

Richmond Partnership Bulletin

Adult Social Care

8 March 2016

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Richmond
upon
Thames

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Partnership

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The Richmond Partnership brings together the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to improve the quality of life for all those who live, work or visit the borough. Published monthly the Richmond Partnership Bulletin provides an update on the work of partners, links to more information and resources and highlights areas for action.

On the agenda

1. Council raises concern over supported accommodation for vulnerable people

The Government in the Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Statement (2015) outlined plans to cap rents for social housing to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels for new tenancies starting after April 2016, with the cap implemented from April 2018. LHA is the amount of housing benefit someone in the private rented sector can claim.

Initially no exceptions were made for supported housing. The issue is that supported housing such as schemes for people using learning disability and mental health services frequently need to charge higher rents and service charges than would be covered by LHA levels, as an example needing to charge a higher rent to pay for 24 hour cover for vulnerable residents. On the 2nd March 2016 the Government announced a one year exemption for supported housing, so that supported housing tenants will be affected from April 2017. This will allow Ministers to analyse the results of a research project into supported housing costs before any new tenants

are affected. Locally, the Council has modelled a number of supported housing case studies which estimated a shortfall in Housing Benefit income which would result in schemes being placed at risk. There is also concern housing associations will not invest in developing new supported housing projects whilst there is no long term funding certainty. In response to this issue Cllr Lisa Blakemore, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Health has written to the Rt Hon Lord Freud (Minister of State for Welfare Reform, DWP) and Marcus Jones (Minister for Local Government, DCLG) expressing concerns to the Government around the potential impact this measure will have on the provision of supported housing, which is a local priority.

2. New Volunteering Service in Richmond is now up and running

Richmond CVS, as part of their Community Connections Richmond partnership service, are now using a new database called Volunteer Connect which has been specially developed for the voluntary sector. Volunteer Connect allows volunteers to search and register for roles,

and organisations to advertise and update roles and find potential volunteers. This can be done entirely online and can be a great way for volunteers to explore opportunities, especially if they know what kind of role they are interested in. The service will also have drop-in points across the borough where volunteers can meet with an adviser and talk about the sort of roles they might be interested in, and these will be in place by the end of March. To get started follow the link [here](#) to the website. All organisations will need to register with Volunteer Connect.

3. Help to learn English at home

Learn English at Home (LEAH) is a local charity helping ethnic minority residents of Kingston and Richmond to improve their English language skills and become more active in their local community. Improved English language skills are a gateway to many further opportunities, but for many with very low levels of English, a disabling lack of self-confidence, young children at home or ill health, accessing adult education college is a real challenge. LEAH trains volunteers to offer 1:1 support in client's homes, kick-starting the learning process, building client's confidence to join groups and opening up opportunities such as study at college and eventually employment. Last year Learn English at Home supported over 300 isolated ethnic minority adults across Kingston and Richmond. The charity won the NIACE South East Learners' Week Project Award 2015, and also shortlisted for the Guardian Charity of the Year Award 2015. If you know someone who may need support from LEAH please visit go to <http://www.leah.org.uk/> or for more information on referring contact 020 8255 6144, or email info@leah.org.uk

4. Richmond Health and Wellbeing Board Event

The Richmond Health and Wellbeing Board would like to invite residents and stakeholders to the launch of its refreshed Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2016-21, on 16 March 2016. The launch will include a question and answer session (Q&A) with members of the board, and will be your opportunity to find out more about the Health and Wellbeing Board, how Listening Events and engagement have shaped the strategy, and how this feeds into local services in the Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Council. The

event starts at 7pm with registration from 6.30pm at York House. For more information please see the [invitation](#). Due to limited capacity, you will need to register prior to attending, please RSVP to PublicHealth@richmond.gov.uk by 9th March.

5. Engage with Village Plans on Facebook

As part of the Council's work to encourage greater engagement and collaboration with local residents and businesses, six Facebook groups have been created to coincide with the current phase of the Village Planning programme. The Village Facebook Groups for Richmond, East Twickenham and St Margarets, Hampton, Hampton Wick, Hampton Hill and Teddington, provide another way for residents and businesses to help develop this local vision. They will act as a series of online community forums where local residents and groups can come together and discuss local issues such as Village Planning with the Council and each other. For more information see [here](#)

6. RACC Wellbeing courses & events

Information on wellbeing courses and events held at Richmond Adult Community College is available in their first newsletter accessible here:



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For more information:

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