.



Stories from across Swanton services

Children in Need

Friday 13th was far from unlucky this year. It was on this day in November that the annual Children in Need fundraising day took place, inspiring thousands from across the country to behave in strange ways, don ridiculous costumes, organise all manner of activities and events, and nudge people into parting with their lolly.

Well, we're very proud that a number of Swanton Services decided to get into the spirit of the event and come up with some excellent fundraising activities. Here's a snapshot of what our service users got up to, both before and on the day...

One big step for Glenn, one giant leap for Children in Need

Glenn Close, one of the young residents at Southfield House, wanted to raise cash for Children in Need. She planned a route for a sponsored walk from the Helix Kelpies in Falkirk to Bonnybridge, a distance of 12.5 miles and arranged it for Thursday 5th November. Deputy Manager Anita Thomson volunteered to accompany Glenn on the walk.

Glenn requested an application pack from Children in Need and went round all the staff asking for sponsorship. She also arranged a cake sale for 12th November. Even before Children in Need Day she had already raised

over £200! Anita and all at Southfield House are very pleased with her 'get up and go' attitude and wonderful achievement: 'I think for someone who is 23 years of age and who lives in a residential setting to think about other young people less fortunate than herself is just wonderful.'

Going at their own pace, Glenn and Anita took around four hours to complete the walk. It wasn't easy – the rain was battering against them and they ended up truly soaked. But as far as they're concerned it was well worth it to raise so much cash.



A party with a cause



Swanton Community Support Norwich hosted a Children in Need party at the request of several of the service users who were wanting to do their bit to help raise funds for such a good cause. Service users and staff from Heath Farm House and The Old Vicarage came along to join the fun, showing that life is for living.

Cake and good times were shared by all who attended. Everyone enjoyed themselves dressing up and singing karaoke while also being able to catch up with one another. All were well catered for in the event, with both staff and service users singing side by side and having the greatest respect for one another – a fantastic example of working together. The event continued long past the planned time as everyone was having such a good time and by the end of the evening a total of £112.67 was raised – a magnificent achievement.

Stories from across Swanton services

Dressing up to raise money

Over at Maesteilo Mansion, which covers all the South Wales services, another fundraising party was in full swing on Children in Need Day. Every year Alex Angus and Karen Jefferies from the Day Service based at Maesteilo organise a party for Children in Need and all the service users contribute by baking cakes, etc., and all money raised goes to the charity. They all know what Children in Need is about and understand the fundraising aspect of the event.

Karen and Alex were delighted at this year's efforts: 'We would like to give a massive "THANK YOU" to everyone who attended the fancy dress party. It was a superb success and made for a great afternoon. We loved all the fancy dress outfits and the effort that had been put in to them. We made a fantastic £204.88, smashing the amount we raised last year by almost £40! Please pass on our thanks to all who attended and supported the event, to all the people who helped make the decorations and helped us on the day, we couldn't do it without you!'



Super heroes!

Service users from Heath Farm House joined in with the Super heroes themed party and karaoke for Children In Need hosted by the Service Users and staff at Treeview Court. The event included a bake sale with various cakes on sale and we raised a total of £112!



Heath Farm House service users who attended were Paul Gee (Superman), Howard Smith (Batman), Basil Kelly (Iron man), John Lince and Stephen Freeman (The Hulk). The support staff were Andrew Lincoln, Louise Lincoln, Zoe Tams and Liam Baker. Service user Paul Gee also enjoyed singing one of his favourite songs Cliff Richard's *Summer Holiday*, supported by staff member, Andrew Lincoln.



Pauline wins competition to rename unit



Pauline Moss, a service user at Swanton House Care Centre in Norfolk, beat stiff competition to rename one of the units. The main house, which is part of the three unit service at Swanton House Care Centre, has now been named Birch House, after Pauline, a resident at the home, won the competition. Pauline is a long-time member of the Swanton family, having been supported at the centre for over ten years.

The competition, which was run by Activities Coordinator, Kerry Hope, challenged service users, family members and staff, to come up with a creative new name for the unit. A panel of judges, which included the Service Manager of Swanton House Care Centre, deliberated long and hard over some very imaginative entries.

An evening of celebration was hosted to welcome in the new name, where Pauline was crowned the competition winner with her entry of 'Birch House'.

Learner of the Year Awards 2015



At Cartref Croeso two staff members have achieved Learner of the Year awards 2015, which is recognised for their hard work for completing their QCFs to a high standard.

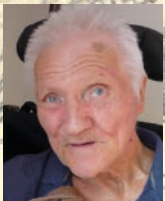
We send our congratulations to Emma Brownsill for achieving QCF level 5 Health and Social Care and Tammy Edwards who has obtained QCF level 2 Health and Social Care. Both Emma and Tammy were presented with a certificate and a gift in a ceremony at Cymru Care Offices. (Emma is 3rd from the left and Tammy is 4th from left.)

Tony Parish visits Gryphon House two days per week to help keep the garden area tidy by weeding and clearing autumn leaves and service Users Paul Gee, Basil Kelly and Howard Smith recently enjoyed a visit to the cinema to see the new James Bond movie *Spectre*, supported by staff Trish Hickey, Liam Baker and Nicole Fitzgerald.



Spotlight on... Martin, otherwise known as 'Scoop'

Martin Creasey, a resident of Swanton's Gryphon Place, had a long career as a prolific artist, cartoonist and writer. His daughter relates his colourful life, a life full of adventures, a life well lived and now a life well cared for.



Ever since I was little (and before then) my Dad was always painting. His paintings seemed to depict vast worlds, with people rushing all over them, in tunnels of their own making, or over massive landscapes, never stopping to look up the backdrops of huge skies to see the giant rolling planet-scapes around them... a theme that was to continue throughout his working life.

He went to Art School, where he met my mother, his first wife, at Salisbury, but had already been to Les Beaux Arts in Paris and New York and Chelsea. He had his own style, didn't quite fit in, so took heed of a psychologist who, in a one-off appointment, told him 'You'd best get a job then' – and my Dad (and Mum) started a string of jobs, much like actors do while not acting, to get by.

Before that, he and his brother Richard had worked their way round the world – the original gap year travellers – in a Hillman hunter, camping under trees of nesting green mambas in Africa, travelling through US dust storms, walking down Death Valley in their flip flops, visiting diamond mines in South Africa and other mines in Australia... my Dad drawing furiously wherever they went. What adventures!

They were following their parents' glamorous world trip to promote the books written by my Grandfather, John Creasey, who was, by then, a famous writer of crime detection novels.

My Dad and his brother were expected to be glamorous, I think, join the hunting set and carry on like that, back in England, but they both had their own ideas, looking for their own adventures. Richard went into television, soon becoming head of documentaries at Granada, and my Dad continued painting and drawing. He could draw beautifully and was an accomplished draughtsman, delighting in light and shade.

One adventure which my Dad embarked on, was to sail with us, his little family, out to Greece, aiming to live there and eke a living from exhibitions of his sketches – he would have loved that, living in shorts and drawing the olive groves and men sitting in cafes under those huge umbrellas. We have the drawings still.

But it was a difficult time to be in Greece, at war with Turkey as it was and with the global petrol crisis – this was the seventies and that adventure didn't quite work out. Dad had to come back and that was a bit heartbreaking, like the travails of the Greek heroes, modern and ancient, that he so admired, including Zorba – 'Wife, children, the whole catastrophe!'

And so he came home, eventually settling in Norfolk. Here he worked for the Archaeological unit at Earlham Hall, then he started his own business, 'House Portraits', doing pictures in pencil or pen ink and wash as mementos of people's homes.

All this time he was painting in acrylics and developing his own ideas, having other sorts of adventures, this time with cancer: walking on hot coals, to recover from it; learning meditation.

He made his money by doing up places, restoring them by hand with original materials before that was really fashionable... and lost it buying in France in 2002... His one final adventure that he couldn't resist culminated in a pilgrimage across Northern Spain – 'The Camino' – which he'd read all about.

My Dad's last great working achievement was to find a publisher for his Little Man books, written under the name of Scoop Creasey and available online. Fame at last! The books feature a cartoon character, who simultaneously has many metaphysical and very funny adventures – mix-ups with 'Predicumbstances' as Dad called them. In the books, such as *The Little Man Learns to Face [and conquer] his Fears*, he shared what he had learned about all sorts of things.

And Dad now? He peacefully resides at Gryphon Place, where he is beautifully looked after and cared for. You could say he is on another adventure... of sorts. None of us is quite sure of what things are like for him, but he seems happy and responds in his own way, with the occasional 'Good Morning' and 'Thank you', when he can; polite and thoughtful, as he always was.

Spotlight on... is a new occasional column which gives a more in-depth profile of someone in the Swanton family? Do you know anyone who could be featured and who would be happy for their life story to be told? If so, send text and pictures – not forgetting to obtain permissions – to Amanda.Dougill@swantoncare.com.

Blog: Building the right support: what has been proposed, and how will it be achieved?

The publication in late October of the national plan, 'Building the Right Support and Service Model for Commissioners of Health and Social Care Services', highlights key milestones in the delivery of the Transforming Care programme.

Delivering the change

The clear focus was on delivering the change from inpatient to community-based services for people with a learning disability and/or autism. The paper outlined a commitment to seeking a reduction of up to 50 per cent in the number of inpatient beds.

In order to achieve this, the plan sets out four clear needs:

- Local housing that meets the specific needs of this group of people, such as schemes where people have their own home but ready access to on-site support staff
- A rapid and ambitious expansion of the use of personal budgets, enabling people and their families to plan their own care, beyond those who already have a legal right to them
- People to have access to a local care and support navigator or key worker
- Investment in advocacy services run by local charities and voluntary organisations so that people and their families can access independent support and advice

Three key changes

In order to meet these needs, it sets out three key changes. Firstly, local councils and NHS bodies will join together to deliver better and more co-ordinated services. Forty-nine new local Transforming Care Partnerships will work with people who have lived experience of these services, families, carers and key local stakeholders, to agree robust implementation plans by April 2016, and then deliver on them over three years. They will be made up of clinical commissioning groups, NHS England's specialised commissioners and local authorities, and will cover the whole of England.

Secondly, the report sets out how budgets will be shared between the NHS and local councils to ensure that the right care is provided in the right place. A new financial framework will aim to speed up discharges, particularly for those who have been in

inpatient care the longest, and make better use of resources so that services can be increased and improved. Central to the new framework will be the opportunity for local pooled budgets which encourage better use of resources for all people in a local area with learning disabilities and/or autism. Funding guidance will also be reformed to enable swift discharges. For people who have been in hospital five years or more, specific payments will be made by the NHS to local authorities to enable their needs to be met in the community.

Finally, national guidelines will set out what support people and families can expect, wherever they live. A new Service Model describes what good services should look like, framed around nine principles from the perspective of the people using them. It gives people a clear picture of what they can expect from the services they use, while at the same time allowing Partnerships the flexibility to design and commission services that meet the needs of people in their area.

The new model, which was co-produced by people using services, commissioners and health and social care system leaders, has been finalised using the feedback from early implementation by six 'fast track' areas.

Yes, but...

The announcement of 'Building the Right Support' has seen a cautious welcome from many in the sector, but clear concerns have been raised by Mencap and the Challenging Behaviour Foundation:

We are concerned about whether sufficient resource and investment is being made available up front to develop the local support and services required. Families will be fearful of the fact that there is little new in the report about how local areas can be compelled to make the necessary changes to support services and guard against a postcode lottery of poor care. New money has been announced today but there is no indication as to whether this is sufficient to rapidly mobilise the new housing and care services needed, whilst also up-skilling local area teams.



Today's report is a start. Doubts remain as to whether it addresses the causes of failure to deliver change over the last 4 ½ years. NHS England and the Government must adequately fund local areas to deliver this change, as well as hold them to account, and intervene where change is not happening. People with a learning disability, families and carers need to see change on the ground before they will believe progress is being made.

We mustn't make the mistake of lumping in small, flexible, and tailored residential services with 'one size fits all' hospital environments. The closure of outdated and ineffective hospitals is a step in the right direction. However, smaller residential services can provide the ideal stepping stone for people who are moving towards living more independent lives, but require additional support as they make that journey.

Additionally, policy-makers must remember that supported living is not always the right answer. We need to ensure that appropriately designed and staffed residential solutions are not ignored in favour of supported living solutions, where that does not meet the best interests of the individual.

Making informed choices

Central to decisions about appropriate care paths and plans should be the individuals and families affected, who must be able to make informed choices. The right information needs to be made available to enable individuals and families to make informed decisions, given the choices available to them. Budget sharing is a good idea, but additional funding is critical to delivering on the aspirations of Building the Right Support.

We want to hear from you!

Have an exciting day out planned? Raising funds for a charitable cause? Have some best practice to share with the rest of the Swanton community? Want to be featured in our next issue? Please contact newsletter@swantoncare.com to share content for the next issue. We're looking forward to hearing from you and we're always keen to receive stories and accompanying photographs.

New name for Swanton News

Can you think of another title for the Swanton newsletter? If you come up with any bright ideas do let us know!

Getting in Touch With Us

Our central enquiry and referral system will help find the best solution for you based on your specific needs, wherever you are.

To find out more about Swanton, or just have a chat and get some advice, please get in touch. We are here to listen to you.

**Call: 024 7621 4427
Email: info@swantoncare.com**

**Alternatively, you can visit our website:
www.swantoncare.com**

We have a commitment to responding to you within 24 hours.