



CANOLBWYNT CYFLOGAETH

CONWY

EMPLOYMENT HUB

CYMORTH HYFFORDDIANT GRYMUSO
SUPPORT TRAINING EMPOWERMENT

AUGUST 2022

Hub News



WELCOME

The last financial year was a resounding success for the Conwy Employment Hub team as we exceeded our expected Job outcomes across all the three Welsh Government Employability programmes.

All three programmes have been a lifeline for many and in particular, Conwy has been highlighted as the best across Wales for Communities for Work which is recognition for all my colleagues' hard work.

As we are fast approaching the half way point for this financial year, we are building on this success and have introduced a number of major new initiatives. with more planned for the next six months which we will be able to announce soon. The cost of living crisis is a serious concern for us all but families on lower incomes are most affected and with the situation set to worsen we will continue to help the residents of Conwy with employment support as well as benefits advice.

We hope you enjoy this edition but please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if we can help you and your business in any way.

Libby Duo, Strategic Manager

EDITION 3

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A RECORD YEAR



CfW, supported by the European Social Fund, is a post coded programme that supports people who are long-term unemployed and economically inactive aged 25 and over, plus young people aged 16-24 not in employment, education or training (NEET).

We exceeded the number of job starts for participants aged 25 and over by 215% and 238% for NEETS.



CfW+ operates in a similar way to CfW but the programme is targeted at people who are either living in or at risk of poverty and is available throughout Conwy county, and we exceeded the number of job starts by 101%.



Supports people who are finding childcare costs are preventing them from training or working and by seeking our support we exceeded our aim of helping people return to work by 179%. An incredible 93% of participants on the PaCE programme successfully gained employment with the remaining 7% undertaking training to develop their skills set before seeking employment.



Libby commented; "2021 was still difficult for us all as there remained a number of Covid restrictions in place and it wasn't until the end of January that life returned to some normalcy, so I am particularly delighted with these results and that through this challenging time we have surpassed our expectations.

"All my colleagues have worked tirelessly over the last 12 months to provide intensive and personalised mentoring support to develop our participant's confidence and skills and to help them find and maintain employment. We've been able to offer employment, in work support, better off calculations and training and qualifications. In addition, we have also helped many people to overcome a range of barriers to help them enter and remain in employment".

TARGETING JOB SEEKERS

Are you using Working Wales' Job Bulletin to advertise your job vacancies?

The Job Bulletin is a really useful tool to get your current vacancies delivered in a personalised email to job seekers.



The Bulletin is split into 2 parts. The first section includes a job match function, highlighting any jobs on the Working Wales system that can be matched to the customers' preferred occupations and location, and the second provides an additional geographical list of up to 50 vacancies nearest to the customer's post code.

It's free for employers to advertise. To get your vacancies uploaded on to the Job Bulletin please send an email with the vacancy details and include a link to the job advert where possible to vacancies@careerswales.gov.wales.

FOCUSING ON THE YOUNG

In April 2022 the Welsh Government launched the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) to ensure that all young people aged 16-24 are able to receive the support they need to gain a place in education or training, find a job or become self-employed.

As part of this initiative, we have received additional funding to support young people in Conwy to help them start their employment and career journey. Our Communities for Work Plus programme is now working across the county by embedding mentors and helping more young people with complex needs and barriers into employment or training.



WEMINDTHEGAP

Aimed at 16 to 25 year olds, the WeMindTheGap's WeDiscover programme run in partnership with the Hub, had such a positive impact on participants in Conwy that is now being rolled out across North Wales.

Participants praised the programme mentors for changing their lives and giving them the confidence to capitalise on post-pandemic opportunities. Among them was MJ, a young carer who struggled with mental health issues and admitted to joining WeDiscover for "something to do" having lacked motivation on leaving school.

"I wasn't doing much besides playing video games and doing art from time to time, though I was losing my passion for it," they said.



"My sister found the course online and I originally didn't think I would do it, or maybe go for one day, but I stayed and am so glad I did because it was an incredible experience."

Since the programme began in 2014 they have changed the lives of up to 250 young people, delivering more than £5.5m in social value and over £2.5m in public savings.

Rachel Clacher CBE, Chair and Founder of WeMindTheGap, said: "The impact of Covid-19 and ongoing restrictions have disproportionately affected our young people. By delivering a programme with love and meaningful opportunities we aim to support young people to transform their own lives and take the next step into the wider world."

The next WeDiscover programme will run throughout North Wales from 3 October.

REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

The North Wales Regional Skills Partnership's Annual Report showcasing how they have been pushing forward the skills and employability agenda has recently been published.

You can download a copy of the [**Annual Report here**](#) to read about the Partnership's achievements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our face to face Drop-in sessions and Job Clubs are back up and running, and it's great to be back out in the local community.

Currently we have nine events running every week, but we are adding more over the next few months to ensure we are in all the key areas where Conwy residents need our help the most.

The Drop-in sessions at libraries and family/community centres are an opportunity for people to talk to our Mentors and Advisors about the issues they are facing, whether it be lacking in confidence, benefits advice, help in finding a job or training to build skills.

The Job Clubs at Canolfan Dewi Sant Centre, Pensarn and Ty Llywelyn Community Centre, Llandudno offer more personalised support in finding employment. This includes help in writing a CV, job applications and preparing people for interviews as well as support getting online.



SOCIAL CARE

The recruitment crisis in social care sector continues so to support Conwy County Borough Council's Workforce Development team in recruiting more people into this sector, we have employed a dedicated Social Care Employment Mentor. There are also a number of initiatives we will be supporting the team with over the next few months and will share further details of these in the next issue.

AN INSPIRATIONAL CARER

Despite being both partially blind and deaf since birth, dyslexic and suffering with Labyrinthitis and chronic migraines throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Jess Watson continues to put others ahead of herself.

The 26 year-old travels weekly by bus with assistance dog Jingle to Ysbyty Glan Clwyd in Bodelwyddan, where she spends time with patients on the stroke ward, playing games, listening and talking to them in her role as a support worker.

After moving to Llandudno, where the family own St Hilary Guest House on the town's promenade, she was put in touch with Conwy Employment Hub, who pointed her toward the Engage to Change, DFN Project Search one-year internship programme, encouraging people with a learning disability to gain vital skills and experience with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

After six months of training, Jess is now enjoying her time at the hospital, and said: "I think given my disabilities a career in the NHS was something I never considered, I thought there would be too many barriers.

"But this programme has shown me there is a role for me, and it's something I find really rewarding. I am driven to help others, that's what I want to do with my life and that includes animals, which is why I'm also volunteering some time with PetPlace, who have also been very supportive.

"I am lucky to have had a lot of backing from my family, Conwy Employment Hub, the health board and others, which has given me the confidence to look ahead and explore the opportunities out there.

"There are platforms and programmes that can help you achieve your dreams - you just have to go for it."



Jess Watson with her assistance dog Jingle and her Hub mentor, Susan Tracey

HELP FOR UKRAINIAN NATIONALS

Our Triage Officer, Bernie Haniewicz, has been attending the weekly Ukrainian resettlement clinics to offer our help and support to refugees looking for work.

Many Ukrainians are highly skilled but their qualifications are not compatible with the UK system, and there is the additional barrier of the English language. With a solution focus, Bernie has collaborated with Working Wales, which is delivered by Careers Wales, to fast track recognition and alignment of Ukrainian qualifications as well as introducing English courses.

We've had our promotional material translated into Ukrainian which Bernie took with him when he joined the "Peace March" along Llandudno Promenade in early July.

Bernie said: "I was made very welcome by everyone attending and the Ukrainians are so appreciative of the welcome, and all the help and support they are getting from Conwy residents and businesses."

We have signed up a high number of Ukrainian refugees to our programmes, and Bernie will continue to play an active role in helping them by holding meetings at Medical Centres as well as local hotels where many are staying.



WOULD YOU LIKE SOME FREE PUBLICITY?

We've had a number of guests on our weekly Employability Features on Sound Radio and Bayside Radio.

If you'd like to join us – whether you want to be an Industry Champion to promote career paths or talk about your current job vacancies, we'd love to hear from you. You can email us at ceh@conwy.gov.uk or ring 01492 576280.



TRAINER CO-ORDINATOR APPOINTMENT

We're delighted to announce the appointment of Susan Tracey as our new Trainer Co-ordinator.

Susan has a wealth of experience in the employment sector having started her career at Manchester City Council and progressing through various recruitment roles including as Operations Director for a regional recruitment agency.

Latterly, Susan ran her own Consultancy which focussed on organisational, team and personal development but the Covid-19 pandemic led to an overnight downturn in business, so Susan took the opportunity to join Conwy Employment Hub as a Mentor back in January 2021.



Having been a Mentor for 18 months has stood her in great stead for her new role and commenting on this, Susan says; "My experience as a Mentor has enabled me to understand the barriers facing many people from getting a job as well as the skills and training they need. This is invaluable in ensuring the training pathways into work I'm developing will add real value to the local economy and offer participants opportunities to develop skills through training and hands on experience that will genuinely help them in their future work life.

"I am also keen to support our team of Mentors and Advisors to achieve their development goals and provide training targeted at their needs for their current and future roles."

Susan's role started on 1 July and already she has hit the ground running developing a variety of training courses from Security to skills training in retail and social care/support work. She is also working with several partner organisations in developing additional courses and is in discussion with Grwp Coleg Llandrillo on joinery and plumbing courses.

Steve Griffiths, Employment Practitioner Manager for the Hub said; "We are thrilled Susan has stepped into this role. She has the breadth of experience required for the job and already we are seeing new courses which will appeal to and attract new participants to our Welsh Government Employability Programmes, and I look forward to seeing the exciting developments she has planned for the future."

COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND UPDATE

With the six-month extension to the UK Community Renewal Fund (CRF) programme, we are casting our net of support further.

One of the priorities we outlined in our CRF bid was the introduction of development courses for families accessing social care services which will utilise outdoor adventure activities to increase participation and engagement, develop confidence, and improve family relationships and communication.

We have partnered with Douglas Road Family Centre in Colwyn Bay to run a free four-week cookery course starting in September. The aim is to help people understand mental health from a nutritional perspective and it will also explore how to use common food parcel ingredients to add value to their diet. Participants will receive recipe cards and ingredients for the practical sessions to create meals to take home.

There's a family fun day for STAND members at Welsh Mountain Zoo on Friday 4 November. STAND supports families with children and young people with speech language communication needs, additional needs and disabilities, and the event includes a fun and interesting talk on working with animals, a ringside seat at the feeding and training of the sea lions, the penguin parade and bird show as well as an exclusive art and craft workshop with all material provided.

We're also working with Creating Enterprise to run a family outdoor activity day for its Working Families Project. Families will learn the art of foraging and how to identify the plants and fruits that grow wild and provide an incredible and edible feast for free. They'll also enjoy lunch in a local café and have a guided tour of Conwy Castle.

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GWEITHIO MEWN PARTNERIAETH Â CHYMNEDAU AR GANOLFAN BYD GWAITH
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITIES AND JOB CENTRE PLUS

