



Aurora Project Lambeth is unique in many ways, but one of the main reasons our service stands out as being different to other organisations across the borough is the fact that clients have the opportunity to speak with, and get support from their peers, individuals who have “been there and done that”.

I am often asked how I match a volunteer to a client; I am often asked what the special formula is for getting the match right. The answer is that there isn't a one size fits all process but we do have a few guide lines that we follow, the rest is down to intuition!

When making volunteer and client matches Aurora Project Lambeth also takes into account national guidelines, set down by the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, around the following factors:

- Age, we try to match volunteers with clients of a similar age range
- Personality, hobbies and interests
- Support Needs of clients and expertise of volunteers
- Physical or Mental Health issues identified

In the last few months you will have noticed that Aurora Project Lambeth has sent out a new, improved client referral form, if you didn't receive yours you can download it here:

http://www.auroraprojectlambeth.org.uk/professionals_8_1958659040.pdf.

We designed this new referral form to help me make better matches between volunteers and clients. The new form asks you to tell us a little more about the person you are referring, including a bit about their hobbies, interests and what type of peer mentor you feel they would best get one with.

It really important that you fill in the referral form in as much detail as possible, some people prefer to fill in the referral form whilst the person they are referring is with them, the more information we have the more appropriate the match will be. We have a hugely diverse team of volunteers of varying ages and with various expertise and we understand that making a good match in the first instance is important to both the volunteer and client. If a client meets a volunteer they can relate too, can get the support they need from, and who they feel they can connect with the better the mentoring or befriending experience will be for both client and volunteer.

There is some guidance notes on our website that can help you fill out the referral form and help you decide whether or not the person you are referring is suitable for our service,

http://www.auroraprojectlambeth.org.uk/professionals_6_966068516.pdf.

We don't always get it right!

Sometimes matches don't always work out; despite the steps we take to get it right. In training volunteers are told that if at any point they don't feel like they are making a connection or can't get



on with their client they can speak to me and further training and support will be given to help rebuild the relationship or if necessary rematch the volunteer to another client.

When a client first meets with their volunteer, I speak with them first, outlining a bit of background about Aurora Project Lambeth and what they can expect from their mentor. During this conversation I let the client know that should they feel they are not getting on with their Mentor they should let me know and they will be issued with a new Mentor.