

Derry **Youth & Community** Workshop

ANNUAL REPORT

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2024

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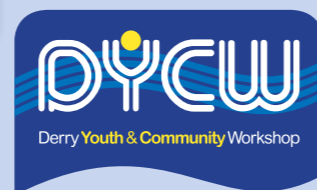


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Introduction

Derry Youth & Community Workshop is a registered charity, founded in 1978 and continues to deliver on its original mission statement:

- **To provide training in and facilitate the development of both personal and vocational skills: thereby allowing the person to reach their full potential and to channel their talents towards enhancing their own lives and the life of the community as a whole.**
- **To enhance the employment prospects of the person.**

Over the past year, Derry Youth & Community Workshop has delivered its services via programmes contracted through the Department for the Economy. These programmes include Skills for Life and Work, Training for Success and Apprenticeship NI.

Derry and Strabane District Council continues to have the highest unemployment and economically inactive rates in Northern Ireland, with the total claimants of working age at 5.0%, as referred to on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency website as of May 2023.

Across Department for the Economy training programmes during 2023/24, DYCW had 24 new clients register for support in developing skills and progressing towards and into employment. 71% of leavers on these programmes have completed a qualification while 64% have progressed into employment or Further Education.

The workshop continues to deliver high quality qualifications, with 80 clients gaining an essential skills qualification, 14 clients gaining vocational qualifications, 47 clients gaining a qualification in employability and personal development. 15 clients have achieved OCNNI Level 1 Award in Personal Success and Well-being qualification.

DFE Quality Improvement Team continues to report that there is sufficient evidence Derry Youth and

Community Workshop is planning effectively for sustained improvement, following submission of Quality Improvement Plan for Department For the Economy (DFE) Skills for Life and Work, Training for Success and Apprenticeship NI programmes.

General Service Delivery Reports for Apprenticeship NI, Training for Success and Skills for Life and Work programmes are completed on a quarterly basis and returned to the Department For the Economy (DFE). Quarterly meetings continue to take place with DFE Contract Manager following submission of reports.

City and Guilds have carried out External Quality Assurance (EQA) visits both remotely and in person over the past 12 months, with all reports reflecting positively on both the training and policy and procedures that are in place.

DYCW successfully tendered and received a £3000 grant from OCN NI to deliver Award in Personal Success and Well-Being as an additional qualification to our Training for Success and Skills for Life and Work participants. We are currently delivering this to our third batch of learners and feedback to date has been excellent.

OCR recently completed a Centre Monitoring Inspection Report with feedback noting that it was an excellent report with no actions or recommendations.

Despite the end of ESF funding, DYCW continues to deliver to services to the unemployed and economically inactive on their journey into and towards employment. These services are totally funded from the Workshops own limited resources.

Outstanding Successes

Derry Youth and Community Workshop recently gained approval from BCS (British Computer Society) to deliver ICDL (International Certification of Digital Literacy), recognised by employers across the globe as the Benchmark in Digital and IT skills. We are delighted that both Gavin Bradley and James Quiqley successfully completed their BCS Level 2 Certificate in IT Users Skills (ICDL Extra) (ITQ).

We would like to congratulate our IT learners who completed an OCNNI Digital Fabrication course while at the same time having a FAB time at the FABLAB suite of the Nerve Centre. The course allowed our learners to use a wide range of innovating technology such as vinyl / laser cutters and 3D printers to create a number of customised products like key rings, phone stands and t-shirts etc. Special thanks to the staff for their hospitality, knowledge and expertise in this area.

Retention of our Skills for Your Work learners has been excellent for the quarter January to March 2024 at 100%. Quarter October to December 2023 saw 100% of Skills for Your Life and Training for Success leavers achieving at least 1 qualification and progressing into employment or further education.

Massive congratulations to Wendy Brown on completion of her NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Hairdressing through the Apprenticeship NI programme in conjunction with Heads & Co Hair Salon.

Derry Youth and Community Workshop have a commitment to Continued Professional Development for all staff. Staff continue to attend training events / meetings suitable to their individual roles and keep up to date with any Department or Awarding body requirements. Staff also attend any job fairs held in Social Security Offices, Regional Colleges and Schools.



Qualification Completions from 01/04/2023

In the past year DYCW clients have achieved a total of 156 certifications over the following areas:

**Essential Skills | Vocational | Skills
Employability Skills | Personal & Social Skills**

Essential Skills

Successful Completers:

Essential Skills – 80 learners completed Essential Skills qualifications. Breakdown of areas completed:

- Literacy – Entry Level 3,
- Communication Levels 1 & 2,
- Numeracy Entry Level 1 & 3,
- Application of Number Levels 1 & 2
- ICT Levels 1 & 2.

Vocational Skills Successful Completers:

Vocational Sections – 14 learners have completed qualifications. Breakdown of areas completed:

- Retail Knowledge Level 1 & 2
- Introduction to Hair and Beauty Sector Level 1
- IT User Skills Level 1 & 2
- Health and Social Care Level 1
- BCS International Certification of Digital Literacy



Employability Skills & Personal & Social Skills Successful Completers:

35 learners gained certifications over both Employability Skills & Personal & Social Skills qualifications.

Personal Success and Well-Being

15 learners gained qualifications in Personal Success and Well-Being

Throughout the year we invited parents / guardians to attend Presentation of Certificates at DYCW with our learners, allowing us to celebrate their achievements and encourage them to continue working well towards achieving their milestones and qualifications.



Report on Work Placements and Employers 2023/24

Lisa McHugh – Work Placement Officer – Derry Youth & Community Workshop

Over the past year (2023/24) and as always, at Derry Youth & Community Workshop, our clients continue to progress well and be our top priority.

This year we found that people were struggling to even make the first steps. They needed encouragement and support from word go, so, we valued each and every person as an individual from the moment they got in touch.

Some of our young people have significant or multiple barriers and need help to overcome challenges. By encouraging and creating a supportive, caring and friendly learning environment we developed the right training plan from soft skills to formal qualifications, work sampling opportunities, guidance and support, confidence building, mentoring in the workplace and guiding them into the right position hopefully to maximise their individual potential.

We have adapted our processes and guided our trainees at a pace that suits their needs which has proved vital when working with such a diverse group.

We worked with Mark McGrath from the Dept. of Education and Co-operation Ireland this year and arranged for our young people to take part in a One Wish Survey. This survey really opened our eyes to the reality of what issues they were facing from: Food Poverty, Mental Health Issues, Addiction and Lack of Rehabilitation Services, Health Crisis and Appointment Waiting Times, Family Suicides, Travellers feeling Judged and Isolated, Loneliness, Lack of Facilities for 15-25 yr olds, Feelings of Worthlessness, Financial Worries to name but a few.

This has given us the opportunity to be the voice for our young people and express and put forward their concerns and feelings of what actually needs addressed in our city to help make a difference in our town and society for the future of our young people.

We have organised informal briefing sessions, (where other service providers and employers are invited) which has given us, the trainees, parents and employers the

opportunity to meet in a relaxed environment and hear all about what is happening, share experiences, review our processes and find out what they want or believe would make for a better future for them.

We like to offer our trainees as broad a range as possible local employers to meet and work with. We continue to strive to do this by keeping up our good relationships, constantly sourcing and organising industry visits where employers get the chance to showcase their business and talk about previous success stories of into employment from training before etc.

Over the past 12 months, all trainees have been given the opportunity to participate and prove themselves in a valuable work experience and where possible, this will hopefully lead to employment.



Employer Testimonials 2023/24

Hegartys Butchers, (25 William Street, L'Derry)
Gary Wade, Manager

"I have been working with DYCW for many years with their retail students. This year in particular I am currently training a great young man in the trade and he proving to be a real asset. I also hope to have space for another trainee soon so hopefully this will be another great year of success for our shop."



Reloved Charity Shop & Tea Rooms (Glendermott Rd, Waterside, L'Derry)
Rhonda Guy, Shop Manager

"As a local Charity Shop and Tea Room in the Waterside we continue work with Derry Youth & Community Workshop. We have two clients on board with us. Two retail students. One in the Charity shop and One in our Tea Rooms. We just love to help local people in our community learn skills to help them achieve their qualifications and personal goals in life. We enjoy new faces and are always happy to help people out"



Enagh Youth Forum, (33 Bawnmore Place, Strathfoyle, L'Derry)
Paul Hughes, Manager

"Love the opportunity to be able to offer students from DYCW the facility of work experience. They can come here to work, train and learn many new skills which helps with their studies and also equips them for a job. It is a great feeling of satisfaction for us as a community organisation and youth facility when helping out a student in all aspects of their life"



Bluebox Broadband, (16, Skeoge Industrial Estate, Beraghmore Rd, L'Derry)
Aisling Gardener, HR Manager

"Great experience being able to offer work placements in IT to students who are studying the subject. To date we have been very successful at training clients and all is working really well. Clients gain lots of new skills which are so beneficial for their qualifications. And employment within our company is always seen as the end goal."



Employer Testimonials 2023/24

Cancer Focus Charity Shop,
(Shipquay Street, L'Derry)
Deborah Tracey, Shop Manager

"For many years we have been working with Derry Youth and agreed to have people on placement in the shop for customer service, retail and hopefully visual merchandising. We are looking forward to training so that hopefully we can all benefit from a skilled work force and employees who are happy at work".



Sainsburys, (Strand Road, L'Derry)
Ruairi Hale, Manager

"We at Sainsburys are so happy to be in a position to offer Work Placements to DYCW. It has been a pleasure to work with all the clients we have had in store to date. Hopefully this continues to progress and has already lead to employment for some".



The Recruitment Co., (Belfast)
Jack Know, Recruitment Consultant

"We have had nothing but success working along side Derry Youth & Community Workshop. We are a Belfast Recruitment Agency with amazing job opportunities within the Northern Ireland Civil Service in Derry and surrounding areas. As we don't base in Derry this is a great two way benefit link for both us and the clients at DYCW. This year again, has proved successful and we are hopeful this will continue"



Working in the Community

Derry Youth and Community Workshop have a wide range of productive links and partnerships with many employers from the public, private and voluntary sectors. In order to do this we have attended Careers Fairs, Industry Visits, International Womens Day event held in the Guildhall and keep connected with the Chamber of Commerce and DEN (Disability Employment Network). These events are attended by local business people in the area and also other similar service providers who like to receive and share information on best practices.

Since the loss of ESF funding the Job Assist (Lemis) project ceased in March 2023. After a number of enquiries from the public and the Jobs and Benefits Offices, DYCW Board of Directors decided that Job Assist would continue to operate on a self funded basis with one Employment Mentor from July 2023. DYCW continue to source future funding opportunities.

DYCW Job Assist centre continues to offer an individualised client centered approach to those clients that need it. Due to the lack of funding the ability to offer free training has ceased. Our Employment Mentor however sources suitable training options elsewhere where possible. We are currently the only referral option for the local Jobs and Benefits Offices, that will help unemployed people with their CVs, Job Search activities and Interview Skills. All other funded projects in the city are only funded to work with those termed as Economically Inactive.

Job Assist has offered a drop in Job Club on a weekly basis, available on Thursday mornings where people can get help with applications, access to a computer if they need it and help with compiling a CV.

From July 2023 to date, Job Assist has registered 85 clients and answered numerous telephone and online queries. Of the 85 clients 49% have successfully entered employment. 10% have taken up training and another 9% had been referred by their Job Coach and only wanted help compiling a CV for their online Universal Credit Journal.

We have a Facebook page with 16,000 followers and post regular employment opportunities and also get requests from a number of local employers to promote their current vacancies.

DYCW staff are currently working with the Womens Centre delivering Essential Skills in Communication and Application of Number 2 mornings a week.

The Core values of DYCW, (Equality, Independence, Respect, Success and Care) in general, give sense to our behaviours and our actions. They represent the way we embrace each others unique talents, value diversity among people, respect each others opinions and points of view. We worked closely as a team and strived to challenge ourselves and consistantly provide a high quality service and culture of excellence to all.



Working with Schools and Colleges

Derry Youth and Community Workshop continue to establish strong links with Schools and Colleges in our local area.

We have delivered presentations to all Year 12 students in both Lisneal College and St Josephs Boys School. This opportunity allowed us to explain all elements of our Skills for Life and Work Programme for any Year 12 students who may not be returning to School / College following GCSE examinations.

Students from Lisneal College, St Brigid's College and EOTAS visited DYCW along with College staff and in some cases parents / guardians attended. Students had a walk around the building and met with staff, this allowed us to showcase the warm and friendly environment we have at the Workshop.

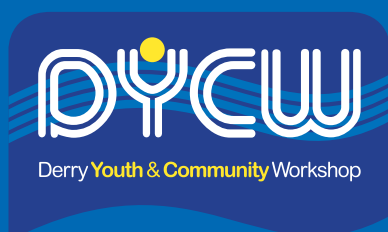
Meetings have also taken place with Head of Careers at St Brigids College and email correspondence has taken place with St Cecelia's College, St Mary's College and Oakgrove Integrated College.

St Columb's College have invited ourselves to attend their Careers Fair later in the year, which we have accepted and look forward to having a stand at this event promoting what opportunities we can offer for our local young people.

DYCW recently attended information event at Ardnashee School and College and also at Reach Across Youth event for all School leavers.

Recruitment numbers have increased by 50% from 2021/22 and retention from recruitment numbers for the Quarter January to March 2024 has been outstanding at 100%.





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