



**GOVERNMENT
COMMUNICATIONS
HEADQUARTERS
PRESS RELEASE
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GCHQ collects for Homeless in 'Pants for Christmas'

GCHQ staff are running a Christmas charity campaign called 'Pants for Christmas,' collecting new underwear, toiletries and other clothing for Gloucestershire's only Direct Access homeless charity, Gloucestershire Emergency Accommodation Resource otherwise known as GEAR.

Spokeswoman for GCHQ, Caroline Waterfield said, "We are really excited about this project. It provides the opportunity for all staff at GCHQ to do something tangible for the homeless of Gloucestershire this Christmas. GEAR works to relieve sickness, poverty and distress, particularly amongst the county's street homeless. They are constantly seeking finance and donations of clothing, food and toiletries. We hope to make a real difference by collecting as much as we can in the run up to Christmas."

The 'Pants for Christmas' campaign is being run across the whole of the South West by a network of government departments under the banner of Civil Service South West (CSSW). CSSW brings together representatives from different government departments across the region. It aims to break down barriers between departments, share best practice and work collaboratively on common issues such participation in the voluntary or third sector.

Regional collaboration of government departments on a variety of common issues is a fast developing Civil Service initiative. It is strongly encouraged by the Head of the Civil Service Sir Gus O'Donnell.

Notes for Editors:

1. Gear Projects is based at The Vaughan Centre, 159 Southgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 1EX. To find out more about their work for the homeless please refer to their website:

<http://www.gearprojects.org/about-gear/index.html>

2. Civil Service South West

Civil Service South West (CSSW) is an exciting and innovative programme designed to bring all government departments and agencies closer together to work collaboratively on common issues that affect the many civil servants they employ.

The programme uses the strong regional presence, its scale and diversity, to benefit all civil servants and, through them, the public they serve.

Programme aims

- To develop a civil service in the South West that is an employer of choice which attracts, develops and retains people from all backgrounds and is representative of the communities it serves
- To enable staff as individuals to get the most out of being civil servants and to feel that they are part of something bigger than the organisations they work
- To enhance existing partnerships between organisations and build new ones where there is mutual benefit to be gained

The programme office team is working with departments and agencies on a range of initiatives to help achieve these aims.