

link-up



No. 5, August 2014 Disabled People's User-Led Organisation Newsletter

Welcome to the fifth DPULO Newsletter. Link-up is intended to provide you with a flavour of the programme and the types of projects we are supporting as well as sharing best practice and good news stories. We are pleased in this edition to focus on three Job Collective pilots being supported by the DPULO programme in Birmingham, Thurrock and Sheffield.

Job Collective Outcomes

So far the Job collectives have supported:

- 7 people into work (3 of which are part time)
- 18 participants to take part in work placements / trials (including people who gained employment by doing so)
- 27 people to take up volunteering opportunities (including people who gained employment by doing so)
- 149 participants to take part in training / personal development activities

Disability Resource Centre (DRC), Birmingham

"Journey To Work" our Job Collective Pilot provides a person-centred mix of one to one intensive support, semi formal group formal 'classroom based' sessions, and drop in sessions to support disabled people towards the workplace. The programmes are supporting 56 participants across four areas of Birmingham.

Sessions available during the ten week formal training programme are varied, but include condition management, employability skills, as well as general skills. The local DEA attends job club sessions, and participants are supported to use Universal Job Match. In addition a range of social activities is available, such as: weekly coffee club, Music Quiz, Theatre Group and Social meetings.

We are delighted our Kitts Green Group continues to meet up nearly 3 months after the formal support and training was completed. Our Employment and Training team are on hand to offer further advice and support. We hope our Erdington Job Collective will join this group now that their formal training is complete



How we are making a difference

"Sue" joined one of our groups very reluctantly at the start, and had to be accompanied by a friend in a carer capacity as she was unable to travel independently and spent most of the first session in tears.

Paul (DRC) spent some time at the end of the first week, persuading Sue to persevere and encouraged her to attend week 2. Sue, 10 weeks on, is now a changed character, she travels independently and has joined an IT club looking to improve her skills as further preparation for work

Have your say...

Please share what challenges you face as a DPULO. How have you overcome them? Is there a question you need advice on, or just let us know what you would like to see in the future issues, email odi.businessperformance@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Thurrock Coalition

Thurrock Coalition's Job collective goes from strength to strength, and is now supporting 41 local disabled people. The collective uses a variety of group, workshop and individual settings, building people's confidence and readiness for work.

Members are supported to explore volunteering and work placement opportunities. We supported one member to volunteer for a local charitable organisation, which has led to a work placement offer with the local authority organising a Veterans Event. This will utilise her considerable knowledge of local history and previous work with a veterans organisation.

We are supporting several of our initial participants to become "Empowered Employment Champions" to offer lived experience, advice and mentoring to new participants in the project. At a recent IT skills workshop one of our Employment Champions gave mentoring and peer support to other Job Club members to enhance their skills base and confidence in IT and the Web, and by sharing lived experiences raised their self-esteem and optimism for the future.

We offer a wide choice of activities and social opportunities for the people we support. Job Collective members can attend regular social events, such as the monthly disco club event, at the Thameside Theatre, where they can try out their dancing and DJ skills, and make friends in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. There are more formal opportunities too, members can join a variety of local organisations, and take

part in local consultations about issues in their local community.

Disability Sheffield

"Just the Job" Job Collective is supporting 21 disabled people in Sheffield who wish to gain employment, or start on the journey towards work. All participants are developing new skills, one has begun working part time, and several have been on work placements.

Kedrh who is participating in the pilot said: 'Being unemployed made me feel like I had no confidence and felt very low. Coming to Just the Job gave me an opportunity to meet other people and focus on what I really want to do, in a friendly setting and motivating environment. At first coming to the Job club got me out of the house and got me back looking at having a career in something I would enjoy doing. Being in a Job club encourages applying for work and using all my skills.'

Jobs I have done in the past I did not always enjoy, or like, due to having to travel miles away from home. Recently I applied for a job which matches my skills, pays above minimum wage and is local. Coming to Job club for over five months now has made me more confident and more job ready for the workplace. I have improved my CV and seen more chances of work availabilities by attending a Job club.

So far I have achieved a lot by doing permitted work of 6 hours every week assisting at the job club and volunteering at the sunlight group which helps service users and staff improve mental health facilities.'

Useful Links (on Hate Crime):

<http://disabilityrightsuk.org/reporting-disability-hate-crime-links>

<http://disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/publications/lets-stop-disability-hate-crime-guidance>