

Volunteering Inclusion Partnership (VIP) End of Project Summary Report

Our VIP Project provided grant funding to four partner organisations to enable them to develop coproduction within their services and enhance opportunities for people affected by homelessness.



- Partner Organisations
- Cornerstone, Caritas
- The Edge Theatre
- Greater Together Manchester
- Oasis Community Centre.

Number of new volunteers recruited: 49

Polices developed or improved as a result of Booth Centre support

- Safeguarding policy
- New volunteer handbook
- Community rules, including acceptable language and respect agenda
- Recruitment procedures.

Types of volunteering opportunities created for people affected by homelessness

- Garden maintenance
- Publicity
- Usher
- Front desk
- Activities facilitator
- Cleaning
- Food preparation
- Supporting other volunteers
- Coaches/referees
- Building links with agencies.



Activities and impact of the partnership

The Booth Centre offered training, shadowing opportunities and mentoring. We offered a handbook to help organisations develop new procedures. Our VIP volunteers visited other services to give their suggestions. We also facilitated learning and visits between partners.

“The project has helped us to engage with a much clearer programme and policies and procedures that are not overly complicated but easy to follow and understand which has accelerated the participants' progress in the project”

Coproduction processes implemented

- The Booth Centre trained over 50 staff in partner organisations in coproduction
- Partner organisations implemented ways to remove barriers to coproduction, including paying volunteer travel expenses
- They changed hierarchies and gave volunteers agency in decision making
- New schedule of daily volunteer meetings and full volunteer planning days were introduced
- New activities were planned and delivered with people visiting partner organisations.

Key successes

- Building a stronger volunteer programme, catering for all needs and backgrounds
- New processes to manage volunteering
- New roles and activities were created, and service changes such as providing free meals introduced in partner organisations
- A strong, supportive network of VIP volunteers
- Building new volunteer pathways within the Booth Centre and with other organisations.

Challenges

- Covid service closures
- Taking long-term volunteers along the journey of this new way of working
- Managing expectations around coproduction, and learning to set out clear boundaries and parameters
- Covid interrupting meetings across VIP partners .

“[Co-production] goes a long way to helping people improve their confidence, improve their self-worth and develop new skills... our volunteers are empowered when they can see that their suggestions, ideas, and actions are making a positive change to the programme.”

All four organisations are committed to carrying on their projects as delivered through the VIP programme.

Ongoing work involves: working to explore how the services can be more welcoming and accessible; continuing to explore how people affected by homelessness can get involved; and how this coproduction approach can be applied with other client groups.