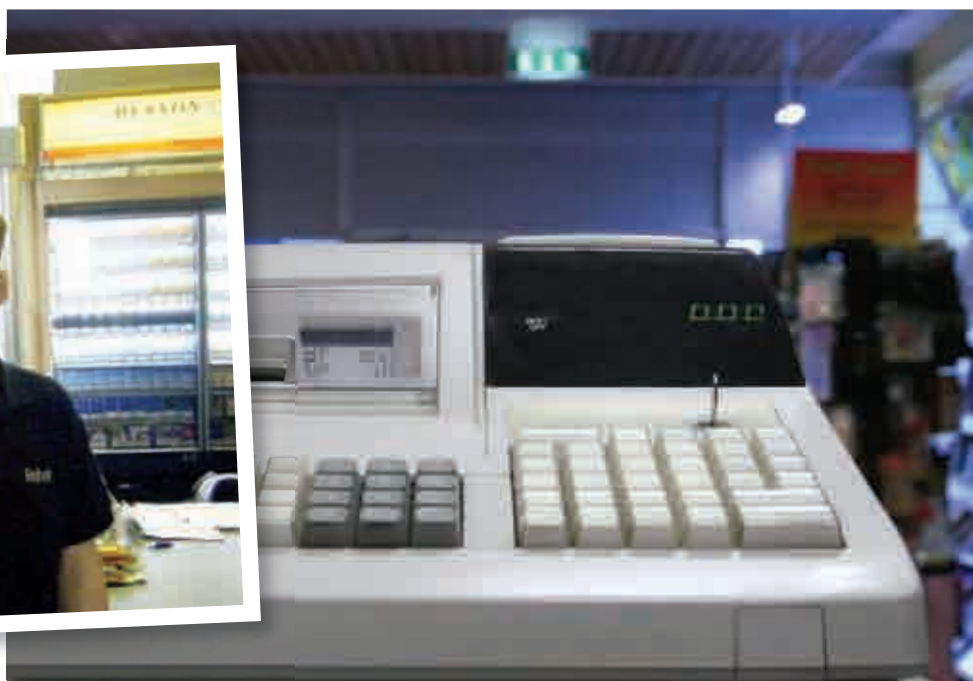


My Working Day

Keith Browne works as a Retail Operative with Rehab Retail in its new shop in Blackrock, Co. Dublin.



FIRST THING IN THE MORNING, I OPEN THE shop, and get it organised for customers – preparing the till, putting out the papers, making sure the stock is on display, and getting ready to encourage people in. It's an early start in Rehab Retail, as I have to open the shop at 7.00am. It was a bit of a killer at first, but I am getting used to it now! This shop is only open two weeks. It is located in the train station in Blackrock, a seaside town in the suburbs of Dublin.

It gets very busy in the morning, with commuters going to and from the city. We sell a lot of muesli bars to people in a hurry who have missed breakfast and a lot of sweets to school children. Then throughout the day, it's bottles of water, newspapers, cigarettes and more sweets. We are considering offering coffee in the future,

and we might put in an ice cream fridge, in case we have a summer, although that might be optimistic!

It quiets down during the day, until the evening rush hour. Customers come in just before and after each train. During quieter periods, we price goods, stock take and train new staff. I like working with the students we have on work experience from National Learning Network, as I was one myself once! I always tell them to smile. Customer service is very important in retail.

I got my first job in the accounts department in Rehab Enterprises, then I worked in customer services in another company. I came back to Rehab Enterprises when this job came up. I live in a city centre apartment with my friend – it's perfect for socialising and my commute is great – when I get off the train, it's only 20 steps to the shop! ■



Eileen Kennedy is the Project Manager for Momentum's 'Catalyst' and 'Accelerate' programmes in Ayrshire, Scotland.

HAVING JOINED MOMENTUM'S 'CATALYST' programme in 2004, following 25 years in the civil service, each day has provided new challenges and rewards for myself, the service, and the clients we support.

It's a difficult task for me to describe my typical working day because every hour of every day is different. I recently co-ordinated a launch event to raise awareness of our new innovative pilot service, 'Accelerate'. The new service helps adults across Ayrshire who are recovering from alcohol misuse to get back into employment. The 12-week programme includes workshops around confidence-building, communication, anger management and team-building skills.

On that morning, I arrived early and double-checked that all the necessary items were prepared and packed. My staff and I were in place at the venue by 10am. The delegates started to arrive around 10.15am.

Ian Welsh, Director of UK Services, opened the event. We were delighted to have his support during this

exciting time of change within the organisation. I then delivered a presentation on the new 'Accelerate' programme.

As the emphasis was very much on an innovative event to promote an innovative project, the delegates were asked to participate in three of the workshops that we provide, thus experiencing the type of support we will be offering the service users at 'Accelerate'.

This was followed by two powerful and heartfelt presentations, one from a former service user, the second by a person who had previously been on a work experience placement. Then I was back in the spotlight for a question and answer session, supported by members of the staff.

My working day has now taken on a new level of excitement and challenges, and I'm thoroughly enjoying every minute of it. We are the only organisation in Ayrshire to deliver this unique, time-framed service and I am extremely proud of that fact, and more so of my dedicated team of staff and volunteers, who made this all possible. ■