

## Annual Report 2010-2011

Hafal Monmouthshire provides two key services: a **Break for Carers service** as well as a **Hospital Advocacy service** supporting individuals recovering from serious mental illness in a secure setting.

The Hospital Advocacy service has developed extensively over the past year with the dedication and commitment of our staff. Staff have built up excellent working relationships with patients, social services, the complaints department and senior hospital management without compromising the role of the advocate. Many issues are resolved at ward level resulting in a more therapeutic environment for all parties. Our advocates are a strategic part of the hospital's Patients' Council and ensure fairness and democracy at all times. Many important issues have been tackled by the project's advocates leading to a more settled experience for patients.

The extended hours of service delivery for the carers service has enabled us to visit more local venues, GP surgeries, community centres, etc. to advertise the service and to explain the role that we can play in supporting carers across the County. We are hoping to develop this further into the more rural areas through the coming year.

Home visits have remained a crucial lifeline for many families as a result of the great difficulty with transport across Monmouthshire and the resulting problems in accessing community resources and centralised services. The flexibility is valued as it provides an individual programme of care and recovery suited to the needs of a particular family.

Telephone support is valued by many, particularly those who are isolated and who find it difficult to engage face-to-face and this is, therefore, a vital resource in a crisis.

A new Carers' Group has been formed. This is a pilot project to test the need for such a service and if it proves successful it will be extended into other areas.

### Events this year have included:

- A Gwent carers event was held at County Hall, Cwmbran. Staff provided transport and support for clients to attend.
- The Public Health Team held local consultation events on the health needs of people across the Borough.
- Hafal's 'Road to Recovery' event took place outside Chepstow Castle and attracted many tourists and locals in spite of the poor weather (see picture below).
- 'World Mental Health Day' was celebrated with a range of agencies participating in an event aiming to reduce stigma and prejudice.
- A Carers Rights Day event took place with the emphasis on partnership working and pooling resources, which made it a worthwhile and memorable experience.

