

Setting Up A Place of Welcome

Thank you for your interest in joining the Places of Welcome network. This guide should give you an outline of the steps you need to take in order to establish a Place of Welcome in your community.

1. Identifying a coordinator

The coordinator will be the point of contact for matters to do with your Place of Welcome. They will also be the person to manage the project each week and ensure that policies and procedures are followed. It is good to identify a coordinator early in the process as they can then help with making connections and building partnerships with other local organisations.

2. Identifying and recruiting a core group of volunteers

Finding a core group of volunteers is essential. Realistically you only need a group of 5 or 6 people, which gives you enough people to allow for holidays and sickness.

3. Understanding and committing to the 5 Ps.

- **Place:** An accessible and hospitable building, open at the same time every week.
- **People:** Open to everyone regardless of their circumstances or situation, and staffed by volunteers.
- **Presence:** A place where people actively listen to one another.
- **Provision:** Offering free refreshments (at least a cup of tea and a biscuit) and basic local information.
- **Participation:** Recognises that every person coming to a Place of Welcome will bring talents, experiences and skills that they might be willing to share locally.

4. Identifying and consolidating local knowledge

- Undertaking some kind of Community Audit is a crucial part of setting up any community outreach project.
- This process can give you the chance to think about what you would like to know if you were new to your local area.
- By doing this you will also understand the limits of your knowledge and can begin to fill in the gaps.

5. Identifying and connecting with partners

- Building partnerships is a great way to ensure that the people who should know about the Place of Welcome, are told about it.
- **Tackling Isolation and Loneliness**

- People who suffer with poor mental health, who are isolated or lonely will often be known about by other services. Meeting with local doctors, nurses, social services and other charities is a really good way to get the word out to people who would benefit from the Place of Welcome.

- **Supporting Refugees & Asylum Seekers**

- Build a relationship with your local council – if you can find out who is responsible for the resettlement/housing of asylum seekers and refugees, get in touch with them and explain how your PoW (and the wider PoW network) can offer support.

6. Agreeing a day, time and venue

- Hopefully, having done the Community Audit/Research referred to above, you will be able to position your Place of Welcome within the week at a time when there is a gap in provision.
- You will also need to ensure that the venue you plan to use is free on the day and at the time you want. Remember that it must be free at the same time every week of the year.

7. Get Assessed

- In order to become a Place of Welcome, you must ensure that the area coordinator has been informed and they will come and assess you, give you permission to use the logos and provide you with templates for leaflets, posters etc. For Greater Manchester & Rossendale the area coordinator is Lily Axworthy (lily@greatertogethermanchester.org)

8. Publicity

- Places of Welcome will provide you with leaflets and posters (there is a cost associated with this). They can also furnish you with a PVC banner and/or an A Frame. Speak to Lily at Greater Together Manchester for information on prices and how to go about doing this.
- Get added to the Places of Welcome website – speak to Lily and she will arrange you to be placed under the Greater Manchester section of the website. If there are any changes to the time/place of your Place of Welcome make sure you get the website updated asap.
- Press Release – why not write a press release for the launch of your Place of Welcome. You could even invite local press along to the opening. Can you get someone to officially open the PoW? If you cannot get press along, make sure you get someone to take some good photos and send these in to the local press with some copy. If you would like help with how to write a press release, please contact Lily.

9. Health and Safety

- See additional information about Health & Safety for Places of Welcome.

10. Arrange Launch