

# FINAL EVALUATION

**PROJECT:** HULL CLLD PROGRAMME

**PREPARED FOR:** HULL CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** JUNE 2023



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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

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### The Hull CLLD Programme

The Hull Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme cost around £7.33m funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and match funding from projects. CLLD was a bottom-up approach to addressing local issues. It aimed to link people from the most deprived parts of Hull to economic opportunities locally, through support, training, employment and self-enterprise. It was a five-year programme, originally running from September 2017 to December 2022, then extended to March 2023 due to Covid-19.

The programme included 26 CLLD projects delivered by 19 VCSE local delivery partners. It was led by a Local Action Group (LAG), made up of representatives from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors and residents. Hull City Council (HCC) was the Accountable Body and Humber Learning Consortium (HLC) was the Programme Management Organisation (PMO). The Accountable Body facilitated the development of the Local Development Strategy, oversaw the development and management of the programme, including engagement, the grant process and PMO function carried out by HLC.

### About the Evaluation

The evaluation is required to understand learning and impact, inform future policy development and direct future funding decisions. The LAG Board recommended commissioning an independent evaluation in the programme design stage. This was beyond the funding requirements and aimed to help the programme team best understand and respond to challenges along the way such as Covid-19.

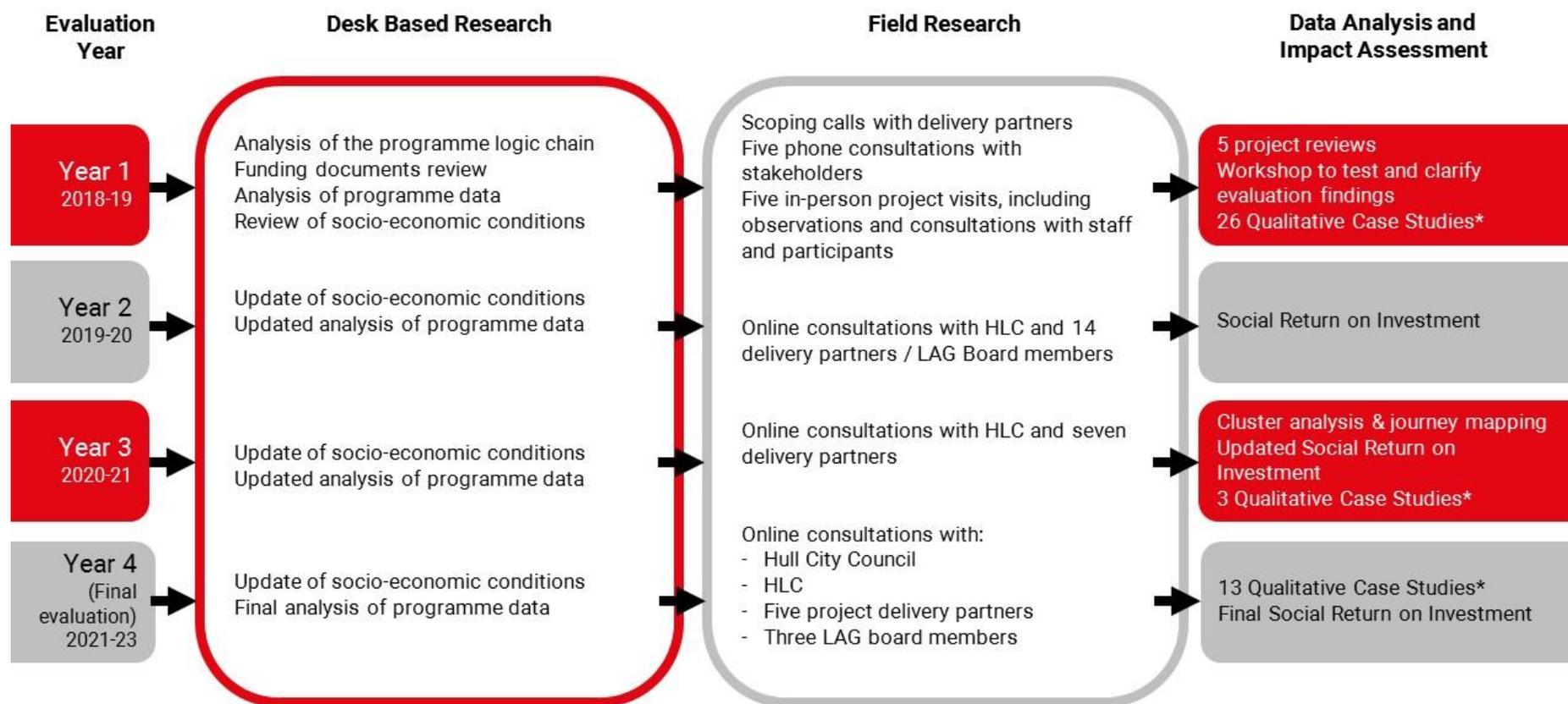
Hull City Council appointed Forever Consulting in January 2019 as the independent evaluation partner for the programme. This included the development of the evaluation design, three annual interim evaluation reports and this Final Evaluation Report, which follows programme completion. It is in line with relevant technical guidance.

### Approach

We collected and analysed evidence using a range of methods over the evaluation lifetime. The approach was altered after Year 1 due to Covid-19. The mixed method approach intended to capture new evidence each year and to avoid repeating the same messages.

Our data collection and analysis comprised desk-based research, field research and data analysis and impact assessment work. An overview of the methods applied each year is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

**Figure 1.1: Overview of Hull CLLD Evaluation Approach**



\*not all case studies are included in the report/ further case studies are available separately

## SECTION 2: THE HULL CLLD PROGRAMME

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This section assesses the programme design through a logic chain analysis.

### Rationale

The Hull CLLD Local Development Strategy (LDS) set out the rationale by highlighting several barriers to employment and economic growth locally:

- ∞ High levels of unemployment and economic inactivity, and a benefits dependency
- ∞ High levels of deprivation
- ∞ Poor health
- ∞ Low skills levels
- ∞ Dependence on low value employment
- ∞ Digital exclusion
- ∞ Transport (cost availability and accessibility)

### Changing context

As highlighted in **Appendix 1**, many of the socio-economic conditions have worsened since the programme began. This appears to be largely due to Covid-19 and wider external challenges outside the control of the programme.

### Objectives

The programme had three key objectives:

- ∞ To make it easier for 2,500 people from the Hull CLLD area to access local economic opportunities (a job or business) by 2022 (now 2023).
- ∞ To create more local opportunities (jobs and businesses), supporting 100 businesses to create 40 additional jobs by 2022 (now 2023).
- ∞ To increase digital skills and take up of online opportunities, supporting 1,000 people by 2022 (now 2023).

These objectives were to be delivered through a programme of activities that aligned with following five priority actions:

- ∞ Targeted training in key work-related skills
- ∞ Making it easier to find access to work
- ∞ Growing integrated community hubs
- ∞ Supporting local and community businesses
- ∞ Joined up support to increase household incomes

### Inputs

Hull City Council secured £7.5m of ESF and ERDF funding (including match funding from projects) to spend from 2017 to 2022 (now 2023).

## Activities

Typical ESF and ERDF project activities delivered through the CLLD programme included:

<b>Initial engagement, assessments, support with barriers</b>
Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) assessments / Personal action plans
Housing and financial advice
Health & wellbeing
Careers/back to work advice / workshops
Referrals/signposting to other services/agencies for advice
<b>Support, soft skills, confidence building</b>
Confidence building, soft skills & employability skills
Mentoring and one to one support
Community/ family support
<b>Address learning, training skills needs</b>
Adult learning/ training (including accredited training)
<b>Gain experience</b>

Volunteering/ work placements

### Identify work opportunities

CV writing

Job search & interview skills

Job club/ job fairs/ links with local employers

### Support in employment/ post engagement

Ongoing mentoring/ support

### Enterprise/ business start-up and growth / self-employment

Mentoring and one to one enterprise/business support and advice

Information and training workshops and specialist expertise and advice

Multi-use business space and access to resources

Business/ enterprise events/ networks

One advantage of the CLLD model is that it allowed support to be bespoke, holistic and tailored to individual needs. A lot of ESF activity focussed on addressing softer employability issues, such as confidence and digital skills and preparing for work.

## Target participants

- ∞ ESF target groups included: those aged over 50, people with disabilities and ethnically diverse people.
- ∞ ERDF target groups included: small businesses, new enterprises and potential entrepreneurs.

## Intended outputs

The following targets were defined at the programme start in 2017. Due to Covid-19, a proposal to reduce programme targets was discussed. For ESF, DWP advised that a time extension would allow projects to meet targets and that reducing targets would mean a subsequent reduction in funding. As a result, targets remained the same and some projects extended their operational delivery by up to 4 months (until the end of March 2023). For ERDF, targets were amended to reduce the enterprise support outputs and increase outputs linked to capital investment. This was in response to a demand for more community hub and enterprise space in the city. The demand was identified when the CLLD Call for Projects received more ERDF capital project bids than expected. Updated ERDF targets were approved by MHCLG in 2022.

**Table 2.1: ESF Output Targets**

Outputs		Target
O1	Total participants	2,510
CO01	Unemployed including long term	1,750
CO03	Inactive participants	760
O4	Participants over 50 years of age	435
CO5	Participants who are ethnically diverse	295
CO16	Participants with disabilities	572

**Table 2.2: ERDF Output Targets**

Outputs		Target	Updated Target
C1	Enterprises receiving support	100	40
C5	New enterprises supported	70	20
C8	Employment increase in supported enterprises	40	5
P11	Potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	200	150
P12	Sqm public or commercial building built or renovated in target areas	1,100	1,300

**End results**

**Table 2.3: ESF End Result Targets**

Results		Target
CR02	Participants in education or training upon leaving	830
R1	Unemployed participants into employment (including self-employment) upon leaving	590
R2	Inactive participants into employment or job search upon leaving	220
<b>Total results</b>		<b>1,640</b>

**Conclusions on programme design**

The programme aimed to provide a holistic and tailored approach to supporting individuals with complex and multiple barriers into education, training, employment and self-employment, living in the most deprived areas of Hull. The ERDF element of the programme aimed to support potential entrepreneurs and grow new businesses in Hull that will create additional, inclusive and sustainable jobs and help to build stronger communities.

There was a strong rationale for the programme. Hull had above average levels of unemployment and economic inactivity restrained by the multiple complex barriers that many local people faced. These issues were more marked in the most deprived neighbourhoods of

Hull. Further, there was not a strong self-employment or enterprise economy locally.

The overall programme logic and theory of change is clear. However, there are wider external challenges and barriers to employment and enterprise which are beyond the scope and influence of the programme. These are presented in **Appendix 1**.

The delivery model appeared sensible based on its initial design. However, several challenges occurred in practice. Eligibility of participants was based on selected postcode areas. This was particularly difficult for partners as many local people wanting support lived just outside of the postcode area, but facing many of the same issues as eligible participants supported. Often partners would support these individuals regardless. This created additional costs for themselves that could not be claimed through CLLD.

It was also difficult for SMEs who had different addresses for their registered address, their place of business or their home address. Or they might be out of the area, but employing people from the target area. Further, some areas became more deprived following Covid-19 but were not eligible.

Selecting delivery partners who were trusted in the local community was a good move. Their relationships, reputation, and level of trust in the local community is important. Delivery within the hub areas and communities of Hull, rather than city centric, was also beneficial. This responded to the needs and barriers of local people who do not or cannot travel into the city centre.

The CLLD programme was designed to allow for a greater number of lower value projects rather than a few larger projects. This was useful as it enabled smaller organisations to engage with the programme (due to lower match funding requirements). However, it did create operational challenges. This included hyperlocal competition, with several project delivery partners highlighting there were a few similar providers in the same area often competing for participants/outputs. It may have also meant inefficiencies in service delivery locally. It also caused frustration among partners as the paperwork and information requirements were not reflective of the amount of funding received

***“The reporting process and eligibility was no different to that for multimillion pound projects. When some projects were only receiving £20,000 and working with a few people, the requirements were not reflective of the scale of money.” HCC***

Outputs and results were clearly defined using ESF and ERDF output and results indicators. They are relevant to some of the proposed activity. However, they were narrowly defined and did not capture the full range of outcomes and impacts achieved.

Target participants often face complex and multiple barriers and there is a need for longer-term intervention. Much of the support is soft outcome focused (such as confidence building). This type of support increased during Covid-19 (including a greater focus on IT / digital skills and barriers) and project delivery partners cannot demonstrate progress against these softer outcomes despite investing significant resource here. This is not captured in claims but this is clearly evidenced in the beneficiary research and through some of the case studies.

Likewise, ERDF delivery partners struggled to capture a lot of work undertaken through the defined output targets. If a business took less than 12 hours support, they could not be counted. For example, only 148 enterprises supported<sup>1</sup> have been claimed, compared to 237 who received some support.

***“Some businesses only need a little support and they cannot be counted. It would be difficult to force somebody to receive further support they don’t need just to be able to count the outcome. People often drop out before they receive the full 12 hours.”***  
**Project delivery partner**

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<sup>1</sup> This includes the sum of the number of: enterprises receiving support; new enterprises supported; and potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready

CLLD has been able to start the support for these businesses, which may be continued later by other organisations and programmes after CLLD has ended and new needs arise for the businesses. The benefits of this have not been captured through the ERDF results.

Key contextual changes occurred during delivery including the roll out of Universal Credit, the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Most notably, Covid-19 has impacted significantly on worklessness (including the profile of who is workless has changed) and businesses, and anecdotally have reduced people's attitudes to risk, investment and enterprise. Socio-economic data shows worklessness, economic inactivity and self-employment has worsened because of Covid-19. This means the need for the programme is likely to be greater now.

## SECTION 3: PROGRAMME PROGRESS

This section summarises progress against output and funding targets.

### Funding

Hull City Council secured £4.9m of ESF funding and £2.7m of ERDF funding, totalling an overall fund of just over £7.5m (including match funding).

**Table 3.1** illustrates that 97% of ESF funding and 99% of ERDF funding has been spent. This totals to 97% of the total programme spend, equating to an underspend of £205,931.

Covid-19 caused a period of no or limited programme delivery, and in turn reduced programme spend. As a result, in late 2021 HCC were faced with an underspend. A decision was made by the LAG Board to offer growth opportunities to projects that were performing well, enabling them to access extra funding to deliver more activity against their project. Two growth windows took place:

- ∞ £273k growth funding was awarded to 4 projects in November 2021; and
- ∞ £156k was awarded to 3 projects in September 2022.

Additionally, HLC reviewed the performance of individual projects and agreed funding reductions with projects that couldn't deliver their original plans. This funding was also reallocated to approved growth projects.

These positive actions by the LAG Board means much more of the funding was allocated than would have been the case, and consequently more people accessed support.

**Table 3.1: Hull CLLD Programme Funding and Spend**

	Target	Spend	%
ESF Projects	£4,866,666	£4,696,434	97%
ERDF Revenue*	£1,895,736	£1,895,736	100%
ERDF Capital	£774,171	£738,472	95%
ERDF Total	£2,669,907	£2,634,208	99%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£7,536,573</b>	<b>£7,330,642</b>	<b>97%</b>

\*Includes £889,669 of Management and Administration costs

### Outputs

**Tables 3.2** and **3.3** illustrate performance against output and results targets.

#### ESF Outputs

2,165 workless residents were engaged. This is 86% of the original target. 1,271 participants have achieved a positive results outcome, with the majority going into education or training. This equates to 59%

of engaged participants having a positive outcome (as according to ESF definitions).

The total number of participants engaged is below the target. This is mainly due to a lower achievement against unemployed (CO03) participants.

A possible explanation is the introduction of other DWP programmes (Restart and Kickstart) targeting the same groups following Covid-19. For example, a requirement was that all people unemployed for over 12 months were referred to Restart. This led to a reduction in referrals from JCP in to the CLLD programme. As a result, Hull CLLD focussed their attention on supporting economically inactive residents, which explains the overachievement here.

The number of ethnically diverse people supported is very high, at 151% of the target. This reflects the work of delivery projects (such as TJ Training, Toranj and Best Hope) that specifically target these communities who have a good track record of delivering similar programmes in the city. As demonstrated in **Appendix 1**, the size of this group grew too.

Although just below target, the high number of participants with disabilities supported (92%) is reflective of the delivery partners funded through CLLD. This-Ability is a programme in Hull designed to help people with various disabilities develop their employability skills. Many of the partners involved in This-Ability were also CLLD delivery partners and have experience of engaging people with disabilities and have strong relationships with this community.

### ERDF Outputs

The updated ERDF targets more closely reflect the local demand for more community hub and enterprise space in the city. CLLD has over-achieved against the targets for Enterprises receiving support (C1) and Sqm public or commercial building built or renovated in target areas (P12).

However, the three other outputs are below target. A potential explanation for this reflects a decreased appetite or going into self-employment in and after Covid-19 due to people becoming more risk averse. Additionally, many small businesses have struggled due to the cost-of-living crisis and have had to cut costs including recruitment.

### ESF Results

Of the 2,165 people engaged, 20% have secured employment (or moved into job search) and 38% gone into further education or training. This compares very well against relevant benchmarks (see **Appendix 5**).

However, ESF results performance is mixed. Supporting participants into education or training (100%) met target. Whereas, the programme has struggled to move unemployed people in to employment (47%). This is likely to the introduction of Restart as highlighted earlier. But wider local conditions outside of the programme's control have also been influencing factors.

**Table 3.2: Hull CLLD Programme Outputs**

Outputs		Target	Achieved	%
<b>ESF Outputs</b>				
O1	Total participants	2,510	2,165	86%
CO01	Unemployed inc. long term	1,750	1,252	72%
CO03	Inactive participants	760	913	120%
O4	Participants over 50 years old	435	429	99%
CO5	Ethnically diverse participants	295	444	151%
CO16	Participants with disabilities	572	528	92%
<b>ERDF Outputs</b>				
C1	Enterprises receiving support	40	50	125%
C5	New enterprises supported	20	12	60%
C8	Employment increase in supported enterprises	5	4	80%
P11	Potential entrepreneurs assisted	150	82	55%
P12	Sqm public or commercial building built or renovated	1,300	1,669.5	128%

Source: HLC, June 2023

**Table 3.3: Hull CLLD Programme Results**

Results		Target	Achieved	%
CR02	Participants in education or training upon leaving	830	830	100%
R1	Unemployed participants into employment (including self-employment) upon leaving	590	276	47%
R2	Inactive participants into employment or job search upon leaving	220	165	75%
<b>Total results</b>		1,640	1,473	90%

Source: HLC, June 2023

## Conclusions

### Overall Hull CLLD has performed well against targets...

Original programme results targets were challenging given the local contextual issues, barriers faced by participants and based on benchmarks from other relevant programmes. Despite this, the CLLD programme has performed well against targets. Feedback suggests this is largely due to a collaborative partnership approach between the LAG Board, HCC, HLC and several strong delivery partners who were supported effectively in their delivery role by HLC. This is discussed further in Section 4.

### **Even in the face of Covid-19...**

Covid-19 was a major setback and affected delivery in the following ways:

- ∞ Lockdown and social distancing restricted delivery. Many project delivery partners moved to online approaches to engage participants, although this was challenging in Hull where digital exclusion is more prevalent. It also made engaging new participants more difficult.
- ∞ Several project delivery partners temporarily furloughed their staff and some put their projects on hold. This meant they could not operate or needed to operate at a lower capacity for some months.
- ∞ Fewer referrals came through from other sources. For example, Job Centre Plus (JCP) prioritised other post-Covid and new national mainstream programmes as a priority for referrals during CLLD. This is one reason for the overperformance of engagement with economically inactive residents as projects targeted and refocussed to others that needed help.
- ∞ Participants needs changed because of Covid-19. Partners focussed on supporting existing participants with emerging priority

needs, such as general well-being and emotional support, access to food, financial issues and mental health issues.

- ∞ ERDF projects commenced at the end of 2019/start of 2020, just as Covid-19 hit. This was a difficult environment in which to start off delivery.

Following Covid-19, the local contextual conditions dramatically worsened. Evidence showed that Hull was one of the worst impacted parts of the country in terms of worklessness resulting from Covid-19<sup>2</sup>.

### **And other challenges that also affected delivery...**

- ∞ Aside from Covid-19, the complex and multiple barriers faced by many participants require long-term intervention, longer than programmes like CLLD allow for.
- ∞ The nature of support was often focussed on softer outcomes (such as confidence building) which wasn't captured in the targets. As demonstrated in Section 5, performance here is good.
- ∞ Wider barriers to employment exist, which are beyond the influence of this programme. For example, fewer jobs available with greater competition, existing challenges around the benefits trap and Universal Credit.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.smf.co.uk/revealed-the-places-facing-the-worst-economic-hit-from-the-pandemic/> (July 2020)

- ∞ There is a skills gap in Hull. Even for entry level jobs participants need sufficient skills, many of which need to be acquired at a formal education setting (e.g. college). Anecdotally, there is a resistance to this amongst people furthest from the labour market and those the CLLD programme has been targeting.
- ∞ Wider infrastructural issues are acute in Hull – including in-flexibility of employers, high childcare and transport and costs.
- ∞ Project staff found it difficult to meet the evidence requirements and were unable to enrol some participants and count some achievements. For example homeless people who did not have an address.

Based on this evidence, the results targets were difficult to achieve and the Hull CLLD programme has performed well, especially given the context.

## SECTION 4: PROGRAMME DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT

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This section explores programme delivery and management. Feedback from consultees informs this aspect of the evaluation.

The Hull CLLD programme has been led by the LAG Board made up of representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, and residents. Managed by HCC as the Accountable Body, with programme management support provided by HLC.

Delivery partners were selected through an open call for project proposals in a competitive process. Significant investment was placed on the co-design of Hull's CLLD Programme with local partners at the programme design stage.

Largely, feedback on the programme delivery and management has been positive but with some identified areas for improvement.

### **A very effective project management organisation...**

Throughout our evaluation, many of the successes of the programme have been attributed to the LAG Board's decision for HCC to act as the Accountable Body and to appoint a Programme Management Organisation. HLC bring deep insights into the local VCSE delivery partners. This includes: their service offer, their community relationships, their appropriateness to CLLD, and their fit with other relevant local programmes. Feedback from project delivery partners and LAG board members supports this.

***"HLC is an experienced PMO with good knowledge of programmes and funding. They have been very important to the programme's success."*** LAG board member

***"HLC as a PMO were 100% efficient."*** LAG board member

HLC provided an effective PMO function, and guided project delivery partners to ensure targets were best achieved and all geographical areas were supported. HLC's experience, guidance and advice ensured project delivery ran smoothly, even in challenging circumstances, such as throughout Covid-19 and awaiting Project Change Request (PCR) approvals (which often took a very long time).

HLC worked proactively with HCC and the LAG Board to reallocate funding and targets for underperforming projects, monitored areas of poor performance and identified strategies for improvement to drive the best outcomes possible.

### **A carefully selected LAG board...**

A LAG Board was established to ensure effective governance of the Hull CLLD project. An engagement process took place to recruit a diverse mix of board members. Each of the Hub areas was represented by a community and voluntary sector organisation and a local resident. The Board also had representation from HCC, local Councillors, Job Centre Plus, NHS, University of Hull, the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce.

LAG board members suggested that HCC were effective in appointing a board that represented a wide range of sectors and local community interests and perspectives.

***"I'm extremely proud of what CLLD has achieved and how it's been delivered. From putting the bid together and the staff involved, to the involvement at grass roots level and bringing in a mix of sectors to ensure cross-representation."*** LAG board member

Feedback revealed that the LAG Board worked together very well. Very few LAG Board members left throughout the duration of the programme, which is also positive. Members were clearly invested in the programme, they offer appropriate challenges, whilst regularly offering support. The Board were flexible, particularly during Covid when meetings needed to be held online. They were also responsive, providing answers and approvals quickly when needed.

***"I really enjoyed the opportunity to be involved and to see the programme through to conclusion."*** LAG board member

Some board members were also a delivery partner. This is not uncommon and is evident in other CLLD programmes. Although there was no evidence of this, it could have created a challenge with potential conflict of interest, however, robust governance was in place to avoid this.

## **A community focussed and considerate Accountable Body...**

HCC was the Accountable Body. They were also responsible for strategically managing the programme and working with HLC, the LAG Board and the managing authorities to ensure effective delivery of Hull CLLD. HCC were community focused and considerate in their approach to managing the programme. Examples included:

- ∞ Extensive work was undertaken before the programme began to make sure the CLLD Strategy was led by local communities. It built on existing research and consultation that had taken place to identify priorities.
- ∞ A Shadow LAG Board being developed to ensure full community engagement from the earliest stages of planning for CLLD.
- ∞ HCC committed to processing claims monthly instead of quarterly. This helped the cash flow of small organisations delivering the programme.
- ∞ Ensured that LAG Board meetings were accessible, in community settings and that board members were supported in their roles.

## **A good selection of project delivery partners...**

A key success factor was getting the right project delivery partners on board and giving them the level of ongoing support needed to manage complex funding programmes.

Hull CLLD funded 26 projects. The majority were ESF funded with five projects allocated ERDF funding. The projects funded covered a wide

range of interests and needs, from work placements in environmental recycling units to ESOL and from sports related engagement to housing renovation activities.

Project delivery partners invested significant time getting to know the people they worked with. This led to tailored, supportive and engaging support. Partners are well-connected and have been long present in the communities they serve making them accessible and trustworthy.

Most partners delivered the programme successfully. They were able to flex their offering following Covid-19. The few that struggled were unable to alter their support much following Covid-19 due to how specific it was. It meant they were largely put on hold throughout the pandemic.

*“Some projects have delivered significant volumes and values of ESF and ERDF provision very flexibly, they’ve been able to cope with the significant challenges the pandemic presented.”*

HLC

### **But with limited networking opportunities...**

However, project delivery partners suggested there existed limited networking opportunities between them. Several would have liked more project partner level networking events. Due to the challenges associated with counting and claiming participants and outputs, partners were sometimes competing instead of collaborating.

### **Delivery partners also felt the pressure of the funding requirements...**

The programme funded small community and voluntary organisations. Many had not previously received European funding and were unaware of the scale of bureaucracy involved. The paperwork, eligibility and detail required for claims was a big challenge for many, particularly at the beginning of the programme.

The requirements of delivering the ERDF capital projects also caused stress and pressure for some partners, for example with procurement. Some partners learned quickly and adapted to the challenge. Others struggled.

*“The project got off to a delayed start due to many issues with processes and bottlenecks i.e. procurement, surveyors, the internal renovations, electrics”* Project Delivery Partner

### **Appropriate targeting of beneficiaries...**

The targeting of project beneficiaries was broadly appropriate, except for the postcode eligibility. This caused challenges and additional work for partners throughout the programme. ESF participants were mainly engaged through outreach, word of mouth, existing relationships, and referrals. These were delivery partners’ preferred approaches.

The programme targeted the hardest to reach who were economically inactive and long term unemployed, often with complex multiple barriers to employment. Most of this target group is difficult to move

into education or employment often needing sustained support over a long period.

Entrepreneurs were largely targeted through hubs, such as the Business Hub located in Hull Central Library, community library branches and the new CLLD funded Greenwood Centre. Feedback shows that many did not need the full 12 hours of support offered by CLLD.

### **Effective delivery of cross-cutting themes...**

The programme delivered well against the cross-cutting themes of Equality and Diversity and Environmental Sustainability. Examples are set out below against these themes. Success was driven through the project management by:

- ∞ Establishing a diverse LAG Board with a mix of public, private, voluntary and community representatives.
- ∞ HCC putting in place cross-cutting theme action plans that were monitored regularly.
- ∞ Ensuring these themes were central to scoring and approving projects for the programme.

### **Equality and Diversity**

As demonstrated by the ESF outputs, the programme has performed well for engaging participants that were aged over 50, had disabilities and were ethnically diverse. Many of these were particularly vulnerable.

Digital exclusion is a major factor affecting equality in Hull. The programme recognised this and digital inclusion activities were successfully built into all projects. Some examples of this include providing access to computer suites and broadband, IT courses, one-to-one support and training on basic IT principles, and using digital skills to improve participants' social networks.

#### **A skilled man with a digital barrier preventing new job opportunities...**

Alan came into the office after seeing the poster in the window offering digital skills and unemployment support. He had been out of work 2 days and had just been to an agency seeking factory positions, the agency required him to have a Manual Handling Certificate, which he did not have.

During an IAG session with an advisor he explained he needed the certificate which can be gained online, but had no experience of using a computer. The advisor enrolled him immediately. And the next day supported him to enrol onto a Manual Handling online course and provided a lesson in how to use the computer for the course, remaining on standby for any IT support needed during the training.

The advisor also helped Alan to review and update his CV in the session. Alan passed the test first time and left the office with the certificate in hand and went straight to the agency to secure his factory position, all within 24 hours of seeing the poster.

Partners also worked hard to ensure that no-one missed out on support due to a lack of access to digital technology. They loaned people laptops, tablets, mobile phones and dongles so they could have digital access and participate in training or have a means for communicating with the project.

During Covid-19, they also made sure there were enough devices in households where children were home-schooling so that participants did not miss out. For example, Timebank set up a Digital Project, taking donations of old computers and other digital devices, fixing them and giving them out to participants. Other project delivery partners did similar.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

The programme funded projects that directly responded to environmental sustainability:

- ∞ Enviromail offered work experience and training opportunities at the Enviro-hub recycling centre in Hull.
- ∞ Giroscope buys and renovates empty properties in West Hull to provide affordable homes for those in housing need. They also run projects that refurbish old unwanted digital equipment, renovate

and reuse household furniture, and bring unwanted bikes back to good use in their bike repair and maintenance workshop.

- ∞ Two of the ERDF capital projects included renovating and bringing back in to use local unused assets (the former St. Matthew's church<sup>3</sup> and Greenwood Business and Enterprise Centre<sup>4</sup>).
- ∞ One business supported through CLLD ERDF funding - The Library of Stuff<sup>5</sup> - recycles, refurbishes and repairs household and garden items and tools that can be rented out for an affordable price. The library is contributing to the more sustainable use of goods and reducing the community's carbon footprint.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://giroscope.org.uk/boulevard-village-hall/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://unityincommunity.org.uk/greenwood-business-and-enterprise-centre/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.libraryofstuff.co.uk/>

## SECTION 5: OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The section explores the difference the programme has made to individuals, businesses, delivery partners and overall.

### Individual level impacts - ESF

The programme supported 2,165 workless residents. Many lacked qualifications, skills or experience. Many participants also experienced multiple and complex issues that acted as additional barriers to gaining employment, such as acute lack of confidence, mental health issues, disabilities, caring responsibilities, ex-offender, homelessness and the benefits trap.

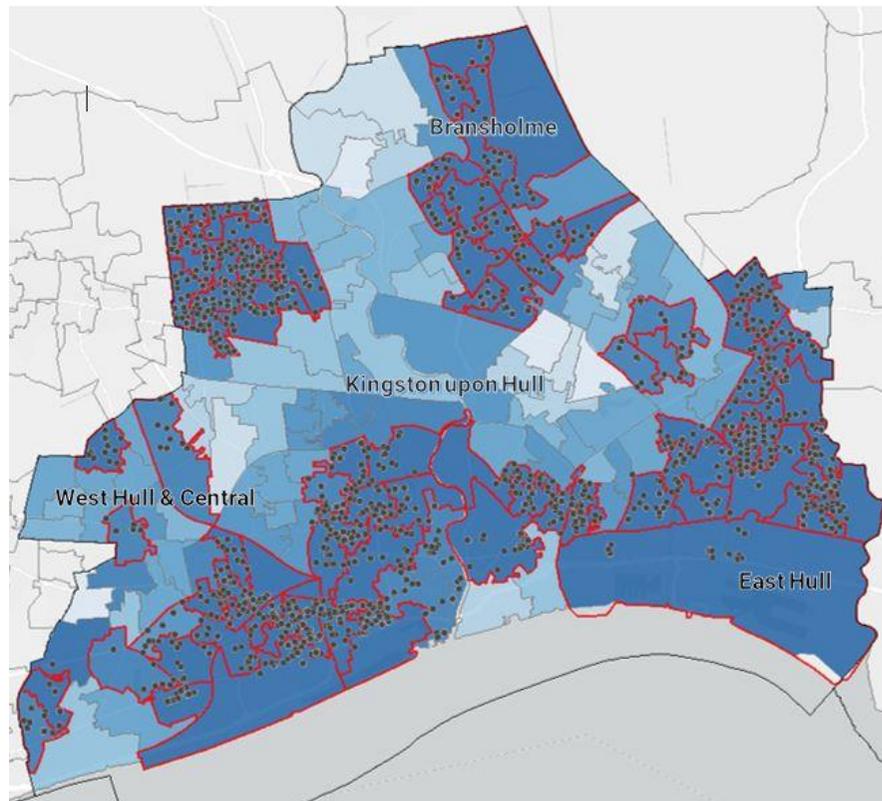
The project delivery partners supported participants at various stages on their route to education, training, employment or self-employment.

### Who was involved in the programme?

Participants engaged in the programme came from what are typically the most vulnerable communities including:

- ∞ A notable 93% who lived in the top 10% most deprived areas in the country (see **Figure 5.1**).
- ∞ 20% were aged over 50 years old.
- ∞ 21% came from ethnically diverse communities.
- ∞ 24% were disabled.
- ∞ 20% came from single adult households.

**Figure 5.1: Where participants live by deprivation**



#### Key:

- Participants
- ▭ Hull CLLD boundaries
- ▭ Local Authority boundary

#### IMD 2019:

- Light blue: Least deprived LSOAs
- Dark blue: Most deprived LSOAs

In the Year 3 evaluation, we explored the characteristics of participants' and undertook detailed analysis of their journeys and their distance travelled towards employment. The purpose was to help understand who was involved in the programme, what works for certain groups and in what circumstances.

We gained access to individual participant data (1,240 participants) which included information such as their demographics, how long they had been on the programme, what support they had received and their employment status at the start and end of the programme.

We undertook 'cluster analysis'. This is a technique which groups individuals together based on similarities across several key characteristics. Here, the cluster grouping was based on:

- ∞ Employment status at the start of their programme
- ∞ Employment status once they left the programme
- ∞ Time on the programme
- ∞ Age
- ∞ Unemployment length
- ∞ Educational attainment

The analysis identified five key groups of people involved in the programme:

- ∞ Younger people facing difficult challenges.
- ∞ Inactive older people with low skills levels.
- ∞ Young parents in and out of work.
- ∞ Young educated men close to the labour market.
- ∞ Older people surrounded by long-term worklessness.

The analysis showed that the groups most likely to achieve a positive outcome were young educated men close to the labour market and inactive older people with low skills levels. The groups least likely to achieve a positive outcome were young people facing difficult challenges and older people surrounded by long-term worklessness.

A summary of the five groups is set out in **Table 5.1**. A more detailed profile of each group is included in **Appendix 3**.

**Table 5.1: Summary of the five participant groups**

	<b>Key characteristics</b>	<b>Typical Journey</b>	<b>Typical Programme Length</b>	<b>What works?</b>
<b>Younger people facing difficult challenges.</b>	More likely to be younger, an ex-offender and homeless (than the average participant).	Most started the programme unemployed or economically inactive (and not in education or training). Only 6 of the 220 participants moved into education and training. Most still in a similar position as they started.	More than half a year and often more than a year.	Progress has been made in achieving a lot of softer outcomes including: improving mental health, confidence building, basic skills and improved communication.
<b>Inactive older people with low skills levels.</b>	More likely to be older working age, with no or little qualifications.	Most started the programme economically inactive (and not in education or training), with many unemployed for over 3 years. Around half of this group have moved into education or training and a quarter into employment. Around a fifth are still inactive (not in education). The remainder are unemployed.	Up to one year.	Main activity here included job training and job searches, and basic, communication and life skills.
<b>Young parents in and out of work.</b>	More likely to be younger, a single parent or in a workless household with children.	Most started the programme unemployed or economically inactive (and not in education or training). Around a fifth moved into education or training and a further 8% moved into employment. Although almost half are still unemployed.	Less than 16 weeks and many for less than 8 weeks.	Main activities completed were around job specific training and job searches.

<p><b>Young educated men close to the labour market.</b></p>	<p>More likely to be younger, male, white, an ex-offender with higher level qualifications and a disability affecting work.</p>	<p>More likely to have started the programme short-term unemployed. Nine out of ten moved into employment with the remaining now in education or training.</p>	<p>Less than 8 weeks.</p>	<p>Main activity included job specific training and job searches or gaining information, advice and guidance.</p>
<p><b>Older people surrounded by long-term worklessness.</b></p>	<p>More likely to be older working age, living in workless households.</p>	<p>Nearly all started the programme long-term unemployed. Although a small number of successes, the majority are still in long-term unemployment.</p>	<p>Over a year.</p>	<p>Progress has been made in achieving a lot of softer outcomes including: providing information, advice and guidance, basic and life skills, and completing a work placement.</p>

### What impact did the programme have on individuals?

Participants received support at different stages of their route to employment, covering initial advice and engagement, addressing barriers, through to developing softer skills, vocational training, work experience and support with accessing employment. This has had a huge impact on individuals, as shown below.

### Participants gained support with important and challenging barriers...

The programme aimed to identify and tackle local barriers to improve economic prospects and bring people closer to the labour market. Project delivery partners and participants reported that some of the main personal challenges faced by participants include homelessness, being a lone parent with little support, caring responsibilities, the benefits trap, drug and substance misuse, physical and mental health, housing, debt and financial stress.

By offering a holistic approach and open-door policy, many partners identified and addressed personal issues and major barriers that may not have been picked up through other types of support. This can make a huge difference to a person's quality of life and in some cases, feedback suggested it prevented suicides.

Examples of wider support provided include:

- ∞ Helping individuals to find housing solutions and food banks.
- ∞ Budgeting, financial help and ensuring they were receiving all the benefits and government support they were entitled to. The programme helped 60 people reduce their financial stress.

- ∞ Helping them access childcare and support. Outcome data shows 82 increased their confidence in parenting.
- ∞ Signposting to counselling services and often providing this themselves.
- ∞ Helping participants to become independent and do things for themselves, for example using public transport.

Across all projects, participants reported the friendly and supportive nature of project staff and the benefit of emotional support.

#### **A refugee with four children and nowhere to call home**

A Somali woman and her four children lost their father and were forced to flee their home. They trekked across countries and lived in a tent until eventually they arrived in the UK. Unity in Community housed the family (not funded through Hull CLLD), supported them through the food bank and gave them equipment and furniture to help them move forward. Ongoing support from Unity in Community has helped the family to integrate into the local community and feel part of the city. Two of the four children are now at University, one works for the Refugee Council and the fourth is in school. The family faced horrific challenges but with the support of Unity in Community they have moved forward with their lives and excelled.



### **A single mother with challenges that affect her daily life**

Brenda found out about Probe through an outreach event at the job centre and arranged an appointment the same day. Brenda was vulnerable and had lots of barriers, she was a lone parent with a small child, had debt issues, and experiencing anti-social behaviour from neighbours.

She was quite young and had no confidence. She admitted that she hadn't opened her mail in a long time because she was scared. She brought her mail to Probe and they went through everything. There was a Section 21 eviction notice as well as other debts. Probe worked with Brenda to visit the landlord and arrange a payment plan. Probe also supported Brenda to contact Citizens Advice Bureau and her landlord, attending appointments with her. They helped her install home security measures. Brenda improved

her confidence and began to advocate for herself. As well as supporting Brenda with some of the basics, Probe have begun to have conversations about next steps. Brenda has expressed an ambition to do some maths and English qualifications.

### **An ex-offender facing remorse and low confidence**

When Carl came to us, he was struggling with being unemployed. He had worked as a fisherman for over 15 years and was used to working away from home for long periods of time. When he committed his offence, he lost his job. He had struggled to find meaningful and sustainable employment since and felt his conviction was a barrier. Carl felt very remorseful about his conviction, and it knocked his confidence. He was reluctant to apply for jobs as he didn't know how to explain his conviction.

Carl engaged with his advisor really well. He came into the office weekly as well as keeping in touch on the phone. We helped him develop a professional CV and a tailored covering letter. We helped him apply for jobs

After a couple of months with us, Carl gained full time employment with a company he was keen to join. He aspires to progress there. He is also planning to complete a forklift course and driving test so that he has the requirements needed for a promotion.

### **A man that spiralled into homelessness**

Dylan was married for a long time and worked hard for most of his life, but then his marriage broke down and he went off the rails and ended up homeless.

Dylan has been at Emmaus for around 18 months and loves the community there. He said that it is like a big family, everyone is accepted, and he is made to feel at home. There is always someone to talk to (both staff or other companions) and the staff are very supportive.

He has been on a lot of courses at Emmaus (mental health awareness, workshops, furniture polishing) where he learned a lot. He is going on a placement at a bike workshop soon, which he is really looking forward to. Dylan said that he is a completely different person now than when he joined Emmaus. He has grown as a person, is much more confident, wakes up happy and motivated every day and looks forward to going to work [working in the Emmaus enterprises]. He wants to carry on learning as much as he can and give back to Emmaus, by sharing his skills with others and working in the community.

### **They improved soft skills and their physical and mental health...**

A significant amount of time spent with individuals aimed to increase their confidence. Project delivery partners recognise this is crucial to

accessing the labour market, and would also help other areas of the participants' lives.

Many participants cited a lack of confidence as a barrier to accessing employment. Through Hull CLLD, 230 participants have undertaken activities specifically aimed at increasing their confidence. Many participants interviewed reported their confidence, self-esteem, mental health and wellbeing had improved as a result of participating in the project.

### **A woman tackling her mental health and confidence challenges**

Elaine has been coming to Giroscope for around 6 months. She suffers from anxiety and depression that prevents her from working.

Elaine is involved in the house renovation project at Giroscope, which she finds therapeutic. Elaine also said she enjoys the social side of Giroscope; she gets on well and has a good laugh with the supervisor and other volunteers. Since joining, Elaine's confidence has increased, and she has been pushing herself to do things that she wouldn't normally do. She has now dropped one day per week of counselling as she no longer needs as much support.

Although she is not yet ready for employment, Elaine would like to go to college and develop her skills in painting and decorating. Elaine is in the process of finding out what courses she can do at college, as she is keen to gain qualifications, develop her skills and make a better life for herself.

Additionally, project delivery partners supported participants to improve their soft skills and their health in the following ways:

- ∞ Project delivery partners adapted their support in response to the changing needs of participants resulting from Covid-19. This included supporting people with their mental health and wellbeing as many participants reported increased isolation, loneliness, boredom and anxiety. In total 46 participants received support with their mental health throughout the programme.
- ∞ Projects gave many participants somewhere to go and something different to do. Participants told us they benefited from the programme as it gave them a sense of purpose, a reason to get out of the house and an opportunity for socialising. Many reported they have increased their social interaction and 251 improved their communication skills because of the programme.

Often, these types of support are not available from traditional employment services, and yet they are really valued by participants.



### **A lonely army veteran that needed to keep busy**

Frank found out about the service through a friend and joined Giroscope around a year ago. Frank is an army veteran and since leaving he has dipped in and out of employment.

Frank enjoys volunteering at Giroscope to get out of the house, to keep busy and for an opportunity to socialise with others. He appreciates the support from Giroscope, stating 'there's always someone you can go to if you have a problem'. Frank has also gained qualifications and developed his English and Maths skills at Giroscope, which is very beneficial as he didn't gain any qualifications at school.

Frank works on both the upcycling furniture project and the computer and phone recycling project. He has learned new skills through both projects. He has also developed a work ethic and increased his confidence and motivation for learning and development.

### **An ex-offender who is moving forward with his life**

George found out about the service through his brother. He has been volunteering at Giroscope for 6 months. He is an ex-offender and was in prison for 10 years, which makes it difficult for him to find a job.

George works on the upcycling furniture project at Giroscope. Whilst he is really enjoying the furniture project, he would like to try out other projects in the future so he can further develop his skills and experience.

The main benefits of Giroscope for George are having something to keep him busy. He enjoys having more of a structure to his life and something to get up for in the morning. He has gained qualifications, which have helped him apply for jobs. Although he hasn't been successful it hasn't deterred him from job searching.

George has also benefitted from the support of staff and the other volunteers at Giroscope. He feels that Giroscope has helped him to move on with his life and progress towards employment, which is what he really wants. George is now living in a Giroscope home and enjoying his own space and independence and continuing to look for a job.

### **They gained skills and experience to prepare them for work...**

A key part of the support for participants on the route to employment was helping them acquire new skills and experiences that will prepare them for entering or returning to work. Like increased confidence and motivation, for many participants, there are several hurdles to overcome before contemplating developing a new skill, but that every hurdle overcome is an important step on the route to employment.

Outcome and 'distance travelled' data shows that:

- ∞ 166 undertook work preparation activities. Many developed work-related skills such as creating and tailoring a CV, searching and applying for jobs, completing application forms and preparing for interviews – in person and online.
- ∞ 611 participants improved their digital skills. Hull has a larger than average proportion of digitally excluded residents. Covid-19 created an imminent need for more people to develop their digital skills. Project delivery partners worked hard to throughout the programme to improve participants' digital skills.
- ∞ 66 participants took part in volunteering and work placement activities, which gave participants responsibility and the experience of maintaining a job. Work experience was commonly cited as an important factor in increasing participants' employability, confidence and well-being.

- ∞ Approximately 220<sup>6</sup> ethnically diverse participants gained enhanced English language skills, which not only helps them to secure and maintain a job but also to better settle into the community.

### **A woman with ample work history in need of digital skills to get back into work**

Hayley was referred to our Digital skills program. She had worked for some years as a full-time carer but found herself out of work with no digital skills to apply for a new role. Hayley had been advised about a job that she wanted to apply for; a Transport assistant for vulnerable adults and children with Hull City Council.

We helped her with her online application, she was invited to interview over Zoom. Hayley had no experience of Zoom so we gave her some training to enable her to attend the interview online. Hayley was offered the job and is awaiting her start date.

We have continued to support Hayley showing her how to use email and access online information such as her wage slips. From having no digital skills at all she is now confident in using her iPad for everyday use and is looking forward to starting her new role. Hayley was so happy with our help that she recommended her daughter to us, who was also successful!

### **A mum that had never worked but turned her life around**

Imogen found out about Aspire Igen through her mum. Imogen explained that she had recently become a single parent to her 16-year-old son and had never had an interview before, never mind a job. She was desperate for a job to get her life back on track. Imogen got help with creating a CV, uploading it to Indeed and carrying out job searches together with her mum.

She applied for five vacancies in one session. Imogen was offered an interview and was very nervous about it. We supported her with interview preparation and confidence building. She was successful in gaining employment as a Housekeeper in a hotel and was over the moon. Imogen said it was with thanks to the mentor and CLLD Programme that her life has turned around and she can now be independent and a role model to her son, of which she is very proud.

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<sup>6</sup> Based on an assumption that half of ethnically diverse participants improved their English (taken from consultations from delivery partners)

### **A woman who was hit hard by redundancy but gained new skills**

Karen worked for a major retailer in Hull for over 30 years and was made redundant during Covid. Karen was 57 and was worried that she wouldn't get another job due to her age. She had no confidence, and she was also really upset about being made redundant because the company was like a family to her.

She was referred to the Job Centre to claim Universal Credit. Whilst the job coach was very helpful, Karen needed more support because she was quite distressed by the redundancy, lacked confidence and also had no digital skills.

She came to Aspire Igen and found it to be very helpful. We helped her with basic IT skills, creating a CV, how to use a smart phone, how to apply for jobs, and helped with mock interviews.

We also gave Karen the confidence to look at other types of work using her transferrable skills. She was nervous about retail, because of all the closures. We opened her mind up to other things. We worked with Karen for around 18 months and supported her at each stage. She completed the Learn My Way Course and went onto complete a Level 1 certificate in Essential Digital Skills.

Karen had a few knocks where she didn't get some jobs, which was upsetting and knocked her confidence. We supported Karen through these difficult times and also helped with other things like travel planning and getting new glasses. These things mattered and made her feel happier and more comfortable.

Karen found a job in customer services in the public sector and told us she wouldn't be where she is now without the support of Aspire.

### **A volunteer using his difficult life experiences to help others**

Liam came to Enviromail after he had hit an all-time low and lost everything he had in life. Since joining Enviromail Liam has started to think about his future and completed several online training courses, including a course in counselling.

His past experiences of working in a bar, listening to people's troubles and his first-hand experience of drug alcohol addiction have led him to want to be a counsellor. Liam is continuing to build up his experience, skills and knowledge of effective counselling by volunteering at SWITCH so that he can turn this passion in to a paid job in the future.

Liam has come a long way since joining Enviromail. He is mentoring another CLLD beneficiaries at Enviromail who have been through similar experiences. He also wants to help others through counselling. Further, he stood up and spoke in front of a crowd at an ESIF event (where CLLD was one of the topics being discussed) to tell people his story and about how far he has come.

### Undertook training and acquired new qualifications...

For some, the next stage after developing softer skills and work-related skills involved undertaking job-related training and gaining new qualifications to secure work. Outcome and 'distance travelled' data shows that:

- ∞ 414 undertook specific job training
- ∞ 830 moved into formal education or training on leaving the programme

Feedback from our evaluation research revealed that whilst many participants were keen to get involved in informal training and work towards new low-level qualifications in the community setting, there was a reluctance to learn in a formal classroom environment i.e. College. Hull performs below average in terms of skills and qualifications and the city has a skills shortage. There is a need to close the skills gap which will increase the range of employment opportunities available to local people.



### A single mum with a disability finds understanding, empowerment and a profession she loves

I started on a CLLD project in March 2019. When I first arrived at the project, I felt a bit nervous. I had been out of work for over nine years. I am a single parent and I have found it difficult trying to find work and feel that I am often discriminated against because of my disability. I was not getting past the interview stage and felt disheartened as I wanted to work, but I just needed to be given an opportunity to prove myself.

Enviromail is the first organisation which has believed in me. When I met my training officer, it was the first time I had met anyone with the disability the same as mine. It was refreshing to speak to someone who understands exactly how I feel and after meeting the team I felt empowered and realised that I could achieve great things.

I completed work experience at Enviromail and the CLLD project team encouraged me to sign up for a college course. I am working towards a Level 2 cleaning. I love it. The project recognised that I have real skills, I just lacked confidence and self-belief. I have since volunteered to be a cleaning mentor and I have buddied up with another volunteer who I am helping him with the course.

When I complete the course I will be closer to employment as I now have the skills, the qualifications and experience I need to

progress. I feel part of the Enviro-hub team and I know that I am valued.

### **Many found a job or moved closer to employment...**

The final stage of the pathway to employment is securing employment. Outcome and 'distance travelled' data shows that:

∞ 441 secured employment (or went into a job search, at least 276 gained employment) through the CLLD programme.

***"Some people supported into work or training are people that have never worked, and they are still progressing now, 3 years later. People have been given a hand up through the programme and completely turned their lives around. They now have more qualifications; they are sustaining a job and they are progressing in that job."*** Project Delivery Partner

### **A single dad with health challenges secured a job**

Matt was referred to us by his JCP coach as he had no IT skills and had recently come out of work due to Covid 19 and his health. Matt was looking for a career change as he is a single parent and has lost his support system for childcare due to his family having to self-isolate. We spoke about all the careers he could apply for due to his transferable skills.

Matt was given a Learn My Way account and started to complete modules to help his IT knowledge. With our support, Matt updated his CV and signed up to Indeed. After just one lesson on how to use Indeed, he tried it on his own whilst at home. He was successful in gaining an interview the same day and then successful in gaining a part time position that suited his situation.

Matt needed new work trousers and steel toe capped boots to be able to start work the following Monday. We paid for these and also a bicycle as he started an early shift and was unable to use public transport. Matt was only with us for 4 weeks.



### **A bereaved widow who gained employment and friends along the way**

Natalie was a full-time carer of her husband for many years. He sadly passed away in June 2021. Natalie then needed to claim Universal Credit to help financially. She made a telephone claim because she didn't know how to use a computer. She was asked to prepare a CV by a job coach to start applying for work. But Natalie was in a state of grief and not in a position to start looking for work at this point.

She came to Probe for help and was given initial advice and support. She was advised to reach out to her job coach and ask for bereavement time. Natalie was not able to advocate for herself at this point nor realise that this was a possibility. She was given 6 months' time for bereavement.

We gave her support through one-to-one meetings, emotional support, empathy and understanding and help with job searching. Natalie soon got a part time retail job but couldn't start until she was able to provide ID. Probe helped her to get a citizen's card, enabling her to start her job. Natalie stayed in touch with Probe and because of work, had gained new friends and continued to visit Probe to work on her IT skills. She was a completely different person one year on.

### **An ex-offender determined to succeed impresses employers and secures a job**

Pete came to us very keen to get back into employment. He said he would like to work in retail after working in the seafood industry for several years. He was already volunteering.

We discussed a few options, and he decided a customer service course would help him gain the skills needed. He was keen to keep busy whilst applying for various roles, so he then completed our 2 day employability course where he gained the skills and confidence to disclose his conviction to an employer.

We then discussed an employment opportunity at Tesco Warehouse and Pete agreed to do a warehousing course so he would gain a better understanding of the working environment. Pete was interviewed for the role and was successful, unfortunately due to the location and an issue with transport he was unable to accept. Pete didn't let this get him down and continued to engage regularly never missing a call or appointment.

After an unrelated meeting with another employer, we highlighted Pete and his story. They were so impressed, they contacted a friend who was recruiting and they arranged for them to meet with Pete in person. Pete told his story about his conviction and how this had impacted his life and the changes he had made to move on from this period in his life. He secured this role and started immediately. Pete is still employed and pops in occasionally to tell us how he is getting on.

## Individual level impacts: ERDF

### Entrepreneurial activity was encouraged and has left a legacy...

The ERDF element provided:

- ∞ 50 existing enterprises with support and 12 new enterprises with support. Although, delivery partners suggested they have supported more than double this amount but because they did not need the full 12 hours of support they could not be counted as outputs.
- ∞ This led to 4 new full-time jobs in the supported enterprises.
- ∞ 82 potential entrepreneurs were assisted to be enterprise ready.

Delivery partners highlighted how potential entrepreneurs often don't have the confidence to think that enterprise is an option for them. This is something they help with. The support offer also gave businesses the opportunity to network with like-minded people and share knowledge and experiences.

Many businesses benefited from a grant from the delivery partners (but funding sourced from elsewhere). This may not have happened in some instances if it wasn't for CLLD. Businesses were able to buy equipment which improved their productivity and enabled them to expand their offer. This will benefit them for years to come. This was really important for many start-ups and is not commonly available.

#### **A refugee entrepreneur that has set up her own eatery**

Ruth is owner of Everything Toastie. She came to the UK as a refugee and has made a life in Hull. She wanted to set up her own

café and was directed to CLLD support via the Job Centre. Ruth spent considerable time researching her business idea, preparing a business plan and understanding how to become an entrepreneur with support from an advisor.

Ruth believes there is a strong demand for this support across the city and beyond, and great enterprise potential in Hull. As well as running her own eatery, Ruth became a Youth Enterprise Champion and supports other young people to set up in business, training or work.

#### **A woman with health challenges that can't work sets up a creative business instead**

Crafting was a part-time hobby for Sarah which became a full-time business venture when she was laid off work due to disability. She had wanted to go back to full time employment, but her consultant did not think that this would be feasible due to her pain management.

She was selling products on a small scale to friends and family, but this was not enough. Sarah was referred to CLLD via the Job Centre. The team helped her access a grant for equipment which would enable her to make new products. Sarah also received one to one support and attended webinars on social media, IP, copywrite,

trademarks, websites as well as networking opportunities with new and upcoming businesses.

“For me, the most important sessions were creating a website and social media webinars, this has led to me being more proactive on Facebook and to have my website created with a better platform and host.”

Sarah is making plans to attend trade fairs and promote her brand. She has plans to increase sales across the UK and beyond.

### **Enterprise support also prevented individuals setting up to fail...**

There were also individuals who received entrepreneurial activity support who did not pursue their idea, as it no longer seemed viable. This came about in several instances following the development of a business plan or testing different scenarios with their advisor. This saved individuals money and time and individuals felt it was a better outcome rather than setting up to fail.

### **Project level impacts**

#### **Partners are now more resilient, better known, more skilled and have a greater awareness of other similar organisations...**

Project delivery partners commonly reported that participating in the programme has enabled them to continue their service offer, increase the number and type of participants they support and enhance their

offer. Furthermore, jobs at programme and project level have been safeguarded through the delivery of the programme.

The programme has also created opportunities for smaller VCSE organisations to deliver employment programmes – something that has historically been the preserve of larger VCSE organisations or other sectors.

Feedback from project delivery partners suggest that because of the Hull CLLD programme, they are now:

- ∞ More resilient. It enabled some to work with different groups to their usual provision and expand their service offer. All partners changed to online delivery during Covid-19. Several have maintained this and it has made them more efficient with a more varied offering. This also enabled project staff to improve their own digital skills.
- ∞ Better known in their local communities. The programme has allowed partners to deepen their knowledge of and relationships with the local community. Partners have worked closely with over 2,000 local people helping them to tackle challenges and improve their economic prospects and identifying opportunities in their community.
- ∞ More aware of their partners and similar organisations. Some partners worked with each other for the first time, whereas, others have a better understanding of which organisations do what. This will be useful for future partnership working and is already evident. Three CLLD partners (Unity, Probe and Vulcan) have come together

with a shared offer because of being on CLLD. They are one of the early beneficiaries of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

- ∞ Developed the skills and capacity of staff within small community and voluntary organisations. Partners are now better aware of how to deliver (and how not to deliver) projects like CLLD. They are more prepared to take on larger and more complex programmes. These lessons have been applied in further funding bids and will put them in a good position to access UK Shared Prosperity Funds. Some project delivery partners have already secured further funding due to their experiences of delivering the CLLD programme - Vulcan has since accessed other funds to build another floor to the Community Kitchen. HLC also reported bringing some CLLD projects into other funding programmes they manage as a result of their strong performance and skills developed through CLLD.

### **Many staff reported several positive aspects of working on Hull CLLD...**

Staff within project delivery partners highlighted several positive experiences from working on the programme, for example:

- ∞ Partners are proud they have had the opportunity to provide valuable resources leaving a legacy for their community. The ERDF capital projects delivered by Giroscope, Unity In Community and Vulcan will have a long-standing impact on their communities.
- ∞ TJ Training received a Civic Crown Award from the Lord Mayor because of their hard work. This is 'a personal award given to citizens who have touched the Lord Mayor's year'.

- ∞ Providing meaningful support to people with multiple barriers and complex needs.
- ∞ Offering holistic support that extended way beyond typical employment, training and enterprise advice.
- ∞ Smaller caseloads and more contact so they could develop a relationship with participants, getting to know them and how best to support them.
- ∞ The ability to work with participants over a longer time-period.
- ∞ The ability to be creative and flexible with the support they provide. This was particularly beneficial during Covid-19 when partners were unable to deliver many activities as originally planned.

### **But staff reported some negatives with the programme...**

Some of the key challenges faced by project delivery partners include:

- ∞ The high level of bureaucracy and the inability to claim for a lot of the work delivered.
- ∞ The stress put on teams to deliver outputs in very challenging circumstances.
- ∞ The fear of financial clawback.
- ∞ The complexity and lack of guidance around delivering ERDF capital projects.

## Community level impacts

The ERDF element of Hull CLLD has also funded incredible community assets and enterprise facilities that will leave a long-standing legacy for local people to use and enjoy. These include:

- ∞ The former St. Matthew’s church community hub<sup>7</sup> - Giroscope has returned the old church that had been empty for over seven years to its former glory, whilst also installing work and office spaces into a mezzanine floor. This space is now used by local start-ups, community businesses, social enterprises and sole traders.
- ∞ Greenwood Business and Enterprise Centre<sup>8</sup> - Unity In Community took over and refurbished a HCC owned former works depot that had stood empty for over 10 years. The former depot now comprises a 240sqm ‘Business and Enterprise Hub’. It provides community space to deliver business support services, as well as providing affordable incubation workspaces and ‘hot desks’ for new and existing community businesses and enterprises.
- ∞ Vulcan Community Kitchen – The Vulcan Centre extended their existing premises to house a community kitchen. The kitchen has enabled skills and employment opportunities, provides learning

about nutrition, healthy lifestyles, cooking and self-care and distributes nutritious meals to the community.

- ∞ Community cafe in the Orchard Centre – Unity in Community took over café premises in the Orchard Centre in 2019. The café was refurbished and the community space reconfigured. It provides home-cooked food at subsidised prices, training opportunities and opportunities for local students to gain work experience opportunities and career guidance. The café struggled during Covid-19 due to social distancing restrictions but is now back up and running<sup>9</sup>.

### ***Refurbishment of the Greenwood Business and Enterprise Centre***




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<sup>7</sup> <https://giroscope.org.uk/boulevard-village-hall/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://unityincommunity.org.uk/greenwood-business-and-enterprise-centre/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://hullisthis.news/cafe-welcoming-customers-back-in-unity/>

*The former St. Matthew's church community hub during construction*



## Programme level impacts

The Hull CLLD programme has made excellent progress of moving those furthest from the labour market, nearer to, and into, employment and self-employment.

As highlighted in **Appendix 1**, economic inactivity, unemployment and worklessness has increased since the programme began. At the same time, self-employment has fallen, with women faring worse than average. Despite this, the situation would likely have been worse without the intervention of Hull CLLD. **Figure 5.2** illustrates the impact of the programme on participants' pathway to employment. This demonstrates more people are closer to the labour market and progressing towards the employment pathway. The people supported were furthest from the labour market with multiple and complex barriers.

## Summary

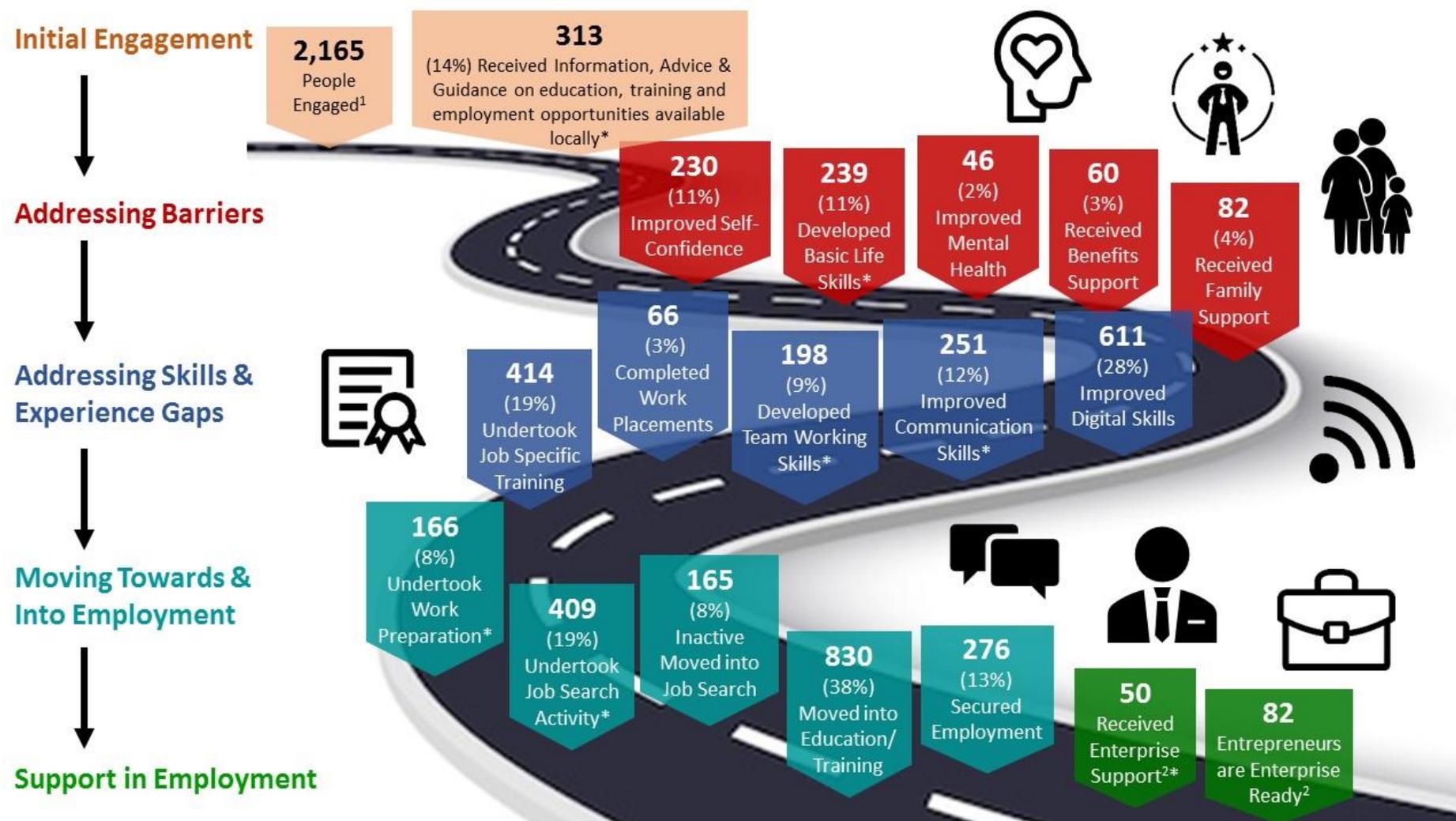
Assessing impact by looking at performance against targets is only useful if the targets were appropriate in the first instance. We have assessed the ESF results targets to be challenging given:

- ∞ The multiple and complex barriers faced by participants.
- ∞ The level of results which were not counted due to postcode eligibility and evidence and compliance issues.
- ∞ The timescales for realising the benefits may be longer than the programme.
- ∞ Local and national external factors which are beyond the influence of CLLD.

We favour a 'theory of change' approach to determining impact. The evidence shows a clear relationship between the role of the programme in engaging people with multiple and complex barriers who are furthest from the labour market, helping them overcome their personal obstacles and increasing their confidence, whilst supporting them to gain skills and experience to move them into education, training or employment.

We surmise that Hull CLLD has made significant progress towards its overriding aim. Our research has highlighted several significant positive impacts. These extend beyond the benefits for participants and include new assets for the local communities to enjoy and use, increased entrepreneurial activity was encouraged and has left a legacy, and CLLD partners are more skilled and better known and trusted in their communities.

Figure 5.2: Hull CLLD Programme impact on employment pathway



\*Not included in SRoI / 1. ESF projects only / 2. ERDF projects only

## SECTION 6: PROJECT VALUE FOR MONEY

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Value for money has been assessed using the Social Return on Investment (SRoI) approach for ESF related outputs, outcomes and expenditure. This involved defining, quantifying, and monetising programme benefits compared against costs to determine the ratio of social return per £1 of investment.

The SRoI was conducted in line with the Cabinet Office Guide to Social Return on Investment (2012) and wider technical guidance where relevant.

### ESF

#### Costs

Costs are based on actual spend of £4,696,434.

#### Benefits

Benefits have been identified using programme monitoring data and through consultation with project delivery partners and participants. The SRoI analysis is based on several monetised programme benefits, which include (but not limited to):

- ∞ 830 participants moving into education or training
- ∞ 276 participants moving into employment (including self-employment)
- ∞ 165 participants moved into job searching
- ∞ 230 participants supported with increased confidence

- ∞ 46 participants supported with improved mental wellbeing
- ∞ 60 participants with improved financial confidence
- ∞ 82 participants with improved parental confidence
- ∞ 611 participants improved their digital skills
- ∞ 66 participants supported with taking part in volunteering opportunities

#### Adjustments

The gross benefits were adjusted to account for additionality and derive net impacts. This means estimating the level of impact that would have occurred anyway without the activities funded by Hull CLLD. The following factors were applied:

- ∞ Deadweight – a measure of the amount of outcome that would have happened even if the activity had not taken place.
- ∞ Displacement – an assessment of how much of the outcome was displaced from elsewhere.
- ∞ Attribution – an assessment of how much the outcome was caused by the project versus the contribution of other organisations or people.
- ∞ Drop off – the deterioration of an outcome over time.

Valuations were applied to each benefit based on relevant benchmarks taken from several accepted sources.

Other adjustments made in line with HM Treasury and Cabinet Office SROI guidance include:

- ∞ Adjusting all values to reflect 2023 prices.
- ∞ Discounting values using a 3.5% discount rate, as advised by HM Treasury.
- ∞ The timescale of impact and duration of the effects.

## Results

The analysis shows that the programme gave a social return of £6.27 per £1 of public investment.

We estimate the maximum public cost of moving a workless person into employment through the Hull CLLD Programme to be £17,016.

\*This estimate only includes the 276 unemployed participants moving into employment upon leaving. It therefore excludes the 165 inactive participants moving into employment or job search upon leaving. If these 165 moved into employment it could be as low as £10,649.

**Table 6.1** shows how Hull CLLD’s SROI and cost per employed participant compares to other employment programmes (inflated to 2023 prices). It shows that both the overall SROI and the cost per employed participant performs very well against the comparable benchmarks, especially the other CLLD programmes.

**Table 6.1 SROI Comparisons (ESF only)**

Programme	SROI	Cost per employed participant
<b>Hull CLLD</b>	£6.27	£17,016*
<b>Tideway Ex-offender:</b> Working with charities to employ one person with convictions per 100 workers on the Thames Tideway Tunnel.	£7.28	£13,867
<b>Community Matters BBO:</b> Aimed at people with additional barriers to accessing employment.	£6.13	£12,806
<b>Wakefield CLLD PEAT Project:</b> A CLLD programme delivered in Wakefield	£5.20	£31,886
<b>Family Matters:</b> Voluntary sector-led employment programme focusing on people furthest away from the labour market, based in the Black Country.	£4.97	£23,274
<b>Hastings CHART CLLD project:</b> A CLLD programme delivered in Hastings and Rother	£4.23	£18,254

*Note: Values have been inflated to 2023 prices. Sources for benchmarks are provided in Appendix 4*

## ERDF

Value for money for the ERDF outputs are based on the cost per enterprise supported.

### Costs

Costs are based on actual spend of £1,006,067 (excluding Management and Admin and Capital costs).

### Benefits

Benefits used here include:

- ∞ 50 enterprises supported
- ∞ 12 new enterprises supported
- ∞ 82 potential entrepreneurs supported

### Adjustments

Similar adjustments were made as per the ESF outputs.

### Results

The analysis shows that Hull CLLD cost £6,694 per enterprise supported.

**Table 6.2 Cost per Enterprise Supported (ERDF only)**

Programme	Cost per enterprise supported
Hull CLLD	£6,694
Hastings CHART CLLD project: A CLLD programme delivered in Hastings and Rother	£1,382
Wakefield CLLD PEAT Project: A CLLD programme delivered in Wakefield	£5,969

*Note: Values have been inflated to 2023 prices. Sources for benchmarks are provided in Appendix 4*

## SECTION 7: CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

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This section presents the conclusions in terms of strengths and successes, as well as weaknesses and challenges. This informs the lessons that can be learned to inform future programmes.

### Strengths and successes

- ∞ The programme was well designed, with a clear logic chain between the rationale, activities funded and end outputs and outcomes. The programme design included a selection of delivery partners who could operate at the community level and this has brought lots of benefits.
- ∞ It was well managed and organised. This has been well-reported by LAG Board members and project delivery partners.
- ∞ Delivery partners are well known and trusted in their community, which enabled them to reach people who were not engaged with other services or had not completed other support received. They also offered warm, welcoming, supportive, and engaging environments, making it easier and less intimidating to participants, many of which had low confidence and poor social skills.
- ∞ They invested significant time getting to know participants and building relationships with them. This led to a genuinely tailored and bespoke service, often offering holistic support and addressing multiple needs.
- ∞ The nature of support was alternative and additional to mainstream services. People could self-refer to projects and often did.
- ∞ Delivery partners operated an 'open door policy'. Regardless of a participant's situation or eligibility, people were not turned away. Staff were there to help in whichever way they could. They supported people even when they knew they couldn't claim for them through CLLD (e.g. ineligible or another provider had already registered them and therefore used their own resources).
- ∞ Delivery partners worked with vulnerable people and recognised that a person needs to function well in life before they can function well in the labour market. This meant they invested considerably in addressing issues such as health, wellbeing, isolation, confidence, financial management, before moving onto employability issues.
- ∞ Some participants have entered the labour market for the first time in a long time, or the first time ever. Project delivery partners continue to support individuals for months after they enter employment. They understand that many issues still remain and participants are still vulnerable even if they are in work. Several examples were raised about project delivery partners saving someone's job. For example by helping them to maintain or build a relationship with their employer, or acting as a voice for the participant.
- ∞ The extent individuals have achieved softer outcomes, and are closer to the labour market, is one of the strongest successes of the programme. Hull CLLD has equipped many with 'life skills', such as improved confidence and self-esteem, which means they can

better tackle life's challenges, whilst still having the time and energy to focus on plans for their future education, training or employment.

- ∞ Project delivery partners tended to be flexible and agile. They demonstrated their ability to adapt their offering quickly during Covid-19. Many moved away from achieving outputs to supporting what their local community needed. This included food banks, baby banks, clothing, financial and mental health support. This was a lifeline for many vulnerable groups at a very difficult time. They also understood that not all participants were comfortable with coming straight back to face-to-face settings. Delivery partners offered a range of solutions including maintaining online and telephone support, as well as hosting face-to-face sessions outdoors, such as in car parks.
- ∞ The ability of delivery partners to provide local people with access to digital devices throughout Covid-19 is another strength. They recognised that one device in many homes wasn't enough with children home schooling. They also improved digital skills locally too.
- ∞ Project delivery partners reported many examples of project staff and volunteers going beyond the call of duty in difficult circumstances. For example, supporting participants in evenings or certain times of the day that suit them and doing doorstep visits for certain participants to check they are ok.
- ∞ Delivery partners are now more resilient having developed new skills that can be used in future funding bids.

- ∞ Of the 2,165 people engaged, 20% have secured employment (or moved into job search). This compares very well against relevant benchmarks (see **Appendix 4**).
- ∞ Local businesses gained valuable support and advice that has helped them to develop, expand and benefit the local economy.
- ∞ Delivery partners were commonly resourceful, operating on tight budgets. This means they offered greater value for money than mainstream services. This is demonstrated by the value for money assessments.

### **A lasting legacy...**

One of the major strengths of Hull CLLD is the lasting legacy:

- ∞ Firstly, there are new local community assets to enjoy and use. This includes: the former St. Matthew's church community hub, Greenwood Business and Enterprise Centre, Vulcan Community Kitchen and the Community cafe in the Orchard Centre.
- ∞ One of these community assets has also leveraged additional funding to expand (Vulcan Community Kitchen).
- ∞ Hull CLLD has increased entrepreneurial activity leaving a lasting enterprise culture.
- ∞ Delivery partners are now better known and trusted in their communities and continue to deliver services for the most vulnerable groups in the area. This includes developing relationships with local employers over a long period of time. This is now paying dividends as employers are starting to approach

partners directly and taking their feedback on board, for example around flexible working patterns which meet the local community needs. Employers have also started coming into the local communities to seek out suitable employees, rather than relying on jobs fairs, where CLLD participants often struggle to attend (due to confidence or travel costs).

## Weaknesses and challenges

∞ Progress against outputs has been challenging. They were already difficult due to the complex barriers faced by participants and wider external barriers. Covid-19 exacerbated some of these existing challenges:

- The 'hard to reach' became 'even harder to reach' with more people suffering mental health issues (such as anxiety, loneliness, and depression) and being less likely to socialise or leave their house. They already required significant resource just to engage them before Covid-19.
- Delivery partners reported a big dilemma throughout Covid. They knew they had to carry on supporting people who were becoming increasingly vulnerable. However, the type of support provided couldn't be funded. Although many did use the furlough scheme, it was limited to ensure that there was staff available to answer phone calls and provide what support they could. This meant they missed out on potential cost savings.

- Most activity that remained throughout the pandemic was online. This further highlighted the levels of digital exclusion that exist in Hull. This was in terms of both access to technology such as broadband and laptops, but also the skills needed to engage online.
- Most the support delivered was with existing participants and supporting additional needs. It was difficult to engage new participants.
- JCP and other agencies were not referring participants as much as previously as their priorities changed with more people closer to the labour market suddenly needing employment. Post Covid-19, JCP directed participants to new programmes such as Restart and Kickstart.

- ∞ Some participants could potentially choose from a range of CLLD projects to access support. With delivery partners required to meet participant targets this created competition within CLLD.
- ∞ The DWP's Restart Scheme duplicated the ESF activity. It was a larger programme with greater resource. JCP staff routinely referred people to this programme rather than CLLD. A workshop was held with DWP to address this issue.
- ∞ The socio-economic context worsened. This includes: increasing worklessness, falling levels of self-employment, and an increase in the number of people unable to work due to a disability.

- ∞ The level of administration required and risks around achieving compliance with programme regulations created a large cost to VCSE organisations.
- ∞ Performance monitoring requirements were stringent and meant that some results weren't counted because the evidence base was not compliant. For example, ERDF required wet signatures which were difficult to gain especially in lockdown. This often meant impacts were missed.
- ∞ The number and range of projects funded was occasionally a challenge in terms of management and administration. Additionally, some of the delivery partners who were unfamiliar with ESIF funding needed more intensive support than was expected at the outset.
- ∞ The nature of the target groups mean that some people will take years to resolve their barriers and move into employment and training. The level of support needed to bring them closer to the labour market can be extensive. The results indicators and targets did not reflect the extent of support needed or reflect the smaller wins for people on their journey. Our analysis showed that it costs up to £17,016 per output, i.e. to support a workless person with complex needs into employment.
- ∞ As the support can be required for a long time, the fixed timeline of the funding becomes a challenge especially towards the end. It leaves staff feeling anxious about their role and whether further funding is coming and encourages providers to go for 'low hanging fruit' to achieve outputs, which goes against the nature of the programme.
- ∞ Some of the major barriers to employment cannot be addressed alone through programmes like CLLD. For example, the structural economic change, high unemployment and competition for jobs, the challenges created by the benefits system, and the prevalence of zero hours contracts. This requires a joined-up response to inclusive economic growth from wider stakeholders.
- ∞ Whilst partners have made progress working with local employers, more work needs to be done to increase flexible, sustainable, family friendly (to accommodate the larger than average lone parent population in Hull) and inclusive employment opportunities.
- ∞ Target participants living outside the defined CLLD area tried to access the support. They were offered support even though the projects could not claim this as an eligible output. These individuals demonstrated many of the same barriers as eligible participants.
- ∞ ERDF providers reported frustration with eligibility criteria stating an individual can be supported if the business is in the CLLD area, rather than the participants' home. They had to signpost people elsewhere who live in an eligible area (and need the support) but have a business outside the area. On the other hand, they have supported people who probably didn't need it as much. They suggest that in future programmes should have a second eligibility check which factors in how long an individual had been unemployed for example.

- ∞ Both ESF and ERDF providers reported they have supported many more individuals than they were able to claim for. For example, only 144 enterprises supported<sup>10</sup> have been claimed, compared to 237 who received some support.
- ∞ Most of the resource dedicated by project delivery partners has been on building softer skills. This activity isn't measured which means the effectiveness of the Hull CLLD programme is significantly underplayed, when considering existing ESF and ERDF performance measures.
- ∞ Some partner networking events took place, but feedback suggests partners would have benefitted from more networking and best practice sharing.
- ∞ Whilst HCC and HLC took steps to lessen the impact on delivery partners, feedback shows they felt the stress and pressure of targets and clawback.
- ∞ All project delivery partners, participants and other stakeholders suggested there is still a need for CLLD or a similar programme moving forward, and the need is greater than it has been before. The economic outlook is challenging and uncertain. The ongoing impacts of Covid-19, alongside current issues such as the Russian

war with Ukraine, rising inflation, and the cost-of-living crisis, are likely to have a significant impact on local employment outcomes. And whilst UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is available, funding allocations for Hull are much lower than what has previously been received through European funds.

## Lessons

### Lessons for grant recipient/ project delivery body

- ∞ Grant recipients generally under-estimated the amount of paperwork required and the impact on resource. It is important that adequate time is built into funding bids for this.
- ∞ There are opportunities for local organisations with a shared vision to work together, share knowledge and build on the momentum generated through the CLLD programme.
- ∞ There were organisations delivering similar activity in the same areas. It could be beneficial to undertake research up front about what is needed, how it should be delivered, and who else is active in the same space, to ensure the work is adding value, for example, delivering to a target community or in a different way.

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<sup>10</sup> This includes the sum of the number of: enterprises receiving support; new enterprises supported; and potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready

## Lessons for those designing and implementing similar interventions

- ∞ As was the case here, a carefully selected and representative board can bring a lot of value.
- ∞ The profile of worklessness has changed following Covid and businesses face different challenges now. Always undertake a detailed profile of the target participants for future programmes ensuring support is tailored to local need.
- ∞ The effectiveness of the project delivery partners is well recognised at programme and project level. However, the impact and learning could be shared with wider stakeholders, including other employment delivery organisations and policy makers, like other parts of Hull City Council, Hull and East Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and JCP/DWP.
- ∞ Ensure new projects and programmes complement existing activity and they do not duplicate or create competition. This does not only waste resource but can create disharmony.
- ∞ Consider further synergy in programme design where delivery partners are doing the same work. For example, joint marketing activity (or the development of assets that could be used) or recruitment or training.
- ∞ As demonstrated by the CLLD programme, employment support often does not work in isolation from other support. Consider further synergy with other relevant non-employment support programmes in the area such as mental health services.
- ∞ Consider ways to assist delivery partners with targeting participants to make sure all relevant groups are engaged and not just the 'easy wins' e.g. facilitating involvement of other services like housing associations, Police, mental health services and other public sector bodies.
- ∞ Consider how cross-referrals could work where all partners involved could claim a 'fair' amount.
- ∞ The targeting or eligibility by postcode is counterproductive. It is frustrating for individuals and delivery partners to exclude someone who has similar barriers.
- ∞ It would be beneficial to continually review how success is measured and ensure it is embedded into project delivery.
- ∞ Consider the benefits of regular networking between delivery partners and orchestrating that.
- ∞ Different users prefer different engagement approaches (i.e. online vs face to face). Consider approaches which allow for both.
- ∞ Ensure enough resource is allocated for supporting delivery partners with claims, compliance and other issues.
- ∞ Take the opportunity to shout about the impact of the programme and showcase projects and participants' stories. This gives participants, project partners and board members inspiration and motivation.

- ∞ Design programmes that support a longer-term legacy and shape the future image of local infrastructure support e.g. by making organisations more sustainable.
- ∞ There exists a lot of good practice and success stories from the Hull CLLD programme. It was already flexible offering holistic targeted support. Arguably it became more flexible, holistic, and targeted throughout Covid-19. This is something to build on and could be implemented elsewhere.

### **Lessons for policy makers**

- ∞ VCSE and community-led organisations play a valuable role in reaching participants furthest from the labour market, and engaging them in effective and appropriate ways. The bespoke, tailored approach is resource intensive, but delivers good value for money.
- ∞ The increased awareness, understanding and skills of VCSEs created through programmes like CLLD could put them in a stronger position for leading or managing community-led programmes in the future. This might create even better outcomes for communities.
- ∞ Consider how to achieve a truly community driven approach alongside necessary funding requirements. There are benefits to delivering activity in the community setting by the VCSE sector, but onerous requirements make it challenging for smaller and community-based organisations to manage. Funding rules also make it harder for projects to collaborate or to create synergies between projects offering different services.

- ∞ Project Change Requests generally take a long time to be processed. Consider the impact that has on project management and delivery.
- ∞ Benefits in programmes like Hull CLLD are often realised well after the after programme ended. Consider a mechanism for capturing these later.
- ∞ Consider the implications of short-term funding for delivery organisations. It creates job insecurity for delivery staff and the sustainability of the organisation.

## APPENDIX 1: CHANGING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

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The Hull CLLD Programme aimed to reduce worklessness in the most deprived communities of Hull by addressing local issues. The ESF funded activity focussed on unemployed and economically inactive individuals. Specific target groups included: those aged over 50, people with disabilities and ethnically diverse people.

ERDF activity was also aimed at certain groups, including small businesses, new enterprises and potential entrepreneurs.

In 2018, when the programme began, rates of worklessness (including both unemployment and economic inactivity) in Hull were notably higher than regional and national averages, hence the need for CLLD.

Workless people often face multiple and complex barriers to employment, including barriers beyond the influence of the programme. The programme was already operating in a challenging context, which has dramatically worsened since Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.

This section demonstrates the local context in which the programme operated and how it changed over the delivery period. There is a focus on the target groups identified above.

### **Economic inactivity initially decreased, but is rising again...**

The Hull CLLD project area saw economic inactivity rates fall from 31.1% in September 2018 when the project started, to 26.1% in July 2020. However, it has since increased to 36.6% as of September 2022, an increase of 2,900 people since projects started delivery<sup>11</sup>.

The decrease between 2018 and 2020 should be considered with caution. Possibly the biggest explanation for the decline in economic inactivity rates is the introduction of Universal Credit in 2019. The increase in those on unemployment benefits supports this, as described below.

Other points to highlight here include:

- ∞ The economic inactivity rate in the CLLD project area is higher than the average across Hull (by 11.7%), Yorkshire and the Humber (by 10.5%), and England (by 12.3%).
- ∞ The gap between the economic inactivity rate in the CLLD area and the local, regional and national rates has grown since the start of the programme.
- ∞ Whilst overall economic inactivity rates in Hull have increased over the course of the programme, there has been a decrease in this rate

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<sup>11</sup> Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey, September 2022

amongst those aged 50-64 from 27.6% in 2018 to 25.2% in 2022. During this period, regional and national economic inactivity rates increased for this group (data not robust for CLLD project area here).

### **Unemployment in the Hull CLLD area is higher than average and still rising...**

We have used the claimant count as the main measure of unemployment. The claimant count measures the number of people receiving a benefit mainly for the reason of being unemployed, but it also includes those on low incomes.

The claimant count rate (the number of people receiving a benefit as a percentage of the working age population) gradually increased across the CLLD project area following the introduction of Universal Credit in 2019. This means that more people (a wider range of benefits) are now considered as claimants than when CLLD projects began delivery.

From March 2020 onwards, like the rest of the country, rates rose sharply after Covid-19, peaking in February 2021 at 11.3% in the CLLD area. Since then, rates decreased until September 2022, and have risen

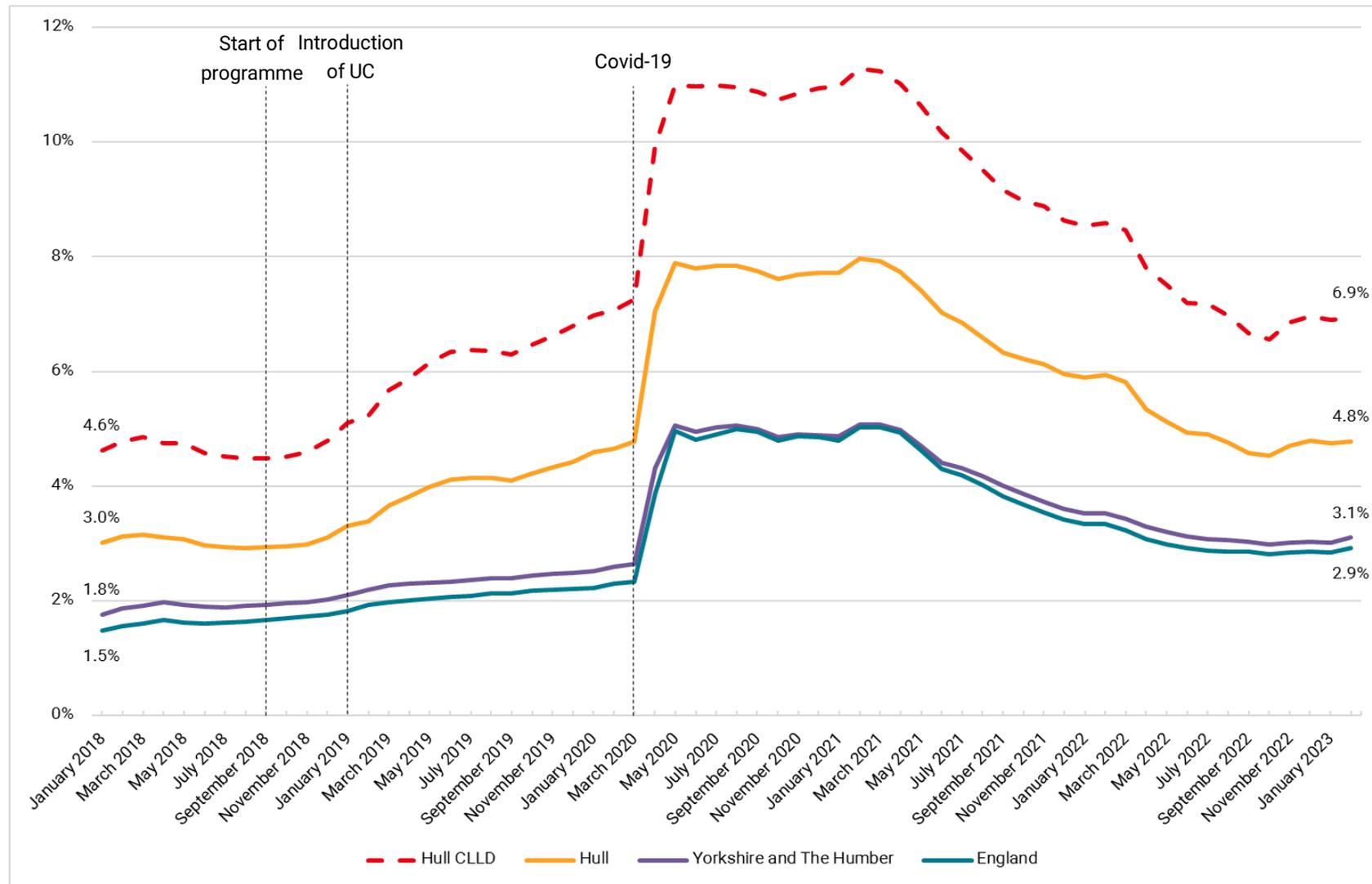
slightly to 6.9% in February 2023<sup>12</sup>. Other points to highlight here include:

- ∞ The current claimant rate of 6.9% in the Hull CLLD area is higher than the average for Hull (4.8%), and more than double that of Yorkshire and The Humber (3.1%) and England (2.9%).
- ∞ The gap between the claimant count rates in the CLLD area and Hull, the region and nationally has slightly widened over the course of the programme. For example, when projects began delivery, the claimant count rate in the Hull CLLD project area was 1.6% higher than in Hull, 2.6% higher than Yorkshire and The Humber, and 2.8% higher than England. This gap has widened to 2.2%, 3.8% and 4.0%, respectively, in 2023.
- ∞ Those aged 25-49 have fared the worst, with the rate rising from 5.4% in September 2018 to 9.0% in February 2023. However, nationally this rate almost doubled but from 2.2% to 4.3% over the same period.
- ∞ Comparatively, those aged 50+ fared better. The rate only increased from 2.9% to 3.9% over the same period. Nationally the rate increased from 1.0% to 1.5% for this age group.

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<sup>12</sup> Source: ONS, Claimant Count, January 2023

**Figure A1.1: Claimant Count Rate, 2018-2023**

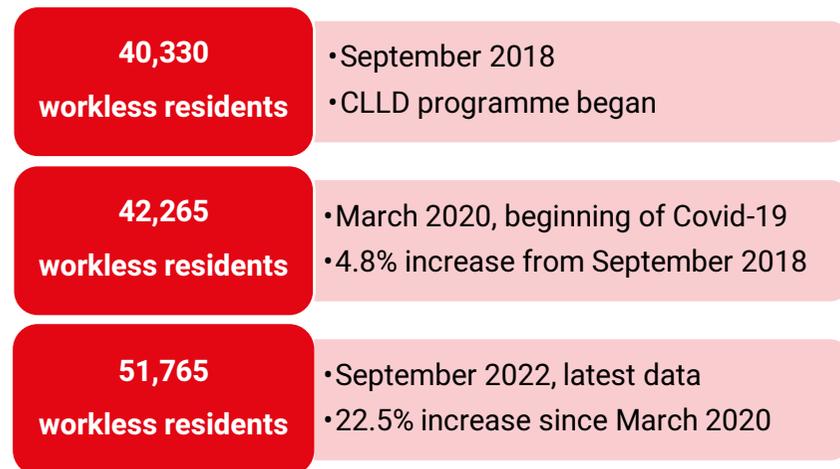


Source: ONS, Claimant Count rate

### Increasing levels of worklessness...

As demonstrated in **Figure A1.2**, the number of workless residents<sup>13</sup> has increased by around 11,435 people across the CLLD target area since projects starting delivering.

**Figure A1.2: Hull CLLD workless residents 2018-2022**



Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey and Claimant Count, September 2022

### Higher than average proportion of people with no qualifications...

The proportion of those aged 16-64 with no qualifications (NVQ) in Hull stands at 11.0%, down from 11.4% in 2018 (data not robust for CLLD area). This is higher than regionally (7.8%) and nationally (6.4%). Whilst this proportion has decreased across Hull, regional (-0.7%) and national (-1.2%) figures have decreased at a faster rate.

This proportion is higher still amongst those aged 50-64. It stands at 12.7%, down from 15.7% at the start of the programme. This is higher than regionally (by 3.0%) and nationally (by 4.2%)<sup>14</sup>.

### Hull CLLD has a higher proportion of lone parent households with dependent children than elsewhere...

The Hull CLLD area has a higher proportion of lone parent households (17.5%) than Hull (13.4%), regionally (11.0%) and nationally (11.1%)<sup>15</sup>.

Of these households, 70.1% are households with dependent children<sup>16</sup>. This is a higher than in Hull (67.5%), Yorkshire and The Humber (65.8%) and England (62.3%).

<sup>13</sup> Worklessness is defined as economically inactive plus those on claimant count. Therefore, it includes some people in employment on low incomes. Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey and Claimant Count, September 2022

<sup>14</sup> Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey, December 2021

<sup>15</sup> Source: ONS, Census 2021

<sup>16</sup> A dependent child is a person aged 0-15, or aged 16-18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s).

The proportion of lone parent households has increased slightly across all these areas from 2011 to 2021<sup>17</sup>.

### **The cost-of-living crisis is adding further challenges for those furthest from the labour market...**

The cost-of-living crisis has negatively impacted much of the population across the UK, and Hull is no exception. However, CLLD programme participants from high deprivation areas are likely to be disproportionately impacted when compared to elsewhere.

The CLLD Sustainable Development Survey carried out by Humber Learning Consortium in June 2022, found that 62% of staff delivering the CLLD programme had seen an increase in requests from participants for support with the cost of living. The main areas of concern identified were energy conservation, travel costs, food bill reduction, and mental health and wellbeing<sup>18</sup>.

### **A growing proportion of ethnically diverse communities...**

Economic activity data for ethnically diverse communities is not robust so it is not possible to assess changes here. However, the size of this target group has grown.

When comparing the 2011 and 2021 Census, the proportion of the population from ethnically diverse communities in the Hull CLLD area

has grown from 11.3% to 18.7%. This is a higher proportion than in Hull (16.1%) but is lower than the regional (19.1%) and national (26.5%) averages.

The Hull CLLD area has seen the largest increase in the proportion of ethnically diverse communities (+7.4%) in this time when compared to Hull (+5.8%), Yorkshire and The Humber (+4.9%) and England (+6.2%)<sup>19</sup>.

### **A significant increase in the number of people unable to work due to a disability...**

The proportion of those aged 16-64 who are disabled has increased significantly in the Hull CLLD area since 2018 and at a faster rate than elsewhere. This is based on a definition of Economically Active Core disabled which includes those who have a long-term disability which substantially limits their day-to-day activities. And those who are work-limiting disabled, which includes those who have a long-term disability which affects the kind or amount of work they might do

This rate increased from 31.6% in 2018, to 37.8% in September 2022. This increase of 6.2% equates to an additional 3,300 people unable to work due to disability.

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<sup>17</sup> Source: ONS, Census 2021 and ONS, Census 2011

<sup>18</sup> Source: CLLD Sustainable Development Survey, June 2022

<sup>19</sup> Source: ONS, Census 2011 and ONS, Census 2021

In comparison, across Hull this rate increased by 5.0% to 31.1%, regionally, it increased by 2.7% to 25.6% and nationally this rate increased by 3.4% to 23.6%<sup>20</sup>.

**The health of Hull residents is worse than nationally across several measures including personal well-being...**

The Health Index<sup>21</sup> is a new measure to better understand the health of the nation. It uses a broad definition of health including: health outcomes; health-related behaviours and personal circumstances; and wider determinants of health that relate to the places people live.

Data is available from 2015 to 2020. **Table A1.3** illustrates four of the relevant indicators in the context of the CLLD Project. Data is indexed against the national average in 2015. Therefore, any score below 100 is worse than the national average and scores above are better.

All four indicators in Hull are significantly worse than the national average, especially personal wellbeing. These indicators have all worsened since 2018, and covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis has likely caused further decline in these measures since 2020.

**Table A1.3: Hull Health Indicators (index 100=England 2015)**

	2018	2020
Personal well-being	98.3	78.7
Life satisfaction	98.5	84.4
Physical health conditions	98.5	84.4
Sedentary behaviour	95.2	82.2

Source: ONS, Health Index, 2022

**Lower proportion of active enterprises, but the gap is closing...**

The number of active enterprises (businesses) per 1,000 residents is lower in Hull (27 per 1,000) than regionally (37 per 1,000) and nationally (46 per 1,000). The growth in active enterprises in Hull per 1,000 residents (+6.6%) between 2018 and 2021, was higher than regionally (+5.1%) and nationally (+2.5%)<sup>22</sup>.

There has been a decrease in business closures in Hull over the course of the programme. During the same period there has been an increase regionally and nationally.

<sup>20</sup> Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey, 2022

<sup>21</sup> Source: ONS, 2022

<sup>22</sup> Source: ONS, Business Demography, 2021

### **Higher than average growth of micro businesses in Hull...**

Hull has a lower proportion of micro-businesses (77.4%) compared to regionally (83.0%) and nationally (85.1%). However, between 2018 and 2022, the gap has been closing with +10% growth in micro-businesses in Hull compared to +5.0% regionally and +3.5% nationally<sup>23</sup>.

### **Self-employment rates decreasing, with females disproportionately affected...**

Self-employment is an indicator of enterprise. Self-employment rates in Hull were 9.2% in 2018 and have fallen to 8.6% in 2022 (data not robust for CLLD target area). Rates across the region and nationally have fallen at a faster rate over the same period, however, remain higher than in Hull. Across the region self-employment has fallen by 1.5% over the same period to 11.8%. Whereas, nationally, the rate fell by 1.9% to 13.4%.

Whilst the total self-employment rate in Hull has fallen by 0.6% since the start of the programme, the proportion of females who are self-employed has decreased at a faster rate again. The female rate fell by 2.1% to 3.7% in 2022 and remains less than half that of regional (7.8%) and national (10.2%) averages<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Source: ONS, UK Business Counts, 2022

<sup>24</sup> Source: ONS, UK Business Counts, 2022

### **Jobs density is decreasing in Hull faster than nationally...**

Job density<sup>25</sup> has decreased from 0.83 in 2018, to 0.79 in 2021 (-0.04). In comparison, there was no change regionally, and a small decrease of -0.01 nationally<sup>26</sup>.

### **Declining levels of support going forward...**

Feedback from the evaluation revealed that during the programme, there has been significant employability support available locally. Support programmes available to unemployed people in Hull included Building Better Opportunities, Springboard, Restart and Kickstart. There was some duplication of activity and, in some cases, too much supply.

However, since Brexit and the change in European funding available to voluntary sector organisations, this picture has changed significantly. Many existing programmes have ended or are coming to an end, and there is little in the pipeline to replace them.

The new UK Shared Prosperity Fund will fill a small gap, providing the City of Hull with £9m over 3 years. But this is a very small amount of funding to what Hull has received previously. As a result, there will be a shortage of support going forward and voluntary and community

<sup>25</sup> This is the number of jobs per resident aged 16-64

<sup>26</sup> Source: Jobs Density, 2021

sector organisations are at risk. This is likely to have a negative impact on people seeking skills and employment support.

## Conclusions

This section demonstrates the challenging local circumstances in which the programme has operated. Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis have had a detrimental impact upon the most vulnerable communities. Many of these were the target groups for the programme. Some of the challenges faced which are at least in part a result of Covid-19 and more recently the cost-of-living crisis include:

- ∞ Increasing levels of worklessness.
- ∞ Decreasing self-employment rates, especially among females.
- ∞ An increase in the number of people unable to work due to a disability.
- ∞ Increasing number of lone parents with dependent children.
- ∞ A growing ethnically diverse population
- ∞ Declining health of residents.
- ∞ Decreasing job density rates.

It would be easy to conclude from this that Hull CLLD has had little impact on socio-economic conditions locally. This seems unfair and it

is likely these conditions would be worse without the programme. This is not only due to the profound impacts of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crises but there are other wider external challenges and barriers to employment and enterprise which are beyond the scope and influence of the programme. For example:

- ∞ Transportation and the location of jobs to and from workless communities (i.e. poor public transport links).
- ∞ Digital access and skills which became increasingly important throughout Covid-19.
- ∞ Childcare costs.
- ∞ Availability of sustainable jobs.
- ∞ Roll out of Universal Credit and the resulting increase in claimant numbers
- ∞ Structural economic changes.
- ∞ Economic challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis.

Overall, the need and demand for a programme similar to CLLD is even greater today than it was in 2018. This is at a time when investment in support is due to decline.

## APPENDIX 2: CONSULTEES

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We would like to thank the following organisations for their support and input to this evaluation. Some of the following were consulted several times.

- ∞ Alpha Education Community Trust
- ∞ Aspire Igen
- ∞ Catzero
- ∞ Emmaus
- ∞ Enviromail
- ∞ Giroscope
- ∞ Goodwin Development Trust
- ∞ Hull City Council
- ∞ Hull Culture and Leisure
- ∞ Hull CVS
- ∞ Hull FC
- ∞ Humber Learning Consortium
- ∞ Humber Skills Network
- ∞ Job Centre Plus and LAG Board Member
- ∞ LAG Board Members
- ∞ Offploy
- ∞ Preston Road Womens Centre
- ∞ Probe and LAG Board Member
- ∞ RDS Academy
- ∞ Timebank
- ∞ TJ Training
- ∞ Toranj Tuition
- ∞ Unity in Community
- ∞ Vulcan Boxing Club
- ∞ Working for Health

## APPENDIX 3: PROFILES OF THE FIVE CLUSTER ANALYSIS GROUPS

### Younger people facing difficult challenges...

#### Participant Characteristics...

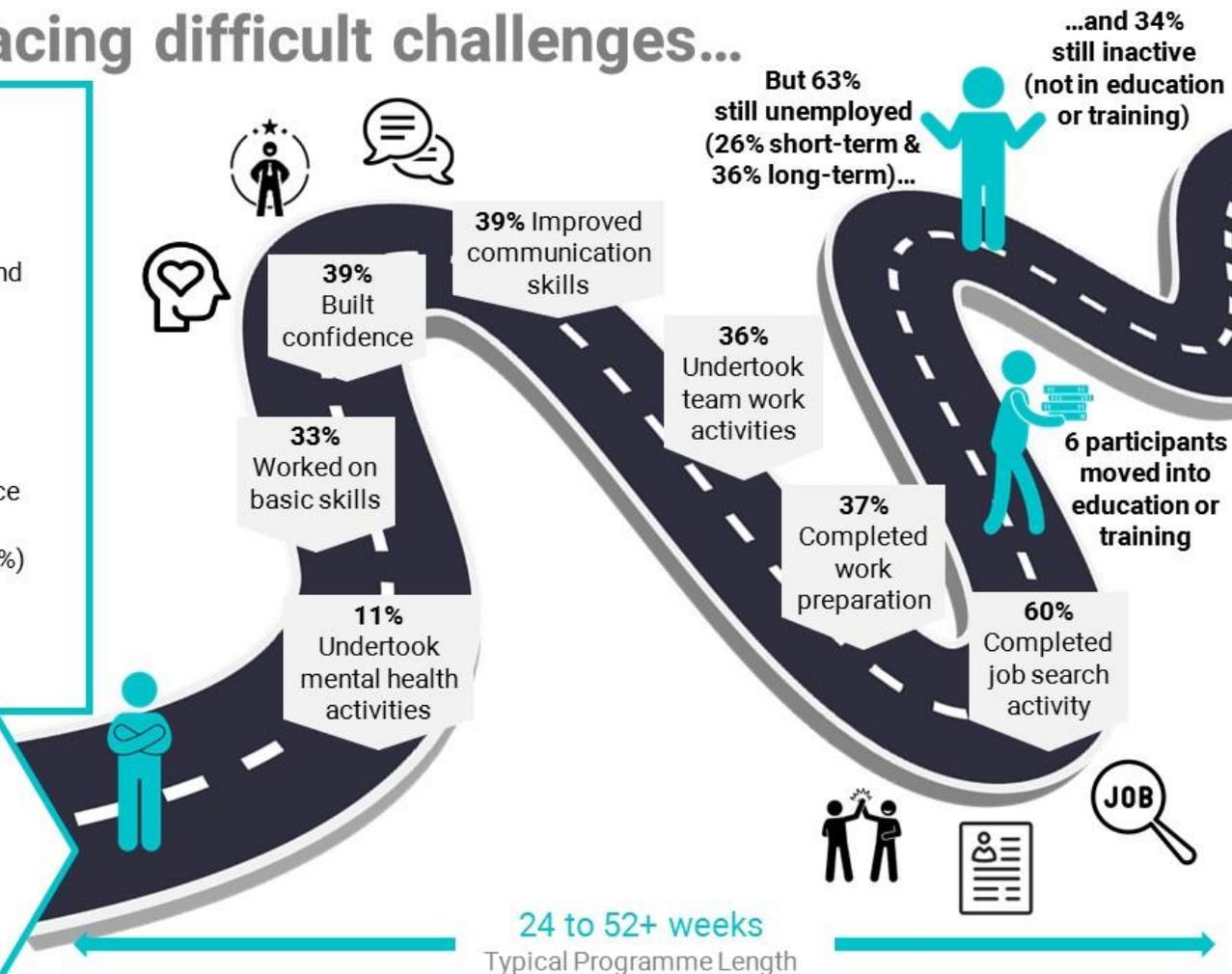
Much more likely than average to be...

- Non-white (22%) participants
- Younger people, with 32% aged 16-24 and 35% aged 25-34 years
- Unemployed for up to 23 months (75%)
- An ex-offender (25%)
- Homeless (6%)
- Not in receipt of any benefits (22%)
- Claiming Employment Support Allowance (6%)
- Achieved Level 2 or 3 qualifications (59%) (GCSEs and A Levels)
- Need additional English support (7%)

220 Participants

More likely than average to be short-term unemployed (27%)  
But 35% long-term unemployed & 36% inactive (not in education)

#### Participant Journey...



# Inactive older people with low skills levels...

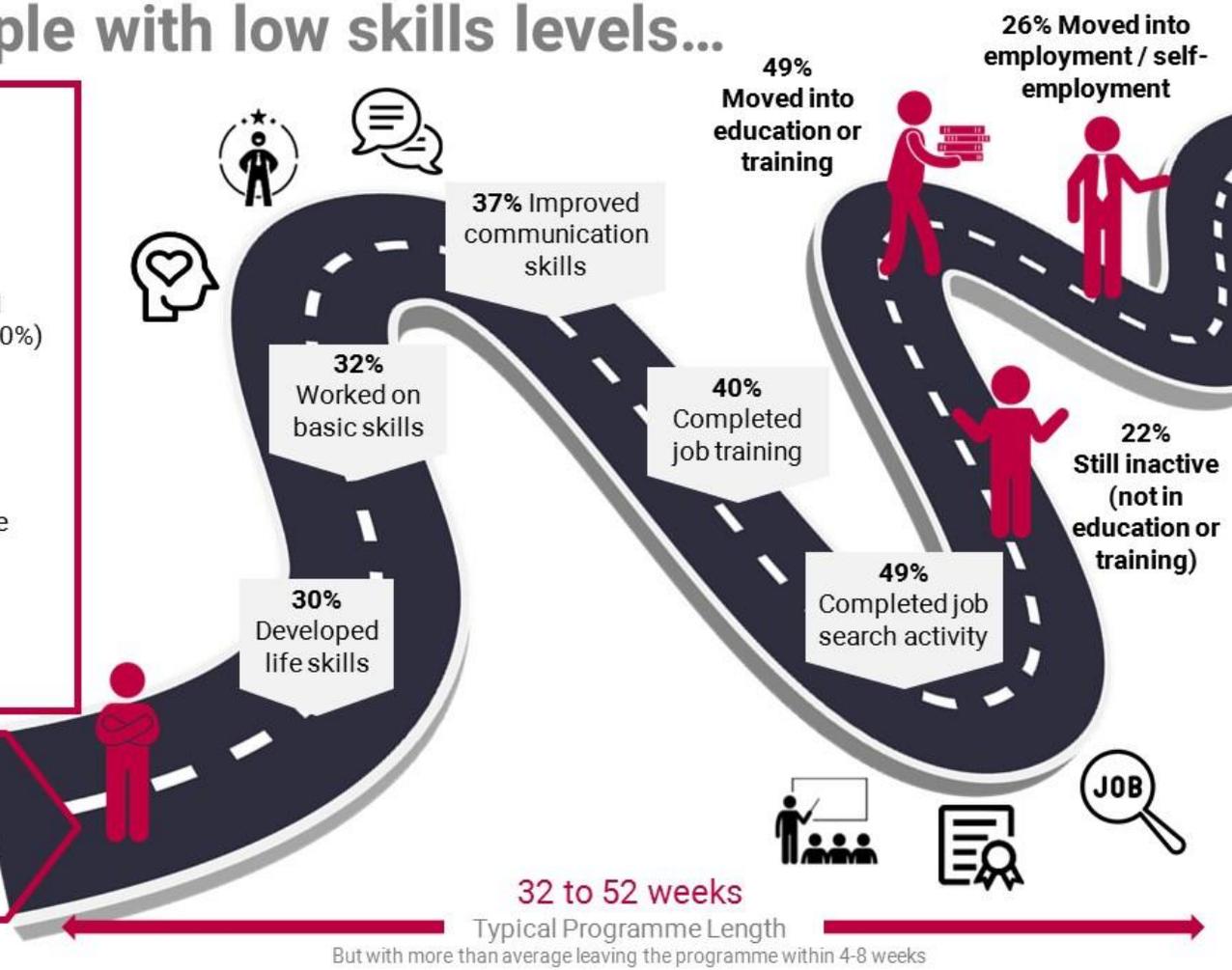
## Participant Characteristics...

Much more likely than average to be...

- Female (52%) and non-white (22%) participants
- Older working age people, with 47% aged 45+. But also high % aged 35-44 years (30%)
- Unemployed for 36+ months (63%)
- Homeless (15%)
- Need mental health support (7%)
- Not in receipt of any benefits (33%)
- Claiming Employment Support Allowance (13%)
- Have no qualifications (21%)
- Have entry level qualifications (35%)
- Need additional English support (10%)

## Participant Journey...

**256 Participants**  
**85% Started as inactive (not in education or training)**



# Young parents in and out of work...

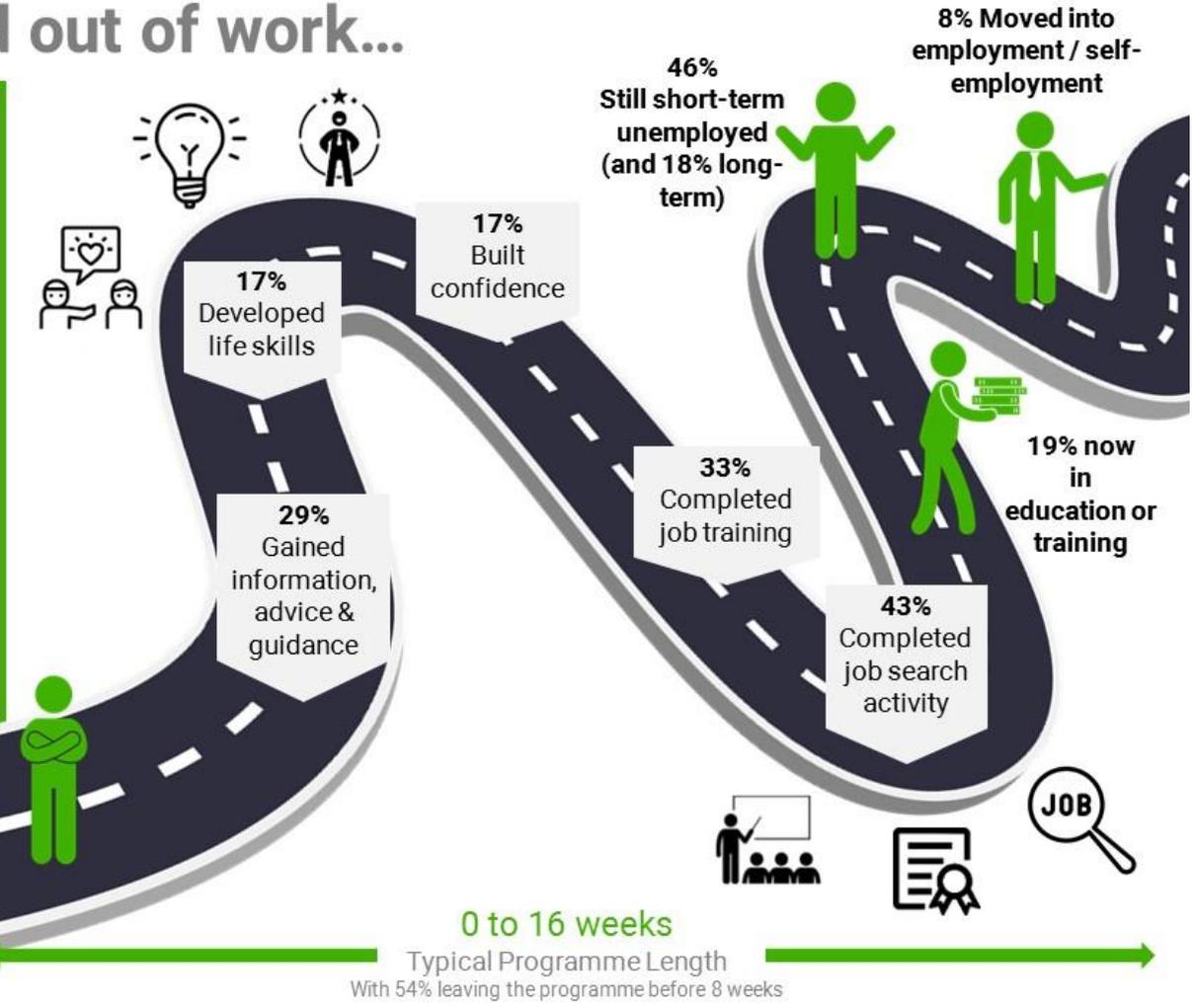
## Participant Characteristics...

Much more likely than average to be...

- Younger people:
  - 43% aged 16-24 years
  - 38% aged 25-34 years
- Unemployed for less than 12 months (56%)
- Have no qualifications (16%)
- A single parent (21%)
- A workless household with children (29%)
- Claiming Universal Credit (63%)
- Struggle with dyslexia (9%)
- Need mental health support (7%)

## Participant Journey...

**253 Participants**  
 More likely short-term unemployed (35%)  
 But also, 36% long-term unemployed & 28% inactive (not in education)



# Young educated men close to the labour market...

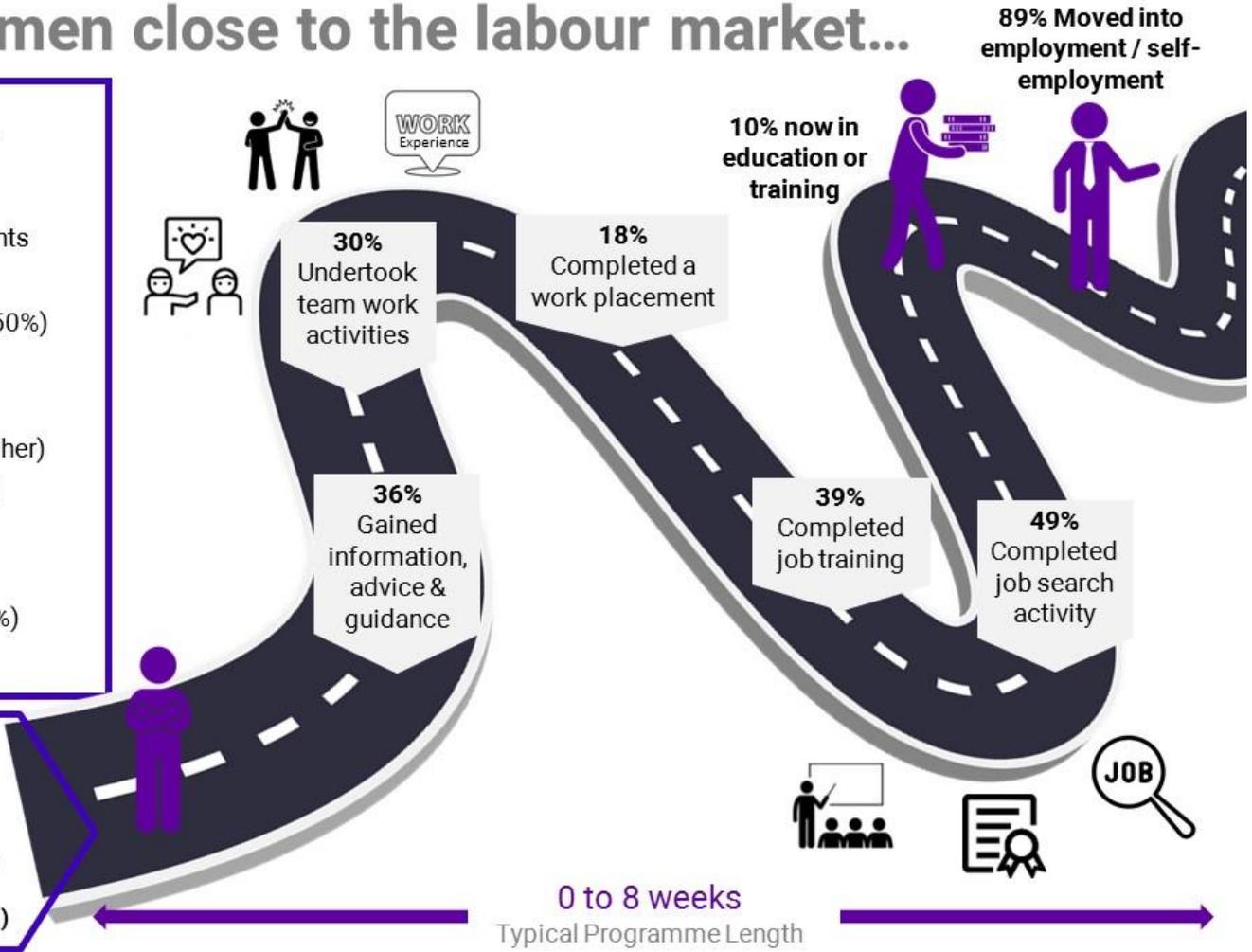
## Participant Characteristics...

Much more likely than average to be...

- Male (68%) and white (91%) participants
- Younger people aged 16-24 (25%)
- Unemployed for less than 6 months (50%)
- Have higher qualifications:
  - 25% have Level 3 (A Levels)
  - 13% have Level 5+ (degree & higher)
- Have a disability affecting work (24%)
- An ex-offender (17%)
- Claiming Universal Credit (51%)
- Claiming Job Seeker's Allowance (24%)

## Participant Journey...

**176 Participants**  
 More likely short-term unemployed (43%)  
 But also, 28% long-term unemployed & 28% inactive (not in education)



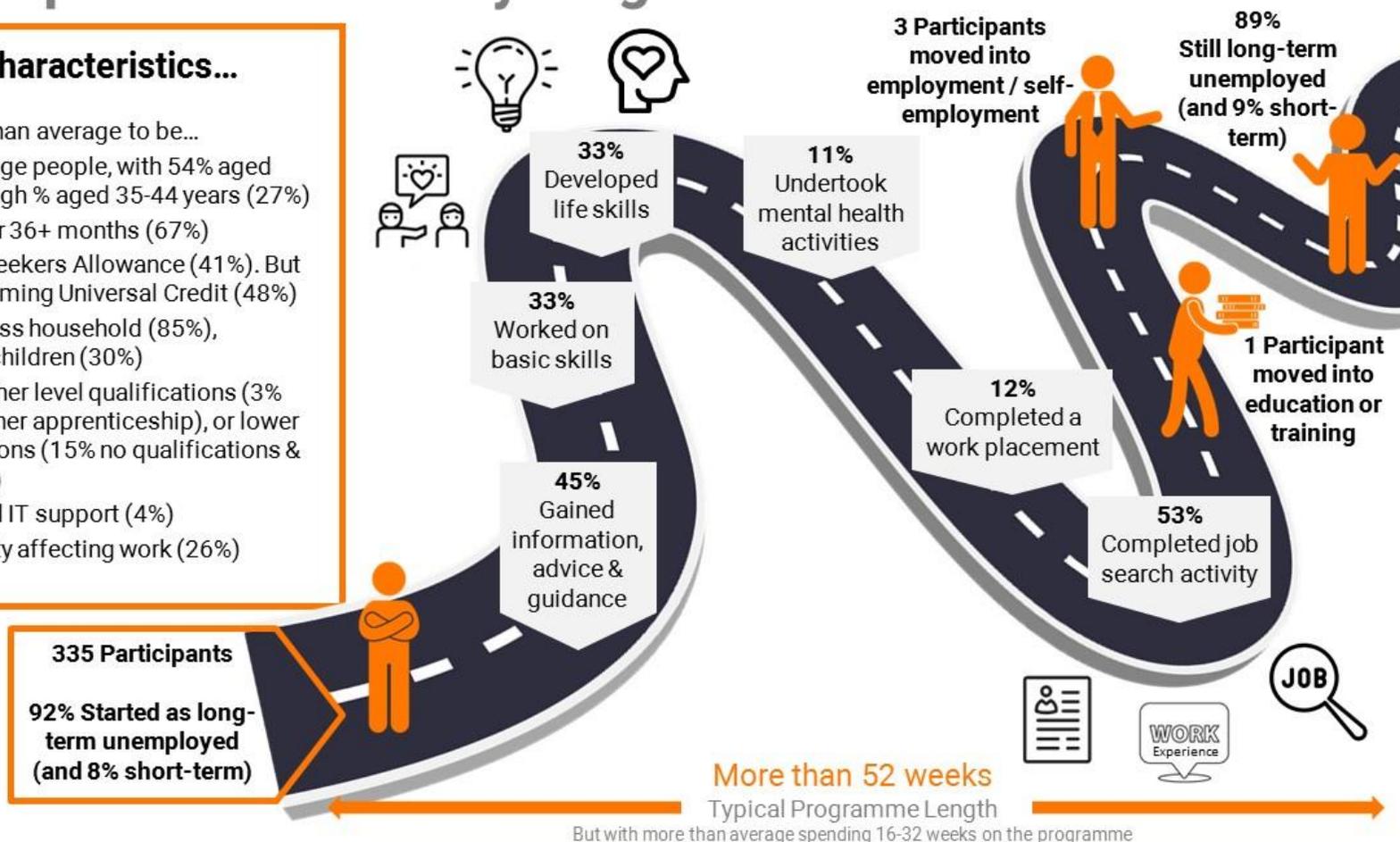
# Older people surrounded by long-term worklessness...

## Participant Characteristics...

Much more likely than average to be...

- Older working age people, with 54% aged 45+. But also high % aged 35-44 years (27%)
- Unemployed for 36+ months (67%)
- Claiming Job Seekers Allowance (41%). But also high % claiming Universal Credit (48%)
- Live in a workless household (85%), including with children (30%)
- Have either higher level qualifications (3% Level 4 e.g. higher apprenticeship), or lower level qualifications (15% no qualifications & 22% entry level)
- Need additional IT support (4%)
- Have a disability affecting work (26%)

## Participant Journey...



## APPENDIX 4: VALUE FOR MONEY SOURCES

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The following sources were used for the value for money benchmarks:

- ∞ Tideway Ex-offender: Evaluation of Commitment 43, Forever Consulting, 2020
- ∞ Community Matters BBO: Community Matters Final Evaluation, Forever Consulting, 2020
- ∞ Family Matters: Family Matters Evaluation, Forever Consulting, 2022
- ∞ Final Evaluation of Wakefield CLLD Peat Project, Forever Consulting, 2022
- ∞ Final Evaluation of Hastings CHART CLLD Programme, Forever Consulting, 2023

## APPENDIX 5: CLLD RESULTS COMPARED AGAINST BENCHMARKS

Programme	% Participants secured employment	% Participants moved into further education/training
<b>Hull CLLD Programme</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Wakefield CLLD PEAT Project:</b> A CLLD programme delivered in Wakefield	8%	44%
<b>Hastings CHART CLLD project:</b> A CLLD programme delivered in Hastings and Rother	19%	23%
<b>Community Matters BBO:</b> Aimed at people with additional barriers to accessing employment.	11%	13%
<b>Family Matters:</b> Voluntary sector-led employment programme focusing on people furthest away from the labour market, based in the Black Country.	12%	18%
<b>BBO National Programme</b>	10%	6%