



## Gill's Story

**Project name:**

Linkbridge Community Support Centre

**Delivery Organisation:**

Linkbridge

**Target: Wellbeing Programme:**

Burnley

**Primary theme:**

Improving Mental Wellbeing

**Secondary theme:**

Encouraging Healthy Eating

**Contact:** Simon Gill

**Telephone:** 01282 715574

**Email:** info@linkbridgecentre.com

**Website:** www.linkbridgecentre.com



Gill, project beneficiary

**Background to the project:**

Within the Burnley area there were many services aimed at meeting the needs of the local population, but also evidence that people were not always aware of these services and fell through the gaps. Linkbridge aimed to change that. It was set in the heart of the community and was easily accessible. It provided support while bringing the community and other services that can help them together.

**What activity took place:**

Linkbridge is a community support centre based in the Duke Bar area of Burnley. The problems in the area include: poor education, high unemployment, crime, substance misuse, homelessness and prostitution. As a consequence people lack confidence and suffer from low self-esteem, loneliness, anxiety, and depression, and some are suicidal.

To tackle these problems, Linkbridge provided a voluntary service to the community, offering valuable resources including outreach support, information, and advice. Some of the issues the centre helped people with included healthcare, housing, education, employment, and money management.

**target: wellbeing** aims to help people achieve healthier and happier lives. It's a programme of over 90 projects that increase exercise, encourage healthier eating and promote mental wellbeing.

Funded by £10.1m from the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund, it's managed by Groundwork for the benefit of targeted disadvantaged communities across the Northwest.

For more information call **0161 237 3200** or email [targetwellbeing@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:targetwellbeing@groundwork.org.uk)



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# target: wellbeing Gill's Story (cont.)

## Who this case study is about:

Gill - a beneficiary supported by Linkbridge. Gill had disabilities that meant, without support, she would not be able to work. This caused lethargy and depression, which affected her mental wellbeing.

## The Project Worker's view:

*"Given support, Gill was able to work doing a job she loves. This gave her self-esteem and confidence a boost, greatly improving her mental wellbeing. I had regular meetings with her as she visited Linkbridge on a monthly basis. I was very happy with her progress and Gill continues to display a happy disposition, showing enthusiasm for work and life despite physical constraints."*

*"Our project has had a major impact on the overall wellbeing of those who took part. We saw people who perhaps lacked confidence, were lonely or leading sedentary lives become more confident and outgoing. I feel very positive about the outcomes and expect the results for many will be long lasting"*

*"We also had excellent support from the PCT and Groundwork UK. Both were there for us if and when we needed them. Good partnership working with other organisations is very important for us as Linkbridge specialises in bringing communities and services together. If we are to provide a good quality service, I think good listening is essential, only then can the appropriate support be given."*

## Gill's view:

*"I have been unable to work for over ten years due to MS and arthritis in my spine and hips. I wanted to work but had been unable to find long term supported help. The help available was for only one year then I would have to go it alone. I needed to find an organisation that would be able to give indefinite support, allowing me to work 15 hours per week without losing incapacity benefit. I found this in Linkbridge."*

*"I needed to be able to work the few hours a week to enable me to feel useful and able to do my bit for society, and not be a free loader. It is also important for my health and wellbeing to have a structure to my day and give me a reason to get up in a morning. I have suffered from depression in the past, due partly to not being able to work and being stuck in the house. I had no energy or inclination to do anything in or out of the house. I spent all my time sleeping and watching TV. My health was at an all time low. There are a lot of people in the same boat who have not been able to access the help that I have."*



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**target:**  
wellbeing

## Gill's Story (cont.)

*"Linkbridge is a community organisation that is for anybody to use and it has been a godsend. My introduction to the group was at a healthy eating course where I had the chance to talk to the project worker about my difficulties around work. My current sessions tend to be a chance to talk about any issues that have arisen. It is so nice to know that Simon and Linkbridge are there to enable me to work and are only a phone call away when needed."*

*"My confidence, health and mental state have greatly improved and I have gained new friends. My relationship with my husband has improved due to now having a social life."*

*"There needs to be more organisations like Linkbridge, to allow people with long-term disabilities to get back into work to improve their self-confidence, mental state and wellbeing, as the disability doesn't disappear after a year like the help does."*

### Key learning for others:

- There is a lack of services in a position to support people with physical constraints
- It is worth considering the long lasting multiple benefits to a client after receiving support

### Further information available:

- End of Project Report

Further information on this project can be found at:  
[www.targetwellbeing.org.uk/profile/linkbridge\\_community\\_support\\_centre](http://www.targetwellbeing.org.uk/profile/linkbridge_community_support_centre)



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