

Users' perspectives of the effectiveness of a peer-led community based alcohol support service

Soar K, Kougiali Z, Brown J, Clarke C, Nsumba F, Oliva E, Osunsanya S, Pytlik A, Wilkins T, Wozniak K, Casalotti S, Pendry, B. Psychology, Bioscience depts. Applied Health and Community, University of East London E15 4LZ b.pendry@uel.ac.uk

Introduction

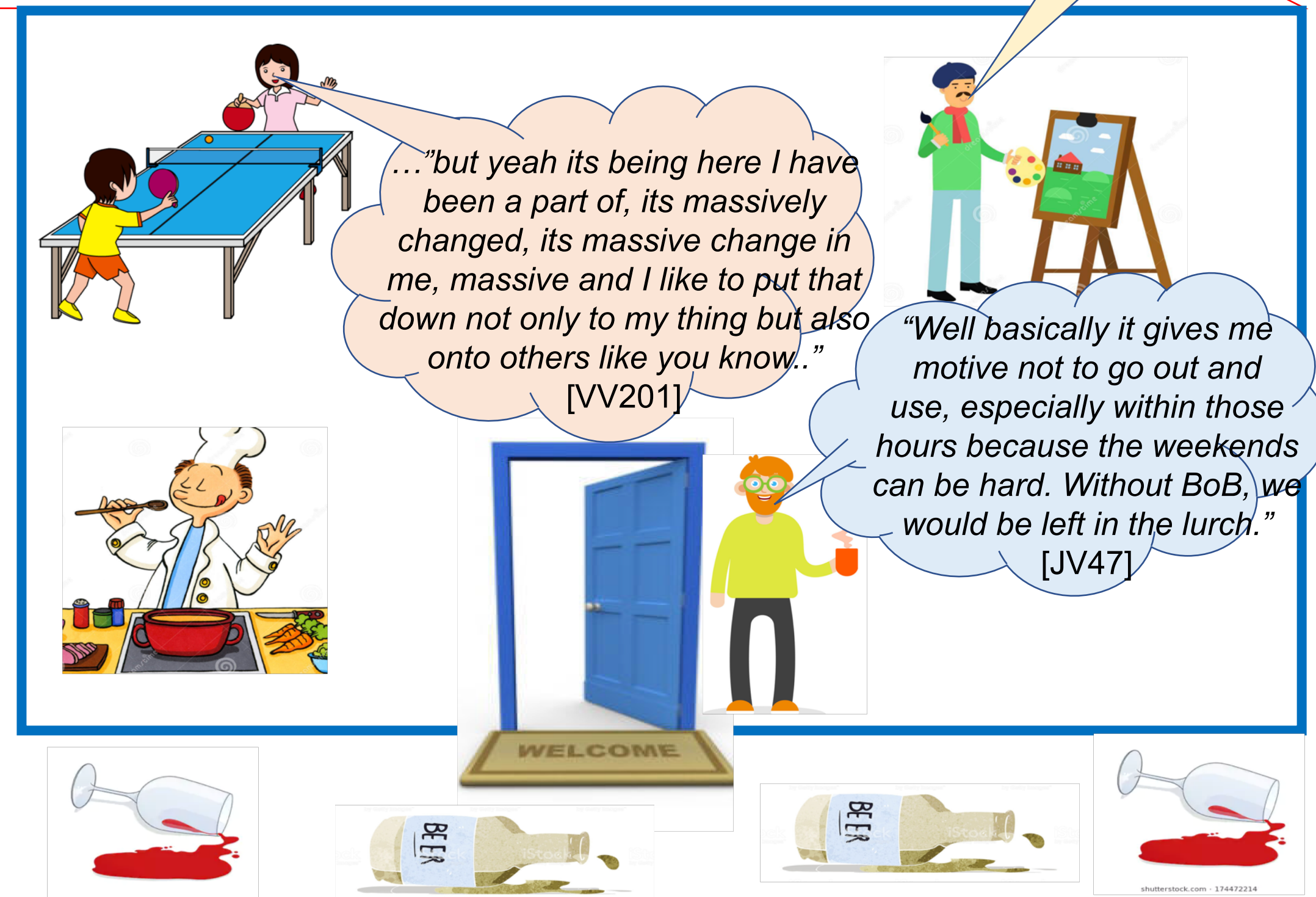
Build on Belief (BoB) is an independent service supporting individuals misusing alcohol or other drugs. It offers a shelter and alternative activities during the weekend rather than a structured abstinence led therapy. Volunteers (ex-service users) support current users (clients) by running activities and generally being supportive. Such peer-led programmes can have positive outcomes for both users and volunteers (Boisvert et al., 2008) and contribute to national alcohol reduction strategies (Gov.UK, 2012).

Aim

To evaluate the experience of the clients and volunteers of BoB and to assess whether BoB approach has had a positive impact.



"I always learn, do you know what I mean, yeah, I need to stop drinking (...) and more skills keep me occupied" (JC 34,40)



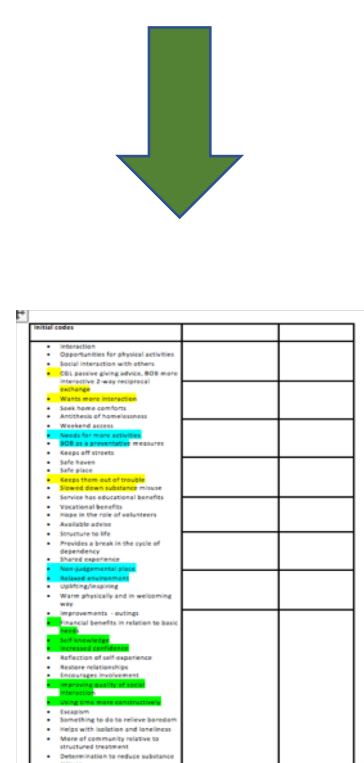
Methods



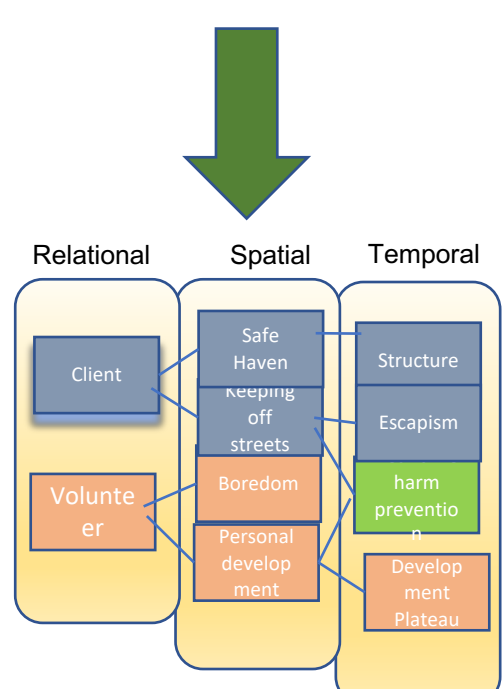
Semi-structured interview (n=13)



Verbatim transcription

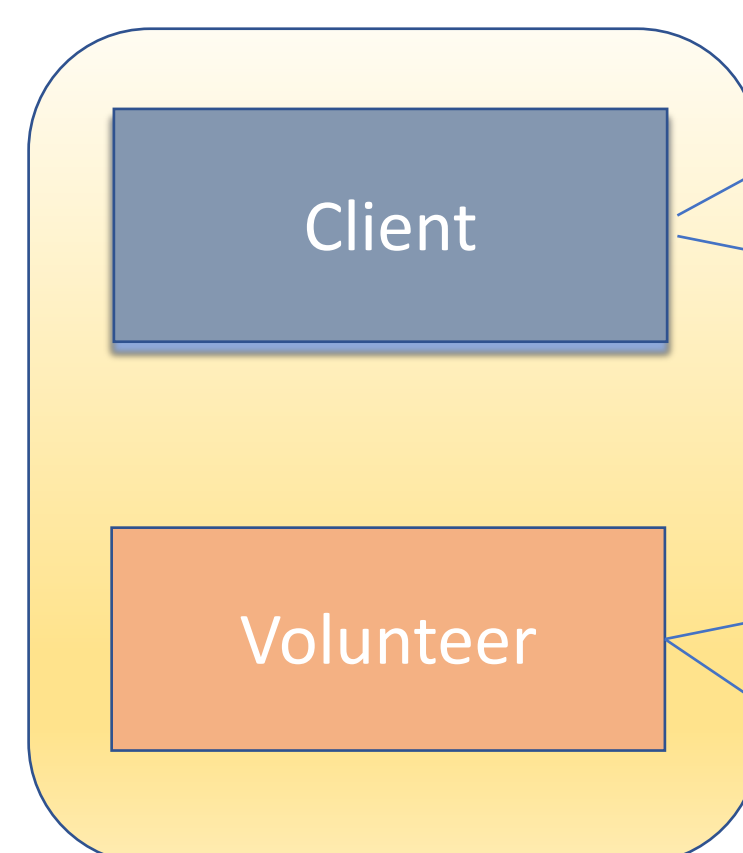


Coding

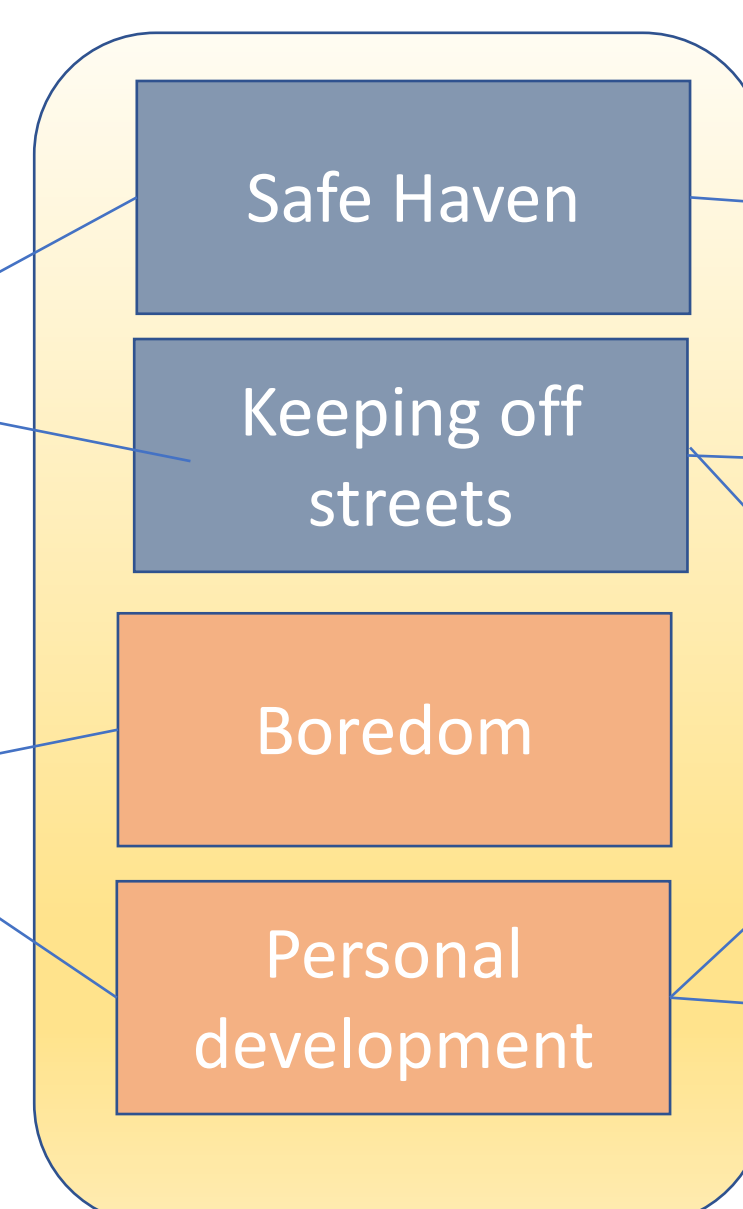


Thematic analysis

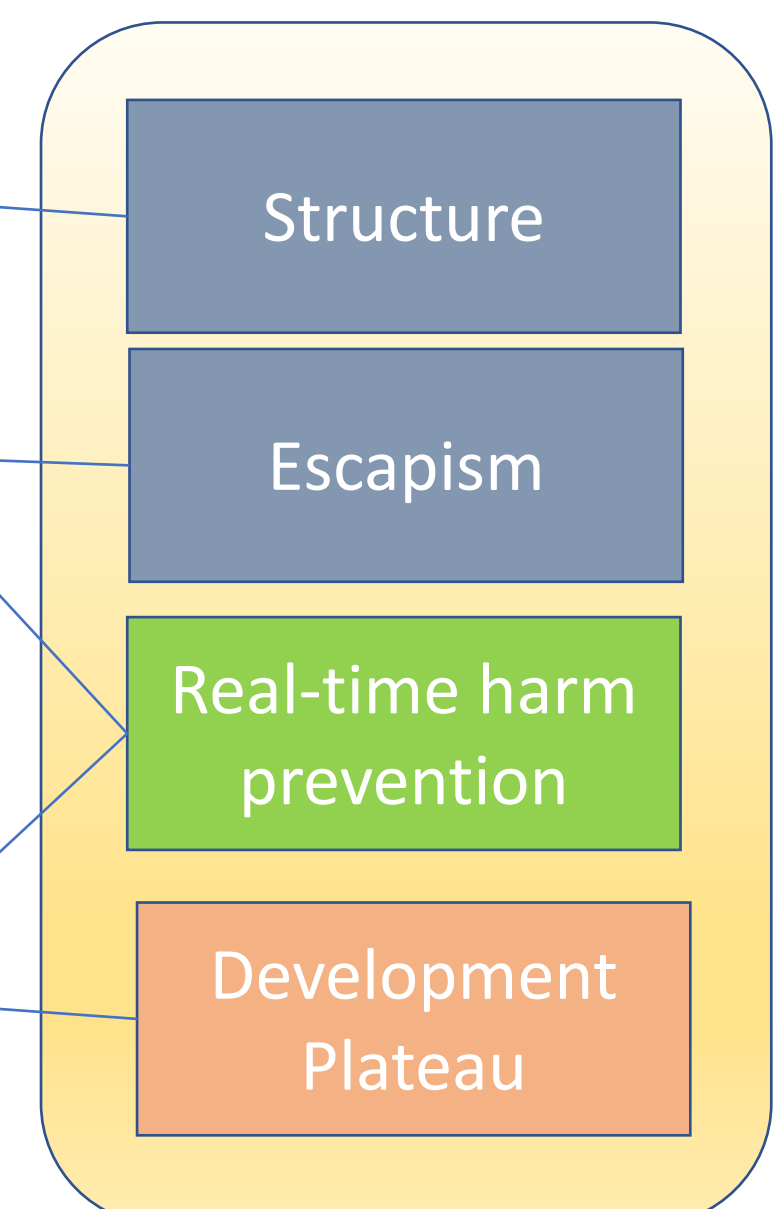
Relational



Spatial



Temporal



- The project was carried out by 8 UEL students under academics supervision
- Interviews were conducted of both BoB volunteers and clients.
- Differences were noted in the responses: volunteers attended BoB for their personal development while clients were searching refuge.
- Most reported that they were better able to control their alcohol use by attending BoB.
- BoB provided a therapeutic space without structured therapy as observed in other comparable programmes (Boisvert et al 2008).

Future Work

- Comparison studies with other peer-led, non-structured alcohol misuse support centers.
- Quantitative measurements of alcohol use before and after attendance.

Acknowledgements

- This work was supported by a UEL London Scholar grant
- We are grateful for the cooperation received from BoB staff

References

- Boisvert et al., 2008 Effectiveness of a peer-support community in addiction recovery: participation as intervention *Occup. Ther. Int.* 15(4):205–220
- Gov.UK 2012 Alcohol Strategy policypaper <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alcohol-strategy>