

Member Briefing

Number: 1185

Title: New homelessness support service now up and running

Summary: On 1 April 2018, forfutures took over the delivery of the homeless support service. The service offers people at risk of losing their home or those who are homeless, support, advice and information to help them find accommodation and opportunities to improve their futures.

On 1 April, ForViva was appointed by Cheshire West and Chester Council to work in partnership to deliver one holistic homeless support service across the borough over the next nine years. The new service, which is called forfutures, is now up and running and the transformation into one integrated support service is underway.

Over the last five weeks, forfutures has supported over 500 people who were at risk of becoming homeless, without secure accommodation or who have been sleeping rough.

Former emergency accommodation at Richmond Court has closed and forfutures now provides 12 other emergency beds in Chester and four in Northwich. Anybody needing to access short-term accommodation is urged to contact forfutures.

forfutures' Outreach team continues to identify people who are sleeping rough and engage with them on the most appropriate levels of support and accommodation. The forfutures team is working closely with local voluntary and community groups and the police to engage with people sleeping rough.

Anyone at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness and in need of support and emergency accommodation can make contact with the service in a number of ways.

- call the 24-hour number: 0300 123 2442
- email: hello@forfutures.co.uk
- visit: www.forfutures.co.uk

People can also visit or contact any of the following voluntary sector organisations, as well as the police, health services, Cheshire West and Chester or any other members of the Outside In group.

- DWP and Job Centre
- Soul Kitchen
- Share Shop
- CATH: Chester Aid to the Homeless
- Turning Point Aqua House
- Chester PLUS
- St Peters' Church
- St. Werburgh's Medical Practice for the Homeless
- Freedom City Mission, 6 Hunter Street, Chester

Forfutures also provides drop-in advice and information hubs for immediate support with housing issues. The hubs, which offer a holistic service where people can access immediate housing support, advice and information, are open Monday to Friday between 10am till 4pm.

Users of the homeless support service are at the centre of the forfutures approach. The vision for the service is Improved Lives, where communities thrive. All residents are entitled to high quality homes, safe and sustainable neighbourhood environments and increased life chances and opportunities in relation to health, education and employment.

Realising this vision is heavily reliant on strong and effective partnership working not only with organisations that support homeless people, but also with the voluntary sector. The forfutures team are currently working with volunteers to help provide meaningful activities to address social isolation and offer opportunities to learn new skills.

For further information, contact: Joanne Walters, Housing Strategy and Policy Manager

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Responsible Committee, Cabinet Member: Councillor Angela Claydon

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