

Impact Report

August 2023 / July 2024



Introduction: Education and Skills

Across Riverside Training and Clip, we continue to empower people to reach their destinations—whether it's improving confidence, supporting mental health, building skills for further learning, or progressing in their careers. For 30 years, we've been dedicated to evolving with the needs of the communities we serve, finding innovative and impactful ways to deliver our services.

This year has been particularly significant. We proudly maintained our Matrix accreditation for the quality of our information, advice, and guidance services, demonstrating our commitment to excellence. Additionally, our training and education efforts went through the rigorous external validation process and earned a 'Good' Grade 2 from Ofsted in June 2024.

Beyond education and skills, we are focused on the people we support and reflected in achieving our group-wide Customer Service Excellence re-accreditation. This recognition highlights our unwavering commitment to placing customers at the heart of everything we do, ensuring that the services we deliver truly make a difference in their lives – and this is reflected in our approach of delivery by Clip and Riverside too.

During 2023/24, we provided wellbeing, education, and employment support at our four Lincolnshire sites, helping individuals gain confidence and skills to succeed. Through 22 diverse contracts, delivered in collaboration with valued partners, we supported 6,802 people—empowering them to take meaningful steps forward in their personal and professional journeys. We're grateful to all our funders for their continued and new support in the last 12 months. And look forward to working with them in 2024/25.

Here are some links to our work:

Access to HE: <https://cliplearning.com/university-access-courses-in-lincolnshire/>

GCSE's : <https://youtu.be/khxPqoeUVCc?si=9cYvOYhdK5BLSazj>

In the following pages, we're excited to share highlights of our impact, showcasing how our work continues to make a real difference in the lives of those we support.

Proudly working in Partnership with:



Part of the bigger picture

Much like many local charities, Riverside and Clip have had a challenging few years since COVID. Reduced funding, increased overhead costs, difficulties in recruitment and challenging needs of the people we support, has meant we have had to act fast and respond. A lot of work has taken place in the background this year to strengthen our position and do more for our customers, we have worked hard and more closely with our financial team within the group and external partners to negotiate new contracts and loans that will secure the best value for money. This collaboration has resulted in a continued reduction in overhead costs – despite the challenging increases we've had to absorb including utilities.

In addition, we've been improving our internal services. Working with our IT team, we've rolled out new hardware, including updated laptops and additional technology for our teams and learners, ensuring they have the right tools to perform their roles effectively. This upgrade has not only improved operational efficiency but also made our platforms more accessible for the team and learners, enhancing their ability to engage with services quickly and seamlessly.

We've significantly strengthened our safeguarding practices across the group training over 20 to level 3 as designated safeguarding leads to ensure we can support people even more – with expertise around housing, debt, domestic abuse and mental health being invested in to ensure we can offer appropriate and relevant support. This has been recognised as good practice by funders and by Ofsted.

We've worked to improve our internet connectivity across many of our sites and boosted our security training efforts to ensure compliance with cyber essentials standards and safeguarding through filtering and monitoring. This has been vital in safeguarding our data and ensuring that we are equipped to protect the privacy of the people we support while keeping our operations efficient and secure.

This collective effort reflects how we continuously strive to create a resilient infrastructure that allows us to grow, innovate, and support our customers effectively. With these improvements, we can do more to support our communities and ensure they have access to the resources and services they need to thrive.

And that's not all. Through work carried out on how we are structured, we have started the process to convert Clip and Riverside to charities. This is to ensure our structure reflects who we are and enables us to leverage more income long term to meet our vision and aspirations.

Seeing our impact

We know that people are on a journey and need different support to enable them to reach their destination. That's why we ensure we have a blend of services across wellbeing, education and employment support for all ages to do this. Seeing the difference we make in peoples' lives is our main reason for being.

This year alone we have delivered more and helped more people than last year.

We've delivered **22** contracts across our **4** centres and **3** outreach sites.

And we have helped

6,802 people through:

- Wellbeing
- Activities
- Employment support
- Learning
- Qualifications
- Finding work

and lots more supported through drop ins, coffee clubs, social events and our cafes.



And whilst every person has their own destination in mind, we are proud that we have helped people progress into work and further education this year:

Into Work: 250

this includes learners we have supported to remain in work, upskill, and those who have secured work

Into Further Education: 335

And more importantly we have continued to achieve high levels of satisfaction from those we help:



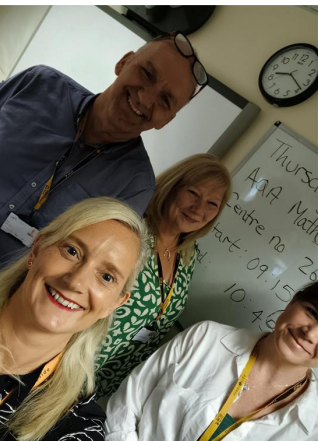
93% satisfaction with our services

6 in 10 people would recommend



The following sections highlight the results, real life stories and difference we make that are just a snapshot of the real impact our work has every day and showcases how we continue to create stronger, more supportive communities.

A year in pictures ...



A year in pictures (cont)...



Like Comment Share

Jemma Leanne and 23 others




Building confidence.

Supporting peoples' wellbeing

We've continued to support people with wellbeing support in all our centres this year. This includes a wide range of services from walking groups, breakfast clubs, 1-2-1's and skills courses that all help people build confidence, gain knowledge, and develop skills. This year alone we have:

- Grown our wellbeing service provision through our contracts with NHS, Shine, Active Lincolnshire and LPFT to provide further access to complimentary services, helping promote independence, opportunity, and recovery. This has enabled complimentary delivery for our wellbeing courses.
- Regularly facilitated events such as Mental Health Partnership Meetings to bring together over 50 organisations working across Lincolnshire to support peoples wellbeing
- Delivered activities and events such as social lunches, breakfasts, family events and chat groups in all our cafes to ensure we are a welcoming space for the local community and do all we can to reduce loneliness.
- Focused on a rounded approach to conditions such as Autism and Dementia we worked with specialist stakeholders to run virtual reality events across the different sites funded by differing contracts. For example; Virtual Reality Autism Experience for parents and careers ran as an LCC Family Learning Course; supported the development of Autism groups in Gainsborough and Mablethorpe and allowed a progression to Distance Learning Qualifications. The group in Gainsborough has worked with Gainsborough Old Hall in order to support the venue to become Autism friendly for visitors.

Helped: **6,218** 

People Gained skills to support their wellbeing: **264** 

Through Family and Schools: **775** 

This case highlights the transformative impact of community-based support and the Memory Café in providing a space for those with dementia and their families to connect, engage, and thrive. Lynda's renewed sense of engagement and her family's improved ability to support her are testaments to the positive outcomes that such initiatives can bring.

Case Study:

Lynda's Transformation Through the Memory Café and Community Support

Lynda, in her late seventies, lives with her husband, who is in his mid-eighties and facing his own health challenges. Together, they are supported by their three daughters. Lynda's husband, who acts as her main carer, has struggled with his own health needs while looking after Lynda, who has Alzheimer's. At home, Lynda has become passive, speaking little and often resisting activities she once enjoyed. Her husband, exhausted from caregiving, finds it difficult to engage her in outings or new activities.

Lynda's youngest daughter discovered the Memory Café and brought her mother there initially to give her dad a break. Despite being initially hesitant, Lynda was welcomed by the staff, volunteers, and other participants. She soon warmed up to the group, enjoying the sense of belonging and the camaraderie she found there. The staff made a point of remembering the correct spelling of her name, which became an important detail to Lynda, and she looked forward to each visit. Whenever she missed a session due to illness, her return was celebrated, showing her that she was missed and valued.

After a few weeks, Lynda and her youngest daughter noticed a flower arranging course offered as part of the Adult and Community Learning programme at the centre. They decided to attend it together, and this became a significant breakthrough for Lynda. She attended every session, taking pride in the arrangements she made and seeking out the group leader to show her work. This consistent participation was a major step forward, as Lynda had not shown interest in attending regular activities before.

As Lynda's youngest daughter continued to support her attendance at the flower arranging course, her eldest daughter took over the responsibility of accompanying Lynda to the Memory Café. This daughter also attended The Virtual Dementia Training session in Mablethorpe, which helped her understand dementia better and develop strategies to support Lynda and the rest of the family.

The positive changes in Lynda's behaviour were noticeable. She now eagerly anticipates her visits to the Memory Café, often waiting with her coat on, ready to go. She has even encouraged her husband to attend, which he has done, enjoying the chance to interact with other men in the group and participate in games like dominos.

At the Memory Café, Lynda has become more talkative and engaged, often sharing how friendly and welcoming the group is, and she has become an advocate for it, encouraging others to join. Her eldest daughter has seen a marked difference in her mother's mood and behaviour, describing the time at the Memory Café as when she "gets her Mum back"—chatting and laughing like she used to. Even after an accident that kept Lynda away for a few weeks, she returned to the group eagerly, showing her continued interest and enthusiasm.



Growing skills

Supporting people through education.

We know everyone has different ways in which they learn. And people have had different experiences with education – not always good. That's why core to our services for all ages is offering opportunities to learn in lots of different ways to enable people to build a love of lifelong learning – and build skills that help them take their next step. We've continued to support people with our education programmes in all our centres, and in Lincoln through our partner Abbey Access training, this year. This includes a wide range of services including our study programme for those 16-19 who have yet to achieve their qualifications including entry level qualifications right through to GCSE, and qualifications for all ages focused on key sectors that we know skills are vitally needed across Lincolnshire. This year alone we have:

- Grown our young peoples' provision to meet the demand – and working with local secondary schools have ensured those who may have become NEET, are actively engaged in learning
- Used our education programmes to ensure we are supporting our communities, including delivering projects in partnership with local organisations to build skills and also offer more in local areas including:
 - The spoken word project which culminated in a poetry slam at the Riverhead Theatre in Louth, where students wrote a poem depicting how they felt about where they live.
 - an arts project, investigating the history of Mablethorpe which led to some street theatre to be performed as part of the SO festival in Summer 2024
 - The Creative Literacies Project with Shooting Fish Theatre Company. Including working with ImageSkool Graffiti artists to create the backdrop a scenery for the Utopia play at Trinity Arts centre
- Maintained our core Access to HE programme focused on access to health professions. And despite low numbers on the programme achieved 100% achievement rate and saw learner progress to university to study midwifery.
- Continued to buck the trend in GCSE results to the national average – showing that our provision is essential to support the communities.
- Introduced a new pathway in construction to support new skills and get people back into work, Site Right Health and Safety test, maths for construction to meet local people's learning needs.
- Piloted a subcontract of our young peoples core provision to Abbey Access to meet the growing need of learners in Lincoln.

Young people



Qualifications delivered –



177

(100 last year –
56% increase)

Young people helped –

(50 last year –

over 60% increase)

83

Retention – **74.1% ↑**



Achievement – **49.7%** overall /



CLIP **57.4%** achievement this year,
(higher than last year at 56%)

Progression – **68.7%** overall /

CLIP **82%** including over half
back into education

16-19 GCSEs



Number completed: **13**

Achievement rate: **92.03%**

Pass rate (Grade 4 or above): **46**

[compared to national average Gov.uk 22/8/24
Ofqual - national average for Grade 4 and
above is 17.3%]

Supporting adults



Courses delivered: **309**

Qualifications studied: **25**

Qualifications include:

Autism Level 2,
Understanding Mental Health Level 2,
Customer Service Level 2.

Retention



Vocational
quals: **89.3% ↑**

Maths and
English: **100% ↑**

Achievement vocational quals:

CLIP –

50% ↔



Maths and English

CLIP – **83.3% ↑**

Riverside – **100% ↑**

Access to HE



One workstream delivered –
Access to Health Professions

Retention – **67%**



Achievement rate – **100% ↑**

Where next **50%**

GAP year, University place to study midwifery.



Case Study:

Celebrating GCSE Success at CLIP Learning Centres

CLIP Learning Centres recently celebrated the incredible achievements of their learners on GCSE results day. With a 100% pass rate and nearly half of students achieving grades above a 4, the results marked a proud moment for learners, tutors, and staff alike.

Emma Innesbeer, Delivery Manager at CLIP, shared her excitement: "We recognise the hard work that students have put into their studies. Today's results are something they should really be proud of, because we certainly are!"

Over the years, CLIP has consistently provided learners with the opportunity to take Maths and English GCSEs, delivering results that far exceed national averages. This year's success highlighted the centre's commitment to excellence, with 46% of learners achieving grade 4 and above. Nationally, the averages for learners aged 17 and older are 25.9% for English and 16.4% for Maths, showcasing the exceptional outcomes achieved at CLIP.

Richard Thorpe, Operations Manager at CLIP, commented on the impact of these achievements: "We know that gaining nationally recognised grades makes a difference in our learners' progression. Our learning centres welcome anyone who is looking to achieve these qualifications, no matter your age or ability, and our pass rates reflect the success you can have with us."

Results day was not just about grades but also about celebrating effort and determination. Smiling faces, a special podcast, and proud tutors came together to create a memorable day. The results underscore the power of dedication and the supportive environment at CLIP, where learners of all backgrounds can thrive and achieve their goals.

With such impressive outcomes, CLIP continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of its learners, paving the way for brighter futures.



Helping people take the next step.

Supporting people into work and progress.

Core to our service is ensuring we equip people with the skills and support they need to progress when they are ready. We work with people who have never worked and don't know where to start, right through to those who are in work and want to change career or gain skills to progress. We've continued to support people with employment support in all our centres this year. This includes a wide range of services from help with CVs, job clubs, employer talks, placements and work experience, and qualifications to get people job ready. This year alone we have:

- Grown our 1-2-1 support services in Riverside where we have delivered STEPS – support towards employment and personal success in West Lindsey to over 70 people – with almost 95% of those we helped either in work or education linked to the job market.
- Supported those who have been out of work with a variety of different barriers, lengths of unemployment have ranged from 1-2 years to some customers who have been unemployed for over 20 years.
- Supported vulnerable members of the community to make connections reducing social isolation through our Cafe's, attending groups, activities and courses ran in the centres. Launched our clothing and warm space library – where we ensure people have access to interview clothes when they need it and warm clothing during the colder months
- Represented the work done by Clip and Riverside on both a national and local level to stakeholders and funders Continued our strong relationship with DWP – including introducing a weekly session during the at Gainsborough jobcentre supporting the work coaches.



Helped: 583 people with specific employment support – all receiving 1-2-1 support and action plans to help them succeed.



Restart participants – 66% into work
(compared to national average of 43%)



Steps participants – 92.8% positively progressed

Case Study:

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Kevin's learning journey

Kevin Boulton's journey began with a desire to turn his life around and find meaningful work. After facing challenges that left him uncertain about his future, Kevin discovered the Restart programme, which offered him a pathway to rebuild his confidence and pursue his ambitions. He signed up for two key courses: Resilience and Coping Strategies, and Building Aspirations. Both courses were designed to equip learners with the tools they needed to overcome personal barriers and prepare for employment opportunities. For Kevin, these courses became a turning point.

When Kevin first joined the programme, he was eager to make a change but lacked the confidence to take those next steps. The Resilience and Coping Strategies course taught him how to manage stress and maintain a positive mindset even in challenging situations. Through group activities and practical exercises, Kevin learned techniques to build his inner strength and tackle obstacles with renewed determination. Meanwhile, the Building Aspirations course helped him set realistic goals and visualize a future where his skills and passions aligned with a fulfilling career.

As Kevin progressed through the courses, his transformation became evident. He actively participated in every session, sharing his thoughts and ideas while encouraging others to do the same. His enthusiasm and approachable nature created a welcoming environment for everyone, and he quickly became a valued member of the group. The skills he gained and the friendships he formed boosted his confidence and reignited his belief in himself.

Inspired by his progress, Kevin decided to take a bold step forward. He began volunteering at John Copeland Hospital, where he found a way to give back to the community while gaining hands-on experience in a professional setting. His role at the hospital allowed him to apply the skills he had learned during the Restart programme, from effective communication to problem-solving. The experience also deepened his sense of purpose and clarified his career goals.

Today, Kevin is closer than ever to achieving his dream of becoming a support worker. His journey through the Restart programme has not only brought him closer to employment but also transformed his outlook on life. He now speaks with confidence about his future and is determined to continue building on the foundation he has created.

Kevin's story is a testament to the life-changing impact of programmes like Restart. It shows how access to the right resources and support can empower individuals to overcome challenges and create a better future for themselves. For Kevin, the Restart programme was more than just a series of courses—it was the catalyst for a new chapter in his life, filled with hope, growth, and opportunity. His journey inspires others to take that first step and believe in the possibility of change.

There to support when you need us.

Supporting tenants in our homes.

We are proud to be part of a group that is more than just a provider of education, employment, and wellbeing support. Acis Group, as a housing charity, serves almost 8,000 homes across more than 20 Local Authority areas, including almost 4,500 homes in Lincolnshire. We ensure those in our homes have the support they need to sustain tenancies and thrive within their communities – and a huge part of that is equipping them with the confidence, skills, and job support through Clip and Riverside.

Our bases in Gainsborough and Market Rasen are perfectly placed to offer services to these tenants and communities – and in the last year we have done just that.

This year we have delivered specific projects and support for our tenants, including:

- National Numeracy Day - Pizza Party at our community centre in Gainsborough
- Easter themed Family Fun Day in Gainsborough

Focusing on supporting our tenants



579

people in tenant household areas supported through education and employment services.



1,631

wellbeing interventions helping people in tenant household areas.



That's

1 in 2

of our households in DN21, LN7 and LN8 supported through our education, wellbeing and employment services in clip and riverside.

riverside

clip

Case Study:

Simon's employment success with Riverside Training and APM Cleaning & Repair

Simon, a long-term unemployed individual and an Acis shared ownership housing customer, was referred to the Restart programme at Riverside Training in June by the Job Centre. Riverside is a delivery partner for Jobs22, which works with the Department of Work and Pensions to provide tailored pathways to employment. Since joining Restart, Simon has successfully secured employment with APM Cleaning & Repair, cleaning communal areas in sheltered housing owned by Acis Group.

Originally from Leicester, Simon moved to Gainsborough last year after purchasing a shared ownership property. His passion for music, particularly rock, and DIY, including a recent van-to-camper conversion, keep him busy outside of work. He initially struggled to find stable employment due to his long-term unemployment status.

Riverside's support began with an accredited online cleaning course, which provided Simon with a valuable qualification. Additionally, Riverside enrolled him in a "Get into Warehousing" course, which covered health and safety training for chemicals. These qualifications gave Simon an edge in his job search, allowing him to stand out among other candidates.

Riverside also provided Simon with essential workwear at the start of his employment, an important contribution given his financial situation at the time. Their support extended to assisting with his CV, suggesting changes that helped improve his chances of securing a role. Riverside staff, including Jo, Louise, Michael, and Olga, went above and beyond to support Simon, helping him stay motivated and focused throughout his job search.

In Simon's own words, "Anything is worth a try. If you're desperate to get into work, give it a go." After securing his job with APM Cleaning & Repair, Simon quickly settled into his role. By the end of his first week, he was already working independently and is excited for the future. He enjoys the job, particularly the interaction with residents, and feels grateful for the opportunity to get back into employment.

Shaun Maitland, Operations Manager at APM Cleaning & Repair, praised Simon's progress, stating, "Simon has been brilliant from day one. He is very pragmatic and learning at a great pace. It's a pleasure to have him on the team."

This case demonstrates the impact of tailored employability support provided by Riverside Training and the positive outcomes of such programmes, helping individuals like Simon successfully transition back into the workforce and thrive.





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