

# 'I lost five stone and found a whole new life'

## Craig, 30, feels transformed after operation

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THROUGHOUT his life, Craig Taylor always felt he was being held back because of his size.

Weighing 17 stone 10lbs and having a 42-inch waist, Craig did not have the confidence to get the job he had always dreamed of because it meant meeting people.

He left Rumney High School in Cardiff at 16 and settled for a job as an administrator for a telecommunications company where he did not have to face the public.

Now, after losing more than five stone in weight, he wears a size 34 waist jeans and a medium sized top.

He's also gained a top job with another company as a business development manager, still in telecommunications.

He is now feeling so much more confident that he's looking to arrange a sky dive to mark his 30th birthday, which he celebrated last month.

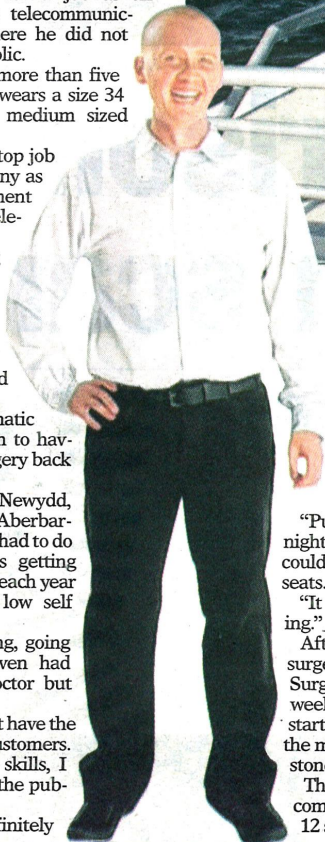
Craig puts his dramatic transformation down to having gastric band surgery back in October 2006.

Craig, of Heol Ty Newydd, Bedwelty, near Aberbargoed, said: "I knew I had to do something as I was getting heavier and heavier each year and I had such a low self esteem.

"I had tried dieting, going to the gym and even had tablets from the doctor but nothing worked.

"Back then, I didn't have the confidence to face customers. Despite having the skills, I didn't want to meet the public in my last job.

"People definitely



■ Craig Taylor, of Bedwelty, lost more than five stone after having gastric band surgery

treated me differently when I was overweight as all they saw was a fat man.

"I was also borderline diabetic and was suffering with high cholesterol.

"Public transport was a nightmare for me as I couldn't fit properly in the seats.

"It was all so embarrassing."

After spending £8,500 on surgery with Streamline Surgical, it took just a few weeks before the pounds started coming off and over the months they turned into stones.

Then last year, he hit the comfortable target of 12 stone 7lbs which he has

managed to maintain this year through a carefully planned diet and going to the gym three times a week.

Earlier this year, he completed a 29-mile bike ride, felt confident enough to get a tattoo, and is planning the sky dive.

Craig said: "It's completely changed my life.

"For instance, if I ever went away, I would never take my top off, now I don't care as I have so much more self confidence.

"I would recommend a gastric band to anyone who has tried every other thing as I did.

"It's a lot more work than people think, you still have to watch your diet and exercise, but it's worth it.

"My mum Lyn is even thinking of having one."

Craig had his surgery done in Chichester by Guy Slater and Shaw Somers, who are the surgeons for Streamline Surgical.

### HOW A GASTRIC BAND WORKS:

ALL gastric bands work on the same principle - restriction.

The band divides the stomach into a small pouch above - about 5% of the stomach - with the main body of the stomach below.

When the gastric band is tightened, the small pouch above the band acts as the stomach and restricts the amount of food that can be taken in at any one time.

In other words, the brain is "tricked" into thinking that the whole stomach is full, when in fact only the small pouch is full.

Even a small amount of food can produce a feeling of fullness so that overall calorie intake may be 50-60% less than usual, leading to weight loss.