

## **Craig Baxter**

Craig Baxter is one of our GP Referral Managers, working for Serco Leisure in West Lancashire. He's been with us for just under 8 years.

His work via the West Lancashire Active scheme has resulted in many hundreds of formerly inactive people now becoming regularly active. His enthusiasm for exercise and the holistic benefits it can bring are the reason so many local people have made positive changes to the way they live, resulting in improved health - both physical and mental. He has been instrumental in setting up, shaping and enhancing the current GP referral service in West Lancashire, which caters for over 300 people per year.

Craig runs classes and individual sessions with customers referred by local GPs. These are often people for whom exercise is a foreign concept. With Craig's easy-going and super-positive manner, he relaxes attendees, helping them forget these are 'fitness' sessions, making them as much a social event as an active one.

He's not only a compassionate health and fitness professional - he's also a life saver. Just last year, Craig was on hand with CPR to save a customer's life. For him, he was just using the vital training Serco Leisure had provided, and doing his job. For the customer, Craig's quick thinking and professionalism were the difference between life and death.

We could sing Craig's praise all day long, but the words of the people he's helped will hit home more than any of our recommendations. Examples can be found on the Active West Lancs website, but as a flavour, here's what an attendee called George said about Craig:

"When I started on the programme, I was suffering from depression and taking a high dose of medication, I was also being prescribed statins for high cholesterol. I have been reviewed by my GP and I no longer take anti-depressants and my cholesterol level reduced so significantly that I was able to stop that medication as well. I've also dropped a trouser and collar size. Much of this is due to Craig's drive and determination and I would have no hesitation in recommending the Active West Lancs programme to anyone."

Another attendee, Andrew said:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the Active West Lancs service, I would recommend it to anyone! Kelly and Craig were fantastic throughout, making sure my programme was up to date and that I was working at the correct intensity so that I would see changes in my body shape and body weight. They were both encouraging me to keep going on my off days. I have lost 17 kg and it has kick started a positive change in my lifestyle."

Craig Baxter - a Physical Activity Champion every year.