



Build It Stronger

Back on Track Liverpool Ltd

People's Project Runners-Up Award: Final Report

Project ID 10354793

Initial project aims

Build It Stronger will offer six-weeks of practical woodworking skills to young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs). We will work with the Youth Offending Team, the LIT teams and youth groups to identify the young participants who are most at risk of, or on the cusp of, anti-social behavior. As well as learning practical skills, the young people will develop a sense of personal achievement, self-confidence and self-worth and, by working with a community organization to provide a legacy "gift", develop inter-community understanding, and a deeper connection with their own space and neighbourhood – future-proofing tomorrow's communities and citizens.

Delivery

We took in two different cohorts of young people – 13 in total. The first group of six were young people who were disengaged from mainstream education. Working with fellow social enterprise Urban Workbench, the young people started by learning about each piece of machinery and how to use basic hand & power tools. Then, the group learnt how to build bird boxes from pallets and timber offcuts donated by local businesses.



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After building 6 bird boxes, they visited our local partners West Everton Community Centre, next door to the Urban Workbench workshop. They heard about what WECC do in the local area to support individuals and communities.



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We then took our cohort into the Urban Workbench satellite workshop at WECC. Our mixed gender, young DIY-ers decided to donate their bird boxes to WECC for their outdoor spaces. Across another two sessions our young people co-designed and up-cycled chairs to improve the look & feel of WECC. They decided to create seating from up-cycled chairs and timber, which WECC's visitors can now enjoy.





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Finally, we introduced our cohort of young makers to our CNC machine. They worked together to customise beautiful **CNC manufactured furniture**. They painted stools and a table to take away for Back On Track's community hub at Toxteth Town Hall for use by other young people and children.





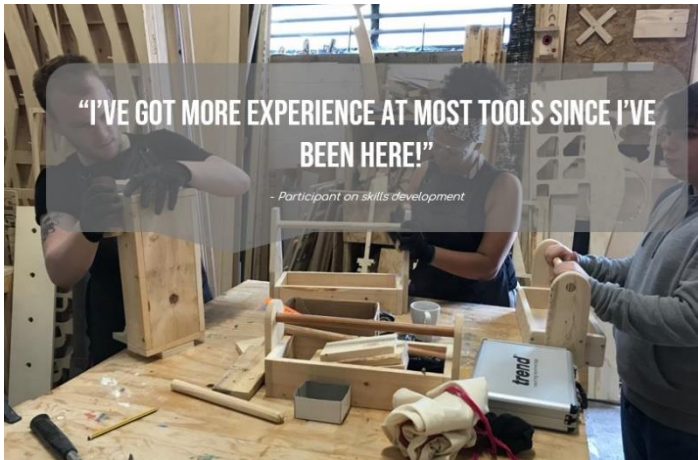
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The second cohort we involved were slightly older - 16-25. For this we partnered with Merseyside Youth Association (MYA), who work with young people furthest from the labour market for a variety of reasons. Seven participants attended 6 sessions over 3 weeks. In addition to the basic joinery and introduction to hand and machine tools, the group upcycled donated pallets into tool and fishing tackle boxes. They also co-designed and repurposed unloved timber chairs into unique benches and seating with storage and foot rests!



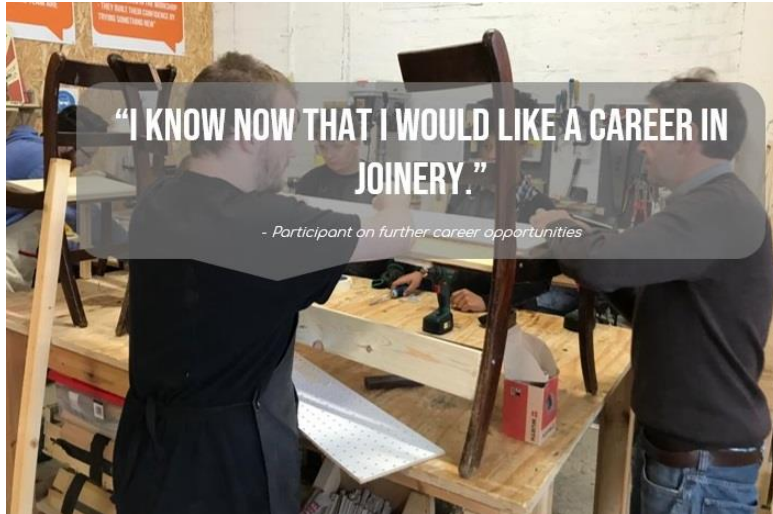
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MYA mentors said "our Talent Match participants often have multiple barriers ranging from poor mental health, previous offences, disability, adverse childhood experiences, lack of community engagement, social isolation and substance misuses."



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Individuals were from different parts of Liverpool City Region and didn't know each other before joining the Talent Match programme.

Through the therapeutic benefits of making, our cohort built new relationships and increased their self-confidence. All 7 participants completed the sessions with 100% attendance throughout, a significant achievement when working with this referral group.

"It was a privilege to watch all the young people grow in confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness and also to grow socially" commented the MYA mentor.

Outcomes

The feedback shared by the participants has been amazing. It has reinforced our belief in the power of creative activity and making to provide a way to grow not just skills but self-confidence.

Of the 13 young people we engaged:

- 2 of the initial cohort undertook a further course in catering over summer
- 2 young women have returned to Further Education
- 3 of the MYA cohort are now looking for further training or an apprenticeship in woodwork/joinery

Virtually all of the young people had their confidence boosted by their accomplishments – none of them had any woodworking skills prior to starting the course.



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Conclusion

We will continue to monitor the young people as they go forward to see what directions they take. What we can now evidence is that, even with the hardest-to-reach groups, teaching them something new, something creative, practical skills and letting them achieve comparatively quickly, we can help young people develop confidence and ambition.

Thank you, National Lottery Community Fund People’s Project. Your support meant so very much. We are now talking to Liverpool City Council about replicating some of these courses on a larger scale – and have a lot more ideas on other ways to engage young people (subject to funding, as always).

Cate Murphy
Operations Director
Back on Track Liverpool Ltd
22 September 2019