

## REPORT TO CTIP ON THE MIGRANT WORKER DROP-IN HELD AT PENZANCE YMCA

The drop in has been running smoothly now for over six months. On two occasions I have assisted workers who were made homeless by employers and were not entitled to local authority help. This experience prompted me to write letters to all churches in the areas requesting voluntary financial assistance from congregations so that we could set up a crisis fund. Fortunately, we received a donation from St. John's Church in Pendeen for £143.00. This means we can offer temporary emergency accommodation in the backpackers hostel at a subsidised rate. Since the migrant workers crisis fund has been set up two homeless Czech men have used this. They were able to access the drop in the following evening and have since moved to Truro where they have jobs and accommodation. I hope to organise a fundraising event in late spring that will raise more money for the crisis fund.

Since the beginning of this year we have had another worker on board, Kat Anderson, who is funded by Stonham Housing to run a full time outreach migrant workers service. She attends the drop in from 5-7pm and offers advice on housing, immigration and financial issues. She is also a native Polish speaker, which is very useful for translations. In terms of numbers attending we have an average of four people attending every week. Please see the chart below for more detailed figures including nationalities of those attending.

• Nationalities	• Total no.s over six months	• Total no. of visits.	• Average weekly visits
• Polish	• 14	• 21	• 1.5
• Lithuanian	• 1	• 4	• 4
• Hungarian	• 2	• 16	• 8
• Bulgarian	• 2	• 17	• 8.5
• Romanian	• 2	• 10	• 5
• Serbian	• 1	• 18	• 18
• <b>Total</b>	• <b>22</b>	• <b>86</b>	• <b>3.9</b>

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007 to end of February 2008 (six month period)

### **Supporting People Development and Innovation Grant.**

The YMCA was awarded funds by SP to organise a joint community project between residents of the YMCA and migrant workers. Through consultation with two residents and a worker, the idea of guitar lessons being set up was suggested. This worker, Janos Balaton, is a talented musician who likes to teach. Translation service funds were granted as part of the bid so I organised a Hungarian translator through Jobline Staffing employment agency in Truro. Two lessons went ahead but unfortunately these had to be cancelled due to poor attendance. Janos is still keen to teach so the idea has been suggested of opening up the project for the wider community but still including YMCA residents, one of who is still keen. Since running the drop in I have learnt that most of those accessing it are looking for practical help rather than a social meeting place. Therefore, inter community projects will need to be designed in such a way that takes into account these needs and time-scales.

### **Migrant Workers Awareness Training**

Catherine is holding a training day on Migrant Worker Issues on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April 10.00am-12.00am in the conference room at Penzance YMCA. Everyone is welcome but numbers are restricted so please call Penzance YMCA to confirm your place.