



BRIGHTON

OASIS

PROJECT

Annual Report 2007-08

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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Oasis women's project aims to improve the lives and maximize the potential of women, children and young people affected by substance and alcohol misuse. We seek to prevent and reduce drug and alcohol related harm to women and their families by providing services which offer a continuum of support from harm minimization through to total abstinence, and which are complemented by specialist services for children, young people and women working in the sex industry.

This Years Report

In the year since I have been at Oasis one of the ways I have found of learning about our clients and understanding what they need from us is by listening to their stories. Last year at our Annual General Meeting Vicky talked about how meeting Della on the bus at a time she was out looking for drugs had resulted in her coming to Oasis and starting to make positive changes in her life. This story made me think how a chance encounter at the right time can make such a difference but also how women who have used the service are the most effective encouragement to others.

Some times peoples stories are uplifting and motivating and other times they are sad and shocking. In this report we have used client's stories to illustrate their experiences of Oasis and how they have benefited from the services provided. We hope these stories will illustrate how we work in a way that facts and figures aren't able to. I'm grateful to all the women who were willing to share their, sometimes difficult stories. Women who have experienced problems with drugs or alcohol have often struggled to keep this a secret for a

long time, and remained silent about their experiences and struggles. I hope you find their willingness to share their stories with you encouraging and stimulating.

Jo-Anne Welsh, Director



Welcome to this year's annual report. This has been a year of consolidation and progress at Oasis with considerable stability and strength in both the staff group and members of the Board.

Jo-Anne Welsh has completed her first full year as Director and under her leadership Oasis has continued to thrive. The Parents of Children at Risk (POCAR) initiative is now in its second year of operation and has a well established place on the landscape of safeguarding services offered within the Brighton and Hove CYPT. Oasis staff should be justifiably proud of the excellent work that the project has achieved in helping parents whose substance misuse has been a cause of concern to the welfare of their children and the very positive comments made by those who have taken part in the programme.

This year we are looking to review and re-structure our direct work with young people themselves through the 8's-16's programme. As for the under 5's who come to the crèche at Oasis, the latest OFSTED report rated the facility as excellent and were fulsome in their praise of the regime established by Coralie and her staff. The report noted "Children receive the most amazing interaction from the supervisor of the crèche who is an excellent role model for the sessional workers within the setting"

Oasis was also recently reviewed for renewal of our Investors in People award and again, the inspectors were favourably impressed with the standard of leadership and the effective functioning of the staff

group. The assessor noted "Commitment demonstrated by interviewees to the ethos and mission of the Project – enthusiasm to provide a meaningful and effective service to service users." as being a particular strength of the project.

Our role in the national scene of substance misuse services continues to gain recognition. A report of the work of the POCAR programme is about to be published in Child Abuse Review, an international journal dedicated to highlighting good practice in multi-agency child protection work. Requests for training arrive regularly from other local authorities keen to know more about the success of our approach to women only substance misuse services.

It continues to give me great pleasure as Chair to be associated with an organisation that maintains such a high standard of performance in this very complex area of public service work.

Gretchen Precey



(Recovery On/Off Alcohol & Drugs) Service User group that meets every week.

Two of the Oasis SU's have been involved over the year in developing the service user involvement (SUI) training for service providers and have attended planning sessions with the SUI worker at MIND. They have also been involved in many different courses and training programmes throughout the year. Finally, one Oasis SU also helped to facilitate at the MIND Annual SU Consultation in November.

With training and support from myself one of the SU has regularly attended meetings with the PCT and has successfully influenced some of the commissioning decisions made. It has been an excellent year for Oasis service user involvement and I'm looking forward to working with the team next year to harness the enthusiasm and experience of the women service users.

Rick Cook, Service User Involvement Worker for Substance Misuse Mind



"We place considerable value on Brighton Oasis Project and the work it does in giving many women the chance to address their substance misuse problem.

During the past year the Project contributed greatly to what has been achieved in the city. Increasing the number of drug users who start and remain in treatment significantly increases their chances of good outcomes.

I was particularly pleased by the progress made in supporting families affected by substance misuse, enabling many children to be safely cared for by their parents."

Darren Grayson Chief Executive of Brighton and Hove City Teaching PCT

Throughout the year I have worked with the service users (SU) at Oasis to enable them to get involved in the planning and delivery of services and ensure that the voice of women users is heard in the city.

The Oasis Service User Forum met every 4 weeks throughout 2007/08 with approx 5-8 women attending each time. A meal was provided and cooked by the service users.

Over the year Oasis has been fortunate to have several very motivated service users that have reinvigorated the service user group. Four of these services users (SU's) are also members of SUSTAIN (Service User Support Training Advocacy & Involvement Network) and ROAD

Services for people with a substance misuse problem are categorized as Tier 2 or Tier 3. Tier 2 refers to open access drug treatment such as needle exchanges and drop in advice services, it is often where service users get initial information and support. Tier 3 refers to drug treatment in the community with regular sessions to attend undertaken as part of a care plan which may or may not include substitute prescribing. Oasis is commissioned by the local NHS to deliver tier 2 and 3 services for women in the area. Like all our services these are delivered by working in partnership with colleagues in other drug services and across health and social care. For drug treatment to be most effective clients need to stay engaged with services for at least 12 weeks, at Oasis 85% of clients attend for at least this time.

The Tier 3 intervention delivered to women attending voluntary is generally known as structured day care and comprises group activities and one to one key work. To complement all the services at Oasis a range of supplementary activities are available including:

- Yoga
- Auricular Acupuncture
- A healthy eating group
- Creative Activities
- Newsletter Production
- Service User Forum

Open Access is available 4 afternoons a week and telephone advice between 9-5 Monday to Friday. Alongside presenting problems with drugs and alcohol clients also come to open access with problems

around sexual health, housing, pregnancy, mental health, legal problems. Clients who book an open access slot are able to use the crèche.

For women who have completed a programme at Oasis we run an Aftercare service once a week. This group provides ongoing support and helps women to move on, providing guidance about education and training.

Oasis holds a Probation sub-contract for the women on Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRR). This is a community sentence for women whose offending is related to their drug use. These women are required to have a minimum number of contact hours at the project. They engage in various groups to address their criminal behavior and substance misuse. Women may attend Oasis on a DRR for up to a year. In the year 2007/08 17 women were on a DRR at Oasis.



Georgina's Story

I have struggled for nearly 20 years with my addictions, mainly to skunk and some recreational Class A drugs. I have on many occasions tried to quit with varying degrees of success but ultimately always returning to using drugs due to feelings of depression and hopelessness.

I was aware of drug rehabilitation programs but was always hesitant to access them as I felt they were designed and aimed for people struggling with 'harder' addictions – heroin, crack etc. However, I reached a point of absolute desperation in wanting to quit but feeling unable to deal with it on my own any longer. At this point I went to my GP to enquire about a referral to a drug rehab programme. He told me that there was a women's only service which existed in Brighton and I felt this would be perfect as I did not feel comfortable around men especially discussing personal issues.

I cannot express in words how much regular attendance at Oasis has helped me. I expected to be talking only about drug use but was very surprised to find the group sessions covered so much more – self-esteem, relationships, confidence and lots of cognitive behavioural therapy exercises aimed at challenging negative thoughts and behaviours. I found every single session enlightening, stimulating and extremely helpful. My self-esteem and confidence has increased dramatically which has had a very positive impact in many areas in my life and has helped me cut down my skunk use dramatically with the long-term view of abstaining completely. I have also managed to be abstinent from all Class A drugs since attending Oasis, something I am very proud of.

I feel Oasis is the perfect name for this centre as over the last few months it has personally felt like an oasis of calm, logical thinking, kindness and understanding in a difficult, confusing and painful world.

The POCAR project has been operational since October 2006 and was developed to be a robust and effective model of joint interagency working between Social Care Teams (CYPT), Substance Misuse Service (SMS/SPT), Crime Reduction Initiative (CRI) and Brighton Oasis Project (BOP). Oasis delivers the psycho social component for women who are referred to the programme. This includes women with both problematic drug and alcohol use. The POCAR program is a response to the identified needs of children and young people whose parents have substance misuse problems. Substance misuse is often an underlying cause of children been identified as “at risk” or “in need” by social services.

Since its inception the numbers attending the programme have increased. In 2007/08 38 women commenced the POCAR programme with 10 already on it at the start of the year. The length of time women spend on the programme is variable according to their needs; the minimum programme duration is 16 weeks however some women have stayed for up to a year. The POCAR team has grown in line with the increased demand and now includes 2 part time staff and the coordinator. We also benefit from the input of volunteers into various aspects of the programme. Women attending POCAR are also able to access the other activities provided such as yoga, city college courses and the healthy eating group.

Triple P, the evidenced based parenting intervention is delivered to women on the POCAR programme. The staff team

delivered a workshop at the Triple P conference in Brighton focusing on working with substance misusing mothers which was well received.

The POCAR programme is currently being evaluated however feedback from women attending and the teams working with their families is very positive.



“The Children and Young People’s Trust would like to congratulate the clients, staff and volunteers at Brighton Oasis Project on a successful year. The work they undertake with women and their families is invaluable in reducing the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse and supporting family life. We are delighted that the Parents of Children at Risk Programme (POCAR) has become well established and that lots of women and their children are now benefiting from this provision. The POCAR programme is a great example of agencies working together to support parents and safeguard children. Brighton Oasis Project has made a significant contribution to the city’s progress in tackling the “Hidden Harm” agenda.”

*Di Smith , Director of Children’s Services
Children & Young People’s Trust*

Client’s Story

Oasis has changed my life because I have been dependent on alcohol for the past 2 years. I had reached the point in my life where I couldn’t handle my alcohol misuse. I’m grateful for Oasis as it has given me the will to carry on with my life without alcohol.

Along with the substance misuse program came the parenting group, my children had no boundaries and no rules in their life, they never have because for the past 10 years of my family’s life I have moved them from place to place, school to school and not really thought of the consequences and how it really would affect them.

The parenting group has helped me put those rules and boundaries in place, it has taught me how to listen and understand my children needs. It’s given me the courage to be consistent and most of all a much more relaxed, calm, giving and understanding mother.

So I thank Oasis for giving me the tools to be a much better parent. Thank you for my recovery and a much better life for my children.



Oasis runs a general outreach service and one targeted at women working in the sex industry. Both services work with extremely vulnerable women who are marginalised in society and often experiencing multiple, complex health and social care needs. The outreach staff work with women in a variety of settings to promote their health and wellbeing and help them access general services such as GP's, housing services and benefit advice.

Sex Workers' Outreach Project (SWOP)
SWOP is open to all women working in the sex industry. The service works in partnership with Terrence Higgins Trust South to provide outreach to parlours and other sex work establishments. Condoms and other safer sex supplies are distributed and the outreach workers offer specialist sexual health advice, along with a range of support, advice and information.

The service had 112 first time contacts during 2007-8 and saw an average of 53 individual women on a monthly basis. The service also reprinted and distributed the Sex Workers' Handbook – a manual with information on issues such as sexual health, safer working, drugs and alcohol, debt and leaving sex work.

As well as brief solution focused interventions, the service provided one-to-one ongoing support and advocacy around issues such as drug and alcohol use and barriers to exiting sex work. During 2007-8 the service came into contact with women from 21 different nationalities: where required, telephone interpretation services were used as well as a range of multi-lingual resources.

Client's Story

I was introduced to SWOP when I was forced to become a working girl. I had heard of Oasis but didn't realise that they supported us girls. Finally I could talk about how I felt emotionally and physically without being judged which was a huge comfort.

The Oasis project helped me to address my alcohol and drug abuse, this was all confidential and that really helped me, I have come a long way since using Oasis and know I still have a long way to go. But with regular support I know I'm not alone.

General Outreach

The outreach service, delivered by one part time outreach worker mostly targeted women who were either homeless or in temporary accommodation and had a total of 231 contacts with women. 47 contacts were first time contacts.

In October 2007 the Outreach Service started to carry out visits to Bronzefield Prison with the aim of promoting the project's services to women due for release. 6 visits were carried out between October 2007 – March 2008.

The service takes a harm minimisation approach and works holistically with women: a range of support and advocacy was provided with the aim of engaging women with health and support services as well as providing continuity of care for those women who struggle to stay engaged with health, housing or support services.

Volunteers are an essential part of Oasis, not only do they bring their skills and enthusiasm they increase the diversity of the team and bring their own unique life experiences. Volunteering can be good for the individual, building skills and confidence and improved mental and physical wellbeing. Whether its helping with preparing meals or providing counseling for clients the volunteers contribute enormously to making Oasis the unique organisation it is. Estimates suggest that for every pound invested by an organisation in volunteering there is a notional return of seven or eight pounds.

Without the volunteers contribution at Oasis we would be unable to provide all the aspects of the service currently offered. We receive a regular flow of requests to become a volunteer at Oasis and this year thanks to charitable trust funding have been able to recruit for roles throughout the organisation.

All the volunteers undertake a formal training programme which ensures they understand the organization, their role and responsibilities. After a thorough vetting process they begin to work in the areas they have expressed an interest in, this could be the crèche, adult services or in supporting the organisation generally. This year we have provided opportunities for volunteers to meet together to be updated on issues relating to their work in the organization such as domestic violence.

In the spring we took advantage of our refurbished patio with a barbeque to thank the volunteers for their contribution, they were then presented with flowers and

thanks by a service user. Amongst the staff team we have several ex volunteers and are really pleased that volunteering can be a route to paid employment for some. In the next year we intend to continue providing regular opportunities for volunteers to get together and update their knowledge to ensure they are aware what a crucial role they play in the organization.



Young Women's Service

The Oasis Young Women's Substance Misuse service works in partnership with RU OK the statutory young peoples service to provide substance misuse interventions for young women aged 11-19. The Young Women's Worker (YWSMW) is flexible and will meet clients in venues convenient to them such as cafes and in youth centres. To increase girls and young women's self esteem and confidence, their ability to empathize with others and sustain relationships the young women's worker

Nicky's Story

I am a twenty year old young mum with an addiction of cannabis and I have been addicted to cannabis for seven and half years. Coming to Oasis on the young women's program has helped me dramatically, and by going to this group every week it has changed my way of thinking and what my triggers are. Oasis is very helpful to young mothers such as myself.

Having a key worker is very useful because they help you challenge your addiction and tackle it safely, you can also talk to them and off load your problems.

By coming to Oasis every week helps you to keep off your substances and they are still there for you after you have completed the course. I would definately refer other people to join the project as you learn about relationships, domestic abuse, triggers, self esteem and changing your way of thinking.

uses a range of interventions.

This year we have started a young women's group for the first time with the aim of helping young women make the transition from children's to adult services. The group runs on a modular format with different themes including self esteem, changing your thinking, sex and relationships. Over the year from 2007- 08 a total of 37 young women accessed the service including 26 new clients. At the end of March 2008, 15 young women had completed treatment having been retained for more than 12 weeks and 13 young women continued to receive support. The young women's worker has worked closely with staff in other agencies to ensure that young women's needs are met. A "Handy Hints" handouts has been distributed throughout Brighton and Hove hostels with tips for safer alcohol use.

Young Oasis

Young Oasis is a service for children and young people aged up to 18 years with a family member who is using, or has used drugs or alcohol problematically. During the year the service provided both one to one counseling and a group intervention. Young Oasis uses creative ways to encourage the children and young people to explore and express their feelings. It was a difficult year for the Young Oasis for a number of reasons. The funding to the service was reduced from previous years and the service was also affected by staffing problems. The service did however continue to operate not least due to the commitment of the volunteers involved.

The service was given a target of working

with 25 children and young people for one to one counseling over the year which was achieved. The aim of the counseling is to increase the children and young people's resilience and ability to cope with their circumstances.

MY LITTLE OASIS

When I was lost in the desert,
my little Oasis guided me home.

When I was dying of thirst,
my little Oasis gave me friends.

When I was weak and vulnerable,
my little Oasis gave me protection.

When I was hungry, my little Oasis
gave me something to eat.

And when I was sad,
my little Oasis gave me happiness.
My little Oasis may have gone for a while,
but I will always find my little Oasis.

My little Oasis will never be lost,
my little Oasis will always come back.

My little Oasis is the place I go,
I love my little Oasis.

By Sophie aged 13

Creche

The number of women now accessing the POCAR programme at Oasis has led to increased numbers of children in the crèche. We continue to work with a high ratio of staff to children to ensure they are given the attention they deserve. We are fortunate to have a good team of crèche staff including committed volunteers. The crèche has increased its opening times to accommodate the increased demand. The crèche was inspected by Ofstead and was judged "good" in all areas except the

Enjoying and Achieving Category where it was judged "outstanding". The children (and their mums) enjoyed a summer picnic in Queens Park. A Christmas party was held here at Oasis with food and a Christmas fairy. All the children received a Christmas present and had the chance to have their faces painted.

Between 1st April 07 & 31st Mar 08 the creche worked with 45 children from 35 families.

Shelley's Story

I was dependant on alcohol for the first two years of my son's life, so his father (my husband) brought him up independently, my husband is not from England and so he spoke a different language to my son, my son has no brothers or sisters in this country so he was always either with his father and me. I spoke English to him and his father spoke a different language. This led to my son's confusion and he became quite slow communicating verbally to others.

I started POCAR at the Brighton Oasis Project and my son started attending the crèche there, straight away my husband and I saw a great difference in his behavior, he became to more confident around other people and in himself and started learning English words more in a fun way. The Crèche manager gave me a lot of information of language experts to help my son.



Women's Drug project established at Brighton Women's centre. The aim of the project was to support women drug users by offering a support group and drop in with a crèche facility

1993

1995 Successful bid submitted for SRB funding for £192,000 to establish a family day centre for drug misusers and their children

Successful bid to National Lottery Charity Board for £127,748 over 3 years. Services at this time delivered on 3 sites, Brighton Women's Centre, Tranxactions premises and the NHS Drug Dependency Unit

1996

The project formally separated from the Brighton Women's Centre and became Brighton Oasis Project

Brighton Oasis Project becomes a Limited Company and achieves charitable status

1997

Lease obtained on 22 Richmond Place, building and refurbishment commenced

1998 First day programme commenced at Oasis attended by 8 women

Sex Workers Outreach Project commences to work with women in the sex industry

2000

Oasis 8-16 Young Peoples group wins Community Care Award in the Drug and Alcohol Category

2001



2005 Achieve Investors in People status

2006 Acquire lease for number 11 Richmond Place to establish POCAR programme

Start to deliver services as part of the Parents of Children at Risk Programme (POCAR), an interagency initiative

2006



Brighton Oasis Project wins Best Drug Team in the South East in the first Home Office Tackling drugs Changing Lives

2007-08

Over 85% of women remain in treatment with Brighton Oasis Project for more than 12 weeks

2008

Over 60 women have commenced POCAR at Brighton Oasis Project

2008-09

Income projected to be over 500k for the year

Incoming resources from charitable activities	Total £	
Unrestricted:		
Brighton and Hove Primary Care Trust	139,389	
Brighton & Hove City Council	20,000	
Other grants	5,349	£164,738

Restricted:		
Brighton & Hove City Council	34,600	
Communitas Against Drugs	25,638	
Brighton and Hove Primary Care Trust	105,153	
Sussex Probation Service	4,480	
Sure Start	14,600	
Lloyds TSB Foundation	20,000	
The Monument Trust	25,000	
Crime Reduction Initiative	40,667	
The Body Shop Foundation	2,000	
Children and Young People's Trust	2,667	
Sussex Community Foundation	5,000	
Community of Blessed Virgin Mary	5,000	
Capital works income	54,500	
Total £	£339,305	£504,043

Expenditure 2007/08	
Staff costs	315,199
Depreciation	11,400
Project Expenses	4,897
Rent	35,075
Utilities	26,377
Staff travel and expenses	2,467
Supervision	1,783
Audit and Accountancy	11,300
IT costs	2,495
Other small costs	10,334
Individual Project costs total	6041
Total £	£426,828

Brighton Oasis Project gratefully acknowledges funding and support from the following:

Brighton and Hove City Council
Brighton and Hove City Teaching Primary Care Trust
Brighton and Hove Children and Young People's Trust
Sure Start Central
Home Office Drug Interventions Programme
Sussex Probation Service
Home Office Communities Against Drugs
Monument Trust
The Body Shop Foundation
Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sussex Community Foundation
Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales
Brighton District Nurses Association

Our Board of Trustees

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Brighton and Hove City 
Teaching Primary Care Trust

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Lloyds TSB | Foundation for England and Wales