

Social Justice and Regeneration Committee

SJR(2)-17-06(p.10)

Date: Wednesday 6 December 2006

Time: 09.30am – 12.30pm

Venue: Senedd, Cardiff Bay

Paper to note: Visit to Cymdeithas Tai Hafan, Rhyl, 6.10.06 by Mark Isherwood AM

- Cymdeithas Tai Hafan was established in 1989, registered as a Charitable Housing Association.
- They grew out of Welsh Women's Aid.
- They support women from 16 – 65 'and beyond'.
- Their 'cornerstones' are equality of opportunity and tenant participation. Tenant participation is about 'building confidence and empowerment'.
- They are a national organisation, covering 17 Welsh local Authority areas including all Local Authorities in North Wales.
- Their Rhyl project is for young women.
- Key issues: Not enough money coming through. They have been 'the biggest loser' under Supporting People Revenue Grant (SPRG) and 'will not survive' if more money is not put in the pot. They are ALSO very concerned about the proposed transfer of SPRG to Local Authorities without ring-fencing ('unlike England'), 'when almost every Social Services Department is in deficit'.
- In two years', the Council have only re-housed one young woman from here. They rely on Housing Associations and private landlords (convincing them to take on supported people). Their work with private landlords has made 'a good start'.
- There were 61 referrals at this project last year, but they were only able to help 10.
- They offer an individually tailored support service to develop confidence and self-esteem. This is task-centred.
- This integrates with the "New Dawn" in-house Lifelong Learning Programme, which provides Certificates of Achievement and OCN credits able to get their learners onto courses.
- They provide Children's Services which include parenting groups, Youth Forum and outings/parties/holidays.
- Across Wales, they have 130 bed-spaces for temporary supported housing and 200+ bed-spaces of 'floating support' in women's own homes.
- They have 142 staff, which includes 6 former service-users.
- They were the first voluntary sector provider to have a Welsh language Scheme.
- They exchange visits with Poland and are looking to bring volunteers for Wrexham over from Poland.
- 72% of women re-housed have mental health issues. They operate specialist mental health services, including awareness-raising.
- They work with women ex-offenders and women with drug and alcohol dependency.

- 24% of the women re-housed were sexually abused as children (compared to 0.3% in the wider community).
- 20% of the women re-housed have been through the Care System.
- They provide Mediation Services and are trying to persuade Local Authorities and Housing Associations to 'buy-in'.
- They operate a Schools Liaison Project, funded by Comic Relief. This includes both theatre and work in schools on domestic abuse.