

Introducing Positive Pathways



Our Youth division has secured an exciting new research project to help young people steer away from crime. Funded by the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) and evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University,

'Positive Pathways' will support 15–17 year olds who have committed low-level criminal offences, or who are at risk of doing so, with seven months of personalised support, including one-to-one mentoring; information, advice and guidance; and a residential experience.

The residential experience will build on our long track record of delivering the National Citizen Service (NCS) to help young people become positive members of society through personal development and skills for work. Positive Pathways will help educate, motivate, and inspire young people participating to change their negative behaviours, get back on track and move towards a safer future.

We're looking for referrals from across the East and West Midlands, so if you know an eligible young person or a potential partner organisation, tell them to visit:

www.ingeus.co.uk/positive-pathways

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Five steps to Mikella's dream job

Ten years of caring for her grandmother, with twin sons to raise and only zero-hour contracts as a means of earning money, Mikella was struggling for the stability that secure work can bring.

Then she met Muhammed, a Restart Scheme Advisor for Ingeus in London. He mapped out a five-step journey which, along the way, used the expertise of the Ingeus team and its specialist partners. It led to the 46-year-old landing her dream job as part of a security team guarding one of the capital's highest profile buildings.

The Restart Scheme offers enhanced job seeking support to people who have been out of work for more than nine months and the Ingeus team made a start on transforming Mikella's future from the moment she walked through the door of its Tower Hamlets centre.



Initial discussions established she had previous stewarding experience and wanted a job in security. Although she had casual work only a full-time post would ease her financial troubles but, to gain security jobs, she needed official accreditation. She was referred to Ingeus training partner the CherryTree Foundation, where she was supported to complete a Level 2 Door Supervision and First Aid course, leading to a vital Security Industry Authority (SIA) badge. A referral to Debt Free Advice gave her support to manage her financial problems. She explains: "I had the threat of bailiffs but Debt Free Advice arranged breathing space for me to deal with my debts until I started earning money."

Once the security job opening was identified, Muhammed worked with Mikella to complete the application. Together they reviewed her experience and transferable skills, creating a personalised supporting statement and tailored answers to job-specific questions. Next stop

was Smart Works London – which supports women with the clothes and skills they need to nail a job. On a video call she was taken around the charity's clothing store and picked out an appropriate outfit, followed by coaching in interview techniques. "It really helped me," says Mikella. "It gave me confidence when I went for the interview."

Armed with that new belief in her own abilities – and looking the part – she was rewarded with a job offer at the end of a day that saw 180 applicants apply for 30 positions.

"When they told me I'd got a job it was overwhelming. I screamed! It's like I'm starting a whole new life. I still can't believe it... I keep pinching myself!"

"I've never earned money like this; I've never had this stability. The benefits are amazing and I see this as a job that will take me through to retirement."

Mikella will start her new career with 10 weeks of training. She says: "I will be grateful to Muhammed

forever. In fact, all those I met at Ingeus are top, top people.”

Muhammed recalls: “Mikella wasn’t in the best place when she first came to us but I am so happy to see how far she has come. She has a whole

new energy and I couldn’t be more pleased to have added to her journey.”

Ingeus Operations Director Amanda adds: “The Restart Scheme in London is only possible through the great

work our partners deliver with us. With organisations such as CherryTree, Debt Free Advice and Smart Works we have created a fantastic network of referral partners helping our participants with all their barriers to work.”

Ingeus awarded London Mayor’s Good Work Standard accreditation

Following last year’s recognition as Partner of the Year for our work with the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter, we are now pleased to be accredited as one of the Mayor’s Good Work Standard employers in London.

This is a great recognition of our commitment to our people, and our continual efforts to provide a working environment where everyone can thrive.

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan introduced the UK’s first Good Work Standard in 2019, providing a pathway for London businesses to gain recognition as good employers.

The Good Work Standard recognises best practice across four pillars: fair pay and conditions, workplace wellbeing, skills and progression and diversity and recruitment. The Mayor’s Good Work Standard sets the benchmark for the best employment standards and helps employers contribute to a fairer and more inclusive London economy. This means an economy that works for all Londoners and means more Londoners can access good jobs.

Mike Collins, Head of Integration for

Ingeus’ in London said: “We are delighted to achieve the Good Work Standard in London, demonstrating our commitment to best employment practices and continually improving the health and wellbeing of our employees. We know this is an important step in attracting and retaining a diverse, talented and successful workforce and we hope to assist other employers in realising these benefits through our employment programmes too.”

Sarah Best, Ingeus’ Head of People, added: “The Good Work Standard accreditation shows our dedication to creating a workplace where everyone feels appreciated and supported. By following high standards for fair pay, employee wellbeing, and professional growth, we’re not only making our team happier and more productive but also helping to build a fairer economy. This award highlights our ongoing efforts to maintaining a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.”

Youth Voice invitation to the West Midlands Youth Movement Campaign

Ingeus' Youth Voice, our group of ambassadors helping shape our business, were invited to attend the West Midlands Youth Movement Campaign Launch event 'My Tomorrow' on the 30th June.

Held at Millenium Point, Positive Youth Foundation hosted the launch event of this exciting new Youth Campaign with support from the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership and the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster.

The evening was filled with inspiring young people performing their spoken word. Sharing their experiences, original songs produced and performed by young people, and the premier of the new film which will lead this new campaign, 'My Tomorrow.'

The event also brought together professionals, decision makers and community leaders to combat negative stereotypes about young people and inspire future positive change.



Rowland values his scrap metal business

A lifetime's experience working with metal has proved to be a cast iron guarantee of success for self-employed scrap dealer, Rowland, from Haywood in Rochdale.

Remarking to his Ingeus key worker, Emil, that, aged 63, all he knew about was welding and the value of metal, sparked a new business idea that, one year on, is going from strength to strength.

The scrap metal merchant turned his hand as a locksmith and worked in engineering before spending 21 years as a welder in the armed forces as part of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. Feeling that severe dyslexia 'held me back all my life', Rowland learnt his trade on the job, able to read, but struggling to write. He never dreamt of being able to legitimately set up a business with the stringent licences involved in metal removal and processing. He also feared any rigid and bureaucratic help to get back to work would clash with his self-confessed no-nonsense approach to life.

"Ex-squaddies don't always fit into civvy street and people in the past have just assumed I'm stupid because words are such a nightmare to me," says Rowland, who was referred to the Working Well Work and Health Programme in Rochdale after being unemployed for three years. Delivered by Ingeus and partners across Greater Manchester on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, it helps people with disabilities and health conditions into work or self-employment.

Rowland needn't have feared Ingeus' help wouldn't suit his needs or personality:

"As soon as Ingeus took me under its wing, it was brilliant. They realised the problems I had and bent over backwards to help me. The whole thing just gelled and worked – I really appreciated someone actually taking the time to listen to me and help me."



Embracing the support on offer, Rowland attended sessions on motivation, wellbeing, CV creation, job searching and interview techniques. When the idea of self-employment struck, Emil sat patiently working through local authority forms with Rowland, gaining identification documentation and security checks, and arranging funding for licences and travel. The business was soon forging ahead!

"I love being the master of my own fate," continues Rowland, who has built up a busy local collection round and has just celebrated his first year in business. "I'm earning a living through my own efforts and am happy doing what I know about."

"Ingeus did a wonderful job, keeping me motivated and offering practical help. Who knew I had a skill I could put to good use after all these years? I guess Emil did!"

Adding to Manchester's greatness!



When Jenny arrived in the UK as an asylum seeker in 2006, his situation was bleak. With no family or friends here, and struggling with language difficulties, Jenny lived homeless in large cities across the country for years, before arriving in Greater Manchester in 2016.

Now declaring it the 'best place in the world' Jenny's outlook has been vastly improved by the help he's received from the Restart Scheme in Bury.

Providing all round support to tackle people's barriers to finding work, the Restart Scheme is delivered by Ingeus across Greater Manchester. Jenny has become a firm favourite with the Bury team with his beaming smile and sense of humour, no matter what life throws at him.

"Even if I had a million pounds, I wouldn't live anywhere else," says Jenny, who fled from the Democratic Republic of Congo and now lives in a Prestwich house share. "Great Manchester! It has welcomed me. First the church and refugee groups, connecting with the African community, and now Oliver and everyone at Ingeus. They have helped me more than a lot."

Following a referral from Jobcentre Plus in August 2023, Jenny met with Restart Advisor, Oliver, and attended 12 appointments in his first four weeks on the programme. Having lost his biometric residence permit while homeless, the first task was to confirm his identity and right to work in the UK. Ingeus funded and successfully applied for a new permit, which Jenny had been unable to navigate himself. Support was given with housing and everyday essentials, phone credit and IT issues. Oliver

helped Jenny craft a CV, and the team trained him on job searching and interview techniques.

Jenny has now completed a security industry course with an Ingeus training partner and will be given help to gain his security licence. Ingeus has provided travel expenses for interviews and appointments, printed documentation and applications, and highlighted relevant vacancies. He is now applying for additional courses, security, and care-based roles and has tackled his first interview with excellent feedback.

"I have appreciated all the wonderful help from everyone at the Bury centre. "From day one, I have felt so welcome in the centre and have received support with many problems. Without this, I would be stuck.

"I am now back to applying for jobs every day and attending my appointments every week. I am more determined than ever to find work. With the help of the Restart Scheme, I now have that chance."

Oliver adds: "There are no words to describe Jenny! He has immense dedication and determination to succeed after some very tough years. He warms the heart of everyone he meets and is so generous in his thanks to the Bury Restart team. I can't wait to see his hard work pay off."

Breaking down barriers – the right way

George has a job, actively volunteers, is studying at the Open University, and is writing a book. He is also a serving prisoner at HMP Sudbury in Derbyshire and is the first person in custody to ever complete the Ingeus Peer Mentor Academy whilst on temporary release.

Breaking new ground and determined to help others turn their lives around, George is swapping an addiction to drugs for an addiction to learning.

“I guess I’ve turned the education thing around,” says George, who left school with no qualifications and struggled to settle into working life after a promising football career stalled. Subsidising a drug habit by turning to dealing when work dried up during Covid, in 2021 George received an eight-year sentence, four to be served in custody.

“It was my first time in trouble, and it was so hard on my family,” recalls George, now 40, who is happily married with two teenage children. “In Bedford jail I started with very basic English and maths – my English teacher was incredible – and something finally clicked. I love learning new things now and am studying a pre-degree course in psychology and counselling.”

During his time at HMP Bedford, George was a Young Adult Ambassador and worked in the reception team, where he unearthed his passion for helping others. Seeing repeat offenders returning time and again to the prison, George wanted to provide practical help and motivation to stop the cycle of reoffending. Thanks to Ingeus’ Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (CRS), he now has that opportunity.

Transferred to HMP Sudbury in 2023 and released on temporary licence to work, volunteer, and visit his family, George spotted details of the Ingeus Peer Mentor Academy. An eight-week structured programme of self-discovery and life-skills, it harnesses the power of lived experiences. The academy also provides an opportunity for participants to gain a Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) Level 2 Award in Understanding Health Improvement.

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Successful graduates, like George, can volunteer in a range of activities with Ingeus, such as a health champion role which includes supporting experienced Ingeus staff to deliver workshops and training to other participants.

Celebrating his achievement at an Ingeus ceremony in February 2024, George's wife and daughter were there to applaud his success.

"I couldn't have done any of this without my family's support," continues George. "I'm so, so thankful for everything I have. I've seen other prisoners struggling with no housing, no family relationships, no basic things. Building your life back from that is so hard. Being a better role model for my kids, a better husband, and putting my mistakes to good use is all I want now.

"The Peer Mentor Academy taught me so much about the impact of my behaviour on others and valuable boundaries to stick to. The other participants were from different

backgrounds, yet we all gelled and learnt from each other. It's put me in a really good place to help at the volunteering sessions; people are intrigued by me as I'm still a serving prisoner."

George now supports people on probation at Ingeus' Midlands centres, volunteering one day a week. He works four paid shifts a week picking and packing orders for an online sales site and has regular family visits. His days at the prison are spent studying, writing a book of his life experiences, and visiting the gym. He's lost more than 12kg in weight since being sentenced and has his sights firmly set on the next chapter of his life:

"I have one year left to serve, with release on temporary licence," concludes George. "Ultimately I want to help young offenders – to stop that life spiral that goes so wrong for people."

Recognising the rapport and empathy that people with lived experience can bring to the benefit of others, 17% of Ingeus' current workforce has directly encountered the criminal justice system.

Championing Pride Month

Our LGBTQIA+ Employee Resource Group (ERG) is a vibrant and inclusive community, dedicated to helping our workplaces be places of acceptance, support, and empowerment for all LGBTQIA+ employees and their allies.

We're proud to stand with the LGBTQIA+ community, not just in June but all year round. Our LGBTQIA+ Champion, Kyla, told us her thoughts on being a part of the LGBTQIA+ network and one piece of advice to help build inclusivity.

"It is so lovely to be a part of the network and meet so many other passionate individuals who all want the same thing as you – equality! It has allowed me to reignite my passion for supporting others, being innovative with my ideas and making sure our service users are all treated fairly."

"When we are proud of our love, like here at Ingeus, we set a standard for how everyone else should be and are a lighthouse for



others to know where they are welcomed to be themselves, freely and safely!”

“One piece of advice is using gender neutral language which is one of the most important things we can do. Something as simple as referring to others as they/them until we are told otherwise can make such a difference to someone who’s pronouns we may not know.”



Charting a new course after the forces



Armed Forces Day is an opportunity to reflect on, and appreciate, the services of those in the armed forces community. Paul Murphy, Team Leader on the Restart Scheme, shares his insight of moving from the forces into a corporate setting.

“I served as a Radio Systems Operator in the Royal Signals for five years. The most impactful experiences were those that exposed me to the real hardships people around the world face daily. This perspective has shaped my outlook on life and instilled in me a deep sense of respect for everyone I meet.

Transitioning from military service to the corporate environment was challenging to begin with. Your colleagues are also your roommates, you eat meals with them, and they’re your friends. This is a big contrast to the corporate world and learning to have boundaries and separation between the two has been an adjustment.

I feel lucky that this is the first civilian role that I’m excited to come into work for. The tools that we have to help people find a job and improve their lives make a real difference. A story that sticks with me is when I helped someone to get a role in October; she was overjoyed, and this meant that

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she could give her children a Christmas to remember. Moments like these mean you finish each day with a real sense of achievement and the knowledge that you have aimed to do your best for people.

The most valuable skills I gained during my service that still prove useful today are:

Adaptability: In any fast-paced workplace, change is the norm. It's crucial to remain calm, think on your feet, and adapt your plans as necessary.

Teamwork: I strive to guide my team members and help them become the best

versions of themselves. After all, "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link".

Integrity: The military instils a high moral code in its personnel. This aligns with Ingeus' value of 'Doing the right thing'. It involves discipline, honesty, and ethical behaviour, such as punctuality, owning up to mistakes, and maintaining transparency with colleagues and service users.

The company is very proactive in upskilling and bettering their employees, whether it's through courses, workshops, or simply asking management a question.

It's important to understand that the military and civilian

workplaces are vastly different. Not everyone will have the same work ethic or focus on the job at hand. They need to understand that to some people, work isn't the be all and end all. It's important to treat everyone as individuals with their own unique perspectives and experiences to share.

For how employers can support their ex-forces employees, recognising and providing support for mental health issues is vital. It's also important to dispel any preconceptions about ex-soldiers. Veterans are generally hardworking, adaptable, and disciplined, making them valuable and loyal employees to the right business."

The best NCS yet: Building skills you simply can't teach in a classroom

Paula, Alternative Learning Course Director at West Suffolk College is an NCS veteran. Having supported students with special educational needs to attend various iterations of National Citizen Service over the past eight years, she says the four-night residential she's just attended in North Norfolk was 'spot on'.

"It was just the right balance of fun and challenge," Paula says. "We crammed a lot into our five days but had time to settle into

being away from home and for the students to develop confidence and new friendships without it becoming overwhelming."

Paula's past experience of NCS went a long way in encouraging colleagues, parents, and carers to allow 19 supported learning students to attend the Live It NCS programme. One of three experiences designed to build skills for life and work for 16 to 18 year-olds, 'Live It' centres on adrenaline-fuelled physical activities and survival skills. It was a lifechanging adventure for the Bury St Edmunds teens, many of whom had never stayed away from home before.

"Many of our supported learning pupils dislike change – new surroundings and people can be worrying," adds Paula. "They specifically need help with their communication and integration skills. Building confidence to take steps out of their comfort zone is vital and I've seen time and again how NCS achieves that. The progress students make is invaluable, you simply can't put a price on it – I would have taken all 100 of our supported students if I'd been able to."

Paula attended the Kingswood West Runton activity centre in the Spring of 2024 and, never expecting her students to do something she wouldn't, wholeheartedly threw herself into

activities including caving, abseiling, rock climbing, cart building, archery, a night walk, and zipwire. It earned her bumps, blisters, and the tremendous respect of her students, one of whom had the revelation that 'teachers are actually normal people!'

"There was a real sense of camaraderie," continues Paula. "We got to know our learners so much better by spending five solid days with them. It deepened our understanding of their challenges and issues, and we saw them flourish in so many new ways. Getting curious, taking ownership, following new rules, finding new friendships that will continue at college and beyond anything, the confidence it built up, were things you simply can't teach in a classroom."

"The centre was comfortable, and the food was good. The activity leaders worked with us to ensure the activities were suitable for our students and gave us time and space to socialise and relax. I would 100% attend Live It again, we've got lots of students interested in a future trip."



Getting to know you...



Alisha Ripley

This month we're getting to know Alisha Ripley, Performance & Delivery Manager for our Work and Health Programme in Greater Manchester.

"I try and explain to people what I do all the time, but with such a varied and ever-evolving role, with a plethora of industry specific acronyms, it can be quite hard to articulate!

Alongside my colleague, we are responsible for the day-to-day operations of all things Work and Health Programme in Greater Manchester. I primarily oversee our Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside centres as well as the Response team for the region. Delivering the contracts on behalf of Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) keeps my life busy and interesting and my diary for the week includes a wide range of activities. Including: being onsite with one of my teams working on all things advisor and participant related; working

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

Sunrise or sunset?

I'd have to say sunrise because I love the longer days once the Winter Solstice hits!

Fruit or vegetables?

Tomatoes – discuss.

Book or movie?

Book.

City or countryside?

Countryside, preferably with a lovely little village containing a bookshop.

Tea or coffee?

Tea

Text or call?

Call at work, text at home.

Summer or winter?

Summer for daylight hours

Playlists or podcasts?

Playlists – especially when driving

Vanilla or chocolate?

Chocolate

Driver or passenger?

Driver – I'm a terrible passenger.

with commissioners to maximise the programme's positive impact on residents; strategic planning with my Head of Delivery, Nic Wood, and CIF (Community Investment Fund) Coordination Manager; staff recruitment; and liaising with our Integration team to produce our Social Value reports.



Get the latest updates and join the conversation