

# Insight

No.3 August 2014

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## **Making a difference in the local community.**

The number of ex-Remploy employees who with support from CSF projects successfully gained employment has risen to 316

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The CSF is making a positive difference to the lives of 820 ex-Remploy employees, by providing a variety of projects which deliver a mix of social and work ready activities. With over a quarter of participants taking up skills development opportunities

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CSF has delivered a variety of projects, with the Connect social job club proving the most popular. Connect has enabled individuals to come together to take part in getting ready for work activities, catch up with ex- colleagues, share ideas and get involved in social activities.

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Welcome to this special edition of the DPULO'S CSF newsletter. The Community Support Fund (CSF) was launched in July 2012, the fund criteria was co-produced with disabled people to minimise the negative social impact of the Remploy factory closures on the lives of the disabled ex-employees and their families. ”

The CSF offered personalised local support to ex-Remploy employees for upto 18 months to enable them to make the move back into employment; and/or maintain links with ex-work colleagues and take part in social activities in the local community.

To date, 50 Voluntary Sector and Disabled People's User Led Organisations have received funding of £1.3m to deliver support to 820 ex-employees and of those 316 have been supported into employment.

## **Geographical split of CSF awards**

CSF projects have been delivered in the following areas (please note some organisations are delivering projects in more than one area):

North West – 12

Greater London – 2

South West – 1

South East – 3

North East – 8

West Midlands – 3

East Midlands – 2

East of England – 1

Yorkshire & Humber – 4

Scotland – 8

Wales – 7

## CSF has provided training, confidence building and employment opportunities. Here are a few examples:

### TCV Employment & Training Services Ltd

Phillip was made redundant from Remploy having worked there for 11 years. To support him through this difficult time Philip joined the CSF TCV Connect project. Phillip attended weekly sessions to build his confidence and identify training opportunities. As a result Philip is now more confident, he is applying for jobs, looking at training options and is not just willing to accept that that's it! He is motivated to move on from his redundancy. Although Philip initially came to TCV with low moral, he now feels the CSF project has helped him enormously in refocusing, retraining and boosting his confidence for getting back into employment.

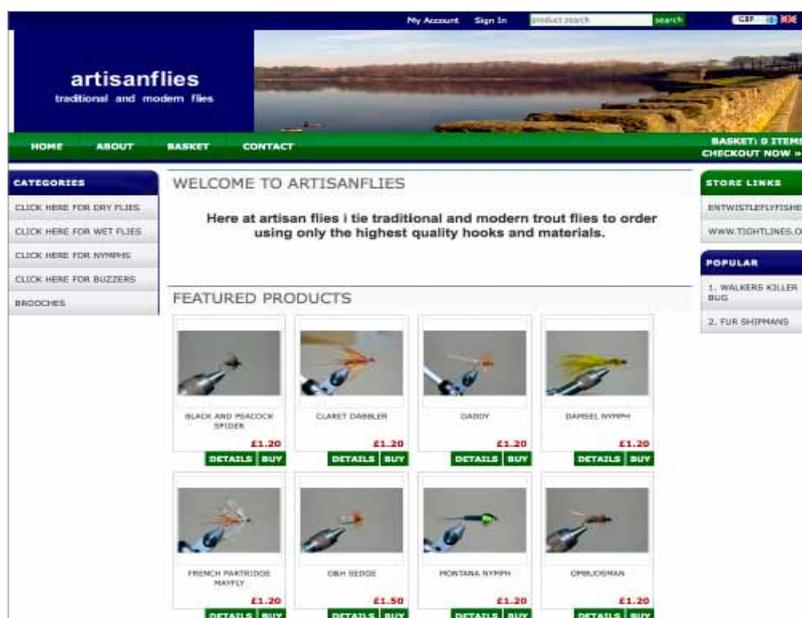


### Good news stories from: Access Ability

Dave was employed full time for 8 years at Remploy, Bolton. Following the closure of the factory he was made redundant. Dave had always enjoyed fishing in his spare time and made his own fishing flies. Dave joined the Access Ability programme based in Bolton library every Tuesday, which provided a regular meeting point for him and 15 of his ex-colleagues.



Through one to one sessions Dave received the support, guidance and funding he required to establish his own online fly fishing business, Artisan Flies [www.artisanflies.co.uk](http://www.artisanflies.co.uk) He now regularly sells his bespoke, hand made fishing flies all over the world. He promotes his business through utilising social media sites such as Facebook and Tumblr. Through funding received from the Community Support Fund (CSF) Dave was supported and enabled to fulfil his lifetime passion of creating a self employed business, making and selling products that he has a personal passion for.



### Northern Pinetree Trust (NPT)

Clive was made redundant in August 2012 he had originally considered taking a year out to enjoy his hobbies of music, fishing and football.

Whilst enjoying listening to bands he spotted a gap in the market and noticed how poor the marketing of venues and bands was in the local area.

Clive joined the CSF NPT project and received the necessary advice and support to investigate if there was a gap in the market. NPT helped Clive to carry out the market research, which supported Clive's original findings. With NPT's help Clive was able to obtain the necessary equipment to develop his idea.

NPT worked with Clive on the business plan and funding application. Clive was granted funding and registered self-employed on the 26th May 2014. Clive now has four regular clients and continues with marketing



## Christine at Landau

When Christine was made redundant from Remploy she went to work at a Garden Centre for 6 months through a Job Centre scheme, and although she enjoyed this she didn't feel it was quite what she wanted.

Christine decided voluntary work could help her to try different areas of work and give her more opportunities. Christine started at the British Heart Foundation, sorting clothes, using the till and serving customers.

To get help and support to develop new opportunities and learn new skills Christine joined the CSF Landau project. The project helped her to complete a vocational profile to identify her skills and provided support to help her identify new work opportunities

Jane, her Landau Coordinator, arranged a placement for Christine at The Moat House Hotel, on the housekeeping team. Christine enjoyed this placement and gained many skills as well as enjoying the social side of working in a team.

At the end of the placement Christine was keen to try other placements and stated working in the café at Cornerstone community Centre. Here Christine takes orders, clears tables, makes snacks, uses the till and serves the customers.

Previously she was extremely shy and didn't have any confidence in herself now Christine is working unsupported and has proven herself to be a valuable member of the team.

Once a week Christine attends Landau's work club for 1 to 1 support with job searching and following her placements is hoping to find full or part time work soon in catering, or retail.

## The Lennox Partnership



The Lennox Partnership has been delivering a CSF project since September 2013 for 23 clients affected by the Remploy factory closure. "We have delivered the contract in conjunction with Enable Scotland to ensure we are able to offer a diverse range of services to meet all of our clients needs. To date we have run a range of workshops for clients including: Employability training, Universal Job Match, First Aid & Health & Safety training (certificated), Financial Planning clinics (group), 1-2-1 Financial Planning looking at mortgages / savings/pensions / wills etc."

The recently appointed Minister of State for Disabled People, Mark Harper, MP visited The Lennox Partnerships (TLP) offices in Clydebank on Tuesday the 29th of July to hear about the Community Support Fund programme being delivered to support the people who had been affected by the closure of the Remploy factory in Clydebank.

As well as meeting some CSF project participants the Minister found out what TLP had been doing for the Remploy workers who had been made redundant, a full update on the progress of the 23 participants was provided, which showed a total of 10 had been assisted into work, 7 had completed work placements with well known organisations such as Marks and Spencer, 2 were currently involved in volunteering and 1 was studying Medical Administration at college

Blyth Deans, Chief Executive of TLP said "The Ministerial visit provided a great opportunity for us to let the newly appointed Minister of State for Disabled People know what we were doing in Scotland to support people with disabilities, and to highlight the successes we had achieved already within our CSF project in Clydebank"

## Useful Links

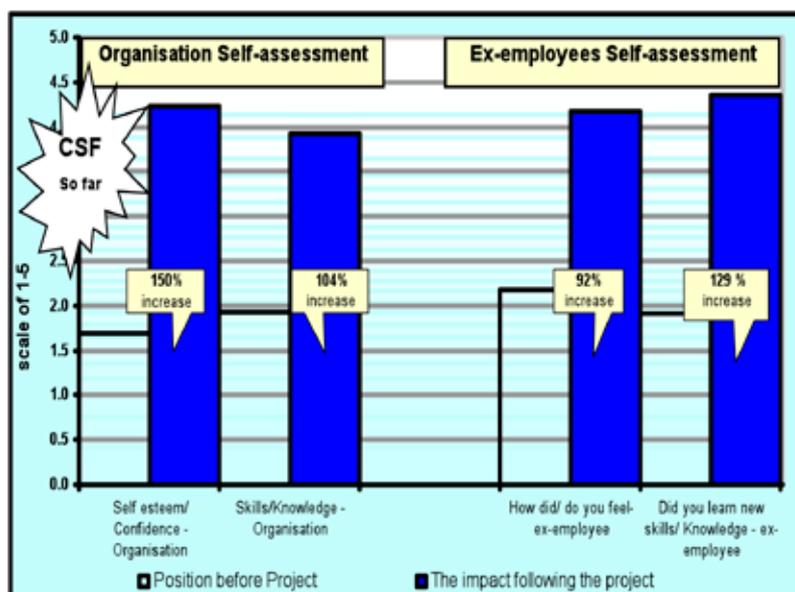
- Office of Disability Issues: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-disability-issues>
- CSF pages: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-support-fund-for-ex-remploy-employees>
- Strengthening Disabled People's User-Led Organisations Programme: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/strengthening-disabled-peoples-user-led-organisations>

## The story so far.....

The CSF has made a big difference to the lives of many of the ex-Remploy employees. The social job club approach has enabled ex-employees to adapt to life outside Remploy and take up new opportunities as well as maintaining links with ex work colleagues and greater participation in their local community.

Organisations running the CSF projects have been able to develop strong relationships and work successfully with local employers, partners and Jobcentre plus in both providing work placements and employment opportunities, to participants on the programme. The CSF programme has also contributed to building local organisational capacity and strengthening outcomes for disabled people.

Early feedback from both organisations and ex-Remploy employees has been very positive, CSF has clearly had an impact on the lives of the ex-Remploy employees. The chart below illustrates how confidence has grown and skills have increased as a direct result of CSF interventions.



## Feedback from organisations and participants –

‘There was initially a lot of resentment and bitterness over the closures but we feel that participants are now looking forward and focussing on opportunities instead of the past. This is really positive and we anticipate that the majority will move into work.’ - Petra Kennedy, MTIB’s Employment & Training Manager

The CSF Project has helped in maintaining relationships as most of the ex-employees could of easily of confined themselves to their homes. The project allowed them to meet up 3 times a week and to share experience of any work related activities. - Mountain Ash YMCA

There is clear evidence to show that this project has made a difference to the ex-employees of Remploy Preston – the majority are now engaged in work (paid or unpaid) and/or involved in community activities. The project has also helped with some very practical issues where the individuals did not have the skills, support or confidence to do it themselves.- Disability Equality (NW) Ltd

“Without accessing personal budgets, ongoing partnership working and continued support from CSF this Service User Led training would not have been possible.” - Graeme Woodworth, Director of Access Ability