

**Learning visit report
Carney's Community 13996**

1.1 Date of visit: 04/11/2019	1.2 Name of visiting Funding Manager: Natalie Jordan, Jack Joslin, Paul Martinelli, William Hoyle	1.3 People met with: GT
1.4 Programme Area & Outcomes: Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Offenders\More ex-offenders successfully and sustainably resettled in the community and re-offending rates reduced		
1.5 Purpose of the award: £69,600 over three years (£22,800; £23,200; £23,600) to cover the cost of mentoring sessions and associated management costs.		
Grant start date: 01/09/2017		Grant end date: 01/09/2020
Project progress and difference made		
2.1 Project Outcome 1: Increased enrolment in education, employment and/or training (including improved knowledge of opportunities) Progress made: Carney's Community (CC) works with schools and pupil referral units. Battersea Power Station is the most successful partnership in terms of work placements. Several participants have set up their own businesses, and 3 are due to make presentations to Make My Mark for start-up funding. Another is being supported in her application to become an air stewardess, for instance with support getting a driving license, which is a role requirement.		
2.2 Project Outcome 2: Improved confidence, self-esteem, health and fitness Progress made: This target is being met, and CC measure this through individual action plans, questionnaires every 3-6 months, and focus groups. CC has learned to be clearer with partners about detailed needs and circumstances of individuals in support of this outcome. For instance, following a miscommunication about a work placement role being made redundant with a view to starting the young person on another opportunity, the uncertainty caused the individual, who has mental health problems, to follow an unhelpful path affected their self-esteem. The partner organisation in question has been very good at adapting to learning and listening in response and practice has improved in this regard.		
2.3 Project Outcome 3: Improved family and or housing situation Progress made: Housing in Wandsworth is unaffordable, and few placements are available. Those successfully housed get moved out of the area, where CC is no longer accessible, removing young people from support networks. Those in unstable housing situations are more difficult to support in other areas due to lack of stability. In terms of family support, feedback from participants is the primary way that CC track this outcome. Initially, CC wanted to work more with parents but have found that this can jeopardise the relationship with the young people, so an effort is being made to link in with council parenting teams.		
2.4 Project Outcome 4: Reduction in offending and re-offending Progress made: This outcome is difficult for CC to measure as it is reliant on feedback from participants and there are consent issues around accessing data. From feedback there is reason to believe that CC makes a big difference, and many case examples of participants with backgrounds of serious offences who are now contributing back positively to CC and wider society support this.		
Impact and learning: Funding Manager comments		
We met the CEO at CC's centre during a busy evening boxing and drop-in session.		

1. Impact

Over the long term, the stability and consistency that CC offers young people can be transformational, evidenced by a number of case examples. Engagement is high, and CC is well-placed to build trusting relationships. The project has fostered connections with local residents of different backgrounds to the young people, following initial resistance. Many locals have also volunteered.

The Grantee highlighted that other funders respect that CC is in receipt of this grant and it is possible this has helped unlock further funding. Press activity following the award helped, as often coverage leads to donations from individuals, and possibly reaches other organisations who might refer young people to CC.

CC seems to be in a strong place and is growing. At the time of our visit, the charity was recruiting a COO to take on some responsibility for fundraising and accounting.

2. Learning

The grantee has learned about communication, both with participants and partners. CC has also learned that the policy of being unconditionally open to all is vital to success, but that this brings a range of challenges. More young people with disabilities have become involved in the project, and CC has had to learn how to appropriately adapt and has strong links with relevant agencies for support. CC has also learned the value of having consistent premises, which means they are continually available for people with chaotic lives whose engagement is likely to fluctuate.

3. Knowledge:

The Grantee spoke about the challenges of funder-led Monitoring and Evaluation practice in this area of work and can force a focus on “quick wins” when work is often years-long before a breakthrough. Baseline testing requires young people to disclose issues before trust has been established, compromising accuracy of data. Long term case examples and feedback from other organisations is more useful and accurate for CC’s work.

Cuts to local authority services are having a large impact, and the rising threshold for access to other services puts more pressure on CC to deal with increasingly complex issues.

The Grantee emphasised the need for long-term support and was advised of the possibility of continuation funding.