



Newsletter

Issue 07 – June 2019



In partnership with



Department for
Work and Pensions



We are pleased to update you on our Work in Progress programme. To date:

29
1

Placements
Taster day

6
4

Volunteering
Job Starts

What our clients are telling us

“ I enjoyed my work placement and doing something different. ”

“ Being on this programme has given me someone to talk to. ”

“ Tony has helped and supported me over recent months in looking for placements and signposting me to local organisations for additional help. ”

“ Tony continues to support me with my goals and aspirations. ”

“ Being able to develop myself, going out and meeting new people, going to new places and building my confidence. ”

From positive placement to paid work!



Kristian started on our programme in November, during his initial appointment Kristian identified that his preferred type of work would be gardening or tree surgery, but would need assistance with a supported work placement and job searching.

Kristian has lots of experience via a volunteer role, work experience and paid employment for a variety of organisations including working in a retail horticultural environment.

As part of our Vocational Profiling activities clients take part in a Buzz Test, when, at the end of series of questions, character traits are revealed. Kristian's traits are: patience, great with complicated situations, often uses imagination to solve problems, a natural listener, interested in the ideas behind tasks and especially how it affects people. These are positive traits for the type of work Jamie is interested in pursuing.

Wanting to utilise Kristian's existing skills and support him to development new ones, Kristian's Adviser Brian suggested the idea of a placement within Azure's own horticultural nurseries. Kristian was keen to take up this opportunity and his placement started in February.

This was a great time for Kristian to start as it was the beginning of the busiest time of year for our nurseries, he would gain a vast amount of experience and learn and develop a variety of new skills.

Kristian settled in to this placement quickly and integrated well into the team. Brian supported Kristian to undertake Manual Handling training which he passed at 100%. Kristian's placement went that well that it was agreed to be extended in order for him to gain more experience. Nurseries Operations Manager Sharon Stokoe was really impressed by Kristian's approach to work and positive attitude.

“ Kristian did really well during his placement; he listened to instruction and applied himself to the tasks allocated. He's a great team member who gives 100%. ”

Towards the end of Kristian's placement he was offered paid employment on a short term contract to assist within our Nurseries throughout the summer and he jumped at the opportunity! Kristian started his new paid role in May.

“ I'm pleased to be part of the team. ”

Well done Kristian, your hard work and commitment paid off!

Stephen's Employment Success



Stephen with manager Shaun Musgrave

Since our last story about Stephen in our February edition, we are pleased to provide you with an exciting update.

Stephen settled in well to his placement with NHS Prescription Services, quickly learned the tasks assigned to him and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Stephen was doing so well that management within his placement suggested that his placement be extended for a further 4 weeks in order for him to have involvement with the full range of duties. Managers were impressed by his attitude and approach to the whole situation.

During Stephen's placement extension period vacancies for the department were advertised. Stephen was keen to apply for a position and worked with his Adviser Brian on the application.

Stephen was successful in gaining an interview; it was during this process when Stephen was able to talk confidently about his placement with the organisation. He talked about the tasks he had performed and was even able to actively demonstrate his ability, as part of the process included a practical element.

This was only possible because NHS Prescription Services had offered Stephen the opportunity of such a placement, along with Stephen's hard work and commitment which he showed throughout his time there. For Stephen this was a successful and positive experience; it tested his ability to tackle new surroundings, people and roles. These are important opportunities for our clients and we wish to thank employers such as NHS Prescription Services for these invaluable placements which enable our clients to gain new skills and experience in a real work environment.

We are delighted to report Stephen was offered a job. He is thrilled to have accepted the offer and is looking forward to becoming a paid employee of the wider NHS Business Services Authority.

“ **I'm over the moon; I'm so pleased to be offered this job.** ”

Congratulations Stephen! We all wish you the very best in your new job.

A big THANK YOU!

We are working with some great employers who are hosting our clients and assisting them to achieve their goals. Thank you!

A fond farewell to Amy

Amy featured in our December newsletter having gained a work experience placement at DWP within their PIP department.

Since then Amy has gone from strength to strength.

Having done well in her work placement with the PIP team, the Employment Adviser team within Jobcentre Plus had identified another placement for Amy this time at DWP's Child Maintenance Group. This 2-week placement started in January 2019.

Amy's Adviser Brian Hunt reports that as a result of these two Placements, Amy's confidence had visibly improved. This also having been highlighted by PIP department manager Tracy at the end of Amy's first placement.



Amy (centre), with manager Tracy and mentor Mitch from Amy's first placement at DWP

With a renewed confidence, along with lots of new skills and experiences, Amy applied for many jobs including the civil service, NHS and a local authority.

Pleased with Amy's progress, the Employment Adviser Team had sourced another opportunity for her, this time at North Shields Jobcentre in a front of house role; working directly with the public. This would push Amy a little further and test her ability even more as this would be the first time she would liaise directly with customers. Although a little nervous, Amy was excited and accepted the opportunity.

Amy started this placement in May and she enjoyed the challenge of a different type of administrative role. The placement went so well, that she was offered to attend for an additional week. However as the end of this placement drew closer, the opportunity was extended a further 3 weeks to allow Amy to gain maximum experience.

Determined to get a job in a business administration role, Amy made further job applications to DWP and for an administration apprenticeship with North Tyneside Council.

The main objective on Amy's Development Plan was confidence building, in addition to a supported work placement, tailored job search provision and job skills training, all of which Amy has successfully achieved. Amy is happy to be a completer on our programme having accomplished her development plan objectives. The vast amount of invaluable experience Amy has gained will stand her in good stead as she moves determinately towards her goal of paid employment.

“ **Azure has been very supportive. The programme and being on placement has helped build my confidence.** ”

We are pleased your time on Work in Progress was so positive, we are confident that it won't be long before you are snapped up and starting work.

We all wish you the very best for the future.

A Job Start for Sean

Sean was referred to Work in Progress in November. Sean had a great work history as a Gardener with Your Homes Newcastle; a series of summer short term contracts over a 10 year period.

Due to his experience, Sean was keen to get back in to this type of work; utilising the skills and knowledge he had gained and developed. Sean identified that he would need support with a work placement, tailored job search and job skills training. Due to his Dyslexia Sean would also need additional support with the job application process. Sean had clear ideas of his plan to regain employment which included passing his driving test.

Sean's Adviser Brian acted quickly and the first activity was updating Sean's CV, to reflect Sean's work history, dedication and commitment.

Over the weeks Sean completed a literacy and numeracy assessment, underwent a Dyslexia screening assessment, participated in Buzz Test, engaged with job searching and made several job applications. Brian supported Sean to keep his Universal Credit Journal up to date to accurately record his activities.

Sean was always hopeful that an opportunity back at Your Home Newcastle would become available, but in the meantime was actively working with Brian to explore other options, which included making enquiries and applications to landscape gardening companies and well as expanding Sean's vocational area.

Sean's Work Coach identified a possible course which encompassed training, a work placement and a guaranteed interview. Sean was excited to learn that this course was at Your Homes Newcastle and Sean was accepted on to the programme.

This 3-week course started in May. Sean really enjoyed the experience and kept in contact with his Adviser throughout providing updates on how it was going.

Sean was offered an interview in early June and was successful in gaining a paid full time permanent position with Your Homes Newcastle in the position of Gardener. Brian recalls receiving the news from Sean "He was very excited and happy to be back at Your Homes Newcastle."

Sean's determination to gain paid employment was further demonstrated when following his interview and before learning he had been successful; he was still submitting job applications with his Adviser.

“ I have enjoyed my time on the programme, attending appointments with my Adviser was like meeting up with a friend. I can't wait to start work. ”

We are thrilled for you Sean, well done. We wish you all the very best for the future.



Rachel's Story



Rachel started on our programme in December 2018. During her initial appointment Rachel expressed that she would like to work in a care home in a cleaning role.

In order to achieve this Rachel's Adviser suggested she complete a basic skills assessment to establish her level of literacy and numeracy, which would assist us in providing the right support for her.

Once this was established, Adviser Brian then arranged for Rachel to undertake COSHH and Workplace Safety interactive training, which she successfully passed. This training made a great addition to Rachel's CV as well as providing a positive selling point to host employers when approaching them for a placement opportunity.

Rachel identified a potential host employer; somewhere she had attended a placement whilst at school. Brian approached this organisation and they were happy to meet Rachel. After a positive introduction and informal chat, Chasedale Care Home offered a 6-week placement in the position of Domestic and Rachel started in March.

During her placement Rachel was shadowing a member of staff and participated in various tasks including vacuuming corridors and cleaning public rooms. Great feedback was received from manager Sammy Dunworth. Sammy was so impressed with Rachel that towards the end of the placement, she suggested Rachel complete an application form for domestic bank staff. Rachel was invited to attend an interview and has been successful in gaining a bank position.

“ Being on this programme has helped me get a placement and because of the placement I got a casual job, it might just be casual but at it's a job! ”

“ Rachel did really well during her placement; she just needed some minor prompts. We were impressed by her work and attitude which is why we were offered her a position on the bank. ”

Sammy Dunworth, Chasedale Care Home Manager

This is great news Rachael; we are so pleased for you. Well done!

Feedback

We welcome feedback. If you'd like to share any comments about this provision, please email:
tracey.summerbell@azure-charitable.co.uk

All the photographs and stories used in the production of this newsletter have been obtained with the full consent and permission of each client