



# BigLife Enterprises

Impact report 2015

# Working Well

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**Big Life Enterprises** provides advice, employment and training opportunities for people who face barriers to work.

We deliver **Working Well**, an innovative pilot service across Manchester, Salford and Trafford, which works with people who have been through two years of the Work Programme, and remain without employment.

The service is commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities.

Through Working Well, **15** clients secured employment. There was also a significant improvement – more than **10%** - in clients' expectations of finding and retaining work – a measure taken during initial assessments and in clients' most recent reviews.

In its first year, Working Well had **994** referrals, going on to work with **886** people.

- **62%** had either never worked or not worked for more than **5** years.
- **63%** had either no qualification or qualifications below GCSE level.
- **45%** were experiencing depression or low mood.

More than **116** services were involved in clients' support, including GPs, housing, mental health, local council services, money services, family support, and many more

- **727** clients are working with at least one or more service
- **396** referrals have been made to other services
- **60%** of clients referred to other services felt that they were improving their employability

**Julie, age 41, came to the service after a difficult experience finding work previously. Her story is typical of many of the people we work with:**

“On the work programme, I was on stressful zero-hours contracts, and found it so hard to cope that I ended up in hospital.

Working Well made improving my health and wellbeing the number one priority, helping me to switch GPs, access counselling and receive benefits guidance from Citizens Advice. My new GP helped sort out my medication, which had improved my confidence, and Citizens Advice helped me sort out my benefits.

I wanted to get back to a state where I can work. Working Well know they have to get you sorted first. I’m now volunteering in a community cafe, and I want to work in a caring profession. I’m still working with Working Well, and they’re helping me to gain the skills I need for a specialised job.”

## Skills2Build

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Between 2009 and April 2015, **Big Life Enterprises** also delivered **Skills2Build**, employing apprentices who learn a range of maintenance, landscaping and gardening skills. **Skills2Build** was commissioned by Your Housing Trust, Cruden Property Services and, Pinnacle Property Services.

In its final year, **Skills2Build** took on three new apprentices. Of these, two have now gained employment and further qualifications. **Skills2Build** also supported two volunteers and three community payback places.

This year, **Skills2Build** worked on **105** individual jobs, maintained a cleaning contract servicing **69** blocks of flats per week, and ground maintenance for five nurseries.

Overall, in the six years that Big Life Enterprises has delivered **Skills2Build**, the service worked with **35** trainees and three apprentices. **18** had criminal convictions, **26** finished their traineeship or apprenticeship, **22** found employment within six months of finishing and **78%** of trainees received qualifications before they left.



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