



growing points

March 2016

Dear Supporter

I am pleased to report that we have made great progress on a number of fronts since December! Growing Points is growing.....

Referral Organisations

In line with our action plan this year we have increased the number of organisations who spot customers with ambition and refer them to us. We work with the City of Sanctuary, Retas and Skyline in Leeds; the Refugee Council and Open Doors In Hull; Sussex Partnership and Mind in Sussex; and Transitions and Social Action for Health in London.

In 2016 our focus is on supporting Refugees but we will work with any agency working with people from excluded communities. Feel free to contact us if you have a customer you think we might be able to help. We are now also looking to establish contact with organisations in Leicester where we think there is a need for an organisation like ours.

Growing Points Plus



We have been working with the Family Independence Initiative on setting up this programme in the UK . (FII.org)

As well as working with individuals to improve their social mobility we are proposing to work with family groups in London Leeds and Leicester. The programme is called Growing Points Plus. Up to six families in each area will be given a small stipend and for this they meet monthly to develop plans to achieve their ambitions. They can apply for small amounts of capital which they have to match and they can

use this in line with their plans e.g. for training and development; or for equipment to set up a business.

There is good evidence that this self help approach works. 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)

Hidden Talents



This project is taking off! We have 11 candidates for this exciting new scheme which we have worked on with City of Sanctuary Leeds, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Health Education England.

We know that there is a critical shortage of nurses in the UK and NHS Trusts have been spending scarce resources recruiting from abroad. Some of our customers qualified as nurses in their country of origin and others have expressed a desire to train as a nurse here.

Leeds Teaching Hospitals are setting up a paid apprenticeship scheme for our customers. The year long course will result in a qualification and the likelihood of working at the Trust in the future. Our customers are very excited about this opportunity and LTH recognise that it makes sense to grow their own. Our thanks to Rose McCarthy at City of Sanctuary and Dean Royles



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and his staff at the Trust for getting this going and to Mike Curtis at Health Education England for additional funding. This pilot will be our proof of concept and we hope to roll it out to other forward thinking hospitals in due course. We know this makes economic sense for the NHS. Watch this space!

We are also extremely grateful to one of our Guardians Geraldine Clark who has coordinated this till now and to Amanda Ashton who is taking over as the Director of this project

If you work in a Trust and want to know more about this please contact Jane Rennie jane@growingpoints.co.uk

Growing Points Associates

Many of our customers have indicated that they want to give something back given their positive experience with us and we are going to set up an award scheme to recognise their achievements. We are also going to recruit some of our graduates onto the Growing Points Plus programme as they have a lot to offer others in terms of advice and support. More of this in the next newsletter.

What we do....

Growing Points is all about our customers: here are a few examples of what our customers can achieve given access to our professional networks:

ZW was a teacher in China – she is working with a Guardian who is a head teacher to get her on the right path to teaching here. This includes getting her a voluntary position at a local school and a paid role as a teaching assistant.

ID came from Africa where he had a degree in Law but was working as a care assistant in nursing homes. His Guardian arranged meetings with solicitors here to see what work he might do here. Through his networks the Guardian arranged a meeting with the Director

of Nursing at a large chain of private nursing homes to see whether this qualifications and experience could be useful to the organisation. They have given him a job as a care practitioner so he is now has a career path.

SA wants to become a doctor but has not been successful in his applications. Through our networks we have put him in touch with a GP who sits on a University selection panel to practise his interview skills and a medical consultant has worked with him to review his personal statement. He is in a much better position to get in this year.

All of these customers have ambition and we have through our networks got them in the right place at the right time!

We continue to look for sustainable funding for all of our initiatives in the future and if you are interested or you know someone who is please contact Dick@growingpoints.co.uk

Guardians

We are always looking for more Guardians as our customer base increases! Guardians share their professional networks with customers giving them opportunities they would never normally be offered. Here is a comment from Deidre one of our Guardians:

"I just want to thank you for getting me involved in such a fantastic project at Leeds, with all those inspiring women! From a selfish point of view, it was just the right thing at the right time for me, and I really feel very privileged to be involved, after you have done the groundwork of setting it all up. Very exciting project, and I shall enjoy being part of it as it progresses."

Contact jane@growingpoints.co.uk if you want to get involved!