

**Staff Ambassadors programme 2015  
Line manager feedback – July 2015**

**Q1 Thus far, would you say that there have been any benefits to you and your wider team of having a staff member on the Ambassadors Programme? Please explain your answer.**

**Personal development**

- Having my staff member on the Ambassadors Programme has brought benefits to my team. My Ambassador is using some of the facilitation skills she observes at the monthly meetings at our own Team Development Sessions. The benefit to me as a line manager is the knowledge that my Ambassador is actively developing herself and getting time to reflect on her work, I see that this helps her deal with the sometimes difficult situations she has to deal with in her day to day role.
- My Ambassador has gained more confidence with being involved in the Ambassadors programme. By this I mean that he doesn't shy away as much from contacting people and using his own initiative.

**Connectivity**

- She has widened the partnership opportunities for the venue with the field visits and workshops she has been on too.
- Interacting with a wider pool of people which has increased knowledge and increased skills and enthusiasm.
- I know that my Ambassador has been making some good contacts, that we will no doubt benefit from in the future, but in the short-term there have been no immediate benefits for myself or the team.
- Participation in the programme has had a positive impact throughout team. It's improved the connectivity that our team – and the ambassador participant in particular – has had with other colleagues. It's also democratised and made non-hierarchical this interaction.
- The series of visits to community projects seem to have been a really inspiring part of the programme.

**Increased understanding of other Glasgow Life service areas – leading to improved service provision**

- My ambassador is gaining more knowledge and understanding about other aspects of the business and what the museums can offer people of all ages, this is beneficial to myself and other team members especially in the planning of the summer programme. We are currently doing a weekly challenge in one of the museum finding out information on the museum visiting it and taking part in activities, this is a complete shift in activities for the participants as they are out of the area they live in, they are learning and seeing the positive side to using museums and libraries which can provide them with year round activities.
- Connections with the Communities team, an understanding of the broader GL context, the external visits have been useful and one of the two has found the action learning sets useful to review a specific problem.

- It has had the benefit of an increased knowledge of the work and the staff of the GL Communities team. I also think it's been part of a growing wider awareness of the Our Museum process, with more of my team members attending Insight and Creative Cafes this year.
- I would say there have been a number of benefits: my Ambassador now has relationships and connections to a wide range of colleagues from the Museums Service Area that he would never have had without involvement in a programme such as this – this has not only been of benefit to the projects he is involved with through the programme but also in his wider role and other projects he's involved with such as Cultural Hubs. My Ambassador is also able to share with colleagues within the NW Area Team some of the knowledge he has been able to gather and pass on contacts or areas for collaboration to other colleagues to enhance their programmes/projects and to assist with not only working towards our own service priorities but also Museums and Glasgow Life's.
- Greater awareness of resources and opportunities that can be accessed with museum partners for programme development across hubs. Increased awareness of museums team and able to signpost other Communities staff to relevant contacts for museums staff. Particular benefit to the development and success of the NW cultural hub at Netherton Community Centre.

### **Motivation and enjoyment**

- I know that my Ambassador has really enjoyed this whole process and has immersed herself into the programme fully, attending a variety of the activities on offer.
- Yes, staff motivation has been a benefit to the individual and the wider team. The acquiring of additional skills and access to training have been shared within the team. Participant has been appreciative of the opportunity to attend training sessions which they would not normally be able to access.

### **Other**

- Yes, my Ambassador has had an overall positive experience and from promoting this he has encouraged some of our staff to consider themselves for the SA programme.
- Not really evident as the range of work is quite narrow. However, one of the workshops - pinpointing – for project planning could have benefits for the wider team if this can be incorporated into a future team project.

### **Q2 In your opinion have there been any challenges? If so, how have you worked through these?**

#### **Prioritising time for the Programme**

- Time has been an issue, however I have asked my Ambassador to prioritise the Ambassadors sessions. This continues to be an issue that we have to work through month to month given the staffing pressures that NE Libraries are under.
- Allocating time off has been the main problem and even then it hasn't really been a major issue at my venue [GMRC]. For the most part my Ambassador has been able to attend the meetings/activities. This has been possible by re allocating work or other people stepping up to fill in the gaps when the Ambassador has been out. Perhaps made easier by the nature of the venue and its public programme
- Challenges have all been around the time necessary for participants to be fully involved in SA programme versus the operational needs of the service. As all my staff are "operational" this has presented many challenges for us as a team to ensure where possible individuals can fully commit to programme.
- Prioritising of other work commitments, often operational, against the commitments to the programme. My Ambassador in particular had found it a challenge in working as part of a group

but has increased greatly in confidence in this area as a result of participation in the project and can use these skills within other areas of work

### **No challenges**

- To date I feel that the programme has been very well organised and have not had any challenges.
- My Ambassador has participated fully in the Staff Ambassadors Programme and continued to sustain high level “business as usual” work.
- There haven’t really been any challenges that I’ve encountered in the programme.

### **Staffing levels**

- No major challenges although staffing levels have meant other staff have had to deliver additional workshops and other pieces of work – this will be more difficult in the future with current staffing levels.
- Age old problem of releasing staff to attend. Until such attendance on ambassadorial duties is seen as a core requirement this continues to be a struggle. I have worked through these with some brilliant rota-ing by my AMM!

### **Collaborative project**

- Yes, for one team member, the project in particular and re lack of input from others working on the project. For me it’s difficult to know how to resolve this when it falls out with normal work programmes for other team members – I would ordinarily have raised this with the other line manager by now. I think we still are trying to work through the challenges though I have tried to ensure that my team member and I are both appreciating the learning from the process itself and therefore even from the way the challenges might be helping us to understand better colleagues’ approaches and priorities.
- The biggest challenge has been developing a mutual project across the two services – Communities and Museums.
- Nothing significant as a line manager, other than my Ambassador’s frustration at others’ commitment to attend project planning sessions not always being consistent which impacts on the pace of progress.
- My Ambassador arranged weekly workshops throughout the school summer holidays which did mean we had to readjust our summer programme accordingly [through his collaborative project work]. We had to reduce the number of out of school workshops we offered as a result. The SA led workshops had a maximum of 6 people attending, whereas the out of schools group workshops can facilitate up to 20 people per session. My Ambassador covered 6 sessions in total with the SA group and so it could be argued that our workshop attendee figures were reduced as a result of this. We still made our target for July by working harder elsewhere to get attendance figures by utilising a volunteer and bringing out of school groups in 6 at a time to our family workshops. I do think the pressure all venues receive to measure success through quantitative means will always make working with smaller groups for several sessions more challenging but I don’t think that this should be a barrier to what can be achieved. I believe with flexibility and understanding of the overall goal these potential issues can be overcome.

### **Application process and managing participation**

- Yes, there have been challenges right from the start. The application process requires careful management of expectations from staff applying. My member of staff didn’t want to fill in an application and this caused an issue with whether they should be offered a place even though they had previously been told they would get one. This lack of an application is an issue as there’s no document to refer back to when assessing the ambassador’s progress, and whether the programme is meeting their aims. I’m working through this by raising the programme at my one to one’s with the member of staff to provide an opportunity to check and discuss progress. I’ve also

expressed my disappointment when the member of staff has cancelled their attendance at Ambassadors' meetings and reinforced the message that this is an opportunity for learning and development that I as a line manager have committed to supporting and prioritising.

#### **Other**

- I can't think of any major challenges. One or two of here sessions have clashed with meetings for the West Court Redisplay project. However, as other members of the project team have been able to attend these, I didn't request my Ambassador to miss her Staff Ambassador sessions, and have brought her up to speed on the meetings later. There have also been occasions when I have forgotten that my Ambassador was going to be out at a Staff Ambassadors session, and so I have had to email her about something, rather than get an instant answer from the next desk, but nothing significant.

**Q3 Have you witnessed any positive changes in your Ambassador as a result of their participation on the programme? If so, what are these and how have they affected your wider team?**

#### **Acquiring and sharing skills**

- The Ambassadors Programme has allowed my staff member to both share her positivity with others and benefit from the group's experiences. She uses the skills she is gaining on the programme within our team and it is received very well, the team building she facilitates is having a positive effect on the venue team.
- Yes staff member is more motivated and enthusiastic to share their experience with the wider team, they have developed and promoted a new project within the venue which front of house staff participated in and they will continue to develop a closer working relationship with team members in promoting and delivery of this project. Staff member has actively requested moving to other venues to further develop their skills.
- Increased skills in staff management/ personal development due to completion of the coaching programme

#### **Motivation and enthusiasm**

- My ambassador has been constantly enthusiastic about the programme and what he has learned and this has provide feedback to staff who initially were not interested in participating asking questions and showing an interest in applying for the next round. I think seeing someone of their own grade going on a long term learning programme and feeding back how much he has gained not only in knowledge of business but friends and also having fun while doing it has contributed majorly to this.
- My Ambassador has come up with the idea of a new adult film/book group on the classics and where before he would struggle to put this in place he is now driving this idea forward and this is benefitting the venue and him.

#### **Greater confidence**

- My Ambassador's confidence has grown more. She was always quietly confident but she has led more workshops with my wider team and taken on more challenges as she is comfortable and patient as she knows her subjects.
- More confidence, keen to be involved in other service wide projects, has become involved in workplace coaching off the back off being on the Ambassadors Programme which benefits GMRC and GL in general.
- More confident, more pro-active approach. Ripple effect (to varying degrees) with colleagues/other team members: pro-activeness begets pro-activeness!

- His attitude to taking more initiative and also being more pro-active in the workplace, coming up with ideas and following them through, which is a great improvement.
- Increased confidence in working with partners through participation in the programme and also attributable to the tangible success of the Netherton Cultural Hub
- For one team member it has particularly confirmed an area of development for her: increasing her confidence.

### **Relationships with others**

- My Ambassador has expressed great enthusiasm about the different venues she has visited, and also the new people she has met. I feel she is much more aware of what is happening in the rest of Glasgow Life than I am just now. She is especially enthusiastic about getting some one-to-one coaching. I am sure that she will apply what she has learned to her role in the team, and some of this will get passed on to team members.
- My Ambassador has built relationships and an understanding of other service areas which allows him to identify joint opportunities or sign post colleagues to contacts in Museums.

### **Connectivity**

- I have heard reference to Ambassadors events and visits during project team meetings where connections are being made between community engagement and museum projects. I think this has resulted in a wider awareness of the programme by the team.

### **Time management**

- I do see positive changes in the member of staff, they are more organised in terms of planning their diary to prioritise Ambassadors events and meetings. I think that sending Outlook appointments would help to reinforce the importance of the sessions.

### **No difference**

- I probably don't see often enough to witness positive changes, or to be able to say they are definitely due to the Ambassador programme, given she has various other changes and challenges happening through her work.
- Not particularly, he has always been committed to outreach and providing high quality workshops to young people and continues to do so. If anything it reinforces that what he was currently doing was the right path and so this acts as positive reinforcement rather than positive change.
- I have had three of my four direct reports go through this as well as 4 others in my department. I have not seen a noticeable difference pre and post programme as to how these individuals carry out their job/interact with colleagues or others but what it has done is allow them to meet with others in Glasgow Museums that they may not have come across in their day to day work.
- Overall no difference, although one individual whilst on programme was significantly different in his behaviour towards colleagues out with his normal team but this has not unfortunately continued at the level I would have liked to see him maintain. I am working with this individual through 4 weekly one to ones to improve.
- She became enthused when the Ambassador programme was discussed but no real discernible benefits to the wider team

### **Q4 How have you or how are you going to sustain any positive changes you have seen in your Ambassador beyond the Ambassadors Programme?**

- My Ambassador's priority is the operation of the building and the management of staff, however she has always expressed interest in the development side of things and is already contributing to the development of the venue with local partners. I will discuss with her at our monthly 1:1's how

she would like to continue in this vein and ensure she is allocated time within her busy schedule to work towards her goals.

- I hope to empower the ambassador to use this knowledge to provide an Activity programme for 2 age ranges 5 – 12, 12 – 18, involving the venues and activities Glasgow Life has to offer. For the over 10's I would like him to develop the programme in such a way that the participants can work toward accreditation via dynamic youth and youth achievement.
- I absolutely will – I would welcome the opportunity to have more admin officers participate in this programme as from my Ambassador's feedback it can only allow, particularly new officers, to grow confident and learn more about the Glasgow Life Business.
- Continue to provide opportunity for Ambassador to share experience with team and promote the positive impact of being involved in the programme to the individual and the wider team.
- Acting on and encouraging the pro-activeness I have seen in our Ambassador who has now taken on a broader remit and more responsibility.
- Not sure. I'll ask them both what would be useful either for them as individuals or that they could bring to the wider team from the process. I'll look for opportunities for development for the team member who has identified a specific area – that might be through coaching which would again build on the programme
- Ask member of staff to talk about their experience at monthly team meeting.
- I will continue to work with my Ambassador as before. We have discussed continuing further interdepartmental partnerships and the contacts he has made on the programme could prove invaluable to this.
- I think that perhaps I will ask my Ambassador to give us a session about what she has learned at the end of the project, and the team as a whole can follow on with any ideas that are raised as a result. Perhaps we will also visit some of the other Glasgow Life venues she has been to.
- She will be line managed by a different manager soon but will hopefully incorporate some of the learning in her new role.
- I'm committed to my Ambassador maintaining the relationships that he has developed so far and I'm aware that I'll be able to draw upon these again in the future if required. I'll also encourage him to put his learning into practice with his own team.
- My Ambassador has put in place a new programme (ongoing event) which is starting soon so my job will be to provide him with the time and resources to keep this up.
- Continue with the working relationships established through the Staff Ambassadors beyond the timescale of the programme. The impact on the cultural hub in the NW and through partner engagement, will be sustained. My Ambassador is now more likely to incorporate colleagues from museums in programme planning from the offset now that there is a greater understanding of the service and what can be offered.

**Q5 What barriers might need to be addressed for the Staff Ambassadors Programme to work more effectively for you and your staff?**

**Time commitment required for participation**

- The time commitment, my ambassador has two contracts and although I can provide him with the time to commit to the programme other areas of the business seem to be struggling and he is using his annual leave to participate in the programme if a meeting or session falls on a day/time he works his other contract.

- There are time commitments which can be construed as a barrier. Investment in time is paramount to ensure the participant can fully emerge into the Programme without feeling guilty of the work/responsibility the person has.
- Time, given the shortness of staff. Also some cynicism about management commitment to the process, given perceived lack of time to work with communities
- Time commitment can be a factor, so for projects to be sustained it could prove difficult to juggle this with what is already a very tight schedule.
- Only real problem is having time for staff to take part. But this can usually be sorted out with a bit of planning.

### **Staffing**

- If Library staffing situations were improved it would be easier for staff to participate.
- Staffing levels – shortage of staff causes concern. It would be great if all staff given opportunity to attend without concern on how we cover attendance.
- As staffing levels get pared back even more it'll become even more difficult to release staff, particularly those with public facing delivery roles. Also, getting managers in to a position whereby they can really commit to being ambassadors too – same problem around being ever more stretched time-wise....
- Resource implications – time out of the office for a number of staff from the one team

### **Better communication of the Programme**

- I'd like to understand better the project aspect. Perhaps I could have been at the peer review? Is there a way to involve us at an interim stage?
- I think there is still a bit of a perception by the team that the programme is separate from day-to-day work, the message about this being embedded into our ways of working as a service are maybe not coming across clearly enough. I also think that some of the team would like to get to know their colleagues in Museums better before/in addition to getting to know Communities staff better. This is where the Work Shadowing could help as an introduction to the idea of paired working and learning about colleagues – maybe Work Shadowing should be seen as a taster before applying to Staff Ambassadors.

### **No significant barriers**

- There haven't really been any barriers, though juggling day to day workload with the programme could be a potential problem.
- I've not witnessed any significant barriers as a line manager.
- To be honest there was only one instance where we struggled to let the Ambassador away and out with this it has all gone smoothly.

### **Q6 Any other comments**

- Other staff within the Library are now interested in the programme.
- I hosted an ambassadors session on accredited learning within communities, this highlighted a few issues for me. I think Glasgow Communities and the museums should work more in partnership as various activities the museum have could, if in partnership with communities, provide participants with an accredited qualification.
- My Ambassador has really sold this to myself and my wider team and I would be happy to support further participation to other staff. This is definitely a "linked-in" community in more ways than one!

- This is such a great programme, innovative and impactful.
- I'm very aware of positive benefits from previous cohorts – I don't know if that reflects the individuals or that the benefits reveal themselves over time.
- Interestingly from the 6 participants from Riddrie Library who attended, 2 had already visited SSSM with the school and 3 of the others had visited St Mungos for a Bigot Busters workshop with their school. Although Riddrie at several miles away, is definitely a worthwhile area to reach out to it could be interesting in future to assess how many new visitors this sort of workshop reaches out to – how can we reach young people who have never visited Glasgow Museums? How can we attract their parents and grandparents who may not have visited for a long time?
- Lastly, I think something positive from the first cohort to where we are now is the work with staff external to museums which spreads this positive way of working further.
- I still think we haven't quite cracked, within the service, how SA programme integrates with service. It does feel like a "training course" and once it's over, like most courses – even if good – folk mean to take on board and take forward new ways of working/ new behaviours learned but very few do.
- Although there is a mixture of staff on programme, the ones I would most liked to have seen on course were not the ones who volunteered!! Always a difficult one.
- Suggestion: when on Leadership and Development training course we were asked to write down individually what we would take from course and action note. Put in envelope and address to our home address. Trainer collected in...forgot all about it and 4 months after course ended received to home address .No note no nothing but it certainly got me taking my notes back out and seeing if I had done what I said I would do AND auctioning where I hadn't. Spoken to others on course at same time and they also liked this extended follow up.
- As far as I can see, this has been the most successful of the Staff Ambassadors groups so far. It has been a very good idea linking in with the Communities staff, rather than just doing it within Museums.
- My Ambassador has indicated that it was not made clear to her why the staff Ambassador's programme was being rolled out, and how it fitted in to the wider company strategy.