

**Case Study Hele Angels Shop  
Single Parent Mother**

Although the shop only officially opened its doors on the 15<sup>th</sup> November, Hele's Angels can already provide one successful case-study of how it is been centrally involved in the transformation of one individual's life and potentially two.

Since the end of October, staff and volunteers at Hele's Angels have been supporting and encouraging a single parent mother from Hele in her passage into employment. Understanding the difficulties and questions single mothers face in seeking employment is already well known:

- how many working hours are allowed before benefits are cut
- what kind of childcare assistance is available to part-time/ full-time working mothers
- what is the best way to write a C.V
- where do I look for jobs

Because Hele's Angels shop has a team of agencies working under one roof, running a mix of advice and information surgeries, we were able to assist this customer in all aspects of her transition to successfully finding the job she wanted.

The original purpose of the customer's visit was to get benefit advice about how increasing part-time hours would impact her benefits. As a Sanctuary Housing Association tenant she was concerned that if she moved into a job, working more hours, her benefit would be stopped and she would not be able to pay her full rent. This would jeopardise her tenancy position and place her into a rent- debt situation. The dilemma she faced was: could she increase her working hours, still receive housing benefit and other passport benefits, and still get help towards childcare.

In coming along to the shop she was able to get answers to all these questions under one roof. When she visited the shop she was able to:

- Speak to a Sanctuary Housing Association Housing Advisor
- Speak to a Benefits Advisor
- Get support in C.V writing
- Use Free Internet for job searching
- Bring her toddler son ( kid's play box is available in the shop)

Having received all this advice and information the customer began her new job before Christmas; she has now increased her working hours and is in her desired job. While this case study demonstrates the effectiveness of multi-agency agency staff working together to offer customer's a professionalized and local service, the child-friendliness of the shop, its free internet and printing services, the resources shop volunteers' add to the service have all contributed to ensuring this customer felt supported, empowered and respected.