

# PeoplePlus Evaluation - Self-employment Pilot: HMP Low Moss



# About PeoplePlus

PeoplePlus has combined our **unique experience and expertise** garnered from:

- Delivering the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) flagship NEA programme, where we have helped **over 33,500** unemployed people explore self-employment (SE) since 2017.
- We deliver Self-Employment under our Fair Start Scotland provision and are the market leader in Scotland for self-employment services. Our Fair Start Scotland service has engaged and onboarded **over 11,000** participants known to the justice system and **over 4,000** have moved into sustainable employment including self-employment.
- Delivering the Greater Manchester Start Smart and West Yorkshire Start Up programmes where we have helped **over 4,000** people, including Housing Association residents, consider SE since 2018.
- Delivering our Department for Education (DfE) Skills contracts which have helped **c. 300** unemployed people start their journey into SE.
- Delivering services in **50+** prisons.

## Evidence of success:

**PeoplePlus Enterprise has over 30 years' experience of in helping people to start and grow a business, supporting over 100,000 people to become self-employed during that time.** We are the UK's largest provider of SE services for the unemployed and are particularly skilled in supporting those on out-of-work benefits, into SE - over the last year alone we have helped c.13,000 people across the UK to start or grow their businesses through our DWP, DfE, Local and Combined Authority, Scottish Government and MOJ contracts.

**Recently PeoplePlus delivered SE workshops within** HMP Wealstun, HMP Leeds, HMP Drake, HMP Littlehey, HMP Highpoint and HMP Holme House.



# What PeoplePlus delivered

PeoplePlus piloted the delivery of a **two week prison based self-employment programme at HMP Low Moss.**

**This programme was targeted at prisoners nearing their release date with an interest in and/or experience of self-employment.** The programme comprised of two hours of training per day (Monday - Friday) delivered by two qualified and highly experienced Business Advisors.

## Our engaging programme consisted of:



**Promotion and awareness raising activities** across the prison to promote the training offer and raise awareness of the benefits of self-employment as a practical career option post release



**Self-employment awareness sessions** for prisoners:

- interested in attending and wanting to find out more about what was involved
- to gain an overview of the programme
- to ask questions about the content and benefits of engaging



**Tailored workshop sessions** - To build confidence, motivate and inspire participants, workshop session plans were tailored to participant need which was identified and gathered at the awareness sessions and also through engagement with the prison. Training was delivered in a relaxed learning environment, using a variety of teaching styles, e.g., 1:1 support, group discussions, activities, and blended learning resources. Group sessions and core topics that were covered included:

- Is self-employment right for me?
- Business formats and subcontracting
- Market Research and Business Planning
- Marketing / Social Media
- Finance, cost analysis and Pricing for business.



**Independent study** was undertaken following each session. Participants were given learning materials (e.g. handouts and work booklets) and were tasked with completing work towards their final business plan, applying in-session and in-cell learning to their business ideas.



**Business plan formulation** - Business plans were completed throughout the course and summarised on the final day. Participants had the opportunity to present their ideas back to the group, with representatives from the prison (e.g. Offender Managers) invited to attend presentations.



**Supportive exit arrangements** - on completion of the course, all participants had a completed business plan, a portfolio of useful resources and signposting to support their ongoing self-employment journey, including access to ongoing post-release support from dedicated Business Advisors, for those who wanted to maintain contact with PeoplePlus.

## THE RESULTS

**100% of participants** successfully completed the course

**100% participant** satisfaction levels, with all participants confirming that they 'enjoyed attending the PeoplePlus self-employment programme'

**100% of participants** felt confident in their ability to succeed as a self-employed individual post course completion, compared to 50% of participants who felt not confident/unsure prior to starting the course

# Participant quotes:



“The course has helped me go for it as I now know I can do tax and run a company well”

“I enjoyed the workshop as it filled in the gaps on self-employment that I had previously worried about”

“I enjoyed learning about how to run a business as it is something I’ve always wanted to do”

“This course should be done in all prisons”

“The Advisor made it interesting and engaging”

“I thought the course was well detailed and gave a lot of information”

## Our recommendations

- ✓ **Building on the success of the pilot**, roll the self-employment programme out to all prisons in Scotland enabling all prisoners nearing release to benefit from tailored support to become self-employed.
- ✓ **Implement tailored self-employment support through the gate** as part of the overarching training course, ensuring momentum is maintained and participants are supported to start trading via a dedicated Business Advisor
- ✓ **Implement stretch activity** post course completion for those still in the care of Scottish Prison Service, enabling prisoners to complete the development of their business plan in readiness for release and continuing through the gate with support from a dedicated Business Advisor
- ✓ **Collaborative working with DWP Work Coaches** within the prison to facilitate a referral to PeoplePlus self-employment support post release for those prisoners who did not attend the self-employment programme within prison.

If you would like more information on our Scotland Self Employment Proposal please email:

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