Apex Scotland, Stranraer

Apex Scotland are a Scottish Charity who work with ex-offenders and young people at risk of offending. They provide a range of services aimed at helping young people aged 16 and over who have been excluded from school or have possibly not engaged, to access a service which will help with lifeskills and improve the opportunities open to them.

Callum was employed as an Administration Assistant for Apex Scotland in Stranraer through Community Jobs Scotland. He initially had responsibility for just reception and administration tasks but started to display an aptitude for working with clients – particularly relating to the needle exchange project that was being delivered to service users. Callum received additional training relating to this and his work allowed them to start operating an out of hours service one evening a week. Since then the needle exchange has steadily grown from approximately 100 needles being given out each month to 800-900 a month now.

Due to way Callum deals with the needle exchange clients they feel confident about using the service and know it will be confidential. This has a knock on effect on the local community of Stranraer in terms of harm reduction for individuals and a safer environment for the community as a whole.

Callum has also helped develop a new disclosure service which Apex deliver for ex-offenders accessing Jobcentre Plus services across Stranraer and Ayrshire. He has taken responsibility for processing new referrals, allocating appointments and producing monthly reports.

At the end of his CJS contract, Callum was kept on full-time in a new role at Apex as a Personal Development Mentor.

Callum says:
“Community Jobs Scotland funding offered me an invaluable opportunity to work and gain experience. I was happy to find that my role wasn’t limited to admin, I was able to do some client work and found that I liked the challenge that this kind of work presented. I very much enjoy working with Apex Scotland and I was lucky enough to be offered a full time position when my CJS contract came to an end. In the current job market gaining a first step on the ladder is incredibly important and I am grateful to have been given this opportunity. I feel that I have improved a lot during my time at Apex and hope to continue to do so with my new role.”

“Mhari” – an Apex service user – says:
“I met Callum on my first day at Apex. He was really friendly and helped me sort out stuff with my accommodation and things like that. He was always helpful and sorted out a place at college which is what I’m doing now. I’m very grateful to him and Apex for the support they gave me.”

Vikki Binnie, Apex Scotland Service Development Manager says:
“Having Callum on board has been great for the team in Stranraer and Apex as a whole. We know we can rely on him to get on with the task at hand and get the job done. Callum manages to strike the balance between being professional when dealing with other agencies and being friendly and approachable with the clients. It’s been exciting to see his confidence grow and see him make the transition from administrator to Personal Development Mentor. Well done Callum!”