

GMEC Individual of the Year Award 2010 – Sponsored by BBC

Finalist: Andrew Bacon - Parkway Green Turnaround (Grounds Maintenance Team)

This category aims to reward employees who were recruited from the benefits register, and can demonstrate that, despite an unconventional educational background or work history, they have overcome significant challenges to become a real asset to their employer.

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- Andrew Bacon was one of the first people to be recruited onto the PG Turnaround project, which helps ex-offenders progress into permanent employment.
- Andrew had spent substantial time in prison, and had been unsuccessful in securing paid work before coming to PG Turnaround, but he was desperate to turn his life around, and has done so with the help of GMEC, Procure Plus, JCP, Probation, Police, Progress to Work and Parkway Green.
- Andrew has proved himself to be a leader, motivator and mentor for the other members of the PG Turnaround team. Andrew's contract as Senior Grounds Maintenance Operative – in which he supervises new team members - has been extended to January 2011.

Andrew Bacon was nominated by Parkway Green Director of Communities and Investment Ian Gregg.

Ian said: "Andrew Bacon is a key member of our grounds maintenance team in our groundbreaking PG Turnaround scheme aimed at getting ex-offenders back into work.

"Andrew, from Wythenshawe, is an ex-offender with a fragmented work history and has benefited greatly from the Turnaround project and also from the support from Procure Plus. In fact, Procure Plus has been central to the success of this whole project by taking an interest at a senior level and offering clear direction through the steering group.

"Coincidentally, Andrew was the very first person we interviewed for the grounds maintenance team when we launched the scheme in June 2009. We were looking for four grounds maintenance operatives, one of whom would act in a senior role and deputise for the team leader when required. At the interview it was clear that Andrew displayed good people skills; he was confident and personable, and we immediately saw him in a supervisory role within the team.

"From the very beginning of the project the other team members looked to Andrew for support because of his natural leadership style and the mentoring role he adopted.

"The scheme allows for people to work for six months and then move on to full time employment. Andrew's six months was up in January of this year but because the team was expanding so successfully we extended Andrew's contract until January 2011.



“Not only has he successfully completed health and safety training and taken courses in the use of all the equipment, we will also encourage him to take leadership training as he is now supervising five people.”