

UK's first Peer Mentor pilot support at HMP Winchester



Ingeus has introduced a new Peer Mentor pilot service at His Majesty's Prison (HMP) Winchester, the first of its kind in the UK. This new role is designed to support prisoners on their rehabilitation journey, offering guidance through lived experience as part of Commissioned Rehabilitative Services.

The peer mentor will work closely with Ingeus' Custody Accommodation Advisor to help new prisoners settle in. They'll be part of the induction process, offering one-to-one sessions and sharing important information about housing support and other services available in prison.

This initiative not only empowers prisoners but also fosters a sense of community and understanding within the prison environment. By leveraging the experiences of those who have successfully navigated the challenges of incarceration, Ingeus aims to create a supportive atmosphere that encourages personal growth and rehabilitation.

The long-term goal is to have a Peer Mentor on each wing at HMP Winchester.

Carrie Peters, Director of Justice Services, said: "The Peer Mentor service will make a real difference in helping people turn their lives around. Having a Peer Mentor, someone who has lived experience of the justice system, can offer stronger understanding and guidance for a successful resettlement period after custody."

For more information about Ingeus' justice services visit www.ingeus.co.uk/justice.

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JACK'S BUILDING A NEW CAREER

Twenty-two-year-old Jack is cementing his career after finding a much longed-for job in the construction industry. Thanks to the Restart Scheme delivered by Ingeus in Greater Manchester, not only is Jack's difficult search for work over, but he's in a role he loves and has turned his pre-job challenges around.

Jack, from Rochdale, who was unemployed and experiencing homelessness, was struggling to find a job. It was only after being referred to the Restart Scheme by his local Jobcentre Plus that he found the support he needed. His search was made even more difficult because of his stammer, a condition impeding communication with potential employers. With support and encouragement from his Restart Advisor, Adam, and Employer Account Manager, Helen, Jack soon overcame his barriers to employment.

"I was applying for jobs on a daily basis," explains Jack, who was unemployed for almost two years. "But it was only with the Restart Scheme's support that I started to make progress. I was learning all the way through and was getting positive feedback from potential employers."

Adam and Helen developed a tailored programme to meet Jack's needs. Adam ran one-to-one coaching sessions to boost Jack's confidence, while group workshops addressed employability skills, such as CV writing and digital skills.

Jack recalls, "It's fair to say that the Restart Scheme changed my life. I was homeless and out of work, but after just six months with the programme my life was turned around. I needed help with everything – I had a lot of growing up to do and wasn't in a good state of mind. Slowly but surely Adam and Helen helped me to get back on my feet."



Adam and Helen also supported Jack to enrol on a course to obtain a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card, a crucial requirement for working in the construction industry. With their guidance and encouragement, alongside his own hard work, Jack passed the CSCS test and was in a stronger position to secure a construction role.

"Jack's determination and resilience have been truly inspiring," says Adam. "By helping him recognise his strengths and abilities, he's grown more self-assured, ready to take on new opportunities. Seeing him achieve a role in the construction industry is the ultimate testament to his hard work and progress."

Helen adds, "From the moment I met Jack, I knew he was keen to work – what

he needed was someone to believe in him and help him believe in himself. It was then about finding the right role for him. After he completed his CSCS training, I found Jack an employer who recognises his potential and will provide Jack with the opportunity he deserves."

Now working as a labourer for a construction firm, Jack says he couldn't be happier. While he has no intention of moving jobs, he's also grateful to the Restart Scheme for equipping him with employability skills for the future.

Commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions, Ingeus is the lead provider of the Restart Scheme in Greater Manchester and Central and West London. We also partner with Serco to support the Restart Scheme in Central West Midlands.

CHAMPIONING COLLABORATIVE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT AT THE LGA CONFERENCE



Ingeus was proud to attend the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Conference 2025 in Liverpool. A flagship event bringing together local government leaders, policymakers, and partners to shape the future of public services.

Exhibiting at our stand, our team engaged in meaningful conversations, sharing insights and learning from others committed to building stronger, more inclusive communities.

The conference also provided a valuable platform for Ingeus to showcase lessons learnt and practical examples of how it has successfully worked with local authorities to engage referrals and improve lives through its employment services.

At our fringe session, we explored practical strategies to boost engagement and outcomes in employment programmes. The session featured expert insights from two of our team members, Laura Roberts, Head of Delivery, and Paul Russell, Senior Integration Lead, as well as Shadi Brazell, Director at Central London Forward. They discussed how collaboration, innovation, and community listening can drive meaningful change.

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Long-serving Ingeus team member, Alisha, is no stranger to stepping into new realities. With almost 100 books under her belt to date this year, her love of reading regularly whisks her away to gritty New York crime scenes, fantastical realms, and the shrines of ancient emperors.



That free-spirited passion for discovery has served her well in her 13 years at Ingeus, anchored by a consistent drive to help other people, and the reassuring familiarity of a company she joined back in 2012.

"It's good to know who's who, who's good at fixing the printer, and where the sandwich van parks," jokes Alisha, now a Senior Service Manager for one of Ingeus' newest employment contracts in Greater Manchester. "It means I can focus on the job at hand instead of having to absorb things in the periphery."

Yet far from being staid, it's the ever-changing evolution of Ingeus that satisfies Alisha's quest for newness. Now working on the mobilisation of her fifth major employability contract, she has implemented pilot programmes; worked in front line, compliance, and performance management roles; and travelled extensively across the North West. She's made lifelong work friends; got married, moved house, and started a family all in her time with the company.

"I love the familiarity of Ingeus," adds Alisha, who was involved in developing the company's values back in 2016, "but we're a contract business and commissioners and programmes change regularly. There's always something new around the corner. I like change and there's more still to come with new contracts and ways of working."

"I also get to meet some great people – one has become a close friend and was the witness at my wedding. The variety of people I get to work with is eye opening. Teams can have people aged in their 70s to being fresh out of Uni, people who identify differently to me, have disabilities, or difficult past life experiences. It's like the most interesting book ever! It helps broaden my mindset; it's a real win for me."

"I guess I add to that mix by being a working mum. My son's just started school and I've been able to restructure my work hours to allow for a couple of school runs."

Reflecting on her transition from hospitality, to a spell in recruitment, then into the employability sector, Alisha believes being values-driven, with your eye on the ball, and a helping hand for those around you, is the secret to building a successful career at Ingeus:

"I try to make work fun, and a lot goes into building team spirit, but there's generally a spreadsheet behind it! I was an original values ambassador and sit on two of our employee forums. Ingeus has a healthy balance of driving performance while supporting people the right way."

"I've had many standout moments; every time we won a new programme or welcomed a VIP to our centres, but winning a national values award (2016) and being named a Fellow of the Institute of Employability Professionals (2023) are personal highlights. I hope there's many more to come."

SWEET SUCCESS CONTINUES FOR REBECCA

When Rebecca first landed her dream job as a pastry chef with restaurant group The Ivy Collection in 2018, little did she realise that seven years later the role would be even sweeter than it was on the day she started.



Aged just 19 at the time, Rebecca, who has a historic diagnosis of Asperger syndrome, was the youngest pastry chef to be employed at The Ivy Spinningfields in Manchester. She was supported in finding the role by Ingeus' Working Well (Work and Health Programme) team, which offers tailored support to people with disabilities and health conditions who are seeking employment. Now 26, she's still one of the youngest pastry chefs there, but her experience – and the support she receives – continues to grow.

"I received my diagnosis of Asperger syndrome in my early teens when I was still at school," recalls Rebecca. "Getting this job has helped me to challenge the stereotypes that some people have."

"The Head Chef understands that my autism lets me see the finer detail in things, and they've been more than happy to let me try to do things which need that precision. I think seeing the work I do has changed people's minds, realising that anyone can succeed if they have the right support – which is exactly what I've been given."

Initially out of work for more than a year, Rebecca was referred by her local Jobcentre Plus to Working Well (Work and Health Programme), delivered in Rochdale by Ingeus. From there she received help from her specialist key worker, who put together a tailored programme of support, including confidence-building workshops and practice job interviews.

Attention from local media put Rebecca firmly in the spotlight as she started work. Since then, she's also received recognition at the ERSA Employability Awards, where she was highly commended in the Significant Achievement category.

Rebecca recalls, "I've so much to thank Ingeus for – they've built my confidence in so many different ways, especially preparing for interviews, which was really helpful as someone who isn't neurotypical."

"I also would never have imagined I'd have the confidence to appear on television – it was daunting knowing that ITV wanted to interview me, even more

so as I had the Executive Chef in the same room while it was happening. But if I had the chance, I'd do it again!"

While Ingeus helped Rebecca gain confidence in kickstarting her career, she puts much of her continued personal growth down to her colleagues and the support she receives in the workplace.

"My colleagues on the pastry section, and the sous chefs, are very good at reading me – they know when I'm getting overwhelmed by things and understand when I need to take five minutes to calm down. They're also very understanding with smaller things, like how I don't necessarily make eye contact when I'm talking to them."

"The Working Well programme really means a lot to me. It's not only helped me to find my dream job but is inspiring others to realise that things can get done and that you can make something of yourself."

A CHALLENGE WORTH RISING TO

Like all good leaders, Ingeus' Head of Service for CFO Evolution, Owen takes insights and inspirations from everyone around him. His team, family, and knowledge gained during a 21-year people-centred career are instrumental in him leading our successful CFO Evolution justice programmes in the North East, East, and West Midlands. Yet when the chance arose to build his professional credentials in work, he was keen to take his learning to another level: a Senior Leader level 7 apprenticeship, including the Level 7 Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership Practice from the Chartered Management Institute.



"The course was sourced and funded via Ingeus and I was encouraged and supported all the way, especially by my manager," says Owen, who recently gained a Distinction and Chartered Manager status for his considerable efforts. "I received six hours dedicated study time each week during work hours. It was a busy time operationally too. At times it was tough going doing both, but thoroughly enjoyable and a challenge well worth rising to."

As is often the case at Ingeus, it was a team effort that supported Owen's successful completion of some of the modules: "I'm so grateful to colleagues who I went to for advice, or to gather information and evidence for topics outside of my everyday remit," Owen

adds. "HR, finance, marketing, supply chain – it was very wide ranging."

The course took Owen 16 months to complete, balancing his time between work, home, and his lifelong love of Newcastle United. After his steady rise through the ranks at Ingeus helped him find his vocation working on justice programmes, he says the achievement means much more than just an academic qualification:

"I can definitely apply the strategic elements I learnt to my everyday role. Leading with purpose, value-based leadership, leading high performing teams. These all play a part in us achieving great outcomes for the people we're supporting to turn their lives around.

"I never forget that behind the spreadsheets lie real people's lives. Making a positive difference is why I joined Ingeus 12 years ago and hopefully now I can have an even greater impact. I genuinely enjoy my role and get to work with fabulous colleagues who share a passion for helping people. I get a lot of satisfaction from it and it's only right that I invest a lot into it too."

It's set to be a summer of academic triumphs for Owen. Having proved it's never too late to add a new string to his own bow, he'll be celebrating alongside his two daughters; one graduating from her degree and the other receiving her GCSE results. Let's hope Newcastle United's premiership performance is equally impressive!

HELPING OUT WITH LITTER WATCH



The People Team spent a day supporting Litter Watch, a registered charity dedicated to improving the local environment through practical regeneration and educational activities for the people of Sandwell.

The team quite literally dug in to transform Litter Watch's allotment—clearing weeds, tidying the area, and preparing the surroundings for students from Hanbury Primary School to use in September.

A fantastic team effort from everyone who got involved!

Supporting Disability Day 2025

Our Employability Performance Support team had the pleasure of volunteering at Disability Day 2025 at the iconic Kia Oval in London.



This brilliant event celebrates inclusion and the power of sport to bring people together, welcoming young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to enjoy a day packed with accessible, inclusive activities — from wheelchair cricket and boccia to yoga, dance, archery, and more!

Our team threw themselves into the fun, guiding children through activities, making new friends, and even getting their faces painted (with pride!). The laughter, joy, and unforgettable memories made it all worth it.



Getting to know you...



Ian Hawley

Integration Lead for the Restart Scheme in Greater Manchester.

This month we stopped to take a minute to find out more about Ian Hawley and his role as Integration Lead for the Restart Scheme in Greater Manchester.

"I love being an Integration Lead, having worked in employment for

the last 20 years, I love being able to join dots and make provision work across the boroughs. There is so much support available. It is fascinating to learn and share with the business and our partners to better support those participants who need it, and seeing the impact we make to people's lives is so satisfactory. The role can be very reactionary, and there is never one day the same, which really keeps you on your toes."

We asked Ian to answer life's essential 'this or that' questions:

Sunrise or sunset?

Depends on the time of year, sunrise in Summer, Sunsets in Winter.

Fruit or vegetables?

Gotta be Vegetables.

Book or movie?

Book for most, Movie for Marvel :D

City or countryside?

Countryside

Text or call?

Call. It's good to talk

Adventure or relaxation?

Bit of both, but would go more adventure.

Singing or dancing?

I am a DAD so neither.

Cats or dogs?

Fish.

Sweet or savoury?

Savoury. I am sweet enough already (don't throw up!)

Driver or passenger?

Driver. I hate being a passenger.