

foundations **4** work

our passion **your future**

project update

April 2018 to December 2018



A partnership
between the
**Create
Community
Network CIC** and
settle

Context ...

This report considers the first year of the 'foundations for work' project, an innovative collaboration between settle and the Create Community Network. There are 4 main elements to the project:

1 to 1 support ... the one to one mentoring with individual tenants to assess their needs and work with them to develop a plan of action (activities and interventions) that will help them on their journey to a more self sufficient and fulfilling life. This, ultimately, leading to a sustainable employment option that meets their individual needs of the demands of the life they lead.

skills and capabilities... the development of self worth and belief, the acquisition of skills and capabilities leading to building of the confidence to make positive, self managed steps forward.

passport ... the planning and capturing of plans and progress, giving employers credible evidence of commitment and development. This too providing individuals with a sense of both direction and achievement.

opportunities ... the provision of taster experiences, work placements and, ultimately, roles within both the business and voluntary sectors.

Snapshot ...

It has been a privilege to be a part of such an innovative project, underpinned by heartfelt values and commitment. Our first year has been really successful building and nurturing the heart of the programme, that of supporting and hand holding those tenants needing individual support and guidance.

However, there is still so much to do and in this second year we are looking forward to bringing to fruition the other core elements of the project and seeing this wonderful initiative develop, grow and make the impact we all know it can!

Progress ...

Overview

As a new initiative, this first year has primarily been about building the foundations for a long term, sustainable programme. This has meant focusing upon the real heart of the programme, the 1 to 1 mentoring provision, whilst laying the groundwork for the peripheral support areas of easy access programmes and employer engagement. Not forgetting the innovative passport scheme.

Mentor

After a very successful recruitment process we appointed a mentor in May 2018 who took up their position in early June.

Referrals



There is always an expectation that not all those referred to the project will actively engage and therefore, for the purpose of targeting and reporting a typical engagement figure was set at **85%**. This meant to achieve an annual target of actively **engaging 30** individuals, a **target of 35 referrals** was set. As the project progresses, this number will be reviewed and adjusted if not feasible or representative.

In this first year there were **38 referrals** which, given the time for projects of this nature to gain momentum, is seen as very good.

Engagement



In this first year, of the 38 individuals referred, some **29 have actively engaged** in one way or another. This represents a **76% uptake** which, whilst lower than the target set above, is still seen as positive and has driven the total number of **engaged participants** to **29**, just 1 below the full year target.

Given our mentor has been in post for just 9 months, **expected progress** for the first year would be to have worked with nearer **22 or 23** individuals. Against this background, working and liaising with 29 is seen as very good.

Progress (contd) ...

Impact



In the early throes of any project it can be very difficult to definitively measure the impact any intervention is having. With this in mind we have looked to **keep things simple** and look at 3 levels of **step change** individuals have made.

first steps ... for many individuals, simply agreeing to engage, committing to an appointment or responding to a text or phone call can represent the first small steps to progress.

good progress ... once a rapport and/or an informal contract is established, the next step for individuals is to undertake one or more specific activities or sessions to address a particular need. This represents good progress.

big steps ... a big step can mean different things for different individuals but, for this first report, we've considered progress such as moving into employment (full or part time) or volunteering on a regular basis for the first time.

It should be noted that aside of the categorisation above, the simple act of 1 to 1 mentoring is seen as hugely beneficial. Access to a reliable, safe, non-judgemental, personal contact is widely valued by individuals and provides a real springboard to progress.

Participant Journeys

first steps	'One off' meetings – information, advice & guidance provided:	3 tenants
	Referral/signposting to Peer Support Groups, CCN drop in, other voluntary organisations (Mind in Mid Herts, Safer Places):	8 tenants
good progress	One or more courses attended (inc. Vocational, Well being, Key skills):	9 tenants
	One or more CV sessions attended:	11 tenants
big steps	Volunteer Placements	3 tenants
	Paid employment secured (including career progression):	6 tenants

Challenges/barriers to work

- tenants mental/emotional and physical health
- not being in the right place to even think about work due to their vulnerability at that particular time.

Looking forward ...

Overview

After a successful first year embedding the mentor and the 1 to 1 provision, this second year is focused upon the 3 remaining prongs of the project:

- schedule of **programmes and activities**
- **passport** initiative
- **business/employment community** engagement

Programmes and Activities

Our planned schedule of activities is close to implementation (see sample below) with one fine hurdle to finalise: delivery space. We are currently working with local providers and businesses (including settle) to secure rooms on a regular basis that enable the activities to be planned and reliably booked in advance.

	May		June		July		
mindfulness	thu 2	thu 16	thu 6	thu 20	thu 4	thu 18	CCN Centre 10-12
CV surgery	wed 8	wed 22	wed 12	wed 26	wed 10	wed 24	CCN Centre 10-12
interview skills		thu 30		thu 27		thu 25	CCN Centre 10-12
IT skills	tue 7	tue 21	tue 4	tue 18	tue 2	tue 16	CCN Centre 10-12
active walks	tue 7		mon 3		mon 1		TBC 12-1

In time we hope to relocate to new premises, which allow us to easily deliver more of the above but meantime we will be working with one or two key partners to bridge the shortfall.

A further key element of this delivery will be the regular throughput of referrals which has really begun to pick up at the tail end of this last year. This bodes well for a full service up and running by quarter 2 of this second year.

Passport Initiative

Again, this is close to implementation. After carefully considering a number of options with regard to size, cost, sustainability and value to the participant we have sourced an excellent folder to be the foundation of this valuable initiative (see below).



We have also begun developing the inserts for the folder that enable participants to both capture their progress and demonstrate this to potential employers (see below)

 Certificate of Achievement	
NAME Joe Bloggs	
ACHIEVEMENT Fully completed CV	
COMMENTARY Fully completed CV	
ENDORSED BY Fully completed CV	
SIGNED Fully completed CV	
	

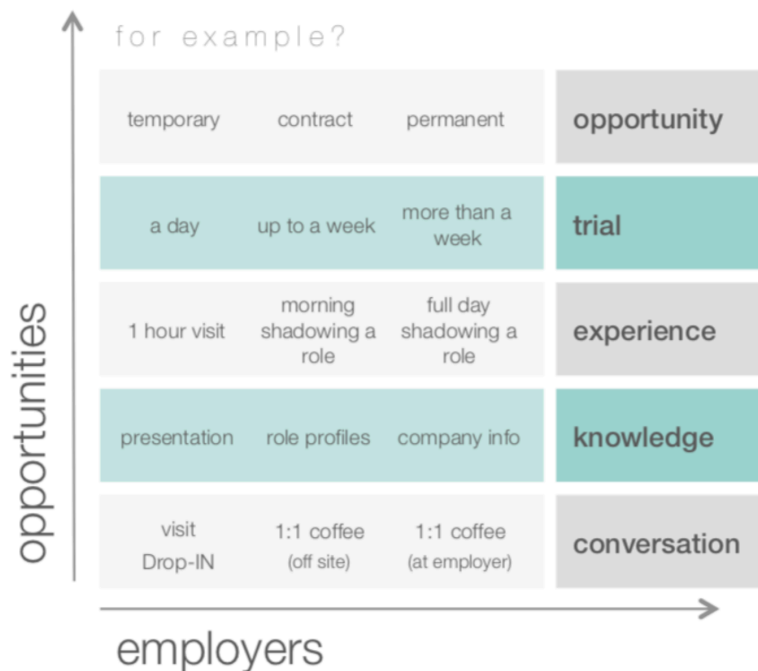
The first of these passports we expect to be in action and utilised by mid Q1 in year 2.

Feedback on the value of these from both participants and employers has been really positive and, as a result, we see the passport as providing a key point of understanding between the 2 parties and the basis for genuine, sustainable employment opportunities.

Business/employer Engagement

This is probably the biggest challenge of the project, indeed, the biggest challenge for employment related support programmes. Without the understanding and commitment of this hugely influential group, opportunities for our participants will continue to be severely limited or, at best, short term and cyclical. Whilst much resource was targeted in this area during year 1, there is still a mountain to climb here and we are redoubling our efforts to make an impact here.

Our proposition to employers is simple, flexible and designed to give employers the widest possible spectrum of opportunities to get involved (see diagram below).



To date, we have secured support from a number of small businesses who see the value of what we are looking to achieve and are keen to do whatever they can to make things happen. Whilst this has been encouraging we are looking to make a much greater impact and to drive this forward we are taking the following actions:

- Increase the resource and effort devoted to this activity
- Collaborating with local partners to work together to present a united front in changing the mindset of the local business community
- To support the above, deliver a number of employer engagement events (again, in collaboration)
- Once properly up and running, develop case studies that 'work' and demonstrate how a productive relationship between employers and initiatives such as this can make a real and positive difference to all parties involved.