

Appendix 5 Project Outline for Growing Together Shoeburyness

Growing Together Shoeburyness will address needs around mental health in Shoeburyness and surrounding area of Southend. Mental health is compounded by unemployment, deprivation and low aspirations. In 2009 in Southend there were 15,633 adults with common mental disorders and 1,163 with psychoses and personality disorders; this is expected to rise to 15,844 by 2020 for common mental disorders and 1,180 for people with psychoses and personality disorder (South Essex Mental Health Strategy, 2012). In February 2011, there were 17,450 benefit claimants in Southend, of whom 4,710 are on Job Seekers Allowance and 7,650 on Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit (nomisweb.co.uk). Southend Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2009) states that 'people who experience mental illness need support to take control of their own care and support, and to recover on their own terms, including, where appropriate, help to get back into meaningful and productive employment' (p. 10). 'Incapacity Benefit claimants make up the largest group of economically inactive people of working age in Britain and almost 40% are on Incapacity Benefit due to mental illness' (p.13) – 33.8 people per 1,000 working age people were Incapacity Benefit claimants in Southend in 2007.

Shoeburyness is an area with pockets of significant social and economic disadvantage. When examining the 2010 Indices of Deprivation it highlights that an estimated 9,000 Shoebury residents live within the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Of these just under 3,000 live within the 10% most deprived areas in the country.

When looking at the working age of Shoeburyness residents who live within the 30% most deprived areas – 399 (Feb 2012) are currently claiming Job Seekers Allowance and over 600 are claiming Employment Support Allowance or Incapacity Benefit. Over 1,400 people in total are in receipt of some form of DWP benefit.

Trust Links's experience of clients with mental health needs over the last 12 years indicates that these clients have entrenched needs and often have negative attitudes to and experience of employment – positive work experience can have a beneficial impact on this mindset. In addition, clients have complex social, emotional and health related needs and a recovery programme is needed, including liaison with other services in health, housing and financial advice to begin to address them.

The project complements the South Essex Mental Health Strategy and the national 'No Health Without Mental Health' strategy. The project will provide early intervention, prevention and recovery support for people with diagnosed mental health problems and young people at risk of developing mental health problems. The project will work in close partnership with secondary mental health services to ensure co-ordinated care and support for people in the care system.

There are no services like this in the Shoeburyness area: the significant majority of mental health related funding is spent on clinical treatment services, even though it's important to invest in holistic and social recovery services.

Our application has the support of local MP James Duddridge who said the project would be "amazing". Local councillors have stated that this project would be an important development to meet local need.

The current clients of the Growing Together project in Westcliff are very supportive of and excited about the establishment of a new project in Shoeburyness. Some are keen to help with the set up of the new site in terms of design, planning and delivery - they are keen to transfer the positive culture and ethos to the new project.

Our online survey with local agencies and professionals (from schools, police, NHS, voluntary sector agencies) in Shoeburyness demonstrates that there is significant support for the project proposal. 53 people responded to the survey - 100% agreed that there was not anything like this project in the area. Many respondents commented that this project is needed in the area, one respondent stated "We know that we have large numbers of people with mental health needs in the area. Voluntary counselling groups are overwhelmed and have long waiting lists. The area has super layered areas of deprivation. Shoeburyness is an area we are trying to regenerate and support as a whole community, raising aspirations and achievement. A key part of this work is to improve the mental health of people in the area and this project will help." Many respondents said they knew of clients or parents of children in their schools suffering from schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and drug induced psychosis. This is also a significant need around learning disability locally. No respondents had statistical data on prevalence locally.

Respondents to the survey commented that the project could significantly contribute to community cohesion locally. One respondent stated that: "Groups of people with diverse backgrounds & life experiences coming together in a shared activity is always positive. They will be working with & sharing time with many whom they would not normally meet." There was a consensus that the Growing Together Shoeburyness project will bring people together from diverse backgrounds and enable them to work together on a positive project. "Being involved in this project and feeling part of the community may help many young adults to start something new. At the moment there are groups of young adults within Shoeburyness with little motivation. The project proposal would benefit the community by older people, vulnerable adults and the unemployed creating an environment to be proud of and in turn develop a respect for themselves and the community."

When asked which age groups the project should focus on, respondents stated teenagers 13 - 19 (81%), young adults 18 - 25 (73.8%) and vulnerable adults/unemployed (71.4%), with fewer supporting work with young children (66.7%) and older people (50%). Many commented that the project would be a very valuable asset locally, providing an important focal point for community members, addressing significant unmet need in the local area.

We also carried out a survey with the general public outside Asda, the main supermarked in Shoeburyness. 104 people responded and 74% said that they or their family would enjoy using the project. Whilst 32% said they would travel to Southend to access the service, 80% said they would access the service if it was located closer to home. 50% of respondents said they or somebody they knows suffers from a mental health problem and some respondents talked about their experience with family members with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression and anxiety. Comments from members of the public included: "of course it's a good idea. We want the service to be local as we can't rely on buses" and "it will be nice to see the land used again."