**https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/jobs/warning-covid-could-spark-20000-ni-redundancies-over-next-year-39868600.html**

**Luc Donaldson, 19, Tandragee**

“If you look at me two months ago and me now I’m a totally different person. My Mum is over the moon, she has no words for how happy she is.”

Luc Donaldson, 19 from Tandragee, was out of work for 13 months after a bad experience on a work placement left him feeling low with anxiety and depression. This, alongside the lack of jobs due to the Covid 19 pandemic, left Luc feeling worried about his future and how he was going to pay his bills.

“I was studying a lorry mechanics course at college and got a work placement in a garage. But within the first few days it was clear that I was being bullied by my supervisor. Things got so bad that I was actually sick with the anxiety, so I had to leave.

“It was awful being out of work after that. My mum was so worried about me, she said she had never seen me at such a low point because I was depressed, and my anxiety was so bad I couldn’t leave my room. It was a horrible time. I had bills to pay for my car but had no money coming in, it just kept getting me more and more down. Then the pandemic began, and I didn’t see how I was ever going to find work.”

A friend of Luc’s told him about The Prince’s Trust Get into Retail with Tesco programme. Get into Retail is a training and mentoring scheme that gives young people aged 16-30, not currently in full time employment, education or training, the skills, experience and confidence they need to find a job. During the programme participants complete on the job training in a Tesco store and receive regular feedback and guidance from a dedicated buddy.

“One of my friends did the programme previously. He had anxiety and no confidence at the start but at the end of the programme I was amazed at the change in him, that inspired me to give it a try.

“Part of the programme was online and it made me feel anxious just thinking about taking part, but when I was in the store on placement it gave me a new lease of life. The staff are all lovely, interacting with them and the customers has really boosted my confidence at the end of the programme I was delighted to be offered a contract in the Craigavon store. It feels great to be working again.”