18 Works

Join Prospects campaign to recruit local young people

“They deliver the services that they say they will, and the outcomes they promise.”

Tackling youth unemployment in West Yorkshire

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Welcome to Prospects in Partnership for Yorkshire and the Humber

Welcome to this special issue of Prospects in Partnership which focuses on our work in Yorkshire and the Humber. The region is key for Prospects. We work in partnership with government, local authorities, schools and other organisations to provide services for people of all ages; from children in the earliest years of education, families and young people to adults. We have more than 200 Prospects employees based locally.

The Prospects Group is an employee owned mutual, providing a wide range of education, employment and training services in the UK and internationally. At the heart of what we do is the drive to improve the life chances, skills and aspirations of everyone we support.

In Calderdale, on behalf of the council, we manage the 16+ Leaving Care Service which supports young people, who may not have had the best start in life, with their preparation for transition from care to independent living. You can read about this service and the difference it makes to young people in this issue of Prospects in Partnership.

Another way we work with young people is helping them find and sustain a career that suits them. In addition to the various services we run including the Youth Contract, Connexions and support contracts for Wakefield and Bradford Council, we have launched the 18 Works campaign to demonstrate the value of employing young people to employers. There is more about the campaign and how you can get involved in this issue. We want employers, local authorities and other organisations to join the campaign and find out why 90% of companies which have taken on a young person said it had been a positive experience for their business.

It’s not just young people who need help with careers; adults often need support too. The National Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance for jobseekers and those in work aged 19 and older to make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. As part of Careers Yorkshire and the Humber, Prospects provides the service in South Yorkshire as well as prisons across the region. There is more about these services in this issue.

I hope you enjoy reading about our work in the region in this issue of Prospects in Partnership. We are determined to make a difference in the region and improve the opportunities for those we support.

I would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to know more about Prospects and how we could partner with your organisation.

All best wishes,

Nick Bell
Chief Executive, Prospects

Prospects for excellence and value

The Prospects Group is a dynamic and enterprising organisation providing a wide range of education, employment and training services in the UK and internationally. At the heart of what we do is the drive to improve the life chances, skills and aspirations of everyone we support. Each year we touch the lives of more than a million people through our extensive range of high quality services. The Prospects Group has an annual turnover in excess of £80million and employs more than 1,400 skilled and professional staff.

We work in partnership with Government departments, local authorities and other organisations. Prospects provides a number of Government flagship programmes including:

- Work Programme which helps longer-term unemployed people back to work, as prime contractor in the South West and a major subcontractor in London and Bristol
- National Careers Service offering advice on learning and work as prime contractor in London, South West and West Midlands. In addition Prospects is a partner in Careers Yorkshire and the Humber
- Youth Contract, support for 16-17 year old NEET young people in London, the West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber
- Ofsted Early Years Inspection Services across the Midlands and North of England

For more information please visit www.prospects.co.uk

Prospects welcomes comments or suggestions on any stories covered, or ideas for future content. Please contact: jayne.runacres@prospects.co.uk

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18 Works is Prospects’ new, exciting campaign to encourage companies in Yorkshire and the Humber to recruit local young people. More than one in five young people in the region aged 18–24 are unemployed (ONS) and yet in the same region, nearly 10% of vacancies in administration and just over 8% of caring roles remained unfilled last year, according to the National Careers Service.

Local companies could benefit greatly from recruiting young Yorkshire talent, many of whom are highly skilled, qualified and want to work and be successful. More than half of 18–24 year olds surveyed in a recent poll by YouGov said that a career was their number one priority. Only a quarter of companies employ an 18–24 year old, according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), but 90% of companies which did said it had been a positive experience for their business. 92% of employers said this was due to the young person’s ability to be moulded; a further 30% said it was because of their enthusiasm, and 20% said the young person’s willingness to learn was the biggest factor of success. The CIPD has linked employing young people with a company’s ability to grow, saying:

“If you actively engage with young people now, you can start to build a strong pipeline of future talent, which can help put you ahead of your competitors and ultimately secure your future growth.”

Jenny Cryer, Prospects Regional Operations Director

18 Works is a free service linking employers who have vacancies with young people looking for work. Employers simply submit their vacancies to the 18 Works website which will then be promoted to young people across the region through our network of schools, universities and other organisations working with young people. Using the website and social media, Prospects will also alert young people to new vacancies.

“Doing the right thing for our region’s young people is also the right thing for the region’s businesses — this is a classic win-win.”

Jenny Cryer, Prospects Regional Operations Director
Business leaders are also encouraging employers to take on young people — Karren Brady, CBE, Business Woman and Vice-Chairman of West Ham FC, in a Huffington Post article ‘Businesses Can Help Themselves by Helping Young People’ (October 2013) said: “What we need is relatively simple: businesses to recognise that those under 25 could become a talent pool that will help them grow but they have an active role to play in helping them understand and then develop the skills that are needed.” She added, “As I have found from offering work experience at West Ham, businesses also learn from determined, passionate young people.”

Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group said, “In my experience, many young people have in them an entrepreneurial spirit and they display exceptional drive, but each of them will need support on their journey. Large enterprises and government can and must do more to help these young entrepreneurs.” He added, “The future of our young people is not something that can be addressed by government alone; it will also require leaders in the business sector to play their role to drive the change we need” from The Independent, ‘We need a nation of young entrepreneurs’ (November 2011).

Jenny Cryer, Prospects Regional Operations Director, said, “18 Works is about connecting untapped young talent in Yorkshire and the Humber with the region’s employers. Doing the right thing for our region’s young people is also the right thing for the region’s businesses — this is a classic win-win.”

Join this exciting campaign — visit www.18works.co.uk or contact Jenny on 01274 377800 or jenny.cryer@prospects.co.uk
It seems not a week goes by without the issue of young people struggling to find work making the news. Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) affect communities across the UK, the economy and, of course, themselves. In a survey last year by Young Lives — the international study of childhood poverty — young people who are NEET said they did not feel “part of society”.

Prospects has worked with young people for more than 20 years helping them get their first job, supporting them to find the training course that’s right for them or advising them on staying longer in education. Prospects has raised the aspirations of young people and supported them to overcome barriers to their future careers.

Sanna says: “While I was at school in year 12, Connexions came in and ran group sessions on our options for the future. At the time I was planning to go on to study art but really I had no idea what I was going to do. In year 13 I started one to one sessions with an adviser at the Bradford Connexions Centre and through that I now know what I want to do and how to get there. I’m currently studying health and social care at college as a foundation before I go to university next year. My adviser at Connexions also helped me to get voluntary work at my local hospital, from October for six months I will be spending a day a week working in different departments. Connexions are a great help. If it wasn’t for them I wouldn’t have my career and I would probably be sitting at home doing nothing.”

Prospects brings its experience of working with young people to its work in West Yorkshire. We have reduced NEET levels in Bradford and Wakefield, by working in partnership with the councils to deliver the Connexions service, the devolved Youth Contract and Talent Match. Wakefield Council say of Prospects: “The performance is clearly excellent. They deliver the services that they say they will, and the outcomes they promise.” Prospects knows from experience that working in partnership achieves the best results. In three years the NEET level has dropped from 8.7% to 5.4% in Bradford and in Wakefield from 7.5 to 5.4% in just over a year.

Our Youth Contract work has resulted in 75% of participants in Bradford and 65% in Wakefield getting into sustained positive outcomes. Through Youth Contract Prospects has helped more than 500 16 and 17 year olds in the two districts, who were unemployed and risked disengaging completely with society, into sustained work, training or education. We also provide the Youth Contract in the remaining Yorkshire and the Humber local authorities. Through our Connexions work we support more than 10,000 young people every year to make plans and to move into education, employment and/or training.

Prospects Advisers are experienced, committed and passionate about their work. This is what Julie Forshaw, a Connexions Early Help Personal Adviser in Bradford, said:

“I work in the Bradford Pupil Referral Unit with some of the city’s most troubled young people, many of whom live in very challenging circumstances. At the moment only five young people from my caseload of 45, who left school this summer are NEET. I work with young people in their education setting and their home. I listen to them, help them plan and offer practical support. Each young person is different so my role with them changes; sometimes it’s visiting to make sure they are out of bed, other times it’s supporting them to find a training course and stay on it. I work closely with the young person’s family as well as my colleagues on other programmes such as the Troubled Families and Youth Contract to make sure that we provide joined up support which engages. The biggest sign of success is when the young person I have been working with no longer needs my support!”

Find out more about Prospects work with young people on behalf of government, local authorities and schools on our website: www.prospects.co.uk/Helpingyoungpeopleintowardandtraining
Prospects manages the 16+ Leaving Care Service for Calderdale Council. Called the “Pathway Service” the team support all young people, aged 16 and older who are Looked After and Care Leavers in the district. Our team of nine includes social workers and Pathway Advisers who support young people on their journey to independence, remaining in contact with each of them until they are 21 or if they are in education — which many are — to their 25th birthday. We recognise that each young person who comes to the service is different so we provide personalised support which meets their individual needs, enabling them to move successfully into adulthood.

Jenny Cryer, Prospects Regional Operations Director, said, “To be really effective, the most important element of our service is the quality of the relationship that our staff build with each young person. We have a stable staff team who have known many of our young people for a considerable period of time. The strong, consistent relationships translate into the outcomes that the young people achieve.”

While stability in relationships between our staff and the care leavers is important, one of the key features of social work is the need to be flexible. Colette Evans, social worker for the Pathway Service in Calderdale, talks about the variety of her role: “No two days are the same. One day I can be in London visiting a young person at LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art), the next doing a Stat Visit to a young person struggling with substance misuse. In my job I work alongside foster carers, other social workers from the local authority, health workers, the Police and Youth Offending Team, teachers and schools as well as with other organisations which can provide care support packages to help my young people; for example, with accommodation. At times the job can be very frustrating and moving a young person forward seems almost impossible, but at other times young people make fantastic progress and it all becomes worthwhile.”

Service innovation is driven by partnership working for example, Prospects is currently working with the Care Leavers’ Association on a Cabinet Office funded project. GOAL — Getting On And Living is an exciting new opportunity for young care leavers to take responsibility for running a training course and providing mentoring for other care leavers.

Carrie Wilson, Young People’s Project Coordinator for the Care Leavers’ Association, explained: “Our mentors run a 10 module training course which covers practical subjects such as managing money, motivation and responsibility along with providing an opportunity for the mentors to get to know the young people. The project is flexible, user led and delivered from a care leaver’s perspective. Being run by young people who have left care it means the care leavers can really identify with the course leaders and be open and honest. It’s a way of working without some of the barriers which professionals are required to have.”

GOAL will start in Calderdale with four mentors who will run the course and mentor nine care leavers. The aim is for GOAL to be self-generating so that care leavers who are mentored now go on to mentor new care leavers in the future with those new care leavers becoming trainers and mentors to the next generation. Carrie adds: “The project enables those who have left care to give something back.”

Goal is being run in five local authorities to start with and is being independently evaluated. It is hoped it will be available to more local authorities soon.

Visit www.prospects.co.uk/CalderdaleLeavingCareService to find out more about the service.
The new National Careers Service contracts have just begun. As part of the Careers Yorkshire and the Humber consortium Prospects continues to provide the National Careers Service in South Yorkshire. Careers Yorkshire and the Humber is rated by Ofsted as good. Since August 2010 the consortium has helped more than 265,000 individuals and has a customer satisfaction rate of 99.87%.

Prospects will also deliver the new contracts in three others areas. Prospects has retained the London contract and also expanded its coverage to include provision of the service in South West and West Midlands, all as prime contractor.

The National Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance for jobseekers and those in work aged 19 and older to make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The new delivery model will continue to be provided by qualified careers advisers and will embrace digital technology alongside the familiar face to face service.

Ray Auvray, Chairman of Prospects, said: "As the leading provider of careers information, advice and guidance across England, we know how important quality, impartial careers advice is for helping people to find fulfilling jobs which offer the potential to progress to become long-term careers. We look forward to supporting more people into work and learning through the National Careers Service."

More than advice for Oliver

Oliver has Autism and during previous roles had found the expectations of a working environment, in terms of social interaction, challenging although he generally found he could do the work tasks very well.

Oliver was referred by his Work Choice adviser to the National Careers Service, which is provide by Prospects in South Yorkshire, to discuss the possibility of a placement as a trainee data in putter. To support him in his role, Prospects allocated a member of staff to be Oliver's mentor and briefed the team to ensure they did not put pressure on Oliver to take part in social activities. Despite his previous experience in other work places Oliver has integrated well into the team. So much so that he now has a temporary contract with Prospects and continues to develop. He works as part of the Management Information team tracking National Careers Service customers and the difference the service has made to their working lives.

Linda Orridge, Prospects Operations Manager, said: "Oliver has settled in well and was able to undertake the data inputting work with accuracy and eventually within good timescales. We have given him support to undertake other administration tasks within his capabilities. I’m pleased Oliver has been able to continue working with us as it is a pleasure to have him on the team."
Prospects work, on behalf of the National Careers Service In Custody, was recently praised by Ofsted, as part of the inspection by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) at HMP Askham Grange. The Ofsted inspector said: “Well done and congratulations, in prisons we do not often see the level of service you provide, which has hugely contributed to the overall grading of outstanding!” Prison staff also thanked the Prospects team for their contribution.

In addition to being praised by Ofsted, the team in Yorkshire and the Humber have consistently overachieved on their targets and our advisers’ efforts are also recognised by customers.

National Careers Service customers in Yorkshire and the Humber were recently asked to nominate an adviser they felt had gone above and beyond expectations in making a positive difference to them for the Extra Mile Award. The winner was chosen by a judging panel comprised of the Careers Yorkshire and the Humber executive chair, and the management team.

Melody Duke, Prospects employee and National Careers Service In Custody Adviser, was crowned the winner. On accepting her award Melody said: “It’s so nice to be recognised for an award, doing a job I absolutely love.”

Due to the volume of positive client feedback it was also decided to name a runner up, who was also a Prospects employee, Sharon Beardon, National Careers Service Adviser. Sharon said: “Thank you to everyone who nominated me and acknowledged my efforts, this means a lot to me and I will continue to do my best for every client I advise.”

Prospects plays a vital role in helping to reduce reoffending as a one of the largest providers of multi-disciplinary careers information services in the community and in custody. We are one of the largest providers of custodial careers information and advice in the UK, delivering the National Careers Service In Custody to offenders in prisons across Yorkshire and the Humber, London, West Midlands and South West.

The service helps offenders in the resettlement phase to prepare for release and supports them ‘through the gate’ to move into training, learning and jobs, thus ending the reoffending cycle. Prospects works with offenders to tackle their barriers to employment by helping offenders assess their skills, identify learning needs and set medium and long-term career goals. Prospects works closely with other agencies, the voluntary sector and Jobcentre Plus to ensure offenders can access additional support.

To find out more about the National Careers Service In Custody Offer in Yorkshire and the Humber please contact Mel Wheeler on Melanie.Wheeler@Prospects.co.uk
Prospects helps reduce NEETs in Yorkshire and the Humber through the Youth Contract

Now in its second year, the impact of Youth Contract support on 16/17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is evident, with many local authorities attributing their reduction in NEETs to it.

Delivered through a network of subcontractors, dedicated mentoring is offered to NEET young people, aged 16/17 who achieved one or no GCSEs at A*–C grade, and/or care leavers or are completing Community Sentences, supporting them to reengage in learning and sustain it for a minimum of six months.

To date 3,500 eligible young people have enrolled (1,000+ are 2014 school leavers who are being supported to re-engage). Of the total 1,700 have re-engaged in learning with 650 having sustained for six months. 1,960 young people are currently receiving mentoring support to re-engage in learning or sustain.

Louise Casey congratulates Prospects Key Worker

During a recent visit to Wakefield, Louise Casey, Director General of Troubled Families, spent the day shadowing a Prospects colleague, Joy Storey, who is a Troubled Families Key Worker. Louise was extremely positive about what she saw and wrote a postcard to the family she visited with Joy to say:

“Thanks so much for meeting me & Joe last week. You’ve done brilliantly — keep it up. You’re right Joy is an angel. All the best Louise.”

Prospects appoints new Director of Offender Management

Prospects has appointed Victoria Blakeman, former International Counter-terrorism Consultant and Head of UK Corrections and Detentions in Afghanistan, to develop the strategic direction of its offender management services.

In her previous role, Victoria advised the UK Government and UN on the rehabilitation of offenders and management of prison populations in places such as Somalia, Nigeria, Bangladesh and Tajikistan. Victoria was involved in the construction and restructure of management at Lashkar Gar prison in Afghanistan. Victoria has previously worked in prison management in the UK, where she was Acting Governor.

Prospects supports offenders in 13 secure establishments in Yorkshire and the Humber and plays a vital role in the prevention of reoffending by providing careers information, advice and guidance services as part of resettlement phase to prepare for release and supports them ‘through the gate’.

Working with the voluntary and community sector

Prospects has strong relationships with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in West Yorkshire, working with them on a number of projects. Our aims — better outcomes for young people — are the same and combining the strengths of the different organisations allows us to come up with the best models of working. In Wakefield, Prospects works with Nova, Barnardos and Mencap on the delivery of Youth Contract and in Bradford our Youth Contract workers are based with Centre Point, Brathay and BYDP. The most recent partnership has come about as a result of Prospects delivering Talent Match for Your Consortium in both Bradford and Wakefield.
The Ofsted framework 2012 requires inspectors to devote greater time to lesson observation, and speaking to pupils and parents. The Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA) is a national award that strengthens and enhances educational settings’ work with parents and carers. LPPA provides evidence of a sustained approach to parental engagement, which meets Ofsted criteria, and ensures parents have a positive experience of the school, while encouraging higher achievement of pupils.

Prospects has developed an innovative set of prezi presentations, workshop materials and one to one resources to support the delivery of a more innovative approach to Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG).

Flexible in approach and using a clear framework for action, relevant to each school or educational setting, LPPA helps identify strengths as well as areas for development. The results include improving two-way communication, promoting a positive learning environment, improving attendance, punctuality, behaviour and pupil progress.

We are delighted to receive the Award and are proud to say that it signifies the hard work and dedication of staff, governors and parents working together for a better education for our children.”

Headteacher, Dearne Highgate Primary School

Prospects Events organise careers and skills exhibitions around the UK. In Yorkshire and the Humber the team organises Skills Yorkshire and the Humber, the region’s biggest skills and careers event for 15–24 year olds. Skills Yorkshire and the Humber inspires, motivates and thrills visitors with more than 50 organisations providing interactive features from every major career sector imaginable. Skills Yorkshire and the Humber takes place each October at Centenary Pavilion, Leeds Utd FC and is free to attend.

Find out more at: www.skillyh.co.uk.

For those advising young people and adults on the opportunities available in their working life, the National Career Guidance Show North gives career guidance professionals a chance to network and learn with like-minded colleagues; gain valuable insights and CPD at expert seminars and meet relevant and helpful exhibiting organisations. The National Career Guidance Show North takes place on 26 February 2015 at Centenary Pavilion, Leeds Utd FC and is free to attend.

Find out more by visiting: www.nationalcareerguidanceshow.com
Prospects delivers the largest early years Ofsted inspection service in England, inspecting more than 44,000 early years and child care providers. In September 2010, Prospects began to deliver the contract covering the Midlands and the North of England. Nearly 400 inspectors check that early years and child care providers understand and meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This includes the extent to which children’s needs are identified and met through teaching, safeguarding arrangements and arrangements for partnership working with parents and carers. In addition, our inspectors carry out other activities and events, including meeting with new applicants seeking Ofsted registration and making recommendations as to their suitability to become early years and childcare providers.

Find out more at: www.prospects.co.uk/WhatWeDo/EarlyYearsFamilies

Early Help — prevention is better than cure

Prospects has developed a strong track record in the delivery of services within the Early Help Offer in West Yorkshire. We have a particular expertise around the delivery of support for teenagers and families. Prospects has brought together funding streams for Connexions, Youth Contract, Troubled Families and Talent Match to offer a ‘net of support’ around young people and families in need. We achieve positive outcomes through the good use of assessment tools, strong partnership work and support to individuals and families by a key worker or personal adviser.

Jenny Cryer, Regional Operations Director, said: “Early Help is about very practical interventions early in the life of the problem. Our teams work with young people and families before an issue escalates, helping to prevent referral to expensive specialist services. We get alongside families and individuals and help them to find solutions to their own problems before they become overwhelming”.

Inspiring resources for career guidance

Following recent changes to Statutory Guidance and recommendations from Ofsted, schools must ensure that they deliver independent careers guidance that must be impartial and include a range of pathways. With this in mind, Prospects’ latest publications have been developed to fit perfectly to enable you to meet this requirement.

For further information, please call our friendly team on 01229 814840 or take a look at our website www.prospectseducationresources.co.uk