



SCMC NEWS

#4 MAY 2010

The Scottish Community Mediation Centre Newsletter

WELCOME!

Welcome to the May edition of our newsletter and we have news for you. We are moving office in July – see Centre News for further details.



Oddities corner

Never cast a clout till May is oot

– a reflection

Many of you will have heard the above phrase which, although it appears to be Scottish, a little digging shows that it is an English proverb – *Ne'er cast a clout till May be out* being the alternative modern form. The earliest citation is this version of the rhyme from Dr. Thomas Fuller, *Gnomologia*, 1732, although it probably existed in word-of-mouth form well before that: *Leave not off a Clout Till May be out*.

Clout in this sense means a piece of cloth. The meaning behind the mention of May is ambiguous; it could be taken as being the month of May or, certainly in an English context, the may flower – that is, the common hawthorn flower. By the way, a *Gnomologia* has nothing whatsoever to do with gnomes!

New courses

Ian ran a new half-day course on *Policies and Procedures for Community Mediation Service Managers* on 17 March 2010 and aims to run it again later this year.

In the next few months we have plans to develop a series of new courses including: *Building your Portfolio* – a discussion of how to work on mediator accreditation, a refresher course for 'rusty mediators' and a practice day for experienced mediators.

Training

What's coming up?

We are running a two-day course in Edinburgh called *Handling Conflict Constructively* on 26 and 27 May for people who are not mediators and need to learn skills that will help them handle difficult situations more effectively. The course is not assessed. For the first time people completing this course will receive a joint award from REHIS and the Centre. REHIS – The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland – is Scotland's awarding body for qualifications in Health and Safety and we look forward to working with them in partnership in future.



We have a new venue for our next five-day course in late summer (26, 27 August and 2, 3 and 10 September 2010) in Glasgow which is lighter and brighter than the Renfield Saint Stephens centre in Bath Street. Our previous five-day *Mediation Skills* course was in Edinburgh in March. The course was full and all 11 participants passed the course with flying colours; including Robert.

We have noticed an increase in the number of people willing to pay for this course themselves over the past two years. Mediation skills are seen as a useful addition and a way to increase an individual's 'employability'.



SCMN News: An Office Near You



IN this occasional series we take a look the home of a community mediation service somewhere around Scotland. In this edition it is Aberdeen's service.

Sacro Mediation Services moved into their current accommodation in May 2001, from their previous premises in Little Belmont Street. The accommodation is shared with Sacro Restorative Justice, Community Based Reparation and Support Services.

Sacro Criminal Justices services are housed within the building next door.

Originally bought as a dowry, the building was later sold and at some point, was used as a hotel. Rumour has it this hotel was used for purposes quite unsavoury – in fact; we have it on good authority that the current Team Leader's office was once papered with a lurid, exotic, scarlet paper!

Since then the building was owned and run by an employment agency for the oil and gas industry, supplying offshore workers for all over the world, especially Denmark and Holland. This same owner is still our current landlord.

Update on accreditation

A further two mediators and one service have been accredited since the last newsletter came out. These are: Nicola Angus and Lesley Fettes together with the Aberdeen service. The scheme has now been opened up to individual applications from mediators; previously portfolios were submitted in batches by each service.

For further information, see the website where the standards for the schemes are available. More assessors are being currently recruited and trained to handle the anticipated increase in the volume of portfolios.

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.

Centre News

Branded!

Since our last newsletter in February we have received approval as a Branded Learning Centre status by Learn Direct Scotland. Our next step is to apply to become a provider of ILA approved courses so that individuals who apply for and have Independent Learning Accounts (ILA's) can use their money credited to their accounts to pay for our short courses or pay part of the cost of our longer courses.



Some of our courses now appear on Learn Direct Scotland's database of Learning providers. We

have to hold Branded Learning Centre status for six months before we can apply for ILA status so we plan to submit our application at the earlier possible date which is in early August and we will let you know how we get on.

In the meantime if you want to learn more about the government's ILA scheme see weblinks section.

Team Away Day

At our annual team away day in Edinburgh we develop our plans for the forthcoming year. We met on 27 April to review targets set and outcomes achieved for 2009–2010. We were relieved to find that our income and expenditure were finely balanced but came out even so we know that we are in a position to continue creating new courses and delivering basic training for mediators for 2010–2011.

On the move.....

The lease on 21 Abercromby Place is expiring and we are moving to 29 Albany Street, Edinburgh in July which is just a short distance away from us. Whilst we will be sad at leaving such a beautiful place to work in, there is a larger training room at the new premises which will give us greater flexibility in providing courses.

www.scmc.sacro.org.uk

Our webmaster Alan has been busy upgrading our website in recent weeks and there is now a revised front page with access to a full list of community mediation services throughout Scotland together with a new structure and upgraded sections within the NETWORKS section.



SCMC will shortly be moving from 21 Abercromby Place.

Weblinks

www.learndirectscotland.com

Courses can be found by the following steps:

- 1) select 'COURSE SEARCH' on left hand side of screen
- 2) enter 'sacro' and click on SEARCH

www.ilascotland.org.uk

ILA Scheme

Visit the above link for more details on this scheme and how to apply for your account.



News from around Scotland

We asked for your news and here is a summary of what is happening around Scotland:

Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire

The Aberdeenshire service has seen a rise in the number of referrals since January and there is now a pilot Street Mediation service in Aberdeenshire. The Homelessness pilot is going well and there are hopes for this to be extended.

Dundee and Angus

There has been an increase in the number of referrals received, year-on-year, by both services showing a welcome steady increase in usage of mediation.

Following the success of our two "*Encouraging Participation In Mediation*" training courses for referrers last autumn a further course was run in February which also received favourable evaluations. Both the Dundee and Angus services have supported Noise Action Week (26 – 30 April) by providing attended information stands at the Wellgate Centre in Dundee and the Tesco Superstore at Montrose. Shoppers who participated in opinion research surveys had the chance to win a £25 Tesco voucher. The services saw the retirement of their team leader – Bob Ballantine – at the end of April after ten years of working for the service.

East Lothian

The service has, once again, received more referrals than ever before. As with the previous year, the overwhelming majority of referrals came from agencies. Many residents in East Lothian now phone the widely publicised 24 hour ASB help-line as a first point of contact for even low level neighbour disputes. We very much enjoyed hosting the Scottish Community Mediation Network Meeting in January; it was a very positive experience. In February we had another enjoyable experience, providing our first Scottish Mediation Conference workshop. We were delighted by the way the group engaged with the situations we presented them with and received excellent feedback from participants.

Shetland

Referrals continue to come in with an upsurge in the new year. The team leader is currently running training for five new volunteers. A pilot arts and Restorative Justice project called Space2Face is almost concluded and it has been a very successful venture with some amazing gifts created. We are hopeful of further funding to extend this pilot project for at least another year.

South Lanarkshire

One of our full-time mediators and two of our part-time Mediators have recently achieved accreditation, with a further three part-time mediators currently compiling their portfolios in preparation for submission for assessment by end July 2010.

We continue to promote and encourage Homeless referrals for Mediation from all Housing Area offices within South Lanarkshire. The service has also been receiving a number of enquiries and referrals from Schools and Social Work services who are coming into contact with Young People who are experiencing family conflict.

West Dunbartonshire

We have recently restructured our Anti Social Behaviour Services and the full range of services will be operational W.E.F. 17 May 2010. We have recruited two new full time mediators, Frank Beattie & Colin MacFarlane with plans to interview for two more posts in May. Having full time mediators will allow for development and promotional work of the service to progress. We will hopefully be hosting a 'celebratory' event shortly, marking the 10th Anniversary of neighbourhood mediation within West Dunbartonshire.

The current 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 September 2010) please do drop us a line. Photos particularly welcome!

Contact us at the Scottish Community Mediation Centre:

By phone: 0131 624 9200
By email: info@scmc.sacro.org.uk
Or visit our website: www.scmc.sacro.org.uk



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