



## Mental Health Project - London

The Mental Health Project tries to involve people with mental health problems in regenerating our estate. Unfortunately, the mental health and benefits systems don't help to get people involved in their communities and yet this could improve both their mental health and their chances of getting a job. For example, we run a young people's music project. There is a young man with mental health problems who is very involved in that. We were hoping that we might be able to pay him to help run it. He found out that he could earn up to around £80 a week on Incapacity Benefit, but actually he would only see about £20 of it. The rest would come off his housing and council tax benefits. What's the point of working? All the hassle and stress he would have is more than he could cope with so he's given up on the idea.

People feel that the benefits system is not very geared up to making it easier to do constructive things in their local community. We are always looking for ways to avoid getting into trouble with the benefits system – surely it should be helping us to help people in this area.

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