

Max Thomlinson

THE JOURNEY SO FAR BACKGROUND

Max was referred to the YES Hub by Mark Smedley from MS Angling. At the time, he was finding it difficult to maintain routine and structure, and he was experiencing social isolation and anxiety, which made it challenging for him to form friendships and engage with others. These barriers affected his confidence and engagement, making support from the YES Hub an important step forward for him.



SUPPORT RECEIVED

Following his referral, Max received a full tour of the building and an overview of the activities available to him, including gym access and boxing sessions. He was also added to the WhatsApp group so that he could receive updates, session reminders and ongoing encouragement.

Early in his support journey, Max explored several wellbeing-focused activities. He expressed enthusiasm toward walking groups and outdoor activities, particularly fishing, which he later attended through a session run by M&S Angling. He also took part in gym sessions at Pendle Wavelengths, showing a positive attitude towards building activity into his life. As part of his personal development, Max was also booked onto a Health, Safety and Manual Handling course delivered by Domiciliary Home Care in September, which he completed successfully. Alongside this, mental health support was introduced and Max agreed to an introductory wellbeing session with Colin from Lancashire Mind, demonstrating a willingness to work on his emotional wellbeing as well as his physical health. This led to eight counselling sessions with the YES Hub's in house student counsellor from UCLAN Preston.

As Max continued to engage, he took part in a group trip organised by the YES Hub to the Super League Grand Final at Old Trafford. The purpose of the trip was to provide a new social experience, promote community engagement, and reward continued participation. Before the match the group visited The Lowry Centre, shared meals together, and spent time socialising. Max was fully involved in the experience, enjoying the atmosphere of a major sporting event and benefiting from the confidence and independence that comes with engaging in wider community opportunities. This marked a positive step in his social development and overall wellbeing journey.

A significant turning point occurred when Max independently reached out to request support preparing for an upcoming interview with SpudBros Express in Blackburn. He contacted the Hub via WhatsApp, explaining his interview details and asking for help with preparation. Max attended a one-to-one support session where we worked through interview techniques, including the STAR method and competency-based questions. We also looked at role expectations and brand awareness, and Max was tasked with adapting example answers using his own experiences. A follow-up session was arranged to conduct a mock interview, giving him the opportunity to practise and build confidence ahead of the real interview.

Shortly after, Max informed us that he had been successful and had secured the job. He is due to start employment on 10th December, marking a major achievement both personally and within his support journey. His progression into work reflects increasing self-belief, independence, and resilience — skills that have been strengthened through his involvement with Active Lancashire and the opportunities he chose to embrace.

Overall, Max's engagement has been consistent and meaningful. He has tried new activities, completed training, accessed mental health support, built routine, and taken initiative when seeking help with employment. His journey clearly demonstrates growth in confidence, wellbeing and motivation. Securing employment is a positive outcome that reflects his hard work and ongoing commitment to improving his life, and stands as a strong example of successful progression through support.



Max Thomlinson

"Pendle YES Hub came into my life at a time when I felt lost and unsure of myself. The weekly wellbeing walks helped me reconnect with people and the world around me, step by step. The health and safety training showed me I was capable of learning again, and the chance to experience my first ever rugby cup match reminded me what it feels like to enjoy life. The trip to York gave me a sense of freedom and possibility I'd been missing.

But the biggest change came from the talking therapy. Being able to open up, be heard, and work through things I'd kept inside for years gave me the strength to believe in myself again. Because of all this support, I've now found a job something I never thought I'd achieve so soon. The Hub didn't just help me gain skills; they helped me rebuild my confidence, my hope, and my future."

Shunem Shamshad Youth Engagement Worker

"Max has shown remarkable growth during his time with us, and it has been a privilege to support him. Seeing him build confidence, develop new skills and move into employment has been truly rewarding."