



NEWSLETTER

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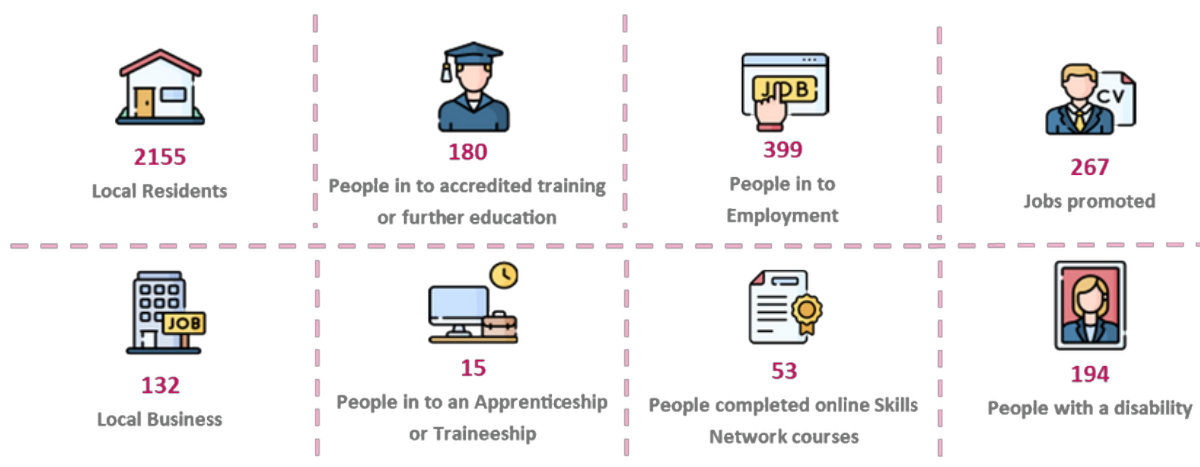
February 2023

[Walsall Works](#)

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In 2022 WW has supported



Multiply

Nearly 50% of adults in the UK struggle with maths. There's nothing more frustrating than trying to understand something we just can't get our heads around and feeling nauseous when thinking about numbers.

With the ongoing rise in the cost-of-living becoming more and more real for us all, right now might be just the time to get on better with numbers. Feeling confident with numbers helps in every aspect of life from measuring materials for DIY projects to cooking, checking our bills, buying shopping, and even just the day-to-day managing of our money.

The good news is that there's no such thing as someone who "can't do math", if you've tried and think you can't, have you considered it might be the way you were trying to learn? Learning in a way that's right for you not only gives you the ability and skill, but also the confidence that will help you get a job, get on in your career, spend, save and budget better – and you don't need to be a maths expert either.

So, if you're underconfident when it comes to anything about maths, you'll be able to get the support you need in the way you need it from the Multiply programme through Walsall Works. From flexible courses to one-to-one mentoring, learn what you want, when you want – and best of all, it won't cost you a penny!

For details of the different types of innovative programmes available across the Borough, please contact Walsall Works on 01922 654353 or by email at WalsallWorks@Walsall.gov.uk

Multiply



Multiply has been launched as part of the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme, by the Department for Education (DfE).

What our advisors can do

You can find our Walsall Works Advisors across various locations across Walsall, working to make a difference to the people of Walsall. They help people gain the skills they need to find work and to progress in their careers to achieve their full potential. When they work with residents, they get to know the individual, their job aspirations and help identify the steps and skills needed to move forward. Through this process, they also come across people who may have additional barriers that are preventing them to move forward. They offer support to help address these.

Health and well-being is a barrier that a number of people have raised with our Advisors and there is plenty of support in Walsall to help people with this. Lockdown has had an impact on people's anxiety levels and our Advisors have seen this. They have been able to refer people to Walsall Talking Therapies Service to support those with depression and anxiety. The treatment involves talking to a therapist to help understand feelings and behaviour and to change behaviours.

We have linked into support groups such as Men with Anxiety and Depression Group to help them access employment opportunities.

SAM was diagnosed with agoraphobia and had not left their house for 18 months. With support from Walsall Works, DWP and Rethink, Sam is attending regular face-to-face appointments with an Advisor and has gained the confidence to take his children to school.

BEN is autistic but wanted to do something outside his home, he attended Ryecroft in search of an opportunity. Our Walsall Works Advisor was able to establish that he had an interest in cooking and he was interested in learning. Ben was referred to Walsall College's Hawbush Campus to access a catering hospitality course.

GARY suffers from memory loss and due to his condition, he carried all of his belongings with him. With no mobile phone, he would forget his appointments, but he regularly attended Bloxwich Library where Walsall Works was based. He explained to an Advisor that he had no boiler and no heating and was unable to cook hot meals. He was supported to raise his memory loss issue with his GP who was able to make referrals to support his health condition. Gary was also referred for an energy assessment to help him resolve his energy issues. He was introduced to the staff at the centre so they could also check on him and support him further. His Advisor introduced a daily diary for him to record daily actions to support him with his memory loss.

Our Advisors have supported people with mental health issues, anxiety, depression, agoraphobia, eating disorders, physical disabilities such as sight and hearing impairments and learning disorders. This is lots of support for people with health issues so do reach out.

Walsall Works Advisors are located in the following venues:

- Pleck Library
- Darlaston Library
- Bloxwich Library
- Ablewell Advice Centre
- Willenhall Library
- Ryecroft Hub
- Impact Hub, St Paul's Crossing
- Brownhills Library

2022 was the year that Walsall Council was able to deliver on the Department for Work & Pensions' Restart Scheme at full capacity. This is a programme that forms part of the Government's Plan for Jobs and we are working in the Walsall borough as a supply chain partner for Serco Plc.

With the aim of supporting long-term unemployed local residents into sustainable employment, we signed up **333** people onto the programme in 2022. Of these participants, **93** people have so far started work and **68** of those are now in a sustainable job.

As part of our support, which is tailored to the individual needs of the participant, we have offered training courses to help people upskill and get the qualifications they need to start work. Throughout the year, we progressed **68** people into training courses, some resulting in the licences they need to start their chosen career - such as CSCS cards and SIA badges.

Included in our offer to participants are online courses through Skills Network, these are designed for people looking for a convenient way to upskill without the classroom environment. **77** people took this opportunity in 2022, with **36** fully completing the course so far.



Our Restart Scheme participants have faced a wide range of different barriers to work, from long gaps in employment, limited available hours for work and health challenges. The team has been able to help many overcome their challenges and progress them back into a rewarding career. An example of this is found in the following case study.



Karen joined the Restart Scheme in March 2022. Due to raising her family, Karen had not been in paid employment for over 20 years. Karen was very concerned about getting back into work, she was worried that everything must have changed and she wouldn't be able to keep up. Despite her fears of the unknown, Karen was eager to get into a job and wanted to be earning again as soon as possible. The challenges she faced beyond the work gap were that she lacked some of the necessary employability skills which meant she was not able to make successful applications.

Karen gained support from her employment advisor, Ali and this started with a revamp of her CV to highlight the transferable skills she had gained while unemployed. Ali then helped to build Karen's confidence and expand her understanding of where to find opportunities. Karen was referred on to a job club with Walsall Works and she met with the team's employer engagement officer, who put her forward for a cleaning role that suited her skills.

Thanks to her eagerness and the interview preparation that she received, Karen was able to articulate how her domestic and parenting experience made her a great fit for the role. The employer was really impressed with Karen's interview and offered her a role initially for 25 hours per week in May 2022. Due to her diligence and reliability when in work, Karen was offered a 40 hour per week contract in October 2022. Karen thanked Walsall Works and Restart Scheme for the support provided and felt they had made a massive positive impact on her life.

Works+

Walsall Works successfully secured funding from the Community Renewal Fund through West Midlands Combined Authority to enhance and add value to our Walsall Works programme providing employability support to

- Residents from 7 targeted wards of St Matthews, Blakenall, Birchills Leamore, Willenhall South, Darlaston South, Pleck and Palfrey
- Social housing tenants residing in Walsall
- Individuals aged over 50
- Residents impacted by redundancies

Working in collaboration with whg, a community-based approach has been adopted to support people back into work. Employment Advisors were based in a number of community and voluntary sector organisations, bringing support and services into the communities.

As part of the Works+ delivery, a number of work placements were created with local businesses to offering valuable paid work placement for up to 16 weeks with a local employer facing a skills shortage.

Through Works+ we were able to:

 <p>Deliver from 10 community voluntary locations</p>	 <p>Register 556 residents to Works+</p>	 <p>Commence 41 Works+ Placement Starts</p>	 <p>Held 8 Job Fairs</p>
 <p>Supported 98 people into training/education following support</p>	 <p>Supported 74 participants to gain a qualification following support</p>	 <p>Worked with 151 local employers</p>	 <p>Supported 77 people in job searching and life skills</p>



Events

Thursday 17th January New Year New Career!

The year started off with a great event at Brownhills Community Centre. The New Year New Career event was a great success with many new opportunities available. We had a great turn out with over 250 people attending the event. We had 18 exhibitors at the event all who had upcoming opportunities available. Thank you to all the employers who exhibited at this event.



Employer Spotlight!



During 2022 we held a number of different Spotlight information events, bringing local employers with current and immediate job vacancies, together with participants from our employability programmes and people who are actively seeking work.

Spotlight sessions are a great way to meet with employers like HS2, the RAC, Balfour Beatty Vinci (BBV), Atalian Servest, Embark Learning and to ask them questions about the different jobs they have and to really understand the kind of skills and abilities they are looking for from people interested in applying.

Attendees of these events always comment on how useful they have been, many have gone on to secure interviews and jobs as well as identify additional training, they may need to secure jobs for the future.

Thursday 16th March Walsall Works EXPO!

Walsall Works are hosting their EXPO on Thursday 16 March 2023. This will be a great opportunity to come along and meet with over 60 local employers and training providers. To book to attend please go to our [Eventbrite page](#).

If you would like exhibit at the event, please get in contact with us via email walsallworks@walsall.gov.uk

Walsall works Jobs | Apprenticeships | Training
EXPO 2023
One of the largest Job Fairs in the West Midlands

Thursday 16 March 2023
9:00am - 3:00pm
The Hub @ Walsall College
Littleton Street West WS2 8ES

- Meet with 60+ employers offering full time and part time roles
- Get advice and support with accessing and securing a long-term career
- Come prepared to meet with employers and bring your CV

Book your place at: [WalsallWorksExpo2023.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.walsallworks.com) or scan the QR Code above
Find out more at: www.walsallworks.com or call: 01922 654353