

Sales Improvement Services Growing Better Lives Case Study

Growing Better Lives

Growing Better Lives (GBL) is a community interest organisation that develops and researches innovative approaches to mental healthcare. GBL runs various projects including Greencare which makes use of the natural environment in therapeutic support programmes.

About Greencare

Greencare is a therapeutic approach where contact with nature is an integral part of the process. This can include therapeutic and social horticulture, rural crafts, animal assisted interventions, care farming, woodland crafts, wilderness skills, and other ecotherapy techniques.

Greencare is an essential part of an intensive therapy programme in Slough for people with complex emotional needs.

'Green Care' is a range of activities that promotes physical and mental health and well-being through contact with nature. It utilises farms, gardens and other outdoor spaces as a therapeutic intervention for vulnerable adults and children.

Support to Greencare.

Like so many charities within the UK, funding is a challenge.

Greencare have worked off the back of donations and grants and have been providing support within the local



Growing Better Lives run a number of support interventions in and around Slough and include the use of a purpose built yurt at Iver Environment Centre, Slough Road, Iver Heath, Bucks SL0 0EB.

community that often goes unseen or is mis-understood until such time as an individual or a close relative might come into contact with behavioural challenges.

To be sustainable the organisation knows that it must meet wider stakeholder needs and so the business planning process has been designed to carry out market research and reconsider how it can generate revenue and serve the community and how best to approach any new emerging market opportunities.

This is being achieved by a number of workshops that address the business planning process and ensure ownership of the tasks are agreed and allocated to existing team members. Where skill deficiencies exist, use of volunteers can be made, working in partnership with third

sector support organisations such as Slough Business Community Partnership and WAVE (Wider Access to Volunteering for Everyone).

Tim Anderson has worked with the team at Greencare during 2015 helping them prepare a business plan and an alternative approach to fund generation that will support the self sustainability of the local services and thus ensure the on going provision of such services.

The plan is also aimed at raising the profile of the great work the organisations does which in turn should also improve donations and support from the local community.

Comments from the team:

Vanessa Jones, Director

Our directors are unpaid volunteers who see how beneficial Greencare is to people with complex needs and want to make the services financially sustainable and to expand – but we all have limited time and business skills!

Tim is helping us focus on what is needed to achieve our short and medium term aims and is showing us how structured business plans can support that process.

He is an enormous asset to our team: keeping us on track with our business planning whilst still being sympathetic to our aims and understanding of our needs.

Dr Rex Haigh, Director

As a team, we are extremely committed and passionate about the work we do.

We know that it could help so many people who either 'fall through the gaps' in all the local services, or end up with 'mental illnesses' and 'psychiatric careers' that could have been prevented.

We have the knowledge, skills and experience between us to deliver an excellent programme. But we do not have the business background or understanding to turn that into a viable social enterprise – and, at long last, it feels like things are turning round.

Tim is really helping us to do what we need to turn our ideas into a reality.