

FUTURES REIMAGINED

A Blueprint for Success

Building Better Opportunities GREAT & YES Projects -
An evaluation report

2016 - 2023



CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Our Achievements	4
■ The YES Project	5
■ The GREAT Project	6
YES Project Milestones	8
GREAT Project Milestones	10
Six Years of Learning – Review and Reflections	11
■ GREAT and YES projects delivery models	14
■ Deliver Holistic Interventions	18
■ Place the user's voice at the centre of the service	21
■ The necessity to tackle the root causes of deprivation and challenges involved in increasing social inclusion	24
■ Focus on a 'good' job rather than any job	27
Partnership and Collaborative Working	28
■ GREAT Project Current Delivery Partners:	28
Business in the Community	29
Leicester College	29
Optima UK	30
Scalliwags	31
Personal Development Point	31
■ GREAT Project <i>Previous</i> Delivery Partners	31
Leicestershire County Council	31
Healthy Working Futures	32
Enstruct Training Limited	32
Pop Up Nursery	33
PreSchool Learning Alliance	34
■ YES Project Current Delivery Partners	31
Leicestershire Cares	32
The Bridge (East Midlands)	32
Bangladesh Youth and Cultural Shomiti	33
■ YES Project <i>Previous</i> Delivery Partners	34
SEED	34
Warwickshire College	34
Twenty Twenty	34
Soft Touch Arts	34
The Princes Trust	34
Highfields Community Association	34
A Blueprint for Success	35
Acknowledgements	38
■ GREAT Project Staff List – Past and Present	38
■ YES Project Staff List – Past and Present	41

FOREWORD

Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL) is a charity supporting voluntary and community sector organisations in Leicester and Leicestershire, working to change people's lives for the better. Since 2016, VAL has managed the Building Better Opportunity (BBO) programme that includes the GREAT (Getting Ready for Employment and Training) Project and the YES (Youth Employability Support) Project, funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund.

The GREAT and YES Projects have been working with the unemployed and economically inactive people of Leicester and Leicestershire for six years. The GREAT Project focuses specifically on unemployed and economically inactive adults within families, while the YES Project focuses on young people aged 15-24 who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). We have sought to offer holistic support to those furthest from the labour market; individuals who need intensive support to enter the workforce.

Our position within the employability landscape means we receive participant referrals in two ways, mandated referrals from job centres and voluntary referrals where a third party or the individuals themselves have made the referral to the GREAT or YES Projects. The projects take a pragmatic approach to employability; placing a high value on individual's ability to make their own choices, while working within a policy landscape that encourages individuals quickly back into work.

While unemployment at the time of writing is at its lowest since 1974, the GREAT and YES Projects have experienced high demand for our services in Leicester and Leicestershire. This is due to high levels of economic inactivity among 16-25-year-olds and the over-50s, alongside both projects' commitment to supporting long-term out of work individuals in to work regardless of how complex their barriers to employment may be.

With the European Social Fund programme for employability coming to an end, this legacy evaluation report seeks to celebrate the successes of the GREAT and YES Projects, highlight our learning over the past six years and leave a guide of best practice to any programmes that may follow in the future.

Vandna Gohil
VAL Executive Manager - GREAT Project and YES Project

Chantal Brotherhood and Anna Barrow
GREAT Project Team Managers

Harks Flora
YES Project Team Manager

Disclaimer: We have a series of case studies in this report and due to the information contained please note, that for some of them we have not used actual photos of the participants.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

The projects have tracked their achievements over the past six years by publishing quarterly cumulative progress measures. These are the most up to date figures, final for the outputs (number of participants, disadvantage, disability and long term (unemployed), and anticipated for the results (into education or training, employment or job searching).



YES PROJECT
COLOUR CODES HELP DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

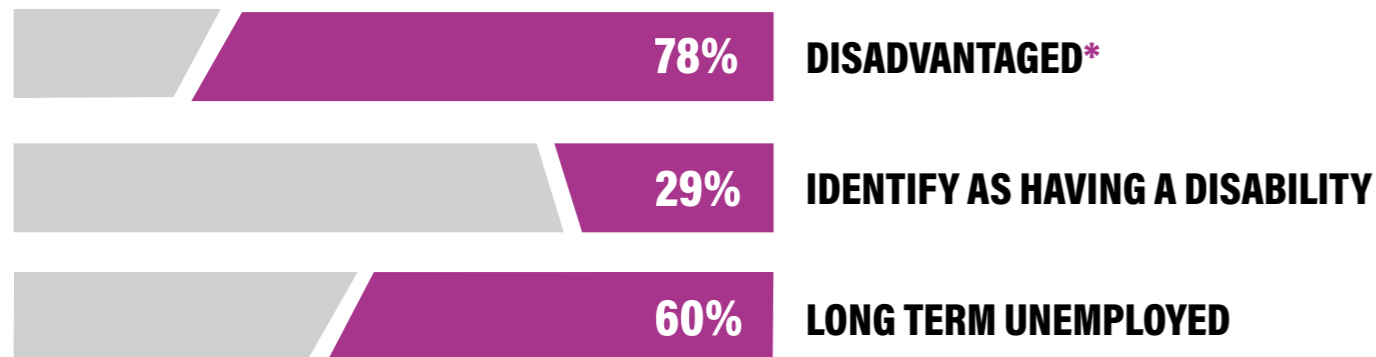


GREAT PROJECT
COLOUR CODES HELP DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

THE YES PROJECT



843 PARTICIPANTS WORKED WITH:

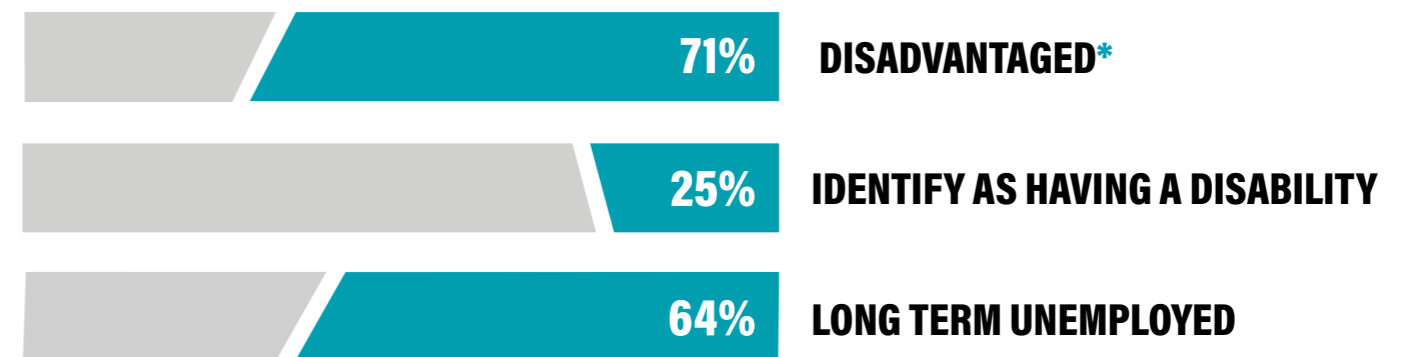


*A participant is considered disadvantaged by the BBO programme by meeting at least one of the following outputs: with a disability, from an ethnic minority group, is homeless or affected by housing exclusion or lacks basic skills or does not have primary or lower secondary education.



THE GREAT PROJECT

PARTICIPANTS WORKED WITH: 901



*A participant is considered disadvantaged by the BBO programme by meeting at least one of the following outputs: with a disability, from an ethnic minority group, is homeless or affected by housing exclusion or lacks basic skills or does not have primary or lower secondary education.



YES PROJECT MILESTONES

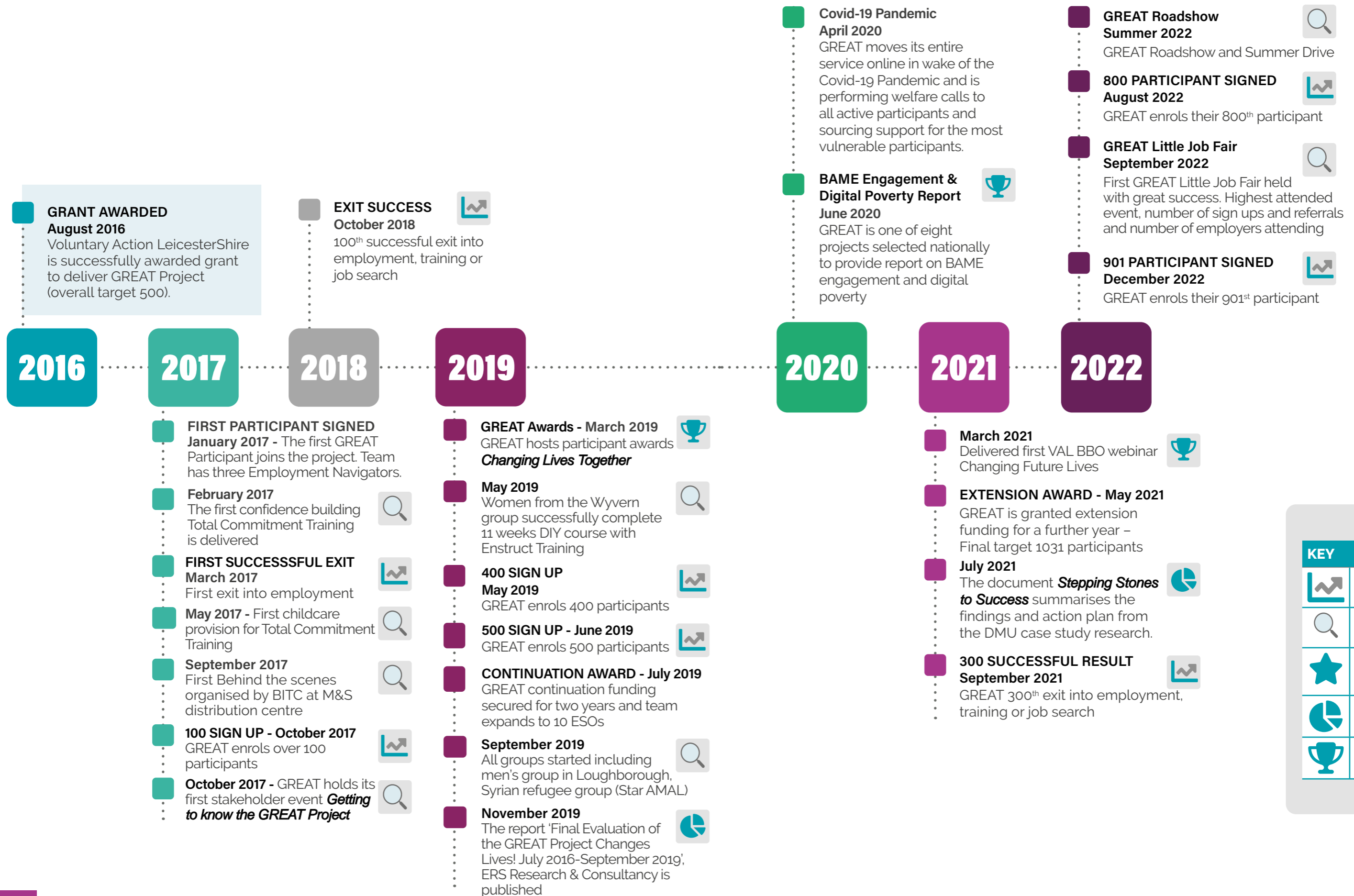
- GRANT AWARDED**
June 2016
Voluntary Action LeicesterShire is successfully awarded grant to deliver YES Project (overall target 400).
- PROGRAMME LAUNCH**
September 2016
The first YES Team Programme is launched
- September 2016**
YES first participant was signed up by delivery partner Warwickshire College.
- FIRST SUCCESSFUL EXIT**
October 2016 -First exit into employment
- November 2016**
Leicestershire Cares launches World of Work Tours with a trip to Sytner
- December 2016** - The first YES Media course is delivered
- 3 YEAR TARGET EXCEEDED**
May 2018
YES exceeds their three year employment outcome target by 38%
- EXIT SUCCESS**
June 2018
YES helps 75% of exited participants leave with an outcome
- 3 YEAR TARGET REACHED**
September 2018
YES reaches their three year target for supporting participants who identify as having a disability
- YES Event**
February 2020
YES Stakeholder event *A New Direction* #ReRoutingFutures
- BAME Engagement & Digital Poverty Report**
June 2020
YES is one of eight projects selected nationally to provide report on BAME engagement and digital poverty
- BBO Webinar**
September 2020
Delivered first VAL BBO webinar #ReRoutingFutures - *The New Normal*
- 843 PARTICIPANT SIGNED**
December 2022
YES enrolls their 843rd participant

2016 **2017** **2018** **2019** **2020** **2021** **2022**

- February 2017**
Soft Touch Arts launch Kickstart mentoring
- 100 SIGN UP**
April 2017
YES successfully enrolls their 100th participant to the project
- FIRST YES AWARDS**
December 2017
YES hosts their first *Young Person of the Year Awards* to celebrate the achievements of participants
- 100 SUCCESSFUL EXITS**
December 2017
YES successfully exits 100 participants into an employment, training or job search outcome
- YES Awards - February 2019**
YES hosts the *YES Awards 2019*
- 400 SIGN UP - May 2019**
YES enrolls over 400 participants
- CONTINUATION AWARD - July 2019**
YES continuation funding secured for two years. Team adds the Keyworker Lead post.
- AWARDS FINALIST - August 2019**
YES is named a finalist - National Lottery 25th Birthday Awards
- 300 SUCCESSFUL EXITS**
September 2019
YES 300th exit into employment, training or education
- November 2019**
YES Project - Partnerships, Pathways and Progression - Final evaluation Report: June 2016 - June 2019, ERS Research & Consultancy
- 500 SIGN UP - December 2019**
YES enrolls over 500 participants
- EXTENSION AWARD**
May 2021
YES is granted extension funding for a further year - New final target: 932 sign ups
- July 2021**
The document *Stepping Stones to Success* summarises the findings and action plan from the DMU case study research.
- ERSA Awards**
November 2021
ERSA (Employment Related Services Association) 2021 Awards Runner Up
- 400 SUCCESSFUL RESULT**
December 2021
YES 400th exit into employment, training or job search

KEY	
	Performance
	Spotlight on Provision
	Celebrating Participant Achievements
	Research & Evaluation
	Recognition

GREAT PROJECT MILESTONES



KEY	
	Performance
	Spotlight on Provision
	Celebrating Participant Achievements
	Research & Evaluation
	Recognition

SIX YEARS OF LEARNING Review and Reflections



A key component of the GREAT and YES Projects has been continuous learning over the six years of delivery. Through our holistic approach, the GREAT and YES Projects have been designed to respond and adapt to participants needs, rather than rely on a prescriptive model from the outset.

This was achieved in the YES Project by offering a diverse variety of activities and interventions from a range of local delivery partners; with reviews and refresh to give participants the best person-centred support.

The GREAT Project achieved this by offering individuals additional support outside of traditional employability such as providing childcare during activities and interventions, and navigating the benefits system and providing financial advice; i.e. Better Off In Work Calculations.

GREAT and YES Projects Delivery Models

The GREAT Project delivery model illustrated in Fig. 1 The GREAT Project Workflow 2022, evolved throughout the life of the project aligned with the learning and adaptations to the external environment. We hope that the map below is helpful to demonstrate the different stages of the participant journey alongside the processes that we followed to comply with the funders and audit requirements.



“There is an ethos within VAL of continuous improvement and an openness and willingness to learn ... In short, VAL can be regarded as a ‘learning organisation’, with a clear culture of absorbing and considering ideas for enhancing delivery.”¹

¹ Youth Employability Support (YES) Project – Partnerships, Pathways and Progression – Final Report: June 2016 – June 2019, ERS Research & Consultancy

Fig. 1 the GREAT Project Workflow 2022

Project Workflow

- PPT Participant
- TM Team Manager
- DIA Data Impact Analyst
- ESL Employment Support Lead
- PSO Project Support Officer
- ESO Employment Support Officer
- TSO Training Support Officer

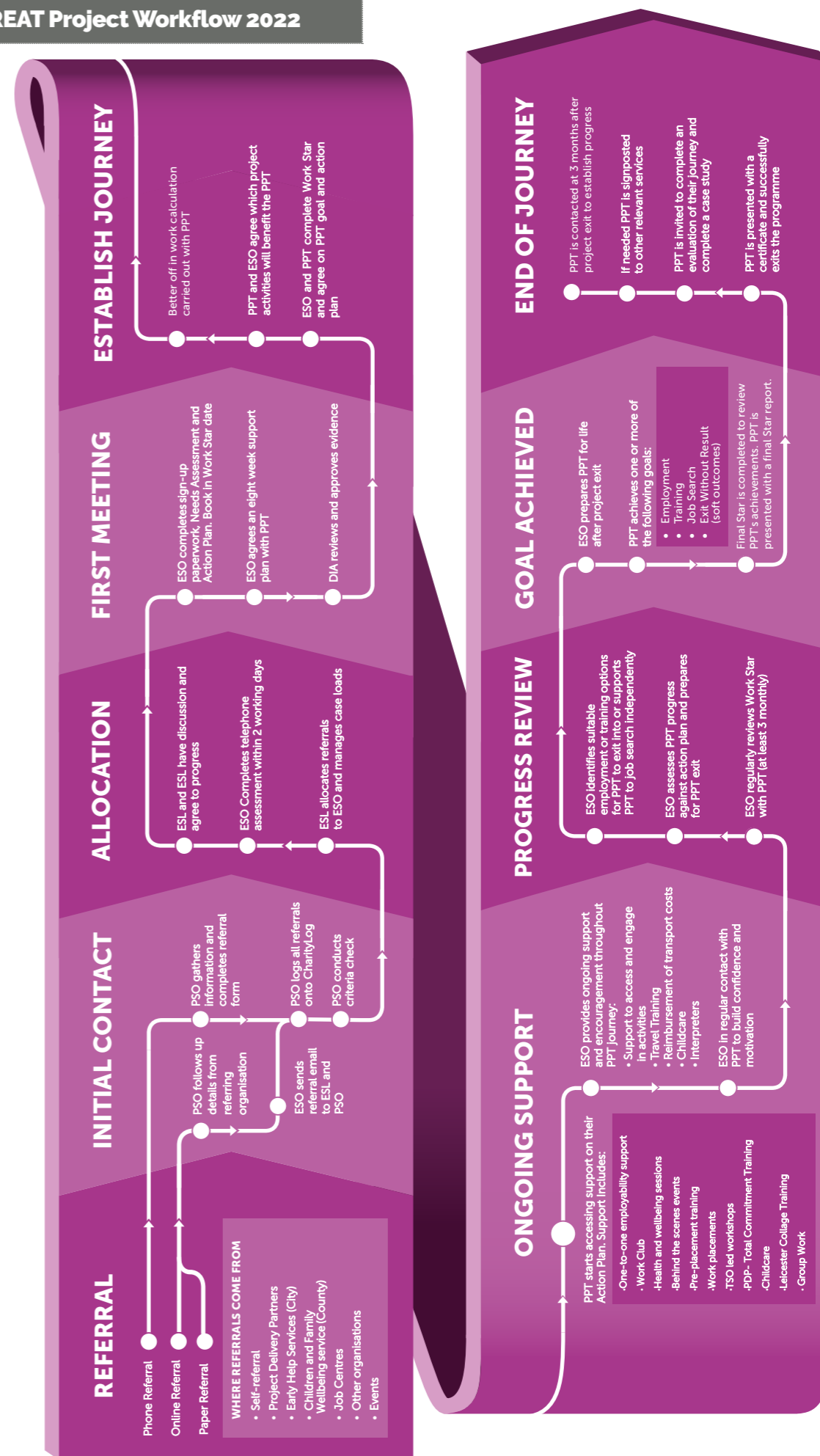
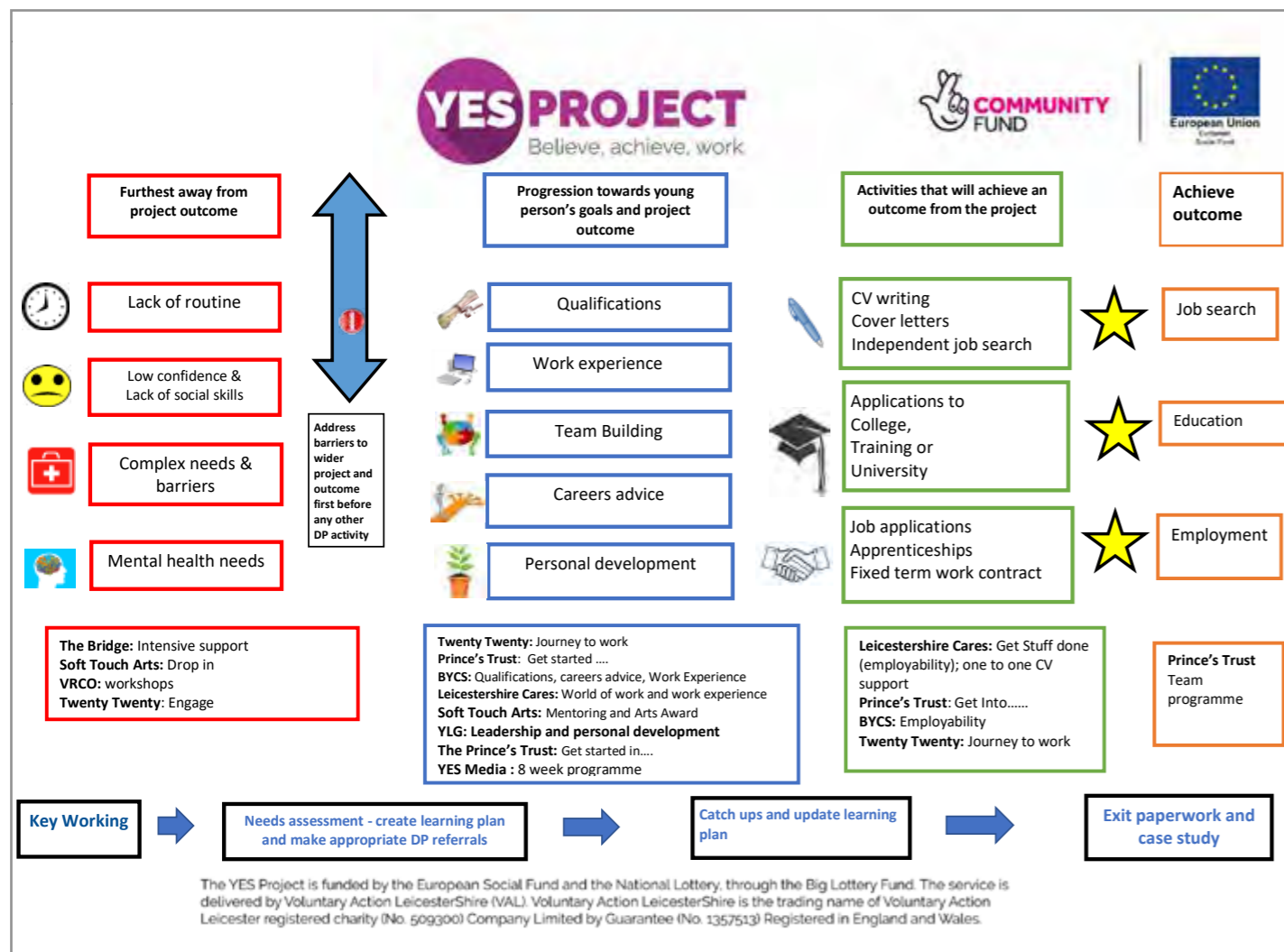


Figure 2 - YES Project Young Person's Journey -
This is the result of a comprehensive "project mapping" exercise that took place in October 2019. The aim was to capture and illustrate the journey of any given young person, as they progress through the project - starting with the barriers (red boxes) they are likely to be facing upon entry.

The map illustrates both the interventions by Delivery Partners (including the VAL project team (blue boxes) and skills needed for a young person to overcome their barriers (green boxes) and progress into sustainable outcomes (orange boxes). This is set against a flow chart of both keyworker practices and the delivery partner activities that were on offer at the time.

Fig. 2 YES Project Young Person's Journey



The development of **Figure 3- YES Project refreshed delivery model** took place in 2021 as a result of our funding extension and subsequent restructuring of our project offer. There is a clear reduction in delivery partners and therefore the activities and interventions on offer.

The key change here, from Figure 2 -Yes Project Young Person's Journey, is the two routes in place: **Fast and Paced**, which reflected the changing needs of our incoming participants and a need to progress them more efficiently.

Specific activities and interventions are linked with the remaining delivery partners reflecting on their areas of delivery expertise and ability to achieve specific outcomes. We also, like the GREAT Project, introduced Outcomes Star™ to measure soft outcomes for the young people on the project.

As part of the legacy of these two projects, it is imperative that we pass on our learning in the hope that any future employability programmes start from where we left off, rather than a blank page.

Fig. 3 YES Project refreshed delivery model

YES PROJECT REFRESHED DELIVERY MODEL 2022

Use of Outcome Star: Work Star to measure outcomes in Employability

Use of Outcome Star: Pathway Star to measure soft outcomes; Confidence, Skills etc.

Demographic	Barriers	Route #	Delivery Partner	Activities on offer	Outcomes for YES Project
Unemployed young people referred directly from the JCP work coaches, (as a guideline unemployed 3m+)	Lack of high quality employability skills Lack of work experience Lacking career direction Low confidence and motivation	Route 1 (FAST) 6 week end to end employability programme: Social Care, Construction, Hospitality, Warehousing & Logistics	Leicestershire Cares	CV writing Work exposure Careers advice Interview skills Vocational qualifications (CSCS, Food safety, H&S)	Employment / apprenticeship
Economically inactive or longer term unemployed, (as a guideline 12m+) Referred in by stakeholders such as Councils, NHS, Charities, JCP	Mental health, physical health, learning disability, lack of qualifications, language issues, social issues	Route 2 (PACED) Longer term support with multiple interventions and activities	The Bridge BYCS VAL	Intensive support Travel training Health and wellbeing Functional skills 1-1 Employability support In house Work experience Spot Purchase: Health and wellbeing Arts and Media Sports / outdoor pursuits Work with external partners (Parks/ Co-op)	Training, employment and job search Disability target Training, employment and job search BAWE Target Training, employment Cross referral to other activities on the project and job search.
				Cross referral to FAST programme in Route 1	Employment or Job Search Outcomes

Cross referrals to other activities on the YES project

After six years of delivering, we have learnt:

- 1 **To deliver holistic interventions**
Employability projects must focus on the whole individual to create lasting change.
- 2 **To place the user's voice at the centre of the service**
Involving service users in service design will bring about better interventions and give users ownership of their employment journeys.
- 3 **The necessity to tackle root causes of deprivation and challenges involved in increasing social inclusion**
Individuals furthest from the labour market have complex barriers which stop them entering work. These must be tackled alongside developing employability skills.
- 4 **To focus on a 'good' job rather than any job**
To create lasting employment, keyworkers must help individuals find work which is right for them rather than encourage them to accept any job.

*"[The] broad nature of the project remit was reflected in participants' accounts of how ESOs and Key Workers helped disentangle personal problems as well as imparting the confidence to interact socially. IA YES Project participant explained how their Key Worker had helped them set up a bank account in order to be able to claim Universal Credit, and even assisted them in attending relationship counselling after they had been assaulted by a girlfriend."*²

*"The projects add to the evidence base that there are alternatives to supporting vulnerable individuals which, if properly resourced, could provide a better approach to labour market activation than that currently favoured by politicians wedded to a 'work-first' approach and punitive sanctions"*²

Learning Point 1: Deliver Holistic Interventions

The GREAT and YES Projects were designed around a whole-person approach to employability; an understanding that in order for individuals to succeed in sustaining long-term employment or training, they must have stability in key areas of their lives.

In practice, this has required the front-line staff to be more than Employment Support Officers/ Keyworkers in the traditional sense and offer mentoring and emotional support to participants as and when they need it.

The projects' use of Outcomes Stars™ for evaluating participants reinforces this approach. Outcomes Stars™ are evidence-based tools developed by Triangle Consulting³, for measuring and supporting change when working with people. The Stars used by the GREAT and YES Projects track individuals progress on relationships, stability at home, and their mental and physical health; these measures have as much weighting on their Outcomes Star™ as their progress on employability skills.

With the emphasis of the projects being on vulnerable individuals who are "furthest from the labour market", a traditional work-first punitive model would not have been appropriate and, in many of our participants cases, may have caused more damage to the employment prospects of individuals.

The remit of the BBO programmes being those furthest from the labour market has meant we have not been beset by issues seen in payment by result models. These models, by design, force providers to focus their attention on "quick wins" and push complex cases to the back of the queue in order for funds to be released in a timely manner.

² Co-designing pathways to decent work? A case study of two third-sector projects working with the long-term unemployed and young people who are 'NEET' in one Midlands' county – Dr Peter Butler & Professor Jonathan Payne

³ Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise Limited

*"My confidence is better than it was thanks to you pushing me. The project has given me support a little at a time and that's easier to process like baby steps - I didn't feel pushed."*⁴

The GREAT and YES Projects purposely avoided this in order to fulfil our remit, taking on cases no matter how complex. On average, participants were engaged on the projects for 5 months before leaving with a success, with the most extreme case being on the project for 5 years before exiting successfully. These long-term cases would not have been possible under a payment by results model and highlights the value of projects dedicated to complex cases that have not been tackled by traditional services.

*"Crucially, the targets for GREAT are not linked to payment-by-results, an approach that has bedevilled the DWP's Work Programme, where there have been problems of 'creaming' (directing support at those easiest to move into work) and 'parking' (neglecting those with more complex needs). There is no evidence that the projects have experienced similar problems. Nor does the approach rely on rapid job entry"*²

The key to the GREAT and YES Project's success in moving long-term unemployed and economically inactive individuals into education, work or training, is understanding that possessing job-ready skills is not the only factor. While local labour market conditions can limit participant's choices, viewing them as human beings with complex personal histories and anxieties and working with them individually on these barriers, can set individuals up for stable and sustained employment in the future, regardless of these external factors.

² Co-designing pathways to decent work? A case study of two third-sector projects working with the long-term unemployed and young people who are 'NEET' in one Midlands' county – Dr Peter Butler & Professor Jonathan Payne

⁴ GREAT Project participant



YES Case Study 1 Keion's Story



Keion has always wanted to work in Media, which is why in 2019, he successfully completed his A-levels in Media, Music Technology and Photography, followed by a short course at a local radio station.

Keion heard about YES Media from a family member and he was keen to get involved to grow his skills in film and entertainment, by learning about multimedia skills from video production to sound engineering, creating music and short films.

Whilst on the YES Project Keion also learnt how to use software like Adobe After Effects through YES Creative, as well as working with Leicestershire Cares, who supported Keion in making sure his CV highlighted all of his talents.

The YES Project gave Keion the opportunity to participate in the BBC Young Reporter. They were looking for young content creators to pitch an idea ahead of the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), and if selected, the young person would work with the BBC to bring their vision to life. Keion was 1 of 22 young people selected nationally to take part and on the 21st November 2021 his end product aired on national television.⁵

Keion is exceptionally proud of this achievement and is excited about where the future will take him. Right now, his end goal is to work in the film and entertainment industry, producing shows and films for the likes of Netflix! When asked what he'd say to another young person considering joining the YES Project, Keion said (see speech bubble):

It's your time, so use it wisely. You have to be prepared to put the time in to get things out. But honestly, it's a great group of staff who are all supportive and friendly.

Keion successfully exited the YES Project after going on to study for a Level 2 Certificate in Youth Work Practice, giving him the skills and knowledge to become an assistant youth support worker.

➤	Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of opportunity/how to get involved
➤	Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YES Media and YES creative – skills and opportunities gained Leicestershire Cares – CV support
➤	Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training exit for an employment outcome

⁵ To see Keion's end product visit: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-leicestershire-59134780>

Maryam was struggling to secure employment having lost her confidence after being made redundant from her last job. She hadn't worked for a while after having a baby, so needed help with navigating the employment market. When she joined the project she said:

"I wasn't having any luck finding a job, I had assumed it was because I had been out of employment for a while after having a baby. It really opened up my eyes to find how the world of work is constantly changing and adapting to new conditions and has very different requirements from what I was used to."

Maryam worked with her Employment Support Officer, Yachna, around her strengths and weaknesses, ensuring she knew how to add value to her attributes and how to look for jobs suited to her abilities. Yachna commented:

"When I first met Maryam I could tell she was anxious and nervous about getting back into work. She had self-doubt and little confidence in her own abilities. She was however enthusiastic and determined to do something for herself."

Maryam attended Behind-the-Scenes Tours from delivery partner, Business in the Community, including Next head office, Fareshare, University of Leicester and East Midlands Airport.

Maryam also attended employability skills workshops with the Training Support Officer, including Get Ready to Get That Job, and a Work Life Balance workshop where she learned about tools for stress reduction and exploring areas of self-improvement. Participating in the GREAT Project built Maryam's confidence and gave her a clearer idea of how she could utilise her transferable skills to adapt to most jobs.

➤	Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence Out of touch with workforce Lack of skills
➤	Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behind-the-scenes tours – employer insight Training Support Officer – employability skills
➤	Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Confidence gained

GREAT Case Study 1 Maryam's Story

She commented on the value of having the one to one support from her ESO:

"It really is like having someone in your corner. Helping you identify your weaknesses and amplify your strengths and how to successfully coordinate that with the job roles you want. It's the kind of backing you need to help push through the mental barriers from rejections and wanting to give up."

Maryam was successful in securing employment as a Finance Compliance Officer in a local Medical Centre. Her ESO Yachna said:

"I was able to support her with identifying and focusing on her strengths rather than her weaknesses. Together we looked at jobs that matched her skill set and also did one-to-one interview preparation and provided guidance on how to answer questions. Maryam took everything on board and was successfully able to secure employment. She has done really well and it was an absolute pleasure to work with her."

Maryam reflects on how the GREAT Project has impacted her life:

"I believe this project is the reason I have managed to get to the position I am in, I have immense job satisfaction. I am working in a role, I could not possibly have walked into as easily as I did; had it not been for the backing of the GREAT Project. I am able to contribute to my household and society as a whole."

I feel a great deal happier and it's freeing being able to dictate your own savings/spending habits. Having a regular payday is awesome!

Learning Point 2: Place the user's voice at the centre of the service

2

The ethos of the GREAT and YES Projects has been to create a user-centred holistic service, following the best practice of such services, namely that participants should have a voice and be included in key decision making in shaping the support available to them.

In the YES Project this began as the Youth Leadership Group, a formal meeting of delivery partners and participants, discussing thoughts and ideas on the service offer alongside more technical elements such as marketing and social media output. The inclusion of this group into the YES

Project had the dual effect of enhancing delivery of appropriate services and gave participants a sense of ownership over their journey through the project.

In the later phases of the YES Project, user voice was captured through the Be Me group - a space for young people to share their stories, be heard and feel empowered to make choices themselves. This provided a more personalised approach to shaping the service compared to the Youth Leadership Group, and aligned closely with the highly adaptive approach to designing services in the continuation phase of the project.

*"The YES Project initially placed particular emphasis on giving young people a 'voice' through a Youth Leadership Group. The successor 'Be-Me' group adopts a more individualised approach. While there is no doubt that engaging young people in key decision making is challenging, the ambition is clearly important"*⁶

The GREAT Project ensured that user voice was incorporated into the project by taking feedback at workshops on the content, delivery and relevance to the participant. An interesting development was the creation of WhatsApp groups after longer activities such as the four-day Total Commitment Training (TCT), helping to maintain friendships that had been made. This was due to TCT focussing on collective problem solving between participants, helping to create meaningful personal connections between them.

The WhatsApp groups also became informal ways for participants to support and share ideas with each other.

User input was also generated by the GREAT Project through directly employing three former participants into ESO roles and an Archiving Assistant. This provided a unique insight into participant's needs and experience of the keyworking process, helping to shape the project. Positive outcomes were created through the former participants lived experience and ability to relate to current participants.

An important facet to providing a user-centred service in the GREAT and YES Projects is the provision of one-to-one ESOs/Keyworkers. Upon entry to the project, each participant is assigned a keyworker who will work with them throughout their entire time on the project. Individuals may attend interventions hosted by other delivery partners and organisations, but their ESO/Keyworker will be with them every step of the way to ensure seamless and personalised support.

This method of keyworking has been a learning point for the projects; it is integral to successfully engaging individuals who have often been let down by other services, ensuring that they understand that we are working at their pace to get them into work or training, rather than the other way around.

*"You almost feel more like friends than somebody that's saying look you can do this, you can do that. And it's done in a way that you accept it because she's so friendly. So you never feel awkward... (GREATclient1)."*⁶

*"ESOs and Key Workers repeatedly emphasised their role was to help participants articulate and realise their own goals, and to make their own choices in their own time."*⁶

The GREAT and YES Projects have developed an employability model which puts the individual at the heart of the service. By listening to individuals' ideas about how the service should be delivered and providing individualised support to break through their barriers, we have developed projects which react to changing circumstances and work for the people they serve.

⁶ Co-designing pathways to decent work? A case study of two third-sector projects working with the long-term unemployed and young people who are 'NEET' in one Midlands' county - Dr Peter Butler & Professor Jonathan Payne



YES Case Study 2 Maisie's Story



After studying at home to complete her GCSEs, Maisie was unprepared to go to college and was anxious about the workload, having had low attendance at school. Maisie wanted some time to work on herself and her confidence before going to college. She signed up to the YES Project after a careers interview.

Maisie was looking for something creative and accessible. She attended the YES Creative at Soft Touch Arts; these sessions not only gave her the chance to expand her painting, sketching and digital art skills, but she was also given the opportunity to showcase her work at an exhibition at Soft Touch Arts.

During her time on the YES Project, Maisie also got involved in the BE ME group, including online sessions focused on mental health, hosted by Richmond Fellowship Life Links.

Maisie engaged incredibly well on the project, even volunteering to participate and share her insights and her experience in the research conducted by De Montfort University.

With YES' support, Maisie has been able to develop both her confidence and creative skills, and she has also had the time she wanted to work on herself too. Maisie exited the project into education, having accepted a place at Leicester College to study BTEC Art and Design.

When asked what she'd say to other young people considering joining the YES Project, Maisie said:

Honestly, it's a really welcoming environment for young people that struggle socially and/or in school. I feel ready for college now which I wouldn't have a couple of years ago. I'd really recommend it."



	Barriers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence Lack of skills
	Provision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft Touch Arts – confidence building and skills gained Life Links – mental wellbeing support Be Me – socialising, team work
	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence gained Educational exit

GREAT Case Study 2 Niesha's Story

Niesha was a single mother with three children who was going through a divorce from an abusive marriage, her confidence was low and she wanted support to improve this as well as develop her skills and qualifications. Niesha's education was in religious studies, and she did not have GCSEs. She had relied on her In-law's network to find employment in the past, so had no experience in searching or applying for jobs.

Her ESO Aishah comments on meeting Niesha was when she first joined the GREAT Project:

"When I first met Niesha, she was very anxious and wary of trusting anyone due to the circumstances she's come to the project in. She hadn't had a good experience with another employability project, but decided to sign up because she 'had a good feeling' about GREAT."

Niesha and her ESO agreed a plan about how she was going to reach her employment goals and discussed the barriers that may prevent her from achieving these goals. She wanted to get a part-time job that worked around her children but wasn't sure what sector she wanted to work in. She liked the idea of helping others as she felt it would benefit her mental well-being.

Niesha worked on her C.V and how to write cover letters, she also learned how to use websites such as Eteach and Indeed to search and apply for jobs. Aishah helped her increase her confidence in writing job applications, showing her she had the knowledge and ability to do so. Niesha also attended the Total Commitment Training (TCT) course that helped her boost her confidence. She comments:

"I felt a huge surge in confidence and what I was capable of after these sessions. I had a lot more motivation going forward and was excited about the future."

Having identified that lack of qualifications was one of her barriers, her ESO helped her search for a suitable course.



She exited into Training, enrolling in a functional skills course in both English and Maths with Leicester College. Niesha reflects on how far she's come:




"My circumstances are the same but I've started a functional skills course. When I look back and think back to when I started with you I was still in the dark, and I feel like I'm in a better position in a lot of ways."

Niesha now attends College twice a week, and it fits around her children's hours. She proved to herself that she can continue to push herself forward and gained a sense of purpose and fulfilment:

"The GREAT Project sees the good in people and I feel like you see the good in people too much but in reality, life isn't like that and people don't treat you like that in other places."

Aishah reflects on Niesha's journey:

"At the beginning, she was in what she described as a 'dark place' but through the help she received from the GREAT project, Niesha was able to build her confidence, self-esteem and ambition as well as her grasp on the reality of her situation and what her options were. The project gave her the tools to put her first foot forward, and believe in herself so that she could build a sustainable life for herself through work and training."

	Barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence Lack of skills & qualifications
	Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2-1 support - Job searching skills, CV and cover letter support TCT - confidence building
	Outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training exit Confidence gained

Learning Point 3: The necessity to tackle the root causes of deprivation and challenges involved in increasing social inclusion

3

The GREAT and YES Projects were designed Tackling individuals' barriers in life has been one of the main purposes of the GREAT and YES projects. In project terminology these have been referred to as 'soft' outcomes, i.e. outcomes not related to achieving employment or moving into education or training, but progress against barriers stopping them from entering into employment.

*"Soft' outcomes in terms of personal development, self-efficacy and well-being are important. Not only are they vital 'stepping stones' towards employability; they also have value for participants regardless of hard project outcomes."*⁷

For the GREAT project one of the significant issues for participants was childcare. Individuals with young children often found that they could not afford to go back to work due to the prohibitive cost of childcare, chose not to in order to spend time with their children during their early years, or found they could not attend interventions to help them into employment due to lack of childcare. This barrier would often lead to a lack of confidence in themselves after having children, exacerbated by the low value society places on rearing children.

*"[It has been] a really big help with confidence building. When you've been out of work for such a long time. Services, such as child care, a big help."*⁸

Low confidence for YES Project participants was more often than not linked to social isolation and this was often the most significant factor as to why individuals were Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET). The YES Project therefore focused its efforts on delivering social activities, to build peer networks for young people, growing their confidence in social situations and, ultimately, getting them into work, training or education.

*"The focus [of the project] was 'very much on building a young person up to be ready to go out into the working world. It's more about building their confidence, building their motivation, just getting them out there in the social world'"*⁷

A significant proportion of GREAT Project participants were new arrivals to the UK, many possessed high level qualifications but could not translate these to UK-recognised qualifications. In addition, individuals were unfamiliar with the UK employment system, lacked the relevant skills needed to obtain employment and lacked confidence speaking English.

Basic knowledge building was therefore a priority for keyworkers to work on with participants.

Conversely, in the YES Project a high proportion of participants lacked basic qualifications upon leaving school or arriving into the UK. Equipping young people with job-ready education was therefore a key barrier to overcome in the YES Project.

The lack of support at local and national level leaves participants feeling isolated and believing that there is no way out of their current situation. The feeling of hopelessness is often present in these participants, believing that things will not get better.

To combat social isolation, where possible, the projects provided support out in the community rather than in participant's homes to encourage them to leave their house. Local libraries, community centres, museums and children's centres have all been used for this purpose. This allowed participants to find what free and accessible events were going on in their local communities, including support groups, stay and play sessions, reading groups and family activities. The aim of this was to increase participants support networks and thereby begin to combat social isolation.

Both projects provided travel training to participants, helping them to use public transport to attend activities that are further away, access volunteering or training and to commute to potential employment. This increased participant confidence in travelling to new places, opening up new opportunities for them and their families. This was of particular value to new arrivals to the area and those with anxiety.

The group work programmes were designed to support participants to build connections with others and feel less alone in their journey. The projects designed cohorts of groups specifically to meet the range of needs and experiences of our participants. The GREAT Project for example ran groups for just men or women, those who are employment ready, those who may have never worked before, and those with young children and participants struggling with their mental health. While these groups had employability aims they also served as a support network, with participants sharing their previous experiences and current barriers, helping others to not feel so alone.

To achieve lasting employment outcomes, root causes to individual's barriers must be addressed. Focussing on 'stepping stones', or soft outcomes, enable individuals to travel a journey towards employability one step at a time. Re-engaging individuals into community services and tackling social anxiety helps reduce the chronic social isolation that those furthest from the labour market often experience.

⁷ Co-designing pathways to decent work? A case study of two third-sector projects working with the long-term unemployed and young people who are 'NEET' in one Midlands' county - Dr Peter Butler & Professor Jonathan Payne

⁸ GREAT project participant

YES Case Study 3 Sierra's Story

Before joining the YES Project, Sierra had struggled with depression at university, and lost her self-esteem. Because she'd moved back in with her parents, she was also feeling a loss of independence which added to her anxiety.

"My social anxiety was at an all-time high and I was struggling to ask for help. I wasn't leaving the house much at all and I found myself sleeping through the days. I wanted to apply for jobs or volunteering opportunities, but I just lacked a lot of confidence."

She felt she was in a rut because she didn't enjoy the subject she had studied and knew it wasn't what she wanted to do in the future.

Sierra took part in the Get Creative sessions with Soft Touch Arts; got career advice from the Bangladeshi Youth & Cultural Shomiti (BYCS) and help with CV writing with Leicestershire Cares.

She accessed the mentoring provision through Soft Touch Arts and during this time she was also referred for specialist counselling with The Bridge.

"Whilst attending the Friday sessions at Soft Touch Arts I was offered one-to-one mentoring. My weekly mentoring sessions gave me the opportunity to look at my goals for the future and practical steps in how to achieve them. I was also able to talk about my feelings and emotions which helped me identify what further support I needed."

Sierra was successfully offered a part-time job and exited the project. Looking ahead, her next goals are to continue counselling and to learn more coping strategies to manage her anxiety. She would like to try new things whilst continuing with her art too.

Another thing she would like to do would be to help others struggling with mental health and anxiety.



"Being on the YES Project helped me establish a routine and allowed me to be comfortable within a social setting. I got better at asking for help when I need it, and this meant I was finally in a position to start counselling. I got the chance to embrace my creative side too, and I actually found a part-time job which I never thought would be possible."

➤	Barriers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mental health and anxiety ■ Confidence
➤	Provision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Soft Touch Arts - mentoring ■ BYCS - careers advice ■ The Bridge - mental well-being support through counselling
➤	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part-time job ■ Anxiety coping techniques gained

Brendan, 21, lives at home with his parents and his sister and was referred to the GREAT Project by his mum. At the time of joining the project, Brendan wanted to work towards an NVQ in electrical engineering, but as he had not worked before, his mum felt the GREAT Project would be a good place for him to start.

At the time of joining Brendan disclosed he has Asperger's and needed help with his confidence and anxiety. Whilst on the project, Brendan took part in all of the activities that were available to him as a participant, including Total Commitment Training (TCT), employability skills workshops (Interview skills, Managing return to work) as well as one to one support and Work Club sessions that helped him with his CV and writing cover letters.

Given Brendan's interest in electrical engineering, his Employment Support Officer (ESO) Leah felt he would benefit from attending Enstruct. Enstruct was the GREAT Project's delivery partner DIY skills, including electrics, tiling, bricklaying and plumbing.

Brendan also accessed Business in the Community behind the scenes tours. He visited a local food manufacturer as well as a nationwide logistics company.

Brendan also attended workshops on managing low mood and worry and learnt different ways in which he can help manage his mood.



GREAT Case Study 3 Brendan's Story

Having accessed the full range of services the project offered, Brendan saw a tremendous improvement in his quality of life. He exited the project into Job Search, having gained the skills to look for work independently.

Leah said:

"Brendan was an absolute pleasure to support. I'm so glad he took the time to attend everything the project can offer because it has really benefitted him; the change I've seen is incredible. I hope that he finds a role soon because he deserves it."

➤	Barriers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of skills ■ Disability ■ Confidence and anxiety
➤	Provision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Confidence building - TCT ■ Vocational skills appealing to the participants' interests - Enstruct ■ Participant gets business insight - Business In the Community ■ Wellbeing support - VRSO
➤	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Independent job search ■ Confidence gained

The project has helped me build and gain confidence, has helped me with my anxiety and has helped me develop useful skills in searching and applying for work.

Learning Point 4: Focus on a 'good' job rather than any job

4

With the projects' emphasis on holistic, user-centred services, one key element of working with participants was guiding them to jobs that are good for their personal situation, rather than applying for and accepting any job that was presented to them. In addition, the projects avoided steering participants towards agency work and zero hour contracts, as this type of work can be fleeting and provide irregular hours of work. This contrasts with the statutory provision, jobs first approach.



"Discussions repeatedly emphasised the JC+ focus on 'conditionality', with claimants being pressurised to take any job as quickly as possible ... for example, one ESO who cited a 'single mum with a PhD in Mathematics', ... 'the work coach was on her shoulders, get a job, get a job. She was someone...with a PhD and the work coach said, "I don't care, get any job, go be a cleaner"'⁹

One-to-one keyworking has been the definitive factor in making this possible, with keyworkers able to help participants untangle their situation and ultimately decide what exit from the project is the correct one for them.

This focus is not simply aspiring for higher standards of results for our participants, but rather a concerted effort to avoid locking participants into a cycle of poor insecure work, low wellbeing and repeated unemployment.

"There was a feeling that young people were often being pushed towards agencies [under Jobcentre plus] and precarious forms of employment. One [keyworker] vividly likened the potential damage of such poor labour market entry to 'a smoker's first cigarette'"⁹

The role of employers has supported our approach through 'behind the scenes' sessions, work placements and interview opportunities. Tours of local employers have given participants new insights into workplaces and broadened their horizons as to what work opportunities are available in Leicester and Leicestershire.

For participants, work placements offered by local employers have enabled them to experience a job and a workplace before applying for roles. These opportunities are invaluable due to the additional effect of improving the confidence of the individual in being able to do the job.

The GREAT and YES Projects have been working for the past six years to create lasting change for long-term unemployed and economically inactive individuals. Engaging with local employers and seeking to offer good work placements is a key cornerstone to employability projects. The move away from a jobs-first approach for individuals in complex situations and focussing instead on finding suitable employment over any job, increases the possibility of individuals gaining from their journey into work.

⁹ Co-designing pathways to decent work? A case study of two third-sector projects working with the long-term unemployed and young people who are 'NEET' in one Midlands' county - Dr Peter Butler & Professor Jonathan Payne

YES Case Study 4 Simran's Story



Simran joined the YES Project because she had just finished college and wanted to receive support with researching and applying for apprenticeships. She also wanted to gain skills that would benefit other areas of her life, like building her confidence and developing her employability skills.

Simran worked with a lot of the YES Project's different delivery partners including the YES Media Project. This was a great opportunity for Simran to work as part of a team and gain more confidence.

Simran also worked with The Prince's Trust, who helped her to develop her skills around leadership, teamwork, make new friends and develop interpersonal skills and confidence. She did a work experience placement, which gave her the opportunity to put her new skills and confidence into practice.

With Leicestershire Cares Simran was supported with applying to apprenticeships and looking at other options she could pursue. They also helped her apply to university, where she is currently in her placement year and aspiring to become an accountant.

➤	Barriers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of employability skills ■ Confidence
➤	Provision
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ YES Media – creativity, teamwork and confidence ■ Prince's Trust – confidence, gain like skills and teamwork ■ Leicestershire Cares – apprenticeship application support
➤	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work placement



Without joining the YES Project, I might not have gone to university and be in the position that I am in now; about to start a work placement! I'd probably still be shy and lack confidence. The YES Project really helped me to develop new skills

GREAT Case Study 4 Joanna's Story



Having worked as both a primary and secondary school teacher in her native country Poland, Joanna felt her English language skills were not good enough to work as a teacher in the UK and she was also concerned she didn't understand the British educational system.

Joanna joined the GREAT Project in the hopes she would better her language skills and to eventually find work in her field.

Joanna said:

"I was at a time in my life where I wanted to think about looking for employment, but I needed help to find work and to understand the job market."

Her ESO Eileen helped her tailor a support plan to address her barriers and goals. She was encouraged to attend Work Club sessions to work on her CV and learn the skills she needed to search for a job effectively. She also had a one-to-one interview skills session, followed by a mock interview to help prepare her for interviewing using English as a second language.

Although Joanna has all the relevant qualifications to teach in England, she felt most comfortable looking for a teaching assistant role, as she felt this would be an easier transition. Her ESO helped her look at job specifications to match her skills and qualifications to various teaching assistant roles. A turning point in Joanna's confidence came when she saw an advert that was specifically looking for a Polish speaking teaching assistant. Seeing this role showed Joanna that being bi-lingual is hugely beneficial and is considered a valued skill and not a barrier.



"I also really liked having time to focus on my needs. Being a mother, sometimes it can be hard to focus on yourself, but I was able to put myself first."

Speaking of her time on the project, Joanna said:

"I really enjoyed having someone to talk to, and speaking in English has shown me that I can be understood by others. I also really liked having time to focus on my needs. Being a mother, sometimes it can be hard to focus on yourself, but I was able to put myself first. For those that are thinking about joining the GREAT Project, go for it – do something for yourself. Trust the people that offer you help because it's worth a try."

Eileen, Joanna's Employment Support Officer, said:

"Joanna really has it all; good qualifications and work experience. She just needs to have more confidence in her spoken English. She will make a wonderful teaching assistant."

Joanna registered with multiple teaching agencies and exited the project feeling confident she had gained the skills to secure a job.

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATIVE WORKING



The learning of the GREAT and YES Projects would not have been possible without the collaboration between delivery partner organisations. With each organisation offering a distinct element of the projects we have been able to gather insights into the effectiveness of particular interventions.

The GREAT Project is delivered by a range of statutory, not-for-profit and private companies. This partnership approach means the project can offer a holistic, person-centred service, tailored to participants needs. Without the expertise of these partner organisations, the GREAT Project would not have been able to successfully support participants into work or training.

The YES Project is delivered by a partnership of voluntary and community sector organisations in Leicester and Leicestershire.

The number and composition of our partners has changed throughout the six years of the project to meet the shifting needs of our participants. The project has ended with three core delivery partners, offering distinct support, from intensive one-to-one interventions to larger group world of work tours.

Each delivery partner has described their work on the GREAT and YES Projects and given their insights about the future of employability once the projects close.



	Barriers
	Cultural and language
	Confidence
	Provision
	Work Club – employability skills
	1-2-1 support – interview skills and mock interview
	Outcome
	Job search
	Confidence gained, being bilingual is an advantage

GREAT Project Current Delivery Partners

Business in the Community, Andreea Tudor, Operations Manager

Business in the Community (BITC) and their network of business members are leading a movement to create a fair and sustainable world in which to live and work.

Formed in 1982, and with His Majesty King Charles III as our Royal Founding Patron, they are the largest and longest-established membership organisation dedicated to responsible business.

They work and campaign with more than 600 members to continually grow their responsible business practices, uniting our efforts for greater social and environmental impact in our communities.

They grow the responsible business movement and collectively create a greater impact focused on:

- developing a skilled and inclusive workforce
- ensuring ways of working are good for everyone
- delivering a just transition to the climate crisis and regenerating the planet
- building thriving communities.

BITC's work on the GREAT Project

'World of Work' is a holistic, person-centred service helping individuals facing barriers to employment move towards work through a programme of 'in work' experiences, placements and behind-the-scenes employer visits at a variety of organisations across Leicester and Leicestershire.

'Behind the Scenes' allows participants to build their knowledge of different sectors and confidence in the workplace through visiting an employee and talking to business volunteers about their careers.

'Ready for Work' comprises of two primary elements that help unemployed people who experience barriers to work, to move closer to the labour market. This free service is designed to give members of families, who are not currently employed, the support they need to find work or training opportunities, enabling those with

barriers to employment to get a taste of work and move closer to the labour market.

- 100% of jobseekers reported an improvement in either knowledge of the job market and confidence in approaching employers to gain more knowledge about the role.
- 80% of jobseekers attending this kind of intervention progress into other more focused employability and skills programmes.
- 57% of participants that complete a work placement through Ready for Work programme go on to gain and sustain employment, significantly outperforming similar national programmes

BITC have learnt that this support to open business doors and provide opportunities to receive key advice and information on businesses recruitment processes and true life experiences of working in that industry are vital and improve confidence and help remove barriers.

This has proved essential in helping participants choose and decide the career path they want to get into, while also getting them the chance to ask their own questions to business representatives.

This inspires participants and gives them the opportunity to break down barriers to their chosen career pathway.

The gap that's left

Without GREAT and its partners, BITC believe there will be current and potential future participants who will miss out on the help to remove barriers and provide the support needed to help them increase their chances of getting into work and training.

This missing support that is not being replaced in the community could put more barriers in place and hinder the potential of all the current and potential new participants to achieve their chosen career path moving forward.

The BITC would like to see this support and infrastructure continue as some amazing work has been done, and there is still a lot of work that can be done with the need for a lot more participants to be supported in their journey to break down the barriers of getting into career based work and training.

Leicester College, Pam Sargent - Programme Area Manager

Leicester College is one of the largest further education colleges in the UK, offering a comprehensive range of technical, vocational and higher education qualifications across a broad range of programme areas, from Pre-entry level up to Level 6.

The College's offer for adults is delivered through a range of strands including Community Learning, ESOL, Distance Learning and English & Maths. The College has a large ESOL department and the intent of this provision is to help students to improve their language skills, study skills and citizenship skills and to aid their progression to suitable education, training and employment opportunities.

Leicester College's work with the GREAT Project

Their role within the GREAT Project has been to deliver 4 rolling Taster sessions in ESOL, ICT and Functional Skills English and Maths, to enable participants to progress and develop their language and numeracy skills for employment, training, and everyday living.

The sessions were delivered at the appropriate level to meet the needs of the participants. The sessions have enabled the participants to develop their language skills to help them within their employment, moving into further training or daily life skills. Tutors have enabled the participants to develop their knowledge of progression routes and supported them through all stages of progression including helping them to complete their application and enrolment for the next course. The Taster sessions gave the participants an insight into the courses, and the expectations and study skills of being a student. Participants were able to progress onto further courses within the college, thereby fulfilling their potential and aspirations.

The gap that's left

Individuals will not have the knowledge of the opportunities to progress and the routes available without the Great Project sessions. As all tutors working with the participants have experience of undertaking initial, diagnostic and summative assessment, they were able to support the participants well with the next stage of progression.

Optima UK Ltd, Lorraine Boorman, Chief Executive

Optima UK Ltd is a people centric business providing training and development, coaching and counselling support and Human Resource solutions across a wide spectrum. Optima supports people disenfranchised from the workplace and the social economy, those with mild to moderate mental health and wellbeing needs and people with specialist health and wellbeing needs.

We support over 50,000 individuals per annum either on their journey to work and/or wellbeing and in their personal development and career progression. Also working with over 10,000 client organizations supporting them to attract the right people, train and develop staff to help their business performance.

Optima's work with the GREAT Project

As part of the GREAT Project we provide mental health and wellbeing support to participants with mild to moderate health and anxiety issues.

They have seen from our one-to-one personal support sessions and group workshops that all participants have grown significantly in their confidence and desire to move forward to take their next steps of progression. They have helped to move many participants into voluntary and paid work which, from their early interventions, they would never have believed that they could achieve such a goal. The programme has made a significantly positive impact on the lives of all the participants.

There are two learning key factors from the project that stand out for us, one is that the participants need closer nurturing engagement in the early interventions to win their trust and they need continued close engagement support throughout. Secondly, the programme management needs to be a lot more flexible and less bureaucratic to allow suppliers to deliver more freely and not spend so much time on admin and bureaucratic process.

The gap that's left

Without the GREAT Project individuals will not progress in the same way as other programmes don't provide the intensity or consistency of close connection with the participants which they rely on. Participants need a prop to lean on to move them forward and without it we believe participants will continue to suffer and not move on.

Programmes with sufficient financial support are needed to deliver concentrated and focussed support to allow for considerable participant engagement and build stakeholder networks to enable joined up support. There also needs to be new, fresh approaches as traditional support programmes and management of them are very stale and not moving forward progressively; they are too old-fashioned and bureaucratic.

Scalliwags, Andrea Parker - Founding Director

Scalliwags is a small business providing toys and staff to enable organisations to offer childcare to the adults wishing to take advantage of the Courses and Events on offer.

Often adequate and reliable childcare is impossible to find for short periods and so adults cannot easily access opportunities such as these.

Scalliwags work on the GREAT Project

They have supported many courses throughout this contract offering safe and accessible childcare to adult participants. This has enabled many of those requiring childcare to take full advantage of the opportunities that have been offered through this project. They have learnt that there is an on-going need for services such as ours.

The gap that's left

Without the GREAT project's support there will be limited opportunities for individuals to take advantage of as, without childcare, it is impossible to either attend or, if attending with children, to fully concentrate on what is on offer.

Scalliwags will continue to offer childcare facilities for children of any age or abilities so that participants can achieve to their maximum potential without additional worries or hardship.

Personal Development Point Ltd, Tony Smith - Training Director

Personal Development Point Ltd (PDP) has been delivering personal and social development for over 15 years.

At the heart of the work is helping people to be a better version of themselves, whether that be in leadership, dealing with change, working in a team or getting back into work or education. Their approach takes people from where they are, to helping them see and take ownership of an improved them going forward. From clients such as NatWest, Sky and O2, to small local charities, they can work with anyone.

PDP's work with the GREAT Project

PDP has been integral from the outset, delivering the personal and social development aspect of the offer. They deliver a 3 or 4 day training course called Total Commitment Training (TCT) which is about increasing people's confidence and self-esteem.

The impact on the participants has been huge, with people feeling more confident they felt more able to take on more opportunities the GREAT project had to offer and therefore maximise the potential for larger growth. Even participants who would arrive very shy and very anxious as to whether to attend, we were able to help them relax and gain so much from the course.

TCT is a fantastic course and really does help build people's confidence and self-esteem, but a lot of people who lack these would often not attend due to how they felt about meeting new people. This is where the GREAT staff who had a relationship of trust with the participant and they knew how good and effective the course was, supported their clients to come along, even if it meant being with them at the start for extra support. Without the GREAT staff, attendance on the course would have been lower.

The gap that's left

Without the GREAT Project, participants will have to go back to engaging with four five or six different agencies to get support, which is a hurdle a lot of them choose not to tackle. Only with a joint funded project, like GREAT, will agencies get behind the idea of working together.

The GREAT Project made the first and hardest step easier and with continued support we saw considerable outcomes.

GREAT Project Previous Delivery Partners

Leicestershire County Council October 2016- September 2019

Leicestershire County Council offered pop-up Work Clubs for GREAT Project participants in local libraries, ensuring access to IT facilities for job search and self-employment research. The Work Clubs covered key employment skills such as CV writing, job searching and completing job applications

Healthy Working Futures October 2016- December 2018

Healthy Working Futures supported GREAT Project participants with occupational health needs including:

- Assessments
- Diagnosis Support
- Occupational Health Support
- Pain Management

Enstruct Training Limited October 2016- September 2019

Enstruct Training provided participants the chance to gain skills, confidence and experience in the construction industry. Learners received a hands-on approach to education, enabling them to learn at a rate that best suited their individual needs, in a safe, welcoming, yet realistic working environment.

Pop Up Nurseries

October 2016- March 2018

The GREAT Projects first delivery partner providing mobile childcare provision alongside GREAT Project activities for children aged 0-5.

Parents Learning Alliance

April 2019- March 2020

Provided mobile childcare provision alongside GREAT Project activities for children aged 0-11.

YES Project Current Delivery Partners

Leicestershire Cares, Kieran Breen - Chief Executive

Leicestershire Cares believe in partnership. We work with business, community groups, public sector, schools and young people to ensure that no one is left behind.

Our emphasis is on being agile and creative and ensuring the voices and lived experience of the young people and communities they work with lead the way on how the work. They strive to create a city and county where everyone can thrive and all young people can live safe, rewarding, fulfilling and happy lives.

Leicestershire Cares work on the YES Project

Leicestershire Cares have worked on the YES Project since its introduction and have delivered the employability outputs in a creative and agile manner. Using their strong links to local businesses, YES Participants have had the opportunity to gain work experience, World of Work Tours and 1:1 mentoring from these business members. As well as having people from the business community support Leicestershire Cares staff with their employability sessions covering everything from CV's, job searching, cover letters, workplace behaviours and mock interviews. For a period of Leicestershire Cares' time on the project, we also provided participants the opportunity to gain their Functional Skills qualifications and work towards achieving their English and Maths, which was a huge barrier to employment for a lot of participants.

Every participant who has come through the doors of Leicestershire Cares throughout their time on the project has at the very least, improved their confidence and soft skills. The creative sessions provided by the staff help to improve self-esteem and build on basic soft skills that would help young people in the workplace moving forward, especially communication and team working. The biggest impacts that Leicestershire Cares have made to participants' lives whilst being on the project was to gain definitive outcomes.

Leicestershire Cares have support participants to gain Functional skills qualifications, start training or college courses and placed multiple participants into the workplace, providing stability for the future and allowing these young people to develop themselves.

Leicestershire Cares have learnt that the reasons for youth unemployment are complex and there are many interrelated issues and barriers that prevent young people from progressing positively. It takes a creative, agile and youth focused approach to support these participants and there is not a simple linear solution to make a lasting impact.

The gap that's left

Without the YES Project many young people might be left behind, as often those with the most complex needs go to the back of the queue. This in turn can make those young people ever more isolated and prone to mental health and wellbeing issues as well as possibly being targeted and exploited by county lines gangs.

Investing in further support for unemployed young people is key to help them to tackle their barriers to employment and path their future. As well as working with local businesses to ensure that opportunities are available for these young people to develop their skills and experience. In essence, YES-like projects need to be central to levelling up funds.

The Bridge (East Midlands), Molly Boggis - Project Management Support Officer

The Bridge (East Midlands) has been working for the community since 1993, they deliver a number of specialist housing related advice, support and assistance and accommodation options to those who are homeless and vulnerably housed across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Their focus is on preventing homelessness through securing tenancies and promoting personal wellbeing. They have a skilled and committed team who are dedicated to shaping and providing a number of vital services that are responsive to the needs of the community. Last year they supported 2330 households across their services.

The Bridge's work on the YES Project

The Bridge (East Midlands) has provided the Intensive Support work for participants on the YES Project. This has involved receiving referrals which have a housing need and/or mental health diagnosis. Upon allocation, participants had a Support Worker who would see them or call them on a weekly basis and encourage them to reach their goals as set in their action plans. This support was not time limited but bespoke to the needs of the individual which allowed professional rapport to be built and trusting relationships formed. Holistic support was offered ranging from meeting wellbeing needs, accessing professional mental health services, benefit claims and encouraging confidence to leave their homes. Group activities offered by YES were always popular and cross agency working with other delivery partners proved pivotal in the success of the project.

Young people with an unstable living environment need that extra support of having an allocated worker to navigate their way through getting their first tenancies. Without having a place to call home and feeling comfortable in it, NEET status cannot be addressed. Additionally, participants suffering with mental health conditions need support to access the correct support whether that is their GP, medication or other professionals. Young people require services that give them time and listen to them. Having a network of delivery partners make a project like YES a success.

The gap that's left

Without the YES Project participants will have to find alternative projects and provision to support them to build their confidence and self-esteem and prepare themselves for returning to education, training, or employment. There are limited options available that offer such a holistic approach, therefore some young people will not find the support they need.

New services need to be funded with the focus on engaging young people who are NEET to build confidence with professional services and provide young people the time they need to build on their self-esteem skills.

Bangladesh Youth and Cultural Shomiti, Ebrahim Ali - YES Project Officer

Bangladesh Youth and Cultural Shomiti (BYCS) is one of the longest established voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations based in Highfields in Leicester.

Founded in 1974, it serves a vibrant multi-cultural-community which is considered as one of the most deprived in the UK.

BYCS prides itself on delivering strong, purposeful advice, learning and employment related services. Subject to funding, our services are focused in five main areas: Accredited Adult education, learning and training such as English, Maths and ICT; Information, Advice and Guidance; support for children and young people, particularly those who are new arrivals to the country; Social welfare and benefit advice and support services for employers and their workforce.

BYCS 's work with the YES Project

BYCS has been involved in the delivery of the YES Project activities from its inception. Over the years, BYCS's contribution has helped to increase many of the YES Project's Key Performance Indicators including engagement with hard to reach communities, economically inactive participants, gaining Further Education outcomes and impressive qualification results. The successful delivery of our provisions were due to our unique in-house delivery model using qualified and experienced management and delivery staff.

YES activities at BYCS included the delivery of accredited qualifications and vocational training such as health & safety and food hygiene which have proved useful for those wanting to move directly into employment.

The offer of fast track qualifications, including functional skills English and Maths, provided participants with an opportunity to gain essential qualifications to help them access college or employment in circumstances where a year's study for GCSE would not be appropriate.

BYCS developed their staffing offer to be able to offer 1-2-1 additional learning support to students who have additional needs such as a learning disability.

This has been essential for those young people who needed a different approach to mainstream education.

The creation of in-house volunteering opportunities at our premises provided young people with a unique opportunity to gain administrative work experience and build confidence, language skills and make new friends at the centre.

During the COVID - 19 lockdown, delivery moved to remote learning, online support or via telephone and paper based for those students who did not have online access. Highfields suffered one of the highest levels of digital poverty in the East Midlands and in light of this they distributed digital devices and mobile data to the needy through our connections with The Good Things Foundation and The Prince's Trust.

YES activities at BYCS have had a major impact on our own participants as well as those referred to us by other delivery partners. Access to the YES Project within the community removed barriers and increased engagement for specific communities.

Access to careers advice led to better career decision making skills. Many participants successfully followed their short and long-term learning and career goals. For example, participants progressed from functional skills to GCSE's at BYCS, followed by accessing higher education courses at colleges and universities.

The YES Project has made it possible for so many participants to make their professional dreams come true, from the first cohort of participants alone we have a physiotherapist, trainee solicitors, teaching assistants, warehouse operatives, food production operatives, project assistants, customer services representatives, forklift drivers, care workers and trained careers advisors.

The gap that's left

Without the YES Project there will be reduced access to local and accessible employability and education provisions and an adverse impact on those with multiple barriers including those on the periphery of society.

There is also the risk of increased social isolation and reduced social cohesion in Leicester and Leicestershire; thanks to the YES Project, some young people at BYCS have experienced diversity that they never had before.

continued...

Future projects need to include a holistic service that will consider participants' short and long-term work and learning goals. Interventions should be easily accessible and culturally sensitive to local needs and need to be delivered within communities in order to reach the 'hard to reach' and those on the periphery of society.

In addition, learning provisions should be accredited and externally recognised to be of use to participants when accessing further education or employment.

Finally future projects need to consider the post-exit support needed by participants when they enter into employment or education following interventions from projects like YES.

YES Project

Previous Delivery Partners

SEED Creative Academy (September 2016 - March 2019)

SEED Creative would provide a 4 week engagement programme themed on digital media which would include; relevant work experience, employability skills support (CV writing, interview skills, application forms, job site profiles), placement on apprenticeships and mentoring sessions.

Warwickshire College (September 2016 - June 2019)

Warwickshire College managed and were the principal deliverer of 'YES' Team programme which would include; induction and ice-breakers, residential trip, work placement, community projects, next steps, team challenge and celebration event to recognise achievements of participants.

Twenty Twenty (September 2016 - March 2020)

Twenty Twenty (Charnwood) would provide the YES Project participants with mentoring services to support young people to achieve sustained educational and/or employment outcomes, functional skills assessment and provision including English, Maths, ICT and Digital Media.

Soft Touch Arts (September 2016 - February 2022)

Soft Touch Arts delivered short engagement sessions themed on a wide variety of creative industries, provided one-to-one support through mentoring sessions, development planning and setting and monitoring goals, Arts Award accreditation where appropriate, public facing group projects.

The Princes Trust (September 2016 - February 2022)

The Princes Trust delivered a dedicated outreach programme, Get into (industry themed pre-employment courses which was delivered with employers including employability and sector specific skills/experience, industry-recognised qualifications, work placements and job opportunities).

Highfields Community Association (December 2019 - February 2022)

Highfields Community Association were responsible in the delivery of activities to support young people to learn about themselves and gain hands on experience of digital media and aid with challenging young people to become independent, resilient and capable of taking part in everyday life through an 8 week programme which would include; developing media production skills, music, film or documentaries.

A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS



The GREAT and YES Projects over the last six years, have fulfilled an important role in the employability landscape. Together, the projects have developed intensive support for long-term unemployed and economically inactive individuals that extends beyond the approach taken by statutory providers.

While these projects end, demand still exists for this type of employability support particularly with the rise in the number of economically inactive individuals. Future projects can gain important insights from the learning of the GREAT and YES Projects in Leicester and Leicestershire. Our success stems from the core purpose of these projects: to provide individualised, holistic interventions that seek to empower individuals by putting them at the centre of their employability, learning and personal journey.

"The [Leicester City Council] Task Group heard about examples of highly successful employment projects ... In all of these projects a key element was the individual tailor-made support provided to each participant which built confidence and self-esteem as well as developing job ready skills. We recommend that individual personalised mentoring is a feature of projects promoted, supported or run by the City Council."¹¹



If the purpose of future projects is to tackle the complex barriers that keep individuals out of the labour market, then there must be an acceptance that these projects cannot be judged on a simple cost-effectiveness measure. Complex barriers are inherently expensive to tackle and overcome because they take time. Participants in employability projects need to have an element of choice on the pace at which their interventions are delivered if they are to achieve success. Individuals need to feel in control of the choices they make with the help and support of knowledgeable key workers who understand their personal barriers and goals.

Ensuring individuals are encouraged into 'good jobs' that work for them is key to creating lasting change, rather than pushing individuals into ill-suited work and create a revolving door of employment and unemployment. What constitutes 'good work' is a contentious issue. Our claim is that individuals are more likely to feel work is good for them if they have chosen it themselves and are more likely to stay in such work, provided employers also make sustainable employment possible for them.

Future employability projects need to engage with employers more and expect a leadership role from them in accordance with an expanded definition of 'corporate social responsibility'. Employers themselves need to have 'inclusive' hiring approaches. They need to offer forms of flexible working, including shifts and hours, which are suited to individuals rather than exclusively business needs. They need to be patient when engaging with participants from projects like GREAT and YES, working with individuals when setbacks occur in supportive ways that can be often time consuming. The social inclusion of vulnerable individuals with complex needs makes very challenging demands on employers. They need to be a key partner in this and receive the necessary incentives and support to make this possible.

Social isolation is a large challenge in modern society. The GREAT and YES Projects have seen both younger and older participants who are completely isolated from society; lack of work forms only one element of this isolation. Future employability projects must focus on re-engaging individuals into local services, communities and their own families in order to create lasting change in those individuals' employment prospects and well-being.

With the end of the European Social Fund Building Better Opportunity projects, there now exists a significant gap in services for vulnerable individuals who are unemployed or economically inactive. The GREAT and YES Projects have been a vital avenue for referrals from Jobcentre Plus, helping to reduce their caseload of complex cases. Without this type of project there is likely to be a backlog of cases for support.

The GREAT and YES Projects have learnt key lessons over six years of delivery that employability projects designed to support those furthest from the labour market should and we want to share this with readers of this report as follows:

1. Deliver holistic interventions

Possessing job-ready skills is not the only factor determining whether someone is unemployed or not. Viewing individuals as human beings with complex personal histories and working with them individually on these barriers can set individuals up for stable and sustained employment in the future.

2. Place the user's voice at the centre of the service

By listening to individuals' ideas about how a service should be delivered and providing individualised support to break through their barriers, organisations can develop a project which can react to changing circumstances, working effectively for the people they serve.

3. Understand the necessity to tackle root causes of deprivation and challenges involved in increasing social inclusion

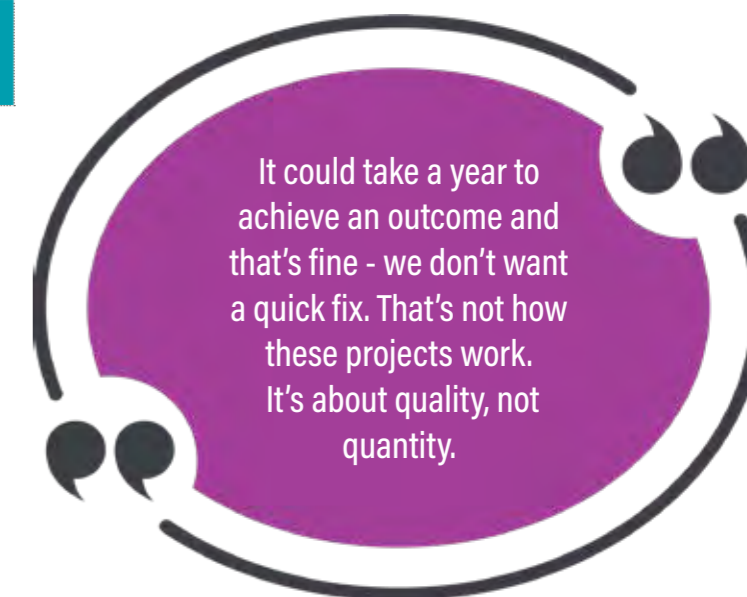
To achieve lasting employment outcomes, root causes to individual's barriers must be addressed. Focussing on 'stepping stones', or soft outcomes, enable individuals to travel a journey towards employability one step at a time. Re-engaging individuals into community services and tackling social anxiety helps reduce the chronic social isolation that those furthest from the labour market often experience.

4. Focus on a 'good' job rather than any job

Engaging with local employers and seeking to offer good work placements is a key cornerstone to employability projects. Projects should move away from a jobs-first approach for individuals in complex situations and focus instead on finding suitable employment over any job.

It is therefore imperative that new funding streams, not linked to a payment-by-results approach, come online to fund new projects with similar processes to GREAT and YES; providing wrap-around support for those furthest from the labour market underpinned by :-

- Long term and intensive support to participants, especially those with complex needs (e.g. housing, addiction, mental health issues, health conditions, debt)
- Recognition of progression towards employment and the importance of soft outcomes: confidence, mental health, well-being, life satisfaction and skills/competencies
- Adopt a holistic approach with key worker support
- Engage and involve participants/beneficiaries in their choices
- Commitment to employer engagement
- Devise in-work support



The GREAT and YES Projects provide a blueprint for success and we hope the lessons outlined in this report will be used to shape the development of future employability policies and programmes.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS THANK YOU



A special mention to Muriel Russell, Nancy Freeman, James Smalley, Leah Fazakerley, Yachna Gadhia, Amy Cook, Chris Rushworth, Melanie Wyatt and Liv Southall who helped to fine tune the projects' operational delivery and finally to all the people (listed below who played their part in making the GREAT and YES Projects' a success by helping to change people's lives for the better.

We also want to acknowledge the special relationship we developed with Professor Jonathan Payne, Director of the People, Organisations and Work Institute (POWI) and Dr Peter Butler Reader in Employment Relations (POWI) at De Montfort University.

We want to express our thanks to Shirley Fung, Building Better Opportunities Funding Officer at the National Lottery Community Fund for all her support over the years.

***The next few pages include a list of every one that has been involved in the project – we apologise in advance for any omissions.**

GREAT Project Staff List

Organisation	Staff name	Job title	Dates	Delivery dates
VAL	Wendy Brickett	Senior Manager	August 2016-October 2017	June 2016 - present
VAL	Heather Roythorne	GREAT Project Team Manager	October 2016-February 2018	
VAL	Nesta Birrell	Administrator	November 2016- April 2017	
VAL	Muriel Russell	Data and Impact Analyst	November 2016-Present	
VAL	Krishna Patel	Navigator/ ESO Lead/ CCT and Engagement Development Officer	December 2016- Present	
VAL	John Hughes	Navigator	December 2016- October 2017	
VAL	Emma Whitmore	Employment Support Officer	December 2016- September 2019	
VAL	Hina Dayala	Navigator	April 2017- February 2018	
VAL	Haneesha Flora	Administrator	May 2017-June 2017	
VAL	Diana Georgescu	Employment Support Officer	May 2017- June 2021	

Organisation	Staff name	Job title	Dates	Delivery dates
VAL	Eileen Cusey	Navigator /Vocational Rehabilitation Case Officer/ Employment Support Officer	May 2017-Present	June 2016 - present
VAL	Chris Rushworth	Project Support Officer	June 2017- Present	
VAL	Vandna Gohil	Executive Manager YES & GREAT Projects	October 2017- Present	
VAL	Chantal Brotherhood	GREAT Team Manager	November 2017-Present	
VAL	Kenton Hall	Comms Officer/ Employment Coordinator	April 2018- September 2019	
VAL	Ivan Liburd	Delivery Coordinator	April 2018- March 2019	
VAL	Yachna Gadhia	Employment Support Officer, ESO Lead	April 2018- Present	
VAL	Leah Fazakerley	Employment Support Officer, ESO Lead	May 2018- Present	
VAL	Anita Gardiner	Employment Support Officer	May 2018- March 2021	
VAL	Harinder Kang	Employment Support Officer	May 2018-Present	
VAL	Aarti Thobhani	Training Support Officer	May 2018-Present	
VAL	Suzanne Hailles	Employment Support Officer	May 2018- December 2018	
VAL	Desrie Hadley	Employment Support Officer	May 2018- May 2021	
VAL	Georgia Cox	Communications Officer	October 2018-September 2019	
VAL	Imran Mahmood	Employment Support Officer	March 2019- July 2019	
VAL	Patrick McLintock	Employment Support Officer	April 2019- September 2019	
VAL	Sally Tame	Communications Officer	October 2019- Present	
VAL	Harks Flora	Learning and Knowledge Manager	December 2019 - June 2022	
VAL	Olivia Southwell	Finance Officer	March 2020- October 2022	
VAL	Sarah Boon	Communications Officer	April 2020- March 2021	
VAL	Tom Simpson	Employment Support Officer	March 2021- Present	
VAL	Rasheda Shah	Employment Support Officer	May 2021- Present	
VAL	Phil Pearson	Employment Support Officer	May 2021-Present	
VAL	Aaishah Ahmed	Employment Support Officer	October 2021- Present	
VAL	Anna Barrow	ESO Lead, GREAT Project Team Manager	October 2021-Present	
VAL	Jessica Mistry	Employment Support Officer	October 2021- May 2022	
VAL	Ellie Lomas	Employment Support Officer	December 2021- October 2022	
VAL	Nijah Paul	Communications Officer	February 2022- December 2022	
VAL	Karen Abbot	Business & Engagement Development Officer	June 2022- Present	
VAL	Narmeen Fayaz	Employment Support Officer	July 2022- November 2022	
VAL	Zahra Mire	Employment Support Officer	July 2022- Present	
VAL	Ibrahim Buwanhot	Work Club Support Officer	August 2022- Present	
VAL	Aysha Ghanchi	Work Club Support Officer	September 2022-Present	
VAL	Aimee Markham	GREAT & YES Archive Assistant	October 2022-Present	

Organisation	Staff name	Job title	Dates	Delivery dates
Business in the Community (BITC)	Beverley Toone	Senior Employment Project Manager	October 2016- June 2018	October 2016 - present
BITC	Agathe Suzanne	Employment Operations Manager	December 2016- August 2017	
BITC	Lynne Bignall	Employment Coordinator	December 2016- January 2018	
BITC	Chris Hill	Employment Programme Manager	March 2017- December 2017	
BITC	Ann-Marie Liddiard	Head of National Operations	August 2017- January 2018	
BITC	Jack Gibson	Employment Operations Manager	October 2017-September 2019	
BITC	Mark Rogerson	Finance Manager	November 2017- February 2018	
BITC	Nicola Burton	Head of Operations	March 2018- August 2018	
BITC	Laura Browne	Project Support	March 2018- July 2019	
BITC	Kerri Pomeroy	Project Support	April 2018- February 2019	
BITC	Juliette Hewitt	Employment Manager/Operations Manager North	June 2018- July 2020	
BITC	Hilda Dotsey	Employment Manager	February 2020- September 2021	
BITC	Katie Harris	Employment Coordinator	September 2020- February 2022	
BITC	Andreea Tudor	Operations Manager	September 2020- Present	
BITC	Ben Hunt	Employment Programme Manager	December 2021-Present	
BITC	Grace Baylis	Operations Manager	February 2022- July 2022	
BITC	SP	Management Accounts Assistant	March 2022- Present	



Organisation	Staff name	Job title	Dates	Delivery dates
Personal Development Point	Tony Smith	Training Director	April 2017 - Present	April 2017 - Present
Optima UK Ltd	Rachel Nott	Vocational Rehabilitation Manager	March 2021- October 2021	March 2021 - Present
Optima UK Ltd	Sarah Preston	Head of Training and Employability	March 2022- Present	
Optima UK Ltd	Lisa Flook	Finance Manager	March 2021- Present	
Optima UK Ltd	MM	Training Consultant	May 2021- July 2021	
Optima UK Ltd	Karen Whatsize	Senior Training Consultant	November 2021- February 2022	
Scalliwags	Andrea Parker	Founding Director	October 2021 - Present	October 2021 - present
Leicester College	Pam Sargent	Programme Area Manager	September 2022-Present	September 2022 - Present
Leicester College	Kate Penny	ESOL Tutor	October 2022- Present	
Leicester College	Ibrahim Latiff	IT and Functional Skills Maths Tutor	October 2022- Present	
Leicester College	Connie Steele- Bobat	Functional Skills English Tutor	October 2022- Present	
Leicester College	Julia Potter	Lecturer	October 2022- Present	
Healthy Working Futures (HWF)	Kornelia Roznicka	Case Manager	December 2016- January 2017	December 2016 - December 2018
HWF	Samantha Durant	Client Coordinator	December 2016- December 2017	
HWF	Jagruiti Raval	Case Manager	December 2016- August 2017	
HWF	Rachel Millard	Clinical Team Lead	December 2016- July 2017	
HWF	Clare Carlier	Clinical Support Specialist	March 2017- August 2017	
HWF	Shalina Janar	Case Manager	August 2017- December 2018	
HWF	Linda Sherwin	Clinical Support Specialist PWP	September 2017 - September 2017	
HWF	Clodagh McHugh	Clinical Support Specialist	October 2017- November 2017	
HWF	Lisa Cook	Clinical Support Specialist	November 2017- May 2018	
HWF	Mitchael Lincoln	Administrative Support	January 2018- December 2018	
HWF	Terri Cooper	Clinical Case Manager	May 2018- November 2018	
HWF	Abigail Howells	Operations Manager	May 2018- December 2018	
HWF	Rachel Mather	Clinical Support Specialist	May 2018- December 2018	
Enstruct	Nigel Bond	VTEC Centre Manager	February 2017- September 2019	February 2017 - September 2019
Enstruct	Keith Yates	VTEC Centre Manager	June 2018- September 2019	February 2017 - September 2019
Enstruct	Hayden Bhatt	VTEC Centre Manager	June 2018- September 2019	
Leicestershire County Council	Rebecca Lydon	Work Club Support Officer	February 2017- March 2018	February 2017 - September 2019
Leicestershire County Council	Karl Bassett	Work Club Administrator	March 2017- July 2017	
Leicestershire County Council	Amy Cook	Work Club Officer	April 2017- May 2019	
Leicestershire County Council	Alexandra Colman	Work Club Administrator	June 2017- January 2018	
Leicestershire County Council	Ross Cook	Work Club Support Officer	May 2018- September 2019	
Leicestershire County Council	Emily Burditt	Work Club Support Officer	August 2018- September 2019	
Pop Up Nurseries	Gemma Payne	Crèche Assistant	December 2017- March 2018	December 2016 - March 2018
Pop Up Nurseries	Angela Marsh	Crèche Manager Sessional	December 2017- March 2018	
Pop Up Nurseries	Debbie Wykes	Crèche Assistant	December 2017- January 2018	

YES Project Staff List

Organisation	Staff name	Job title	Delivery dates
VAL	Abdul Asghar	YES Team Leader	June 2016 - present
VAL	Abeda Sheikh	YES Project Administrator	
VAL	Aimee Markham	YES Archive Assistant	
VAL	Amy Cook	Keyworker Development Officer	
VAL	Anna Barrow	YES Project Administrator	
VAL	Collette Bird	YES Delivery Coordinator	
VAL	Dave Sharpe	YES Team Leader	
VAL	Dee Wylkes	YES Project Administrator	
VAL	Donna Snedden	Executive Finance Manager	
VAL	Eileen Cusey	Vocational Rehabilitation Case Officer	
VAL	Faye Coward	YES Keyworker	
VAL	Feteha Mannan	Finance Officer	
VAL	Fowzia Nor	YES Project Administrator	
VAL	Georgia Cox	Communications Development Officer	
VAL	Hardip Cohan	YES Support Coordinator	
VAL	Harks Flora	YES Team Manager	
VAL	James Smalley	Data and Impact Analyst	
VAL	Jason Hamilton-Smith	YES Keyworker	
VAL	Krishna Patel	Cross Cutting Themes and Engagement Officer	
VAL	Manisha Sharma	Finance Assistant	
VAL	Matt Benton	YES Keyworker	
VAL	Melanie Wyatt	Finance Officer	
VAL	Mia Williams	YES Keyworker	
VAL	Nancy Freeman	Data and Impact Analyst	
VAL	Phil Welsh	Marketing and Communications Team Manager	
VAL	Rebecca Seavers	YES Keyworker	
VAL	Rhianne Burgess	YES Project Administrator	
VAL	Richard Scott	Communications Development Officer	
VAL	Ricky Shah	YES Start Up Development Officer	
VAL	Sally Tame	Communications Development Officer	
VAL	Simon Jenner	YES Senior Manager	
VAL	Stephanie Hollis	Communications Development Officer	
VAL	Suzanne Dakin	Finance Officer	
VAL	Vandna Gohil	Executive Manager YES & GREAT Projects-	
VAL	Zuli Stannard	YES Support Coordinator	
Bangladesh Youth and Cultural Shomiti (BYCS)	Abdullah Lorgat	Administration Appentice	September 2016 -Present
BYCS	Carole Clohesy	Functional Skills Tutor	
BYCS	Ebrahim Ali	YES Project Officer	
BYCS	Jabid Rahman	Functional Skills Tutor	
BYCS	Naeema Hussain	English Tutor	
BYCS	Nirmal Dattani	Functional Skills Tutor	
BYCS	Rafiqul Islam	YES Project Officer	
BYCS	Raphael Andrew Case	Functional Skills Tutor	
BYCS	Sakina Chhitra	English Tutor	
BYCS	Shah Jalal	Maths Tutor	
BYCS	Shofiqul Islam Chowdhury	YES Project Coordinator	
BYCS	Stephen Hill	Functional Skills Tutor	
BYCS	Stephen Potter	Functional Skills Tutor	
BYCS	Victoria Hogg	Functional Skills Tutor	

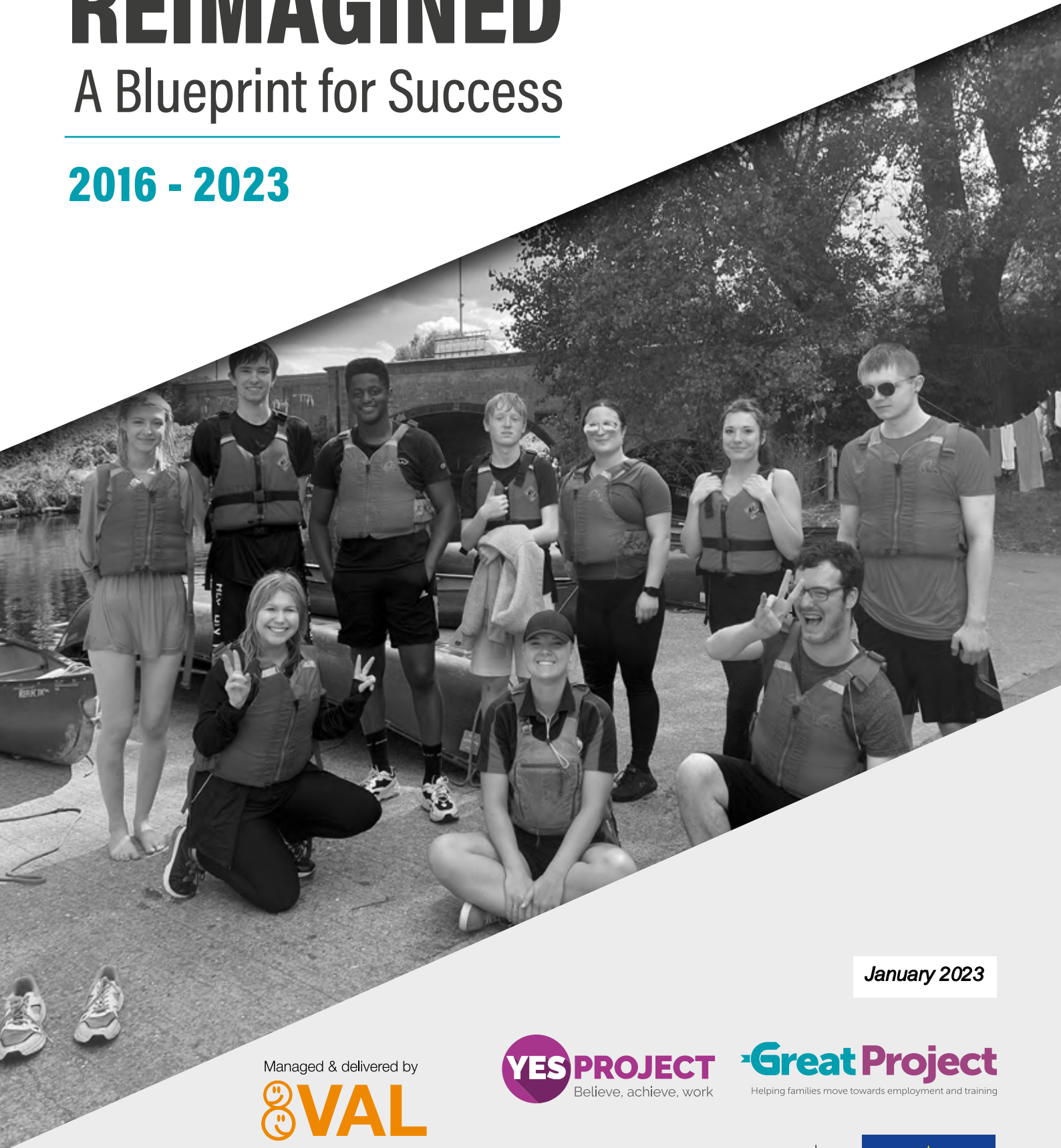
Organisation	Staff name	Job title	Delivery dates
Leicestershire Cares	Anna Piranty	Flying Fish Development Officer	September 2016 - Present
Leicestershire Cares	AYESha Surti	YES (Leicestershire) Project Development Officer	
Leicestershire Cares	Catalina Taban	Project Development Officer	
Leicestershire Cares	Charlie Bird	Flying Fish Support Officer	
Leicestershire Cares	Charlotte Robery Turner	Business Engagement Manager	
Leicestershire Cares	Fiona Spence-Arnold	Project Support Officer	
Leicestershire Cares	Jennifer Rodall	YES (Leicestershire) Project Development Officer	
Leicestershire Cares	Karla James	Flying Fish Support Officer	
Leicestershire Cares	Keisha Coggins	Finance Manager	
Leicestershire Cares	Kieran Breen	Chief Executive	
Leicestershire Cares	Peter Boyne	Management Support	
Leicestershire Cares	Roopal Shah	Finance Manager	
Leicestershire Cares	Ross Cox	Project Development Coordinator	
Leicestershire Cares	Sarah Green	Finance Manager	
Leicestershire Cares	Simran Basi	Project Development Officer	
The Bridge	Mary Bullivant	YES Intensive Family Support Worker	July 2016 - December 2022
The Bridge	Chantelle Bramley	The Bridge Manager	
The Bridge	Jo Carter	YES Young Persons Support Worker	
The Bridge	Kerry Rankin (Shapcott)	YES Intensive Family Support Worker	
The Bridge	Mbu	YES Intensive Family Support Worker	
The Bridge	Molly Boggis	Project Management Support	
The Bridge	Olivia Prescott	YES Young Persons Support Worker	
The Bridge	Paul Snape	YES Intensive Family Support Worker	
The Bridge	Sarah Plummer	The Bridge Manager	
The Bridge	Vickinder Kainth	YES Intensive Family Support Worker	
Soft Touch Arts	Callum Black	YES Arts Worker/Coordinator	September 2016 - February 2022
Soft Touch Arts	Helen Pearson	Soft Touch Management	
Soft Touch Arts	James Jackson	Arts Support Worker	
Soft Touch Arts	Joe Crofton	YES Arts Worker/Coordinator	
Soft Touch Arts	Kelly Grace	YES Arts Worker/Coordinator	
Soft Touch Arts	Kieran Walsh	YES Arts Worker/Coordinator	
Soft Touch Arts	L Buttery	Arts Support Worker	
Soft Touch Arts	Lauren Park	Arts Support Worker	
Soft Touch Arts	Leena Patel	Arts Support Worker	
Soft Touch Arts	Melissa Grey	YES Arts Worker/Coordinator	
Soft Touch Arts	Ruth Northey	YES Monitoring Support Worker	
Soft Touch Arts	Sally Norman	YES Arts Worker/Coordinator	
Soft Touch Arts	Vince Atwood	Founding Director	
The Princes Trust	Alex Rowe	Get Into Executive	
The Princes Trust	Auguste Zaliaduonyte	Contract Manager	
The Princes Trust	Azhar Hussain	Contract Manager	
The Princes Trust	Chrissie Packwood	Outcomes Executive	
The Princes Trust	Danielle Bagdatlioglu	Programme Executive	
The Princes Trust	Ellen Jackson	Outreach Manager	
The Princes Trust	James Foreman	Contracts Coordinator	
The Princes Trust	Jamie Mack	Princes Trust Executive	
The Princes Trust	Jessica Ball	Outreach Executive	
The Princes Trust	Kerry White	Outreach Manager	
The Princes Trust	Kishan Patel	Programme Executive	

Organisation	Staff name	Job title	Delivery dates	
The Princes Trust	Lisa Capell	Partnerships Manager	September 2016 - February 2022	
The Princes Trust	Lois Ruda	Programme Executive		
The Princes Trust	Maria Pilinovics	Princes Trust Executive		
The Princes Trust	Nicol Heatherley	Contracts Executive		
The Princes Trust	Nutan Patel	Intensive Outreach Exec - City & County		
The Princes Trust	Rachel Barry	Princes Trust Executive		
The Princes Trust	Rachel Manton	Public Sector Partnerships Manager		
The Princes Trust	Robina Suhail	Senior Youth Worker		
The Princes Trust	Sarah Taylor	Princes Trust Executive		
The Princes Trust	Zahra Aziz	YES Arts Worker/Coordinator		
Highfields Community Association (HCA)	Fatima Li	Senior Youth Worker		December 2019 - February 2022
HCA	Furzana Khalifa	Joint Head of Centre		
HCA	Norman Perrin	Youth Worker		
HCA	Pat Gardner	Admin & Finance		
HCA	Priya Thamotheram	Head of Centre		
HCA	Tarek Islam	Youth Worker	September 2016 - March 2019	
Seed Creativity	Chris Gray	Seed Operations Manager		
Seed Creativity	Jon Prest	Seed Director		
Warwickshire College	Charlotte Varnam	Princes Trust Programme Leader	September 2016 - June 2019	
Warwickshire College	Chris Gately	Head of Re-engagement and Learning		
Warwickshire College	Emma Foster	Princes Trust Team Leader		
Warwickshire College	Jordan Luchman	Princes Trust Team Leader		
Warwickshire College	Lynne Mann	Princes Trust Administrator		
Warwickshire College	Mark Scott	Princes Trust Executive		
Warwickshire College	Mat Jesson	Princes Trust Programme Coordinator		
Warwickshire College	Natasha Adams	Team YES Programme Leader		
Warwickshire College	Yasmin Malek	Team YES Programme Leader		
Twenty Twenty	Alice Clapton	Journey to Work Coach		September 2016 - February 2022
Twenty Twenty	Aminata Kamara	Journey to Work Coach		
Twenty Twenty	Amy Connell	YES Monitoring Coordinator		
Twenty Twenty	Andy Lowings	Centre Administrator		
Twenty Twenty	David Hearn	Arts Support Worker		
Twenty Twenty	Isobel Lowings	Operations Manager		
Twenty Twenty	Jo Woodman	YES Monitoring Coordinator		
Twenty Twenty	John Olaley	Operations Manager		
Twenty Twenty	Jonny Rudge	Head of Fundraising		
Twenty Twenty	Lizz Scarborough	Centre Administrator		
Twenty Twenty	Matt Davies	Business Development Director	September 2016 - February 2022	
Twenty Twenty	Mike Evans	Journey to Work Coach		
Twenty Twenty	Mohsin Shaikh	Journey to Work Coach		
Twenty Twenty	Rax Gudka	YES Monitoring Coordinator		
Twenty Twenty	Richard Hall	Youth Employability Support		
Twenty Twenty	Rob Cook	Operations Director		
Twenty Twenty	Sarah Ford	Operations Director		
Twenty Twenty	Sarah Sharpe	Centre Administrator		
Twenty Twenty	Sean Peterson-Stocks	Soft Touch Management		
Twenty Twenty	Sophie Hurd	Centre Administrator		
Twenty Twenty	Tyler Fixman	Mentoring Coordinator		
Twenty Twenty	Vicky McKay	Fundraiser (Overseeing Twenty Twenty Financial Claims)		

FUTURES REIMAGINED

A Blueprint for Success

2016 - 2023



January 2023

Managed & delivered by



The YES Project and The Great Project are funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund. It is delivered by Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL). VAL is the trading name of Voluntary Action Leicester. Registered charity no. 509300.

