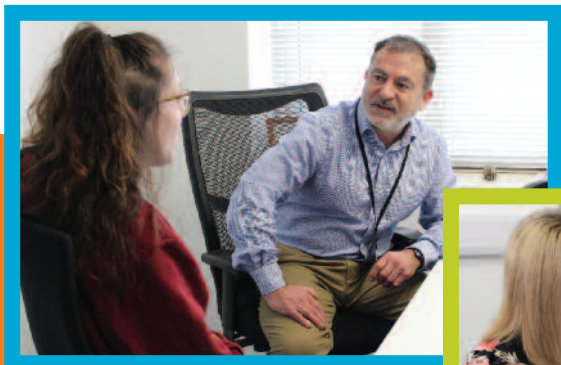


# PORTLAND PATHWAYS

PREPARING FOR WORK

SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

RECOVERY COLLEGE



IMPACT REPORT  
2020/21



# INTRODUCTION

We are extremely proud of the huge impact Portland Pathways has within our community.

Pathways aims to support individuals to gain employment, and to help businesses to recruit the right staff for their roles. We also offer a range of courses to help our customers to develop their skills and prepare for employment. Our Recovery College courses, in partnership with the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, support people to improve their mental health.

In 2017, we launched the pilot of Portland Pathways from our first hub in Mansfield. With a focus on reducing the disability employment gap in Mansfield and Ashfield, this unique 'roll-on, roll-off' programme provides the encouragement and tools for people to excel.

Since launching the pilot, Portland Pathways has gone from strength to strength. In 2018, we opened a second hub in Sutton-in-Ashfield and have recently celebrated our 4th anniversary. We are now planning to extend our impact further with hubs in Worksop and Kirkby-in-Ashfield.

In a relatively short time, Portland Pathways has won four prestigious awards and was named as finalist for the Equality Trailblazer Award in the national British Chamber of Commerce Awards.

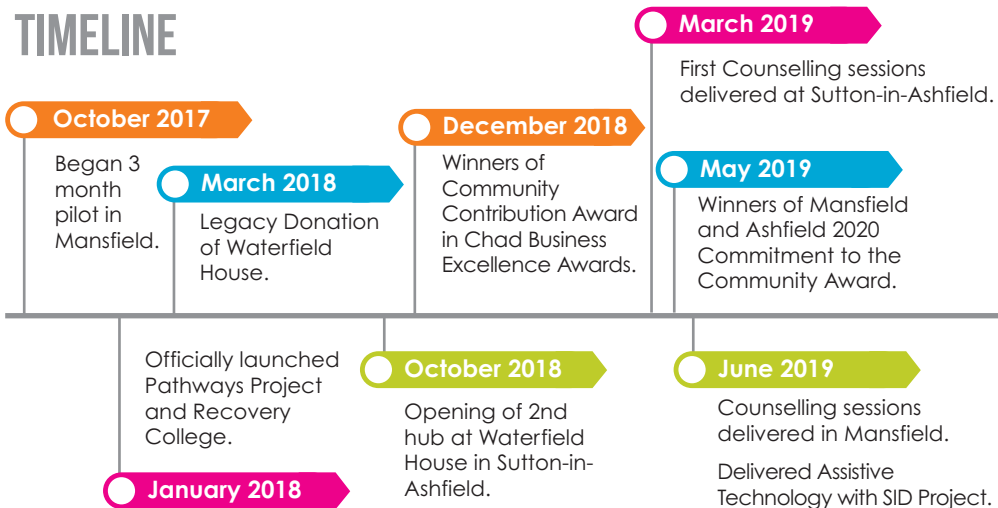
This year has been a challenging year, with Covid restrictions impacting on employment opportunities and mental health, however we have continued to deliver crucial support through our different services and have secured 41 job starts and provided 110 one-to-one counselling hours.

This report highlights just some of the many successes that the Pathways project has delivered, as well as taking the opportunity to thank our many funders, supporters and staff.



**Mark Dale**  
Principal & CEO

## TIMELINE



# CASE STUDY

## Irene Westwood

Irene Westwood was first referred to Portland Pathways in 2018 via Framework to build her confidence and social skills.

After attending the Recovery College and with the support of Pathways staff, Irene decided to volunteer on the programme as she understood what people attending were going through. While volunteering with the Recovery College, she developed a greater awareness of mental health and gained lots of confidence in working with people with mental health challenges.

Whilst at Recovery College, Irene completed training in Mental Health Awareness and Keeping Children Safe in Education, preparing her for future positions.

Irene wanted to broaden her experience further by volunteering at Portland Day Services, supporting the Thursday Garden Group's community litter picking initiative.

Irene really enjoys her volunteering work and is a really valuable member of the team.

Previously working as a portrait photographer in schools and baking for family and friends in her spare time, Irene is looking forward to finding a full-time role which enables her to use her skills and give something back to the community.



### September 2019

Welcomed Stitch Sew Support Group to Sutton-in-Ashfield.

### November 2019

Delivered D2N2 Digital Essentials course.

### August 2020

Reopened doors for face to face appointments. Began exciting recruitment drive with Amazon. Let's All Eat Foodbank moved into Waterfield House.

### September 2020

ATTFE Sutton Academy began delivering various courses from Waterfield House.

### November 2021

Won the British Chambers of Commerce Equality Trailblazer Diversity and Inclusion Award in the East Midlands region.

Delivered Fighting Minds, the first in-work support sessions for veterans.

Temporarily moved to an online and telephone service due to COVID-19.

Won East Midlands Chamber Community Impact Award.

### July 2019

### March 2020

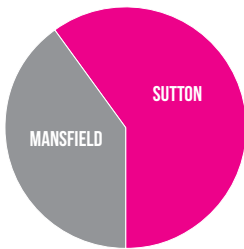
### November 2020

# FACTS & FIGURES



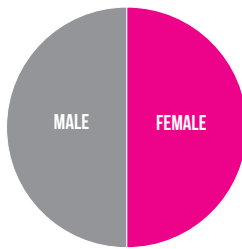
## 80 REFERRALS TO THE SERVICE

### PREPARATION FOR WORK



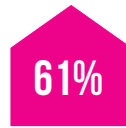
#### REFERRALS BY HUB

32 Mansfield (40%)  
48 Sutton (60%)



#### REFERRALS BY GENDER

40 Male (50%)  
40 Female (50%)

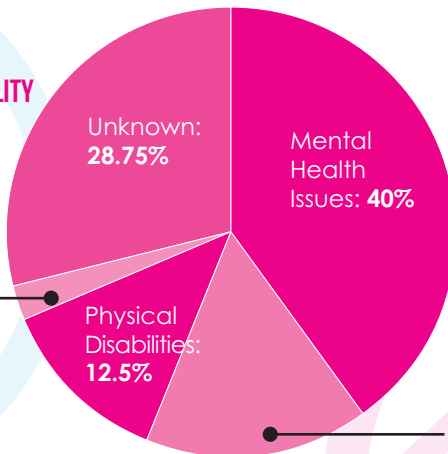


OF JOB STARTS  
REMAIN IN POST AT  
26 WEEKS (19/20)



JOB STARTS IN 20/21

#### REFERRALS BY DISABILITY



No Disability:  
2.5%

Intellectual and  
Developmental  
Disabilities: 16.25%

# SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

BUSINESSES RECRUITED  
PATHWAYS CUSTOMERS

57

## RECOVERY COLLEGE

CUSTOMERS ENROLLED ONTO  
RECOVERY COLLEGE COURSES

36

ONE-TO-ONE COUNSELLING  
HOURS DELIVERED

110

## WELL-BEING RESULTS FOR PORTLAND PATHWAYS

(Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale)

LOW WELL-BEING

MODERATE WELL-BEING

HIGH WELL-BEING

Proportions of customers in each group before and after intervention

**BEFORE**  
PORTLAND  
PATHWAYS  
INTERVENTION



**AFTER**  
PORTLAND  
PATHWAYS  
INTERVENTION



### DISTANCE TRAVELLED

**48%** less people in Low Well-being category

**42%** improvement in Moderate Well-being

**7%** improvement in High Well-being

# MATRIX PROPERTIES...

## Portland Pathways helps parents with Access to Work Applications

Many learners at Portland College are encouraged to complete work experience placements as part of their further education to help improve confidence, communication and develop independence, ready for when they leave Portland and enter the world of work.

As part of their work experience placements, Portland College provides learners with transport to and from the workplace as well as a support worker to assist them in their day-to-day duties.

One of the local businesses who support Portland College learners with their work experience placements is Matrix Properties based in Strelley.

In September 2019, Portland Pathways was asked to support two learners who had just finished studying at Portland College as they have been offered paid employment with Matrix Properties following successful work experience placements.

However, because they had finished studying, they could no longer access Portland College's transport or support staff. Their parents wondered how they would be able to take up the offer of employment as they both needed 1-2-1 support at work and transport.

Nikki Amirsaeedi, Pathways Manager contacted the learners' parents and the business to discuss how Portland Pathways could help them ensure that the learners could start paid employment with Matrix Properties. She explained that the Government run a scheme called Access to Work which is designed specifically to support people with a physical or mental disability or health condition start or remain in work. They can offer:

- a grant to help pay for practical support with work
- advice about managing your mental health at work
- money to pay for communication support at job interviews

Nikki supported the learners' parents to apply for Access to Work and helped submit all relevant documentation and health records required. This was initially completed just for the Travel to Work element and Nikki spoke to many local taxi firms and set up agreements with a local firm who invoiced Access to Work directly.

The Support Worker element was then applied for successfully and both started work in January 2020.

Matrix Properties were so impressed with the previous learners and the Access to Work support that the following year, they identified two more learners they wished to employ. Portland Pathways again supported the Access to Work applications.



**Alex Ottewell, from Matrix said:**

“Learners with learning difficulties have proven to us to make excellent employees. At Matrix Properties, we couldn't have been happier with the results from the learners that underwent work experience placements with us, so much so, we offered the learners paid work positions at the end of their placements.

What started out for us as an opportunity to benefit from additional resource from learners, as well as provide them with a platform to develop skills, build confidence and enhance their employability, has actually resulted in a successful recruitment process for us, saving us time and money finding and trialling the right people.

We would recommend to anyone running their own business or part of a wider business to at least consider offering work experience placements to learners from Portland. Learners are managed by their own, hands on support workers, meaning you as a business benefit even more from extra helping hands. We have gained so much for what has felt like such little/no effort on our part, and to know that we are part of a wider effort working to change the employability landscape and career aspirations for young people with learning difficulties is just magic.

Without the support given to the parents by Portland Pathways and their patience with the Access to Work application process, I don't think that we would have the valuable staff in post that we have today.

”

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Covid-19 pandemic presented many challenges to our clients, employers and Pathways as a community service.

As 40% of clients last year reported having mental health issues, it was vital for Pathways to continue supporting people. During the lockdown periods, Pathways operated a telephone service before opening up again for face-to-face delivery in August 2020.

Throughout lockdowns, we continued to work closely with clients to support their varying needs.



## IMPACT DURING LOCKDOWN

48 NEW REFERRALS TO THE SERVICE

7 JOB STARTS

60 1:1 COUNSELLING HOURS DELIVERED



## CASE STUDY

### Alex Brown

Alex was referred to Portland Pathways for help with his anxiety and confidence, Alex has Autism and finds social situations difficult at times. Alex completed both levels of the Recovery College and found this helped him to cope and especially improved his social interaction as he was within a group of people of differing ages and backgrounds.

Alex has progressed exceptionally well and has joined a local gym to keep fit and with Pathways help has secured a place at University studying the Classics.

Pathways helped him with Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and through a local organisation was able to supply him with a new laptop computer to help him with his studies.





# OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



As a community initiative, Pathways works in partnership with several organisations and groups locally.

For example, in 2020, we made the Let's All Eat Community Foodbank our Charity of the Year and supported them with fundraising, donated 5000 free meals, created Christmas boxes for those most in need and provided the foodbank with space at Waterfield House.

The Sharewear clothing scheme is also based upstairs in Waterfield House, providing the perfect central location for them to conduct their vital charity work.

Academy Transformation Trust FE College use our meeting rooms to deliver courses and training, and the Stitch, Sew, Support Group operate their members only community group from Waterfield House every Monday.

## CUSTOMER QUOTES

"Thank you so much for helping me. Without your help and guidance I would never have been successful. With lots of love and thanks, Angela".

"I'm still working and enjoying it. It gets me out of the house, meeting people and socialising. It's the best thing I've done."

## COMING SOON

We're really excited to be expanding into Worksop in January 2022 so more people can benefit from our services. We are also exploring suitable premises in Kirkby-in-Ashfield with a view to opening another hub in the New Year.



# MULTI-AWARD-WINNING SERVICE

Since launching in 2017, our overall objective has been to promote independence, health and well-being and employability and provide vulnerable people with better futures.

Portland Pathways has been recognised for its huge impact by several prestigious awards.

## Community Contribution Award

Presented in November 2018 at the Chad Business Excellence Awards, this award recognised the successful launch and implementation of the Portland Pathways and Recovery College programmes in the Mansfield and Ashfield areas.



## Commitment to the Community Award

The Mansfield and Ashfield 2020 Commitment to the Community Award was presented in 2019 to celebrate our contribution to the economic development of North Nottinghamshire.



## East Midlands Chamber Community Impact Award

Pathways were crowned winners of the East Midlands Chamber Community Impact Award in 2020 in recognition of the crucial impact the service has on our local communities.



## British Chambers of Commerce Trailblazer Award

Following our award from the East Midlands Chamber, we were nominated for the regional finals and announced as winners of the Equality Trailblazer Diversity and Inclusion Award in the East Midlands region. We have also been shortlisted for the national award to be announced in December 2021.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Special thanks to our supporters who have helped us to deliver the Portland Pathways initiative:

## CORPORATE SUPPORTERS:

**LINNEY** 

- £45,000 Donation (£15k per year for three years)



- £5,000 Donation

## TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS:

**The Baily Thomas**  
Charitable Fund 

- £15,000 Donation



- £255,000

- **ACT Foundation:**  
£2,500 Donation

- **The Nineveh Charitable Trust:**  
£5,000 Donation



## INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS:

- **I. Waterfield:** Legacy Donation of £35,576 for lift
- **I. Waterfield:** Legacy Donation of Waterfield House
- **I. Waterfield:** Legacy Donation of £200,000 for Revenue Funding

# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## How your business can support your local charity

Portland College is a specialist college for young people with disabilities and associated learning difficulties. As a registered charity we have to raise thousands of pounds each year to buy specialist equipment and therapies to enhance the lives of our learners and citizens.

But it's not just cash donations that your business can help with. There are many individualised partnership options for your business and we would love to hear your ideas and work with you to create a perfect partnership.

Here are just a few ways your business could help hundreds of disabled people...

- **Employee Fundraising**
- **Volunteering**
- **Donating Materials**
- **Payroll Giving**
- **Work Experience Placements**
- **Choosing Portland as your Charity of the Year**

If you would like to support the Portland Charity, we'd love to hear from you.

Please contact us to discuss your ideas on **01623 499100 ext 202** or email [graceturner@portland.ac.uk](mailto:graceturner@portland.ac.uk)

# HOW PORTLAND PATHWAYS CAN HELP YOU...



## PREPARING FOR WORK

**We can help you to:**

- Assess your employability needs and work with you to address them.
- Create a professional CV and/or cover letter.
- Search and apply for work, including support for online applications.
- Undertake employability sessions and prepare you for interview.



## SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

**We can support your business to:**

- Identify alternative recruitment avenues.
- Realise the benefits of employing someone with a disability or additional needs.
- Apply for Access to Work funding.
- Promote health and well-being in the workplace.



## RECOVERY COLLEGE

**We will provide:**

- A range of courses aimed at people with mental health difficulties.
- Strategies and techniques for you to take away and use in daily life.
- Ongoing support to help improve health and well-being.

For more information contact the **Portland Pathways Team**  
T: **01623 499193** E: **pathways@portland.ac.uk**

## OUR LOCATIONS

### **Pathways @ Sutton**

Waterfield House, 10B Outram Street, Sutton-in-Ashfield,  
Nottinghamshire, NG17 4AX

### **Pathways @ Mansfield**

Advice Hub, 16 Regent Street, Mansfield,  
Nottinghamshire, NG18 1SS

### **Pathways @ Worksop**

The Crossing Church & Centre, Newcastle Street, Worksop,  
North Nottinghamshire, S80 2AT



**Portland**

Pathways



@portlandcollege