

Reaching Out

Work for You is about tackling worklessness in Ayr (Lochside & Whitletts) and Kilmarnock (Onthank, Altonhill, Hillhead & Longpark).

Welcome to the second issue of **Reaching Out**, the Work For You monthly newsletter. In this edition we will provide you with a premises update, let you know what the team has been doing and start a monthly feature introducing each member of our team; first up is our Manager, Moira Kelly.

Meet Moira Kelly, the manager of the Work For You team. Moira is married with a seven year old daughter so, as a full-time working mum, knows the challenges of work/life balance! Moira brings a wealth of experience to the team having worked in the Department for Work and Pensions for nearly 27 years. During the past six years Moira has successfully managed teams of advisers helping unemployed people back to work, including those furthest from the labour market. Her ambitions for the Work For You team are to gain the trust and respect of both customers and partners, and help as many people as possible make a positive difference in their life by finding work. Moira can be contacted at 01292 666080 or by email to moira.kelly@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk



Working within the Community

It is important that, as a community-focused project, the Work For You team is based in the communities we're working with. In Ayr, we are using rooms at Lochside Community Centre, John Pollock Centre and the Russell Street building - a huge thank you to both South Ayrshire Council and Access to Employment. In Kilmarnock we have been using Onthank Community Centre and are about to start using the North West Centre. We also attend Cairns Nursery and Hillbank Nursery every week. Again, a huge thank you to East Ayrshire Council.

We're working with both local authorities to identify and secure premises in these communities for the longer term. We hope to complete and agree the details sooner rather than later, and we will keep you updated as this progresses.

How we can help

Tackling worklessness is not just about helping people look for work – some people have much more complex barriers that need to be tackled before they are ready for work. One of our customers was homeless and has been unemployed for two years.

"I now have much more confidence in finding work, and I'm now much more attractive to potential employers."

With no home, no recent work experience and no confidence, he felt as far away from work as it was possible to be.



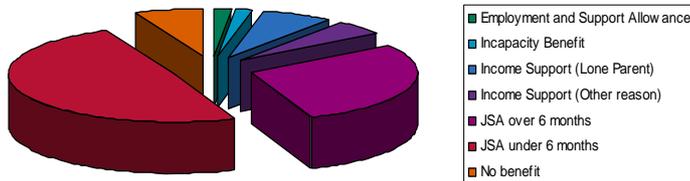
Part of the Department for Work and Pensions

Working with partner organisations we were able to find and fund suitable training, update his CV and jobsearch skills, and help him resolve his housing situation – he is moving into a new flat next week. “Thanks for helping me access the training course - gaining the certificate has increased my confidence and made me more attractive to potential employers.”

Of course, where people are ready to work, finding a job is the surest and fastest way of helping them move out of poverty and making a real difference in their lives. **We have already helped five people move into work**, improving their lives and those of their families.

Who we are helping

In just six weeks we have received almost 100 referrals. Every customer’s situation is different, and by working alongside all our partner organisations we are ready to help.



Three-quarters of our customers are claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance, but we’re working with customers on other benefits too, and some who are not claiming benefit at all.

Around one in five of our customers have a background of offending, and some have other problems such as homelessness, addiction, or a lack of relevant skills.

We are keen to build on our early success and we encourage all our partner organisations to remember the Work For You team, and make as many referrals as possible! We don’t need to work exclusively with customers; many will have complex and overlapping barriers that will require the help of a number of different organisations. We are happy to work alongside anyone to provide a ‘support’ role, making use of any available provision.

Thank you to all who have referred customers to the Work for You team. Remember, referrals can be made **NOW** by contacting Rose Wilson, Admin Support on **01563 506568**, or **07825073332**. Alternatively, you can email the team at kilmarnock.workforyou@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk.

Who we are working with

We met recently with Kilmarnock College, who have agreed to support Work For You customers in the North West area of Kilmarnock by providing hair and beauty treatments to improve appearance and raise self confidence/self esteem. Work For You advisers will also work closely the college’s Employability Officer to provide enhanced support and guidance for students looking for work. The college is planning a *Personal Care and Appearance* course starting in January 2011, which we hope will help some of our customers gain vital skills. Thanks to Pamela Slater (Head of External Relations), Elaine Hutton (Curriculum Manager Beauty and Complementary Therapies) and Nancy Dobbie (Curriculum Manager Hairdressing) for their support.

We also attended the Freshers Fayre at Kilmarnock College and generated some interest and referrals from this event.

The Ayr team have been featuring on Ayr FM (107.5fm), the Ayr based community radio station which is on air for 4 weeks. We have recorded a series of adverts promoting our work and arranged a series of on-air interviews. Tune in and have a listen!