



# The Difference

## Volunteering and Community Involvement



Keith, Volunteer, Yeldall Manor

The European Association for the Treatment of Addictions is proud to announce the second edition of our bimonthly publication, *'the Difference'*. This e-bulletin demonstrates how eATA member organisations are exhibiting best practice and achieving successful treatment outcomes. This second issue entitled, 'Volunteering and Community Involvement' aims to demonstrate the importance of volunteering in the recovery process and in the success of an organisation. The following submissions are examples of success stories and case studies in which community involvement was important to treatment success.

*Important Notice: eATA offers our apologies due to an error in our last issue. The article on page 3 entitled 'Family Focus: A Case Study' listed Addaction as the organisation to contact, however the article corresponded to The Nelson Trust. We apologise to all those concerned.*

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# Westminster Drug Project

Volunteers are an essential part of WDP. In fact the organisation was established by volunteers 21 years ago. Today there are around 100 people at any one time who work with us unpaid, making up 1 in 4 of our workforce.

About 60% have had a drug or alcohol problem themselves in the past. Volunteering provides the opportunity to give back, inspire current service users, and is an important route to gain employment skills and go on to paid work. Ten volunteers have become paid members of staff in the last twelve months.

*Volunteer placements include volunteer  
substance misuse practitioners;  
administration volunteers; social work &  
counselling trainees*

An exciting new development is our Supported Volunteering and Peer Advocacy Programme *Giving Something Back*. The project has just begun in Barnet and will be extended to four London boroughs over three years.

The programme has two tiers; the first is to support service users to engage in a range of volunteering opportunities, including working in homeless projects, environmental charities and shops. WDP is developing partnerships with charities and social care organisations to provide the posts, which will offer a route to paid employment. One of the aims is to broaden the range of potential career paths beyond drug and alcohol work.

The second tier of the programme is Peer Advocacy, where recovering and former drug users provide practical and emotional support to substance dependent clients. The programme provides training to enable participants to attain and sustain posts related to both tiers.

We believe that the training and support we offer volunteers is central to being able to offer high quality placements. Many volunteers have joined us through the extended Induction Programme which runs a few times a year in different locations. This gives an overview of the substance misuse field, combined with role play and other experiential forms of learning. We are currently offering a free NVQ3 course in Health & Social Care: this is provided through partnership with an adult education provider. Volunteers also get reserved places on many of the in-house staff training courses and their professional development is further enabled by Volunteer Support Groups.

## *Kamal Lock: from volunteer to employee:*



“I started as a volunteer with the Westminster Day Programme in January 2010. The way the volunteering programme is structured at WDP means that I have been able to meet all my training outcomes - allowing me to also evidence the skills and knowledge needed to complete my NVQ. Now, I am delighted to say, I have been given a paid job here, as a Group Work Practitioner. As a volunteer I was given the practice and training, and positive feedback, to give me the confidence to apply when the opportunity arose.

“My advice to others thinking of volunteering is that it is give and take. Volunteers need to be reliable and come in on time, deal with change and work hard. But the support you get back in turn is amazing. The culture here is incredibly supportive. That’s the environment we want to give clients but it is also there for each other.”

Westminster Drug Project  
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# Western Counselling

## A VOLUNTEERS' TALE, A STORY OF LIFE AFTER ADDICTION

*By and from: Pete S.*

Hello whoever is reading, and welcome to my story. To give just a few details before we start, my name is Pete, I am 60 years young, I live in the West of England, I am most certainly, in abstinence based recovery and I am a former drinker and life-long alcoholic. It gives me pleasure to tell you how it was, how it is, and what helps me to keep the great life I now enjoy.

Like a lot of people, some of whom may read this; drink and the life that went with it eventually took me to a lonely place, an almost permanent bench either in a park, or on a street corner. Trapped in a cycle which I could not break, and so very, very alone. Something had to happen, and at the age of 53, a beaten, drink stained beggar asked for help. After assessments and appointments, a detoxification and follow up treatment centre became a reality. Also a reality was a move from London to Somerset, a distance of 170 miles or so.

*"I feel very much 'part of' something  
good and positive."*

To save all the gory details of an addict going through a rehab let me take you straight to me leaving treatment. I became involved with an appropriate Fellowship right away, and undertook a lot of college courses and day care programmes, after all I had to educate myself and learn how to communicate all over again.... This, my friends, was all in my late 50`s and the most daunting thing I have ever done. So, it was the year 2008 and I had an armful of certificates, what was the next step?

*"I do not drink anymore and I help others to do the same,  
what more can I ask."*

I have been a Volunteer Support Worker at Western Counselling Services (come on I have to mention them!) for three years or so now and to be honest, I could not say who benefits from it the most be it myself, the clients or the centre. The style of treatment is allied to the fellowship I attend and that is a real bonus, on a personal level I get support from the whole team, including, and especially, the management and I feel very much "part of" something good and positive. The whole experience is so much part of my recovery that it is almost uncanny.

Yes, life is good today, I have a purpose and get rewards, and better than that by doing this I do not drink anymore and I help others to do the same, what more can I ask.

Thank you for reading this,

Pete S.

Western Counselling:

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# Volunteering for Cranstoun

## Oxford's Women's Services

Having worked at Cranstoun Oxford's Women's Service as a sessional worker doing massage therapy and reflexology for nearly three and half years I have come across many different clients: some who have really helped themselves, others who have not been so lucky. When I found out about Cranstoun's Women's Initiative on Street Health (WISH) I felt I wanted to help out in anyway I could. So I embarked on going out on the occasional Thursday evening with a worker doing outreach work and helping any sex workers that are associated with the Women's Service.

I have been volunteering for WISH in the form of outreach work for nearly two years now. I feel it's a necessary thing to do and it is vital to build relationships with the clients. I see drug dependence in a whole different light. It is rife in my community and needs to be tackled with sensitivity. I feel it's a great service as we can reach out to sex workers without the worry for them of meeting authoritarian figures from the statutory services. Sex work is not something that is done out of choice and anyone can see that if you meet some of these women.

***WISH is a project that was set up several years ago in Oxford by Cranstoun, and is part of the Women's Service. We work with sex workers because of the close proximity of drug use and sex work.***

I felt it was important to get to know the clients/sex workers as I was working with them. Being able to recognise their needs is just as important as working with them within the service. This was important for me, to give something back and to aid such a good service in Oxford which helps women with drug problems. The trust is there from the women and therefore it's easy to reach out to them if they know you. If the workers are familiar with the clients in any

way, then this is a success to the ability of the organisation and how it works, helping clients to move forward.

Breaking out of this mould takes some courage and after some time of drug use and not being able to get out of it for many different reasons. WISH is very simple: it focuses on a certain time scale for the evening, the same day every week, numbers are available for the women to call should they need something or someone as a point of call and we have supplies to give the women again should they need them: a simple yet effective service without any prejudice or judgement. Cranstoun is reflected in this. It is a commitment yet a worthwhile cause and it shows how much you are trusted. The reputation here is shown in a remarkable way.

*"This was important for me, to give something back and to aid such a good service in Oxford which helps women with drug problems."*

We also give emotional support to the women if they are in some sort of difficult situation and we can pre-arrange to meet up if a quieter location is needed. It's a vital service that shows compassion and practical help, and it goes to show that this sort of thing is going on in every community and the more we open our eyes to it the better our communities can be served.

I am proud to have been a part of it, and feel that it has educated me to a level that I never thought would.

Rosalia Barresi

Volunteer

**Cranstoun:**

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Website:

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Email: [info@cranstoun.org.uk](mailto:info@cranstoun.org.uk)

# Education, Training and Employment at Nelson Trust

*The Nelson Trust is a Gloucestershire-based registered charity providing residential and day care addiction treatment, resettlement, training and employment, family therapy, aftercare and specialist women's services.*

The education, training and employment (ETE) programme at The Nelson Trust is designed to meet some of the social functioning aspects identified in a clients care plan.

ETE provides group and one to one services to achieve the objective of transition into training and employment. All activities are designed to develop and increase confidence. Our aim is to motivate clients and equip them with transferable skills. Clients can gain a recognised qualification at the Trust, which can improve their eligibility for sustainable employment.

The Trust's Educational Centre gives people the opportunities to learn a wide range of useful subjects, including creative and vocational skills. The centre comprises a fully equipped IT suite with internet access, an arts and crafts studio, working kitchen and a carpentry workshop.

The Nelson Trust works in partnership with Stroud College of Further Education to enable clients to explore a range of further education options. Stroud College runs courses from the Education centre which have been specifically designed to help clients gain entry-level qualifications and experience for further education opportunities. Clients may also attend courses at the College campus.

ETE guidance sessions are delivered on a one-to-one basis and treated impartially and confidentially. All ETE staff are fully IAG Qualified. The Nelson Trust works in partnership with many local Gloucestershire organisations, including several charities. Clients often take advantage of these partnerships by doing voluntary work to gain valuable experience and learn new skills in the workplace. The ETE programme is continuously evolving according to need and demand.

## Case Study: Stephen's Experience

**Stephen volunteers for the Nelson Trust assisting the Art group teacher and at Lansdown Pottery, a local group that teaches young people with learning difficulties.**

Stephen, 54, had a long history of heavy drinking which stemmed from his low self esteem and low mood. Stephen drank to blot out a reality he couldn't deal with and to 'fix his feelings', but in truth drinking had just become a way of life.

**After two attempts to get clean in other rehabilitation centres he was signposted to Nelson Trust in November 2007 by a drug and alcohol case worker in Swindon. Nelson Trust had a very different approach to the previous centres he had been to, focusing more on the route cause of his habit - he had to deal with his problems without the clutch of alcohol for the first time.**

During his time at Nelson Trust he was given the opportunity to revive an old interest in Art and Pottery - interested enough to then complete a two year foundation degree course at the local college in Creative Practices. Stephen spent six months in treatment at Nelson Trust then he went on to stay in Nelson Trust's move on accommodation for a further six months. At the end of his stay his support workers helped him set up on his own in rented accommodation. Volunteering is the next step to paid employment as Stephen is still on anti-depressants and he is claiming Disability Living Allowance.

Stephen said 'I have never been a good socialiser so for me volunteering is not only giving something back to society but it is a sort of formalised social activity. It's all about building up my responsibilities gradually and giving my time to others that need help, it also gives me some structure to my week'

### The Nelson Trust:

Tel: 01453 885633

Website:

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# Yeldall Manor

Yeldall Manor is a Tier 4 service offering detox, rehab, resettlement and aftercare. We operate a programme founded on Christian principles for men aged 18-65.

It's hard to imagine Yeldall Manor working in isolation from the local community. Since the start, we have been supported in our work by a dedicated and gifted group of men and women who invest their time, energy and love in our residents - working alongside them, teaching them life skills, leading discussion groups, organising social events, and encouraging them by visiting to talk, drink tea and laugh together.

"We value our volunteers because, quite simply, they enable our service users to achieve more - particularly on our resettlement programme."

Our twelve week resettlement programme builds on our 24-week rehabilitation programme and aims to give residents the life skills, experience and confidence to

flourish back in the community. Residents receive individual support (including one-to-one Counselling), engage in Groups (on subjects such as relapse prevention, relationship building, budgeting, and healthy eating), and (crucially) spend three days a week on a voluntary work placement.

**After more than 20 years of chronic alcoholism and a prolonged period of rough-sleeping, Keith came to Yeldall Manor in December 2009. During his resettlement programme, Keith's voluntary work placement was at the Greyfriars Coffee Shop in Reading.**

Reflecting on his experience, Keith says, "Working at the Greyfriars Coffee Shop has really helped me to develop as a person. When I arrived at Yeldall I was quite withdrawn and didn't really speak to anyone. It's helped me gain self belief and self esteem, as well as confidence in otherwise insecure areas such as meeting new people and doing unfamiliar tasks. My voluntary work at Greyfriars has, in many respects, made me whole again and has given me the opportunity to put into practice all that I had been taught at Yeldall Manor."

What makes these placements possible and effective? The investment of volunteers - the opportunities they create, the training they give, the responsibilities they delegate, and the friendship they offer.

"Voluntary work placements play a critical role in establishing our residents in their recovery and help to ensure that 1 year after completing our resettlement programme, 79% of our ex-residents are living drug/alcohol free and 71% are in work."

**Yeldall Manor**

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