

<b>Organisation Name</b>	<b>Reference</b>	2019-10-R025
Safe Welcome After Prison (SWAP)		

<b>Visit Date</b>	<b>Visited By</b>
18 May 2022 Zoom call	Alison Hope

**Grant Summary**

Safe Welcome After Prison supports offenders upon release from prison, many of whom have multiple complex needs. They offer a change of lifestyle programme which ultimately contributes to the success of them not reoffending and returning to custody. It's a user led service offering loans and gifts of vital necessities as well as supporting health and housing needs until benefits are paid. This can prevent a return to acquisitive crime during those crucial early weeks after release.

The grant will fund a Volunteer Coordinator post for 2 years to train service users to become volunteers who are at the core of service delivery. After three years the organisation would have absorbed the role of the Volunteer Coordinator and a robust approach to volunteering into its culture and the role will no longer be necessary in a paid capacity.

<https://safewelcomeafterprison.com>

**Visit Details (People met, premises visited etc.)**

Zoom call with Ian Calderdale, project manager and Yvonne Oliver, Chair of Trustees.

**Information about the Organisation**

Tiny charity, Ian is an ex offender, who co founded SWAP to help others. He was an addict who is now working part time up to the hours permitted, without losing benefits.

He had terrible stage fright on the zoom to begin with. Said had no problem speaking face to face, to groups, but hates seeing himself on zoom. He warmed up after while to pitch in to stop Yvonne talking!!

They have made loads of progress with our grant but the volunteer manager has serious cancer. Volunteers are ex offenders who have been supported on release from prison, overcome addictions etc and are now able to support others with 1to1 work starting with simple things like picking them up from prison, giving them a phone, getting them on universal credit, methodone prescriptions, GP appointments. (many have addictions). They have a link with the benefits office to make urgent applications as many short term prisoners leave with no cash at all. They then have 1to1 work and group counselling. Some are run by qualified or trainee counsellors, with ex Service Users volunteering where appropriate.

The last report said David, their Volunteer Manager, was back to work but symptoms have returned and he is working part-time as much as he feels able and it sounds like he has some 'last chance' treatment in June, when they expect him to be off for

a while. It's real shame because they felt he was doing a great job. The other workers have backfilled for him and still progressed formalising their volunteer programme which they want to get accredited so that participants have something recognised on their CV. This is very much a grass roots community led organisation which is growing organically.

We are their main supporter. The illness of their Volunteer manager has meant that they have progressed the work planned within the team.

The Volunteers support ex prisoners and also earn fees for SWAP for drug testing etc which raises about £6k per year.

The peer to peer support really works for them. A few of them have ended up doing part-time work and Yvonne commented how they were then getting jobs (which was a success but also meant they had to train up new volunteers!)

It was a messy discussion with Yvonne going off at tangents, but I still felt that the grant was serving them well. Their annual report is due soon and will provide some stats on their outcomes.

#### **Issues and Comments**

Note that Volunteer Manager very likely not to be able to continue. Suggest a follow up in June/July to see what the situation is.

#### **Other Feedback**