

# TRAINING UPDATE REPORT

## FOR BEDFORDSHIRE BENEFITS NETWORK

### Spring Training Programme

BAF decided to arrange a self-funding training programme in the spring for BAF members, after it failed to get any grant funding.

The programme consisted of 3 full-day courses presented by 3 different trainers in May, June and July. The trainers, who all work for local agencies, provided their services on a freelance basis.

Course	Date	Tutor	Venue
Introduction to Benefits	16/5/23	Dean Crofts	Bunyan Meeting
Universal Credit	7/6/23	Elliott Stephenson	CVS
Personal Independence Payment	13/7/23	Karen Banfield	CVS

All 3 courses were well booked, and attendances were generally good – although there were a number of late cancellations for the PIP course (which had been fully booked).

Course	Bookings	Attendance
Introduction to Benefits	11	11
Universal Credit	16	15
Personal Independence Payment	18	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>38</b>

After keeping its training fees at the same level for a number of years, it was agreed, due to inflationary pressures, to increase the fees this year for BAF courses. The new rate for full-time courses was £75 standard rate (for BAF members), and £40 for volunteers. Fortunately, this did not have a detrimental effect on the number of bookings.

The break-even number for each course was 8 attendees. Any bookings above that would bring in a surplus. As all 3 courses were well attended, the programme brought in a good surplus (£1,000+) for BAF and Advice Bedfordshire and BAF. The final accounts for the programme will be presented when all outgoing payments have been made.

The general feedback from the programme was extremely positive.

Evaluation question	Courses			Average for programme
	Introduction to Benefits	Universal Credit	PIP	
Did the course fulfil your expectations?	100%	100%	100%	100%
Was the course at the right level for your needs	100%	100%	100%	100%
Will the knowledge/skills you have gained on this course help you in your work?	100%	100%	100%	100%

In terms of more specific opinions on the courses, the average feedback was also very positive.

**Course structure and content** – 97% stated this was very good

**Training materials** – 91% stated these were very good

**Trainers and course delivery** – 100% stated this very good

**Venues** – 82% stated these were very good

The only minor negative feedback was:

- Very good overall – but more details could be added as examples (Intro. to Benefits course)
- Good overall but needed more time to practice (UC course)
- Good – but could have done with individual copies of PIP1 and PIP2 forms (PIP course)
- Good venue – but warm and needs more toilets (CVS)
- Parking is the only issue (CVS)
- Lunch would be nice!

From the feedback the only things suggested to be reviewed are:

**UC course** – Should this be lengthened slightly and provided over 2 x half days rather than 1 full day?

**Venues** – Which venue is better (Bunyan Meeting or CVS?). Or are there any other alternatives?

## Future BAF training

A full report on the training programme will be presented to BAF's Steering Group tomorrow.

A recommendation will be made that BAF should run another training programme this financial year – possibly in early 2024.

BAF members should be asked what their pressing needs on training are before planning the programme.

Len Simkins (BAF Training Facilitator) – 13/9/23