



Tools and approaches to generate connection

A Good Practice Mentors case study with:

Bromley By Bow Centre's Social Prescribing Team

The Bromley By Bow Centre (BBBC), now part of Family Action, works to strengthen long-standing local services and expand opportunities to support communities across Tower Hamlets. The centre's Social Prescribing Team deliver a peer support group for those who have experienced a cardiac event, that aims to reduce loneliness amongst members and provide information and education around cardiovascular health.

The team initially attended some of the Good Practice Mentors' free online workshops exploring approaches such as co-production. After meeting with GPM to scope out how the team could best support them on a bespoke basis, the team received small group mentoring focused on co-production.



Aims of support

The support aimed to:

- Develop confidence in using Test and Learn approaches, and working more flexibly with a group
- Explore how to work with their peer support group via:
 - involving a wider range of voices
 - supporting the group to become more self-led
 - facilitating more 'informal' connection amongst members
 - sharing creative methods to gather insight into the group's priorities
 - finding ways to create more informal spaces and encourage sustainable peer support



Flexible, tailored group mentoring

The BBBC team attended 3 online mentoring sessions with the Good Practice Mentors' Co-production Lead.

Each session focused on priorities decided by the group in response to questions asked by their GPM facilitator such as;

- What would be your top priority for the next session?
- What are the skills or knowledge you still feel like you're missing?
- What do you think needs to happen with the group next?

The sessions included both theory and practical activities, and identified key topics led by the team's responses. This blended approach to learning meant people understood why they were doing something and how to do it in practice.



The responsive and practical nature of the sessions meant that learning could be applied in ‘real time’, ensuring that it was put into practice immediately. The sessions also included time for reflection around what was working well and what needed development, and gave the team the opportunity to implement the approaches with the peer group.

“The sessions were extremely informative and supportive, tailored to our specific interests and focus, and [we] were given space to ask further questions and be very open in our discussions.”



Building confidence via practical tips

A big focus of the support was on building confidence within the team, to try new things, be more responsive, and to give the group more responsibility. The mentoring included practical tips that people could try out immediately and then reflect on in a structured way.

As a result of the mentoring support, the team have reported feeling more confident in their personal skills relating to connecting with, reaching and involving local communities.

“[The] support has really helped us to think about and identify practical tools and approaches that we can use with the group to generate connection and shape what we do. The guidance and tools mean I feel much more confident in ways to do things that will get us to where we want to go.”

The support also helped the team to feel closer to achieving the organisational goal that they were working towards in relation to the peer support group.

“The tools and approaches have allowed us to connect more with the group, get their engagement and feedback and properly shape how we do things for them.”

Re-shaping future approaches

When asked about how they will continue delivering community groups, the team described how the mentoring had led to fundamental shifts in mindset, approaches to running group sessions and collecting feedback. The key learning included:

- The importance of connecting with members early on to facilitate long-term engagement
- To consider how to set up a room, how to welcome members, and how to manage group conversations so everyone feels involved
- Using techniques to determine how members are feeling early on to increase participation

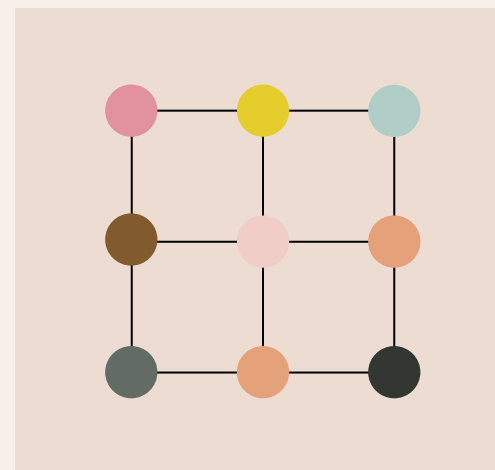


“We also have learnt how to help facilitate more connection and conversations between group members, and have got a better idea around how we can support the group to become more self-sufficient”

Overall, the responsive and practical nature of the small group mentoring sessions led to increased confidence of participants that will enable them to better support BBBC’s community groups.

The flexibility of the support enabled the BBBC team to lead the focus of the sessions and ensure the learning shared was tailored to their unique setting and needs.

As a result, they feel equipped with tools that will enable them to facilitate groups that involve all of their members, respond to their feedback and are able to become self-sustaining.





If you would like to discuss how GPM could support you to reach, engage and connect with your community then please drop us an email:

✉ GPM@syha.co.uk

For more information and resources please visit our website:

🌐 [GPM Website](#)

Please see our Eventbrite page for our upcoming workshops

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