



ChoiceWorks

RELEASE YOUR POTENTIAL

CHOICEWORKS Case STUDIES



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European Social Fund
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future



Glasgow City Council's **ChoiceWorks** Programme supports individuals aged 16 and above, residing in Glasgow, who have a history of offending behaviour and are not in employment, education or training. Through the Programme our teams seek to change the behaviour of participants: to achieve a cessation or significant reduction in offending; to improve mental and physical health. The Programme's support through further learning and employment opportunities reinforces behavioural change. Simply, the Programme turns lives around.

Our highly experienced teams work with individuals who are eligible for the Programme. They provide bespoke case management, intervention, employability and training support not only to address offending behaviour, but also to address barriers which may be viewed as an obstacle to progressing to a positive destination.

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INTERVENTION WORKERS

On receipt of a referral an Intervention Worker will contact the referrer to discuss the individual in more detail. If the person meets the criteria, the Intervention Worker will contact the person to discuss the Programme, go through the registration process and start sessional work.

This stage of the programme looks to discuss and address offending behaviour, establish if the person has any external barriers to progression and ascertain their future vision.



CASE MANAGEMENT WORKERS

The Case Management Workers provide a support service to those on the Programme. They look to address barriers that someone may face in moving forward. Where required this will include engagement with relevant partners to support the individual. Issues such as housing, health and well-being, addictions and debt advice are addressed.



EMPLOYABILITY AND TRAINING OFFICERS

The Employability and Training Officers work with the individual during their programme to understand what they would like to do in the future. This could be by way of providing support with curriculum vitae (CV) preparation, application for funding, training, identification of employment, volunteering or education opportunities.

The officers will also provide ongoing support where someone gains employment, volunteering or further education.

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Working with the **ChoiceWorks** team has massively changed my life, not only in helping me gain employment but also within myself. I struggled with the aftermath of my conviction, something I never thought would happen to someone like me however it did and I had to keep going forward. Having both workers at the end of the phone during the last few months helped my deteriorating mental health as they helped me cope with the situation I was going through and also as support during the pandemic. They helped build my confidence and assisted me in the best way of letting prospective employers know about my conviction and how to deal with my emotions when doing so.

I cannot recommend this programme enough, it taught me that people do make mistakes but that this mistake does not define me as a person. Thanks to the ChoiceWorks workers I am now able to speak about what happened without getting deeply upset and that not everyone is judging me.



Maria

17 February 2021

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JOHN'S STORY

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Case Study - John

John is a 35-year-old male from the south of the city who was referred to **ChoiceWorks** by his Community Payback Supervisor whilst the COVID-19 restrictions were eased slightly and Payback was operational.

John has a history of offending and was given an unpaid work order for his most recent offence. When John first engaged with **ChoiceWorks** we were able to meet face to face with appropriate social distancing and other preventative measures in place. All registration and offence-based inputs were at first carried out within the Payback site, however, as COVID-19 restrictions tightened, we moved to doing telephone sessions to complete his offence-based work.

John was going through a turbulent time when he first engaged with **ChoiceWorks** and was consuming alcohol more frequently and living within homeless accommodation due to a breakdown in the relationship with his mother due to his alcohol consumption. John presented as a likeable individual who was at a point where he realised he had to make changes in his life to have a positive future ahead for himself and his family.

John engaged very well with the intervention worker. He was very open and honest throughout sessions, and identified the changes he felt that he needed to make in order to have a happier, healthier, offence-free life. One of these areas included cutting down on his alcohol consumption which John achieved himself without the support of addiction agencies.

In tandem with the intervention sessions John also worked with the employability officer to identify areas of training he wished to pursue in order to make him more employable. These included Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) training and test, which John successfully passed, and Construction Industry Scaffolders Operator Training Scheme (COTS) training which he also worked hard at and passed. John attended all training sessions with the employability officer including some 4-hour sessions by phone to practice CSCS.

John, whilst working with us, built on his relationship with his mother and moved back home once he had stopped drinking alcohol. Alongside this John was offered a tenancy which he accepted. Our case management worker assisted John to apply to The Scottish Welfare Fund to help to furnish his new flat and was successful in getting most of the items he applied for.

John and his mother unfortunately tested positive for COVID-19 recently which slowed down John's move into his new home but he hopes to have completed the move by the time you read this.

John has the option of starting work in a scaffolding company, once restrictions are eased, and he looks forward to this. Now we continue to check in with John on a weekly basis and continue to look for other possible job opportunities for him. He is also currently practising the DVLA theory test and hopes to sit this, once restrictions are eased.

John has been a pleasure to work with and is an example of how someone can turn their life around to look towards a more positive future even during a pandemic. We continue to wish John the best of luck for the future.

*"It's been amazing working with **ChoiceWorks**, it has had a massive impact on my life for the better, I can't thank you all enough."*



BETH'S STORY

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Case Study - BETH

Beth is a 24-year-old young woman from the south side of Glasgow City. Beth was referred to **ChoiceWorks** by her Unpaid Work officer who felt she would benefit from support to explore her offending behaviour and also to assist with training and employability as Beth was unemployed at the time of referral.

Beth had been convicted of a charge that she picked up whilst under the influence of alcohol and had been given an Unpaid Work Order, which she carried out in a charity shop, and also completed hours with **ChoiceWorks** under the 'other activity' criteria of the Order.

Beth was referred to **ChoiceWorks** in the early part of the pandemic and was one of the first clients to engage with us using remote sessions over the phone where we would normally meet with clients face to face. Beth engaged well with the intervention worker, working on sessions such as victim awareness, responsible behaviour, and positive self-talk. Beth found it difficult reliving the offence of which she had been found guilty and wanted to put it behind her and move on in her life. Although Beth found sessions difficult at times, she worked hard to explore her behavior and to look at ways of avoiding similar situations in the future.

Beth also worked with our training/employability team to look at potential employment opportunities. On initial meetings with Beth she expressed a desire to work in the care sector or to study at college towards a qualification for the care industry. However, due to the nature of the offence Beth had been charged with, there could potentially be difficulties in applying for a care sector post. The employability team encouraged Beth to look at other possible options to fill her time until such times as she could either apply to college or be in a position to apply for a care sector position. Beth was supported to apply for wider ranging positions and worked with the training/employability team to look at interview skills and other skills pertinent to the jobs she was applying for. Beth applied for a job with a high street chain of shops in which she was successful in gaining employment.

At the time of writing Beth continues to be employed but is currently furloughed due to COVID-19 restrictions. She has not picked up any further offences.

*"I am thoroughly enjoying my position and have been advised by my employer that she has been impressed with my standard of work and Customer Service skills. All being well there is the possibility of me undertaking Supervisory Training in the New Year and progressing with my career. It is great to be back in a routine and earning to support myself in a job that I really love. I wouldn't be where I am if I had not joined the **ChoiceWorks** Programme. It's good to know I still have support from Staff at **ChoiceWorks** and can contact them anytime."*



Simon's STORY

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Case Study - Simon

Simon is a 21-year-old male who resides in the south of the city. Simon was referred to **ChoiceWorks** by his Unpaid Work supervisor who felt Simon required assistance to move on from offending behaviour and to fill his time with meaningful activities. Although Simon is not a persistent offender, the convictions he has picked up are of a moderate to serious nature. Prior to being involved in offending behaviour Simon had a promising future as he was on track to become a trainee with a well-known agency, however the agency does not allow anyone who has picked up an offence to apply within a year from conviction. This was devastating for Simon as it has always been the path he hoped to follow.

Simon was issued with a 140-hour Community Payback Order for the offence he was found guilty of committing. He carried out his unpaid work with Glasgow City Council Community Payback Service.

Simon worked with the intervention worker when restrictions of COVID-19 lockdown were initially in place and sessions were carried out over the phone. Simon attended every session and presented as a pleasant young man who deeply regretted being involved in offending behaviour. Offence Based Interventions Sessions were carried out over a 6-week period to look at how Simon had become involved in the offence he had been convicted of, and the impact the sentence was having on his life. Using a Cognitive Behaviour Therapy model, we looked at the choices and consequences of the decisions made by Simon on the lead up to and during the offence and how Simon could try to deal with things differently if a similar situation arose in the future. We also discussed at length how the offence had impacted on Simon and how he could move on from this and continue to pursue his ambition of working in his chosen career, as he can reapply in a year's time to the training programme on which he was previously accepted. Simon was credited with hours towards his Payback Order for working with **ChoiceWorks**, as the Programme falls under the category of 'other activity' for individuals on orders.

Alongside the offence-based work, Simon also worked with the employability/training officer to look at ways to build his CV and make him more attractive to the agency he wishes to work for when he applies again. Simon also worked on practice sessions for Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) training with the employability/training officer and was given support with interview skills and confidence building. Simon also expressed an interest in various other training courses as he felt this was an ideal opportunity to build his CV and complete further training.

While working with Simon an opportunity arose for applications to Action for Children Youthbuild Construction course. Simon was assisted by the employability/training officer to apply for the course and was also coached on interview skills. Simon was successful in gaining a place on the course, which he has now completed. He has passed several construction skills certificates which will assist in gaining employment in the future and also will show the agency he wishes to work for, when he reapplies, that he has used the year to engage in positive activity. Some of the certificates Simon passed include: CSCS, Vehicle Marshalling and Asbestos Awareness. Simon awaits a practical work experience placement as this has been on hold due to the COVID-19 restrictions, but every day is now a step closer to reapplying to his chosen career and we wish him every success for the future.

"I am delighted I was successful in gaining my CSCS and other qualifications so quickly and am glad I was referred to ChoiceWorks as I wouldn't have known about all the different things on offer."



MARIA'S STORY

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Case Study - Maria

Maria is a young woman who resides in the south west area of Glasgow. Maria lives with her young daughter and, until a series of unfortunate events unfolded, she lived a happy, hard-working life providing for the two of them.

Maria is a very articulate young woman with a good level of education, working for many years prior to the current pandemic, working hours that fitted around her caring responsibilities for her daughter. Maria has a good level of social support from both friends and family and is a very capable and well-rounded individual.

Maria was referred to **ChoiceWorks** by her social worker after a night out ended with Maria picking up a charge and conviction that she struggles to comprehend as it was so out of character for her. Alongside this Maria was also made redundant from her job due to the COVID-19 crisis. These events led to Maria suffering from severe anxiety and low mood. The social worker referred her to **ChoiceWorks** as she felt Maria would benefit from some support to help her come to terms with being convicted of an offence and to assist Maria to job search.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions it was agreed the intervention worker would carry out sessions over the phone which Maria agreed to. Maria engaged very well with the intervention worker, being very open and honest. It quickly became clear that the normal sequence of offence-based sessions that **ChoiceWorks** would work through would not be suitable for Maria as she was not a persistent offender and it was important that she was assisted to come to terms with the situation: she had picked up an offence but her life could progress. We adapted the sessions to focus more on coping strategies of dealing with living in the present and looking towards the future through tools such as mindfulness. Maria was struggling to accept that she had been capable of being involved in an offence and the impact this had on her life coupled with the loss of her job was devastating for her. Maria expressed deep regret and shame over what had happened and feared for her future and ability to provide for her daughter. Maria worked tirelessly with the intervention worker, her social worker and sought assistance from her GP with regards to her anxiety.

Alongside this Maria worked with the employability officer to upgrade her CV and to job search with the officer assisting her with job applications and interview skills. Maria applied for several vacancies and was interviewed for several administration positions within agencies. However, the positions Maria applied for required PVG checks to be carried out as they involved working with vulnerable groups. Maria was advised by all the workers she was engaging with to be open and honest about her conviction. Maria let prospective employers know about the charge she had picked up which she found difficult as she was frightened that she would be judged and labelled as a criminal. Maria was offered a full-time administration position with a large agency but had to reject this as it conflicted with her ability to cater for her daughter's needs. Maria was also offered a term-time position with another large agency which she accepted but there were issues relating to disclosure. In order to work with vulnerable groups Maria contacted the Scottish Ministers to ask for her case to be considered. Maria was issued with letters of support from all the workers involved in her case and this resulted in Maria being given permission to work with vulnerable groups.

Maria has now received a March confirmation date for her to commence her new job. Maria is also now less anxious, and her mental health is much improved. Maria is a perfect example of how our lives can change in a split second but that we can use this experience to move on to a positive future. Maria continues to keep in contact with the intervention and employability officer. She is now finished her supervision order with the social worker. The ChoiceWorks team are delighted for Maria and wish her and her daughter all the best for the future.

*"I cannot recommend this programme enough, it taught me that people do mistakes but that this mistake does not define me as a person. Thanks to the **ChoiceWorks** workers I am now able to speak about what happened without getting deeply upset and that not everyone is judging me."*

Want to find out more?

Why not get in contact with our team? We can chat through the programme and discuss your options with the **ChoiceWorks** programme.

Call us on: 0141 276 7566

Text / Whats App: 07879687765

E-mail: CommsafetyChoiceworks@glasgow.gov.uk

Web: www.glasgow.gov.uk/ChoiceWorks



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