



# Meet the BBO Team - Clarine & Andreea

**Clarine Powell**  
Training & Development Team Leader  
Building Better Opportunities  
Birmingham

**Andreea Chelaru**  
Office Coordinator  
Building Better Opportunities  
Birmingham  
What did you do before coming to ACH?



I started my career in Retail and Customer Services before becoming a Customer Services Trainer for BUPA. I have extensive Welfare to Work experience delivering various DWP / Jobcentre Plus contracts and have worked for some of the biggest training providers in the country including Skills Training UK, Intraining, Ingeus, Prospects and A4e. I have previous managerial and staff development experience and assessed IAG qualifications up to Level 4.

**Why did you decide to come to ACH?**

A few years ago I ran a Big Lottery/ESF funded project for Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities, where we were able to help people with a wide range of health issues

move towards sustainable employment. I am very excited to be working with ACH on the Building Better Opportunities project where I can utilise my previous experience for the benefit of the ACH residents and the local BME community to overcome barriers, build confidence and improve motivation.

What project are you working on for us?

The Building Better Opportunities programme is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund (ESF) who are co-investing in local projects tackling the root causes of worklessness, promoting social inclusion and driving local jobs and growth. ACH have secured funding through two Building Better Opportunities programme streams, Community Matters whose objectives are to help people move into work, training or to become economically active and Black Country Click Start which will provide support to help people develop their personal financial and digital skills.

What is it that you want to achieve?

I want to build on the support already being provided by ACH to make the project a success and help to raise the profile of ACH as they continue to grow so we can continue to support the development of our communities beyond the end of this programme.

What are you hoping to gain from Ashley Housing?

Since joining ACH I have been made more than welcome by the teams in Birmingham and Wolverhampton where we will be delivering BBO as well as on our recent visit to Bristol. I hope to build on these new working relationships to develop not only my personal skills but also those of the rest of my team to achieve positive outcomes and ultimately job satisfaction.

What is your proudest moment in your career?

Although not directly related to my career I recently became a Dementia Friends Champion, which is a programme run by The Alzheimer's Society to change people's perceptions of dementia. I am a trained Health & Wellbeing Behaviour Supporter as well as being a member of Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Trust.

What did you do before coming to ACH?

Before coming to ACH, I worked for ten years in the charity sector managing European funded projects. I have worked with different vulnerable groups from Romania and UK such as ethnic minorities, people with mental health issues, and people with disabilities, providing them the support they needed to overcome social and economic barriers and to find their own route to self-development.

Why did you decide to come to ACH?

What made me decide to come to ACH was the nature of the work and the people we support. I believe that ACH's way of working with the participants and its ethos provides a safe and sustainable pathway to independent and fulfilling living. Also, I wanted to do my part in helping other non-native English people have a quality living in the UK.

What project are you working on for us?

I am working on two strands of the Building Better Opportunities Project, funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund, which provides support for those furthest from the labour market to become employment ready and to develop their pre-employment skills. Community Matters Programme helps people move into work, training or to become economically active and Black Country Click Start provides support to help people develop their personal financial and digital skills.

What is it that you want to achieve?

I hope to have a positive impact on the life of our participants, to help them improve their skills and for them to gain the independence and quality of living they are searching for. After these

three years of project delivery, I wish to see the people we support in much better place in their life than the one they were when we started working with them.

What are you hoping to gain from Ashley Housing?

Ashley Housing gives me the opportunity to further develop my management skills, but also to develop new skills. It is the first time when I am working with refugees and members of BAME and I hope that this experience will provide for me new professional and personal perspectives. Although I've been working for only one month for ACH, I feel that I already gained a lot especially regarding the staff culture, which is one of the friendliest and inclusive I have been in contact with.

What is your proudest moment in your career?

One of the proudest moments of my career was when one of the projects I managed won the "Excellence in Health Award" at the Roma Excellence Gala. The award acknowledged the fact that we supported over 400 Roma/Gypsy medicine students to undergo or maintain careers as doctors and nurses.