



MENTORING GLOUCESTERSHIRE BUNDLES



Gloucestershire Bundles
A Helping Hand for Local Families and Children

The project is part of Gloucestershire Community Foundation's INVEST 2023 Leadership Programme, which is run in partnership with Cranfield Trust and the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire. Gloucestershire Bundles was not known to Cranfield Trust before being selected for mentoring support through INVEST. The charity helps families in need by providing toys, books, clothing, toiletries and equipment throughout the county from its base in Gloucester. Under the Programme's Mentoring scheme, a charity leader will receive monthly mentoring sessions over a period of approximately 6 months.

The Project

Under this project, mentoring is being provided to two Trustees, Dawn and Stacey. Both are heavily involved in coordinating the charity's operations. Originally, Stacey applied to the Programme for a mentor, but when she started working with her mentor, she realised that his support would be equally important to her colleague Dawn at this critical stage for the charity.

The mentor, Nick, is a member of the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire, a membership organisation which has provided most of the mentors for INVEST since it began in 2019.

Nick agreed to mentor Dawn and Stacey together, appreciating how closely they worked together at Gloucestershire Bundles on everything from providing day to day operations to fundraising and social media

Gloucestershire Community Foundation confirmed that they were happy with this flexible and inclusive approach to providing what the charity needs, given the very challenging environment it is operating in. Both Stacey and Dawn wanted a mentor who could help them to maintain the charity's unique impact in the community as it grows.

They also needed business and governance guidance. Volunteer mentor Nick made an excellent match as he is a local businessman bringing with him extensive experience of growing a successful local charity, the Pied Piper Appeal, where he is still Chair.

As Nick commented after meeting the charity for the first time: "The journey has begun!" And as for Stacey: "We can't thank Nick enough. We are really looking forward to what this is going to bring to Gloucestershire Bundles."

Impact

Nick has been a huge support to Dawn and Stacey, bringing with him a great network of local professionals and contacts which has led to two new trustees joining the board, as well as visits from among others, Dame Janet Trotter, former Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, to help raise the charity's profile in the county.

The additional support has allowed Dawn and Stacey to start to regain a better work/life balance – something that working in a small and desperately needed charity is very difficult to do. For Stacey, Nick's support is a "game changer" making things possible that will expand the charity. Stacey was glad that the mentoring became available for both herself and Dawn as some of the decisions are "bigger than just me".



As the project is drew to a close, Nick summed up his experience as a volunteer:

“

Working with Dawn and Stacey has been amazing - it has really opened my eyes to how important the INVEST mentoring programme is. It is so needed, giving charities support behind the scenes allowing them to concentrate on delivering their mission.

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Dawn and Stacey summed up the impact on the charity of the INVEST programme and what it has enabled them to do as a charity and personally:



The most significant benefit to us as a whole is the reassurance that we are moving in the right direction. We have been able to build a stronger board and are even hiring a member of staff to run the office, which frees us up to develop the charity and improve our services to the people we support. Our network is now much wider and the impact on our charity has been huge.



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