

## Our story

15 years ago Sussex Oakleaf was created to provide homes in the community for people leaving St Francis Hospital in Haywards Heath. It is hard to believe that some of those people had lived in a psychiatric hospital for over 30 years. We often hear their stories of lives behind closed doors, segregated from our community, subject to discrimination from the rest of society. It is Sussex Oakleaf's fundamental belief that people who experience mental distress, are marginalised from society because of their drug misuse or separated from their families because they are unable to cope, deserve opportunity, support and a chance.

We try and support and offer these opportunities to vulnerable people across East and West Sussex through a whole range of housing and community-based activities.

Throughout our 15 years we have developed services which put service users at the very heart of what we do. We have developed services which offer a range of different types of support in different settings to suit people's differing needs. And now in 2009 our organisation has had some local and national recognition for the work that we do through our innovative projects and developments.

***“If you're walking down the right path and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress.”***

Barack Obama



## This is what we do

We are here helping people survive crisis and recover control in their lives, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

We provide outreach services to support people to maintain their tenancy, work opportunities through our community cafes and a whole range of different housing options including registered care, supported flats and shared housing. We support people to use their time productively in the social or work context, facilitating meetings, clubs and groups. Our support is focussed around person-centred planning.

We are proud of our complex care packages provided to people who have the highest support needs in our community and want to live independently in their own home.

### **Melanie's story**

***For a long time Melanie would attend the groups and just sit there quietly, often tearful. Gradually she started to form friendships within the group. With her new friends she has started to socialise and has taken up a sport. She has recently taken up part-time work in the career that she is trained in. Melanie has voiced many times how much coming to the drop-ins has meant to her and how it has helped to regain her confidence.***



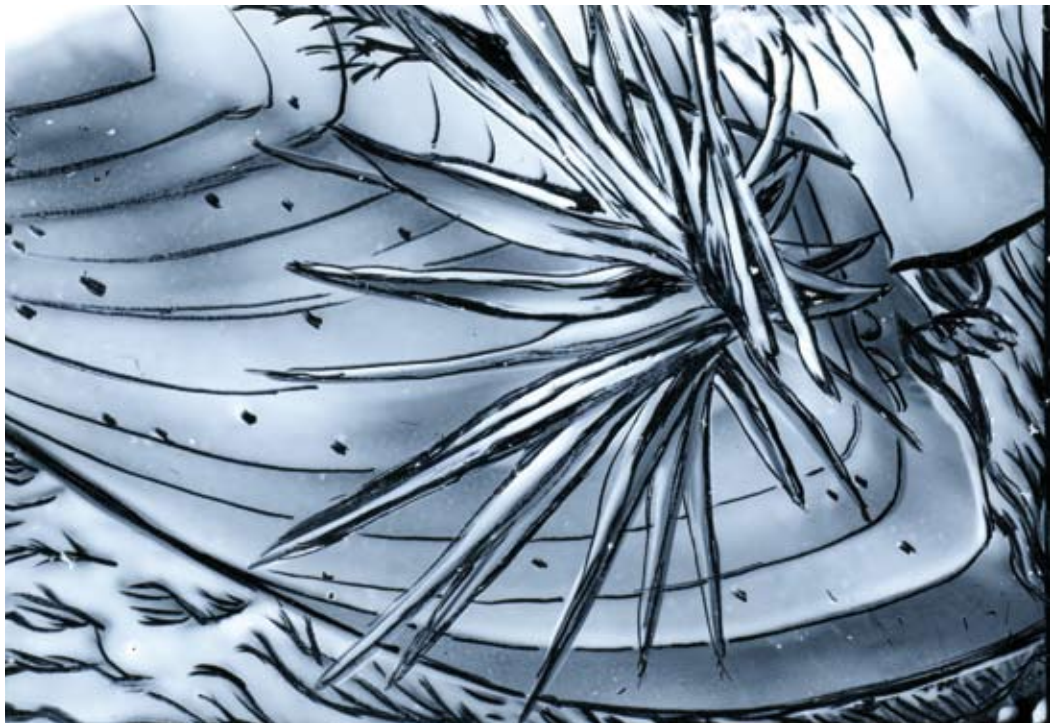
## Friends, networks and partners

We certainly couldn't do what we do alone. We value the people around Sussex Oakleaf who enable us to fulfil our potential. We are currently working with Sussex Partnership Trust on some exciting developments for community resources. We work with our friends in the Strategic Network for Mental Health: Advance Housing, Second Step in Bristol and Mind in Birmingham, to benchmark our services and share good practice. We work with our colleagues in the Mental Health Providers Forum to learn from each other, share experiences and to have the opportunity to influence national policy.

We work closely with our commissioners and value their support. We have many friends, people who know Sussex Oakleaf and have worked with us over a number of years. This wonderful network of friends, partners, colleagues and competitors helps us deliver better services to our clients.

### **Lucien's story**

***Lucien joined the group a year ago. He has made friendships and helped organise social events independent of staff. Lucien has taken an active role in service user involvement and has been a great peer supporter in the group. Creative opportunities, that have been made available to him through Sussex Oakleaf's connections with external projects, have led to his art and creative writing work being published and exhibited at art galleries in West Sussex. Lucien will soon be starting a residential course to develop new work-based skills.***



## Oakleaf Consumer Circle and Service User Involvement

Oakleaf Consumer Circle is the name chosen by our service users for our service user committee, which is a direct subcommittee of our board.

The Oakleaf Consumer Circle acts as a critical friend to the board, raising our awareness of consumer and service user issues, holding us to account to ensure that service users are at the very heart of what we do. We also have

service user representation on every single interview panel from recruiting the Chair to support worker.

Service user involvement in Sussex Oakleaf is more than the annual survey, more than the Sussex Oakleaf newsletter and actually more than Oakleaf Consumer Circle, it enshrines everything we do within the organisation and long may that continue.

***“As a Circle we are here to help and champion our service users for the benefit of all. I am thrilled to be the first Chair of the Oakleaf Consumer Circle and I see the Circle going from strength to strength.”***

Laura Rigg, Chair of the Oakleaf Consumer Circle



## Recovery, wellness and hope

Sussex Oakleaf works with service users in a recovery focussed way. Recovery is about making sure that the way we work puts service users in the driving seat of their support. We want to be alongside them in their journey to recovery, supporting their dreams, hopes and ambitions.

Peer support is a really important part of recovery. Our training course is accredited and has been hugely successful in providing service users with the opportunity to really use their experience to help others and to give others hope. This is a very powerful way to help people stay well.

***One of the peer supporters employed by Sussex Oakleaf said that she has not been in employment for over 10 years and it was so nice to be able to say to friends and family that she was off to work!***

Sussex Oakleaf is one of the first organisations that has measured the effectiveness of recovery-based services through a two year project funded by the Department of Health with our Strategic Network partners. We celebrated the end of this project in January 2009 with a summit in Westminster where we had the opportunity to directly influence key policy makers. We had so many service users involved in the project over the two years, meeting their peers in Oxford, Bristol and Birmingham, shaping and developing services and most of all, enjoying the opportunity to take part in training, personal development and creative opportunities.



## Community Support

We are really trying to move away from the traditional view of day services. We strongly believe that vulnerable people in our communities deserve a different way to be supported. We presently have two community cafes running and several in development across Sussex. The cafes provide a facility for our peer support workers to do their work, they are also open to the public and are based in central town locations. Community psychiatric nurses see their clients in the cafes too; so much nicer than visiting a community mental health centre!

By developing this model of community support, we believe we are reducing the traditional stigma which is associated with mental illness. The community cafes are fantastic, so look out for our campaign next year to fundraise for shiny, fancy coffee machines. We think our service users deserve a good coffee!

***“Since coming to Stepping Stones I have made friends and have come out of my shell. I do a lot of things I would never have done such as art, keep fit, cooking and lots of trips and outings. All of these things have improved my self-esteem and I now feel I have a life. It has really changed me and I now wash up, make tea and coffee for my Mum and generally feel much better.”***

Peter



## On your marks, get set, go for individual budgets!

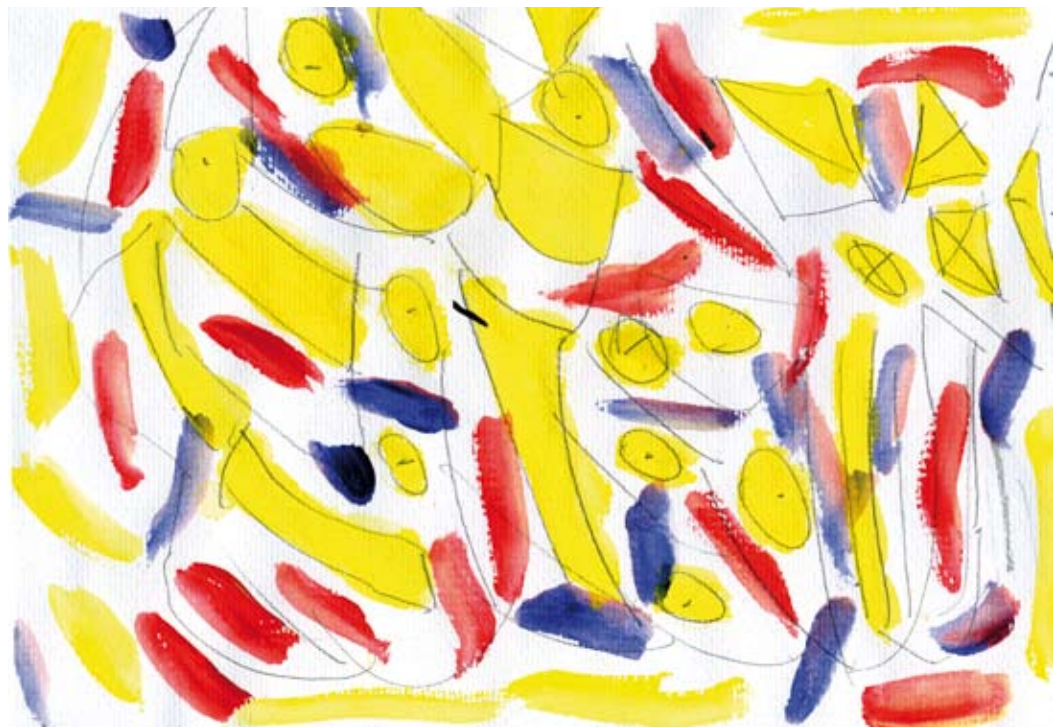
Sussex Oakleaf has been preparing for individual budgets and the personalisation agenda. We have been putting together a database of all of the community services, not just mental health but mainstream services that service users might want to access to aid their recovery. These range from fishing groups to art groups to swimming clubs.

We have been developing a computer-based system which will take a service user and individual budget co-ordinator through a Resource Allocation System (RAS), identify their needs with them, turn this into an individual budget and this will then link into our own internal finance systems to enable us to track, cost and invoice the individuals account. Alongside this, Sussex Oakleaf are developing its ideas for a brokerage service for service users and we hope that anybody with a mental health need and individual budget in Sussex will want to come to us to talk through their options and arrange their package of support.

Artwork: Margaret

***“You can’t reason yourself back into cheerfulness any more than you can reason yourself into an extra six inches in height.”***

Stephen Fry



## Complex Care

Up until very recently, the only option for somebody with very high support needs was a registered care home placement. Our business is about making sure that there are opportunities for people to have choice in their accommodation and support. Complex care packages are all about a tailor-made care package to suit individual needs. We are able to visit people as often as three times a day seven days a week. This is often in their own homes. We support people to live more independently, to access community services, support with daily living and emotional support. We coordinate a person-centred plan to enable them to get the very best out of their lives.

### **Clive's story**

***“I love living in my own flat.” Clive had lived in registered care for eight years. He had never considered living on his own until a Sussex Oakleaf New Futures Worker raised the idea. At the age of sixty-six he moved into his own flat, with the support of a complex care package. In three months Clive has taken huge steps in gaining more independence, which include: cooking, maintaining his tenancy and joining a local relaxation class. Clive has done really well in managing all aspects of independent living.***



## Stand to attention for the board!

The board of Sussex Oakleaf are all people from our local community who have an interest in making sure that our service users have the opportunities to support their recovery. Two of our board members are service users. We have three subcommittees of our board: the Oakleaf Consumer Circle, the Resources Committee and the Operations Committee.

Our Chair, Martyn Yeats, has led the organisation for the past five years and will be stepping down this October. We want to pass our huge thanks to Martyn for the enormous commitment that he has made during this time. He has led Sussex Oakleaf with integrity and we will be sure to miss his calm, fair but firm leadership style which we have benefited from over the years.

***“This has been another good year for Sussex Oakleaf. So much seems to have happened over the past year. I was delighted to be part of the launch of our service user committee (Oakleaf Consumer Circle) in January. The committee will work in partnership with the main board and further champion the voice of the service user within and beyond our organisation against keen competition. We have also won a Best Companies award for acknowledged excellence in the workplace, highlighting our commitment to being a good employer. Next year we aim to do even better!”***

Martyn Yeats, Chair



# Financial Resources

## Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ending 31st March 2008

	2008 £	2007 £
Grants & Donations	£3,003,978	£2,986,389
Investment Income	£24,823	£18,652
Other	£2	£1,689
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£3,028,803</b>	<b>£3,006,730</b>
Staff Costs	£2,199,093	£1,998,591
Non Staff Costs	£826,531	£962,480
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£3,025,624</b>	<b>£2,961,071</b>

## Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2008

	2008 £	2007 £
Fixed Assets	£152,535	£167,597
Current Assets	£810,602	£693,812
Current Liabilities	-£245,122	-£146,573
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>£718,015</b>	<b>£714,836</b>
Represented as:		
Share Capital	£8	£8
Restricted Reserves	£28,338	£22,947
Designated Reserves	£189,044	£191,825
General Funds	£500,625	£500,056



## Service Information (monthly)

Area of work	Number of Service Users and Projects
Mental Health Residential Care	5 projects 37 service users
Mental Health Supported Housing	8 projects 39 service users
Young Person Supported Scheme	2 projects 16 service users
Substance Misuse Tenancy Support	3 projects 51 service users
Outreach Services (Mid Sussex)	1 project 22 service users
Signpost Floating Support Housing advice	1 project 90 service users 200 service users
Day services	4 projects 216 service users (approx)
<b>Total</b>	<b>671 Service Users</b>

### At a glance

Number of staff	136
Number of projects	24
Annual turnover	£3m
Number of service users	671



## Have your say

Please send us your comments,  
ideas and suggestions:

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