

INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERS FINAL REPORT



**Museums Partnership Reading
2023**

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Summary information

liV host organisation	Volunteer Now
Assessment date(s)	9 th to 11 th May 2023

Assessor	Janet Lewis-Jones
Name of lead assessor	Anne-Marie Zaritsky
1st assessment/renewal	1st Renewal
Assessment outcome	Met

About the organisation

Museums Partnership Reading (MPR) is a collaboration between the Museum of English Rural Life (The MERL), which is part of the University of Reading, and Reading Museum, which is managed by Reading Borough Council. Although this is the Partnership's first liV renewal, having last been assessed in 2019, both The MERL and Reading Museum held accreditation separately for many years prior to the partnership being formed.

MPR came into being to make best use of Arts Council Funding, and continues to receive a grant from them which has just been renewed. This supplements University and Local Authority support, and is further enhanced with other small grants.

Volunteers undertake a wide variety of roles across the two museums, from 'front of house' welcome volunteers, tour guides, object handlers and costumed interpreters; to 'outreach' – supporting events, Museum on Wheels; to behind the scenes, working in the archives, cataloguing, transcribing and so on; to helping maintain facilities and resources through gardening or sewing. There are also some discrete programmes such as 'Friday Fledglings' (activities for families); the Chatty Café (a social prescribing project); the Youth Panel (which inputs ideas around improving engagement with young people); a knitters' circle; and at any one time, a range of time limited projects, for example, currently, Our Green Stories.

At the time of the assessment, there were around 170 active volunteers, which is an increase from the last assessment, when there were just under 150. Staff and managers have determined that the current structure and resourcing can sustain a maximum of 200 volunteers. MPR is fortunate in that they receive far more applications than they are able to offer roles to.

Volunteering is overseen by a central team comprising the Volunteer Coordinator and the Volunteer Administrator. This is a change from the last assessment – at that time MPR was still in the process of coming together and there were two volunteer coordinators, one for each establishment; unfortunately, the post at Reading Museum had time limited funding. The Volunteer Coordinator is line managed by the Associate Director and Head of Curatorial and Public Engagement, at The MERL. There is a steering group which leads on strategy and direction, ultimately reporting to a board comprising members from the University and from Reading Borough Council.

The central team are responsible for recruitment, onboarding and ongoing support of volunteers; on a day to day basis, volunteers are supported by staff relative to their specific role(s).

A small number of development and improvement suggestions were made at the last assessment, and these have been comprehensively addressed as follows. At the time of the last assessment the partnership was still forming, and volunteers at Reading Museum were concerned that the loss of a dedicated volunteer

coordinator would negatively impact on them – the Volunteer Coordinator directly addressed this through a range of approaches, and none of the volunteers at this assessment described any difference of experience in terms of support, indeed many now engage at both museums. Expenses were not provided at the time of the last assessment, this has not been fully resolved, however, progress has been made with expenses for travel from home to place of volunteering now paid for anyone on benefits and full-time students; and travel to somewhere other than usual place of volunteering covered for all volunteers. The other two suggestions (ensuring all volunteers had a copy of the current volunteer handbook, and looking at a way of having a calendar of ad hoc opportunities for volunteers to sign up for) have both been addressed through the introduction of the Better Impact platform.

How the organisation was assessed

As there are a wide range of often quite specific roles, for the purpose of selecting a sample of volunteers, these were grouped under four main areas – on site visitor facing, behind the scenes, outreach, and special projects. Volunteers were selected from all of these groups, and included long standing volunteers and very newly recruited volunteers.

Staff were selected to include staff responsible for volunteers, staff working with volunteers, and managers. Addressing strategic and governance aspects was the Associate Director and Head of Curatorial and Public Engagement.

All interviews took place via video conference, mainly one to one, but with some pairs/small groups included.

NUMBER OF SITES, BRANCHES, LOCATIONS:	2
NUMBER INCLUDED IN INTERVIEW SAMPLE:	2
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS:	170
NUMBER INTERVIEWED:	30
NUMBER AS % OF TOTAL:	18%
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER ROLES:	4 main areas
NUMBER OF ROLES SAMPLED BY INTERVIEW:	4
NUMBER AS % OF TOTAL:	100%
NUMBER OF STAFF:	50
NUMBER INTERVIEWED:	12
WERE TRUSTEES INTERVIEWED?	NA

WRITTEN EVIDENCE:

Along with the self-assessment – volunteer policy, three role descriptions, volunteer blog with full details of recent volunteer satisfaction survey. During the assessment – two volunteer handbooks (The MERL & Reading Museum), Volunteer Supervision 101 (a guide for staff), screen sharing of Better Impact covering various functions.

Meeting the standard

Quality area 1: Vision for volunteering

Volunteering is embedded within the overall vision, values, culture and aims of the organisation and its impact is recognised and communicated. Organisations understand why they involve volunteers

Practice		Met
1.1	Volunteering is planned and reviewed in line with the organisation's vision, strategy, and values	Yes
1.2	Volunteering is valued as part of the culture of the organisation and the benefits of volunteering are understood and communicated	Yes
1.3	The impact of volunteering in contributing to organisation aims is understood and communicated	Yes
1.4	Volunteer involvement is reflected in management, financial and resource planning	Yes

Volunteering is fully embedded in operational planning and is a significant feature in funding applications – the last Arts Council grant included acquiring a suitable platform to manage volunteers, and both grants include activities to develop diversity and inclusion, with volunteers a key part of that agenda.

Careful consideration is given to resourcing and capacity, for example identifying that 200 volunteers is the maximum that the current investment can support without impacting on the quality of the volunteer experience.

Staff described how volunteers were “crucial” to progressing the museums’ strategic agenda around access, engagement, and “relevance”. Staff commented: “Historically museums were maybe seen as ‘closed’ places, where only certain people went. Volunteers tended to be those who already understood what goes on, academics for example, working in the archives. Opening up, deliberately and proactively creating roles and reaching out to different communities has changed that. That would have been impossible without volunteers. That is the impact they have”; “As ‘representatives’ of the community, of different communities of interest, they enable us to ensure that what we are offering remains relevant, of interest. Take the youth panel for example. They have produced a manifesto which we will use to inform future development”.

Volunteers themselves described what they saw as their role and impact: “There is always so much for them to do (archives staff) – a long list of documents to be catalogued or transcribed. There will always be things that fall to the bottom of the list, they might never get to. That’s where we come in. I worked on [a niche topic archive] and was so pleased when I heard someone wrote in to say thank you, and that they had found something in there they wouldn’t otherwise have come across”; “We really enhance the visitor experience, I think. The staff do a great job, but wouldn’t have the time to provide the amount of information we can about objects. The museum would of course still be there without us, but I don’t think the

visitors would have such a good visit. I think we bring more people in. that's the aim I guess!"

The website has a headline stating how 'volunteers are the lifeblood of Museums Partnership Reading'. Data analysis shows volunteers as providing over 6,500 hours. One staff member echoed the views of all of those interviewed – “They are an integral part of our workforce”.

Quality area 2. Planning for volunteers

People, policies, and procedures have been put in place to ensure volunteering is well-managed

Practice		Met
2.1	There are specific and proportionate systems and processes for volunteer involvement that are regularly reviewed	Yes
2.2	Relevant people in the organisation are aware of systems and processes relating to volunteering and why they are important	Yes
2.3	There are designated people responsible for volunteers and volunteering that have experiences, competencies and attributes for the role	Yes
2.4	Systems are in place to ensure the management of risk, safeguarding, health and wellbeing and protection of volunteers, the organisation, and others	Yes
2.5	There are problem solving procedures to deal with issues raised by or about volunteers	Yes
2.6	Records of volunteer involvement are maintained in line with data protection	Yes

Significant investment has been made in volunteering since the last assessment. A Volunteer Administrator post has been created, with the role including far more than basic administration; the Better Impact platform has been purchased to improve the implementation of systems and processes. Both of these investments were lauded by staff as having made a substantial difference to practice. Staff spoke about how recording and reporting was more efficient, and how the platform provided a vehicle for improved communications and for ensuring volunteers had access to the latest information and versions of documents. Whilst there are still a small number of volunteers who are not yet comfortable using the platform, most were enthusiastic about it – “It’s great, you just go on and book your shift, really helps plan your diary”; “There are often one-off things to get involved with, or even new opportunities. You can sign up, or express an interest... it’s really dynamic”; “If you want to look something up [policy & procedure] you just go to the portal thingy”.

With practice during the pandemic restrictions changing, the Volunteer Coordinator recently decided it would be helpful to provide a ‘refresh’ to staff with

responsibilities for volunteers and produced a new ‘101’ guide. Similarly volunteer handbooks were reviewed and refreshed. Volunteers commented on how well MPR responded to the pandemic restrictions, providing clear information in relation to which roles had to be fully suspended, as well as what opportunities were on offer. “Reading [Museum] stayed closed for much longer than The MERL, so I transferred over there. I do both now”; “They set it up so we could volunteer from home. It was all very well organised”.

The Volunteer Coordinator is the current Chair of the BOBVol Volunteer Managers Network which supports excellence in volunteer management across the museums, galleries and the heritage sector in Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Hampshire/Solent.

Staff supervising volunteers described the role of the central team – “It starts with putting together a role brief, as part of which we discuss things such as when, how frequently, who they’ll report to, boundaries, risk, all of that stuff. Then [Volunteer Coordinator] sorts the recruitment, and then we interview together... She’s always there if you do run into any issues”.

Overall volunteers were effusive in relation to how well managed they felt volunteering was – “They [supervisors] are obviously all very experienced, always have an answer to your questions, never mind answering them, happy to take the time. And then you have [Volunteer Coordinator], you can easily get hold of her, and she’s lovely. And then there are all sorts of handbooks and things. It’s all very well managed”.

Quality area 3. Volunteer inclusion

There is a positive approach to inclusion, equity and diversity and a proactive approach to making volunteering accessible

Practice		Met
3.1	The organisation is inclusive and managed in a way that encourages the involvement of and is welcoming to a wide range of people	Yes
3.2	There is a proactive approach to increasing volunteer diversity, addressing under-representation, and including targeted groups as part of the organisation’s inclusion, equity and diversity aims	Yes
3.3	Information about volunteering opportunities is made as widely available as possible using a range of methods and there is active engagement with a diverse range of people	Yes
3.4	Where possible there is a wide range of accessible opportunities that can be adapted throughout the volunteer’s journey	Yes

Significant inroads have been made since the last assessment in relation to widening the demographic of the volunteer team. This has been the result of various initiatives undertaken by the central team. The Volunteer Coordinator was

one of the first cohort of [Southeast Museum Development's] Museum WIDE and undertook CPD activities aimed at making MPR more 'Welcoming, Inclusive, Diverse and Equitable'. Volunteers described subsequent training they were able to access That was commissioned by the Coordinator for visitor facing volunteers.

Monitoring of demographics of new starters has been introduced and although, being optional, responses were low, they do indicate an emerging picture of improved diversity – 38% identifying as something other than 'white British', with countries of origin as diverse as Brunei, China, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Uganda, Ukraine; 62% under 34 years of age, 13% reporting as disabled, and 12% neurodiverse. "We have a beautiful mix of individuals" said a staff member. "Volunteers are at the vanguard of what we are seeking to achieve with regard to diversity," said another. "We are part of Curating for Change – supporting career development within the sector for people who are deaf, disabled or neurodivergent" noted a manager.

Specific projects have been developed including the Chatty Café, which is aimed at visitors referred through social prescribing, who may progress to volunteering, a special programme for people who are neurodivergent, the youth panel, formal supported volunteering and so on.

Since the last assessment, new roles have been created offering a wider range of choices in terms of role content, level of commitment, timing, location and so on, including some home based roles. Continuing to work on diversifying participation is a key feature of the new Arts Council funding and will include further expansion of the range of opportunities available.

Quality area 4. Recruiting and welcoming volunteers

It is easy for people to find out about opportunities, explore whether they are right for them, and get involved

Practice		Met
4.1	People are clear about the opportunities available and the process to become involved	Yes
4.2	Recruitment processes and checks are timely, fair, consistent, straightforward and appropriate	Yes
4.3	Recruitment is a two-way process for volunteers to find out more and that considers how individual and organisational needs can be met	Yes
4.4	Volunteers are provided with any necessary information, introductions and training for their role	Yes

There is a robust and consistently applied recruitment process managed through the central team using Better Impact. Prospective volunteers can identify roles they are interested in from a range of 'recruiting now' options; they are shortlisted; contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator for an informal chat; book a slot for an

interview; provide references and are invited to identify a start day. Recently recruited volunteers all confirmed the process, describing it as “totally straightforward”; “very professional” and in relation to the interview, “just the right balance, friendly, but serious enough to make you feel it’s an important role you’re applying for”.

The conversation prior to interview and plethora of information available on the website provide prospective volunteers with ample information, and for more popular roles, the team are introducing ‘intro-views’ – group sessions including a tour, a talk from an existing volunteer and input from staff, so that volunteers can make a better informed decision and to improve retention.

Once recruited, volunteers undertake an induction with the Volunteer Coordinator in relation to generic aspects of volunteering at MPR, and then a role specific induction with the person who will be their supervisor. During this time they also need to sign to say they have accessed and read through the volunteer handbook.

Volunteers noted – “Yes, it was all very clear – exactly what needed to be done, who I should speak to if I got stuck”; “I felt really well looked after. I’ve volunteered elsewhere, and not been sure exactly what I should be doing, or who to ask. They took care of all of that. I felt quite confident on my first shift”. For some roles, volunteers shadow or are paired up with existing volunteers as part of their induction.

Quality area 5. Supporting volunteers

Volunteers feel supported at all times, that they are a part of the organisation and that their contribution makes a difference

Practice		Met
5.1	Volunteers feel appropriately supported in their role and able to discuss all aspects of their volunteering	Yes
5.2	Volunteers and everyone in the organisation who comes into contact with volunteers are clear about the scope of volunteer roles and what volunteers can expect from the organisation	Yes
5.3	Volunteers have the opportunity to discuss how they are doing	Yes
5.4	Volunteers have opportunities to express their views and ideas and to be involved in relevant decision making	Yes
5.5	Volunteers feel there is good communication between themselves and the organisation	Yes
5.6	There are systems for volunteers to have a positive and managed exit	Yes

Overwhelmingly volunteers spoke of how welcome they were made to feel by everybody. “It’s always the same, everyone is really pleased to see you, or so it seems!”; “The reception staff might say – ‘Ooo, while you’re here you might want to have a look at a new exhibit or display’ or they remember to tell you about

anything that has happened since you were last in. It really makes you feel part of the team”; “It’s very much a community, and it’s wonderful to be part of that, lots of different people, staff and volunteers, with shared interests”.

One to one time with supervisors is available and quarterly meetings for MPR Visitor Welcome volunteers. Volunteers have access to both their supervisor and the central team. “I think she [Volunteer Coordinator] floats between the two [The MERL & Reading], she certainly around a lot – we always have a little chat, and I know how to get hold of her”; “We sort of work alongside each other, so she [supervisor] is always available to me”.

There were lots of examples of MPR consulting with volunteers – a working group was formed to review the implementation of Better Impact and make tweaks to improve the volunteer users’ experience; the Youth Panel has produced a manifesto for the future; volunteers were consulted on the redevelopment of a gallery recently; and there is an annual survey. Volunteers noted “It’s not them and us, you don’t just passively wait to be told what to do. If you feel something could be improved, or added or whatever, you just have a chat. Sometimes it’s changed, sometimes it isn’t, but you do feel whatever it is has been considered”. Staff said, “We really do need their ideas and opinions. As representatives of the local community it is essential that we are listening to what they can tell us”; “With Better Impact, we were able to benefit from the experiences of volunteers who had used it in other volunteering organisations as part of the working group”.

Volunteers rated general communications highly citing the monthly newsletter and information available on Better Impact, but also ad hoc emails sent out by the team, and their inclusion in general discussions when on site.

Quality area 6: Valuing and developing volunteers

Volunteers are valued and there are opportunities for volunteers to develop and grow through their experience

Practice		Met
6.1	Volunteers feel their contribution is meaningful and rewarding	Yes
6.2	Volunteers feel valued by and a part of the organisation	Yes
6.3	The experiences, attributes and competencies that volunteers bring are recognised and they have opportunities to develop them	Yes
6.4	Volunteers have the opportunity for connecting with and learning from other volunteers where appropriate	Yes
6.5	Volunteers’ future aspirations are supported where appropriate	Yes

All volunteers interviewed felt that their time and contributions were valued by MPR. They commented that staff always made them feel appreciated. Where relevant, volunteers are credited for their work, for example in relation to transcriptions – “My work was used as the information to [accompany] exhibits in a

recent exhibition”; “There was a garden party when we transcribed the first 100 letters”.

Volunteers spoke about opportunities to develop, including occasional training opportunities and opportunities to get involved in new roles: “If you look [on Better Impact] you can see any new roles that are coming up, you can also sign up for specific events and activities, one off things. But also [Volunteer coordinator] might call you to bring your attention to something she thinks you might be interested in”; “It’s one of the things I like the most, you’re not tied to one role, you can apply for other roles and get involved in one off things”. Staff said, “A number of volunteers are gathering experience to support their careers, so if we can we will expose them to experiences that will help with that, or arrange for them to chat to someone who might be helpful”; A staff member (supervisor) noted “You do your absolute best to make sure they get what they want from the experience”. Some volunteers have successfully applied for paid employment with MPR.

Staff are also mindful of the skills that volunteers bring – “It is not just extra time that volunteers bring us, but also skills, knowledge and experience. They often know more than we do; we make use of that!”

To acknowledge contributions there are regular coffee mornings and other catered social events during the year. “You get a free cuppa every time you’re in, 10% off at the shop and regular do’s” said one volunteer. The most recent annual satisfaction and wellbeing survey shows that 85% of respondents were very or extremely satisfied, 42% rated their experience 10/10. During the assessment, interviewees struggled to think of anything they would like to see improved; “No sorry, I just think they’re marvellous!”

Future Plans

The new round of Arts Council grant will support the current volunteering programme for another three years. The schedule of activities associated with the grant includes a number of new initiatives as well as continuation and development of others. Within this there will be new roles and opportunities for volunteers.

Museums on Wheels is to be expanded, as well as further development of the Pathways initiative which offers supported volunteering for people with additional needs. The Volunteer Coordinator is exploring roles for blind and visually impaired people in partnership with a local specialist organisation. The Youth panel will oversee the implementation of the manifesto.

New opportunities may include roles in new initiatives – Untold Histories, We Are Open, Sanctuary status, and Sew What.

The grant has a focus on careers in museums, so there may also be developments around progression routes for students and schools' liaison.

The Volunteer Coordinator is leading on EDI for MPR and so there will be further developments in this area also.

An important piece of work will be looking at opportunities for continuing to fund the programme when the current Arts Council grant is spent up in 2026.

Strengths

A number of strengths were identified during the assessment, these are detailed below. The numbers in brackets refer to the quality area and specific practice of the Investing in Volunteers standard.

Volunteering is completely embedded in organisational planning with the contribution of volunteers integral to the delivery of MPR's current plans. There is a clear 'purpose' to their involvement directly linked to the organisations' vision, aims and objectives. Their involvement is formally and strategically planned. This provides context when considering new roles and developments, and also ensures significant clarity amongst staff and volunteers themselves in terms of the focus of the role and its intended impact.

"I feel my role is about helping improve access, increasing visitor numbers and encouraging new visitors, different visitors"; "It's about letting more people know about what's on offer, whetting their appetite, reaching more people who might not ever have thought about coming"; "I feel I help the museum to take part in an important national programme they might not otherwise have the capacity to be part of".

(QA1 - 1.1 Volunteering is planned and reviewed in line with the organisation's vision, strategy, and values; 1.3 The impact of volunteering in contributing to organisation aims is understood and communicated; 1.4 Volunteer involvement is reflected in management, financial and resource planning)

There is a strong, well qualified and experienced central team, complemented by committed and enthusiastic staff across the museums who provide high quality support to volunteers and volunteering. This creates a positive environment in which volunteers are made to feel welcome and appreciated, and as a consequence are more likely to be committed and stay.

This is reinforced with robust, up to date policies and procedures, and a volunteer platform that is used to its best effect, contributing to efficient and effective volunteer management.

"I really enjoy working with volunteers. Over the years I've worked with a great many, and each and everyone has taught me something. It's a really lovely part of the job"; "They [volunteers] bring such a vibrancy, I love that they are around, we need to take good care of them," said staff.

(2.1 There are specific and proportionate systems and processes for volunteer involvement that are regularly reviewed; 2.3 There are designated people responsible for volunteers and volunteering that have experiences, competencies and attributes for the role)

MPR has undertaken significant work to improve EDI and open up the museums to new audiences of visitors. Volunteering has been and continues to be, an important part of this. Opportunities have been designed for people with additional needs, younger people, people with different availabilities or interests. Investment has been made in personnel development to support the progression of diversifying participation. It was clear throughout the interview process that approaches are producing results.

(3.2 There is a proactive approach to increasing volunteer diversity, addressing under-representation, and including targeted groups as part of the organisation's inclusion, equity and diversity aims)

The most outstanding strength observed during the assessment was how welcome, appreciated and embedded volunteers feel. This is especially notable given that at the time of the last assessment there were two fairly disparate groups, with one group quite concerned about how the formation of the partnership and loss of 'their coordinator' would affect them. Without exception, volunteers described their experience as feeling like being "part of a community"; "Just another member of the team, no difference between staff and volunteers"; "Such a happy relaxing environment, I often don't want to go home"; "So supportive and flexible. Everyone is kind"; "There is such a great rapport, really good peer relationships, a real team" and "A really lovely place to come and volunteer, couldn't be any better!" Another volunteer commented, "Well they need to keep us happy don't they. They wouldn't want visitors arriving to find some sour faced miserable old volunteer ready to greet them. No. They want visitors to be greeted by jolly enthusiastic bods, who are pleased to be there!"

Spending time putting everything in place to create this atmosphere and culture supports volunteer retention, but also their commitment and enthusiasm.

(6.1 Volunteers feel their contribution is meaningful and rewarding; 6.2 Volunteers feel valued by and a part of the organisation)

Continuous development and improvement

Suggestions for continuous development and improvement are offered to help the organisation be even better than it already is in relation to involving volunteers. The adoption of these suggestions and progress against them will be followed up on and more fully explored during the renewal assessment in three years' time. The numbers in brackets refer to the quality area and specific practice of the Investing in Volunteers standard.

Some longer standing and well experienced volunteers expressed concern about succession planning, noting that they would not be able to continue for many more years and that it would be important to begin to plan for their replacements now. This was particularly the case in relation to roles where their longevity of experience and knowledge acquisition was an important facet of their roles e.g. outreach. "You gather such a wealth of knowledge over the years, I think it is important to be able to pass that on to new younger volunteers, so it isn't lost". Whilst MPR has significantly increased the number of younger volunteers, many of these are students who are more likely to move on when courses are finished. In order to bring more sustainability to roles for which experience is important, staff might consider a more targeted strategy.

Action: Consider a succession plan for volunteer roles where continuity is important

(1.4 Volunteer involvement is reflected in management, financial and resource planning)

Some younger volunteers commented that it would be interesting and helpful to have some 'career pathways' information in relation to how current volunteering opportunities linked to possible future job roles and careers. "It would be really good to see how the opportunities relate to different careers, like if I am doing this task, what sort of careers would that be a part of. Just to help me think about what I might go on to do. I can also then directly relate the experience in applications. A luxury item I know, but it would be good!". This might well fit with one of the current grant areas around initiatives that contribute to developing careers in museums.

Action: Consider mapping how various volunteer opportunities directly relate to careers in the Museums and related sectors.

(6.5 Volunteers' future aspirations are supported where appropriate)

As it is still considered best practice to offer all volunteers expenses (including home to place of volunteering) this is an area MPR might continue to explore. It is unlikely that this would be a particularly high financial burden as many volunteers described having travel passes, of cycling or walking; or how they would not wish

to claim even if expenses were available. MPR might explore the likely actual costs in any future budgeting decisions. Offering expenses contributes to widening participation by removing barriers that people who, whilst not claiming benefits, are on low incomes – this might well include the age groups that MPR would like to see better represented.

(3.2 There is a proactive approach to increasing volunteer diversity, addressing under-representation, and including targeted groups as part of the organisation's inclusion, equity and diversity aims)

In developing volunteering in the Chatty Café, consideration might be given to incorporating a session for volunteers around boundaries and debriefing. Although there is no suggestion there is any issue at present, given that volunteers are working with people with multiple problems including mental health, there is at the least the potential of visitors sharing their problems with volunteers, and volunteers will need to be completely clear what the boundaries are, when something needs escalating; and just as importantly, the opportunity to offload if they are troubled or upset by something they have heard.

Action: Review training for Chatty café volunteers

(4.4 Volunteers are provided with any necessary information, introductions and training for their role)