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# Tapping into the potential of expert volunteers: A vision for the future of welfare to work

A position paper from Careers Development Group

# Contents

3	Foreword
4-5	Executive Summary
6-7	Chapter One: The Issue
8-9	Chapter Two: The Current Landscape
10-14	Chapter Three: CDG’s Proposal - Expert Volunteer Initiative
15-16	Chapter Four: Next steps
17-18	Chapter Five: Why is CDG promoting this initiative?
19	References



# Foreword

Supporting people who are long term unemployed, trying to enter the workplace for the first time or facing multiple barriers is not just something we might want to get around to doing; it is a core part of living in a civilised and harmonious country.

Certainly, Britain is not well served if we have a society split between those with jobs or have enjoyed good careers and those who are struggling to get into employment. We need to ensure there is a transfer of skills, expertise and knowledge between generations - from the retired or retiring baby boomers to generations X and Y, many of whom will be the children and grandchildren of the self same baby boomers.

As a leading charity with nearly 30 years of experience of getting people back into work, we believe that by attracting skilled volunteers to the welfare to work sector we can really start to break down the barriers that cause long term worklessness, and address the resulting financial and social implications for those individuals and society as a whole.

This is why we are launching this paper to start the debate on how we can tap into Britain's long held tradition of volunteering. By recruiting and supporting expert volunteers to complement and work alongside welfare to work providers and the government we can all give additional support to those in our society who are unemployed.

Working in partnership with the public, private and third sectors presents an opportunity to cement the Big Society philosophy together, and this would act as the springboard to create an expert volunteer community with the power to change lives, change communities and change society for the better. In the long term, we should aim to attract 50,000 people who are willing to take on this challenge.

We are all responsible for the society we live in and none of us should turn a blind eye to those who need our support to get back into work. Now, more than ever, is the right time to encourage, persuade and support those with the skills, expertise and time to climb aboard.

All those in the welfare to work sector have an opportunity to add even more value to the work they do by coming together and moving this exciting and progressive initiative forward.

Roy O'Shaughnessy  
Chief Executive  
Careers Development Group

# Executive Summary

Careers Development Group (CDG) is a charity that seeks to help the unemployed find and sustain meaningful employment. Many of the people we support have multiple barriers to employment, including lack of recent work experience, disabilities, health problems and lack of relevant employability skills. We provide training, work experience and the support necessary to enable our customers to achieve a better quality of life.

Unlocking the cycle of welfare dependency and worklessness has been a key objective of CDG's since its foundation nearly 30 years ago. Despite all efforts to tackle unemployment and worklessness, research shows that of the UK's unemployed, 1.4 million have been seeking work or on benefits for nine or more of the last ten years<sup>i</sup> and more than one in four working age adults in the UK are not in work.<sup>ii</sup> While we support the government's programme to improve employment opportunities, CDG believes a more radical approach is needed to dramatically reduce levels of unemployment and that the government's programme is just one part of this.

Everyone in society has a stake in helping others into sustainable employment and will benefit from achieving this. As the Prime Minister noted: 'If we want real change for the long term, we need people to come together and work together.'

Drawing on its experience, CDG proposes that an expert volunteer initiative will complement existing services for the long term unemployed and help to create an effective solution to worklessness. But the solution is twofold and we cannot make lasting, sustainable change in communities across the UK without collaboration. To support this initiative we call for a concerted effort from all parties - the government, voluntary and community organisations and the private sector - to tackle the problem of long term unemployment.

**“ The key aim of the initiative is to attract skilled volunteers to help Britain's unemployed. ”**

The key aim of the initiative is to attract skilled volunteers to support the unemployed. These volunteers, skilled and experienced in industry or wanting to share career experience, will provide additional support to individuals who are unemployed and need more help than the government system has the funding and longevity to provide. The UK already has a strong record of volunteering and there is potential to further help those with multiple disadvantages by deploying expert volunteers throughout the job seeking process. The not-for-profit sector already has a track record of ploughing its returns back into the community and can provide a framework for such an initiative.

Tapping into the time and commitment of skilled volunteers could help get people get back into work, making a major contribution to reducing long term unemployment as well as providing benefits for the volunteers themselves. Volunteers and their employers benefit from the added confidence, motivation, team working and the skills utilised during volunteering.

Everyone has a role to play in order to successfully and sustainably reduce unemployment and worklessness. To achieve this we call on everyone to play their part - the government, businesses, the voluntary sector, welfare to work providers and those individuals who have time to give back to support the unemployed. The government can support this by:

1. Continuing the work of the old Office of the Third Sector and actively promoting the training of expert volunteers to help the unemployed find work.
2. Convening a professional/volunteer working group comprising business, the not-for-profit sector and government to realise the full potential of volunteering in the welfare to work market. The outcomes of this group should feed directly into the ongoing development of the Work Programme.
3. Rewarding companies which adjust their CSR policies with tax credits to recognise the value of their contributions.
4. Making good its commitment to the not-for-profit sector – that it will be the true vanguard of this radical change, and enable the innovation and expertise of charities like CDG to be applied across programmes to tackle worklessness, such as the Work Programme.

Furthermore:

1. Commercial businesses should be encouraged to adjust corporate social responsibility policies to promote volunteering.
2. DWP and its partners should also actively encourage Work Programme bidders to use volunteering models, and favour those providers who do so.
3. Voluntary organisations and welfare to work providers need to come together to help facilitate and lead the volunteer process.

Working in partnership with the public, private and third sectors provides an opportunity to meet this challenge head on. We are eager to turn the expert volunteer initiative into a reality, and will be holding a summit on 14 October 2010 to discuss how it can work in practice.

# Chapter One: The Issue

As a leading welfare to work charity, CDG's extensive experience with jobseekers of all ages, needs and backgrounds gives us a unique perspective on the current shape of the labour market. Rather than just relying on anonymous national statistics, we also have our own experiences and informed perceptions that tell us what needs to be done to address long term unemployment and its causes.

We believe there to be three interlinked obstacles (unemployment, worklessness and multiple disadvantage) that need to be overcome to reach our ambition of supporting jobseekers into sustained, meaningful work. The government must ensure these obstacles are addressed as it moves forward with its radical welfare reform programme.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

UK unemployment remains high, with the number of unemployed climbing over recent months to 2.47 million in July 2010.<sup>iii</sup> More than one in four working age adults in the UK are not in work,<sup>iv</sup> and although we have seen a recent dip in the national level of unemployment, the regional picture across many parts of the UK remains concerning. Northern Ireland, North East England, Wales and London in particular have tended to fare worst in employment rates.<sup>v</sup>

We are also due to see a further increase in unemployment as the impact of government cuts and measures to reduce the budget deficit are felt across the public sector. As the government looks to reduce the budget deficit, public sector unemployment is likely to increase. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) recently predicted that overall UK unemployment could be pushed to over three million.<sup>vi</sup> In addition, unprecedented numbers in part-time employment, high numbers of NEETs (individuals not in Education, Employment or Training) and growing numbers of economically inactive people (those who are neither in employment nor unemployment – for example people who are retired, looking after a home and some students) indicate a national picture of instability, uncertainty and insecurity in the labour market.



## WORKLESSNESS

Looking beyond national statistics, the picture is yet more concerning. Research shows that of the UK's unemployed, 1.4 million have been seeking work or on benefits for nine or more of the last ten years.<sup>vii</sup> The UK has one of the highest rates of workless households in the EU, with 4.8 million working age people living in households where no one of working age is in work.<sup>viii</sup>

The pressing issue of welfare dependency and the 'prevalence'<sup>ix</sup> of worklessness is not only affecting individuals. Their families and communities are also being forced into a cycle of decline as educational attainment, indebtedness, earning potential and health and wellbeing all suffer as a result of long-term unemployment. As Chris Grayling MP, Minister for Employment, recently noted, 'worklessness creates intergenerational cycles of disadvantage, it is a root cause of poverty and leads to a tragic waste of human potential.'<sup>x</sup> The cost of worklessness to both society and the individual is immense and addressing long term unemployment has to be a priority.

**“ Worklessness creates intergenerational cycles of disadvantage, it is a root cause of poverty and leads to a tragic waste of human potential. ”**

Chris Grayling MP, Minister for Employment.

## MULTIPLE DISADVANTAGE

Behind this picture of widespread unemployment and inter-generational worklessness are the multiple disadvantages and many problems that people face. As the State of the Nation report<sup>xi</sup> notes, 'multiple disadvantage remains a significant problem in the UK with 5.3 million people suffering and 3.7 million doing so persistently.' We see on a daily basis that a jobseeker may need to overcome many of the barriers of mental or physical disability, the effects of prolonged substance abuse, re-integration into the community following a spell in prison, low self-esteem, a lack of applicable skills or training and literacy and numeracy issues – all in order to secure sustained employment.

Ensuring that these individuals and their families, neighbourhoods and communities overcome multiple disadvantage, and unlock the cycle of welfare dependency and worklessness has been a key objective of CDG's since its foundation.

# Chapter Two: The Current Landscape

CDG has supported the efforts of current and past governments to implement a range of initiatives to address the causes of long-term unemployment but too often solutions to these interlinked problems have been piecemeal. Therefore they have not sufficiently impacted the rate of long-term unemployment, nor have they significantly addressed much of the root causes. CDG believes that any initiative will require substantial investment of time, infrastructure and funding from all parties – welfare to work providers, government, volunteering organisations and the wider not-for-profit sector - to make this goal a reality.

## RADICAL WELFARE REFORM

The current government inherited a welfare system which was costly to the taxpayer, confusing to the customer and prone to abuse, fraud and error. Whilst reform was undertaken by the previous government through the contracts such as Flexible New Deal, one of the current government's top priorities on gaining office has been to reform welfare from top to bottom. The roll out of the Work Programme is a significant part of the fundamental shake up of the welfare architecture.

Despite pressures on government to cut back and balance the books, addressing unemployment is a priority that requires investment, for future financial and social benefit. Given the challenging economic climate, the Work Programme will be expected to deliver over and above expectations – delivering better results than previous programmes but with the more limited funds resulting from a departmental budget cut of up to 40% over the course of the parliament.

Welfare to work organisations taking on substantial government contracts need to place a significant proportion of people who have been unemployed long-term into sustained employment, and will be expected to do so on a payment by results basis. These providers will have to have substantial capital reserves and the scope to design innovative delivery models.

Just as the government, voluntary organisations and the private sector need to work together, some welfare to work providers will need to set up consortia and partnerships to deliver the optimum service. Others, like CDG, will be in a position to both deliver

“ Everyone in society has a stake in helping others into sustainable employment. ”

the requirements of Work Programme and plough investment and expertise back into the organisation and the communities that we support. A radical approach is needed to dramatically reduce levels of unemployment and the government's Work Programme is one crucial part of this. Welfare to work providers need to continue to innovate and deliver effective new solutions.

Everyone in society has a stake in helping others into sustainable employment. CDG proposes that the expert volunteer initiative, outlined below, will complement existing services for the long term unemployed and help to create an effective solution to worklessness.



## THE BIG SOCIETY

The Big Society builds on a burgeoning civic-minded volunteering community whose potential has never been fully harnessed. The National Citizen Service (NCS), also designed to harness the UK's civic potential, will open up a range of volunteering and social action opportunities to young people.<sup>xii</sup> At CDG we believe that there is much more potential in using volunteers – and that, in fact, they could be a major cornerstone of addressing long-term unemployment, by providing additional ongoing support to unemployed people over and above that which welfare to work providers can offer.

We also welcome the government's intention to set up work clubs as 'places where unemployed people can gather to exchange skills, find opportunities, make contacts and provide mutual support'.<sup>xiii</sup> We believe that an expert volunteer corps is key to this initiative and would yield major benefits to jobseekers. CDG stands ready to support this initiative, and would consider offering its delivery centres, complete with IT suites, training rooms and job search areas, for work clubs as this initiative takes shape.

We agree that a way needs to be found to address both long-term unemployment and its root causes. We believe radical change can help the long term unemployed and at-need groups such as young people and those with disabilities back into meaningful, sustained work. This will require substantial investment in their skills base, guidance, mentoring and confidence-building. CDG is ready and willing to work together with the public, private and not for profit sectors to address this issue and, drawing on nearly 30 years experience of working with the long term unemployed, we propose that more effective use expert volunteers is a significant step towards achieving this and call all sectors to action.

# Chapter Three: CDG's Proposal - Expert Volunteer Initiative

We believe we can harness the potential of expert volunteers to increase our power to change lives and support jobseekers into sustainable employment. However, the government, public and private sectors and industry will need to be fully committed if this is to be achieved.

Volunteers can be used to directly target the pressing concern of long-term unemployment and the negative social consequences flowing from it. CDG calls on business, government and welfare to work providers to sit down together and discuss how we can make it work.

## OUR VISION

The UK has a strong track record in volunteering and we believe this can be better utilised when providing services to the long term unemployed. As Baroness Neuberger noted in her recent report on volunteering, 'volunteers can perform roles that paid staff could never do [and bring many] unique perspectives'.<sup>xiv</sup>

Our vision is one where the UK taps into the time and commitment of people across the country on a much more systematic basis. Businesses and the welfare to work sector would identify and utilise expert volunteers in employment services and support the necessary infrastructure to make it sustainable. Charities, such as CDG, provide the obvious conduit to making this happen due to their unique status and lack of need to answer to shareholders. However, we will need everyone to work together in using volunteers to further support the hardest to help individuals (those furthest from the job market) and to truly address the issue of worklessness.

Working in partnership with government, we believe that the Big Society philosophy could be the springboard for the creation of an expert volunteer community who can help to support key welfare services in conjunction with private and not-for-profit sector organisations.

By 'expert volunteer', CDG means someone who, alongside the capacity and desire to volunteer, has the skills to support and share with the long term unemployed.

For those currently in full or part-time time employment this could be part of a corporate social responsibility scheme, or time they willingly give outside of work hours. For those who are retired, semi-retired or choose to stay at home, and have the relevant skills, it could be an ideal opportunity to give some of their time back to the community. Volunteering not only provides benefits to the unemployed individual being supported, but to volunteers themselves and their employers.

## WHO COULD BE A VOLUNTEER?

This could be the retired English teacher who wants to help support those needing basic literacy support, the HR director wanting to help build self-confidence in those who have been unemployed for more than a year or the former builder who has sold his business and wants to help young people learn a trade.



Expert volunteering in the welfare to work sector could be the beginning of a national movement and long-term culture change which has the potential to change the nation's attitude to giving their time and expertise. As Yvette Cooper, former Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, has noted: 'It is crucial for all of us that we make sure we do everything we can to harness the skills and talent of young people now so that we can all benefit in the future'<sup>xv</sup>- a sentiment echoed by her successor, Iain Duncan Smith.

It is the willingness to trust in the capability of not-for-profit organisations that has given rise to CDG's expert volunteering initiative. As a leading employment charity, we look for ongoing support to echo the sentiments of the current and past government that the not-for-profit sector is the vanguard of this movement.

As the government moves forward with the introduction of the Work Programme, our expert volunteer proposal offers significant potential. Although the focus for all involved in employment services is on delivering cost efficiencies, we believe the expert volunteer initiative does more – by offering additional social benefits, mentoring and a source of additional expertise. Expert volunteers are not there to replace welfare to work professionals; their support would be targeted and designed to complement the work professionals do. We believe that expert volunteers can help society go further in supporting the long term unemployed, enabling the welfare to work sector to concentrate more effort on helping the hardest to reach.

“Volunteers can perform roles that paid staff could never do [and bring many] unique perspectives.”

Baroness Neuberger

## THE VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE: HOW IT COULD WORK

Traditionally, 50% of the people who are long term unemployed and seen by welfare to work providers, such as CDG, are able to find and sustain employment once their key barriers have been identified and overcome.

Individuals not in this category, the other 50% of customers that we see, find it much harder to find employment or overcome the barriers that would allow them to seriously consider employment.

The purpose of the proposed volunteer initiative is not to accept that some people cannot be placed in long term employment. On the contrary, CDG as a charity is committed to every person in our society having access to employment, despite any obstacles and barriers that may be in an individual's way. These obstacles can range from a lack of education and skills to significant social issues, such as a lack of confidence and substance misuse to mental health issues and disability.

Individuals facing issues such as these, the 'hardest to help', will often require more assistance and longer term support than government contracts are able to offer, or compensate providers for. CDG proposes that utilising the skills, experience and time of expert volunteers will further help to reach and support this group of individuals.

**“Customers will have access to a range of expert volunteers offering a plethora of skills – be these industry related skills and experiences, advocacy or language and translation skills.”**

Expert volunteers will be recruited from a range of sources, as seen in our pilot volunteer programme, AddOne, based in CDG's Guildford centre. These include contacts that our staff have in the local area, volunteer centres, plus both local businesses and large corporate organisations. In addition, CDG is working with Reach, a registered national charity which helps find skilled volunteers with the right skills and experience to enable voluntary organisations to fulfil their potential. Reach will work with CDG on an ongoing basis to recruit skilled volunteers with business, management and professional experience who are interested in supporting the long term unemployed.

Customers will have access to a range of expert volunteers offering a plethora of skills – be these industry related skills and experiences, advocacy or language and translation support. In addition, CDG will offer a career development coach (a long term mentor) or advocacy career coach to unemployed individuals who will benefit from the ongoing one to one support that this type of relationship will provide. As Sarah King, chief executive of Reach, notes: “coaching or mentoring are popular roles for skilled volunteers, giving them the opportunity to change lives while balancing their own time and life demands.”

Volunteers will be trained and supported to provide a range of services to customers, largely dependent on the skills and interests of the volunteer. For example, volunteers will be encouraged to share industry specific skills and experiences where applicable in either a one-to-one setting or a presentation to a group. CDG will also train volunteers who are interested in becoming career development coaches. These volunteers will support customers in a mentoring capacity on a long term basis, both while CDG works with the individual to gain employment and beyond to ensure the hardest to help always receive consistent support. For volunteers interested in working in an advocacy role, CDG will train and support volunteers to work with customers, particularly disabled customers, as an advocacy career coach.

We suggest that the expert volunteer initiative will operate alongside, and complement, any government contract for the long term unemployed. We envisage the following for our customers:

- All CDG customers will receive a comprehensive individual assessment of their ability to step into employment and at what level.
- Individuals deemed hardest to help will be offered the opportunity to supplement the services they will receive through the Work Programme (or equivalent) with support from the expert volunteer programme.
- Any individual requesting this assistance will receive a further two to four hours of assessment to establish not only the obstacles the individual faces to gaining sustainable employment, but also to develop a comprehensive plan as to what it will take to overcome these and the estimated timescales for doing so.
- Depending on the individualised action plan resulting from this further assessment, the customer will be directed to the most appropriate expert volunteer for support.
- In addition, CDG will offer a career development coach (a long term mentor) or advocacy career coach to customers who will benefit from the ongoing one to one support that this type of relationship will provide.

CDG is just one provider of services to the long term unemployed but our vision is to see the utilisation of expert volunteers across the welfare to work sector and associated services. Our hope is for the sector as a whole, and individual organisations within it, to examine how the volunteer initiative can work on all levels.



## EXPERT VOLUNTEERS: UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

There are tens of thousands of people across the UK with the skills and experience to help people achieve or return to employment. Our belief is that many of these would provide their time and expertise readily if they were given the option to do so. They have at their disposal a rich skillset which includes numeracy, literacy, engagement and mentoring skills. As Francis Maude, Minister for the Cabinet Office, noted earlier this year, ‘charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations must be in the vanguard of this change.’<sup>xvi</sup> Although voluntary action is always a personal choice, government can help to enable, encourage and facilitate it.

CDG believes that its long term vision of a body of 50,000 volunteers supporting the long-term unemployed for between two and ten hours a month is completely achievable. Of the working age population (18–64) who are economically inactive, 16% are retired and 25% are looking after family or the home, which would suggest 41% of the 9.4 million people classed as economically inactive in 2010 are not working but could be targeted to get involved and give time to this initiative.<sup>xvii</sup> If all partners - government, welfare to work providers, volunteering organisations and the wider not-for-profit sector worked together to encourage just one in 200 of these individuals to get involved then we would achieve the 50,000 volunteers.

According to a government citizenship survey,<sup>xviii</sup> in the twelve months to the end of 2009, 41% of adults formally volunteered at least once during that year, whilst 55% had done so informally. From the same research, 26% of people aged 50 to 64 formally volunteered at least once a month and CDG believes the volunteer initiative can play its part in improving that figure. As Sarah King, chief executive of Reach, points out,

“The link between remaining mentally active in retirement and improved health and wellbeing is well evidenced, it is the ready availability of stimulating opportunity that has not yet been fully realised.”

Furthermore, with the increase in part time working<sup>xix</sup> there is another large group of individuals who have two to ten hours a month available to give back to their local community. Given too, that more and more commercial organisations are seeing the benefit of staff donating their time to supporting others, we believe there is a great opportunity for large employers and the private sector to support the issue of worklessness through their corporate social responsibility agenda and promote employers volunteering in their leisure time.

We believe that volunteers are central to a successful, prosperous and cohesive community. Our model could leverage the potential of the UK’s current and future volunteers to help address the unemployment, skills and welfare gap. Communities across the UK have long dedicated themselves to good causes, and have been able to achieve great goals on the most limited of funds. The injection of incentives, support and guidance will surely allow the UK’s volunteers to reach new goals.

# Chapter Four: Next steps

Long term unemployment is a problem that, despite best efforts, has not yet been resolved. We firmly believe in the potential of expert volunteers to make a real change to the prospects of individuals, families and communities. But their potential cannot be exploited without dedicated partnership working from the government, private sector and the not-for-profit sector. As Francis Maude noted, ‘we can’t simply retrench and hope that voluntary activity will spontaneously leap into existence.’<sup>xx</sup> All parties need to play a part to make this vision a reality and to make this happen:

1. The new government should continue the work of the old Office of the Third Sector and actively promote the training of expert volunteers to help the unemployed find work. This is a natural extension of the coalition’s commitment to ‘[supporting] the creation of neighbourhood groups across the UK, especially in the most deprived areas.’<sup>xxi</sup> David Cameron noted at the launch of the Big Society that ‘government... must foster a support a new culture of voluntarism, philanthropy, social action.’<sup>xxii</sup>
2. DWP and the Office of Civil Society should convene a professional/volunteer working group comprising business, the not-for-profit sector and government to realise the full potential of volunteering in the welfare to work market. The outcomes of this group should feed directly into the ongoing development of the Work Programme. DWP and its partners should also actively encourage Work Programme bidders to use volunteering models, and favour those providers who do so. As Baroness Neuberger noted in her 2008 report on volunteering in the health sector, ‘statutory agencies should consider the social benefits of volunteering when commissioning services from providers, and understand the true costs of volunteering.’<sup>xxiii</sup>
3. Commercial businesses should be encouraged to adjust corporate social responsibility policies to promote volunteering. They should incentivise employees to ‘give hours’ and should promote secondments to not-for-profit organisations.
4. Government should reward companies which adjust their CSR policies with tax credits to recognise the value of their contributions. Given the contribution volunteers would make to reducing long-term unemployment and getting people into employment, this would ultimately be a revenue-positive measure and is in line with the philosophy behind the DEL/AME switch, with initial investment delivering later savings through lower benefit expenditure.

CDG is on the front line of employment support provision. As a leading welfare to work charity and service provider we know what support jobseekers require and who is best equipped to deliver it. We believe that every person of employable age is better off working than not, even if they have multiple barriers to work.

In the current economic climate, everyone is looking for maximum value for money. Although budgets are constrained, we believe that investment is required in order to achieve a lasting change to our interaction with and attitude to the welfare state. We strongly believe that a long-term sustainable approach is needed and the expert volunteer model we propose offers just that. We call on business, government and not-for-profit sector providers to sit down together and debate how to make it work.

We will be hosting a volunteering summit on 14 October 2010 to discuss how the initiative can be taken forward, and would welcome your input in the debate. We want to ‘involve the best of the public, private and voluntary sector.’<sup>xxiv</sup> We will work closely with organisations interested in advancing this vision as part of our public benefit commitment to the community. Working together, we believe we can achieve success beyond all current expectations. As Reach suggest, “volunteering using people’s skills and personal life experience is still a hidden opportunity waiting for thousands of people to find.” Please visit our website at [www.cdguk.org](http://www.cdguk.org) for more information about how people and organisations can get involved.



# Chapter Five: Why is CDG promoting this initiative?

CDG is a dynamic charity and leading employment services provider. We are a not-for-profit organisation with an ambitious business ethos. We exist to help individuals into employment and plough every penny of our surplus back into our business or the communities in which we work to help those who are unemployed find and sustain meaningful employment.

Many of the people we support have multiple barriers to employment, including lack of recent work experience, disabilities, health problems and lack of relevant employability skills, to name a few. We provide training, work experience and the support necessary to enable our customers to achieve a better quality of life.

Our belief in this approach is demonstrable in our own actions. As a registered charity, we already reinvest all of our surplus back into our work. So far in 2010, that has amounted to some £2 million, with the number of people helped rising from 27,000 to 33,000 and one placed in a job every twenty minutes. We are also now committed to raise donations to match fund our own contributions, with this programme being rolled out from the autumn. Every penny donated will go directly into the community to underwrite initiatives that reduce the number of long-term unemployed.

Within CDG's spread of welfare to work contracts are a full range of back to work activities, including job search, job brokerage, work experience placements, environmental and community sector placements, vocational qualifications, information advice and guidance, pre-employment training, motivation and confidence building and literacy and numeracy skills (including ESOL). Our wide range of contracts support people aged between 16 and 64, with some specifically aimed at people with disabilities, lone parents, black and minority ethnic groups and other socially disadvantaged groups.



“ In order to achieve CDG’s vision of full employment we believe that all sectors; commercial, not-for-profit sector and government need to blend the commercial and the charitable in a way that has not been accomplished before.”

CDG’s vision stands for ambitious radical change. It envisages a society in which unemployment does not exist, including for those with complex needs and disabilities. Although CDG works through commercial contracts with the government, its overarching targets, and indeed the targets of all providers, must be longer than that of any commercial contract. CDG seeks to engender a culture among providers where targets are exceeded and everyone aims to achieve full, sustained employment for jobseekers. Despite this inspirational vision, CDG is also realistic that even with the most seamless provision the challenges faced in the UK will take generations to solve.

Working in partnership with the public, private and third sectors provides an opportunity to meet this challenge head on. We are eager to turn our expert volunteer initiative into a reality, and will be holding a deliberative summit on 14 October 2010 to discuss how it can work in practice.

For more information, please contact:

Rebecca Green  
Development Manager  
Careers Development Group  
Carlton Plaza  
111 Upper Richmond Road  
London SW15 2TJ  
0207 811 3131  
[volunteers@cdguk.org](mailto:volunteers@cdguk.org)

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Registered office:  
Careers Development Group  
Carlton Plaza  
111 Upper Richmond Road  
London  
SW15 2TJ

Web: [www.cdguk.org](http://www.cdguk.org)  
Email: [info@cdguk.org](mailto:info@cdguk.org)  
Tel: 020 7811 3131

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