JOBS SUCCESS

Polmont Employability Hub links up with TIGERS

It has been a busy year for the Employability Hub at HMPYOI Polmont. In the past twelve months, AI has delivered a wide selection of certificated employment-related training on topics that range from construction and hospitality to welfare rights.

In particular, the team at the Hub have been able to establish a successful working relationship with TIGERS, a construction training firm. This partnership has delivered just over 100 industry-related qualifications.

Another great success story from Polmont has been the recent employment of one of our students, Ben. After Ben had completed his CSCS and TIGERS training, AI was able to place him with Balfour Beatty for work experience. This culminated in Ben finding full-time work in the construction industry. So far, feedback on Ben's performance has been excellent.

NEW STAFF

New Advocacy Worker providing vital support

AI has received funding from the Scottish Government's National Development Plan for a new Advocacy Worker. The post was taken up by Claire Grehan in April, 2019. Claire is now offering 1:1 support to people living with or affected by alcohol and substance misuse across Mid and East Lothian.

So far, Claire has been working with clients through the recovery cafes and drop-in services in Musselburgh and Dalkeith. She has also been getting referrals from partnership agencies.

"It is essential that clients are given support with things like benefits and housing issues so that they can concentrate on their recovery," Claire says. "By providing this kind of support I aim to help people sustain their engagement in the recovery process and improve their progress."

Claire will work with AI partnerships as well as other agencies in the community. She will develop support groups in more rural areas, helping to reduce social isolation and to improve the recovery resources that are available.

GROWING STRONGER

New funding driving exciting new projects

AI has secured new funding that will allow us to continue to deliver a high standard of service to our clients and to develop in new and exciting areas.

We have received three-year funding through Third Party Grants (Edinburgh Council) for EdinMe, a new project for young people in Edinburgh with mental health difficulties.

We are excited to be part of The Listening Fund. This is a pilot project managed by Corra. It will explore how we listen to young people across our services and help us to involve them more.

In North Lanarkshire, we have ESF and North Lanarkshire Council funding to develop our local partnership with Routes to Work. This will extend our work with adult offenders to include HMP Barlinnie.

Our work with offenders in East Lothian has received a further tranche of ESF Challenge Funds and match support from East Lothian Council.

In Midlothian we have received new project funding from the Council which will extend our client group to include the homeless.

Our work with people in recovery in Midlothian and East Lothian continues thanks to Meldap's support. We have also received Scottish Government funding for a two-year advocacy project for people with substance related issues.

The Big Lottery Fund, which supports our work in the Polmont Employability Hub, has provided additional funds for training.

JOB PLACEMENTS

Construction Partnership helps bridge skills gap for those leaving custody

AI has been working with the Department of Work and Pensions to provide opportunities in the construction industry for those leaving custody in Edinburgh. The first fruits of this initiative has been with Balfour Beatty, lead contractor on the renovation of Edinburgh's North Bridge.

Phase one of the North Bridge renovation work involved the installation of scaffolding and decking above Waverley station. The sub-contractor for this work, Network Scaffolding, was able to offer six opportunities to those who had completed their Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) training in HMP Edinburgh. These opportunities provided a two-week work placement, with the offer of a labouring contract on completion.

Phase two of the renovation work will involve the removal of the paint from the bridge's steelwork for inspection. This will be carried out by the industrial coating specialist Taziker International. Taziker has already offered two places for people leaving custody, and aims to offer further places if the first placements are completed successfully.

This success builds on previous partnership work with the Scottish Prison Service to re-implement CSCS training and accreditation within HMP Edinburgh.

Links are now being made with other large construction employers who will be carrying out significant developments in the city over the coming years. It is hoped that the sector will be able to offer opportunities to a growing number of AI students in the future.

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North Lanarkshire Council

ACCESS TO INDUSTRY
NEWSLETTER 2019/20

Reducing barriers to further education and employment

ACCESS TO INDUSTRY

Celebrating five years of partnership in Clovenstone

2019 marks five years since the start of AI's successful referral partnership with Clovenstone Community Centre.

"The centre's staff, Sas, Susan and Donna, have been a significant source of referrals for our youth work projects," says AI Caseworker, Graham Redpath. "The support our caseworkers and their young clients receive from Clovenstone Community Centre is invaluable. Everyone at AI thanks them for their help and looks forward to strengthening our relationship with everyone at the centre."

The staff at Clovenstone have helped channel participants into many AI projects, including our cooking group and employability classes, sexual and mental health support groups, participatory budgeting sport events and community Christmas get-togethers.

Take a look at our new website:
www.accesstoindustry.co.uk
It's full of information about our services and courses.

NEW SERVICES

EnCompass project growing strongly

AI's EnCompass project has had a busy second year of work. The project team have continued to deliver core employability and training services, while expanding the scope of their work. They now offer a number of more therapeutic activities, including art, meditation, SMART workshops and an eight-week Living Life to the Full course.

"We recognised that people with complex needs benefit from having flexible options to choose from," says EnCompass Caseworker, Magdalena Marciniak, explaining why the project has grown in the way it has.

EnCompass is an innovative employability programme for people living with complex needs. As part of its varied work, EnCompass supports AI's Dumbiedykes Community Gardening project. This takes place every Monday for eight months of the year. Funding for the last season was provided by Spirit of Dumbiedykes. This season funding is coming from the Community Grants Fund, City of Edinburgh Council (South East Locality).

The students on the course learn all about organic gardening from Alastair, our horticultural expert. The project has been increasingly popular, with 25 people taking part in 2018.

The garden project has been able to host a number of barbeques. These social events provide an opportunity for all AI students to enjoy the garden, taste delicious food and celebrate the hard work of the gardeners. At the first barbeque of 2019, the band Serenity Strings provided tunes to go along with the food.

"We hope that these vibrant events will encourage more volunteers to join," says Magdalena. "We aim to give as many people as possible the opportunity to get experience of the gardening sector and to learn about healthy food and lifestyle choices."

ACCESS TO INDUSTRY

Access to Industry statistics 2018/19

- 398 people supported
- 75 attended AI courses
- 42 moved into employment
- 92 qualifications received in-house through Edinburgh College
- 71 sustained further education
- 185 received training

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Scotland Works for You partnership proves it worth

Over the last 12 months, AI has developed a successful new relationship with Disclosure Scotland and its *Scotland Works for You* alliance.

Scotland Works for You aims to secure opportunities for people with convictions to lead positive, healthy lives that contribute to society. The group, which was started in 2017, aims to both reduce the stigma of having a conviction and to remove the barriers that stand in the way of integration. It works by providing employment and education opportunities for individuals with convictions.

"These aims sit comfortably with our own, and have led to collaborations in a number of areas," says Mark Phillips, who manages AI's Passport and Encompass projects. "For example, we asked Disclosure Scotland staff to provide information sessions at both HMYOI Polmont and 156 Cowgate. In return, AI has been able to play a key partner role in the design and delivery of a new Disclosure of Offences training package that supports safe and fair decision making in this area. It is hoped that this will become a key resource for employers, employability professionals and clients."

"Working in partnership with Access to Industry has been refreshing," says a representative from Disclosure Scotland. "Having input from the people who face challenges in securing employment has given real impact to our training. The continued involvement of Access to Industry in this process will not only enhance our product but will help us reach out to those employers who would benefit most from the training."

KEY PARTNERSHIP

MELDAP Recovery College celebrates 5 years' of growth

As it reaches the end of its 5th year of operation, the Midlothian and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership (MELDAP) Recovery College is still expanding the range of services it provides.

"In the last 12 months, partnership working has once again been our key priority," says AI Advocacy Worker, Claire Grehan. "We have built on our already strong links within the wider MELDAP Network. We have also secured further funding and our team has grown from three to four."

Among the College's recent achievements is the delivery of a three-day training course for 11 new Peer SMART Recovery Facilitators. As a result of this course two new SMART Meetings have begun in East Lothian. Early 2019, saw the start of a new College partnership with Children 1st Midlothian. This involves the support of a group for parents affected by addiction. The Peer Support worker managing this project is a former student of the Recovery College.

Another success is the Starfish Recovery Café in Musselburgh. This has gone from strength to strength, with a new advocacy worker providing weekly drop-ins. Equally successful is the Horizons Recovery Café in Dalkeith, which provides a safe space for those in recovery and an excellent meeting place for students and caseworkers. A number of students have moved into volunteering roles with Horizons and are supporting the café's outside catering work.

2019/20 will see the start of further SMART Tools Training for facilitators. This should lead to a stronger SMART network across the MELDAP Region. Midlothian will also benefit from a new Recovery Hub in Dalkeith which will house all recovery services in one building. This will further strengthen the work that the Recovery College is able to provide throughout the region.

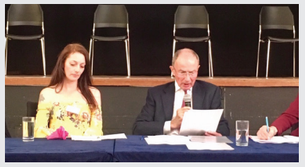
SHINE NEWS

SHINE secures new funding to help more women

Shine is a national mentoring service for women offenders and recently secured a further year of funding from the Scottish Government. AI manages and delivers Shine in Lothian and the Borders, with AI Shine mentors acting as prison-based champions at Cornton Vale, Polmont Young Offenders Institution and HMP Edinburgh.

In Autumn 2018, Shine mentees in East Lothian took part in six Insight to Wellbeing pilot group sessions. These were run in partnership with Beyond Recovery, which has pioneered similar work in prisons in England. Participants were asked to reflect on their thoughts and experiences, listening out for their 'innate potential for wellbeing'. The project had a really positive impact. Feedback included: "I have learned to trust and listen to myself," and "I listen more and think before I act".

In March 2019, one of our Shine mentees spoke at the Scottish Association for the Study of Offending's Women in Prison Lecture at Edinburgh Sheriff Court. She discussed the emotional and financial costs of maternal imprisonment.



In April 2019, our Shine mentee, Angela Gilchrist, addressed the Prison Reform Trust's Women's Summit, Transforming Lives, in Westminster. The summit focused on the value of the lived experience in shaping policy and services. It was an opportunity to influence decision makers and share experiences with women from all over the UK.

Our Shine mentees enjoyed a screening of *On the Outside*, a film created by Paul Gray, Programme Leader for Film, Arts and Creative Industries at Napier University. The film depicts in precise and moving detail the experience of four women serving sentences in Polmont Young Offenders Institution.

AI Shine representatives now attend the Cross Party Group on Women's Justice and the Scottish Working Group on Women Offenders.

STUDENT SUCCESS

AI photography takes pride of place in Leith

The extraordinary work of 12 students who completed AI's Access: Photography course were featured in the Picture This exhibition, which took place in June 2019 at The Image Collective Gallery, Ocean Terminal, Leith.

This year's students shared a passion for nature and their photos showcased the remarkable plants and animals to be found in and around Edinburgh alongside the exuberance of the city's architecture and people.

"Photography is something I always wanted to do but never had the opportunity to enjoy," said Nick who took part in the course. "I've lived in the city for 20 years but am now seeing it like never before; this course has really changed my outlook."
"I enrolled in the course thinking photography could become a hobby but thanks to the guidance and support I'm taking away a new found passion," said Rab, another course participant.

This popular course is run in collaboration with Edinburgh College's Broadcast Media and Photography department. Due to its success, plans are in development for more collaborations with the college in the coming year. Photography will be upgraded to a National Progression Award (NPA). This will ensure that students receive an industry-recognised qualification on completion. They will also be able to apply for an NPA in Digital Media, which will offer creative and technical learning in both audio and moving and still images.

Photo: David Lamont

ART SUCCESS

Melissa uses AI as a stepping stone to Art and Design

Melissa was one of the students who successfully took part in AI's Art & Identity course in 2018. This was run in collaboration with The Fruitmarket Gallery in Edinburgh.

After completing this course, Melissa went on to participate in the follow-up project, Celebrate Art. While she was doing this, she was accepted to study UAL 2 Diploma Art & Design at Edinburgh College. Along the way she produced some amazing pieces of work.

The latest news from Melissa is that she is almost ready to complete her Edinburgh College course. She will then move on to Art & Design Level 3 for the 2019–20 semester.

Everyone at AI is very proud of Melissa and the wonderful art she has created.

PROJECTS CONTINUE

Passport moving forward in Lanarkshire

2019 has already been a successful year for AI's Passport project, which supports adults and young people with convictions.

Importantly, Passport has been invited to continue as specialist employability provider on South Lanarkshire Council's Structured Deferred Sentence programme. It has been a vital part of this programme since 2017

"Access to Industry provides a person-centred employability approach to supporting young people placed on a court-imposed Structured Deferred Sentence," explains Ross White, Social Worker with South Lanarkshire's Justice Services. "Working in partnership with AI has resulted in many positive wellbeing and court outcomes."

Another success has been new funding for Passport in North Lanarkshire (through the Third Sector Challenge Fund). This will support men leaving HMP Addiewell and HMP Barlinnie who are returning to the North Lanarkshire area. This North Lanarkshire Council funding follows on from a successful first project working within HMP Addiewell, which was the first programme that Passport offered to adult males outside Edinburgh.

"AI's case worker, Johnny, runs sessions in HMP Addiewell's Academy for our residents who are looking for support on their liberation," says Robert Taylor, HMP Addiewell's Employability Coordinator. "Johnny's knowledge, enthusiasm and understanding of our residents' needs is a great asset to our own in-prison employability team. Tackling residents' housing and employment concerns prior to liberation provides a great comfort to them, and Johnny manages these concerns extraordinarily well."

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