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Anawim
Birmingham's Centre for Women

Insight, Inclusion, Impact

Women's Involvement Worker Toolkit: learning from experience at Anawim

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Front cover: View from the Library secret garden, Birmingham
https://unsplash.com/@dorianlesenechal

1. Introduction to the toolkit

Service user involvement has become an essential element for many organisations looking to meet the needs of their clients through including them as active participants in making decisions about aspects of the organisation that affect their life. Service user involvement involves partnership between the organisation and the service users to influence policy and improve service delivery. Developing this collaborative approach between service providers and service users in the development of service delivery, is seen to be crucial for any organisation which is looking to empower women (Ava and Agenda, 2017).

While there may be many benefits of service user involvement for both the organisation and the service users themselves (Ponce et al, 2014; Millar, et al, 2015), successfully engaging service users in these processes needs effective planning, management and review. One approach is to employ a Service User involvement Worker. This toolkit has been prepared to help organisations looking to support their clients through establishing a Service User Involvement Worker role, based on the experience of Anawim, a registered charity based in Birmingham that provides a range of support services to a client group of women who have a range of complex and often overlapping needs.

Anawim introduced the role of a Service User Involvement Worker in 2016 to support client engagement with the services provided, and aimed to ensure the women had a voice in how the Centre is run, and could influence the services provided to ensure their needs are being met. Women often engage with the multiple services at Anawim for a long period of time, sometimes over several years, and rely on the Centre for ongoing support. The role was entitled Women's Involvement Worker, to reflect that the service users at Anawim were all women. The purpose of the Women's Involvement Worker role was to "encourage, support and enable service users to take part in the life of Anawim and beyond into the community."[1] The role has evolved significantly over that time, and the organisation has gained a great deal of experience about the practicalities, positives and pitfalls of employing staff members in this role.

Aims of the Toolkit

- *To support organisations wanting to establish a Women's Involvement Worker role.*
- *To share the experience of how a Women's Involvement Worker can engage with the women and support them to have a voice and actively contribute to life within the organisation and beyond.*
- *To provide guidance and ideas about how to do service user involvement well.*

1.1 What is service user involvement?

Service user involvement has been adopted in different sectors over recent years, including health, mental health services and criminal justice. The understanding of what constitutes service user involvement, and the nature and extent of the involvement differs between sectors and between organisations within each sector; there is no consistent definition of service user involvement (Dalton et al, 2015).

There are many different ways that service users can become involved in an organisation, on a scale from being a passive receiver of services to being fully involved in senior level decision making. Service users at different stages of their journey through the organisation will fit into this model in different places; some will want to maintain a low level of participation, whereas others may want to develop a much greater level of involvement, and take on additional responsibilities within the organisation. This can be illustrated using the 'Ladder of Participation' (Arnstein, 1969) showing the different levels that service users can engage with service providers in service delivery (Table 1).

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[1] Taken from the Service User Involvement Worker job description, March 2017.

Table 1 Ladder of participation[2]'

Level of participation	Level of influence
Devolution	Final decision making is the responsibility of the service user community
Collaboration	Actively working in partnership with the service users to share decision making, with opportunity to directly influence outcomes
Involvement	Working directly with service users to ensure their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and included in considerations for decision making
Consultation	Obtaining feedback and opinions of groups and individual service users, but with limited influence on the final outcome
Information	Providing information about services and events that are happening, but with no opportunity to influence these

Whilst there are various definitions of service user involvement in the literature, Millar et al (2015) developed a definition of service user involvement for mental health services based on five main attributes:

1. Person centred approach
2. Informed decision making
3. Advocacy
4. Obtaining service user views and feedback
5. Working in partnership.

The definition of service user involvement adopted by Clinks in their guidance (2016) is aligned with the World Health Organisation definition of community participation:

> *"A process by which people are able to become actively and genuinely involved in defining the issues of concern to them; in making decisions about factors that affect their lives; in formulating and implementing polices; in planning, developing and delivering services, and in taking action to achieve change." (World Health Organisation, 2002)*

Benefits of service user involvement exist for service users themselves, the service provider, and wider society (Ponce et al, 2014; Millar, et al, 2015; Griffiths & Hancock-Johnson, 2017). The Service User Involvement Policy[3] developed by Women's Breakout, an umbrella organisation with a network of members who support women involved in the criminal justice system (which has recently merged with Clinks).

The main benefits of service user engagement, as specified by the policy, are:

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[2] Adapted from NHS resources for participation, based on work by Arnstein (1969)
(https://www.england.nhs.uk/participation/resources/ladder-of-engagement-2/)
[3] Service User Engagement Policy (2017) Women's Breakout (womensbreakout.org.uk/documents/)

- Increased self-esteem of those participating.
- Greater clarity around what can be delivered, and what service users can expect.
- Greater service user satisfaction.
- An improvement in community spirit and the benefits this can bring.
- Greater control by service users over their lives.
- Improved communication and a better understanding of each other's views.
- A service which is more responsive to individual needs and preferences.
- Development of service users' skills and experiences.

For service users to participate at the appropriate levels of the participation ladder and be able to engage in decision making and delivery of services, organisations need to consider the processes for enabling this. Developing a collaborative approach jointly between service providers and service users is considered to be crucial for any organisation which works to empower women (Ava and Agenda, 2017). One collaborative approach for organisations is for this is to employ a Service User Involvement Worker, who can focus on actively encouraging and facilitating participation by service users in service development and delivery. It is often the case that a Service User Involvement Worker will have had first-hand experience of being a service user themselves, and have a shared lived experience with those currently accessing services.

1.2   What is 'lived experience'?

People often talk about having 'lived experience', and the importance of involving people with lived experience in service development and delivery. This can be defined as meaning someone who has had personal experience of the issues being faced by service users, or has accessed the services being provided by a particular organisation. Staff or volunteers with lived experience of a particular issue or problem can then use this experience to offer support to others who are currently experiencing the same issues (Bradstreet, 2006).

Summary of definitions

Service user: *A person who is currently accessing services provided by an organisation.*

Service user involvement: *the process of actively including service users in planning, development and delivery of services (Revolving Doors Agency, 2016)*

Lived experience worker: *a person who is employed in a role that requires them to identify as being, or having been a service user*

Expert by experience: *someone who has a personal knowledge of what it is like to experience and live with a particular difficulty and to be a user of support services (Millar, 2015).*

Peer support: *people sharing knowledge, experience and practical help with each other (Nesta & National Voices, 2015)*

1.3 Principles of Peer support

Many organisations now involve people who have lived experience in peer support, having established a process for those with lived experience to help others going through a similar experience. The core principles of peer support, are outlined in box 3. These are adapted from peer support principles for mental health support services (Repper, 2013), and can be applied to wider contexts.

Core principles of peer support (adapted from Repper, 2013)

Mutual	Peer workers have an understanding of common challenges, and the confusion, loneliness, fear and hopelessness that can ensue.
Reciprocal	Peer relationships do not involve professional expertise, but a sharing and exploration of different world views and the generation of solutions together.
Non-directive	help people to recognise their own resources and seek their own solutions, rather than directing to the 'best' solution.
Recovery focused	Peer support engages in recovery focused relationships by: inspiring **hope**; supporting people to take back **control** of their personal challenges and define their own destiny; facilitating access to **opportunities** that the person values, enabling them to participate in roles, relationships and activities in their community.
Strengths based	Peer support involves a relationship where the person providing support is able to be with someone in their distress, whilst recognising possibilities grow and move forward through seeking out their qualities helping them take small steps forward.
Inclusive	Understanding the meaning of their experiences within the communities of which the person is a part. Someone who knows the language, values and nuances of those communities is better equipped to be more effective in helping others become a valued member of their community.
Progressive	Peer support is a shared journey of discovery, working together to learn new skills, develop new resources and reframe challenges as opportunities.
Safe	Negotiation of emotional safety for both parties can be achieved by discovering what makes each other feel unsafe, sharing rules of confidentiality, demonstrating compassion, authenticity and a non-judgemental attitude.

1.4   Anawim context

Anawim is a registered charity based in Birmingham that provides a range of support services to a client group of women who have a range of complex and often overlapping needs. The women supported by Anawim may have experienced domestic violence, mental health problems, have worked as sex workers, or have a history of offending behaviour. The Anawim centre acts as a 'one stop shop', providing a place where women can access the services from a wide range of agencies, with case workers offering support and direction to appropriate services for each of the women attending the Centre. Women attending Anawim can either self-refer, or are referred by partner agencies, such as the National Probation Service, or as part of the New Chance programme. A total of 886 women were referred to Anawim during 2018-19.

The key objective of Anawim is to help women and their children overcome problems that adversely affect their lives, to help them achieve their goals and reach their full potential. The services provided by Anawim include rehabilitation, support in prisons, community outreach, mental health programmes, counselling, support for women experiencing domestic abuse, family support, and money advice. A wide programme of activities has been developed to help the women raise their self-esteem, confidence, skills and social responsibility.

This toolkit is based on the experience of Anawim, which has employed four Service User Involvement Workers since 2016, under the role name of a Women's Involvement Worker (WIW). Anawim wanted to involve their women more in the decision making processes that affected their experience of the services offered, and the WIW role was introduced to facilitate communication between the women and the staff. Three of the women employed in the role had personal experience of being a service user at Anawim, the other did not, but brought experience of supporting vulnerable women in other contexts.

The profiles of the four WIWs employed by Anawim are summarised in Table 2.

The Women's Involvement Worker role was seen as being distinct from other roles within the organisation. For Anawim, the purpose of this role is to "encourage, support and enable service users to take part in the life of Anawim and beyond into the community."[4]

At the outset, the detail of how the WIW role would manifest itself was undecided. The managers had a broad overview of what the role would achieve including supporting the women in telling their stories and encouraging greater participation, although there was little direction at the start about how the role should be implemented in practice and what it should focus on. Building on this 'blank canvas' allowed the WIWs in post early on in the process to develop their own ideas and look for opportunities to get the women attending the centre more involved.

> I like the fact that I can bring my own ideas to the table and kind of do what I want in the role because I feel like with my personal experience, lived experience is important in understanding kind of what the women might need, but also knowing the restrictions of my role as well as within the centre, and the staff support me with that.

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[4] Taken from the Service User Involvement Worker job description, March 2017.

Table 2 WIW profiles

	Background	**experience of being a WIW**
WIW1	Ex-service user at Anawim. Built up work experience through volunteering. Contacted by her former support worker about the job role and encouraged to apply. Set up the service user forums, helped women to have a voice and engage with partner organisations.	"My life is completely different now, it is a life beyond my wildest dreams because I would only dream of having a life like this."
WIW2	Psychology degree. Previous experience working for the NHS and supporting vulnerable women in a health context. responded to an online job advert. Supported women through a number of events and activities, as well as encouraging participation in external forums.	"It's intense, it's difficult, because I'm not used to listening to these intense experiences that women have been through, but the thought that I'm able to support these women and help them along their journey of recovery for me has just been ... I think I underestimated that. And for me that's really powerful."
WIW3	Ex-service user at Anawim. supported by Anawim outreach workers whilst in prison, undertook Probation Order at Anawim. Worked in a number of organisations, responded to an online job advert for the WIW. Took the lead on peer mentoring scheme.	"I'm passionate about helping other people, especially people who I can identify with who've been in similar situations to me... I'm doing a lot more than I thought that I would or could in this role. "
WIW4	Ex-service user at Anawim Referred to Anawim through the New Chance programme in 2017. Volunteered briefly at centre after being a service user. Degree in education. Used previous experience in a professional career to develop and run a workshop for other service users. Applied for the WIW role, supported by her case worker, instrumental in setting up the Women's Development Initiative within Anawim. Being in the role has helped her develop confidence and a sense of purpose.	"On the surface and to people at my work I was professional and I looked successful to a degree. But inside … I had no confidence and I was really miserable. I'm not anymore. And that, it's that, it's that self-esteem within myself, of me now seeing what is good about me and me accepting my mistakes and me accepting that I might have made choices that weren't right, but actually rather than beating myself up. There was a reason, it's not an excuse but there was a reason, and OK this is now how I need to do things differently. That's the biggest thing that I suppose being in this role has given me. And now I've got this passion to (a) get other service users feeling how I feel about myself and (b) change peoples' perceptions about people that end up in prison or end up homeless or end up using drugs."

2. Organisational considerations for establishing a WIW role

This section considers some of things to be considered by an organisation looking to set up a Women's Involvement Worker role. This will cover considerations at the planning stage, developing the job description, recruitment, and taking account of previous experience. It will look briefly at funding, and then cover some of the considerations for managing the role and overcoming potential challenges.

2.1   Planning for the role

2.1.1   Job description

The job description at Anawim was developed to cover a range of activities within the Centre, with a focus on encouraging the women to get involved. Despite having a detailed job description, there was a lot of flexibility within the role in how this was implemented in practice, and there was also scope for the post-holder to develop the role based on their own preferences and experience.

The job description for Anawim included the following tasks:

1. Work with the existing team in the 'one stop shop' women's centre to provide support to the women who attend who have multiple and complex needs. Encouraging some service users to become mentors and volunteers within the project and beyond.

2. Hold regular forums to raise issues, get involved in activities and work programmes at Anawim and in the community.

3. Assist in drop-in, and assist service users and volunteers in their roles in running it, helping them to gain experience which will help them move into employment.

4. Help and encourage the women to manage the resources and donations within the donations hub, co-ordinating and sorting clothes, toiletries, household items into a more unified resource.

5. Encourage service users to get involved in forums, interview panels, contribute to research.

6. Hold regular service user groups at the centre, encouraging them to share their views of the service in order to improve and shape it to their needs.

7. Support and enable ex-service users to tell their story at events, open days, with politicians, commissioners and supporters in safe ways minimising risks of relapse and exploitation.

8. Encourage, support and enable service users to take part in civic life, sitting on boards, interview panels, become mystery shoppers etc.

9. Work as a member of the existing team according to the values and vision of the project.

10. Demonstrate an awareness of the principles of equal opportunities and be committed to their implementation.

11. Follow the Society's policies and procedures and comply with all relevant legislation, in particular the Health and Safety at work act.

12. Participate in meetings and training as appropriate to the work.

13. Undertake additional duties within the overall running of the Anawim project as may be identified in consultation with the Service Manager and team.

2.1.2 Recruitment

It is important to decide what kind of person you want for the role, and what their key skills and experience should be.

- Think about whether the person you recruit needs to have experience as a service user, in your own organisation, or one offering similar services.

- What are the overall aims of the role, and how will this role fit with other roles within the organisation?

- The recruitment process should be carried out as for any other post within the organisation, following the usual approval processes, and agreeing the essential and desirable criteria for the role.

- The experience, skills and knowledge needed for the role include having good organisational skills (for organising and managing events and groups of women); ability to develop good relationships with others at all levels (other staff members within the organisation, service users, external stakeholders); time management skills, to manage competing priorities on limited time, especially for part time workers; and communication and listening skills.

- An example of the criteria needed for the Women's Involvement Worker role at Anawim is shown in Table 3.

- The application process should follow the usual processes to enable the candidate to demonstrate their ability to meet each of the criteria as set out, through the application form and in interview.

- For jobs that are open only for female applicants, the job advert needs to indicate that this meets the criteria of Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2011), which states that in certain circumstances, where there is an occupational requirement, it is lawful for an employer to apply a requirement to have a particular protected characteristic.

- If the post-holder is expected to have lived experience, and share this with service users, then this needs to be discussed at the interview. Job interviews can be stressful experiences, and can be particularly hard if the applicant has received rejections because of their experience with the criminal justice system. Advice on when and how to ask potential employees about a criminal record is provided by Recruit[5]

WIW experience of applying for employment

"I wasn't judged here. As they knew my background so it was easy for me to come in and do the interview and I'd developed a real fear of interviews because of having to disclose." (WIW3)

"the world is quite difficult to navigate when you've got a criminal record, regardless of if you've been in prison or not…I used to come here and I was the same as you looking at the job board thinking none of these are going to have me, and you've just got to keep trying and work your way up. And it's inspired a lot of the women who are looking for employment - I know that much. It's inspired a lot of the women who've got criminal records and are looking for employment as well." (WIW4)

[5] Asking about Criminal Records (https://recruit.unlock.org.uk/guidance/)

Table 3 Example of the person specification for the WIW role

Factor	Essential Criteria
Knowledge and Experience	- Experience of supporting women with complex needs - Understanding of Safeguarding and offending behaviour - Experience of training and awareness raising - Experience of working within a supporting role - Knowledge of mental health issues and personality disorders - Public speaking - Understanding of roles service users can take in projects and civic life
Skills and abilities	- Ability to liaise effectively with people & draw them out - Time Management - Excellent interpersonal, communication and listening skills - Ability to lead Group sessions - Ability to sensitively interview women on their experiences - Able to work as a member of the team and share information - Understanding of the need for confidentiality - Organisational skills - Ability to cope with stressful and emotional work - Ability to produce reports and case studies & meet outcomes on time - Ability to plan and prioritise work - Ability to input data into bespoke database accurately.
Other	- Calm, friendly and approachable disposition - Mature - Empathic - Non-Judgemental attitude to service users

2.1.3 Previous work and life experience

As mentioned in the previous section, the experience needed to do the job of a service user involvement worker has generated much discussion.

- Lived experience: Does the post-holder need to have had lived experience? In what form? Do they need to have personal experience of using the services provided by your organisation, or in similar organisations? The WIW role, in getting other people engaged in the Centre, does appear to benefit from having a shared experience in life, through knowing what it's like to be a service user, and building a shared connection with the women in the Centre. The WIW needs to be aware of the implications of opening up and sharing that they have lived experience and are an ex-service user – while this may bring benefits from increased trust and connectedness with other service users, it may also present challenges, such as a lack of privacy and being unable to move on from past experiences.

- Time since being a service user: If they were a service user, have they had sufficient time away from the organisation since they stopped accessing services? Anawim stipulated that ex-service users should have left the service for a period of at least 12 months before returning to work for the organisation as a volunteer or member of staff. Having this break can help with the transition from service user to staff member, for the WIW themselves, for other staff members and also for other service users.

- Professional experience: Have they had work experience elsewhere, and understand what is required of being an employee? Someone with little previous experience of working in a formal work environment will require more time from their line manager as part of their induction, to make sure they know what the expectations are within your organisation in terms of being on time for work, processes for booking holidays and reporting sick leave, and identifying training needs. Having experience in another role is helpful in bringing a professional approach to the job, setting boundaries in terms of what information they share, being available outside work hours, and confidentiality issues.

2.2 Finding funding for the role

Funding is always a difficult issue, and finding funding for the role will influence the number of hours that can be worked, the length of the contract and the focus of the role, where this has been specified to fit with the funder's requirements and expectations. Consequently, it is likely that there will be an element of 'role drift' in order to meet the requirements of funding and it is important to manage the expectations of the WIW by having these discussions at the outset.

For Anawim, the WIW roles were part time, due to the available funding. The hours offered reflected the availability of the staff due to family and other commitments, and so as not to affect their entitlement to certain benefits. While this suited some WIWs, others in the role felt they could achieve more if funded full time, in-order to develop role further.

It is an ongoing consideration of how many hours each worker can work to fit in with benefits, which pot of money can be accessed to fund this, and a constant challenge in trying to give some job security to staff members. Difficulties of short term funding means that it is not easy to attract and retain the best staff. This is a concern for the staff too, who are forced to look for alternative employment when jobs cannot be secured. Often the funding is not announced early enough to keep someone in the role, and it can be hard to manage the situation when people have to leave when the funding comes to an end. The uncertainty may also add to the pressure a WIW feels coming into the role and having to show results to justify why they are there.

2.2.1 Things to think about:

- The duration of the funding, and the implications of short-term funding on recruitment and retention for the post

- What the funding covers, such as direct salary costs, related overheads, equipment, expenses

- Any outputs and outcomes expected

- Reporting requirements of the funder

- What does progression look like?

- The role being respected as a valued role within the organisation and not being a 'token role'

It's always hard with short term funding. You can't guarantee anybody. We've had good people come for interviews lately and then they go well it's only a 12-month contract. What's the chance of it being more? And you go well I hope it will be but I can't give you a contract for three years when I've only got one-year money, I can't. And who wants to leave a permanent job and go to a job for 12-month funding? (Manager)

It all comes down to money: can I be funded? (WIW3)

I know that I personally feel I've got to show results now because I'm going to have to justify my funding. So if I'm going to justify my funding to continue, I need to be showing results now. (WIW4)

2.3 Managing the role & supervision

Having effective strategies and practices in place for managing the women's involvement worker will help them integrate and feel like a legitimate member of staff and guide them in developing and implementing the role effectively. Expect that quite a lot of supervision time may be needed at first to start to establish the role, and support the WIW, especially if they have had limited experience working in this environment previously.

- Defining the role – Have a clear understanding about what the role is for, what can be achieved within this role, and how it fits into the wider organisation.

- Think about what their work objectives are going to be – and how to make these SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely).

- Have a clear induction process for new staff, based on the needs of the individual and their previous experience – understanding that service user involvement informs decisions and actions throughout the centre

- Setting boundaries – what is expected of the WIW in relation to taking work home, understanding professional working behaviour, and defining the relationship with the service users, particularly if the WIW knew the women as a service user.

- Find the balance between routine administrative tasks and meetings, formal appointments and having informal time to be available for the women to talk to the WIWs.

- Time management is important, especially with increasing demands and limited time available – think what you can realistically expect to get done in the time available.

- Discuss with the WIW the extent to which they need to disclose information about their own lived experience to service users, to other staff members and to external agencies.

- Managing their enthusiasm – everyone coming into this role was enthusiastic and passionate about being able to help others and give something back to the organisation which helped them. Their manager needs to harness this passion, and help them explore their ideas fully, whilst providing guidance and remaining realistic in understanding what can be achieved in practice. Things often take longer to implement than anticipated, and not everyone will share the same enthusiasm about their ideas.

- The WIW role is not a casework role – it is a bridge between the more formal casework set-up and the women, to help the women have a voice within the organisation, and have a real influence on decisions made which affect them as service users. However, this can become blurred when women feel more confident and comfortable talking to the WIW.

- It may take some time to go through the transition from a service user to staff member, for the WIW, for other staff members and for the service users. Understand that there may be some element of feeling like an imposter, and remind the WIW that they are there on merit, selected at interview because of their skills and experience.

- Understanding the consequences of actions of the role and the impact of implementing ideas – thinking through the processes of how things will work in practice and what may happen as a result. For example, setting up a WhatsApp group for the women to communicate with each other may sound like a great idea, but what happens if someone puts inappropriate comments about another service user, or discloses personal information on this? It could work with clear guidance and agreed rules of engagement, and careful monitoring and management. The potential problems and consequences need to be carefully thought through.

It's not a place where your mistakes or your experiences in life are kind of a big flashlight above your head; it's a place of accepting the whole of who you are. And I found that with the staff as well. They were actually really happy that it was me that got the job as well. It was me that kind of, I probably took about a week or two to transition from service user. (WIW3)

2.4 Organisational challenges and considerations

- There are different kinds of role that come under the WIW umbrella – engaging with the women within the organisation to change what happens within the organisation; engaging with external organisations to influence policy and practice more widely and women's development work, to support women to move on an prepare them better for leaving the organisation. An additional

strand to this is peer mentoring, where women volunteer or are employed to offer support to other women, based on their own experience.

- Include service user involvement as a key strategic aim throughout the organisation, have a clear direction and set of outcomes for what the WIW role is aiming to achieve, whilst allowing flexibility to develop the role based on the skills, experience and ideas of the WIW.

- Ensure the post holders are fully aware of the purpose of their role and how this fits into the organisation as a whole. Any changes to their role, or changes within the organisation which affect their position need to be clearly communicated.

- Giving WIWs autonomy to oversee a key project enabled them to feel more embedded in the role, and gives the role a stronger, more professional footing within the organisation.

- Service user involvement should be embedded within the organisation – every member of staff needs to consider how the women can be involved in their own area of work.

- Provide a thorough induction to help with the transition from service user to staff member. Don't make assumptions that the WIW will know all about the organisation because they have previously been a service user, they were probably only aware of part of the work going on.

Engaging service users – the role of the Women's Involvement Worker

2.5   Being visible – building relationships

One key element of the WIW role, regardless of the background and approach of the WIW, is building relationships with the service users, gaining their trust and being able to encourage them to participate in activities to help them progress. Knowing the service users on an individual level is particularly important in being able to approach them about engagement with external organisations and understanding how telling their stories could be most effective.

To get help with this, the WIWs at Anawim planned their day to make sure they could include a great deal of face to face interaction with the service users, getting to know them as individuals, knowing why they were coming to the Centre, and building up a level of trust. Being present in the main room or kitchen, where the service users gathered informally, and being visible and approachable on a day to day basis was important, as well as organising social events and the forums in providing an opportunity to listen to the women and interact with them. The WIWs were also instrumental in getting the women to contribute to events to mark national and international events such as International Women's Day, Mental Health Awareness Week and Black History Month.

But the core of it, it's the relationship that you're able to build with the women and getting them to trust you. So when you do look at a woman and you say but look I know that you can do this, I know you can stand up in a room full of 100 people and share your story, and that person has never stood up. But for them to believe me and to do it, it's that. Nothing that I do or have done or want to do would be anything if they didn't trust me. And that is really important. And I think that's the main thing that someone in this position needs to be able to do, build those really close trusting relationships. (WIW4)

The WIWs were perceived by service users as being different to other staff members, in as much as they were shared their experiences with the women, and were also available to listen to the women

without them having to have an appointment to talk to them, as would be needed for their case workers. They were seen as being approachable, and this helped to build trust and would therefore encourage participation in programmes and activities.

Key points to think about was about building relationships with the women, making links, and being the 'bridge' between the women and the staff within the Centre:

- Being present and visible within the centre and available for the women to talk to informally, not needing an appointment – this is different to case work, and the WIWs should not be used as caseworkers. However, WIW should be encouraged to manage their time, and allocate periods of time when they are not available; this would allow other work to be done behind the scenes, and is especially important with part time hours.
- Be imaginative in using different forms of communication to inform the women of what they can be involved in and what is available to them, making sure these are kept up to date – design posters to advertise events, word of mouth, inform the women during forum sessions and classes, social media where appropriate. This needs to be revisited regularly, to make sure new service users have the opportunity to get involved, and remind the others of what's available. A clear communication strategy is required.
- Benefits are twofold – women feel they get to know the WIW, and can trust WIW, WIW gets to know the women, and who would be able and willing to help with schemes within the organisation and also support external ambassador talks
- Maintain regular contact through the forum and developing other events within the centre.

2.5.1   Other events within the Centre

The WIWs were instrumental in planning and organising many events within the Centre that the service users could attend and contribute to, often to mark national and international events, as well as social events and fundraising activities. Examples of events and activities included:

- An exhibition of artwork by the women for International Women's Day.
- Running 'Time to Talk' sessions as part of Mental Health Awareness Week.
- A buffet lunch with Caribbean and Jamaican food provided by the women as part of Black History Month celebrations.
- Organising 'Pamper days', where the women provided pamper treatments to service users for a small fee to raise funds for the Anawim Christmas lunch.
- Bingo nights, to provide a safe environment to socialise in the evening.
- Creative arts forum, to encourage the women to share ideas and express themselves through different creative media.
- Inviting the women to join a choir to perform at the annual Anawim Awards Ceremony
- Filming an induction video for new clients, explaining what happened at Anawim, and what to expect.
- Created a monthly newsletter, with contributions from service users and staff members
- Shared lunches with staff

2.6 Helping the women to support each other – developing the 'Peer Mentoring' Scheme

The peer mentoring scheme was developed and set up by the WIW at Anawim to provide support to the women to be able to support each other. This programme was developed in discussion with the women in the Forum, to promote the idea and gauge interest.

2.6.1 What is the peer mentoring programme?

The aim of the peer mentoring scheme was to get the women who had been at Anawim for some time more directly involved in the Centre and be able to offer support to new women coming in, so they could learn from their experience, to help them on their journey through Anawim. The women who had been attending Anawim for some time, and were further along on their journeys were encouraged to get involved and take on more responsibility within the centre to provide support to those coming in. Women who were recruited to the programme were provided with training and then allocated to specific areas of the Centre, where possible matched to their skills and interests. The first cohort of women to become peer mentors were in a variety of settings, including peer mentoring the parenting group, being present in the main kitchen to be there to chat and make sure people can get tea and coffee, and sitting in on courses that they have already completed to offer additional support. They also received computer training at a local college, so they were confident in helping other women use the computers at Anawim.

2.6.2 What did the WIW do?

The WIW was given the responsibility of developing the programme from the start, with the support of her manager and colleagues. She was involved in the following tasks:

- Developing the programme in discussion with service users, drawing up role descriptions, and identifying suitable roles within the Centre where peer mentors would have the greatest effect.
- Advertising the scheme within the Centre and encouraging the women to apply for the role, reviewing the applications and interviewing the women for the role
- Matching successful applicants with peer mentor roles.
- Writing and delivering a 6 week training programme to get the women ready to offer peer support. The course was based on one that the WIW had encountered in a previous job for another organisation, and the WIW adapted it to fit to the needs of the Anawim women. This included what peer mentoring means, confidentiality, computer skills and safeguarding.
- Developing a structured timetable for the women to work to, to make sure the main roles were covered at key times within the Centre.
- Providing ongoing support once the peer mentors had started in their roles, by holding a weekly meeting with them to talk over the previous week's events, discuss any challenges they faced, such as having a difficult conversation with a service user, identify further training needs and plan for the coming week.

"So yeah it's worked really well, we've got a brilliant group of women, they meet together on a Monday, they're supporting each other. A lot of them are starting from scratch and they're quite inspired by me, so they do want and believe that they can make a career out of it and this is just a small starting point. But some of them don't even know how to turn a computer on yet. So we have the Monday meeting where we can get together and look at their development as well … And it's also a chance for them to offload anything, say if they've had a particularly difficult conversation with a woman or anything they need to report we can discuss that in the group on a Monday."

"So, so far it's working really well and the group of women have really gelled and it's given them a real sense of value of themselves like that their experiences matter and I think they feel like whatever they've been through now is not for nothing. So it's given them a real value."

2.6.3   Things to think about when setting up a peer mentoring programme

- Peer mentoring may be happening informally – developing a more formal programme gives the women chance to receive training, have a role within the organisation and a record of what they have achieved.
- Identify roles that peer mentors could take up – this could be having a peer support presence in the main social room or the kitchen; having peer mentors available for key courses or connected to services provided by the Centre.
- Look for opportunities to support peer mentors to work across organisations that they have been involved in, or which could benefit from their lived experience.
- The peer mentoring scheme can help build confidence for those who have been out of work for a while, going through an application process, interview and training, and having a clear role to fulfil and a work schedule to follow. How will the peer mentors be selected? What skills and experience do the peer mentors need? What will the application process involve, and who will sit on an interview panel?
- What training will they receive to become mentors, and who will deliver this? Don't make assumptions about what they know at the start, be clear about what's expected of them in the role.
- Peer mentors in this context were still service users, despite being further on in their journey, and need ongoing support particularly if they have had a challenging encounter with another service user.
- Make sure other staff in the Centre are aware of the peer mentoring scheme, and the role of the peer mentors, particularly when peer mentors have been allocated to the courses they are running, so they know when to expect them and can help them feel welcome coming into a room with people they may not know.
- Regular weekly updates with the peer mentor cohort helped the women to support each other in the role, and learn from the experience of others. The women saw this as being a valuable part of the role, and were keen for this level of communication and management to

continue. This should provide the chance for the women to give feedback and voice their concerns – not everyone may be suited to the role they've been allocated, so look at reviewing this after an initial settling in period.

- Review the peer mentor roles periodically, to make sure the mentors are available at the right time to able to meet people and provide support. There may be little point having someone available as a peer mentor on a day when few courses are running and few people are attending the Centre.
- Issues around confidentiality need to be addressed, to ensure that the peer mentors understand that women may talk to them in confidence, whilst being mindful of the importance of safeguarding, and reporting concerns to staff.
- Setting boundaries about the level of support peer mentors are expected to provide, and about sharing personal information.
- Look at the best way of maintaining channels of communication with the peer mentors - use of social media, such as having a What's App group chat may be a good way to keep in touch and keep everyone informed of what's going on, but offers limited opportunity to control posts, so need everyone to agree to a code of conduct for the group.

2.6.4 Peer Mentoring Case Study

Zainab[6] worked as a qualified nursery nurse before having her own family. She had not worked for a long time, and since coming to Anawim had been looking at the possibility of returning to work. She got involved with the Peer Mentoring scheme as a way to get involved and build up her confidence, learn new skills and gain work experience again. The WIW encouraged her to apply.

> "I wanted to go back into employment and I thought that this would be a good stepping stone for me to get my confidence back because I've been out of work for a very long time. I'm a qualified nursery nurse and I wanted to go back into that field."

Zainab applied through the formal application process, and was invited to attend an interview. She was asked what area of work she would be interested in.

> "I said well I would like to work with teenage mums, support young mums, that was something I want to do… a lot of mums they don't get that and your initial first days or your first months are very, very hard. And it's just if you're there to say to somebody, it's normal to be tired, it's normal you don't want to comb your hair in the morning, it's normal you don't want to have a wash and it's normal that you don't want to pick your child up constantly. And I said I wanted to be that person to say."

Zainab was given the role of working as a peer mentor in the Family Support Unit. She was then offered the chance to volunteer in the 'Stay and Play' sessions, and support the Centre's plans to expand the sessions to allow more women to attend with their children, and started contributing ore to planning the sessions.

> "And I thought at the time I'm just going to be helping out, I'll do it … you know, I am actually running the place! So I will plan the activities, we do all of it!"

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[6] Names have been changed in the case study

The peer mentoring experience was hard work, but rewarding, and in this case led to further opportunities for volunteering and training within the Centre.

> "And to be honest the more you put into it the more you will get out. And it does take a lot of commitment and you have to invest a lot of time and do the extra work that comes along with it."

"It's helping you build confidence. It's you're meeting different people all the time…. by hearing somebody else it makes you also feel like I'm not the only one. Or it can also make you feel like you can let go as well, it'll give you understanding, you know, it does give us understanding on ourselves."

Service User (Peer mentor)

2.7 Giving service users a voice - listening to the women and sharing ideas

Part of the Women's Involvement Worker role is encouraging the women to have a voice, express their opinion and enable them to be listened to. The WIWs worked to establish a regular forum within Anawim, to enable to women to come together and discuss their concerns and ideas between themselves, which were then taken to the staff meetings the following week. Feedback from the staff meetings was shared with the women at the next forum, thereby creating a pathway for communication between staff and service users. The WIWs were also instrumental in making sure the women's voices were heard at a local and national level, and they worked with the service users to take an active role in influencing policy and practice of external organisation and services they encountered.

2.7.1 What is the Service User Forum?

Establishing a regular Forum for the women to discuss ideas and concerns was one of the first jobs of the WIW in Anawim. Prior to this, the methods of gathering the views of the women about the Centre included feedback forms, ad hoc focus groups, a suggestion box and feedback to caseworkers, which were all seen to be one directional, with limited opportunity for Anawim staff to provide a response to the women. This role provided a means of bridging the gap between the service users and staff, and facilitate better two-way communication around service development. The timing of this, held once a fortnight, was set to balance having enough time to implement actions in between meetings, but not being too infrequent.

The Forum was held every other Friday afternoon, and was publicised through posters in the main room, added to the timetable, word of mouth and through the case workers. It was facilitated by the WIWS, or sometimes the operations team managers, who tried to ensure everyone present had the opportunity to have their voice heard. Bringing together a diverse group of women sometimes with very different opinions, could generate a heated discussion, and the Forums required careful facilitation. Efforts were made to make the forum experience more positive, focusing on positive change and being mindful of others, rather than just being an opportunity to vent anger or frustration. As part of this process, the WIWs collaborated with the women to produce a Charter, laying out the purpose of the forum and establishing guidelines for expectations and acceptable behaviour. The

Charter was discussed and drawn up by the women within the forum to ensure the women were happy with the content and would agree to abide by these guidelines.

2.7.2   What did the WIW do?

The WIWs were responsible for all aspects of the Forum, and were supported in developing their ideas to implement this.

- The WIW established the forum as a regular event, booking a suitable meeting room and ensuring it fitted within the times of other courses and events within the Centre.
- The WIWs publicised the event, and encouraged the women to take part and get involved in the discussions.
- They set the agenda and were responsible for the facilitation of the meetings. Minutes were taken.
- The WIWs noted the concerns and suggestions of the women at each meeting, and reported these back to staff meetings the following week. They were responsible for following up the actions from the staff meeting so they could report back to the women at the next Forum.
- They drew up a charter, or ground rules of acceptable conduct within the forum in consultation with the women. This included respecting other people's views, letting everyone have a voice, using appropriate language, listening to others and not talking over people.
- The Forum also hosted outside agencies who wanted to gather information/ research from a focus group.

2.7.3   Running a Forum - Things to think about

Facilitating a meeting like the forum requires skills such as planning, questioning skills, active listening, and managing group dynamics. There are a variety of toolkits and advice available to offer ideas and help for facilitating meetings 7. Below are a few things to think about when planning to set up a forum.

Before the forum:

- What are the aims of the forum?
- When will it be held, and how often?
- Who will be invited?
- How will this be publicised?
- Who is going to facilitate the meetings?
- Who decides the agenda?
- How are you going to let other staff know about and promote the forum?
- Where will it be held? How many people are you expecting to attend?

During the forum:

- What is the format of the forum, and what are the participants expected to contribute?
- What ground rules need to be established? How will these be agreed?
- What happens if people don't follow the rules?

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[7] E.g. Seeds for Change (2019) Facilitation tools for meetings and workshops https://seedsforchange.org.uk/tools.pdf; NHS Institute for Improvement and Innovation (2009) The facilitators toolkit https://www.england.nhs.uk/improvement-hub/wp-content/uploads/sites/44/2017/11/Facilitator-Toolkit.pdf

- How will you encourage discussion?
- How will you manage conflict within the forum?
- How will you make sure everyone has a chance to speak, and encourage participation? What about people that are reluctant to speak up in front of a group?
- How will the discussion be documented?

After the forum:

- Have you got an accurate record of the discussion and decisions made at the forum?
- How can you follow up on any actions that were agreed during the meeting?
- What are the main points from the forum that you want to feed back to the staff and managers at the Centre?
- How are the outcomes of the staff meeting going to be presented at the next Forum?
- Does anything need to change before the next forum to improve engagement? Do additional participants need to be invited?

2.7.4   Outcomes from the Forum

A regular group of women attended the forums, and they contributed to discussions about how the Centre was run, and gave suggestions about potential improvements.

- The women wanted to know more about what the staff did, and about their roles. This was addressed through an article in the Anawim newsletter.
- As part of increasing the interaction between the staff and the service users, 'Lynne's Lunches' were introduced, where a shared lunch was provided a couple of times a month to provide a regular chance to meet up informally.
- Some of the women were uneasy if there were visitors on site, especially male visitors. The women asked for a board to be put up near the entrance noting who the visitors were at the Centre each day.
- Ideas about other schemes introduced by the WIWs, such as the peer mentoring scheme and the development programme were presented at the forum to gauge potential interest and develop the ideas further.

"And that forum is where the service users and all the women, it's their space and they can just talk about usually Anawim stuff, or what's good, what's not good, what they'd like to do, just projects being shared with them"

Women's Involvement Worker

"And there's another thing that's important about the forums, because we've gone through the experience right from the beginning to now, which has been a long time, there might be something that we might suggest or we might give an opinion on that might benefit new clients coming in."

Service User

2.8 External engagement

The WIWs were also involved in work outside of Anawim, to establish good relationships with partner organisations in the local area, and nationally, as well as raising the profile of Anawim and the support

that it provides. A number of organisations approached Anawim with requests to involve service users in doing talks or taking part in research or other activities. However, it was not always appropriate to respond to all requests to talk to service users, and the WIWs were keen to ensure that information would be presented in an acceptable manner and that the women weren't being exploited. Opportunities to take part in media interviews also arose, which could be appropriate for either for the WIWs themselves or for other service users.

2.8.1   What did this involve?

The WIWs contributed to a number of forums locally, for example taking part in research with external agencies interested in women's experience of coming out of prison, or contributing to the local forums about experiences of mental health services. The WIWs with lived experience were able to contribute with their own personal experience, and were also able to support other women in doing this. They also got involved in giving presentations at police training events. This involved the WIWs talking to police officers about their own experience of interaction with the police and going through the criminal justice system, and also inviting service users to share their stories. The WIWs identified women in the Centre who they considered to be far enough on in their journey, and who were willing to stand up and speak and share their story. Spending time with the women and getting to know them as individuals is important in knowing who would be best equipped to get involved in this. It helped to develop the trust between them and build a good relationship with the service users. These women became known as the Ambassadors of Anawim.

The WIWs have also been involved in accompanying women to London to attend rallies, to talk about their experience and lobby parliament to influence a change in policy at a national level, talking about the impact on them of current policy. Being able to influence policy at the highest level is empowering for the women, in feeling that they are being listened to and that their experience can make a difference.

"it's highlighted that some women have really enjoyed it and, as upsetting as reliving their story has been, they've found the process very therapeutic and it's helping to build their confidence massively. Other women have kind of done it once or twice and then said I don't want to do it again because it makes me feel like I'm reliving it and I'm stuck in that."

Women's Involvement Worker

"with the female offender strategy last year, everybody, everybody, everybody wanted to speak to the women and wanted the women to sit down and share the most intimate parts of their lives. But not everybody had an end result or an end result that the women were going to see. So it started to feel like a bit that they were being exploited, and I don't ever want them to feel that, because again it goes back to them not being able to trust me. I don't want them to feel that I'm using them at all."

Women's Involvement Worker

2.8.2   What did the WIWs do?

The WIWs helped many women to get involved in events outside of Anawim, and helped to develop their confidence to stand up and tell their story.

- They worked with other staff members to identify appropriate opportunities with local organisations for the women to get involved in.
- They identified women who would be willing to take part in events with external organisations, and able to stand up and tell their story.
- Support the women in preparing for telling their story, helping them to think about what to say, about using the right language, and being careful about disclosing too much.
- The WIWs with lived experience shared their own stories alongside the service users.
- The women placed their trust in the WIW to guide them through the process; the WIWs were there with them, encouraged them, and provided emotional support afterwards. They also intervened if the women felt uncomfortable.

2.8.3   Things to think about

- How will external visits be funded?
- How is this prioritised within the limited time available if the WIW is working part time hours?
- What is the balance of internal work and external engagement?
- What can be done to support those who want to have the opportunity to have their voice heard but are constrained by other factors, such as child care?
- Does everyone who wants to contribute have the opportunity to do so? Don't rely on the same people all the time, make everyone has the chance to share their story if they want to.

- How will the information the women are providing be used? What are the benefits for the women in getting involved in these events? Are the women being exploited?
- Be mindful of the wellbeing of the WIW, and offer additional support when she is providing emotional support to the women in telling their stories.

2.9 Promoting skills and employability

Two areas of work for the WIWs within Anawim focused on helping the women gain skills and experience to support them back into the workplace.

A Women's Development Worker role was introduced, to work alongside the Women's Involvement Worker. This role, which was also open to former service users, was to coordinate and manage the women in volunteering roles within the Centre, mainly through catering, cleaning and supporting groups booking the hall for events. This evolved from a credit scheme where women who were staying in the residential part of the Centre earned credits for doing work, such as cleaning, helping in the donations hub, and managing room hire at weekends and evenings. The credits earned were put towards purchasing household goods and furnishings for when they moved out of the Centre into their own property. As well as earning credits, the women were gaining skills and work experience. The credit scheme was developed by the WIW, and expanded to include other service users within the Centre. The women who wanted to take part in the scheme completed an application form, and were interviewed, gaining work-related skills. However, to overcome problems with funding the credits, and the legal implications of earning credits whilst on benefits, this became a volunteer scheme, and the credit element was discontinued. Service users were disappointed that the credit scheme ended, but were still keen to contribute to the organisation, and engaged with the scheme as a volunteer instead.

Alongside this, the Next Steps employability programme was developed by the WIW to support women with skills to get them back into the workplace, such as writing a CV and interview skills. This was linked to an organisation within the hospitality industry, which helped to deliver the programme. Another aspect of the programme was helping the women to develop business skills, so they could consider setting up their own business to make money from their creative skills.

2.9.1 Things to think about

- A volunteering scheme within the Centre needs to be set up with a clear understanding of employment legislation, and the rules and restrictions around working or volunteering whilst receiving benefits.
- The volunteers are still service users, and may have different needs from volunteers who support the charity in other ways.
- How will the volunteering positions be monitored and reviewed? Will people have the chance to change roles?
- How long will the scheme last for, for each individual? Will they have to reapply after a certain length of time? How will new services users be able to join at a later date?
- How will the volunteers' contribution be documented, so they can demonstrate to future employers that they have participated in the scheme?

3. Does the WIW role make a difference?

There has been a significant change in service user involvement since the inception of the WIW role at Anawim, with a much greater sense that the WIW role is more embedded within the service and integral to the service provision for the women attending the centre. The women have regular opportunities to voice their ideas and concerns about the running of the Centre, and the focus of the WIW role has shifted to have a greater emphasis on being more outward facing and encouraging the women to get involved in influencing policy and preparing for life independent of Anawim. This has been part of the shift in focus of the support given to women attending the centre, with a more structured approach to their journey through Anawim.

The WIW role has had an impact on the service users, the organisation, and the WIWs themselves.

> *"On a big or small scale making a difference to people's lives that's the best thing." (WIW)*

> *"it's that self-esteem within myself, of me now seeing what is good about me and me accepting my mistakes and me accepting that I might have made choices that weren't right, but actually rather than beating myself up. There was a reason, it's not an excuse but there was a reason, and OK this is now how I need to do things differently. That's the biggest thing that I suppose being in this role has given me." (WIW)*

> *"The reason why I related especially to [the WIW] …she's actually been there. So what she was speaking about was like truth to me because she's actually been there." (Service User)*

"I mean one of the biggest ones is having that connection with the women. It seems to be on a different level. It's closer. … We're able to develop it with the ambassador talks and reach out to other organisations. And women, they're keen to share what their journey or their experience is, so hopefully there can be change for other women who end up in similar situations. But the biggest, the main thing would be to have their voice and that connection there and then everything else links off that." (Anawim Manager)

2.10   Benefits of the WIW role

There are some clear benefits from having established the WIW post, and changes within the organisation reflect the influence of the WIW role and the shift to having service user involvement as a central policy to development. Beneficial aspects of the role include the following:

- WIWs have developed skills, confidence and greater resilience, and are less emotionally affected when they retell their own stories.
- WIWs with lived experience can contribute to awareness raising in telling their stories at external events, and supporting other women to do this, by acting as a role model within the WIW role.
- Service users feel listened to, feel they have a voice and get a response – feel more part of Anawim.
- Embedding service user involvement within Anawim – this has changed from initial ideas about being nice to get the women involved in "little projects" to having service user involvement becoming embedded within activities across the whole Centre.
- Staff employed as WIWs are seen as being genuine and someone who the women can relate to.
- A lot of work has been done to put the ideas of service users, WIWs and the teams within which they work into practice, overcoming the practical challenges and implementing ideas.
- Having clear understanding now of the different aspects of the user involvement role, both internal communication and external engagement, enabling WIWs to develop the role to fit with their own experiences and priorities of service user involvement, albeit within constraints of funding requirements.

2.11   Challenges of the role

Establishing a service user involvement worker role may not be straightforward, and at Anawim, it has been an evolving process to develop the role in its current format, with individual and organisational challenges and dilemmas. The main considerations include the following:

- Establishing an identity as a WIW, and balancing the different expectations as a staff member, peer, and friend, and how this impacts on how they relate to the women. Having a clear understanding of how this role differs from other staff roles within the organisation.
- Prioritising work and managing time constraints of part time working, for both the WIWs and managers, and being able to provide sufficient support. In particular, balancing the time spent hands on working directly with the women with the time needed for 'behind the scenes' work, such as event organisation, meetings and admin.
- Setting boundaries for the WIW role, and also establishing boundaries for the volunteer roles.
- Understanding the financial implications of part time work, restricting hours so as not to affect benefits, needing to understand and apply the employment regulations.
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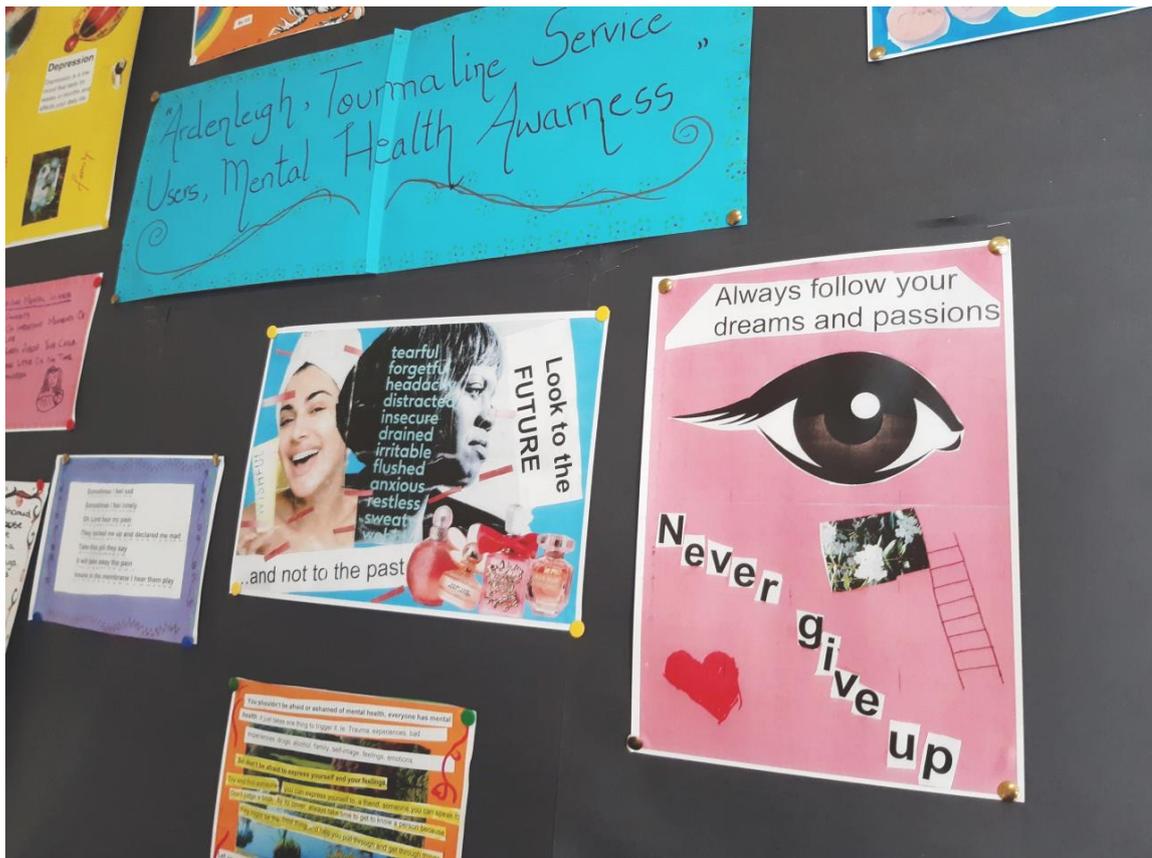
- Finding effective ways of communicating with the women, getting information across, and keeping on top of communication with individuals who are involved in the different programmes, again within the constraints of part time working.
- Keeping grounded and have realistic expectations about what can be achieved with the time and funding available, through having clear roles and responsibilities for each WIW, and working out the best way to work together and accept differences in how things are done.
- Maintaining a visible presence at the centre for the women, and being there to listen to them women is important.
- Developing the role into a full time role and understanding what progressions look like within this role.

Advice to other service user involvement workers:

"Be open, listen, take lots of deep breaths, be flexible, be adaptable and make sure you are asking for help and using the support network that's there." (WIW)

4. Further Information and other toolkits

1. **Revolving Doors Agency (2016) Service user involvement with offenders in the community: a toolkit for staff (http://www.revolving-doors.org.uk/file/1861/download?token=mj5AoJXw)**

   "This toolkit is for managers and staff of any probation service provider that wants to involve their service users in the management, design and delivery of their probation services."

2. **Side by Side Research Consortium (2017) Developing peer support in the community: a toolkit. London: Mind. https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4247/peer-support-toolkit-final.pdf**

   "This toolkit is for people interested in mental health peer support happening in the community."

3. **Weaver, B, Lightowler, C. and Moodie, K (2019) Inclusive Justice. Co-producing change. A practical guide to service user involvement in community justice. University of Strathclyde. https://cycj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Weaver_Lightowler_Moodie-2019-_Inclusive_justice_Final.pdf**

   "This guide is a practical resource which aims to support professionals and service users to work together to shape the design, development and delivery of services. In this guide, we offer our learning from our research, based on documenting the process and progress of three service user involvement groups from their inception."

4. **Clinks (2016) Good practice in service user involvement from the voluntary sector working in criminal justice https://www.clinks.org/publication/good-practice-service-user-involvement**

   "This report is intended to inform voluntary sector organisations and criminal justice partners about different models of service user involvement in use, and what has made them effective and successful. Our aim is that you will be able to learn from these examples and put this good practice into action in your own organisation or context"

5. **Clinks (2016) A guide to Service user involvement and co-production https://www.clinks.org/publication/guide-service-user-involvement-and-co-production**

   "This guide provides a structured and accessible introduction to involving offenders and exoffenders in your work, including examples of good practice, checklists and signposting to further information and support."

6. **Feantsa (2013) Participation Toolkit https://www.feantsa.org/download/participation_toolkit_english_final_2013-2-17759063145615739680.pdf**

   "We have created this toolkit because … we believe that people have a unique insight into their own situation. Harnessing their views and experiences helps them, and also helps all of us in our work to improve services and influence policies and plans."

7. **Voluntary Action Leeds (2019) Recruiting volunteers with criminal convictions toolkit**
   https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/insights/documents/GIVING-TIME-Toolkit.pdf

   "The aim is to equip organisations with the skills and confidence to safely and carefully recruit people [with criminal convictions] to their volunteering programmes.

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