



11<sup>th</sup> March 2015

## **Ashley Community Housing granted Flexible Support Fund**

Ashley Community Housing, a Bristol-based housing association, is working closely with the Department of Work & Pensions on a number of initiatives to help unemployed individuals move into employment. To support this work Ashley Community Housing has secured funding of **£41,990** from the Flexible Support Fund to expand their culturally competent employability services by creating a service designed specifically for individuals from refugee and minority ethnic communities with multiple barriers to employment.

Ashley Community Housing are passionate about inspiring a positive change in people's lives, and will use their flexible support funding to create a pool of employability trainers from refugee communities with the cultural competence to support more individuals to become independent in their job search and job application activities. It aims to increase the ability of participants to work with their Job Centre advisor, ultimately leading to them moving into paid employment. It reinforces this work by providing work placements to consolidate this learning with work experience and a reference.

The programme will be open to individuals aged 18 or over and from refugee and minority ethnic communities, living within the Central Bristol wards. Individuals will be able to access this program via Ashley Community Housing's Job Club, partnership referral from local community groups and their Jobcentre Plus Advisers.

Ashley Community Housing will provide employability skills training supported by job coaching, work related activities across the city and work placements aimed at improving the employability for those in need of it. Personal development, language skills and basic numeracy skills will also be accessible. In addition the programme will offer post employment support for applicants who gain employment to smooth each individual's transition into the workplace.

Richard Thickpenny, Ashley Community Housing's Business Development and Fundraising Manager, said: "This project combats social disadvantage by supporting individuals to gain skills to overcome their social isolation, provides learning opportunities to break down the barriers of economic isolation and offers individuals the opportunity to become employed and gain the experience to add value to qualifications gained."

Ashley Community Housing is a leading provider of accommodation, support and employment training for refugee homeless individuals and families in Bristol. We provide accommodation with support to a wide range of people who need help to gain - or regain - their independence. We work with homeless people, women at risk of domestic abuse and refugees. Our aim is to provide homes in a stable, supportive environment with a range of services to match each person's needs.

For more information on our courses offered, please see our website [www.ashleyhousing.com](http://www.ashleyhousing.com)  
or call 0117540433

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