Here are just some of the roles that volunteers undertake within the Criminal Justice System...
Youth justice
- Appropriate adult
- Mentor
- Youth Offender Panel member

Restorative justice
- Victim-offender mediator
- Family group conference facilitator
- Community Justice Panel member

Victims
- Witness Service volunteers in Crown and Magistrates’ Courts
- Victim Support volunteer
- Helpline advisor
- Counselling

Probation
- Probation Board member
- Teaching literacy and numeracy volunteer tutor
- Supporting training courses
- Mentor
- Probation volunteer

Prisons
- Official prison visitor
- Custody visitor
- Prison visitors’ centre (support and advice, assisting with practical tasks)
- Play worker for children during prison visits
- Literacy, numeracy and basic skills volunteer tutor
- Chaplaincy (from the main world faiths)
- Volunteer orchestra leader

Police
- Special Constable
- Police Cadet
- Independent custody visitors
- Police support volunteer
- Crimestoppers volunteer
- Crime Prevention Panel member
- Diamond Initiative volunteer

Other
- Independent Monitoring Board member
- MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) lay advisor
- Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator
- Magistrate or Justice of the Peace
- Providing helpdesks in Magistrates’ Courts
- Raising awareness of Prisons Week and Prisoners’ Sunday
- Community Chaplain
- Circles of Support member (working with sex offenders to reduce the risk of re-offending)
- Fundraiser for charities and voluntary and community organisations that support offenders, ex-offenders, prisoners, those at risk of offending or the victims of crime
- Volunteer for charities and voluntary and community organisations that support offenders, ex-offenders, prisoners, those at risk of offending or the victims of crime
- Campaigner
- Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel member
- Educating young people and promoting preventative measures
- Courts Board member
- Community Justice Panel member
- LCJB (Local Criminal Justice Boards) Independent Advisory Group member
- Trustee

Volunteer roles for prisoners
- Participating in park regeneration schemes
- Providing Braille transcriptions for blind people
- Creating artworks for hospices
- Making wheelchairs
- Citizens’ Advisor (in conjunction with Citizens Advice Bureau)
- Peer-advisers
- Prison Listeners (trained by Samaritans)
- Acting in plays
- Timebanking
# Volunteer peer support

FOR ORGANISATIONS WORKING WITH OFFENDERS, EX-OFFENDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

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## Acknowledgments

Clinks would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who kindly contributed good practice examples to this guide. We would also like to thank everybody who agreed to be interviewed for the guide and sharing their personal reflections on delivering a peer-to-peer service in the Criminal Justice System. The guide could not have been produced without the knowledge and expertise of the Volunteering and Mentoring Network Steering Group whose members include The Prince’s Trust, St Giles Trust, Samaritans, Pact, Action for Prisoners Families, Volunteering England, Circles UK, Catch 22, SOVA, CSV, the National Offender Management Service and Ministry of Justice.
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FOR ORGANISATIONS WORKING WITH OFFENDERS, EX-OFFENDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

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Foreword

The purpose of this guide is to support Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and other agencies and stakeholders in the Criminal Justice System to deliver quality peer-to-peer services for people in custody, those released from prison and people serving community sentences.

This guide is part of a series of guides commissioned by Clinks and funded by the Ministry of Justice. The others produced as part of this project are:

✱ A Guide to Managing Volunteers
✱ A Guide to External Quality Standards
✱ A Guide to Setting up a Project
✱ A Guide to Demonstrating Effectiveness
✱ A Guide to Service User Involvement
✱ A Guide for Trustees and Board Members

You can download the guides from our website.*

About Clinks

Clinks is a national organisation that supports the work that Voluntary and Community Sector organisations undertake within the criminal justice system of England and Wales. Clinks’ vision is of a vibrant and independent Voluntary and Community Sector working with informed and engaged communities to enable the rehabilitation of offenders for the benefit of society.
Introduction.

in this section:

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Volunteer peer support

In order to provide the best possible services to people in the Criminal Justice System, it makes sense to involve people who have experience of using those services in their design and delivery. This guide is designed to develop a better understanding of how to involve peer volunteers in a new project or existing volunteer programme. It offers advice on the steps an organisation should take to develop a new project, including specific guidance on risk assessment and local partnership development. Furthermore the guide provides insight into some of the working practices that are being undertaken by the experts – organisations that deliver peer volunteering.

A DEFINITION

Volunteer peer support occurs when people with the same shared experience provide knowledge, experience, or emotional, social or practical help to each other. It commonly refers to an initiative consisting of trained individuals volunteering to support people with specific or multiple needs to provide practical advice and guidance. This can take a number of forms such as mentoring, befriending, listening, counselling, advocating or being an advisor.

In this guide we are talking about volunteers who have had direct experience of the Criminal Justice System. This could include experience of:

✶ Being arrested
✶ Being convicted by a court
✶ Serving a prison sentence
✶ Serving a community order
✶ Being under probation supervision
✶ Having lived in approved premises.

Some services will recruit peer volunteers from the community; others will train current or former service users as volunteer peer supporters.

Volunteers who carry out this kind of support are referred to throughout this guide as ‘peer supporters’, ‘peer mentors’ or ‘peer volunteers’. The work they do is referred to as ‘peer support’, ‘peer mentoring’ or ‘peer volunteering’.

The approach organisations take to engaging peer volunteers will in some instances be unique to that organisation. Using peer volunteers can pose challenges. Special attention should be paid to the recruitment of peer volunteers, to ensure that they are appropriate for the role, have the right motivation, can complete the training, and want to do the work. Risk assessment procedures will need to be carefully developed with partners and fully implemented. Supervision and monitoring of the peer volunteer will be essential to aid their personal development and, in some instances, their progression into paid employment or other volunteering opportunities.

Organisations must recognise the importance of ongoing development. For many people who have been through the Criminal Justice System volunteering can be an important stepping stone, building and reinforcing the skills they need in order to progress into employment. A criminal record can be an obstacle to ex-offenders who wish to enter the labour market, which makes it important to be realistic and honest with potential peer volunteers about what development opportunities may exist within the recruiting organisation.
Complementary resources

This guide should be read in conjunction with the other Clinks Volunteering & Mentoring Network guides, such as Clinks’ guide to Managing Volunteers, which was developed in partnership with Volunteering England. The advice in that guide is useful to any developing volunteer programme, including those involving peers. Additionally Clinks’ guide on Service User Involvement is a valuable tool to support an organisation in improving the quality of their service user involvement. The Clinks review of service user involvement in the Prison and Probation Service also highlights some of the good practice being undertaken in those settings; the most successful peer support programmes are responsive to the needs of service users and volunteers, and some of that good practice will be useful.
Volunteer peer support.
Developing a peer-to-peer service.

in this section:

Peer support: a step-by-step guide to the process ................................................................. 12
Essential ingredients for a peer volunteering service ............................................................. 13
Recruiting, selecting, training, supporting and supervising volunteer peer supporters is similar to the procedure organisations would use when involving other volunteers. This can be visualised as a step-by-step process.

1. **Recruit your peer volunteers**  
   *See Section 4 on recruitment*

2. **Check the candidates match pre-set eligibility criteria and continually assess their suitability for the role**  
   *See Section 5 on selecting*

3. **Ensure candidates are security checked and vetted for their suitability**  
   *See Section 6 on security and vetting*

4. **Train candidates and observe their behaviour during training**  
   *See Section 7 on training*

5. **Confirm or reject their application**  
   *See Section 5 on selecting*

6. **Closely supervise and monitor their work to identify strengths and needs**  
   *See Section 8 on support and supervision*

7. **Continually assess the risks associated with the work for volunteers, service users, and the organisation**  
   *See Section 9 on risk assessments*

8. **Help peer volunteers to develop and plan for the future**  
   *See Section 10 on moving on*

9. **Monitor the impact, outcomes and outputs achieved by the volunteer**  
   *See Clinks’ Volunteering and Mentoring guide on Demonstrating Effectiveness*
In developing this guide Clinks consulted with providers of peer volunteering from both the voluntary and statutory sector to assess good practice. Clinks has been able to capture some of the essential ingredients for a quality peer volunteering service. The feedback from this consultation has enabled us to bring together the following table which contains an outline of the type of skills and expertise an organisation might want to develop.

Throughout this guide we have endeavoured to address these aspects of good practice and provide more information, advice and guidance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR A PEER VOLUNTEERING SERVICE</th>
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<td><strong>Develop specific staff skills and expertise</strong></td>
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<table>
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<th>Essential ingredients</th>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership development (continued)</td>
<td>✗ Understand partners’ points of view – take time to understand partners’ expectations, and any constraints they may be working under.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✗ Understand cultural differences – VCS organisations will often have a different working culture to those in the statutory and private sectors. Partnerships require a flexible approach, and VCS organisations should be ready to judge when it is appropriate to challenge aspects of organisational culture, and where it is not.</td>
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<td>✗ Focus on solutions – Partnership working can often involve negotiation and compromise. Try to highlight the issues you face and then look for positive solutions.</td>
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<td>✗ Agree working practices – Sign a Service Level Agreement with key partners that spells out the roles and responsibilities of all parties. This document should outline how the project will be delivered, what the role of the peer volunteers will be, and which service users are eligible for support.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Recruitment and selection</th>
<th>Good practice in recruitment and selection of peer volunteers lends a project credibility, quality and sustainability. Recruitment and selection procedures should be:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✗ Clear – ensure that all partners understand how candidates are to be identified and selected, and what they are to do.</td>
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<td>✗ Open – Have clear eligibility criteria for roles, and ensure both that candidates are aware of these and that staff recruiting peer volunteers follow them.</td>
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<td>✗ Individual – Assess candidates’ suitability for a given role on a case-by-case basis. Organisations may have several roles on offer that require different skills and/or expertise.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✗ Skills-focused – Screen candidates to ensure they have the necessary skills for the role they are applying for.</td>
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<td>✗ Supportive – Peer volunteers are giving their time and often hope to develop their skills if successful in their application. Be prepared to identify and develop potential. For example, a candidate with the right personal qualities and motivation, but who lacks experience or technical skills, may prove an excellent candidate if their training needs are identified and met from the beginning.</td>
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<td>✗ Firm – All services will have some eligibility criteria which are non-negotiable. It is important to identify which these are, and to de-select candidates who do not meet them.</td>
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<td>✗ Responsive – Give candidates regular feedback during the recruitment and selection process.</td>
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<tr>
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| Training | Quality training is an essential ingredient in any peer service. It allows the service provider to ‘skill up’ their volunteers to deliver a specific role whilst also continuously assessing the candidate’s ability to undertake that role.   

It is important to assess training needs on an individual basis. If you have a structured programme that focuses on drug abuse, for example, then training will be specifically geared towards that aspect of support. However, if you have a more informal programme that provides non-specialist advice then a volunteer will require training that is more generic, and possibly less intensive.  

Trainers should always be experienced or qualified to train adults. It is important that training is delivered professionally and of a high quality.  

While eligibility criteria are used to broadly assess someone’s suitability for a specific role, training allows organisations to observe a candidate’s actual ability to provide the service in question. Consideration of the following points is important in developing a training programme:  

- **Comprehensiveness** – Training should cover all the skills necessary to perform the role in question.  

- **Organisation** – Stipulate when the courses will be run and how many people can be trained at any one time (15 people maximum per course is considered standard)  

- **Staffing** – Have two experienced trainers present at training courses. This allows you to both deliver the training and observe the behaviour and progress of candidates. If this is not possible, consider having other ‘observers’ at training courses who can identify how candidates are responding to the training.  

- **Progression** – Try and run training over a number of sessions to allow candidates to learn, adapt and progress  

- **Assessment** – Candidates should know that the training course is part of the selection process and that they are being observed throughout to assess their ability to perform the service in question.  

- **Supportive** – If observation of the candidates uncovers problematic behaviour, trainers should look to address and overcome these issues in one-to-one sessions, rather than making an immediate judgement that that person is unsuitable.  

- **Accountable** – Keep clear records of observations made in the training sessions and attempts to address any ‘problematic behaviour’ |
Volunteer peer support.

Once an organisation has selected volunteers, it has a duty to manage them. This will include:

- **Induction** – Induction should be appropriate to a volunteer’s level of involvement; this may be fairly basic in short-term or one-off volunteering projects. For volunteers with more regular involvement, induction should aim to prepare them fully for their role, and help them understand the criminal justice setting in which they will be volunteering.

- **Advice and guidance** – Volunteers should have access to guidance and advice when needed, for example if they encounter difficult situations with the service’s users, or if they need advice from a professional about how to resolve a problem.

- **Supervision** – This should always include one-to-one private supervision sessions, but may also take the form of group supervision, mentoring, or buddying schemes.

- **Ongoing training** – Volunteer managers should ensure that ad hoc training is available to help volunteers fulfil their responsibilities where issues arise. Supervision meetings, whether individually or in groups, can be a fruitful arena to discuss if there is anything peer volunteers are finding difficult, and how it might be addressed.

- **Communication** – Peer volunteers should have a regular and reliable means of contact with their manager.

- **Progression** – Peer volunteers should be helped to plan for their future. Volunteer managers should be aware of their volunteers’ long-term objectives, and should leave time in supervision meetings to support peer volunteers in setting and reviewing interim goals.

- **Recognition** – Peer volunteers often make rapid and significant progress, and their achievements should be recognised through individual praise, group supervisions, or awards ceremonies.

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| **Volunteer management** | Once an organisation has selected volunteers, it has a duty to manage them. This will include:  
  - **Induction** – Induction should be appropriate to a volunteer’s level of involvement; this may be fairly basic in short-term or one-off volunteering projects. For volunteers with more regular involvement, induction should aim to prepare them fully for their role, and help them understand the criminal justice setting in which they will be volunteering.  
  - **Advice and guidance** – Volunteers should have access to guidance and advice when needed, for example if they encounter difficult situations with the service’s users, or if they need advice from a professional about how to resolve a problem.  
  - **Supervision** – This should always include one-to-one private supervision sessions, but may also take the form of group supervision, mentoring, or buddying schemes.  
  - **Ongoing training** – Volunteer managers should ensure that ad hoc training is available to help volunteers fulfil their responsibilities where issues arise. Supervision meetings, whether individually or in groups, can be a fruitful arena to discuss if there is anything peer volunteers are finding difficult, and how it might be addressed.  
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  - **Recognition** – Peer volunteers often make rapid and significant progress, and their achievements should be recognised through individual praise, group supervisions, or awards ceremonies. |
| **Risk management** | Any project that supports offenders needs to carefully identify and minimise the risks that both the service users and service providers can face. Some key principles in assessing and managing risk are as follows:  
  - **Full risk assessment** – A robust risk assessment will ensure the safety of the service user and the peer-supporter. This can include working alongside other protocols such as MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) when supporting people who pose a high risk to themselves or the public.  
  - **Individualisation** – Not all volunteers or all situations involve the same levels of risk. A case-by-case approach should be taken to assess what the risks are for any given individual working in a specific situation. |

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<td>Risk management (continued)</td>
<td>✦ Evidence-based practice – Assess risk based on all the relevant information. This will usually involve working alongside statutory partners and developing data-sharing protocols</td>
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<td>✦ Monitoring - Closely monitor the service user and service provider’s activity for any changes in behaviour, attitude or personal circumstance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✦ Supervision – Ensure that regular one-to-one and group supervision sessions are held with peer volunteers</td>
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<td>✦ Ongoing review – Risk assessments should be reviewed regularly.</td>
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<td>Referrals and matching</td>
<td>Clearly define how referrals onto your project will be made. This will have to be worked out in detail with partners and supported by evidence as to local need. Some key principles to bear in mind are:</td>
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<td>✦ Service user criteria – Have clear criteria as to who can/will be offered support</td>
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<td>✦ Methods of referral – Establish clear referral routes onto the project</td>
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<td>✦ Statutory partner liaison – Prison or Probation partners must confirm that the offender is eligible for peer support under their offender management criteria.</td>
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<td>Service user involvement</td>
<td>All services should, wherever possible, involve their service users in order to plan new services, understand the impact of existing services, and improve the organisation’s engagement with its client group. Clinks in partnership with Revolving Doors Agency produced a guide on service user involvement which outlines different approaches and tools that could be adopted to ensure quality engagement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation is vital to understanding the impact an organisation has on its service users and whether or not those services are of benefit to the target client group. There are two main reasons why an organisation should conduct robust monitoring and evaluation. Firstly, it can help an organisation identify what works well and what change or improvements the service might bring about. This will help organisations to target their resources efficiently to meet the needs of their service users, and provide the best possible support for their volunteers.</td>
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Secondly, the information collected through regular monitoring and evaluation will help organisations to report on success to stakeholders, including funders, and to attract further funding. It will also demonstrate that the organisation in question learns from its experience in order to develop and improve.

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Working in partnership.

in this section:

- What should you discuss with your partners?  
- Developing a Service Level Agreement  
- Case study: Shannon Trust
Volunteer peer support.

Currently there isn’t a consistent approach to involving offenders or ex-offenders in the Criminal Justice System. Neither the VCS nor the statutory sector agree on a common approach, although there are good examples of where it is working well. This has led to different approaches towards peer-to-peer services. The approach of individual prisons is likely to vary, and probation trusts will have different policies and procedures as to how, when, or if those with criminal records may become peer supporters. Local partnerships with the relevant statutory bodies will therefore be essential to the success of any peer-to-peer project. The delivery organisation must have a clear approach as to how it wants to deliver a peer-to-peer service, but must also be aware that negotiation and flexibility are key to making that service a reality.

For these reasons an organisation setting out on the journey of developing a peer support programme will need to have built relationships with its partners and clearly mapped out how the service will operate.

What should you discuss with your partners?

Security and risk assessment

Confirm what security checks candidates must complete
Most organisations will require a CRB check for volunteers, but statutory agencies may require further checks. Be clear on what checks need to be done, how they are to be completed, who is responsible for their completion and how long they usually take so that the candidates can be informed of a likely time-frame within which their security checks will be completed. Ensure that a transparent process is in place so that candidates can be made aware of why they’ve been de-selected due to their security checks (where appropriate).

Be clear about your partners’ eligibility criteria for peer volunteers
Different service settings and service providers are likely to have different eligibility criteria. If a project is recruiting ex-offenders to support people within a prison, or under probation supervision, the partners will need to decide jointly on eligibility criteria for people who want to become volunteers. For example, a Probation Trust may decide that all peers recruited as volunteer mentors must have been crime-free for two years since the end of their last sentence, this is not a statutory requirement but has been implemented in some areas.

Clarify what level of access a peer supporter will have to service users
When planning how a service is to be delivered all parties need to know what level of access the offender or ex-offender will have to their service users. A prison may put restrictions on the movement of ex-offenders within a prison, for example by restricting or refusing access to keys. This will influence how and where services are delivered.

Recruitment, training and selection

Decide upon the most practical and accessible way to recruit candidates
In different service settings there will be varying ways in which partners can work together to recruit candidates for peer-support. For example, prison officers might suggest candidates for a Samaritans Listener programme, or a probation officer might recommend a volunteering opportunity to someone coming to the end of their licence. It is good practice to openly recruit for volunteers and allow for equality of opportunity; adverts, flyers, and application forms should be readily available to all. Work with partners...
to ensure that opportunities are clearly displayed, the service is understood, partners are willing and able to promote the volunteering opportunities, and that the application process is as simple as possible.

Make clear what training will be delivered, by whom, and how

All parties should be clear and in agreement on the training required to fulfil the role in question. It might be important for partners to be involved in the training to ensure that all the required skills are given to trainees. For example, if you were involving peer mentors in a probation service setting then those mentors would need to have a clear understanding of how to support an offender through their licence, how to meet the requirements of that licence, and what would constitute a breach of the licence.

A process for jointly assessing candidates’ suitability for the role

At all stages of the selection process (initial application, interview, risk assessments, and through training) it is advisable to involve partner organisations. This could mean involving a member of staff from one of the partner organisations to co-facilitate a volunteer training programme, and help assess a candidate’s suitability for the role. It could also involve joint meetings to assess initial applications from potential volunteers, or an agreement about which partner organisations should be represented at an initial interview. This joint assessment of candidates will improve everyone’s confidence in the selection process and the quality of the chosen candidates.

Setting goals and measuring success

Identify a target client group

Working alongside partner organisations should help to identify a suitable client group. This will include accessing relevant data to analyse need and inform who the service should support, what services it will deliver, what the outcomes will be and why the service is needed. This allows the service to set clear aims, show exactly how it will be delivered, and identify what outcomes to measure.

Set clear monitoring and evaluation procedures

It is important to agree how success will be measured, setting clear and achievable measures that everyone can work towards. Monitoring systems and evaluation procedures should be agreed within the partnership and not developed separately. This is especially true where the service user is under the care of a statutory agency such as a Prison or Probation. Statutory agencies will hold information about service users, such as previous offences, their progression into employment, or re-conviction data. This information may be of real significance and help an organisation to assess its wider impact. Partnerships will need to negotiate what information will, or can, be shared, how it would be shared, ensuring that data protection and confidentiality procedures are upheld in order to protect the service user.
Developing a Service Level Agreement

After partnerships have had a full range of discussions they will often develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that set out clear working protocols and procedures. An example of an SLA can be found in Appendix 3 and can be used to structure a local SLA.

CASE STUDY: SHANNON TRUST

David Ahern is the Chief Executive of Shannon Trust and oversees the Shannon Trust Reading Plan (Toe by Toe). Since 2001 Shannon Trust has provided copies of the Toe by Toe manual to prisons free of charge to “inspire prisoners who can read to teach those who can’t, through one to one peer support”.

The Reading Plan has supported teams of volunteers who work closely with prison staff. Every prison has an appointed ‘facilitator’ who is responsible for programme delivery. ‘Facilitators’ are characterised by their passion to address poor literacy in prisons and come from different departments; chaplaincies, libraries, workshops, the education department and wing staff – they are all volunteers in their own right.

David said, “When we started out the Prison Service was not tapping into the resource of literate prisoners who wanted to do something constructive.” The Reading Plan now runs in 154 establishments including Immigration Removal Centres and Juvenile establishments.

Shannon Trust has some 1,500 trained prisoner mentors who deliver the reading plan and over 200 prison staff who act as ‘facilitators’. It is sometimes described as being ‘viral’ because trained prisoner mentors take their reading manuals from prison to prison to help non-readers.

However, David stressed that the programme struggles without the drive and commitment of prison staff and active support from Prison Governors. “We are an enabling charity, not a delivery organisation. We are a ‘coalition of the willing’ that relies on the co-operation and support of the prison estate.”

When Prison Officers and staff actively support peer delivered learning the Reading Plan can flourish in the most challenging environments. The need for partnership working is also helping to secure growth of the Reading Plan, “We receive support from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), encouraging Governors to back the project and are currently investigating with NOMS how officer support for peer mentoring can be embedded in officer training.”
Recruiting peer volunteers.

in this section:

Recruiting peer volunteers
Volunteer peer support.

Recruiting peer volunteers

Different organisations will be recruiting peer supporters in a variety of ways. Some may be volunteers in prison supporting each other; others may be people with spent convictions supporting people under probation supervision. The great diversity of service settings means it is worth developing recruitment policies and procedures to reflect that setting.

For instance, recruiting people in prison to provide peer support will require close partnership with the prison to ensure that candidates are aware of the opportunity and are able to apply. In the community you may be looking for the Probation Service to highlight people on licence who are interested in providing peer-support. You may also find that they are able to help with recruitment, for example by publicising the scheme, or by referring interested candidates. On the other hand you may be recruiting ex-offenders from the community who are no longer in contact with the Criminal Justice System. In that instance, the organisations will need to employ more traditional recruitment techniques, by advertising opportunities locally through volunteer centres – on www.do-it.org – through the local and/or national press, or through social networking websites such as local forums or professional networks such as the Clinks Network®.

There are specific organisations that support service users who have criminal convictions, such as User Voice® and Unlock®. There may also be the possibility that local agencies can support each other to develop a volunteer base. It may be that such agencies will be willing to refer their service users to volunteering opportunities as part of their rehabilitation. If you are looking for services in your area you can check on Clinks’ Working with Offenders Directory®.

Depending on the project that is being delivered, the criteria employed to recruit peer supporters will also vary. You should develop your selection criteria wherever possible with criminal justice agencies to ensure that those people who are recruited will be eligible to undertake the tasks required of them.

Organisations will need to develop acceptance criteria for peers who apply to volunteer. These will depend on what your service is, where it is being delivered, and the requirements of partner organisations. For example, you might want to ask whether the candidate:

- Has direct experience of the issues that service users face – these might include experience of imprisonment, community punishments, drug addiction, homelessness, long-term unemployed, family breakdown
- Has the skills and qualities needed to offer peer support – some of the qualities include persistence, resourcefulness, good listening skills, and a commitment to helping others
- Has committed offences that might bar them from working with a specific client group or in a particular environment – some people may be inappropriate to work with, for example, children or women due to their previous offences.

5. The Clinks Network is an online resource for sharing information and starting debate on important issues: www.clinks.ning.com
7. Unlock: www.unlock.org.uk
Selecting peer volunteers.

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Selecting peer volunteers

A good selection process will look at the suitability of an individual to fulfil the role as well their capability to do the role in question. This will support organisations to identify whether a candidate is suitable for a given volunteer placement.

A good selection process will include the following elements:

- Widely advertised volunteering opportunities
- Clear description of the volunteer role
- A simple application process
- Easy to understand selection criteria
- Applications assessed on the basis of the selection criteria
- Interviews with applicants to further assess their suitability
- Appropriate vetting and security checks
- Quality training that assesses an applicant’s motivation, ability and suitability for the volunteer role
- Support for individuals to progress through the training
- Regular and clear feedback for applicants whether or not they are successful in being selected.

A clear set of selection criteria for filtering applications will need to be developed for each project, and will vary to a large extent depending on the service setting and the role of the volunteers.

It is important to think of the selection criteria as just the start of the longer process of selecting a suitable candidate. The way candidates respond to and engage with the training will reveal more about their motivation and their ability to undertake the role in question (see page 34 for more information on training). Further to this vetting and security checks may prevent a candidate from working in a particular setting or with a particular client group (see page 30 for more information on vetting and security checks).

The flowchart on page 27 has been adapted from materials supplied by The Prince’s Trust who provide practical and financial support to people aged 13-30 who have been struggled at school, been in care, are long-term unemployed or have offended. The flowchart sets out their volunteer recruitment process for a mentoring service that recruits volunteers with previous convictions to support people in prison.

9. The Prince’s Trust: www.princes-trust.org.uk
Peer volunteer selection flowchart

Meeting for potential volunteers
- Clearly outline eligibility criteria
- Explain applicants will not be active until CRB-cleared (3-9 months’ time)

Interested applicants submit application

Eligible applicants invited to interview
Questions asked about offending

Vetting procedures commenced
(CRB, Prison Security)

Training for volunteers
Applicants still being assessed during training

Receive vetting and security checks
Approving/rejecting applicant for role

Applicant can now be confirmed as active
Volunteer peer support.

The SOS Gangs Project is run by the St Giles Trust, and trains young people on a six month course to gain an accredited Level 3 qualification in Information, Advice and Guidance. After this they can apply for volunteer positions with the St Giles Trust, mentoring others who want to break the cycle of reoffending.

Junior Smart, the project’s Team Leader, says that training has a range of positive effects. “A good peer mentor has a range of hard and soft skills, and you can’t teach all of them. But for us the training process gives young people the chance to gain a worthwhile qualification (NVQ level 3 in Advice and Guidance) and to build confidence – if they see the course through, it proves they’ve got sticking power. It also lets us see whether they are suitable to become volunteers for St Giles in the longer term. They’ve got to have personal experience of the issues they’ll be working with and they need passion and a willingness to learn. But the course teaches other important practical issues, like maintaining confidentiality. While they are on it, we can see whether they are persistent and resourceful. So it is good for them, as much as for us, because it builds confidence and shows potential.”

CASE STUDY: SOS GANGS PROJECT
in this section:

Vetting and security clearance

Vetting and security clearance.
Vetting and security clearance

All employees and volunteers working with vulnerable adults and children will need to undergo vetting and security checks to minimise the risk to the service user. Risk assessments should also aim to minimise the risk to the volunteer who might themselves be considered a vulnerable adult. The type of vetting and security checks that will need to be undertaken will vary between service settings: prisons with different security categories, for example; a probation hostel; or in the community alongside probation offender managers.

The information in this section has been produced by the National Offender Management Service but is subject to change and we recommend that organisations keep up to date with changes in the law regarding the vetting of people who wish to work or volunteer with vulnerable adults. Changes to this process can be tracked through the Home Office10 or through the Ministry of Justice11. There are also several organisations which aim to identify what these changes mean for volunteers and those with prior criminal convictions.

Volunteering England brief their members and the wider Voluntary and Community Sector on the impact of future changes to vetting practices. To be kept up to date visit the Volunteering England website12.

Unlock, the national association of reformed offenders, inform people with prior convictions about the practical impact of vetting and other Criminal Record checks on certain employment opportunities and volunteering roles. Their online forum offers a valuable resource for organisations, as well as people with prior convictions, to ask questions about their own circumstances. This can help people to understand when they may need to disclose information about past criminal convictions and what activities or opportunities they may be barred from undertaking because of their criminal record. For more information visit the Unlock website13.

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) oversees the policies that direct what vetting procedures and security checks are necessary when supporting people with criminal convictions. Security checks are undertaken for a number of reasons. It is important to be aware that these are applied to all employed staff in the Prison and Probation service as well as to anyone wanting to work or volunteer in these service settings. The reasons for, and operation of, these checks is explained below. The checks are carried out for a number of reasons:

- For the safety and security of the staff, fellow workers and prisoner;
- For the employee/volunteer’s personal safety;
- To ensure NOMS do not allow individuals into prisons and NOMS locations that may pose a risk to other staff and workers as well as prisoners;
- To ensure compliance with legal requirements on the right to work in the United Kingdom and the protection of children.

All external organisations working in a NOMS setting are required to complete security checks to varying degrees. The level of clearance required

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13. Unlock: www.unlock.org.uk
is determined by the setting in which they will be working (the security category of the prison, working in the community, or in a Probation hostel), the level of their interaction with service users (frequent or less frequent), and the method of communication with the service user (telephone, letter, face-to-face). There will either be a pre-prescribed level of security clearance for a specific role, or a risk assessment will be carried out by the appropriate manager to determine the right vetting level.

It may be the case that the peer-to-peer role being developed is a new role and that the service (Prison, Probation, Police, or in the Courts) hasn’t come across a similar role before. In this case it is possible that they will not have a clear idea of what the appropriate vetting level is for the peer volunteers. Many Voluntary and Community Sector organisations describe the need to negotiate with the aforementioned services to agree the appropriate security clearance for someone with a criminal record.

Once the vetting level has been established guidance should be agreed which could form part of a ‘vetting pack’ specific to peer volunteers. Below we have provided some examples of what security checks could be undertaken and what information they seek to obtain.

**Standard Check**

The need for a Standard Check is determined through local risk assessment and is most frequently applied to short term roles where an external organisation is involving a volunteer to undertake a specific task.

A Standard Check consists of:

* Confirmation of identity
* Confirmation of entitlement to work in the United Kingdom
* Criminal Convictions check (spent and unspent convictions).

**Enhanced Check**

An Enhanced Check is required for anyone intending to work within a prison establishment. This includes people who are recruited as prison staff or anyone who will be working or volunteering in a prison establishment. An Enhanced Check consists of:

* Confirmation of identity
* Proof of current address
* Confirmation of entitlement to work in the United Kingdom
* Criminal Convictions check (spent and unspent convictions)
* Personal Reference from a counter-signatory
* A Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check for those working with children aged under 18 years
* Qualifications where appropriate
* Professional Registration where appropriate.

**Counter Terrorism Check (CTC)**

A CTC is carried out where a building or site is considered to be at serious risk of terrorist attack and also where information is held which may be of use to terrorists or those whose work involves unrestricted access to certain government or commercial establishments. It is the minimum requirement for working in the High Security Prison estate, Governing Governors, Deputy Governors and Chaplains. The CTC consists of an Enhanced Check, as above, as well as additional checking by the Security Services.
Volunteer peer support.
Training peer volunteers.

in this section:

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Training provides vital information and guidance for volunteers and helps them to ‘hit the ground running’, as well as making the volunteer feel valued. Additionally, it is a chance for the organisation to observe candidates in a safe environment, and thereby assess their suitability and capability for the role in question.

Clinks have produced two train-the-trainer guides on supporting volunteers in prison and volunteering with offenders in custody which provide an overview of volunteer training. Although these are not specific to peer volunteers, they are still useful to an organisation developing its volunteer training course. You can find more information on the Clinks website14.

Basic training

The type of training delivered will vary depending on the service that volunteers are being trained to do. For that reason there are numerous aspects of training listed in this section which may not be relevant for certain services. It is important to tailor a training course to the needs of the volunteers and be able to clearly articulate why it is they are undertaking the training. This will be especially true of specialist training on, for example, drug and alcohol awareness, mental health awareness, benefit and debt advice, or family/parenting support.

There are however some basic areas of training that will likely be suitable to most new volunteers involving peer-to-peer services. We have provided a list below of the basic areas of training for a peer volunteer (for example an advisor, listener, mentor or befriender):

**Understanding the ethos and mission of the delivery organisation**
Making sure that candidates know and understand the ethos of the delivery organisation and are happy to progress its overall mission.

**Understanding the project aims and objectives**
Providing a clear overview of the service that is to be provided and what it seeks to achieve. This would include the role that the volunteer will undertake and what their contribution to the overall project will be.

**Professional conduct**
Raising the awareness of policies and procedures that the volunteers must adhere to and basic aspects of professional conduct. These could include adherence to equal opportunities, an opposition to discrimination, maintaining confidentiality, reporting serious incidents, and the expectations surrounding conduct towards partner organisations.

**Maintaining appropriate boundaries in a one-to-one relationship or group setting**
Ensure that peer volunteers have clear guidelines on professional and physical boundaries and understand why they must be upheld.

**Attitudes and values towards crime and justice**
Supporting positive attitudes towards issues of crime and justice, such as understanding the impact of crime on victims and society, being non-judgemental towards people who have committed particular offences, maintaining a positive attitude towards rehabilitation.

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Active listening skills
Supporting candidates to develop good quality active listening skills so that they can capture and understand the messages the service user is communicating, either verbally or non-verbally, clearly or vaguely to support better relations between the volunteer and service user.

Case management and action planning
Foster a clear understanding among volunteers of their role in assessing the service user’s needs and identifying solutions to those issues. This could include how the volunteer will manage their time in order to provide an appropriate level of support, or how and when to end a relationship with a service user.

Reporting and evaluating contact with service users
Explaining the paperwork associated with reporting on outputs and outcomes; generating an understanding of why outputs and outcomes data is needed, how best to collect it and what the data will be used for.

Understanding the issues faced by the client group
Each service will have different issues it is seeking to address and reasons why they are important. It will be necessary that the volunteers understand those issues; what the causes are as well as some of the solutions that can support individuals.

Handling difficult situations and appropriate responses
Many volunteers will come across difficult situations and should be equipped with an understanding of how to cope with them. Many organisations use examples from past experience of issues that can arise and how they were addressed.

Understanding the need for ongoing training, support and supervision
The delivery organisation is responsible for ensuring that the peer volunteers have all the information they need to undertake their role. For this they need to be kept up-to-date on new organisational policies, procedures, and other aspects of the service that will affect them. In addition it should be made clear the basis on which ongoing support and supervision of volunteers will take place, stipulating both the volunteer’s requirement to attend supervision and the organisation’s responsibility to arrange supervision and offer support where possible.

Signposting clients to relevant specialist services
Where appropriate, volunteers should be aware of other agencies to which they are expected to signpost service users, and how to do that. Make sure volunteers are aware of the processes and procedures involved in referring a service user to a different service provider.
Volunteer peer support.

Prison Listeners provide emotional support to their fellow prisoners who may be struggling to cope, are having a difficult time or who are just feeling low. They give the time and space that allows people to speak freely about how they are feeling – no questions, no judgement and in complete confidence.

Samaritans train some of their own volunteers to go into prisons, where they then train prisoners to become Listeners. The scheme has expanded since its beginnings in HMP Swansea in 1991, and now operates in most prisons in England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as about half of the prisons in the Republic of Ireland.

Prisoners can apply to become Listeners, and the selection process is run by Samaritans. Some prisoners may be refused by the prison on security grounds, but otherwise all applications are passed to Samaritans and those who are successful go on a Listener Selection Day prior to being accepted for training.

Maria Foster’s role is to support the work of Samaritans Volunteers who go into prisons to select and train prison Listeners. “It’s very, very important to find out whether someone is suitable to work as a Listener. The qualities we look for in selection are the ability to listen, and to do so non-judgementally. Being able to keep confidentiality is also critical. We look for people who don’t reach snap judgments, and who can listen actively, because that, rather than offering advice, is their role.

We don’t collect figures on how many potential Listeners don’t make it through the selection process, but not everyone does. You occasionally get the impression that when someone is volunteering, it’s all about them and not about helping others. That isn’t right for the Listener scheme. We might also de-select someone if issues arise during the training – it’s an intense course of eight modules delivered over between three and eight weeks, so we get to know the candidates pretty well.

“But most of the potential problems emerge during the selection day, which is a critical part of preparing prisoners to deliver the service.”

**CASE STUDY: PRISON LISTENERS**

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“But most of the potential problems emerge during the selection day, which is a critical part of preparing prisoners to deliver the service.”
Certain services may require the candidate to complete a specific training course in order to deliver the service in question. For example St Giles Trust’s Peer Power Programme utilises the knowledge of peers who have experienced housing difficulties to help others in a similar situation, and as part of this course the peer volunteers study for an NVQ level 3 qualification in information, advice and guidance. This training develops and accredits skills that volunteers will use while at St Giles, but also provides a qualification for the future after they leave.

There is a vast array of specialist training that organisations might want to consider. Some is essential to service delivery, some may be aimed at providing the volunteer with a qualification; ideally, the training modules selected should do both. Specialist training could include:

- Drug and alcohol treatment
- Mental health awareness
- Housing advice
- Employment, training and education advice
- Accessing state benefits
- Debt advice
- Health and well-being / life skills
- Supporting offenders’ families and children
- Working with ‘high risk of harm’ offenders.

Consider whether additional training could be delivered and think who might be able to deliver it. You might want to approach specialist organisations to find out what sort of training is available, for example visit Homeless Link, Drugscope, Mind, Action 4 Advocacy, Women’s Resource Centre, Citizens Advice, or other local specialist organisations like local Housing Associations or Drug and Alcohol Teams.

Training may be an ongoing process for many volunteers, depending on their roles. This is especially true if information, guidance or procedures change over time, or if the volunteer’s role changes. It’s a good idea to record the training courses that individual volunteers have attended (along with the dates), as this will help with identifying any training gaps or refresher courses that may be needed.

Refresher courses can be shorter but are essential to support adherence to good practice and any changes to working practices that may have been implemented since their initial training. These can be run at regular intervals (for instance every 12 months) for existing volunteers. Be sure to use supervision meetings to consult volunteers about what training needs they have identified for themselves; support these where possible.

Remember that any training should support candidates/volunteers to succeed and progress. Make sure that you recognise achievements with qualifications and/or certificates. Where people struggle with training ensure they have the best possible support to succeed.

Training as part of the selection process

Training allows organisations to monitor a candidate’s appropriateness for a role. Trainers should be able both to deliver the training and observe how participants respond to the different modules. We would advise that the trainers are experienced in training, or qualified to train, so that they can perform this role effectively.

Trainers may find that a candidate is ineligible because of their attitude or beliefs. This could include hostility towards people who have committed certain offences (perhaps sexual offences), they may be prejudiced against people with mental health issues, they might be unwilling to work with members of the opposite sex, or they might voice racist opinions. It is important to make candidates aware that being invited to a training course does not automatically mean they will be selected to become a peer volunteer.

Develop methods to track how candidates respond to the training course, and ensure that their positive and negative responses are noted down, recorded and saved. This information is vital to provide feedback to the candidates as they undergo training as well as identifying where people may need additional support to succeed. Finally, this information allows an organisation to be clear about why it has selected or de-selected someone for a volunteer role.

CASE STUDY: SUSS IT OUT

West Yorkshire Probation Trust secured funding through NOMS for a pilot project, the Suss It Out peer support scheme, to enable service users subject to a Community Order with a Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) to train and practice as peer supporters.

West Yorkshire Probation Trust commissioned Turning Point (their treatment provider for DRRs) to deliver the pilot. The DRR manager is Simone Burden, Senior Probation Officer. She told Clinks that the pilot enabled service users who were currently on DRRs to undertake a ten week training programme, accredited through Bradford College. At the end of their training they were provided with opportunities to support the delivery of DRR, undertaking such tasks as running an induction group, and providing ongoing support to other service users.

“We needed to ensure that the peer supporters who were also subject to a DRR were supported throughout the pilot and their recovery and that the elements of the DRR that they were involved with such as induction groups were also supported by staff. We already have a culture of service user involvement within the DRR and ensure that all our service users are supported with this. Service user involvement has clear benefits for both service users and staff, such as better communication, better service delivery, increased compliance and the likelihood of successful completions of statutory orders. Having good relationships, good communication, and a level of trust between partners and service users was a real help here and enabled us to see some positive developments within DRR.”
Support and supervision.

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- Identify a single point of contact 40
- Assess what support is needed 41
- Choose the most appropriate form of supervision 42
- Case study: Patient Involvement within a Prison Healthcare Setting 43
Volunteer peer support.

All volunteers need support and supervision and should have a named person to offer them support, guidance and to resolve any queries or concerns they may have. Some volunteers will require more help and support than others. The best way to find out if a volunteer requires support is to ask them. When involving offenders or ex-offenders as volunteers you are more likely to be working alongside people who have multiple and complex issues to address. For that reason a peer-to-peer service should plan for the possibility that more time than usual will be needed for supervision and ongoing development.

Be flexible

It is important the staff team are trained to identify areas of additional support as well as ensuring that regular supervision sessions are in place to address any issues. Organisations may additionally want to consider allowing paid staff the flexibility to offer one-to-one support at short notice to ensure that volunteers who have any urgent issues can be offered support in between regular supervision. These arrangements will be made more difficult in a secure setting, like a prison, where access is an issue, but may be easier in a community setting.

Identify a single point of contact

Always identify a single point of contact whom the volunteer can approach for support. This might, among other things, be the volunteer manager, the project co-ordinator, or a prison or probation officer with responsibility for volunteer management. It is important that support is readily available, flexible, and responsive as and when needed. As previously mentioned this will largely depend on the flexibility and accessibility of the environment within which the peer support service is operating.
Assess what support is needed

Some people may need extra training or ‘on the job’ coaching. Peer volunteers may lack confidence, and need reassurance that they are carrying out their roles correctly. Many of these issues can and should be addressed in one-to-one supervision. Supervision meetings are the best way of ensuring that volunteers get a chance to give and receive constructive feedback. Some volunteers may view supervision as an appraisal or performance review, so use an informal, volunteer-friendly approach. Reassure volunteers that supervision provides an opportunity for both parties to talk in private, without disruption, and that it is an opportunity for a volunteer to discuss their role and to ask questions.

Arrange a private space for the supervision meeting, and try to ensure that there won't be any disruptions. The questions you use in supervision sessions can be simple. Some of the questions used by voluntary sector organisations Clinks asked included:

Q What has gone well?
Q What hasn't gone so well?
Q Is there any support or training that you need?
Q Is the volunteering role meeting your needs and fulfilling your motivations for volunteering?
Q Are there any other tasks within the organisation you would like to do?

Encourage volunteers to raise problems or concerns at an early stage, before they grow into a bigger issue. At times volunteers may experience issues within their own lives which mean they need to step back from offering support for a while (eg family problems, illness, relapse). It is important to discuss these issues in a private and confidential manner with the volunteer and make a decision about whether they should take a break from the project.

Ensure that the volunteer is given clear feedback, and that they know that the organisation is pleased with their work. If there are problems with a volunteer’s work, it is important to raise them with the volunteer.
Choose the most appropriate form of supervision

Some organisations choose to employ a number of more informal types of support that complement normal supervision arrangements. These often take the form of group discussions or peer support to bring together volunteers to share their experiences. They could include:

- **Volunteer meetings** – less formal meetings that allow volunteers to get to know one another
- **Buddying schemes** – where a less experienced volunteer is supported on a regular basis by a volunteer with more experience
- **Group supervision** – allowing volunteers to share and discuss their experience
- **Peer review sessions** – feedback from other volunteers on progress and development.
CASE STUDY: PATIENT INVOLVEMENT WITHIN A PRISON HEALTHCARE SETTING

Anne Cowman set up the Patient Involvement Within a Prison Healthcare Setting project in 2008. It uses prisoner healthcare representatives to ensure that prisoners receive an equivalent standard of healthcare to that which they would receive in the community.

The project provides a means for them to participate in decision-making on healthcare in HMP Leeds, and took its lead from the idea of patient involvement in the wider NHS.

Prisoners who are selected as healthcare representatives have a dual role: firstly to advise other prisoners on healthcare that is available and secondly to participate in a prisoner patient forum that feeds back prisoner-patients’ concerns and ideas about the provision of healthcare.

“We have regular supervision meetings with the representatives, and I also try to meet each representative individually at least once a month. This is so we can talk about issues on the wings, find out whether there are any individuals who are causing the representatives concern, and to work out whether the representative feels able to deal with that person's needs. If they don’t, we can provide them with support.

“For example, in the vulnerable prisoners wing there are lots of prisoners over the age of 60. The healthcare representatives in that wing, they’ve got a bigger challenge – some of the prisoners they help need a lot more support, sometimes with care needs like mobility, shaving, washing – that kind of thing. So through the meetings, we realised that the representatives were taking on a significant role as carers that wasn’t what we had envisaged. We discussed it and said that we didn’t want them to feel that they had to do this only because they were representatives on the same wing as older prisoners.

“But they wanted to continue doing this kind of caring work, so we could move on to thinking about how we could support them. We brought in the prison’s disability liaison officer to ensure that we could do this properly and he helped arrange disability awareness training for the representatives. Now we’re considering arranging an accredited health and social care training course for them, so that they can gain a qualification.

“Fundamentally, the project’s not only about better healthcare, but also about giving prisoners opportunities for pro-social behaviour. And when you do that, when you empower someone, their confidence builds and their behaviour changes. You can see that from these representatives, who are not only negotiating on behalf of the prisoners with prison governors and NHS managers, but also finding they can respond to need in others as well.”
Volunteer peer support.
Risk assessment.

in this section:

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Risk assessments aim to minimise risks to the service user and service provider. In a peer-to-peer service both volunteers and service users can be vulnerable people and may even have a similar level of need for support. Assessing risk is therefore an important part of deciding whether the potential reward is worth pursuing or whether the risk is too high, and it will also help decide what the boundaries and supervision should be around a peer-support programme. Proper risk assessments are an essential part of service design.

The service provider or delivery organisation should conduct a risk assessment with all the available information. This will include risks associated with the individuals involved such as previous convictions, gang affiliations, and an understanding of their current situation and circumstances. It will include risks associated with the environment that volunteers are working in such as the risks of a peer volunteer meeting a client in their home or working in a high security prison setting. It will also include risks associated to the service provider such as whether it has the capacity to meet demand or reputational risks to the organisation if something were to go wrong.

For a peer service the delivery organisation will also want to consider what the risks associated with involving volunteers with criminal convictions are, for example the risk that they may re-offend or cause harm to service users by abusing their role as a peer volunteer for personal gain.

The aim of your risk assessment will then be to:

* Anticipate where, when and how risks might occur
* Minimise the likelihood of those risks occurring
* Mitigate against the damaging effects should something happen.

### Identifying risks

It is important to be aware that there are certain risks that could be unique to a ‘peer’ in the Criminal Justice System. These could include:

* A statutory assessment of the individual (e.g., Asset – young offenders assessment profile, or OASys – Offender Assessment System for adult offenders)
* Previous offences (data about previous convictions is held on the Police National Computer – PNC).
* Former criminal associates
* Former gang affiliations and/or rivalries
* Places or areas that need to be avoided
* Support needs of the peer volunteer.

In this section we have used existing guidance from Clinks members and other Voluntary Sector Organisations on how to conduct an effective risk assessment. The majority of the guidance is based on a risk assessment for a peer-to-peer mentoring service but can be applied to other services. For ‘service-wide’ risk assessment it will be important for service providers and their partners to jointly identify risks and propose solutions to minimise those risks.

Risk assessments will also need to be produced on a case-by-case basis. These should always be completed by a person competent in assessing risk and cover all risks that are significant and foreseeable including:

* The circumstances of the service user
* The circumstances of the peer-supporter
* Environmental factors, for example: appropriate places to meet a service user
* Unsuitable, unsafe or an unprepared ex-offender putting the person offering peer support at risk of harm
Volunteer peer support.

- Incompatibility of relationship resulting in breakdown
- Harm to either party during meetings.

There are always risks and responsibilities associated with arranging peer support for and by vulnerable people. These can be minimised by ensuring the service user and peer supporter are subject to:
- Clear eligibility criteria
- Rigorous selection process
- Security and vetting checks
- Assessments of need and personal circumstances
- Clear action planning undertaken with regular reviews
- Ensuring that professional boundaries are clearly understood
- Monitoring and feedback on meetings and other activities
- Regular contact with paid staff
- Regular review of risk assessments.

In addition to this you can minimise risk by providing the peer supporter with:
- Comprehensive training and induction
- Regular refresher training
- Specialist training, for example, working with vulnerable people
- Regular one-to-one supervision and appraisal.

Below is a list of some of the issues a provider will want to consider about the individual being offered peer support:
- Do they have any physical health issues – eg epilepsy, physical disability, diabetes
- Are they on any medication - when and how does this need to be taken?
- Do they have any mental health issues – are these being addressed?
- Do they have any learning/behavioural issues that might impact on how they interact with others?
- Do they have any history of substance abuse?
- Do they have any allergies that the mentor might need to be aware of?
- Do they have any history or violence towards workers or others?
- Have they displayed any issues towards the opposite gender or different ethnic backgrounds?
- Are they comfortable travelling to a meeting on their own?
- Are there any areas locally that they need to avoid, due to gang or other related issues?
- Where does their family live, where do they socialise - are these places best avoided?
- Do they have any history of storytelling or fantasising?
- What are their previous convictions - is there anything you might need to know more about?
Involving people in risk assessment

It is important to recognise the impossibility of planning for all eventualities. Risk assessment should seek to minimise and manage risk, rather than eradicating it. A volunteer or service user could do something totally unexpected, catching everybody off-guard. This implies that the risk assessment should be an open and ongoing process, evolving and developing as the service, its people, and its circumstances change. This means regularly re-assessing the risks to both service users and volunteers. Effective communication with key partners, service users and volunteers is essential.

Once risk is understood, it may be minimised. This should be done systematically, adapting the boundaries involved in the service so that its goals may be achieved practically but safely.

- **Talk to partners:** if a service user or volunteer is in custody or under probation supervision then make sure all parties communicate and exchange information on changes in behaviour, attitude, or circumstance that may affect that individual

- **Talk to service users:** by maintaining regular contact with service users, talking to them about how they are finding the service they receive and observing their behaviour can help to identify emergent risks and/or needs

- **Talk to volunteers:** use regular one-to-one and group supervision sessions to allow volunteers to raise any fears or concerns they may have, as well as identifying any risks they may pose to service users.

Minimising risk

Below are examples of the risk factors that have been identified by providers of peer-to-peer support in the CJS. The table shows how organisations would deal with identified risks both to the volunteer and the service user in order to minimise the potential for harm to either party. A similar resource should be developed locally to provide clear ways in which the risks associated with peer-to-peer services can be minimised. The following table is an example and is not intended to capture all the potential risk factors.
## MINIMISING RISK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Minimising the risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Unsuitable, unsafe or unprepared volunteer putting the person being offered peer support at risk of harm** | ✧ Recruitment, vetting and training  
✧ Regular supervision to ensure that unforeseen difficulties can be identified  
✧ Independent contact point  
✧ Training around the potential needs and vulnerability of service user  
✧ Preparation to explain expectations and boundaries  
✧ Quality recruitment and quality selection to ensure as close a match as possible to the role description and tasks  
✧ Referral and matching risk assessment to determine suitability of peer relationship in light of background information  
✧ Activity recorded at regular intervals  
✧ Have a clear exit strategy that informs the volunteer and service user why the relationship is being ended or put on hold  
✧ Develop a range of volunteering opportunities to ensure that less prepared volunteers can be matched to the most suitable volunteering opportunity |
| **Unsuitable unsafe or unprepared ex-offender putting the person offering peer support at risk of harm** | ✧ Referral and matching risk assessment to determine suitability of peer relationship in light of background information  
✧ Preparation to explain expectations and boundaries  
✧ Clear guidelines on practical aspects – such as approved meeting spaces or a lone-worker policy  
✧ Clear guidelines on sharing information, confidentiality and disclosure of criminal acts  
✧ Good training to prepare volunteers  
✧ Activity recorded at regular intervals  
✧ Complaints procedure available to volunteer |
| **Incompatibility of relationship resulting in breakdown**          | ✧ Referral and Matching procedure based on multiple sources of information and agreed by more than one member of staff  
✧ Gain a second opinion on suitability of match – perhaps from a partner organisation (Prison Service, Probation Service, Police)  
✧ Consideration of background information and referrers recommendation |

continues on page 50
Volunteer peer support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Minimising the risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incompatibility of relationship resulting in breakdown (continued)</td>
<td>✴ 3-way meeting between a relevant member of staff, volunteer and service user before the relationship is initiated and after the first interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Making sure there a compatibility of personal interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Having a number of volunteers from different backgrounds and with different skills in order to have a large pool of volunteers large enough for quality matching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Having a process for mediation/conflict resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Have a clear exit strategy that informs the volunteer and service user why the relationship is being ended or put on hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harm to either party during meetings</td>
<td>✴ Training and preparation about boundaries of role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Training on safe ‘contact’ and health and safety issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Training for mentors to deal with difficult situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Guidance on identifying and dealing with unacceptable behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Lone worker policy in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Review relationship regularly with mentor and mentee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Regular supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</td>
<td>✴ Clear understanding of when and what should be shared and reported to protect the vulnerable party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Quality vetting and security checks to assess a candidates suitability to volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Quality vetting and security checks to assess whether a service user should be supported by a volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Regular supervision and monitoring to identify, review and tackle any safeguarding issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ A clear safeguarding policy in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative press coverage leading to service disruption or closure</td>
<td>✴ Agree with local partners how to respond collectively to negative press coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Engage with the local press to provide positive case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Collect quality data on the positive outcomes of the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✴ Ensure volunteers and service users are given a voice to express how the service has supported them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mitigating risk

There may be occasions when things do go wrong and despite attempts to mitigate risk an incident can occur. Projects will need to plan for how they will respond to these incidents. A minor incident could include negative press coverage of a service and its use of peers as volunteers. To mitigate the damage that this press coverage could cause the project an organisation could have case studies and/or statistics that clearly show the benefits of the project. Using the same risks identified in the table above we have provided examples of how you might mitigate the effects of incidents in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Mitigating the risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Unsuitable, unsafe or unprepared volunteer putting the person being offered peer support at risk of harm | ✴ Suspend the peer support with immediate effect  
✴ Assess the reasons for the incident  
✴ Review the suitability of the peer volunteer  
✴ Provide additional training to support the volunteer  
✴ Change the role for the volunteer  
✴ End the relationship with the volunteer |
| Unsuitable unsafe or unprepared service user putting the person offering peer support at risk of harm | ✴ Suspend the peer support with immediate effect  
✴ Assess the reasons for the incident  
✴ Review the suitability of the service user for the project  
✴ Provide a different type of support  
✴ End the support for the service user |
| Incompatibility of relationship resulting in breakdown               | ✴ Suspend the peer support with immediate effect  
✴ Assess the reasons for the relationship breakdown separately with both parties  
✴ Establish whether or not the relationship can be salvaged  
✴ End the relationship |
| Harm to either party during meetings                                | ✴ Suspend the peer support with immediate effect  
✴ Assess the reasons for the incident  
✴ Explore whether or not the harm could have been avoided  
✴ Check whether or not policies and procedures were followed  
✴ Outline how services could be improved to avoid future harm to either party  
✴ Implement changes to service |
### Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

- Assess the reasons for the incident
- Explore whether or not the harm could have been avoided
- Check whether or not policies and procedures and appropriate safeguarding legislation were followed
- Explore whether further action needs to be undertaken
- Outline how services could be improved to avoid future harm to either party
- Implement changes to service

### Negative press coverage leading to service disruption or closure

- Communicate with partners and funders about the negative press coverage
- Undertake a re-active media approach to defend the local service utilising evidence of the positive outcomes of the project
- Address with partners how to avoid future negative press coverage
- Address with partners how to create positive press coverage
- Ensure partners and funders are still supportive of the project

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Volunteer peer support.
Volunteers moving on.

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- Volunteers who stay too long 55
- Case study: Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust 56
- When volunteers leave 56
- Giving references 57
- Exit interviews 58
Volunteering can help people to gain new skills and experience, and for some it can provide a stepping stone into paid employment or further education and training. When an organisation involves volunteers who are in custody or seeking to improve their employability it is vital that they are given the opportunity to learn new skills, gain qualifications and support their personal development. Where appropriate try to move someone on to employment or other volunteering, training or educational opportunities.

We suggest that organisations refer to Clinks’ Guide to Managing Volunteers16 (produced in collaboration with Volunteering England).

Supporting prisoners, offenders and ex-offenders to move on

Some organisations involving peer volunteers may structure their programmes so that volunteers are encouraged to develop new skills, build up social networks and gain confidence and self-esteem. They may take a proactive approach to helping volunteers find paid employment when the time comes for them to leave. Some may offer employment opportunities for their volunteers. Where organisations offer this support, they should ensure that there are sufficient resources to do so, so that all volunteers are treated fairly, consistently and equitably.

Where organisations are supporting peer volunteers it is helpful to try and ensure that the volunteer has a point of contact for advice on personal and career development. For example, when someone is released from prison back into the community they are often unable to continue in their volunteering role within the prison and may struggle to find a similar role in the community. If organisations working with prisoner volunteers are unable to find suitable volunteering opportunities, try and signpost them to the local Volunteer Centre. In community settings where volunteers are able to commit longer-term to a project it is good practice to be supporting them into diverse volunteering opportunities, other education or training and future employment.

Volunteers who stay too long

In some cases, a volunteer may join an organisation and remain with them for a number of years. Whilst this isn’t necessarily a bad thing, some volunteers may feel that their authority extends beyond their volunteering role. Where possible, such behaviour or attitudes should be dealt with during supervision sessions. If the behaviour persists, but isn’t enough to raise a complaint about the volunteer, then some options could include changing or adapting the volunteer’s role, developing a new role for them, or maybe placing them within a different part of the organisation. Finally, if all else fails, the volunteer manager may decide to encourage the volunteer to move on from the organisation. This needs to be dealt with tactfully, and may involve the volunteer manager arranging a supervision session or a review with the volunteer to discuss the following:

- The volunteer’s achievements during their time with the organisation
- What the volunteer might expect to gain from their volunteering in the future
- What the organisation can realistically offer the volunteer in the future
- How the volunteer’s needs may be better met elsewhere.

Ideally, the volunteer will recognise that if they have fulfilled their reasons for volunteering then it may be time for them to move on. If, however, this doesn’t happen then the volunteer manager may need to emphasise that the organisation can no longer offer the volunteer anything new or exciting, but that the volunteer has a wealth of knowledge and experience that would benefit another organisation. If there are local organisations that would really appreciate the volunteer’s help, then give the volunteer their details. Alternatively, give the volunteer the contact details for the local Volunteer Centre. Above all, remember to be kind, firm and polite when dealing with a delicate situation.

Details of local Volunteer Centres can be found at: www.volunteering.org.uk/finder
Volunteer peer support.

CASE STUDY: LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND PROBATION TRUST

David Gamble has worked since 2009 as a Service User Engagement Coordinator with the Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust. His post is part of the drug and alcohol rehabilitation programme run by the Trust itself from its office in Leicester.

The service is open to any provider in Leicester that wishes to refer clients; it has the entry requirement that service users have either been in treatment connected with their addictions, or that they have been in contact with the criminal justice system as a result of their addiction.

Peer support is woven all the way through the scheme and David says there are three main benefits:

- For service users, the use of peer mentors can bridge gaps that exist between staff and service users, as well as ensuring that support comes from someone with direct experience of the issues affecting them.

- For peer mentors, the mentoring itself is a good recovery tool, as well as giving them the chance to give something back and consolidate their recovery.

- For staff, peer mentors provide high-quality assistance, as well as a better understanding of the issues they are working with, and high-quality feedback on service design. It is also a morale boost to staff to have continued contact with former service users.

David is well-placed to be doing the work that he does, because he is himself a former service user and a peer mentor on the programme. He was on a rehabilitation order in 2008, at a time when the service was looking to develop its service user involvement. “I was asked to be part of the first peer mentor group,” he said. “I sensed that this was a chance to be a positive influence and role model, and to benefit other people in the same boat as me. I was happy to help and keen to help others. Before my conviction I had a window-cleaning business, but I had also started to think that I might want to do this as a new career, so it was a good opportunity.”

David started by participating in groups encouraging service users to engage and participate, and was particularly interested by the chance to debrief after sessions, because this aspect of the service was new, and there was the

When volunteers leave

It’s a good idea to have a written policy on how to say ‘thank you’ to volunteers when they leave the organisation, to ensure that all volunteers are treated fairly, equally and consistently. This will be especially helpful for other members of staff if a volunteer leaves whilst the volunteer manager is away for any reason. For instance, the organisation may decide to give the volunteer a ‘thank you’ card that other members of the organisation can sign, and/or a small commemorative gift. The volunteer could also be presented with a certificate to acknowledge their volunteering contribution.
Volunteer peer support.

Potential in some cases for resistance. “It was the first time that a group of peer mentors had been through the programme, and I felt that we had a lot of responsibility, a lot of ownership and input into the service. We bonded very well as a group, and that made the whole process flow easily.”

David told Clinks that he got a lot from the volunteering: a sense of purpose and ‘giving something back’; increasing confidence and self-esteem; and an overall good feeling coming from being involved in something that he was passionate about. David’s conviction meant that he lost his driving licence, and he therefore had to close his business.

By the time that he started the peer mentoring, he was already interested in working as a drug and alcohol treatment worker, and had enrolled on a foundation degree in Drug & Alcohol Counselling at the University of Leicester, but David says that the thought might not have become reality if he had not had the chance to be a peer mentor. “I wonder what would have happened without this opportunity; I don’t know if my interest in this kind of work would have solidified”.

Some people may regard this as a souvenir of the time they have spent with the organisation, whilst others may find a certificate a useful way of demonstrating the skills that they’ve learnt and developed whilst volunteering for the organisation.

Giving references

Volunteering can be a valuable source of experience, and is often a route into employment for many volunteers. One way of recognising a volunteer’s contribution to the organisation is to offer to give them a reference. This may be more applicable for volunteers who have been with the organisation long enough to understand their volunteering role and get the most out of it.
Exit interviews

It is good practice to conduct an exit interview when a volunteer decides to leave the organisation, as it is an opportunity for them to reflect on their role, what they have enjoyed, what has gone well and whether they would recommend any changes to the role. When volunteers indicate that they intend to leave the organisation, remember that they are free to come and go as they choose; unlike paid employees, volunteers do not have to serve a notice period.

Depending on the circumstances, some volunteers may simply telephone to say that they are unable to continue volunteering. Others may give a date that they intend to stop volunteering. It is always good to try and capture what outcomes have been achieved by the volunteer as a result of volunteering for your service. For example, being a peer mentor may have led to employment in a different social care setting, or it may have given them the confidence to go onto further education. Ensure that this information is captured in the exit interview so that positive outcomes can be celebrated and negative outcomes can lead to improvements in your service.

For further information on outcomes and demonstrating your effectiveness please download Clinks’ guide on Demonstrating Effectiveness.17

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Appendices.

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Appendix 2: Interview questions for ex-offenders offering peer support 61
Appendix 3: Example Memorandum of Understanding 63
Appendix 1: Example of role description for peer to peer services

Anticipated role duration and time commitment

* 6-month relationship for each peer relationship
* On average 2-4 hours per month per relationship, although the frequency of contact varies over the term of the engagement
* Expectation that each person will offer peer support to at least two people – taking on one initially and a second after 3 months
* Adhere to the reporting requirements
* Maintain regular contact and complete required reporting tasks.

Key tasks and responsibilities

* Attend induction and initial training course
* Attend ongoing training
* Confirm in writing that you have read and will adhere to the relevant policies and procedures such as Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Confidentiality agreement
* Undergo an annual review and a review at the end of each relationship
* Meet on a regular basis. Face-to-face contact is preferred
* Maintain regular and frequent contact with the first meeting being a face-to-face which involves a staff member. Then:
* For the first month at least 1 face to face meeting and 3 telephone calls/letter/emails
* In the next two months 1 face to face and 1 telephone call/letter/email per month
* In final two months 1 face-to-face/telephone call/letter/email per month
* Establish and maintain professional boundaries
* Provide encouragement and support; recognise and celebrate progress; help them to learn
* Where necessary, signpost to other services and sources of support
* Attend regular group meetings with staff and other volunteers
* Attend monthly one-to-one supervision with the contact person
* Willingness to undergo and satisfactorily obtain enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau and/or Independent Safeguarding Authority (or equivalent in Scotland or Northern Ireland)
* Inform the contact person if client/young person is at risk, or is a risk to others

Person specification

Essential

* Commitment to the aims and values of the organisation
* Understanding of the issues facing offenders
* Reliability
* Must have experience of prison
* Ability to relate to and empathise with offenders and their aspirations
* Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, especially listening skills
* Ability to be non-judgemental, self-aware, patient, understanding, flexible, positive and supportive
* Ability to challenge own assumptions and negativity.
**Appendix 2: Interview questions for ex-offenders offering peer support**

**Interviewer:** “On this project we are looking for ex-offenders who have experience of being in prison but who are now reformed and living crime free lives. During this interview we will ask you some questions about your offending history.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>GUIDANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  What, do you think, are the qualities needed when offering peer support?</td>
<td>eg: good listener, reliable, non-judgemental, inspirational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Why do you want to do this role?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  What are the issues facing offenders leaving prison or in the community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Describe a time when you helped someone?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  How many times have you been in prison?</td>
<td>At least once otherwise not eligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  What was the date of your last release?</td>
<td>At least 2 years otherwise not eligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  What are your convictions?</td>
<td>A general summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Do not have <em>any</em> offences against children or <em>any</em> offences against adults of a violent or sexual nature?</td>
<td>If yes – not eligible. Where offence against adult of a violent nature but staff believe applicant is reformed consult with another member of staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  What helped you to stop offending?</td>
<td>Assessing whether reformed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 What does leading a crime-free life mean to you in your own life?</td>
<td>Assessing whether reformed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Have you ever had an issue with alcohol /drug misuse? If yes, how many months /years have you been clean for?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Can you commit to meeting once a fortnight with your mentee and complete a mentor log from each meeting?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Are you prepared to attend ongoing training and regular support meetings?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Would you like to ask us any questions? Do you have any worries /concerns about being a mentor?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Example Memorandum of Understanding

Service Level Agreement - Organisation and Prison Service

Memorandum of understanding between Organisation and [Prison Name]

Date

Background

Organisation ("Organisation") and the Prison have agreed to work together for the period of x years to deliver Organisation "Name" project (the "Project") at the prison. The Project aims to enable eligible mentors ("Mentors") to support eligible young offenders ("Young persons") in their transition from custody to the community.

Eligibility criteria for Young persons and Mentors

- For young offenders in custody at the prison to be eligible to become a Young person under the Project, they must be: within x months of release; aged between x-x years old; interested in resettlement support; and returning to the [geographical location] area.

- To be considered by Organisation for training as a Mentor, potential volunteers must be: criteria

Organisation shall operate a screening process to select suitable Young persons and Mentors and shall provide suitable training for Mentors.

The Project

1.1 The Project aims to enable mentors who have been trained by Organisation ("Mentors") to support young offenders through their transition from custody to the community.

1.2 Mentors shall endeavour to visit the prison on a fortnightly basis to provide support to particular young offenders who meet the eligibility criteria.

1.3 Organisation shall endeavour to match each eligible young offender ("Young person") to a Mentor with the aim that Mentors will visit their Young persons fortnightly at the prison and write letters to their Young persons to provide support.

1.4 If required, and where practicable, Mentors shall meet their Young persons at the gate of the prison on the date of the Young person's release to ensure they reach their accommodation safely.

1.5 The primary role of a Mentor is to inspire and motivate their Young person. The secondary role is to help their Young person to access appropriate services for their needs when resettling into the community; for example, accommodation or health services.

1.6 Mentors shall support their Young persons up to six months following their release.

Physical Environment Amenities

2.1 Organisation shall bring a group of Mentors to visit the prison every week between the hours of:
14.00 - 16.00 Wednesday  
17.30 - 19.00 Wednesday (alternate weeks)  
10.00 - 12.00 Saturday (alternate weeks) or as periodically amended and agreed between the parties; observe the safety and security regulations of the prison, having been made aware of them by the prison.

2.2 The Prison shall: escort Organisation's staff and Mentors to the relevant parts of the prison or, if acceptable to both parties, provide Organisation with keys to gain access to the required areas following security and key training; provide accommodation in which Organisation's staff and Mentors may operate in privacy; provide Organisation's staff and Mentors with adequate training and information on health and safety and security procedures, following which the Prison shall remain responsible for the health and safety and security of Organisation's staff and Mentors at all times while they are in the prison; have in place and maintain for and in relation to the term of this MoU appropriate insurance against all risks normally covered by a comprehensive policy of insurance in respect of the provision of services in the nature of those provided by the Prison under this MoU, including (subject to contrary written agreement) public liability insurance cover of a minimum of £10 million; and on request, provide to Organisation a copy of the insurance or policies required under the paragraph above with evidence of payment of the respective current premium or premiums.

2.3 Organisation reserves the right to withdraw a Mentor from the Project at any time.

Communication

3.1 Organisation shall: at the outset of the Project, provide prison security officers with a list of all Mentors for security clearance for the duration of the Project; endeavour to ensure that its Project Co-ordinator meets regularly with the Prison's Liaison Officer for the Project; endeavour to ensure that its Project Co-ordinator meets regularly with the dedicated staff for resettlement and housing at the Prison; ensure that its Project Co-ordinator meet annually with the Prison's Governing Governor to discuss the Project; provide publicity material to the Prison for distribution to serving prisoners eligible for the Project.

3.2 The Prison shall: provide security clearance for the Mentors in due course; issue badges to Mentors if appropriate; appoint a Liaison Officer to meet regularly with Organisation's Co-ordinator; provide a Prison Orderly to support the Project on one day per week; ensure that the Governing Governor meets annually with Organisation's Project Co-ordinator; distribute Organisation's publicity material appropriately in places where serving prisoners can access the information.

Selection, Training and Support

4.1 Organisation shall: select and train Mentors; provide ongoing support for established Mentors; offer support to young offenders who have expressed a desire to work with Organisation as a Young person.

4.2 The Prison shall: offer training to the relevant employees and Mentors of Organisation in aspects of health and safety and security; identify young offenders eligible to be Young persons and communicate details to Organisation's Co-ordinator; provide accommodation for group sessions and one-to-one work; advise Organisation's Co-ordinator when a Young person is transferred to another prison and the new location details; try to ensure that the Young person remain in the prison and are not transferred for a minimum of three months; however, this will be dependent on population pressures.
prevailing at the time; facilitate contact between the Mentors and the Young person when requested to do so by Organisation; having obtained consent from each Young person, provide Organisation with details of the Young person’s conviction, release date and home address; support Organisation to facilitate Mentors meeting Young persons at the gates of the prison on their day of release.

General

5.1 Organisation shall give clear, concise information to the Deputy Governor of the Prison on the nature and content of the Project, especially regarding adherence to the principle of confidentiality with regard to all Organisation staff or Mentor contact with Young persons, except where such confidentiality would be in a breach the law or good practice.

5.3 The Prison shall respect and accept the confidentiality of the contents of all Organisation or Mentor contact with Young persons, except where such confidentiality would result in a breach of the law or good practice.

5.4 Both parties will consider joint training initiatives.

General Conditions

Assignment
Neither party may, without the written consent of the other, assign this agreement

Expiration Date
This MoU shall automatically terminate 24 calendar months after the date of this MoU (unless both parties agree to extend the term of this MoU). Subject to the agreement of both parties, this MoU may be renegotiated and extended by a further 12 months.

Notice
In the event of either of the parties becoming aware of any departure from the terms and spirit of this MoU, that party undertakes to use best efforts to notify the other as soon as is reasonably practicable. Both parties agree to undertake best efforts to redress the problem or to amend this MoU as appropriate within 30 days of receipt of any such notification. Failure to redress the problem or amend this MoU in a manner satisfactory to both parties gives either party the right to terminate this MoU with immediate written notice.

Variations
All variations, including amendments, to this MoU shall be in writing and signed by both parties.

Legal effect
With the exception of the Prison’s responsibility for health and safety and Organisation’s confidentiality obligations, which shall be legally binding, this MoU is not intended to be legally binding and merely represents the present intentions of Organisation and the Prison.
Signatures
The undersigned hereby agree to the terms of this MoU

Signed on behalf of Organisation

Signed

Date

Job Title, Organisation

Signed on behalf of the Prison

Signed

Date

Deputy Governor [Prison Name]