

# in touch



Welcome to the latest issue of In Touch. Over the summer lots of changes happened in the way Social Services commission us to provide homecare. KCC cancelled all block contracts and introduced their home from hospital/enablement service. Many KCC Care Managers were reassigned and are still to settle in posts. Recognising the real threats to our business that the KCC changes have



introduced, we have streamlined our organization and have removed one Care Coordinator post and seven Senior Carer positions. We have also changed the way we hire people to make us as efficient as possible.

As some of you know we deliver homecare at approximately half the cost of the KCC in-house service, and these budgetary pressures on us are likely to continue. We realize that this financial environment has been tough on those that pay for their own care and so we have decided to continue our price freeze until April 2010.

On a more cheerful note, we held our second Care Academy in July for nine staff, which was a great success. We were also awarded a prize for Innovation at the West Kent Business Awards in October and were a finalist in the Best Business of the Year category.

I will be taking a sabbatical over the coming months, so Julia Mead and Emma Foard will be taking up the reigns! I hope you enjoy this newsletter and wish all staff and clients a wonderful Christmas. Richard Gould

**Terra**  
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# Roll call of Carers of The Month

It's been a while since the last newsletter so we have a cluster of carers to name check. As ever, client feedback results in nominations for Carers of The Month. Some of the latest winners are shown below:

**April** - Sarah Martin has given her all as a support worker; prepared to change areas at short notice when required, helping out at the last minute, even working the weekend she was moving house. She copes well with challenging clients and her work is frequently complimented on.



**May** - Sheila Welsby is a good carer and team player. She is careful to always read the care plan and feeds back any issues. As a team player she is happy to help cover others and mentor/shadow new support workers.



**June** - Hannah Lucas supported a client during a very difficult time and then went 'the extra mile' to follow him to hospital to support the family. She is a very caring member of the team and well liked by all her clients.



**July** - Mandy Wharton has a wonderful 'can do' attitude. Nothing is too much trouble. She works across all areas, balances her work for TerraBlu with helping her husband's business. She has also run self-defence classes for fellow staff and has taken on our client gardening project.



**August** - Sue Lomas Bullivant has been a great addition to the rural team since joining in March 2009. She works well with her fellow support workers and has built up a good relationship with all her clients and can always be relied upon to record and report back any issues. Sue is always reliable with excellent timekeeping.



Contact the office to nominate your support worker as CoTM...

## The Tonbridge tea party

Sheila Welsby and Elanor Jenkinson organized a lovely tea party for 28 clients at the Baptist Church Hall in Tonbridge on 6th August.

Sheila also organized some live music, which involved singing along to some old favourites including 'Streets of London.' There was a great spread of cakes and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Thanks to Jane Childs for helping with the organization, Lisa Draper and Sue Ellingsworth with the transport and Clare Derrick, Sally Wolfe, and Lisa Griffiths who all helped on the day.



## Sunny outlook at Care Academy 2009



*Pictured above l-r: Carole Tomlin, Katie Plass, Carolyn Gratton, Mandy Wharton, Emma Foard, Justine Gibb, Eva Koziol, Richard Gould, Sarah Martin, Laura Cooper*

The second Care Academy was held in Albir Spain between 1st and 5th July at the same hotel as last year. Carolyn Gratton helped run the workshops with Richard, and it was very much enjoyed by those that attended.

The KCC changes and our business planning were discussed at length, and the Care Academy Projects chosen this year were 'Tidying up client gardens'. The weather was brilliant this year and most people ended up on the beach on their afternoon off.

# A celebration of innovation

*Pictured: back row l-r:  
Netta Sceal, Elenor  
Jenkins, Sarah Martin,  
Laura Cooper, Emma  
Foard, Ruth Meakin,  
Clare Shillingford;  
front row l-r: Elaine  
Lumley, Richard Gould,  
Kim Murrell and  
Elaine Ralph*



TerraBlu was lucky enough to be selected as a finalist in three categories at the West Kent Business awards and ended up being awarded the prize for Innovation. The Care Academy was a major factor in winning us this award. Eleven members of staff attended the awards dinner at the Spa Hotel in Tunbridge Wells on 22nd October. It was a great evening.

## Green fingers at work in clients' gardens

During Care Academy the attendees chose a garden make-over project. The support workers nominated clients who they thought deserved and couldn't manage to do their own garden make-over.

On Sunday 11th October Mandy Wharton, Katie Plass, Sarah Martin, Emma Foard – with help from Laura Tierney, Richard Gould and his children – transformed two client gardens. Despite sore hands and aching backs it was a great success. The second part of this project will take place in the New Year.

