

of the year

# Review



# AMH Celebrates 50 years!

Since 1963, Action Mental Health (AMH) has provided life-changing services, helping people to recover from the effects of mental ill-health.

To celebrate our 50th anniversary we kicked off the first of the parties with a coordinated balloon release across all our service units on Thursday 25th April.

Clients, staff, family, friends and local supporters came together to mark a half century of support and recovery for people living with mental illness.

## Awards for IPS - Individual Placement and Support Programme



**Pictured at the Irish News Workplace & Employment Awards at Titanic Belfast: Eoin MacAnuff, AMH; Joanne Stroud, AMH; Maria Hilditch, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust; Terence Smythe, AMH IPS and Aisling Curran, BHSCT. AMH and BHSCT were shortlisted for the Disability Best Practice Employer Award for the IPS project.**

"Working your Way to Recovery" was also named runner-up in the Partnership Category at the Belfast Trust Chairman's Awards. The entry focussed on the employment scheme Individual Placement & Support (IPS) currently based in North Belfast's Mental Health Team in partnership with Action Mental Health and was submitted jointly by Occupational Therapy staff and AMH.

## MLAs visits AMH Services



**As always, we were delighted to host a number of visits by MLAs to our services throughout the year. Minister for Justice, David Ford MLA, visited Action Mental Health's site in Antrim.**

DUP MLA for North Belfast and member of the NI Assembly Health Committee, Paula Bradley, visited the AMH offices in Belfast City Centre where she dropped in on the

services' camera club. The Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, William Hay MLA visited AMH's New Horizons service unit in Foyle to launch a fellowship programme which is part of the new Assembly Community Connect initiative.

South Antrim MLAs Trevor Clarke and Danny Kinnehan mucked in to help David Babington and Action Mental Health clients at the AMH garden in Antrim.

## Mental Health Training for MLA Staff



As the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's charity of the year, AMH offered a bespoke training course for MLA constituency staff across Northern Ireland. This bespoke course delivered by AMH Works was developed with input from MLA staff.

## Celebrating Volunteer Week



Kirsty Reilly, Ivan Conroy and Hughena Gregory, who all volunteer in AMH New Horizons North Down & Ards were presented with certificates by the Mayor at the Volunteers' Hero Awards Ceremony. They and all our other volunteers are greatly appreciated by staff and clients who value their work and support.

## Mental Health Awareness Week



The Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, William Hay MLA launched an art exhibition to mark the beginning of Mental Health Week, featuring work by AMH Clients. The exhibition promoted mental health through art and art therapy and was developed in association with AMH and Seacourt Print Workshop.

## Stormont Steeplechase!



The Met Office had issued amber warnings for rain, yet despite the weather forcing other sporting events to be cancelled – the Stormont Steeplechase went ahead and there was a great turn-out. Fun runners were joined by runners from East Down AC, North Down AC, St Peters AC, Orangrove AC and Co. Antrim Harriers to take part in the first ever AMH Steeplechase. The event was organised by East Down Athletic Club, with all proceeds – £500 – going to AMH.

## Pro Bonos Sing at Stormont



**A choir of 50 solicitors and barristers from across Northern Ireland – The Pro-Bono's – filled the Great Hall at Stormont with song at a concert in aid of Action Mental Health. AMH had been chosen by the President of the Law Society – Michael Robinson – as his Charity of the Year. The evening was hosted by Nuala McKeever and sponsored by Finance Minister, Sammy Wilson MLA.**

Many thanks to all those who attended the event and to all the sponsors, and especially to the Choir, for a very memorable evening. A total of £6,704 was raised for AMH!

## Prisoners of the Past Film Launch



Clients at AMH New Horizons in Downpatrick worked with Blue Bird Media Company and the Down County Museum to create a film exploring crime and punishment in the old Downpatrick Gaol in the 1800s. Clients gathered information on gaol conditions and prisoner stories as well as crimes and punishments of the times by researching prisoner detail sheets and newspaper articles. The film, entitled "Prisoners of the Past" was launched at the Eclipse Cinema, Downpatrick.

# Zip Wire Challenge at Parliament Buildings for Assembly Commission's Charity of the Year



Many of our MLAs joined over 100 brave souls, to take up the challenge of the 100 ft high, 1000 ft long Zip Wire in front of Parliament Buildings, Stormont to raise funds for Action Mental Health (AMH). AMH held the Zip Wire Challenge as part of its birthday celebration at Stormont. AMH Staff and clients were treated to a fun filled day of activities and fun, with representatives from each of their units, all over NI, taking the zip wire challenge – a fantastic achievement!

## Allstate NI's Charity of the Year



AMH were chosen by Allstate Northern Ireland as their Charity of the Year.

At the launch, AMH Works provided some Mental Health Awareness training including some advice on “Stress Busting” techniques. Allstate staff were treated to some head and shoulder massage – provided by Zenbu Therapies – which can be one way of relieving the stresses of daily life! All State NI raised a total of £6270 for AMH – Thank You!

## Boden Party



A big thank you to School Gate Style Blogger – Avril Keys – for organising a Boden Clothing party and raising £624.44 for Action Mental Health! Many thanks for everyone who purchased and donated!

## Law Society Tees Off for AMH



As the world's greatest golfers prepared to tee off for the US Open, The Law Society held their own event in the beautiful setting of Warrenpoint Golf Club.

Organised by The Law Society of Northern Ireland, in support of AMH as their chosen Charity of the Year, Law Society members came out in force with approximately 26 four-balls taking part. The weather was on our side – with not a drop of rain and there were plenty of prizes up for grabs! Golfers were also treated to a BBQ at the 9th...

Thanks to all those who took part, to all those who sponsored a tee box, donated prizes, gave up their time to organise and help out. The Law Society raised a grand total of £4,000 for AMH! Thanks again.

## Local Designer Helps Create “A Place for Reflection”

AMH New Horizons in Ards took part in a collaborative arts project run by local interior and furniture designer Donna Bates.

Donna, known for her sympathetic restoration of forgotten furniture pieces, shared her upcycling knowledge and skills with AMH clients during a 10 week workshop culminating in the creation of a contemporary furniture space for the service unit. The clients worked with Donna through the design stages from concept drawing through to salvage, material sourcing and upholstery.



The aim was to create a communal space for relaxation, sharing and reflection, where clients could come together with the ethos of helping each other in the recovery of their mental health. The pieces were made from reclaimed furniture, namely old Ulsterbus seats recovered from a salvage yard in Ahoghill. Then with Donna's help, the clients created 8 reupholstered chairs, cushion covers and hanging banners to create a beautiful shared space that has become part of the centre at New Horizons in Ards.

# A Step into Retailing

**Seven Retail clients from AMH New Horizons North Down & Ards took part in an 8 week project with Sainsbury's in Bangor while studying for an NVQ level 2 Diploma in Retail Skills.**

After completing the Sainsbury's induction programme, they got the opportunity to gain experience in each department including serving customers on the tills. Sainsbury's have certainly gone the extra mile in facilitating this project. It has been a great confidence builder, with most of the clients now hoping to follow a career in retail. The course concluded with a certificate presentation which was attended by local actor BJ Hogg, this was a fun way to end such a beneficial course. A big thank you to John Lockhart - Store Manager and Lisa Templeton - in-house training for Sainsbury's Bangor!



# AMH Golf Challenge 2013 sponsored by McKeown's solicitors



**The second AMH Golf Challenge was held in Concra Wood Golf Club, which boasts an 18 hole, par 72 Championship course situated in Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan.**

The golf course at Concra Wood was designed by two of Ireland's golfing legends: Christy O'Connor Junior and Senior. Many thanks once again to our main sponsors – McKeown's solicitors and to everyone else who helped make this event another great success, especially all the clients and staff from AMH New Horizons Newry!

# Horticulture in Ballysillan



Our Horticulturalists from AMH New Horizons in Belfast were hard at work this year tending their allotment with help from The Conservation Volunteers.

# Chill at the Mill



Saturday 27th July 2013 saw some of Northern Ireland’s local musicians and singers perform at the McKeeting family’s annual fundraising event “Chill at the Mill”, an event best described as a “mini Glastonbury”. With twelve local acts performing, a BBQ, a raffle, a tombola and a bouncy castle, it was an event enjoyed by an audience of all ages. This year the McKeeting family held their event in aid of Action Mental Health raising a staggering £1,761.41.

## Michelle Gildernew enjoys Action Mental Health

**It was a great day for AMH New Horizons in Fermanagh when Michelle Gildernew, MLA and Chair of the Health Committee, popped in to visit.**

It was a relaxed and informal visit, and Michelle interacted very positively with clients. She clearly welcomed the opportunity to catch up with the changes in the service. She also had time for a cup of tea and had a go at laughing yoga! Michelle certainly left with a good feel for the challenges facing the organisation, and the value of the service provided. Michelle also popped back later in the year to present certificates to some of our clients.



## AMH Foyle celebrated their 20th birthday



AMH New Horizons opened in Foyle twenty years ago, and to celebrate this milestone, they threw a huge party and challenged everyone to take part in the AMH Firewalk! Local radio station Q105 broadcasted live from the event with some of our staff and clients being interviewed about the work of AMH. We also had live music, birds of prey, circus performers, and a BBQ! Happy Birthday AMH New Horizons Foyle!

## AMH football tournament



We held our 5 A Side football tournament at Stormont. Teams from the AMH New Horizons, Antrim, Ards, Downpatrick, Derriaghy, Tannaghmore and AMH Promote took part. The winners were Tannaghmore who beat Derriaghy in a penalty shoot out in the final. Well done everyone who took part!

# Together for You Launch

## £3 MILLION LOTTERY BOOST TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH

A consortium of Northern Ireland organisations was awarded a major Lottery contract to promote positive mental health in Northern Ireland. The Big Lottery Fund awarded a contract worth £3 million to the Together for You partnership, which for the first time brought together the services of eight support organisations under a joint banner.

The project which is being led by Action Mental Health (AMH) in association with Aware Defeat Depression, CAUSE, CRUSE, MindWise, Nexus, PraxisCare and Relate NI, will promote mental health and well being in Northern Ireland and provide a range of services in new and innovative ways.

Together for You will raise awareness of positive mental health, encourage early intervention and provide intensive support services for people experiencing mental ill health. For the first time, a co-ordinated approach across the eight organisations will support activities in each of the five Health and Social Care Trust areas.

Activities over the next three years will include working with school mental health promotion, activities that promote well being in older people, campaigns to reduce the stigma and discrimination of mental health, suicide/self harm and bereavement support initiatives and improved psychological therapies.



## Mental Health and the Law



**Issues surrounding disability, mental health and the law were the focus of a unique seminar, organised by the Law Society of Northern Ireland and supported by Action Mental Health.**

The seminar was the third instalment of seminars entitled 'Diversity and the Law' which has been launched by the Society to examine the impact of the law on issues such as disability in Northern Ireland.

The seminar on disability and mental health issues provided a platform to discuss the issues, to inform audiences unfamiliar with the main issues and to share best practices.

Gary Kane from AMH Works spoke at the lecture attended by representatives from various interest groups, Government agencies and members of the legal profession with a view to identifying issues of concern and sharing of best practice amongst organisations.

Amongst attendees was the Minister for Justice, David Ford MLA.

## Wine tasting at the Law Society



On September 18th, the Law Society of Northern Ireland held a Wine Tasting Evening in aid of the President's Charity of the Year Action Mental Health. The evening was hosted by Denis Broderick at Law Society House, Belfast. As one of the first Wine and Spirit Education Trust Diploma holders in Northern Ireland, Denis has been at the forefront of wine education in the province for almost thirty years. A large number of guests sampled a range of internationally renowned wines with complimentary cheeses and had a most enjoyable night. A grand total of £1,382.10 was raised.

## Training for the Granite Challenge



With the Granite Challenge fast approaching, Team AMH took part in multiple cycles during July and August in preparation. This included the Bangor Coastal Challenge, Paul McKibben Charity Cycle and Marie Curie South Down Charity Cycle.

# Granite Challenge 2013



**On October 6th, many of AMH's keen cyclists joined cycle clubs and individuals from far and wide, to take part in the Granite Challenge.**

In its second year, the event was a roaring success, with over 150 cyclists from all over NI taking part in the 55 mile route over the Mourne Mountains. This cycling sportive was supported by local cycling club, La Lanterne Rouge and Mourne Cycles.

The Granite Challenge is called a "challenge" for good reason. Starting at AMH's New Horizons unit in Downpatrick, the route takes intrepid cyclists via Tyrella towards Dundrum, then along the coast road through the

seaside town of Newcastle, towards Annalong. Then it's up into the Mourne Mountains, past Silent Valley.

The climb up to Spelga is physically demanding and was rewarded at the top with tea and homemade tray bakes. Then it was downhill towards home, through Bryansford, Maghera and Clough. Final destination was our New Horizons in Downpatrick, where a bowl of homemade broth, hot food and apple tart awaited the cyclists!

All proceeds from the event go to Action Mental Health to help their support services and outreach work across Northern Ireland. £2,849 was raised for AMH, so a big thank you to all who helped out and took part!

# Make a Change, Make Art



An exhibition of original artwork was officially opened at the Carnegie Library, Bangor by Lady Sylvia Hermon and attended by the Mayor of North Down Cllr Andrew Muir. David Flynn CCEA Education Manager also presented over 100 accredited certificates to 70 clients. A variety of pieces were created including prints, photographs, Tiffany glass and textiles, many of which were part of clients' accredited CCEA qualifications.

# Men's Shed Downpatrick launch



AMH formally launched their new Men's Shed Project during World Mental Health Week 2013. AMH were awarded a grant from the Big Lottery Fund's "Reaching Out: Connecting Older People" programme to establish Men's Shed projects in Downpatrick, Antrim and Enniskillen.

# Launch of Salus



Salus is a cross border project supporting young people and their key contacts in the area of mental and emotional wellbeing. The project covers the border counties of Fermanagh, Cavan, Donegal and Derry/Londonderry. Funded through the EU's Interreg IVA programme, it is a joint project between AMH (lead partner) and the National Learning Network.

# Belfast International Airport - Charity of the Year

**Action Mental Health (AMH) were chosen by Belfast International Airport as their Charity of the Year.**

At the launch, Belfast International Airport held a coffee morning for staff and presented AMH with a cheque for £10,000 to kick-start their year of fundraising and awareness raising activities.

David Babington, Chief Executive of AMH, said he was delighted to accept the honour on behalf of the charity's staff and clients; *"We are very pleased that Belfast International Airport has chosen to focus on and support mental health and wellbeing in the coming year and we are delighted to be named as their Charity of the Year. Our team in AMH will be working alongside BIA to organise and support a number of fundraising activities and events. We also hope to run a number of joint initiatives to raise awareness, tackle stigma and promote positive mental health."*

John Doran, managing director Belfast International Airport, said; *"Both Action Mental Health and Belfast International Airport are celebrating their 50th anniversary in 2013 and this was an excellent way of celebrating this significant milestone. We look forward to supporting AMH to raise much needed funds to support the invaluable work which they undertake."*



# The Grand Opening of the Darragh Suite



Local MLA and Justice Minister David Ford officially opened the newly refurbished AMH Regional Offices adjacent to the AMH New Horizons service in Antrim. The Regional Office, named the Darragh Suite after the late Pat Darragh, who worked in AMH in Antrim for 20 years until his death in 2010, will house Men's Shed Steeple Antrim, AMH Works, as well as SES staff who deliver the Workable and Work Connect employment programmes.

## What's Your Story? Culture For All Sofa On Tour



AMH New Horizons Foyle were awarded funds through the Big Lottery Fund NI and Arts Council of Northern Ireland to create an art piece made from books. The funding which was made available through the Culture for All grants scheme was a unique opportunity for people from all over NI to contribute a book for inclusion in the "What's Your Story Sofa". As part of the City of Culture 2013 Celebrations the sofa visited Magee University, Guildhall Derry, City Hall Belfast, Antrim New Horizons and Foyle Street Library.

## Statements in the Senate



**Mental health was on the political agenda at Stormont on 8th October at an event sponsored by the Speaker Mr William Hay MLA.**

To mark the end of our time as the NI Assembly Commission's Charity of the Year, and as part of our week of events for World Mental Health Day, Action Mental Health held a special "Statements in the Senate" event where representatives of four Stormont Committees, as well as other MLAs, heard testimony from people who have used the service.

Clients of AMH's New Horizons services from across Northern Ireland spoke on four key areas including the journey from well to unwell and back again, welfare reform, gaps in mental health services and the importance of placements for those seeking to regain employment.

AMH's staff also spoke about the importance of reducing stigma and AMH's work in prisons and the issue of mental health in the justice system. Martin Moorcroft from Barnardo's NI also joined us as an employer to highlight the vital role of our volunteers in delivering their services.

MLAs Michael Copeland, Maeve McLaughlin, Tom Buchanan and Paul Givan responded on behalf of the Social Development, Health, Employment and Learning and Justice Committees respectively, agreeing to take the issues raised back to the other members of the Committees.

We would like to commend the clients who took part for the courage and eloquence with which they shared their experiences and for the support of the MLAs and wider Stormont staff throughout our time as Charity of the Year.

# Basket Case Exhibition



**AMH New Horizons Fermanagh were Taking Action on Stigma with the launch of their “Basket Case” exhibition in Fermanagh County Museum on Wednesday 26th March.**

An inspirational and thought provoking exhibition influenced by Drumclay Crannog, it hoped to challenge the stigma associated with mental illness and showcase the creative talents of clients at AMH’s New Horizons in Drumcoo.

Supported by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the exhibition showcased basket weaving skills, art, poetry and creative writing, created by clients with the help of local artists and based on the findings from the ancient historical site where archaeologists excavated a wealth of weaving artifacts among others.

Experts hailed the finds as internationally significant, shedding new light on life in medieval Ireland. One of the most interesting aspects for the charity was the revelation of the Brehon Laws, the statutes which governed everyday medieval Irish life, and how progressive they were in their treatment of people with disabilities.

This led the group to think about the stigma that exists in modern society around mental illness, as a barrier to seeking help, and among the many derogatory terms they compiled, “basket case” seemed the most relevant to their project.

The exhibition even attracted royal visitors – The Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall popped into Fermanagh County Museum while on a visit to Enniskillen.



# Creative Crafts in Foyle



A very talented client in our AMH New Horizons Foyle service, created these fantastic art pieces as part of the CCEA Creative Crafts Level 3 Project. The final pieces comprise 5 skulls reflecting different feelings and thought processes from being unwell, feeling caged or paranoid through to happiness and love. We never cease to be impressed by the creativity and skills shown by our clients!

## AMH BOCCIA Champions 2014



AMH NI Boccia champions 2014 AMH Alligators from AMH Craigavon & Banbridge claimed the top spot in a fantastic tournament held in Lisburn, seeing off stiff competition from 35 other teams. Congratulations to the AMH Alligators who are: Christopher Ward, Ryan Lavery and George Haugh.

# Impact of Alcohol



The Big Lottery Fund awarded the Western Trust a grant of £1,198 million for the Impact of Alcohol Programme Portfolio of projects across the Trust area. Two such WRAPP (Western Regional Alcohol and Prevention Programme) projects are delivered by AMH – Quest (AMH New Horizons Foyle) and Time Out (AMH New Horizons Fermanagh).

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust also received funding from the Big Lottery Fund to deliver the projects under the title 'Taking the Initiative to Reduce the Impact of Alcohol.' The project "Healthy Body, Healthy Mind" will be delivered by Contact and Action Mental Health (Antrim) to increase the capacity of local community, voluntary and specialist services to recognise and support individuals and families affected by both mental health and alcohol problems.

## Bronze Casting in Bangor



Ned Jackson Smyth, Artist and Art Tutor has been working with AMH New Horizons in Bangor on a new bronze casting project.

The group explored the idea of "Healing" and developed their concepts through carving and drawing what represented healing to each individual. Over the following weeks, as the works developed and new skills were acquired, the participants demonstrated increasing confidence in their ideas. Working at the foundry offered a completely new experience for all raising self-esteem as each person witnessed their own casts coming to fruition!

# Law Society Pro Bono Choir presented with a “Heads Up” Award



Members of the Choir of the Law Society of Northern Ireland gratefully accepted a “Head’s Up” award from AMH for all their hard work and generous contribution to AMH! Thanks again!

## Back to Earth Cookery Programme

AMH New Horizons clients in Antrim started the Back to Earth Cookery programme with our brilliant gardener/ chef Hendrik Denmeyer.

All the organic produce is either from our garden or the organic farm in Helens Bay. The clients made Wheaten Bread and Seasonal Garden Soup from scratch! This programme is funded by the Public Health Agency as part of the Muddy Minds Garden Project.



## Kirkstown Castle Golf Club



Thank you to Kirkstown Castle Golf Club for their donation of £1,178.00—to mark their donation the Golf Club received a “Head’s Up” Award.

# Antrim Healthy Activity Week



AMH New Horizons Antrim hosted a range of events during the week, in association with Active Communities, including Boccia, Badminton and Rounders. The group then enjoyed an away day trip to Sentry Hill and Hazelbank Park in Newtownabbey. Fun and games continued with an introduction to Tai Chi and the week came to a close with Street Dance and a BBQ.

## AMH Derriaghy take to the sky



Clients from AMH New Horizons Derriaghy who are taking part in Positive Steps, challenged themselves by taking to the high ropes and zip lines at SKYTrek in Colin Glen Forest Park.