

Press Release
8 February 2010

New Money Mentors get the go-ahead



Residents of Torfaen will soon be able to benefit from a new government funded project called Money Mentors, that will offer financial advice to the local community.

JobMatch, who last week approved funding for the Torfaen based scheme, is a UK government initiative which helps thousands of people into training and gaining new qualifications, linking people with suitable job opportunities and encouraging self-employment.

Money Mentors is a joint partnership between Melin Homes, Gateway Credit Union, Torfaen Council and Torfaen Citizens Advice Bureau and is funded by JobMatch.

The Money Mentors project will provide expert financial advice to the local community. The fully trained Money Mentors will be going into the local community in mid March talking to people in places such as local schools, libraries and adult education centres, maybe even the local pub!

Kellie Beirne, Director of Communities and Enterprise told us: “The brilliance of this scheme is that the Money Mentors will be chosen from the local community and will have a vast knowledge of the local area and its residents. Money Mentors will know the people and the places and can give advice in a more informal setting.”

John Richards, Manager of Gateway Credit Union said “The Money Mentors, once appointed, will undergo an intensive three week, tailor made training course which will look at all areas of personal finance such as benefits, savings and managing debt. They will become real experts having both the financial knowledge and knowledge of the local area.”

Dave Congreve, Assistant Chief Executive (Communities) said “A not so obvious, but equally important benefit of the scheme is the creation of 7 new jobs in the Torfaen area to previously unemployed people. This is a huge bonus in itself, without counting the advice and support these people will provide.”

Sheila Hendrickson-Brown, Director of Torfaen Citizens Advice Bureau said “Many people visit our offices every day looking for financial advice, but I am sure this is just the tip of the iceberg. Having local people as Money Mentors will make a huge difference to the help people can receive. Research has shown that people are far more likely to take advice from someone they know and trust.”

Donna Brown, Employment Routes Development/ Delivery Officer at JobMatch said “We are very pleased to be able to facilitate this new initiative that has been developed through local partnership working. We hope this is just the start of a successful working relationship that will provide more employment and training opportunities in the future.”

Ends

Photo caption:

Back row, left to right John Richards, Manager of Gateway Credit Union, Kate Buckley, Melin Homes HR Manager, Jess Marsh from Torfaen County Borough Council’s Community Services Unit and Sarah Freeman, Financial Inclusion Officer at Melin Homes

Sitting, left to right: Sheila Hendrickson-Brown, Director of Torfaen Citizens Advice Bureau and Kellie Beirne, Melin Homes’ Director of Communities and Enterprise.

Notes to editors:

Melin Homes is a not for profit landlord providing quality homes and services across Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport, Powys and Torfaen. For further information please visit www.melinhomes.co.uk