



WNF WORKLESSNESS BULLETIN

ISSUE 3

Welcome

I am delighted to report that the WNF Worklessness programme has made excellent progress this year, both in the number of people being engaged into the programme and in the number of people being placed into jobs. By the end of June 8,751 people were engaged into the programme, and 668 people were placed into employment. More than this, the programme provided essential & much needed pre-employment support to 4,933 people and had also helped 96 people realise their dream of becoming self employed.

The business sector has also felt the positive impact of the WNF programme; in the same period, the programme has supported 505 businesses, including 21 that were supported to set up as newly created businesses.

I am also delighted with the success of the new pocket-sized WNF Employment Project Directory, which has been designed to provide an overview of the wide spectrum of services offered by the programme. 20,000 copies have already been distributed to local venues including libraries, community centres and jobcentres, and we are already planning our second print run.

Graham Edwards
WNF Worklessness Team

FOCUS BIRMINGHAM

Focus Birmingham, a Future Jobs Fund employer, has developed a new project to support long term unemployed people, with help from WNF's Innovations Fund. The Innovative Jobs Academy (IJA) complements the work of Jobcentre Plus by offering those in long term unemployment an opportunity to assess their skills, knowledge, interests and motivation. It's an intensive, one-to-one life-coach based service and is very much results and goal focused.

The IJA offers:

- Motivational Mapping
- Personal Action Planning
- Personal Development Agreement
- Self Marketing
- Work Experience

10 places are available at the IJA – all FREE to the customer but going fast! Customers who sign up for the IJA will be committing to working with the project for up to 6 months. There is no requirement to attend every day, only a few hours one day a week.

Contact: Alexander Hicks, Focus Birmingham on 0121 478 5215 or email alex@focusbirmingham.org.uk



CASE STUDY

Project: **Innovative Jobs Academy (IJA)**
Client: **David Rhodes**

One of the first clients to register with the IJA, David Rhodes came to IJA from Jobcentre Plus. David had already gained a Fine Art degree and had worked briefly in the catering industry, but knew that catering was not the career for him.

Through the coaching service provided by IJA, David has found the motivation and courage to embark on a musical career, with IJA giving him free use of a recording studio to make demo CDs. David was full of praise for the IJA:

"The Academy was greatly beneficial to my line of work and I would recommend it to anyone who is having difficulty trying to choose a career. I found that Alex's job-finding techniques and general positivity gave me a fresh outlook on the world of work.

"Before I started going to the IJA in February I was working on and off in a bar but have since quit that line of work in order to pursue a career as a musician, more strictly speaking, a Banjo player. I am still receiving Jobseekers Allowance and I have had to move back in with my Dad but I now feel equipped with the necessary tools in order to become self employed. I could not have come to this decision without the help of the IJA."



Senior IJA personal coach, Alexander Hicks commented: "Focus helped David find paid-for gigs and we feel sure he will soon be earning enough to live without benefits, something I know he is very keen to achieve"

Left to right: David; Daniel Richards (Studio Technician); Andrew Mitchell (MP) and Deirdre Alden (Edgbaston Councillor)



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Prospects Services is working with residents in the priority areas of Hodge Hill, offering a wage subsidy scheme to employers to take on residents who lack relevant employment experience or do not quite have the right skills. In addition, self-employment support is available for residents looking to start a new business.

To date, Prospects, along with sub-contractor Jericho Foundation, have placed 17 residents into wage-subsided employment within the Washwood Heath Ward, all of which were matched to the clients' preferred sector of work!

Local resident Rozina Khan said: "Before I was given the opportunity to work with Jericho Foundation I was unemployed and claiming JSA. While I was unemployed I became bored and depressed but since I have started my placement at Reece Nursery I feel a lot better within myself and have become more confident. I am so glad I took advantage of the support offered. Jericho Foundation has given me the ability to gain more experience and qualifications and I am learning new skills in the admin field. I have become more confident with my duties and am able to take new challenges and work on my own initiative. My colleagues I work with are also kind, friendly, helpful and welcoming."

Prospects are also working to support residents who want to move into self-employment. The project enables clients to receive one-to-one support through a dedicated experienced business advisor, covering topics essential to starting up in business. Clients are supported with understanding the tax and national insurance implications, creating a business plan for their business and putting together cashflows. Clients are also helped with the very important task of carrying out competitor research & analysis to ensure the business starts and remains successful. Support is also available in seeking and obtaining business credit. The project has so far helped 5 people set up their own business in areas ranging from beauty to general retail.

Fellow resident Nabila Hussain said: "If I had not been encouraged to join this project, I would probably be stuck at home, whereas I have now got something to do with my life. I have always wanted to do Bridal Beauty on a self-employed basis, but didn't know where to get the right support and help from. At Prospects I was given a clear picture of what options are available for me towards starting my own business. I also went along to an employability workshop, which was very useful to me. I would strongly recommend the service to any individual looking for the right change in their life. Thanks for your support"

Nabila is currently in the process of having her business officially registered.

prospects

Hall Green WNF providers have developed a strong working relationship in order to deliver a seamless service to clients in the area, and to ensure that residents receive the best possible service that meets their individual needs.

Projects to assist workless clients in the constituency are being delivered by Ashiana, Birmingham Disability Consortium, Jericho Foundation and Pertemps People Development Group. Together they are delivering six contracts in Hall Green, targeting disabled clients, lone parents and young people, offering employment support, training and paid work placements.

All providers meet regularly to focus on the service that is being delivered in Hall Green, where they:

- look at how they can build on the services they each deliver
- take advantage of joint working opportunities
- review their client case loads
- ensure that clients are referred between projects where appropriate, so that they receive support from the provider best equipped to meet their needs.

Jan Hinksman, Project Manager for Jericho Foundation was quick to praise the virtues of this approach, "Jericho has a great relationship with the other providers in Hall Green. We meet up regularly to discuss particular problems that affect delivery and to maintain this relationship"

This close working relationship between providers is now starting to deliver results and demonstrating how the model of specialist providers can work. By the end of May 939 clients had already been engaged in the constituency. Projects are now shifting their focus to getting these clients into work, and so far have managed to secure employment for 32 people in the same period.

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Midland Heart, Ashram Housing, Business in the Community, Crossmatch Solutions Ltd, Jericho Foundation and St Basil's are working together to deliver a ground-breaking project to support homeless clients to focus on the journey towards securing employment. Roots to Work project works with people who have no permanent address or live in hostels or supported accommodation, and assists clients to overcome complex barriers they face and move them towards employment and independent living. The project works intensively with clients, providing specialist employment support and coaching. Equal importance is given to clients to secure permanent accommodation, and to address and overcome their individual needs, working with support workers and workers around drug and alcohol dependency and mental health issues, which are prominent in this client group. Workshops have been held with hostel support staff to increase awareness of the support that is available through the project, and encourage clients to sign up to the programme. Great strides have been made by Roots to Work, with 54 people receiving pre-employment interventions (such as basic skills support, training and qualifications) and 5 people securing employment at the end of May 2010. A further 10 clients have also secured placements with private sector employers, which provide an excellent way of gaining necessary work experience and skills, filling gaps on CVs and gaining references to improve the chances of finding paid employment. Contact: Nikki-Dee Smith, Midland Heart Tel 0845 850 1020 ext 5690

