



Summer Newsletter

This is a special edition — a celebration of volunteers newsletter in which we express our thanks to all the SMART Recovery Facilitators whether you volunteer for us directly or through another organisation.

Over the last year we have trained the following:

- **18** Peer Volunteers – Peers in recovery who volunteer only for UK SMART.
- **107** Partner Volunteers – peers in recovery who primarily volunteer for another organisation/a partner of SMART and deliver SMART meetings as part of their role.

We are registering new peer led mutual aid meetings every week and we currently have **328** face to face meetings and **57** local online ones as well as our usual National Online Meeting timetable.

Our volunteers each go through an application process and complete 20 hours of self-directed learning in which they have to pass some assessments. Gaining the position takes effort and time and is therefore well earned! Needless to say we could not provide the coverage we do all over the UK without amazing volunteers who are giving up their own time to give back to the recovery community.

What support do we give to volunteers?

We have 6 full time Community Co-ordinators who are paid staff of UK SMART Recovery. Each of them covers a geographical area to provide support to all the facilitators in that area. Every volunteer has access to the contact details of their local community coordinator. The community co-ordinators each host monthly facilitator support sessions and additional tool time sessions. Some of our volunteers like Andy xx also hold tool time sessions for us. All of this is provided online via zoom but the co-ordinators also move about their region visiting volunteers, attending their meetings, giving ad hoc advice and general feedback. The co-ordinators are:

- Kelly Doig—Scotland
- Jeni Langley—North East and Yorkshire
- Danny Howell — North West and East Midlands
- Emma Sharp — West Midlands and South West
- Colleen Lally—London and South East
- Graham Rowson—North Wales

When a new volunteer completes the facilitator training their details are passed to the respective community co-ordinator. A newly qualified facilitator receives a congratulatory email from Central Office which also confirms the next steps, an email from their local community co-ordinator who offers any support which is required. Emails include information on certificates/manual, how to register meetings, local support on offer, tool times/support groups etc.

Regular contact is maintained via email or phone calls. The main and most regular opportunity to network together as facilitators is via the support groups/meetings. These are your opportunity to connect with other facilitators, hear about what's going on and gain advice from others doing the same role. We really want all facilitators to engage with these forums regularly.



A special thank you.

We would like to extend our gratitude specifically to individuals who have delivered the role of Volunteer Regional Co-Ordinator. SMART has undergone a restructure and the VRC role used to provide a bridge between facilitators on the ground and our National Co-ordinators but this is changing because we now have community co-ordinators to help support facilitators across England. This means our volunteers can concentrate on doing what they do best which is delivering peer led mutual aid in the community. The following individuals have acted in a VRC or enhanced capacity in recent years and we extend a special thank you to them:

- Emma Renton
- Lyndsey and Martin Tunney
- Vivian McKinnon
- Toby Branfoot
- Robbie Lyttle
- Paul Evans



Dan Murphy will continue to be our training course assessor.

You have all been amazing in supporting SMART Recovery and we thank you for your time and dedication.

A new volunteer recognition scheme will launch in September and it will include amongst other things, a nomination system, milestone awards and facilitator spotlights.

What's going on?



Over the last year we have been using lots of different ways to communicate out to everyone about what's going on at UKSR. We have used social media, email, newsletters and our website. From now on the main place to find out about what's going on including new meeting registrations will be the **weekly news bulletin** on our website

published every **Thursday** lunch time. Everything that's current will be in the weekly bulletin but some of the content will also be pushed out via social media for: special announcements, specific events, surveys, facilitator support meetings, tool time and drop in sessions. This newsletter will provide a general overview of what we are celebrating each quarter. Your local community co-ordinator is your main point of contact and can also fill you in on the latest things we are doing. You can also sign up to our mailing list here at the bottom of our contact us page: <https://smartrecovery.org.uk/contact-us/>

Last but certainly not least:

The whole team wish to thank everyone that stepped forward to tell their story of addiction and recovery in May this year. We have 20 powerful and inspirational stories from those who use SMART, the Family & Friends programme and some Veterans. M&F Health, the PR company who helped us create media packs using these stories have been extremely impressed and humbled by the stories. Some of the case studies have been picked up by traditional and digital media so well done to all — it is quite rare for the voices of those in recovery including those who support them are given platforms like this.