



RE:Focus welcomes back the MAISHA Transnational Partnership

The MAISHA transnational partnership met in Glasgow from the 26th to the 30th of March. MAISHA is the RE:Focus partnership involving Hamburg in Germany and Pesaro in Italy, as well as personnel from our local partners here in Glasgow. It is the third time our partners have met in Glasgow and they were all looking forward to working with people they had met in past visits.

It was a full and productive week kicking off with our 8 Hamburg partners undertaking 3 days work shadowing with a variety of organisations across the city. The Hamburg delegates said this was the best visit to date as the work shadowing was such a great experience and gave them a true feel for the issues of supporting people back to work as well as the diverse range of organisations that undertake this work. The organisations that accommodated our partners deserve a big thank you especially given that it coincided with the end of the financial year as well as LDC mergers. Not an easy task for the organisations, but they made our Hamburg Partners most welcome and provided them with a wide range of activities and some great information that they have taken back with them.

The MAISHA partnership is broken into three working groups specialising in the following topics: **Skills Passport; Diversity Management Tool Kit; and Modularisation.**

The three working groups will have a brochure produced by the end of May, which will show the work of the group but will also be tools for our partnership to use beyond the life of the Transnational Partnership. We are working to very tight deadlines to make this happen. Unfortunately our meetings on 29th-30th March were the last face to face meeting we will have. However, modern technology will play a huge part in our on-going work, which will allow us to finish and present our products at a local, national and European level.

Our partnership meeting came to an end with a fantastic social evening in the Lighthouse. It allowed the MAISHA partnership to relax and enjoy themselves and gave us an opportunity to meet up with a number of the RE:Focus project staff, service users and members of our Development Partnership. All in all it was a hectic but productive week, which allowed us to show our partners the great city we work in and gave them the wonderful welcome that Glaswegians do so well.

Special thanks to the RE:Focus domestic partners for their hard and dedicated input to MAISHA: Marie Wright, Margaret Linton, Louise Caldwell, Gordon Craig, Mark Cresswell, John Wallace and John Owens.





Creating employment through the development of Social Firms

A Social Firm is a not-for-profit social enterprise that has the specific social purpose of creating good quality jobs for people severely disadvantaged in the labour market.

Social Firms provide an alternative approach for organisations as well as income generation from their trading activities. They also offer an alternative pathway to employment for individuals with health and social care needs.

Equal Access is currently in discussions with CEiS, the largest social economy development organisation in Scotland, about the potential for introducing a Social Firm Development Programme to the wider network.

To start this off we plan to run a workshop in the Autumn of 2007, delivered by CEiS, providing professionals and organisations with an awareness and understanding of Social Firms and discussing potential business ideas and motivations for developing such a business.

For those organisations interested in starting a new Social Firm, or converting an existing business or project into a Social Firm, there would be the potential to access up to 70% funding to support a facilitated feasibility study into its business idea.

But first of all we need your feedback!

In order to gauge the level of interest in further developing this workshop and programme please email Ken Wardrop at kenwardrop@easglasgow.com with the following information by Friday 4th May.

1. Name of your Organisation and your contact details
2. What is your current level of understanding of Social Firms? (Low/ Medium/ High)
3. Would you and/ or any of your colleagues be interested in attending a Social Firms workshop?
4. If yes, which of the following formats would you be able to attend (half-day morning or half-day afternoon or full-day)
5. If such a workshop goes ahead, may we contact you with further information?

Further information on Social can firms can be found at: <http://www.socialfirms.org.uk/>

Further information on CEiS can be found at: <http://www.ceis.org.uk/>

Youth Networking in the West

"Thank you for this morning, it was inspirational!"

A quote from a young person who attended the speed networking event in the west area in March.

Scotland, Determined To Succeed (a partnership between Careers Scotland and Glasgow City Council's Education Department) and the Equal Access manager in the West worked together to deliver a networking event for young people who are due to leave school in May 2007 and who may fall into the NEET (not in Employment, Education or Training) category. Using a speed dating format, sixty young people from seven secondary schools in the West area learned more about their options after leaving school from 16 service providers. Feedback from young people, teachers and providers was really positive. The event complements other work undertaken by Careers Scotland and Glasgow City Council to reduce the NEET statistic across the city.



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Due to the success of the event in the West, Determined To Succeed are organising similar events across the rest of the city. Please phone Alison Mitchell for more information 0141 534 7928.

Signposts to the West

Around 50 people gathered at Anniesland College on Friday 20th April for the launch of an exciting new resource for frontline staff, Signposts to the West

Anniesland College together with Opportunities, Careers Scotland, West Glasgow Community Health & Care Partnership (CHCP), and Equal Access to Employment Glasgow secured funding from the EQUAL RE:Focus Development Partnership to produce a practical map of services within the West. The map is supported by an online database and gives details of 65 services working in Employment, Education and Training and a further 62 within supports services. College principal Linda McTavish, said they were very clear in the development stages that the product had to be simple and relevant to those customers who would use it. A former teacher of Geography, Linda said the map was a great idea and she was delighted with the finished product.

Ray DeSouza, Head of Planning and Health Improvement, West Glasgow CHCP also welcomed the new resource and hoped there would be commitment to keep it updated after the end of the RE:Focus Project.

**The map can be downloaded from the website at: www.signpoststothewest.co.uk
Or contact Sharon Nicholls: Signpost to the West Project Manager at 0141 357 6013**



Glasgow's Carers Centres: Employability Training Session

There are approximately 62,000 unpaid Carers in Glasgow. It is further estimated that 46% of Carers are not in paid employment. For many Carers work will not be an option but early intervention of support and information will enable some carers a quicker return to employment after a gap.

On the 23rd of March, the Managers of Glasgow's eight Carers Centres attended a session on Employability Training. The training was successfully developed and delivered within the Homelessness Sector in Glasgow by Glasgow Homeless Network, Equal Access to Employment, Blue Triangle Housing Association, Glasgow Simon Community – the BUDS Project, and Move On. The broad aim of this training is to facilitate an understanding of the pathway into employment and the services available on the pathway amongst health and social care staff.

The aim of the Carers Employability Training Awareness Session was to adapt the contents of the training pack to ensure it reflected the employment support needs of carers and the training needs of the Carers Centres, Support Workers. The session was facilitated by Kathy Hunter from Enable Scotland, and the approach taken was to involve the Managers in agreeing the content of the training to be delivered to their own staff in order to build ownership and to ensure the training would have a lasting impact. Some of the key issues arising from the training included lack of flexible support services for carers to enable a return to work, the best point to speak to carers about their employment aspirations, and how to simplify onwards referral to local employability services.

The Centre Managers' have taken on the task of developing solutions to these issues, including the best way of evidencing and then feeding back on identified gaps in services. The Employability Training is now being rolled out to all the support staff across the eight Carers Centres, including the Young Carers Workers. With the support of Equal Access to Employment, the Managers will continue to work together to identify local actions that will support their staff to assist carers who wish to do so onto a pathway to employment.

For further information on employability developments with the Glasgow Carers Centres please contact: Kimberly Murphy at 0141 429 2518

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