



Apex Scotland is a national charity that supports individuals with an offending background, or who may be at risk of offending behaviour, back into positive activity, and eventually, employment.

Apex understands that being unemployed can be a challenging time. This is all the more so, for unemployed individuals who have multiple, and often complex barriers to moving back into employment. These barriers may include mental health issues, substance misuse, unstable accommodation, a lack of work history, qualifications or experience, and a criminal record. For these individuals, the path back to employment can seem like a Labyrinth.

*A Labyrinth is defined as “A complicated irregular network of passages or paths in which it is difficult to find one’s way; a maze”.*

Individuals facing barriers to employment express the difficulty they can face, managing their claimant agreement with their Jobcentre advisor, applying financial capability skills to manage their bus fare to key community appointments, being uneducated with digital skills or to access and operate a computer and use the internet. Therefore, Apex Personal Development Mentors (PDMs) support individuals who find themselves facing their own Labyrinth, to navigate this, and ‘Find the right path for you’.

In March 2015, Apex launched the Labyrinth service in Fife, in partnership with DWP, through 9 month pilot funding generated through the Flexible Support Fund. An Apex PDM has been working closely with the seven Jobcentres in Fife to provide a mentoring service, specifically for the (ex-) offender cohort. This means that the Labyrinth service targets support at individuals who have been identified to require additional employability

support due to their current or past offending behaviour or the existence of a criminal record, forming a barrier to them moving back into employment.

Apex has been delivering a mobile service across Fife which focuses on a mentoring relationship being established between the PDM and the client. The PDM and client form a collaborative working relationship which is built around ongoing client self- assessment, action planning and the achievement of progressive milestones. Apex supports clients to access the relevant support services, training, skills building workshops, and employment opportunities within and around their own communities. The PDM supports clients to sustain engagement with these services and activities, ultimately working towards a milestone where the client is independent, self-motivated and self-reliant – and more ready to join the labour market.

Apex PDMs promote client access to local opportunities with existing services, while Apex also undertakes core employability skill building interventions and personal development support. Apex also offers a criminal record disclosure service.

As of April 2015, Labyrinth will be upscaled to launch the new programme, and Apex as a formal partner of the Opportunities Fife Employability Pathway, as the key service in Fife, specialising in the support of (ex-) offenders.