

## Breaking habits through treatment

**Giving drug users the maximum number of opportunities to kick their habit is the driving force behind ARCH Initiatives, which provides treatment to users under the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP).**

After more than 20 years offering support to those involved in crime and experiencing drug problems, the Wirral-based charity has grown from employing three people to more than 100 and it is getting bigger.

Working in partnership with agencies including Wirral DAAT, the police and the prison service, ARCH Initiatives is the main provider of treatment for drug users caught up in the criminal justice system.

Steve Jones, Criminal Justice Manager, said: "We are considered to be the single point of contact, the main treatment provider.

"We provide the 'carrot to the stick' of enforcement. For us, it's about making sure we give people as many opportunities as possible to get treatment.

"With the new DIP, we're thinking outside the box, preventing people from slipping through the net of treatment.

"This approach is both unique and challenging and ensures users get care in a co-ordinated manner, with minimal gaps in provision and a singular joined-up assessment approach."

ARCH Initiatives provides reforming users with medication, such as methadone.

The charity offers residential treatment at Birchwood, a 14-bed detoxification centre, where drug misusers can stay for between two and six weeks, taking part in a two stage, clinical detoxification programme.

In addition to its work in Wirral, ARCH Initiatives also provide services in Halton, Warrington and in parts of South Cheshire.

Steve explained: "Firstly service users receive medication, then they can take part in one-to-one therapy sessions and group sessions.

"While in Birchwood we make sure their health is improved and organise visits to the dentist and doctor. A whole range of primary care services is offered. A follow-on plan is also drawn up."

Service users are brought into contact with ARCH Initiatives through the criminal justice system.

Under the umbrella of the DAAT-funded DIP, ARCH provides Arrest Referral, Restrictions on Bail, Bail Support and Bail Plus, Drug Rehabilitation Requirement, Prolific Offenders' Scheme, post release prison work and the all-new Merseyside-wide criminal justice 24 hour free phone help line ACT.

Currently, the charity has 11 criminal justice substance misuse workers who engage 'face to face' with clients to address their substance misuse.

Government figures show that for every £1 spent on treatment there is a saving of £3 within the Criminal Justice System. In addition there are savings in policing, health and care services.

## New face co-ordinating DIP

**More than 30 years' police experience is being used to help implement the DIP in Wirral.**

Former Detective Inspector Richie Humphreys took up the joint post of Drug Crime Manager at Wirral DAAT and Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in July 2004.

Richie, from Liverpool, is responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating all aspects of the DIP on behalf of the partnership.

His appointment follows 31 years with Merseyside Police, which included two postings with the drug squad.

Richie believes the work carried out by the Wirral DAAT is "outstanding" and carries his work in drugs with the police to the next level.

He said: "The police are very good at dealing with drug problems but these problems tend to reappear, so working in partnership we have got to look at the next stage, solving long-term problems and preventing them from coming back.

"We know that treatment works and that's where we'll make our impact. If you can reduce demand, you can reduce supply and related crime, targeting repeat offenders in partnership with the police, probation and court staff."

Richie gained a Masters degree in Psychology at Liverpool University in 1998 and was responsible for running an Alcohol and Crime Project for Liverpool while with Merseyside Police.

For further information on the DIP visit [www.drugs.gov.uk](http://www.drugs.gov.uk) or contact Richie on 0151 6513879



## CONTACT

For further information contact FRANK at [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com) or telephone 0800 776600

A single point of contact for professionals working in the drugs field in Wirral is manned during office hours by ARCH Initiatives. Contact 0151 6478633

## WORKING TOGETHER TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF DRUGS AND CRIME

**Efforts to tackle drug-related crime in Wirral have been strengthened thanks to the national Drug Interventions Programme.**

A large percentage of all burglaries, thefts and shoplifting offences – referred to as acquisitive crimes - are carried out by offenders who steal to raise cash to fund a drug habit.

The Criminal Justice Interventions Programme (CJIP) was launched in 2003 to reduce the number of such crimes being committed by addressing the root cause – drug use and addiction.

It was renamed the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) in September last year but its aims remain the same.

The scheme, co-ordinated and commissioned locally by Wirral Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), pulls together a number of initiatives to provide a 'beginning-to-end' package of support for offenders.

It seeks to ensure they have access to the support and treatment they need at all times: from the moment of arrest, through the courts, when in prison and during their rehabilitation back into the community.

Wirral has a long-standing history of prevalent, problematic drug use and about 1.3 percent of the 300,000 population are classed as problematic drug users. More than half of these are in treatment.

Chair of Wirral Drug Alcohol Action Team Kevin Miller has backed the aims of the programme to break the cycle of drug related crime in the area by getting more people into treatment.

He said: "Until DIP was introduced, people who commit crime in order to fund their drug use have been difficult to attract away from their often chaotic lifestyles and into treatment.

"DIP's strength is that it takes advantage of the opportunities within the criminal justice system for making contact with these people."

Offenders are unlikely to come into contact with the programme just once and their support will not end when they finish their sentence or treatment.

Therefore DIP interventions form part of a 'beginning-to-end' support programme that follows and manages offenders as they pass through the criminal justice system.

This special edition of DAAT File explains how DIP works in Wirral, as the programme enters its second year outlining the work being undertaken to establish the 'beginning-to-end' package of support.



**HOLISTIC APPROACH:**

The Drug Intervention Programme brings together enforcement and treatment to provide an effective solution to substance misuse.

## Need highlighted for programme

**The need for the DIP has been underlined in research into the relationship between drugs and crime, commissioned by Wirral DAAT from Liverpool John Moores University.**

**A recent study found:**

- in Merseyside 72% of those arrested for acquisitive crimes have been convicted before
- drug-use is an issue for 41% of those charged with committing acquisitive crimes
- a quarter of offenders identified as using drugs did not receive drug treatment as part of their sentence
- between 2000 and 2003, just 155 out of the 1,022 offenders arrested for acquisitive crimes were assessed by an arrest referral worker.

### ACT 24/7 HELPLINE

A DRUGS advice line for users, their families and professionals, including the health service and police, has been described by the Home Office as one of the best of its kind anywhere in the country.

Advice is available 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week through the ACT line on 0800 028 1300.

As well as offering support to users and their families, it also provides advice to all services working with drug users, allowing for a network of care and support wherever users may be.

Drug Crime Manager at Wirral DAAT Richie Humphreys explained: "If any drug worker comes into contact with a Wirral drug user, they can ring this number and get them into appropriate treatment. It helps stop people falling through the cracks."

The free and confidential phone-line is run in partnership with Merseyside's other DAATs and by ARCH Initiatives.

### ARREST REFERRAL SCHEME

Under this scheme offenders in police custody who use drugs are encouraged to seek support and treatment to break their habit.

In Wirral, users are not forced to take up treatment, instead, police officers make them aware support is available and can arrange meetings with an on-site drug counsellor from ARCH Initiatives.

Should users be unsure of taking the opportunity of meeting with a counsellor, officers can provide information on treatment and the phone number of a drug worker.

National figures demonstrate more than half of those who take up the offer of treatment at this stage are still drug free by the end of their treatment period.

### DRUG TESTING

The drug testing of offenders after they have been charged was launched in 2001.

Anyone charged with acquisitive crimes, including burglary, theft and shoplifting, will be tested for the Class A drugs heroin and cocaine.

Refusing to be tested is an offence which could result in a criminal charge.

When it comes to sentencing, magistrates will be informed of test results and this information may impact on the severity of the sentence.

An independent evaluation report on the first three years of the testing scheme, which was released last month, says it helps identify drug-using offenders and increases the number of people accessing drug treatment.

### WIRRAL PIER PROJECT

Wirral Pier Project has been helping prolific offenders with drug problems into treatment for more than a year.

Launched in January 2004 the project team is made up of three police officers, a drug worker and a member of National Probation Service Merseyside.

It aims to reduce the number of acquisitive crimes, which include burglary, theft and shoplifting, being committed in Wirral by targeting the persistent offenders responsible.

The project is in the process of supporting 35 offenders through treatment. Regular drug testing is carried out to check they are taking treatment seriously.

If clients fail to comply with treatment they will be targeted by police officers, who will closely monitor their whereabouts to look out for further offending, leading to custody.

The project has contributed to significant reductions in acquisitive crime levels in Wirral.

### COUNSELLING, ASSESMENT, REFERRAL, ADVICE AND THROUGH CARE (CARAT)

Support and treatment remains on offer to offenders once they have passed into the prison system.

An assessment is made of the prisoner by the CARAT team at HMP Liverpool as soon as the offender enters the prison system and appropriate advice is given.

A care plan is drawn up and treatment includes one-to-one counselling, as well as group sessions.

Links are provided between the prisoner, health care professionals and the community.

Once the offender has served his or her prison term, he or she is offered throughcare and support to resettle into the community by the DIP workers based at Arch Initiatives.

### PERSISTENT OR OTHER PRIORITY OFFENDERS

THE Persistent or other Priority Offenders (POPO) scheme was launched to identify those who pose the greatest criminal threat to their communities.

It involves the police, the probation service and prisons in a bid to tackle the root causes of prolific offending.

The POPO scheme, which works hand-in-hand with the DIP, aims to:

- prevent and deter
- catch and convict
- rehabilitate and resettle.

A significant proportion of persistent or priority offenders are problematic drug users, committing a high number of crimes, including burglary, theft and shoplifting to fund a drug habit.

But as a result of their chaotic lifestyles, it is difficult to keep these offenders in treatment.

The targeting of persistent offenders under the POPO scheme adds a 'stick to the carrot' of the treatment offered by the DIP programme.

### DRUG REHABILITATION REQUIREMENT (DRR)

A DRR is a condition of a community order and allows the court to monitor an offender's progress during rehabilitation.

It was introduced to the UK this year as a more flexible replacement for the Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO).

The DRR allows courts to make an order requiring offenders to undergo treatments either as part of a community order or suspended sentence order.

Supervision and attendance on a rehabilitation programme are conditions of the DRR, just as they were on a DTTO. The overall package of interventions offered through a DRR is similar to that which were available through a DTTO.

However, unlike the DTTO, the DRR allows the courts to tailor rehabilitation to meet each individual offender's need by grading the level of treatment given in accordance with the seriousness of the crime.

### RESTRICTIONS ON BAIL

Magistrates in Wirral can now remand in custody any offender who uses Class A drugs but refuses to undergo assessment and treatment for their addiction.

The powers were introduced by the Home Office in January 2005 under the Restrictions on Bail scheme and Wirral is one of ten new areas to receive them.

Traditionally magistrates could only refuse bail in certain circumstances, such as when there is a risk of the offender failing to return to court or committing further offences.

Restrictions on Bail will mean the court must refuse bail if the defendant is unwilling to undergo drug assessment and follow-up, unless it is satisfied while on bail there is no significant risk of re-offending.

Any breach of the condition will mean the individual could be remanded in custody.

The scheme was being piloted in Manchester, Nottingham and Salford, where it has proved to be a success.

### BAIL PLUS

Wirral is unique in offering this scheme, which encourages offenders to take up drug treatment in a bid to improve their chances of securing bail.

Although users cannot be forced into taking part in treatment, they are advised that one of the grounds upon which bail can be refused is the likelihood of further offence being committed while on bail.

Offenders are advised that a period of treatment with ARCH Initiatives, which includes regular monitoring, would greatly decrease the likelihood of any offending while on bail and would serve to make magistrates more likely to grant bail.

This is not a national scheme and has been running in Wirral alone for a little more than a year.

### PROGRESS2WORK

A Jobcentre Plus programme providing a tailored package of support, advice and guidance to help former substance misusers into training or employment.

It is a voluntary programme open to anyone who is:

- unemployed
- in receipt of ANY working age benefit
- drug free or stable.

An employment adviser will offer practical, realistic help and advice. Support will be available until the participants no longer need help or have worked for 13 weeks.

The provision is delivered by The Social Partnership on 0151 649 9147.

### OPERATION HAWK

OPERATION Hawk was launched to combat the supply of Class A drugs and related crime in Wirral.

Over the last year Merseyside Police has carried out 170 raids on drug dealers' homes resulting in more than 200 arrests and the seizure of drugs with a street value in excess of £2.5 million.

There are four main elements to Operation Hawk, which mirror those of Wirral DAAT:

- preventing young people from becoming drug users
- reducing supply
- reducing drug related crime and its impact on the community
- getting more drug users into treatment.

Consultation is taking place among Wirral areas hardest hit by drug related crime. Wirral DAAT is working with Merseyside Police to reassure these communities and offer advice and support.

## Drug Intervention Programme