



## **£1.5M BOOST FOR 'LIFE-CHANGING'**

### **NORFOLK CHARITY PARTNERSHIP**

- ***Project will get 16-24 year olds with health and social barriers into work or education to change employability in Norfolk***

A major boost for seven Norfolk Charities has been confirmed today (15<sup>th</sup> December 2016) to help young people with severe barriers into education, training and employment.

Project leaders The Matthew Project, along with partners YMCA Norfolk, ACE, NANSA, Norwich and Central Norfolk Mind, Gyros (Great Yarmouth) and The Princes' Trust, have been successful in securing funding from the Building Better Opportunities programme, which is supported by the Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund.

It is the first time these specialist charities have coordinated a partnership approach on such a large scale and the funding will create up to 12 new jobs to the county. The overarching aim is to improve the lives of disadvantaged young people in Norfolk.

The *On Track Partnership* delivery will commence in January 2017 to support 16-24 year olds who are 'furthest from the labour market' with complex and entrenched barriers to work which prevent them from gaining skills, qualifications and ultimately employment. The partners have been working together for months to achieve this result.

The *On Track* Partnership will work with existing providers to reach those with moderate or severe special educational need or disabilities, mental health issues, substance misuse issues and anti-social behaviour or criminal activities.

-more follows-

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Lead charity the Matthew Project – drug and alcohol recovery specialists – along with partners, say it is now recruiting part of a 12-strong team in various roles to work alongside young people facing specific barriers to employment, continuing education or training after the age of 16.

CEO Paul Martin said, “It is a significant and life-changing project for young people trapped with a poverty of opportunity due to health, addiction and other social problems. On Track will provide a new way out of severe social and economic deprivation which is a great benefit to the whole community, to families and those who will participate.”

Our first focus is on recruiting a brilliant team to turn the plans into a reality. We need young people coaches, admin staff and volunteer mentors. We also need to speak to businesses who want to recruit from a diverse talent pool.

For the 18-24 age group, the primary aim will be for project participants to enter sustainable employment as quickly as possible.

The priority for 16-17 year olds who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) is to get them back into education or work-based training.”

Youth unemployment has been on the government’s agenda for a while – it’s an exciting opportunity to forge a new approach across Norfolk.” he added.

To find out more about the project and roles visit: [www.matthewproject.org/jobs](http://www.matthewproject.org/jobs), email [hr@matthewproject.org](mailto:hr@matthewproject.org) or phone 01603 626 123.

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**For more media information please contact Tom Oxley on 07718 130930.**

**Paul Martin and Esther Heybourne (phone only) from The Matthew Project are available for interviews from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December.**

**Building Better Opportunities**

- The Big Lottery Fund is the largest funder of community activity in the UK. It puts people in the lead to improve their lives and communities, often through small, local projects.
- It is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by National Lottery players for good causes. Every year it invests over £650 million and awards around 12,000 grants across the UK for health, education, environment and charitable purposes.
- Since June 2004 it has awarded over £8 billion to projects that change the lives of millions of people.
- The project has received up to £1,660,900 of funding from the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund as part of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England. The Department for Work and Pensions is the Managing Authority for the England European Social Fund programme. Established by the European Union, the European Social Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support skills development, employment and job creation, social inclusion and local community regenerations. For more information visit [www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding](http://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding)