**Oral History Transcription – Pia – Chipstead Lake**

**Rewind – Leonard Cheshire Disability, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund**

**Filmed** – 2016

**Start of transcription**

[Text on screen: What is your background?]

[Pia]

00:00:10 - I worked in social care for probably about 15 years before I came to Chipstead Lake. I've basically kind of worked my way up, kind of as a career, started as a support worker, became kind of a senior support worker, worked for an organisation as their manager, and then, eventually, came to Leonard Cheshire 10 years ago.

00:00:30 - I just really enjoy being with people, making changes, finding that the things that I was doing at work was having a real impact on the people that was in the services I worked at. I like creating a relationship with people, like to see that things would improve, and people would learn new skills, or their life would improve in some way was something that I would be part of.

[Text on screen: Have you enjoyed working at Chipstead Lake?]

00:00:58 - It's been a great time, I've done lots of different things as a manager. I obviously had the ability to make lots of changes, do lots of things that I felt was important, working with a great team of people. Yeah, so, I've really enjoyed it.

[Text on screen: Do you have any special memories of events at Chipstead Lake?]

00:01:13 - The 30th anniversary of Chipstead Lake was … an amazing day, we had lots of guests from the past. I think one memory in particular was that the gentleman who had originally bought the land for Chipstead Lake turned up, and was able to tell us the story about how he bought the piece of land.

00:01:37 - What actually happened was that it was just a, … it was basically just the leftover of the M25 being built, and, so, it was just a pile of rubble, really, and he bought it for, I think it was 30 pounds, he bought the whole site, with the view, he obviously, his plan was to have this amazing home to be built. But, that was quite special to meet him, and talk to him about how, what his visions were at the time.

00:02:08 - I think another special event is actually an event that happened yesterday. So, yesterday, the refurbishment of Chipstead Lake was completed, and it was officially opened by the local mayor. So, the refurbishment had been waiting, or, had been working for it since my first day. It was literally the first thing my boss said to me as I started on my first day was, "Chipstead Lake's gonna be refurbished soon."

00:02:29 - Along the line, lots of things have happened, and it's just taken a lot longer than we thought, and it's been done in various stages, and the final stage was officially opened yesterday, the 12th of May, 2016, and it was an amazing day. The sun was shining, and we had lots of excited guests who came, lots of people who had been involved and made sure that that event happened.

00:02:51 - The home was looking the best it ever has in the whole time I've been here. It looked amazing, and it was just, it was a really special moment, and I was so proud to be there, and be there when the plaque was revealed by the mayor. It was amazing.

[Text on screen: What other memories of Chipstead Lake would you like to share?]

00:03:09 - About four years ago, we had a large amount of funding from Comic Relief for sport.

00:03:15 - At the beginning, the service users were really, really reluctant, and they were just saying, "We can't do sports. "We can do a bit of wheelchair dancing, "but that's it, we can't do anything else."

00:03:25 - And, I think just by really challenging their own views themselves, we were able to get people out and do amazing things. They were doing regular boxing sessions in a local boxing gym, they were going to a normal kind of gym, they were playing tennis, they were going trampolining.

00:03:44 - I remember the first time they went to tennis club, and the group went off, I saw them going to the minibus to go off, and they all looked quite gloomy, and I was like, are you alright, you're not looking… "Oh, we can't play tennis. I'm not sure I can do that, I don't know if I should go." Oh, just go and see if you have a great time, you know, see what happens, you know. You know, if you don't try, you can't.

00:04:06 - And, like, two hours later, I saw them coming back. And I was, how did you get on? And it was, "I won!" You know, that was kind of, it wasn't I could do it, it was "I won" was the most important thing that happened that day.

00:04:17 - And, again, those are days you sort of think, well, actually, I do this job for a reason. And, we've carried on the sports project, and, obviously, on a much smaller scale. We don't have big pots to do paintballing anymore, but, we've carried on, so we still do boxing, we still raise money for that, we still go, they used to offer us a sailing club, but, a lot to go sailing, so we still do a number of sports, which service users really, really enjoy, so, you know, we found the ones they really, really, enjoy, and then we've carried on with that, and that's been really amazing to see people actually to kind of develop and actually have the confidence,

'cause I think that a lot of the things with sport was more about confidence, I can actually do this, rather than, oh, no, I'm not sure if I can.

00:05:03 - So, that's amazing.

**End of transcription**