

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 Sam Wrigley

Sam is currently working at Spire CS (site logistics firm) as a Site Logistics Operative.

Sam had been out of work since December 2018 after doing a variety as temporary jobs through agencies which included being an electrician's mate, he also spent 7 years working as a caterer for the Council.



Q+A with Sam

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

After being out of work for 3 months I found out about the opportunity to retrain through Ambition Manchester. I was keen to retrain so I could pursue a career in construction and gain a full-time permanent job. I attended the Construction Skills Fund training course in March 2019.

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

One of the biggest challenges I faced getting back into work were agencies not returning my calls. That, coupled with a gap in my employment since December 2018, meant I was beginning to struggle to get up in the morning. I was staying up late and sleeping in and I really needed a job to get my body clock back to normal working hours. It was becoming really frustrating as I was only getting ad hoc work and nothing permanent.

What support did you have to overcome these barriers?

With Ambition Manchester and the Construction Skills Fund I was given valuable employability advice and then able to complete a Traffic Management qualification that helped me get a job with Spire CS as a Site Logistics Operative.

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

I attended a Construction Skills Fund course in March 2019 focussed on gaining a Traffic Management qualification which helped me get the Site Logistics job with Spire CS. I found the course really useful as it was something I hadn't done before and it helped me get a qualification that supported me in getting a permanent job with full time hours.

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, erecting temporary fencing and site labouring. I've worked extremely hard since joining the Spire team to get on with my work mates and peers, and in April 2019 I was awarded a H&S award by the main contractor (Lend Lease) and the Site Manager.

What difference has this opportunity made to you?

"This opportunity has made a great difference to me. Through the Construction Skills Fund I have managed to retrain, get a full-time permanent job with full time hours and start to plan ahead with my life and get my finances back on track. No day is ever the same and I enjoy getting up in the mornings and coming in to work every day.

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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 tailoring a bespoke training package”.

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creating value for our communities

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