



## Association of ex-Service Drop-In Centres - ASDIC

### FRAMEWORK

#### Concept

1. There are a number of Drop-In centres around the UK which support veterans of the Armed Forces, merchant marine and the fishing fleet and their families. Sometimes called Hubs or Centres, between them they offer their Service Users (SUs) social interaction, general welfare (eg financial and employment advice) and wellbeing, including mental health support. This takes place routinely under one roof, all at the same time and in an informal, relaxed environment. The Association of ex-Service Drop-In Centres (ASDIC) network aims to link these Drop-Ins together for their mutual benefit and make them more accessible to SUs.
2. ASDIC is strongly supported by the Confederation of Service Charities (Cobseo). Managed by Veterans Outreach Support (VOS), it has been established as a Cobseo Action Group within the Welfare, Health and Wellbeing Arena and endorsed by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust as part of the *Strengthening Local Government Delivery of the Covenant* programme. All members of ASDIC are expected to follow a common ethos as described in the code of conduct (para 8) and sign the ASDIC Membership Agreement (at Appendix 1). However, ASDIC does not seek to take away the independence of Drop-In but rather to empower it.

#### Objectives

3. The principle objective of ASDIC is to help Drop-Ins work together and thereby become more accessible to SUs. A secondary objective is to make it easier for Delivery Partners (DPs) (ie. state, charity and third sector organisations participating in Drop-Ins) to work together, extending their reach and giving them more opportunity to offer their services. Drop-Ins complement hubs like TRBL Pop-Ins and Help for Heroes Recovery Centres, making their services more available, especially to those with restricted ability to travel. At the same time each Drop-In can retain its individual identity within the context in which it was set up, whether on its own, as an independent charity, CiC or subordinate to a parent organisation (eg NHS, local County Council).

#### Steering Committee

4. ASDIC is overseen by a Steering Committee comprising representatives from Drop-Ins, Delivery Partners and key stakeholders under a Chairman. Day to day management is provided by a General Secretary who is responsible to the Steering Committee through the Chairman.

#### Membership

5. To be eligible for membership, Drop-Ins should comply with the following:
  - a. Open regularly, at least once per month.
  - b. Offer support to SUs without charge.
  - c. Have volunteer and/or pro bono component of staff.
  - d. Have at least two Delivery Partners in attendance (eg Citizens Advice, SSAFA, The Royal British Legion,).
  - e. Be a member of Cobseo themselves or be sponsored by a member of Cobseo or by a representative of ASDIC after a visit.
  - f. Have been in operation for at least one year.
6. Interim Membership was offered to all Drop-Ins for the first year (2018) and we are now moving to full membership for those who meet the criteria listed at para 5. Drop-Ins aspiring to join ASDIC which are less than a year old or do not yet qualify otherwise, may join as Prospective Members for a probationary period, and benefit from the advice of members as they become established. Delivery Partners may apply for Associate Membership (Appendix 2). All applications for membership should be made to the General Secretary, for ratification by the Steering Committee.

#### Benefits

7. The benefits of ASDIC membership include:
  - a. \*Use of the ASDIC membership brand, including the logo, giving national credibility and status within Cobseo.

- b. A dedicated presence on the ASDIC website to promote the member's Drop-In.
- c. Mutual support from other Drop-Ins to offer advice and stimulate best practice.
- d. Access to advice or mentoring.
- e. Facility to share relevant codes of practice, governance, conduct, outcome measurement and performance standards.
- f. Conferences and/or regional meetings to share ideas with other members for mutual benefit.
- g. Access to the membership list with contact information and details about the support offered by ASDIC Drop-Ins UK-wide.
- h. Cross-referral when a Drop-In is unable to address the particular needs of an SU or when another Drop-In may be more convenient for an SU to attend.
- i. Contact information and details about the Delivery Partners attending Drop-Ins and the specific services they provide.
- j. Demonstrable collaboration when applying for funding from grants and trusts.
- \* Prospective members may enjoy the benefits of ASDIC membership but will not be able to use the ASDIC brand, including the logo, until they are full members.

### **Code of Conduct**

8. Whatever their size or type (public sector, charity sector or private organisation), all ASDIC members will remain independent and responsible for their own conduct and governance. All members will be expected either to be a member of Cobseo, or to meet the general conditions which Cobseo would require for their overall ethos, culture and conduct. There will be wide variations in the way Drop-Ins are organised and one size definitely does not fit all. Delivery Partners attending a Drop-in will be expected to work cooperatively and it may be desirable for Drop-Ins to agree a similar code with them.

Drop-Ins wishing to join ASDIC will therefore agree to:

- a. Act with kindness and consideration to SUs.
  - b. Work together harmoniously to deliver the best possible service to SUs.
  - c. Signpost to other organisations when the support required is beyond their capability.
  - d. Be covered by appropriate professional indemnity insurance.
  - e. Be committed to monitoring standards and improving performance.
  - f. Where relevant, conform to statutory regulations for provision of clinical services.
  - g. Open at least once per month and publish opening hours.
  - h. Conform to the highest standards of behaviour in a relaxed and informal setting.
  - i. Follow appropriate legislation for data protection, safe-guarding, equality and confidentiality.
  - j. Never compete with other members or Delivery Partners and in the event of an unresolved dispute enter Alternative Dispute Resolution (see para 10).
  - k. Share developments and experiences that may be of interest to other members.
  - l. Maintain contact with the ASDIC General Secretary as appropriate.
  - m. Share contact details with ASDIC and other members for the purposes of giving access to SUs, providing their services and showing their attendance on lists at events.
  - n. Display the ASDIC certificate provided and use ASDIC branding on promotional material.
  - o. Produce a short (one page) annual report in the format requested.
  - p. Provide appropriate training to volunteers.
  - q. Attend periodic ASDIC meetings and conferences as appropriate.
9. Should it become known that a member falls short of this code of conduct, the Steering Committee will reserve the right to revoke membership.
10. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Should a dispute arise, members agree that it will be resolved initially through ADR mediation rather than litigation, and that a mediator will be appointed within 28 days of notifying the General Secretary of the dispute. Failing this, the matter will be referred under the Arbitration Act.

Capt M J D Farrow OBE RN  
General Secretary

28 May 2019

### **Appendix**

- 1. ASDIC Membership Agreement – to be completed and returned by all members.
- 2. ASDIC Associate Membership Agreement – to be completed by Delivery Partners.