

Construction Skills Fund – Meet The Candidate

A multi-million pound fund to help tackle the construction skills shortage was launched in June 2018. The fund is part of the government's 'National Retraining Scheme', seeking to provide the training employers want to help those out of work, or at risk of redundancy, to start new careers.

Funded by the Department for Education the pilot scheme aims to inform larger policy developments (National Retraining Scheme and T-Levels). The Construction Skills Fund (CSF) aims to increase the number of people trained in construction, tackle the skills shortage and help build the homes and infrastructure England needs.

Procure Plus is one of only three Construction Skills Fund projects in the Northwest of England.

Working with B4 Box to deliver our training, we are well ahead of our target to deliver 350 candidates into employment by June 2020. In a series of profile pieces we will be introducing some of these successful candidates to hear how this fund has changed the course of their working lives.

Today meet Chris Reynolds

Chris is currently working at Lyndon SGB (scaffolding firm) as a labourer.

Chris served as an infantry soldier for 11 years before returning to the UK and worked as a mechanic before leaving the forces.

Chris was labouring for a brickwork firm on a casual basis from Jan 18 to Nov 18 and was moving around different properties before meeting up with Walking with the Wounded a Local Employment Group.

Through Walking With The Wounded and Procure Plus Chris was referred on to attend a Construction Skills Fund course with a view to starting a job as scaffolding labourer subject to successfully completing the CSF course and obtaining a CSCS card.



Q+A with Chris

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**Jon Cooke –
Director Lyndon SGB:**

“The Construction Skills Fund is a good way for people to access training prior to starting work in the construction sector and a great scheme for employers to access recruitment and training support and funding. This also helps Lyndon SGB promote our vacancies and opportunities within the community and access the local employment groups which is key to the business helping bridge the skills gap in construction”.

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How did you hear about the opportunity to retrain? What interested you about it?

I found out about the opportunity to retrain through a Local Employment Group Walking with the Wounded (WWTW). I was keen to get my CSCS card and retrain so I could pursue a career in construction.

Any challenges/barriers you faced (either training or employment)?

The only barriers I really had was a lack of awareness of any courses I could attend, just some basic advice and guidance, I also needed a CSCS card to get access to work on a building site. Then I met up with WWTW and was referred onto the Construction Skills Fund training course which has provided me with all the advice and guidance I need.

What support did you have to overcome these barriers?

I applied for a scaffolding position that WWTW made me aware through the Procure Plus training alerts which was a great start. However, the job I have now via the Construction Skills fund is better again and I have already completed additional qualifications helping me to get a CSCS card.

I was also supported in finding a property to move into whilst I got myself back on track.

What did the training cover, and what did you find useful about training?

I attended the CSF course in March 19 which included Level 1 Health & Safety, Traffic Management and Manual Handling. I then sat and passed my H&S touchscreen test and received my CSCS card.

I am currently working toward getting my FLT licence as I continue to work towards further scaffolding qualifications.

I found the course content really useful as the trainer delivered the content in an interactive way and was very engaging, the training has all been relevant to my new job.

What role have you gone into now, what types of things are you doing on site?

I now work for Lyndon SGB as a scaffolding labourer in Manchester. My duties include order picking, painting the scaffolding tubes, cutting boards, separating the fixtures and fittings and general labouring.

What difference has this opportunity made to you?

“This has made a huge difference to me as I would have struggled not being in work both mentally and financially. The training which helped me get a job has helped me financially get back on my feet and really helped turn my life around. This has given me the push I needed and I’m now looking to find my own property and looking to do more qualifications/training at work”.



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