

Press Release: Swanswell
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Chair of National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse Services visits Swanswell

Swanswell, a leading provider of community based drug and alcohol services, recently welcomed Baroness Massey of Darwen to Birmingham.

A prominent and highly respected authority on the problems of drug and alcohol misuse, the Baroness is Chair of the Board of the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse Services (NTA) and speaks in the House of Lords on a range of health issues. She was keen to see how Swanswell's ground-breaking treatments are working.

Accompanied by other members of the NTA Board, Baroness Massey spent several hours at Swanswell receiving presentations, observing role-plays, taking part in discussions and meeting practitioners and service users.

In particular the visit focused on Swanswell's innovative approaches to harm reduction, its extensive service user involvement from strategy through to shaping service delivery and its commitment to partnership working including treatment outcome profiling.

Baroness Massey also heard about Swanswell's domestic violence pilot which is already proving highly successful with Criminal Justice partner agencies; in the first cohort clients achieved a 100% zero-reoffending rate followed by over 70% zero-reoffending longer term.

The event also included an insightful presentation and demonstration from Professor Paul Sharkey of Reading University who is supporting Swanswell's desire to utilise cutting-edge technology and new media in future service developments.

The NTA, in the front-line of a cross-Government drive to reduce the harm caused by drugs, works in partnership with national, regional and local agencies to support effective, appropriate and accessible local services. Baroness Massey's visit was an opportunity for her to assess the contribution Swanswell has to play in supporting the NTA's aims of 'improving the quality of treatment in order to maximise the benefit to individuals, families and communities'.

Swanswell Chief Executive Debbie Bannigan commented. “We were delighted to welcome Baroness Massey and to be able to demonstrate to her the broad range of services we provide to support people to remove the physical and emotional barriers that stand in their way. It was also a wonderful opportunity to share with her some of our ideas for service development and demonstrate the close and flexible working relationships we have with health professionals”.

Baroness Massey found the visit useful and interesting commenting, “I was very impressed by the range of services provided by Swanswell and by the service users’ involvement”. Special praise for the professionalism and passion of staff at Swanswell was also given.

-ENDS-

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Notes to Editors:

About Swanswell

Since its formation 40 years ago, Swanswell has become an established and respected provider of community based services for people with drug and alcohol problems. A Charitable Trust it has over 130 staff and offices in Rugby Birmingham, Coventry, Nuneaton and Leamington.

www.swanswell.org

About Baroness Massey

Baroness Massey became a Labour Peer in the House of Lords 1999.

Swanswell Charitable Trust
Registered Charity: 1074891

- Chair of the Board of the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse Services (NTA) – see www.nta.nhs.uk for further information
- In the House of Lords she speaks mainly on health, education and young people. She is a health education specialist on a range of issues including drug and alcohol misuse, HIV/AIDS and sexual health in national and international contexts.
- Honorary President of young people's sexual health charity Brook – see www.brook.org.uk for further information.
- Member of the Advisory Council for Alcohol and Drug Education the Trust for the Study of Adolescence.