



## Plymouth CASS + Report

August 2017

### Service Users

CASS+ worked with 100 clients during August.

56 males comprised 19 defendants (on the day), 2 victims, 24 currently in touch with the criminal justice system, 10 clients who were re-engaging with CASS and 1 drop in.

44 females comprised 8 defendants (on the day), 2 family, 11 victims, 15 currently involved with the criminal justice system, 6 clients who were re-engaging with CASS and 2 drop ins

20 were first time clients of CASS.

1 referral was from District judge, 1 from Magistrates, 6 from solicitors, 6 from probation, 2 from court staff, 2 word of mouth and 3 were from external agencies.

A minimum of 21 additional clients were helped without the need to complete a contact form. There were 77 clients this month that identified themselves with **mental illness**, 7 with learning difficulties and 9 with physical difficulties.

We would like to say goodbye and thank you to Georgie (volunteer) who has left this month as she has successfully completed her Criminology degree and is returning to her home town, hopefully bursting with knowledge!

**Clients issues and referrals made to support clients to resolve these issues.**

**Issues raised and where referred to: Family**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Family</b>	<b>9</b>		
<b>Access</b>	<b>5</b>		
Advice/ support			5
Letter for Family Court			3
Assist with paper work			1
Support in court			3
<b>Guardianship</b>	<b>1</b>		
Advice/support			1
CAFCASS		1	1
Family Law Advice		1	1
Children's Social Care		1	1
Fostering and Adoption		1	1
C.A.B. (Improving Lives)		1	1
Law Society.org.uk		1	1
Family Law Clinic		1	1
Family Solicitor		1	1
<b>Child care</b>	<b>1</b>		
Partner of prisoner		1	1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Criminal Justice**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Criminal Justice</b>	<b>34</b>		
Advice/support			13
Assistance with means form			5

Leonard Stocks Hostel		1	1
Support in court			2
Witness care		2	2
Portsmouth Court		1	1
Police		1	1
probation		6	6
Solicitor		1	1
usher		3	3
Explained court process			2
<b>Victims</b>	<b>1</b>		
Criminal injuries Compensation Authority		1	1
<b>Sex offending</b>	<b>1</b>		
ReCOOP		1	1
G.P		1	1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Drugs**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Drugs</b>	<b>3</b>		
Advice/support			2
Hamoaze House		1	1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Alcohol**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Alcohol</b>	<b>4</b>		
Advice/support			3
Harbour		2	2

A.A.(Alcoholic's Anonymous)		1	1
Hamoaze House		1	1

Plymouth stats: Higher than average for:

- Alcohol-specific hospital admission for under 18s
- Alcohol-related hospital admission for men and women
- People who binge drink
- Employees working in bars

(LIVEWELL, 2016)

**Issues raised and where referred to: Debt**

	Raised	Referred	Resolved
<b>Debt</b>	<b>28</b>		
Advice/support			17
Money Advice Plymouth		10	10
Food Bank		3	3
Soup run		1	1
Shekinah Drop in		1	1
Church		1	1
Bailiff		2	2
Argos		1	1
Lowell Fraud Department		1	1

'Regarding the financial struggles that the Provident are experiencing – their share price dropped by over 60% the other day and they are listed as a FTSE 100 company so it's a case of "watch this space" with regards to how they move forward and whether they can survive.

All of this means that our most vulnerable clients and service could now become victims of illegal money lenders'.

A man who was sentenced to 28 months in Exeter Crown Court last week for illegal money lending used to be a Greenwoods and then Provident agent and used his ex-client bank to expand his illegal money lending activities

**.Dave Monk- LIAISE Officer**

(Leads in Awareness, Intelligence, Support and Education) – SW England.

**Issues raised and where referred to: Benefits**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>27</b>		
Advice/support			18
CHOICES		1	1
Upper Tribunal (HMCTS)- Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service.		3	3
E.S.A helpline- (Employment Support Allowance.)		2	2
E.S.A. new claims		2	2
J.S.A. (Job Seekers Allowance) new claims		2	2
Credit union		1	1
Letter for D.W.P (appeal)-			1
Plymouth City Council		1	1
One Stop shop		1	1
George Hostel		1	1
Job Centre		1	1
Food Bank		2	2
Bank		1	1

G.P.		1	1
On line form assistance			1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Fines**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Fines</b>	<b>10</b>		
Advice/support			7
Fines office		3	3
Listings		1	1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Accommodation**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>19</b>		
<b>Homelessness</b>	<b>7</b>		
Advice/support			4
One Stop Shop		3	3
Shekinah Drop in		1	1
Letter of support			1
PATH- (Plymouth Access to Housing)		1	1
<b>Tenancy</b>	<b>12</b>		
Advice/support			7
Shelter		2	2
C.A.B- Improving Lives		1	1
Plymouth Central Library		1	1
Letter of support			1
Community Connections		1	1
CHOICES		1	1

C.A.B. (Improving Lives)		1	1
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**Issues raised and where referred to: Mental Health**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>16</b>		
Advice/support			11
Operation Emotion		1	1
Rethink Community Service		2	2
Crossline		1	1
Options		1	1

Interesting to note that Mental Health comes up a fair amount every month, but quite often there are no referrals made, people often just want to come in and “offload” as they have no one to listen to them. They regularly tell us that this helps their day to day life-knowing that they can talk about their anxieties and issues, and in return receive some sound practical advice. Many of these clients fall through the net of, or do not reach the high thresholds of, current MH systems; but they take great value from and achieve significant outcomes from low level interventions and a service that is able to offer them the time and space to talk.

**Issues raised and where referred to: Physical Health**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Physical Health</b>	<b>2</b>		
Advice/support			1
G.P.		1	1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Domestic Abuse**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Domestic Abuse</b>	<b>5</b>		

Advice/Support			4
WRSAC Mentoring Project		1	1
Adult Social Care		1	1
Family Solicitor		1	1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Education, Training and Employment.**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>E.T.E.</b>	<b>5</b>		
Advice/support			4
Shekinah 24		1	1
Gymnasium		1	1

**Issues raised and where referred to: Miscellaneous**

	<b>Raised</b>	<b>Referred</b>	<b>Resolved</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>9</b>		
<b>Immigration</b>	<b>1</b>		
Advice/support			1
<b>Civil Case</b>	<b>3</b>		
Letter of complaint			1
Plymouth County Court		1	1
Family Solicitor		2	2
C.A.B. (Improving Lives)		1	1
Down loaded paperwork for court			1
<b>Safe Guarding</b>	<b>2</b>		
Adult Social Care		2	2
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>2</b>		
Advice/support			2



Energy Trust Grant		1	1
British Gas		1	1
Warm Home Discount		1	1
E.E.		1	1
<b>Student Loans</b>	<b>1</b>		
C.A.B. (Improving Lives)		1	1
Achievement Training		1	1

### **Community Courts/CJSSS**

CASS+ is operating in the Community Court every Thursday, please feel free to refer defendants for a problem solve prior to their sentencing, we will be happy to help. Many thanks to those Magistrates/DJ who have raised referrals to CASS+ post-sentence.

### **Manager's networking in July 2017**

#### **18/08/2017**

Carole fed into the evaluation of Highbury Community and Advice service in London.

#### **22/08/2017**

Carole attended the Criminal Justice Network meeting hosted by POP+.

#### **23/08/2017**

Carole met with a team member from the Mental Health Liaison and Diversion team to discuss Mental Health in the CJ system.

Carole has also attended numerous meetings across Devon and Cornwall to raise the profile of CASS+ and to source funding for the future.

### **Plymouth Coordinator's networking**

#### **01/08/2017**

Carole and Liz attended an event at Pentillie Castle, hosted by Sarah Coryton (High Sheriff of Cornwall). This event was well attended and a great opportunity to do some

networking, we had a lovely evening and were delighted to be able to be present in



such beautiful surroundings.



### **07/08/017**

Sarah Coryton spent the morning with CASS+ in Plymouth, she sat in court 1 with myself, and observed some of the custody cases. One case was followed up by the team, and Sarah saw how we liaised with cells, the defendant and a family member to try and offer support. This case raised the whole issue of Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System, something that we see daily. I think that she could get a good grasp of some of the work that we do in the short time that she was in. We were appreciative that she made the time to come and see us with such a busy schedule.

### **22/08/2017**

I attended First Aid Training held at the Food Bank, this was a refresher for me but always good to get an update as things seem to change in some way or another every time that I attend. I was very grateful to the team at Oasis Café (where Food Bank is situated) for making me so welcome.

### **23/08/2017**

Carole and Liz attended a Well Being at Work Forum in The Guildhall which focused on alcohol. Presentations were given by HARBOUR, LIVEWELL and Nash & Co. We both have a good knowledge of alcohol issues, but found it interesting to hear some of the latest statistics and issues currently faced across the city. We encourage all of our team members to attend Alcohol Intervention Brief Training and talks held at Harbour.

### **Case Study 1**

Miss A came into the office with numerous letters from the bailiffs. She was very anxious that the bailiffs would attend her address and was clearly distressed by the situation. She suffers with extreme mental health issues, and had found out about us on line. In most cases we refer people on if they are not linked into the Criminal Justice system, however when faced with crisis management we also look at the best path for the client. It had taken this lady a lot of courage just to walk to the door and ask for help, this situation had got to the point where it needed to be addressed immediately to avoid additional costs, and further stress. We know that if we had referred this on she would have been put on a waiting list or asked to come back, this was not an option for this lady.

We sorted through the letters with her and called the bailiffs on her behalf. We asked to speak to the welfare team and explained that Miss A is a vulnerable lady, with numerous mental health issues, who was finding the situation fairly distressing. They advised that Miss A should send medical evidence to them along with 3 months' worth of bank statements. In the meantime, her account would be placed on hold for the next 14 days. We explained this to Miss A and wrote down a list of what information she would need and agreed that she would bring this back to the office, in order that we could send this to the bailiffs on her behalf. She left the office in a much more positive

mood and was assured that the bailiffs would not be attending her address for the next 14 days.

Miss A returned to the office a few days later with a doctor's note, detailing her mental health diagnosis' and 3 months of bank statements. We sent this to the bailiffs and received a reply to call the welfare team. After a few days, we were contacted by the bailiffs and were able to set up a payment plan, on behalf of Miss A, of £20 a month. Miss A was happy with this outcome and we agreed to text and remind her when this payment was due.

We texted Miss A, however she missed the payment due to a bereavement in the family. She returned to us at the office with a letter stating that the bailiffs had applied for her committal to prison due to non-payment. Miss A was very anxious and distressed. We called the bailiffs again on her behalf, and were informed that if Miss A made the payment today and kept up to date with the plan no court proceedings would be taken. Miss A was happy with this outcome and made the payment over the telephone whilst in the office. She left the office with a payment plan she was happy with and was very grateful for the support.

CASS+ are experienced at handling bailiff matters and if clients provide us with the correct information we have excellent success rates, however it is dependent on clients playing their part too. We work with some chaotic people so on some occasions we can set things up and get an account put on hold, then we may not see or be able to contact the client again, this can be frustrating and fortunately only happens occasionally. For the most part we are able to secure a positive outcome which will not set the client up to fail.

Chloe (Volunteer)

## **Case study 2**

Mr. C (61) was approached in the public area by a volunteer and was asked if he required any assistance. He was in the criminal court to do a Statutory Declaration relating to a vehicle offence. He told us that he had guardianship of two school aged granddaughters and was living in temporary Emergency Housing. He has rent arrears and debts so he was put on a low band until his debts are manageable, meaning that it would be difficult to secure permanent suitable accommodation. CASS+ referred him

to Money Advice Plymouth, who will be calling out to his property in September; hopefully this will set him on the right path to resolving his debt issues, which will in turn assist with his Housing.

Mr. C also expressed a wish to have guardianship of two other grandchildren who were in care, this would mean appealing a decision made in the Family Court. CASS+ signposted Mr. C to a Family Solicitor, and gave details of Improving Lives and The Family Law Clinic. It is likely that he won't be considered suitable for guardianship until he has secure housing, but hopefully this will be achievable soon.

We will keep in touch with Mr. C until he feels confident that things are moving forward, and will also be on hand to offer advice or support where required.

Liz (CASS+ Coordinator)

**Please feel free to get in touch with us if you wish to discuss anything about CASSPLUS or our reports.**

**Our details are:**

**Carole Edwards- General Manager – [carole.edwards@cassplus.org](mailto:carole.edwards@cassplus.org)**

**07949455137**

**Liz Hand- Plymouth CASS Co-ordinator- [liz.hand@cassplus.org](mailto:liz.hand@cassplus.org)**

**07949455158**