

Design: www.nicethinkingdesign.co.uk

The Aspire Project

Research shows that ex-offenders who have employment are up to 50% less likely to re-offend. Safer London Foundation's Aspire Project aims to help ex-offenders in sustainable employment and training experience, providing mentoring through the gate and into work, helping people who have a pattern of re-offending to break the cycle.

After an initial two day training course, designed to educate the participants on awareness of the criminal justice system as well as knowledge about the issues affecting offenders, mentors visit those serving custodial sentences in prison. Regular support is available from the Aspire Project Manager and we will also organise networking events where mentors can socialise and share ideas and experiences.

offenders with a job are 50% less likely to re-offend

Mentors are matched to offenders (all of whom have been assessed as posing a low risk of harm), who are then approached the end of a prison sentence, offering a community based sentence. Volunteer mentors take a commitment of three to four hours per month, fitting into account their work commitments.

Aspire mentors are drawn from a wide cross-section of society; we have a magistrate and several others employed in the criminal justice system but also a member who are ex-offenders themselves. All bring their own particular life experiences to bear on the task of helping their mentee to find work.

safer london

Safer London Foundation

Skyline House
200 Union Street
London SE1 0LX
Tel: 020 7021 0301
Fax: 020 7021 0302
info@saferlondonfoundation.org
www.saferlondonfoundation.org



Project workers with Streetlink - helping sex workers find a way out of life on the streets

Safer London Foundation is the independent charitable arm of the Metropolitan Police Service. Established in 2005, Safer London's primary role is to support and promote community led crime reduction and prevention projects, working to make London a safer, place to live, work or visit. We do this by providing funds and/or volunteers to projects across London working to make their communities safer. In addition to this, in January 2007 we began a project to mentor ex-offenders into work, as a job is widely recognised as a major factor in reducing the likelihood of re-offending. This initiative is the Aspire Project.

Grant Funding for Projects

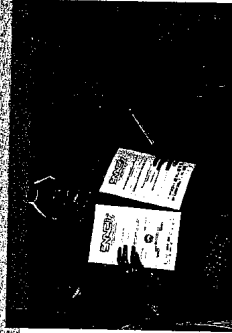
SLF's grants committee awards funds from a range of sources, such as Proceeds of Crime funds from the Home Office and donations from the corporate sector, to projects which match our application criteria. This year the criteria have centred on guns, gangs and weapons reduction, and our list of grant supported projects is now approaching 60.

There are many more applications for support than we can meet, but the SLF operations team is continually trying to find potential funding for projects which will make a real difference to community safety and cohesion in London.

Hackney Quest is an example of just such a project providing educational workshops to explore the problems of guns, gangs and weapons.

Karen Neville, Project Manager, says "The grant has made a real difference; it enabled us to provide specific workshops to targeted groups who may have been excluded from school for violent behaviour and/or carrying knives. The workshops highlighted to them the impact their behaviour will have on them in the future and to their families and victims and showed them other options for dealing with problems."

Making London a safer place to live, work or visit Another recent success has been an initiative based in Hammersmith & Fulham: the **Safer Neighbourhoods Annual Challenge** (SNAC). This involves communities being challenged to make their own neighbourhoods safer by identifying a local problem and then coming up with a solution. During the last five months over 600 young people have taken part and generated some fantastic initiatives. The awards evening, held earlier this year, attracted 250 people to the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith, hosted by Channel 4's Miquilla Oliver and with the special guest star British soul singer Beverley Knight.



Two SNAC winners receive their awards from Beverley Knight (far left) and Miquilla Oliver (far right)



Young people at an SLF funded Balik Arts event



Volunteers from Men Group with SLF CEO Tony Shepherd (far right) at a women's refuge during Volunteers' Week

Volunteer Support for Projects

In addition to allocating grants to community groups working to reduce crime, Safer London Foundation also provides volunteers, who offer valuable assistance to projects:

Community Volunteers - Individuals who regularly help SLF and its projects through mentoring, administrative assistance, youth work, newsletter editing, and other volunteering activities.

Corporate Volunteers - volunteers who work on SLF projects as part of their organisation's volunteering programme. For example, KMPG and Tesco employees are mentoring police officers through the Safer Neighbourhood Sergeant Mentoring Programme.

Interns - students and other individuals who would like to gain work experience volunteering at SLF for a dedicated amount of time (usually at least 10 hours per week). Interns gain valuable information about the work of Safer London Foundation, crime-reduction projects and activities in London, and the charity sector in general.

Skills Bank - volunteers with a specific skill they wish to share, such as website management, fundraising, marketing, bus driving, or carpentry, register their details in our database for ad-hoc project support.

SLF provides training for volunteers and there is a monthly support meeting, which gives the opportunity for feedback, but also social time with other volunteers and SLF staff. The Volunteers Co-Ordinator will work with you to ensure that you are matched with a project that suits your interest, skills and availability.

Identifying a local problem and then coming up with a solution

Jill Coombe, Community Involvement Manager, ABN AMRO, says "ABN AMRO is delighted to be able to support Safer London Foundation. Over 450 staff at ABN AMRO UK are involved in volunteering their time and skill to local projects and we have seven colleagues involved in the SLF mentoring scheme. It's a win-win situation for both the project which gains fresh input, and the volunteer who gains new insights and skills in the process."