

# **Guide to Developing Recovery Cafes**

November 2011



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# **Recovery Community Development and Recovery Cafes Network Event 11 November 2011**

## **Introduction**

This guide was produced to coincide with the first UK Network Event for Recovery Community Development and Recovery Cafes, which took place in Edinburgh thanks to the sponsorship of the Scottish Drugs Recovery Consortium.

The event was attended by people in recovery, volunteers and paid staff interested in sharing ideas and practice in our efforts to help people in recovery develop their community and their own initiatives. People came from Scotland and England, and we hope it will be the first of many future UK-wide events which help us all to continue to improve and apply our creativity to promoting and supporting happy and healthy recovery.

The guide was drafted by the Serenity Cafe and then completed with the information gathered during discussion at the event.

**Thanks to all those who participated and contributed, we look forward to seeing you again!**





## Background to the Serenity Cafe

### What it is

The Serenity Cafe is a social hub for people in recovery, led by people in recovery. It first developed around the idea of a social enterprise cafe which could cater for the social needs of people in recovery trying to avoid the pressures to drink and use drugs found in many adult social situations in Scotland. However, people in recovery quickly realised its wider potential to develop their recovery community and offer a wider range of opportunities for people in recovery to support each other and develop, personally and socially, as they adjust to life without alcohol or drugs.

The Serenity Cafe has developed a broad network of activities led by volunteers in recovery, with some initiatives providing opportunities for paid work for people in recovery. Activities have developed without the benefit of permanent premises. Although permanent premises remain our aspiration, we have achieved a great deal using borrowed and hired venues:

- Steering group, all people in recovery, meeting monthly to develop the initiative
- Monthly cafe-club nights attracting 70-150 clubbers in recovery, with our own house DJs, soft bar and full cafe menu.
- Weekly drama group (volunteer led)
- Weekly Women's Group (funded by SCF Women's Fund)
- Football team (Espera) led by volunteer trained at SFA courses
- Arts in Recovery – music group, choir and more drama activities (funded by Postcode Lottery)
- Fortnightly family activities, for parents in recovery and their children
- Residentials, barbecues, walks, fishing, chess, book swaps, led by volunteers
- Peer mentoring between experienced volunteers and new volunteers – peer mentoring and leadership training courses
- Recovery coaching – training for recovery coaches and supervision of coaching
- Volunteering – regular recruitment sessions and matching with peer mentors, training and support to develop activities (leading to SVQs in community development during 2011)

### Who is involved

From the outset a steering group of people in recovery was formed to lead the initiative, a group which has slowly developed during the 20 months it has been in existence. This group is supported by a community development organisation called Comas, which is helping the steering group to work towards full independence managing a fully functioning recovery cafe. This is a long journey.

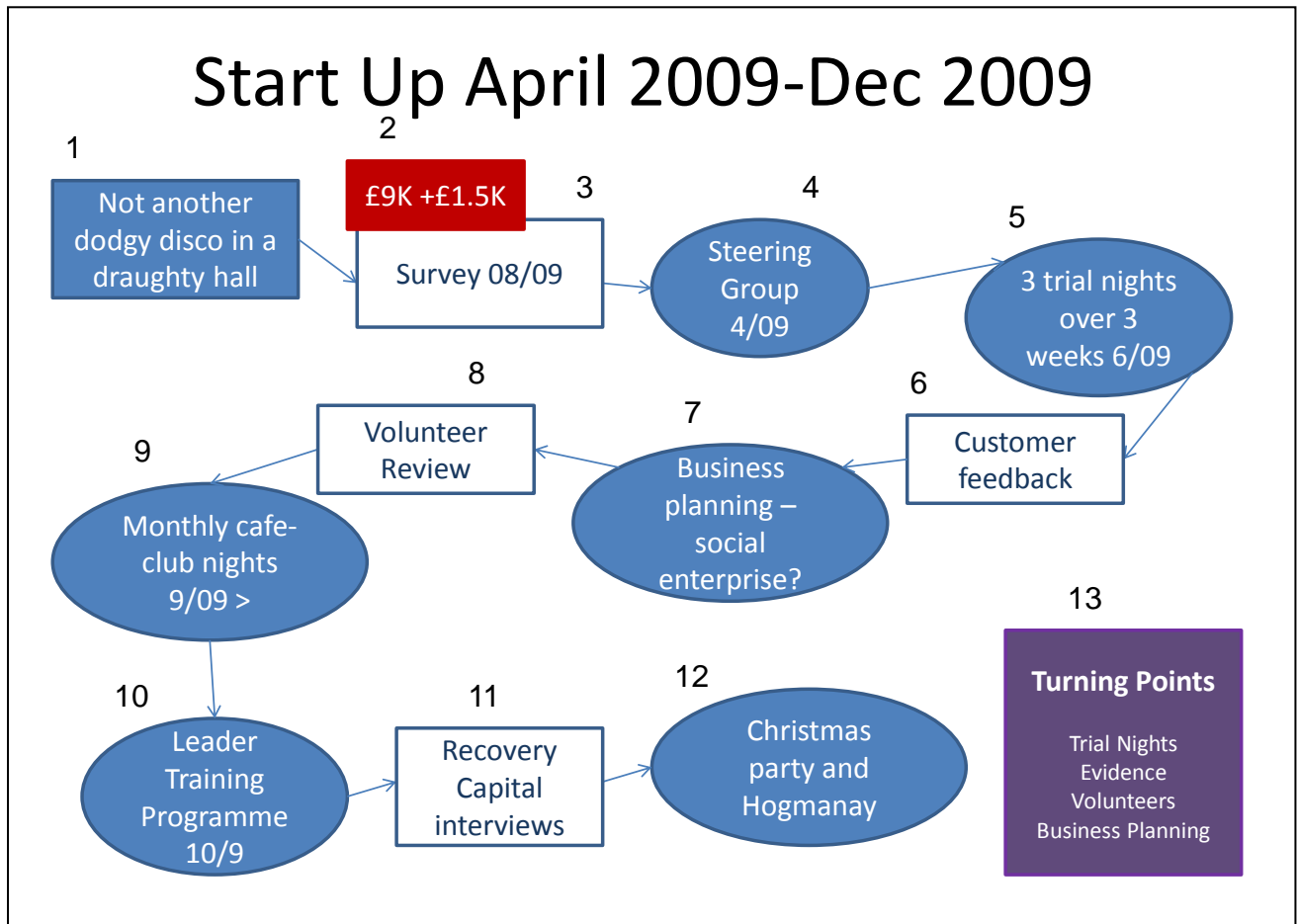
Volunteers develop activities within the Serenity Cafe. Volunteers are expected to be in abstinent recovery and to attend activities drink and drug free. If volunteers relapse, communication with them is maintained if this is helpful to them, and they are welcome to re-engage when they feel ready.

Participants in the Serenity Cafe are all people in recovery, described by the steering group as anyone who has set a goal of abstinence. Many have achieved abstinence. Some are using prescribed medication or other forms of treatment and can attend events as long as they are not intoxicated.



The Serenity Cafe celebrates all recovery and all approaches to recovery.

## The story so far



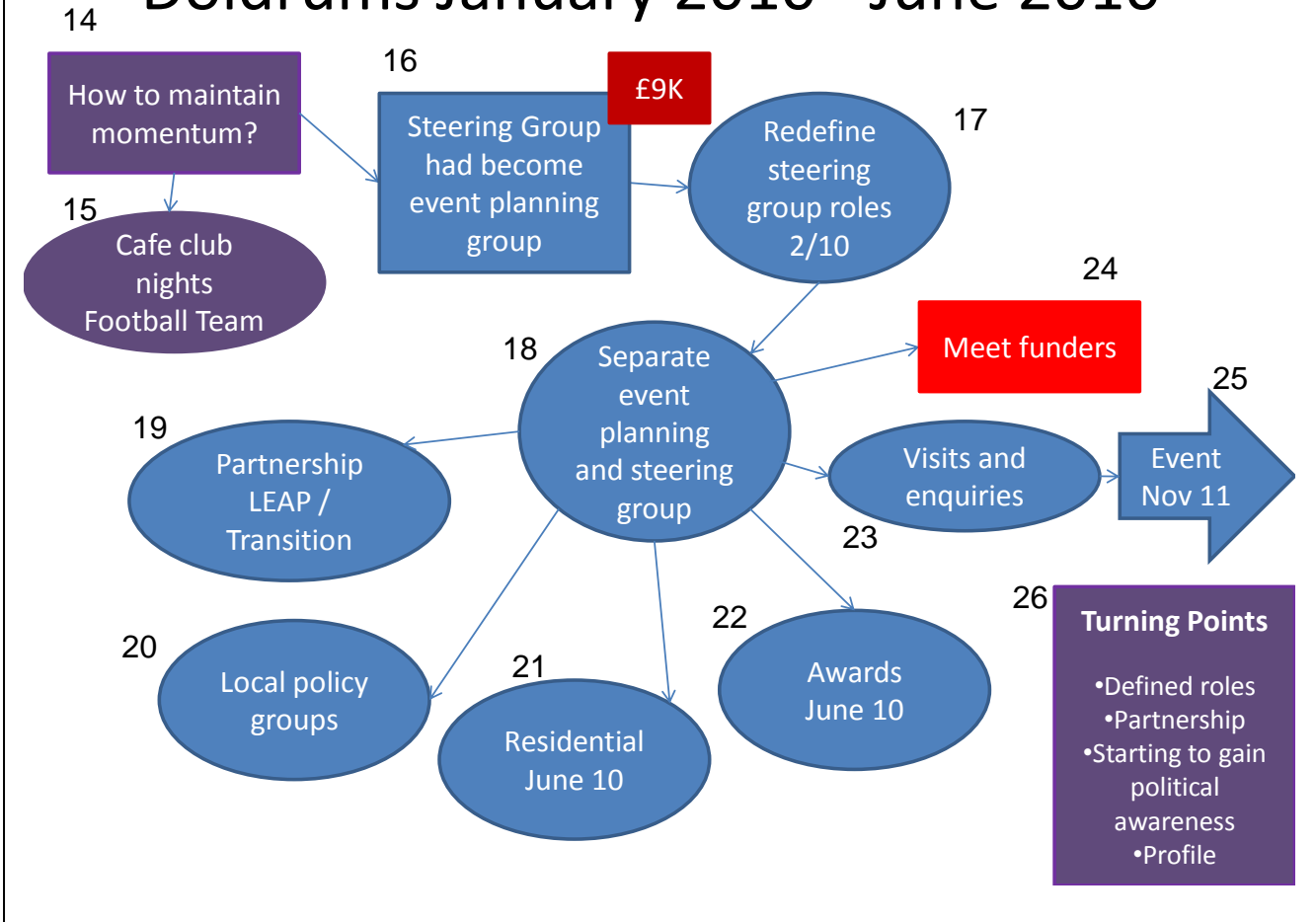
1. Experience of AA/NA social events lacked ambience, meeting in expensive coffee bars before and after AA/NA meetings was expensive. Contrast this with finding Friday and Saturday night social venues dominated by hen and stag tourists – it wasn't difficult to realise that social life for people in recovery takes a little getting used to. There has to be something better!
2. Comas (community development agency supporting Serenity Cafe) applied for an Investing in Ideas grant from the Big Lottery to explore the feasibility of the idea with people in recovery. (£9k awarded, and £1.5k came from Lothian Health). Some of this money was used to engage someone to do some business planning, to cost the idea properly and develop a business plan. This was a bit too soon in the process to be useful, but has been a useful tool.
3. A survey was sent out online (using surveymonkey.com) which snowballed to 98 respondents within a few weeks. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive on the need for somewhere safe and recovery-friendly to meet others. The seed was sown. Interested respondents provided their email addresses and these were used to call a first meeting.
4. A very loose steering group was formed in April 2009. At the first meeting there were two people. Within three months it had grown to 15 people. Meetings were informal, no 'committee' was formed – ideas, chat, food and encouragement.



5. However, people at the steering group meetings really needed something tangible to fix their efforts on. It was decided to use some of the Investing in Ideas funding to hold some trial nights – three weekly cafe-club nights – to test the concept, in June 2009. Volunteers chose themes, dressed the hall, hired a DJ, and prepared a mocktail and food menu with volunteers providing the hard work.
6. There was trepidation, no-one knew what to expect and we half expected a flop, or 50 people if we were lucky. We got a massive response, over 100 people came each night. The customer feedback was amazingly positive and provided further evidence we could use for funders.
7. With the evidence from our cafe-club trial nights, we approached a social enterprise support agency with our evidence and our draft business plan. We had built in the cost of supporting people in recovery in first-step employment, traineeships and volunteering. It turned out that these costs, and the cost of premises, made our plan too 'social' and not enterprising enough – i.e. it would not make enough of a profit and we were advised to raise prices or reduce staff costs. We realised we could not realistically do either of these – prices needed to be affordable for people in early recovery still on benefits, and staff would be needed to ensure volunteers and employees in recovery had a positive developmental experience. So we committed to being a valuable project contributing to society, rather than a viable commercial business.
8. We conducted a volunteer review after the trial nights, further confirming that volunteers really enjoyed the experience but also really valued support to play their part. The review provided yet more evidence for funders.
9. Spurred on by the success of the trial nights, the steering group realised that we could run cafe-club nights with volunteers and hire of a church hall, and break even. They decided monthly events would be the right frequency to allow them to continue to search for permanent premises and funding. Monthly cafe-club nights ran from September 2009 (except for Festival time, when we ran a beach barbecue instead)
10. The role of volunteers in leading the cafe-club nights was crucial, so leadership training was provided for volunteers in the autumn of 2009. However, leadership has continued to be difficult to encourage and develop. Volunteers tended to operate as a herd of cats each with their own direction. The fact that it usually does come together on the night continues to be proof for some of them that leadership isn't needed, while for others there is frustration at this style. These differences continue to highlight the need for staff to help facilitate team work and support emerging leaders.
11. During the winter of 2009-10, interviews were carried out by Comas with a number of volunteers. This action research supported the development of the Serenity Cafe and provided still more evidence about the role of social networks and personal development in early recovery – this was becoming an important part of the Serenity Cafe's role and purpose.
12. The Hogmanay cafe-club night crowned 2009 – around 150 people came along, twice as many volunteers got involved, desperate to avoid an isolated Hogmanay. The event was a roaring success and confirmed to volunteers and participants that the Serenity Cafe provides something unique and important in Edinburgh.
13. Turning points of this start-up phase were the trial nights, the mass of evidence we gathered on why the Serenity Cafe is needed; the growing cadre of volunteers gaining experience; and the realisation that 'social enterprise' is too vague a term and that our business model requires external funding support to be viable – a fact we decided not to be ashamed of!



# Doldrums January 2010 - June 2010



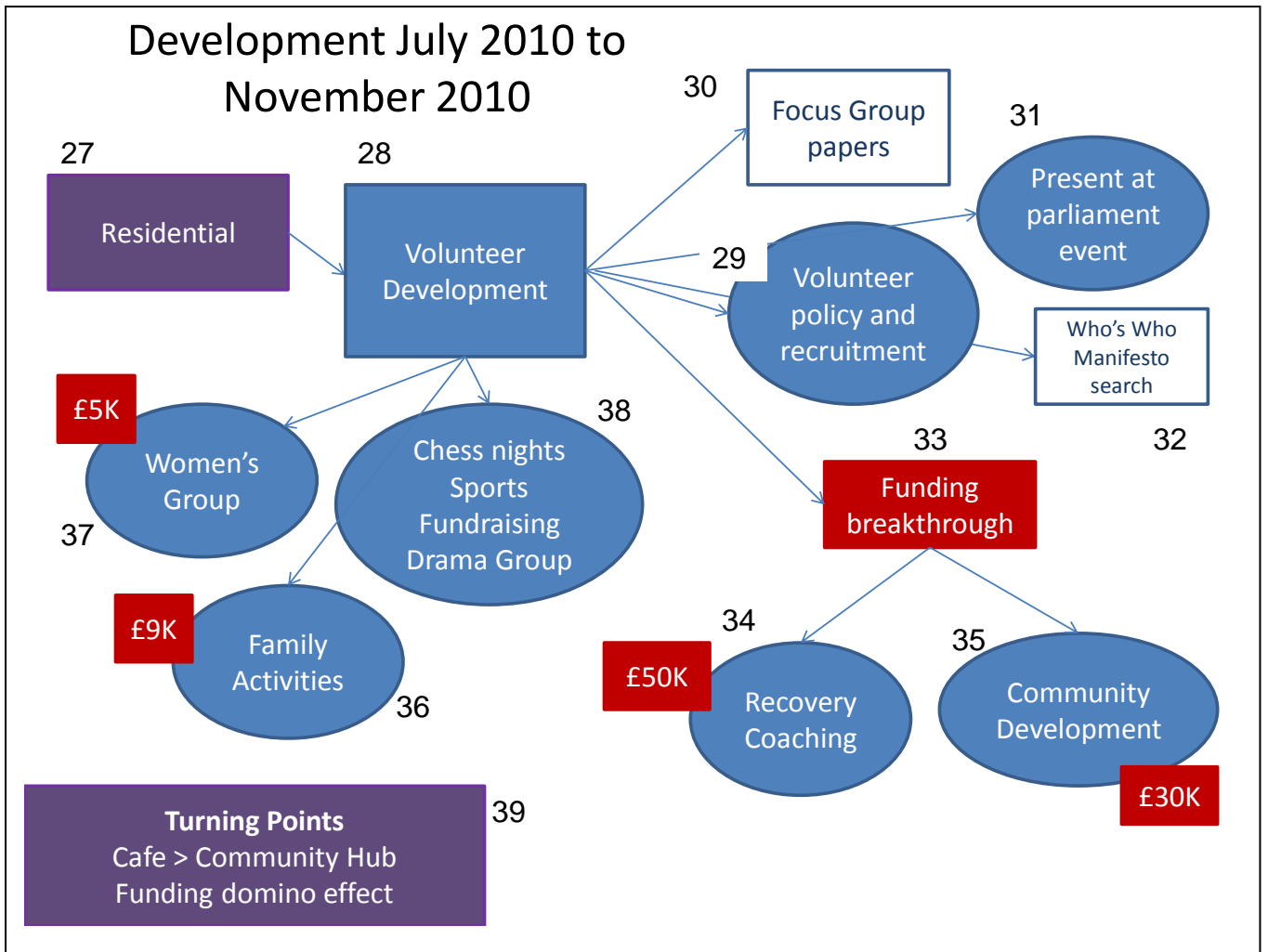
14. During the winter months of January and February, cafe-club nights suffered from skint customers and cold weather. Volunteers were starting to feel the pressure of keeping up the monthly cafe-club nights. Our challenge over these months was how to sustain momentum.
15. An interested volunteer started a 5-a-side Serenity Cafe football team. This was positive but also caused ructions – that unruly competitive spirit created tensions on team selection. The team played out their league fixtures, and then another volunteer came forward willing to attend SFA training courses and shoulder the responsibility of getting an 11-a-side team together.
16. The steering group was also struggling to stay focused on the future, with all its energy now focused on the cafe-club nights. We gained a £9k grant from Awards for All for volunteer and steering group training, and to train our own DJs (making our cafe-club nights much more cost effective).
17. We recruited more people to the steering group from our growing team of volunteers. Before people really could get a handle on the point of the steering group, we identified a range of roles – however we still held off from creating a formal committee. The roles related to all the things the steering group would need to be good at in order to become independent – human resources (for employment of staff), funding, PR and marketing, finance, policy, volunteer development, premises. We recruited two people to each role, and agreed a 50% renewal of steering group members annually – half will step down each year and the remaining half will mentor the new members.



18. It became really important to separate out event planning from the steering group. The event planning meetings became open meetings for all volunteers willing to help at cafe-club nights, and happened fortnightly. Steering group meetings became closed meetings and focus on developing the Serenity Cafe as an independent organisation carrying out the wider range of activities now happening within the Serenity Cafe hub.
19. A key source of support and encouragement from the outset, the partnership with Lothian and Edinburgh Abstinence Project (together with its partners Access to Industry Transition project and City of Edinburgh housing) developed further during 2010. People in treatment were encouraged to attend cafe-club nights to taste opportunities after treatment. The association also provided Serenity Cafe with advocacy within wider public sector circles by LEAP staff who promoted our work.
20. This advocacy led to Serenity Cafe volunteers being invited to attend a range of local policy-making groups in the fields of drug, alcohol and recovery. This experience was mixed. Some other substance misuse service providers were hostile towards any support for abstinence and to a newcomer on the scene in a competitive funding climate (although we were not asking for money!). Volunteers needed support and preparation for meetings which was time consuming – and they definitely needed support afterwards, to deal with their anger and frustration. Over the months, volunteer participation in such meetings has become easier. Volunteers are more confident to express their views, and service providers and decision makers have become used to their contributions.
21. The Awards for All funding earlier in the year enabled us to hold a residential training weekend for steering group members. This was a good bonding session and we used tools such as Myers Briggs personality types and Belbin's team roles to help steering group members understand each other better. It also gave us vital space to re-establish our vision for the future, and to focus on developing our volunteering programme – the 'give and get back' core of the Serenity Cafe.
22. A major boost for the steering group and volunteers happened when we won the Scottish Charity Awards community category. It was an amazing pat on the back for their hard work and a welcome boost to our credibility.
23. Throughout the year we hosted visits from other groups and fielded enquiries from other parts of the UK about how to replicate what we were doing. This was good for our ego but time-consuming.
24. Throughout the year steering group members were making grant applications for permanent premises. Funders would meet with steering group members would walk away impressed – but still no cash forthcoming!
25. The offer of sponsorship by Scottish Drugs Recovery Consortium was a welcome opportunity to share our experience at a national network event, and was another boost to our credibility.
26. Turning points during this phase were defining steering group roles; benefiting from partners' advocacy of our work; getting to grips with local politics in decision making / development circles; and raising our profile with awards and events.







27. The steering group felt particularly strong and optimistic after the residential. It was important to build on this momentum quickly.
28. We undertook an intense phase of focusing on volunteer development as the Serenity Cafe's main resource – and also to demonstrate the value of this to funders.
29. Volunteers worked hard to develop a comprehensive volunteering policy to support our further development of volunteering. This required the steering group to pin down decisions such as 'who can volunteer' and 'what happens when I relapse?' A volunteer planning and review process helped to confirm what volunteers can gain from volunteering, and with the help of some funding from Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland (see point 33 below on Recovery Coaching) we were able to establish the role of Peer Mentor, and train more experienced volunteers to mentor new volunteers. We also established formal volunteer recruitment open evenings and became more proactive about volunteering, rather than a more casual approach we had adopted before.
30. During the spring and early summer we trained some volunteers as focus group facilitators and ran some focus groups on issues we felt were important to people in recovery (mental health; getting professional help; spirituality). We produced papers on the findings from these focus groups. We did this because of our experience in local policy making groups, where we felt that some substance misuse professionals – and those in other services – had limited awareness of recovery. These papers were our effort at sharing our experience for the benefit of others who might help people in recovery.



31. Our raised profile in the voluntary sector due to our charity award meant we were invited to make a presentation at an event in the Scottish Parliament on preventive spend. We proposed that investing in support for recovery after treatment helped prevent relapse and therefore protected investment in treatment by making it more effective. One volunteer showed how his own use of public services while using drugs chaotically and on methadone cost the tax payer dearly; and what he has contributed back to society through the Serenity Cafe and other volunteering. This again helped raise the Serenity Cafe profile, but also helped volunteers think through our positioning of the Serenity Cafe to politicians – key decision makers about funding for the wider recovery agenda in Scotland. From this, the Serenity Cafe manifesto emerged – the message is make just a 1% shift from treatment and care to recovery support in Scotland, and every area will be able to afford someone who will help facilitate recovery community development and recovery cafes!
32. Volunteers were continuing to develop their role in local policy and decision making circles, and decided they needed a 'Who's Who' of local figures in substance misuse and relevant areas. They sent a questionnaire to officials and a guide is being produced.
33. In June 2009, Serenity Cafe seemed to break through the funding barrier. This could be for a number of reasons: we have gathered good evidence of what we have achieved and what people gain from the Serenity Cafe; we have won an award; we have proved our stayability, now getting towards two years old; we have started to make our presence felt in wider circles concerned with substance use and recovery; we are cresting a wave of interest in recovery and new ideas to help resolve an age-old problem.
34. The first breakthrough was a grant of £50k for one year by the Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland to develop Recovery Coaching and peer mentoring. People in recovery will be trained as recovery coaches to coach others in recovery using a life-coaching approach and based on helping individuals to build their personal recovery capital. The peer mentoring is described in point 29 above. The Steering group went through its first formal recruitment process for a full-time member of staff. This proved to be challenging. The steering group decided that being in recovery was not an essential criteria for the role and wanted someone to bring experience and skills. Some volunteers applied for the position, and were deeply disappointed that they did not get selected. We learned from this that we need to find a way to help volunteers prepare applications, and also that the transition from volunteer to paid role will require more structured learning within the Serenity Cafe.
35. This structured learning will now be supported by our second major funding breakthrough, a two-year regional grant through Scottish Community Foundation from Comic Relief, to help us strengthen our volunteering and provide accreditation for volunteers who are helping to develop their recovery community through SVQs in Community Development.
- 36-38. A wide range of activities have started in the autumn of 2010, some with small grants from different sources and some purely with volunteer effort. The voluntary effort has become more focused and productive as a result of our efforts to structure and support individual volunteer planning and reviews using peer mentoring. Small grants have brought opportunities and challenges. Often they create delivery deadlines and targets that the steering group has to manage and focus on, distracting them from the overall drive for permanent premises. On the other hand, they boost steering group esteem, create new interests and provide niches for some volunteers to develop their talents. The grant opportunities are pursued using ideas that come from listening to volunteers and steering group members and tapping into their enthusiasms. What is created overall is a really vibrant sense of a community developing – far more than just a cafe. This has become what the Serenity Cafe is – a hub.

**It's a long journey which we are just beginning. We are learning from mistakes and building on our successes, and loving every minute of it.**



## Recovery Community Development

In recovery communities, individual learning and development is coupled with, and mutually reinforced by the process of peer support and the reciprocity within helping relationships

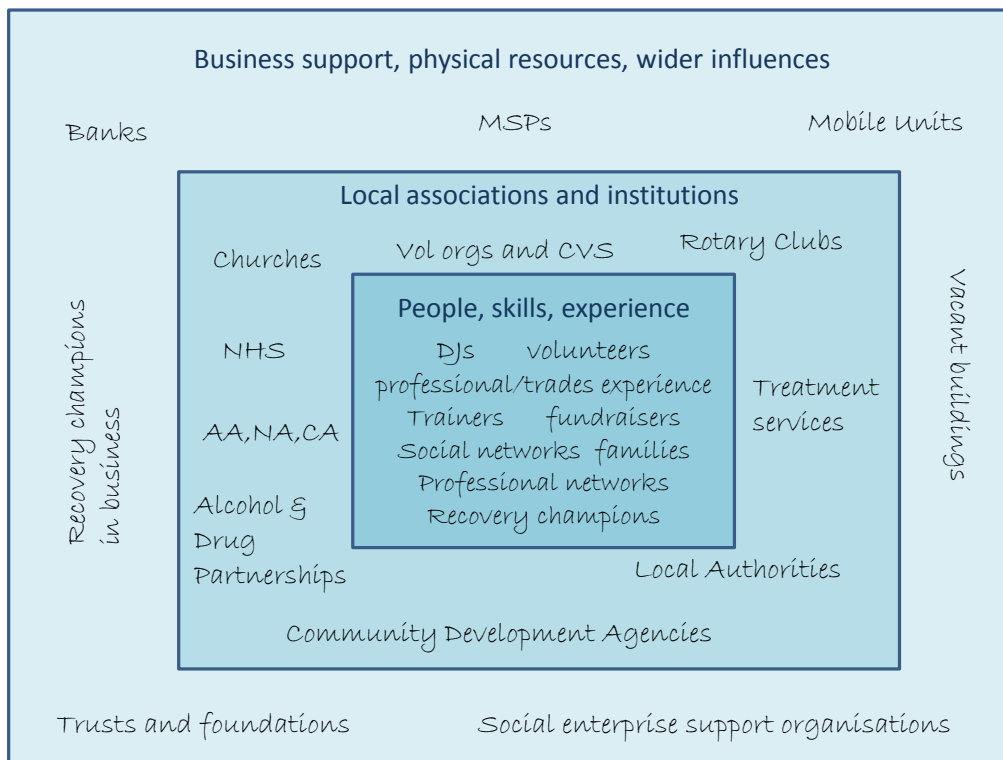
The strengthening of individual social networks of support in turn creates and reinforces a sense of community

The building of personal recovery capital contributes to and strengthens the collective recovery capital available to the community

Recovery community development is only possible when we see the potential in people and the assets we have to build on. This requires us to overcome 'deficit thinking' and take a positive, participatory approach in which people in recovery are they key resource, generators of ideas and leaders of their recovery community.

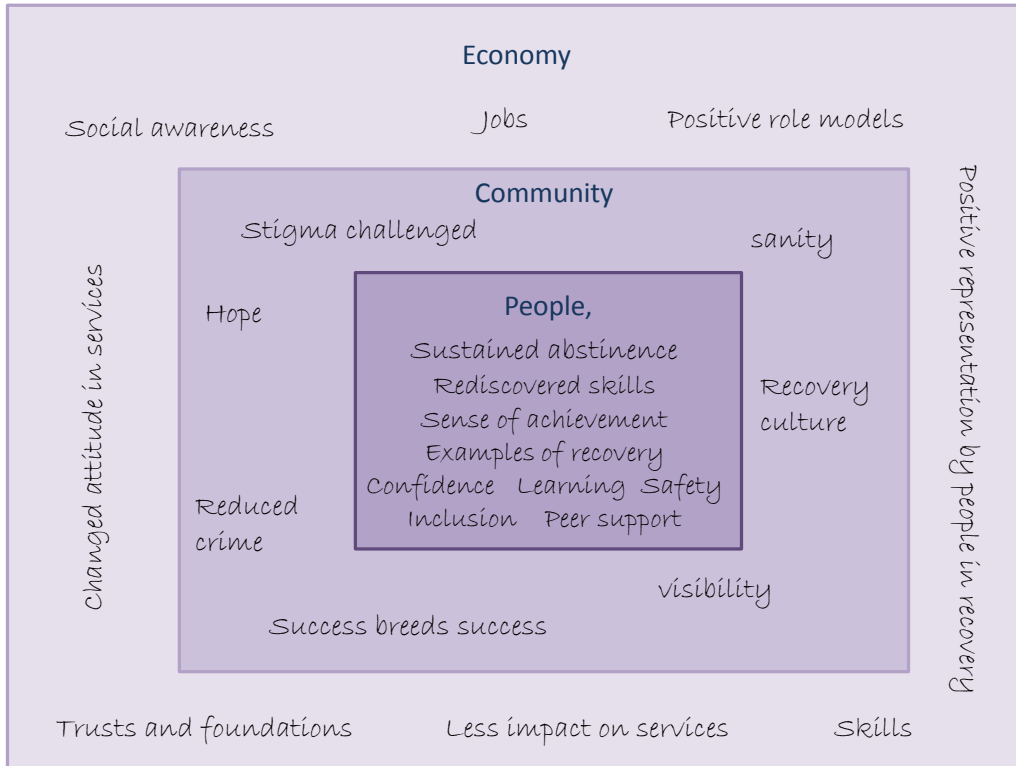
### An Asset Map

Participants in the national network event shared their ideas about the assets available to their growing recovery communities:



**What difference will it make?**

We also created an outcome map – funders and backers need to know that the ripple effect is a fact, and they need evidence generated directly from our work, to persuade them of the added value of recovery community development and recovery cafes.



## Gathering and using information

- Evidence of need is one of most funders' key criteria.
- Evidence of success builds your track record – another key criteria of funders.
- What is good evidence? Information which is objective, tells the full story, can be backed up with source data and checked out against secondary data.
- Source data is collected from participants and the community.
- Secondary data is collected from public sources and other research.

### Think ahead

There are several ways in which recovery cafes will use evidence:

- When developing ideas, to provide evidence of need
- When establishing a track record, providing evidence of good implementation
- When evaluating work, providing evidence of distance travelled by individuals or the wider community, and the impact – the difference the recovery cafe has made.

If evidence is going to be needed during the life of a recovery cafe, it pays to include the cost and the work required in project planning. Commissioning external evaluation can be costly, so if you plan to use external researchers, build this into the cost of your proposals from the outset.

Any research or evaluation on your recovery cafe will likely rely on information you gather during the course of your work (records, minutes, user numbers etc) and you will waste time and money if you don't have these to hand for an external evaluator or researcher to use – so the gathering of evidence needs to be something done throughout a project and integrated into your day to day work – it should become habitual, not a last minute panic.

### Using researchers and evaluators

Consider these options:

- Contact local universities and match your interests to their departments' interests – you may be able to make joint submissions for research funding
- Encourage students on relevant courses who need to conduct research or case studies for their courses to use you

### IT tools

Use on-line survey tools (e.g. [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) which helps you devise your questionnaire, send it to people by email or have it available on a web page, and collates data from completed surveys. The data can then be exported to excel or the site will also generate basic charts. These sites are usually available on subscription but some allow you to use them up to a certain number of questions and number of survey returns for free.

These sites can also be used to back up paper distribution of surveys

### Designing research and evaluation

Consider:

- Research fatigue in a small recovery community ("not another survey")
- Different approaches – response rates vary according to method, with postal surveys having low rates of return but reaching a broader range of people, where face to face surveys have a high rate of return but may reach a smaller range of people
- Whether you want numbers, or thoughts, views, feelings and experience



- How you will find participants and encourage them to respond
- How you plan to use the information you collect

### **Roadtest**

Get people with different perspectives together to develop and test your research/evaluation tools:

- Check out your assumptions
- Consider whether the research is only meeting the organisation's needs or whether it meets the wider recovery community's needs as well
- Check out the survey isn't 'closed' to finding an answer that challenges your current assumptions or finding there isn't a need for what you propose after all – a survey that only seeks confirmation of an idea is not well designed

### **Research and market research**

If you propose to develop your recovery cafe as a social enterprise you will need to gather evidence to support your business planning. Market research will have a much more practical orientation – how much people would use a recovery cafe, what they would use it for, how much they would be willing to spend etc.

### **Data protection**

Inform people how you will use any evidence they provide when answering surveys or participating in interviews, ensure they know whether or not the data is anonymised, who will see the results.

If you plan to store personal data in any way, you must ensure you comply with Data Protection. More information on this is available at [www.dataprotection.gov.uk](http://www.dataprotection.gov.uk)

### **Feedback**

If people have been willing participants in research or evaluations, it is also good practice to share the findings with them – even if this is just a brief summary or an article in a newsletter.

### **Baselines and measures**

A one off survey only gives you a snapshot of a particular point in time. If you want to show 'distance travelled' or claim improvements because of your recovery cafe, you may need to think about developing a survey you can repeat over time.

It may be important to show that individual volunteers or participants have benefited or made progress over time. A number of tools/approaches can help to do this

- Use rating scales to encourage people to self assess different characteristics or skills when they first become involved, and repeat the self assessment at regular intervals
- Choose a small sample of people (volunteers and customers) willing to provide regular updates on how they are using the cafe (or how their volunteering is developing etc)
- Use birthdays (belly button and recovery) to mark the passing of time and mark an opportunity to review personal progress
- Decide on a framework to use early on, of the things you think will be affected by the recovery cafe, and use this to structure your surveys, self assessments, personal and group reviews

### **Day to day information in your recovery cafe**

If you can develop good habits, your day to day work will bring a lot of useful information – it is only useful if you file it, analyse it and write it up:

Qualitative data can include:

- Pictures/photographs/film
- Flip charts, worksheets or other records from group exercises
- Workers' reports or recordings, minutes of meetings, letters or other documents
- People's writing – diaries, articles or freely written responses to questions
- People talking – audio tapes or camcorder
- Workers' own notes on observations and discussions (which may include noting things such as non-verbal responses that indicate thoughts or feelings)





Before getting carried away, think about:

- Large scale exercises can make analysis very time consuming (e.g. taking notes from a one hour audio tape of an interview will easily take more than two hours)
- Exercises that are not well structured can make it hard to draw conclusions e.g. if a focus group wanders of track or fails to get people focused on specific issues
- Well structured exercises, such as surveys, can provide more conclusive evidence but less of a 'story'

### **National data sets**

Local drug and alcohol partnerships should be able to make all relevant drug and alcohol data available to you – if it is collected in the first place! At the very least they can provide treatment/service data collated according to national monitoring requirements.

Other data which may be helpful includes:

Population – General Register of Scotland [www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics)

Deprivation – Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/)

Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics [www.sns.gov.uk](http://www.sns.gov.uk)

General government releases of statistics by topic [www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/)

Health data [www.isdscotland.org](http://www.isdscotland.org)

### **Government data**

Data is particularly easy to get hold of from government sources simply by asking for it – if they collect it, they will provide it, and often relevant to a postcode or other variable you specify, although officials may just pass on a whole dataset for you to go through yourself.

It is not usually necessary to request the information under the Freedom of Information Act, but use this option if you believe the data exists but is not being provided to you.

An email to the government should get a response within 18 days. Your MSP may be able to get the information more quickly.

MSPs can also ask for information on your behalf by asking a written question in Parliament. The official answer will then appear online – parliamentary questions are also another useful source of data, and searchable on [www.scottish.parliament.uk/business](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business). You can also find full transcripts of debates in parliament on the parliament website.



## **The Serenity Cafe experience of gathering and using information**

### **1. Online Survey**

- A market research survey kicked off the whole Serenity Cafe initiative.
- SurveyMonkey was used and an initial email snowballed to 98 respondents within weeks
- Provided evidence of clear demand from the target market
- Provided contact names, voluntarily given, who were invited to an initial meeting
- Plenty of open text boxes at the end of each question provided useful illustrative quotes

### **2. Customer feedback**

- Small feedback forms left on tables at our 'trial nights', boosted by lots of encouragement to fill them in by volunteers
- Some questions with ratings scales and some open questions with text boxes
- Provided useful feedback on what we could improve on
- Provided more helpful quotes to demonstrate the need and the impact
- Provided important encouragement to volunteers

### **3. Group reviews**

- Short structured surveys asking volunteers for feedback to help develop the volunteering programme
- Reviews after training and the residential, asking for three comments on 'what went well' and two comments on 'it would be even better if...'

### **4. Focus groups**

- We have trained a small number of volunteers as focus group facilitators
- Some focus groups have focused on the Serenity Cafe itself
- Other focus groups have helped us to develop a series of papers on different aspects of recovery, which we have circulated to practitioners and people in recovery
- We paid facilitators with the help of a small grant – this was particularly useful as we used a digital recorder for some focus groups and the transcribing was a major task
- We developed a 'read and review' sheet asking the focus group participants and steering group members to comment on each section of the papers we developed, so that they were properly reviewed and signed off as representing the Serenity Cafe and people's views.

### **5. Individual progress through volunteering**

- After a year of volunteering, the volunteers developed a list of outcomes which they felt their volunteering had helped develop. This was used to form a self assessment exercise which asks volunteers to rate where they are with each of the criteria.
- The rating exercise is used within a volunteer planning and review process, by which individuals set themselves goals to move up the scale in one or two criteria.

### **6. Individual recovery stories**

- One to one interviews were carried out with some volunteers early on in the development of the Serenity Cafe. Evidence from these interviews was used to explain to funders and other practitioners the experience of recovery. This supported our proposition of why a recovery cafe is needed and what participants and volunteers can gain.



### **Network participants' comments and ideas:**

- Demographics- get the wider community behind the surveys within your service
- Engage with other agencies
- Keep it simple
- Know your audience
- Focus groups are vital
- Have recovery champions

## Recovery community engagement

- 'Community engagement' describes the extent to which recovery community members identify with and influence an organisation or development.
- In some areas, people may not recognise that a 'recovery community' exists, or people might identify strongly with a specific approach to recovery rather than with all people in recovery as a whole community
- Funders, in particular, may be unfamiliar with the term 'recovery community'
- The closer a recovery cafe is to a recovery community's expressed need, the more likely it is to succeed.
- The sustainability of a recovery cafe is directly linked to its ability to attract recovery community involvement on an ongoing basis.
- Recovery community engagement requires investment – time and effort

### Why?

**Community accountability.** If a recovery cafe wants charitable status, or to become a company limited, it will need to think about 'membership' and accountability – who votes for directors/trustees, how decisions are taken and overall direction decided. It makes sense for recovery cafes to be accountable to the recovery communities they serve.

**Community beneficiaries.** Many funders want to see community engagement or 'user involvement'. Usually funders want to gain the widest possible public benefit from their investment in organisations.

**Community customers.** The best businesses take listening to customers seriously and find ways to build this into their regular activities.

### Don't take anything for granted

What the recovery community thinks and feels about a recovery cafe is hugely important. Poor relationships, gossip and misunderstanding can poison development and cause a great deal of stress for individuals. The section on Communication emphasises the need for sustained effort to ensure everyone understands what is happening, why and how decisions are made.

### Embrace difference

**Different ideas.** Some difference of opinion can be hugely constructive, helping recovery cafes to avoid blind spots in their thinking and to properly assess how well their communication is working.

**Different life experience.** Recovery cafes have successfully brought together people regardless of the substances of their addiction and their length of time in recovery. It is this mix that makes recovery cafes special and a key ingredient of the personal growth that can take place through being involved.

**Different approaches.** Getting together with other organisations to share plans and ideas helps avoid duplication and competition, provided each respects the others' approach. Recovery cafes need to be relevant and useful to staff and users of all services promoting and supporting recovery, as well as to people who have approached recovery through self help and mutual aid.



It is important to involve, consult and interest a wide range of people. But people prefer different levels of involvement and a 'horses for courses' approach works best. Not everyone will be a 'committee joiner' or a hands on volunteer.

Level	How to attract	How to manage
<p><b>Mr Involved in Everything</b></p> <p><b>This person can be relied on to turn up to every meeting, respond to every consultation or survey, have their say in anything going on and 'represent' the recovery community at every opportunity</b></p> <p>Level: may be more of a 'meeting attender' than someone who will take on practical tasks and actively take responsibility for getting things done.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide fairly 'traditional' approaches to opportunities for involvement</li> <li>• Show links to other things going on in the recovery community and pay respect to others' history and experience</li> <li>• Use the potential for cross-representation that this person brings – allowing you to reach a wider range of people through other groups/meetings they attend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give them their 'air time' but chair them well – don't allow them to hog meetings (these people can sometimes unintentionally put off people new to recovery community engagement)</li> <li>• Keep them informed – this type of person generally is more supportive if they are involved or provided with information to share with other groups they attend. They may feel slighted if they are not kept informed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mrs 'It'll Never Work'</b></p> <p><b>Cynics have their place in recovery community involvement – they may well be voicing what others feel but won't say. A 'critical friend' is sometimes more useful than an unquestioning supporter.</b></p> <p>Level: another 'meeting attender', or may be an 'abstainer' who criticises from the sidelines without getting involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge the potential for failure, while sticking to a 'solutions focus' – ask for suggestions rather than getting stuck in a defensive mode</li> <li>• Actively seek their critique to shape ideas and proposals – this may help to stop them sabotaging things later on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen and learn from criticism and cynicism without feeling the need to prove you're right or win them round (this will hold things up and presents the dilemma of what to do if you can't)</li> <li>• Protect less confident 'ideas' people from cynics</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mr Roman Candle</b></p> <p><b>After initial enthusiasm this person's interest often fizzles out</b></p> <p>Level: more of a 'hands on' person who prefers active involvement on a specific task. Even if for a short duration these people can be useful, if they complete their task within their attention span.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep meetings short and pragmatic, avoid pomp and formality</li> <li>• Involve them in 'task teams' with a clear focus and timescale – preferably peopled with like types</li> <li>• Let them dip in and out as their interest is tweaked – don't chase them between times or they may drop out entirely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out their strengths and skills and think of ways of using these so that they feel involved and useful</li> <li>• Set short term goals and mark their achievements - 'do-ers' tend to lose interest in long term and seemingly unattainable goals</li> </ul>

<p><b>Ms Restless</b>  <b>Has a short attention span and forgets long term goals – it is what is happening here and now that attracts this person’s attention.</b>  <b>Level – if it is specific and relevant, and communicated in a snappy style, they will happily share their views, and some will volunteer for practical tasks, but will retreat if there is nothing going on that directly interests them. May flit to other initiatives and back again.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These people may not cope with meetings and the more cerebral tasks of planning and decision making. They may prefer volunteering activities that are fun and hands on.</li> <li>• Use their bursts of enthusiasm constructively and consciously make it easy for people who have flitted off to flit back in again at a later date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to avoid allowing people who commit more time and have more tolerance for meetings and planning, from dismissing these people as disinterested or uncommitted.</li> <li>• Use decision making techniques that ‘cut to the chase’ quickly and make meetings short and effective</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mr ‘Quick Let’s Hide’</b>  <b>Would rather avoid you than commit to turning up or doing anything – even if they are supportive of your goals and may in fact use the facility or service once it has been achieved</b>  <b>Level - accept that in most communities there are a majority of people who prefer passive or no involvement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may need evidence of wider community support so you can’t always give up on the hiders – use surveys or other ‘quick and easy’ ways for them to share their views or confirm their support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect their time (even though what you are asking in comparison to what you give is miniscule) and respect their choice not to be involved</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ms Sweetie Shop</b>  <b>Wants to be involved in everything and takes on so many new things that confusion, poor time management and the inability to say no soon traps them in exhaustion</b>  <b>Level – ensure time and commitment required for activities or groups is clear from the outset.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These people need to be reassured that opportunities for involvement will be ongoing, rather than here today and gone tomorrow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with time management tools – diaries, planning ahead, collaboration with other service providers to avoid clashes of key dates.</li> </ul>



It is important to have different strategies to engage people with different interests in the recovery cafe – it is important to engage people who are not directly and closely involved as well as the more committed people who will become the mainstay of the recovery cafe development group

**Flexibility**  
Allow people to move between different levels of engagement according to their skills, interests and circumstances

**Keep informed**

- Newsletters
- Media
- Posters

**Build Participation**

- Consultations
- Open Meetings
- Activities

**Find Roles**

- Board/committee
- Task Groups
- Volunteer Opportunities

**Not involved**

**Fully involved**



Seeking Views and Evidence

Surveys by post or email

Voluntary contribution

Donations  
One-off tasks

What they want from a Recovery Cafe

Social networks  
Venue  
Activities

Focus Groups  
Interviews  
Meetings

Short term, specific tasks

Sense of community  
Recovery identity  
Relevant support

Interviews  
Meetings  
Ongoing measures

Ongoing, specific or general tasks

Personal development opportunities



## Getting people interested

- Consider the drawbacks and positive aspects of presenting your recovery cafe as a 'service' – this sends a message to participants and to other service providers. People in longer term recovery may not feel drawn to a 'service'. Other services might struggle with the looser concept of recovery community.
- Pay attention to 'marketing' your vision – short, simple and attractive – and think about who you are trying to interest, test it on a few people and change it if necessary before going wider
- Provide background information via your website for people who want more detail
- Counter cynicism by gathering information on success stories from elsewhere – invite them over or visit them, or find another way of making people aware that there are possibilities and solutions to be learned from
- Avoid presenting ideas as fixed or a 'done deal'. If possible, identify an issue and try to draw solutions from people who come along – it is likely there will be some that are similar to ideas already being considered by your recovery cafe; the advantage is that people then feel much more ownership of the chosen direction.

## Open meetings

When starting a recovery cafe, open meetings help to involve people from the outset in development.

- **Chair meetings well** – facilitate discussion rather than using the meeting to tell people about the idea.
- **Structure meetings** – provide exercises or break people into small groups, provide other ways of people sharing their views than speaking up – post it notes, feedback forms or other tools will yield more information than just a discussion
- **Balance fun and socialising with the business** – keep it short and interesting. One advantage of structuring the meeting is that people with shorter attention spans stay engaged.
- **Respect people's time and resources.** Don't forget refreshments, and if you can, add other incentives, such as childcare.

## Headhunting

- It may be a good idea to approach 'recovery champions' who have the respect of people in the recovery community.

## Sub-Groups/Working Groups/Task Forces

One way of engaging a wider range of people in the recovery cafe development is to involve them in sub groups with a specific focus that meets their interests (this has the added bonus of reducing the number of agenda items your main committee needs to spend time on). Such groups can be short term or long term.

- Ensure the remit of the group is clear and the level of delegated decision making authority, budget or other limits are spelled out
- Decide what links there should be with the main committee – e.g. reporting back frequency
- Identify someone who the chair of the sub group can contact if they have concerns or are not sure how to handle issues that arise

- Allow them to get on with the job. People will quickly lose interest if they cannot progress tasks because the main committee does not delegate sufficient authority or constantly interferes with their approach. In turn sub groups have to recognise that their work is part of the whole organisation's reputation and development.

Without support and regular check-ins, sub groups often wither away or lose momentum. If you don't have a lot of support time available, avoid sub groups, unless they can be led by people with a track record of 'finishing what they started'.

### **Making groups work**

Group dynamics can be difficult to work with, especially when you are also part of a group. Ways of avoiding getting bogged down in difficult group dynamics when engaging the recovery community include:

- Using external facilitators occasionally, to depersonalise group control
- Using structured formats – exercises with clear rules and giving people variety in how they express their views
- Using tools and exercises with the group to raise people's levels of self awareness and how they operate in groups or teams
- Constructively challenging people who dominate, let others down, fail to accept decisions or avoid making decisions.
- Ensure people put the overall vision above their personal feelings. Reminding people of the overall goal and regularly re-committing the group to this helps avoid pettiness.

### **Think about how to sustain motivation:**

- Risk of burn out of key individuals who take on too much, leaving a gap that is hard to fill
- Participation–fatigue in the wider recovery community, where too many organisations are trying to attract people into user involvement roles focusing on a few reliable, articulate people
- Increasing scepticism – if recovery community engagement does not actually result in any observable difference, people will soon think there is no point
- Boredom and impatience – the initial attraction of an idea can wear off when people start to realise that to achieve it there needs to be quite a bit of hard work. If the hard work is also boring, that makes it even harder to sustain interest.
- Use a workplan to identify clear goals and timelines – aimless meetings are very demotivating for some people
- Develop your approach to the training and development of people involved, so that there is a clear reciprocal benefit in recovery community engagement – people gain skills, and possible accreditation, that might be useful in their career or re-engagement with employment, or simply allow them to feel more confident to play their part
- Develop your approach to building the leadership skills of the people involved in trying to gain and sustain recovery community engagement
- Reduce barriers to recovery community involvement as much as possible – try to provide childcare, travel expenses or transport, refreshments or a lunch allowance etc
- Say thank you in as many ways as possible, directly to individuals and publicly to the wider community
- Have a regular awayday or event for everyone involved – some business and a lot of celebration of your progress, in a way that makes people feel valued



## Review regularly

- Remind people of how far things have progressed
- Allow people to identify things that appear to be stuck, look at the reasons and suggest solutions
- Allow people to consider a change of roles and responsibilities, where it is an individual that is stuck – although this takes courage it is important to put the best interests of the organisation first
- Allows people to confirm the idea or vision is still relevant, or make a clear decision to change direction or draw things to an end – this is much healthier for recovery communities than the quiet fading away of a recovery cafe which demoralises those left trying to hold it together and risks confirming for the local sceptics that nothing comes of anything.

## Communication

Keeping the recovery cafe visible and lively is essential – people are coming into recovery all of the time, so it is important that 'prior' knowledge is never taken for granted. Workers have quite short attention spans and memories when it comes to letting their clients know about you, so regular email updates lets them know about what you are doing:

Many **website** packages are free or cheap, and very easy to update with even basic IT skills.

**Facebook** is a popular medium, but has limitations (e.g. not great to make downloadable resources available)

**Newsletters** circulated in hard copy reach those less IT-oriented people, and also act as a nice record of progress over time (once a web page is edited or refreshed with new information, the previous information that tells a story is gone). However newsletters take time to edit, and it often falls onto one or two shoulders to write it.

**Skype** is a great, cheap way of sending out texts to lists of mobile numbers – text marketing of activities, or reminders to volunteers and steering group members of meetings.

**Mailchimp** is a free package (limited number of sends) which allows mass mailing to your email addresses, with template designs to make your emails stand out. It also monitors how many 'clicks' your emails get. The drawback is manually inputting all your email addresses, but once this is done it is a fairly idiot-proof package.



## The Serenity Cafe experience of recovery community engagement

### 1. Open meeting

- The first meeting of the Serenity Cafe was attended by only two people, but we started the process anyway. The group soon grew in size.
- We kept meetings open to anyone interested for as long as possible, and did not move to a more formal steering group for several months.

### 2. Inclusion

- We have struggled with attracting a good balance of men and women. We offered childcare expenses for meeting attendance, but many women are focused on demonstrating their re-commitment to their families and some struggle with getting family members to look after children.
- We try as far as possible to avoid clashing with mutual aid area committees etc. After experimenting with different nights we decided it was best to have a regular pattern, i.e. the first Wednesday of every month.

### 3. Focus

- The first meetings involved trying to develop a concept of a recovery cafe. There was a lot of doubt and cynicism as well as enthusiasm and ideas. We hit a wall with this and decided that holding 'trial nights' was the best way to develop the vision – by doing, not just by thinking about it.
- Once regular cafe-club nights were established, keeping these going became the main focus. We had to work hard then to get people to focus on the bigger picture and the longer term future.
- The steering group did not really take off until we provided a clearly defined role for the group and the tasks and responsibilities people would need to take on. These were similar to the roles found in more formal committees.

### 4. Dynamic

- It was important to us to use people's skills and experience whenever these are offered. Not everyone wants to come to meetings. However, to be able to involve people in a flexible way requires co-ordination, ideally from a volunteer development worker role.
- It is also important to spot individuals' talents and interests, and find ways to use these for the development of the recovery cafe. This comes from having the time and plenty of informal contact that makes finding out about people's lives possible. It is important to meet people outwith meetings and cafe-club nights when we are all working.

### 5. Visible

- PR and marketing was established as a key role on the steering group, and we have been lucky that one volunteer has made this a specialism.
- Most of the tools we use are free or very low cost, but these rely on people giving us a mobile number (for Skype) or email address (for Mailchimp), or signing up to our facebook site themselves.
- Although we made a rule on getting agreement before photos went online, there has never been an issue about doing this – people seem to really like seeing the latest cafe-club photos online.
- The paper-based newsletter has been the biggest challenge, as making it look good on a low budget and with a fairly limited printer has been difficult. People have very different ideas about the purpose of a newsletter – news or entertainment – so we have not yet made this a regular feature of our communication.
- Our website is basic, using a £35 diy package called Mr Site ([www.mrsite.com](http://www.mrsite.com))

### **Network participants' comments and ideas:**

- Social networking
- Posters in agencies
- Visit recovery settings that are already established
- Word of mouth
- E-mailing lists
- Website
- Texting
- Fliers attached to all correspondence
- Link up with the relevant agencies
- Make GPs aware of what's on offer

## Governance of recovery cafes

- Governance is the process by which decisions are made.
- Decisions are best made when a recovery cafe has a framework of ideas – policies - to guide it.
- Good governance is therefore a process by which an organisation makes itself ready to make effective decisions.
- Good governance is good leadership towards a sustainable future.

### First steps

For recovery cafes working in partnership with a 'host' agency, governance by people in recovery can take the form of a steering group. The host agency, as the legal entity, is the formal holder of bank accounts, the formal employer of staff, and the formally accountable body for any funding received. The host in this situation is also taking on all of the risk.

A steering group can plan, over time, to take over complete control and become a fully independent organisation, taking over these functions on a gradual basis when training and development needs have been met.

For recovery cafes that start out as independent entities, a choice has to be made about legal structure – to become a company limited, a charity, a co-operative or any other form. Without some kind of constitution defining the legal status of the organisation and its rules of operation, it will not be possible to open a bank account.

Whatever legal structure is used for your recovery cafe, when setting up you will need to make a range of decisions:

### How often should we meet?

Identify the *minimum* number of meetings in your governing document / constitution (e.g. four times a year), to avoid being tied into an unmanageable schedule.

### When should we arrange for our Annual General Meeting?

This need not be the anniversary of your inception – it should be at the time of year that suits your recovery community best i.e. avoids clashes with conventions, held at a time when most people are likely to attend etc

### How long should office bearers hold office for?

There are two dilemmas:

- how to ensure a 'clique' does not form at the head of the recovery cafe, which prevents new members holding office, or lets things become stale, because of an open-ended (and therefore unending) period of office;
- if a fixed period to hold office has been applied, how to avoid panic appointments when successors to office can't be found,.

It seems the best compromise is to fix the period at one-three years, but to take succession planning for office bearers seriously in terms of training and coaching other members to take over the roles. Some organisations use deputy or vice-office roles to plan for succession, moving the deputies into



full office when it is vacated. In small organisations there are not always enough willing people to achieve this.

### **Job descriptions for office bearers**

In small recovery communities the idea of selecting office bearers along similar lines to a recruitment process may seem far-fetched. But a 'job description' for each role does lay out roles and responsibilities fair and square, and could encourage more interest in roles. If the going gets tough further the down the line, and office bearers are not keeping up their roles, job descriptions can be really helpful in reviewing the situation and finding a way forward. They also help avoid roles growing unmanageable with each new project or task that comes along.

### **Training**

Training for specific office bearer roles can help individuals to develop their skills and experience, and give their best to a recovery cafe. It may be helpful if training is an expectation of the office bearer, rather than an option. Again, think about succession – could some training be delivered to all members, or open to the whole recovery community, to build the skills and experience more widely?

### **Learning from others**

Time spent visiting other recovery cafes – and receiving visits from other recovery cafes, can be some of the best learning available. No recovery cafe is exactly the same, but many have learned from difficult experiences which you might be able to avoid by hearing their views. Take every opportunity to network.

### **Organisational structures and funding trends**

At present a number of 'new' organisational structures are finding favour with funders and the government. However, we all want our recovery cafes to stand the test of time – if they are last as long as mutual aid groups have lasted, then they will certainly outlast current funding trends.

Some of the new organisational structures offer few additional benefits to the traditional structures that voluntary organisations have always used – charitable structures and company limited structures (many organisations are both charitable and a company limited). The term 'social enterprise' is being used so widely, it can also apply to a charitable company limited as well as to a profit-making company.

In our finance and business planning section, we suggest some of the potential limitations of applying a pure 'business' model to a recovery cafe, so you may well feel that charitable status will be useful to your future sustainability.

It is also fair to say that in some recovery communities, the 'profit motive' is regarded with some suspicion. The charitable model sets clear rules about personal benefit and dedicating funds and assets to the recovery community, which some people feel are appropriate.

### **Legal advice**

There are many templates for constitutions to form a charity and memoranda and articles of association for forming a company limited – there are also memoranda and articles of association which are written to allow a company to achieve charitable status. These can be used without paying for legal advice or a lawyer to do it for you, and you may well have members of the recovery community who have legal training.

It is easier if you decide on the legal form you want in the long run, and start out in that form. If you are already a charity and want to become a company limited, or vice versa, you will need to dissolve the first organisation and transfer assets into a new organisation, which will also necessitate changing bank accounts.



Structure	Pros	Cons	Things to think about
<b>Charitable Trust or Association</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax advantages – Gift Aid</li> <li>• Constitutions can be relatively simple</li> <li>• Fairly easy to set up using models, without legal assistance</li> <li>• Fairly easy to amend constitution (keeping OSCR informed)</li> <li>• Can become a Company Ltd</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal liability of trustees (<b>unless it also becomes a Company Ltd</b>)</li> <li>• Trustees cannot be paid or receive any financial gain (except for legitimate expenses)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will charitable status open up a wider range of grant opportunities?</li> <li>• How many individual donors are likely (is registration as a charity to receive Gift Aid worth it)?</li> <li>• Does having charitable status infer a sense of worthiness to stakeholders?</li> </ul>
<b>Community Interest Company</b>	Assets are locked and must be used for community purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up costs if using a lawyer</li> <li>• Limited flexibility in use of profits</li> <li>• <b>Cannot be a charity</b> (can be a subsidiary company of a charity)</li> <li>• Members of the Board cannot be paid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For a new organisation, may be a structure worth considering</li> <li>• For an existing Company Ltd, no additional benefits by changing to a CIC (a Company Ltd can also specify community-oriented disposal of assets on wind-up)</li> </ul>
<b>Company Ltd by Guarantee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited liability of members</li> <li>• Possible to also have charitable status</li> <li>• Members of the Board can be paid (<b>unless it is a charity</b>, see above)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up costs if using a lawyer – but can be done without one, a notary must witness and sign the registration document which is available at the court for a small fee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fairly standard legal form with lots of similar organisations to learn from and compare Memorandum &amp; Articles with</li> </ul>
<b>Co-operative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represents clear set of values</li> <li>• All members have equal status and receive equal benefits/profits</li> <li>• Employees can be shareholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up costs if using a lawyer</li> <li>• <b>Cannot be a charity</b></li> <li>• Maintaining a high level of member participation in a large organisation can be challenging and has a cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of co-ops to learn from</li> <li>• Dedicated national organisations for co-op development</li> </ul>
<b>Industrial and Provident Society</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited liability and co-operative/ mutual ethos</li> <li>• Can also have charitable status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up costs if using a lawyer</li> <li>• Now somewhat old fashioned and therefore fewer people are familiar with the requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses different regulator (FSA) with less user-friendly guidance for non-legal/accounting types</li> <li>• Fewer around to learn from</li> </ul>
<b>Social Enterprise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A description rather than a legal entity, used to help an organisation ride a current wave of support for SE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over-use of the term risks rendering it meaningless – all of the above could be described as social enterprise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of national support organisations growing in this field, some with start-up grants and freebies</li> </ul>

## Effective meetings

Poor meetings are the most likely thing that will drive people away from governance roles.

Most habits are hard to break (as we all know), so if you allow ineffective meetings to become the norm in your recovery cafe, it will be very difficult to move on.

Good meeting habits include:

- Setting a time to complete business and sticking to it – with all the business completed, it helps to agree how much time will be spent on each item at the start of each meeting, so everyone has the same expectation
- Preparing appropriately for each meeting – and each participant turning up prepared – invariably people come without papers, if this is indulged then people won't take meetings seriously
- Good discussion, to which everyone contributes fairly
- Decisions reached properly – with information and ideas used well
- Ending each meeting appropriately – and each participant clear about decisions and action points

## Collective responsibility

Although an effective chair is certainly one feature of effective meetings, it is not acceptable to leave it all to the chair for the smooth running of meetings, nor to blame the chair alone if meetings are not working well.

Everyone who attends meetings must take responsibility, for:

- Reading papers/minutes in advance
- Turning up on time
- Sticking to the agenda
- Keeping their contributions relevant, concise and generous (i.e. in the way they treat other participants)
- Accepting consensus decisions – not trying to return to decisions already made
- Sharing responsibility for progress and checking implementation of decisions
- Training

Training in chairing meetings can be a very worthwhile investment. Chairs have to be confident to manage people as well as the administrative process of a meeting. These difficult challenges include:

- constructively cutting off people who hog discussion;
- calming potential conflict when participants disagree on a course of action;
- coaxing quieter participants to voice their opinions;
- using their personal leadership qualities to guide people towards making decisions and contributing their time and effort.

We know from day to day experience these are not unusual aspects of recovery community life.

Useful skills include group facilitation, training skills (although chairs are not trainers they can use many similar group processes) and mediation skills. All of these emphasise effective listening and responding to non-verbal cues to enable people to participate and communicate.

## Reflection

Once minutes have been approved and filed, people rarely look back to see whether agenda items are getting stuck or decisions are not being taken forward. Devoting at least one meeting a year to



consider how well your meetings are working for you can help the participants to realise together what works well and what does not.

An immediate reflection after certain kinds of meeting can also be helpful – in particular, 'negotiation meetings' with external agencies. Here, it is helpful to de-brief together sharing views on what people feel went well and what they would change next time.

### **Decision making – quick, focused and democratic**

Solution-focused meetings are a useful way of leading a group of people through a process of ideas generation and decision making on difficult and complex problems. The techniques can also be used briefly on any issue to reach a conclusion without lengthy discussion.

The approach overcomes the confusion that can arise when different perspectives have been aired within a group but there is a general reluctance to take sides – or dominant members of a group assume there is agreement because they have been the most vocal.

The approach is also a great equaliser in groups where there are different power relationships or different age groups (e.g. young and old making a decision together)

Solution focused meetings involve a number of steps:

1. Spend a small amount of time describing the problem (get it 'aired' but don't get stuck on it)
2. Spend some time 're-framing' the problem as a question: "how to....?" This helps shift the focus on negative feelings about the problem towards a question to which we will find an answer. It is important not to shift the focus to "why" questions – which are often about assigning blame rather than finding a solution - blame is another way to get stuck.
3. The "how to...." questions also help break the problem down into more manageable chunks – usually the solution starts with dealing with one aspect of a problem, not trying to grapple with it all at once.
4. List all of the questions on a flip chart – do not evaluate any of them at this stage and don't allow the group to start discussing them – the purpose of this stage is simply to hear many questions. If these are not forthcoming, ask people to think of the questions an outsider might ask, or an alien, or a child – this can help get to the root of things.
5. Give people pens or stickers, and allow them three votes. They have to place their marks directly on the flipchart against the questions they most want to address – they are allowed to vote for their own ideas, to put all three votes against one question, or to spread them between questions. This is not a call out exercise, and it is therefore more of a private voting process – allowing people to go with what they really feel rather than being swayed by relationships.
6. The question with the highest votes is now the focus of discussion. The same ideas generation process applies to finding answers to the question, putting them on flip charts. Again, do not allow evaluation of ideas at this stage. To stimulate answers, try to ask the same question using different words, or ask people to think what other people might do in answer to the same question (e.g. use known and unknown people – your granny? Alex Ferguson?) – it doesn't matter that these people are unconnected to the question, the idea is to loosen people up and venture suggestions they might otherwise self-censor. The point of the ideas generation is to find a new solution – if there was an obvious answer it would have been done by now, so encourage people to offer both sensible and 'extreme' ideas.
7. Using the stickers/pens and three marks, vote again on the solutions. Once the solution is agreed, start to action plan how it will be taken forward. The action planning is an important way to end the exercise – if you end the session after the solution has been voted, people may not fully adopt it and you could find yourselves back at square one.

## The Serenity Cafe experience of governance

### 1. Steering group

- The steering group in the Serenity Cafe did not form for several months after the first meeting. This allowed volunteers to 'find their feet' and consider whether they preferred a 'hands on' or planning role (or both)
- It took a while for people to 'get' the need for the steering group when they were focusing on the cafe-club nights rather than long term development – we had to promote it quite persistently
- We defined a number of different roles and asked for two people to share each of the roles. These were: premises; marketing; finance; human resources; volunteer development; policy; chair and secretary. There has been some change in the group, so having two people share each role paid off.
- We proposed that after a year, half the group will step down, and the remaining half will mentor new recruits so that there is a constant flow of fresh ideas, burn out and cliques are avoided, and there are always more experienced members on hand to show new people the ropes
- A residential helped the group to focus on the long term future, re-establish the vision for the recovery cafe, and formalise the volunteering programme

### 2. Policies

- The steering group has developed policies as the needs arise. To date they have developed:
  - Volunteer handbook (volunteering policy)
  - Providing services to outside organisations
  - Fundraising and sponsorship
  - Hire of Serenity Cafe equipment
  - Equality and inclusion
  - Working with the media
  - Recovery and participation in Serenity Cafe (abstinent or prescription assisted recovery)

### 3. Politics

- We have often been asked to provide representatives to different groups and forums in the city and nationally. We have avoided this to some extent, as we need volunteers and steering group members to focus on Serenity Cafe development and we don't want to over-stretch people
- We have had to emphasise that people can't represent Serenity Cafe unless a position or decision has been agreed by the group. There were some occasions when people assumed a position even though they had not attended recent meetings, or different people were giving out inconsistent messages about the Serenity Cafe position.
- Some group members have experienced opposition at some professional forums. This is easier to cope with if people have had the chance to prepare for meetings and can get support and debrief after meetings. We cannot change the way other professionals behave but we can help Serenity Cafe members know that they gave the best contribution they could.
- Steering group members have looked at the wider political picture, and developed a manifesto for recovery community development in the run up to the 2012 elections.

### 4. Effective meetings

- Our meetings have improved with practice. Individuals have learned the ropes in terms of reading papers in advance and getting their questions ready, and sticking to task during meetings.
- Protracted and circular discussion has been a problem at times. Using the solution-focused approach has helped, although beware that when people see a vote going against their preferred option, they will count the votes rigorously. If anyone has abused their voting allowance it can create problems!



### **Network participants' comments and ideas:**

- Structure- develop it at the individual's pace
- Mentoring – support
- Identify transferable skills
- Develop interagency co-operation
- Ensure training opportunities with the organisation
- Be consistent in your growth – if you're standing still you're going back the way
- Avoid insularity
- Develop an accurate person specification for roles
- Be firm
- Give feedback (constructive)
- Provide boundaries
- Identify job prospects outside the cafe/community

## Project Development and Fundraising

- 'Project Development' describes the process of generating and shaping ideas into a project which is feasible and fundable.
- Both project development and fundraising require experience in finance and communication.
- Funders then look beyond your project proposal, to assess the strength of your governance.
- Even if your recovery cafe starts with a funding agreement with a public body already in place, in today's climate no recovery cafe can afford to be complacent. We must maintain a level of 'funding fitness' to cope with the difficult financial climate.
- Social enterprise is an important feature of financing recovery cafes, but income generation is unlikely to cover 100% of support and premises costs.

### Funding fitness - ready for external scrutiny

Funders of all kinds want a clear idea of who they will give money to and confidence that their money will be well spent on the activities proposed by the applicant organisation. They need to know that the applicant organisation has the skills, experience and commitment to use their money well.

Before starting on project development and fundraising, it is helpful to think through the kinds of questions funders are likely to ask about your governance, policies and practice, so that any gaps can be addressed well before you intend to submit proposals.

#### Think about:

<b>Governance</b>	<b>The legal structure of your organisation, the number of trustees and their skills and experience, the representativeness of your committee and your recovery community engagement</b>
<b>Finance</b>	The systems you have in place to manage money and account for it, and policies to ensure good practice
<b>Employment</b>	Policies for how you recruit and manage staff (essential if your proposals include money for staffing), employers' liability insurance
<b>Working with volunteers</b>	Policies for how you recruit and manage volunteers (essential if your proposals include money for volunteers) public liability insurance
<b>Communication</b>	Annual reports and information on your organisation such as reports on previous projects. A visible presence online to provide funders with supplementary information that can't be provided in restrictive application forms
<b>Sustainability</b>	Most funders require you to have thought about an exit strategy for their own funding, and a strategy for long term survival generally

### Funding for stability

Organisations reliant on only one source of funding are obviously more vulnerable than those that have several sources of support – perhaps from grants, income generation (fees etc), local fundraising events, and funding agreements with the public sector. If one source of funding ends, an organisation with other means can survive until another source of funding is secured. Imagine constructing a stool – anything less than three legs is unstable.

## Sources of funding

Recovery cafes should consider:

- Local fundraising, even in small amounts, demonstrates to larger funders that there is recovery community support and commitment
- Public sector tendering, for example to provide 'employability' services or aftercare support services
- Loans, where business planning shows that income generation will meet repayment costs
- Income generation through cafe activities, outside catering services, sales of branded items etc. Successful social enterprises which emphasise employment of disadvantaged people estimate that a 'good' social enterprise can achieve around 70% of 'break even'.

## Strategic approach

A strategic approach to financing all of your activities helps you approach funding in a planned way. Avoid falling into the trap of applying for every funding opportunity – this can lead to implementation headaches and peaks and troughs in growth which is hard to manage, and risks taking off at tangents to your core purpose. Try to assess clearly

- does it fit with our current aims and objectives?
- can we deliver, if we get the grant?
- do our volunteers / participants have the time and energy for this?

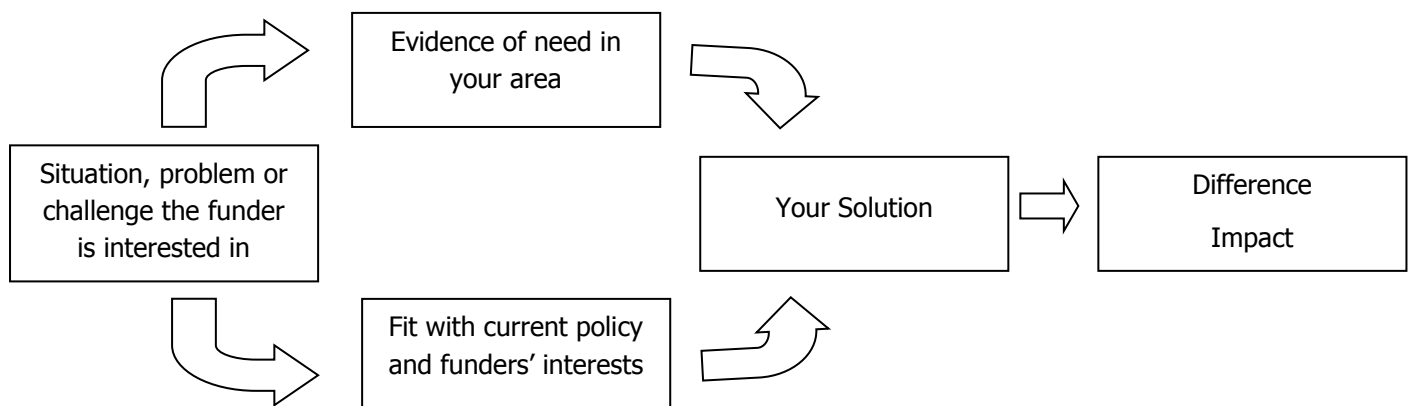
If the answer is yes, then proceed; but if it is not clear, think hard before investing time in making a proposal. There is a real risk of burn out when trying to deliver on a myriad of small grants which are keeping people very busy but not really contributing to achieving the overall vision.

For many funders established for charitable purposes, funding is geared towards public benefit, in terms of making a difference and finding solutions to challenges or problems faced by society.

It may be a problem for recovery cafes that funders have a range of different attitudes towards our work:

- Some funders are not interested in drugs or alcohol and read 'recovery' as services to drug or alcohol users
- Some funders may feel that their focus needs to be on people who are actively using substances
- Most funders will be unaware of the challenges people experience in recovery and why long term opportunities and support are important.

We have to present the idea of recovery cafes carefully, providing clear evidence of the challenges and problems, why they occur, and what kinds of approaches will work – both 'what' and 'how'.





The funding environment is highly competitive. Your proposal will need to stand out for busy grant assessors – the term 'innovative' is often used by funders to convey their desire to feel interested and enthused by the applications they receive, and to feel that they are putting their money at the cutting edge of development. But presenting the idea of recovery cafes can be a difficult process in groups for a number of reasons:

- Completely new ideas have no 'working models' to show funders what is possible – although funders like 'innovation' they tend to avoid high risk ideas.
- Recovery cafes tend to emphasise the benefits of social networks to recovery. These days, there is more emphasis in funding circles on tangible outcomes such as getting people into employment.
- Beware of over-claiming the benefits in your proposals (such as promising to get people into employment). Failure to achieve over-ambitious targets could be understood as failure of recovery cafes as a concept and leave other recovery cafes struggling to get a funding break.

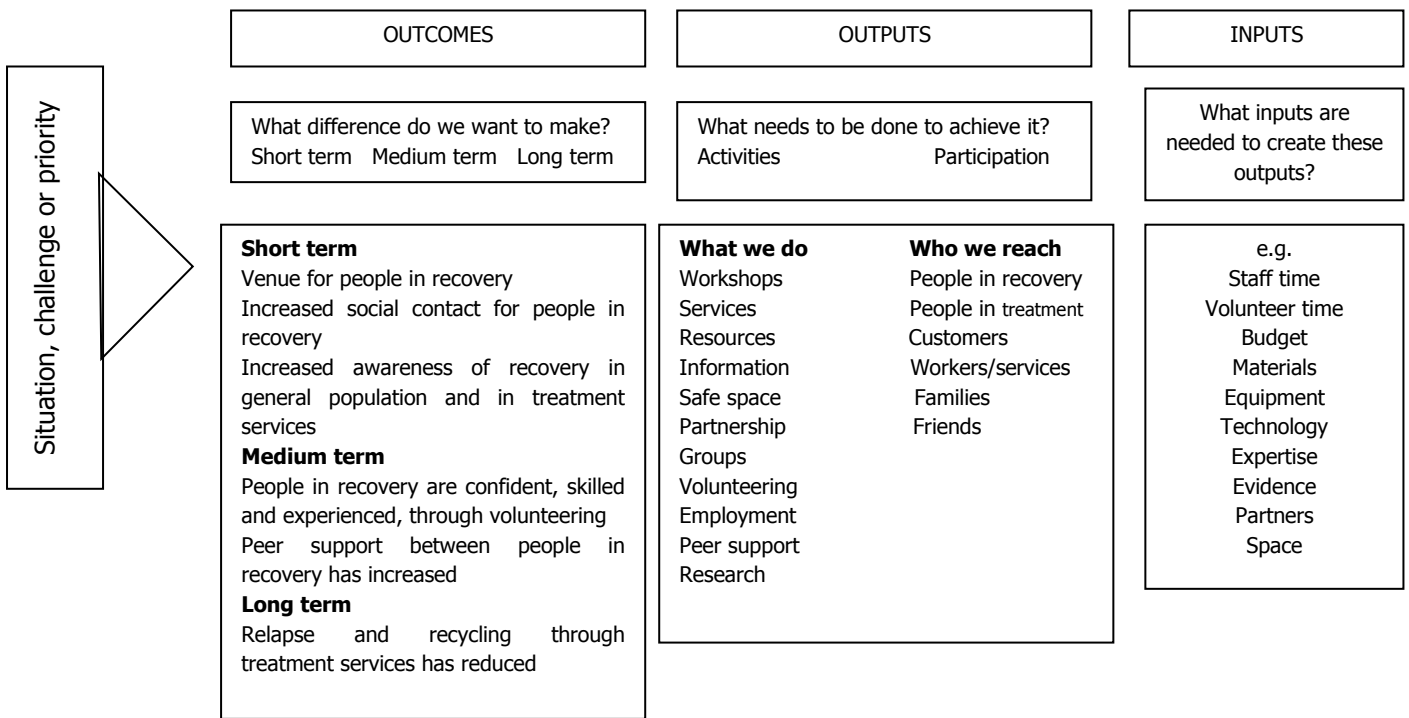
Shaping up your proposals is easier if your group works in a 'developmental' way:

- Ongoing horizon scanning, to see what is 'up and coming' in funding trends and policy debates
- Effective meetings where ideas can be encouraged and constructively tested
- Communication which is good at bringing information *into* the organisation as well as sending information out – so the recovery community feels it can make suggestions and so that other agencies, officials and politicians can explore partnerships with you
- A 'go and see' mentality where the exposure of members to ideas through visits to other organisations, conferences and networking, is part of the regular work of the group – it is hard to imagine what you have never seen or experienced.

Usually, the main funders provide proposal forms in which the questions asked demonstrate the project planning they require you to have completed before the proposal stage, which may include:

- Outcomes – the difference that will be seen, once your recovery cafe has been successful
- Outputs - projected number of beneficiaries/participants; what they will experience/achieve/do (quantified)
- Inputs - quantities of resources including time, materials etc, projected number of staff/volunteers
- Systems – what systems you have in place (or will put in place) to measure impact and monitor progress

However, even if funders invite a 'freestyle' proposal, it is essential to include all of these aspects in a logical order anyway. If you can represent your recovery cafe in a logic model like this, you will already have answers to some of the questions funders will ask:



Note this is similar to the Weavers' Triangle often used by funders such as the Big Lottery

**Things to bear in mind when planning revenue projects include:**

- Scale – do the proposed outcomes match the level of outputs and inputs? Does the level of need justify the proposed outcomes? How can the size of the local recovery community be realistically estimated?
- Testing – if you are proposing that one member of staff can achieve a certain level of activity, try to plan a typical week and see what level of activity they would physically have time for, while still having time for administration, meetings and other requirements. This exercise can really help you check that the levels of output / input is realistic.
- Full cost recovery, ensuring you include all of the actual costs of delivering a project and a contribution to the management of it
- A realistic workplan – on a multi-year project, over-ambitious projections of output in the first year or two can lead funders to question the continuation of funding when projects fail to meet these. Learn from projects elsewhere and err on conservative estimates using evidence from your market research.

**Things to bear in mind when planning capital projects include the above and:**

- Professional advice from quantity surveyors, planners, architects etc (which will need to be costed in advance)
- Cash flow projections to synchronise grant payments and stages of completion



- Have good risk assessments and contingency plans – mishaps and unforeseen problems can be expensive to rectify and funders may not be able to step in and top up their contribution

Many funders use similar jargon in slightly different ways – again, it is important to ensure you use the definitions and examples by each funder when communicating with them – a perfectly good proposal can be deemed to fail criteria simply by wording something as an output when the funder wants to see an outcome – and sometimes their own examples make it hard to tell the difference!

### **Aims and Objectives**

**Aims**- the vision or overarching purpose of your recovery cafe

e.g. We will build the strength and vitality of the recovery community in Kilmuchty

**Objectives** – a broad, overall statement of one specific goal that will contribute towards achievement of your overall aims

e.g. To develop social networks and peer support between people in recovery, helping people to overcome the challenges of sustaining abstinence and rebuilding their lives.

### **Outcomes and SMART Outcomes**

**Outcomes** focus on the 'difference you want to make' (Big Lottery) – while an objective focuses on what you want to do. An outcome should really explain both 'what and why'

e.g. Increased engagement in learning and personal development for people recovering from addiction, through improved access to community activities, peer support and volunteering

SMART

Specific – tightly defined, relating directly to the issue being addressed.

Measurable – provide information that records the level of improvement by the end of the project

Achievable – can be achieved within the timescale

Relevant – have a strong connection to priorities and activities.

Time-bound – set specific time periods

e.g. 100 people in recovery have increased their social networks with others in recovery through attending recovery cafe activities; 50 people leaving treatment services have developed their confidence and social skills, through volunteering in the recovery cafe

*Note:* Outcomes use active and positive language, and tend to present a situation in the present tense, as if it has already happened.

### **Outputs**

Outputs help to provide a range of specific measures of the direct result of your activities, and are usually quantifiable – the things that you can count.

e.g. 12 recovery community groups use the recovery cafe each week for meetings; 6 local service providers make their services accessible by delivering through the recovery cafe; 8 part-time jobs are created within the recovery cafe

### **Inputs**

Inputs include all of the things that you will need to do (for which you need a certain amount of staff or volunteer time) or to buy, to make the project happen – it is usually strongly linked to the project budget. Again, inputs are quantified.

### **Activities**

Some funders describe activities separately from inputs, in which case they want to see the 'deliverables' – the things that will happen week to week for the duration of the project e.g. volunteering programmes, recovery coaching, arts in recovery courses, relaxation classes etc

Before developing your project proposal, consider the different ways it could be delivered:

<b>Delivery option</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Things to think about</b>
<b>'In-house'</b>	<p>If you have the capacity and are confident you have the skills and experience, doing it yourself can be the simplest option</p> <p>If you are a new organisation, taking forward some small projects yourself initially helps to establish your track record</p>	<p>For new organisations, taking on a major project without any practice will present a steep learning curve and change process that may challenge your committee – and many funders will want to see you can walk before you run</p>
<b>In partnership</b>	<p>Partnering with other organisations with a good track record can bring more skill and experience to bear on the project.</p> <p>Funders may feel reassured by a partnership with a large, well funded organisation that already has systems in place that a recovery cafe will need – finance, employment, volunteering, insurance etc</p> <p>The degree of partnership can be whatever you decide – a written agreement, and plenty of time and work together to develop it are essential.</p>	<p>Partnership working in itself brings challenges – communication has to be strong and the sharing of responsibilities well planned. There has to be time set aside to make the partnership work as well as the project.</p> <p>The greatest challenge in a partnership will be how to retain a recovery cafe concept which is developed by people in recovery for people in recovery. Will a partner organisation be willing / able to allow this to happen, and to allow the people in recovery leading the development to learn and grow through doing things for themselves?</p>
<b>Commissioning</b>	<p>It may be beneficial to commission specialists (e.g. for business planning) to help with key tasks.</p> <p>Funders may feel reassured that you are seeking the appropriate advice and skills for your recovery cafe – in major revenue or capital projects they may also want to see that you have used specialist advice to develop your proposal</p>	<p>Make sure that you engage specialists on a well defined brief, and manage them closely. Try to learn from them rather than just receiving their final report and invoice. You can build in a learning/teaching relationship into your original specification.</p> <p>Ensure you manage external delivery agents well – don't leave them to do their own thing on your behalf – it is your recovery cafe and your reputation at stake</p>

Research your funder before developing your proposal. Many funders will tell you how they want to receive proposals – *take their advice*. Common requests include:

- A maximum number of pages –stick to this, and stick to their word counts. There is a real skill in making sure every word you use packs maximum punch, it comes with practice. Wafflers do not make good fundraisers.
- Set headings – stick to the order in which they have listed the headings, and adjust your ideas to match their headings. Only add additional headings if it is essential in getting your message across
- A set of accounts – many funders want to see your financial situation and that your accounts are properly audited. If you are just starting out, try to raise money to get an accountant to externally verify your accounts after the first year even if your income and expenditure are

tiny, and even if you are not yet registered as a charity. It shows you take financial management and accountability seriously.

- Unless it is asked for, don't provide a lot of supplementary information – funders just don't have time to read it. However, if you let them know there is further information on your website, they may look at it once you have grabbed their attention with your interesting proposal – but you must then ensure your website is up to date and attractive and your downloads are easy to find.

If you are presenting a proposal and the funders you are approaching have no stated preferences, the standard setting of headings to use include:

Heading	Requirement
<b>Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The opening statement must encourage the funder to read on, first impressions count!</li> <li>▶ Let the funder know that you have researched their interest in this area of work</li> <li>▶ Keep to one or two paragraphs if you can</li> </ul>
<b>Summary/overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Your whole proposal in a nutshell -this should not be more than half a page</li> <li>▶ Introduce the need, and why it matters</li> <li>▶ Describe your proposed solution to meet the need, briefly</li> <li>▶ Set out your credibility – your skills and experience to provide the solution</li> <li>▶ Let the funder know what you are asking for from them</li> <li>▶ Keep each section short – use simple, powerful language.</li> </ul>
<b>Statement of need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Expand on your description of the need</li> <li>▶ Look forward to the difference you will make</li> <li>▶ Suggest urgency – what will happen if action is not taken</li> <li>▶ Provide evidence – this could be used as a baseline to quantify the changes you expect by the end of a period of funding</li> </ul>
<b>Project description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Overall aim of the recovery cafe</li> <li>▶ Link your ideas to the funder's criteria</li> <li>▶ State your specific objectives and intended activities –SMART</li> <li>▶ Describe your methods – how, when, why</li> <li>▶ State any wider outcomes and benefits of the process</li> <li>▶ State your capability - staff, skills, experience etc to make it happen</li> </ul>
<b>Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Use simple presentation (e.g. a table) and get the sums right!</li> <li>▶ Don't guess - explain any estimates you have used and use clear budget headings</li> <li>▶ Use explanatory notes to explain budget lines where needed</li> <li>▶ Explain your own projected income generation and any other funders' contributions</li> </ul>
<b>Exit strategy/ future plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Show that you have thought about long term sustainability</li> <li>▶ Build in an evaluation into the activities and the budget. Explain here how the evaluation will be used to support your exit strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Organisation information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Describe your track record</li> <li>▶ Briefly outline your governance arrangements and how this project fits with them</li> <li>▶ Provide a very brief overview of your current activities</li> <li>▶ Describe your own strategic direction and the 'fit' of the proposed project, as well as any fit with current national policy interests</li> </ul>



<b>Conclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The conclusion is the rounding off and the final chance to make this a memorable proposal for a busy funder. Use it well.</li> <li>▶ Keep it brief</li> <li>▶ Provide a reminder of the importance of finding a solution to the needs you have identified</li> <li>▶ Link again to the funder's interests – this is the start of a collaboration in which you will make a difference together</li> </ul>
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## The Serenity Cafe experience of project development and fundraising

### 3. Partnership

- Comas is the small community development agency partnering the group developing the Serenity Cafe. The advantages have been that Comas understands recovery and the community development process involved in helping the Serenity Cafe to be genuinely 'by people in recovery for people in recovery'.
- Comas has provided fundraising skills and a lot of training support, as well as practical assets such as an office and IT for volunteers to use, a temporary 'home' for the Serenity Cafe until permanent premises are secured
- The downside has been that Comas itself is a new organisation slowly establishing a reputation and track record, so some funders have asked why Comas should support us, and focus on what Comas is about as much as what the Serenity Cafe is about.

### 4. Starting small

- The Serenity Cafe has achieved a lot with a little. This 'slow growth' has actually enhanced volunteering and recovery community engagement, as there is a real sense of ownership of the progress we have made, and has allowed us to really learn as we grow.
- We started off with a Big Lottery Investing in Ideas grant and a NHS Lothian Community Development and Health small grant. We have built on this with small short term grants for specific pieces of work.

### 5. Juggling

- Which activities we pursue has usually been dictated by what money we can get, rather than a planned approach to development.
- We have had to start some activities with only half the money really required to do it, because hoped-for match funding has failed to materialise. We have taken the view that making a start might help us evidence the need and this does involve some risk – for the people involved, who might see their activities come to an end, and for the funder whose initial stake we are using.
- Everything we do has been profiled as positive achievement for the next funder to see. This does put a lot of pressure on any paid staff we have appointed to achieve targets and evaluate their work.
- In our first year some of our bids were unsuccessful, and funders' rules often stipulate that we must wait a year before re-applying. We then have to use the year to make sure our next proposal is even better, but we don't give up.

### 6. Community engagement with fundraising

- People doing marathons, triathlons etc have gathered sponsorship for the Serenity Cafe – we use a Paypal button on our website for getting online donations.
- Car boot sales and other activities bring in small amounts and increase engagement.

**Network participants' comments and ideas:**

- Start small
- Be creative
- Be consistent, persistent, insistent
- Be truthful

## Finance and business planning

- When money given, you act as a custodian, looking after it and guiding it towards achieving the agreed outcome. Your custodianship builds trust in funders and the wider recovery community.
- Finance is not just about income and expenditure, it is about the bigger picture – the most effective way of using *all* your resources.
- Fear of spending and trying to do everything too cheaply can be as wasteful as spending too extravagantly.
- Accountability and transparency are key with managing finance, attracting finance and using it effectively

### 1. Clarity

Be clear about your needs as an organisation and the purpose of your system of accounting for money:

- To show funders what happened to their money
- To show the accountant, charity regulator and the public that money was used wisely and fairly
- To show future donors that money in this recovery cafe achieves positive results
- To show future funders that good systems and decision making is in place
- To inform the recovery cafe's decisions, plans, project implementation and forecasting
- To inform the recovery cafe about costs and results

### 2. Accessibility

Every system is only as good as the people using it at the time – and we all do have different approaches to finance and accounting depending on our personalities and our personal orientation towards numeracy and money management.

The point of this reminder is that every recovery cafe occasionally needs to think of the 'fell off the boat' scenario – if only one person can make sense of the files and recording system used for the recovery cafe's finance, you are at risk of losing control if something happens to that person. The golden rules are:

- Use an agreed system that is simple and idiot-proof (the smaller your recovery cafe and the fewer people focusing on finance, the more-so)
- Apply a disciplinary zeal to keeping finance files (receipts, invoices etc) no matter how few transactions are made. Discipline early on saves a lot of sorting out once things escalate.
- Create and maintain a finance manual (an idiot's guide) that describes each file, spreadsheet and recording process and how a new user should complete them/use them on a step by step basis, with pictures! (this will be invaluable if you recruit somebody new to help with finance or appoint a new treasurer to the committee)
- Ensure the finance files and spreadsheets are accessible to all committee members in an accessible and secure location – not someone's bedside cabinet or sideboard.

- Cross reference everything – number your invoices and record on your spreadsheet, number each receipt and record on your spreadsheet – and so on.
- Appoint an external accountant or auditor early on rather than near your first year end, and show them your system. If they are happy, the financial year end will be less stressful.

### 3. Standard forms

No-one wants recovery cafes to turn into a mini-bureaucracy where triplicate request forms and double authorisation is required to buy a pencil sharpener. Keep standard forms in perspective – where you have a lot of similar transactions, templates can make life quicker and easier. For people managing transactions, standard formats create a reassuring paper trail of monitoring, authorisation and recording within your system. Standard forms to consider developing and using include:

- Petty cash voucher (clip to receipts)
- Cash income voucher (clip to bank deposit slip)
- Invoice payment voucher (clip to invoices)
- Received voucher (clip to funding award letters, donor bank transfer records etc)
- Purchase order / authorisation to purchase (clip to payment voucher and receipt/invoice)
- Travel and subsistence claim forms (clip to record of payment)
- Payslips (clip to record of payment)
- Staff timesheets for staff working irregular hours (clip to record of payment)
- Standard finance report template for the committee (using the same format consistently helps non-finance people to know what they are looking at and ask questions)

### 4. Routines

In addition to having a finance manual that guides the practice of recording income and expenditure, other routines need to be established. These might include:

- Weekly update of income and expenditure records, filing
- Weekly/monthly payroll (some CVS provide a cheap payroll service)
- Monthly reconciliation of internal account records to bank statements
- Monthly payment of NI/PAYE to HMRC
- Monthly/quarterly reports to the committee
- Quarterly grant claims and monitoring reports (if required by funders)
- Quarterly VAT returns (if VAT registered)
- Annual preparation for the end of financial year
- Annual summary of tax/NI to HMRC and issue of P60s (a payroll service may do this)
- Annual financial accounts sent to Companies House/charity regulator as required (an accountant may include this in his/her service)

### Ready to receive money

Some basics to prepare for:

For receiving money (table 1)

For spending money (table 2)

Table 1: receiving	Steps	Things to think about
<b>Banking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It may take several weeks to open an account, involving paperwork and verification of signatures. Open both 'current' and 'high interest deposit' accounts from the outset</li> <li>• You may be able to deposit revenue grants in a high interest account and make planned transfers to your current account for expenditure, to increase your potential income from interest</li> </ul>	Using a credit book for deposits helps keep your records in one place
<b>Costing proposals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use full cost recovery to ensure that the funding you receive reflects the actual cost of delivering the outcomes</li> <li>• Be open and transparent, using budget headings that are clear – try to avoid adding a bald percentage cost for vague headings such as 'management costs' or 'overheads', describe and cost these accurately</li> </ul>	If you wish to represent value for money, you may wish to reduce the incidental costs associated with a recovery cafe, e.g. time spent on managing staff, for example, or a contribution to rent and utilities required to host an employee in an office. It is still a good idea to quantify this and show it in the costed proposals as your recovery cafe's contribution. However, applying a monetary value to volunteer time is more problematic, and it is often more satisfactory to state the number of 'volunteer hours' projected as a contribution rather than costing this.
<b>Linking to project management</b>	Increase your ability to account to funders by showing deposits for specific purposes in a separate worksheet on which key dates are also flagged (e.g. report by <date>; make next claim by <date>) and key requirements (e.g. monitoring).	Link your financial management to performance management – often claims from major funders are linked to performance monitoring in which you will have to account for progress in an auditable trail from spend to activity.
<b>Using surplus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is good practice to discuss with funders how to manage any underspend that arises on completion of a funded piece of work. They may be happy for you to keep the surplus and use it for other purposes. If they want it back, they may still be sympathetic to future requests for support.</li> <li>• If underspend has arisen because of failure to deliver on key aspects of a piece of work, it is better for your reputation in the long term to discuss this with funders as soon as you identify a problem.</li> </ul>	If underspend has occurred through good housekeeping, approach the funder with suggestions on how your organisation could use the surplus (i.e. a mini-project or new objectives to add to the funded piece of work) if the money is not returned. If underspend has occurred through failure, provide a clear and business-like appraisal of why it went wrong and what solutions can now fix it, if the donor is still willing to support it.
<b>Keeping donors informed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All funders and donors, large and small, deserve at least an acknowledgement that their money has been received.</li> <li>• Many funders and donors are open to an ongoing relationship via newsletters and annual reports</li> <li>• For long term projects or appeals, let people know that you have reached your target</li> </ul>	Use mail merge databases to enter details of donors straight away – it captures the information in one place but also allows your administration of acknowledgements and future communications to be done more easily.

Table 2: spending	Steps	Things to think about
<b>Banking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have as many signatories as possible for expenditure transactions with an 'any two' requirement</li> <li>• If your bank offers a personal advisor, use this person effectively – let them know about key grants you have deposited or projects and the phases of income or expenditure you expect</li> </ul>	<p>Online banking makes many transactions easier, but remember to download confirmations and keep them as records in the same way as you would a cheque stub</p> <p>'Business debit cards' can make things much easier for staff, reducing reliance on petty cash and enabling ordering goods online. Again ensure attention to controls, print and file all transactions.</p>
<b>Filing</b>	<p>Filing is perhaps the most important aspect of accountability. File every receipt, order, bank statement, credit slip, creditor advice note, invoice – anything to do with your money must be saved. If you want to avoid an end-of-financial-year nightmare, file each according to a specific area of expenditure.</p>	<p>Also be meticulous about filing instruction booklets and guarantees for equipment; contracts (e.g. with mobile phone or internet providers); or any other agreement.</p> <p>Create a dated inventory from the outset of all equipment etc, for insurance purposes and for your auditor.</p>
<b>Establishing controls</b>	<p>Controls include systems and levels of delegated authority and expenditure limits; an upper limit for a petty cash float and clear rules on cash payments; separation of duties (i.e. one person orders, another writes the cheque); security (a safe or lockable cash box); regular reconciliation between bank statements and internal records.</p>	<p>In small recovery cafes it may appear more convenient for one person to deal with the finance, especially once a paid member of staff is in place. However, 'double checking' is not a judgement of someone's trustworthiness, simply a safeguard for both the individual and the recovery cafe, against simple mistakes that always happen (e.g. adding a nought onto the end of a key number in a spreadsheet, leading to a mistaken assessment of financial health)</p>
<b>Linking to project management</b>	<p>Separate worksheets for different bank accounts and pieces of work (ideally linked to a master financial summary spreadsheet) helps track expenditure. Setting these up in a similar format (e.g. with standard headings) makes them easy to read as well as giving your organisation more 'intelligence' about how it is using money, e.g. on materials or travel, across all of its projects.</p>	<p>When delegating the implementation of a project to an individual (e.g. member of staff) it is essential that they know what the budget is, how it was made up, and how much they have left, on a regular basis. They can have this information with or without delegated authority for expenditure, but making project management decisions without knowing financial implications is ineffective.</p>
<b>Projections and variance</b>	<p>Forecasting expenditure over the whole year or life of the recovery cafe is the only way to know your finance needs. Some forecasts are based on past experience and some based on educated estimates, or similar projects. Show expenditure against each budget heading as you progress through the period of funding. The pattern of spending throughout the year is not always uniform, so monthly variance has to account for this.</p>	<p>Some funders ask for an annual/life of project forecast of spend. Simply dividing a budget heading figure by the months of the year/project does not always follow the actual pattern of spend, and the seasonal fluctuations that will occur. Failure to think ahead sometimes resulting in cash flow crises or management panics.</p>



## **Business Planning**

A business plan can be a simple document or complex, depending on the size of your proposed recovery cafe and the level of reliance you will have on income generation, loans or grant support. You can develop a business plan for separate aspects of the recovery cafe (e.g. the cafe itself, nightclub events etc) or have an overall business plan for your recovery cafe.

For small recovery cafes, going through the main ingredients of business planning when each project need arises, supports decision making about what is needed, how proposed solutions will work and what the financial implications are.

It does not matter if only one or two sentences are provided for each section described below – getting into a routine of presenting proposals to the committee in a structured format which addresses all the important questions is a really healthy approach to managing.

Anyone presenting an idea or requesting support, from a new activity to an individual with an idea for an extension of the business, should be encouraged to be 'business-like' in their approach.

As recovery cafes develop, an overall business plan helps them to think about the bigger picture and the overall sustainability of their enterprises.

Most funders will want to see a business plan for significant projects – larger funders such as the Big Lottery have their own templates to help you.

A business plan might contain any or all of the elements below.

### **At least, for small recovery cafes:**

- An assessment of the need for the recovery cafe (includes analysis of evidence – local data, your own surveys or consultations etc)
- An options appraisal – an overview of what other solutions or projects you have considered and why your proposal of a recovery cafe was selected
- A detailed recovery cafe specification – how it will work and what resources will be required (staff, space, equipment, running costs, start-up support etc)
- A projected timescale for implementation, with specific objectives and milestones
- A risk assessment – a realistic presentation of all the risks that could de-rail or compromise the recovery cafe and ideas about how these would be avoided or resolved if they occurred.
- A budget (include in-kind and partner contributions and make all assumptions clear)
- A cashflow forecast (sets the budget against income targets and plots the spend over time)

### **And for larger, more complex recovery cafes, all the above and:**

- A persuasive description of what you want to do (the recovery cafe) and the outcomes it will achieve (SMART outcomes – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed)
- An assessment of other projects or providers in the area, and why you perceive a gap in provision or a particular need to create a new recovery cafe
- A PEST analysis – a look at the political, environmental, social and technical issues that might influence the recovery cafe, support it or emphasise the need for it (at least an assessment of the national and local policies)
- A SWOT analysis – a fair assessment of the strengths and weakness of your recovery cafe and your capacity to deliver it, and an overview of the opportunities and threats your recovery cafe might face on implementation
- A funding plan – how the funds or resources required will be brought together as a full recovery cafe support package, identifying key dates for funding deadlines, which funds will





be used as match to attract other funds, conditions of any of the known funders, or the implications of loans.

- An impact assessment – a realistic appraisal of what it will mean for your recovery cafe to either succeed or fail in this venture

## **Market Research – see gathering and using information**

### **Full Cost Recovery**

Full Cost Recovery (FCR) is a term increasingly used in the voluntary sector and fundraising circles. It refers to the challenge many organisations face of covering their core costs (rent, utilities, insurances etc) when so many funders and donors are only interested in projects and direct support to beneficiaries or outcomes.

Full costs are easier to assess for organisations that have been running for some time, as you can compile a full cost recovery budget based on analysis of past expenditure. For recovery cafes starting out, your FCR budget should be based on well-researched estimates, and ideally by asking similar enterprises that have been running longer to share their experience with you.

To compile an FCR budget, simply look at all areas of expenditure over a period of time (a year, ideally):

- Some of the transactions will have fit clearly and neatly into your planned budget headings.
- Look at those that did not, and decide if a new category is required (if an item is recurring expenditure)
- Look for unusual, or one-off items, and decide whether these would be included in future budgets or not.
- Once all of the expenditure is organised into fairly detailed budget headings, this gives you an idea of what costs are required over a year.
- You then have to consider whether you actually spent enough in that year – did you scrimp because funds were lacking? Add to your FCR budget in any area you feel this is required.
- Make sure things are rationally clustered – e.g. staff training is with staff salaries and employer's costs, to reflect the true cost of a member of staff.

### **Building a budget for project proposals**

Once you have this full cost picture to hand, use it to apply costs to your project proposals and business plans – you can now apportion rent, utilities, management time and so on to each project clearly.

### **Multi-year budgets: increments and inflation**

Another important thing to factor into your budgets on multi-year project is annual increments for staff, and the anticipated annual pay rise. Within reason, all project costs should anticipate a small annual increase for inflation, provided you make your assumptions clear (i.e. inflation assumed at 3%).





## The Serenity Cafe experience of finance and business planning

### 1. Running cafe-club events

- Financial management skills are being developed in the current steering group by focusing on small aspects of the overall picture. The steering group has a current bank account for cash income and expenditure from the cafe-club events, and a savings account for fundraised income.
- We are just beginning to work with a volunteer to bring to each steering group meeting an overview of income and expenditure, and accounting for the grants we have received. As yet, 'financial literacy' within our steering group is in the 'disinterested' category.
- The cafe-club events have been a good place for people to get a handle on value for money – it is not as simple as it seems. For example, we have no storage facilities between events, so un-used food stock can't be 'saved for next time'. We buy all bar stock in small quantities because of the lack of storage space, so we can't achieve discounts by bulk purchasing. Some people identify savings can be made by buying certain products from different supermarkets – but once the time and travel has been factored in getting different products from several different places, this saving is not worthwhile.

### 2. Social enterprise

- During our early development we approached a social enterprise advice organisation with our basic business plan. They added their business expertise and added calculations we hadn't thought of, such as replacement of crockery and furnishings over time, depreciation of equipment, and testing the overall projections with variances – what would happen if sales fell (e.g. seasonally) by a certain percentage.
- To our dismay, the overall projections weren't good. In order to make the business viable, we were advised to reduce support costs, or raise sales targets. We felt we would need high support for trainees and volunteers in early recovery, and we also felt clear that we had to keep prices well within reach of people on benefits. A key factor for us was also the high cost of rents in Edinburgh on a reasonably sized, city centre location that would also attract 'passing trade'.
- We have considered a number of things to improve on the viability:
  - Renting a future premises with sufficient space to rent out for meetings, and to rent 'internally' so that each Serenity Cafe grant proposal for an activity contains a budget line for renting this space (we currently do this anyway, but the rent is paid to external venues)
  - Reducing reliance on having a viable cafe as the main source of income in the overall recovery cafe plan – our wider concept of a hub for the recovery community is that different recovery-focused activities and support projects will help finance the whole
  - Having a membership scheme for people in recovery which links to member discounts within the cafe, allowing us to charge 'high street' prices to those that can afford them (e.g. tourists)
  - Diversifying income generation in other ways – recovery-oriented bookshop, classes with scaled prices, ticket prices for gigs and nightclubs etc.

### **Network participants' comments and ideas:**

- Recognise the potential and the limits of social enterprise
- Harness business experience within the recovery community
- Think ahead, but keep your head. Licensing and regulation may seem daunting but many small businesses overcome these hurdles all the time. Maintain a can do attitude.

## Working with volunteers

Volunteering can be long term or short term, formal or casual

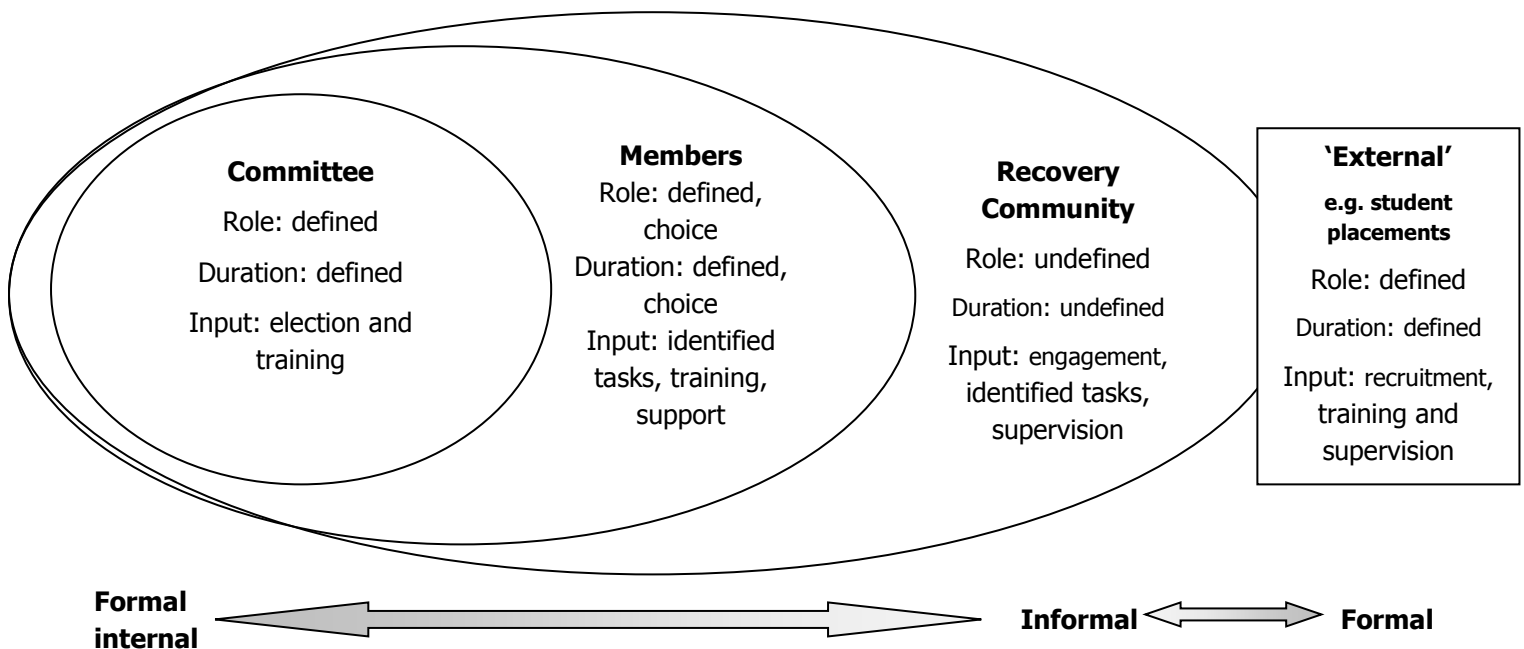
Volunteers can have a wide range of motivations for getting involved. For some, personal development and progression is important: training, experience, recognition, social contact, satisfaction, stimulation. For others, 'giving to get back' is their priority.

Volunteering works best when opportunities provided match volunteers' motivations to a recovery cafe's needs

Voluntary time can be the most high-value resource within a recovery cafe

A recovery cafe that treats its volunteers as if they are a valuable resource benefits from increased volunteering

There will be a wide range of voluntary effort put into most recovery cafes. It is helpful first to make a distinction between different kinds of voluntary support and to plan to provide what is required to make volunteering work for the benefit of the recovery cafe – as well as for the recovery cafe to work for the benefit volunteers:



Your approach to volunteering will depend on how far you want to take the principle of 'for people in recovery by people in recovery'. In the current climate there will be plenty of talented people looking to gain skills and experience through volunteering, who are not necessarily in recovery themselves.



## **Capacity to work effectively with volunteers**

Before considering engaging volunteers, consider your capacity to work with volunteers well:

Informal volunteering:

- Someone (a member of staff or another volunteer) to define tasks, monitor activity, provide on the spot guidance and support
- Insurance
- Disclosure/child protection policy guiding who to check and when
- In informal volunteering focus on offering clear, easy to learn and complete tasks that provide a sense of achievement, enjoyment and social contact.

Formal volunteering:

- Someone (a member of staff or very experienced volunteer) to co-ordinate and develop volunteering
- Volunteering policy
- Placement descriptions, possibly a recruitment process, certainly an induction process
- Supervision and training or induction
- A personal planning and review process to help volunteers get the most from their involvement
- In formal volunteering, people might have higher expectations, especially if they volunteer for an intensive period or fulfil a key role over a period of time. Offering references or accreditation of learning and experience, training, out-of-pocket expenses, and a clear sense of place in the wider recovery cafe (e.g. a named peer mentor or supervisor), may all be important to them.

Many people in recovery struggle to commit to regular, sustained volunteering in early recovery and may make a very gradual transition from casual volunteering to more regular roles.

## **What can we offer?**

The common feature of what most people want from volunteering is acknowledgement and feedback. Don't let this be an accidental experience – plan for how you will acknowledge contributions and provide feedback. Ideas include:

- Logging volunteer hours and acknowledging landmarks
- Holding volunteer celebrations and awards ceremonies
- Linking volunteering to work experience outwith the recovery cafe

## **Peer support and mentoring**

The process of involving some volunteers in supporting other volunteers is a common feature of recovery communities. In some settings (e.g. mutual aid) the experience of recovery itself is the focus of the shared experience. This is peer support.

Within a recovery cafe, there are myriad potential roles for volunteers, and therefore a wide range of potential support needs. Peer mentors need to be well trained for their role in supporting other volunteers on their volunteering – this is separate from and additional to supporting people in their recovery.

Training for peer mentors should include:

- Self awareness (personality type and learning style)
- Leadership skills
- Inclusion – attitudes and values
- Communication skills
- Managing conflict
- Coaching skills applied to helping volunteers set goals for their personal progress through volunteering
- Emotional intelligence



## Identify outcomes for volunteers

Volunteering helps recovery cafes develop and grow, whilst volunteering helps individuals develop and grow. This relationship is central to the ethos of recovery cafes.

Being clear about what volunteers can gain from volunteering helps when planning volunteering tasks and how volunteers will contribute to development. A clear framework also helps to monitor volunteer progress – and to inform funders of this.

Outcomes for volunteers may include:

- Increased confidence
- Greater self esteem
- Improved self organisation, such as time management
- Greater resilience – problem solving and coping mechanisms
- Improved social skills – communication, team work
- Work related skills
- Progression into further learning / training
- Progression into work
- A stronger sense of citizenship
- An increase in social relationships

However, bear in mind that within recovery communities there is a hugely diverse group of people, who bring a wide range of skills and experience. Some may have past professional experience and some may be currently working and offer to volunteer in addition to their paid work. Some people may wish to take their career in a completely new direction than they had during their addiction and wish to use volunteering to explore new avenues.

Outcomes can be monitored in different ways. Common methods include:

- Self assessment using rating scales based on your own framework
- Outcomes Stars or Richter Scale (formalised scaling tools)
- Alignment to accreditation schemes such as ASDAN or SVQ/NVQ (pass level = progress)

Some of the challenges include:

- Keeping in touch with casual volunteers or volunteers who drop out, to monitor their progress in the long term
- Using self assessment with people who experience peaks and troughs, especially in early recovery, which skews assessment of overall progress
- Volunteers may think hours logged in volunteering is the same as distance travelled through volunteering. Good support and supervision challenges the notion that 'turning up' is the same as learning and development.

## The Serenity Cafe experience of developing volunteering

### 1. From casual to structured

- When the Serenity Cafe-Club nights first started, there was a 'turn up and muck in' approach to volunteering to stage the events. As people got more comfortable with the tasks, attendance at planning meetings dwindled. Attempts at developing a rota have worked to some extent, but many people still turn up and offer their time on a casual basis, and these people need to be directed towards tasks. Some tasks lean heavily on a small number of committed volunteers and when they are not available, it becomes clear that the rest of the team have not learned these roles.
- The process of volunteer planning and review has been the turning point in our volunteering. This has enabled the longer term, regular volunteers to identify activities and development they want to see, and to plan the steps they will take to make this happen. As a result of volunteer planning, activities within the Serenity Cafe have mushroomed to include a drama group, football team, fundraising has stepped up, and the policy role has further developed.
- Volunteer planning and review is clearly only viable with people who are interested in longer term, consistent volunteering.

### 2. Team work and leadership

- The cafe-club nights are a peculiar test of team work. There is a clear deadline to work towards, and now there is also a clear standard of what we want to create.
- During years of addiction selfish individualism is our means of getting by. Recovery does not make us natural team players. The existence of a rota helps some people to firm up their commitment, but for others it reduces the sense that the whole team needs to see the bigger picture – they do their bit on the rota and no more.
- On cafe-club nights individuals get completely caught up in their own task, so much so that new volunteers have at times come and gone without people knowing their name, so we don't know how to invite them back. Volunteers suggested we introduce 'task lists' so that people could be deployed to all of the different tasks and avoid getting stuck in a 'comfort zone', and so that new volunteers would have a guide to tasks. They task lists are handed out at the beginning of the session and then ignored.
- There are some 'star roles', and others that people don't willingly get involved in. Fairness should mean that everyone takes a turn at everything, but more leadership is required to make sure this happens.
- Leadership is essential to bring together disparate teams with varying levels of ability and commitment. We have held several leadership training courses, but leadership has still not emerged from within the group. We tried paying some individuals in the group a sessional rate to co-ordinate the volunteering on the night, but they have tended to focus on the tasks and not the people.
- Regardless of these issues, volunteers still have a great time and always get the job done.

## **The Serenity Cafe experience of developing volunteering**

### **3. Volunteer progression**

- Although cafe-club nights and the steering group were initially the focus of volunteering, volunteers are now involved in a much wider range of activity. The planning and review process helped to create this momentum.
- The plan and review framework was started by the steering group, who identified all the different things that volunteers gained from their involvement. These became the self assessment measures which volunteers use to identify what they want to gain and set goals to improve.
- We started a log of volunteering time given, which allowed some volunteers to acknowledge just how much they have done for the Serenity Cafe – and we also acknowledge this with awards ceremonies, with awards based on time given.
- As the Serenity Cafe became more successful in securing paid roles to take some pieces of work forward, we became far more conscious of the need to provide progression opportunities for volunteers, which would eventually enable them to confidently apply for paid positions, both within the Serenity Cafe and in other services.
- A major step forward in developing our approach to volunteering was the development by volunteers of a volunteer handbook. This formalised our experience and helped everyone to think about volunteering as an essential resource within the Serenity Cafe. Although we have not had any major problems, it prompted everyone to think about how we might respond if problems did emerge, and set ourselves a guidelines for this.

### **4. Peer mentoring**

- We developed the peer mentoring role as an extension to leadership training. The peer mentoring role gives 'leadership' a more structured application. Peer mentors are trained in leadership skills generally, but also trained to use the planning and review framework with other volunteers.
- The peer mentoring began with existing volunteers using the planning and review framework themselves, and then choosing a partner to monitor their progress and give feedback to each other on their progress.
- Trained peer mentors were then matched with new volunteers. After an initial induction evening, peer mentors will now introduce the volunteer planning and review process, and will ensure the volunteer handbook is introduced to them.

### **5. Recovery coaching**

- We are just beginning a training course for volunteer recovery coaches, who will learn coaching skills focusing on supporting others in their recovery, helping them build their recovery capital.
- The course will be accredited by the Association for Coaching. We see it as a formal coaching role for which people must meet a required standard, and we will provide supervision for coaches.

### **6. Recovery community development accreditation**

- The development of the Serenity Cafe requires community development skills which can easily be undervalued. We have decided to make these skills explicit, and we plan to offer SVQ accreditation in recovery community development. Volunteers will be provided with training and learning opportunities, and can use their volunteering activity to evidence their learning to gain an SVQ in community development. They can use this to further their career in the voluntary sector more widely, as well as within the recovery community.

### **Network participants' comments and ideas:**

- Inclusion – peer leaders, role models, motivation, person centred
- Utilise strengths
- Provide training
- Build on motivation – motivational interviewing
- Manage expectations – open and honest discussion
- Structure and personal development plans



## Becoming an employer

- The ingredient that really changes an idea to a practical reality is not money, it's people.
- In recovery communities there is a pool of potential workers. Investing in the pool, increasing its size and quality, makes sense in the long term.
- The day to day experience of a job is as important to workers as the salary and benefits.
- Almost all processes related to human resources are about successfully managing relationships. Much of the legal framework is only used when relationships have gone wrong.

### First steps

Becoming an employer for the first time requires adjustment where a recovery cafe has developed through volunteering initially. It can be hard on the first employee. Preparation must focus not only on the technical process of recruitment but also on the organisational process of becoming managers.

One of the first steps to consider is whether there is a requirement of paid staff to have direct experience of recovery. Different recovery communities will have different views on this. Some of the decision may be based on whether people with the required skills and experience are available within the recovery community. If this is not the case, then it is perhaps worthwhile to consider whether to 'grow your own'.

### What do we need from an employee?

Many organisations in the community sector make a transition from being committee-led to becoming more employee-led, once paid staff are in post. It can be a relief to pass on responsibility of drafting business plans, strategies and operational plans, communications and other time-consuming tasks. But once the organisation becomes reliant on this, then the leadership of the organisation becomes more of a shared process between staff and committee. This need not be a bad thing – many organisations thrive under the leadership of a good chief officer working in partnership with their committee. But there are things to think about before this happens – if we prefer to lean on paid staff for our long term progress, how do we plan for their succession?

### Job design

First steps into employment for committees often involve taking on a solo member of staff initially, perhaps part-time, rather than a full project team. Many of these staff will enter such positions knowing that part of the requirement is to be a 'jack of all trades'. However, think carefully about getting value for money from your employee – if he or she is paid at a 'professional' point on the scale but spends a substantial amount of time on 'administration' level tasks such as payroll or data input from surveys, or trying to fix your ancient IT equipment, then you are not getting value for money or making best use of their skills. When applying for funding and designing positions, think about whether it might be more effective to have two different roles at different levels, than rolling everything into one; or, budget for using external services, such as payroll or IT maintenance, data input etc. This can create wider local employment opportunities as well as making each member of staff more effective.

## **Key contact**

Before beginning a recruitment process, identify a member of the committee who will be the main contact for the employee. Collective decision making is an integral part of recovery cafes, but being managed on a day to day basis by committee is generally a very challenging experience, similar to being managed by a Hydra, each head with a different perspective.

Allow one member of the committee to take on the supervision and appraisal of the member of staff, and be the main person who provides a 'committee' perspective between meetings. This person need not be the Chair. Whoever it is, training in management and supervision of staff, coaching or other human resources skills, will be helpful preparation for this important role.

Some smaller organisations budget to pay an external supervisor for solo staff.

## **Letting go**

Many community organisations have grown from the dream and commitment of a small group of people who are the 'founders' of the whole initiative. When paid staff start to arrive, will they happily 'put their baby in foster care'?

Being aware of the possibility that some people will find it hard to 'let go' will at least help recovery cafes spot the signs that staff might be being stifled, under-used or undermined if key individuals cannot let go or feel threatened by the contribution of paid staff.

## **Further preparation to consider:**

### **Insurance**

Employers' liability insurance is essential if you begin to employ staff. This, together with your public liability and any other insurances, can be a significant annual cost.

### **Advertising**

Some funders require external advertisement of positions. Making job descriptions, person specifications and application forms available on your website dramatically reduces the administration of recruitment.

Encourage emailed application forms, to reduce the need to photocopy forms for shortlisting panel members – emailed forms can be forwarded on easily. This does require people to be able to use a computer, but in this technical age, being competent on a computer is likely to be essential for most positions.

### **Selection**

Training for people in recruitment selection helps people to be confidently involved in shortlisting and interviewing people. It is possible that applicants from within the recovery community will be interviewed by their peers, so people must be confident that the process has been undertaken fairly and without bias.

- Design application forms so that all personal details are removed from the information forwarded to the shortlisting panel. Obviously details and work histories of applicants indicate if they are already involved in the recovery community, but removing the name and address from the application does help to remove a distraction.
- Use a points scoring system against the essential criteria in your job description, which helps to neutralise the shortlisting. If a candidate has not clearly stated how they meet the criteria, this is reflected in the points.



## Recruitment processes

Process	Steps
<b>Job description</b>	<p>Usually structured using these headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job Title</li> <li>• Responsible to</li> <li>• Job purpose (overall aims of the job)</li> <li>• Main duties</li> <li>• General (other tasks that contribute to the project/organisation overall)</li> <li>• Relationships (perhaps a diagram of the organisation and lines of responsibility)</li> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Salary range</li> </ul> <p>If a Disclosure Check is necessary for the successful candidate, say this here. If you want to be pro-actively positive about employing people with an offending background, a positive statement is reassuring to some potential candidates.</p>
<b>Person specification</b>	<p>This outlines essential and desirable skills, experience or qualifications you think are necessary to do the job well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key requirements you might need include working evenings/weekends when required, to drive, to be in recovery etc</li> </ul>
<b>Application form</b>	<p>Standard features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name, address and contact details on the front page, which can be removed for shortlisting</li> <li>• Education and qualifications (when and where gained)</li> <li>• Previous work experience (dates and key achievements)</li> <li>• A large section inviting candidates to explain why their skills and experience suits them to the position – you may want to give a page limit</li> <li>• Sometimes, a section on personal interests can give you an insight into a person's general outlook</li> <li>• Add some questions which relate to the person specification – e.g. if a driving license is essential, ask this on the form</li> <li>• Ask for contact details for two or three referees</li> </ul> <p>Additional features may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity monitoring form</li> </ul> <p>Some organisations simply ask for a CV. This can make shortlisting harder – the standard format of an application form should help you to see easily where a person's qualifications and experience matches your requirements.</p>
<b>Advertising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive advertising in the mainstream press (in the region of £1000+) is not always well spent – consider third sector press such as Good Moves and Big Issue for cost effective alternatives (in the region of £250). Ask partner organisations to circulate to their stakeholders.</li> <li>• Clearly state how applicants can find out more – a website with downloads reduces enquiry overload.</li> <li>• State all relevant dates – closing date, interview date, and when candidates can expect to hear if they have been shortlisted.</li> <li>• Some organisations save time and money by stating in the application pack that applications will not be acknowledged.</li> </ul>



<b>Shortlisting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A team approach is best – but preferably not more than four or five people.</li> <li>• Remember people should declare an interest if they are related to or good friends with any of the applicants. However it is inevitable that some people will be known to the panel - transparency to decision making is the key.</li> <li>• Use the person specification to draw up a 'scoring grid' so each panel member can identify how well a person matches up to your identified needs. In addition to scores, be prepared to discuss gut feelings on potential candidates – a good recruitment process uses insight as well as hard evidence.</li> <li>• Keep your scoring sheets as evidence of the thoroughness of your process. A candidate may ask for feedback on their application.</li> <li>• You can advise applicants you don't want to interview that they have been unsuccessful at this point if you wish – or you can wait until the end of the process. If the interview process does not result in appointment you may want to re-list from previous applicants rather than re-advertise, if the overall standard of applicant was high.</li> </ul>
<b>Interviewing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The essential part is the panel interview – ideally not more than four panel members, and for not more than an hour.</li> <li>• Have someone who is not on the panel to 'meet and greet', show where the loos are, and co-ordinate any additional tasks (see below). This person can also make copies of identification (passport or drivers' license, now a requirement, and certificates etc).</li> <li>• You may structure the interview, asking for a 10 minute presentation on a given topic, followed by questions.</li> <li>• Introduce each panel member at the start and make it clear who is chairing the panel. Panel members should cover all of the schedule of questions agreed beforehand, but may ask supplementary questions for clarification. This is an opportunity to really get to know a candidate, so ask questions and query their answers if you feel you need to.</li> <li>• Sum up the interview by repeating the key facts about the post – salary etc and the timeline for decision making, giving the candidate the opportunity to raise any concerns or questions.</li> <li>• Again, use a scoring grid against each question asked, with room for insights and personal impressions to be recorded.</li> <li>• Ensure time between each candidate to make these notes immediately.</li> <li>• You may want to supplement the panel interview with an exercise or task for the candidate to complete before or after their time with the panel.</li> </ul>
<b>Their notice period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can ask about a candidate's notice period in their current job either on the application form or in the interview, if this is material to your decision (i.e. if you are in a particular hurry to appoint).</li> <li>• People can often negotiate on their formally agreed notice period for an earlier start date – ask about this if it is important to you. Never approach a candidate's employer about this or any other aspect of their application without their permission. Don't apply pressure – conscientious people usually want to wind up the post they are leaving to make it ship shape and without loose ends – an attitude you may want them to apply when working for you.</li> </ul>
<b>Making an offer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can make an offer <i>subject to satisfactory references</i> . A phone call to the preferred candidate to advise them you will be making an offer is fine – this also allows them to consider their acceptance (e.g. salary level, start date etc) that will influence their final acceptance. Prepare for negotiation in advance, by agreeing as a committee what you parameters are.</li> <li>• Remember, if the references are not fully satisfactory (i.e. fail to persuade you that the candidate has all the skills, experience and qualities you need) you are not obliged to offer the candidate the job.</li> <li>• You can also ask the candidate if they are happy for you to verify details of previous employment by contacting employers and asking for their confirmation of when the candidate worked there. Employers may want written confirmation of the candidate's permission before disclosing information.</li> </ul>





<b>Unsuccessful candidates</b>	Offer feedback to unsuccessful candidates (when the candidate is ready to hear it, which is not necessarily immediately on hearing the bad news) and follow up with a formal letter of rejection and thanks for their application and effort.
<b>Proving a written statement of employment</b>	<p>Within two months of their start date, employees must be provided with a written statement which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Names of employer and employee.</li> <li>• Date the employment started.</li> <li>• Job title and description of main duties.</li> <li>• Place of work.</li> <li>• Pay rate and how often paid.</li> <li>• Hours of work.</li> <li>• Holiday entitlement (days and pay).</li> <li>• Date the employment will end (unless the employment is permanent).</li> <li>• Notice periods.</li> <li>• Sick pay and pension arrangements.</li> <li>• Grievance and disciplinary procedures.</li> <li>• Details of any collective agreement which affect the employees.</li> </ul> <p>The statement can refer to other documents rather than going through everything in detail (e.g. other policies such as disciplinary and grievance procedures) but these must be available and accessible to employees.</p>
<b>Induction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A well designed induction process can start the whole employee/employer relationship on the right footing.</li> <li>• A good induction might also include planned visits to local partner organisations, advance scheduled meetings with key individuals such as local elected members etc, and getting these into people’s diaries as soon as a start date is confirmed can give the appointee a good head start.</li> </ul>
<b>Probationary period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many organisations offer full appointment subject to a satisfactorily completed probationary period. If your appointment is for more than a year, this is well worth considering.</li> <li>• The probationary period has to be a reasonable period of time, to get past the ‘settling in’ period everyone has in a new job.</li> <li>• For this to be used effectively, clear objectives for the probationary period have to be in place, and the organisation has to be confident in its own management, supervision and appraisal processes by which it will assess whether a probationer will finally be offered the full contract, and justify any decision not to offer it.</li> </ul>



## Employment law

Legal Requirements	Key points
<b>Written statement</b>	See Recruitment section; must be given to employee within two months of appointment.
<b>Working hours</b>	The legal maximum working week is 48 hours, averaged over a 17 week period, unless employees sign a written agreement waiving this.
<b>Leave</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The legal minimum annual leave is 4.8 weeks pro rata.</li> <li>• Both male and female employees can take different types of time off for the birth and care of their children.</li> <li>• Birth or adoption entitles each parent or carer to 13 weeks' unpaid leave during the early years of a child's life.</li> <li>• Mothers have a right to ordinary and additional maternity leave, regardless of length of service.</li> <li>• Fathers (or those with responsibility for bringing up children) who have worked for you continuously for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the baby is due can take up to two weeks' paid paternity leave.</li> <li>• One member of a couple who adopts a child can take up to 39 weeks' paid ordinary adoption leave and 13 weeks' unpaid additional adoption leave, if they have worked for you continuously for at least 26 weeks by the time the child is matched.</li> <li>• All employees are entitled to dependant care leave.</li> </ul> <p>Workers can take 'reasonable', unpaid time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependant.</p>
<b>Flexibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An employee who is a parent or carer with a child under six or a disabled child under 18, or a carer of a dependent adult, has the right to make a request for flexible working.</li> </ul> <p>You must consider the request and can only refuse an application if there is a 'clear business reason'.</p>
<b>Sickness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees are entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP), usually after four or more days' sickness.</li> <li>• SSP is the minimum level of payment you must make to any qualifying employee. It is payable for up to 28 weeks for any single period of sickness.</li> <li>• Employees qualify when they earn over the NI minimum threshold (£90 a week)</li> <li>• If you want to pay higher than the statutory minimum, you can offset your payments against the SSP you would have had to pay.</li> </ul> <p>You can get money back from HMRC if SSP payments exceed a certain level, and reclaim in full if it is more than 13 per cent of your gross NI contributions in any month.</p> <p>Your terms and conditions can specify when an employee should let you know they are too ill for work, who to contact, and when to send in self certification or a doctor's line.</p>



<p><b>Maternity</b></p>	<p>During pregnancy and after a birth, a woman can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have paid time off for ante-natal care.</li> <li>• Take 26 weeks' maternity leave, in which all her contractual rights (except pay) continue.</li> <li>• Receive statutory maternity pay (SMP), if she has completed 26 weeks' employment for you by the end of the 15th week before her 'due date'</li> <li>• Be paid SMP for 39 weeks (some of this may be deductible from employer's NI contributions)</li> <li>• Claim maternity allowance if she is ineligible for SMP (from Job Centre Plus)</li> <li>• Take 26 weeks' additional maternity leave, 13 of which will be unpaid.</li> </ul> <p>Women can claim unfair dismissal, if she is dismissed for any reason to do with the pregnancy or childbirth. You must give written reasons for the dismissal, without having to be asked.</p> <p>It is illegal to let a woman return to work within two weeks of childbirth (or within four weeks, if the work is in a factory).</p>
<p><b>Dismissal</b></p>	<p>If you need to dismiss anyone for any reason, the employee is entitled to a reasonable period of notice, at minimum one week after one month's employment, and after one year and extra week per year, up to a maximum of 12 weeks after 12 years' employment.</p> <p>The employee is usually entitled to normal pay and benefits during the notice period.</p> <p>Employees who are dismissed may try to make claims for different types of dismissal:</p> <p><b>Wrongful dismissal</b>-dismissing employees without the right notice.</p> <p><b>Constructive dismissal</b> - when an employer breaches any important terms of the contract (e.g. reducing their pay or changes that affect how they go about their day to day work), or tells the employee to resign.</p> <p><b>Unfair dismissal</b> - dismissing an employee (even a part-timer) with one year's continuous service without a fair reason and reasonable treatment. Failing to provide an appeals procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You must follow your disciplinary procedure which should incorporate the statutory dismissal procedure and includes appropriate verbal and written warnings.</li> <li>• An employee failing to pursue an internal appeal may not be able to proceed with a case.</li> <li>• An employee can ask a tribunal to order re-employment or award compensation. The basic award is £9,900 (depending on age and length of service) and compensation for financial loss up to a maximum of £63,000.</li> </ul> <p>Where possible, seek professional advice before dismissing an employee.</p>





<b>Employees leaving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If an employee chooses to leave, you can usually require him or her to work out the full notice period. If the employee refuses, he or she is not entitled to be paid for it.</li> <li>• If you want the employee to stop work immediately, or before the notice period ends, you must still pay what would have been earned during the notice period.</li> <li>• If you both agree that the employment should end straight away, no further payment needs to be made.</li> <li>• There is usually nothing to gain from sending an employee to a new employer with a bad ending. Your ex-employees can be the best, or worst ambassadors for your organisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Payment</b>	<p>Observe the minimum wage (but aspire to better!)</p> <p>Give every employee a pay statement showing gross pay, deductions (NI and PAYE) and net pay.</p>
<b>Transfer / TUPE</b>	<p>If your organisation merges with another, your employee's existing terms and conditions must be respected.</p>
<b>PAYE and NI</b>	<p>Making PAYE and NI deductions and payments is not complicated and HMRC provide everything that is needed for a person of average literacy and numeracy to do the job without special training. Nevertheless it gets easier the more you do it, so having the same person responsible for doing it monthly is a good idea.</p> <p>HMRC do provide training and in spite of the tax man being regarded as a bit of a spoilsport, they are actually very helpful on the phone. Make sure you have your account number handy when calling. They key to a relaxed end-of-year is to maintain your tax/NI recording in good order.</p>
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>Tax exempt and taxable benefits are described in mind-boggling detail at <a href="http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/guidance/480.pdf">http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/guidance/480.pdf</a>.</p> <p>Key benefits subject to further tax include cars used for personal use as well as work use (but not cars for 'company use' only or pooled cars); mileage expenses paid at a rate over 40p a mile for the first 10,000 miles or over 25p per mile thereafter;</p> <p>Key benefits which are tax exempt include the provision of a mobile phone (whereas contributing to someone's personal phone bill is taxable) and Blackberry; and, we quote HMRC, "<i>benefits of a trivial nature (for example a seasonal gift of a Christmas turkey or an ordinary bottle or two of wine) should not be classed as a [taxable] benefit, but anything more lavish in quality or quantity remains chargeable</i>".</p>
<b>Pension</b>	<p>If an organisation has five or more employees, it must provide a stakeholder pension scheme, to which it can make a voluntary contribution. If all employees opt for the organisation to pay a minimum 3% contribution into their own personal pension, then a stakeholder scheme is not required.</p> <p><a href="http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk">www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk</a> lists approved stakeholder schemes. <a href="http://www.thepensionstrust.org.uk">www.thepensionstrust.org.uk</a> provides an occupational pensions scheme for the third sector.</p> <p>It may be good practice to consider matching the average public sector contribution (6%) if an organisation can afford this (cost it into your funding proposals), regardless of the number of employees.</p>





**While employing people is the cue for a recovery cafe to hand over lots of the tasks it has struggled to do by relying on volunteers, it is the start of a major commitment. Things to prepare for include:**

A designated key contact who will meet the employee regularly (e.g. monthly)

A system of approving workplans and reports (e.g. a regular agenda item for the committee or delegated to the key contact)

A training/development plan, drawn up with the employee and reviewed regularly, to ensure the employee receives training or experiences (e.g. visiting another recovery cafe to learn from it) to enable him/her to do the job well (include a reasonable training budget in any staff costs you apply to funders for)

A system of countersigning and clear delegated authority (e.g. letters, cheques, orders) that will work without holding up the employee's progress

An emergency contact for the employee to use for immediate support or assistance, and a person who will contact the employee's personal emergency contacts if he/she is taken ill or in an accident while at work

An appraisal system – these need not be a major upheaval. Simply diary a series of meetings (e.g. annually), in which a committee member formally reviews progress and completion of workplans/training plans, and provides feedback (gained from stakeholders) to the employee, on their work. Record the meeting and refer back to previous records to chart progress over years. An employee can appraise other employees they manage.

Consider external support. Sometimes an employee of another organisation with more experience can be asked to mentor or meet with your employee; some organisations pay for external coaching. You might consider the investment worthwhile if you are paying a significant salary.

### **Employee terms and conditions**

The Employee Terms and Conditions go hand in hand with the written statement of employment and other relevant policies.

Employee Terms and Conditions should outline all of the ways in which the employing organisation intends to look after, support and develop staff, as well as how it will respond if things go wrong. It will describe how pay, holiday and other entitlements increase with time served (if they do).

### **Discipline and grievance**

This should outline how the recovery cafe will respond to and investigate complaints from stakeholders or staff. Bear in mind the focus of the complaints may be the employees or committee as employers. It should describe the processes of verbal and written warnings for any less serious complaints which are upheld, or suspension and dismissal for any serious complaints which are upheld. Again, principles of fairness and transparency (declarations of interests and notes of all discussions and decisions) are paramount. Your policy can outline under what circumstances the recovery cafe or staff might seek outside assistance, and mention the role of the charity regulator and Companies House as bodies which may investigate corporate irregularities within the recovery cafe (if you are registered with them).

### **Short term contracts**

The reality is that most recovery cafes will employ people on short term or fixed term contracts. High staff turnover can have an impact on small organisations, but not preparing for the departure of a member of paid staff can leave a muddle which other staff or committee members will then have to sort out.



- Avoid a 'wait and see' attitude by which employees and employer hope that more funding will materialise in time to extend a contract.
- In the 'final third' of any contract period, focus employer/staff meetings on completing tasks or adjusting workplans to prioritise the main tasks that should be completed.
- Make sure that time is set aside to put files in order, pull together everything to make it fully accessible and form a retrievable history of the piece of work. This will include asking the employee to download and print any work-related emails that need to be filed, and remove electronic files from their personal computer to an organisation computer. Any personal and password protected files on the organisation's computer should also be removed. This process can take quite some time if an employee has been in post for a year or more.
- Reclaiming equipment given to staff in the course of their work means it remains in circulation for the community to use.

### **Redundancy entitlement**

Employees are entitled to a redundancy payment if their period of continuous employment has lasted longer than two years, even where this was on a fixed term contract. At the time of writing this amounts to 1 weeks' pay per year of service for 22-41 year olds and 1.5 weeks' pay per year of service for people over 41. You should calculate this amount and add it to your employers' costs in funding proposals for posts of more than two years (if it will not be available from your own reserves).

People who have opted for the 'self employment route' are not usually entitled to a redundancy payment.

### **References**

It is fair to prepare a reference for all employees who leave your employment. You need not discuss the content with them but you can also compile it with them as part of an 'exit interview' if you wish. Preparing this before they leave, and keeping it on file, allows their key contact to give accurate details. The danger of leaving it until a future reference request appears is that people may have moved on or forgotten details that some future employers may ask for (e.g. days taken as sick leave, point on salary scale).

### **Fixed term contracts**

Employees may be appointed on fixed term contracts if your funding is short term. Remember these points:

- Employees on fixed term contracts over two years are still entitled to redundancy payment.
- A series of short term contracts which run end to start count as continuous service for redundancy entitlement.
- If fixed term contracts have run continuously for more than four years, then the contract that takes them beyond a four year period has to be regarded as a permanent contract.
- Employees on a fixed term contract cannot be treated less favourably than employees on a permanent contract. For example, you cannot decide to provide less training or development opportunities for someone on a fixed term contract than a permanent employee in a comparable role would be given.
- In terms of equally favouring fixed term employees, any conditions of service which improve with length of service (e.g. increased holiday entitlement with each year in service) should be provided to fixed term employees.

## The Serenity Cafe experience of employing people

### 1. Short term and part-time

- The first paid roles the Serenity Cafe established were very part-time and short term. The main focus has been volunteer development and helping to establish the first cafe-club events.
- We found that in the early days getting recovery community engagement, having someone in recovery was really useful, people in recovery could use networks and word of mouth in ways that people not in recovery found inaccessible.
- It has always been difficult to really develop pieces of work using very part-time roles – things can become 'bitty' unless these different pieces of work are pulled together to bring a sense of teamwork with other workers and volunteers
- It would not have been possible to go forward with these short term and part-time paid staff unless Comas provided the supervision, support and guidance for staff. We are not yet at the stage where the steering group is trained and organised to provide this. We are now starting to receive regular work reports from staff at steering group meetings to increase our management of their roles.
- Steering group members have always been fully involved in shortlisting and interviewing.
- In the summer of 2010 we appointed our first full time member of staff in a one-year post. When developing the person specification we decided that being in recovery or personal experience of recovery was a 'desirable' criteria, rather than an essential criteria.

### 2. From volunteer to paid staff

- Because we are using a community development approach to developing the recovery cafe, we fully expect that as we build the capacity of individuals and their skills and experience increase, they will be ready for employment and will apply when any vacancies arise.
- We have had challenging experiences. People involved with the steering group have applied for some roles and have not responded well to not being selected, others have applied and used it as a learning experience on how to present themselves in an application.
- We have designated one post as an apprenticeship, when a volunteer applied for a part-time role but we felt she might need a bit of additional support while getting to grips with the role. We asked an experienced professional to guide her in an apprenticeship for a limited period, after which she will become a full member of staff. This was mainly because the grant available was too small to appoint a co-worker and Comas did not have the capacity for someone to provide close supervision.
- We have been able to offer payment to some volunteers for specific tasks, such as running focus groups and transcribing the recordings, when funding has become available for these activities.

### 3. Still to find out

- As our ability to attract small grants is increasing, we are getting more opportunities to take on a part-time member of staff to co-ordinate some activities. Sometimes, volunteers have already started activities, and will get support from a paid worker to take them even further. We have yet to find out what impact this might have on volunteering and whether jealousies will occur.
- The welfare reforms will have an impact on many of our volunteers who are already being encouraged towards work and off benefits. We aspire to an hourly rate above minimum wage, and this may take people on Incapacity Benefit above the 'permitted work' threshold of under 16 hours and £95 a week. We will just have to remain solution focused, if we want our recovery cafe to be part of the solution into work, for people in recovery.

### **Network participants' comments and ideas**

- Provide coaching session on employability, on interview skills and how to take the rejections
- Identify job prospects outside the community / cafe
- Provide accurate person specifications



## Other documents we are will to share with developing recovery communities.

1. Serenity Cafe market research questionnaire
2. Serenity Cafe volunteer handbook
3. Serenity Cafe volunteer plan and review
4. Serenity Cafe policy handbook

## Network event participants

(Sorry to those we have missed off who did attend, or those we have listed who cancelled)

Kerry Marina	Farrar Shaw	Recovery community leader Circle Project Manager	Cafe Hub, Lancashire Circle 'FABI'	<a href="mailto:cafehub@live.co.uk">cafehub@live.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:marina.shaw@circlescotland.org">marina.shaw@circlescotland.org</a>
Diane	Lee	Recovery Development Worker	Crew, Edinburgh	<a href="mailto:Diane@crew2000.org.uk">Diane@crew2000.org.uk</a>
Julie	Heslin	Project Worker	C.A.R.S (Community Addictions Recovery Service), Leith	<a href="mailto:julieheslin@tpsthelinks.co.uk">julieheslin@tpsthelinks.co.uk</a>
Stacy	Morgan	Project/Recovery Worker	Turning Point Scotland, Edinburgh	<a href="mailto:stacy@tpsleith.co.uk">stacy@tpsleith.co.uk</a>
Linda	Swift	Administration Manager	Scottish Drugs Recovery Consortium, Glasgow	<a href="mailto:linda.swift@sdrconsortium.org">linda.swift@sdrconsortium.org</a>
Dougie	Paterson	Director of the Scottish Drugs Recovery Consortium	Scottish Drugs Recovery Consortium, Glasgow	<a href="mailto:dougie.paterson@sdrconsortium.org">dougie.paterson@sdrconsortium.org</a>
Heather	McLaughlin	Administration Assistant of the SDRC	Scottish Drugs Recovery Consortium, Glasgow	<a href="mailto:heather.mclaughlin@sdrconsortium.org">heather.mclaughlin@sdrconsortium.org</a>
Wilma	Easton	Development Officer	Edinburgh Council Addictions Social Work Department	<a href="mailto:wilma.easton@edinburgh.gov.uk">wilma.easton@edinburgh.gov.uk</a>
Bridie Ian	MacKenzie MacArthur	Counselling supervisor Trustee	Crew, Edinburgh Second Chance, Glasgow	<a href="mailto:bridie.mckenzie@btinternet.com">bridie.mckenzie@btinternet.com</a> <a href="mailto:iansmacarthur@yahoo.co.uk">iansmacarthur@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Colette	Garsyth	Senior Practitioner	Oasis night shelter, Blackpool	<a href="mailto:colette.garsyth@cri.org.uk">colette.garsyth@cri.org.uk</a>
Linda	Raddon	Volunteer/peer mentor coordinator	Oasis night shelter, Blackpool	<a href="mailto:linda.raddon@cri.org.uk">linda.raddon@cri.org.uk</a>
Kevin	McDaid	Service user (Blackpool service user group)	Oasis night shelter, Blackpool	<a href="mailto:Kevin.bsug@googlemail.com">Kevin.bsug@googlemail.com</a>
Graeme	Richards	Family Support Worker	Circle, West Lothian/Edinburgh	<a href="mailto:graeme.richards@circlescotland.org">graeme.richards@circlescotland.org</a>
Elizabeth	Watson	Lead Occupational Therapist Alcohol Problems Service	NHS Lothian, Edinburgh	<a href="mailto:Elizabeth.Watson@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk">Elizabeth.Watson@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk</a>
John	Alderson	Community activist/ volunteer	Alcoholics Anonymous, Newcastle Upon Tyne	<a href="mailto:mrjohn.alderson@gmail.com">mrjohn.alderson@gmail.com</a>
John Carolyn	White McKerracher	Prison educator	Renfrewshire Drug Service Carnegie College	<a href="mailto:johnwhite@renfrewshire.gov.uk">johnwhite@renfrewshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:Carolyn.McKerracher@sps.pnn.gov.uk">Carolyn.McKerracher@sps.pnn.gov.uk</a>
Lesley	Glenn	Volunteer Development Worker	Reachout With Arts in Mind, Alloa	
Cathy	Reid		Pheonix	N/A
Lisa Duncan	Johnstone Ellis	Recovery Worker	The Castle Project	<a href="mailto:lisa@castleproject.org.uk">lisa@castleproject.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:duncanjamesellis@btinternet.com">duncanjamesellis@btinternet.com</a>
Kelly Kane	Cunningham Duffy	Project Worker Serenity Cafe volunteer	Access To Industry - Transition	<a href="mailto:Kelly@accesstoindustry.co.uk">Kelly@accesstoindustry.co.uk</a>
Davy	Tomlins	Serenity Cafe volunteer		
Phil	Rainford	Serenity Cafe volunteer		
Jade	O'Donnell	Serenity Cafe volunteer		





Ruth	Campbell	Comas
John	Arthur	Serenity Cafe volunteer
Bruce	Budge	Serenity Cafe volunteer
John	Glynn	Serenity Cafe volunteer
Karen	McLean	Serenity Cafe Women's Group worker
Sally	Sorrie	Comas
Alina	Pripis	Serenity Cafe Recovery Coaching Development Worker
Jim	MacDonald	Serenity Cafe volunteer