



Opportunities within Gateway

An opportunity exists for Kent LINK to have a presence in both the Maidstone and Dover Gateways currently at no cost.

Both Gateways will provide a hot desk, computer, internet access, telephone, staff ID badges and a staff kitchen area. They will also be able to provide space for a pull up banner, leaflets and posters in the reception area, as well as provide opportunities within the Gateway for running specific campaigns and the staff would fully support LINK in organising these. Maidstone has the facility of a private meeting room and sufficient space for two participants to work simultaneously on site. In Dover there is currently no private meeting room facility, although NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT does have a private room allocated to them. It is hoped that discussions will commence shortly with them about sharing that space.

There are currently several vacancies within Maidstone Gateway with the greatest footfall being on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. With this in mind, a provisional day of Thursday was agreed, with the proposal of one half day per week. Dover currently has a vacancy every Wednesday although it is proposed we attend for a half day once every fortnight. It is intended that both sessions are initially run by the Development Worker to start with until the volunteer recruitment and training process is in place. Occupancy may start once the LINK information has been installed on the electronic Qmatic queuing system, but only before the 30 June 2010.

The Development worker will be responsible for providing a full brief to Gateway Staff and ensuring LINK literature is current and up to date. Maidstone Gateway will provide a full induction process and introduction to partnership organisations for each participant working on site. The LINK will be advertised as a partner organisation in subsequent advertising of the Gateway at no cost to the LINK. There could also be a mutual link between our websites.

It is proposed that to start with sessions are advertised specifically to LINK participants in East and Mid Kent, letting people know they are able to access the LINK at the Gateway, offer appointments and drop-in times to come and meet with participants and the Development Worker. This would provide opportunities for participants to discuss LINK opportunities, be updated on LINK work and provide an opportunity for them to raise issues about health and social care.

It will be important to review the progress and success of this opportunity every three months to look at how sessions are developing, if people are accessing the LINK in this way and to look at how we share resources with stakeholder organisations.

Cate Boland
LINK Development Worker (Mid Kent)
June 2010