



growing points

December 2015

Dear Supporter

We like to keep you in the picture with our activities – feel free to pass this on to people you think may be interested in what we do.

Development Day

Trustees gathered in Leicester for the annual development day in September. We reviewed our business plan and agreed the key activities for the coming year.

We think that people are starting to “get” what we do and that we are developing a good reputation for the service we provide with referral agencies and our customers!



Celebrating our successes -

That's Josh peering round the photo – he joined us in November 2015 as a Trustee and works for Barclays.

What will we be focussing on this year?

This year we are focussing our efforts on supporting Refugees and we have been working successfully for some time with the City of Sanctuary and Retas in Leeds on this. We are concentrating on building relationships with similar organisations in Leicester and London to support people in realising their ambitions.

How you can help -

Do you have *contacts* inside organisations who might have customers for us? Please let Jane Rennie know as we have found it is much easier to make progress that way!

jane@growingpoints.co.uk



We are going to work with the Family Independence Initiative which is based in the USA. Have a look! <http://www.fii.org/>

FII has been working for 14 years in Oakland, New Orleans, Detroit, Albuquerque and Boston to help lift low-income families from poverty. Over that period there has been a lot of learning which "boils down to this: when low-income families work together, determine their own course for progress, and gain access to small amounts of capital, they make amazing progress. Consistently, average incomes increase by more than 20% within two years of enrolment. Household savings go up, debt goes down and children do better at school. (FII Newsletter November 2015)

So far we have worked with individuals to improve their social mobility and we want to speed this up by seeing if we can do this with communities. FII is a brilliant non-stigmatising approach to guiding communities out of the welfare; rewarding the ambitious and the determined to achieve their ambitions and sustainability. We think it will work here and we want to pilot it here with communities in London and Leicester and undertake an evaluation of its effectiveness.

FII methodology is likely to be very counter-intuitive to English practitioners.



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The demand for families to find their way by working with each other, the deliberate absence of facilitation or support, the data collection process on decisions made and the quarterly audit programme by FII are not our way. Staff can be sacked for intervening in the family group process!

All payments and loans/grants are carefully assessed and only made subject to clear performance rules which are widely understood and respected. So it works and it does so by handing the ownership for successful outcome to the families and if they make mistakes they learn from them. Thus our north European interventionist, community resource focused, targeted and guidance driven approach which removes responsibility from participants is not for them.

Families choose their own groups based on the ability of them to work together (no one is put-on a group) they are paid a stipend for attending meetings and for entering data; they are treated with respect and dignity and they are never told how to do it. We should learn from this!

Let us have your views on it.

We are going to source sustainable funding

We very much want to work with a like-minded corporate sponsor. If you can put us in touch with such an organisation or you run one. Please contact Dick@growingpoints.co.uk

We will also be applying for funding from a number of charitable Trusts and if you have any suggestions please feel free to let us have them!

We have a first for Growing Points!

Our long term vision is for people we have supported to become Guardians in their own right. One of our new customers is being offered support by someone we have successfully supported in the past.

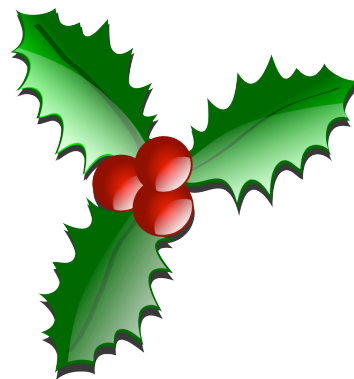
This is great news and we shall be working on sustainability over the next few years.

Guardians

After customers our Guardians, with their great professional networks, are our most important assets and we are developing more regional support networks for them and have appointed three Guardian Angels to do this.

Being a Guardian is richly rewarding and not onerous. If you have great professional networks and are happy to offer our customers access to them please get in touch with either Dick Stockford or Jane Rennie.

And finally...



Happy holidays and a healthy happy New Year to all our supporters and promoters and we look forward to working with you in 2016.

Your news, views and comments are always gratefully received and if you feel that you can support us in any way please contact the Director jane@growingpoints.co.uk