

A message from Paul Pandolfo, Programme Manager at Inspiring Change



Photo from the conference of an artist's visual recording of Manchester's presentation

On 26 November, the first North West Fulfilling Lives conference took place in Manchester and the feedback from the event has been fantastic.

Inspiring Change Manchester (ICM) is part of a Big Lottery Fund programme that includes 12 projects across the country. This event was an opportunity for staff and volunteers from the Manchester, Liverpool and Blackpool projects to get together to share learning. And that's certainly what happened – all three projects have had some early wins bringing innovation to work with people with multiple needs.

All three have also experienced some challenges. The common ground when

it comes to overcoming difficulties seems to be involving people with lived experience of multiple needs, who usually bring a new perspective and clarity.

The day ended with an inspirational input from Julian Corner, Chief Executive of Lankelly Chase. He gave everyone a reminder that positive change from the Fulfilling Lives programme is most likely to come from a focus on people rather than services, organisations and systems. Whole person working and introducing more empowering approaches have the potential to bring about transformational change.

Paul Pandolfo,
Programme Manager.

CORE Group – Mark Jepson, Service User Involvement Coordinator

Core Group Induction Day on 30 November 2015.

The ICM CORE Group is a diverse and ever changing collection of people who have lived experience of multiple and complex needs and who have accessed at least one related service. The CORE Group exist to share their skills and experience in the design and delivery of Inspiring Change Manchester.

Around every three months, I run an induction day for those that have expressed an interest to get involved with our programme. We are always keen to expand and diversify the group, and to keep our involvement fresh and challenging.

I have just delivered the fifth induction day. It is always one of the most pleasing aspects of my role, when people show up of their own volition, motivated by a passion to help shape and deliver services in Manchester. In some ways this particular day was a milestone as we had our first service user ready to join the group. This makes the process feel a lot more relevant.

There were six attendees from diverse backgrounds with the common bond that all had lived experience of multiple and complex needs. This is the lived experience we cannot do without if we are to deliver a coproduced programme.

Volunteers often say, 'Thanks for giving me this opportunity.' But I think this needs flipping on its head – we're the ones who

should be thanking them for giving their free time and sharing the experience on which this whole project depends.

The day was a success with a smart, engaging and stimulating group, who put me on the spot on more than one occasion (as it should be). Part of the day was focused on group work in which I asked the group to come up with what partnership working and coproduction meant to them. Their knowledge on this was impressive and it was inspiring to see that they had a real grasp and insight already.

I really look forward to working with this group of people and feel they will be a positive and lively influence on ICM.

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Flexible fund – James Found, Monitoring and Research Officer

It's been 18 months since we started using our flexible fund. We're already seeing the benefits of having funds that give ICM clients a choice about the support they receive which enables them to overcome barriers to accessing that support.

Some of the things we have used our flexible fund for include: education and training courses; interpreters for non-English speaking clients; gym and

leisure passes; learning equipment; private counselling sessions; access to sustainable accommodation and more.

So what is it?

A flexible fund is a specific type of fund which ICM clients can access to purchase goods or services which may not be on offer within ICM or other types of accessible mainstream provision.

How it works

At the beginning of a client's journey with ICM, our dedicated Engagement Workers and Peer Mentors work with the client to identify opportunities for using the flexible fund. This involves building on the individual's strengths (asset based assessment) and considering the sort of barriers they might face in accessing services.

Adopting a person-centred approach, decisions around using the flexible fund start with the client, empowering them to take control of their own support and giving them alternative options that may exist outside of mainstream provision. This forms a central part of what we do here at ICM – ensuring that we build our support with the client.

For large flexible fund amounts of £500 or more, all decisions go through our ICM panel, which involves people with lived experience to ensure that the money is being spent fairly and empowers our ICM clients. Doing this ensures that we achieve the most value for our fund, enabling the most sustainable outcomes for all people with multiple and complex needs.

Want to know more?

Here at ICM we have produced a Flexible Fund Practice Guidance, which gives advice on how best to implement and use a flexible fund.

If you would like a copy of the guidance or simply want to find out more, you can contact us at ICM@shelter.org.uk

Housing First – Sarah Walters



Housing First Working Group Meeting involving staff, volunteers and expert speakers

You may remember that one of the proposals that went to the Big Lottery for years three and four was for ICM to run a Housing First Pilot in Manchester.

Housing First provides recurrently homeless people with ordinary housing in the community, without expecting them to be 'tenancy ready' as some traditional services have required. Person centred wrap-around support is provided by support workers and specialist teams to help clients retain their tenancies and begin to deal with some of the reasons why they may have left tenancies in the past.

There is an increasing evidence base that this approach works, both in the UK, Europe and in North America and Canada. A recent evaluation report by the University of York's Centre of Housing Policy showed that the average length of time that a tenant had been homeless before getting a Housing First tenancy was 14 years, and a snapshot of the projects being evaluated showed that

74% of all current service users were still being successfully housed over a year later.

We were pleased that the Big Lottery approved this proposal and are excited to have the opportunity of testing whether this approach will be successful in Manchester. We have formed a cross sector project team to plan the roll out of the pilot which begins in April 2016.

The team has decided to concentrate on helping between 10 and 20 ICM clients who require accommodation and we are going to recruit for a specialist worker to work with landlords both in the private and public sector. There will also be a GROW trainee position attached to the pilot and support will be provided through the accommodation pathway.

If you have any comments on Housing First or want to know more, please get in touch by emailing Sarah_Walters@shelter.org.uk

Blog Update - Ben Whalley

Inspiring Change Manchester is all about making sure that the stories of people involved in the programme are shared and celebrated across the partnership and further afield.

Our blog space can be found at icmblog.shelter.org.uk which has regular input from everyone involved in the partnership.

If you have any suggestions about the content or direction of the blog space, get in touch with Ben by emailing ben_whalley@shelter.org.uk or calling **0344 515 1595**

GROW Trainee update



Chelsey, GROW trainee at Middle Temple Hall in London talking about female inequality in the criminal justice system

Getting Real Opportunities out of Work, or GROW, is Inspiring Change Manchester's traineeship for people with lived experience. They last for a period of

12 months. GROW trainees are on work placements across delivery partners in ICM and because of this get a massive amount of on-the-job training and experience.

Because of the varied work experience, GROW trainees find themselves in a place to apply for other jobs very quickly. We have recently said goodbye to one of our GROW trainees, Karl, who has moved onto a permanent job on his new career path.

You can see his blog online at icmblog.shelter.org.uk

Our GROW trainees have been involved in a vast amount of work since the last At a Glance newsletter at the end of summer. GROW trainee, Chelsey, attended the Community-led Solutions to Gender Inequality, Victimisation and Offending event in London (see photo) which is contributing to the national agenda on gender inequality.

Our twitter account is regularly posting about the work and experiences of our GROW trainees and you can follow us at [@inspchangemanc](https://twitter.com/inspchangemanc)

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