



SCMC NEWS

#3 FEBRUARY 2010

The Scottish Community Mediation Centre Newsletter

Happy new year to all our readers.

Welcome to this, our third newsletter – we hope that you find it useful and informative. If you wish to make any contributions, please contact us. We hope you had a very happy Burns Night.



New courses

TWO new courses have been developed by the Centre – Shuttle Mediation and Whole Stair/Multi-Party. The Shuttle course that ran in September 2009 has been edited as it was a bit too ambitious and tried to pack too much into a half day. The revised course was successfully delivered in Elgin in December and will run again on 4 March.

The Whole Stair/Multi-Party course will be delivered by Aileen Riddell in March this year who some of you will know from her days with the Sacro Aberdeen Community Mediation service.

Bookings were brisk as soon as they were advertised. The first Shuttle course in September was full. The December course in Elgin had nine participants from the Highlands and Aberdeenshire services. A second open course in Edinburgh on 4 March 2010 is filling up. The first Co-mediation course on 30 September was full with 12 participants so places for the next course need to be booked ASAP. We can easily provide more courses if the demand is there. Check the new 2010–2011 training timetable on the website www.scmc.sacro.org.uk to see what's coming up.

Staff News

2010 heralds the tenth anniversary of the 'consultancy team' working together. A testament to mediation skills.

Eileen has been leading the blind once more, this time in sunnier climes with Traveleyes an international tour company specialising in holidays for blind/partially sighted/sighted groups. Scottish born entrepreneur Amar Latif runs the company. He was educated at Strathclyde University and has won several awards for his work as a young entrepreneur, film maker and actor. An amazing person, born blind, who pushes the limits. Visit www.traveleyes-international.com if you'd like to know more.

On the work front Eileen has been re-elected as Board Member of the Scottish Mediation Network but is no longer Chair.

Robert has been busy bagging more Munros and plans several highland trips in 2010, together with another 'midsummer bivvy' on top of a hill, much to the bemusement of friends and colleagues. He continues to research his family history and hopes to visit a couple of Commonwealth war graves late in 2010.



Early morning mist from summit of Glas Tulaichean.



USE YOUR MOUSE to locate lots of interesting video clips showing mediators in action in different fields of mediation.

Go to the "news" tab at www.scmc.sacro.org.uk and click on the short video for Amber, which will take you to YouTube and lots of related video clips about mediation.

SCMN News



THE network held their latest meeting this month in Musselburgh, kindly hosted by East Lothian Community Mediation Service. With 30 members attending, it was a lively meeting with good discussions and sharing of information.



SCMN members at January's meeting in Musselburgh.

Update on accreditation

AT the recent SCMN meeting the Perth and Kinross Community Mediation Service were presented with their accreditation certificate, together with two of their mediators – Andy Heap and Lois McKandie



Andy Heap and Lois McKandie receive their Accreditation certificates from Anne Inglis, one of the assessors. Also pictured is Ialene Mitchell.

Scottish Community Mediation Centre

THE Scottish Community Mediation Centre has a national and international reputation for high quality training and consultancy work in the field of Community Mediation and constructive conflict resolution. The Centre, which is managed by Sacro and funded by the Scottish Government, has provided services to a wide range of national and local government agencies as well as other bodies such as charities, social housing providers, police and Ombudsmen.

We provide a comprehensive service of training, consultancy and practice advice on all aspects of community mediation, as well as acting as the administrative base for the Scottish Community Mediation Network and its accreditation schemes.

We are able to offer a range of resources on all issues around constructive conflict resolution in neighbourhoods. Training, advice, guidance and assistance are available to mediation services, social landlords, and all other agencies concerned with neighbourhood conflict.

Assistance

- > Information and advice on Community Mediation and constructive conflict resolution.
- > Training courses on all aspects of constructive conflict resolution.
- > Assistance to social landlords in the provision of quality, accredited conflict resolution services to their public.
- > Assistance with the introduction and maintenance of rigorous standards of service delivery in the areas of neighbour mediation and neighbourhood conflict resolution.
- > Design and delivery of good neighbour initiatives in conjunction with Scottish local authorities and Housing Associations.
- > Publications and promotional materials on community mediation in Scotland.

Statistics

MEMBERS of the Scottish Community Mediation Network (SCMN) have been submitting statistics to the Centre since April 2008. The Centre acts as administrator for the SCMN. In the first six months of the current year 04/09 – 03/10 community mediation services around Scotland worked with a total of 1341 referrals. Of these almost a half (47.6%) related to noise disputes. Of those referrals which went on to become mediation cases, 68% resulted in either a positive improvement or agreement amongst parties.

scottish mediation network

THE fourth Scottish Mediation Conference is being held in Edinburgh on 25 & 26 February 2010. Go to the SMN website www.scottishmediation.org.uk for further details about the conference programme and workshop hosting opportunities.

SMN (Scottish Mediation Network) is currently recruiting a new Chief Executive to succeed Carol Paton who has been their interim Chief Executive.

IAN McDonough and Eileen Schott have been involved in the SMN since its inception and have both served the board as Directors and as Chair since the creation of the SMN Ltd. We hope the new CEO will continue the good work and continue to support all forms of mediation in Scotland.

Keep up to date with all Scottish Mediation Network activities through the monthly e-newsletter, Collaborate. E-mail collaborate@scottishmediation.org.uk to be added to the e-mail list.

Weblinks

www.mediate.com

Mediate.com is a good read – especially the blogs. There are lots of links to articles on topics that would interest practitioners in Scotland. Although the website is American and commercial mediation is well covered, there are some interesting articles on ethical issues that are quick to read and only a few pages long.

There is an interesting article entitled 'You know you are taking it personally when...' by Bill Eddy in *mediate.com* – see:

www.mediate.com/articles/eddyB5.cfm .

Centre News

WE are pleased to announce that we are now one of 500 REHIS Approved Training Centres in Scotland.

Participants on the new two-day Handling Conflict Constructively course will receive a joint award from REHIS (Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland) see web-link at: www.rehis.org/about/about-rehis

We will be promoting the next course on 26 and 27 May 2010 as an un-assessed stand-alone course to improve communication and reduce the risk of making conflict worse.

There is no expectation that participants will mediate in future and no reference to mediation in the course material. It is suitable for front line staff dealing with conflicts and the mandatory module for anyone who wants to complete the assessed three-day course in basic Mediation Skills we offer.



Eileen, Robert and Graham Walker of REHIS at the recent signing of the joint agreement.

AN application to become a Branded Learning Centre was submitted to Learn Direct Scotland in September and Eileen and Robert have been slaving away putting together a portfolio of evidence to support our application. Why? Independent Learning Account holders could purchase our training with grants available from Learn Direct Scotland. For more information visit www.lds4b.com.

We have been busy developing our website in the past few months: *The Mediation Managers' Manual* has been added to the Practice/ Publications section in our website + two extracts from the book *A Guide to Mediating in Scotland* + a new search engine and a *What's New* button.

We are currently developing a practice forum for mediators to raise and discuss practice issues with other mediators. The site will be moderated to protect contributors and readers.

News from around Scotland

We asked for your news and here is what we have to pass on:

At the **Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire** Mediation Services the six-month Homelessness Mediation Pilot started in January and will carry on until July 2010. Nicola Angus has been seconded to this post and will be based in Peterhead over this period. The areas covered by the pilot are Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

In **Edinburgh**, the Community Mediation Service have built up their volunteer numbers and now have 26 mediators including ECMS staff, the Centre's team and 18 volunteers. Their new group of 10 volunteers began in June and many of them now are quite experienced and confident having had a steady stream of co-mediating cases. We are pleased that they represent such diverse communities.

The **Fife** Community Mediation Service continues to keep busy, with workplace referrals within the council increasing. Their Schools Initiative is awaiting funding approval and, if approved, they will be working with two new Fife groups this year, as well as providing support for our original schools. The Fife service will be launching the whole series of our Peer Mediation and Transition booklets, hopefully in March.

The **Renfrewshire** service has again seen an increase in referrals in the last quarter this has been a result of increasing our awareness sessions. The last instalment of awareness raising sessions, were to Environmental Neighbourhood Wardens and proved to be successful. In addition we have also seen an improvement in our performance figures as a result of our early intervention. A higher number of our residents have confirmed an improvement in their quality of life after Mediation has become involved with the case. In some cases it has also been successful without the requirement of a full mediation session.

In **Midlothian**, the Mediation Service continues to grow and shows a yearly increase of 10 to 15% in the number of referrals and our expectation is that the number of referrals for community mediation will continue to grow. The service has now taken over the Council's work place mediation provision. They now have a large enough team of volunteers to meet demand and have stopped recruiting for the time being.



Dawn Mands being presented with the Smithies hamper by Bob Ballantine, Team Leader, Dundee Community Mediation.

Also pictured are Libby Mands and nominator Pat Dobson.

The **North Lanarkshire** service has now moved to a new location within Scott House, Motherwell. All posts within the service have now been made permanent as a result of the recent restructure within Housing and Social Work Services. The service is also looking at further development, one way in which we have been doing this is through feedback from service users, which has provided both positive points and points of development to be considered.

In the **Scottish Borders** the mediation service has seen a lot of change in the past twelve months, with a move to a co-located unit, with the Safer Communities Team, in Council HQ in Newtown St Boswells. Police personnel are now physically co-locating and it is already noticeable what the benefits of co-locating can be mainly in getting early interventions in quicker through better multi-agency working. We will continue to work hard at promoting community mediation as a valuable early intervention against ASB.

At the **South Ayrshire** Community Mediation Service referrals to the mediation service have picked up which has allowed nearly all of the new mediators to begin practising their skills. Awareness-raising sessions have been delivered to the police and, separately, the five housing offices within the region.

And finally, in **West Dunbartonshire** the Neighbourhood Mediation Service has seen a healthy increase in numbers of referrals compared with the corresponding period last year. In early January 2010 the Council agreed to a new structure within the ASB Taskforce with the introduction of four full time mediator posts. This will help meet with the demands put on the service for early intervention and prevention through the mediation framework.

This and previous editions of this Newsletter can be obtained from our website – see details below. If you wish to contribute to our next edition (due out in May 2010) please do drop us a line. Photos particularly welcome!



Scottish
Community
Mediation
Centre

21 Abercromby Place
Edinburgh EH3 6QE
Tel: 0131 624 9200
Email: info@scmc.sacro.org.uk
Web: www.scmc.sacro.org.uk



Sacro is a company incorporated under the Companies Act, limited by guarantee.
Company reg. No. SC86651. Registered charity No. SC016293.
Registered office at 29 Albany Street, Edinburgh EH1 3QN.
Honorary President: The Rt. Hon. Lord Cullen of Whitekirk KT.