

Black Country City Deal

Working Together Project Evaluation:

Interim Report

November 2016

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We would also like to thank all the project participants who took part in the qualitative research.

List of abbreviations

BCHG	Black Country Housing Group
BCTG	Black Country Training Group
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
BRC	Bilston Resource Centre
CSCS	Construction Skills Certification Scheme
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESA	Employment and Support Allowance
FE	Further Education
HRP	Household Reference Person
IFA	Ideal for All
IT/ICT	Information Technology / Information & Communication Technology
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
MBC	Metropolitan Borough Council
NOMIS	National Online Manpower Information System
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PBR	Payment By Results
PIP	Personal Independence Payment
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
WAAC	Walsall Adult and Community College

Executive Summary - Narrative

This is the interim evaluation of the Black Country City Deal Working Together Project. It was completed by an independent research team from Future Excel, who are experts in the field of community and employment support services. The first and second wave of research carried out between September 2015 and October 2016 comprised of desk based research, analysis of project data and qualitative research (in-depth interviews and observations) with project stakeholders, providers, staff and participants. Initially findings were published in Spring 2016 following the first wave of research carried out between September 2015 and March 2016 allowing the identification of changes or differences following completion of the second wave of research. An 'At A Glance' pictorial summary of the project to date accompanies this document.

The project forms part of the wider Black Country City Deal proposal between government and the Local Enterprise Council and Local Authorities. It is a five year demonstration project aimed to reduce welfare dependency and increase employment in areas of high unemployment. The original delivery model has three key pillars; employment support services, community support and financial incentives. The funding from government is £2.8m, with an additional £2.8m provided locally through match funding. With a focus on social housing tenants, it aims to increase the employability of 2,800 unemployed and economically inactive residents, with the aim of helping 900 into sustained work. The project modelling estimated delivery of a £1.1m reduction in the welfare bill and £19.7m in earnings gains. The project is monitoring a range of other outcomes and measures including increased confidence, digital inclusion, skills and qualifications. The accountable body for the project is Walsall MBC, and the day to day management is undertaken by the project lead, Accord Group. The project is overseen, guided and supported by a steering group of local stakeholders.

The project commenced in April 2014, with the first year focused on implementing project infrastructure, recruiting the project team and working with key stakeholders to agree operational requirements to deliver the project strands. This included undertaking a mapping and gapping exercise of local services and an assessment of needs in the areas with the highest levels of worklessness across the Black Country. The identified areas for the project are Darlaston South, Walsall; Kates Hill/St Thomas's' ward, Dudley; Bilston East, Wolverhampton; and Princes End, Sandwell. The delivery of direct services and support commenced in April 2015 through a network of 8 contracted providers/supply chains from the not-for-profit, charitable and public sector¹. One of the contracted providers lost a key supply chain partner² when they closed down during 2015, and one contracted provider³ and its supply chain exited the project on a voluntary basis at the end of 2015. A new procurement round was initiated early Spring 2016 with services and support being provided by one lead contracted provider and their supply chain for each of the four areas. A level of continuity was retained with a number of year one providers continuing to either lead or form part of supply chain; however 2 lead delivery providers⁴ from year one decided not to continue and in three of the areas new organisations joined the supply chain. Changes also included a stronger focus on engagement with social housing providers, a payment by results element for sustained jobs, pre-set volumes and targets for each of the four areas.

The providers deliver a range of support to participants from community based venues. Support includes advice and guidance, job-search skills and coaching, skills based training, employer led/vocational skills, self-employment, work experience, volunteering, mentoring, confidence building, therapeutic activities, job-brokerage and matching. In the first year of the provision, some provision was targeted and focused on participants with particular needs e.g. supporting people with health conditions or older people and some on a wide range of needs through the

¹ Bilston Resource Centre, Black Country Housing Group, Black Country Training Group, Gazebo, Walsall Adult & Community College, Dudley 19+ Partnership, Ideal for All, Age UK

² St. Thomas's Network

³ Black Country Training Group

⁴ Gazebo & Age UK

delivery of a partnership/consortia approach. In the second year, this is still the case to certain extent where there is a large supply, for example St. Thomas's and Princes End but not in the areas where the lead provider is the primary deliver. The project recruited four community connectors, employed by the project lead and hosted by the largest social housing provider in each area to facilitate targeted recruitment. The Community Connectors role is to develop relationships and trust with the local community and facilitate project delivery through support and signposting. At the end of March 2016, there were two Community Connectors in post and a redefining of roles took place; with each Connector subsequently focusing on 2 geographical areas and providing the primary contact for the local Jobcentre Plus Office.

Building effective relationships with key stakeholders within the social housing sector and with Jobcentre Plus has not been without challenge. Strategically there is recognition of the importance of the project; and the important role these organisations play in helping deliver this project. On a practical level there are examples of where partnership working has proved effective in engaging unemployed and economically inactive housing tenants in the project. Good working relationships now exist and the Jobcentre Plus representative is now chair of the steering group. However it should be recognised that these stakeholders work, remit and core priorities cover a much wider cohort and objectives than the targeted geography and eligible participants of the project.

The project has developed a range of management and monitoring systems to capture project data and comply with accountable body and funders audit requirements. The project uses Work Stars™ which measures and supports progress for adults out of work or returning to the workplace. In the first year this was administered as a paper based system, moving to online in the second year of delivery. Early data from the online system indicates that 65% of participants have made a positive change.

Between April 2015 and end of September 2016, 1178 unemployed and economically inactive residents have engaged with the project on a voluntary basis. Over a third of participants started the project 6 or less months ago. Overall a third of participants are from the Darlaston South area, with the lowest participant cohort from Kates Hill/St Thomas's' ward. However, for the year 2 cohort there is a broadly equal split across all four areas. Overall, women and those aged over 25 years are the largest participants groups, with BME participation rates broadly in line with ward rates. Nearly 10% (111) of project participants moved into employment. For the year 1 cohort job starts, all the job sustainment points (26 weeks for JSA benefit claimants and 13 weeks for other benefits) have been reached; with the majority of the year 2 cohort job starts occurring in the future. This gives year one cohort sustainability rates across the project of between 60% and 78% (subject to confirmation of all outcomes). Nearly half of those who found jobs had been out of work for two years or more, and 15% for 10 years or more or had never worked. Proportionally, more residents from the Kate's Hill and Bilston East area found work, with men and younger people also more likely to move into work. This has been broadly consistent across both waves of research and cohorts. Initial benefit savings and increased wages calculations, supported by Black Country Consortium indicate savings in the region of £341,300, an increase in wages of £772,660 and income tax contributions of £70,700. These calculations are based on evidenced and sustained jobs achieved by the project to date. Further work on reduction in healthcare and crime costs will be undertaken to produce a wider Social Return On Investment calculation for future reports.

Challenges in implementing successful and targeted engagement strategies early in 2015/16 led to a data review by the research team in September 2015. This sought to specifically establish the available 'pool' of social housing residents, as opposed to the generic number of workless residents across all housing tenures in the area. It was concluded that in some areas nearly 80% of the total social housing cohort would need to be engaged to deliver project targets. As a result, at the end of March 2016 all unemployed and economically inactive residents who are in or require social housing in the identified area can access the project. In relation to the year 2 cohort, non-social housing tenants account for 30% of the cohort.

This research covers the first 18 months experiences of the service delivery (April 2015 to end of September 2016), with a further 18 months planned service delivery. Whilst we cannot draw final conclusions about the overall effectiveness of the project, we can start to see the impact being made, identify a number of emerging themes on what has worked well in helping unemployed and economically inactive people back to work. These include:

- A physical presence in the heart of the community where the target group lives, that can act as a hub, focal point and 'go-to' place. Local people value these resources greatly but they have a relatively small radius of engagement and do not capture all targeted areas.
- Proactive engagement in the heart of the community by local and experienced 'engagers' and 'connectors' is effective in supporting participation, if supported by 'warm' handovers between project interventions.
- Co-located and joined up multi-agency and provider services and support.
- The use of therapeutic (e.g. arts, drama, gardening) and 'soft' learning activities (e.g. sugar-craft, flower-arranging) provide effective engagement, confidence building and progression tools.
- Progression for those furthest away from the labour and with complex needs is underpinned by a strong 'trust-based' and 'encouraging' relationship with key workers; and often comprises of key elements of intensive mentoring.
- For those ready for work, support services which have a strong emphasis on employer engagement and work-focus are a primary driver for successful employment outcomes e.g. access to work experience, volunteering, pre-employment training and skills, matching and brokerage services, interview preparation.

The project has also learnt a number of lessons that can provide the basis of a tool-kit for future projects. These include:

- That collecting and systematically reviewing relevant and up to date area based data is key to ensuring the project meets local needs, the deliverables remain achievable and targeted delivery strategies can be developed and implemented.
- Future delivery plans and profiles should adequately and realistically reflect the time required to implement new provision and support.
- Where project eligibility is narrowly defined, a targeted and focused engagement and outreach strategy is key to avoid wasted time and resources.
- Engage key stakeholders who are primary referral agents early and ensure they are part of the programme design and invested from the beginning. Maintain your project message throughout the project by identifying key points of contact ('project champions' and developing an effective marketing and communication plan.
- Multiple tiers of reporting and complicated governance structures can be cumbersome and add time to project management. All stakeholders and providers need to have clear roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication of services and competition within the projects.
- Clarity regarding project scope, definitions, eligibility, funding requirements should be agreed and understood prior to project commencement to avoid unnecessary delay and impact on operations.
- Not operating in a 'silo' – to ensure the project delivers complementary and aligned activities ongoing dialogue with strategic and operational stakeholders is essential.

Whilst initial analysis has been undertaken on benefit savings and income tax contributions, further work is required around the impacts in secondary markets of healthcare and crime cost reduction to report fully on social return on investment. It is also recommended that the project implements additional job-tracking strategies to ensure all job starts and sustainment outcomes are captured. Additionally consideration should be given to the projects exit and sustainability strategy.

The next steps will be to carry out the third and fourth wave of longitudinal and thematic qualitative research and observations with stakeholders, providers and participants; relevant surveys and further analysis of data. This and the subsequent research will inform the Final Evaluation Report which is scheduled to be completed in Spring 2018.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 This report presents the combined findings of the first and second wave of qualitative research on the delivery of the Black Country City Deal Working Together Project. The findings incorporate evidence drawn from several elements of research:

- Interviews with the project lead (Accord), the Community Connectors and Jobcentre Plus
- Interviews with community and employment support providers involved in the project including Housing Association partners
- Interviews and group forums with participants eligible for and participating in the project
- Observations of interactions between provider staff and participants in the project.
- Observation of partnership and management arrangements including a lead partner information event for providers, contracted delivery providers partner and contract management meeting and monitoring visits.

1.2 The report also includes findings from analysis of:

- Project and performance data from the beginning of the delivery phase in April 2015 to the end of September 2016.
- Desk-based review of relevant documents and reports including year one and two procurement exercise, steering group minutes and provider review meetings.
- The review of social housing tenant data and baseline data, an update and refresh of which was undertaken by the research team in September 2015.

1.3 Due to the qualitative nature of the research reported here, and the fact that the data is based on the first 18 month experiences of a planned 3 years of service delivery and support, they should not be used to draw final conclusions about the overall effectiveness or impact of the programme. As further results become available from subsequent stages of the research and evaluation from Winter 2016 to Spring 2018, the scope for drawing stronger conclusions will increase. The results presented in this report provide an early qualitative and quantitative insight into the project delivery including the initial community and employment support provision, the role of the Community Connectors and the experiences of the first cohorts of participants in the programme.

SECTION 2 – SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

2.1 Background to the City Deal

2.1.1. The Black Country City Deal Working Together project forms part of the wider City Deal proposal by the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Sandwell Borough Council, Walsall Council and Wolverhampton. Originally referred to as the Housing, Jobs and Prosperity Demonstration Project, the agreement with government⁵ described this element as being able to ‘test new ways to reduce unemployment in local areas of deprivation’.

2.1.2 The aim was to set up a five year project to reduce welfare dependency and increase employment in areas of high unemployment; learning from successful programmes in the US⁶ and aligning with the Troubled Families and Help to Work programme. The project would operate within identified geographical areas to deliver an integrated ‘Journey to Work’ that aligns mainstream support service alongside bespoke interventions tailored to maximise value added.

2.2 Focus on social housing tenants in identified locations

2.2.1 The original project outline made reference to social housing neighbourhoods where periods of worklessness amongst residents were often longer in duration than their counterparts in other housing tenures. The outline included a commitment to expand and improve local partnerships between local authorities, social housing providers, skills providers and welfare benefit agencies.

2.3 The Original Delivery Model

The original model had three key pillars:

2.3.1 Employment support services

This included intensive job search, career planning, CV preparation and tailored Information, Advice, Guidance on jobs and benefits; pre-employment training and skills such as literacy, numeracy, employability and bespoke employer led training; mentoring; work trials, work experience and work placements; and post-employment support and re-employment activity to aid progression.

2.3.2 Community Support

This was described as support to assist residents from the same household, family or peer group.

2.3.3 Financial incentives

It was envisaged that this would be a combination of a flexible support ‘bursary’ to support the costs associated with the transition to work, which may be repayable over time once a set salary has been achieved. This would be coupled with rent

⁵ www.the-blackcountry.com/Upload/01/Black_Country_City_Deal_Document.pdf

⁶ E.g. Jobs Plus – www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/Promoting%20Work%20in%20Public%20Housing%20ES.pdf

freezes from housing providers and enhanced by the use of financial incentives for providers using performance-related payments for staff based on job sustainability and earnings progression.

2.4 The Funding

2.4.1 The Black Country City Deal agreement includes the provision of £2.8m by central government to support the delivery of the project; with expected match funding of a further £2.8 m provided by local authorities, social housing and other providers.

2.5 The outputs, outcomes and impacts

2.5.1 The project will focus on increasing the employability of 2,800 long-term unemployed and economically inactive Black Country residents in areas with high concentration of worklessness with the aim of helping 900 into sustained work. The original project modelling estimated that it could deliver £1.1m reduction in the welfare bill associated with savings on transition from unemployment to work and a further £19.7m associated with earnings gains. The project is monitoring a range of other outcomes and measures including increased confidence, digital inclusion, skills and qualifications.

SECTION 3 – EVALUATION PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

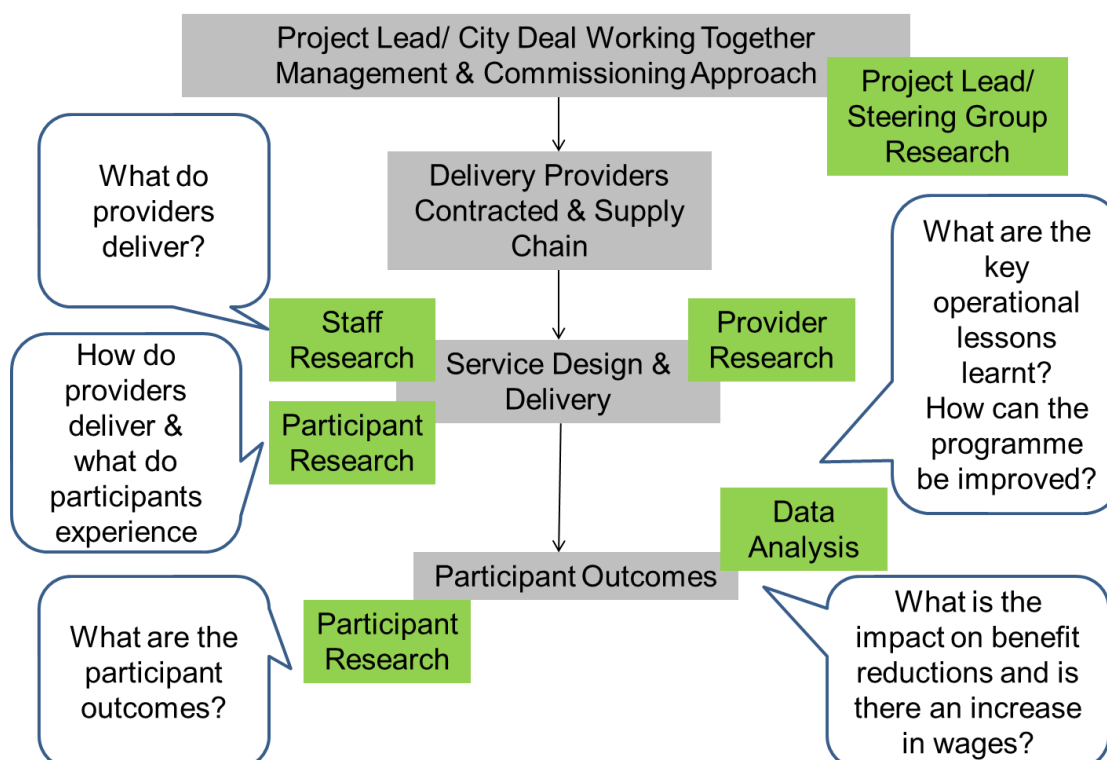
3.1 The Evaluation Overall

3.1.1 Background

Following a competitive tendering exercise, the Project commissioned Future Excel⁷ in autumn 2015, to undertake an independent evaluation of the five year project (2014 – 2019). The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an independent review of the five year project including:

- An assessment of what works in assisting unemployed people into sustainable employment and equally an assessment of what hasn't worked.
- The delivery and effectiveness of the project by assessing participant and provider experiences and outcomes.
- An interim and final report which will be used to disseminate this knowledge and evidence more widely.
- Research, findings and recommendations which will form part of the toolkit designed to help practitioners in rolling out similar projects in the future.

3.1.2 Structure of Research - Overview



3.1.3 High level research questions

- Project Management & Commissioning – How does the project management and local commissioning model influence service delivery and outcomes? Why do providers design their services the way they do?

⁷ a locally based consultancy and experts and specialists in the employment related and support service sector

- Delivery – What services do providers deliver to participants and how do they deliver them? What is the participant experience? What are the key operational lessons learnt from delivery?
- Outcomes – What are the outcomes and destinations of participants? What is the impact on reducing benefits, job entry and sustainment?

3.1.4 The project management and commissioning model

The evaluation will look at how the approaches to local project management and commissioning impacts and influences service delivery and participant outcomes. This includes desk based research; review of relevant management & monitoring documents/reports and 4 fieldwork waves⁸ of qualitative interviews and observations with stakeholders, the project lead, current and previous delivery providers and subcontractors.

3.1.5 Delivery Models

Evaluation of the support and service delivery itself involves research with both providers and participants. This research builds on and tests the information provided by providers during commissioning and outlined in their tenders.

Provider research

The provider research element of the evaluation aims to identify not only the service provided, but the factors shaping its nature, which will vary between providers, with local conditions and between different groups of participants. The provider research is being conducted through:

- Three waves of observational research⁹ comprising of observations of key interventions and interactions between participants and provider staff
- Three waves of qualitative research¹⁰ with Pilot provider managers and frontline staff, Lead /managing partner representatives and staff :

Participant research

The research with participants is exploring their end-to-end experience of the project and ascertaining their views on services and support received, the relevance and helpfulness of these, and outcomes from the programme as a whole. Several waves of research are being undertaken, employing a mixture of cross-sectional and longitudinal design:

- Up to four waves of qualitative in-depth interviews and surveys with participants in February/March 2016, Mid-2016, spring and autumn 2017, using a mixture of face-to-face and telephone interview methods;

3.1.6 Measuring outcomes and impact

An assessment of the project drawing on both administrative data and data generated by other strands of the evaluation will be used to identify the factors associated with variations in project effectiveness and impact.

3.2. Coverage of this report and methods

⁸ Wave 1 – February – March 2016; Wave 2 – Mid-2016; Wave 3 – Mid 2017; Wave 4 – 2018.

⁹ Wave 1 – February – March 2016; Wave 2 – Mid-2016; Wave 3 – Mid 2017

¹⁰ Wave 1 – February – March 2016; Wave 2 – Mid-2016; Wave 3 – Mid 2017; Wave 4 – 2018.

This, the second published report of the evaluation, draws on several elements of the project management and delivery evaluation strands, described above, namely:

- The first and second wave of qualitative research with stakeholder, project lead, provider managers, front line staff and community connectors across the four identified areas.
- The first and second wave of qualitative in-depth interviews with participants (across all providers and in all identified areas).
- Observations of interactions between participants and provider staff (across all lead providers and in all identified areas).
- Desk based research and review of relevant project documents.
- Analysis of initial Project Data from April 2015 – September 2016.

The interview instruments comprised of an interview protocol (Annex 2) and a range of topic guides used for all qualitative interviews.

3.2.1 Qualitative research with delivery providers and project lead

Interviews with providers

This element of the research, delivered over two phases focused on the provision delivered by the 8 Year One and in the 4 Year 2 contracted delivery providers (and their subcontractors) across all 4 localities. It should be noted that, within the project, end-to-end provision (from assessment to in work support) is provided, in some cases, by leads themselves and in other cases by their subcontractors within supply chains or both. The sampling approach adopted in choosing the organisations for interview was primarily focused on ensuring that all contracted/lead providers were included, and a sample of sub-contractors from each of these lead providers. The first phase interviews included one contracted delivery provider who left/exited the project voluntarily during the latter part of 2015.

The provider types, and the different models of provision they offer are explained more fully in Section Four. A summary table can be found at Annex 2a and 2b. The design of the research was such that, within each organisation, the local manager was to be interviewed, as well as interviews with 'frontline' staff delivering the project. In the first phase 17¹¹ senior level managers (3 interviews via telephone) and 17 front line project delivery staff were interviewed. In the second phase, 10 management staff interviews (2 telephone interviews) were carried out, of which 5 were follow up interviews from Phase 1 and 13 front line project staff were interviewed, of which 8 were follow up interviews.

Interviews with project lead staff, community connectors & Jobcentre Plus

In parallel to the research with providers, in the first phase qualitative interviews were undertaken with the project lead staff responsible for the day to day project management function and delivery of the community connector elements. Within the project lead, research aimed to capture the views of the Project Director, partnership & monitoring officer and 2 community connectors who have contact with the wider community and participants involved in the project. During the second phase, follow

¹¹ 3 of these individuals work in micro organisations and therefore also deliver front line services to participants but have been classified as managers only for the purposes of the report, rather than frontline staff.

up interviews were undertaken with these staff (all who remained the same), as well as a further interview with an Accord Housing Group senior management representative involved in the project proposal stages pre-project start and a Jobcentre Plus representative.

The achieved sample is shown in Figure 1.

Type of Organisation	Delivery Year 1		Delivery Year 2	
	No. of Organisations	No. of Individuals	No. of Organisations	No. of Individuals
Lead Partner & Stakeholders	1	4	2	6
Contracted Delivery Provider	8	27	4	9
Supply Chain Provider	6	7	6	14
Total	15	38	12	29

*Fieldwork*¹²

Fieldwork was undertaken between February - March 2016 and September - October 2016. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured topic guide, which differed for project lead staff, provider managers and for front-line staff and community connectors. There will be further follow-up interviews (longitudinal) as part of the subsequent waves of research during 2017.

3.2.2 Qualitative research with participants

The key questions that the evaluation sets out to explore through research with participants focused on their experiences of the project, including the type and quality of services received, and the degree to which services were perceived as tailored to their specific needs. In respect of the participant journey, they will be at one of the following five stages:

- Initial or early engagement with project or provider ('new entrants');
- During engagement, with project or provider ('engaged participants');
- Job entry ('job entrants');
- In sustained employment of 13 or 26 weeks;
- End of engagement with the project or no longer engaging.

In the first and second wave of fieldwork, interviews were carried out with participants across all stages.

When interviewing participants who were engaging with the project (either new entrants or engaged) the aim was to explore perceptions about the project; closeness to work, aspirations and expectations, motivation, and barriers and needs or experiences of working with providers, changes in motivation, aspiration, and progress towards work (including the perceived impact of the project). For those who have moved into work (job entry stage) interviews focused on how entry to work was achieved and experience of in-work support from the provider. The most appropriate research method for addressing these issues and the interactions between them is qualitative, in-depth interviews. In phase 2 structured and interactive group forums

¹² Data collection from interviews, group discussions, observations and materials

delivered by experienced facilitators were used in addition to one to one interviews to explore these areas.

All contracted providers were selected as fieldwork sites on the basis of their varied ranges of organisation and provision. Some provided the majority of services through their own organisation, while others subcontracted some provision. Some had developed large and extensive supply chains, while others relied on far fewer organisations to provide services.

The providers drew their own sample of representative participants from new entrants and engaged participants; and where possible job entrants. In total, interviews were conducted with 75 participants (34 in phase 1 and 41 in phase 2); representing 5.5% & 8.5% respectively of total project participants (615) on programme at the start of February 2016 & (474) on programme in September 2016. Some risk was inherent in this sampling approach that providers might filter participants and include only those who would give a positive account of their experience. To avoid this, supplementary telephone interviews¹³ were carried out in the second wave with a random selection of participants, as well as a number of follow up interviews with participants interviewed during delivery year one.

The participant research element allows a better understanding of people's journeys back to work, and data on change, for example in motivation, aspirations, health, and the links between these. The second wave of participant qualitative research used forums, in addition to the qualitative one to one interviews. This allowed participants to open up in a different way by using interactive group work to share experiences and using scenarios to explore support offered. However, there were practical restraints where lead providers are delivering through a larger supply chain i.e. getting a voluntary representative sample of participants from multiple providers in the same place, which may not be there that is not their normal place of service delivery.

Figure 2 presents geographical spread of the achieved samples¹⁴.

	New Entrants & Engaged Participants Interviewed			Job Entrant Participants Interviewed			All Participants Interviewed		
	Year 1	Year 2	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Bilston East	8	8	16	2	3	5	10	11	21
Princes End	6	13	19	0	1	1	6	14	20
Darlaston South	12	9	20	1	1	2	13	10	22
St. Thomas's	5	5	10	0	1	1	5	6	11
Total	31	35	66	3	6	9	34	41	75

¹³ 30% contact / response rate achieved out of 24 calls made (reasons for no response include telephone number not being available or not a valid number, phone rang out, call not returned).

¹⁴ A minimum sample for qualitative project participants interviews (circa 5% of all project participants per geographical area) set by the research team was achieved. (Bilston East 7.5%; Princes End 6.8%; Darlaston South 5.5% and St. Thomas's 5.4%) – additional participants were provided for interview in Bilston East and Princes End.

3.2.3 Observational Research

In Total, 24 observational visits to delivery providers and supply chain partner premises were carried out, as well as attendance at two events (a contracted delivery providers' supply chain meeting and a lead partner information event presenting 2016-18 delivery arrangements).

Various interventions were observed: engagement and enrichment activities; one to one interviews and sessions between advisers and participants, follow-up information, advice and guidance sessions and reviews; group information and training sessions; vocational and therapeutic activities. The interventions observed involved around 85 + project participants. The observations were analysed for information including how the provider staff delivered interventions and interactions; how participants responded and the use of tools and resources.

3.2.4 Presentation of Qualitative Findings

In this report the findings from the provider and participants interviews and observational research are, for the most part, integrated into the relevant report sections.

3.2.5 Analysis of Data

The project team has collated a range of administrative and progress data from the beginning of April 2015, when engagements commenced. Analysis of data from April 2015 –September 2016 can be found in Section 5 of this report. This includes some initial reporting on benefit savings, increase in wages and income tax contributions calculations which will form part of the wider and subsequent Social Return on Investment calculations (subject to final agreement of all methodologies).

SECTION 4: FINDINGS & EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 An overview of the Project Journey

4.1.1 Figure 3 below provides an overview and snapshot of key milestones during the first two years of the project.

Figure 3: The First 2.5 Project Years

		Key Milestones	
Year 1 2014 – 2015 (Implementation & Planning)	April - June	Overarching project management arrangements agreed Recruitment of Project Director commences	
	June	Project Director Recruited & In Place	
	June – November	Partnership Building & Development of Steering Group Mapping & Gapping of existing provision Local Needs Assessment – Baseline Data Implementation, planning and shaping of how the project elements/strands will be delivered.	
	December	Additional Project Team recruited & in place Recruitment of Community Connectors commences Procurement for 2015/16 local project delivery commences	
	February	Procurement for Research & Evaluation services commences	
Year 2 2015 – 2016 Operational Delivery (Year 1)	April	Community Connectors Recruited & In Place	
	April - June	Contracted Year 2 delivery commences	
	July	Research & Evaluation Contract Agreed (July 2015)	
	Sept – October	Social Housing Data Analysis & Baseline Data Refresh Undertaken (Research Team)	
	September - March	Desktop research & Wave 1 Qualitative Research (Research Team)	
	Feb-March	Procurement for 2016 – 2018 local delivery commences	
	March	Transitional Arrangements for 2015/16 delivery agreed	
Year 3 2016- 2017 (Operational Delivery (Year 2)	April - June	Contracted Year 2 delivery commences	
	April – October	Desktop research & Wave 2 Qualitative Research (Research Team)	

4.1.2 The first year of the project (2014/15) was spent implementing project infrastructure and working with key stakeholders to agree the operational requirements needed to deliver the key project elements and strands. This involved refreshing local needs assessments and undertaking local mapping and gapping of existing provision to ensure complementary and joined up project provision was implemented. No operational delivery of support services took place during this year.

4.1.3 Delivery of support elements commenced in April 2015 (Year 2 of the project) following commissioning by the lead partner, Accord Housing Group. Providers were notified in February 2016 that due to contract provisions, they would not be extended and recommissioning for Year 2 and 3 would take place.

4.1.4 A second commissioning round commenced March 2016; with transitional and new contract arrangements implemented between April – May 2016. The project has confirmed plans for a further two full years of operational delivery of the key

elements and integrated project strands (2016 – 18). There has been an initial dialogue with the funder around using any project underspend to extend delivery beyond this point and into the final project year 2018/19 by a further 6 months. An assessment of the profiles and budgets is planned to take place at the end of year 2 delivery.

4.1.5 The final project year (2018/19) will subject to the review outlined above in section 4.1.4 comprise of a final 6 months of delivery and focus on supporting/capturing sustainable outcomes and final evaluation.

4.2 Project Management Arrangements

4.2.1 Accountable Body & Project Lead

The accountable body for the City Deal project is Walsall MBC, with the day to day management of the project delegated by the Local Enterprise Partnership and Black Country Local Authorities to social housing provider, Accord Group. The project is led and managed on a day to day basis by a dedicated Project Team, led by a Project Director who was appointed in June 2014. There is a detailed grant agreement, quarterly reporting, monitoring and claim process in place between the accountable body (Walsall MBC) and Accord to manage the contractual and financial arrangements. There is a small project team in place comprising of the Project Director, Partnership & Monitoring Officer and Project Administrator. They are supported with finance and marketing functions by the wider Accord Group infrastructure. Good working relationships and a joined up approach exist between the accountable body and project lead (regular meetings and dialogue, joint monitoring visits to providers), this has been facilitated by stability and consistency in the point of contact at the accountable body. Over time an open and supportive relationship has developed.

4.2.2 Relationship with Funder

A direct relationship between the project team and funder (Cabinet Office/DCLG) has been challenging due to changes in reporting arrangements and funder personnel/decision makers. A consistent point of contact within the funder has been in place since early 2016 and as a result key decisions relating to extension of eligible participants to include non-social housing tenants and remaining funding have been resolved. There are now regular scheduled teleconferences to review and discuss project progress and a visit to the project has taken place.

4.2.3 Steering group

There is a steering group in place with representation from the Project Team (Accord Group), Accountable Body (Walsall MBC), Black Country Consortium, Black Country Local Authorities, Housing Providers, DWP/JcP, Voluntary Sector, Local FE Colleges, Talent Match and Training Providers. Its purpose is to oversee, guide and support the delivery of the project. It meets on a regular basis and meetings are documented in writing. There is openness and transparency by the project team with the steering group and the steering group is proactive in their involvement and challenging. For example, impartial members of the steering group formed the

assessment panel for the employment support tenders for both operational year one and two, with the project team acting in an advisory role. The current chair is the JcP District Office representative. A full list of organisations currently represented on the steering group can be found at Annex 3.

4.2.4 Commissioning Approach to Local Delivery

Following agreement of the Project Steering Group, local provider delivery was commissioned. For year one delivery, a series of provider briefing events were held during November and December 2014 across the 'identified' project areas. The deadline for applications was the 30th January 2015, with a 2-3 month window allocated for assessment, due diligence and contract award (subsequently the majority of contracts commenced May 2015). For year two delivery, a provider procurement and networking event was held during 24th February 2016. The deadline for applications was the 24th March 2016, with a view to contracts commencing May 2016.

Key elements of the 'commissioning model' in year were:

Year 1	Year 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no set specification but support should meet specific area needs as identified by the <i>data analysis</i> and the <i>mapping and gapping exercise</i>¹⁵ undertaken by the City Deal project team. For example, the Princes End area data showed significant Health & Well Being indicators and priorities which needed to be addressed. • Proposals should demonstrate innovation approaches to engagement and delivery. • There should not be duplication of services, where funding already exists. • Eligibility was aligned to overall project perimeters (defined geographical areas; social housing tenants) but with an additional emphasis on participants over 25 years old and longer term unemployed/economically inactive. • Participation in the programme would be voluntary & supported by community connectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A customer and job focused deliver model. • Engagement strategy is a key element. • Must demonstrate knowledge of the specific area. • One lead provider per area • Applications must have housing providers as part of their 'offer' • Lead applicants should give consideration to existing delivery providers. • Clear strategy for dealing with existing customers. • Eligibility still aligned to geographical areas and emphasis on 25 years plus and longer term unemployed/economically inactive people but indication of widening to non-social housing tenants. • Prescribed financial budget per area. • Prescribed number of outputs/outcomes per area.

¹⁵ Mapping & Gapping Activity available on-line at www.the-blackcountry.com/about-us/making-it-happen/black-country-city-deal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration should be given in proposals to all strands of the project including employment support, community support and financial incentives. • Funding would be in the form of a one year grant agreement with contractual and financial target monitoring arrangements in place. • Providers able to propose costs and outputs/outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment By Result element – 30% of funding retained & payable on sustained job outcomes.
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Grants Based V PBR Payment Model

The rationale for a grant based payments approach in year one, as opposed to outcome related payments was to support the piloting and testing of approaches, as well as encourage local voluntary and community based organisations to get involved. The change in approach in year two to a performance by results (PBR) elements reflected observations and findings from the project team that in some cases providers were not sufficiently focused on the employment outcome, rather the engagement and development activities. With many national employment related contracts¹⁶ being procured on a PBR model, the year 2 approach presents opportunities to explore how this approach works in locally procured programmes with the voluntary and community sector and influence future funding. Initial feedback on the PBR model, relate more broadly to the providers view that the number of prescribed sustainable job outcomes required within the year do not reflect the distance and time the majority of project participants require to support them back to work. As a result, the perception amongst the majority is that there is less money in project to deliver the interventions, as the whole potential budget is unlikely to be 'realised'. It is too early to draw real conclusions on the impact of the variance in payment models between year one and two, based of only 5 months data for the second year cohort.

4.2.5 Who are the delivery providers?

Year 1: Following the tendering process outlined above, 8 providers were contracted to operate as 'lead' providers in each of the areas. A list of the providers by identified area, type and their delivery/contracting structure is shown in Annex 1a.

- Contracted providers were drawn from the not for profit (1), charitable (4), public/Local Authority Learning (2), and housing (registered social landlord) (1) sectors.
- Of the providers, there was a mix of those delivering services directly to participants (3), those using a network of sub-contractors / supply chain partners (either end to end or specialist services) (1), or those doing both (4).
- Two of the eight providers were operating their delivery model across multiple areas – one pan-Black Country basis i.e. across all four identified areas and one across the South Black Country (Dudley & Sandwell).
- Each identified area had between 3- 4 providers operating in the area.

¹⁶ For example Work Programme

Year 2: Following the tendering process and post-tender negotiations, 4 providers were contracted to operate as 'lead' providers; one in each of the identified areas. A list of the providers by identified area, type and their delivery/contracting structure is shown in Annex 1b.

- The lead contracted providers were drawn predominantly from the Local Authorities (either learning/employment (Dudley MBC) or employment (Sandwell MBC) or a wholly owned community college subsidiary (WAAC), with one provider from the charitable sector (Bilston Resource Centre). Three of the four lead providers were the same as those appointed in operational year one; with small changes to their delivery model – additions/changes to their supply chains. However a level of continuity was achieved in the new provider (Sandwell MBC), with two of the four supply chain members having delivered services in operational year one.
- Of the providers, only one (Sandwell MBC) is not delivering any services directly to participants i.e. acting as a managing agent, with the others using a mix of direct delivery and using a network of sub-contractors / supply chain partners.
- Whilst there has been a reduction in the number of lead providers in year 2, broadly the number of partner organisations delivering across the project has remained the same. Where there are larger supply chains i.e. St Thomas's and Princes End, individual providers may only be working with an annual cohort of between 30-50 people. Lead providers in these areas have put mechanisms in place to ensure community connector/JcP engagements are distributed on an equitable basis, based on need and there is evidence of good collaboration. However due to the relative high number of providers working in the same geographical area there is evidence to suggest an element of 'competition' for individual and stakeholder¹⁷ engagements exists in the St. Thomas' and Princes End area, particularly where more than of the supply chain members already has existing relationships for example with a local school or children's centre. It is also in part due to engagement activities, facilities and services being concentrated in one part of the ward.

4.2.6 Changes to the provider mix and their supply chains

Operational Delivery Year 1: In July 2015, one of the Dudley based contracted providers (Dudley MBC) lost a key supply chain partner, when it closed down and in turn the loss of their primary delivery venue. During the latter part of 2015/early 2016, one of the contracted providers (BCTG) and its supply chain covering the Dudley and Sandwell area left/exited the project on a voluntary basis.

Operational Delivery Year 2: Whilst there have been no changes to date in year two contracted providers, it has taken time to embed sub-contracting arrangements in the Bilston East area. Extended contract negotiations led to, delivery in this area starting a month later than the other areas. Additionally at the time of the research one supply chain member had still not commenced delivery.

4.2.7 Project Management and Monitoring Arrangements

¹⁷ Particularly those stakeholders who are 'access' points to the target group / potential referrers e.g. schools, childrens centres.

There is a service level agreement (profiles/targets), monthly reporting, monitoring and claim process in place between the lead partner (Accord Group) and contracted providers to manage the contractual and financial arrangements. The project team has issued a range of guidance and documents to support project evidence requirements and funding compliance rules. Using an in-house bespoke database/CRM system, the project team collate, record and analyse project management information on a monthly basis. A number of individual performance monitoring meetings, reviews and audits were carried out by the project team during the period analysed, including joint on-site audit activity with the accountable body. A number of operational provider group meetings have taken place, with the intention of sharing project data, updates and good practice. Overall, providers involved found these meetings helpful, particularly where the focus was sharing practice. Overall, good working and open relationships exist between the project lead and contracted providers. However, some providers (lead and supply chain) considered the management, monitoring, compliance and evidence arrangements (match and outcomes) required by the funders/accountable body disproportionate to the size of their individual project, too narrowly defined, time consuming and costly. This was an influencing factor in the decision for some organisations not to reapply in year 2 of the project.

4.2.8 Provider Supply Chain Management and Monitoring Arrangements

Across both delivery years, the majority of providers used a supply chain for delivering elements of the projects (either on an end to end service delivery basis or providing specialist and/or clearly defined services). Some had developed large and extensive supply chains, while others relied on far fewer organisations to provide services (and delivered the majority of services themselves)¹⁸. Whilst there are some variations in the way supply chains operate on a day to day basis there were common elements across the board e.g. service level agreements, monthly collation of project data (to reflect the project requirements), co-ordinated dissemination of project documentation and regular meetings and progress reviews. Feedback from year one indicated that whilst the majority of supply chain organisations were satisfied with the arrangements and had good working relationships with the contracted provider, some indicated that they would like more opportunities to engage directly with the other providers and the project lead. There has been an opportunity in year 2 for lead providers to bring representative supply chain members to operational delivery meetings with the lead partner Accord.

Payment Arrangements

In year one, monthly grant payment arrangements between the project lead and contracted providers were broadly reflected in the arrangements with their own supply chains. There was one exception (Black Country Training Group) where payment to supply chain was on a unit cost basis for actual achievements (with the introduction of grant payments to some of their supply chain members only occurring in the last two months of delivery). In year two, supply chain are either being paid for

¹⁸ There is no substantive differential in outcomes or other evidence at this point in time to indicate that one model performs better than the other.

the specific services delivered or where they are delivering end to end services on a same 70% grant and 30% sustainable job outcome basis as the lead provider. One variation to this is where one lead (Dudley MBC) has introduced a mechanism to 'share' the outcome payment, where multiple providers have supported the participant.

4.3 The Delivery Model

4.3.1 Where are the project identified geographical areas?

The geographically defined wards are:

- Bilston East in Wolverhampton
- Darlaston South in Walsall
- St. Thomas' ward in Dudley (initially the Kates Hill Estate)
- Princes End (Tipton) in Sandwell

These areas were identified by individual Local Authority stakeholders based on their assessment of local needs. Initially Dudley identified a specific neighbourhood (Kates Hill) within one of its most deprived wards (St. Thomas'), with the project extending to the whole of the St. Thomas' ward from late 2015. See section 4.3.3.

4.3.2 Challenges Around the Data & Eligible Pool of Beneficiaries

Detailed information about each area can be found in the Baseline Review and Data Refresh Document compiled by the Research Team in September 2015 (and available from the Project Team). As part of this review, the Project Team requested a specific review of the numbers of unemployed and economically inactive social housing tenants in each area of benefit. The original project baseline data and information related only to the number of unemployed and economically inactive individuals in the general ward population; with no correlation between those who are social housing tenants (eligible project beneficiaries) and those with other types of tenure i.e. private renters and home owners (who fall outside of the current project scope). The data review formed part of the wider baseline refresh but specifically sought to establish the available 'pool' of eligible beneficiaries for the project against the original project targets. The full methodology and report can be found at Annex 4.

4.3.3 Summary of Key Findings and Conclusions from the Report (Annex 4)

Applying a range of assumptions and measures the 'potential' unemployed and economically inactive social housing tenant cohort across all areas was circa 5,000; with the split across each area varying in line with the actual number of social housing properties. The volumes range from circa 900 in St. Thomas' ward to 1700 in the Princes End ward. In order to achieve the overall project target of 2800 social housing tenants supported, it would mean the project would need to work with nearly 60% of the total available cohort. However, if the overall project targets remain split evenly across all the four identified areas this would actually mean up to 80% of the cohort would need to be supported in some areas i.e. St. Thomas' ward. Whilst the research team cannot be absolutely definitive on the potential cohort numbers, the research and evidence relating to the profile (economic status and household type)

of social housing tenants highlights additional and key factors/considerations in relation to project approaches, engagement and delivery. For example, social renting householders were more likely than other tenures to:

- Contain a householder who was economically inactive; with the economic status of partners following a similar pattern and a higher proportion claiming ESA (long term illness) or ISLP (Lone Parent households). This means many individuals are not currently engaged with or receiving any structured employment support as they are not currently 'required' or expected to look for work.
- Be female; attributed to households being more likely than other groups to have lone parent households.

Following the review and analysis of the social housing data, the identified area of Kate's Hill was extended late in 2015 (following steering group and funder endorsement) to include the whole of St Thomas's ward. However across the board the limited pool of eligible participants remained a challenge during the first operational year of delivery.

As a result the lead partner and accountable body have negotiated extension of the eligibility criteria to include non-social housing tenants and this forms part of the second operational year of delivery. This approach has supported continued engagements of project participants from within the defined geographical areas. By extending the eligibility criteria from year 2 onwards, the project moves closer a geographical 'saturation' delivery model¹⁹.

4.3.4 How do participants engage with the project?

The role of Community Connectors

The development and introduction of the community connectors role (previously referred to as community champions), as part of the community support strand took place between November 2014 and March 2015. The original scope of the role was to work in the community, developing relationships and trust with local people and organisations and facilitating project referrals and engagement through offering support and signposting to relevant provision. The model included employing unemployed or economically inactive individuals who lived or had previously lived or worked in the identified area, with good local area knowledge and a commitment to the principles of the project. Unlike the US jobs plus model, the connectors were offered paid employment, where the community members involved the US Jobs Plus model offered support on a voluntary basis. To support the recruitment and selection process, a two week customised pre-employment training programme with work experience was delivered in conjunction with JcP and a local provider; with guaranteed interviews for all those who completed the training. Finding individuals with the skills and experience to carry out the role of the community connector proved challenging. Four community connectors were appointed and in place between April – May 2015. The role proved challenging for those connectors who

¹⁹ The 'saturation' model was a feature of the US programme – Jobs Plus (from which some of the original Working Together project delivery model and design features were drawn).

did not have previous experience of similar community engagement work; requiring additional support and ultimately not working out. For the remaining two connectors, who did have previous experience, combined with good local knowledge relationships there is evidence of the positive impact the role has had in engaging with stakeholders and the wider community.

In operational year 2, there has been a reshaping and extension of the two remaining community connector roles with the aim of providing a more focused and co-ordinating function across the project, employment support providers and the wider community. Each connector was allocated two project areas— dedicating two days a week resource to these areas; one with lead providers/in the community and one promoting the project within the local Jobcentre office.

Relationship between Providers & Community Connectors

In year one, both providers and community connectors undertook 'direct' recruitment of project participants. This involved a range of activities from 'door-knocking' in the identified area, networking at community events and venues (local schools), promotion within Jobcentre Plus local offices and running specific 'engagement' events. Specific engagement events used to get residents involved, provide information and a 'hook' into the project have been wide ranging and diverse including community and family fun days, fitness sessions, community learning taster sessions and coffee mornings. Some areas e.g. St Thomas's have employed a dedicated engagement worker who is a local resident and has extensive knowledge of the area, who supports the wider partnership and works collaboratively with the community connector in promoting the project locally and identifying/referring potential beneficiaries. During year one, challenges were identified by providers, connectors, Jobcentre Plus and other local referral partners / stakeholders e.g. local primary school around duplication of engagement activity and perceived 'competition' for project participants both between community connectors and providers; and between providers. However, the project team were proactive in brokering solutions and there is good evidence of collaborative and joined up approaches e.g. joint events/activities between providers and local community connector. The decision to make the community connectors the single point of contact for Jobcentre Plus (JcP) local office engagement and referrals has facilitated a more effective and productive working relationship with JcP; although it is acknowledged by both parties that this could be improved further. It was envisaged that in operational year two the appointment of one provider per area would further eliminate duplication and competition. However, where there are a number of end to end providers within a supply chain the conditions for competition still exist. This to some extent has been overcome by the mechanisms put in place by lead providers to allocate community connector and JcP referrals/engagements on equitable basis and join up engagement events and activities.

Relationship with Social Housing Providers

The initial focus of the approved pilot was social housing tenants and therefore this was reflected in the initial design i.e. managed by local social housing providers, working with the wider social housing sector. However, in planning stages prior to sign off by funders it was originally conceived to be 'tenure blind'.

Whilst employed by the lead project partner (Accord) the initial four community connector roles were 'hosted' by one of the larger social housing provider in each identified area. During 2015/16, the hosts were Walsall Housing Group (Darlaston South), Dudley MBC (Kates Hill/St Thomas's), Wolverhampton Homes (Bilston East) and Sandwell MBC (Princes End). The purpose of the hosting arrangements was to facilitate targeted recruitment of eligible social housing tenants. The community connectors would in turn signpost potential participants to the employment support providers and other relevant support in each area. There were a number of challenges faced in implementing these approaches across the board, including some of the host social housing organisations being unable to share data or find a practical work-around. However, this was not across the board, with evidence of integration and good working arrangements in the Bilston East area in Year 1.

The original assumptions around the level of engagement of housing providers locally in the project and direct access to data/maximising tenant relationships has not been realised; with only 5% of referrals coming directly from Housing Providers.

Specific research²⁰ into why this is this case indicates that:

- Initial relationships in areas where Local Authority stock was involved was in the main facilitated through established relationship with other parts of the Authority e.g. regeneration rather than direct with Housing Teams.
- Where housing providers are directly involved in the delivery of project the majority of their stock is not in the identified areas.
- Whilst it is a project with important priorities, it has a small geographical focus and reach which has to compete with core aims of housing providers.
- Complex 'group' structures and challenges for the housing sector in the early phases of the project were a barrier to joining up and co-ordinating involvement in the early stages.
- There needs to be a degree of separation between certain aspects of the housing role i.e. in respect of rent, repairs, anti-social behaviour and work-focused interventions. Therefore the model of service delivery through community based organisations or housing providers with separate employment and skills functions facilitates better engagement.

A focus for the year 2 service delivery was for providers to demonstrate a clearer strategy in the engagement and partnership work with housing providers in the geographical area. At the time of reporting the level of engagement and numbers of direct housing referrals to the project remains below the expectations of the project.

Relationship with Jobcentre Plus

Background - The initial focus of the project was engagement and support of social housing tenants; and JcP were not engaged in the same way or to the extent as for other pilots e.g. Destination Work in Birmingham, where they were integral to the original design process. During the early days of the pilot contact and levels of

²⁰ Research interviews and completed project questionnaires with housing and lead providers - Accord, Heantun Housing, Black Country Housing Group, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Adult Community College, Bilston Resource Centre

support from JcP was inconsistent and sporadic due to frequent changes in personnel. The result has been the loss of potential added-value earlier collaboration may have brought. For example, it was made clear at the commencement of the pilot that JcP could not provide any tracking of destinations or 'off flow' data to support the job outcome validation and the cost benefit calculations (as has been the case in the US model).

Where are we now? For the past 12 months, the project has had a consistent and supportive point of contact with JcP District Office who has been a key member of the steering group (subsequently taking up the role of chair) and worked closely with the project team to facilitate a referral process. This involved agreeing a single point of the contact between the project (the community connector) and the local jobcentre plus office and has led to allocated days within individual jobcentre plus offices. A challenge for JcP in making referrals has been applying the eligibility criteria, particularly in the early part of the project where it was targeted at social housing tenants as well as those in a defined geographical area. Awareness raising and promotion of the project is an ongoing requirement, to mitigate changes in front personnel in local offices and the introduction of new programmes e.g. Building Better Opportunities ESF, Youth Employment Initiative. The progress in the relationship with JcP can be seen, with in year 2, with an increase in JcP referrals which account for 35% of all project referrals/engagements.

How effective is the approach to recruitment and engagement?

In the first year, a specific challenge relating to area based recruitment and engagement activity, where there is a mix of social, private rented and home owner housing is the 'unintended' engagement of ineligible (non-social housing) residents. Whilst providers signposted these residents to other support, most providers felt that as these residents were from a deprived ward, the status of their housing tenure was an arbitrary factor. This is a feature of the project, that differs from the US Jobs Plus model. Jobs Plus was based on a saturation model, where all residents could access support (including those in work) but where the 'developments' targeted were exclusively social housing in nature. Despite the widening of the eligibility, it is still not a full saturation model. 'Unintended' engagement of ineligible participants still exists, mainly driven by the porous nature of boundaries and project eligibility linked to administrative ward boundaries as opposed to 'known' local areas. For example, eligible individuals from Princes End ward would identify as being from Tipton, however not all of what local people would recognise as 'Tipton' is within the Princes End boundary.

Some new supply chain providers in one specific ward who had an existing footprint (and therefore direct access to potential participants) prior to the City Deal project commencing did not see the value and effectiveness of undertaking community engagement events and activities specifically for the project, citing the level of time and resource required disproportion to the outcome.

"If you're in the community, you should know your community" (Supply chain partner)

The project delivery specifications had a focus on engagement with residents who were considered furthest away from labour market and unlikely to be engaging in work focused activities. The project sought innovation from delivery partners in how they would reach, engage and work with this cohort. Where some providers had an existing footprint prior to project commencement there is some evidence of over-reliance on engaging 'known' residents rather than reaching those who have previously never engaged in these types of interventions as was originally intended.

For providers with no existing presence in the ward, these events were seen as key opportunities to 'get the word out' and promote the services and support available through the project and raise awareness about their organisation. Project participants, placed a real 'value' on these events and activities, as they often benefited the whole family and provided an informal and friendly environment in which to initiate discussions about the future.

"It's a whole family project" (Darlaston South Project Participant)

There is evidence that the concept of community 'connectors' (which includes both the roles provided through the project lead and delivery providers dedicated engagement roles) has been effective in supporting the recruitment and engagement of beneficiaries to the project. However, in year 2 we have also seen evidence where the initial contact/engagement is only focused on identification of project participants, eligibility screening and 'referring on' to other personnel within the project, and/or does not have mechanisms in place to deliver a 'warm handover', the chances of early drop off / non-engagement increase.

4.3.5. Service and support design and operational project delivery

What do providers offer participants under the project?

Under both year one and two commissioning arrangements, providers were expected to develop and deliver support which met the specific 'needs' of unemployed and economically inactive social housing residents in the identified areas. The nature of that service was not specified and providers indicated the level and nature of the support they would offer participants under the project.

The result was that whilst broadly speaking, all providers offered a range of universally 'recognised' employment support interventions this was combined with a education and skills based interventions and in some cases less traditional interventions, approaches to and methods of delivery e.g. using art, drama. In all cases one to one support and mentoring was a common feature. The participants valued the non-work-focused interventions e.g. sugar craft, jewellery making, general arts and crafts and acknowledged that these really helped people to build their confidence to go onto other activities, with many participants interviewed who had accessed these courses had moved onto courses like English and Maths, customer service, horticulture. They also enjoyed working as part of a team and doing activities that were fun and made them want to come back to engage further.

“I can’t believe how well I have done. I loved the craft work and it gave me the confidence to try the maths class” (St. Thomas’s Project Participant)

In year one, some providers chose to target a wide range of needs through the development of large partnership or consortia models, whilst others focused on a particular support need or group within the identified area e.g. self-employment, supporting individuals with health conditions, older people. In year two, there is less specific focus and emphasis on targeting specific support groups or need, although the type/nature of interventions delivered in some area has attracted specific cohorts e.g. lone parents and in two areas (Sandwell and Dudley) they are operating consortia models with partners that have specific specialisms.

Summary of Key Features & Themes of the Delivery Models In Practice

Year 1 - Kate’s Hill / St Thomas’s (Dudley)	Darlaston South (Walsall)
Three providers: 1) Partnership/consortia model –outreach, community and employment support through a diverse range of locally based support organisations – with a focus on creative(arts) & community learning interventions as means of engagement & initial delivery. 2) Consortia Model ²¹ (also operating in Sandwell) 3) Self-Employment ²² (also operating in other project areas)	Three providers: 1) Theme - Older residents – targeted support focusing on unemployed & economically inactive residents aged 45 years or over – with a strong focus on digital inclusion, work experience & employer engagement. 2) Partnership model based on a progressive customer journey moving from community engagement & learning to work-focused pre-employment support to employment. 3) Self –Employment (also operating in other project areas)
Princes End (Sandwell)	Bilston East (Wolverhampton)
Three Providers: 1) Theme - Health conditions & disability – integrated therapeutic & employment support focusing on residents with health conditions & disability – with a focus on therapeutic activities as a means of engagement & initial delivery. 2) Consortia Model (also operating in Dudley) 3) Self-Employment (also operating in other project areas)	Three providers: 1) Use of the arts as a means of engagement & delivery – with a strong focus on mentoring & digital inclusion (through the creation of a community based internet café). 2) Local community based training provider/charity – with a focus on skills and targeted employer engagement. 3) Self-Employment (also operating in other project areas)
Year 2 - St Thomas’s (Dudley)	Darlaston South (Walsall)
Local Authority Learning Team led Partnership model – includes: Outreach, community and employment support delivered through a diverse range of locally based support organisations. Use of creative (arts) & community learning interventions as means of engagement & initial delivery. Employment brokerage & matching.	Community College led model – includes: Partnership model based on a progressive customer journey moving from community engagement & learning to access work-focused pre-employment support to employment.

²¹ One provider delivered a consortia model across both Dudley and Sandwell – delivering outreach, community and employment support through a diverse range of locally based support organisations.

²² One provider delivered an entrepreneurial / self-employment support model across all four areas.

Princes End (Sandwell)	Bilston East (Wolverhampton)
Local Authority Economic Development Team led Partnership model includes: Outreach, community and employment support delivered through existing and embedded support organisations. Specific partner specialisms including health & wellbeing, parent engagement, self-employment ²³ .	Local community training provider / charity – with a focus on skills and targeted employer engagement. Some outreach and engagement delivered through partners.

Identification and level of support

All new participants engaging with the project receive some form of initial assessment to establish the nature and level of support required. In the majority of cases, this is delivered through professional discussion between the provider staff and the participant; with the type and level of support specifically tailored to address individual needs and deliver a holistic journey, captured in an action plan. Engagement with the project is on a voluntary and part-time basis, and participants commented positively regarding the level of choice and flexibility in their engagement and interaction with the project. A number also indicated that this allowed them to be more open and honest about their situation and the type of help that would be effective.

“I feel listened to and have control over the situation. I don’t feel like I’m just a number or a tick in the box”. (Bilston East Project Participant)

All providers had in place a timetable and schedule of project interventions, support and review activity, with participants able to access support on a drop in or appointment basis dependent on the nature of the intervention or their individual support plan. In some cases participants have a structured long term individual contact and intervention plan, in other cases participants are accessing support at “the point of need” i.e. they access only the support they feel they require at that point in time and may well access again in the future. There was evidence of review sessions between providers and participants, as well as follow up by providers with those participants who were had stopped engaging with the project. Case load / cohort management mechanisms have been put in place by the project team to enable providers to report who is no longer ‘actively’ engaging with the project. However, the year 2 research indicated there were inconsistencies in some project areas²⁴, in reporting whether or not a participant is or is not ‘engaging’ with the project suggesting tracking is not being effectively and consistently implemented across all project areas.

The nature and extent of support

All interviewed providers were asked for additional detail about the types of support they offered project participants. The most common forms of support offered were

²³ Although the self-employment option was still able to be offered in year 2 by an original delivery partner, the focus of their delivery as part of a supply chain in year 2 was a much broader employment support offer and self-employment support was not promoted or taken up in the same way as year 1.

²⁴ Bilston East and Darlaston South

job-search skills and coaching, skills based training (literacy, numeracy, language, digital/ICT), employer-led/vocational skills training (health & safety, CSCS, care) work experience & volunteering, mentoring and confidence/ therapeutic activities (craft/drama/horticulture) employer-led pre-employment training and job brokerage/matching. Other common interventions related to the provision of advice, guidance and support on a wide range of issues including self-employment, housing, benefits and debt/financial; followed by more specialised forms of support dependent on a participant's barriers. Other types of support mentioned related to direct financial assistance for the participants i.e. buying, interview clothes or travel to work costs. (See Annex 5: Support available through providers).

Participants particularly highlighted the benefits of the digital inclusion elements i.e. being able to access ICT equipment, get training and support with getting an email address and being able to online job-search.

The majority of participants interviewed were accessing a wide range of employment support (as detailed above) and often holistic packages of support tailored to their individual needs. Participants reported that they felt confident that if particular support was identified that was not currently available the providers would give advice and help to access.

How support is delivered

As part of the research visits to provider premises, how provider staff delivered interventions and how participants (including new entrants) responded was observed. Questions around how support was delivered also formed part of the provider and participant interviews. Provider staff were relaxed, open and welcoming to participants, ensuring participants were quickly put at ease, comfortable and received relevant information prior to commencing any formal interventions. This included the provision of workers fluent in community languages, for those participants where English was a second language. Participants responded positively to these approaches and participated fully in the respective intervention. Participants commented positively on how they were spoken to and felt respected by the project staff.

“They talk to me with respect and kindness, not with intimidation” (Princes End Project Participant)

“They were so easy to talk to and very supportive (St. Thomas's Project Participant)

Some interventions were carried out in 'informal' or non-traditional settings e.g. converted housing within residential blocks, community centres, libraries, internet café. The staff maintained a high level of professionalism and demonstrated an ability to adapt to different environments. A number of observed interventions and interviews took place with participants with a multiple and complex barriers to work including participants with learning disabilities. In these cases, staff demonstrated high levels of awareness and knowledge of the issues and used a range of management strategies in working with these participants.

Participants interviewed were able to describe in detail the support (interventions) they had received and the majority identified positive changes as a result and felt more optimistic about finding work.

“I didn’t think I would ever be able to work again. The confidence they gave me helped me to find myself again and gave me the strength to look forward in my life” (Darlaston South Project Participant)

“I was at such a low point, they saved my life” (St. Thomas’s Project Participant)

The most common changes identified were improved confidence and new skills/qualifications including digital skills (often linked to improved job-search skills), Maths and English, work place relevant qualifications (CSCS, first aid, food hygiene, care).

“The courses build your confidence” (Bilston East Project Participant)

A specific feature of the year one research, was the time to build trust and credibility with the local community. This was a common theme in provider and community connector interviews and also reflected back in participants interviews and forums, for example a number of long-term unemployed participants described previous negative experiences of mainstream employment programmes; and other participants talked about the transitory nature or loss of previous projects and local support services.

“The help is good but how long will you be here for?”

There was evidence of effective multi-provider and agency working where a ‘hub’ approach had been established. In these ‘hubs’ multiple and simultaneous interventions were being delivered which allowed participants to access different types and level of support at one time and in the same place.

Where is the support delivered?

A key feature of the US Jobs Plus model was the provision of employment support services within the social housing developments. Whilst this is now the case across all four identified areas it has not been without its challenges. For example, at the beginning of the project in the Kates Hill area one partner’s community venue was providing the hub for the whole provider partnership. When that partner closed down mid-2015, it left the contracted provider and remaining supply chain without a dedicated project base. Delivery continued on a peripatetic basis using available community space, until an alternative location(s) maximising empty and void premises within the social housing development were secured at the end of 2015. In the Princes End area, one providers original intention was to engage on an outreach basis using community facilities, provide transport and deliver the majority of therapeutic and work based interventions from purpose built market gardens and horticultural facilities in a neighbouring ward. As a result of participants being reluctant and resistant to travel, a dedicated base was established within an old housing office, forming part of a small social housing development.

Even where an established community location were in place from the beginning of the project, challenges around its location in relation to specific social housing developments and pockets of the identified area community have been a challenge. This has been the case for Bilston East and Darlaston South, where multiple locations and specific outreach strategies are required to engage with all communities within the identified areas. This is a similar and emerging challenge for the areas where new locations were established. Even within a relatively small geographical area i.e. the ward, the engagement/use of with location is still dictated by the proximity of residents to the actual premises. Particularly in St Thomas’s’ and Princes End area, the majority of those interviewed lived within a couple of streets and less than 5 minutes’ walk of the premises. The project team and providers are

currently exploring how to reach those parts of the ward currently not fully engaging through a multi and micro-hub approach, which includes working with the wider to community to explore how currently redundant community buildings can be brought back into use and provide employment support services.

It is also important to consider that within what are predominantly housing communities, space to deliver community development activities is at a premium, and therefore the types and nature of interventions has to be carefully considered and planned.

What emerged strongly from the participant's interviews and forums was that the delivery of personalised services from community venues by professionals who show empathy and kindness are effective in engaging people who feel either isolated or disenfranchised by mainstream programmes.

"They listen and give you concrete help" (Bilston East Project Participant)

4.3.6 Measuring Progress & the role of Outcome Stars™

The project uses Outcome Stars™, a recognised and widely used tool which both measures and supports progress for service users towards self-reliance or other goals. The Work Star™ version is designed for use with adults out of work or returning to the workplace. It is a holistic tool and covers seven key areas: 1. Challenges; 2. Job Specific skills; 3. Stability; 4. Job search skills; 5. Basic Skills; 6. Aspiration & Motivation; 7 Social skills for work. It consists of a five-stage model of change (Not thinking about work; thinking about work; making progress; work-ready with support; self-reliance) and a Star Chart onto which participants and provider staff plot where the participant is on their journey. A reading is taken by the provider staff and participant at or near the beginning of the project. The process is then repeated at regular intervals to track progress. The data can be used to track the progress of an individual participant, to measure the outcomes achieved by a whole project and to benchmark with a national average for similar projects and client groups. The project provided employment support providers and community connectors with the training and tools to implement Work Star™ across all delivery. The project initially opted for the paper-based version of the tool, [as some support was being delivered on an outreach basis without access to ICT or internet connection.] There is an option for an adviser only 'reading' where it is not possible or practical to undertake this jointly with the participant.

The majority of provider staff were positive about the introduction and use of outcome stars within the project, recognising primarily the benefits measuring positive change can have for participants. One participant said seeing their progress in this format had been helpful in their development. Some provider staff felt the tool was difficult to administer on a practical level, describing it as time consuming. There have been implementation challenges in getting a consistent volume of readings after the initial point; which makes analysis of progress data currently unviable. The factors affecting this include:

- The project team initially set intervals for star 'readings' at the beginning, mid and end point of the participants journey. However, the length of time the participants spend with the project is defined by individual need i.e. variable lengths. These timescales are not always or clearly specified in the initial

action plan. On this basis, mid-point readings have been difficult to establish and track.

- Where participants have stopped engaging with the project and contact cannot be established, there will be no further readings.

Additionally, the amount of useful data available was constrained by the use of the paper-based tool in year one. These factors were addressed in year 2 of delivery through:

- the agreement of defined time interval for the mid-point reviews (13 weeks);
- implementing a 'leavers' procedure for those who are not engaging, in order to distinguish between active and inactive project participants for the purposes of tracking and analysing progress measures.
- Introducing the electronic version of the tool

There are continuing challenges in implementing outcome stars across the project and limited completed stars for analysis. However, of the 54 completed outcome star records analysed, 65% of participants showed a positive change. The project team plans to carry out further work internally to support the delivery of outcome stars.

Soft Outcomes Measures

Soft outcome measures are being monitored by the project relating improved confidence, digital inclusion, skills and qualifications and providers report this on a monthly basis. An overview of soft outcome evidence captured to date is shown in Section 5.

Case Studies

The providers and project are regularly documenting progress and outcomes measures through participant case studies. The case studies featured include a number of participants who took part in the qualitative interviews. A synopsis of all case studies form part of the evidence base at Annex 7 with a smaller number of 'featured' case studies outlined below.

Yara's Story: Yara had previously been working in the medical and clinical field in Brazil. She was confident that on returning to the UK she would find a job in clinical research quickly. However this didn't turn out to be as straight forward as she had hoped and as time went on she became frustrated and her confidence and self-esteem reduced. She lacked proven experience in her chosen field in the UK and her verbal communication and language needed improvement.

With Bilston Resource Centre's support Yara improved her English through attending ESOL classes, she developed a new CV and was able to have regular access to computers and online job-searching. BRC helped identified relevant job opportunities and once interviews were secured supported with applications and interview preparation including a mock panel interview. During this time Yara received one to one support and encouragement which helped rebuild her confidence.

With **improved communication skills, qualifications** and a new sense of **confidence and self-esteem** Yara **secured a clinical research job** and is looking forward to a bright future after relocating to Weston Super Mare to take up the opportunity.

Nicola's Story: Nicola had spent time looking after her family and had also experienced health issues and challenges, spending a time on health related benefits. As a result she had not been in paid employment for the past 19 years having previously worked in the food industry. She was keen to get back to work but was concerned whether she would find an employer who would understand her health conditions. Her confidence was very low and she said she felt 'a complete wreck and couldn't do anything'.

Walsall Adult & Community College's listened to Nicola's concerns and started by providing intensive one-to-one support, mentoring and encouragement. This gave Nicola the confidence to develop herself further and enrol on a Maths, English and Employability courses. She developed a CV which demonstrated her transferable and new skills. As her confidence built she provided peer-support for those who were struggling with their own learning and started volunteering at the project (even stepping in to be Santa at the community Christmas event).

With an **improved feeling of health and well-being, increased work-based skills, confidence, self-esteem and motivation** Nicola **secured a front desk job** with Jump Nation. She has subsequently gone on to take a **supervisor role**. The project has had a big impact on the whole family, as after a short time on the project Nicola's **son has also gone on to find a job**.

James's Story: James had been made redundant and was looking for help to become self-employed as a 24hour locksmith. Whilst he was trained and had practical experience in this area, he had no experience of setting up and running a business and with a family to support was at the point of giving up his dream. Black Country Housing Group provided James with one to one support and guidance on going self-employed, referring him for business specific support with project partner SWEDA. James developed a business plan, received specific advice (including HMRC/tax requirements and marketing) and was assisted in identifying an accountant. James said, "Without this I couldn't have set up my business but I'm now looking forward to the future".

With **new business skills & knowledge** and an **improved confidence of business success** James is building a good reputation for his business in the local area. He is enjoying his work and building a steady flow of customers from small to large business, as well as general call outs from individuals.

Rachael's Story: Having previously worked in payroll and finance, Rachael was currently at home raising her young family when she met the project team at a local Children's Centre. As she had found the staff friendly and approachable she decided to attend some of the courses on offer through the Dudley 19+ partnership. Initially she attended a Get Cooking course and once her confidence increased and she had built up trust in the team she decided to complete a Level 2 English and Peer Mentoring course.

Working with her adviser from Just Straight Talk, she explored a range of employment options that would fit in with her young family but none of them worked out as viable until they started to explore the possibility of self-employment. She had always enjoyed baking and had begun regularly baking at home in order to control some of the allergens in cooking, when her son developed severe allergies as a baby.

Through personal development, training, one to one support and encouragement Rachael has **grown in confidence and motivation**, which has led to the **creation of a start-up 'allergy-free' cupcake business**. She achieved a 5 star food hygiene rating. She is continuing to **support local community** through attending project events and **sharing her experiences** with other residents. She is keen to develop her brand and offer allergy free cakes with quality ingredients at affordable prices. In the near future she hopes to get a car and be able to offer a delivery service as well.

D's Story: Raising a family and latterly with health issues, D had not been in paid employment for 14 years. With no recent work experience, an out of date CV, no IT skills and no regular access to the internet she was unsure of even how to contact employers and job-search in today's job market.

Age UK provided D with one to one support and mentoring on how to return to employment after a long absence. D attended supported IT classes at the project and additional online courses to support her personal development plan were identified. On completion of a Food Safety qualification, an interview for a voluntary placement was arranged with a local church coffee shop, and with support from her adviser, she was successful and started a week later. She went on to build additional and relevant work skills and knowledge through further online training including customer service and COSHH.

Through volunteering D's **confidence increased** and the opportunity to network with new people led to her hearing about a cleaning vacancy with a high street chain. With a new found confidence, **jobsearch, IT and works skills** she secured an interview and was successful in **gaining employment**. On moving into work, she kept in regular contact with her adviser, often calling in to the centre after work. She is finally believing in herself and feels her future is bright.

V's Story: V was desperate for a new start when she relocated to the area after 9 months of living in a womens refuge with her children. Not knowing anyone in the area she was socially isolated, with no friends and no support structure in place. Her self-esteem was at an all time low and she was suffering from depression. With English as second language she lacked confidence in her abilities. She was referred to the project by Housing Association, Heantun Housing.

The WAAC team started by offering lots of one to one support and encouragement, providing a safe place to talk and build confidence. As V's trust and confidence built she started to access a range of personal development training including a Maths and English course. With thoughts turning to a potential return to work, a placement was arranged to gain valuable and relevant work experience and skills. She is well thought of by both her peers and the placement provider, who say she is making a big difference to the organisation.

Through the project V has not only **increased in confidence, self-esteem and feelings of wellbeing**, but has **made friends, is developing a support network and is no longer feeling isolated**. The personal development training has motivated her to think about her long term future **and inspired her to develop higher level career plans**. She has become an **active member of the community** and gone on to **provide peer-support** to other project participants who need help.

The Mosaic Project Story | Dudley 19+ Partnership: Maths', 'Mosaics' and 'Roseland House'. These may seem like completely unrelated things but by bringing these three things together the Adult & Community Learning Team, were able to

deliver a range of outcomes and benefits for project participants, as well as the wider local community.

Roseland House is a small community facility based in the heart of residential Kate's Hill, and after receiving a make-over and through the regular use of the facility by City Deal delivery providers and other local groups, it is now a key hub and focal point in the community. Local residents and service users identified that the garden space if given a facelift would provide an additional and welcoming space for people to meet and socialise.

Mosaic craft was used successfully in other projects by the Dudley 19+ partnership City Deal team to encourage creativity for adults working alone and as part of a team. Combining practical and creative skills, it supports better cognitive functioning which enhances learning. It also leads to an end 'product' allowing learners to visually see a creation, take pride in it, builds confidence and encourages sharing with others.

Maths - It was identified that a number of residents who the project had engaged with needed support to improve their maths but were lacking in confidence in accessing learning provision. A mosaic course was set up to support the delivery of integrated maths at a level that would build confidence and provide a stepping stone to the main maths course.

The Project In Action - A diverse group of residents and learners from the local community were taught the techniques of designing and creating a large mosaic. They recycled broken floor tiles which they used to cover three raised flower beds at Roseland House. The result was so good that members of the community went on to paint the fences and renew the planting in the flower beds. To celebrate the completion of the gardens, local community groups were invited to a 'Great British Tea Party' in the garden to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday. A garden key was presented to a local resident who had supported the centre for over 20 years to be able to enjoy the garden whenever she wanted, as she had always lived in a flat and never had her own garden. As a result of the Mosaic Project, a welcoming and functioning community garden and space has been created, participants have increased their confidence and skills and been encouraged and motivated to access further learning and support.

Grow to Work:

J's Story: J wanted to access support to help him get a job but with no recent work experience, no work reference and concerns that employers would not understand his Autism his confidence and self-esteem was low. He was keen to volunteer and gain some practical work experience

Through Disabled People User Led Organisation (DPULO) Ideal for All (IFA) he accessed a confidence building course to support social interaction and build confidence, before going on to participate in a volunteering and gardening programme run across IFA's market, therapeutic and outreach gardens. He also completed Personal Development Training, received support to get his CV up to date and help with job-search.

Through volunteering at the gardens, accessing confidence building and personal development training, and receiving peer and expert support and encouragement J has **grown in confidence**. He has developed **new practical skills** and **gained valuable work experience**. Attending sessions and working alongside staff and volunteers who understand Autism, he feels **less socially isolated and anxious in new situations**. He has been able to talk about his Autism and the challenges he

faces in a supportive and understanding environment. He is keen to continue accessing support to help him in his personal development and journey into work.

G's Story: G has struggled to find regular work and place to call home since arriving in the UK as a young man with no spoken English. With a strong work ethic, self-taught English and a talent for cooking he moved all over the UK trying to find a steady job and place to live. The transitory nature and lack of stability in home and work eventually took its toll, and at times impacted on his mental health & well-being, leading to a reliance on alcohol and in his own words him making some 'poor choices'.

Working with Ideal For All, he initially accessed a range of engagement and practical 'therapeutic' activities including community gardening, cooking and health eating workshops. He has also helped develop and maintain a new community garden, encouraging and supporting other residents to participate. He regularly cooks and shares his recipes with neighbours and staff.

Since getting involved with the project he feels **motivated and inspired** to pursue his cooking dreams again. He has received support with job-search and is actively seeking work across a wider area. With the reliance on alcohol decreasing, he is an **active member of the community** and **no longer feels isolated**. He is also showing **significant positive change in his self-reported well-being**.

4.3.7 Impact of changes in Delivery Arrangements from year one to year two -

During the final quarter of the 2015/16 provision, providers were notified that there would be a new commissioning round for the 2016-2018 delivery. During the provider interviews undertaken at this time, many providers reflected that in view of implementation challenges (i.e. securing venues and engaging eligible project beneficiaries) a one year contract had not been a sufficient length of the time to implement new provision and gain momentum. Many felt the challenges which had now been overcome and progress made to date could be lost if there was a change in provision. The result of the procurement exercise was that three of the four appointed providers were the same as those appointed in operational year one; with small changes to their delivery model – additions/changes to their supply chains. Even in the new provide a level of continuity was achieved in the new lead provider, with two of the four supply chain members having delivered services in operational year one. However, two of the year one providers did not apply to be part of the project, either as a lead or as part of a supply chain in year two. Despite a level of continuity, a loss of momentum was experienced during this period (March 2016 to the end of May 2016) as evidenced in the dip of the number of participants starts.

4.3.8 Financial Incentives Strand – The original project strands (community support, employment support and financial incentives) have to some extent become integrated into the overall delivery model (although they are still clearly identifiable). However, only part of the financial incentives strand has been implemented i.e. access to support costs as part of the wider community and employment support provision. No agreement could be reached locally regarding rent freezes and performance related pay.

5 Analysis of the Data

5.1 What data and statistics have been used for analysis?

The project team has collated a range of administrative and progress data from the beginning of April 2015, when service delivery commenced. The data in this report covers from project commencement to the end of September 2016 i.e. the first 18 months of operational year of delivery. The data gives:

- The number of participants who received support.
- The number of participants who have started a job and the job sustainment points/achievements.
- The number of active and inactive project participants.

It is possible to analyse these statistics by geographical area, provider and by demographical/participant characteristics and this analysis has been included in this report.

The Pilot Participants

5.2 How many residents have been engaged and supported?

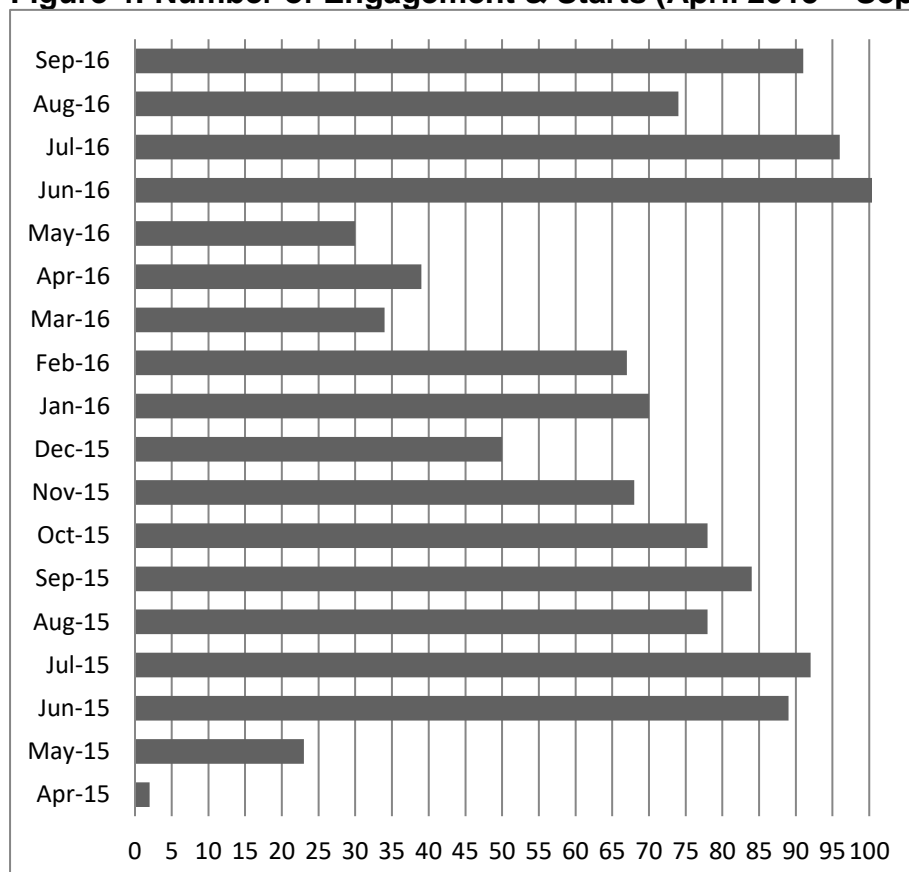
Between April 2015 and September 2016, 1178 unemployed and economically inactive residents from the identified areas have engaged with the pilot on a voluntary basis. This represents 42% of the overall 5 year project target (2800 residents supported) at the overall project mid-point.

5.3 Flow of Starts

Starts increased on a month by month basis at the beginning of the project as individual contracted provision came on stream; dipping between March and May 2016 (in part due to new contracts coming on stream²⁵) and increasing again from June 2016 to the end of September 2016. See Figure 4 below. To reach the 2800 participant starts within the next 18 months, circa 90 starts a month would need to be achieved or if the project delivery period was extended for a further 6 months, circa 68 starts (which would be in line with the average monthly total project starts to the end of September 16).

²⁵ It is worth noting that the Dudley 19+ Partnership had a one month gap in contracts between year 1 and year 2 so there were no engagements in this area for April 2016, although the partnership continued to support and deliver activities to existing project participants.

Figure 4: Number of Engagement & Starts (April 2015 – September 2016)



Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.4 How long have participants had access to the project support?

Over a third of the total participants (37%) started the project 6 or less months ago; with 22% starting within the last 3 months ago. A quarter of the total participants (24%) joined the project over a year ago. Around a third of all participants (474) are classed as still actively engaged with the project (this does not include those who have moved into work or other destinations); of which 80% (379) have been engaged in the last 6 months.

Figure 5: Table indicating length of time participants have had access to project support

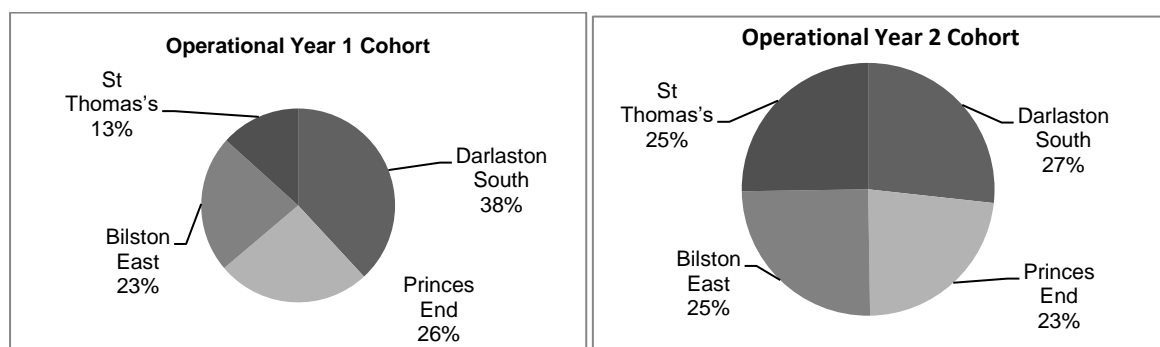
No. of Participants	% of total cohort	Length of time joined	No. still 'active'	% of individual cohort
261	22%	0-3 months	245	94%
182	15%	3-6 months	134	74%
171	15%	6-9 months	37	22%
196	17%	9-12 months	27	14%
368	24%	12-18 months	31	15%

Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.5 Which Areas of Support are participants from?

Whilst it was initially envisaged there would be an equal split of participation across the four identified areas, this was not been the case during the first year of operational delivery (2015/16). Some of the factors influencing the lower participation rates in Kates Hill/St. Thomas area are reflected in the challenges identified by provider and stakeholder in section four. Other factors include the challenges raised by social housing data review, detailed in section four, which identified Kates Hill/St. Thomas as having the most limited pool of eligible participants and Darlaston South as the largest (albeit limited) pool. However, with the widening of the eligibility criteria and extended boundaries for the project in Dudley, the second year of operational delivery shows a more even distribution of participants across the four areas.

Figure 6: Split of Engagement & Starts across Identified Areas (April 2015 – September 2016) – By Year & By Percentage



Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.6 What are the characteristics of the participants?

5.6.1 Social Housing

The initial focus of the project was the targeting of social housing tenants; following agreement by the funder this aspect was widened late March 2016. This is reflected in the difference between year 1 and 2 project cohort. In year one 99% of the participants were living in social housing; whereas for the year 2 cohort this currently stands at 70%. Future reports will analyse differences in outcomes between those currently residing in social housing & those in private tenancies.

Age, Gender & Ethnicity

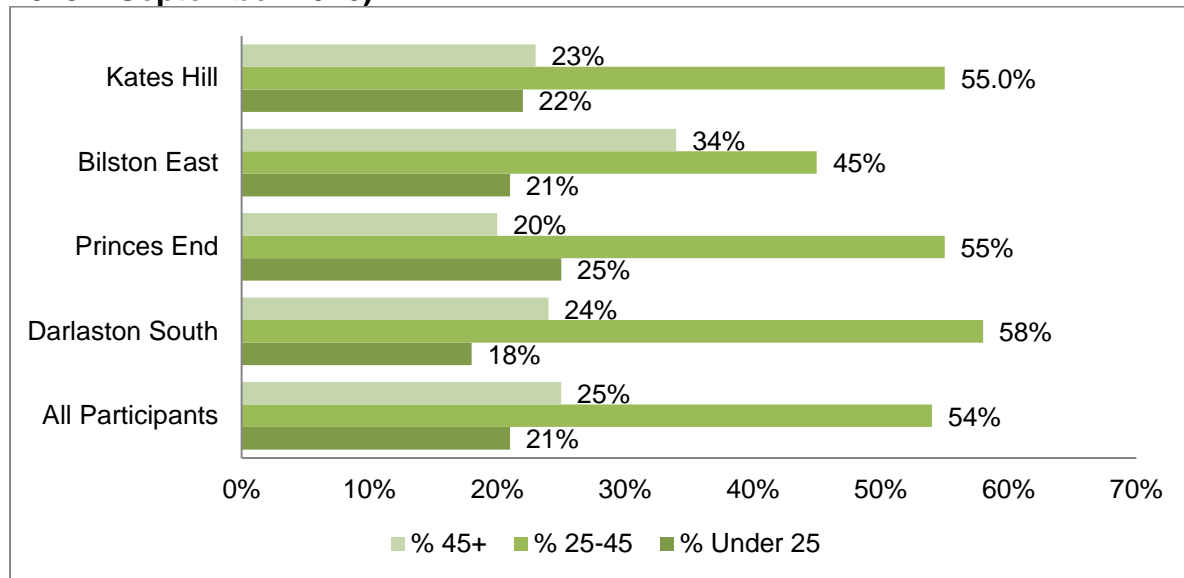
5.6.2 Age

Following the mapping & gapping work by the project team in Year 1, it was identified there was a range of youth focused employment and skills support²⁶ taking place within the identified areas. On this basis, it was agreed that whilst the project would support all unemployed and economically inactive residents in the identified area, the majority of resources would be targeted at those aged over 25 year olds. In addition, the review of social housing tenants in the identified areas (carried out by the research and evaluation team in year one) suggests that younger people are less

²⁶ At the time, the largest of these being Talent Match (Black Country).

likely to be in social housing than other types of housing (private rented); with eligibility dependent on social housing in the first project year. The data shows 79% of overall projects participants (924) are over 25 years old; with 25% of participants (292) over 45 years old. This is broadly reflected across individual areas with the exception of Bilston East, where a third of participants are aged over 45 years.

Figure 6: % participants by Age Group - Overall & By Identified Area (April 2015 – September 2016)



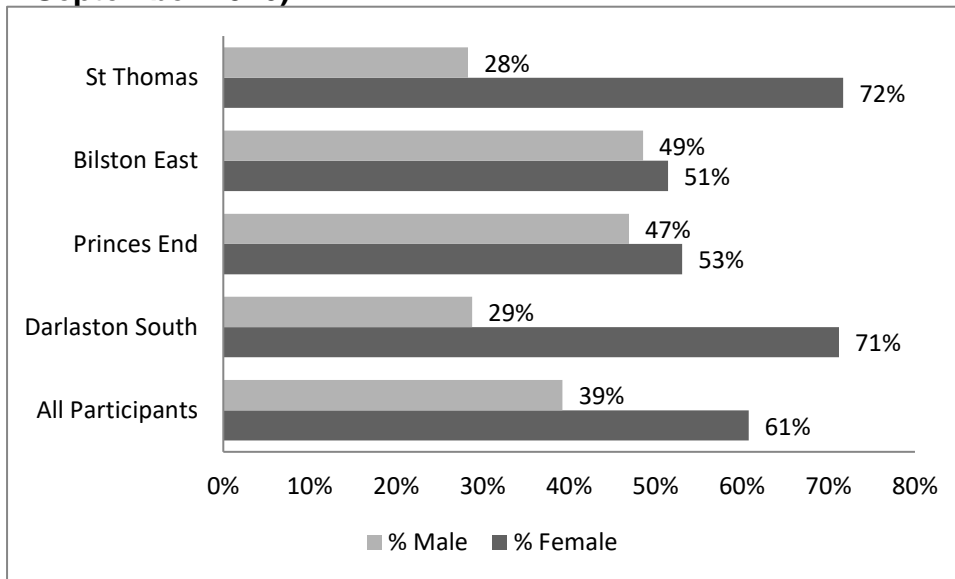
Source: City Deal Project Team; Research & Evaluation Team Calculations

5.6.3 Gender

Over 60% of all project participants are female, however, there is variation between each area with Kate’s Hill and Darlaston South engaging over 70% female participants, compared to Bilston East and Princes End, where male/female participation is broadly 50/50. Whilst the initial findings explored the link between the profile of the social housing tenants²⁷ (a key eligibility in year one of the project) and gender participation; as this pattern has continued into year 2 cohort (despite widening of eligibility) as likely to be as a direct result of the type and nature of engagement and delivery activities and interventions.

²⁷ The profile of social housing residents (referenced in the Review of Social Housing Data in Annex 5), indicates that these residents are more likely to be female than in any other tenure, and therefore we would expect to see similar patterns in the pilot participation data.

Figure 7: % Female & Male Participants Overall & By Identified Area (April 2015 – September 2016)

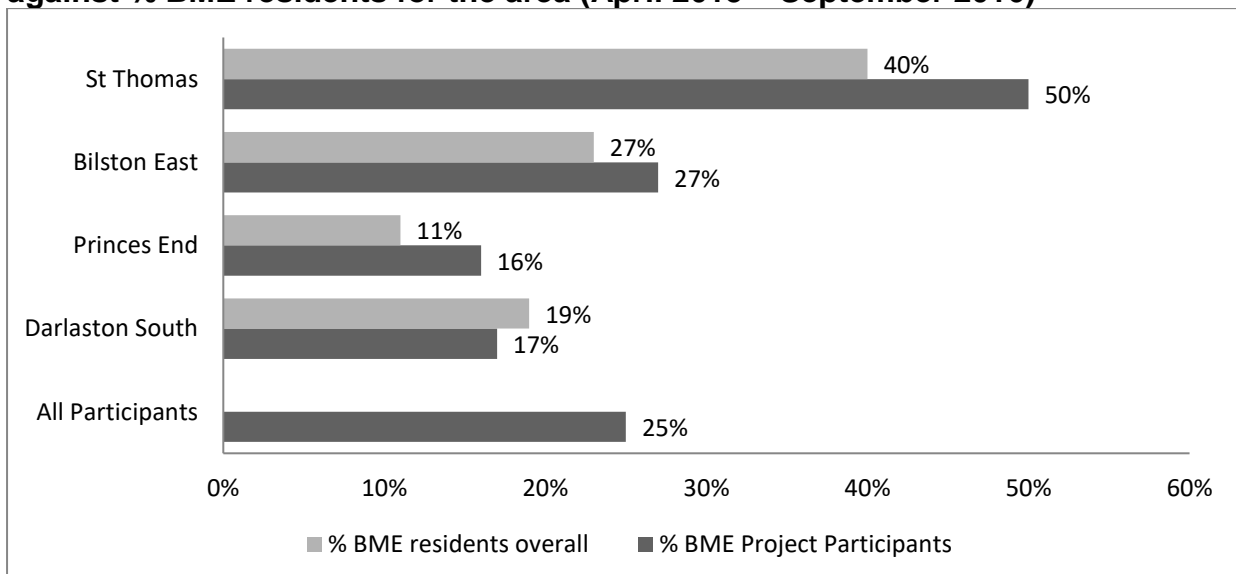


Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.6.4 Ethnicity

The ethnicity of the resident population differs significantly across each of the four identified areas within the project; as well as in relation to the Borough overall in which the project operate. For example, Kates Hill/St. Thomas' ward has a BME population of 39.8%, compared to the Borough (Dudley) as a whole at 11.5%. Project participation rates of residents from BME communities are broadly in line with or above the ethnicity data for the identified area. Overall 25% of project participants are from BME communities.

Figure 8: % BME Participants Overall & By Identified Area with comparison against % BME residents for the area (April 2015 – September 2016)

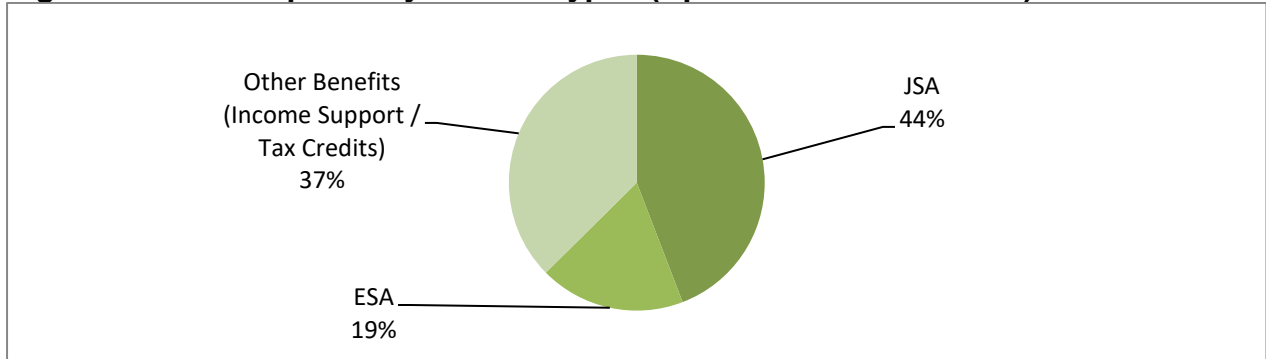


Source: City Deal Project Team; CENSUS 2011; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.6.5 Benefit Data

Non-JSA claimants (i.e. those claiming ESA/Health Related Benefits, Income Support and Other Benefits) account for over half of the project participants.

Figure 9: % Participants By Benefit Types (April 2015 – March 2016)



Source: City Deal Project Team Data Set; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.7 Destination Data

5.7.1 Overview

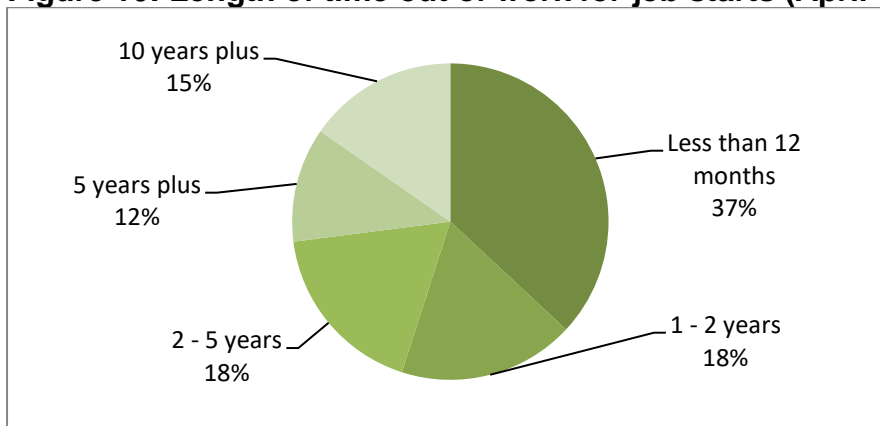
Between April 2015 and September 2016, of the 1178 unemployed and economically inactive residents from the identified areas who **started** on the pilot:

- 474 (40%) are classed as 'active' and still engaging with the programme.
- 111 (10%) moved into employment during the same period.
- 593 (50%) either completed the agreed support, moved into other destinations i.e. full time education, stopped claiming benefits or are currently not engaging with the project.

5.7.2 Job Starts – Who found work?

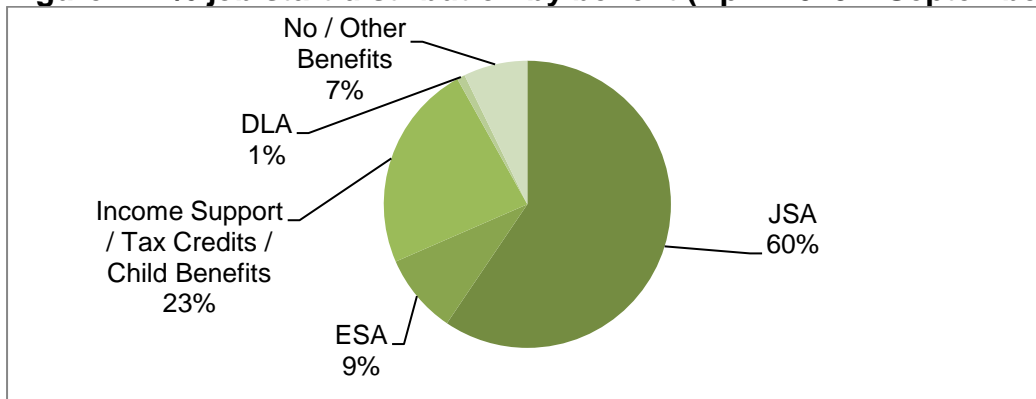
Of those 111 who started work during the period April 2015 – September 2016, 63% had not worked for 12 months or more; with one in four participants (27%) having not worked in over 5 years. The benefits being claimed at the time of finding work are detailed below in Figure 9. However, it should be noted that in the initial findings approximately 7% of those claiming JSA had declared they had previously claimed other benefits including ESA and Income Support.

Figure 10: Length of time out of work for job starts (April 15 – Sept 16)



Source: City Deal Project Team; Research & Evaluation Team Calculations

Figure 11: % job start distribution by benefit (April 2015 – September 2016)

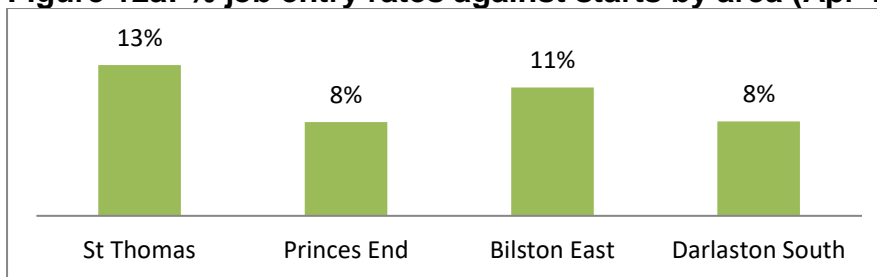


Source: City Deal Project Team; Research & Evaluation Team Calculations

5.7.3 By Area

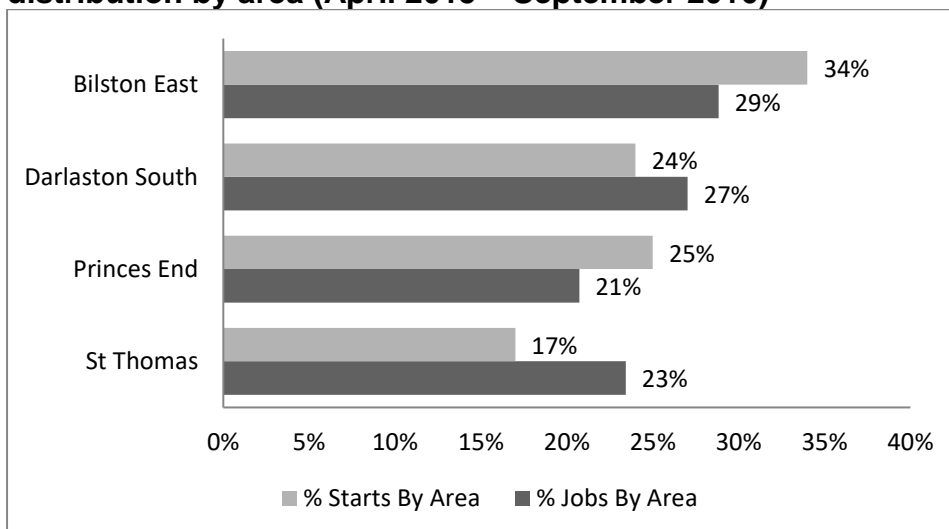
Analysis of job starts by area (against participant starts), shows St Thomas's' and Bilston East achieving marginally higher job entry rates than Darlaston South and Princes End. Further longitudinal data analysis and evaluation is required to analyse trends and factors affecting job entry rates by area.

Figure 12a: % job entry rates against starts by area (Apr 15 – Sept 16)



Source: City Deal Project Team Data Set; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

Figure 12b: % job start distribution by area compared to % participant distribution by area (April 2015 – September 2016)

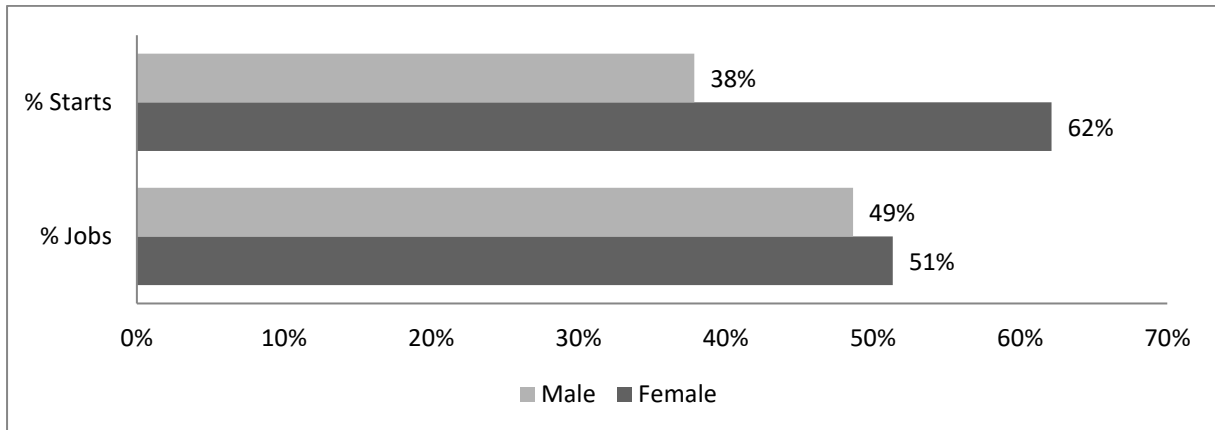


Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.7.4 By Gender

Whilst female participants account for 62% of project starts, they only account for 51% of job starts. This is due in part to the number of female participants on non-jobseeker benefits (currently not required to look for work) who have developed longer term return to work plans and are accessing the project to gain skills and qualifications as part of their individual journey back to work.

Figure 13: % job start distribution by gender compared to % participant start distribution by gender (April 2015 – September 2016)

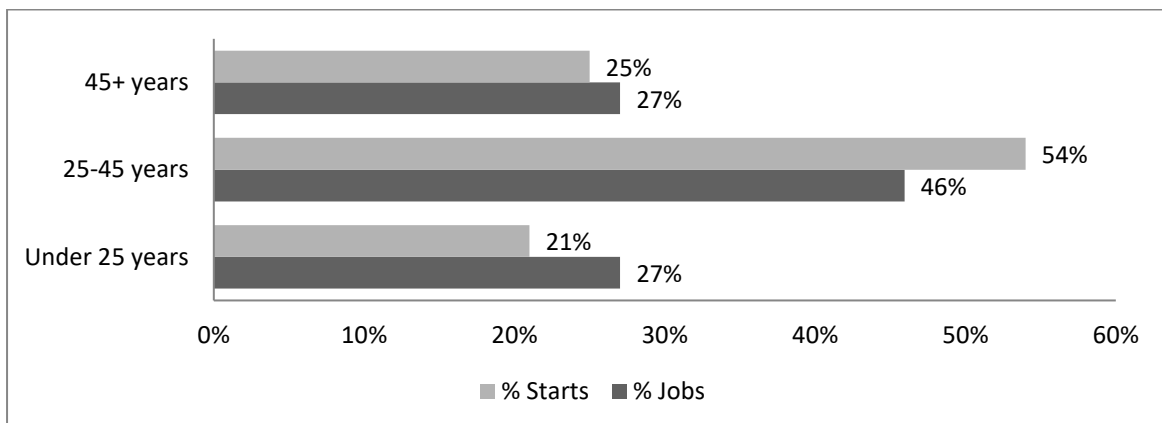


Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.7.5 By Age

Participants aged over 25 years achieve job starts at lower rate than those aged under 25, who whilst only accounting for 21% of the participant cohort provide 27% of the job starts.

Figure 14: % job start distribution by age compared to % participant start distribution by age (April 2015 – September 2016)

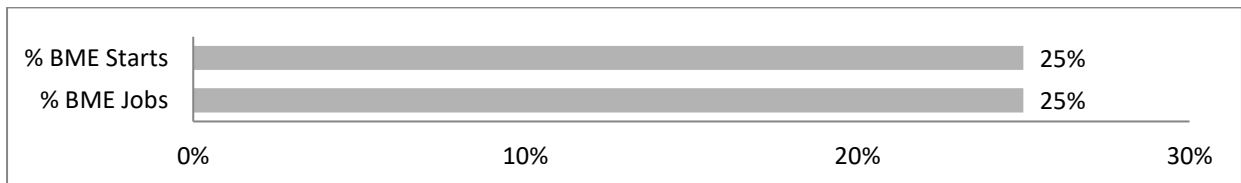


Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

5.7.6 By BME Participant Groups

There is absolute parity in the BME participant and job start rates as a % of the project cohort.

Figure 15: % job start of BME participants compared to % participant start distribution by BME participants (April 2015 – September 2016)



Source: City Deal Project Team; Research & Evaluation Team Calculations

5.8 Sustainability Data

5.8.1 Length of time a job must sustain

The project has aligned the job sustainability criteria with DWP mainstream provision. Namely, for project participants claiming JSA a job will need evidence of sustainment for 26 weeks; for other benefit claimants this will be 13 weeks sustainment.

Of the 111 jobs starts achieved to date:

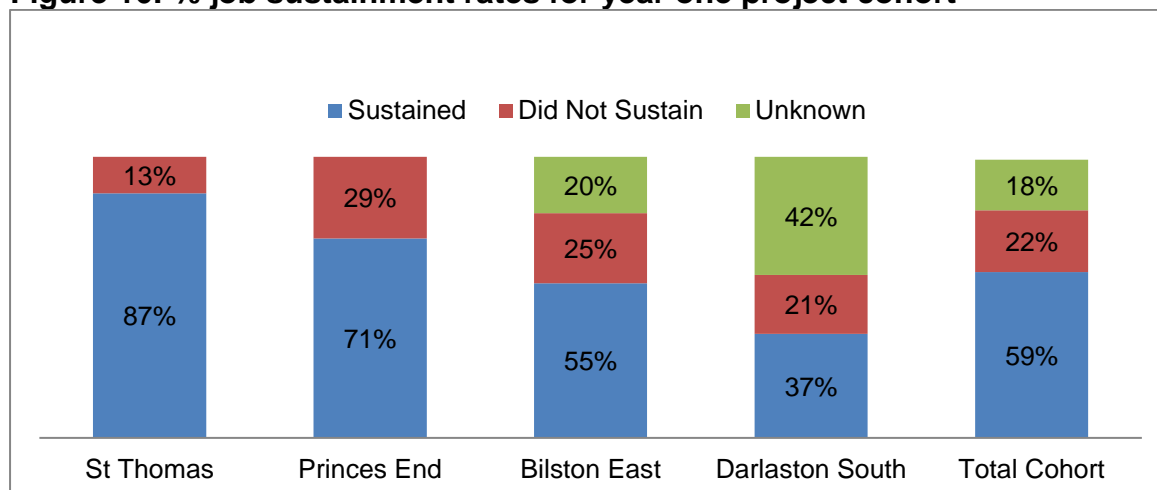
- 41% (46 job starts) required 13 week (3 months) sustainment
- 59% (65 job starts) required 26 week (6 months) sustainment

This gives a blended sustainment rate of around 21 weeks (5 months).

5.8.2 Sustainability Rates

The best indicator of sustainment rates is the year one project cohort; all captured job starts for this cohort have reached the relevant sustainment point. 59% (45 jobs) are confirmed as sustaining; 22% (17 jobs) are confirmed as not sustaining and for 18% (14 jobs) the sustainability outcome remains unknown (as further contact with the participant cannot currently be established). This gives sustainability rates across the project of between 60% and 78% (subject to confirmation of all outcomes). For two project areas, St. Thomas' and Princes End, all of their year one cohort can be confirmed as sustained or not sustained, enabling an accurate picture of sustainment rates in these areas. For the St. Thomas' area 87% of job starts sustained and in Princes End area 67% of job starts sustained. For Bilston East and Darlaston South, 20% and over 40% of job starts respectively are unconfirmed at this point of time.

Figure 16: % job sustainment rates for year one project cohort



Source: City Deal Project Team Raw Data; Research & Evaluation Team Analysis / Calculations

Sustainment and comparison data for the year 2 cohort will be examined in more detailed in future reports, as currently 94% of job starts have not reached their sustainment point.

5.9 Soft & Other Outcomes

5.9.1 Soft Outcomes

A snapshot of soft outcome evidence gathered for participants from year one and two cohorts, and captured by the project and providers to date is shown below in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Evidence Soft Outcomes By Numbers of Participants

	Year 1	Year 2 to date	Total	% of total engagements
Improved Confidence, optimism and support	529	262	789	67%
Increase in Qualifications	100	33	133	11%
Increase in Skills	524	217	741	63%
Increase in Digital Inclusion	392	77	469	40%

Source: City Deal Project Team

5.9.2 Other Outcomes

Business Engaged - The project and providers have also evidenced that since the commencement of the project 164 businesses have been engaged with the project. Partnerships with businesses to develop work-focused and bespoke employment routeways through the provision of relevant skills, experience and access to vacancies are an essential element of successful of employment support programmes.

Wider community and local area benefits – the impact and added value of creating new resources and facilities within the community that support community cohesion should not be under-estimated; and the City Deal Working Together project has made a significant contribution in this respect.

“If I had nowhere else to turn and had no food, I could go there and they would help, they would make phone calls and at the same time someone would put some toast on for the kids” (Darlaston South Project Participant)

Participants and front-line professionals highlighted the differences and impact the opening of new facilities had on the general feeling of ‘well-being’ and optimism of the whole community. This was particularly prevalent where these type of services / facilities did not exist previously or had been lost/closed through the cessation of previous area based funding.

“Working on the garden patch I have met new friends. Before this I had never spoken with neighbours even though I lived here for 5 years! Now we chat, share food and grow plants together.” (Princes End Project Participant)

5.10 Fiscal & Economic Impacts

To support the ongoing reporting of project indicators relating to welfare benefit bill savings and increases in wages to the accountable body / funder and contribute to the overall evaluation the Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence was engaged by the project lead, Accord.

The preliminary findings indicate that the project has made evidenced progress of 31% (£341,300) towards the £1.1million welfare benefit bill target and 4.1% (£772,600) towards the wages target of £19million (as well as 4.2% progress towards income tax paid). Figure 18 shows the current benefit savings, wages earned and income tax contribution made by participants who have sustained work. It also shows what those indicators would be if the participants continued into retirement at the current rate. Summary and methodology papers to support the calculations can be found at Annex 8. A detailed supporting spreadsheet provides further analysis of the costs and savings.

Figure 18: Benefits savings, wages earned and income tax contribution

		Total to present (October 2016)	Progress to Target (%)	Total to May 2017	Total to May 2020	Total to Individuals Retirement
Benefits Savings	Confirmed	£341,300	31%	£562,800	£1,687,300	£9,212,600
	Incl. unconfirmed	£747,900	68%	£1,207,800	£3,563,900	£14,459,900
Total Wages	Confirmed	£772,600	4.1%	£1,265,100	£3,798,200	£21,736,200
	Incl. Unconfirmed	£1,106,600	5.8%	£2,178,200	£7,689,500	£51,506,400
Income Tax Contributions	Confirmed	£70,700	4.2%	£188,600	£360,500	£2,081,200
	Incl. Unconfirmed	£101,400	6.0%	£207,200	£751,400	£5,059,300

Source: Black Country Economic Intelligence Unit Analysis of City Deal Project Data October 2016

5.11 Comparison with other Employment Support Programmes

As part of the initial findings the Research & Evaluation team were asked to prepare a briefing note to form part of the research which compared performance expectations of other Employment Support Programmes against the project Sustained Job Outcome Offer. A copy of the full briefing note can be found at Annex 6. In summary, the sustained job outcome rate over the lifetime of the project is higher at 32%, compared to the Work Programme²⁸ overall (sustained) job outcome measure of 33% for 25+ group and ESA Claimants 16.5% and Work Choice job sustainment rate of 18%. This has subsequently been updated to include Talent Match and Youth Employment Initiative (Black Country Impact) both of which have lower employment outcome rates and proportionally higher investment.

5.12 The Pilot Finances

5.12.1 The Grant

The accountable body received an initial £1.1m of the £2.8m grant at the commencement of the project; with the outstanding grant payment being received spring 2016.

5.12.2 What payments have been made?

The accountable body (Walsall MBC) receives payment for the overall management of the project including audit functions. The project lead (Accord Group) submits quarterly claims to the accountable body in respect of costs relating to the management and delivery of the project strands, including payments to providers and those relating to the community connectors. Between April 2015 and September 2016, the grant expenditure for the direct delivery of the community and employment support elements was circa £828,500; and total project expenditure circa £1,072,313.

²⁸ March 2016 Parliamentary Report on the Work Programme

SECTION 6 - CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

6.1 Introduction

The qualitative research undertaken and the data analysed is based on the first 18 months experiences of service delivery and support. Whilst this enriches our understanding of project and provider delivery of the strands, the nature of the research mean that it should not be used to draw final conclusions about the overall effectiveness, impact or social return on investment for the project. However, for the purposes of this report, we have been able to report emerging themes which helps us identify what works, what lessons have been learnt so far and some of the impacts and returns to date.

6.2 What Works?

With such a targeted geographical employment programme, it was identified early in the first phase of research that a primary key to 'unlocking' engagements is having a **physical presence in the heart of the community** where the target group lives. This is a 'venue' which can act as a **hub, focal point and 'go-to' place** for the project participants and the wider community. However the later research found that **some hubs have a relatively small 'radius' of engagement** and therefore even within a geographical area of an average ward size, additional hubs or strategies for delivery of support may be required to 'service' all of the local community.

Proactive, direct engagement and outreach activities which takes place **in the heart of the community** by **experienced 'engagers' and 'connectors' who live locally or are well known to the community** encourages residents to engage. However to be effective, **mechanisms must be in place for a smooth transition** and warm 'handover' to ensure individuals fully engage and participate.

The operation of **co-located and joined up multi-agency and provider services** and support from these centres was particularly effective where the needs of the participants extended beyond back to work support. Whilst the 'one-stop' shop approach is not a new concept in the wider community regeneration field, the project provides further evidence that this approach, albeit on a micro-scale not only works but **local people value greatly these resources**.

The **use of therapeutic and 'soft' learning activities provide effective engagement, confidence building and progression tools** for those furthest away from the labour market with complex needs and barriers. These activities often are the stepping stone to engagement in more formal learning, work-related and job-search activities. Progression by participants in these cases is underpinned by a **strong 'trust-based' and 'encouraging' relationship with their key 'worker'** and comprising of key elements of a successful **mentoring** process.

For those participants who are ready to look for work, a primary driver for successful employment outcomes is **support services which have a strong emphasis on employer engagement**. Best examples of this were provision which offered a diverse range of work based interventions and opportunities e.g. access to work

experience, volunteering, specific pre-employment training & skills, skilled job matchers and brokerage services, bespoke and intensive interview preparation.

6.3 What Lessons have been learnt? A TOOL KIT FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

Data - In the initial design and development of the project objectives, the collection and review of relevant and up to date data about the target group and the geographical area is key. This is to ensure the project meets specific local needs, the funded outcomes/impacts and other 'deliverables' are realistic and achievable and the appropriate delivery strategies can be developed and implemented.

Lead Times - Where there are no existing resources and services being delivered in a targeted area, sufficient lead time must be planned into implementation in order to establish these services and build trust with both the local community and individuals. This should also be taken into consideration where there are planned changes to delivery and service mid-programme.

Targeted Engagement - Where project eligibility is narrowly defined, it is essential that a targeted engagement and outreach strategy is developed to ensure activities focus specifically on the target group, rather than the community as a whole.

Stakeholder Involvement - Ensure key and relevant stakeholders, for example Jobcentre Plus are part of the initial programme design and 'invested' from the beginning; agreeing early on processes around referrals and tracking outcomes.

Maintaining the message – A drawback of a targeted area based project is the challenge in maintaining communication and focus of referrals agents and other key stakeholders in a fast moving policy driven environment with new initiatives and regular changes in referral personnel. Early engagement, identification of a key point of contact (Project Champions) and an effective marketing and communication plan are key to overcoming these challenges.

Roles & Responsibilities – Multiple tiers of reporting and complicated governance structures can be cumbersome and time can be wasted getting agreements within a time limited project. In addition, where there are multiple stakeholders and providers operating in the same project areas, ensure clear roles and responsibilities are established early on to avoid duplication of services and 'unhelpful' competition within the individual areas and across the wider project.

Project Management Requirements – Clarity regarding project scope, definitions, eligibility, funding requirements should be agreed and understood prior to project commencement to avoid unnecessary delay and impact on operations. In addition, where a project has stringent audit requirements it is essential that all partners from leads to supply chain understand the requirements and 'real' cost of project management and compliance.

The bigger picture – It is important that the project does not operate in a 'silo' and is aware of wider employment policy developments and new initiatives starting locally over the lifetime of the project. A collaborative dialogue with strategic and operational

stakeholders both before and after commencement of the project will ensure the project delivers complementary, aligned and potentially sustainable activities.

6.4 Recommendations

We recommend that:

- Additional job-tracking strategies are implemented to ensure all job starts are captured and all job outcomes which reach their sustainment point are confirmed as either sustained or not sustained. This may include sharing of good practice across the partnership strategies being used where all outcomes in a particular area are being confirmed, alongside agreeing support from Jobcentre Plus to validate those job starts which currently cannot be confirmed as sustained. Only fully evidenced sustained jobs to date have been used in benefit savings and increase in wages/tax contributions calculations to date, with more potential savings/increases achievable.
- Consideration be given to the projects exit and sustainability strategy by the Project Team and Steering Group in dialogue with local strategic stakeholders including the Local Enterprise Partnership and Local Authorities. This might include exploring how the community based resources, services and support that have been built specifically in these communities as part of this project can be maintained post project; identifying additional funding to continue some/all of the activities or inclusion of activities within other projects with wider remits and longer term funding.

6.5 Next Steps

In line with the overall, evaluation methodology, the next steps are to carry out:

- Wave 3 and 4 of Longitudinal & Thematic Qualitative Research & Observations – Stakeholders, Providers & Participants (2017 / 2018)
- Analysis of Data (From October 2016 - March 2017; April 2017 – September 2017; October 2017 – March 2018 onwards)
- Complete Final Report — production of report March 2018 onwards.

Whilst initial analysis has been undertaken on benefit savings and income tax contributions, further work is required around the impacts in secondary markets of healthcare and crime cost reduction to report fully on social return on investment.

Annex 1a – Table of Working Together Project – Year 1 Delivery Providers

Lead Provider	Provider Type	Identified Area	Sub-contractors / Delivery Partners	Delivery Model Description
Age Concern UK	Registered Charity	Darlaston South	Yes	Collaborative Partnership Delivery
Black Country Housing Group (BCHG)	Housing Provider – Registered Social Landlord & Charity	Pan Black Country	Yes	Direct delivery with use of specialist providers
Black Country Training Group (BCTG)	Not for Profit (Company Limited by Guarantee)	South Black Country (Dudley & Sandwell)	Yes	Managing Agent with supply chain delivering end to end
Bilston Resource Centre (BRC)	Registered Charity	Bilston East	No	Direct delivery & Spot purchase only
Dudley 19+ Partnership led by Dudley MBC	Public Sector – Local Authority – Learning	Kate’s Hill (St. Thomas’)	Yes	Direct Delivery & End to end sub-contracting & specialist provision
Gazebo Theatre in Education	Registered Charity	Bilston East	No	Direct Delivery & Spot purchase only
Ideal for All (IFA)	Registered Charity	Princes End (Tipton)	No	Direct Delivery & Spot purchase only
Walsall Adult Community College (Walsall MBC)	Public Sector – Local Authority - Learning	Darlaston South	Yes	Direct Delivery & end to end Sub-contracting end to end.

Annex 1b – Table of Working Together Project – 2016-17 Year 2 Delivery Providers

Lead Provider	Provider Type	Identified Area	Sub-contractors / Delivery Partners	Delivery Model Description
Bilston Resource Centre (BRC)	Registered Charity	Bilston East	Yes	Majority of direct delivery with partners supporting housing element & engagement activities
Dudley 19+ Partnership led by Dudley MBC	Public Sector – Local Authority – Learning	St. Thomas'	Yes	Direct Delivery Plus a number of End to end sub-contractor & specialist providers Engagement mechanisms to support whole partnership
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC)	Public Sector – Local Authority	Princes End (Tipton)	Yes	Managing Agent Four key sub-contractors delivering end to end provision Engagement mechanisms to support whole partnership
Walsall Adult Community College (Walsall MBC)	Public Sector – Local Authority - Learning	Darlaston South	Yes	Majority of direct delivery with partners supporting employability elements

Annex 2 – City Deal – Working Together Pilot - Research & Evaluation

Qualitative Research – In-depth Interviews: Instruments

(For Year 1 Research & Evaluation September 2015 – March 2016)

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL:

- **What to say to interviewees when setting up and beginning the interview**
 - Introduction to interviewer (name, background, contact details)
 - Purpose of the overall evaluation (what works & what doesn't work in getting unemployed 'social housing' tenants back to).
 - Role of the qualitative interview (in-depth; opportunity to explore issues in more detail)
 - Topics for discussion
 - Expected length of interview
 - Confidentiality/anonymity
 - How it will be conducted (semi-structured questions relating to topic; note taking & recording)
 - Informed Consent Letter/Form

- **What to say to interviewees in concluding the interview**
 - Any additional comments the interviewee would like to add
 - Next steps – analysing information & following completion of 'wave' of interviews – capturing in report which will form part of larger interim and final evaluation reports.
 - Thank participant for their time

- **What to do during the interview**
 - Use relevant interview guide which lists questions and issues to be explored
 - Keep question open-ended rather than closed
 - Ask factual question before opinion questions
 - Use probes as needed
 - Key characteristics of a good interviewer – be open-minded; flexible and responsive; patient; observant and demonstrate good listening skills.

- **What to do following the interview**
 - Transcribe and/or review data
 - Analyse data
 - Write report
 - Solicit feedback from stakeholders/interviewees
 - Revisions
 - Dissemination as appropriate

INTERVIEW GUIDES:

- Questions or issues to be explored during the interview
- Limit to 15 main questions and probes per topic
- Separate interview guides for each group of stakeholders – Delivery Partners/Providers (Supply Chain); Lead/Managing Partner (Accord); Strategic Stakeholders/Steering Group; Working Together pilot participants
- Year 1 Topic Guides: Lead/Managing Partner management & delivery approaches & Delivery Partner/Provider Programme/Service Delivery - (Refer to individual guides)

Annex 3 - Steering Group Members – By Organisation

City Deal Project Team (Accord Group)

Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Wolverhampton City Council

Walsall Housing Group
Heantun Housing
Wolverhampton Homes
Caldmore Accord

DWP/JcP
Black Country Consortium

Talent Match

Annex 4

City Deal Working Together Project Review & Evaluation

Data Review Social Housing Tenants

Compiled By Christine Brown, Lead Consultant, Future Excel
September 2015 – Internal Use Only (For Review)

1. Background to Data Review

As part of the baseline data refresh (to be undertaken by the Research & Evaluation external consultants), the City Deal Working Together Project Team requested a specific review of the numbers of unemployed and economically inactive social housing tenants in each area of benefit. The original project baseline data and information relates only to the number of unemployed and economically inactive individuals in the general ward population; with no correlation between those who are social housing tenants (eligible project beneficiaries) and those with other types of tenure i.e. private renters and home owners (who fall outside of the current project scope). The data review will form part of the wider baseline refresh but specifically seek to establish the available 'pool' of eligible²⁹ beneficiaries for the project against the original project targets³⁰.

2. Methodology

Introduction

There are no definitive, current and recognised data sets available on the total number of social housing tenants who are unemployed or economically inactive by project area. For example, the current NOMIS³¹ and DWP³² data does not capture or categorise unemployment / economic inactivity by tenure. Where data does exist on the economic status of an individual by tenure i.e. the ONS, Census 2011 the data held relates only to the Household Reference Person (HRP) or 'householder' and not to other individuals living within the property. There is however a recently published (July 2015) English Housing Survey Household Report (2013-2014)³³ which by tenure identifies data trends in household types, economic status of the householder and of their partner. This has been a key driver for developing a set of assumptions which can be applied to establish a clearer picture of the total number of social housing tenants in each project area. A summary of key findings from the survey and relevant to this project can be found at Appendix 3.

The Approach

2.2 The methodology used to establish the number of social housing tenants included the following steps and assumptions:

²⁹ Social housing tenants in defined geographical areas – Kate's Hill Estate (Dudley); Princes End (Sandwell); Bilston East (Wolverhampton) and Darlaston South (Walsall)

³⁰ Increase the employability of 2800 long-term unemployed and economically inactive Black Country residents

³¹ NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics

³² DWP Data and Analytics Working Age Claimants

³³ The English housing survey is a continuous national survey commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It collects information about people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England

Methodology Step	Supporting Narrative / Assumptions Applied
1. Establish the number of social housing householders / properties in each area of benefit.	The data used to establish the number of social housing householders/properties in each area of benefit was taken from existing City Deal Working Together project data, which had been provided by social housing providers at the commencement of the project (some of which had been collated by the Black Country Consortium). This is summarised in a spreadsheet at Appendix 1 alongside a comparison of the householder data for each ward from the ONS, Census 2011.
2. Establish total number of individuals living in social housing	A set of assumptions (driven from the findings reported in the English Housing Survey 2013-2014) has been developed. Using the data relating to household type of all social renters ³⁴ (i.e. 42% of households were either couples or multiple households) enables us to establish the additional/total number of working age individuals within each social housing household (per area of benefit).
3. Establish number of unemployed and economically inactive individuals living in social housing properties in area of benefit.	A set of assumptions (driven from the findings reported in the English Housing Survey 2013-2014) has been developed. Using data relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The economic status of all social renter householders³⁵: 8% unemployed; 24% inactive: 32% total. - The economic status of partners for all social renters³⁶: 9% unemployed; 30% inactive: 39% total; enables us to establish the total number of individuals living in social housing who are unemployed and economically inactive (per area of benefit). When applied to the base data, this suggests around 34% of social housing residents are unemployed or economically inactive.
4. Apply assumptions to base data and review against target.	The table at Section 3 shows the application of the assumptions to the base data (broken down by area of benefit) and compares the overall target cohort numbers to the available pool of eligible beneficiaries.
5. Test Assumptions and check findings	The data/findings from the English Housing Survey 2013-2014 on which a number of the assumptions are based have been compared against other relevant research. This includes data from the recent Worklessness, welfare and social housing report (July 2015) ³⁷ by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion for the National Housing Federation. The report suggests more than half (53%) of social housing residents are out of work ³⁸ . This alternative data allows us to draw a best and worst case scenario regarding the numbers of eligible beneficiaries in each area. Comparison against other measures e.g. current economic inactivity rates (NOMIS/DWP) against the numbers of social housing householders (ONS, Census 2011) produces comparable results (albeit not social housing profile sensitive).

³⁴ Appendix 2 Figure 1

³⁵ Appendix 2 Figure 2

³⁶ Appendix 2 Figure 3

³⁷ <http://cesi.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/NHF%20CESI%20FULL%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

³⁸ Stating the source of data as the Labour Force Survey, 2013

6. Evaluate data / conclusions.	The narrative at Section 4 outlines the key findings and conclusion following data evaluation against the original review brief.
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3. Application of the Assumptions to the Base Data

Analysis of Potential Beneficiary Pool of U/E & Inactive People in City Deal Working Together Social Housing												Review Against Project Deliverables	
Ward / Area	Social Housing Householders				Social Housing Persons (Non-Householders)				All In Social Housing			Project Beneficiary Target Split Equally Across Each Area Over Lifetime of Project	% of social housing tenants cohort to be worked with
	No. of Social Housing Households / Householders	No. of U/E (8%)	No of Inactive (24%)	Total U/E & Inactive (32%)	No. of Additional Non-Dependents (42% of Householders)	No of U/E (9%)	No of Inactive (30%)	Total U/E & Inactive (39%)	Grand Total U/E	Grand Total Inactive	Grand Total U/E & Inactive (Working Together Project Beneficiary Pool)		
St. Thomas	1806	144	433	578	759	68	228	296	213	661	874	700	80
Princes End	3636	291	873	1164	1527	137	458	596	428	1331	1759	700	40
Bilston East	2463	197	591	788	1034	93	310	403	290	901	1192	700	59
Darlaston South	2248	180	540	719	944	85	283	368	265	823	1088	700	64
Total	10153	812	2437	3249	4264	384	1279	1663	1196	3716	4912	2800	57

4. Summary of Key Findings and Conclusions

- 4.1 Applying a range of assumptions and measures the 'potential' social housing tenant cohort across all areas is 4912; the split across each area varies in line with the actual number of social housing properties. The volumes range from 874 in St. Thomas' ward to 1759 in the Princes End ward.
- 4.2 In order to achieve the overall project target of 2800 social housing tenants supported, it would mean the project would need to work with 57% of the total available cohort. However, if the overall project targets remain split evenly across all four areas of benefit this would actually mean up to 80% of the cohort would need to be supported in some areas i.e. St. Thomas' ward, compared to 40% in other areas i.e. Princes End.
- 4.3 Whilst we cannot be absolutely definitive in the potential cohort numbers, the research and evidence relating to the profile (economic status and household type) of social housing tenants highlights additional and key factors/considerations in relation to project approaches, engagement and delivery. Social renting householders were more likely than other tenures to:

- Contain a householder who was economically inactive; with the economic status of partners following a similar pattern and a higher proportion claiming ESA (long term illness) or ISLP (Lone Parent households). This means many individuals are not currently engaged with or receiving any structured employment support as they are not currently 'required' or expected to look for work.
- Be female; attributed to households being more likely than other groups to have lone parent households.

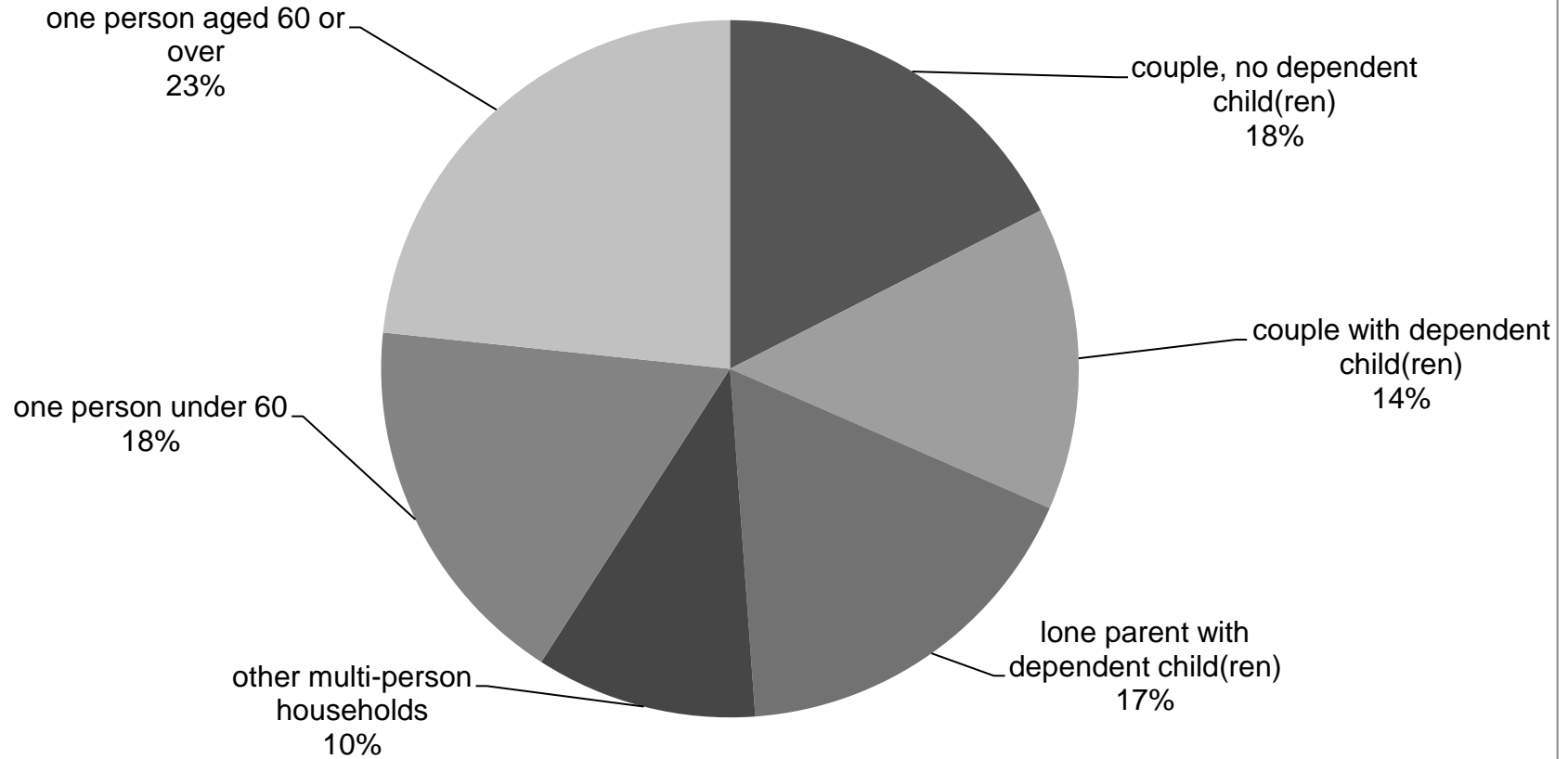
Appendix 1 – Number of Social Housing Units / Social Housing Household Reference Persons (HRP)

Fig 1. No. of Social Housing Units - Source: From Social Housing Providers for City Deal Working Together Project Baseline Data, 2014	St Thomas's	Princes End	Bilston East	Darlaston South	Total
Accord	0	110	0	438	548
BCHG	0	153	25	0	178
Heantun	0	0	307	0	307
Wolverhampton Homes	0	0	2131	0	2131
Walsall Housing Group	0	0	0	1810	1810
Sandwell MBC	0	3373	0	0	3373
Dudley MBC	1587	0	0	0	1587
Social Housing - Other	219	0	0	0	219
Total	1806	3636	2463	2248	10153

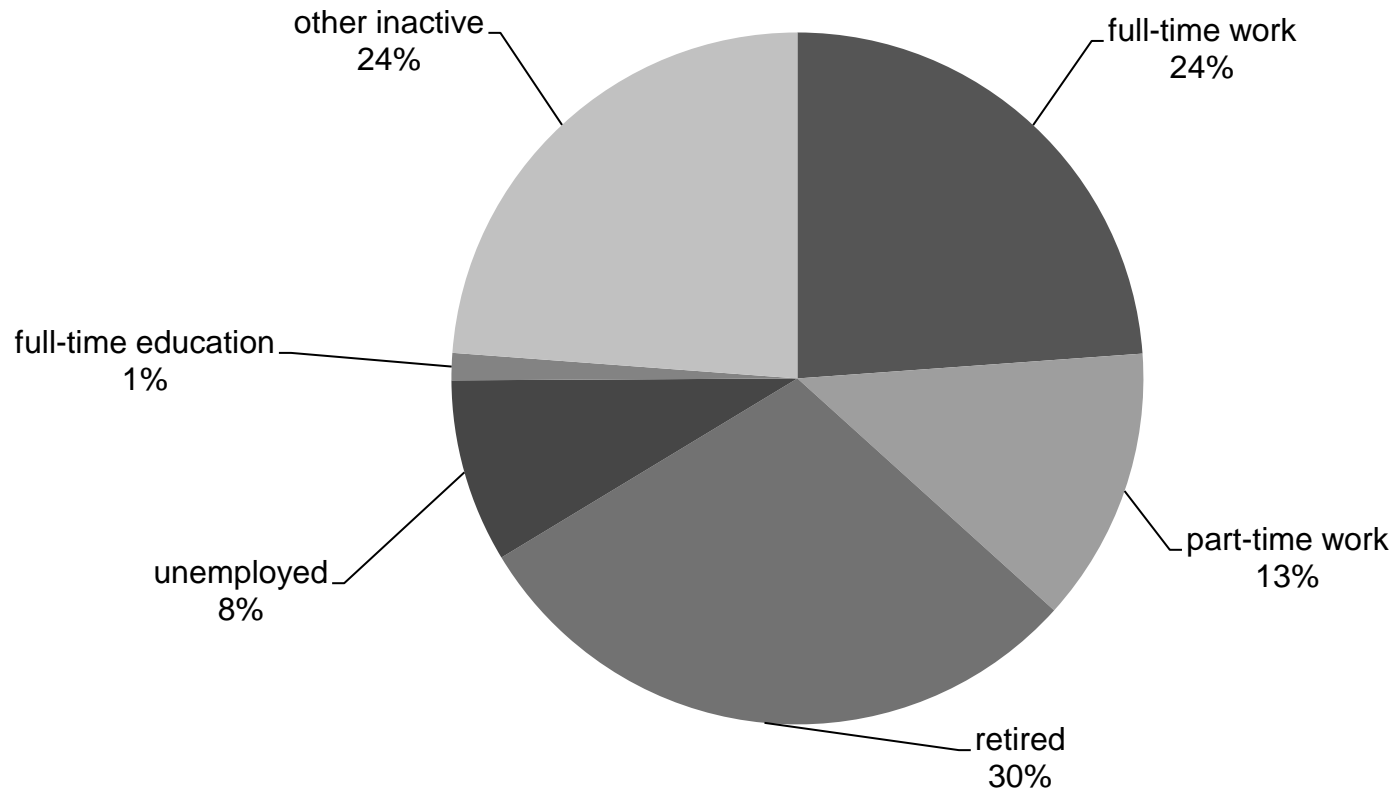
Fig. 2 Tenure / No. of Household Reference Persons (HRP)- Source: ONS, Census 2011	St Thomas's's	Princes End	Bilston East	Darlaston South	Total
Social rented: Rented from council (Local Authority)	1,507	1,869	2,082	1,055	6,513
Social rented: Other	208	373	415	1,168	2,164
All Social rented	1,715	2,242	2,497	2,223	8,677

	St Thomas's's	Princes End	Bilston East	Darlaston South	Total
Variance from 2011 - 2014					
All Social rented	91	1,394	-34	25	1,476
% Increase / Decrease	5%	62%	-1%	1%	17%

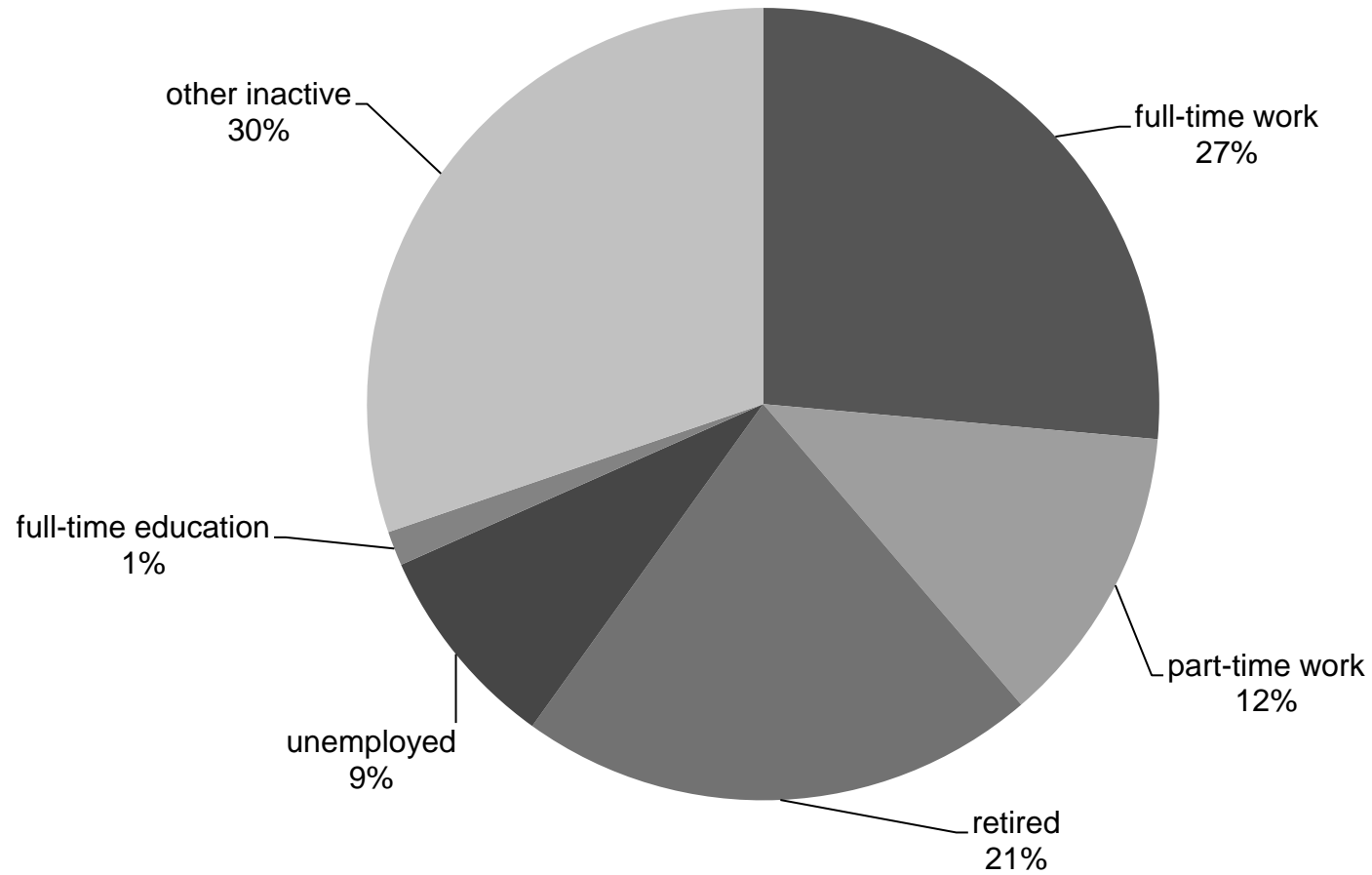
Appendix 2
Household Type - All Social Renters (Fig. 1)
Source: From Annex 2.2 English Housing Survey Households 2013-2014



Appendix 2
Economic Status of Householder - All Social Renters (Fig. 2)
Source: From Annex Table 2.2 English Housing Survey Households 2013-2014



Appendix 2
Economic Status of Partner - All Social Renters (Fig. 3)
Source: From Annex 2.1 English Housing Survey 2013-2014



English Housing Survey Household Report 2013 -2014

Key Facts and Figures – Comparison of tenure groups³⁹

Social renting householders:

Economic Status

- Were **more likely** than other tenures to contain a householder who was **economically inactive** (24%).
- With the exception of outright owners, were **most likely** to be **retired** (30%)
- **37% working.**
- Economic status of **partners** follows a similar pattern to the householder - 21% retired; 9% unemployed; 30% other inactive (including long-term sick and carers).

Household type and size

- Were **more likely** to be **female** (57%) – attributed to households being more likely than other groups to have **lone parent households** (17%) and household with one person over 60 (23%).

Income

- Social rented sector accommodation is offered at a subsidised level and tenants tend to have **lower incomes**; mean gross weekly income was £315 for households compared to £580 for private renters and £798 for owner occupiers.

Length of residence

- Average of 11 years & more evenly distributed across differing residency lengths; compared to average of 17 years for owner occupiers and 4 years for private rented sector.

³⁹ The full report and data tables can be found at www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2013-to-2014-household-report

Annex 5 – Nature of Support Available Through Providers

Assessment

Action Planning

Help with writing a CV, job application or interview skills

Financial support (travel expenses/discretionary)

Motivation or confidence sessions

Therapeutic interventions

Mentoring and coaching

Careers advice

Financial/debt advice

Vocational Training / Training Course

Work experience / voluntary work

Employer Opportunities / Vacancy Matching & Brokerage Services

Employer Led Pre-Employment Training

Literacy, numeracy & language skills

Digital Inclusion

Self-employment advice or support

Help with housing issues / homelessness

Help re criminal record

Help re caring responsibilities (child/adult)

Help with addiction (drug/alcohol)

Annex 6 -

Copy of Research & Evaluation Briefing Note for Project Team

Prepared April 2016 *Updated October 2016*

Employment Programme Job Outcome Comparison Rates

Purpose: To compare performance expectations of other Employment Support Programmes against the City Deal Working Together Sustained Job Outcome Offer.

Work Choice⁴⁰

The performance expectations are:

- 30% unsupported job outcomes (starts) with 60% of job starts continuing for 26 out of 30 weeks (sustained).
- This would give an actual sustained job outcome rate of 18%.

Work Programme⁴¹

The overall performance expectations⁴² are:

- 11.4% on the one-year Job Outcome⁴³ Measure⁴⁴
- 25.8% on the two-year Job Outcome Measure⁴⁵
- 28.5% on the overall Job Outcome Measure⁴⁶

However, the DWP expected that the job outcome measure would vary across different 'payment groups⁴⁷' and set differential benchmarks.

The March 2016 Parliamentary Report stated that DWP minimum performance expectations for the Work Programme at their peak were 33% for 25+ group and ESA Claimants 16.5%.

Talent Match (Black Country)⁴⁸

- 1417 young people engaged
- 21.5 employment outcomes
- A range of other measures including work experience, volunteering & training.

City Deal Working Together

The performance expectations over the lifetime of the project⁴⁹ are:

- The engagement of 2800 eligible participants
- 900 sustained⁵⁰ jobs
- This broadly equates to a sustained job outcome rate of 32%.

⁴⁰ Specialist employment support to disabled people

⁴¹ Employment Support programme of up to two years for long term unemployed.

⁴² Source: Work Programme statistics: Inclusion Analysis 17 September 2015 based on DWP published statistics from beginning of Work Programme in June 2011 to the end of June 2015.

⁴³ 13 or 26 weeks depending on payment group (same definition used by City Deal Working Together)

⁴⁴ Starts who have been on the programme for one year

⁴⁵ Starts who have been on the programme for two years

⁴⁶ Starts who have completed overall and completed the job outcome period at the end

⁴⁷ JSA 18-24; JSA25+; JSA Early Access; JSA Ex-IB; ESA Volunteers; New ESA Claimants (2 groups), ESA Ex-IB; IB/IS; JSA Prison Leavers.

⁴⁸ Sourced from programme directly by Project Team

⁴⁹ Still in year one of operational delivery of employment support activity

⁵⁰ The pilot uses the DWP Work Programme job outcome measure definition of 13 or 26 weeks dependent of participant benefit profile

Annex 7 – Case Studies – Summary of Challenges Face, Interventions and Change

<i>The Challenges I Faced</i>	<i>What the Project Did</i>	<i>The Difference it Made</i>
<p>Not fluent in English Lacked proven experience in chosen sector (clinical research) in the UK Low confidence & frustration at time out of work</p>	<p>One to one support Confidence building Interview preparation Mock panel interviews & presentations Updated CV English practice IT support Job-searching / Job Brokerage</p>	<p>Clinical research job Improved communication skills Qualifications in ICT Improved confidence and self-esteem</p> <p>“The kindness of BRC staff and volunteers was appreciated much more than words can say.” “ I wouldn’t have been able to get through this challenging time without the help and support I received at BRC through City Deal”</p>
<p>Needed support to market a start-up business</p>	<p>One to one business advice and support sessions Practical marketing and networking support Confidence building</p>	<p>Active business with clients Improved confidence in marketing and networking</p>
<p>Skilled and experienced in engineering and mechanics but previous health problems resulted in over 10 years out of work. Lack of recent qualifications and experience.</p>	<p>New qualifications & work experience in construction / housing improvement sector IT skills & qualifications Updated CV Job-searching / Job Brokerage</p>	<p>Engineering job with Jaguar Land Rover Improved confidence Up to date ICT, jobsearching and workplace skills and qualifications Improved confidence and self-esteem</p> <p>“Being out of work for a long period of time can be daunting. I have a range of skills in engineering,</p>

<p>Lack of IT skills and knowledge of online jobsearching processes. No up to date jobsearch tools e.g. CV</p>		<p>mechanics and robotics and was unable to put them in use due to my illness. But since being ready to find work, the advisers and tutors at BRC have helped me regain confidence. The support I have received is second to none. I am really happy that I am in full time work and it is all thanks to the support provided through City Deal.”</p>
<p>A range of complex health needs resulting from a serious accident as a young man. Difficulty communicating due to health conditions (breathing issues, anxiety, depression). Idea for self-employment.</p>	<p>One to one welfare and benefits advice One to one business advice and support sessions IT skills training including support to develop a website & business branding Confidence building</p>	<p>Ready to launch business with support from family Improved feeling of health and mental wellbeing Improved confidence and self-esteem “Having someone else to believe in me and my ideas gave me a real boost” “If you’d told me 12 months ago I’d be running a business now I’d have said you were pulling my leg”.</p>
<p>Ex-offender recently released from prison. Negative outlook as concerned about how a criminal record would be viewed by employers.</p>	<p>New qualifications and work experience in construction / housing improvement sector Updated CV IT support Job-searching / Job Brokerage Confidence building & encouragement Getting involved with other community projects i.e. Bike Right</p>	<p>Developed Strong commitment and hard work to finding a job, resulting in a job. Improved positive outlook and motivation Improved confidence Up to date IT, job-searching and workplace skills and qualifications Improved confidence and self-esteem “Attending BRC has helped me a lot. I have learnt new skills and gained new qualifications. It has given me the opportunity to get my life on track. The centre is local to where I live and staff are very helpful. I have learnt how to best use the Universal Job Match website and also send emails. I am grateful for all of</p>

		the assistance and support I have received through City Deal as I have successfully found employment”.
Out of work for 2 years Caring responsibilities Lacked up to date skills and qualifications Previous experience as a cleaner but no success in applying for jobs	One to one support and mentoring Confidence building Jobsearch skills & tools Support to complete applications Interview preparation Voluntary work in the community ICT support Workplace skills and qualifications Updated CV	Part time Industrial cleaning job with the potential for more hours. Improved confidence and self-esteem Up to date ICT, job-searching and workplace skills and qualifications “I didn’t know where to turn for help with getting a job.” “I was unsure about going to the interview as it (the job) was only for a few hours but I’m so glad you talked me into it.
Not worked for 14 years Previous health conditions Lacked up to date skills and qualifications No access to internet CV out of date	One to one support and mentoring Confidence building Workplace skills and qualifications including ICT Updated CV Voluntary work in the community Jobsearch skills & tools Support to complete applications Interview preparation	Cleaning job Improved confidence and self-esteem Up to date IT, job-searching and workplace skills and qualifications “I had just about given up hope of getting back into work”. “It’s great to feel like part of a team”.
Not worked for 10 years Attended courses & applied for jobs but unsuccessful Low confidence and self-esteem as a result	Regular jobsearch activity and support Development of ICT and jobsearch skills and tools One to one support with interview skills & techniques	Achieved 2 part time jobs as a Kitchen assistant and a cleaner Improved confidence and self-esteem Up to date IT, job-searching and workplace skills and qualifications

	<p>Confidence building, mentoring & encouragement Voluntary work in the community Post-employment mentoring & support</p>	<p>Improved feelings of health & well-being from working and being part of a team</p> <p>“I can’t believe I got an interview! It’s my first one in 5 years”. “I love my job at the school – I wouldn’t change it for the world”.</p>
<p>Previously worked all his life in factories, the engineering and construction sector health problems led to him being on health related benefits.</p> <p>Concerns and anxiety about the change from health related benefits to Jobseekers Allowance as felt he could not return to previous types of employment due to health concerns.</p>	<p>Voluntary work in the community Development of workplace skills including IT. One to one support and mentoring. Confidence building & regular encouragement Updated CV</p>	<p>Open-minded and more positive about the future. Improved confidence and self-esteem Up to date work experience.</p> <p>“The environment was relaxed and not hostile – I now feel more positive and stronger and am more open minded about the future”. Project worker – “Tony has come a long way from the first time we met. He is a valuable volunteer and is able to help out in all aspects of the admin work – it would be lovely if we could include other members of his family in the programme as well”.</p>
<p>Not worked for 19 years due to a mixture of family commitments and health issues. Previous food industry experience. Following a move from health related benefits to jobseekers</p>	<p>Intense one to one support, mentoring and encouragement. Confidence and motivation building. Development of workplace skills including English and Maths. Employability & jobsearch skills and tools including interview preparation. Volunteering within community project.</p>	<p>Offering peer support to others in similar situation. Improved confidence, motivation and self-esteem. Up to date CV. A front desk job and subsequent supervisor job with Jump Nation. Improved feeling of health and wellbeing. Son also working following short time with project.</p>

<p>allowance, despite wanting to work concerned whether would find employer who understood her health conditions. Lacked confidence and was at a low point.</p>	<p>Updated CV with transferable and new skills and experience.</p>	<p>“Didn’t think I would ever be able to work again” “The confidence the girls at WAAC gave me helped me to find myself again and give me strength to look forward in my life”. Employer – “ Nicola is hard working and always willing – she recently won one of the staff awards ‘Busy Bee’ as she can’t sit still! She just missed out on the ‘mother hen’ awards as well as she is always looking after everyone else.”</p>
<p>Looking for opportunities to fit around young children and other family commitments. Previous payroll/finance experience but started baking at home to control severe allergies in her children.</p>	<p>Accessed a number of development courses. Confidence building. One to one support and guidance on self-employment. Post-employment support and mentoring.</p>	<p>Increased confidence and motivation. Created a start-up ‘allergy free’ cupcake business. 5 star food hygiene rating achieved. Continuing to support local community and project events and share her experiences with other residents. Project Worker – “The Working Together Project gives people the opportunity to drop in – it’s not initially about work – the voluntary nature of the programme”.</p>
<p>Not worked for 30 years. Lacked confidence and relevant workplace skills. Felt isolated. Suffered from a range of health conditions.</p>	<p>Development of workplace skills and qualifications. Work placement and experiences One to one mentoring, support and encouragement. Confidence and resilience building. Post-employment support.</p>	<p>A job with a taxi firm. Improved confidence and self-esteem. Improved feelings of well-being from working. “My life is completely different” “I never believed what a difference a job would make”. “I can’t thank you all enough”.</p>

<p>Wanted to go self-employed following a redundancy but didn't know where to start. Experienced and trained as a 24hour locksmith. Family to support.</p>	<p>One to one business advice and support sessions Developed a business plan, specific advice on HMRC compliance and marketing. Sourced accountant & advice on tax returns. Confidence building. Post-employment support.</p>	<p>A start up locksmith business established. Improved confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>“BCHG’s support has helped me to move on following redundancy to set up my own business”. It was clear that they understood my situation and the team worked to help me take my first steps to become a self-employed locksmith”.</p> <p>“I’ve already registered the company and have attended a SWEDA intensive support session to further expand my business plan. Without this I couldn’t have set up my business but I’m now looking forward to the future”.</p>
<p>Mental health issues including anxiety Low confidence Socially isolated Concerned & anxious about recent move from ESA to JSA benefits</p>	<p>Provided holistic one to one support sessions to tackle immediate concerns and worries including benefit advice & support. Group & one to one Job-search & IT training sessions. Planned health & wellbeing sessions to support with practical strategies for managing anxiety.</p>	<p>Improved confidence Reduced social isolation Open to new opportunities and starting to think about work positively</p> <p>“I’m really grateful for the help and support I have received from the team. They are always there when I need them”</p> <p>“I feel more confident with attending sessions and meeting new people at Job Club”</p>
<p>Transitory home and work life – moving all over UK since arriving in London with no spoken English as a young man.</p>	<p>Access to engagement and practical ‘therapeutic’ activities including gardening, cooking & healthy eating workshops. Employment support workshops</p>	<p>Motivated to get back to work Increased confidence Decrease in alcohol reliance / dependency. Reduction in social isolation & active member of community.</p>

<p>Strong work ethic & willingness to work Self-taught in English Instability of a home & job have impacted on mental health & well-being including alcohol dependency & other problems</p>	<p>Job-searching sessions. Peer support activities – encouraging and supporting other residents to develop the local garden.</p>	<p>Positive change in self-reported well-being. “The staff have been so kind to me, even after I had let myself down by drinking again. Now I am back on my feet and not living an unhealthy life....it’s no good for your mental health, and I don’t want to go back”. “Working on the garden I have met new friends. Before this I have never spoken to my neighbours even though I have lived here for 5 years! Now we chat, share food and grow plants together.”</p>
<p>Mental health issues Learning difficulties</p>	<p>Access to ‘therapeutic’ opportunities designed to encourage social skills, interaction and develop communication skills. Once confidence grew, moved to accessing employment support sessions. One to one interview skills. Regular ongoing contact post employment</p>	<p>Increased in confidence and optimism Gained employment – Maintenance Cleaner “They’ve really helped me in a big way and keep me focussed on what is important”. “They’re more like friends to me and listen to my concerns”</p>
<p>No qualifications Poor literacy skills & dyslexia Partially deaf</p>	<p>Participated in engagement event. Went on to access volunteering & Grow for Work programme at charities market garden – where learned practical horticultural skills and gained experience. Team working activities. Planned job-searching sessions</p>	<p>Identified a clear employment route. Developed new work based skills and practical experience Increased confidence, self-esteem and motivation Reduced social isolation. “I enjoy coming to the garden. It has given me a routine and structure”. “I’ve learnt to sow seeds, correct way of planting, using equipment. I’m looking forward to harvesting season”</p>

		<p>"It gets me out of the house and out of my head, everyone here is great.</p>
<p>No recent work experience & work references Concerns about lack of understanding by employers of his condition (Autism)</p>	<p>Confidence building course Volunteering and gardening course delivered by Disabled People User-led Organisation (DPULO) Personal Development Training Support to update CV Job-searching and IT sessions Access to complementary programmes & specialist advice partners</p>	<p>Reduction in social isolation Reduced feelings of anxiety Developed New practical skills Through a (peer & expert) supportive environment, improved confidence to talk about challenges he faces with his condition.</p> <p>"I am very happy with support from IFA, they understand my needs and have helped me."</p> <p>"Coming to the gardens has been a good way of getting me out of the house, through volunteering I have learnt new skills and surprised myself".</p>
<p>Long term unemployed Mental health issues Attended rehab for gambling addiction Severe lack of confidence</p>	<p>Access to 'therapeutic' opportunities designed to encourage social skills, interaction and develop communication skills. Access to engagement activities to build confidence, trust and develop basic life skills. This including accessing Healthy Kickstart sessions (healthy eating & cooking on a budget) as was unable to prepare a meal & accessing soup kitchens. Support to job-search.</p>	<p>Improved basic life skills. A focus on wanting to improve his life & circumstances. Increased awareness of services and support available.</p> <p>"I am feeling more confident and have a more positive outlook since working with Ideal for All"</p> <p>"I am aware of what is available but I don't always access provision if I'm having a bad day".</p> <p>"I enjoy coming down and talking to the team. They support me with my jobsearch"</p>

<p>Not in paid employment for 5 years due to raising young family. Lost confidence and feels shy in front of new people.</p>	<p>Confidence building course Employability course for Customer Service Maths & English course</p>	<p>Increased confidence in abilities and motivation Reduced social isolation & improved support network “Brilliant – Loved it all!”</p>
<p>Long term unemployed Previous skilled self-employed tradesperson. Concerned that age and length of unemployed a barrier to employment.</p>	<p>Work placement within community garden Confidence building and other relevant training courses. Employability Course for Horticulture Maths and English</p>	<p>Positive work placement feedback has led to renewed focus on goals Relevant work experience New qualifications and skills Improved confidence and optimism “Very accessible” “The staff are very helpful”</p>
<p>Not in paid employment as raising family Out of date skills Lack of confidence</p>	<p>Accessed engagement activities and soft skill courses to build confidence, trust and team working including Nail Art, Sugarcraft, Slimming Club. Customer Service training.</p>	<p>Improved confidence and self-esteem Reduced social isolation and improved support network “I am more confident!” “I can carry a conversation, talk and approach more people”. “I should have no problems in the real world and employment”.</p>
<p>Needed a new start after being relocated to a woman’s refuge in the area Low self-esteem Socially isolated with no support network Depression</p>	<p>One to one support Work placement Access to development training including Maths and English courses</p>	<p>Increased confidence, self-esteem and feelings of well-being Reduced social isolation and a new support network Active member of the community offering peer-support to other project participants Work experience New skills and qualifications</p>

English a second language		Increased aspiration and career plans
<p>Unemployed for 7 years due to bereavement and family issues</p> <p>Recently moved from health related benefits to JSA.</p> <p>Volunteering as a Teaching Assistant & completing relevant qualifications.</p> <p>Lacked confidence & finding it difficult to secure work</p>	<p>One to one support to build confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>Up to date CV.</p> <p>Tailored application support.</p> <p>Job brokerage and matching service.</p> <p>Support to move from benefits to paid employment.</p> <p>Post employment support to secure permanent employment.</p>	<p>Full time (temporary) paid employment in a school</p> <p>Increased confidence, self-esteem and optimism about the future.</p> <p>“I firmly think the help from Just Straight Talk has been more beneficial as it’s given one to one and directed solely for the support I need rather than the support offered from the Jobcentre which has always been done as group sessions and in my opinion of no benefit to me”.</p>
<p>Previous temporary roles led to frequent movement on and off benefits.</p> <p>Lack of stable employment.</p> <p>Needed specific employer led qualifications / accreditation.</p>	<p>Brokered relevant training and accreditation.</p> <p>Up to date CV</p> <p>Support to effectively job-search.</p>	<p>Achieved workplace qualification and accreditation.</p> <p>Improved job-search skills and confidence in job-searching abilities.</p> <p>Securing regular interviews.</p> <p>“One word – ‘brilliant’. Best thing I ever did was to sign up with JST.... They paid for my courses, updated my CV and now I am getting lots of replies and interviews”.</p>
<p>Learning difficulties</p> <p>Struggles to support his own personal care and well-being.</p> <p>Lacks a support network or structure within the community.</p> <p>Willing to try new things but gets easily confused and is concerned that people will not understand him.</p>	<p>One to one support to contact DWP on reconsideration of benefit sanction – full benefit awarded.</p> <p>Support to undertake job-search.</p> <p>Planned access to practical and vocationally based courses to build confidence, develop workplace and team working skills.</p>	<p>Improved awareness of support available.</p> <p>Improved confidence to open up & share issues.</p> <p>“I am really pleased with the help I receive. I know I can talk to Ideal for All and they will help me”.</p> <p>“I want to try the gardening so I can learn new things. I like being outside”.</p>

<p>Lack of understanding of job-search requirements has led to benefit sanctioning.</p>		
<p>Limited English language skills which makes him feel excluded. Socially isolated & with little opportunity to meet people with a shared background. Wants to get involved & access help to get him back to work.</p>	<p>One to one IAG & CV development sessions. Assisted job-search sessions. Accessed Grow for Work programme – practical horticulture & employment development sessions at charities community gardens to build on existing skills. Brokerage of ESOL course</p>	<p>Reduced social isolation & gave opportunities to meet people outside the area. New horticulture & other practical skills. Work experience – demonstrated reliability, good practical skills, and a willingness to learn. Improved confidence and resilience in accessing new opportunities. Opportunity to develop English language skills.</p> <p>“I enjoy coming and trying things I have never done before”.</p> <p>Garden Supervisor: “He is a great addition to our volunteering group, he works hard and gets on with things”.</p>
<p>Qualifications were not recognised in the UK. Lack of employment history. Lived in UK for 7 years with good level of both spoken & written English but lacked confidence in abilities.</p>	<p>Job-search support including CV writing, applications, transferable skills. Confidence building. Support to understand employment related issues including tax codes, in work benefits and managing debt. Post employment support specifically to support transition from benefits to paid work.</p>	<p>Secured full time employment in Administration. Increased confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>“Thank you so much for all your help, I could not have done it myself.”</p>

Annex 8 – Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit Summary & Methodology Papers.

Working Together Pilot – October 2016

Nearly a year of contracted delivery has occurred under the City Deal ‘Working Together’ pilot. Utilising its skills set the Economic Intelligence Unit has translated the activity into economic impact to support the evaluation of the project. This involved analysing information to inform progress towards two of the project indicators:

TARGET 1: Provide a £1.1m reduction in the welfare benefit bill

TARGET 2: Increase in wages of £19m with a proportional increase in income tax paid

Preliminary Results as of 18th October 2016

Over the period 2015/16 to 2016/17 the Working Together Pilot has made progress of

- 31% towards the £1.1m welfare benefit bill target.
- 4.1% towards the wages target of £19m (as well as a 4.2% progress towards income tax paid)

The following table shows the current Benefits Cost, Wages Earned, and Income Tax contribution made by participants for each year of delivery on the Working Together Pilot. The table also calculates what those indicators would be if the participants continued into retirement at the current rate – whether that be claiming benefits or continuing into employment. A more detailed analysis of the costs and savings can be found in the spreadsheet that accompanies this paper.

		Total to present (October 2016)	Progress to Target (%)	Total to May 2017	Total to May 2020	Total to Individuals Retirement
Benefits Savings	Confirmed	£341,300	31%	£562,800	£1,687,300	£9,212,600
	Incl. unconfirmed	£747,900	68%	£1,207,800	£3,563,900	£14,459,900
Total Wages	Confirmed	£772,600	4.1%	£1,265,100	£3,798,200	£21,736,200
	Incl. Unconfirmed	£1,106,600	5.8%	£2,178,200	£7,689,500	£51,506,400
Income Tax Contributions	Confirmed	£70,700	4.2%	£188,600	£360,500	£2,081,200
	Incl. Unconfirmed	£101,400	6.0%	£207,200	£751,400	£5,059,300

At the current rate it would take an estimated:

- The target to reduce the benefit bill by £1.1m will be reached by November 2018 (Confirmed Sustained) or by April 2017 (Including Unconfirmed).
- 191 (Confirmed) and 142 (including unconfirmed) additional people per annum for the next four years are required to enter sustained employment to achieve the target of £19m increase in wages.

Data Summary

Indicator	Value
Participants with confirmed Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015-16: 76 • 2016-17: 35
Jobs sustained required weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed sustained: 45 • Confirmed not sustained: 17 • Unknown: 49
Average age of individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36.3 Years
Range of length of unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months to 10+ years
Geography of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darlaston South: 32 • Bilston East: 30 • Prince's End: 23 • Kates Hill/St Thomas's: 26
Benefits claimed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JSA: 65 Individuals • Child Benefit: 16 Individuals • Income Support: 12 Individuals
Average annual claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £8,639 per person
Estimated Benefits Claimed during Unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £3.1m
If benefits claimed to retirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £9.2m cost to state
Journey time of programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 3 months : 54 individuals (49.5%) • 3 – 6 months : 38 Individuals (34.9%) • 6 – 12 months : 15 individuals (13.8%) • Over 12 months: 2 individuals (1.8%)
Biggest employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tipton Homecare (4) • Amazon (3) • Staffline (3) • Self -employment (3)
Common sectors of employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Social Assistance (21.6%) • Sport, Leisure & Hospitality (18.9%) • Transportation & Warehousing (18.9%)
Common occupations of employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care (17%) • General Operation & Warehousing (14%) • Catering (6%) • Customer Service (9%) • Cleaning (9%)
Average estimated annual salary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £19,940
Total Earnings to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed Sustained : £772,600 • Incl. Unconfirmed : £1,106,600

Total National Insurance contribution to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed Sustained: £42,500 Incl. Unconfirmed: £60,800
Progress towards income tax targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed Sustained: 4.2% Including Unconfirmed: 6.0%
Savings to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed Sustained: £341,300 Including Unconfirmed: £747,900
If wages earned until retirement	<p>Confirmed Sustained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wages: £21.7m Income tax: £2.1m National Insurance: £1.2m <p>Including Unconfirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wages: £51.5m Income tax: £5.1m National Insurance: £3.0m

How many more jobs we need to get the

Table 1: Length of Unemployment

Length of Unemployment	Count	Percentage
Under 6 months	1	1%
6 – 12 months	54	49%
12 – 18 months	6	5%
18 – 24 months	8	7%
3 – 5 Years	15	14%
6 - 9 Years	10	9%
Over 10 Years	17	15%

Table 2: Type of Claim

Type of Claim	Count	Percentage
JSA	65	59%
Income Support	12	11%
ESA	10	9%
Child benefit/tax	16	14%
DLA	3	3%
Working Tax Credit	3	3%
Housing Benefit only	6	5%
PIP	1	1 %

Working Together Pilot: Methodology

A model was created using MS Excel to calculate the cost savings and benefits of claimants starting employment. The measures calculated are: amount of benefits claimed by the individuals during their period of unemployment, the savings made from the individuals not being on benefits until present, the amount saved in benefits during the lifetime of the individual, the gross pay of the individuals starting employment to the present, a period in the future and until their retirement, including the relative contributions to National Insurance and Income Tax. This was calculated separately for the individuals confirmed to be in a sustained job (26 weeks for JSA, and 13 weeks for all other benefits) and as a total of the individuals with a sustained job and those unknown/data not available yet.

The data used for the assumptions of benefits claimed were extracted from the Greater Manchester Cost Benefit Analysis Model developed by New Economy, 2015 and downloaded from: <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis-guidance-and-model>. These are summarized in the table below.

Claim	Description	Average award
Housing Benefit	Average award	£94 per week
	Processing application	£52
JSA	Allowance (Age 18 – 24)	£57 per week
	Allowance (Age 25+)	£72 per week
	Claim processing	£71
	Cost of maintaining claim	£363 per year
	Signing cost per customer	£7 per fortnight
	Advice per customer	£51 per 3 months
Income Support	Allowance (Age 18 – 24)	£57 per week
	Allowance (Age 25+)	£72 per week
	Cost of maintaining claim	£178 per year
Working Tax Credit	Average Cost	£1960 per year
ESA	Allowance (Age Under 25)	£57 per week
	Allowance (Age 25+)	£72 per week
	Claims processing	£232
	Maintaining claim	£167 per year
PIP	Average award	£81 per week
Disability Living Allowance	Care Component	£54 per week
	Mobility component	£22 per week
	Maintaining claim	£20 per year
	Processing claim	£144
Child Benefit	Per child	£20.70 per week

The claims to date was calculated by multiplying the length of unemployment and the allowance listed. Every individual was assumed to be claiming housing benefit. As the length of unemployment was given in a broad range, an assumption was made on the exact length of unemployment per individual. This is listed in the table below:

Length of claim	Estimated Length (per year)
Under 6 months	0.25
6 - 12 months	0.5
12 - 18 months	1
18 - 24 months	1.5
18 months	1.5
1 year	1
2 years	2
3 years	3
4 years	4
5 years	5
6 years	6
7 years	7
8 years	8
9 years	9
Over 10 years	10

The approximate benefits claimed potentially in the future were calculated by subtracting a given date with the job start date for each individual, and multiplying this with the benefits the individual was claiming in the past. The approximate benefits claimed within the lifetime of the individual were calculated by subtracting the retirement age (65 years) with the person's age, and multiplying this by the benefits claimed.

The job earning potential was finally calculated by matching the individuals with a sustained job with the approximate salary for that Sector (Sector Level 1). The approximate salaries were taken from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2015, by the Office for National Statistics and downloaded from:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/annualsurveyofhoursandearnings/2015provisionalresults> .

This was multiplied by the period of time the individual has been working, a stated period of time in the future, and until the individual's retirement, assuming that the individual stays in the same job with the same wage until their retirement. The income tax and NI contributions were also calculated as 20% net and 12% net respectively.



City Deal Baseline
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