

Mayor opens new community hub in the heart of Bury



Bury's new NeighbourHub was opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony by The Worshipful the Mayor of the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Councillor Sandra Walmsley.

The Hub provides a relaxed environment where local residents can go to get help and advice on issues including housing, employment, money management and health.

The Mayor said: "It was an honour and a privilege to officially open the new advice centre. I'm sure it will be a great help to many Bury residents who will welcome a central point, open five days a week, where they can get advice on a wide range of employment and skills support."

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Funded by the Community Investment Fund (CIF), the Bury NeighbourHub is a collaborative project between Bury Works, Bury Council and Ingeus.

The hub is open Monday to Friday with agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, Citizens Advice, National Careers Service, and local health support services regularly on site so that Bury residents can access a one-stop-shop of support.

Ingeus will provide information on the Working Well Work and Health Programme, including the new Pioneer support programme, commissioned by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to help people on out of

work benefits or who are economically inactive secure sustainable employment.

Bury NeighbourHub also provides space for local people from different backgrounds to come together and connect, get involved in community projects, and learn how their skills and ideas can help Bury to become an even better place to live.

Representatives from Bury Council, Jobcentre Plus and other local partners including charities and specialist services attended the opening event, which showcased the variety of services available.

Cllr Charlotte Morris, cabinet member for culture and the economy, said: "This is a great initiative, and an

excellent example of the Council working with public and private sector partners. My thanks go to everyone involved in getting it off the ground, and I look forward to seeing how it gets on. Given the current economic climate, it's so important to support those who have been out of work for a prolonged period back into meaningful employment."

Nicola Wood, Head of Delivery for Ingeus said: "It was fantastic to see so many people attend the launch event. Our mission is to enable better lives and the NeighbourHub provides us with another avenue to support even more people with finding suitable local employment."



Christine digs deep to find inner calm

Traumatic experiences had left Christine finding it difficult to trust people.

The 60-year-old had been unemployed for 14 months when she was referred to Ingeus' Working Well (Work and Health Programme) team for tailored support to find a job. Commissioned by Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the programme helps long-term unemployed people and those with disabilities and health conditions to gain employment.

Christine, from Oldham, has a deep-seated fear of filling in application forms as her personal information has been leaked in the past. She was in the military in the 1980s, a time when it was illegal for gay people to serve. After being outed, Christine was arrested and faced intrusive questions, which triggered a series of traumatic events.

"After Covid I wanted to step away from everything, I needed to decompress," says Christine. "However, it becomes unhealthy to stay at home and I no longer



Christine (right) with Hannah Williams from Oldham Council.

wanted to go beyond the safety of the front door. Filling in application forms is an absolute nightmare," she says. "Ingeus took the time to understand that I had issues, and the reasons why."

Christine's keyworker referred her to partner organisation the Better Health Generation for additional support. "They gave me coping strategies to accept that what's creating anxiety for me isn't as much of a threat as I think it is," says Christine.

Her keyworker suggested she join the programme's group volunteering sessions at the Growing Hub at Alexandra Park. Volunteers grow organic

produce for the foodbanks around Oldham.

The Get Oldham Growing project is led by Oldham Council's co-ordinator Hannah Williams. Christine agreed to get involved, and thanks to her enthusiasm was offered a part-time temporary job. After encouragement, Christine sent off her application and became a paid member of the team.

"It's not just an improvement to my mental health, there's a physical improvement too. I absolutely recommend the programme. It's good that you maintain a level of contact with Ingeus, so if any issues come up, there's a safety net."

Ingeus gets five awards at event celebrating 20 years of CFO



On 24th January 2024, a CFO celebration event took place commemorating the last 20 years of European Social Fund CFO programmes across custody and the community.

Recognising both employees and service users, 90 nominations were received from all CFO providers across nine categories. Ingeus were delighted to be announced winners of five awards:

- Partnership & Collaboration - for Manjit Dhillon, Employer Engagement Team, CFO3
- Sustainability - for Fit for Work, CFO3
- Good News Story - for Leonie Plumtree, CFO3
- Partnerships & Collaboration - for Gareth Richmond, CFO Activity Hubs
- Lived Experience - for Dan Hart, CFO Activity Hubs.

“It was good to finally be recognised for the work I have done on myself and how I can have a positive impact on the participants going forward.”

Dan Hart, winner of the Lived Experience award

Ingeus Justice teams were also named runners-up in the following categories:

- **Veterans** - for John Brookes, CFO3
- **Creative Arts** - for AllStar Yorkshire and Humber, CFO3
- **Lived Experience** - for Leonie Plumtree, CFO3
- **Neurodiversity** - for Independent Me, CFO3
- **Sustainability** - for Three13 North East, CFO3.

Dan Hart, winner of the Lived Experience award joined the Durham CFO Activity Hub following his time in the criminal justice system for 16 years. His participation in CFO Activity Hubs as a peer mentor led to paid employment as a Health Trainer:

“It was great to feel part of a team and to be invited to be at the awards. The best part for me was winning the award for Lived Experience, it was good to finally be recognised for the work I have done on myself and how I can have a positive impact on the participants going forward.”

Leonie Plumtree, winner of the Good News Story and runner-up for Lived Experience has achieved great success through support from Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS) and has progressed to become a Personal Wellbeing Advisor for Ingeus:

“Being at the CFO event was lovely, the awards were a fantastic way in highlighting the incredible work CFO do. I am extremely grateful to be nominated for two awards and winning the Good News Story award and thankful for those who have helped me achieve this. CFO and Ingeus have given me a second chance to find the person I have always been.”

Ingeus (and APM UK previously) has delivered Justice services to help enable better lives for more than 20 years, including CFO3 since 2010 and CFO Activity Hubs since 2021. Teams across the business are united in helping people on their rehabilitation journey and work with local and national partners and employers to help them secure the specialist support and jobs they need to make a positive and lasting change.

Carrie Peters, Director of Justice Services said:

“We are absolutely delighted to receive these awards and recognition for the hard work, creativity and triumph that they represent! Some truly inspirational stories of determination, resilience and grit that have resulted in life changing outcomes. It has been an absolute privilege to deliver CFO services across three regions and we are proud of the whole team and all that they have achieved.”

“CFO and Ingeus have given me a second chance to find the person I have always been.”

Leonie Plumtree, winner of the Good News Story

“It has been an absolute privilege to deliver CFO services across three regions and we are proud of the whole team and all that they have achieved.”

Carrie Peters, Director of Justice Services

Continuous Improvement Academy heads east to Cambodia

The Continuous Improvement Academy goes from strength-to-strength as it celebrates success in an international project to transform the Cambodian employment service.

Imagine for a minute that you are responsible for delivering employability services in a country that has only been at peace since 1991, where over 90% of workers toil in the informal economy and where three quarters of the population live on US\$3 a day – less than the price of a takeaway coffee. Established only fourteen years ago, these are just some of the challenges facing the Cambodian jobcentre network, the National Employment Agency (NEA), as it develops services to provide the population with the right skills to attract international investors and to reduce poverty.

In 2019, Ingeus (and our parent company, APM Group) was invited to join a Japanese Ministry of Labor-funded project to help train the NEA to meet these challenges. APM's international relations lead, Anton Eckersley, noted that the Group's thirty-year record of successfully establishing and scaling up employability services in Asia-Pacific geographies like Korea and Singapore is highly respected in the region.

As with all our work, weaving sustainability into the NEA transformation project was a key measure of success. Collette Westerman, Development Manager for Ingeus UK's Continuous Improvement Academy, designed a specially tailored version of their White



Belt introductory training to help NEA staff understand the key principles of Continuous Improvement (CI) and to provide them with the tools to build new processes to drive real cultural change.

Because of the time differences, Collette delivered her training in pre-recorded modules which were interpreted and facilitated at the workshop in Phnom Penh. For the NEA management team, the training (which included folding t-shirts), was unlike any other and was a huge hit. Collette said that Ingeus recognises many of the core challenges faced by the Cambodians and that she really enjoyed being part of the event.

The CI Academy's contribution has been highly valued by the NEA who sent Collette a big 'saum arkoun' (thank you). Once the project's results have been evaluated, the hope is that the transformation project will create a quality blueprint for other employment services in the global south.

A new job and a new life for Afghan refugee Hayatullah

After eight years struggling to find work, Afghan refugee Hayatullah is now able to provide for his family.



He fled his war-torn country in 2015 to begin a new life in England but, without speaking strong English, gaining a job was very hard. With help from the Restart Scheme and his new employer, he's found quality work and is now on track to a better life.

"It was very difficult in Afghanistan," recalled Hayatullah, now 28. "There was poverty and war everywhere and it was really hard to survive. There were

no jobs and no real chance of doing well in life."

He left Afghanistan and travelled through different countries by sea and air, working where he could. When he arrived in England, he was granted asylum and supported with accommodation but couldn't find work.

"I had nobody here to help or support me and didn't understand the language," he said.

"I tried really hard to find a job and was willing to work hard but nobody wanted to give me a chance."

His break came when Jobcentre Plus referred him to the Restart Scheme, a government programme delivered by Ingeus which supports unemployed people into work. Commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions, Ingeus delivers the Restart Scheme in the West Central region on behalf of Serco. Ingeus is also the prime provider of the Restart Scheme in Greater Manchester and Central and West London.

Hayatullah was relieved to discover he could communicate with his Restart Advisor Ali, as they both speak Urdu.

"Ingeus has been very helpful throughout my time with them," said Hayatullah. "They put a CV together for me, filled in applications and ultimately helped me get into work."

Hayatullah's new job is testament to Ingeus' strong partnership with the OCS Group, one of the world's leading international facilities service providers.

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Keen to uphold its inclusive recruitment policies, OCS supports regular recruitment events at Ingeus' Birmingham centre. Sharing information on its vacancies and accessible recruitment practices, it has employed 15 Restart Scheme participants to date for one of its local client contracts.

"For a lot of our participants, interviews can be very daunting, especially if English is not their first language and they haven't worked for a long time," says Ali. "Yet every

single participant leaves the OCS induction days with a smile on their face. Those that are offered work, like Hayatullah, are thrilled. The cleaning contract he now works on is flexible and perfectly suits his needs."

Hayatullah's new job involves cleaning spaces at a major entertainment venue in Solihull.

"I am really enjoying work – I like the busy environment and I get on really well with my colleagues," he said. Now that he is earning a wage, he has been able to move out of

supported accommodation and is living with his partner.

"Life is so much better now," he said. "I am able to support my family and look after myself which is a big achievement for me."

He is also relieved that Ingeus continues to support him – he speaks to his Advisor Ali regularly: "Ingeus continues to help me even now that I am in work. If I receive an email or letter that I am unsure of I can always ask them. I am very grateful for all that Ingeus has done for me."

Age Friendly Pledge

We're proud to have signed the Age-Friendly Employer pledge and support Centre for Ageing Better's #AgeWithoutLimits campaign.

Its aim is to change the way we all think about ageing and support a growing movement of people and organisations working to make society more age-inclusive.

Research from the Centre for Ageing shows that 50% of people aged over 50 in England have experienced age discrimination in the last year, and at least a third of people hold ageist beliefs.

One of the ways Ingeus is taking action and showing commitment to older workers has been through our accreditation as a menopause friendly employer. In 2023 a menopause network was created to ensure colleagues are supported.



**We're an
Age-friendly
Employer**

Improving health and wellbeing through landscape therapy

Delivered in partnership with HMPPS CFO3, and Rangers from the Peak District National Park Authority, Fit for Work is a 12-week programme for people on probation. It offers the opportunity to learn new skills, work within a team, identify personal motivators, and helps set goals for the future.



Pictured are Sarah Nobbs (PSDL) and Holly Brough (Case Worker)

Starting off the year at Derbyshire Peak district, the latest group worked under the direction of the Fit for Work team and the Park Rangers. Through the programme, people gain access to a range of accredited qualifications, including Health & Safety. A broad range of heritage skills are also taught including dry stone walling, construction methods for paths and walkways, management of hedges and landscapes, manufacturing and installation of a variety of types of gates and fencing, and recycling pallets into a variety of items.

Gary Smith, Head of Delivery for CFO3 for Ingeus, said: "Fit for Work started as a Development Funded programme, and has been so successful that it was been extended into 2024. The team work on dry stone walling, maintaining walkways and fitting new features like the one pictured. They work in all weathers, and even on this occasion pictured where the temperature was a chilly -4!"

CFO uses European Social Fund money to move individuals in custody and the community closer to the labour market.

For more information about CFO3, www.ingeus.co.uk/services/justice/cfo3

I'm back inside a young offenders' home... but this time I've got the keys

"Forty years ago, I was locked up in a place like this – a residential home for young offenders. Today I have the keys to the place and I'm about to go in and help those inside to turn their lives around."

Ingeus Community Support Worker Paul was standing outside an Approved Premises in Manchester and says:

"It's a house with locked doors, where people who are coming towards the end of their sentences prepare for life on the other side of the door.

"My job is to assist them to restart a normal life by helping them with housing, benefits or other difficulties."

Paul has worked for the Ingeus Justice division for 18 months. He describes his role as an 'on the ground fixer' combining his lived experience of the criminal justice system and his passion for supporting former offenders. People just like himself.

He arrived in the UK from Jamaica with his family when he was six.

He struggled to settle and soon became involved in "a lot of foolish and petulant behaviour" which led to petty crimes.

He had his first brush with the law by the time he was 11 but when his crimes became "too much and too often" he was sent to a young offenders' institution from the age of 13 to 16.

"That place did pretty well for me," he says. "I left there with four O-levels and six GCSEs

and went straight into a technical college to study electronics.

"I soon realised that wasn't for me, so I joined the military. I experienced massive racism, left without permission and for a year was working at a store in London while also still drawing my Army wages."

His dishonesty caught up with him in the form of a court-martial from which he was sent to a military prison.

It was on release he decided to turn his life around. He spent many years working in the community sector, helping organisations write bids for financial support, receiving a small percentage of the money if he was successful and occasionally working on the project for which he secured funding.

He later worked on a local radio station financed by the NHS aimed at engaging ethnic minority communities and when that contract came to an end he found himself unemployed. He was referred to Ingeus and a place on the Government's Restart Scheme, aimed at getting long-term unemployed people back into work.

Ingeus values lived experience, so his Restart Advisor recommended he work for the business and found a potential management position for him.



“I had set my heart on helping people to rebuild their lives.”

But instead Paul had seen a vacancy in the Justice division because: “I had set my heart on helping people to rebuild their lives.”

Although it represented a lower salary he does not regret the decision: “I love the people I work with. There are lots of others with lived experience and I have learned a huge amount from them. And then of course there are the other people who haven’t got the same experience but they show no negative attitude towards you.

“Working in this environment is good for me because I’m not judged on my past, I don’t have to keep looking over my shoulder.”

Paul, a trustee for an education group and member of the Manchester carnival

committee, adds: “I consider myself to be in a fortunate position where my experience of the justice system, my Jamaican heritage and, at the age of 64, my life experience give me skills to support people to break the cycle of crime.

“I understand their frustration and I can empathise with them but spend a lot of my time explaining that they must get into the habit of living a normal life, one that’s conducive to being a good citizen. That’s how you get the best from the system.

“I have learned so many things about myself and other people. I realise that underneath it all we are all human beings trying to make our way on planet Earth.”

Getting to know you...



Glenn Fitton

This month we stopped to take a minute to find out more about Glenn and his role at Ingeus as Head of Cyber.

As the Head of Cyber at Ingeus my primary role is to foster growth and innovation, while ensuring our clients' information and our systems are safeguarded against the latest cyber security threats.

My career has largely been based in London assisting organisations establish secure digital environments. I've consulted for a diverse range of organisations in sectors including manufacturing, financial technology and private equity.

Cyber security is a fast-paced and complex risk to manage. While technology plays a significant role, I firmly believe that our organisational culture and shared commitment to our value "do the right thing" for our customers are equally crucial.

I joined Ingeus at the start of 2024. As a newcomer, I'm inspired by the fact that our work has a genuinely positive impact on society. Despite being a business, the altruistic nature of our organisation serves as a significant motivator for me.

We asked Glenn to answer life's essential questions:

Summer or Winter?

Summer

Chocolate or sweets?

Chocolate

Night or morning?

Morning

City or countryside?

Countryside

Cats or dogs?

Dogs

Dressed up or casual?

Dressed up

Phone calls or emails?

Phone calls

Books or films?

Films

Night out or night in?

Night out

Holidays or home comforts?

Holidays



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