

The Network

Issue 17



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Welcome to Issue 17 of The Network

Editors Note

Welcome to the 17th issue of The Network. We kick off with an apology... the Crown Commercial Services... not the Crown Prosecution Service was featured in Issue 16. Thank you to the readers who got in touch for not only making the error known to us but reassuring us that there are people out there who read the mag!

The spot light this month is on Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) with Jill Hague highlighting the vital work they do.

Phil Welsby from HMRC tells us about how International Men's Day was celebrated and we look at how children in Liverpool schools are being educated about tax.

DWP's Heather Richardson tells us how the Civil Service Local Going Forward project is working with offenders to develop skills to gain employment.

We catch up with The Merchants and see how they are getting on with their project for the Civil Service Local North West Academy, and we also have all our usual features such as CS Local pages, Just for You and a festive quiz from our very own little Grinch; Robbie :)

Finally we hope you all have a great Christmas and we will see you in 2018!

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Civil Service Local is committed to ensuring that wherever possible our events are accessible to all participants. If you have any specific requirements that will enable you to fully participate, please let us know and we will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments.

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Just for You

Including the back-catalogue!

Focus On... *HM Courts & Tribunals Service*

HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) is responsible for the administration of criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales.

HMCTS works with an independent judiciary to provide a fair, efficient and effective justice system. It employs around 17,000 staff and operates from locations in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

HMCTS is also responsible for non-devolved tribunals in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Through the courts and tribunals, HMCTS gives people and businesses access to justice, including:

- victims and witnesses of crime
- defendants accused of crimes
- consumers in debt or with other disputes
- people involved in the adoption or protection of children
- businesses involved in commercial disputes
- individuals asserting their employment rights or challenging the decisions of government bodies
- people affected by relationship breakdown.



HMCTS administers the work of magistrates' courts and the County Court, Family Court, Crown Court, and Royal Courts of Justice. It is also responsible for a number of tribunals including, first-tier and upper tribunals.

HMCTS follows the Ministry of Justice's [strategic vision for reform](#), to create a more effective, less costly and more responsive justice system for the public.

This issue, our SCS contribution is brought to us by

Jill Hague



HMCTS and Chair of the North West Civil Service Local Steering Group

HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) is responsible for the administration of criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales. I lead the team, of around 2000 staff, in the North West Region.

HMCTS is unique as a civil service department because we work in partnership with the independent judiciary to provide a fair, efficient and effective justice system.

HMCTS gives people and businesses access to justice including:

- victims and witnesses of crime
- defendants accused of crimes
- consumers in debt or with other disputes
- people involved in the adoption or protection of children
- businesses involved in commercial disputes
- individuals asserting their employment rights or challenging the decisions of government bodies
- people affected by relationship breakdown.



Our justice system matters – for every citizen and for the role we play in the world. If we didn't have a justice system where would we be? During the riots in 2011 the public looked to the criminal justice agencies to bring matters to a stop. The Police, Courts, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation and Prisons all pulled together (Manchester magistrates' court sat overnight) with offenders arrested and sentenced within 24 hours. Within 3 days peace had been restored. That's just one example of why I think justice is important but HMCTS doesn't just deal with criminal matters. It's equally important to make sure that a child is looked after properly and is safe. The list above shows the breadth of work that we're involved in. I'm really proud to work within HMCTS and I'm especially proud to be part of the North West team.

We're currently in the process of delivering a transformational reform programme. In just a few short years we will have revolutionised how justice is administered; putting the people that need to use the service at its heart. This will involve simplifying our processes to make access to justice easier, and improve the speed within which cases can be dealt with. We are also investing in digital services to turn paper handling into digital processes. We will look very different in 2022.

The North West is involved in a number of reform pilots, at the same time as delivering "Business as Usual" and so it's a very hectic time for everyone involved.

As well as my work within HMCTS I'm also the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for CS Local NW. You're all aware of the work that CS Local NW are delivering in order to meet the aim of improving the culture, identity and brand of the civil service and drive forward the common vision to be "a brilliant civil service". We do this by identifying, developing and delivering initiatives that result in: Connecting the civil service; Unique ways of delivering services to Citizens; Building the capability of our people.

As Chair of the Steering Group (the SRO) I have overall accountability for the success of CS Local in the NW (there are currently 36 departments represented) and I am also a member of the national steering group which is led by the Cabinet Office. I have regular meetings with the local team who are identified as the most pro-active team of all the CS Local teams, we're very lucky to have them.



Changing Horizons Blackpool

In November this year, the team spent their time and efforts in starting the work on our two Changing Horizons events (Blackpool & Oldham) - which will see us inspire approximately 1000 children, supported by 300 civil servants and lots of wider public and private sector organisations. The team will also be launching a new Volunteer



Opportunity Hub shortly, looking to offer different types of opportunities (along similar CS Local themes) to try and attract a new audience. The People Connections programme is picking up speed, with lots of mentor/mentee relationships underway and we have now had our first CS Local facilitated secondment between different departments.

The team also delivered A Brilliant Civil Service in Action event in Liverpool on December 5th, working with Cabinet Office colleagues, with support from local staff to be facilitators and stallholders it was a huge success.

Our priority for the coming year is to consider what should we keep doing or stop doing. So, for example when we started the schools programme there wasn't anything similar within each department but now all departments have similar outreach programmes so we could perhaps stop the schools programme and focus on Academies or Changing Horizons. Whatever we do I know that it will be a busy, challenging year but that CS Local NW will continue to be at the forefront of activity.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to encourage you all to "get curious". Find out what Civil Service Local is doing in your area and how you get involved. The contribution that all of us can make to the wider community through pooling our skills is incredible but we can only continue with your support. Find out more [here](#) and help us to deliver a **"Brilliant Civil Service"**.



Phil Welsby from HMRC talks “International Mens Day”



HMRC Liverpool Region celebrated International Men’s Day with an event in Bootle on Thursday, 16th November. The theme for the day was **Celebrating Men and Boys in All Their Diversity**.

The day was divided up into various presentations, mostly from within HMRC, but there was also an external speaker from Prostate Cancer UK and a speaker who had previously been with HMRC but has moved on to the Home Office.

John Sheekey, a senior leader from Risk & Intelligence Service in HMRC, gave a keynote talk on his life and career. Simon Koefman, who volunteers for Samaritans, talked through what Samaritans do, and some of his experiences volunteering for them. We also had talks on Wellbeing and Facing Modern Challenges, as well as the personal account of the experiences of a Mental Health Advocate within HMRC.

One of the highlights of the day for me was a talk from Paul Young, another member of HMRC staff, who talked about his life experience, challenges and mental health. To say that Paul had been through a lot in his life is an understatement – it may give you an idea if I say that Paul mentioned, almost as an afterthought at the end of his talk “oh, and I was hit by lightning when I was a teenager”.

All of the speakers talked with huge amounts of honesty about circumstances in their lives, including some quite difficult and emotional subjects, but there was also a degree of humour to the day, and I personally felt that the tone of the event was really uplifting.

Feedback for the day included: “amusing and inspiring”, “the best event I have attended all year” and “I came back to the office and told anyone who would listen that they should attend next year”.



Getting to know Phil...

1. What is your favourite food? Anyone who has tasted my wife’s baking would know that I couldn’t possibly vote for anything else! Can’t narrow it down to any particular cake – they’re all amazing!
2. What is your favourite sports team? Everton
3. What was the last film you watched? Summarise it in 2 words. Star Wars: The Force Awakens (in preparation for The Last Jedi!) – Brilliantly nostalgic
4. What CD’s would be found in your car? Mostly best-ofs, compilations and movie soundtracks – currently including The Blues Brothers, Guardians of the Galaxy and Scott Pilgrim vs The World.
5. Who would be your 5 ideal dinner guests? Tim Burgess, Kate Hudson, Alison Brie, Andrew Lincoln and The Rock

A 'Taxing' Day at School

Margi Rathbone on secondment to Business in the Community tells us about her project working with local schools to educate children about tax...



In my role as Business Connector for Liverpool region, I identified an opportunity to deliver Junior Tax Facts, HMRC's tax education programme, to St Paul's Catholic Junior School, Liverpool. As well as teaching young people about tax, Junior Tax Facts includes interactive maths exercises, which would help St Paul's secure the Liverpool Counts Quality Mark (LCQM).

I arranged to meet with Lindsay Carroll, Head of Maths at St Paul's to discuss the programme and promote the

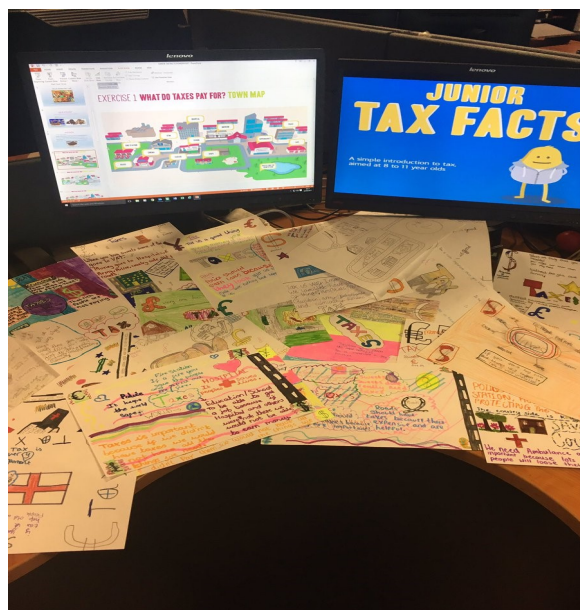
benefits to the school.

Lindsay was so impressed with Junior Tax Facts, she invited them to deliver to the whole school - which involved delivering 16 presentations to 600 students over a four-week period.

Working closely with Civil Service Local representative Jodi Baines, I also identified, coached and developed a help guide for the 20 HMRC volunteers who would be helping to deliver the presentations.

Each presentation started with students watching the Junior Tax Facts video, and was followed by an interactive session that demonstrated how maths is used in real life. Students also explored the history of tax and had the opportunity to become Chancellor for the day.

At the end of the presentations, students were asked to design a Junior Tax Facts poster, and the winning designer from each class was presented with a prize and certificate at the school assembly. This proved to be really popular with the students and gave them an opportunity to put their learning into practice.

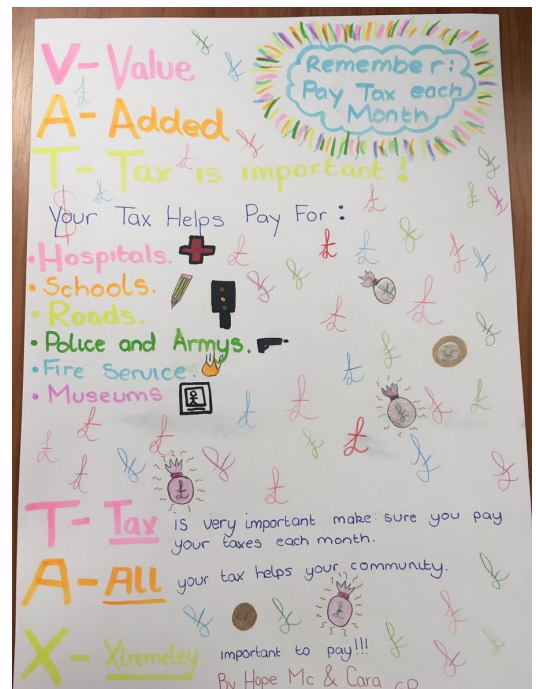


Jodi and Margi's hard work paid off, as 100% of students said they enjoyed and found the presentations interesting. The feedback from the teachers was equally positive. One teacher said: "The PowerPoint, content, group activities and YouTube video were of excellent quality and age appropriate for our students. The volunteers were knowledgeable, and made the sessions interesting. Even some of the teaching staff came out with facts that they didn't know about before."

The volunteers also found the presentations a rewarding and enjoyable experience. One of the volunteers, Andy Barton, Customer Service and Tax Design, Liverpool said: "The exercises were well received and engaged all of the children, particularly the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the day. Interestingly, the children unanimously agreed that health was the area that they would spend the most money on."

Due to the success at St Paul's, Jodi and Margi have been invited to deliver the Tax Facts module to more than 3500 children in primary and secondary schools across Merseyside and North Wales since June 2017 with demand growing daily. There are now over 150 HMRC colleagues who have been encouraged to volunteer and Margi and Jodi have formed a list of Tax Facts Ambassadors to deliver the presentations.

To find out more about Tax Facts and how to become a Tax Facts Ambassador, visit the tax education intranet page.



Getting to know ...Margi

1. What is your favourite food? **Lamb** is my favourite food and especially if its in a **curry dish**.
2. What is your favourite sports team? **Liverpool FC** forever!!!
3. What was the last film you watched? **Loving Vincent** - artistically amazing.
4. What CD's would be found in your car? Would be a Motown legend like **Smokey Robinson, Aretha Franklin or Luther Vandross**.
5. Who would be your 5 ideal dinner guests? **David Attenborough, Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton Angela Merkel and Pope Francis**. I like a bit of controversy around the table.



Hi. I'm Hazel and as the newest project lead to CS Local and as the portfolio holder for all things communications, I get the pleasure of introducing the final edition of The Network's CS Local pages for 2017.

I have been working with CS Local since the start of August and in this short time, I have already worked with some fantastic people from various departments. By way of introduction, I have been asked to answer some questions all about me and to be as honest as I can...

- 1. What is my favourite food?** It depends on my mood as to what I fancy eating but I'm always in the mood for a bowl of pasta....with garlic bread....and tomato
- 2. What was the last film I watched and review it in 2 words?** It was a film called 'Life' and I would sum it up as 'alien psycho'
- 3. Favourite book on my bookshelf?** Well it is my Kindle and I would say anything by Marian Keyes. I have the new one waiting for me for when I start my Christmas leave
- 4. 5 ideal dinner guests?** My Dad's Dad whom I have never met, Princess Diana as I bet she'd have loads of good gossip, some eye candy...maybe Tom Hardy, my cousin who died when he was 16 as I still miss him and Micky Flanagan as I have seen a few of his clips recently and found him to be most funny.
- 5. Who would play me in a movie of my life?** I would insist it was a glamorous Hollywood actress as it would be the only time in my life when I would be anything like a pin up. Maybe Angelina Jolie as she got to dump Brad Pitt.

As we approach the end of this calendar year, it seems the perfect time to reflect on the many achievements of the last 12 months. You may remember, or was involved in, the 'Changing Horizons' Blackpool event back in March. This fantastic event was nominated for a Cabinet Office award and some of the team went along to a glitzy award ceremony to receive a national honour. However, this award wasn't just for the team, but for everyone who took part to make it the success that it was. There will be a second Blackpool event in February 2018 and another in Oldham in March 2018. Make sure you look out for more information on our pages to get involved.

There have been so many fantastic people involved in so many projects that if I tried to include them all, I would be still typing through my Christmas dinner. So instead I wanted to dedicate this edition of the CS Local pages to some of the supporters who have given their time this year to make a difference to people's lives and the impact they have made.

From behalf of all the team here at CS Local North West, we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to working with you all in 2018.

“I don’t think I’m doing anything special”

Garry Woodworth – November 2017 – North West

Christmas is a time of joy for many but for those who are homeless, vulnerable or alone it’s often a period when their social isolation is most keenly felt.

Craig Buckley, from the Food Standards Agency (FSA), decided to do something about it in his part of Lancashire and, as a result, received the Special Recognition prize at this year’s Pride of the Civil Service North West Awards in Salford.



Craig is remarkably self-effacing about his award, saying: “I really wasn’t expecting the nomination as I don’t think I’m doing anything special. It’s what anyone would do.”

He adds: “It was my wife, Sheena’s, idea originally. Our youngsters had left home and we’d both suffered bereavements so we had some spare time at Christmas.”

So, in 2015, Craig and Sheena posted a message on social media asking if four people who were homeless, vulnerable or alone wanted to share Christmas dinner with them at their house at Clayton-le-Woods near Chorley and were overwhelmed at the response.

Craig says: “We wanted to rekindle the spirit of Christmas and our offer just spread through word-of-mouth. Until you do something like this, you realise that you never really know what other people have been through.”



In 2016, such was the continuing interest in their idea, Craig and Sheena asked Chorley Cricket Club if they could use their facilities and ended up providing a Christmas meal for 42 people.

“We went to the club the day before and cooked and prepared the food,” says Craig. “We even had Santa Claus there to give presents to the children!”

Carmel Lynskey, Head of Operational Delivery North for the FSA, says; “I’m a huge fan of Civil Service Local and, since I joined the FSA eighteen months ago, I’ve got everyone on board”.

Carmel says that, at first, Craig was reluctant to receive the Special Recognition Award; “Craig is a really private guy. He just gets on with what he does at work and he’d not really told people about the work he does in the community.

In addition to helping at Christmas, Craig also works with older people in his area to record local history and ensure that their stories are preserved for future generations so, says Carmel, “when we found out about what he does, myself and his line manager thought he was worthy of recognition”.

Ryan Jackson talks about Oak Tree House and how they help people like Sharon...

Not long ago, Sharon had a family, a job, a home and the mortgage that went with it. Then her circumstances changed, her family broke-down and she lost her job. Financial pressures mounted and Sharon became mentally ill. Addiction then began to contribute to her increasingly difficult circumstances and, with seemingly nowhere left to turn, Sharon became homeless.

Without the support network most of us take for granted, once Sharon became homeless, the prospects of getting a new job and overcoming her addiction looked remote.

Fortunately, Oak Tree House provided that network. It's a supported housing unit in Lancaster that provides accommodation to people who are ready to try to regain control of their own lives. And it proved to be a lifeline for Sharon, enabling her to get off the streets and focus on her recovery, instead of simply trying to survive from day to day. As a result, Sharon is now in control of her own future again.

She says she has beaten her addictions, albeit "for the time being" in her own words, and she is working on developing a structure to maintain the progress she has made. Sharon strongly believes in the work that Civil Service Local does at Oak Tree House. Asked if she takes anything positive from the sessions, she says "Definitely."

She says she "enjoys the social aspect" of the sessions the volunteers run, and she looks forward to "meeting new people". The volunteers have changed Sharon's opinion of government departments, having previously had some negative experiences. She says the Civil Service Local volunteers "come across as very human" and "approachable". She appreciates their down-to-earth attitude, and believes that the skills she has learned have helped give her the belief that she can return to living independently again. She is confident that she will be able to thrive, not just survive, and have a home and family again.

Sharon says that when you enter a shelter, "you can be whoever you want to be" but in the sessions with other residents you "meet the real people". Working with other residents during the sessions has helped break down barriers, and she has made friends with other residents as a result. She is now building that support network she never thought she would have, with people who are very different to her, have different reasons for being in Oak Tree House, but who also share many of the same struggles and challenges.



Sharon has found the sessions on interview techniques and CV-writing the most beneficial and, thanks to the skills she has learned, she can now see a future in which she is back in work. She explains that the sessions are playing a large part in her recovery, as she “needs the structure to keep focussed on the future” and to divert her attention from her addiction. She would

recommend them to any future resident at Oak Tree House.

Sharon’s positive view of the work the Civil Service Local volunteers do is shared by other residents and staff at the centre. They greatly value the work of the volunteers, and recognise the important part they play in the recovery and rehabilitation of the residents.

I take great satisfaction in helping other people through their difficulties, and it is speaking to people like Sharon, working in places like Oak Tree House and collaborating with fellow volunteers that keeps me coming back to Civil Service Local.

If you’ve been inspired by Sharon’s story or the work of Ryan and the other volunteers, why don’t you get involved in one of our projects? Check out our new Opportunity Wall, with new projects being added all the time.

Do Digital



The Do Digital project aims to improve citizens' digital skills to encourage them to use online government services and make the most of an increasingly digital world. John Edgar, from the Department for Education, took part in a recent Do Digital project at Oldham library, and he tells The Network how he helped one citizen in particular.

"I was fortunate to see the same lady over the course of three weeks, and I'd like to think I helped her in her journey into employment.

The lady in question, Hope, is Ghanaian and had spent a number of years living and working in Germany before moving to the UK and starting a family. Her children are now grown, and she's receiving Jobseeker's Allowance while she is trying to return to employment after 14 years out of the workforce.

Hope initially came to the library to ask how to attach her CV to her applications, and how to make it more easily accessible to her. In the first session, I helped her to access her email account, attach her CV to an email application, and to register on a job search website to improve her ability to find vacancies. I also identified that her CV was very generic and didn't contain much of what she had achieved.

The following week, I worked with Hope to develop her CV further, expanding on her employment in Germany as a retail assistant in a large chain store, and adding dates of employment and expanding on her duties. We discussed her career history and she revealed that she volunteers in the Food for All project run by the Manchester Christian Association, where she prepares, cooks and serves food for up to 25 people every day. This demonstrates skills she hadn't previously displayed, so we added it to her CV. Building on this, we created two role-specific CVs, one for catering and one for the care profession, where she also has experience.

The final session saw us making applications for roles in these two areas: I helped write covering letters and showed Hope how to record them on her Universal Jobmatch account, which records a jobseeker's attempts to find employment.

After the CV-building session in week two and again after we'd submitted the applications in week three, Hope kept telling me how grateful she was for my help and how much happier she was with her new CVs. I gained a real sense of achievement in seeing Hope start to believe that she could find employment, whereas before she felt that she was simply going through the motions."

This issue we hear from **Sasha Kwende**, who gives us an update from...

The Merchants

... a 2017 Civil Service North West Academy family



Sasha describes the early progress The Merchants have made in delivering their project - A 'Diversity Day' - raising opportunity and awareness for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees in the Civil Service.

"As a Senior Probation Officer within a busy local delivery unit at The Probation Service, it is fair to say that I am accustomed to a high workload. Pressure and meeting deadlines, problem solving and working as part of a team are all par for the course. However, post academy, I concede that maybe I had underestimated how difficult it would be juggling work and academy commitments. I am not alone in this, all the Merchants work across several departments within the Civil Service. This means even arranging telephone conferences (never mind

face to face meetings) has been tricky! In addition I have had a number of unexpected serious incidents to deal with at work which has meant I have not been able to attend as planned.

I will be honest, it has made me question whether my continued involvement in the project is viable - it's a real challenge balancing your time. *But* I, like all the Merchants, remain passionate about our chosen area of diversity, believing it is all our responsibility to push for greater inclusion and promotion for BAME employees across the Civil Service.

So far we have all joined the Knowledge Hub which has meant we have established a central way of communicating with each other and sharing information. We have utilised individual's key strengths but also highlighted areas we would like to improve or experience e.g. research, communication



strategy, project management to name but a few. I have never been involved in designing a project and it has been an eye opener to see what's involved. It's exciting to plan and a large part so far has been deciding what is in and out of scope. This is useful as it retains our focus. Planning project milestones and timescales has also been important for us as a group. It's interesting to me that the dynamics and strengths as a team that formed at the Academy, are only getting stronger! It's this which makes me sure that our project will be a success!"

The Elephants



Sadly, we don't have an article all about the great beast, but HMRC's Daniel Romero talks to us about his (and his 'families') academy experience



I joined the Civil Service Local NW Academy in the hope of improving my leadership and management skills, as I was actively seeking a promotion. The starting event was fantastic, and in all honesty, I never wanted it to end: the people; the atmosphere; the activities and being a part of my new group, 'The Elephants', whose aim was to create a digital and physical recruitment pack to help outline the benefits of working for the Civil Service.

After only one event, my thinking had already started to change. I became much more confident and wanted to challenge myself in situations that would usually make me feel uncomfortable. I took the opportunity to project my personality in the presentations, something which I had never done before.

My increased confidence and passion for self-development became obvious to others. I worked hard to become a bigger part of my work area and to be recognised by doing so.

Almost 4 months into the academy, I applied for a Front Line Manager role and was successful. Remaining with HMRC and staying in the same office, I became a very proud leader of 12 staff members.

I continued creating the recruitment pack with 'The Elephants'. Before joining HMRC, I worked as a freelance photographer, gaining academic qualifications and much experience in Adobe Photoshop. I made my team aware of the personal contributions I could make to our project. My skills proved very useful in helping my team to pull the recruitment pack together, with my creativity lending itself to making it more visual and inviting.

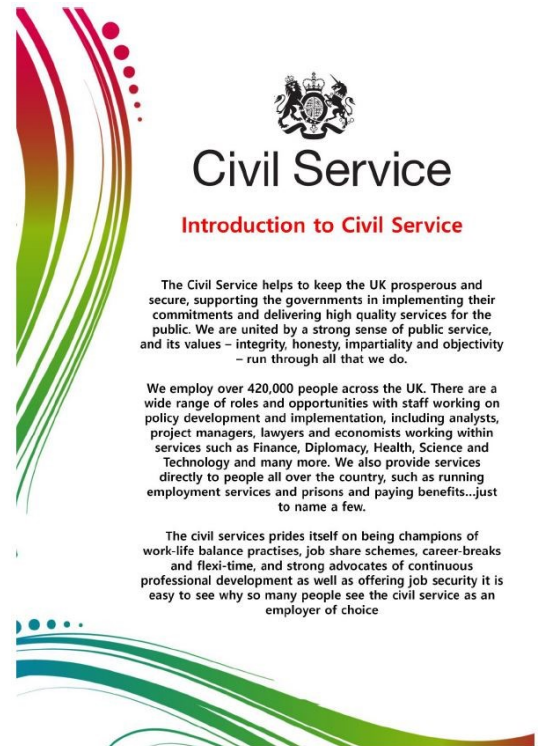
It was not easy juggling my full-time job alongside the work for the academy in my own time. Things became more demanding when other members of the team dropped out, as the extra work all had to be picked up by someone else. I never thought about leaving the group, not for one second, even with the extra work. I knew the few of us that were left were all trying our best to see our project through to the end.

It all paid off. Our pack was sent to Civil Service resourcing and we received a response from the Communications Lead, Executive Recruitment of Civil Service Talent based in the Cabinet Office, asking us for permission to use our pack as a starting point for the website to showcase a brilliant Civil Service. Even better, 'The Elephants' have been invited to future workshops to help design and create the website which will be used to recruit people into the CS. As a team we have spent a lot of time researching this topic, and feel that we are in a very good position to give our perspective views on the subject.

I have now completed the end of year event with the CSNW Academy, however my journey does not end there. I will continue by participating and assisting in the creation of the website. I am hoping that this will give me further insight into the Civil Service, and at the same time, improve myself in the field of design by observing others creating the website.

I opened myself up to the Academy, and with positive thinking came positive things.

Thank you very much CSNW Academy.



The Civil Service helps to keep the UK prosperous and secure, supporting the governments in implementing their commitments and delivering high quality services for the public. We are united by a strong sense of public service, and its values – integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity – run through all that we do.

We employ over 420,000 people across the UK. There are a wide range of roles and opportunities with staff working on policy development and implementation, including analysts, project managers, lawyers and economists working within services such as Finance, Diplomacy, Health, Science and Technology and many more. We also provide services directly to people all over the country, such as running employment services and prisons and paying benefits...just to name a few.

The civil services prides itself on being champions of work-life balance practises, job share schemes, career-breaks and flexi-time, and strong advocates of continuous professional development as well as offering job security it is easy to see why so many people see the civil service as an employer of choice

The Elephants...another CS Local NW Academy success story from another perspective

When the eight of us were grouped together and named 'The Elephants' at the Civil Service Local North West Academy, we were really uncertain as to what laid ahead. A mixed group of Civil Servants from different departments, trying to envisage something that would improve the Civil Service. We left our starting event with a very optimistic view, to work together and create a digital and physical recruitment pack to help outline the benefits of working for the Civil Service.



As our journey together continued, we learnt many valuable lessons. We began to appreciate the importance of regular communication and the different methods in which to do so. Email was a good option in which to relay quick messages to the team, with tele-kits proving to be more effective and efficient for more formal and detailed discussion on our action points. We learned how to manage our time more effectively, by turning our goals into hours, then looking at each team members time availability to assist with completing the task.

Since the team was not provided with any resources from the outset, we had to be really resourceful, by using our professional and individual experiences to help us manage and develop our goals. As time went by, some members of our team dropped out, adding increased workload to the rest of us. Initially, this was difficult for the team, but one which provided a valuable learning curve. It assisted us in identifying our individual strengths and weaknesses as well as those of our team members. By employing members in accordance to their strengths, we were able to manage the project in an effective manner.

The team welcomed the advice and guidance given to us by our project manager, Jon Lingard. He taught us many skills, helping us to understand the importance of keeping to and working on our goals using realistic bitesize objectives.

By the end of year event, our measurable goal of sending our digital pack to Civil Service Resourcing was achieved. It was hoped that our effort could be utilised by them in some way.

Our hope became a reality. We received a telephone call from the Communications Lead, Executive Recruitment of Civil Service Talent based in the Cabinet Office, and she informed us that as project manager of the Civil Service career build, she had been tasked with finding a start point for the website to showcase a 'Brilliant Civil Service'. We were overjoyed to hear that she wanted to use our recruitment pack for this purpose. It was made clear to us that the recruitment pack which we had produced, had avoided the outsourcing of work to an outside agency, which would have cost thousands of pounds.

The website build is due to start in November, with a product ready for testing in December and public launch in March. Our team feel very proud at being invited to a series of workshops, to input our ideas. While we had no doubt what we did was worthwhile, we never expected such a successful outcome. We are highly delighted to have contributed something of benefit to the development of the civil service recruitment website.

Finally, a massive thanks to all that helped us throughout the project concept and beyond, especially:

Janine Clitheroe – Team Facilitator

Jon Lingard – Project Manager



Civil Service

Introduction to Civil Service

DWP Technology's Heather Richardson Going Forward...



I was lucky enough earlier this year to take on the North West Regional Project Lead for the Civil Service Local Going Forward Project which involves a group of civil servants working with offenders nearing the end of their prison sentence.

A group of ten civil servants attend a North West prison to deliver sessions to a group of offenders. They work with the prison on their priorities and devise a programme to meet those objectives. This usually includes interview techniques, CV writing and money management. It also works to increase confidence and develop 'softer' skills such as managing conflict and listening techniques. The programme is delivered through a mixture of activities from presentations, one-to-one coaching and support,

through to focused and more interactive activities aimed at reinforcing learning.

The programme links to the wider Civil Service reform plan and works to reconnect with the communities in which we live and work. It promotes the Civil Service as an employer of choice and helps improve the diversity of our workforce. The programme also links into the core objective of building capability within our workforce.

Whilst the focus of the programme is the assistance given to the prisoners, it also helps to develop the skills and capability of all the civil servants involved. This may include developing presentation skills, team work and dealing with challenging behaviour. It also helps you to adapt to changing, and often unexpected, circumstances and in building new relationships quickly. For those involved, it also often helps to build their confidence in their own skills and abilities.

As part of my role, I engage with the six category C and D prisons within the North West. We arrange ten sessions within the prisons and then invite civil servants who have expressed an interest to design a programme of sessions to deliver to the prisoners. We have just completed ten sessions at HMP Kirkham in Lancashire, working across departments such as Education, DWP and HMRC. The project team has worked well together, delivering a mix of sessions and feedback has been fantastic from both the prison and the team.

Future plans

We currently have project teams running in HMP Thorncross (near Warrington) and we will be starting at HMP Hindley (near Wigan) in January and HMP Styal (near Manchester Airport) in February 2018. Planning is also starting for HMP Lancaster and HMP Haverigg for which we are hoping to gain enough civil service volunteers to run rollouts between March 18 and May 18. Then hopefully this will become a rolling programme and it will all start again...

What those taking part said...

One of our team members said: "This experience has been one of the most enjoyable and rewarding things I've done, and I would definitely recommend it. I will really miss it but I've come away with a new network of friends, a feeling that I've made a difference and a greater insight and understanding. Oh and a big store of 'ice breakers' for future team meetings!"

One of the prisoners taking part also had good feedback, saying: "I did not like doing any sort of group work but these sessions have helped me meet new people and showed me ways of working as a team which will help me when I am released."

If you are interested and are ready to take up the challenge to step out of your comfort zone and into a new environment, please check out the [Civil Service Blog](#).

The Network *Cross-Department Quiz*

Try your hand at our festive quiz and see who can be crowned Christmas royalty! Just for fun no presents for the winner sorry!

1. What's the name of the period leading up to Christmas?
2. How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?
3. Who brings presents to children in Holland on the 5th/6th December?
4. How many presents were given in total in the 12 Days of Christmas?
5. How many of Rudolph's eight companions names start with 'D'?
6. What country did Christmas Trees originate from?
7. What's the second line of "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas"?
8. What's lucky to find in your Christmas Pudding?
9. Christmas Island, in the Indian Ocean, is a territory of which country?
10. Peter Auty sang Walking In The Air in what film?
11. In 1973 which record did Slade have a Christmas number one with?
12. Who stole Christmas from the town of Hooville?
13. Which Cliff Richard single was at number one over Christmas in the UK in 1988?
14. In which city is Kevin left 'Home Alone' at Christmas?
15. According to the Christmas song, who had "a jolly happy soul"?

The Opportunity Wall is your brand new one-stop shop window for keeping track of Civil Service Local North West's volunteering opportunities. Updates to the Wall will be added to the [blog](#) over time as new opportunities become available.



GAP (Government Access Point) provides a friendly, face to face advice service, within a hospice environment, giving practical information and joined up advice on any Civil Service enquiry.

We are looking to extend our services to the Chorley /Lancaster area and are looking for volunteers from Land Registry/DWP Universal credit and HMRC to join our project.

If you would like to join our team, please complete the Civil service Local Application form, advising of which area you would like to join and forward to

GEMMA.SPRUNG@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK
<https://civilservicelocal.blog.gov.uk/civil-service-local-application-form/>

Are you involved with a project that has made a real difference to someone in your local community?

We want to hear from people whose life has changed for the better, thanks to a citizen project. that you help manage.

Get in touch with The Network's editorial team, and we can give your public a voice!

Keep up to date with CS Local North West on their [blog](#) for news, opportunities and more...

Just for Fun

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9

7			1					
4	8	5	3	2		6	1	
2	9		7	8				
	5		6				7	3
				7				
3	6				4		8	
				5	8		3	1
	1	4		3	7	8	2	6
					1			5

Answers from last editions Sudoku puzzle

6	1	4	3	5	9	8	2	7
9	3	7	2	8	1	4	6	5
5	8	2	6	7	4	1	3	9
1	4	9	5	2	7	3	8	6
8	7	6	4	1	3	5	9	2
2	5	3	8	9	6	7	4	1
3	6	5	7	4	2	9	1	8
7	2	1	9	3	8	6	5	4
4	9	8	1	6	5	2	7	3

WORDSEARCH

Find our festive words: CHRISTMAS, DECORATIONS, GINGERBREAD, MINCE PIES, MISTLETOE, SANTA, SILENT NIGHT, and TREE

T S W S F X B S H A V M G D J
O C R Y N Z B L X Y D T A S D
Z P N D E D C Z J H H E E E C
W S S K S A N T A G R X C I N
Q U J K U U I B I B N O T P U
Y W F X P A S N R M R S E E K
L E E X G D T E Z A A O N C Z
V A Y D Q N G A T M T T H N R
T K B F E N P I T E O F Q I O
D T S L I B O S L E Z R P M B
B V I G E N I T I R E U I F J
W S X Y S R S N A T Q C T I Y
I Y X K H I Y C W C Y R D U K
E U M C M F F Z M D V O U C S
P S M B U R H Y C W D L H U G

Answers from last editions quiz

1. Dracula
2. Mexico
3. Charmed
4. Anne Boleyn
5. Twilight
6. Charlotte's Web
7. Pumpkin Juice
8. Rugby World Cup
9. Jamie Lee Curtis
10. A werewolf



Enjoy the festive break, we'll be back next year with the answers for the Cross-Department Quiz and Sudoku will feature in Issue 18 of The Network

[email](#) **The Network** with any thoughts or suggestions! Page 20