

Grant Aid Annual Review:
2015/16

Appendix 4

Appendix 4: Examples of volunteers ‘moving on’

Although the beneficiaries of the Grant Aid programme are primarily service users, groups have also reported examples of volunteers ‘moving on’, e.g. developing skills, and experience to assist them with moving into paid employment. Here are just a few case studies about volunteers ‘moving on’:

Mansfield Play Forum (*Mansfield*)

The play forums all offer accessible play opportunities that meet the social, psychological, and physical needs of children – this is delivered through direct work with children and by offering support, advice, training and shared resources to groups who work with children. Services offered include a Play Resource Centre, Toy Library, Loan Equipment and Scrap Store.

Case study

“Mr N said volunteering had given him the opportunity to gain employment, skills to add to his CV, training and the confidence to carry on looking for work in the field that he wants to make his career”

“Mr N has lived in Mansfield Woodhouse all his life; he was the first person in his family to attend university. Mr N attended [University] for four years and worked very hard to gain a degree in biology. Throughout his time at university he couldn’t wait to be working. Unfortunately Mr N was unable to find work in his chosen field. Mr N says the rejection letters started to affect him, he got a bit lazy not going out and started to lose his confidence. Mr N heard of the Play Forum through a relative and came along to a meeting (Mr N had always had an interest in play and how it benefits children in later life, while at university he had been involved in summer play projects).

At the meeting he found out that money was tight [for the Play Forum] and that play was being affected. Mr N offered to become a volunteer doing administration, computer work and helping in the resource centre and scrap store. Mr N said putting himself forward as a volunteer had given him the opportunity to extend his skills in areas like administration, computers, sales, helping members of the public, understanding the needs of the community, and working with children.

Mr N was able to secure a paid part time position with the Play Forum. Mr N said volunteering had given him the opportunity to gain employment, skills to add to his CV, training and the confidence to carry on looking for work in the field that he wants to make his career.”

Reach Learning Disability

Reach Out (*Newark & Sherwood*)

Reach Out supports adults with learning disabilities to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to integrate positively within their community by for example encouraging volunteering and access to training.

“Reach Southwell staff were delighted when one of their office volunteers (a young man with Autism Spectrum Disorder), secured part-time employment at a local firm, having sufficiently built confidence in his social and communication skills through his volunteering role.”

Stonebridge City Farm

Positive Progress (for Nottinghamshire older and vulnerable people)

The Positive Progress project provides support and opportunities for Nottinghamshire older and vulnerable people to participate in activities at Stonebridge City Farm. The Project provides:

- Opportunities for service users to engage with day to day tasks relating to gardening, animal care and/or customer service.
- Opportunities to access to education, training and employment (which may be delivered via external providers).

Through these activities, the project aims to increase service user confidence and self worth and help them to engage in social interaction, develop new friendships and learn new skills.

Case Studies

“I am hopeful that i will get a job soon and I have not felt that hope in years”

“My name is X and I’ve been volunteering for Stonebridge City farm for the past 2 months I came to work at Stonebridge City farm through my local jobcentre as I had been unemployed for sometime which had made me feel very low. Working at Stonebridge has built my confidence and gives me something to look forward to. I have met lots of different people which has opened my eyes to different cultures and backgrounds and I can appreciate and understand where they are coming from. They also give me help around my CV - I am surprised by the amount of things I have learnt since being here.”

“My name is Y and I am a volunteer at Stonebridge City Farm. Stonebridge City farm is a brilliant and amazing place to volunteer. All the staff are down to earth and have helped to bring me out and get me into a 9-5pm work routine after being out of work for over 2 years. Staff are very supportive which has helped my confidence and self esteem and great to work with colleague volunteers that are very friendly and hard working. I have also been able to brush up my computer skills as well as my face to face customer service and reception skills. I now am also job searching which i previously found difficult to do but now with their help I am identifying jobs. If Stonebridge City Farm was not here then I would most probably be still at home everyday deteriorating. I have also revitalized and updated my CV with current work experience. I am hopeful that I will get a job soon and I have not felt that hope in years.”