MANCHESTER REFUGEE SUPPORT NETWORK

Annual Report 2021
Shared Routes Project

Reporting period: Project Year 3
(8/01/2021 - 07/01/2022)

National Lottery Community Fund

Content

I. Summary 1
II. Training Peer Navigators 1
III. Peer Navigator Volunteering 3
Brief case studies 4
IV. Supporting Peer Navigators 7
V. Key learning for the year 7
VI. Equality Monitoring Data 8
VII. Financial Report 9

I. Summary of the year

By the end of 2021 we completed another successful year of our project Shared Routes. We managed to exceed our target of delivering training to clients. As in the previous years clients expressed how much they benefitted from the training by learning new important things, for example, how to apply for a volunteer role and how to make sure to have a successful start into volunteering. Many peer navigators also said that even though they have been living in the UK for a couple of years in the training they learnt many new things about communication and British culture at work that helped them both in their daily life and in their volunteer role. We created an open and welcoming environment in the training and peer navigators reported that this helped them much to gain more confidence.
We were able to reach a wide range of people. This was possible as we developed several new partnerships, e.g. with the ESOL coordinator of Tameside Council who referred a number of people to us. Other new partners are among others Tameside NHS, Citizens Advice Tameside, Blue Sci (a community wellbeing centre), Multicultural women's group and Growing Togetherness (a mental health and gardening project in Salford).
We are proud that we could also reach a wide range of organisations that hosted our peer navigators as volunteers (see table p. 3.
2021 was still impacted by Covid regulations and organisations took longer to reopen their services and hosting volunteers. This slightly impacted on the number of peer navigators we supported into volunteering as suitable roles were limited and after a while peer navigators moved on to work or education.

Alternative Services
Because of Covid regulations limiting volunteer opportunities we had decided last year in consultation with our peer navigators to offer a mental health awareness session. We could engage a former peer navigator who is a certified mindfulness trainer to offer these sessions and teach breathing and mindfulness techniques. This was very much embraced by our clients. (The session had 10 participants). In consultation with our clients we also offered online fitness sessions as alternative services. One of our staff members is a certified sport coach who designed the sessions and engaged peer navigators as volunteers to deliver them. This was a huge success. 15 people participated in 3 sessions.
It is important to us to connect peer navigators locally. So we advertised offers of various local activities as for example sport activities, wellbeing sessions, ESOL classes, free training. This information was very welcomed.
Involvement of Peer Navigators
We continued to involve our peer navigators in every stage of the project. We give out feedback forms after every training and at the completion of a training we hold focus group and did incorporate this feedback into our work and made changes if appropriate. We also consulted with peer navigators about which alternative services would they prefer. Through all these measures we ensured that we work client-centered.





Online Fitness Sessions with trainer and 2 PNs as volunteers.

II. Training Peer Navigators

Indicator	Target change	Actual change	Comment
Outcome 1			
Increase in volunteering in local organisations by PNs			
Successful completion of PN training	72	74	completion of online training
Outcome 2			
PN have increased confidence, skills and understanding of how UK agencies and communities function			
Improved skills development	72	74	
Improved knowledge and understanding of UK agencies and communities	72	74	
Improved confidence	72	61	Those PNs who did not report an increase in confidence had reported being confident prior to the training, so this indicator was not relevant to them. 21 PNs experienced an increase in confidence of at least 2 levels (from 5 levels).

Note: 59 evaluation questionnaires were received from the total group of 74 peer navigators. We have estimated our 'actual change' figures by extrapolation of the evaluation responses received to cover 74 people.

Shared Routes Training: Quotes from PNs

Hassan, volunteering at a vaccination centre

"Thank you very much for your effort. We learnt much. Things about the UK and local people. The subjects were selected very well. All subjects are useful for us. The lecturers were very enthusiastic, very good and patient. The lessons were interactive all the time. We always had enough opportunity to share our opinion. It was very good. The roles plays were also very good."

Leila, volunteering at Holy Trinity Community Centre

“Normally I don't take part in the class discussion but this time I felt free to discuss or talk. This has helped me a lot and I gained so much confidence.”

Anita, working at a shop

"I learnt so much during this training, about British culture and communication at the work place and this will help me when I’m looking for a job and in my daily life as well. The training kept me busy and inspired me to take up volunteering. Thank you so much for the opportunity you offered us."

Mohamed, volunteering at Oxfam

"All topics in this course were very important because we have to know because we need to be fit to meet with people and know the new cultures. We need to know how the people are doing things and how to speak with them. That is very important to us. I think all the sessions fit perfectly and are very useful. In this country volunteering is so common, not like on our countries and we learnt how to find a volunteer role and how we can benefit from volunteering. These are new things and new ideas.
It is also very important that we met in the course so many people from different countries."

Securing a Job

We’re very happy and proud that two PNs were able to secure a job through our training.

Michelle, found a job in social care with help of Shared Routes Training:

"I want to thank you for the time and your support during the training. I benefitted so much and learnt how to apply for a job or volunteer role and how to be confident. Yes, and applied for a job two week ago and they called me for interview and they gave me the job because I followed your instructions. That’s why I would like thank you because your training was very very beneficial for me. Thank you!"

Linda, working at a restaurant

"I learnt about the English culture, for example how to be polite and that was really important for me because my culture is different. And also I understood better my abilities and skills, what I’m good at because you asked me about these."

Reehan, in education

"I learnt also some things that I didn’t know about, for example I know now where to find a volunteer role and how to go about applying for a volunteer job. And I learnt about socializing and now I can communicate with others well."

III. Peer Navigator Volunteering

Indicator	Target change	Actual change	Comment
Outcome 1 **Increase in volunteering in local organisations by PNs**			
PNs and host organisations report min. 3 months successful volunteering in local organisations across sectors	60	46	Large parts of 2021 were still impacted by Covid-19 regulations which led to late reopening of many services and limited volunteer roles. All this impacted on the numbers supported into volunteering. 7 PNs are in work, 8 PNs in education and 5 PNs wait for a childcare place.
Volunteering of PNs in MRSN and RCOs, 4 other agencies per year	8 volunteers 4 agencies	15 volunteers 6 agencies	Agencies: MRSN (various projects, see table below), PRIDES, WAST, SHEWEB, River Manchester, Experts by Experience

28 host organisations, 46 volunteers (2 PNs volunteer in 2 roles)

Name of organisation	No of PNs
Emerge/Fareshare	3
Manchester Mind	1
One Digital UK	1
Marshalls-Manchester	1
Health&Care Comissioning	
MRSN - Advice	2
MRSN - Asylum Guide	2
MRSN- Shared Routes	4
PRIDES	3
Homestart	1
Oxfam	1
British Heart Foundation	2
British Red Cross	3
Food Club	3
Salvation Army	1
St. Bert's Church	1
The Friends of Mesnes Park	1
Living Creative	1
City of Sanctuary	2
North West Air Ambulance	1
WAST	1
River Manchester	1
SHEWEB	1
Age UK	3
Holy Trinity Community Centre	1
Rainbow Haven	2
Experts by Experience	1
Mustard Tree	2
Cornerstone	1
Infinity Initiatives	1

Volunteering: Brief Case Studies



Paul, volunteering at Rainbow Haven

"When I came here first I didn't know anyone and that was hard.. Then I started the Shared Routes training and after that volunteering at Rainbow Haven. This was so good for me. I connected with people in the training and I'm so happy that you found a volunteer role for me. Volunteering at Rainbow Haven is amazing for me. Everyone is very welcoming. I gained so many valuable experience here. Right now I volunteer in the kitchen department and help the chef. We're preparing different foods on different days. The chef is a very good chef, all the time smiling and hard working. And there are two mothers volunteering with me in kitchen. They are very friendly and hard-working. It's very good for me to speak to different people to improve my English. Volunteering is very good for me. There are so many benefits."

Kati, Activities and Volunteer Coordinator Rainbow Haven:

"Paul has been volunteering with us in the kitchen for a few months now, and we really appreciate the time he is able to give us! When he is here he is always helpful, and our chef, speaks highly of him, saying he works hard, which is high praise from her! Paul has a positive attitude and gets on well as part of the team – we are glad to have him with us!"



Gloria, volunteering with North West Air Ambulance

"Dear Shared Routes team,
You are the best. Thank you so much for finding the volunteer placement with North West Air Ambulance. I'm enjoying my volunteering services with them so much. I like the team, I love my manager. It's been fun. Thank you for brightening my life. I'm happy to be active, thank you very much."

Lisa, Manager North West Air Ambulance Charity

"Gloria is a hard working and determined volunteer. She has helped so much, and her confidence is growing every time I see her. She has completed all the training modules and her work ethic is great. She is a valued member of the team and has fitted in really well. We just can't run the shops without volunteers and for her to give her time to the charity is so valuable. Gloria is a lovely lady who has made a big difference within the shop. She is kind and very considerate and is willing to learn. She is a great volunteer with a heart of gold and we love that fact she chose the NWAA to help with her journey."



Amir, volunteering at St. Bert's Church

"The church where I volunteer is nearby my house and I enjoy very much volunteering there. I help with providing people in need with food parcels and I'm happy that this way I can help people. The Shared Routes training helped me to understand everything around volunteering. And the volunteering helped me a lot. It kept me busy, I meet people and that is so much better than staying home depressed thinking about my situation as a refused asylum seeker."

Carole, volunteer coordinator St. Bert's Church

"Amir has worked with us as a volunteer since the end of August 2021. He helps us every Wednesday morning each week at our Pop-up Café and Grab and Go food distribution scheme. Since then, Amir has proved himself to be 100% reliable and trustworthy. He is the first of the volunteers to arrive and is often waiting for us to open up at 8.30am. He is eager to help and will do any task asked of him. He uses his initiative and doesn't wait to be told what to do, he is able to step in and see what needs doing, I would say that he is a self-starter and has a lot of potential. Amir is very polite and comes across as a kind and considerate individual. The regular visitors to our café give him a warm welcome. He is interested in how others are doing and will ask people how they are when he knows they have had difficulties. He strikes me as a person who wants to make the best of his circumstances and is willing to make the effort necessary to improve his skills and will make the most of opportunities open to him.
Amir has proved to be a valued and reliable volunteer and we have found his help an important part of our volunteer team."



Salem, volunteering at PRIDES

"Through the Shared Routes training I felt more confident about applying for volunteering work. Also, I got to know more about my local neighbourhood and I started going out to my local library and the community centre.
After the training I had good information about Basic office administration and so I applied for a volunteer placement with the help of the Shared Routes team.
I got a volunteering placement with PRIDES (Pakistani Refugees Integration Development Education Support) with their Caring Sharing Food Project from April 2021 until July 2021.
My Role was in administration and registration of all people who get weekly food services. I very much enjoyed my voluntary work at Prides. The management was very supportive and gave a good induction as well as guidance through the job.
I'm very thankful to the Shared Routes Project to specially look after disable people like me, understand my needs and help people like me to participate in volunteering and helping in the community."



Anna, volunteering at Homestart



"In the UK I saw a lot of people volunteering and so I wanted to do it as well. I heard from one teacher at college about the Shared Routes training and I joined. I liked the training because it summarizes everything well what you need to know when you want to volunteer. It was very interesting for me. For example, at the British Culture & Communciation workshop I learnt how to be polite. That was very important because in my country people have a different understanding of what is polite. Also, I learnt for instance how to apply for a volunteer role and this helped me to successfully apply for volunteering with Homestart. At Homestart I visit families with young children who need help and check if they are ok. It is a very responsible job but I like to help people and I like children. It is a very rewarding job because the families are very thankful and wonderful. Now because I volunteer I am more busy than before and I socialize more. I also got more confidence because I do an important job and help families. All in all the volunteering also helps with my mental health and if I have improved my English more I would like to study early years care."

Nawal, volunteering at Food Club

"I started to look for volunteering but I couldn't find anything. Then my friend told me about the Shared Routes project and I joined. I'm very grateful to the Shared Routes team to offer the training. It was very helpful to me. There were many things in the training that I didn't know about but now I'm feeling more confident because I got an idea of what to do when I work or volunteer. After I finished the workshops, the Shared Routes team helped me to find a volunteer placement with food club. That was really great. There are so many benefits to me volunteering. I improve my language, improved my communication, met new people and made friends and other things.
And I could contribute so much to the food club. One day, a woman came who came from Syria and arrived new in the UK and she couldn't speak English very well. She needed help and because we both speak Arabic I translated for her. The food club is linked with the nursery and the woman needed childcare for her children. So I translated for her with our manager so they have been able to help her with childcare. I was very happy that we could solve her problem.
After I do this volunteering I really found more opportunities to get a paid job because I haven't had any work experience before. I'm now over 5 months volunteering with food club and this helps me for my CV and to find work."

Susan, Volunteer Coordinator at Food Club

"Nawal is of much help at our food club. She is friendly and reliable and were able to interpret for us which was really helpful. We are glad to have her as our volunteer."

IV. Supporting PNs

Indicator	Target change	Actual change	Comment
Outcome 4 **Increased engagement of PN in local community**			
Cultural awareness of UK and other RAS cultures	60	74	
Choices and opportunities for engaging in society	60	74	

V. Key learning for the year

1. Even peer navigators who have lived a number of years in the UK benefitted exceptionally from our workshops - particularly important was the workshop British Culture & Communication at work that taught them communication skills they did not know before.

2. Peer navigators increased their confidence through our training.

3. Our flexibility and inclusion of peer navigators in all stages of the project helped us to work client-centred and offer popular alternative services as for example online fitness sessions.

VI. Equality Monitoring Data

Gender	%
Female	62%
Male	38%
Prefer not to say	0%

Age	%
18-24	12%
25-34	41%
35-44	23%
44-54	12%
55-64	11%
65+	0%
Prefer not to say	0%

Ethnicity

Black/African/Caribbean/Black UK	%
African	33%
Caribbean	0%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	5%

Asian	%
Indian	0%
Pakistani	9%
Bangladeshi	2%
Chinese	5%
Any other Asian background	5%

Other ethnic group	%
Arab	12%
Any other ethnic group	2%
Prefer not to say	10%

Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	%
White and Asian	1%
White and Black African	2%
White and Black Caribbean	1%
Any other mixed background	1%

White	%
English/Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish/UK	0%
Irish	0%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0%
Any other White background	10%

Disability	%
Disabled	11%
Not disabled	75%
Prefer not to say	14%

Sexual orientation	%
Heterosexual/Straight	65%
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual	6%
Prefer not to say	28%

Caring responsibilities	%
Caring responsibility	37%
No caring responsibility	54%
Prefer not to say	9%

Religion or belief	%
Christian	36%
Muslim	41%
Hindu	0%
Jewish	0%
Sikh	0%
Other religion	1%
No religion	4%
Prefer not to say	19%

*Note: Numbers are rounded and therefore might add up to more than 100%

VII. Financial Report

Funding from the National Lottery Community Fund			
Revenue	**Received**	**Spent**	**Difference**
Salaries, salaries, NI and pensions	£44,328.00	£45,791.32	£1,463.32
Training	£250.00	£245.00	£5.00
Travel	£150.00	£784.76	£634.76
Consultancy	£1,000.00	£1,200.00	£200.00
Access and travel volunteers	£4,000.00	£1,014.00	£2,986.00
Hospitality and event costs	£3,000.00	£955.00	£2,045.00
Total Revenue Costs	**£52,728.00**	**£49,990.08**	**£2,737.92**
Overhead Costs			
Staff	£12,240.00	£11,780.52	£459.48
Accommodation	£1,060.00	£0.00	£1,060.00
Utilities	£1,040.00	£1,040.00	£0.00
Venue hire	£800.00	£750.00	£50.00
Publicity	£400.00	£30.45	£369.55
Total overheads	**£15,540.00**	**£13,600.97**	**£1,939.03**
Capital Costs	**£0.00**		
Laptops	£0.00	£2,399.97	£2,399.97
Phones +phone plans	£0.00	£791.22	£791.22
Zoom	£0.00	£100.73	£100.73
Webcam	£0.00	£89.66	£89.66
Total Capital Costs	**£0.00**	**£3,381.58**	**£3,381.58**
Other Costs			
Childcare expenses	£0.00	£344.00	£344.00
Total Other Costs	£0.00	£344.00	£344.00
Total Project Costs	**£68,268.00**	**£67,316.63**	**£951.37**