



Making the Cut

Rhian is currently developing her business working from home, making clothes for both children and adults, called *M&I Makes*.

Back in February of this year, Rhian attended one of our community engagement events and was the winner of one of our raffle prizes.

When she came in to collect her hamper, one of

our Communities for Work Mentors, Jan, was able to chat to her about her circumstances. Rhian explained that she had to give up employment because of a health condition. Rhian suffers from Fibromyalgia, which is a debilitating condition that can flare-up unexpectedly causing severe pain and fatigue.

Rhian had an ambition to start her own clothing-line business and thought that working from home could be an ideal solution, as on her good days she could work at any time of the day, then during her flare-ups, she could take it easy and work for limited periods around her condition.



Rhian and her daughter picking up their prize

Jan explained that our programme would be able to help her in finding the correct type of support to help get her business off the ground. Rhian was surprised at what we could offer her and was willing to sign up.

Jan met with Rhian a few times before the lockdown and she brought some of the garments that she had made to show her. Jan thought that the garments “were made to a very high standard and very saleable.” Rhian explained that she had received no training and had learned to sew by herself.

Jan supported Rhian over the phone during the lockdown pandemic and referred her to support from Business Wales. Rhian is has engaged with them and is attending some webinars that Business Wales hold for business start-ups.

As the programme has also supported Rhian with the cost of liability insurance, she is now busy making and advertising her own bespoke line of clothing on-line.

Before setting up her business, Rhian was economically inactive but now has returned to the workforce once again. Her business is still in the early stages and Employability Bridgend will continue to support Rhian to assist with any problems or questions.

Rhian says, "I've found Employability to be very friendly and helpful, Jan has been amazing and is very approachable. She has been very supportive from the start and especially through lockdown keeping in touch and making sure things with the start up of M&I makes is going smoothly."

Rhian at her sewing machine

