

Queen's Hall Action on Poverty: The Brick

Developing chaplaincy

The Brick – a quick summary

The Brick is a small charity that delivers big results for the community it serves. As its name suggests, it provides a safe, solid building block for people in crisis to begin to construct a new life and become valuable members of society. Since it began life in 2008, The Brick has become a real force for social change in Wigan Borough. The charity's original aim was to support homeless people and help them make the transition from the streets back into independent living. The Brick's remit has developed and evolved significantly over the years and it adopts a holistic approach to supporting people in need. The organisation seeks not just to help get people out of crisis but to transform lives through training and work-experience opportunities that lead to real independence.

Development of Chaplaincy

As the Charity continues to grow we have become increasingly aware of the need to provide a consistent level of pastoral care to the people we work with – to our staff and to our volunteers. The Charity was founded from within the Methodist tradition and for the past 12 months has been supported to provide a chaplaincy service for one day a week (mainly focused on supporting the needs of our staff teams).

The Charity learned a lot from that trial phase and the range of needs and issues facing people who we support and our volunteers and staff:

Issues addressed have included bereavement, suicidal ideations, depression, work pressures, family breakdown, disagreements within team, sickness, financial worries, faith questions, fear, sleep problems, disciplinary worries, new job worries, loneliness, sense of belonging and others.

We are committed to developing a substantial chaplaincy resource to enable us to offer support across all of our settings.

Our objectives

- To provide pastoral care and a listening ear to people using our services from all kinds of backgrounds
- To support our staff and volunteers to develop their skills and capacity in providing pastoral care to people we work with
- To lead and support organisational development that creates a daily work and living environment that supports personal growth and resilience
- To train a team of volunteers who can develop and deliver a diverse form of chaplaincy

Our approach to chaplaincy

- Respect each person and respond to them with love
- Seek a direct experience of God within themselves and in their relationships
- Build spiritual connections and community not through professing identical beliefs but from sharing and working together
- Encourage a sense of community and shared space
- Respond to spiritual needs in the moment
- Go to places overlooked by others and never give up on people
- Listen to and support people to help them find their own strength
- Promote social justice
- Speak plainly to people in power.

Tasks for a chaplain

- Pastoral support sessions for staff and volunteers
- Group support sessions where appropriate
- Communications to staff and volunteers
- Regular meetings with senior leaders
- Visit each site at least once per week
- Offer supervision sessions for staff and volunteers as appropriate
- Develop and lead a team of volunteer chaplains
- Raise the profile of The Brick within the faith community locally
- Engage with other organisations and chaplains locally

Annex: Summary of our services

Crisis Intervention

Town Centre Project, providing assessments, advice and appropriate referral routes to those experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness or other crisis.

Outcomes: 2017/18 - 2592 attendances (702 different individuals)

Homeless Street Outreach

Dedicated Street Outreach Workers with street level engagement experience to identify, engage and provide real opportunities to move away from street sleeping. This provision focuses cover over the weekends and evenings to maximise contact for those street sleeping.

Outcomes: Initial delivery period (July 18) outreach workers engaged with 112 individuals

The Brick Works

Vocational training and personal development in a social enterprise workspace for homeless people and other vulnerable people. People using our services will have the option of attending the Brick Works and we will support them with transportation. We offer work experience, including wood-working catering, sales, van mate, admin, reception, peer mentoring, re-upholstery, bike mechanics, PAT testing etc. supporting people into employment.

Outcomes: 2017/18 - 46 trainees engaged (5 progressing into employment) 2 trainees progressed to be mentor / volunteers providing peer support to service users.

Supported Accommodation

Six flat accommodation unit in Leigh that provides safe, high quality accommodation transition for long-term homeless and unemployed people who are undertaking work experience at the Brick Works. All tenants have access to an Asset Coach and Independent Living Mentor (ILM) to ensure they have positive progression pathways into volunteering, training and employment outside the Charity. People we engage with will have the opportunity to move into these flats and will be encouraged to apply.

Outcomes: 2 tenants ready to move into general needs accommodation so they can take up paid employment.

Inspiring Change Greater Manchester Social Impact Bond (SIB)

Partnership with Shelter and Great Places focuses on working with entrenched rough sleepers. Asset based support provided through Asset Coach Team, delivering the May Day Trust's Personal Transitions Model promoting self-reliance and independence. Our ILMs provide support and access to other agencies if the person feels this is appropriate. Project also includes a GROW Trainee who engages with people using the service from a lived background point of view.

Outcomes: Since December 2017 39 people moved into accommodation – of which:

- 5 sustained accommodation for 3 months+
- 5 working towards improved education
- 6 volunteering or entered employment
- 5 entered drug services
- 10 entered mental health services

Emergency Access Accommodation

Our Emergency Access Accommodation provides 15 safe spaces for people to sleep away from the streets, as well as access to health, opportunity to socialise, diversionary group sessions, pathway to other agencies including training and employment. An additional permanent 15 person centre is due to open in Wigan from December 2018.

Outcomes: March 2018 to date – 1472 attendances (215 unique people)

Night shelter

Temporary shelter in Wigan Town centre (St George's church) offering 15 spaces as part of the Mayor of Manchester's "A bed every night" initiative. (This provision will continue to operate in addition to the new permanent Emergency Access Accommodation when that opens in December 18).

Independent Living Mentors

Independent Living Mentors, supported by volunteer team ensure support, signposting and guidance is provided at our service points and other community venues. Close working with partner agencies - drug and alcohol services, health teams, group sessions and training.

Outcomes 17/18 – 1234 attendances with 60 unique people.

Personal Transitions Service (Asset Coaching)

Work with Mayday Trust to deliver asset based working with those experiencing homelessness and tough transitional periods, such as release from prison and substance use. Asset Coaches meet with individuals at Places of Purpose and encourage individuals to focus on their strengths and aspirations.

Outcomes: 52 unique people in last 12 months – 344 attendances

Hospital to House

7 day service within the Hospital with NHS teams to prevent delayed or unsafe discharge for patients with no safe accommodation on discharge. People in hospital who are transitioning through homelessness or unsuitable accommodation are referred to other services ensuring a rapid response and better chance of positive outcomes.

Outcomes: 2017 - 398 referrals into service. 384 were provided with a safe discharge without delay. 97% success rate. Savings to NHS / statutory services - £653,765 in 2017.

Food Bank

Food Parcels provided to individuals and families referred from local agencies. Triage to ensure underlying support needs are identified and support offered to enable positive choices. Everyone gets a one to one conversation in order to enable swift and appropriate interventions – with debt counselling where needed.

Outcomes: 2017/ 18 - Value of donated food / items – £109,560

2017/18 Number of parcels provided - 7304 @ £15 per parcel average