



Women's Workshop



# **WOMEN'S WORKSHOP**

## **Mentoring Handbook**



***Supporting rural women to progress through their journey of learning and development.***

**Our Vision**

**Supporting those who need it most**

**Working with local women to improve their quality of life**

## **Welcome to the Women's Workshop Mentoring Programme**

### **About WOMEN'S WORKSHOP**

The Women's Workshop is about supporting women to tackle the inequalities they face, by working and learning together to promote social and economic justice.

Work on the WOMEN'S WORKSHOP project began in 2006. At that time Fourth Action, its parent women-focussed organisation, wanted to highlight and tackle women's under-representation in manual trades, construction, science and technology, and so launched an innovative self-build project, where women could explore new skills, and gain confidence in exploring wider opportunities for work than those usually available to them. Fourth Action is a Company Limited by Guarantee, and can attract funds and partnerships to help develop its activities.

### **About WOMEN'S WORKSHOP's Mentoring programme**

It soon became clear that women facing barriers to involvement in training or work, progressed most effectively towards their goals when offered a fully-supported holistic approach, because everyone is different, and faces different challenges. The mentoring project developed to become a personalised service that targets the real needs of the clients who access any of Fourth Action's projects and services. The WOMEN'S WORKSHOP has now become more than just a building (although this is still a main part of our work). It also stands as an emblem for women who want to get involved in campaigns which tackle gender inequality, and also a programme of one to one and group activities beyond those just focussed on the self-build itself.

Fourth Action's first mentoring project was to train 30 local unemployed women as peer mentors to support each other in getting and staying involved, and in making progress towards their goals, becoming active in their communities in the process.

### **Overall aims/purpose**

The overall aims of the mentoring programme are to:

- Support people towards identifying their goals and the steps to achieve them including into learning, employment, self employment and volunteering, ensuring that each step in their personal progression is acknowledged and built on.

- Use a holistic approach that concentrates on the needs of the client by ensuring that mentors are well equipped with a range of support skills.
- Create a collaborative quality assured network of local mentors through partnership between VCS organisations and self-employed associates.
- Identify recruit and support people from the community as mentors as part of the next step in developing their career options in the community or other people-focussed roles.

## **Your Role as Mentor**

As a mentor, you can provide encouragement, guidance and support to clients who access the services of WOMEN'S WORKSHOP.

On a one-to-one basis the mentors provide support in range of settings:

- To clarify the person's longer term goals and work with them on how to achieve them.
- To identify support needs and help to overcome barriers to learning, employment, self-employment and volunteering.
- To support people who are involved in learning and development programmes.
- To identify further opportunities with people, in areas that they may wish to develop, whether this be related to self-development, further learning, employment, self-employment or volunteering.

In order to deliver this role and to keep learning about the mentoring role, mentors

- Attend mentor team meetings.
- Have the quality of their mentoring regularly reviewed by an experienced supervisor
- Continue to build knowledge about wider opportunities to signpost and referral people to across the network.

## **The Benefits of Mentoring**

The mentoring relationship can bring many benefits to both mentor and mentee. One of the most valuable things you can do for your client is be a good listener. Where the benefits to the mentee are more obvious, the benefits to the mentor are less so. Through mentoring new opportunities may present themselves giving an opportunity to learn new skills and qualifications, and enhance the skills mentors already have. Mentoring can contribute to increased confidence, developing and having access to networks and other organisations and a wider understanding of the

knowledge this can bring. Mentors can reap the benefits of self reflection concerning their own career paths, open up opportunities in other career fields. Mentoring also develops supervisory and management skills, provides evidence of teamwork, and can also develop organisational and communication skills. Not least are the rewards felt from helping someone in need and knowing you have done the best job possible to help them on the journey of discovery.

### **WOMEN'S WORKSHOP's Client Groups**

Our clients come from a variety of different backgrounds often having a diverse range of needs and requirements. The project aims to offer support to all who are participating on WOMEN'S WORKSHOP projects and learning programmes. The majority of people who get involved with WOMEN'S WORKSHOP are looking to access learning, employment, a change of career or to become self employed, and we are particularly keen to promote opportunities for volunteering and work within the community. We specialise in working with disadvantaged groups of women, including young people, migrant groups, lone parents, long term unemployed and people who have learning difficulties and mental health problems. All of these groups benefit from the one to one mentoring support WOMEN'S WORKSHOP offers which helps to break down barriers and encourage social inclusion.

Although the mentoring service is made available to anyone who takes part in our services people have the option to opt out of the mentoring programme if they wish to do so.

### **Working with Vulnerable adults or young people aged under 18**

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP takes the safeguarding of young and vulnerable clients very seriously. All WOMEN'S WORKSHOP mentors must have a current DBS certificate, and must be familiar with WOMEN'S WORKSHOP's safeguarding policies.<sup>i</sup>

There are certain circumstances where WOMEN'S WORKSHOP will allow mentors who have criminal records to mentor people, and each case is taken on its merits. Where a mentor does have unspent convictions, a full risk assessment will be carried out to ensure that any mentoring they do is appropriate to any level of risk they pose to clients.

## **Mentor Training and Progression**

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP requires all mentors to take part in an induction training programme. All new mentors are entered for a free mentoring skills training programme recognised by the Open College Network which provides anyone successfully completing with an Award in Progression at Level Two. This programme includes opportunities for progression within WOMEN'S WORKSHOP to further learning (which may be subsidised) such as the NOCN Certificate in Information Advice and Guidance, or Community Development Work at levels 2, 3 and 4, and supported signposting to qualifications offered by other providers such as coaching or counselling.

## **Confidentiality and privacy**

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP holds all personal information concerning clients in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988.

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP sets out to guarantee that people's information should remain confidential wherever possible<sup>ii</sup>. WOMEN'S WORKSHOP is committed to confidentiality on a "need to know" basis. For example, there may be no reason why a volunteer needs to know why a client is disabled. If this information is revealed to a mentor by their client, then it is not appropriate to discuss this outside of the project and should be considered as confidential. Personal information about any client is to be treated respectfully and the client may not wish what they have told you to become common knowledge even if they have not specifically indicated this.

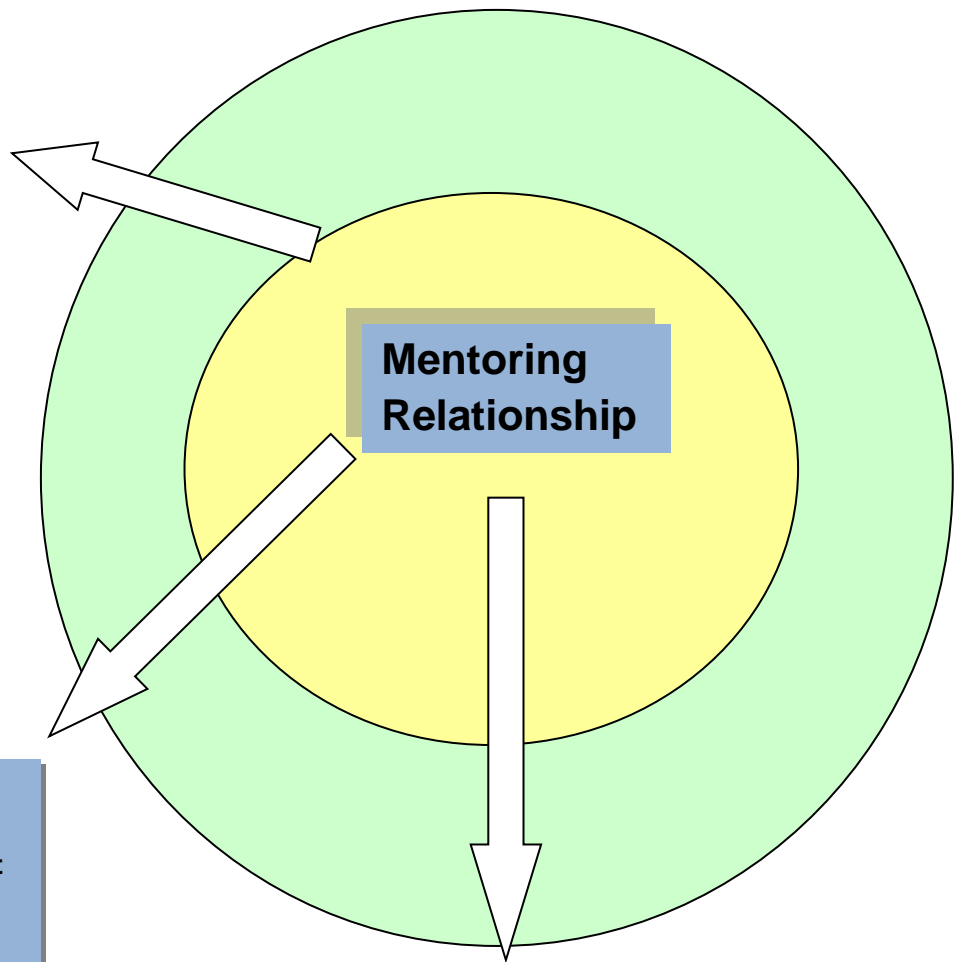
### WOMEN'S WORKSHOP code of practice

- Confidential matters must not be discussed with members of the general public, including other clients or learners.
- In mentor training sessions, meetings and informal discussions, care should be taken not to disclose information where individuals can be identified, and that particular happenings in your mentoring relationship or group sessions are not made public.
- Personal information about other volunteers even if disclosed in a social setting should not be repeated and should be treated in a sensitive manner.
- People can let us know if they are unhappy with the way we have handled their personal information through our complaints process. Any breaches of confidence that are reported will be dealt with through WOMEN'S WORKSHOP's disciplinary process and are considered very serious.

**WOMEN'S  
WORKSHOP policies  
and procedures**

- Health & Safety
- Equal Opps
- Vulnerable Adult and  
Child Protection
- Confidentiality
- Quality assurance  
systems
- Evidence requirements
- Referral

**Personalised  
contract between  
mentor and client**



**External requirements, policies and legislation**

- Single Equalities Act - Equality & Human Rights for all
- Quality standard requirements e.g.
  - Ofsted
  - Mentoring & Befriending Foundation
- NOCN requirements for accredited learning
- Duty of Care legislation
- Data Protection
- Companies House

**The Context  
for WOMEN'S  
WORKSHOP**

There are certain circumstances where confidentiality may not be honoured:

- If a child under the age of eighteen or a vulnerable person makes a disclosure of abuse or something else that may harm them to a mentor, then the mentor is obliged by law to follow the procedures laid in the WOMEN'S WORKSHOP's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policies.
- Where the client gives consent for the confidence to be broken, so that the mentor can seek advice from a supervisor or other third party in order to be able to assist them.
- Where WOMEN'S WORKSHOP is required to supply information to funding bodies, such as the Skills Funding Agency, who sometimes require personal details and details of your achievements.

Mentors are encouraged to discuss any worries, questions or general observations about confidentiality with the Mentoring Coordinator at WOMEN'S WORKSHOP.

When working with clients for the first time, mentors are asked to explain our guarantee around the issues of confidentiality, and to ask the client to sign the confidentiality clause in the agreement between the mentor and the person being mentored.

For further information, please read the WOMEN'S WORKSHOP confidentiality policy.

## **Health and Safety**

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP values its staff, volunteers and associates and encourages them to protect themselves at all times.

All mentoring sessions should be carried out in a community venue that has been risk-assessed by WOMEN'S WORKSHOP. If the client prefers the mentoring to take place elsewhere such as a cafe, or cannot leave their home, the mentor must have the permission of the mentoring coordinator to meet in these circumstances and a risk assessment must be carried out for the personal safety of both the mentor and the client before the mentoring takes place.

If you are due to work out in the community, please make sure that someone knows where you are, who you are meeting and when you are due to return. If for any reason you feel unsafe working with a client, end

the session and walk away. Contact your Coordinator and we will discuss how to move forward with this client.

For more information, see WOMEN'S WORKSHOP's health and safety policy<sup>iii</sup> including the Lone Worker policy.

## **The Process**

Once a client has accessed the services of WOMEN'S WORKSHOP and it has been identified that the client would benefit from working with a mentor, the mentoring coordinator will assess the needs of the client, and then a mentor will be assigned. Geography and other areas of expertise available within the mentor team will be taken into account in this process. Once the relationship has been established, a meeting will take place concerning the areas the mentor will be aiding the client with. Both the client and the mentor have the opportunity, after a maximum of three mentoring sessions, to let the mentoring coordinator know if they are happy with the relationship continuing. The coordinator at WOMEN'S WORKSHOP is always there to help with any issues or worries you may have.

## **Getting the Mentoring Relationship off to a Good Start**

To begin establishing a mentoring relationship, remember the main thing is to build trust and a rapport with the client where they will feel comfortable allowing them to begin their journey of development.

It is important that the client feels that you are interested in them and that they are really being listened to. Active listening can show the client that there is real interest and understanding in the relationship.

Initially the first meeting between you and a client will be to establish goals and build up an action plan with the client. Remember that the role of mentor is to offer the client constructive feedback to empower them to make the right decisions for them, not something that you think they should do. Identify the client's interests and take them seriously.

Here are some useful steps in the process, which may take several sessions to work through, with some suggested resources to help you (the training will cover lots of other ideas to prompt the process)

- Sharing something about yourself and how you got involved in the mentoring project, and asking them what got them interested.



- Discussing the scope and the of what the mentoring can cover and what it can't; covering confidentiality, their rights, time and place of meeting up, how long the mentoring relationship might last (Learner charter<sup>iv</sup>)
- Agreeing a contract (Mentoring agreement<sup>v</sup>) and how they can complain if things don't go well (Complaints procedure<sup>vi</sup>)
- Their current circumstances and the process that led them there.
- Getting agreement for the focus on setting goals and making progress towards them – in initial assessment pack including the following items: <sup>vii</sup>
- Practical support needs and barriers – e.g. learning support, transport costs, child or other care – to enable them to take part (support plan, exploring learning styles)
- Possibly starting to think about future goals by building on achievements, skills and interests they already have (tree of achievements)
- Looking at their priorities for where to start (wheel of life)
- Starting on a plan of action.... (Action Plan)

### **Mentoring Skills and techniques**

There are a few effective techniques that are covered in the induction training that can be used to show that you are listening to your client. Eye contact, facial expressions, body language (nodding looking at client), verbal cues, such as "go on," "yes I understand," also summarising/reflecting statement.

### **Equality and Diversity**

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP works with a diverse range of people and you will be trained and supported in meeting any particular special requirements of the person you are supporting<sup>viii</sup>. They are in charge of whether they use any particular labels to define themselves, and of whether they feel they need extra recognition or support. If you have any concerns about this, please share them in your mentoring support sessions.

## **Signposting and Referral**

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP believes that when people are signposted or referred to other services they deserve to get whatever continuing support they feel they need from the WOMEN'S WORKSHOP mentor while they are developing new support options. WOMEN'S WORKSHOP also tries to ensure that the client is given as full a picture as possible of what they can expect from other agencies that we refer them to. A client should usually be supported in making contact with other agencies themselves, and details should only be passed to another agency with their agreement.

## **The mentoring record**

Once their goals have been recorded, the information will initially be returned to the Mentoring Coordinator, for discussion on how we will move the client onto the next step of the journey. This will then be discussed with you; this may indicate how often you will need to meet your client and what is to be covered.

The mentoring record journal needs to be filled in every time you meet with your client. This is used to track the process, and sometimes is needed as evidence for funders, with the client's consent.

## **Your availability**

We ask that you do your best to be available at the times agreed between you and your client. However, it's understandable that this may not always be possible for a variety of reasons. Please contact your client at the earliest opportunity to arrange an alternative session, failing this please contact the office and someone will contact the mentee to pass on the relevant information.

## **Travel expenses**

Mentors can claim travel expenses on a monthly basis on the WOMEN'S WORKSHOP expenses form<sup>ix</sup>. If there are other out-of-pocket expenses likely to be incurred, please share these with the mentoring coordinator who can let mentors know what arrangements WOMEN'S WORKSHOP may be able to make to cover them.

## Key Contact Details

**Julia Lyford – Coordinator** – [info@womensworkshop.net](mailto:info@womensworkshop.net)

mobile 07775 817544

Julia has overall responsibility for Fourth Action / Women’s Workshop policy and procedures. She is the person to contact if you have any major health and safety concerns, or if you want to discuss the overall quality of the programme, including the mentoring programme staff.

**Hala Zaluczkowska** – [bewickfolly@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bewickfolly@hotmail.co.uk)

07595 073417

Hala is the lead tutor for mentoring skills training and can deal with telephone enquiries and support needs relating to your mentoring role.

**Frankie Williams** – [frankiewilliams@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:frankiewilliams@blueyonder.co.uk)

07913 073459

Frankie is the Chair of the organisation, and she is responsible for overseeing the way the mentoring project is managed, and for dealing with any complaints about the project coordination, or appeals about other complaints.

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Appendices - also online at [www.womensworkshop.net/help-advice](http://www.womensworkshop.net/help-advice)

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<sup>i</sup> WOMEN’S WORKSHOP Child Protection Policy, Vulnerable Adult Policy

<sup>ii</sup> Confidentiality Policy

<sup>iii</sup> WOMEN’S WORKSHOP Health & Safety Policy

<sup>iv</sup> Learner Charter

<sup>v</sup> Mentoring Agreement

<sup>vi</sup> Complaints procedure

<sup>vii</sup> Initial assessment pack including Mountain Evaluation, Learning styles, tree diagram, wheel of life, support needs and action plan

<sup>viii</sup> Equality & Diversity Policy and Action Plan

<sup>ix</sup> WOMEN’S WORKSHOP expenses form