

## **Response to National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy – Consultation Document**

Carr Beck is a unique project, which provides accommodation for homeless women over 35 who choose to continue to drink. The only wet provision in Britain it is situated in Middleton, Leeds. As Team Leader of Carr Beck it is my view that there is a need for more understanding from professionals of wet provision and the value of the service we provide.

Carr Beck has been open for 6 years and has proven to be a success since that time for the following reasons.

- Carr Beck acknowledges that for some women abstaining from alcohol is no longer an option. A project that allows women to drink on the premises enables women who would otherwise be excluded from hostel accommodation the chance to maintain accommodation and have no fear of losing it because of their drinking.
- Carr Beck has high level accommodation. The project comprises of the core hostel and 6 properties in the community. The core hostel is a large, 2 storey detached house built in 1996. There are 2 ground floor flats and 4 flats on the first floor, each self contained, comprising a bedroom, bathroom and open plan kitchen and living area. They are fully furnished to a high standard. There is also a communal kitchen, lounge and ground floor bathroom. The flats in the community are one bed roomed flats comprising of a living room, bathroom and kitchen.
- Carr Beck offers a high level of support. A staff team of 5 workers key work 11 tenants.
- As the staff team don't 'police' the women's drinking, it gives them the scope to work on issues e.g. reasons for drinking and physical well being.
- Carr Beck offers a need led service – the women are pivotal in making decisions about the support they require.
- Carr Beck staff team receive regular supervision and training.
- Carr Beck receives a high level of referrals and occupancy. The fact we maintain a waiting list indicates the need for another project of this type and possibly catering for younger women.

- Carr Beck asks for regular feedback from the women we work with and other agencies to maintain our quality of service.
- Carr Beck is staffed 24 hours a day with sleep-in workers on emergency call between 10.00pm and 9.00am.

I believe it is important that the Department of Health take a lead when looking at health intervention and provide funding for more wet-houses throughout the country Carr Beck proves that wet provision works well. The Department of Health needs to recognise that some people are unable or unwilling to stop drinking and there should be an alternative available to them.

I do hope that you find my comments useful and constructive.

Julie Macdonald  
Team Leader – Carr Beck