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## KICKSTART SCHEME

*16–24-year-olds urged to sign-on to access job opportunities*

**(ARGYLL AND BUTE, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021)** The Kickstart Scheme was established by the UK Government in response to unemployment created by the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Scheme provides those aged 16 to 24 with valuable opportunities to gain employment and develop new skills.

The Kickstart Scheme can support employers to cover:

- 100% of the National Minimum Wage (or the National Living Wage depending on the age of the participant) for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months (including associated employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment pension contributions) with start dates up until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

Inspiralba, an Argyll based Kickstart Gateway organisation have identified that many young people who could be eligible for Kickstart opportunities are missing out as they have not signed on for Universal Credit. In order to apply for this scheme, applicants must be claiming benefits through Universal Credit.

Malcolm Allaway is currently employed as a Digital Communications Officer and joined the Inspiralba Team in June. Malcolm highlighted the positives of the Kickstart Scheme and recounted his own reluctance to signing-on.

‘The Kickstart Scheme has given me the opportunity to find work in a new sector, where I feel as though I am making a difference. However, if I hadn’t previously heard about this job opportunity in particular, I probably wouldn’t have signed up for Universal Credit, because I had no idea how beneficial it could be. The benefits of signing-on should be broadcast more to young, unemployed people so that more will be given the chance to be supported in finding employment.’

Danielle Barker, employed as an Assistant Heritage Officer discussed the easy process of applying for Universal Credit and highlighted the benefits of the Kickstart Scheme.

“Having gone through the steps to sign up for Universal Credit, I can say that the process is quite straight forward. As long as you know your email, your personal details and have the requested

documents to hand such as a bank statement for example, you should be good to go. Kickstart is more than just a job placement; it lets you build on your weaknesses which turn into strengths. You can improve on your attributes and personal development in a bid to release your full potential in a controlled working environment.”

Reeni Kennedy- Boyle, Business Manager at Fyne Futures is participating in the Kickstart Scheme and outlined the types of skills young people can gain under the programme.

‘Fyne Futures are delighted to be a delivery partner with Inspiralba in the Kickstart Scheme. The Scheme is supporting young people access skills development opportunities, our first cohort of young people are learning and developing horticultural, soft and transferable skills such as team working, problem solving, communication and using one’s own initiative. This enables participants to have fun whilst gaining meaningful employment.’

For more information about hosting placements please contact Rachel MacPhail on 07917 606052 or email [rachel.macphail@inspiralba.org.uk](mailto:rachel.macphail@inspiralba.org.uk). For more information on applying for kickstart placements please contact your local DWP centre.



Caption – Malcolm, Allaway, Digital Communications Officer at Inspiralba



Caption – Danielle Barker, Assistant Heritage Officer at Inspiralba