

## Case Study - Sam Huck

A young man from Ulverston has described how the Building Better Opportunities Getting Cumbria to Work (BBO GCtW) project has completely changed his outlook on life and working.

Sam Huck, 23, has a diagnosis of autism and also has a long-term medical condition.

He described how this sometimes made him struggle with the routine demands of life and how his medical condition meant he would wake up on some mornings feeling anxious.

He obtained NVQs in Site Joinery and Bench Joinery at Furness College but a subsequent apprenticeship with a firm did not work out.

He had a variety of short-term jobs but said he did not want to commit to a career. *“I just wanted to give up on joinery and a lot of people thought it was a waste of an opportunity because they saw great potential in me,”* said Sam.

**I absolutely love it. It is the best job in the world**

Then he was offered the opportunity to volunteer at The Furniture Warehouse, which collects, restores and recycles unwanted furniture from residents throughout south Cumbria and is run by Right2Work, a partner in the BBO GCtW project. He was also introduced to Ann Williams, a key worker for both organisations.

*“Ann helped me build up my confidence,”* said Sam. *“She made sure I was comfortable about where I was and helped me feel good about myself and happy in what I was doing.”*

*“In the weeks before I was due to start at The Furniture Warehouse we had conversations and she made sure I was ready to start and told me what I would be doing when I did start.”*

He worked there as a furniture restorer. *“I was over the moon. It was like someone had picked my dream job and given it to me,”* he said.

He then got a paid job with Right2Work’s Community Works team, which provides property and general maintenance services, including gardening, groundworks and general house maintenance to the local community.

The team also provides a supported vocational environment in the property maintenance sector for learners with learning disabilities. Sam, who is doing a Property Maintenance Operative course at Kendal College, is already helping to tutor the learners.



BBO GCtW Right2Work Participant Sam Huck

*“I absolutely love it. It is the best job in the world,”* he said.

*“The learners know that I have my own struggles but seeing me it gives them the confidence that whatever disability they have they are capable of progressing in life if they work hard.”*

*“Some of the learners are twice my age. We are learning from each other.”*

*“One day one of the learners was making a wooden box but he was struggling to cut straight lines. I saw the emotion building up in him. I taught him the correct technique and gave him confidence so he was able to cut perfectly straight. It was a wonderful feeling seeing him by lifted by that bit of teaching.”*

How had working with Ann Williams and BBO GCtW helped him?

*“BBO GCtW gave me the confidence that there are opportunities out there for people like myself,”* said Sam. *“It has changed my outlook on life and working life completely.”*

*“If I had not had that help, I don’t think I would be, in any way, shape or form, in the same mental state and job position that I am in now.”*

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Miss Williams also noted Sam’s transformation. *“He is like a completely different man now,”* she said. *“He has found a niche and run with it. He is absolutely loving it.”*

He is like a completely different man



Sam Huck, Right2Work Participant

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