

Tackling Worklessness

RIEP Project

Involve Yorkshire & Humber

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Tackling Worklessness - Aims

- To utilise Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs) in Local Authority areas with high numbers of workless people
- Develop the capacity of VCOs to engage and train people to move them nearer the labour market
- Assist VCOs to develop their businesses by employing volunteers



Partner organisations

- LSP representatives from local authorities in Hull, Wakefield, and Bradford
- Networks of Involve Y&H: Volunteering Network, Equalities Network, BME programme, Rural programme
- Councils for voluntary service, Volunteer Centres, and Local Infrastructure Organisations



Participating voluntary organisations

- Bradford Action for Refugees Forum
- Age Concern Bradford and District
- Shipley and Bingley Voluntary Services
- Abundant Life Centre, Bradford
- HALE, Bradford
- Khidmat Centre, Bradford
- Holme Christian Community, Bradford



Participating VCOs (continued)

- Informal Learning, Wakefield
- Barnados Yorkshire Region, Wakefield
- Unique Education Ltd, Bradford
- Havercroft and Ryhill Sports and Youth Centre, Wakefield
- Hull African Caribbean Resource Centre, Hull



Learning Points

- Focus groups held with groups of 2-8 volunteers in each organisation:–
- VCOs are already well set up to engage and train volunteers, supported by CVS's
- VCOs need control over who they take on
- Volunteers are often known to the VCO
- Well structured volunteering opportunities increase participants' capacity for paid work and their confidence to pursue it



Learning points (continued)

- Volunteers gain:
- Learning and training
- Skills such as using the telephone, dealing with people, budgeting, problem solving and team working
- Start to think about gaining paid work as a result of seeing themselves as responsible workers in the VCO setting
- Social skills and useful contacts



Learning points for Local Authorities

- VCOs are a solid resource for tackling worklessness in local areas
- Employing volunteers is costly to VCOs – the management contribution and volunteer expenses are vital
- LA run schemes to support voluntary organisations to take on long term unemployed people would support Big Society, Localism, and Health agendas



Volunteer quotes

- ‘I’m helping ex-offenders to learn to cook and fill in forms to sort their benefits – it’s not so long ago that that was me’
- ‘I couldn’t afford to do it without the bus pass’ (£16 per week travel expenses)
- ‘Dealing with incidents all the time...but hardest part is dealing with bureaucrats...they speak another language that you have to learn’



Volunteer quotes (continued)

- 'I've done my Level 2 in Youth Work and next week I'm starting my Level 3 in Information Advice and Guidance' (IAG)
- 'Before long everyone finds they are involved in doing a computer course, or working in the kitchen – you don't really get to sit around. Some of the younger people come here to do homework, it's easier to get help with work and there are computers. Some people start on one course and end up going really far with it, to university it can be'.



Thank You

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