

# SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH CONVICTIONS

## ALADDIN AND A FAIRER CHANCE

As the Tideway project progressed towards the end of its main tunnelling phase, we identified an opportunity to deliver further support to people with convictions through the transfer of unused Apprenticeship Levy funds.

With a reduced ability to offer our own apprenticeships, we worked with the London Progression Collaboration (LPC) to identify organisations who could use unspent funds from the client team Apprenticeship Levy that were available for transfer under the scheme.

By transferring funds to A Fairer Chance, a London-based Community Interest Company (CIC) which works to help those with experience of the criminal justice system, we funded two apprenticeships which not only helped the apprentices but, through the work they did, indirectly helped other people with convictions into employment.

One of the apprentices, 36-year-old Aladdin Rahman from East London, says that he has found the skills that he is learning are really valuable for his role and also help him to continue on a positive life journey after his own release from prison.



He said: "I achieved well at school and did start a local authority career before things went awry. There were things happening in my family and social life that led me to making a bad decision. This resulted in a four-year sentence for possession with intent to supply.

"During my time I took advantage of all and any education opportunities. I became the education 'orderly' and trained as a 'Listener'. I met A Fairer Chance at an Employment Event in HMP Isis and when I came out, I was determined to find them."

Aladdin contacted A Fairer Chance and started working as a volunteer with them.

"I was working in retail but volunteering with A Fairer Chance for a year when an opportunity to join the team as a trainee case manager came up.

"For the first year I shadowed the CEO whilst learning the basics of case management. Then I found out about the new apprenticeship. This seemed a perfect fit."

Aladdin and his colleague Roxanne began a two-year Level 4 Employability Practitioner apprenticeship in 2021.

Aladdin added: "This qualification has enabled me to consider a wide range of approaches and tools to work with my clients, who all have at least one criminal conviction. The point of this qualification is to help me grow and eventually move into a more senior role or take on higher level responsibilities. I am gaining skills and knowledge that will enable me to work in any organisation across the welfare to work world, should I want to.

"This apprenticeship has enabled me to delve deeper into all areas relating to employment. I was very interested in Mental Health issues - the majority of people in prison have experienced these. Through the work we did in class I went on to gain a Mental Health First Aiders qualification that enables me to take a more holistic approach to my work. I really want to stay in this sector and I know this apprenticeship will stand me in good stead."

