

Change, continuity and growth for CSW

As 2015 has merged into 2016, the core purpose and values of CSW remain identical but the way in which they are delivered is changing substantially. Read all about it here... but first, let's remember what we've done in the past...

Look at what we achieved with the support of the Big Lottery Fund!

During the 3-year period February 2013-January 2016, the Big Lottery Fund part-funded 45 Circles across the South West Region. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of volunteers and staff, we successfully completed this project.

Outcomes summary:

- o The 45 Core Members all made, to varying degrees, positive changes to their attitudes and behaviour. Although a small minority were recalled, re-arrested and/or questioned for possible further offending, none were charged or convicted with offences that occurred whilst in a Circle. Although it is impossible to estimate the number of potential victims protected from sexual

abuse, it is evident that the numbers are substantial.

- o The volunteers themselves found an intrinsic value in the challenging and difficult work they undertook and have achieved personal and sometimes, professional growth through the process. Our work is valued by the statutory agencies and academic establishment and has a significant place in the package of measures used to prevent further sexual harm by known perpetrators.

- o We undertook an important role in educating and informing local communities about sexual abuse and how to prevent it, and we enabled community members to actively contribute to the prevention of further sexual abuse



Huge congratulations to Sara on her *StreetCraft* Scholarship Graduation

Following Sara Radford's (Circles Coordinator for Avon and Wiltshire) *StreetCraft* Scholarship, we are delighted to have secured funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for a research project to test the concept of establishing a new service for non-offending paedophiles.

Whilst representing a departure from our traditional work, this project aligns well with the charity's vision of 'No More Victims' and our fundamental purpose to prevent child sexual abuse. Sara is leading this work on a part-time basis.

by known perpetrators.

- o We have the confidence of Police and Probation as a valid, credible and meaningful resource in the risk management of some of the



most dangerous and vilified offenders in our communities.

This project leaves a legacy of more than 100 trained community volunteers across the South West region who want to continue working collaboratively to prevent further sexual abuse by known perpetrators.

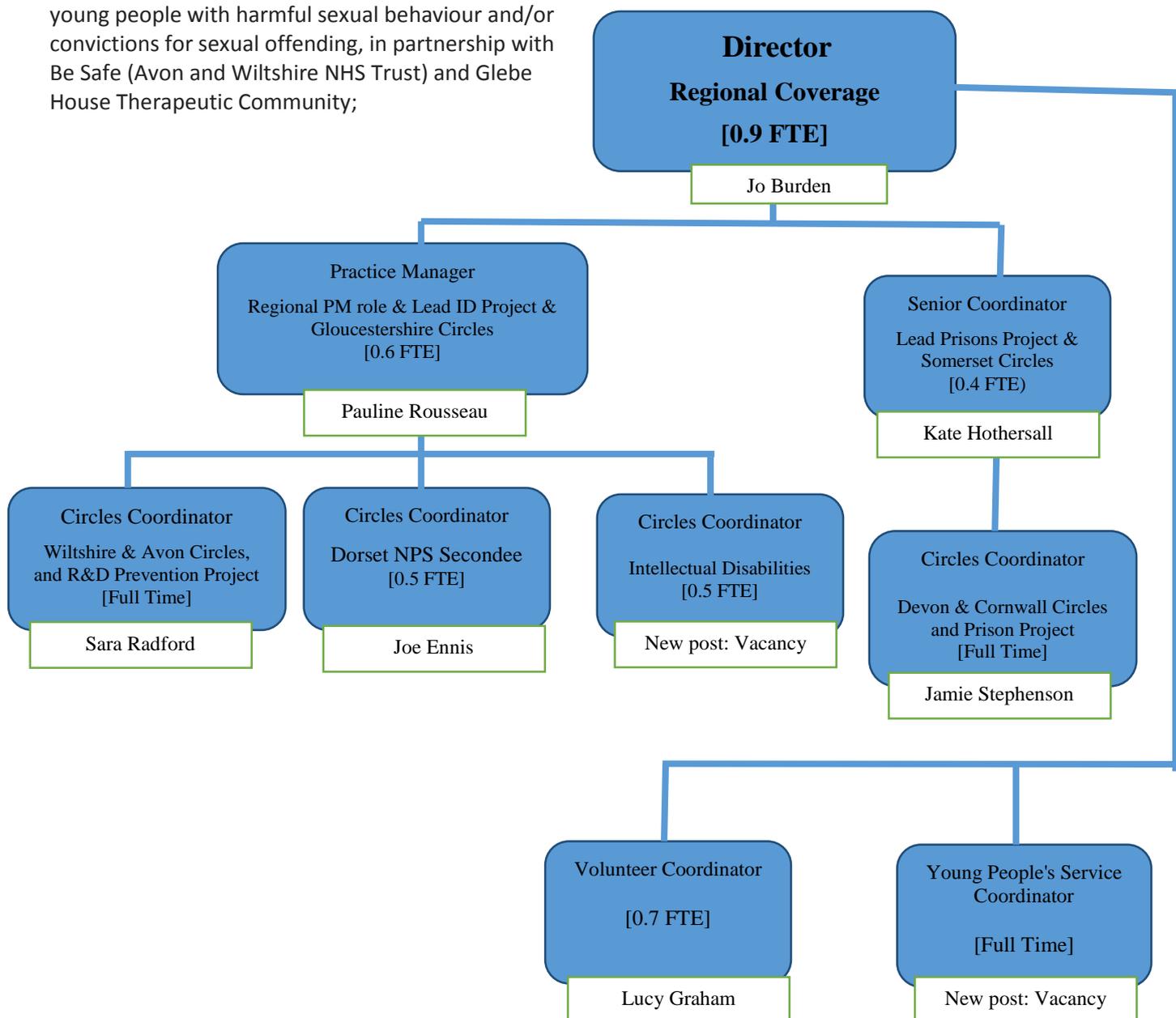
New pilot projects supported by new Big Lottery Fund grant

We are delighted to have been awarded a significant 'continuation' grant by the Big Lottery Fund, enabling us to pilot 3 new projects during 2016-2019:

- Young People's Service (Bristol and surrounding area): for 14-20 year olds, providing services for young people with harmful sexual behaviour and/or convictions for sexual offending, in partnership with Be Safe (Avon and Wiltshire NHS Trust) and Glebe House Therapeutic Community;

- Circles for adults with intellectual disabilities (Avon and surrounding areas), in partnership with Bristol Forensic Learning Disabilities Team (Avon and Wiltshire NHS Trust)
- Prison Circles for adults convicted of sexual offences, Circle commencing a few months pre-release and then for 12 months in the community, in partnership with HMP Dartmoor and HMP Channings Wood.

This means the appointment of a couple of new staff, plus existing staff taking on new roles so our staff and volunteer team is growing:



Two quotes to start off this section...

"It's one of the most helpful things I've done in my life"
Core Member reflecting on his Circle at the final Review.

"I think I began learning long ago that those who are happiest are those who do the most for others" Booker T. Washington

Circles South West is part of the big celebration that is Volunteers' Week 2016, recognising the incredible contribution made by the 22 million people who volunteer in their communities across the UK.

Circles Volunteers are unique as they not only support the work of Circles, they ARE Circles. Huge thanks extended to all our volunteers for your fantastic contribution to our work across the South West.

We are now actively recruiting new volunteers, both for our community circles for convicted adults, and also for our new pilot projects for young people, adults with intellectual disabilities, and prison circles. Please do spread the word within your networks.

Reflections of a Volunteer on a Circle

"The elderly chap we saw had been inside for ages, having done some absolutely dreadful things. He had had a poor childhood and was thought to



have mental health issues at the time. We started to see him when he was still in the open prison. The biggest concern was that he had become institutionalised, and would break the terms of his parole in order to be incarcerated again. However over the year and a half that we supported him, he found a new way of being, and reintegrated himself back into society. I would say that he wanted to become a different person, and managed to find that person inside himself. I do some other voluntary work, but this was the most satisfying and useful for me". Anon, April 2016

Bristol volunteer goodbye and thank-you

Chris Watkins has been a stalwart Bristol volunteer who began volunteering with CSW in 2010. Chris has found time in his busy life to offer his experience and support Core Members in three Circles and has supported our commitment to educate and inform contributing to an important article in The Bristol Post <http://bit.ly/>. A retired GP and artist Chris has a wealth of experience in a variety of volunteer roles and has recently embarked upon a new volunteering role

with Borderlands in Bristol. We thank Chris for his valuable contribution to Circles South West and wish him all the very best for the future.

Wiltshire Volunteer runs his second marathon for Circles South West

Grant Hesketh wasn't a keen runner when he decided to run the Swindon half marathon for Circles South West but was driven by his passion for this cause *"I wanted to make more people aware of what Circles is and to get the message out there more.* Grant, a Wiltshire Volunteer says *"A lot of people say they could never do this but I think if I can prevent it happening to at least one child then that's a win for me. That's the end game, to stop them reoffending. No more victims is the main reason behind it and statistics show that it works."* Grant ran the Swindon half marathon, his first, in 2015. In March he ran a second, Silverstone half marathon, again raising money for Circles South West. Huge thanks Grant!

2015-16 Headlines

2015-16 continued to see Circles South West grow and develop, despite external factors which influenced a rather turbulent year.

New policies and financial arrangements have significantly impacted on the voluntary sector working in criminal justice, including austerity measures and new commissioning approaches. As more organisations recognise the value of volunteering within criminal justice, so the pool of suitable, willing volunteers is more thinly spread. These and related factors mean that, for us, sustainability is increasingly challenging. However, despite the difficult climate and some turbulent times during the year, we are proud to have ended the year in a healthy position with exciting opportunities going forward into 2016-17.

Circles

We coordinated 38 active Circles in 2015-16, including 17 newly established in-year. Another 4 Circles were set up and had been due to commence, all the preparation work having been undertaken. However, of these: 2 Core Members were recalled and 2 Core Members withdrew consent just before the Circle commenced in earnest. Circles were delivered in all five Police areas across the region.

Core Members

We received 40 referral enquiries of which 27 translated into formal referrals. 11 of the 40 referral enquiries we were unable to proceed due to insufficient funding in those areas, and therefore insufficient staff capacity to coordinate. 16 of the 27 formal referrals were allocated to a new Circle in year (with a few due for allocation beyond the end of the financial year in April 2016 onwards). Of the 25 active Circles coordinated, 2 Core Members were recalled to Prison.

Volunteers

At the year-end we had 119 trained volunteers across the region, of whom over 100 had been in an active Circle during the year. This represents over 3,000 hours of direct volunteering time. A conservative estimate of the value in-kind that our volunteers have contributed this year through their direct contact with Core Members is more than £43,000. We trained 57 new volunteers and delivered refresher/advanced training events for experienced volunteers. We held our first Volunteers' Conference, a great success.

Money

Our income was £220k against expenditure of £217k. We secured significant income from new sources. We go into 2016/17 with secured income for the year that almost doubles our 2015/16 income, giving security in the short term and scope for significant development and diversification during 2016/17.

Jobs

Gary Gunby, Senior Coordinator for Devon & Cornwall, retired in May 2015. Elle Fletcher resigned in the Summer 2015, and Lucy Graham was appointed to the position of Volunteer Coordinator. We secured sufficient funding to increase the team to 9 staff (7.1 full time equivalent) from April 2016.

Trustees

There were four significant role changes within the Board membership. New Officer appointments were: Tim Price as Chair; Paul Davis as Deputy Chair; Stephen Ashton as Treasurer; Rodney Mahon as Finance Officer.

Independent evaluation

Funded by the Cabinet Office, the University of the West of England has conducted an independent evaluation of more than 50 circles across the South West and 3 other English Regions. Findings

reinforce previous research, adding to the Circles evidence base in the UK.

National Offender Management Service recognition

NOMS 'Commissioning Intentions From 2014' specifically refers to "Circles of Support and Accountability affiliated to Circles UK" as "valuable for offenders who are above low risk on either RM2000 or OSP". The NOMS Sex Offender Strategy also highlights Circles as an effective intervention.

And last but not least...

100% Compliance with National Standards!

"CSW is able to demonstrate excellence in its practice" (Compliance Review Report, 2015)

On behalf of the Ministry of Justice, Circles UK undertakes regular compliance audits of all member projects, auditing against the MOJ approved National Code of Practice for Circles of Support & Accountability. This ensures consistency of practice in the

delivery of Circles across the member projects currently delivering Circles in England and Wales. A minimum of 80% compliance is required to renew an organisation's operating licence. Circles South West was the subject of a full compliance audit in November 2015 comprising submission of a comprehensive written evidence file; analysis of data-returns; and a 2-day site visit which includes a case-file audit and interviews with a cross section of stakeholders (including statutory partners, volunteers, core members, staff and trustees). We are delighted to have been assessed as **100% compliant** with all 12 standards and all 42 requirements as identified in the National Code of Practice.

THANK YOU to everyone involved in the information gathering process, and thank you to everyone, that the information gathered offered evidence of first-class practice!

As our Dorset Coordinator moves onwards and upwards, we reflect on his service to CSW

A few words from Pauline [Practice Manager]

We say farewell to Joe Ennis after three and a half years of stalwart service to Circles South West. Joe joined us in October 2012 as a half-time Probation secondee and has had the difficult task

of balancing his role as a Probation Officer and all that demands, with his work as Dorset Circles Coordinator. He has lived through the upheavals of Transforming Rehabilitation which witnessed the splitting of Probation into two halves (I won't get too involved with the politics of that here!) but has come out the other side with a fantastic new opportunity of a new job and promotion: Manager of the Pines Approved Premises in Bournemouth! Congratulations on that Joe. Joe has always been a staunch advocate of the work of Circles and has proselytised Probation Officers across the county so that we have never wanted for referrals in Dorset. His calm and composed manner has enabled his volunteers to work confidently with some very challenging Core Members and the relationships he has established with his volunteers has resulted in many of them joining a 2nd, even 3rd Circle. I am sure he will continue to advocate for Circles in his new post.

Personally, I have very much enjoyed supervising Joe and I will miss him and our harbourside venue! (Office, not restaurant, by the way!) I have even tried to keep up with the fortunes of AFC Bournemouth, and, although woefully ill-informed on occasions, find myself looking out for their results each week! I am sure you would all like

to join me in wishing him all the best for the future. Thank you, Joe! From, Pauline and all the team.

And a few words from Joe...

Having worked with Circles of Support and Accountability for the last three and a half years, I have had the opportunity to work with so many people who have a genuine interest in making our communities safer and give up their time in order to assist this process. I believe that Circles offers those who have sexually abused the opportunity to live a law-abiding life that means no further victims of sexual abuse are being created by them. The volunteers who commit themselves to working with Circles work so hard to assist this process and play a massive part in making our communities a safer place to live. The role of the volunteer is like no other volunteer role and is far from something that can be done to simply demonstrate that you have volunteered and worked with offenders.

However, as much as the volunteer role requires such significant commitment it also provides those who do volunteer the knowledge that they are doing something so worthwhile. This whole process is supported by hard working and committed colleagues who have the same belief in what is trying to be achieved and backed up by the statutory agencies who show



their faith in Circles and in return are provided with another means by which to manage the risk of those who they supervise.

We work with men who have committed sexual offences and carry guilt and shame in what they have done and acknowledge their sexual interest but are committed to not offending and acting on this interest. Leaving prison can be difficult in any circumstance but when you are released with so very little, and restrictions that mean you cannot resettle into the community like others, having something to look forward to and somewhere to talk about how you are feeling can make such a difference.

Without a provision like Circles this would not exist and we would still be living in communities where those who are committed to not reoffending and causing greater sexual harm are restricted in their efforts to ensure we have "no more victims".

Joe

Job Vacancy: Young People's Service Coordinator, Bristol

CSW is searching to appoint a dynamic, experienced professional to lead this new and innovative community intervention for young people with sexually harmful behaviour. An exciting opportunity for a competent self-starter, the Coordinator will be pivotal to the development of this new service.

Following the initial set-up phase, you will recruit, train, coordinate and supervise groups of community volunteers to support young people (and families) for around 12 months to make safe choices; take responsibility for their behaviour; and to engage in activities that focus their interest, improve their social connections and enhance their self-worth. Multi-agency work is essential: together with BeSafe and other young people's agencies, you will assess referrals, coordinate and monitor provision, and provide progress updates. You will also work closely with independent evaluators enabling a robust evidence base for this new initiative.

This is a full-time position, 1 year fixed term contract (renewable). Secondments welcomed. Home working potential. For an application pack email recruitment.circlesw@gmail.com or check the website at www.circles-uk.org.uk

A Word From The Chair

2016-17 is going to be an exciting and busy year for Circles South West!

In addition to the fantastic current work done by our volunteers and staff, we have some great new pilot projects starting so we can offer our services to a wider range of people. This will include young people, those with intellectual disabilities, as well as starting Circles with core members who are currently in custody continuing through to their release. We are also scoping a project to provide a service to those who have not offended but want our help and support to prevent them acting on their sexual attraction to children.

There have been a number of changes on the Board of Trustees with our long standing Chair, Stephen Ashton, standing down. Stephen's hard work and dedication as Chair has seen the appointment of Jo Burden as our Director, an expansion of the services we offer, as well as ensuring we are on a firmer financial footing for the future. His leadership and guidance have been invaluable but, fear not, he is remaining on the Board and is now our Treasurer. Rodney Mahon has been working as our Treasurer and has been the CSW finance person for several years. Keeping the finances straight, paying wages, bills and expenses is a vital task and we would not be here as a charity without his dedicated work over the years. I would like to thank him for all his efforts and am so grateful he is staying on as a Trustee, continuing as our Finance Officer working with Stephen. The other change is that Paul Davis is taking over the role as Deputy Chair which will help with our resilience as a Board.

The next few years will be challenging for us as funding is still very tight within our partner statutory agencies but I am confident we can overcome these issues. We have secured funding this year and are currently in a position to expand our services. I would like to thank all our volunteers and staff for the work you do. Your dedication means CSW can continue to support to our Core Members, protect the public in our area and prevent there being further victims of sexual abuse. On behalf of the Board a big THANK YOU!

Tim Price, Chair of Trustees.

Can you help?

- Are you an experienced Circles Volunteer? Would be willing to share your experience with new volunteers? Do you have suggestions for development training?
- Are you a public protection professional? Do you have a suitable referral? Would you come along and give input to our volunteer training events?
- Are you part of a community group sympathetic to our aims? Can you promote our work? Can you help us recruit more volunteers in your area?
- Do you have access to a community venue suitable for a Circle?
- Can you display our advert for volunteers? Or circulate it via a mailing list or social media?

Upcoming events of interest

Volunteers' Week 1st-12th June

The Whatton Conference, Nottinghamshire, 8th June

NOTA Prevention Conference, London, 13th July

Circles South West Core Training & Assessment for new volunteers 30th & 31st July

Circles South West AGM, Taunton, 8th September

Circles South West Core Training & Assessment for new volunteers 17th & 18th September

NOTA Annual Conference, Brighton, 28th-30th September

Circles South West Volunteer Training: Attachment Theory and Desistance 15th October

Circles South West Volunteer Training: Internet Offending and the Role of Pornography 12th November

Circles South West Volunteers' Conference – *date to be fixed*

For further info, email us at info.circlessw@gmail.com

Donating is easy

The easiest way to donate to Circles South West is via the charitable giving website 'The Big Give' www.thebiggive.org.uk. Simply go onto the website, and in the big search box where it says "By Keyword" type in *Circles South West* and hit Enter. This will take you straight to the entry for Circles South West, and you can then choose to "Donate Online". There is an option to GiftAid your donation if you wish.

Get in touch

email us at info.circlessw@gmail.com

phone us on (volunteering) 07738 947988 or (general) 07717 442413

fill in the contact form at www.circles-uk.org.uk

follow us @CirclesSW

from all the team and trustees:

Thank you!