

WELFARE REFORM COMMITTEE

‘YOUR SAY’ – WORK PROGRAMME

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM DONNA

My name is Donna. I am from Glasgow. I was made redundant a wee while ago and I have now been on the Work Programme for about 6 months under Working Links. I am dyslexic and had an accident that has led to some stresses.

The biggest thing for me about the Work Programme has been the advisers. The first one I had was terrible. I had 3 meetings with him and he made me greet twice. He was mean and a bit of a bully. It's bad because all this takes place in an open plan office, so everyone can see you greeting.

The second adviser was much better, but I didn't have them for very long. The third adviser was an amazing woman. She has given me lots of help in setting up my business, getting a webpage organised etc. She has been helpful in suggesting things that I might do in the business as well, like healthy eating classes. Now I can vary appointments if I am running a class at that time. I didn't have this flexibility in the past.

When I first got sent to Working Links I had so much hope, but one of the first things I got sent on was confidence training. There were 31 people in the room - from old women to 18 year olds – we had nothing in common. The trainer took a few names and that was about it – it didn't do very much for my confidence.

The other thing I don't like is the atmosphere of the place. There is no privacy – you can hear all other people's problems – and the whole place stinks of Red Bull and depression.

And they make you feel small – queuing up and filling out forms for £2 bus fare. I take my bike now.