

# East Grinstead Courier

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*Scientology links claim*

## DRUGS GROUP ALERT

YOUNGSTERS and traders have been alerted to an anti-drugs charity based in East Grinstead, which is run according to the principles of L. Ron Hubbard, founder of the Church of Scientology.

The alert follows an appeal to companies in Crawley to contribute £1,000 towards the charity Narconon which provides a drug rehabilitation programme.

The programme, which can cost up to £5,000 and last for two to three months, uses nutritional supplements as well as exercise and saunas to rid the body of drugs. The system was originally devised by L. Ron Hubbard.

Mrs June Clay, drugs counsellor at the council-run Crawley Drugs Advice Centre, said people should know Narconon had connections with the Church of Scientology.

"I am concerned that the treatment costs £5,000 and concerned as to how many will find this amount of money," said Mrs Clay.

"In my personal opinion, people should be aware of the link with the Church of Scientology, especially as the sort of people that could come to them will be at their lowest ebb."

Mrs Clay said two people from Narconon had approached her to talk over their plans to set up a drug rehabilitation programme.

"They never mentioned anything about Scientology but when I asked them they both admitted they were members of the Church of Scientology and seemed surprised I knew," said Mrs Clay.

She added: "I can't comment on the type of treatment used on the Narconon programme - they say it works."

Ms Lesley Zimmatore, executive director for Narconon, denied there was any direct link between the church and the charity and said: "L. Ron Hubbard was the founder of the Church of Scientology and we also use his technology in the drug programme, but Narconon is a secular group."

"We are not connected to the church, but the church validates Narconon. If they know of

somebody on drugs then they would refer that person to us. There are no financial ties."

One of the people who approached Mrs Clay at Crawley was 40-year-old Susanne Lawrence, Narconon director and former alcoholic and drug addict.

Ms Lawrence, a member of the Church of Scientology for 12 years, said she was "at the end of the road" and had given up life altogether when she was introduced to the Narconon programme which cured her.

There was a pilot project in Britain in the 1970s but there was no permanent programme in the country until last year when several ex-addicts, two SRNs and several local residents in East Grinstead decided to get it off the ground.

Ms Lawrence said many individual scientists across the world had chosen to work in the Narconon programme but added: "Narconon is a non-religious activity and its articles of incorporation as a charity preclude any activity other than to address the problems of drug addiction and prevention."

"Independently produced accounts done by outside auditors clearly show that monies raised by Narconon for drug education and rehabilitation are spent on that and nothing else."

She said the cost of the treatment included "full board and accommodation, 24 hour care, vitamins and nutritional consultations with qualified practitioners and supervision by SRNs and trained lay staff."

Ms Lawrence would not say where the programme takes place but said that all initial inquiries had to be made to the national office in the High Street, East Grinstead.

Mrs Clay at the Crawley Drugs Advice Centre said that contacting her organization was the first step forward. She said: "At Crawley we have been working for nearly 30 years to get a walk in-centre and now have one."

"We are funded by Crawley Borough Council and are willing to help anyone free of charge. We have trained counsellors and a doctor visits twice a week. We are the first step towards directing someone to what is hopefully the right treatment."