

# Newsletter



*Finding real paid jobs for people with disabilities and mental health conditions, especially those that need more support into work*

## Alex Goes Back to School

When Alex moved from Milton Keynes to Sheffield he wanted to transfer from his employer, a leading Supermarket chain, to one based in Sheffield. However when he was told there were no vacancies available he still decided to move and search for a new job.

Alex sought help to find paid employment and met with a Disability Employment Adviser at the job centre who recommended Bridge Employment. After initially meeting with Anne for an advice session, Alex then met with Yaz, his designated Employment Worker who would help him find paid work. Alex had always worked; his last job for the supermarket lasted for 6 years and only ended because Alex was moving to Sheffield. He was therefore keen to get back into paid work. Yaz assisted Alex with creating a CV, identifying suitable vacancies and applying for them. However although Alex was successful in gaining interviews he never got the job.

### Easy Read

*Alex moves to Sheffield and wants a job*

### Easy Read

*Yaz helps Alex apply for jobs and get interviews*



One day Yaz spotted a cleaning vacancy for Ecclesall C of E Junior School and went through it with Alex who was very interested; they completed the application form online and a week or so later Alex was offered an interview.

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Yaz contacted the school and spoke to Raj, the school's Business Manager, to explain about Bridge Employment and the support they provide. Yaz accompanied Alex at the interview and he was made to feel at ease by the panel; he was able to talk about his experience, his skills and why he was the right candidate for the post. The same day the school contacted Alex and offered him the job!

Yaz helped Alex to tell the job centre about his new job and complete the relevant forms, and made sure that Alex was better off financially by taking the job. Yaz also helped Alex to obtain a mobility pass. Alex was offered a 5 hour contract but recently his hours have been doubled and he is now doing 10 hours a week!

At a recent review meeting Raj (now Alex's line manager) said:

*"Alex is an extremely hard-working individual and has integrated very well; he works well with all the team. I feel Bridge has given Alex the confidence to apply for mainstream jobs*

*and Bridge are always available to provide support if needed."*

Alex has now been in the job for a few months and is really enjoying it. He feels that the school have been very supportive, he is getting on well with all the staff and in particular the cleaning team.

Alex commented:

*"I really enjoy going to work everyday and feel that I am a valued member of the team. I have recently been on Safeguarding Training which I thoroughly enjoyed. I am also grateful to Bridge for all the support they have provided to help me find and settle into my new job."*

### Easy Read

**Alex gets a paid job as a school cleaner**

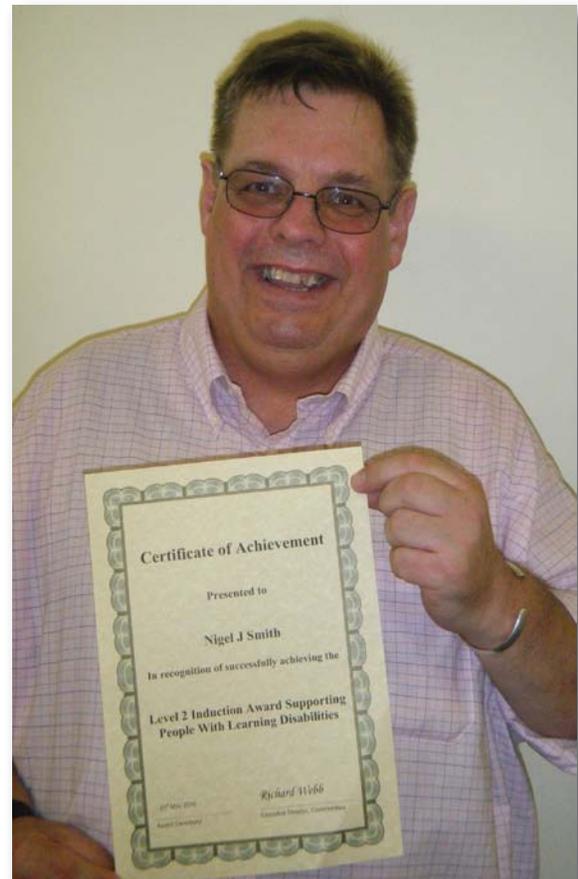
## Update on Nigel

**In our July 2009 issue we told you about Nigel getting a job as a Supported Living Assistant.**

We are pleased to report he is still very much enjoying his work and recently came to show us his certificate for his 'Level 2 Induction Award - Supporting People with Learning Disabilities' which he had been proud to receive at a presentation in the Town Hall that day.

### Easy Read

**Nigel is happy in his job and gets a certificate at the Town Hall**



## Alan Lifts off at Launchpad

**Alan wanted to find paid work so that he could help his wife to support their family.**

Alan had been supported to find a job by Bridge previously, so after being made redundant and a period of ill health, he contacted us again. Alan has a mild learning disability and felt that he would benefit from Bridge's support to build his confidence again and return to paid employment.

### Easy Read

**Alan returns to Bridge to find paid work**

Alan met with Rich to discuss the sort of job he would like and plan the way forward. Alan already had excellent cleaning skills but thought he would like to try a work placement within a different industry to gain more experience and ease himself back into the working environment.

Rich set up a meeting with a Disability Employment Adviser at the job centre and asked that Alan be nominated for a work placement. Alan and Rich were then referred to BTCV and met with Mark Baines, who is an Employment Officer there.

Mark was really friendly and approachable; he gave Alan lots of helpful advice regarding his options. Alan decided he would like to try working in a garden centre; Mark made a few phone calls and came up with a placement at Homebase near Meadowhall.



### Easy Read

**BTCV set up a placement, Bridge provide the support, Alan works hard**

Alan started work there one morning a week and Rich also attended to support Alan to learn the various tasks, including stock replenishment, plant care and watering. Alan soaked Rich on more than one occasion; Rich was never sure if this was by accident!

With every passing week Alan became more sure of himself and the role; eventually Rich no longer needed to assist him and Alan was confident enough to attend the placement alone.

Mark from BTCV commented:

*"It's great to see how two organisations like BTCV and Bridge working together have helped to build up Alan's stamina and confidence in a working environment."*

Alan, Rich and Mark met again and Alan decided that he was ready for paid employment. Rich had heard that Launchpad (an organisation for people with learning disabilities) was setting up a cleaning social enterprise called "Clean Sweep" and were looking for staff.



Alan put in an application and had an interview with Sue Lane, the Project Manager. Because Alan had the necessary cleaning skills and recent work experience, Sue offered him a job!

Alan loves his job at Clean Sweep; It has helped him to recover his self esteem, he is much more confident in his own abilities and he is earning money for his family once again

## Easy Read

### Alan gets paid work at Launchpad

Alan attended an induction course, Rich again supported him with on the job training and Alan quickly learned the cleaning schedule. Rich wasn't too happy about the seven o'clock starts though!

*"I was really impressed with how much effort Alan put in, it was obvious he really wanted this job"* Rich commented.

Alan worked very hard and soon felt part of the team. Alan has done so well in fact that Sue has recently increased the number of hours he works, commenting:

*"Alan has come on in leaps and bounds since joining us, his confidence has grown and he's very much part of the team. He works hard and does an excellent job; we are very proud of his achievements."*



## The Way We Work

Bridge adheres to the person centred model of service delivery. We seek to empower our clients by encouraging them to make choices about how and where we focus our job finding activities. To further this objective Bridge complies with legislation and good practice in relation to confidentiality, equality and diversity, dealing with complaints and health and safety. Our commitments to this are detailed in our Client Handbook which is available on request and is introduced as a matter of procedure to all our clients on first meeting them.

## Easy Read

### Bridge puts clients first



## Kieron tastes the difference at Sainsbury's!

**Kieron was studying at Hillsborough College and although he enjoyed going, he spent more time helping out in the college shop than he did attending lessons! Kieron began to feel that he would be more suited to practical work than academia and so his tutor put him in touch with Bridge. Rich met with Kieron to discuss his options and it was felt that Kieron would benefit from a work placement.**

From the outset Kieron was very clear about what he wanted to do; he wanted to work in a supermarket and that supermarket had to be Sainsbury's!

### Easy Read

**Kieron Leaves college to find a job**

Rich thought that our colleagues at BTCV would be

the best people to source such a specific placement and so he spoke with a Disability Employment Adviser at Bailey Court job centre, asking them to make a referral.

Kieron and Rich soon met with Janet Smith from BTCV. Janet, like everyone at BTCV, was very approachable and took the time to listen to Kieron's requirements. Janet said she would do her best and began to make enquiries with her contacts. It did not take long for Janet to come up with an ideal placement, in Sainsbury's at Crystal Peaks shopping centre. Kieron and Rich went along with Janet to meet the Manager there. It was agreed that Kieron would attend for two afternoons per week, with Rich accompanying him initially to lend support and Janet visiting him every week to check progress.

Janet commented:

*"I first met with Kieron and Rich at Bailey Court Job Centre, he was very precise regarding the voluntary work placement that he would like to experience. I quickly found a suitable placement for Kieron and from the onset he settled well into the programme working for two afternoons per week. Kieron works well as part of a team as well as interacting with customers. I firmly believe Kieron has found his niche regarding a job role."*

Kieron received an excellent induction from Kay Wild, one of the Store Trainers, and his test results proved that Kieron really had been listening after all! Kay issued Kieron with his uniform, including the ultimate prize of a Sainsbury's fleece jacket! Kieron was so pleased, he wore it that night when he went to the pub to meet his girlfriend!

Kieron was assigned to the General Merchandise Department under the watchful eye of Angela. Angela made Kieron and Rich feel welcome straight away and Kieron quickly settled into being a Sainsbury's 'Colleague'. He learned how the department operated and was set to work replenishing the stock.



Kieron was very enthusiastic and was able to try lots of different roles within the store. He received terrific support from Angela and the other Sainsbury's Colleagues (Glynn, Marion, Chris, Kath, Laura, Nathan, Michael, Gemma -everyone!) They all went out of their way to make Kieron feel part of the team.

### Easy Read

**Everyone works together to give Kieron a good work experience**

Because of this, Rich was soon able to leave Kieron in their capable hands.

Rich commented:

*"I have been really impressed by the willingness of the Sainsbury's staff team to assist Kieron in his work placement. Every Colleague we meet has a positive attitude; not only to their own job, but in supporting Kieron to gain valuable work experience"*

Kieron is thoroughly enjoying his placement, thanks to BTCV and Sainsbury's and can't wait to use his new skills in paid employment.

*"This is my first taste of real work, I like it and I want more. I have proved that I am capable and my next goal is to find a paid job!"* He said.

### Easy Read

**Kieron feels part of the Sainsbury's team**



## Feedback on our Services

### Easy Read

**We want to know what you think of our service.**

As part of our Quality Assurance framework we regularly seek feedback from clients about how well or otherwise we are doing in supporting them on their journey to work. If you are not a client of the service – you may be a carer, a parent, a partner agency or an employer that has worked alongside us – we value your feedback similarly. This is your opportunity to have your say.

**Here is a list of the sort of information that we are interested in (some of it is optional):**

- Name and Position (Optional)
- Contact Details (Optional)
- What do you think Bridge does well?
- What could Bridge do better?
- Any other comments you have about Bridge

You do not need to provide your name and contact details with the comments you make but if you do we will respond to you personally.

You can send us your feedback in one of three ways. Via email to:

david.williamson@bridgeemployment.org.uk  
heading the e mail 'FEEDBACK RESPONSE'

*If you would prefer to talk to someone about your views then give us a ring instead on (0114) 2795055 and we will arrange that for you.*

**Or by post to:**

David Williamson,  
FEEDBACK RESPONSE,  
Bridge Employment,  
Zest Centre,  
18 Upperthorpe,  
Sheffield  
S6 3NA

**Many thanks. David Williamson**  
(Contracts Manager)



## Opening Times

Monday - Friday  
9.00am - 5.00pm

Drop in 1.30pm until 4.30pm  
every Wednesday  
no appointment required

If you would like more information or would like to make a referral, please contact us.



Tel 0114 2795055



Fax 0114 2753981



info@bridgeemployment.org.uk



For more information or to download a referral form visit  
[www.bridgeemployment.org.uk](http://www.bridgeemployment.org.uk)



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