

## Talent Match Black Country August 2018 Edition



The project is receiving up to £34 million of funding made up of £17 million European Social Fund and £17 million Youth Employment Initiative, plus match funding of up to £8m from the Big Lottery Fund and funding from partners

Young Adults | Experts Through Experience

Welcome back to Talent Match Black Country's Newsletter!



### Women in Housing Awards - Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018

The Women in Housing Awards recognises and celebrates the achievements of outstanding women working in housing. Now in its sixth year, the awards highlights the amazing work and achievements of the many women, great individuals and high performing teams who make a major contribution.

Black Country Talent Match has been nominated and shortlisted for the **Improving the Lives of Women or Communities Award** - This award recognises outstanding projects which have positively enhanced the lives of women or the wellbeing of communities.

For more information please click the following link <https://www.womeninhousingawards.co.uk/>



### Walsall Update - Tim

Walsall hub has started its 'Landscape and Chill', which is well attended and enjoyed by the mentees. This gives them the time to have a chat while planting and maintaining the Care Home garden.

The men's group has focused on team work this time around. We discuss topics such as, what makes a team, how we work as a team and what roles we play. We have also covered motivation and resilience. Next, we will be doing Food Hygiene level 2 so that the team can work together to cook up a storm!

They have also been to Telford for a walk and talk, allowing people to discuss hard times and good times. It was enjoyed by all.

The WOW (Women of Worth) group had its relaunch on the 7th August. During this session the ladies sat down and discussed what they would like to do while attending the group.

The Hub User group is now going to be happening on the last Friday of the month.

### Wolverhampton Update - Jamie

Wolverhampton Hub has a good feel to it, with people enjoying themselves and getting the most out of their journeys. Mentors are doing their very best to help mentees overcome their barriers and move closer to their desired careers.

Male and female groups are still strong with numbers of around 5-12 mentees attending per session.

Football is now back on which is great news and we could see that with attendance of 25+.

### Central Update - Will

We are giving mentees the ability to influence the way the hub looks, and how it is arranged. This is so it is enjoyable for everyone to come into the hub, whether that be for job applications or social time.

Some things are changing at Central. We have introduced new activities such as "Anime Club" and previous activities such as Football are still well attended.

The biggest change is that I am moving to Sandwell Hub to be their Youth Leader, meaning Rob Ball will be the Youth Leader for Central starting the 3rd September.



The Youth Employment UK workshops have been rolled out now. We have been going to Hub team meetings where we have been given the chance to promote YEUK. After our first trial run we received positive feedback and the young people enjoyed the sessions and thought they benefited from engaging in the session.

What do the Workshops entail?

The workshops are based on more practical than theory. We work side by side with a presentation that we have created whilst running activities alongside. We have no expectations for young people other than show willingness to learn and have an open mind. We will talk to young people about a variety of topics and ask the young people to feedback what they have learnt. Each session is based on one of the following topics:

- Communication
- Team Work and Problem solving
- Self-management
- Self-belief

We run these as individual classes rather than a package across hubs. This means that we can take more time discussing each topic and meeting individual needs of young people.



## Hear from our Job and In Work Support Coaches

### Dudley Update - Nathan

There has been some great progress within the Dudley hub recently, including winning the 'It's a knockout' event hosted by Bilston. The participation from Dudley was fantastic and this has continued within the hub where our mentee's have been developing themselves and moving towards employment.

Ali has gone on to pass his CSCS test which means he can apply for the card which lasts five years.

Rory has completed an excellent training and work placement with the Village hotel which led to a work placement and Cassie has attended an interview and been offered a fantastic job opportunity in the care industry.

Aaron has also done fantastic and gained a job in security and completed his first shift at the Birmingham City game the other day.

Also congratulations to Paul who attended an apprenticeship interview in Birmingham to move closer towards his goal of being an accounting apprentice

The job coach Nathan is also running workshops on a Friday morning which links in with breakfast club so mentees can gain information regarding employment and see the latest job opportunities that Talent Match have.

### Wolverhampton Update - Marie

The Wolverhampton Hub has been real busy this summer. Mentees have been taking part in group activities, such as Mentor/Mentee day where mentors and mentees spend the day taking part in employability games to help boost confidence and thinking strategies.

Mentees were also able to take part in Challenge Academy where mentees had to really push themselves and do things they wouldn't normally take part in. Some mentees even conquered fears of heights and putting their trust in others.

In July mentees took a trip to Birmingham to take up the challenge of the Escape Rooms Live, where mentees had 60 minutes to escape from a locked room, working together as a team to escape before the given time.

Mentees have been doing really well on the job front, we've had a lot of new mentees who have started programme and have been offered jobs, so well done to all mentees.

The hub has been bustling with old and new mentees, and well done to our established mentees for welcoming the newbies and making them feel part of the family.

Job club continues to go from strength to strength giving assistance to mentees, and helping them with CV's, interview techniques, and filling out application forms.  
Keep up the good work Wolves!!!!

### Central Hub Update - Maria

The Central Hub Talent Match cohort continue to forge ahead, making huge progress towards achieving their personal goals.

In July, three of the young adults at Central Hub participated in an introductory session on Customer Service delivered by Max Godridge from Advance UK. They explored different sectors where customer service is important, aspects of good and bad customer service, delivering good customer service and recognising customer requirements. All participants made a valuable contribution to the session and were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of various employment sectors.

Many participants in Talent Match have been involved in training, volunteering and group sessions recently. These achievements have included improving our local environment during a volunteering placement with The Wildlife Trust at Peascroft Wood in Bilston, participating in the Get Up and Go Programme with Heart & Soul Community, getting involved in The Prince' Trust Get into Retail with M & S programme and Health and Safety/CSCS card training at Jobchange.

Congratulations to everyone who has gained employment in the last few months we are proud of you all and wish you well in your roles in warehousing, rail/metro engineering, health and social care, hospitality and more!

### Sandwell Update - Ewen

Tuesdays at Sandwell have just had a makeover! It starts at 9am where mentees can come in and have breakfast together. All options are available from cereal to a greasy fry up! This also gives the mentees an opportunity to eat together, around a table and have conversations.

Breakfast club is then followed by Job Club for 2 hours where their full bellies can engage in assisted job search, CV building, interview practice and career focused discussions with the Job Coach.

After breaking temporarily for lunch, there is Travel Club where mentees who are anxious around travel can transform themselves into confident public transport heroes.

To then conclude the day is Volunteer Club where mentees have an opportunity to gain vital experience by donating their time to local organisations within the Sandwell area.

So, watch out Monday and be scared Wednesday... Tuesdays at Sandwell are here!



## CASE STUDY



Case Study for Cassandra 'Cassie' Hunt and her journey with Big Lottery.  
Marie Gordon (Job Coach)

In April 2018 Cassie, along with 2 other mentees applied for an Internship position as a Funding Assistant for Big Lottery Fund. Cassie had 48 hours to complete her application and send it on 13th April 11:59pm.

Cassie came along to job club with the 2 other mentees, so they could fill out the application form. Cassie started on her application form. During this time Cassie gave a lot of input and advise when it came to helping the other 2 mentees filling out their own application form. Between Cassie, 2 mentees, Shreeca (mentor) and myself, we spent nearly 5 hours completing the application form. The other 2 mentees had finally completed theirs and was happy to submit. At this time Cassie had not finished her application form

and was stuck with the person specification part of form. Cassie spent another 3 hours in the IT room trying to complete this section. Danielle (mentor) and I tried to help, encourage and motivate her to complete the last section of the form, but it seemed that Cassie was starting to get frustrated and wanting to throw the towel in. We sat down and spoke to Cassie, and told her that she could do this, she just needed to give herself a break. We advised her the best thing to do at that moment was stop, take a breather and finish it off the next day. Cassie was reluctant to do this and just wanted to send it in as it was. Cassie was persuaded to go home and chill, then return the next day with a clear head to complete the application form.

Cassie returned the next day bright and early and a bit more positive, she said when she got home she was able to start back on the application form writing out bullet points of what she wanted to say. Cassie, Danielle (mentor) and I spent the next 2 hours completing the rest of the application form. Cassie finally completed and we went through the application form one last time before submitting. We all breathed out a sigh of relief as Cassie pressed the submit button, now we just needed to hold our breath again and wait to see if Cassie's application was successful.

Cassie got a phone call on the 25<sup>th</sup> April from Big Lottery Fund to let her know that her application was a success, and invited her for an interview on 4<sup>th</sup> May. We were all chuffed for Cassie as we knew how stressed she was with filling out the application form and nearly throwing in the towel. Cassie didn't seem as happy as we were. Danielle tried to find out what the problem was but Cassie didn't seem to say. Danielle advised Cassie at their next one 2 one session they would go through and talk about motivations and aspirations within her everyday life and transitioning into employment. Cassie researched Big Lottery Fund and went through what she would wear to the interview.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, day before her interview Cassie came in to the hub aided by crutches, when asked what had happened she said she had a slight fracture, but would still be okay to attend her interview the next day. Cassie spent that day researching Big Lottery Fund and planning what she would wear for the interview.

Cassie attended her interview based in Birmingham City Centre on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May. Cassie returned to the Hub later on that afternoon. When asked how her interview went, Cassie said it went okay but didn't seem positive with her answer.

A few days passed, when Cassie received the call from Big Lottery Fund, they had told Cassie that her interview was very strong, but was unsuccessful at this time. However as they were so impressed, they wanted to offer Cassie another placement within the project.

Cassie has been offered a 3 month paid placement two days a week, based in Sheffield. Cassie would be working at Hallam Sheffield University. Big Lottery Fund will be organising travel and accommodation for Cassie whilst she is in Sheffield.





It's been another busy time for Business Engagement with lots of networking events to meet new employers who want to support Talent Match. Of course, one of our main focuses this quarter was our Progression Bootcamp for job ready young people on Talent Match. (Read more about this event in the next article).

Emma attended a Movement to Work conference in Leicester which urged employers to give hard to engage young people the chance to join the work force. Emma was able to make some very useful contacts. Movement to Work support employers to offer work experience and employability programmes for young people. In the past this has been centered around the London area but Black Country Talent Match are working with Movement to Work to try to open up more opportunities in the Midlands area for our young people. Watch this space!

We forged a link with Signal 107 which saw a young person access some work experience with the team there. Black Country Living Museum have also been working closely with us to provide work experience placements to a number of our young people. It is still all systems go.

Sandwell hub have hosted 2 speed interview days which Business Engagement have supported. Young adults from the hub were able to practice their interview techniques with a variety of different interviewers. We are hoping that other hubs will soon run similar events!

We have had some fantastic success stories from Job coaches. Some fantastic opportunities have been secured with young people coming on in leaps and bounds.

We are looking forward to planning another Progression Bootcamp for early next year as well as a number of other activities to support young people who are coming to the end of their Talent Match journey... we will keep you posted!



# PROGRESSION BOOTCAMP



On the 17th July 2018 at Dudley College, the Business Engagement Advisors Emma and Sophie, joined forces with Alison the Preferred Supplier Network Connector, to host a Progression Bootcamp.

The overall aim of the event was to enable young adults off project who are deemed work ready, to be given that extra push and motivation to move closer to the labour market.

The participants were split into 3 groups and rotated round to each of the different 'zones' throughout the day.

These zones included the -

### **Local Employer/Training Provider Networking session**

Selected Training Providers from the Preferred Supplier Network and local Employers were invited to showcase their opportunities with our Mentees. This was to enable young people to have raised aspirations and knowledge of local training and employment opportunities.

### **CV creation and Social Networking workshop**

Here participants discussed the layout of CV's and what should be included. Along with learning about how online Social Networking in some cases can impact job attainment, if potential employers search for a candidate on social media. Examples included having sensible email addresses, ensuring profiles have efficient privacy settings and any public content is appropriate i.e profile pictures.

### **Self-Presentation and Appearance workshop**

This workshop discussed how self presentation is very important when attending interviews and entering the workplace. Personal hygiene and smart appearance was discussed, along with where to buy hygiene products on a budget.

At the end of the event, those that attended each workshop got entered into a prize draw to win a brand new laptop! Congratulations to the Walsall Mentee who won this!  
Everyone ended the day by receiving a goodie bag of personal hygiene products ranging from shower gel and hair brushes through to washing detergent, not to forget the Lindt chocolate!

We received positive feedback from the participants, allowing scope for another event in the future. Watch this space!

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## WE ARE TALENT MATCH, THIS IS OUR STORY

### Have you seen our latest Annual Report?

More case studies, more updates and more successes!

[Click here to read!](#)

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## PREFERRED SUPPLIER NETWORK



During July, [Advance UK](#) kindly ran a free workshop to promote their new Preferred Supplier Network support offers. These offers compliment work already carried out by our Job Coaches as they build on this by offering specialised or intensive support for those with Learning Difficulties or other additional needs.

The session selected out of the new employability offers focused on Customer Service and was adapted for those with learning difficulties. The mentees who attended all interacted positively with the trainer, Max. Max was patient and engaging with each mentee, in a way that suited their individual needs. This allowed those who attended to have increased confidence to talk within a group situation and gain

further insight into Customer Service. Along with knowing what skill set may be required for those wishing to work in this sector.



Life is busy as usual at the hub.

As part of our flower arranging group on Mondays, we have developed a small garden area at the entrance to the hub. We have had some furniture and planters donated and it certainly looks very colourful. The peppers and tomatoes are coming on a treat too!

Due to our funding requirements we have been sad to see staff leave, and we wish them all the best with their future ventures. We have also seen a number of our Mentees come to the end of their journey with us, and again wish them all the best as they move forward with their lives.

We have one Mentee who has been volunteering in South Africa for a year and she is due to return home in September. We look forward to catching up and hearing about her adventures. Similarly, her sister is working at Camp America over the summer and due to return at a similar time. They've both taken volunteering to another level, and I think for Mentees across the Talent Match cohort, it shows it is something that is open to everyone – so think BIG, and you can do it.

We have a significant number of Mentees enrolling on College courses ready to begin in September – these include Paul enrolling on a catering course at Wolverhampton College, David on an access course at Halesowen College and Eleanor a L3 teacher training course at Dudley, to name a few. Chloe has completed her Level 2 Counselling course. Sean is completing a work placement at M&S, Rory has successfully completed three training programmes and a work placement at Costa, Christina is volunteering at Top Church doing admin and Jenny has completed summer volunteering at the Black Country Museum dressed as a 'land girl'.

Big shout out to Cassie who has gained employment in the care industry, and Ryan who has gained employment at Aldi.



The Talent Match Central Hub, this year in partnership with [HeadStart](#), organised yet another 'It's a Knockout' event. Hosted at the South Wolverhampton and Bilston Academy. With an amazing turnout from our hubs and HeadStart clients alike, it was set to be another great day on the inflatable obstacle course.

Participants and spectators got to tuck into a curry and ice cream from the food trucks. Everyone was in high spirits whether taking part, cheering from the sidelines or kicking a football round on the field.

Well done to everyone who took part in the day and supported their peers and Mentors. Not to forget a big congratulations to the Dudley Hub who won the overall day receiving a trophy. Dudley Hub's closed Facebook page lit up with cheerful comments after the event, with one mentee stating it was 'the best day!'



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**WEDNESDAY 10TH OCTOBER**

**5:30PM START  
MOLINEUX STADIUM, WOLVERHAMPTON**

## ANNUAL AWARDS & CELEBRATION - 10<sup>th</sup> October

We are pleased to announce registration is now open for the Talent Match Annual Awards and Celebration. Please click the following link to register your attendance [TMBC18awards.eventreference.com](https://tmbc18awards.eventreference.com)

The 2018 Awards evening is the perfect occasion to **'Celebrate Success'** at Talent Match Black Country, as the project is moving forward with a more focused approach. It has been the journey of a lifetime for many over the past 5 years and we plan to make this evening one to remember!

On Wednesday 10 October we are returning to the WV1 Restaurant of Molineux Stadium to celebrate once again the successful work carried out in the Black Country. Our young people, mentors, partners and employers deserve to be recognised and applauded for their hard work, passion and commitment – they are at the heart of our project! Look forward to seeing you there.



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Next Newsletter -  
November 2018

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