

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 Skill 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 Phil Murphy

Phil is currently working at Spire CS (site logistics firm) as a Gateperson/ Labourer.

Phil served in the army for 7 years working as a mechanic before leaving the forces, and then spent 8 years working as a paramedic, then moved back to Ireland where he originally came from.

Last year Phil moved back to Manchester and was interested in working in construction. He attended a Construction Skills Fund (CSF) course which was highlighted to him via Project Recce and Procure Plus. He wanted to retrain to get a job in construction subject to successfully completing the CSF course and obtaining a CSCS card.



Q+A with Phil

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

I found out about the opportunity through Project Recce and Procure Plus. I was keen get a CSCS card and upskill so I could pursue a career in construction and I attended the CSF training course in February 2019.

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

At the time I felt the biggest barrier was acquiring a CSCS card which would at the very least allow me to work on a building site.

What support did you have to overcome these barriers?

With the support of the Construction Skills Fund I went on to complete a level 1 in Health & Safety. The team helped me prepare for my CSCS touchscreen test which I passed and they then helped me to apply for my CSCS card.

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

As well as the level 1 Health and Safety qualification, the CSF course also covered Manual Handling and First Aid training which I found really useful. All of this additional training led to me getting my first opportunity to work in construction.

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

I now work for Spire CS as a Site Logistics Operative in Manchester City Centre. My duties include vehicle marshalling, gate person duties and site labouring. Since starting work I have already attended a train a trainer course to deliver in house courses.

I am also booked on to do SSSTS, SMSTS and hoist training courses over the next couple of months.

What difference has this opportunity made to you?

“It has been great to work in a sector that is very similar to my military background. There is a good team work environment, we all have a good sense of humour, there are strict rules on site regarding health & safety and keeping the site running efficiently. Thanks to the training I've been able to enter a job and the foundation CSF has given me is a great start to progress my career”.

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Pete Aikman
Director at Spire CS:

“Procure Plus helping us utilise The Construction Skills Fund has been invaluable to Spire CS as a business and enabled us to recruit ready trained employees. It has also helped us link in closer to the communities across Greater Manchester and support Spire CS as a business tailor making a bespoke training package”.

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