



# Newsletter

Issue 08 – July 2019



In partnership with



Department for Work and Pensions



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

**32**

Placements

**8**

Volunteering

**1**

Taster day

**4**

Job Starts

**21**

Completers

**6**

Leavers

## Alan's placement is a Walker in the Park

Alan was referred to our programme back in December. Alan has had no paid employment, but has gained experience via work placements in positions such as Kitchen Porter and Handyman and has spent that last 21 years as a carer. Upon creating Alan's Development Plan and agreeing his objectives, Alan identified that he would need assistance with most aspects of moving closer to employment.

To assist Alan on his journey, Adviser Brian, suggested he complete a Basic Skills Assessment to determine his literacy and numeracy levels. This would assist in understanding exactly what support Alan needed. Alan was quick to tell Brian that he wanted to attend literacy and numeracy classes to improve his skills. Brian jumped on this request and began searching for possible options. In January Alan started a numeracy course and awaits a space to become available to attend a literacy class.



Brian's sourced a placement at Walker Park. After an introduction and informal chat with the Ranger, Alan was offered the opportunity of a work experience. Alan was pleased to be offered the opportunity and his 6-week placement started in April. As the placement drew to an end, Alan was keen to stay involved in this type of field. Ranger, Emma, suggested that Alan could consider volunteering at Wallsend Park. Alan was thrilled with this idea; he would spend less time travelling as this park is closer to home. Without delay and with support Alan met the Ranger at Wallsend Park and is now volunteering every Wednesday morning.

“ **I have received some very helpful, good advice. Being on the programme has shown me places to go and things to do I thought I couldn't.** ”

Alan has now completed his time on Work in Progress, having achieved objectives on his Development Plan. Wish you all the best for the future Alan.

# Sarah is Well Connected



Sarah with Leah O'Sullivan from Meadow Well Connected

Sarah featured in one of our early newsletters; having been one of our first clients to start a work placement. However not long into this opportunity, Sarah felt this wasn't working out for her and it was established that a more supportive environment would be beneficial.

Adviser Brian didn't want Sarah to lose confidence by not attending a placement and so began to develop a plan with Sarah to source an alternative opportunity. A number of options were explored. Sarah, along with her Mother, agreed a priority list of the organisations to be contacted where Sarah would feel more comfortable and at ease.

Top of the list was Meadow Well Connected; a centre providing a wide variety of services and activities to the local community. Brian sourced a placement in their café in a front of house role and an informal chat was set up with the volunteer Co-ordinator and Café Manager. This meeting went well and Sarah was offered a 6-week placement which started in May.

Positive feedback was received from both the host employer and Sarah's Mother who reported that since starting this placement "Sarah is learning new tasks each day and a positive change in Sarah's confidence can be seen."

As the end of Sarah's placement grew closer Volunteer Co-ordinator, Leah, felt Sarah would gain a lot from the services of the organisation once her placement ended. Leah set up a meeting with Sarah, her Mother and Brian to discuss her ideas. Leah suggested that in order to progress Sarah's interest in the café, she could attend a weekly cookery class, she could continue to assist in the café on a volunteer basis and could attend their once per week positive pathways session. Leah wanted to offer Sarah a variety of experiences and things to do that would stretch her ability and widen her comfort zone. Sarah was very happy with this suggestion; living near to the centre makes it easy to access and Sarah loves attending the centre and feels at ease in the environment.

Sarah started her new routine a few weeks ago and is thoroughly enjoying it. Sarah is now a completer on the programme, having achieved the objectives set on her Development Plan.

“

**It's been a pleasure to see how far Sarah has come on and how much her confidence has grown.**

”

Leah O'Sullivan, Key Support Worker at Meadow Well Connected

“

**Thank you to everyone for helping me to get so far, especially Leah,**

”

We wish you all the very best for the future Sarah.

# Completer

When our clients finish their time on Work in Progress they are asked if they'd like to complete an exit questionnaire, the questionnaire mirrors what was asked at the start of the programme.

One of our clients has recently completed on the programme and this how they scored themselves at the start of the programme and upon completion (1 = poor to 10 = excellent). We are proud to see an overall improvement in how the client feels about themselves.

	Start	Completion
Health and wellbeing	5	8
Physical health	8	8
Mental health	5	8

These are just a selection of the comments made by this client during their time with us.

“

**I feel good.**

”

“

**It has given to someone to talk to.**

”

“

**It's good to have someone who understands my main issues and concerns.**

”

## 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!



Northumberland Community Enterprise

**THE  
FASHION  
LAB**



Your Homes  
Newcastle

jobcentreplus

# Connor's Coaching Takes a Step Closer

Connor was referred to our programme in November. At Connor's initial meeting with Azure it was identified that he would need support with a number of key areas including: careers advice, confidence building, travel training, work placement, tailored job search and job skills training.

Connor identified during his first appointment that he was interested in becoming a children's football coach. This would build on Connor's level 2 award in Sports Leadership which he gained in 2016.

Each subsequent appointment with his Adviser was making small steps towards his ultimate goal.

Adviser Tony Robison set up appointments with Newcastle United Foundation, Cramlington United, and Active Northumberland to progress Connor's main aim. Tony supported Connor to attend these meetings.



As a result of these introductions Connor was offered a number of opportunities. After careful consideration Connor decided to take up an opportunity with Cramlington United. Cramlington United offered Connor the chance to undertake a level 1 Coaching qualification and they would pay for the qualification.

Connor was ecstatic at this and was thrilled to accept the offer. The first task Connor needed to complete was to complete a DBS application. In the meantime Cramlington United offered Connor the opportunity to coach at the club, alongside others already there.

“ **I've never seen Connor so positive and upbeat.** ”

Philip, Connor's father

On 3<sup>rd</sup> July Tony received an excited phone call from Connor to say that Cramlington United had also chosen him to join their football squad.

Cramlington United is in the process of registering Connor with the Football Association, once his DBS clearance is obtained he will be ready to start his Coaching course.

In readiness for his course, Connor is working on his personal fitness.

“ **Tony has given me a lot since we started working together. My confidence has improved and I'm going out more. I'm now involved in coaching, training and playing football, something I have not had for a long time.** ”

We are so pleased to see you making your dream become a reality and we're proud to have played a small part in it.

# Adam puts his heart in to a new placement

Adam was referred to Work in Progress in October. Adam has a solid employment history he has worked in a Business Administration Support role at North Tyneside Hospital for 10 hours per week since 2014. Adam's aim was to expand on this if possible, either within the NHS or with another employer.

During Adam's initial appointment with his Adviser, it was identified that Adam would need support with a number of areas including careers advice, confidence building, supported work placement and job skills training.

To broaden Adam's experience, his Adviser Brian suggested a placement with the NHS Business Services Authority, specifically in Prescription Services. Adam liked the sound of this and an informal meeting was set up with several key people from the department. After a successful introduction, Adam was offered a 6 week placement, 2 days per week. Adam was pleased to be offered the opportunity and started this placement in May.

Adam's main duty was data processing. After 3 weeks on placement, positive feedback was received from the host employer's Floor Manager, Training Manager and Line Manager who reported that Adam was working independently without much intervention. Adam worked hard during his placement and at the end of it reported how much he enjoyed his time there and liked working in this type of environment. Adam also described seeing an increase in his own confidence. During this placement, Adam continued to work his 10 hours per week.

To build on Adam's experience, Brian suggested that Adam may like to consider volunteering for a charity, enabling him to gain knowledge and understanding in a different type of organisation. Adam expressed that he would like to volunteer for the British Heart Foundation in their furniture and electrical store. Brian organised an informal chat for Adam with store manager Helen. Following this meeting, Adam enthusiastically phoned Brian to tell him he'd been accepted as a volunteer. Adam started his new role on 15<sup>th</sup> July; his duties include working on the shop floor as well as administration tasks.

**I have liked being on placement and learning new tasks. I am enjoying being at the British Heart Foundation where I polish and tag goods. I also enjoyed being at Prescription Services where I reconciled names against prescriptions. The staff there were very friendly. Work in Progress has helped and supported me – it's been brilliant!**

It's great to hear you have gained so much additional experience during your time on our programme and enjoying too!



## Feedback

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