



ENTERPRISE IN ACTION & EXPERIENCE COUNTS



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ME PLAN 50+
ENTERPRISE IN ACTION TEAM
EXPERIENCE COUNTS PROGRAMME
REPORT
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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to report the actions, processes, delivery mechanisms, outcomes, achievements, recommendations and client case studies from the Enterprise in Action and Experience Counts programmes as part of the MePlan50+ project.

These programmes delivered by Newport and Gwent Enterprise and Prime Cymru have achieved positive life changes for individuals in terms of gaining employment, starting a business or taking up volunteering for the first time.

Prime Cymru is responsible for the delivery of the Experience Counts Programme which focuses on the employment element of the project. The aim is to support those contributors aged 50+, who may be looking to return to the workplace because of redundancy, early retirement, in-between jobs, on benefits, economically inactive, or simply looking for a change of career.

Newport and Gwent Enterprise is responsible for the delivery of Enterprise in Action which focuses on the self-employment element of the project. This involves providing support, advice and test trading opportunities to address the needs of those 50+ who consider self-employment as a possible pathway, to take their lives forward and fulfil their potential. The support specifically enables them to explore and test-trade their business ideas in a low risk environment.

2.0 Background

The 'Experience Counts' programme was established across many parts of Wales in 2006 by Prime Cymru to help create a series of stepping stones to enable 50+ contributors to find work opportunities which could make a contribution to improving their lives. Since April 2007, this initiative became part of the Me Plan 50+ project which focuses specifically on the County of Monmouthshire working in conjunction with the other partners.

The 'Enterprise in Action' programme was designed following the successful 'Taste of Enterprise' model, which was delivered throughout South Wales, to enable contributors to give their ideas a go, before taking the plunge and decide if it is right for them to set up in business.

Both initiatives provided client focused events, initiatives and training for the over 50s to support confidence building, motivation, self-worth and either employment and/or self-employment.

3.0 Contribution to Research

In addition, both programmes have contributed to the research element of the project. This has been achieved by:

- The delivery of MePlan50+ roadshows which have provided opportunities for promoting the programmes and for running focus groups to feed into the research.
- Providing case studies of some of those who have benefited from the support available. (See **Appendix - Case Studies**)

4.0 Methodology

The following methods were used to attract individuals onto the programmes:

4.1. Design and Printing of Marketing Material

Following an initial launch of the MePlan50+ project a variety of marketing methods (detailed below) were utilised in order to raise awareness of the MePlan 50+ project throughout the County of Monmouthshire. The aim was to promote the various responsibilities of each partner within the project by providing generic information on all the areas of support, and then more specific information related to each programme activity. See **Appendix - General Promotional Material** for the specific Enterprise in Action and Experience Counts flyers.

With the options of two programmes an innovative and coordinated form of delivery across Monmouthshire was required. The concept of roadshows was developed. The aim was to run a series of roadshows in the main towns across the County to inform and attract individuals onto the programmes as well as the identified network of organisations i.e. Job Centres, Careers Wales Gwent, U3A, Rise Learning Organisation etc. which would act as referral mechanisms for the project.

A range of marketing and advertising materials were designed. For example flyers, leaflets, posters, adverts for the local press (The South Wales Argus, and other local weekly newspapers covering Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk, Raglan, Chepstow and Caldicot.)

4.2 Distribution of marketing material

This material was physically distributed by various members of the team to a large number of outlets (shops, libraries, clubs, pubs, markets, Job Centres, One Stop Shops and Public Notice Boards etc) in the five main towns of Monmouthshire, namely Chepstow, Caldicot, Usk, Abergavenny and Monmouth.

4.3 Road shows

Road shows, which were the main marketing strategy to promote and attract contributors onto the project and identify support needs, involved all the Monmouthshire partners including Newport and Gwent Enterprise, Prime Cymru and GAVO who were responsible for the volunteering component of the project. These

activities have taken place in two phases since June 07. The first phase from June 07 to early August 07 consisted of 13 road shows. Due to the success of these a further series of 7 roadshows were put in place to run from January 08 to July 08.

The aims of the road shows were

- good location of venue and flexible start times, flexibility of timings to encourage attendance, especially for those who would not be able to attend during the daytime. Each partner would have a database of clients to support on a “one to one” basis as the contributor need arose from each event.
- a three week rotational cycle was provided so contributors could come again to a second road show three weeks later to further discuss their perceptions of the issues and barriers associated with employment, self-employment or volunteering (a generic approach) and embark on focused support if required (a specific approach).

4.3.1 Road shows: Process:

Contributors who attended the road show events had either read about the project through information advertised in any one of the various local newspapers, seen a workshop flyer, or learned about the project via local interest groups such as RISE, Careers Wales, Job Centres, clubs and societies where 50+ were likely to be members or had attended or were consumers i.e. U3A, Golf Clubs, libraries, doctors surgeries, chemists, post-offices, community notice boards or having visited the MePlan 50+ website.



Once contributors arrived at an event they would be welcomed by the team, asked to complete an attendance register and encouraged to complete questionnaires for the research.

A MePlan folder was placed beforehand in each contributor place with information containing the various leaflets about the project and the project partners i.e. European Project Partner information, Prime Cymru / Experience Counts workshops and Enterprise in Action flyer. Paper and pencils were provided so that contributors could make notes.

The roadshow would start by introductions by the team and inviting the contributors to introduce themselves and what they hoped to get out of the workshop so that the advisers could identify the needs and aspirations of the individuals.

The remit of the project was explained and all partners would present an overview of their programme with an opportunity for questions after each presentation:

Presentation: Enterprise in Action - background information regarding the history to the “Taste of Enterprise” project which was already a model of test trading support provided by Newport and Gwent Enterprise, a model which would enable contributors to understand what test trading was all about and how ‘Enterprise in Action’ would be able to support those 50+ considering future self-employment along with the one to one support available to help clients to explore their business ideas and undertake simple market research activities to test feasibility before making the full commitment to starting a business.

Presentation: Prime Cymru – The Adviser explained the formation and history of Prime Cymru, imparted information about those who had benefited previously from the support, and what “Experience Counts” was all about. Following this, the adviser would answer any questions concerning employment support as well as set up one to one meetings and invite contributors to attend the “Experience Counts” workshops, specifically for helping to improve job searching skills, self-confidence building, interview techniques, and curriculum vitae writing. (See 5.2 for greater detail).

Presentation: GAVO – volunteering. The GAVO Adviser spoke to the contributors about the volunteering aspect and particularly that volunteering provided a useful stepping stone to future employment opportunities in the voluntary sector.

Overall: Following the presentations, contributors then had an opportunity to voice their issues and concerns which were recorded onto a flip chart. Recordings and filming were made for research and dissemination purposes.

Finally, the contributors had the opportunity to speak to any one of the team of advisers’ present leading to ‘one to one’ meetings and follow up support meetings by any one of the partners to address client needs.

4.3.2 Area Group Meetings – Phase 1 Roadshows:

Following the initial road shows, the contributors from the different areas indicated that they would like to attend further group meetings on a more informal basis, to continue to explore specific issues and concerns.

For example, at one event, the team invited an experienced Human Resources manager who provided specific advice on what an employer would be looking for in terms of recruitment and interview process. Feedback from this session was very positive.

Other follow-up sessions included an exploration of the use of the internet and computers, the idea of “time-banks”, the possibility of forming a group to try to set up a recruitment agency for 50+ or simply just to network with each other. This enabled a network of support for the contributors who identified that they shared similar

issues and concerns. However, despite initial enthusiasm, as members of the group found employment or took on other activities, the group gradually disbanded. This supports the concept of “People in Transition” where when individuals are in the process of transition due to certain events occurring in their lives (being made redundant, facing future retirement, moving to a new area, experiencing bereavement or divorce, having insufficient finances or pension to meet living costs) they are seeking something. Once found and they have a clearer vision of what they want to achieve, they move on.



Following the first phase of roadshows, and subsequent informal meetings, the second phase of 7 roadshows (from January 08 to July 08) was put into effect to build on this initial platform. This continued to attract new contributors as well as to raise awareness throughout Monmouthshire. To date there have been a total of **123** attendees arising from **20** roadshows as detailed below.

Date	Title	Where	Numbers attending
07-Jun-07	Roadshow	Angel Hotel, Abergavenny	12
13-Jun-07	Roadshow	Angel Hotel, Abergavenny	0
21-Jun-07	Roadshow	Angel Hotel, Abergavenny	10
04-Jul-07	Roadshow	Beaufort Hotel, Chepstow	10
06-Jul-07	Roadshow	Bridges, Monmouth	11
07-Jul-07	Roadshow	Abbey Mill, Tintern	0
11-Jul-07	Roadshow	Leisure Centre, Caldicot	1
12-Jul-07	Roadshow	Sessions House, Usk	6
13-Jul-07	Roadshow	Sessions House, Usk	1
25-Jul-07	Roadshow	Beaufort Hotel, Chepstow	11
27-Jul-07	Roadshow	Bridges, Monmouth	10
01-Aug-07	Roadshow	Leisure Centre, Caldicot	1
02-Aug-07	Roadshow	Sessions House, Usk	6
31-Jan-08	Roadshow	Sessions House, Usk	10
27-Feb-08	Roadshow	St Mary's Priory, Abergavenny	2
19-Mar-08	Roadshow	Chepstow Hotel, Chepstow	13
30-Apr-08	Roadshow	Bridges, Monmouth	4
21-May-08	Roadshow	Dewstow Golf Club, Caerwent	1
19-June-08	Roadshow	Sessions House, Usk	5
17-July-08	Roadshow	St Mary's Priory, Abergavenny	9
			123

4.4 Other Combined Networking Events

Before the commencement of the roadshows, Team members attended Abergavenny Market to promote the project and the road shows. They had the opportunity to speak with visitors to the market and passers by to ask them to complete questionnaires and encourage them to come along to the road shows.

Following the commencement of the road-shows further events were attended by the various partners:

- A series of five awareness-raising seminars were organised by Monmouthshire County Council for their staff that were approaching retirement. The seminars were held at County Hall, Cwmbran on Thursday 28th June 07; as well as Chepstow Leisure Centre, Tuesday 11th December 07, Monmouth Leisure Centre, Tuesday 15th January 2008, Caldicot Leisure Centre Monday 21st January 2008 and Abergavenny Leisure Centre Tuesday 29th January 2008.

These enabled the team to speak with MCC staff about the various strands of employment, self-employment and volunteering and the support available to them as they consider their future options from 50+ and as they approach future retirement. Some 48 contributors signed attendance forms although there were far in excess of this number attending. Any contributor forms that were completed were added to a centralised database of information. Some attendees were not retiring for two to three years and therefore they felt they were only exploring their future options at this time and not yet ready to partake of the MePlan 50+ support provided.

An informal Networking event on 17th December 2007 was held at Bridges, Monmouth for any contributors who had had contact with the project over the first year. The aim was to discuss the research outcomes and seek further feedback on activities. One of the contributors who had gained employment from the project gave a presentation which was well received by those attending. It also provided an opportunity for contributors to come together, meet people of a similar age and background and network with those they had not met before.

- As part of the marketing and research programme, other events attended included :
 - an Expo 7 event on 30th June 2007
 - MCC Chairman's breakfast 20th September 2007 – Prime presentation about the role of Prime within the MePlan 50+ project
 - presence at the five libraries throughout Monmouthshire (2nd, 8th October and 13th, 15th & 22nd November 2007)
 - 2 business breakfasts on 15th and 25th January 08
 - GAVO organised events
 - An evening event for the Launch of Mon TV 31st January 2008 at The Bridges, Monmouth.

5. Mentoring

5.1 One to one Support and Training Activities for client development (both partners)

Following each of the road shows and the various promotional activities, the contributors were offered the opportunity of being mentored through one to one support by the various partner's advisers with the added benefit of "test-trading" for Enterprise in Action contributors if they so desired.

The Enterprise in Action contributors were also offered training activities as part of their personal development in the areas of "Confidence Building", "Creating the Right First Impression"/ "Life's a Pitch", "Ideas Generation", "Maximise your Marketing" (delivered by Enterprise in Action Lead Adviser), "Costing and Pricing" (Enterprise in Action Team) "Inland Revenue and Tax (through The Inland Revenue) and ICT/Web 2.0 (delivered by the Researcher).

For the purpose of this report, Prime Cymru have been supporting those seeking employment and 'Enterprise in Action' team have been supporting those seeking future self-employment (38 EIA names on database) with either one to one meetings, telephone support and/or test trading activities which contributors have fed back to the team as being very innovative and useful in terms of exploring their ideas and issues towards setting up future businesses. Occasionally there was an overlap of support when clients wanted to explore more than one area and needed the support of both partner advisers.

Arising from the 'Enterprise in Action' support, contributors seeking self-employment have benefited from being jointly referred to Business Eye (now "Support For Business", Business Support Gateway for Advice and Information for pre and post-start business, with further support for their market research activities to identify feasibility of their business ideas).

Coupled with the mentoring/one to one support (122 "one to one" meetings from 81 clients), Prime Cymru have completed 4 "Experience Counts" workshops with 22 contributors attending (see 5.2 for the details of these workshops).

Both partners have continued to support contributors on a one to one basis with the remit of enabling these clients to become more self-aware, more focused and more confident. This enabled them to explore their employment and self-employment ideas, think about how they might overcome any issues and barriers which may prevent them from moving forward and prepare for test trading if that was what they wanted to do.

These barriers include lack of confidence or low self-esteem, lack of specific business/IT skills, fear of failure, fear of success, financial implications, tax and pension concerns, transport and/or health issues, caring responsibilities: children, second families and/or elderly relatives.

The aim was for them to take greater responsibility for their actions to pursue their goals, overcome their fears and decide next steps towards their future goals.

5.2 Prime Cymru – Experience Counts Workshops

The “Experience Counts” Workshops entitled “Presenting Yourself” have addressed the employment elements of the project. These workshops, which have followed all the road show events were timed to last three hours and have enabled contributors to achieve the following:

- Take stock of their current situation.
- Review their skills, experience, knowledge and job history.
- Identify their transferable skills, knowledge and experience.
- Define their behavioral style, by asking themselves: Who are you?, What has persuaded you to explore work options? What is your motivation?
- Identify any barriers to securing work.
- Refine their Curriculum Vitae towards becoming a more tailored selling tool by making it a targeted marketing document.
- Prepare them and be coached in the interview process as a role play for a real experience.
- Prepare them for the recruitment and selection process used by potential employers.
- Identify possible job vacancies.
- Helped to improve their job search skills.
- Helped them to understand the internet process of seeking a position on line as about 30% of most vacancies are now advertised through this medium.
- Helped them to prepare an action plan to achieve their goals.

5.2.1 Experience Counts Workshops: Process

Before the workshop, contributors first learned about the ‘Experience Counts’ events either through the various marketing activities of Prime Cymru posters, newspapers and flyers, and/or from their attendance at the various road shows held throughout Monmouthshire, where the Prime Adviser promoted these workshops as follow up events.

The four workshops held in 2007/2008 followed one week after the road-shows and at the same venues to ensure contributors gained follow up support on an immediate basis for those wanting to return to the jobs market.

Four Experience Counts workshops have been delivered and were held on the following dates and venues show below, with 22 contributors in total attending.

10th October 2007 The Beaufort Hotel, Chepstow.

7th February 2008 The Sessions House, Usk.

5th March 2008 St. Mary's Priory, Abergavenny

7th May 2008 The Bridges Centre, Monmouth

Many of these clients had attended the road shows and indicated they were seeking an opportunity to re-enter the job market and therefore needed guidance and help to achieve this. A number of them had fed back to the team at the road-shows that it was challenging, to say the least, to try and obtain an interview, let alone a job.



On first arrival at an 'Experience Counts' workshop, contributors were asked to complete a register and a contributor form if they had not already done so before the event. Refreshments were provided throughout the workshop. Any completed paperwork was sent to the main office.

At all stages of the 'Experience Counts' presentation, the contributors were encouraged to become involved and participate in a very interactive and focused environment. The reason for this being that the clients had learned as much, if not more, from speaking to the other attendees, to share concerns and issues, empathizing with each other, and discovering that there were others in the same situation as themselves, experiencing the same types of emotions and difficulties in securing paid work.

Attendees were asked to undertake a range of paper-based exercises which included a Behavioral Isometric Survey, which had been designed by an American Executive Head-Hunting organisation to help individuals to find out more about their behavioral styles, and the sort of work to which they would be best suited. Undertaking this enabled the contributors to become much more self-aware and they agreed with the results of this test in most cases.

Attendees also undertook a paper based exercise to analyse their skills, abilities and experience by writing them down in their own words, because this is part of the basic process of compiling a targeted Curriculum Vitae.

Following this exercise, as part of the build-up to the compiling of targeted Curriculum Vitae, the skills dictionary was explained. This dictionary lists some of the most common 'buzz words' used in the recruitment world and contains detailed listings of what employers mean when using the various skills words used in a job advertisement. A handout was also supplied containing the positive words to use in a CV.

The Prime Adviser followed on from the CV session by explaining that the document would act as their marketing tool to sell themselves to potential employers. The three types of CV that are most commonly used are the functional, the chronological and targeted, and these were discussed, with particular emphasis on creating a concise targeted CV which only supplies the relevant information that the employer requires, to make the right decision about employing them.

It was explained that the first purpose of their CV is to get them an interview. If granted an interview, they would have a good chance of influencing the decision to offer them a job.

There was also a session on the recruitment and interview process including a discussion and handout entitled "How to handle the interview".

At the workshops clients were informed of local job vacancies from the local newspapers and four main websites i.e. Total Jobs, Cardiff Jobs, Welsh Recruitment and Jobs Wales.co.uk

The Prime Adviser would also emphasize the importance of using the internet to secure work, as about 30% of all jobs currently advertised are through this medium. At the end of the workshops, contributors received 14 handouts for reference purposes.

Feedback from the contributors about the value of these workshops has been very positive, with a number of them saying it has helped in rebuilding their self-confidence, improved their job searching skills, and given them the motivation to seek work opportunities in a more positive manner.

A number of the clients said they have gained a lot by meeting other people at the workshops in a similar position to themselves, and they now realise they are not alone in experiencing the same types of issues effecting their ability to secure work.

A typical contributor quote received at the end of one of the workshops: *"Its like going into a crowded room where you know no-one" "You need someone to hold your hand"*

"You see that you are not the only person who wants to do something to improve their chances of employment" "MePlan 50+ team give you the confidence to take the next step" "MePlan 50+ act as a sounding board and guide".

Following the workshops, one to one meetings were held with contributors to offer them further training and support in many of the issues raised at the workshops.

5.3 Enterprise In Action – “Test Trading” Activities and “Training Workshops” for Personal Development

The “Enterprise in Action” element of the MePlan 50+ project has had the specific task of delivering “test trading” experiences to those contributors seeking future self-employment, through the development of the existing “Taste of Enterprise” model.

MePlan 50+ recognises the added value of working in partnership with those in the business support arena i.e. Business Eye (now Support For Business), Inland Revenue, Job Centres, Newport & Gwent Enterprise “City of Enterprise” project etc. and contributors were signposted to these agencies to aid their business development.

The Test Trading activities have provided a “dip your toe in the water” experience for contributors thinking about future self-employment, as a way of enabling them to identify the feasibility of their business ideas.

The group experience has enabled those who were test-trading to:

- feel that “they are not alone” in terms of thinking about future self-employment, that “others may be experiencing the same feelings as themselves
- present themselves and their products/services in a professional manner with business cards, promotional material, etc
- test-trade in a suitable environment (as part of a group, in a workshop situation or network event) to interact with potential customers.

These “test-trade” activities would be coupled with one-to-one support from a MePlan 50+ Business Adviser who would explore with the contributors their past experience and skills they would bring to a business and prepare them for “test-trading”, should they wish to do so.

This would enable the contributors to become more self-aware, discuss with them how to go about undertaking simple market research activities to identify feasibility as well as signposting them towards the benefits of the linkages into existing mainstream business support provision i.e. Business Eye (now Support For Business), Local Supplier Development, Local Authority Economic Development, Design Wales, Newport and Gwent Enterprise, Inland Revenue etc.

Contributors have fed back their feelings about business start up which comprises:

- the fear, risk and uncertainty of them experiencing business failure;
- the lack of self-confidence, which may prevent them from taking that first step into setting up a new business
- the need for sufficient time to evaluate and decide for themselves the best course of future action within their own timescale.

By interacting with potential customers and others in the same position as themselves they have been able to gain a more objective view of all the elements of

business start-up and be empowered to make more informed decisions. These informed decisions have either led to business start up, or to identifying a need for further training, or purely as an exploratory exercise with the decision either not to set up or put the idea “on hold” due to their circumstances which may include health, fear or financial reasons.

The Team have had to think much more innovatively and creatively in terms of the types of test trading experiences that the 50+ contributors could benefit from.

The range of business ideas contributors have spoken about with the advisors have extended beyond the retail type business ideas which are suitable for product-based test-trading in a group environment. This was the original concept of “Test-Trading” which was geared towards arts and craft type businesses which are product-based businesses.

What specifically came out of the project was the fact that 50+ contributors were also interested in the service sector business area, such as Consultancy, Marketing and Training. These services are much more intangible in nature and difficult to put across to customers using the original model.

Therefore, the test-trade activities for these service sector ideas have been undertaken via workshops, networking events, directly by the contributors focused on their areas of expertise. They have presented themselves in a more professional manner to promote their service ideas by attending either Business Events, Local Chamber Breakfasts or by delivering presentations at various workshops to invited audiences.

‘Enterprise in Action’ held its first focused workshop on 24th August 2007 at St. Mary’s Priory, Abergavenny to talk to contributors about Enterprise in Action “test trading” and how they would benefit from these types of activities. Contributors (9 attendees) informed the project Advisers of their business ideas and any issues/concerns, so that the team could identify the service/product areas and provide innovative test-trade opportunities for those who were interested in testing their ideas in a low risk environment with potential customers.

5.3.1 “Test Trading” Activities

Some 11 Test Trading activities have been delivered and held on the following dates and venues with 38 contributors attending to explore their business ideas.

- 18th October 2007. Five Counties Show, The Velodrome, Newport (3 attendees)
- 12th December 2007. Christmas Fayre , Newport Market. (2 attendees)

One contributor attended to test trade her healthy dog treats idea and another contributor to test trade her idea of parent coaching. Each contributor set up their products on a table displaying their own sales literature and business cards to promote themselves in a more professional manner whilst interacting with potential customers. From this experience the test traders gained valuable research information to decide if their ideas were feasible.

Sue Skinner,
Parent Coach



- 18th December 2007 Chamber Business Breakfast , The Marriott St Pierre, Chepstow. The 3 attendees had the opportunity to speak with those already in business to network and raise awareness of their business ideas. This was an opportunity to learn from others and potentially make contacts with the possibility of obtaining future business.
- 9th February 2008 Craft Fayre was in Newport Market. (1 attendee) The contributor who attended was trading as “Winnie’s Treats” dog biscuits. This was a further opportunity for the contributor to network, interact with customers (adults and children) and display her products which were well received. The contributor also came up with innovative interactive activities to entice customers as shown in the photo below.

Gill Meeks,
“Winnie’s Treats”



- 6th March 2008 (3 attendees) The contributors got together to deliver a “Women in Transition” workshop which was held at Bridges, Monmouth, to encourage 50+ women to come along to learn more about the help and advice available for them to bridge the gap between where they are now in their life to where they want to be in terms of achieving their future goals.

- 14th April 2008 (4 attendees) The Beaufort Hotel, Chepstow – This was an opportunity for a contributor to make a presentation targeting local Chepstow businesses about his idea to set up a Marketing Consultancy. This provided the contributor with an opportunity to raise awareness of his business support service idea and to follow up any leads.
- 18th April 2008 (7 attendees) The Board Room, Newport Market. Another opportunity to make a presentation about his marketing expertise. This time the attendees were local pre-start businesses who came along to learn more. The contributor had the opportunity to follow up one or two of the attendees in terms of marketing support.
- 14th May 2008 As above, (One attendee) The contributor had the opportunity to deliver an evening presentation on his marketing services at The Sessions House, Usk. Unfortunately no-one appeared on the night.
- 20th May 2008 (One attendee) Chamber Business Breakfast at the Holiday Inn, Newport. One Enterprise in Action contributor attended this networking event with the Enterprise in Action adviser to meet existing businesses and promote her future venture.
- 14th June 2008 (Five attendees at the workshop) One Enterprise in Action contributor made a presentation to five pre and post-start businesses on The Gallery Landing, Newport Market. This was timed to occur before the main test-trading event. This final test-trade event provided the impetus for the contributor to decide to register as self-employed.

Coupled with these test trade activities required to meet the outcomes, contributors have also benefited from training workshops to aid their skills development:

5.3.2 Training Workshops

It was identified that contributors who lacked confidence and/or business skills would benefit from workshops that would enhance their personal development and empower them with their decision making. Contributors were invited to attend the following workshops:

1. 5th July 2007 Group Meeting – St Mary’s Priory, Abergavenny
Training workshop on “First Impressions” Creating that right first impression is important for either someone setting up in business or going for an interview. The presentation included elements of verbal and non-verbal behaviour, acceptable dress codes and tips on how to present a more focused first impression as appropriate.
7 EIA Contributors attended.
2. 9th August 2007 Group Meeting – St Mary’s Priory, Abergavenny
Training workshop based on the book “Life’s a Pitch” – marketing yourself and your business. The presentation provided a selection of useful tips and words of wisdom to ensure a competitive edge.
6 EIA Contributors attended

3. 4th September 2007 Group Meeting – Beaufort Hotel, Chepstow
Training workshop about “Creating a Perfect Website”. Presentation enlightened those assembled with cutting edge knowledge of Web 2.0, Wikis and social networking sites.
3 EIA contributors attended and 2 partners.
4. 6th September 2007 Group Meeting – Pathways Therapy Centre, Usk
Training Workshop on “Ideas Generation” which enabled contributors to first consider a historical perspective of ideas development; secondly, the need for more innovative thinking in a competitive global environment and thirdly, the range of tools/techniques they can use to generate new ideas i.e. SWOT analysis, Blue Sky Thinking, Board Storming, Dreaming, Disney – Random Words, Spider Diagrams, Scanning, Frustration etc. This was particularly useful for those contributors who did not have any ideas as to what they wanted to do.
10 EIA Contributors attended
5. 14th September 2007 Group Meeting – St. Mary’s Priory, Abergavenny
Talk by Human Resources Department from an employer’s perspective of the recruitment and selection process.
3 EIA Contributors attended and 2 partners.
6. 9th October 2007 Group Meeting – The Sessions House, Usk
Training Workshop on “Maximise your Marketing” which enabled contributors to consider a wide range of strategic activities which would benefit their future businesses!
4 EIA Contributors attended
7. 11th October 2007 Group Meeting – The Sessions House, Usk
Training Workshop on “Costing and Pricing” which enabled contributors to consider all the financial aspects of setting up in business.
4 EIA Contributors attended.
8. 25th October 2007 Group Meeting – Market Place Business Centre, Newport
Training Workshop by Inland Revenue – taxation etc
Contributors found this useful. Concerns revolved around taxation, specifically of 50+ pensions
2 EIA Contributors attended
9. 20th November 2007 Group Meeting – Bridges, Monmouth
Training Workshop on “Costing and Pricing” – this was a follow up workshop and built on the previous “Costing and Pricing” workshop.
3 EIA Contributors and 3 Partners

Following these 9 workshops, letters were sent in January 2008 to all EIA contributors asking what type of support they still required or need for any further skills workshops to aid their development. Response was limited. No further workshops were put in place for 2008.

6.0 Prime Cymru Activities, Expected Results & Outcomes

During the course of the project, a total of **81** clients had been seen for support, training and mentoring towards employment, through a series of **122** one to one meetings, these sessions have proved to be useful to the clients as the following **39** outputs have been achieved.

Breakdown of the **39** outputs is as follows:

- 8 Full time jobs comprising a female special needs teacher, a female taxi driver with a transport company, a female credit controller with a firm of chartered accountants, a female supervisor with a supermarket, a female promotional/sales person with a newspaper and a male working as an accounts assistant with a company manufacturing fire alarms, a male administrator with a leading insurance company and a male working as a warranty engineer for an automotive manufacturing company. (See Appendix for Case Studies)
- 7 Part-time jobs comprising two female sales assistants in ladies fashion, a male shelf stacker in a supermarket, a fully qualified male nurse, a male cleaner and a female optician's receptionist, plus a female support assistant working for a charity. (See **Appendix for Case Studies**)
- 4 Self-employed clients, a female running a dog grooming business, a female operating as a freelance researcher/consultant, a male operating as a project managing consultant to local councils, a female running a hypnotherapy business.
- 19 clients have attended for interview with 15 obtaining jobs, 4 have gone for interview but have been unsuccessful.
- 1 client has gone into further education/training studying full time for a Bachelor of Education degree in religious studies at University of Wales Newport.

The employment sectors covered by these jobs are Education, Charities, Food and Fashion retailing, Accountancy, Transport, Automotive and General Manufacturing, Newspapers, Health Care and the Insurance Industry.

The self-employed outputs cover a wide range of business sectors from project management and research, to dog grooming and hypnotherapy.

During the course of the project, Prime Cymru has attended 18 road shows, putting on a presentation at each event to explain the employment element of the project to the contributors and the Experience Counts Workshops.

Following these road shows those clients who were seeking to return to the workplace were invited to attend the Experience Counts Workshops to learn more.

Four Experience Counts Workshops were delivered with 22 contributors attending.

The feedback from the contributors about the value of the workshops has been very positive, with a number of them saying it has helped, in re building their self confidence, improved their job search skills, and given them the motivation to seek work opportunities in a positive and confident manner. A number of the clients have said they have gained a lot by meeting other people at the workshops in a similar position, and they now realize they are not alone in their quest for work.

As part of the marketing programme establishments throughout the area were visited in order to display the marketing material and encourage 50+ attendances at the events.

This exercise proved to be very useful because it allowed both advisers to meet with a number of businesses and employers and explain the benefits of the project “face to face”. The partners have experienced a good reception from most of the establishments visited with some even notifying us of current vacancies for employment. Details of current job vacancies have been obtained and distributed to clients.

6.1 Prime Cymru Case Studies

Following Prime Cymru's support of contributors seeking employment, three contributors agreed to become case studies to give evidence of their success in securing employment and to demonstrate how the project has helped them do so. (See **Appendix** for Case Studies on contributors: Heather Evans, Christine Chicken and Gillian Lewis)

7.0 Enterprise in Action Activities, Expected Results & Outcomes

From the 72 clients who expressed interest in self-employment (on the database), 38 clients are still currently on the Enterprise in Action mailing list.

A total of 34 clients have received client adviser support through one to one meetings, numerous phone calls and e-mails. 11 current clients, 13 No further action and 10 outcomes.

Client outcomes include the five into self-employment, one into employment and volunteering with future self-employment in the pipeline and five clients into employment.

During the course of the project Enterprise in Action advisers have attended 20 roadshows, 5 Monmouthshire County Council Events, 12 Other events.

Test Trading activities: Various. Events:11 Attendance 38 in total

Training Activities: Various. Training workshops 9 Attendance 46

7.1 Enterprise in Action Case Studies

Following Enterprise in Action support for contributors seeking self-employment, three contributors agreed to become case studies. This is to give evidence of their participation in test trading activities which provided them with the knowledge, skills and confidence towards achieving their future self-employment; demonstrate how the

project has helped them to either set up in business or explore their ideas at feasibility stage. (See **Appendix** for Case Studies of contributors: Bryn Williams, Gill Meeks and Sue Skinner)

8.0 Conclusions

This report demonstrates that both “Prime Cymru” and the Newport and Gwent Enterprise “Enterprise in Action” partners of the MePlan 50+ project have achieved their remits in terms of:

- Attracting and supporting 50 + by providing a range of innovative, flexible and targeted methods of support towards meeting project targets.
- Provided a range of “test-trading” opportunities for contributors seeking future self-employment and to meeting the project targets. These test trading opportunities are now more innovative than the original test trading model to meet the needs of the 50+ contributors leaning towards service sector type businesses as opposed to craft/product based businesses.
- Delivered specific workshops (Experience Counts Workshops) to support employment search skills and prepare 50+ to present themselves for interview and future employment by increasing their chances of being selected for a suitable vacancy.
- The “one to one” support meetings, the road-show events, test-trading opportunities and training sessions (“Experience Counts”, Confidence Building, First Impressions, Ideas Generation, Costing and Pricing, Inland Revenue, Maximise your Marketing etc) have provided a holistic package of support and a clear model for other mainstream providers to emulate.
- The study demonstrates that partnership working has been paramount to the success of the project. In particular, the “value added” benefit towards the contributors’ success has enabled them to secure full and part-time employment or self-employment, or pursue further training. The positive enthusiasm generated throughout all events and training sessions also helped to create the project momentum with carried throughout all events held in the five main population areas of Monmouthshire.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that the work of the project has made a difference to a number of people who came seeking support.

9.0 Recommendations

From the work undertaken there appears to be great potential to continue with this kind of support for 50+ who are seeking employment, self-employment, or a combination of the two, to build on this existing and successful platform of support. The findings point towards a potential opportunity for both Prime Cymru and Newport and Gwent Enterprise “Enterprise in Action” to continue to build on MePlan 50+ project work and the MePlan 50+ brand name by endeavouring to secure additional funding towards the aims:

- Continuing to provide both targeted and focused support for 50+ seeking either employment or self-employment.
- Continuing to provide and develop a range of relevant and innovative methods that are attractive to people aged 50+ seeking employment or self-employment in an increasingly aging population.
- Developing the website as a first “port of call” to 50+ seeking employment or self-employment, or an opportunity to explore their ideas.
- Delivering specific workshops i.e. Confidence Building, Ideas Generation, ICT, Inland Revenue, etc. for 50+ target market to aid their development & designing new workshops to supplement these offerings. i.e. 50+ What next?

In order to achieve the above recommendations, MePlan 50+ brand should be promoted Pan Wales with suitable funding secured and in place for marketing activities and workshop delivery.

The funding will enable “Experience Counts” workshops and “Enterprise in Action” workshops and ‘test trading’ activities to continue and be promoted Pan Wales so that existing mainstream providers can utilise the expertise of the MePlan 50+ Specialist Advisers and team in the delivery of 50+ support.

The existing MePlan 50+ Website is an ideal mechanism to attract 50+ to a one stop shop of specialist support, especially because of this growing market.

The information and links on the MePlan 50+ website should be utilised to attract 50+ and mainstream providers to use the resource for information and signposting. However, in order for this to be successful, those organisations that support the 50+ need to ensure that any approach they use is innovative, specific (as opposed to generic), targeted and provides flexible opportunities tailored to the mature individual. That they provide the appropriate and relevant signposting information for the 50+ to be able to identify the mechanisms which will aid their decision making and help them achieve their goals.

Therefore, the above goes some way in encouraging 50+ and mainstream providers to seek the specialist support required.

Appendix – Case Studies

Prime Cymru: Heather Evans, Christine Chicken and Gillian Lewis

Enterprise in Action: Bryn Williams, Gill Meeks and Sue Skinner

Heather Evans, Usk



Heather Evans first came onto the MePlan 50+ project in August 2007 when she attended a road show in Usk. The client had seen a poster advertising the event.

She told the team that she had not worked for many years as she had been bringing up her family; although she had been involved in volunteering work for her local church through fundraising activities and general administrative duties including the design of the parish magazine.

When Heather joined the project she was thinking about returning to the workplace in a part-time capacity.

How did the MePlan50+ Project help Heather?

By attending the road-show and a Prime Cymru “Experience Counts” workshop, which addresses the employment issues associated with people aged 50+ trying to obtain work, plus having a number of one to one employment mentoring sessions with the Prime Cymru Adviser, she has benefitted in the following areas: Help her to rebuild her self-confidence; overcome the barriers associated with finding a job at age 50+; helped her to refine her Curriculum Vitae to a selling and targeted document; helped with the interview process and generally improved her job search skills.

The above factors enabled her to seek work opportunities in a positive and confident manner.

In November 2007 Heather wrote a letter of recommendation about the project in which she thanked all of the team for encouraging her with help and advice in employment matters. She states *“The project is a brilliant idea for the over 50s, enabling them to find work in different ways”* and *“my new designer CV looks really inspiring as well!”*

What’s happening now for Heather Evans:

In January 2008, Heather obtained a part-time job as an Optician’s Receptionist at the local Optician’s shop in Usk. She states she has settled really well into the job which is allowing her to use her good communication skills and administration experience. Heather also acts as a role model to inspire others on the project.

Christine Chicken, Undy

Christine Chicken saw an article in “Newport Matters” in early July 2007 about Prime Cymru’s “Experience Counts” Project which tries to help people age 50+ back into work. As Christine lives in Monmouthshire and not Newport and is 50+, she was invited to switch over to the MePlan 50+ project, by the Prime Adviser, and attended her first Chepstow road-show on 4th July 2007.

When she came to this road show she was unemployed and receiving incapacity benefit, due to her ill-health and other issues. These issues had extended over many months and compounded upon her inability to secure work. Christine said *“I was feeling low, so just getting out of the house was an effort”*. Prior to these issues in her life, Christine had worked full-time in a number of employed roles, for a number of years, and so already achieved a good employment track record.

How did the MePlan50+ Project help Christine?

At the first meeting, Christine made it clear to the team that it was her intention to get back into the workplace in a part-time capacity, as soon as possible, and that she would need a lot of help to achieve this goal.

She also told the team that in order for her to achieve employment she needed help to rebuild her self-confidence and esteem, because she felt she was in a *“black hole”* and *“couldn’t see any way out of it.”* She would need to review her Curriculum Vitae, her interview skills and transferable skills, job search skills and overcome the barriers facing her to return to work.

After attending this workshop Christine said *“I was glad to go to the first workshop which made me feel a real person again”* and *“meeting other people in similar situations was a really good experience and everyone was so nice and friendly, it built up my confidence”*

Christine attended the second Chepstow road show three weeks later, as well as having several “one to one” sessions (during July and August 2007) to explore the above issues, via the support of the Prime Cymru Adviser.

During this time, she also attended tailored “Enterprise in Action” training on “Ideas Generation” and “Creating the Right First Impression” to enable Christine to think about where ideas arise, towards her gaining future employment and how she would present herself at interview stage to increase her chances of success.

Additionally, in the October 2007, Christine attended an “Experience Counts” workshop held in Chepstow, which was yet another opportunity for her to boost her self-confidence and esteem and enhance her job search skills.

At the October workshop, by chance, one of the contributors said to Christine *“You can drive? You like driving? Why not get a driving job?”* She explored this opportunity and contacted a local transport company which also ran a taxi service. She had to undergo a medical examination and CRB check to obtain a taxi driving licence.

What's happening now for Christine Chicken:

As a result she has now obtained a full-time employed role as a taxi driver (November 2007) doing school runs and general cabby work, which, as far as the project team understand, she is still enjoying this position.

Christine said *"It feels great to be earning money and getting about and being useful"*. MePlan 50+ has proved a positive experience for Christine who would have no hesitation in recommending MePlan 50+ project to others in a similar situation to herself.

Gillian Lewis, Caldicot

Gillian Lewis first attended a MePlan 50+ road-show in Caldicot Leisure Centre in July 2007, after coming across a poster in Caldicot Town Centre advertising the event.

At the time Gillian came onto the project, she was unemployed and was registered with the Job Centre service and Careers Wales Gwent.

When she first spoke to the team, she stated in her own words that she felt isolated and alone, and that she was seeking help in rebuilding her self-confidence towards future employment. She also wanted to review her interview skills and obtain details of ICT training courses to provide her with updated skills and enhance her employment prospects. This road show enabled the team to start the process of her support, towards helping her overcome these issues.

Subsequently, she then attended the Chepstow road show in late July 2007 in order to meet others in the same position as herself, and to continue with her one to one support with the Prime Cymru Adviser.

At this event, the Adviser provided Gillian with details of current vacancies in Monmouthshire and Newport advertised on two internet websites, which Gillian had not known about previously, and this information enabled Gillian to explore further employment opportunities for herself. She also benefitted from a further one to one session regarding interview skills and what employers would be seeking in potential candidates.

How did the MePlan50+ Project help Gillian?

Gillian said "I felt isolated, and the MePlan 50+ workshops made me realise that I wasn't on my own, that I could meet up with other people in a similar age group and similar position to myself, which I found to be very positive".

She also expressed that "The team running the workshops were also very positive, friendly and gave me good sound advice and signposting information. She recognised that MePlan 50+ team were the right people providing the right help at the right time to meet her needs".

From her attendance at the Caldicot road show, the team immediately walked over to the RISE organisation (located opposite the Leisure Centre) to obtain details of ICT courses starting in the September for Gillian to consider embarking upon. In fact, Gillian would have started one of these courses had she not obtained a job in the meantime.

What's happening now for Gillian Lewis:

Gillian obtained full-time employment with a well-known local supermarket which she started in early September 2007. She is still working there at this point in time. However, she said that sooner or later she would like to find a more challenging position, possibly even with the same employer.

Gillian has fed back to the team that she hoped the project would continue to support 50+ well after the research has ended, to continue to support other people in a similar position and age to herself, because she found the experience of being a contributor most beneficial and she would certainly recommend to others.

'Enterprise in Action' Case Study:

Bryn Williams



Bryn Williams had been working for 30 years doing 60 hours a week with major publishing organisations. When he retired at 56 he very quickly started to get bored!

"I'd done all my gardening, done all my decorating and I wanted to find something constructive to do with the rest of my life" said Bryn, when he first attended one of the MePlan 50+ road-show events to learn more about the support opportunities towards employment, self-employment and volunteering.

How did the MePlan50+ Project help Bryn?

Bryn arrived at our July 2007 workshop in Abergavenny after reading about the project in a newspaper advertisement and he has since benefitted from "one to one" support as well as a number of **Test Trade** activities (activities which have enabled Bryn to interact with potential customers and undertake simple market research in a low risk environment). Particularly, Bryn commented: *"It opened my eyes to the opportunities out there"* and *"It was an opportunity to meet people in a similar situation and share ideas"*

Importantly, *"It has given me control over my life"*. Bryn felt that he needed to find his direction after this brief period of "time out" and... *"MePlan 50+ has given me the opportunity to discuss ideas and to test them out in a non-threatening environment."* He said. *"The support and advice of the MePlan 50+ Team has been really helpful in me making, what I believe, to be the right choices in terms of where I want to go and what I want to do"*.

What's happening now for Bryn Williams:

Bryn secured employment as a Community Engagement Officer with Torfaen Council, helping people back into employment, volunteering, training or education and he has now recently achieved a higher management role within the same local authority. Something he had not anticipated happening at the time he came onto the MePlan 50+ project!

Bryn is also training to be a General Advisor with the Citizen's Advice Bureau in Pontypool.

There is the future possibility for Bryn to deliver OCN teaching in the community as Bryn has achieved his ET01 teaching qualification and is now looking how to develop this further through embarking on a possible PCET course.

Since receiving support from MePlan 50+, Bryn has also undertaken First Aid Training, Equality and Diversity training, British Sign Language Training, and is now identifying Basic Skills Training.

More importantly, Bryn has used the **Test Trade** experience as a diving board towards him making the transition into self-employment and Bryn is in the process of registering his business with the Inland Revenue.

Bryn has also acted as one of the MePlan 50+ role models, which is a real motivator, in order to speak to others who are 50+ about his life's journey and to help them to think about how they might also make the transition with the help of the MePlan 50+ specialist team.

How he sees it now:

"Life is a game of two halves." He says. "The first half is working for your family and your needs. The second half is working for yourself and what you want to do" "I can do anything – whatever I want to do!" says Bryn.

Feedback from Bryn has been very positive and MePlan 50+ has helped Bryn with "where to look" and "what to do" in order to achieve his future goals and this has boosted his confidence to just "go for it".

Gill Meeks, Chepstow



Gill Meeks first attended one of the MePlan 50+ road show events in Monmouth in July 2007, where she talked about an idea she had for her future self-employment. Gill appeared very enthusiastic about her idea, but said she was uncertain about whether it had the potential for a business.

Her idea was for healthy dog biscuits, and the idea derived from a recipe which had been passed down to her from her grandmother, and which Gill already produced on a small scale from her kitchen for her dog Winnie.

Gill thought that this product idea would be ideal for a home based business (initially because that's where she was making the biscuits) and potentially for future manufacturing.

Gill believed that "Winnie's Treats" (the name she had thought up for her business) would be something that other dog owners would be interested in, and that they would be so similarly impressed with the product, as she was, that they would want to buy the biscuits for the benefit of their own dogs!

Gill said: *"Being in my mid sixties I was retired after many years of teaching" and "I was involved with the scouts and looking after grandchildren".*

Although Gill said she that she lead a busy life, she said *"I felt I still had a lot of mental energy that needed using"* and she had come to the road-show to learn more about the support available and to see if her idea had any mileage. Gill also commented that she was not sure if she could manage a business *"at her age!"* There appeared to be a "lack of confidence" issue.

How did the MePlan50+ Project help Gill?

Gill met an 'Enterprise in Action' Adviser at that Monmouth road show meeting to learn more about how 'Enterprise in Action' supports those seeking self-employment. The Adviser listened to her idea, her issues and her concerns and booked the first one to one meeting with Gill.

Since that time, Gill has received on-going “one to one” pre-start business support with the EIA Adviser, initially to enable Gill to explore her existing skills, skills that she would bring to a business, and to identify any gaps that she might need to address (i.e. any training need), and subsequently to prepare Gill to take part in “Test-Trading” activities, so she could explore the feasibility of her idea and to empower her decision-making to think about taking the idea forward or not.

Over the course of the project, Gill has received a significant number of hours of support, through ‘one to one’ meetings with the Adviser and through various “test-trading” activities.

Gill has had the opportunity to speak with potential customers on The Gallery Landing, Newport Market, to identify interest in her dog biscuits; interact with existing businesses to see how others present themselves in business (Five Counties Show, The Velodrome, Cwmbran and ngb2b business breakfasts in Chepstow and Newport) and to explore market research and market reach activities.

The test-trading opportunities included (1) Her presence on The Gallery Landing Newport Market (twice: 12th December 07 and February 08 – jointly with “City” Project) along with other test-traders (see picture overleaf where Gill presented her “dog biscuits” to attract people to buy them) NB In particular the Adviser was able to prepare Gill to be able to do this and this has enabled Gill to explore her idea in much greater depth. (2) Gill has also benefitted from tailored support by attending a number of ‘Enterprise in Action’ workshops i.e. ‘Maximise Your Marketing’ ‘First Impressions’ ‘Introduction to Web 2.0’ ‘Costing and Pricing’ workshops etc. to raise her confidence and knowledge of the various aspects of business and ICT (3) She has also attended a Tax workshop delivered by the Inland Revenue (4) and attended joint meetings (arranged through the EIA Adviser) to introduce Gill to the additional support mechanism of Business Eye (Caldicot Office) - The Business Information Gateway – who offer additional market research support.

Most importantly, Gill said *“I loved the feistiness and energy at the first workshop meeting”* and *“I have met many people who wanted to remain mentally active, not just working to get money”*. *“It’s great to have an advisor to sit down and talk your business ideas through with”* Gill has fed back to the team that the one to one meetings certainly provide encouragement, motivation and support to the 50+ who are thinking about making changes to their lives and are unsure about the next steps forward.

What’s happening now for Gill Meeks:

With the encouragement and support of ‘Enterprise in Action’, Gill is still exploring the feasibility of her healthy dog biscuits idea, and is continuing to benefit from ‘one to one’ meetings. Gill is currently working towards an “Exit Strategy” as the project approaches its end, and Gill is continuing to look at possible dog-orientated spin offs.

Gill has also given back of herself and her time to the MePlan 50+ project as a Role Model. She has spoken at a number of the 2008 (Phase 2) road-shows, providing feed-back and encouragement to other contributors, speaking about how MePlan 50+ has supported her progress to date and what the project would be able to do for them.

Gill has not yet made the full commitment to setting herself up in business, but she is still on her journey, and self-employment is something that may well transpire for Gill in the not too distant future. Time will tell.

Sue Skinner, Chepstow



Sue Skinner attended a MePlan 50+ road-show in Chepstow after hearing about the project through the Monmouthshire Local Authority. *“Out of the blue I got an email about MePlan50+, thought what’s this, hadn’t got a clue, thought maybe I’ll find out something.”* She said. *“At the time I was feeling a bit down and a bit undervalued – when I got to the MePlan50+ workshop I found it was buzzing with energy - people were interested in what I did and what I wanted to do”*

How did the MePlan50+ Project help Sue?

Since attending the road-show, where Sue learned more about the support from the various partners, and in particular how ‘Enterprise in Action’ could support her future self-employed aspirations: *“I was thinking about setting up my own business but it had always been very much on the back burner”* and *“I particularly wanted to explore self employment, hadn’t got a clue about setting up in business”*.

It transpired that her business idea was to set up as a Parent Coach, where Sue felt she could support parents and children with a whole range of issues, and so, in order to explore this idea Sue received ‘one to one’ specialist support followed by “test-trading”. “Test-trading” to test the feasibility of her idea in a low risk environment, to enable her to interact with potential customers, undertake simple market research and decide about the next steps. Sue commented that *“Without the support of the self employment advisor with MePlan50+ I wouldn’t be here today, she particularly boosted my self confidence”*

What’s happening now for Sue Skinner:

Since coming onto the project Sue Skinner secured a new employment role at the beginning of 2008, in the area akin to her future business aspirations. She has also made progress with her business aspirations.

Sue’s future business is life coaching and parent coaching.

Appendix – General Promotional Material

Appendix - General Project flyer





OVER 50?
What can MePlan 50+ do for you?.....

Working with individuals and employers to enhance opportunities which lead to the increased employment, retention and contribution of the over 50s.

MePlan50+ is a tri nation partnership part funded by the ESF Article 6 programme and based in Monmouthshire in Wales, Offenbach in Germany and County Westmeath in Ireland.

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www.meplan50.eu



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 01633 254117

or visit

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EUROPEAN UNION
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MePlan50+ is about helping individuals plan their future careers within employment

How can we help you?

Experience Counts Programme – Prime Cymru

Our experienced Client Advisors can help you:

- Take stock of your current situation
- Define your marketable skills, knowledge and experience
- Identify and assess suitable work options and the kind of work environment that would best suit you
- Present yourself effectively in writing, over the telephone and face to face

We can prepare you for:

- Communicating with potential employers
- Developing the perfect CV
- Using the Internet
- Dealing with, and maximising your success at interview

MePlan50+ is about helping individuals plan their future through self-employment

How can we help you?

Enterprise in Action – Newport & Gwent Enterprise

Our experienced Client Advisors can help you:

- Identify new business ideas
- Test the feasibility of your new business
- Experience trading with clients
- Develop your personal and business skills

We can prepare you for:

- Starting up your new business

MePlan50+ is about helping individuals explore opportunities in volunteering

How can we help you?

Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO)

Our experienced Volunteer Advisors can help you:

- Contribute your skills and experience to others
- Enhance your skills through volunteering
- Work with others through a volunteer network

"Following a recent road show I have gained confidence, new friends, information & guidance and most importantly the realisation that many people are in the same situation as myself. "



Jane, 55, self-employed based in Magor

Over 50?

Based in Monmouthshire?

Fancy running your own business?

**Not ready to
take the
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We can help you test the water!

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ARE YOU AGED 50+?

YOUR EXPERIENCE COUNTS

about to leave work? being made redundant?
taking early retirement? unemployed or between jobs?
claiming benefit, but want to work?
looking for a change of direction?

We can help you explore paid employment,
self employment and other possibilities

Come along to one of our **FREE**
'Presenting Yourself' workshops in 2008

Thursday 7th February – The Sessions House, Usk 10am–1pm
Wednesday 5th March – St Mary's Priory, Abergavenny 12.30pm–3.30pm
Wednesday 7th May – The Bridges Centre, Monmouth 10am–1pm

What do you do next?

Call Prime Cymru **FREE** on 0800 587 4085

www.prime-cymru.co.uk

www.meplan50.eu



EUROPEAN UNION
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Article 6 Innovative Measures



Prime Cymru – Experience Counts Leaflet



About PRIME Cymru

PRIME Cymru is one of the Prince of Wales's group of charities. We are dedicated to supporting the needs of older people who are economically inactive, and providing free assistance to individuals over the age of 50 who wish to become self-employed or look for paid employment or volunteering opportunities.

Experience Counts

Experience Counts is funded by EU money. It has been established to help create a series of stepping stones to help you find work opportunities, and for you to participate in projects which make a contribution to improving community life and your environment.

What do all people over 50 have in common?

Experience, and Experience Counts!

We can help if you are:

- about to leave work?
- being made redundant?
- taking early retirement?
- unemployed or between jobs?
- claiming benefit, but want to work?
- looking for a change of direction

How can we help you?

Through one to one mentoring and/or group workshops we hope to achieve some of the following:

- Review your skills, experience and job history



**CALL US FREE
0800 587 4085**

Or contact your local advisor

Keith Jones
01633 431368/
07889 264678

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Website: www.prime-cymru.co.uk



ARE YOU AGED 50+?

**YOU HAVE
SOMETHING THAT
CAN'T BE BOUGHT –
EXPERIENCE!**

**PRIME Cymru is
running a project in
MONMOUTHSHIRE
and
YOUR EXPERIENCE
counts!**

**CALL US FREE
0800 587 4085**

- Identify your transferable skills and experience
- Review what you can do and what you'd like to do
- Identify any barriers to securing work, such as transport
- Help with your CV / Job applications
- Help you prepare for job interviews
- Help you identify any possible job vacancies
- Keep in regular contact to see how things are progressing

What will you gain?

You will get **free** help and support to achieve the goals you want to reach.

**THE ONLY LIMIT IS
YOUR IMAGINATION**

**A message from our
Founder & President HRH
The Prince of Wales**



"In 2001 I formed PRIME Cymru because I felt that the experience and skills of many older people were being wasted. Experience Counts gives people an opportunity to use their knowledge and skills to benefit themselves and their communities."

What Do You Do Next?
Call PRIME Cymru **FREE** on
0800 587 4085.

