



Newsletter

Issue 01 – February 2021



In partnership with



Department for
Work and Pensions



Work in Progress – 3!

We were thrilled to be awarded our third contract, with the programme going live on 24 August.

Our contract is to support 45 people in the North of Tyne region on their journey towards employment. You will see us throughout Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland working with clients who are the hardest to help with complex and multiple barriers. Particularly those with learning disability and Autism, some of whom may have additional barriers.

An important element of this provision is to not only support clients to gain an insight into the world of work, by means of breaking down barriers and sourcing supported placements, but also offering support with mental health and wellbeing issues. This short intensive programme is person centred and all activities are individually tailored.

Programme update

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

56 Referrals

6 Did not start

38 Training courses have been completed

3 Interviews for paid work

5 Referrals withdrawn

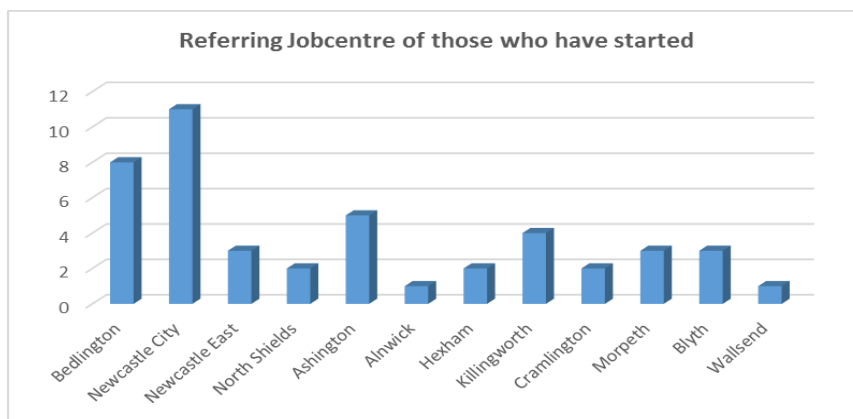
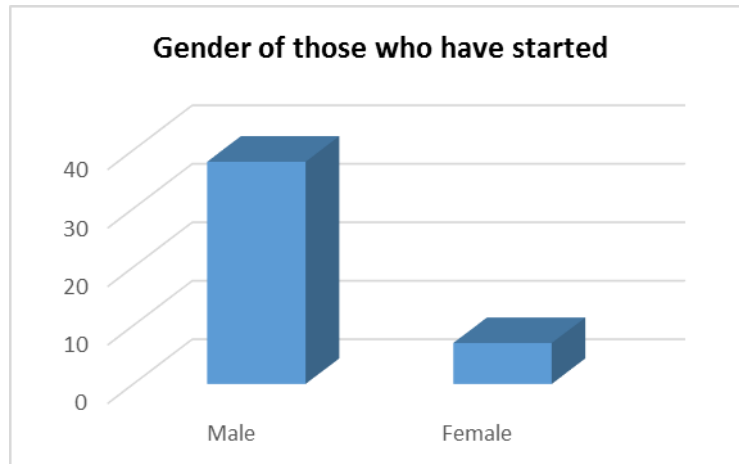
45 Have started on programme

5 Clients been on placement so far

2 Job starts...*more on this later!*

Statistics Station

Of the 45 active referrals:



Covid-19 flexibility

Despite delivering this provision in a pandemic, which brings its challenges, we are still witnessing great achievements by our clients.

Where we could, we tried our utmost to meet clients face-to-face (socially distancing and following government guidance) to carry out initial assessments and conduct weekly meetings. During periods of tighter tier restrictions and national lockdowns we adapted and conducted our sessions with clients remotely, which we were prepared and braced for. For most clients these have been conducted via video call, however in some cases a traditional telephone call was used.

Many clients have been undertaking a range of online training courses such as Manual Handling, Workplace Safety and Customer Service Essentials. Whilst others have been building confidence by tapping in to their interests and hobbies and doing courses in Getting Started with Drawing and Getting Started with Digital Photography & Editing. In addition to their personal development it is also providing structure and focus to their week.

We have also supported clients to access more advanced courses directly linked to the vocational areas of employment they wish to pursue, with courses such as Warehouse and Storage Level 1 and Level 2 with Counterbalance and Reach Fork Lift Trust Licence as well as a client who has achieved a level 2 Understanding Autism course and is now undertaking a level 3 qualification.

All clients are engaging regularly and we look forward to sharing more success stories.

Rachel's route to employment



Rachel is 20 years old, has Dyspraxia and learning difficulties and was referred to our provision early September. Rachel left school with basic qualifications. She gained a part time position as a Kitchen Assistant within the Refectory at Northumberland College, however this unfortunately came to an end.

Rachel enjoyed her time working in a catering environment and decided to attend college to undertake training in this field. Rachel gained a number of qualifications including an NVQ level 2 diploma in Professional Cookery, an NVQ certificate in Food Preparation as well as a level 2 award in Food Safety in Catering.

With her new suite of qualifications along with her previous experience, Rachel went on to gain a part time position in 2016 as an Assistant within Café Azure where she served food, cleared tables and cleaned after services as well as gaining experience using the Barista machine. Sadly, due to Covid-19 this role came to an end and the confidence Rachel had gained took a significant knock.

During Rachel's Initial Assessment for Work in Progress she identified that she would need support with the concept of time and using public transport.

We supported Rachel to update her CV and to undertake a Food Safety level 2 course to ensure Rachel had current knowledge.

Rachel spotted a job she wished to apply for and she was offered an interview. In the intervening period whilst waiting for the interview outcome, with support Rachel applied for another vacancy. We supported Rachel to attend the interview at the Riverside Pantry and she was offered a work trial the same day. This was a perfect opportunity for Rachel to actively demonstrate her skills.

The employer was impressed by Rachel's skills and enthusiasm and she was offered some paid hours work for the following week. Regular hours were given to Rachel and despite several lockdowns as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the café has remained operational for takeaways and Rachel has been given regular shifts.

“ I am really happy and enjoying my new job at the Riverside Pantry, I am developing my skills all the time and the support that I have received from Azure has been excellent. ”

Congratulations Rachel! What wonderful news in such uncertain times. You have shown just what can be achieved with hard work and determination.

Collaboration with CT Furniture

Joshua had previously worked in catering, but sadly this came to an end as a result of the pandemic. This situation had had a negative impact on Joshua and he was referred to our provision for additional support with his Autism, dyslexia and anxiety.

During his initial assessment it was identified that Joshua would need support with career advice, job seeking, creating a CV, confidence building and accessing a placement.

Joshua had a dedicated Adviser, Steve Brown, with whom he engages with each week. Steve and Joshua have worked together on a number of activities to assist Joshua on his journey towards employment.

An aim was to source a placement for Joshua to assist in regaining his confidence and giving some structure and focus.



Covid-19 meant finding a placement in catering difficult and Steve felt it was important that Joshua widened his vocational areas and be open to new possibilities. Joshua was keen to explore alternative avenues and was interested in gaining a placement as a way of re-introducing himself to a workplace.

Steve approached CT Furniture for a placement. After initial discussions, an introduction and informal meeting was set up. Joshua was offered a placement in the role of Warehouse Assistant/Drivers Mate and he was eager to get started. Upon visiting Joshua several times whilst on placement Steve could see how much the placement had meant just by the huge smile on his face.

“ My placement with CT Furniture as a Warehouse Assistant/Drivers mate has helped develop both my confidence and communication skills. The team have all been supportive and this opportunity has definitely been beneficial towards my goal of securing paid employment. ”

Steve reports “to date we have updated Josh’s CV and he has successfully completed a work placement with excellent feedback received from the host organisation”.

As a result of his time on placement as well as the weekly sessions he has with his Adviser Joshua’s confidence has improved significantly over the last few months.

Joshua and Steve have identified several work based online training courses which are relevant to the vocational areas Joshua is interested in pursuing and Joshua will receive support to undertake these. Once these have been achieved Joshua will have more items to add to his CV.

Hopefully this is just the start of more positive things to come in 2021 for Joshua.

We welcome feedback. If you’d like to share any comments about this provision, please email:
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All the photographs and stories used in the production of this newsletter have been obtained with the full consent and permission of each client