**Volunteer responses to community outreach approach**

1. Great being back out helping in the community, starting to build relationships with vulnerable individuals and families who need support during lockdown! Rewarding!
2. The gratitude was shining out this parent, the appreciation was wow! And to watch members of the community shining with this stuff is priceless!
3. ‘Loving the feedback, we must not forget that by helping others we are also helping ourselves!! It was great all working together again and the banter, now we know it is motivating people, not just us volunteers. Long may it continue!!’
4. ‘So nice to hear just how appreciative and thankful the people and families are with receiving the food parcels and quilt and pillow donations handed out. These times are challenging for so many but to reach out and give people what they deserve is just a small step in what we can do to help in these times of need.’
5. ‘This guy is very vulnerable, he struggles mentally to maintain himself, the food he received was well needed as trying to stop using drugs and is 3 weeks clean. The food definently raised his spirits!’
6. ‘This is what it's all about, this is important we make the small differences to people!’
7. The way human beings are treated in a certain class is disgusting and demoralising for individuals, where is the help for these people? I know there is a certain amount of help but it’s not enough in certain areas, I’d like to thank the team for their efforts this week and taking time to do what they’re doing, there is other organisations out there that could be helping as well.
8. ‘As a volunteer, I take part in this approach to reach the unreachable. I’ve been very touched by the foundation cafe attempts in delivering this new approach. Moving in to our 3rd successful week in delivering parcels, I am very pleased at how fast & efficient we have been able to adapt in our new approach. It’s excellent in one hand but frustrating in another, as I feel & know there is so much more can be done using this approach but in the other side of this, we are very few & there is very much for us to work with at the moment. The parcels are only a small part in this; there’s so many needs other than just food support. It is with the trust & bonds we have built in the past weeks we are being able to identify areas we can support & help in.
9. It gives me a feeling of a greater purpose that I and the team will be able to deliver something we recognise is seriously needed here. We hope there is support for us as when we first came together under foundations cafe the offers of support never seemed to materialise, which I totally understand as we were new; so, your support which comes through and been offered is greatly appreciated.
10. Wow, a don’t have the words that all you beautiful people have; what I will say is we are doing a brilliant job from packing the food to you guys and the lovely Lorna who were out delivering them; yous do a great job; its lovely to help people out there and to see how grateful they are.. keep going #teammark
11. The feedback on this is amazing, as a volunteer taking part in this stuff sometimes it doesn’t have rewards for me. I feel it pointless at times trying to help others doing this. I am feeling the positive effects of the work we are doing first hand and though we are reaching good numbers, it’s frustrating we have to pass by others in need because we don’t have enough to reach out to everyone. The support and your comments give me a sense of pride in what I am doing and gives me hope I may not have to pass by anyone in time to come. Us that volunteer in this are not many but it shows you don’t need many, you just need the right approach and the right folk with the passion to make just that wee bit of a difference. Thanks, from me and all of the other volunteers for your comments and your support in this. It lets us see the positive side of our work.
12. Honestly, it’s so uplifting to help one person never mind the amount we are. It’s a privilege to be part of this amazing team, we went from the amazing cafe and recovery group, and because of lockdown, doing this amazing humbling work, the feedback is beautiful and every human being is equal no matter what!! Lots of love!!!
13. Being involved within this amazing group of people who all share the love and passion of helping others in need is a true blessing. Giving support to people in our community and hearing the impact we are having by communicating with individuals is so touching. The feedback is showing us just how appreciative and thankful they are when receiving the parcels. A Great team effort. Helping others is what it is all about & that makes me smile!
14. It’s so humbling for the team hearing from those people we’re engaging with of how valued they’ve been made to feel. To see that protective ‘guard’ coming down & be so welcoming of us- hard to describe how heart-warming this is.
15. This is heart-warming, sometimes we get tied up in the despair of this work and the children are distant from it because of the importance, a see their wee eyes light up when am giving their parents food parcels; last week one of the kids was that impressed he was like ‘can I dae that way yous’ he run in and asked his dad.
16. Aww amazing!! Definently will be appreciated, seeing a child smile is the most uplifting priceless thing, I seen it last week and my eyes filled up! This is stuff no one can buy watching this happen! Melts my heart
17. As part of the delivery team, in my own community, it was very inspiring to see how welcoming we were received, and how open and willing the community was to engage with the volunteers, as well as freely share their troubles, and to see their appreciation for so little. It was very frustrating to be able to deliver so little but it's all begins somewhere, with a local peer using his own knowledge of the area we were able to engage with some, which other services find it difficult to reach or support. There’s so much that could be done using this approach, there is so many people needing more than is on offer, and I understand there is a lot of difficulty in engaging with some in the more deprived areas, be it trust issues or lack of inside knowledge. I have found great hope in being part of the planning and delivering this, and believe it could be the approach that could reach the ones not being reached, as its clear they can be reached with this approach and using local peers and volunteers to engage with them. Hopefully we can move forward in this direction & find appropriate support to continue with this and reach some of this community, which could really do with a little support or just a little hope that they are not alone. I am just one of them; there’s not a lot I can achieve on my own. I thank recovery enterprises. You give my community just a little bit of hope that we do matter, excuse my writing & wording but education was not a big thing in my life, survival was more important. Thank you for your kind words but they don’t mean much without action; if you can understand my writing, & have the ability to support us to do better things, & help support them less fortunate in my community, please take action in kind, as it hurts feeling no one cares
18. It's amazing to hear what pleasure we are having on people’s lives. It just blows me away; as part of this team which a totally enjoy it's a big part of my life. To top it all off would be great to get our own premises so we will all just keep putting a smile on people’s faces xxx
19. It’s those experiences giving us true understanding, empathy & compassion for all we do; & trying to build upon. We know there is so much needing done & it’s very difficult seeing & hearing how people are having to manage with so little & if they don’t matter. We can only keep doing what we are doing with the limited resources, hopefully making a positive impact in people’s lives & to know they are valued & we truly care.
There is much to be learned from community helping community, the unique value of peer support & the local connection. Very grateful to the team’s efforts
20. I just wish I could support the community to the best of my capability in all the things they’re needing support in a don’t feel this is good enough, we should be supported in every way possible to deliver this approach
21. It is completely frustrating when there is so much more needing done. Unfortunately, we are operating beyond our means though remain hopeful that others will support our ambitions of a more equal society where people are offered support & opportunities. There are many solutions being demonstrated & cannot be ignored. We require actions
22. If only we had somewhere to talk to people. It would be so much better for these people, struggles are bad enough without trying to talk and help people on their doorstep in the rain, every human being is beautiful and deserves a chance!
23. A harsh weather today; some harsh experiences to match it; frustrating conditions all round! Please understand, we are facing a lot of pain doing what we are doing! All of us involved, we do not just deliver bags of food here, we are delivering bags of support, the food means nothing to some of the folk we engage with, they did not have it any way and have accepted this is how things are, what is priceless to some of our engagement is how we deliver these small bags of food, two peer's deliver and engage for how long is necessary, any issues identified they will be handed over to another peer and professional support worker to take engagement to another level, we are having to deal with so many issues, at all different levels, we are having to be a foodbank, counsellor, adviser, as well as support workers all in one and most of all, a trusted friend to some very traumatised individuals. We as a team will apologise for highlighting these struggles of others but understand we are hearing these things in person over and over, we are voices for pain and struggles others are feeling, only to seeking support for those who are in real need of it. We are all tired at driving this approach forward, we have not got the backing other services have available at the moment. We are only trying to support our community; we understand the worlds a busy place and these are extremely difficult times. I just think we can all work together and should ease these burdens we face.

**Volunteer feedback late August 2020**

**Volunteer 1**

‘Moving on to the third month in Recovery Enterprises new approach, supporting my recovery and using my skills and knowledge to supporting my local community; this has become a very enlightening experience. I’ve been in recovery for well over a year following a very chaotic addiction. I’ve done many different recovery approaches during this time, and a lot of volunteering for different groups and organisations. They have all been nice experiences and I’ve met many lovely folks along the way.

Recovery Enterprises has been different in many ways. Most important for myself is the CEO himself, he reaches out to me and gives me great direction with the opportunity to improve my recovery, with his full support. This gives me the opportunity to grow beyond any other opportunities available with any other recovery stuff. This experience of being trusted to make decisions, and to be fully supported, to follow these through, has been so instrumental in recognising my strength and ability’s; especially when I came in to recovery a broken man who had lost all self-value, inside myself as well as outside. Working on the new approach to support my local community has given me so much of this back.

I’ve became respected and trusted throughout my area. Being part of this approach, the work involved by the team, and the passion to carry this through has been amazing. The effects it’s having in my area is beyond belief! These are really poor and stigmatised areas, due to documentaries on TV. This has felt like the only positive thing seen here in a long time; the fact others would care enough reaching out to the area.

My community has suffered a lot of stigma; they value this approach so much, be it so little. We are touching so many hearts doing this! The most important thing for me, it’s my recovery that’s supporting it, and my community are aware of this. At first, I thought, what's helping my community got to do with my recovery, as I’ve helped many organisations and many individuals during my time in recovery. It’s seemed relentless and tiring at times!! But being supported by Recovery Enterprises, and the CEO himself, has made my recovery very rewarding beyond anything I’ve experienced in my past. I’ve got great hope in my future recovery and the self-belief in myself for this to materialise in time.

If Recovery Enterprises can achieve the support to move forward, in the direction the CEO is aiming for, my recovery is going to be highly valuable for others seeking recovery. We would be able to run many different projects, using my experiences and training, from recovery groups to peer support and many other things. The CEO clearly see's the value in my recovery and experiences, and has made it clear he is fully supportive to help develop this further in becoming a bigger asset to myself and my community, which it already has been. Hopefully we can achieve the recognition and support to take the organisation forward to the next level and creating something, especially in my area. I cover so my different areas of peer support and recovery, it would be such a shame to sell it short of its TRUE value and seeing a bigger impact in the community.

With Recovery Enterprises, I have developed so many skills, along with my training and experiences has provided me with a great deal of knowledge. It would be an injustice for my community if this knowledge is to be lost in part, and the self-sacrifices along with affecting my self-worth. Recovery is valuable, especially from hard addiction in my area. There are many opportunities for myself but none that will let me reach my maximum potential. I will pass on these, and hope, as well as pray, that being part of Recovery Enterprises will support my local community to a greater effect.

Thanks for the belief you have in this community as it doesn’t need to be as it is here. We together can change things if we listen to the evidence, which has been repeatedly collected, but ignored, for so long. A new approach is required, and under Recovery Enterprises we can offer to help create such an approach. All the best, the recovering addict x’

**Volunteer 2**

‘Just writing this quick line to say thanks for everything you’ve done for me since joining the team about 6 months ago.

I’ve been out the jail nearly 5 years and never seemed to be getting anywhere. If I had the Foundations Café to come out too back then, it would’ve really helped my mental health. I’d probably have been in paid employment too!

Last year was very hard for me on a personal level and before I walked into the café I was about to say ‘fuck it’ and go back to my auld way of life. I really was, as life was just getting too difficult.

But getting to become part of the team and realising there might be somewhere I actually fit in, has gave me that kick up the arse to keep trying and no just give up in order to take the easy option. The café gave me some sort of purpose and I know there’s others in the team who say the exact same! Plus, you took the chance of giving me a chance, and that’s basically why I’m so grateful.

Whit we’ve done with the grub deliveries in basically a month has been amazing. It’s something quite unique we’re doing because nobody chapped my door on a Tuesday with a box of grub, offering help to get my benefits fixed or my grass cut!

Whether we get any more funding to keep it up remains to be seen. Be a shame if we suddenly have to stop because a lot of people will feel it. Plus, I respect you’re actively involved with the team, out delivering on a Tuesday and working alongside us.

Who knows where I’d be had it not been for the café, and I just wanted to say thanks! If you think I can help you with anything you only need to ask. Cheers for the reference, introducing me to Michelle, cheers for everything’

**Volunteer feedback**

As a peer for recovery enterprises, I got a call from a professional asking for some support for a family friend who had relapsed and was struggling for basic food as well as being more or less homeless. On taking this to my manager he stepped in immediately with offer of food support. As a peer with lived experiences, I was asked if I personally could spend some time with the individual and support at this point. Being without premises, this was kind of difficult to arrange but it was arranged for an outside safe environment.

It seemed the support was in despair in how to step forward. After spending a few hours chatting with the individual, I was able to understand his position. He is basically homeless and stuck in an unsafe environment putting himself and others at risk. I was able to identify he had been self-harming, and had been struggling to see a way through this, and so was his support network. In engaging with the person, I was able sharing my experiences and help him identify his options and see his truth in the situation. He was able to draw up a basic plan in his own head and could see clearly where he was going wrong and what could be done right now to move forward; aiming at a less harmful direction. When leaving, his outlook felt a lot more positive and had clearly benefitted from the fast interaction of peer support.

This is the importance of the peers in the new approach by recovery enterprises. Having no premises to do this is not going to stop us playing our part. I just wish the power that be would fully support this work, as seeing the effects and the need for it. It's an approach which is really of value to all in despair for individuals as well as their support.

In contacting my CEO, immediately we arranged a time to deliver food support and I confirmed it would be delivered at this time. 5 o’clock on a Saturday afternoon, a CEO and a peer volunteer of recovery enterprises, stepping in to ease the burden on the services as well as save this individual and their support reach breaking point and losing all hope in the situation. In explaining the whole situation to CEO his professionalism, as well as his knowledge kicked straight in. We can get him support in finding accommodation, not a problem, and we will continue food support as much as is needed. The nature of support was put to the individual who has an appointment arranged with addiction services. It seems a long time to this individual but at least he has a way forward and knows we are here to support with everything of importance- he now has food and less pressure; he just needs to focus on getting himself to appointment safely, and if he chooses to take our support, the CEO and volunteer peer is on standby to take action.

All this has been done from an organisation with no premises; we are easing the burden of so many services in this one case alone, as well as give the family and support involved some kind of peace of mind. This is the work no one see or hears of because as a professional organisation we are bound by confidentiality as well as professional boundaries. Please take note of these small acts from recovery enterprises reaching out to individuals, as well as their family in ways which are different and clearly needed. This approach is required in the here and now, as all the evidence is pointing towards and it's clearly workable under those able to deliver this to everyone’s benefit. We are all in this together and together we can achieve more success in sharing the burden society is facing in today's world.

**Partner feedback**

1. This is amazing guys. You should all be so proud of yourselves helping the people in need. This is what this town is needing. Fantastic job well done
2. Fantastic! Not only supporting folks with essentials but those invaluable doorstep conversations that mean so much now & in the future #connections #communities
3. You are opening doors for engagement. Folk have just got to walk through them and services have to step up to the mark. Have faith
4. You’re doing all amazing, and your community really does appreciate the selfless work you do
5. Never, ever underestimate how amazing you both are, what you are all doing is fantastic and there are very few people out there who do it with so much care and compassion and more importantly you are genuine
6. Wow! You and your team are angels on earth! Your community is so lucky to have you! Well done xxx