

# Case study: Transform Lives Company

August 2021

Transform Lives Company (TLC) is a social enterprise based in Liverpool that provides coaching, training, and wellbeing support alongside volunteering and work experience for people looking for employment. TLC is part of the 'Good Help Community' – a group of organisations that believes 'how' help is provided matters and that "Good Help" builds hope, agency and enables people to take control of their lives. It emphasizes that when people identify their own purpose and confidently take action, transformation can happen.

TLC received £20,003 through the Coronavirus Community Support Fund (CCSF). The CCSF is a funding programme supported by a grant of £200 million from Government, distributed by The National Lottery Community Fund, to help organisations in England respond to the COVID-19 crisis and increase community support to people affected by the pandemic.

## How was the CCSF grant used?

Before COVID-19, all of TLC's programmes were face-to-face but the organisation switched to remote working and online delivery following lockdown. This transition meant that TLC put multiple staff on furlough. At the same time, TLC saw rising demand for their services as more people faced furlough, redundancy, increased isolation, mental health problems and the loss of loved ones. TLC used the CCSF grant to help meet this increased demand, including bringing two staff back from furlough.

By May 2020, TLC had introduced its new core offer 'One You' – a flexible online employment and wellbeing programme. The course allows people to explore their habits around health, stress and anxiety and employment. As part of the eight-week programme, people were supported to explore ways they can make positive changes in their life. Weekly group sessions and one-to-one coaching with TLC's expert coaches sit alongside other weekly activities, including yoga, meditation, a Listening Lounge, film, reading and exercise clubs. TLC also offered counselling and loss and grief recovery support. 'One You' participants kept in touch through a peer-led Facebook group.

To ensure people were able to access these services and stay connected during the pandemic, TLC supplied participants with technology and data, and helped build their digital skills. TLC also kept in touch with people via post, sending out 'Hug in the post' activity packs and specially designed cards.



***It's changed our mindset. A year ago we would have said 'there's just no way we can do our work online, you can't do group-based mental health support online'. Now we know we will keep this way of working.*** – Grantholder

### Quick facts:

Grant period: **May-November 2020**  
**120** people supported  
**15** devices distributed  
**200** sessions delivered

### Three key messages:

- ① The flexible, warm, nurturing nature of 'One You' helped welcome people and empower them to make the changes they needed.
- ② Supplying people with digital devices and data, as well as helping them develop digital skills was key to enabling people to access the programme and stay connected.
- ③ TLC's holistic approach, combining employability work with wellbeing support, particularly loss and grief recovery support, was important in helping people manage the effects of COVID-19.

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COMMUNITY FUND

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## What difference did the CCSF grant make?

### For people and communities

A total of 120 people were supported by TLC during the grant period in the 'One You' programme. Many of these people had experienced significant challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including redundancy, bereavement and financial difficulties.

People felt supported by TLC and empowered to try new things. They said TLC's encouraging coaching approach was key to this because it helped people find their own solutions with support and guidance.



***It's about giving people a chance to learn for themselves but knowing that someone is always there should you need them.***

– Beneficiary

In addition to those who had previously engaged with TLC's services, TLC also worked with individuals new to the organisation. Building relationships with TLC staff and other participants helped create a safe environment that enabled people to share and work through personal challenges that they might not have otherwise spoken about.



***I've responded better to this than anything I've been to previously because I feel this is more geared towards helping you bounce back and helping you recover. It's about helping you become yourself again.***

– Beneficiary

### Key learning from the experience:

TLC has adapted programmes to support people remotely and continued to integrate coaching practices across its offer, recognising that many of the people it works with have previously had 'bad help' that is system-led not people-led.

### Want to know more?

Website: <https://transform-lives.org/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/transformliveco>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Transform-Lives-Company-1669405510047269/>

### For delivery partners

TLC works in partnership with other organisations, such as local housing associations, to identify and refer people who might benefit from its programmes. TLC also works with partners to run taster sessions to help introduce people slowly to the 'One You' programme.

By working with TLC, housing associations were able to offer additional support to their tenants. By connecting tenants with a trusted partner, they found they could support people to overcome the negative past experiences they had with other services.



***There are other organisations in the area that offer employability programmes but they don't offer the additional support that Transform Lives do so I prefer to refer to TLC.***

– Housing Delivery partner

### For the organisation and its staff

Funding from the CCSF supported TLC to bring two members of the management team back from furlough so they could adapt services and develop the new online 'One You' programme. Staff described this funding as "the catalyst" to allowing it to continue its work throughout the pandemic.

The funding and process of developing the 'One You' programme allowed TLC to learn how to deliver services virtually. For example, TLC found that groups needed to be smaller online and needed more facilitators.

TLC also employed a former beneficiary as a programme manager and coach. They developed sessions around loss and bereavement to support people with challenges brought about by lockdown, such as loss of loved ones and redundancy. This became a core element of the 'One You' programme and will be a stand-alone offer for the coming years.



***TLC have been really good about talking to me about my own experiences and have used that to shape the support offered on the 'One You' programme. It's moulded around the acknowledgment that most of our participants are dealing with loss of some kind.***

– Programme Manager