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## NELC's Change Programme

Contributed by Mark Fenty

Their normal day job would involve working on a one-to-one basis with those deemed furthest away from the job market.

However, on Wednesday, September 30, North East Lincolnshire Council's new key worker team swapped their workstations for wellies and scissors for shears for the day.

Wow...What a body!

Sitting down on the job...Again!

Instead of empowering residents of the borough and looking at addressing the barriers they may be facing in gaining employment, the team volunteered their time at the Get Hooked on Fishing (GHOF) site at Homestead Lake.

Matt Benton, key worker manager, said: "We wanted to do something different. The team were keen to volunteer on a local community project and wanted to take part in a worthwhile task that would give something back to the environment. The Get Hooked on Fishing programme seemed to tick all the boxes."

Teas up! It is hard work you know.

The key workers are part of North East Lincolnshire's Change programme, a service geared towards helping people who have been out of work a long time access support to move them towards paid employment. Investment in this programme is also geared towards supporting action to create work opportunities and to strengthen and grow the local economy.

The team is made up of individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds. As a result, they possess a wide range of knowledge, skills and experience in supporting members of the community. The team has been taking part in a comprehensive induction programme to ensure that they are confident in their new roles and able to hit the ground running once referrals start to be received.

Matthew added: "The GHOF project and the key worker programme have a number of similarities which made it the ideal volunteering opportunity. Both aim to raise levels of self esteem, well being and participation which will benefit both the individual and the borough as a whole.

"The team experienced a complete role reversal from their normal day jobs. They attempted new tasks, learnt new skills, used new tools and got their hands dirty while improving the condition of some of the pathways within the site. Hopefully, putting them out of their comfort zone and into an unfamiliar environment, will have helped them to understand how residents who use the key worker service will feel.