

EMPOWERING ENTERPRISE

2017 - 2020

IMPACT REPORT



**EMPOWERING
ENTERPRISE
PETROC™**





FOREWORD

As a further education college, Petroc is committed to transforming life chances and job prospects for all, so we are proud to have managed the Empowering Enterprise partnership for the last 4 years, helping young people who face some of the biggest barriers to getting into work, education or training.

We started this project thinking not just about numbers, targets and results but also defining the change we wanted to bring about in our home county of Devon. I'm delighted to report that through the hard work of mentors, managers and, of course, the young people themselves those changes have come to fruition.

In the pages that follow you will read about participants with improved skills that have helped them find work or return to education, like Shannon, who was able to overcome mental health difficulties and secure a bricklaying apprenticeship. You will see how mentors have cultivated stronger relationships with support services and introduced young people to places and groups where they can play an active part in their community. Reece, for example, was virtually housebound when he came to the project but now has the confidence to travel independently and, as well as finding a job, he volunteers with a local charity.

It is also hugely encouraging to see how those working on the project, both at an individual and organisational level, have had the chance to learn and grow. The funding model for the Building Better Opportunities Programme, of which Empowering Enterprise is part, has given us the opportunity to experiment and innovate. As a result our partnership has discovered new ways of making a positive difference to young people's lives. Partners have adopted inclusive welcome and induction procedures, created new self-employment courses, and invested time in relationships with employers, support networks and community organisations.

I hope that you are inspired by what you read here. Though as the project comes to an end we are facing the challenges of a global pandemic, it is clear that the work of Empowering Enterprise can teach us much about supporting young people and communities through difficult times.

Sean Mackney

Principal and CEO

Petroc



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1.0

INTRODUCTION

The project, partnership and report are
introduced

1.1

INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT

Empowering Enterprise is a Building Better Opportunities project, funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund.

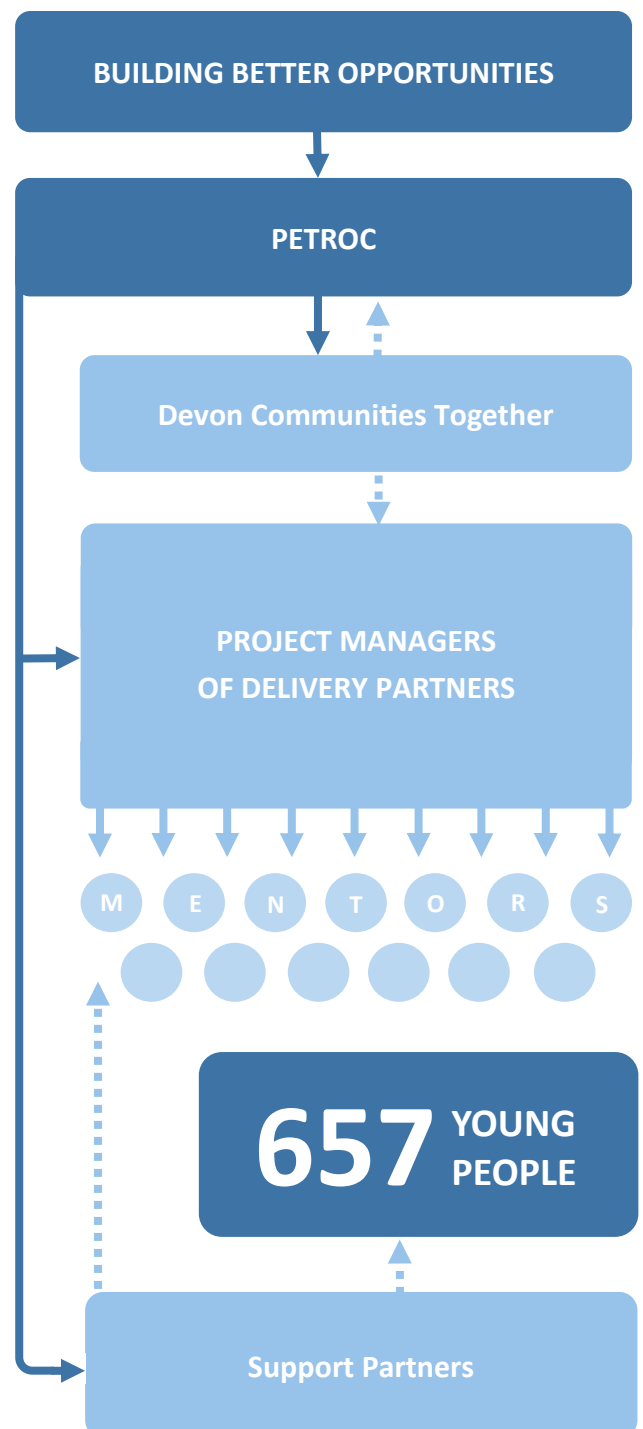
Petroc’s partnership has used the funding to deliver a unique project for 18 to 24 year olds who face the biggest barriers to getting into work, education or training.

The delivery of the project commenced in July 2017 and came to an end in July 2020. Over this time, Empowering Enterprise has worked with over 600 of the most socially-excluded young people in Devon to equip them with skills for life and work giving them the confidence to find a path to a brighter future.

The European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund have come together to fund the national Building Better Opportunities programme throughout 2014—2020, to facilitate investment in local projects ‘tackling the root causes of poverty, promoting social inclusion and driving local jobs and growth, particularly for the hardest to reach groups.’

The funding has been delivered in 38 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas and supports a range of activity, from projects that ‘improve employability for the most disadvantaged, helping those with complex needs, to improving financial literacy.’

Empowering Enterprise is one of the three BBO projects in the Heart of the South West LEP area, with others using a range of strategies to support different demographics, outside of the 18-24 NEET category.



THEORY OF CHANGE

INPUTS

FUNDING

This project has been funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund, and has received £2.3 million.

ACTIVITIES

2017-2020

A summary of project activity can be found in section 1.0. Further details of these activities are presented throughout the report in sections 3.0 - 7.0.

OUTPUTS

TARGETS & RESULTS

‘Targets’ pertain to the number of young people engaged, and their demographic. The ‘results’ account for the ‘exist status’ of each participant on the project—whether they have ‘completed’ the project with a result of employment, moving into job-search, or entering education or training. See section 2.0.



A Theory of Change has been employed throughout the life of the project, and demonstrates the process of change by indicating the links between actions, outputs and outcomes. Theory of Change models emphasise that inputs should be directed towards achieving the outcomes and, ultimately, the desired impact. An Impact Measurement Framework (Appendix 1) was designed at the beginning of the project, in order to establish indicators of change, pertaining to each of the four outcomes. The activities relevant to these outcomes, as well as an indication of the extent to which they have been attained, and their impact, are presented in section 3.0.

OUTCOMES

THE FOUR PROJECT OUTCOMES ARE...

1

Young people participating in the project have improved their employability, entrepreneurial and life skills.

2

Existing support services are more visible and accessible to young people and their communities, and are more sustainable.

3

Communities and businesses are more cohesive and resilient.

4

Project partner organisations have increased their capacity and capability to support young people through a more joined-up approach, sharing of best practice and access to training and resources.

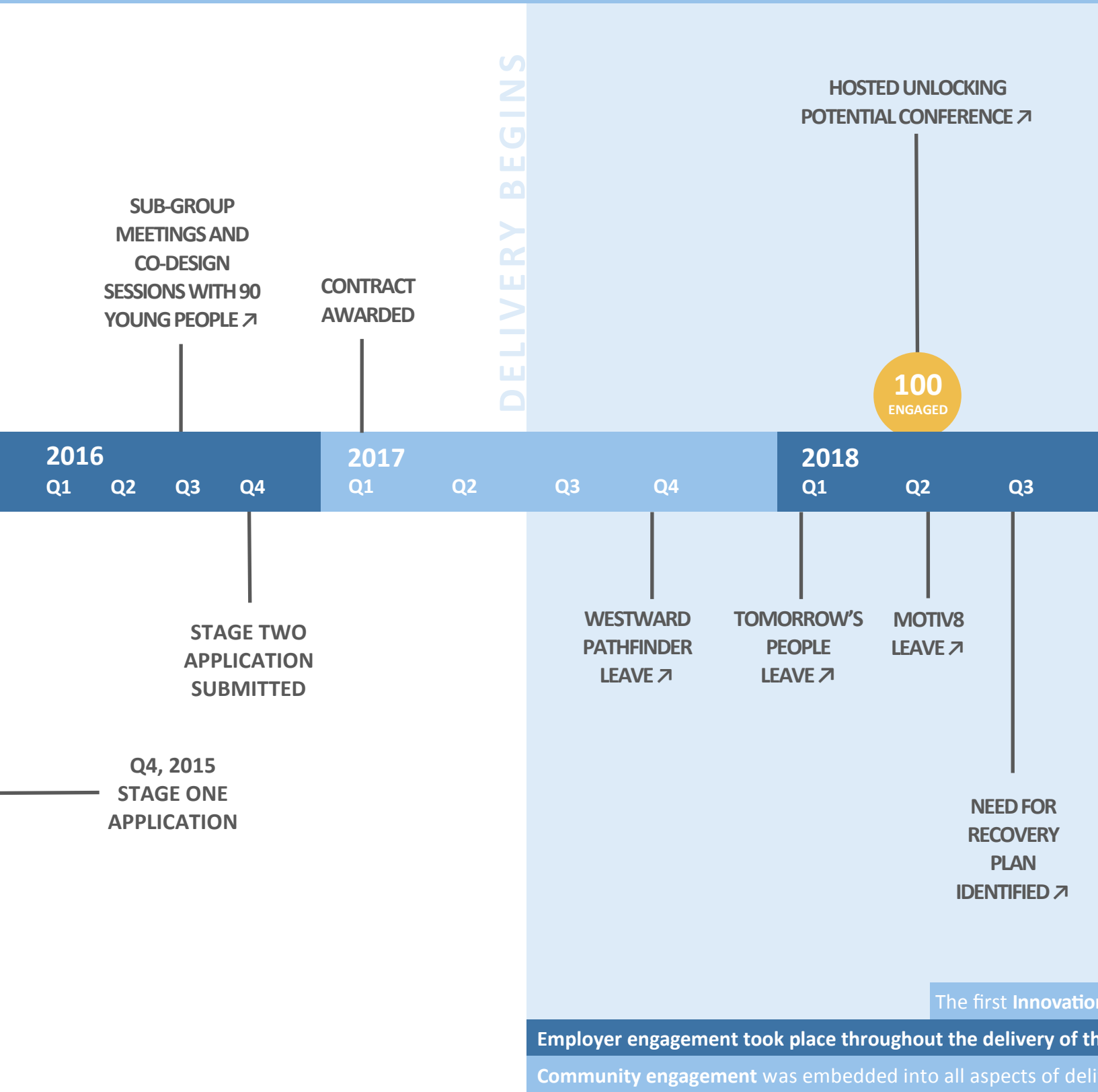
IMPACT

The impact of this project is established in section 9.0 through cumulative examination of the activities, outputs and outcomes outlined above and presented throughout this report. Conclusions are offered regarding the significance of the many changes that have been accomplished by this project.



1.3

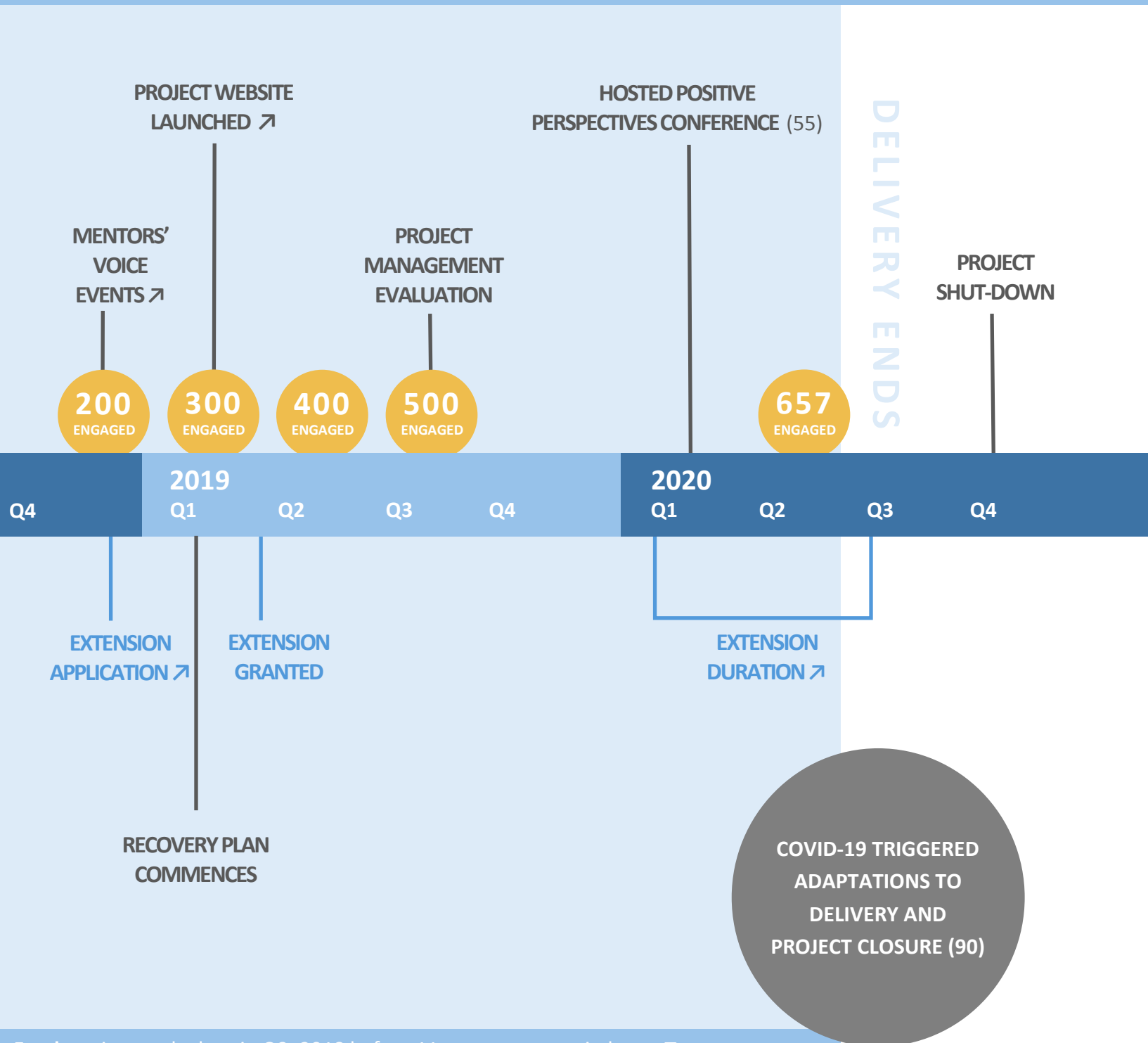
OVERVIEW OF EVENTS



Different types of **inter-partner meetings** (Stakeholder, Partner, Local) took place throughout th

Sustainable Development and Gender Equality & Equal Opportunities were **cross-cutting**

Below is an overview of the significant events that have taken place throughout the project. Major milestones and challenges are summarised on this timeline. Further presentation and examination of this activity is detailed in sections 2.0 - 8.0.



an Fund project took place in Q2, 2018 before 11 more were carried out. ↗

the project, with a variety of strategies employed at different times. ↗

covery, as illustrated by the Community Portfolio. ↗

the lifetime of the project, with partnership-wide meetings taking place almost every quarter. ↗

themes (78) that ran throughout the entire project, from its conception to its closure. ↗

1.4

PETROC AND THE PARTNERSHIP

As one of the South West's leading colleges, Petroc drives forward educational success in further and higher education and strives to raise the aspirations, knowledge and skills of individuals, communities and businesses in Devon and beyond.

As the grant holder and managing body for Empowering Enterprise, Petroc had a number of responsibilities:

- Tracking project progress and developing and implementing strategy to ensure targets, results and outcomes were achieved.
- Liaison with TNLCF, covering quarterly reporting; managing targets, expenditure and risk within the partnership; and managing changes in BBO or ESF Programme rules and disseminating guidance to the partnership.
- Developing and maintaining a bespoke reporting system to record all necessary participant data, and deliver changes in administrative processes where necessary, such as the development of participant paperwork.
- Co-ordinating partnership support events including partner and local meetings and accompanying support sessions on relevant topics. (51)
- Managing the project's budget and resources across the partnership, and supporting partners with the financial claim process, which was new and challenging for many partners.
- Leading on the incorporation of the cross cutting themes (78) across all project design and activity, leading the development of comprehensive action plans for each strand, having a dedicated CCT lead who, among other activities, chaired the CCT sub-group meetings.
- Developing and managing the project website.
- Organising and hosting two conferences. (55)
- Managing the Innovation Fund, (70) considering partner applications to this, delegating funds, and supporting delivery where appropriate.



Petroc were also responsible for the overall management of the project's delivery partners, through providing regular monitoring, supervision and support. Petroc also developed and steered project strategies during times of adjustment and change, such as during the recovery plan and extension application process, by helping each individual partner develop action plans and manage their caseloads.

Their management style of being professional, friendly and readily available was praised consistently by many members of the partnership throughout the lifetime of the project.

Many of the findings from Mentors' Voice (2018), Project Management Evaluation (2019) and Partner and Mentor Exit Surveys (2020) indicate a largely satisfied partnership, in terms of the management of Empowering Enterprise. Support, clear communication and positive relationships have been put forward at all levels, as being aspects of the project that are facilitated and managed effectively.



For example,

100% of Project Managers expressed that the quality and frequency of Petroc's communication has been one of their main strengths.

Inspiring Arts reflected

"With the support and guidance of the project management team, we have been able to deliver a project that was, at times, quite outside of our comfort zone."

ODILS shared

"We're really grateful to have the opportunity to be a partner on such an amazing project and have the support of the wonderful team at Petroc."

A mentor from I Can Do That! explained that Empowering Enterprise had been

"The most impactful and flexible project I have worked on so far, backed up by amazing management team at Petroc who have provided excellent support and networking opportunities."

Lesley Taylor, the Empowering Enterprise Project Manager at Petroc reflects

"What I love about my job is getting people and organisations to work together with a joined up approach, trusting and learning from each other which in the case of Empowering Enterprise has created a partnership in the truest sense of the word. It's never a one person job, it's always a team effort."

Turn to section 4.0 (56-69) for profiles of each delivery partner.

REPORTING ON IMPACT

2017

INTERIM IMPACT REPORT - Produced in December, this offers a summary of activity, outputs and contributions to outcomes that took place in the first six months of project delivery. ↗

2018

YOUTUBE CHANNEL - Launched in August 2018, this has since been updated regularly, offering footage of a range of case studies, interviews and project activity. ↗

MENTORS' VOICE - Throughout the first year of the project, Devon Communities Together identified a number of consistent themes arising out of partner and local meetings, as well as the quarterly progress reports that each partner submitted. To address these further, DCT designed and held Mentors' Voice workshops to explore, with Petroc and the partnership, potential responses and ways of improving delivery. This was reported on in the 2018 interim Impact Report and is further discussed in section 3.1. ↗

INTERIM IMPACT REPORT - This document recounts the work carried out by the partnership throughout 2018, and updates the reader on progress made towards the project's desired outcomes and overall impact. ↗

2019

RURAL ENGAGEMENT - A rural research project was undertaken in the first half of 2019, following the identification of disproportionate recruitment from urban compared to rural areas. This working included desk research, fieldwork, the development of an insight tool and consequent action plans, further detailed in 5.13. ↗

PROJECT MANAGEMENT EVALUATION - Throughout the spring and summer months of 2019, Devon Communities Together conducted an evaluation of the project's management strategy and practices. The purpose of this work was to identify and, where possible, action any changes that could be made to improve the management and mechanics of Empowering Enterprise in the final year of delivery. Furthermore, the learning from this report should offer insights to all stakeholders, with regards to planning the management of any future projects that are undertaken in similar spheres of work. This work examined management at two levels: Petroc's overall project management, as well as mentor management conducted by each delivery partner's project manager (see page 9 for more on project structure). Turn to 3.4 (48) for further insights into this piece of evaluation.

INTERIM IMPACT REPORT - This was the final interim impact report produced for the project, and provides an up-to-date overview of the project, focusing primarily on activity and progress from 2019. ↗

As the project's evaluation partner, Devon Communities Together has reported on activity, outputs, outcomes and overall impact throughout the project. This has been integral to informing the revision and development of ongoing delivery. This has also served to communicate the project to external stakeholders and other third parties from local communities, and social and economic infrastructures. It's worth noting that many other documents, which reflect in detail on specific elements of project activity, such as individual Innovation Fund reports, have been produced within the partnership and are not listed here.

2020

COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO - The community portfolio was collaboratively produced by all delivery partners, overseen by Devon Communities Together. The purpose of this work was to go beyond simply reporting on community engagement activities. Instead, it sought to examine and demonstrate the ways in which Empowering Enterprise and local communities have been intrinsically connected and co-dependent throughout the lifetime of the project. See also Appendix 4 and section 3.3. ↗

PARTNER PROFILES - As partners completed their delivery of the project in the spring and summer of 2020, Devon Communities Together conducted a review of each individual partner's targets, results, and contributions to outcomes and cross cutting themes, as well as their journey and key milestones and learnings. A Partner Profile report was produced for each partner and presented in Impact Review meetings. Summaries are available in section 4.0. ↗

FINAL REPORT

This report presents and analyses the work carried out over the last four years. Following an **overview of the project's activity**, the Theory of Change steers the structure, beginning with the presentation of **final data** of key targets and results, and other insights.

The four intended **outcomes**, and the substantial contributions that have been made towards them, are then examined. Case studies are highlighted to illustrate the ways that these outcomes have been tangibly achieved, impacting the circumstances and experiences of individuals, communities and structures.

A closer look at project activity is then offered, beginning with **profiles of each delivery partner** and their activity. **Innovation Fund** activity is also docu-

mented. These are a unique feature of the project, designed to address a range of rising issues identified by partners through their work with young people. The following two aspects of activity illustrate how the **Cross-Cutting Themes** and **Co-production** with participants have been consistently embedded throughout project delivery. **Challenges to delivery** are also acknowledged and examined.

The report concludes with a summary of the **overall impact** of this project, as well as the identification of key learnings that have arisen from this work. It is the intention that these learnings, along with the recommendations that are offered, will be of value to any person or organisation that seeks to improve the lives of young people and their communities in their work going forward.

REPORT SYMBOLS



Cross Cutting Theme - Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities: This signals that special attention was paid to gender equality and/or equal opportunities, within the activity described. An overview of this cross cutting theme is presented in section 6.1.



Innovation Fund: An overview of these projects is offered in section 5.0, and full reports for each project can be found in Appendix 6. However, this symbol is dotted throughout the report when Innovation Fund projects are referenced, as they often overlap with the four outcomes (section 3.0) and are attributed to a specific partner (section 4.0).



Co-production: This highlights the heavy involvement of participants in the construction and delivery of certain activities. Further details are offered in section 7.0.



YouTube: Click on this 'play' button throughout, to visit the project's YouTube channel and watch a video which goes into the activity or case study in more detail. These videos usually offer accounts from the perspectives of project participants, mentors, stakeholders or community members.



Cross Cutting Theme - Sustainability: This symbol indicates that particular emphasis was placed on environmental sustainability in the design and delivery of the activity being reported. An overview of this cross cutting theme can be found in section 6.2.

1

The project's four **outcomes** are outlined in section 1.2 and detailed in turn in section 3.0. The nature of this work, however, means that activity and outputs often contribute simultaneously to multiple outcomes.

2

For example, whilst participant Nathan developed his workplace skills (Outcome 1), the employer who hosted him on a work experience placement learnt more about employing wheelchair users (Outcome 3), and the partnership benefited by Nathan's mentor sharing a Disability in the Workplace resource (Outcome 4).*

3

4

These symbols indicate that an activity contributes to another outcome.

1.7 ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

BBO	Building Better Opportunities
BOB	Build Opportunities Better
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
CCT	Cross Cutting Theme
CSCS	Construction Skills Certification Scheme
CSW	Careers South West
DBI	Diversity Business Incubator
DCT	Devon Communities Together
DKHT	Dame Kelly Holmes Trust
DTQ	Distance Travelled Questionnaire
EE	Empowering Enterprise
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English Speakers of Other Languages
GEEQ	Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities
GWS	Groundwork South
HotSW	Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
ICDT!	I Can Do That!
JCP	Job Centre Plus
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer +
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NCS	National Citizen Service
NCS+	National Careers Service
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
ODILS	Open Doors International Language School
PDP	Personal Development Plan
PDRS	Participant Data Reporting System
SD	Sustainable Development
STEVIE	Supportive, Team-worker, Engaging, Versatile, Inspirational, Experienced
START	Students and Refugees Together
TAB	Talents, Aspirations and Barriers
TNLCF	The National Lottery Community Fund
WESC	West of England Specialist Centre for visual impairment
WKUK	Whiz Kidz UK (Plymouth)



2.0

TARGETS & RESULTS

MONITORING PROGRESS

A range of targets were agreed during the design phase of the project. These include targets for number of young people engaged on the project, their demographic characteristics, and the results with which they exit the project. These targets were established and tracked to fulfil ESF Programme requirements, and to enable the partnership to monitor engagement.

In this section, some key insights into the attainment of these targets are presented. A full breakdown of this data can be found in Appendix 2.

As the grant holder, Petroc developed a bespoke digital portal for data capture, where mentors and delivery partners could upload relevant registration paperwork and session logs for their participants. This system allowed the project to accurately track the status of participants and view live progress towards project targets.

It is important to note that registration paperwork required multiple forms of eligibility evidence and mentors would usually begin working with participants whilst helping them pursue, for example, birth certificates. A detailed commentary on the paperwork process is offered in section 9.0.

TERMINOLOGY

LIVE participants were those who were working with a mentor and had all eligibility paperwork completed. They could then be counted towards the projects overall target of participants.

NEVER WENT LIVE participants were those who were engaged with a mentor and could potentially be working with them for several weeks/months, but did not submit all eligibility paperwork and were subsequently withdrawn from the project.

COMPLETERS were the participants who fully completed the exit process moved into one of the projects designated results, or became 'Completers Without Result'. If they did not complete the exit process they were counted as **WITHDRAWN**. See section 2.4 for more on participant exit routes.

657

participants went
live on the project

630

was the project's
initial target,
which was
exceeded by 27
young people

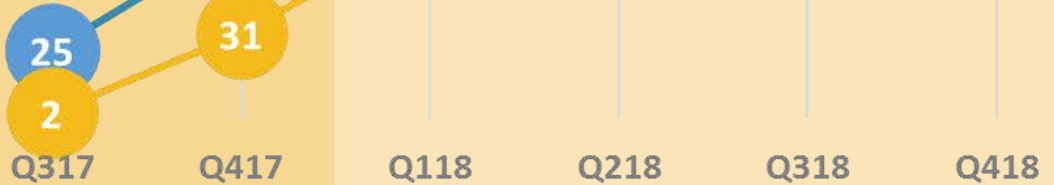
777

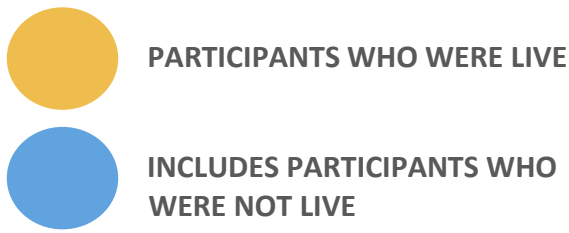
young people were
engaged by the
partnership, but
120 (15%) of them
never went live

2.1



2017 2018

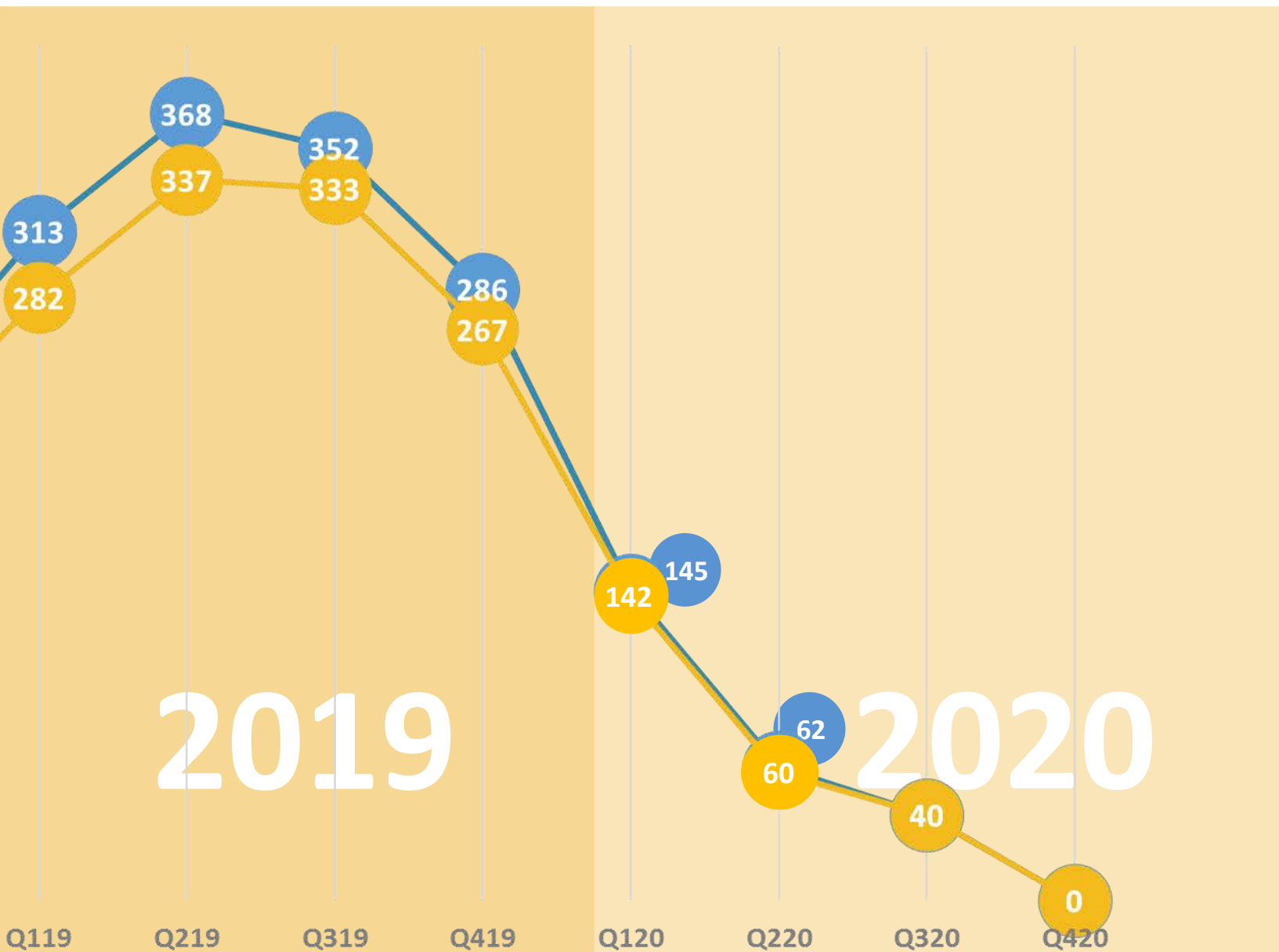




LEFT: The map indicates the location of all young people engaged during the time of the project. 657 went live (yellow), whilst 120 were engaged, but never went live (blue). The map shows all young people engaged during the lifetime of the project.

BELOW: The graph presents the project’s caseload of participants per quarter. 2019 was the busiest year for the partnership, in terms of managing a higher caseload of participants.

The yellow line indicates participants who were live during that quarter, whilst the blue line includes *all* young people who were engaged with the project during that quarter, including those who had not yet gone ‘live’. The difference between the two lines, therefore, indicates the number of young people waiting to become live at that time. As explained in section 3.0, participants would often become engaged with the project before being able to provide all eligibility paperwork. In the graph below you can see how large numbers of young people were consistently engaged before translating into ‘live’ participants. The majority of these would eventually become ‘live’, though not in all cases.



2.2

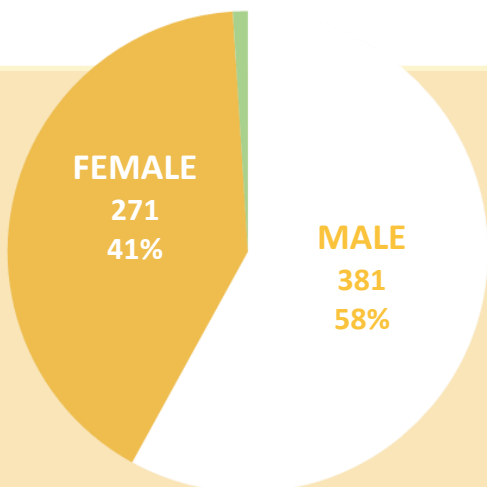
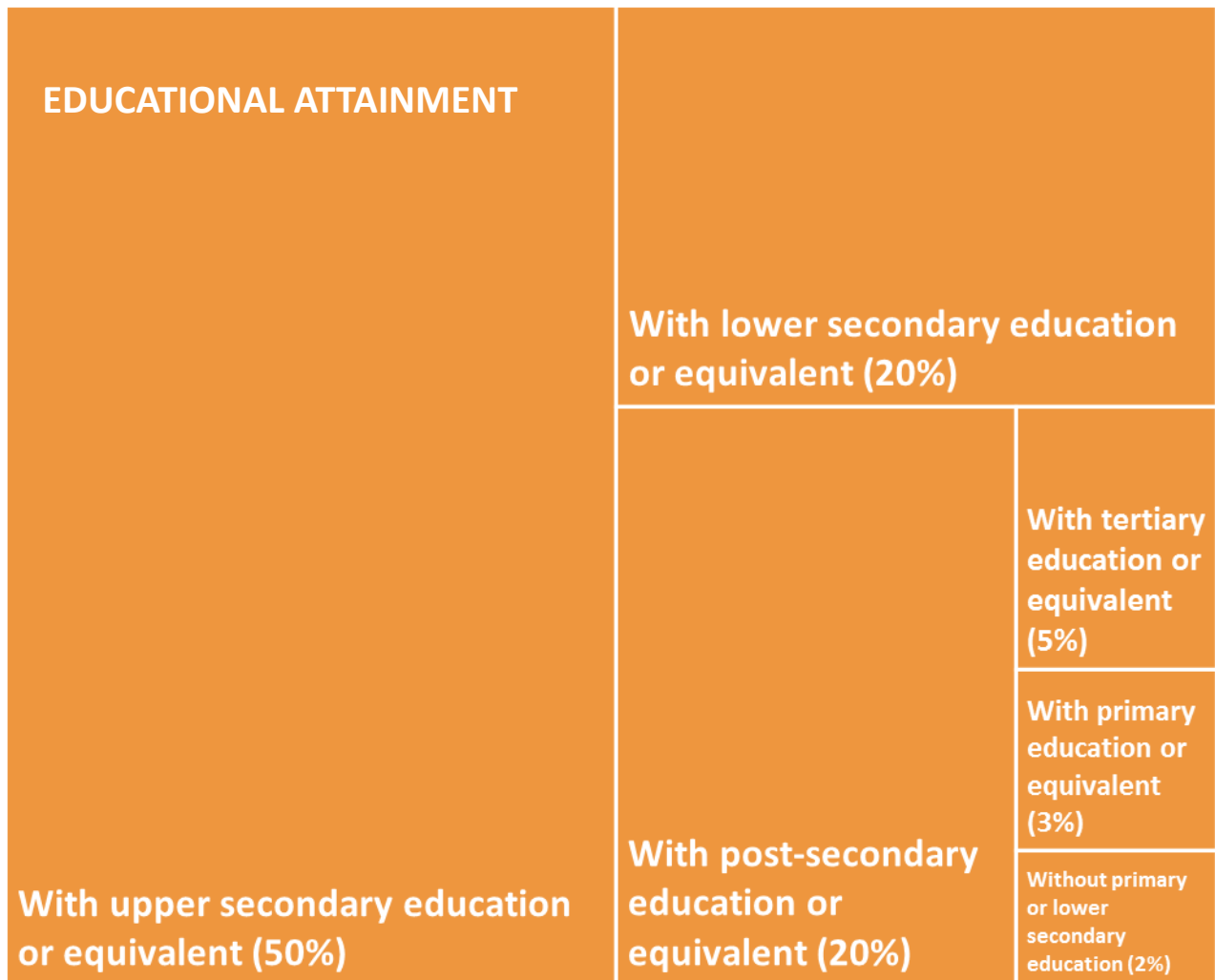
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The project had a range of demographical targets to meet, with the intention of ensuring that the project was accessible to everyone. Some key insights pertaining to participant demographics are offered below.



Note that...

- These statistics only pertain to the 657 participants who went live on the project.
- Some of these statistics may be higher in reality as participants were able to choose 'prefer not to say'.
- These statistics represent each participant's identity and circumstance at the time of their initial engagement with the project.
- Full demographic breakdown against targets can be found in [Appendix 2](#).



GENDER

The gender split was more heavily weighted towards male participants. This was tracked throughout and attempts were made to ensure the project was readily visible and available to non-males, through Cross-Cutting Theme activity ↗ and some IF projects ↗. Three participants were non-binary and two preferred not to disclose their gender.



2.3

first session held
on 10th July 2017

4,609
contact
attempts

35 HOURS
the average
length of time a
participant
spent on the
project

240 HOURS
the longest
length of time
any participant
spent on the
project

2.5 HOURS
the shortest
length of time
any participant
spent on the
project

last session held
on 28th September 2020

6%
ADVOCACY

6%
GROUP

88%
ONE-TO-ONE

11,922
participant
sessions
lasting a
total of

18,260
hours

EQUIVALENT TO

2,519
working
days

(where a working
day is 7 hrs 15
minutes)

2.4

PARTICIPANT RESULTS

Participants could end their time on Empowering Enterprise in a number of ways.

If they exited as a **COMPLETER** then they would have achieved one or more of the three recognised results, which were employment, education or training, and job search. 323 participants completed the project with a result.

If their time on the project came to an end because they and mentor agreed it wasn't an appropriate time for them to attain one of the three results, they were **WITHDRAWN** from the project. 225 participants withdrew.

It did, however, become apparent in early 2019 that this was difficult for participants and mentors alike. Often both the participant and mentor would identify that they had made substantial

progress during their time on the project, but for a reason specific to their journey and circumstance, it wasn't possible or appropriate for them to attain a result at this time. It was felt that the language of 'withdrawn' did not recognise the progress that the young person had made, despite them not attaining a recognised result. For example, one participant struggled to leave the house upon joining the project, and was volunteering weekly in a charity shop when she finished on the project. But this was not recognised as an achievement by the system.

Partnership-wide discussions were held, and Petroc introduced an informal **COMPLETER WITHOUT RESULT** status, which 109 participants achieved. See also section 3.1.

In carrying out follow-up calls to participants, it was found that 78% of completers were in employment, education or training at least one month after the leaving the project.



161
into
EMPLOYMENT



150
into
**EDUCATION
OR TRAINING**



55
into
JOB SEARCH

1

Shannon Groundwork South

Soon after engaging with the project Shannon took the initiative to apply for a bricklaying apprenticeship through City College Plymouth. However, she faced what felt like a huge setback when she realised she had to attain her own CSCS card. Shannon's sense of defeat was short-lived as Austen [mentor] informed her that the project would be running a local and funded CSCS course that she could attend. Shannon jumped at the opportunity and received support from Austen to see the two week course through, before attending an interview at Persimmon Homes for an apprenticeship. Persimmon Homes gave feedback that Shannon demonstrated excellent enthusiasm and motivation. She also passed the CSCS course comfortably, with a score of 48/50 and commenced her apprenticeship in September 2019.



Keagan Eat That Frog

Alongside his twin brother, Keagan joined the project with low confidence and communication levels. Over time, Keagan's mentor was able to build up a rapport and improve communication with him, so that they could work together on some of his goals: independence, health and socialising. Keagan soon became a regular attendee at his local gym and youth centre, and engaged with travel training, to develop his independence. Keagan created a CV and began job searching, attending a Careers Fair with his mentor. He now works a minimum of 20 hours per week at a local pub, and his manager has reported that "Keagan is doing brilliantly. He's coming out of his shell and learning new things all the time."



Kay* Inspiring Arts

Kay was extremely shy and became distressed at the idea of leaving her house or meeting new people. Each time she met with her mentor, she very slowly developed her confidence and identified an interest in learning Photoshop. Her mentor accompanied her to the Apple store in Exeter for a workshop and also accessed arts therapy. Her mentor reflected that "These may seem like small developments but for Kay it's an incredibly large step; her overwhelming anxiety is a huge barrier to her moving on to employment. By taking small steps she is slowly growing in confidence. "

Shabnam ODILS

Shabnam came to the UK from Afghanistan with her sister in 2017. Shabnam had previously completed a degree in maths and physics at Kabul University, which is unfortunately not recognised in the UK. Through the project, Shabnam found out about NARIC who, supported her to translate her degree into UK standards. It transpired that Shabnam only needed to complete one further year of study at a UK institution for her qualification to be recognised. With her mentor Jo's support, Shabnam attended multiple meetings and an Open Day at the University of Plymouth to arrange her commencement of study for September 2019.



Phoebe* I Can Do That!

Phoebe approached I Can Do That! as she was struggling with heavy drinking and was homeless and sleeping on sofas or in her boyfriend's van. Though finding Phoebe accommodation was very challenging (she had no guarantor, no deposit, no references, and a small dog), she was eventually offered a room by the landlady of a house-share, with whom Phoebe's mentor, Amanda, had existing connections. Amanda also supported Phoebe to submit an application to Northcott's charity, who provided her with funds for furniture. Having settled into her new space with her dog, Phoebe's wellbeing improved and she was able to reduce her drinking so that she could apply for voluntary work in a local charity shop. This went well and Phoebe's motivation and personal strength only grew. It wasn't long before Phoebe successfully applied for and undertook an apprenticeship in painting and decorating.

Phil Whiz Kidz UK

Phil struggled with social interaction and stayed at home as much as possible which affected his opportunities to find work. Soon after WKUK mentor, Alan, enrolled Phil on Empowering Enterprise, Phil took up the offer to undertake some volunteering and attain a DBS check. Though this initially pushed him outside of his comfort zone, with Alan's support, Phil increased his skills and experience by volunteering at schools, holiday clubs and the local council. Phil now picks up regular agency work through the local council. Phil also attended two sessions at a music studio and re-discovered a love of drumming. When not drumming, Phil uses his spare time to return to WKUK to volunteer and support their work.



OUTCOME ONE

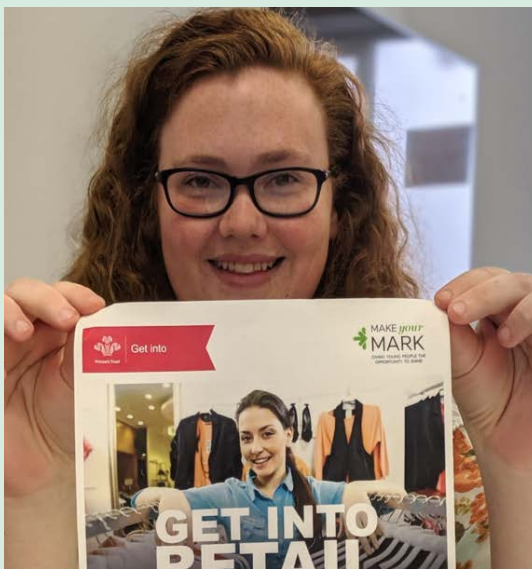
Young people participating in the project have improved their employability, entrepreneurial and life skills.

The project was co-designed to be flexible, responsive and person-centered, to meet each individual's need. Young people's progress was not expected to be linear, and there would not be a maximum time limit placed on participation.

STEVIE mentors would gain the young person's trust and support them to identify their talents, ambitions and barriers and design a person-centered, tailored package of support. This would consist of supported referrals to existing services outside the project, as well as tailored interventions funded by the project. Participants would have access to help to break down practical barriers, such as support with childcare costs, assistance with transport costs, travel planning, and attaining ID or interview/work clothes.

It was intended that BOB mentors would work with teams or individuals to co-design projects or activities that would develop and demonstrate skills, help improve quality of life, promote community engagement and enable young people to become vehicles for change within their local communities.

Bid Summary, 2016, pp.37-39



“It’s dug out James’ single passion, black-smithing... I don’t think we’d be in this position without the mentor’s continual help.”

Parent of JAMES
Battling On participant

“This is the first time someone has listened and helped me and I can feel I’m more confident already.”

JADE
I Can Do That! participant



3.1

ENGAGEMENT

Fundamental to the attainment of this outcome is, of course, the engagement and enrolment of young people on to the project. The data and accompanying commentary presented in 2.0 (pp. 14-19) lays out the ways in which the partnership's levels of engagement of young people varied over time, but generally followed a clear incline. Consequently, the extent to which the objectives of Outcome One were achieved, also increased throughout the course of the project. Ultimately, 657 young people officially engaged with the project, indicated by them going 'live' on the project's system.

BESPOKE SUPPORT

Upon engaging a young person, mentors began their work by supporting participants to identify and reflect on their talents, ambitions and barriers (or TABs).

From this TAB, mentors followed the basic premises of supporting the young person to: be empowered by self-awareness of their existing talents and potential to build on them; clearly explore their options and establish personal aspirations, as well as routes to manifesting them; and identify barriers that they face with regards to their plans, as well as strategies to overcome or dismantle them.

For each young person, of course, the details of this strategy and journey often look very different. A bespoke personal development plan (or PDP) is therefore co-designed with the participant, with the ultimate goal of achieving this Outcome for each individual - improving the young person's employability, entrepreneurial and life skills, and making specific progress towards achieving their personal goals.



ACTIVITIES INCLUDED

10,525 INDIVIDUAL MENTORING SESSIONS (13,855 HOURS)

705 GROUP WORK SESSIONS (2,202 HOURS)

465 REFERRALS TO EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND COURSES

12 INNOVATION FUND PROJECTS CO-DESIGNED WITH PARTICIPANTS

2



DISTANCE TRAVELLED

The 'distance travelled' by each participant was tracked by asking them, upon enrolling on the project to complete a 'Distance Travelled Questionnaire' (DTQ). This would serve as a baseline assessment and would then be revisited upon exiting the project. The DTQ contained statements pertaining to multiple fundamental themes of desired progress, aligning with the first three project outcomes. Participants were asked to provide a score of 1-5 on each statement.

441 exit DTQs were completed, and 353 of these (80%) reported a positive change overall. The average entry and exit scores respectively were 66.9/100 and 77, indicating an average distance travelled increase of 10%.

Data pertaining to distance travelled by participants across the project can be found throughout section 3.0 under the relevant project outcome.

Statements related to Outcome 1 were grouped into four categories (the full DTQ can be found in Appendix 3):

'Personal' - overall life satisfaction and self-belief. Average scores on entry and exit respectively were 16.3 and 19.4 / 25 (an increase of 2.9).

Self Management - time management, managing emotions, learning from mistakes and feedback. Average scores on entry and exit respectively were 21.1 and 24.2 / 30 (an increase of 2.7)

Interpersonal - interacting with others, working in a team, and communication skills. Average scores on entry and exit respectively were 19.6 and 22.8 / 30 (an increase of 3.1)

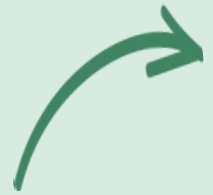
Initiative and Delivery - tackling problems and developing ideas. Average scores on entry and exit respectively were 9.2 and 10.6 / 15 (an increase of 1.3).

It's important to note that, although these numbers are quantitative data, and it is encouraging to see the positive score changes, they should ultimately be considered subjectively. These statements rely upon self-assessment and self-perception at the moment of completion. The participants would have had many milestone moments on their journey on the project. Mentors noted that participants reporting a negative change in score could actually be an improvement in self-development as increased self-awareness resulted in more considered scores, compared to the initial DTQ.



The spectrum of these activities was vast. In the first instance, many activities were focused towards improving the young person's life skills, such as cooking classes, exercise groups, time set aside to look for accommodation, community treasure hunts, food bank runs, to name just a few. Often, it was only once some of this work had been accomplished by the participant that they were ready to start focusing on employability and entrepreneurial skills, or plans to be ready to enter, or often re-enter, education or training. The activities channelled towards these goals included CV writing sessions, mock interviews, team-building activities, confidence boosting workshops, and taster days. The data presented in section 2.4 shows that 165 participants entered employment, 58 commenced job search, and 156

returned to education or training, upon leaving the project. Again, the variety of sectors, roles and courses undertaken by participants is substantial, with young people undertaking jobs, job-searches, and courses in care roles, bar work, night shifts, shelf-stacking jobs, embroidery, cheese manufacturing, business start-ups, and animal care and much more. Many other participants exited the project under the title of 'completer without result', meaning that their mentor recognised that they had made substantial progress, but were not in a place to move on to work, job search, education or training. Many of these young people would leave the project to enter volunteering (an unrecognised exit route), or have broadened their social circle and repertoire of skills substantially.



CHALLENGES

2

COMPLEXITY OF BARRIERS & AVAILABILITY OF EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Despite the unique journeys of each participant, common challenges have arisen across the partnership. Throughout the Partner and Local Meetings (section 3.4, pp.38-43) from Autumn 2017 to Summer 2018, three themes were consistently presented by project delivery staff.

Upon identifying these trends, Devon Communities Together, as the project evaluation partner, designed and delivered Mentors' Voice - a workshop for delivery staff to further examine these perceptions and explore possible constructive responses to them.

1. The barriers that participants were facing were far more complex than partners anticipated they would be;
2. Participants often presented more barriers as mentors got to know them, making working with them more complex and time consuming;
3. There was a lack of capacity or lengthy waiting times at external support services outside the partnership, e.g. housing providers, mental health support, assessments and support for neurodivergency.

ENGAGEMENT WITH GROUP WORK

In 2018 it became apparent that understandings of the distinction between 'STEVIE' and 'BOB' roles amongst delivery staff were very low. Reflecting with hindsight, just 14% of Project Managers felt that they had fully understood the 'BOB' role and group work as an integral element of their delivery when the project began. In turn, the annual impact report produced at the end of 2018 identified that, whilst there were examples of group work and projects taking place across the partnership, this was not at the level anticipated.

Consequently, throughout 2019, there was a partnership-wide push for increased levels of participant-led group work, which began with group work support sessions for delivery staff taking place within the Local Meetings in January 2019. These strategic efforts certainly came to fruition, with the number of group activities increasing exponentially throughout 2019.

In stark contrast to the initial 14%, in Summer 2019 71% of project managers identified that group work was now central to their delivery.

"I was really glad to be pushed by Petroc to try group work. I was reluctant and thought my young people wouldn't appreciate it, but I was glad to be proved wrong about that." Mentor

Many participants reflected on the value of these opportunities.

"The group atmosphere helped as I was amongst people in the same situation—it helped me over my anxieties going into new groups and places." Brandon, WKUK participant

When asked how useful the STEVIE and BOB support was, responding participants gave an average score of 4.6/5 and 3.8/5 respectively.

1. It became clear that the complexity of barriers reported by mentors *were* anticipated within the project bid, which references at various points the 'recognition of the substantial challenges faced by our target group of those who are hardest to reach' (Bid, p.37). This was also shared with senior managers and those party to discussions around the bid during the project design phases. Consequently, it's not that Petroc and delivery partners' senior management did not expect this challenge but that, when recruited, mentors and project managers from delivery organisations did not fully understand this anticipated element of the project. These barriers include, though aren't limited to, **homelessness, disability, substance abuse, relationship difficulties, single parenting, lack of education and qualifications, and much more**. In further evaluation work carried out a year later in the Summer of 2019 (Project Management Evaluation , see 3.4, p.41), 86% of project managers acknowledged that they hadn't anticipated or felt prepared for the high levels of complex barriers that participants face. Furthermore, just 57% of mentors felt that their project manager had clearly communicated and prepared them for this dynamic. Most of these mentors comment that their awareness and preparedness derived primarily from doing similar work previously.

"It was difficult to comprehend what the young people's issues would be." Mentor

2. This leads directly on to the second theme. The target group was always intended to be both the 'hardest to reach' and the 'furthest from the labour market'. It should not, therefore, have been surprising to mentors that participants might struggle to identify or articulate their barriers until a level of trust had been built with them. One recommendation offered in the Project Management Evaluation report outlines how it may have been beneficial for Petroc to provide delivery partners with multiple and varied Case Studies that demonstrate some of the most complex barriers faced by the target group during the bid stage. This should be repeated with project managers and mentors upon their recruitment. It's hoped that this would go some way to prevent the sense of unpreparedness and surprise that many delivery staff experienced at the beginning of this project.

3. In terms of the third theme, mentors consistently reported the lack of timely support from external services and felt both under-resourced and unqualified to provide this support themselves, whilst simultaneously feeling that it would be inappropriate to focus on employability with a young person, whilst they were not housed, severely unwell, or reliant on drugs or alcohol, for example. Ultimately, delivery staff worked hard to support, empower and educate participants to develop their life skills and overcome barriers they were confronted with, through a combination of direct project provision and signposting to external support services. The former is further outlined on the next page, and the latter in section 3.2 (pp. 26-31).

IMPACT

Ultimately, all project activities, either directly or indirectly, have been channelled towards the development of young people's life, employability and entrepreneurial skills. Delivery staff's perceptions of participants' barriers, and engagement with group work, have posed challenges to the attainment of this outcome. These are challenges, however, that have been identified, navigated and, to substantial extents, overcome. The impact on young people, cultivated through pro-

ject activity , has been astounding, as illustrated by the distance travelled by participants, results attained by them, and countless stories of their lives being transformed for the better. When asked how much Empowering Enterprise had helped them achieve their goals, responding participants gave an average score of 4.2/5, and 8.5/10 when asked how likely they were to recommend the project to a friend.

OUTCOME TWO

Existing support services are more visible and accessible to young people and their communities, and are more sustainable.

Petroc intended from the beginning that the package of support provided would consist of ‘a combination of supported referrals to existing services outside the project’ as well as through partner interventions. Furthermore, it was always an aspiration of this project for participants to have a ‘better knowledge and understanding of their local community, including local services and businesses, and be able to identify local challenges and gaps in provision.’ It was planned that partners would ‘organize regular engagement activities in accessible locations within their area to promote engagement, integrate new participants, and promote the development of social and independent living skills.’

Bid Summary, 2016, pp.34, 38-40



“The project’s opened doors to music production that I wouldn’t have been able to afford or attend before.”

JAMES
I Can Do That! participant

“The project paying for a gym membership has changed my life - it has made me healthier and clears my head.”

KATIE
Groundwork South participant



3.2

The visibility and accessibility of support services and their sustainability are fundamental to the mobility and flourishing of young people who are NEET. It was essential that Empowering Enterprise worked from an informed and pro-active position on this issues - keeping abreast of existing local provision and working *with* these services to ensure high-quality holistic support for young people who need it.

It is worth noting that though they are interrelated, the visibility, accessibility and sustainability of support services are also distinct. For example, a young person may be introduced to a service that they were not previously aware of (visibility). However, upon attempting to engage with that service, they are faced with a wait time of six months (accessibility), possibly due to the service's lack of funding or resources (sustainability).

As explained in section 3.1, this has been a common dynamic described by mentors throughout the project. Consequently, it has been imperative to identify that increased visibility does not automatically equate to increased accessibility or sustainability, and work must be done to go beyond publicity, and contribute to the capacity and durability of the provision that exists both within and outside of the project.

DELIVERY PARTNERS

In the first instance, partners have worked to increase the visibility of their own services. Common tools used to achieve this have included social media publicity, such as using Twitter and Facebook to communicate their activities, and promotion of the project on local job-seeking pages. Many partners have also attended local community events to raise awareness of the project. More traditional methods have also been employed, to ensure that potential referral organisations are aware of the project, including providing briefings to key workers and developing promotional material for support services.

Amongst other appearances, the project was promoted on BBC Radio Devon and Radio Exe, and the project's website has had over 9,000 page views. When asked how easy it was to find out about the project, responding participants gave an average score of 4/5.

In terms of accessibility, the funding behind this project has meant that any young person who fits the eligibility and suitability criteria has been able to access the service, up until July 2020. The importance of organisational sustainability was brought into focus early on in the project, when external events forced one delivery partner, Westward Pathfinder, into administration (November 2017), closely followed by another, Tomorrow's People (March 2018) (for further details, see section 4.10). Great strides, however, have been taken towards increasing the capacity and competency of remaining delivery organisations, as further detailed in section 3.4.



“I know where I can go for help in life.”

3.4 → **4.2**
ON ENTRY ON EXIT

...scored by participants on a scale of one to five, in relation to the statement above. There was, therefore, a reported average increase of 0.8 (16%).

EXTERNAL SERVICES

Below are some examples of bespoke work by individual partners and their mentors to make services visible, as well as examples of activities encouraged project-wide:

The Travel Devon Toolkit was shared and promoted across the partnership. This resource was used to ensure that participants can access comprehensive information about their travel options, thus increasing their opportunities.

Young Devon worked with **Proud2Be** to ensure that participants have access to a service through which they can explore their sexuality and gender in a safe, confidential, affirming and informed space.

Work with the **Illegal Money Lending Team** was carried out across the partnership, to raise awareness amongst participants regarding loan sharks.

Additional sessions with **Wiser Money** took place to enable access to advice and support for participants struggling with finances, or looking to develop their budgeting skills.

To increase the visibility of existing services, Petroc coordinated two Empowering Enterprise conferences, **Unlocking Potential** (2018) and **Positive Perspectives** (2020), which hosted a wide range of support services from across Devon.

A number of external support services fed back that the 1-2-1 provision and all round support offered by Empowering Enterprise was of great value and complemented their service:

Plymouth JCP's management worked with several partners and found great value in working in collaboration with the project's provision, finding that it complemented and enhanced what they could do. They reflected that young people need a lot of support and appreciated that Empowering Enterprise offers bespoke packages of support for participants, particularly in terms of young people facing barriers relating to autism, mental health or previous criminal offences.

The manager of **The Zone** in Plymouth worked closely with Groundwork South and fed back that he trusted and valued the project. He liked that the project offered 1-2-1 support and considered each young person holistically. He explained that, as GWS focus on supporting young people with overcoming challenges pertaining to education and work, the Zone are able to shift some of their focus to supporting young people with other challenges. He felt that Empowering Enterprise complemented and enhanced their service, especially noting that the provision freed up his organisation's capacity and had a positive impact on their waiting list.

692 ADVOCACY
SESSIONS

...totaling 361 hours, referring to instances where mentors have contacted or visited services on behalf of, or alongside, a participant.

3.2

SIGNPOSTING & RELATIONSHIPS

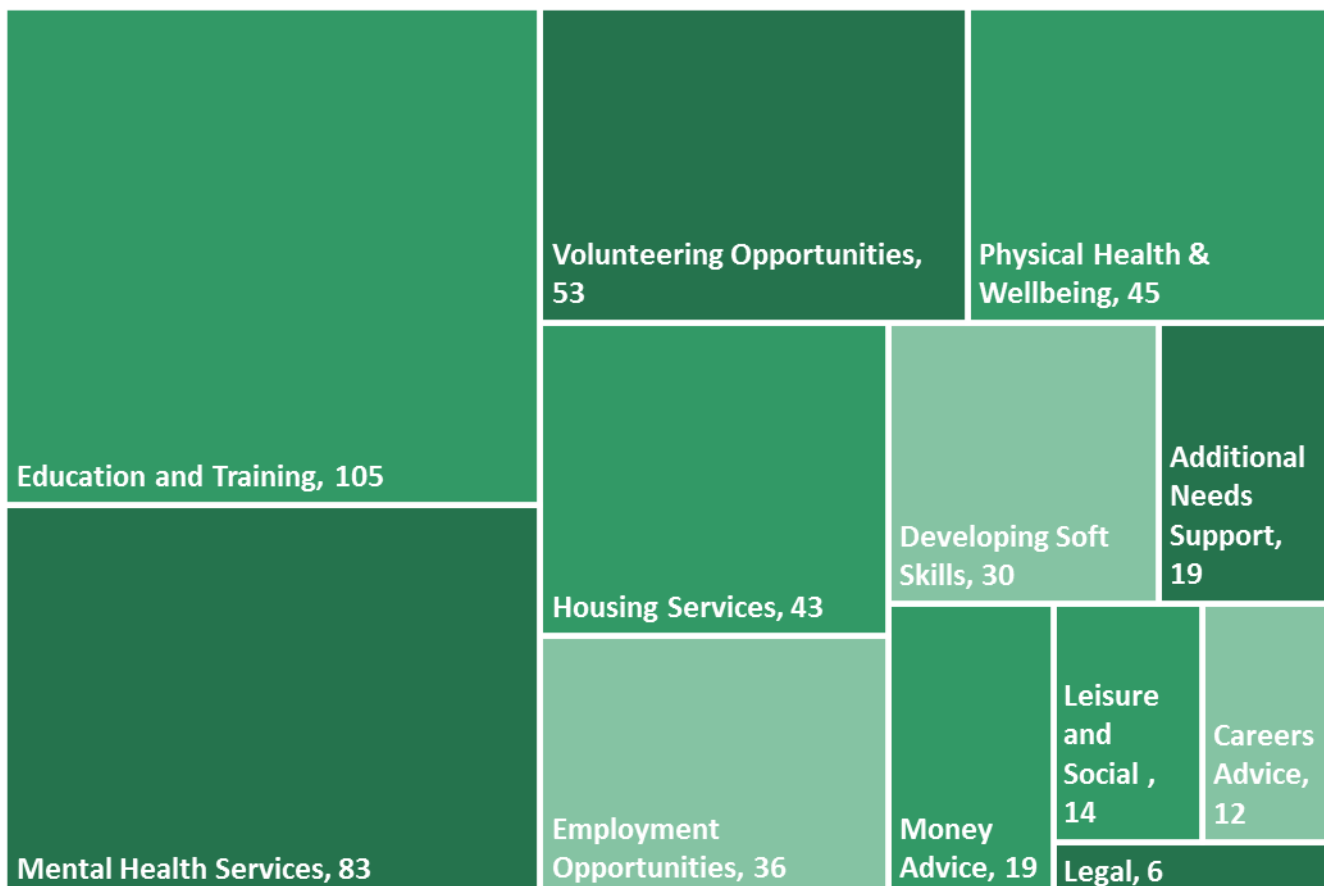
Of the 465 instances of signposting to external support services recorded during the course of the project, 345 (74%) of these were not previously known to the young person.

It is, however, important to note two factors which may mean that this number underestimates the rates of signposting within the project. First, it was only in February 2019 that adjustments were made to the PDRS system to remind mentors to formally log all instances of signposting in any given session with a participant.

Second, it is clear from conversations with delivery staff that signposting is considered by mentors to be such an intuitive aspect of their conversations with young people, that they may not always have logged this formally. The organisations most named as signposted to were Depression and Anxiety Service / Talkworks (20); local GP surgeries (19); and The Princes Trust (16).

Strong two-way relationships were built by partners with support services and individual key workers (such as Work Coaches or housing officers). These relationships mutually benefitted both partners, external bodies and, ultimately, the young people that they supported, through coherent support and access routes to support.

Number of instances of mentors signposting participants to further support for:



Even when a service like Jobcentre Plus (JCP) or Talkworks is visible to a young person, it can feel intimidating and cause anxiety to approach the service (e.g. due to the long waiting times or the reputation of the service). Approaching these organisations was made easier for participants, by having mentor support and advocacy available to them.

Young Devon described the strong relationship they built with Talkworks staff, which enabled them to attend the young person's appointments and better support them with their mental health journeys. WKUK reflected on the value of building a long-term and close relationship with Plymouth City Council's housing service. In the context of close liaison and ongoing two-way dialogue, WKUK were able to refer three different participants, who were in a period of crisis, to the service and receive same-day appointments for all of them.

Alongside the individual relationships developed to share capacity and meet the immediate needs of young people accessing both Empowering Enterprise and external support services, some more systemic work was carried out to make services more accessible and inclusive in the long-term. For example:

An existing relationship was held between ODILS and the Old Tree Court JCP prior to Empowering Enterprise. This was built upon the Skills Sector Team attended one of ODILS' Innovation Fund initiatives, the ESOL Careers Fair (section 5.2). Additionally, the whole Employment Advisor team went and spent some time at ODILS to improve their understanding of the services that ODILS offer, and to develop their skills in supporting clients for whom English is an additional language. The insight gained by these teams has encouraged Old Tree Court JCP's management to look to make all of their 120 work coaches across their two Plymouth sites more culturally aware. Additionally, ODILS and the Skills Sector Team are exploring whether ODILS are able to provide sector-bespoke training courses to key staff.

It is hoped that this initial 'breaking the ice' with services will encourage future engagement - increasing trust in one service and 'the system' may lead to a young person having more trust and confidence in accessing services generally.

"An Alcohol and Substance Misuse Recovery Centre in Torquay had heard about our provision through a parent of a participant. They wanted to connect with us as they were struggling to move clients into work. We met with the centre manager and explored how our services can work together."

Amanda, I Can Do That! mentor



"As a job centre we've had some really good results with [the project]. We have had quite a few go back into work as a result of this programme. [The mentor] has really taken these young people under his wing and comes with them to the job centre. Mentors feed back to us exactly what's going on - we've got that really good relationship and [the mentor] does go that extra mile for the young people."

Sara, Work Coach at Brixham JCP



OUTCOME THREE

**Communities and businesses
are more cohesive and
resilient.**

Our work to facilitate successful transitions into progression routes will not only help us to achieve our progression targets, but will also contribute towards achieving the outcome of communities and local businesses being more cohesive and resilient, as it will break down barriers between young people and employers and challenge preconceptions. This will have a wider beneficial impact beyond those directly involved in the project, as we will encourage a more positive view of young people in general, and will share best practice in taking a more joined-up approach to preparing young people for work and adulthood.

Bid Summary, 2016, p.41



“It’s been an opportunity to bring different parts and pillars of the community together, to get everyone... and show young people what’s out there.”

HAYLEY
Young Devon participant

“We’d made so many assumptions about people with mobility disabilities being able to use our space, but this [project] has been a major eye-opener for us.”

JENNY
Employer



3.3

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Interdependent engagement with communities has been fundamental to the success of Empowering Enterprise. Through a wide range of work and dynamics, the partnership has consistently engaged and responded to communities with the aim of increasing their resilience and cohesion, with participant interaction at the center. As further explored in 4.0 (pp.46-57), delivery partners work on local scales and are embedded in, and informed about, the social landscapes within which they work. The countless instances of community engagement are exceptionally varied and rich, though often difficult to illustrate, due to the way in which the project intrinsically exists within, contributes to, and benefits from, the communities of partners and participants. Consequently, each partner has offered a snapshot of their community engagement which together are intended to provide a 'Community Portfolio' or window into the depth and breadth of the project's relationships with Devon's communities.



BATTLING ON - REFLECTIONS ON STONEHOUSE

Stonehouse is the area of Plymouth where Battling On have their offices. The team there have produced a reflective piece of work that identifies the value of delivering from this location, and explains how local charities, businesses and other organisations in the area have been 'incredibly helpful and positive in taking [Empowering Enterprise] forward.' The Scrap Store, with whom Battling On share a building, and the King Street News Agents have been particularly engaged. These connections have facilitated many opportunities for participants, such as volunteering placements; environmental sustainability insight and action activities; home furnishings for those in difficult housing situations; and CV, interview and retail guidance. In turn, Battling On participants have better immersed themselves into the local community and contributed towards inter-generational activities that have 'boosted cohesion and a sense of belonging' for both themselves and the wider community.

DAME KELLY HOLMES TRUST - GET ON TRACK EMBEDDED IN THE COMMUNITY

Dame Kelly Holmes have curated their own portfolio of their community engagement work within the project, to illustrate the breadth and depth of the role that local communities play in the delivery of Get on Track courses, as well as one of the course's core missions to support young people to give back to their communities. The piece of work presents participant visits to local charities and organisations such as Ride On, an access to cycling charity in Exeter; community engagement activities like town treasure hunts; social action projects such as the creation of community mental health support posters; volunteering like placements at Animals in Distress; and the use of local venues for the courses such as Exeter Community Centre and YMCA Plymouth.

“The treasure hunt activity in Exeter city centre was my favourite because it made a change from staying inside playing computer games, and it pushed us out of our comfort zone, in a really good way.”

A Dame Kelly Holmes Trust participant.

DEVON COMMUNITIES TOGETHER - COMMUNITY CALENDARS

From October 2018, Devon Communities Together produced Community Calendars that were circulated to all mentors to use as talking-points with participants. The calendars were produced and circulated quarterly and each listed a minimum of four community engagement events per month, for each of the four project location areas. Mentors were encouraged to support participants to consider whether they would like to attend or volunteer at these or similar events either on their own or in a group. Examples of listed events are beach cleans, social action meetings, food and music festivals, local exhibitions, and fundraising events.

EAT THAT FROG - OVER 50S LUNCH CLUB CASE STUDY

Eat That Frog have shared an engaging case study that showcases their participants' involvement in a local over 50s lunch club in Paignton. An ETF mentor reflects "The chef who prepared the dinners always had nothing but praise for the participants that worked in the kitchen alongside her. The praise continued from the guests of lunch club who were always met with a friendly manner, and always had their needs met by the participants serving and taking orders... Interacting with people of a different generation and seeing that they were no different from them and that they also had fun stories to share from their lives was important and gave us a chance to grow in understanding each other, and the elderly guests we have that join us at lunch club come alive when mixing with the younger generation."

GROUNDWORK SOUTH - PHOTO ALBUM

A gallery of photos has been put together which exhibits a wide range of the community integration work that Groundwork South have made so

central to their delivery. The album shows participants and mentors in locally-owned cafes, accessing Citizen's Advice services, in community sport centres, at City College Plymouth, using the library, and at Hamoaze House, a community space that supports people recovering from substance abuse and addiction, and the building which Groundwork South's offices is located in. The images are accompanied by captions that describe how participants have engaged with, used, and given back to, these community spaces and services.

I CAN DO THAT! - 'REECE'S WORLD'

Upon engaging with I Can Do That! and starting Empowering Enterprise, Reece almost exclusively stayed at home, supporting his single mother with his autistic brother who requires 24-hour supervision and support. He only left the house with his mum as a passenger in her car, to accompany her with food-shopping, and to attend appointments at the job centre. He explained that he didn't go anywhere on his own, had no friends, and was severely anxious about any kind of social interaction. I Can Do That!'s contribution to the Community Portfolio is an account of Reece's journey towards becoming immersed in his local community. Maps are used to illustrate the transformation of the scope of 'Reece's world', identifying how the project has supported him to visit local cafes, the I Can Do That! offices, and the job centre independently, by offering him public transport training and support with his confidence. Ultimately, Reece ended up working at the local Co-Op and volunteering in customer service at a local charity shop. I Can Do That! reflect how this is illustrative of many participants' 'worlds' being broadened by project activity, and the ways in which the community will benefit long-term from the integration and contributions of these young people.



INSPIRING ARTS - ACCESSING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Inspiring Arts have examined one participant’s project activity and identified 15 community resources that they have been able to access with the support of their mentor. Examples are Youth Arts and Health Trust, Hospice Care Fundraising, Sunningmead Community Centre, and Insight Dynamics Book Club. The 15 resources have been listed alongside a short summary of what they are, the participant’s journey of engaging with them, and the impact that this has had on their personal progress.

ODILS - MAP SERIES

A series of maps have been produced by ODILS, to present a range of geographical data. With many of their participants being relatively new to both Plymouth and the UK, community engagement is essential to ODILS work and its impact has been substantial. Maps include insights on the many locations of project activity across the city and beyond, as well as data on the 11 different countries of origin that participants have come from. ODILS is privileged to host a very diverse community at their school. This map series demonstrates the wide range of contexts and worldviews that are *brought in to* the project by participants, as well as the many communities that ODILS participants access and engage with, *outside* of their main site.

WHIZ KIDZ UK - VOLUNTEERING VIDEO

A video showcasing participants volunteering in the community has been produced by WKUK, with participants marshalling at community events as well as working with children and other young people at holiday groups and craft and sports clubs. The video identifies that, as well as these community groups benefitting from this volunteering, a number of outcomes have been achieved for the participants themselves, including: improved confidence and self-esteem; better able to build and maintain positive relationships; more likely to participate in new activities and offer their time to volunteering again in the future.

YOUNG DEVON - COMMUNITY VIDEO

Young Devon have produced a video which showcases the range of venues and businesses where their Empowering Enterprise mentors and participants have spent time. This includes libraries, sports facilities, independent cafes, and organisations who opened up opportunities for young people to volunteer. In many cases participants were visiting these places for the first time, meeting new people, and broadening their networks and knowledge of their local area.

1

Participants scoring statements out of 5

	Start Average	End Average	Distance Travelled
‘I AM HAPPY TALKING TO OLDER PEOPLE / STRANGERS / PEOPLE I DON’T KNOW.’	3.2	3.8	0.6
‘I AM AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF MY COMMUNITY.’ Demonstrates contribution to society.	2.2	2.9	0.7
‘I AM OPEN TO WORKING WITH PEOPLE I WOULDN’T NORMALLY HANG AROUND WITH.’	3.4	3.9	0.5



NORTH DEVON SOCIAL FAIR

At the beginning of 2019, four participants collaborated with Devon Communities Together, to design and plan a community cohesion event. Having considered potential stallholders, developed a publicity strategy and run a risk assessment, Hayley, George, Connor and Hannah hosted The North Devon Social Fair at Georgie's Youth Club Barnstaple in March 2019. Local groups and clubs were invited to attend the event as stallholders, with the opportunity to publicize their (free or low-cost) activities to young people. 12 community groups brought stalls to the event and promoted their opportunities, and approximately 50 young people visited the Social Fair.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRESS AND REFLECTIONS

Interestingly, in Summer 2019, just 53% of mentors agreed with the statement: 'My manager has always communicated to me the importance of facilitating community engagement and integration activities for young people.' When given the opportunity to explain this answer, the 47% that stated that they **neither** agree nor disagree with the statement. Mentors described how they theoretically understood the importance of this, but felt that their participants weren't 'ready' for community engagement, as they were focusing on overcoming fundamental barriers, with severe social anxiety being a common example. "Yes, [this is] always communicated... But not necessarily appropriate for my young people." "It's been communicated to me, but it's sometimes difficult to achieve."

Upon examination, it became apparent that it took some time for partners to identify community engagement that intrinsically existed within their delivery work and structures. Following the creation of the Community Portfolio, it appears that delivery staff were better equipped and empowered to identify and acknowledge this element of their work. At the end of their delivery, 50% of partner organisations stated that working on Empowering Enterprise had increased their organisation's capacity to engage with local communities in a range of contexts and capacities.

3.3

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Whilst the young people, mentors, partnership, and external support services have worked to reduce the rates of young people who are not in education, employment or training in Devon, it's essential that local businesses and other employers are informed and equipped to play their important role in this narrative. Throughout 2017 and 2018, emphasis was placed on engaging employers to provide bespoke workplace opportunities to project participants, that were appropriate and valuable for both the young person and the employer. Though this kind of engagement continued through to the end of delivery, in 2019 and 2020 project aspirations to shift employer attitudes towards young NEETs gathered momentum, and an inclusive employment strategy came increasingly into focus.



Initially, the partnership's work with employers focused on engaging them to provide workplace opportunities to project participants. However, after the first six months of delivery it was identified that

little progress had been made as partners had been focused on the project setup, recruiting participants and helping them to develop skills they would need to undertake an opportunity in the workplace.

WORKPLACE OPPORTUNITIES

By 2018, more participants were becoming ready to pursue a workplace opportunity in a meaningful way. There was a partnership-wide push towards accessing workplace opportunities. Mentors could contact Devon Communities Together (the employer engagement partner) and put a request in for a participant. DCT would seek and secure a workplace opportunity for them, by engaging and liaising with local employers. Depending on the needs of the participant, and the capacity and willingness of the employer, these opportunities included traditional work experience placements; taster days and half-days; mock interviews; and workplace visits and tours. During this time, some partners heavily utilized DCT in this way, whilst others used previous employer engagement experience to seek and secure their own placements.

208 employers were informed about the project by DCT and asked whether they would provide an opportunity to a young person

114 (55%) of these employers said that they would offer an opportunity to a participant, under the right circumstances. Comments often included the significance of different times of the year and the ability and independence of the young person.

89 bespoke workplace opportunities were secured by DCT for individual participants.



A participant had been struggling to identify a suitable work experience placement due to being a wheelchair user. The Career Zone were able to offer him some administration experience. They work from a new, accessible building at the University of Exeter which the staff thought would be fine for a wheelchair user. However, when the participant arrived at the placement, the space was not suitable for him. Though they made temporary adaptations for his placement, this “was a real eye opener” for the employer, who went on to successfully apply for funding for wheelchair-friendly desks and chairs.

STRATEGIC SHIFT

Half way through 2019, DCT redirected their employer engagement focus towards working with employers on a strategic level to shift attitudes towards young NEETs and perceived barriers to succeeding in the workplace.

The Social Model of Disability was implemented and shared to communicate that very often it is not the young person that presents a barrier, but societal and workplace structures that construct and present them. There is, therefore, an emphasis on the employer’s responsibility to examine their workplace practices and dismantle any apparent barriers that aren’t conducive with an inclusive workplace.

DCT produced an Inclusive Opportunities Toolkit for employers that communicated this message and provided links to useful resources. They also attended events including the South West Business Expo where they networked with over 200 employers. Additionally the 'Untapped Talent' business breakfast was co-hosted with other services in North Devon to promote JCP's 'Ready When You Are' disability campaign. During this time, DCT held employer engagement workshops and offered support for mentors, to better equip them to continue talking to employers on the ground to source valuable workplace opportunities for participants.

OUTCOME FOUR

Project partners will share best practice and resources in a joined up approach which means they can support more young people, more effectively.

The partnership was intentionally designed to include a number of partners whose role it would be to 'advise and support other partners in specific areas, as well as to provide direct support to individual participants with specialist needs'. Plans were also put in place to facilitate networking events for our partnership, which would involve external organisations, including stakeholders and influencers. Petroc also outlined that they would facilitate information sharing through their communications plan activities, including ensuring online forums are available for project delivery staff.

Bid Summary, 2016, pp.35-36



“The project has increased our network and skills. It has expanded our company profile and made more people aware of us.”

Mentor

“The flexibility and length of the project has enabled me to try different approaches to find out what works best for this age group.”

Mentor



3.4

SHARING AND COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES

Throughout the project, the communication and cohesion of the partnership has been a significant strength. Petroc highlight their own positive and open relationships with delivery partners, a positive atmosphere, and the joined-up approach that is employed across the partnership as contributing factors. Petroc's view is echoed across the partnership with **86% of project managers believing that delivery partners value each others' specialisms and expertise**, and 86% also claiming that they have, or would be willing to, refer or re-refer to another partner, should it best serve the participant's progress. It's felt that effective communication systems have played a central role in facilitating this.

PARTNER MEETINGS

Partner Meetings took place each quarter at Petroc's Tiverton campus, a central location for the partnership. These meetings were attended primarily by project managers from partner organisations, as well as key stakeholders. After a networking lunch, the afternoon was usually dedicated to providing support to partners, focused on a specific theme. **72% of project managers feel that Partner Meetings were highly beneficial for their own work and enabled them to share ideas and learn from one another.**

LOCAL MEETINGS

Throughout 2018 and 2019, Local Meetings took place three times per year. There was then a final round of meetings in the first quarter of 2020. In each round of Local Meetings, four meetings were held - one in each of the four project areas: Exeter, North Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. They were hosted in local venues and attended by mentors working primarily in those geographical areas. Again, networking lunches were often followed by a focused session designed to support mentors' delivery.

75% of mentors stated that they find Local Meetings beneficial, highlighting the valuable opportunities to engage in networking, sharing information, and receive partner up-

dates. Others also highlighted the significance of the opportunity they offer to simply spend time with other mentors. One mentor reflected "I work full-time and can go weeks only seeing participants - it's good to speak with other mentors and share".

80% of mentors said they value and use the expertise of other partners, and respect their specialisms, describing the opportunity to share experiences and best practice with other mentors as "invaluable". Most mentors, however, reflected that they "don't have the time to follow up" and "would have liked more time to work with [other] partners".

Some mentors, who work part-time, highlighted that the need to attend these meetings results in reduced capacity, which might otherwise have been channeled into providing participant support - "I only work a 7.5 hour contract, so these meetings are my whole week. I should be delivering [to young people]."



Record of Key Partnership Meetings

Additional Support Sessions for Attendees

2016

Partner Meeting	08-June
Partner Meeting	20-Oct

2017

Partner Meeting	09-May	
Partner Meeting	01-Jun	Petroc Sessions on Financial Claim and Participant Paperwork
Stakeholder Meeting	19-Jun	
Partner Meeting	19-Jul	PDRS Support Session
Partner Meeting	13-Sep	Digital Skills by Cosmic
Stakeholder Meeting	26-Oct	
Partner Meeting	13-Dec	RISC Cyber Safety and Counter-Terrorism, Further Education Progression

2018

Local Meetings X4	Jan-Feb	Y Smart (drug and alcohol awareness), Citizens Advice, Livewell, Eatwell, Mind UK
Stakeholder Meeting	07-Mar	
Partner Meeting	22-Mar	Planet First
Stakeholder Meeting	14-Jun	
Partner Meeting	28-Jun	Cross Cutting Themes
Local Meetings X4	July	EDP Drug & Alcohol Services, Bright Futures, Citizens Advice, Loan Sharks
Partner Meeting	13-Sep	Inclusive Employment; The Value of Evaluation
Local Meetings X4	Sept	
Partner Meeting	13-Dec	Data Protection and GDPR

2019

Local Meetings X4	Jan-Feb	Group Activities Workshops
Partner Meeting	14-Mar	Cross Cutting Themes
Partner Meeting	13-Jun	Reflecting on Project Management
Local Meetings X4	July	Reflecting on Project Management
Partner Meeting	12-Sep	Networking
Local Meetings X4	Sept	
Partner Meeting	12-Dec	Celebrate Your Success

2020

Local Meetings X4	Feb	Signposting Participants to Other Provision
Partner Meeting	12-Mar	1-2-1 Petroc Appointments with Individual Partners
Partner Meeting	17-Jun	



3.4

GROWING ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY & STAFF SKILLS

100%

of project managers believe that working on Empowering Enterprise, and being managed by Petroc, has enabled them to

DEVELOP AND GROW
their organisation's capacity

86%

of project managers believe that working on Empowering Enterprise, and being managed by Petroc, has enabled them to

BETTER UNDERSTAND
their organisation's capacity

100%

75%

50%

of project managers believe that working on Empowering Enterprise has increased their organisation's capacity to:

Better understand their organisation's strengths and weaknesses;

Engage young people who otherwise may not have come into contact with their organisation;

Manage budgets and other financial and administrative responsibilities effectively;

Reflect on, and take active steps towards increasing, their organisation's commitment to environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Equip and up-skill employees (e.g. mentors and other staff);

Provide high quality support and advice to young people;

Work collaboratively with other local organisations who share similar values and visions.

Develop staff's confidence and competence in engaging employers;

Engage with local communities in a range of contexts;

Reflect on, and take active steps towards increasing, their organisation's commitment to equal opportunities and gender equality.



PETROC'S ONGOING OFFER OF SUPPORT

Petroc aimed to have open relationships with partners, available to support as needed. All project managers commented on Petroc's communication being "extremely responsive to enquiries" and "very fair and transparent".

IMPACT REVIEW MEETINGS

In Q3 and Q4 2020 meetings were held between management from each delivery partner and DCT. Detailed 'Partner Profiles' were presented to encourage reflection and learning.

MENTORS' VOICE

In November 2018, two workshops were held for mentors. Provide a space for mentors to share their experiences of common challenges that they face whilst supporting young people and to ensure that managers, evaluators, funders and onlookers understand the complexity of the task at hand.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

In August 2018 two workshops were held to support mentors to feel confident to approach employers on their participants' behalf, and to track the engagement.



WHATSAPP

Throughout the project, encouraged by conversations at local meetings, mentors took the initiative to support each other via WhatsApp, sharing participant opportunities and solutions.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT EVALUATION

In Q2 2019 DCT examined and evaluated the management of the project to date, in order to identify and, where possible, action any changes that could be made to improve the management and mechanics of EE in the final year of delivery.

92% of mentors believe that, by working on the project, they **have developed their professional skills and capacity**. Upon leaving the project, they were asked to list the skills and knowledge that they felt they'd developed through working on the project. The most common answers were '**networking skills and relationships with contacts**' and '**mentoring skills**'; specific examples included setting goals, motivating others and 1-2-1 session planning. Several mentors also shared how they felt they'd increased their empathy with youth from different backgrounds, and understanding of their barriers (the most common being mental health), as well as developing personality skills, such as patience, problem solving and perseverance. Mentors also expressed an improved ability to engage with employers, understanding the benefits system, and training, education and career pathways. Lesser-mentioned areas of development included, improvement of admin and IT skills, and remote/digital mentoring.

Sam* Dame Kelly Holmes Trust

Sam had been given three months by the authorities to get their 'life back on track' or potentially face a prison sentence. Sam's attendance at Get on Track was high and they engaged well with the athlete mentor and other participants. Following GoT, Sarah [mentor] supported Sam to get their CSCS card which allows someone to work on a building site. Sam also completed a Functional Skills course to attain their maths and English qualifications. Sarah reflected that "Doing the GoT programme gave them more confidence and belief that they can achieve this. I don't believe they would've completed subsequent courses without GoT." Sam was given a suspended sentence and a chance to rebuild their life.



Dee Battling On

Dee lives in a rural location in Dartmoor with her young daughter and was very isolated. She suffered abuse growing up and struggled with anxiety. Dee's mentor supported her to get help for her mental health, and also to think about the future. Having grown in confidence, worked with a job coach, and done a distanced-learning course at Petroc, Dee now aspires to be a social worker and has taken steps to pursue this with the Open University.

James* Young Devon

James shared that, before he joined the project "I stayed in my room constantly for 24 hours a day. All I did was play games on my Xbox and smoke cannabis... I felt very down and depressed prior to the programme." James' mentor has supported him to undertake a DKHT GoT course and a Work Based Learning course. James reflects "These courses helped me to socialise more and improve my confidence... I feel there is a huge difference in myself. The project has helped me to reduce my cannabis and be more social... I am really motivated to find work and feel I am getting closer to my goal." Stacey shared "He is a changed young person from when I first met him and I am extremely proud."



UNLOCKING POTENTIAL CONFERENCE May 2018

80 people attended the first Empowering Enterprise conference, from a range of partner organisations, other support organisations, colleges and local employers. As was encouraged by Petroc, 64% of attendees arrived by a sustainable mode of transport. 78% of those providing feedback thought the key note talk, on Craftivism—Craft as Gentle Activism, was ‘Excellent’ or ‘Very Good’. Guests also attended two of the following workshops: Digital Skills for Young People; Get Inspired by Stories of Youth Engagement; Illegal Money Lending; and Understanding the Benefits System for Young People. All workshops were considered ‘Excellent’ or ‘Very Good’ by respondents.

“Craftivism - an inspired choice of keynote!” Attendee



POSITIVE PERSPECTIVES CONFERENCE February 2020

The partnership’s second conference provided the opportunity to over 120 attendees to hear about how they can help the young people they work with maintain good mental health. 66% of attendees arrived at the event using a sustainable mode of transport. Speakers included: Inner Compass, a wellbeing and resilience building organisation; Proud2Be, who specialise in youth LGBTQ+ support and advocacy; Simply Great Media, who offer digital skills courses for young people; and Work Skills South West, who champion personal growth through eco-therapy. 91% of responding delegates stated that the conference made them feel more aware of the ways they can support young people with their mental health, and agreed that they had heard ideas that they will take directly into their day to day work. 86.4% felt more confident about working with young people around gender and/or sexuality, following the conference.



4.0

PARTNER PROFILES

STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY

Integral to the design of Empowering Enterprise was “a strong partnership encompassing a variety of organisations, which provide a mix of local knowledge and delivery, expertise, specialisms and geographical coverage” (10, *ibid*). It was felt that this would allow the project to meet the extremely diverse characteristics and barriers of participants, some of whom may “actively avoid engagement with organisations perceived as representing authority and the public sector in general” (*ibid*) such as colleges or Jobcentre Plus.

As seen in sections 3.2 and 3.3, it was also thought that organisations embedded in their own communities would be better able to draw on local contacts. This would not only increase recruitment of the ‘hardest to reach’ but also to help participants find suitable development opportunities (in workplaces or elsewhere), thereby supporting both participants and the wider community. The partnership, was drawn together, to “offer the best opportunity to achieve the desired results during the lifetime of the project and achieve a lasting legacy of outcomes in the longer term” (11, *ibid*).

This section of the report gives an overview of each delivery partner and indicates the diversity of geographical reach and specialisms. It also gives some indication of that partner’s journey on the Empowering Enterprise Project, including: statistics related to participants engaged; referral and signposting routes from within their community and elsewhere; and stand out activities such as group projects or involvement with the cross cutting themes. This section also includes descriptions of the four delivery partners who began the project but left part way through. Further detail on each partner is found in Appendix 5.

Note: These profiles break down the results achieved by each partner’s participants. The sum of results is often greater than the number of participants who achieved a result (Completer with Result), as participants can achieve multiple results upon completion of their time on the project.

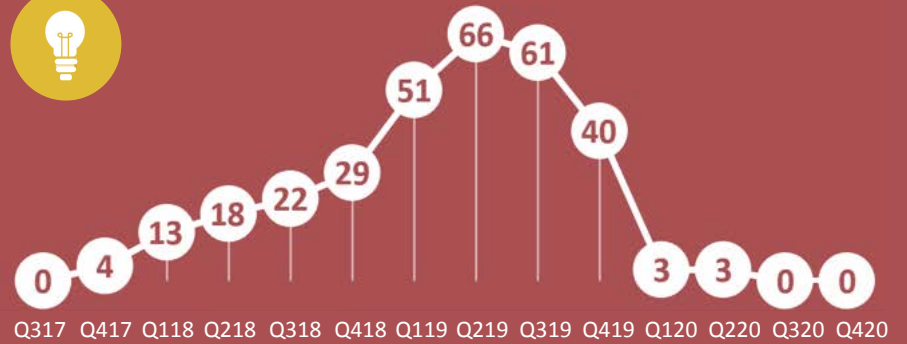


4.1 BATTLING ON

Established in 2012, Battling On is a multi-award winning Community Interest Company predominantly staffed by ex-forces members. It provides care and support for veterans and also trains them to become mentors and instructors, employing them to deliver educational programmes to some of the West Country’s most vulnerable young people. They deliver many programmes on their 124-acre farm and in the community. These programmes develop confidence and emotional resilience including the development of social skills, careers advice, and the facilitation of industry recognized qualifications.



Participants	95
Target	98
Difference	-3
Hours with participants	1,788
Completers with Result	46
Education or Training	23
Employment	25
Job Search	5



After initial struggles getting participants live, due to unfamiliarity with paperwork requirements, Battling On (BO) had a steady flow of participants, at times maintaining a waiting list or signposting to other partners. Although familiar with running projects in the community, BO run a high proportion of their projects from their base in east Cornwall, so Empowering Enterprise provided an opportunity to build great support networks within Plymouth and West Devon.

This included strong relationships with services such as the NEET department of Plymouth City College and the area’s National Careers Service

team (with whom they ran workshops). Community-based contacts included The Learning Institute, Colebrook SW and Plymouth Argyle FC, as well as regular volunteering opportunities with the Plymouth Scrap Store. BO worked with 3 transgender young people in the process of transition, and established a dedicated group to support young mums. Work with the Plymouth Scrap Store and a permaculture course promoted the topic of sustainability. BO ran two Innovation Fund projects – ‘Rural/Urban Toolkit’ and ‘Young Entrepreneurs’. Mentors involved participants in the interview process for recruitment of extra staff, and in establishing their sustainability goals.

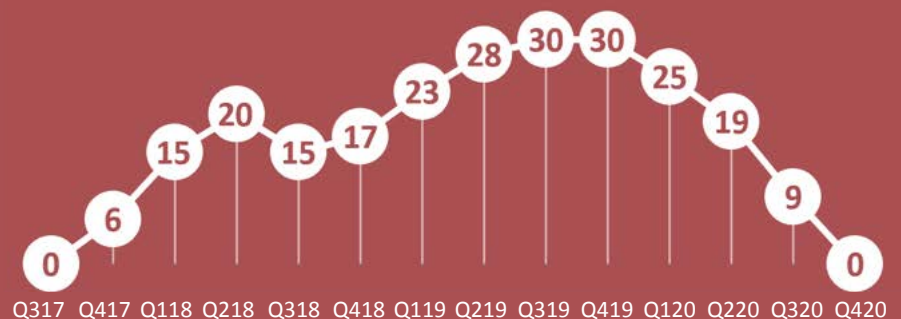
“I love working. I couldn’t have done this without Pam and Bruce [mentors]. The project has really helped me. I didn’t have a clue what to do before. I’m really happy with life now.” Freya*

4.2 EAT THAT FROG

Established in January 2011, and operating eight centres across the South West, Eat That Frog support people to identify and overcome their barriers to live a more fulfilled life. Their centres deliver courses in small groups for adults and young people aged over 16 who haven't thrived in mainstream education. Courses include childcare; catering; digital skills; horticulture; and independent living skills. They reach over 1,000 people annually. Some of their education provision is bespoke for those with special educational needs. Community links are central to their work, and they host lunch clubs, community kitchens, drop in computers for work searches, and more.



Participants	63
Target	67
Difference	-4
Hours with participants	1,819
Completers with Result	23
Education or Training	6
Employment	17
Job Search	3



ETF had a steady and stable flow of participants, except for one period of instability in Q3 2018 due to staff changes. The majority of referrals came from ETF's own engagement. They had a strong process moving young people who were already engaged with their other services onto the project, such as from their post-16 leavers programme. Referral routes were also established between ETF and Jobcentre Plus and Careers South West. Additionally, Adult Social Care services worked out of two of their centres once a week. ETF's established education centres added great value to their delivery of this project. Participants were able to engage with ETF's existing on-

site courses (e.g. job club; healthy living project) and Community Fridges. The centers also provided a space for participants to co-design and host group projects (such as gaming tournaments and a Film Club) and, in doing so, collaborate with the wider ETF team and venue. Strong connections were built with local foodbanks, mental health charities, and construction businesses looking for apprenticeships. Among initiatives related to CCTs, a women's only WhatsApp group was established to support female participants, regular budgeting workshops were run, and conversations around waste evolved around the community fridge.

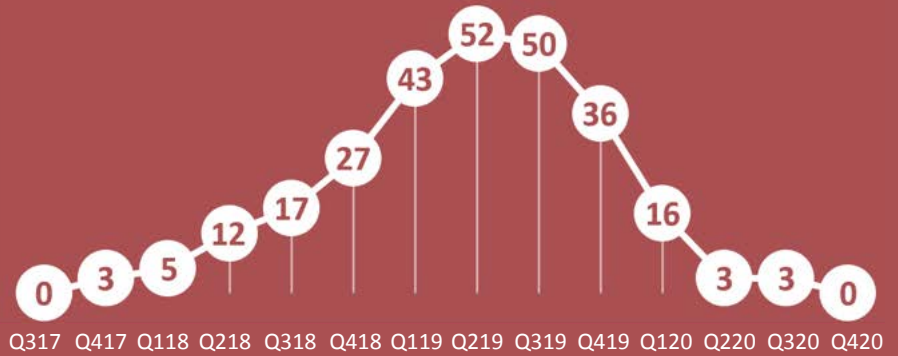
“I have had an amazing experience. The staff have helped me where I needed it. I will always be grateful for what they have done for me.” Jack*

4.3 GROUNDWORK SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Groundwork South is part of Groundwork - a federation of charities working nationally and locally to transform lives in the UK's most disadvantaged communities. Groundwork help people gain confidence and skills, get into training and work, protect and improve green spaces, lead more active lives and overcome significant challenges such as poverty, isolation, low skills and poor health. Groundwork South works on over 25 different projects to change places and lives across the South of the England.



Participants	80
Target	80
Difference	0
Hours with participants	1,276
Completers with Result	31
Education or Training	20
Employment	13
Job Search	1



Groundwork South had initial early disruption to their staff team, with multiple changes to staff arrangements. Furthermore, GWS planned to work closely with Tomorrow's People, before TP's collapse. By Q2 2018, however, the GWS team was well established and recruiting well. Referral routes were built up between GWS and The Zone Plymouth; PLUSS; Jobcentre Plus and Bournemouth Churches Housing Association.

GWS developed a strong relationship with Hamoaze House – a community centre for drug and alcohol rehabilitation in Plymouth. Together, they organised a workshop on the effects of drug and

alcohol. The centre also allowed them to use their kitchen for weekly cooking classes, leading to GWS participants collaborating with The Real Junk Food Project in 2018 to cook and prepare a Christmas meal for Hamoaze House's service users. GWS also worked closely with Plymouth Community Homes to support their community development and consultation work. GWS went on to run regular group sessions, with focuses on exercise, cooking and socialising. Regarding CCT, GWS established a women's group and a gardening course, and were involved in the subgroups, especially contributing to the development of the Transgender Toolkit.

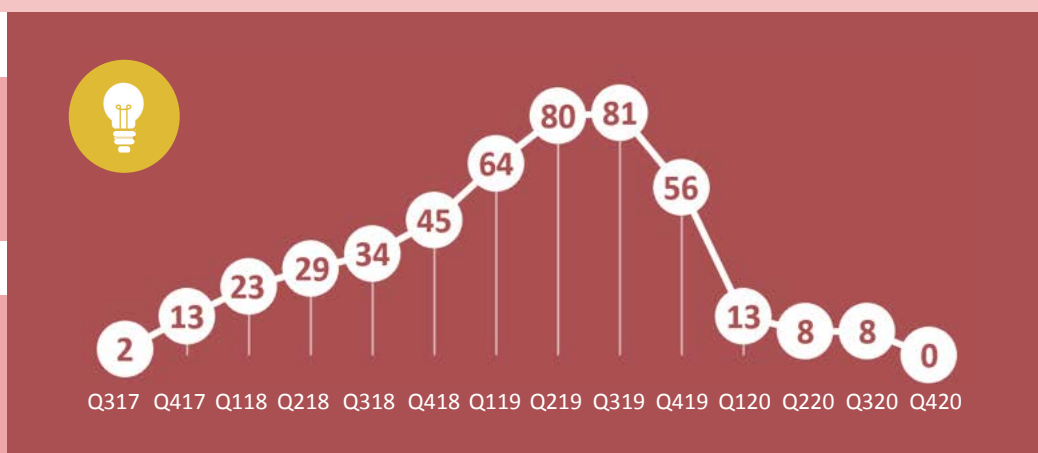
“When I met Sarah [mentor] I was very vulnerable and unstable... Sarah attended meetings with me which has improved my confidence. Paying for the gym has changed my life. Making these small steps has really helped me evolve into the young strong woman I want to become.” Kate*

4.4 I CAN DO THAT!

Established in 2011, I Can Do That! is a small team of friendly mentors who support local residents that wish to progress towards work and improve their lives. They offer 1-2-1 tailored appointments to suit individual needs, can help individuals respond to their own mental health issues, increase confidence/motivation, choose a career direction, train in employability skills and even plan daily routines and nutrition to help achieve their goals. I Can Do That! specialise in mental health and self employment support.



Participants	145
Target	151
Difference	-6
Hours with participants	4,426
Completers with Result	72
Education or Training	27
Employment	37
Job Search	13



Due to involvement with a previous similar project, I Can Do That! started Empowering Enterprise with a pool of potential participants, but did need to adapt to ensure young people’s suitability for EE. This flow of participants was fairly consistent, except for Q2 2018 where staff changes had an impact. The vast majority of I Can Do That!’s referrals came from Jobcentre Plus, whilst others came from many local social services such as Care Leavers Teams. A large proportion of ICDT!’s participants were facing housing and benefits challenges and ICDT! worked to support these areas before moving on to address employment

issues. ICDT! are well connected in the Torbay area, and network extensively in the community, including at a local provision mapping event and a healthy lifestyles conference. Regarding the CCT, ICDT! significantly contributed to the project’s Transgender Toolkit. They also spoke at a partnership-wide support session on this topic, supported two participants to establish a transgender support group, and created autism awareness cards for participants to use. Regarding sustainability, ICDT! developed a meal planning and budget resource, and an on-site allotment to run group sessions with participants.

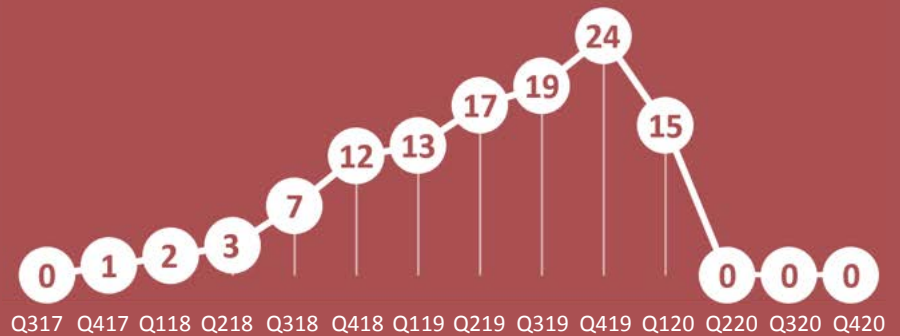
I started this programme with no confidence and no motivation... Now Lynda [mentor] has taught me that if I fail it’s just not meant to be and I can just find another way. I just want to say thank you again for opening my eyes.” Jade

4.5 INSPIRING ARTS

Inspiring Arts is a non-profit community interest company that works with many parts of the community that are experiencing challenges and exclusion, due to social, physical or financial barriers. This includes, though isn't limited to, young people, people with disabilities or experiencing mental health problems. Inspiring Arts specialise in collaborating with freelance artists, arts organisations and community groups nationally and internationally to create projects in theatre, film, digital media, dance, music, visual arts, radio and more.



Participants	33
Target	32
Difference	+1
Hours with participants	966
Completers with Result	17
Education or Training	3
Employment	9
Job Search	6



As they were used to primarily delivering group work, this project was a focused change for Inspiring Arts. Both the prolonged mentoring and intensive level of paperwork requirements were new challenges. IA operated as a small team, meaning that illness and other circumstances at times affected their capacity. They held conversations with Petroc to reprofile and lower their target in Q2 2019.

Their geographical focus shifted through the project, initially working in Torbay and Exeter, before recruiting a mentor in Q3 2018 to cover NW Devon. As well as working with JCP, Inspiring Arts fo-

cused much of their recruitment strategy on building relationships with supported housing institutions, having a regular presence in several. They also formed strong connections with firms involved in training for the security industry.

Amongst their unique initiatives, they involved participants in creating a LGBTQ+ language guide, and created volunteering opportunities with a theatre project for adults with learning disabilities, and at Exeter Street Art Festival.

“This course really helped build my confidence, especially in the one on one conversations and it also really got me motivated to start work and get out there.”

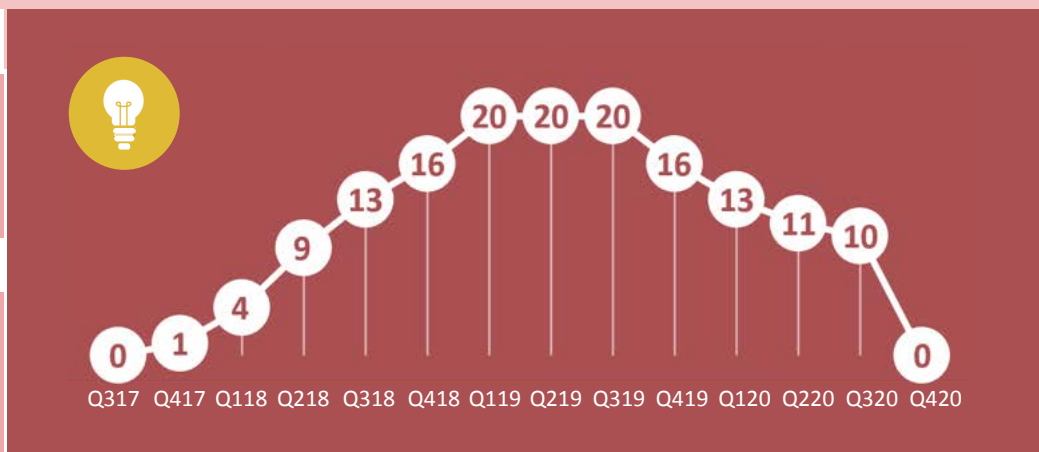
Matt*

4.6 ODILS LEARNING FOUNDATION

ODILS Learning Foundation (Open Doors International Language School) is a charity for refugees, asylum seekers and migrant groups. Located in easy reach from Plymouth city centre, it provides free English language education, skills development mentorships, and employment and community integration support for ethnic minority groups.



Participants	40
Target	37
Difference	+3
Hours with participants	1,169
Completers with Result	15
Education or Training	2
Employment	10
Job Search	4



As ODILS is an established language school working with asylum seekers and refugees, most of their participants joined via existing engagement with the school. Additional referrals were received from Jobcentre Plus and the British Red Cross. There were added barriers for their cohort at times - particularly the accessibility of language within the context of the project’s paperwork-heavy enrolment process. ODILS struggled with other organisations being unprepared for the needs of their participants. Among other activities, they worked with the British Red Cross shop to plan a ‘Charity Shop Induction - Work Experience’ programme. They helped develop University of

Plymouth’s ‘University of Sanctuary’ bid, and built strong relationships with multiple Jobcentre Plus sites, working to improve participants’ access to work experience and also to better understand qualification translation. ODILS engaged local schools at a diversity tea party at Hele’s School, and planned similar sessions with Theatre Royal, Fuse Dance, and Plymouth College of Art. ODILS sat on both CCT sub-groups and held many conversations with participants about different aspects of equality in a UK context, and developed infographic resources to be shared with employers. To promote sustainability, they held six forest school sessions for participants.

“Everything has improved. .. My English is better and if I need anything, my mentor helps me, with driving licences and jobs... People say I’m lucky, but I’m not lucky— I have Jo! [mentor]” Ahmad

4.7 WHIZ KIDZ UK

Whiz Kidz UK is a training and activities provider based in Plymouth. WKUK run careers workshops and holiday clubs that focus on work ethic, attitude and motivation, as well as weekly job clubs for adults, focused on supporting job-seekers. They also provide children’s parties services and have a strand of work called Kreative Kidz, which supports children and their families to engage with the arts and creativity. WKUK have substantial experience in supporting young people and adults with learning difficulties.



Participants	58
Target	52
Difference	+6
Hours with participants	1,264
Completers with Result	25
Education or Training	11
Employment	15
Job Search	3



WKUK started with 3 participants recruited early on and, apart from a few short periods, maintained a steady flow of participants. The majority of WKUK’s referrals came through their own engagement, for example through groups they ran, via parents or social media. WKUK also visited groups at the local nursery and children’s centre. A strong referral pathway was formed with Jobcentre Plus. Regular attendance at local events developed relationships with Police Community Support Officers who recommended the project. Other strong involvement with the community included summer employability initiatives with local schools; forming a partnership with

‘Disability School Games’ to provide volunteering opportunities; and an active social media presence (including encouraging community household item donations for participants).

WKUK, separate to EE, ran weekly sessions for adults with learning disabilities which was a place for learning for EE participants, several of whom volunteered. WKUK were on the sustainability subgroup and regularly held discussions on these topics, including co-creating a money management leaflet with participants and cookery workshops. WKUK participants co-created and ran a social group for regular interaction and outings.

“When I joined I was depressed... The group atmosphere helped as I was amongst people in the same situation... I now feel I have more purpose and am enjoying my new job.” Brandon

4.8 YOUNG DEVON

Young Devon is the largest young people’s charity in the South West. Their mission is to make Devon a better place for all young people. Each year Young Devon work with over 2,000 young people, building quality relationships to help them thrive. The organisation has dedicated teams to help young people develop skills through courses, and improve wellbeing through counselling and helping access accommodation. Ensuring the voices of young people are heard by Devon’s decision makers is also an important part of Young Devon’s work.



Participants	142
Target	141
Difference	+1
Hours with participants	3,357
Completers with Result	93
Education or Training	57
Employment	34
Job Search	19



Young Devon operated in North Devon, South Hams, Plymouth, Exeter/Tiverton, and, from Q2 2019, Ilfracombe. After initial delays in recruiting and preparing the team, due to the paperwork requirements, by Q2 2018 they had a large flow of referrals and team of nine mentors. The mentors, working around the county regularly met to share best practice and support. There were some points of disruption with mentor and support staff changes, notably Q3 2019. They established strong referral routes with Jobcentre Plus, and received referrals from many services around the county. Additionally, a significant number of participants were referred from their other services.

Young Devon often had a waiting list and would regularly refer participants to other partners. Young Devon’s support networks grew through the project to include local businesses, homeless shelters and women’s groups, as well as regional support services.

Young Devon’s many group projects, included: disability awareness, dementia awareness, beach cleans, games afternoons, film workshops, a confidence course, clay painting, bowling and ‘wiser money’ sessions. They also made the most of the Innovation Fund, and ran six IF projects.

“From the moment I signed up, I never felt judged here... I used to be a hermit... But now there is actually emotion in my voice, now I can talk to anyone... And I actually enjoy it! I’m living a life now... Just coming here uplifts my spirits.” James*

4.9 DAME KELLY HOLMES TRUST

Double Olympic champion Dame Kelly Holmes founded DKHT in 2008 from a passion to support disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable young people to lead more positive and healthy lives. Holmes also wanted to support her peers: athletes as they retire from the world of elite sport. DKHT train elite athletes to use their world class experience to engage, enable and empower disadvantaged young people to lead more positive lives. DKHT have created and delivered a range of personal and social development programmes for young people aged 14-25 facing disadvantages.



DKHT run their Get on Track (GoT) programme nationally and were originally recruited to the partnership to deliver this to Westward Pathfinder's (WP) participants, acting as the BOB to WP's STEVIEs. The collapse of WP, however, required a substantial shift in strategy. In the end, DKHT delivered six GoT programmes to participants across the partnership. The GoT programmes consist of 14 sessions of personal development and employability with the support of a world class athlete. Athletes worked independently to deliver the programme, but fed back regularly to mentors. The 14 sessions included: team working activities; mock job interviews, social action projects and volunteering days.

With only 58% of the recruited GoT participants being retained on the programme, DKHT reflected that this is lower than their national average retention rate of 77%, and recognised that this was indicative of many of Empowering Enterprise's participants being 'the furthest from the labour-market'.

Data collected on the programme shows that participants felt they'd improved in a number of areas related to employability and life skills. For example, rating their personal shift in teamwork (55% to 100%) and communicating with a range of people (62% to 92%).



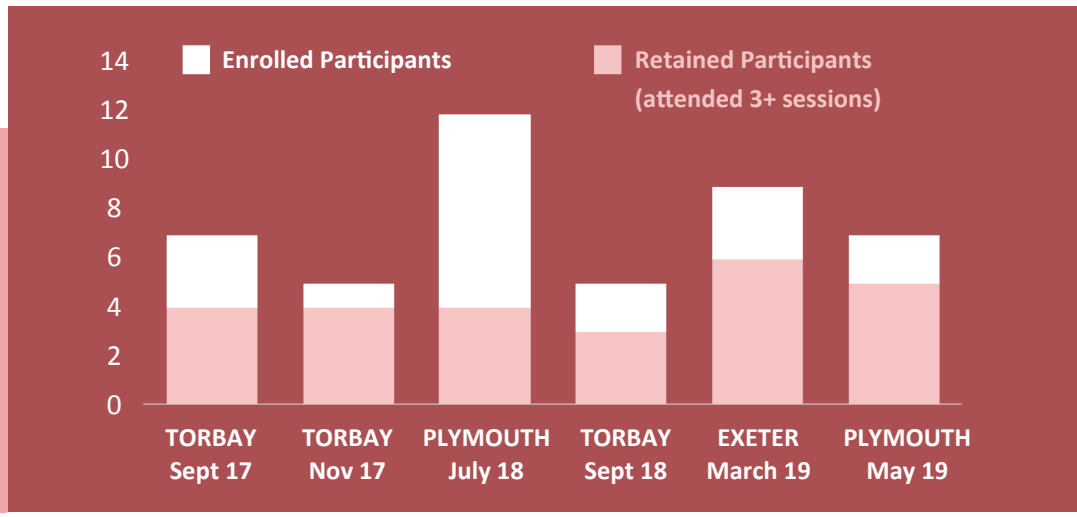
"It's made me look around more at different job opportunities, courses and skills. Just to build up really. I feel a lot more inclined to go on to another course now and do better and better myself." Devon

Participants 45

Target 56

Difference -11

Retained Participants 26



David Hill is a 2 x Paralympian in swimming & triathlon, World & European medallist, British Champion and was TeamGB's youngest athlete at the Athens 2004 Paralympics and top 10 finisher in the Rio de Janeiro 2016 Paralympic Games. David was the primary athlete mentor for the GoT programmes and was able to better understand the demographic of project participants as he deliv-

ered each one. Though GoT followed a general structure, David designed each programme to be suitable for each cohort, developing it as he got to know them better as individuals and as a group. He was praised consistently by both mentors and participants for his relaxed rapport and ability to challenge young people to move beyond their usual comfort zone.



	Starting score	Finishing score	Change in score
Mental wellbeing (Warwick-Edinburgh scale, /30)	19.4	23	+3.6
Self-efficacy (/30)	25.5	29	+3.5
Work well in a team/group	55%	100%	+45%
Aware of the effects of my actions	69%	77%	+8%
Have someone I can turn to	85%	92%	+7%
Feel prepared to enter/re-enter employment, education or training	69%	85%	+16%
Can communicate with a range of people	62%	92%	+30%
Good at problem solving	77%	85%	+8%
Like to inspire and motivate others	45%	77%	+32%
Would join a club/group independently of friends	53%	85%	+32%
Knowledge of nearest sports club health facilities	38%	77%	+39%
Lead a healthy lifestyle	54%	69%	+15%
Feel connected to local community	19%	52%	+23%
Like to be the leader	19%	38%	+19%

4.10 ADDITIONAL PARTNERS

Four delivery partners left the project in the first year. These partners were profiled to recruit almost a third of the total project target (217 participants), and several were due to focus on recruitment from geographical target areas not covered by other partners on the project. Although hard to quantify, it is fair to say the impact of losing these partners, and their associated capacity to meet their targets, was significant. It likely contributed to the subsequent need for the project to re-profile with TNLCF, and the associated pressure on the partnership, as well as missing out on funding for a project extension. Petroc as a management team dealt differently with each partner, and also had to manage the redistribution of existing-live and future-target-profile participants. Presented here is a summary of the circumstances surrounding each organisation.

Partner	Motiv-8 South West	Date Left Partnership	June 2018
Anticipated Coverage	Honiton	Profiled Caseload	25

Motiv-8 SW is a coach-mentoring organisation supporting those that are unemployed. The organisation chose to employ 'consultant-mentors' rather than 'in-house' mentors. This staffing model meant it would be difficult, and likely unviable, to reach their target caseload within their agreed budget. Difficult conversations were held between Motiv-8 and Petroc's Project Management Team to explore potential changes in organisational structure, but ultimately Motiv-8 decided to withdraw from project delivery. At their point of departure from the project they had engaged 7 young people. The model of 'consultant-mentors' meant that the handover process was slightly disjointed, but 5 young people were found new mentors with ICDT! (4) and Young Devon (1). All 5 of these remained engaged on the project and completed with a result.

Partner	EDP Drug & Alcohol Services	Date Left Partnership	February 2018
Anticipated Coverage	Exeter & Bideford	Profiled Caseload	21

EDP work across the South West supporting individuals who face complex issues, including substance misuse and mental ill health. Their loss as delivery partners on the project was not a sudden departure. Where they, organisationally, should have been capable to deliver the project, and had been building referral and signposting networks, they struggled with how to administer parts of the project. Notably, the financial claims. After several months of conversation and support sessions delivered by Petroc's Project Management Team, EDP decided that Empowering Enterprise was no longer a suitable fit for their organisation and would prioritise other funding contracts received. At their point of departure, they were not delivering the project to any participants.

It was decided that instead of being fully removed from the partnership, they would shift role to become a support partner so that others could benefit from their expertise if there were future need. They did deliver a support session for the partnership in July 2018.

Partner	Westward Pathfinder	Date Left Partnership	November 2017
Anticipated Coverage	North Devon and Torquay	Profiled Caseload	84

Westward Pathfinder were a well-established medium sized employability organisation with a total of 38 members of staff. Their loss was very sudden and unpredictable. The organisation had to register for financial administration and close down as some key public sector programmes came to an end. The North Devon mentor working on the project, dropped all participant paperwork into Petroc's Project Management Team's office, on the same day in which Petroc were notified of the closure.

At the point of closure they had engaged 15 young people. Petroc sought to arrange to keep the North Devon mentor on the project under Petroc's employment, but it was not possible. 13 of the young people were found mentors, those young people in Torquay were passed over to EE partners I Can Do That! (3) and Eat That Frog (6). Those in North Devon were passed to Young Devon (4). Despite all attempts to keep a smooth handover between mentors, 6 of these disengaged and were withdrawn after <10 sessions with their new mentor. It was decided that re-profiling of remaining target numbers to alternative project partners would be best decided once the project was more firmly established.

Westward Pathfinder, had the unique delivery model of outsourcing their 'BOB' role, delivering group sessions, to the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust. DKHT delivered 2 of their programmes, with Westward Pathfinder participants (both in Torbay, in September and November 2017). Petroc worked closely with DKHT to bring them on board to deliver their groups as a project wide resource, but this did cause delay in their delivery, with no further DKHT groups until July 2018 (see 4.2).

Partner	Tomorrow's People	Date Left Partnership	March 2018
Anticipated Coverage	Plymouth	Profiled Caseload	77

Tomorrow's People were a nation-wide employment charity, with a branch in Plymouth. Unfortunately changes in the funding landscape also pushed them into financial administration. This was unanticipated by Petroc, but was easier to manage than Westward Pathfinder's closure. Tomorrow's People's project manager and mentor remained available for approximately 2 weeks after administration was announced.

At the point of closure they had held sessions with 23 young people. 22 participants were found new mentors, and were split between Eat That Frog (5), Battling On (6), Whizz Kids UK (5), Groundwork South (5) and Young Devon (1). The availability of the existing mentor to phone around the partners and brief them on her caseload, led to better retention of participants within the project compared to Westward Pathfinder's closure, with only 7 of 23 disengaging and being withdrawn after less than 10 sessions.

Petroc project management feel this loss was an especially sad point as the two organisations had worked together on previous projects and Tomorrow's People had quickly got to grips with the paperwork and processes of Empowering Enterprise where others had initially struggled.

Tomorrow's People were seen as the best performing partner at this stage in terms of targets, reaching good participants through their central Plymouth base, and they had developed potential group work links with other Plymouth based partners.

5.0

INNOVATION FUND

The Innovation Fund was set aside to provide opportunities for mentors and participants to come together to co-design activities and sub-projects that would tackle arising issues in an innovative and dynamic way.



PURPOSE & CHARACTERISTICS

Throughout the lifetime of the project, 12 Innovation Fund projects took place. A timeline of this work can be seen on the next page. The partners that applied for and carried out IF projects, were Battling On, I Can Do That!, ODILS, and Young Devon. Petroc and/or DCT would often play a role in Innovation Fund projects, as well as other external parties. Profiles for each IF project can be found in Appendix 6.

Whilst each of the projects were unique, all of them shared multiple characteristics. The 12 IF projects:

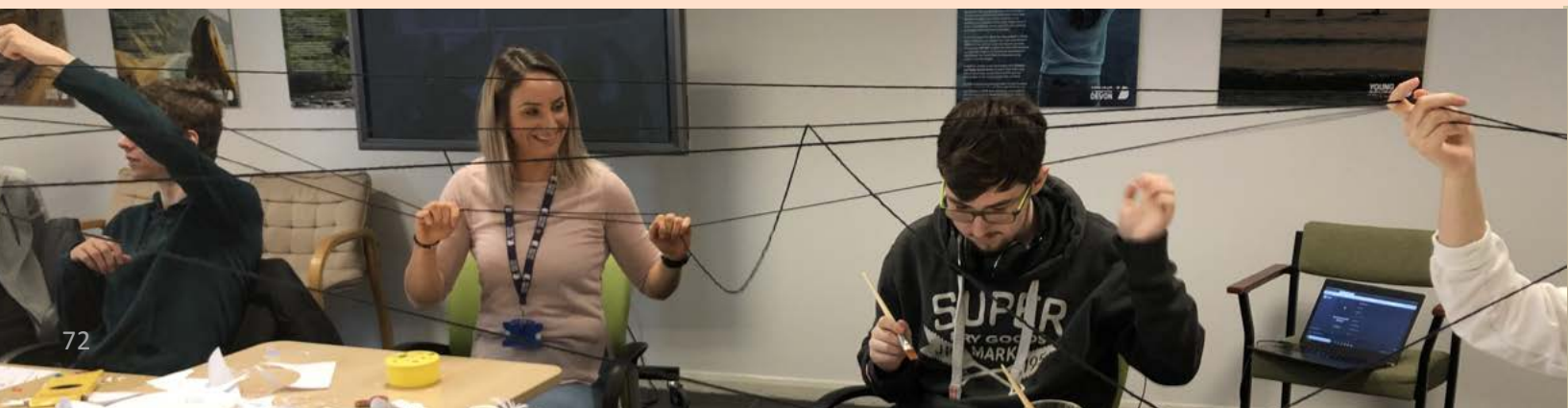
- stepped **outside of the mainstream** delivery of Empowering Enterprise;
- sought to tackle an issue within project delivery that had arisen and been identified either by a participant or mentor;
- were designed and carried-out **collaboratively** by both participants and mentors;
- facilitated excellent **problem-solving** and **project planning opportunities** for participants;
- encouraged participants to **look beyond their own challenges**, and identify, acknowledge, and work to dismantle, barriers that other young people were facing;
- considered **environmental sustainability** in their planning and execution;
- offered considerable contributions to one or more of the four **project outcomes**.



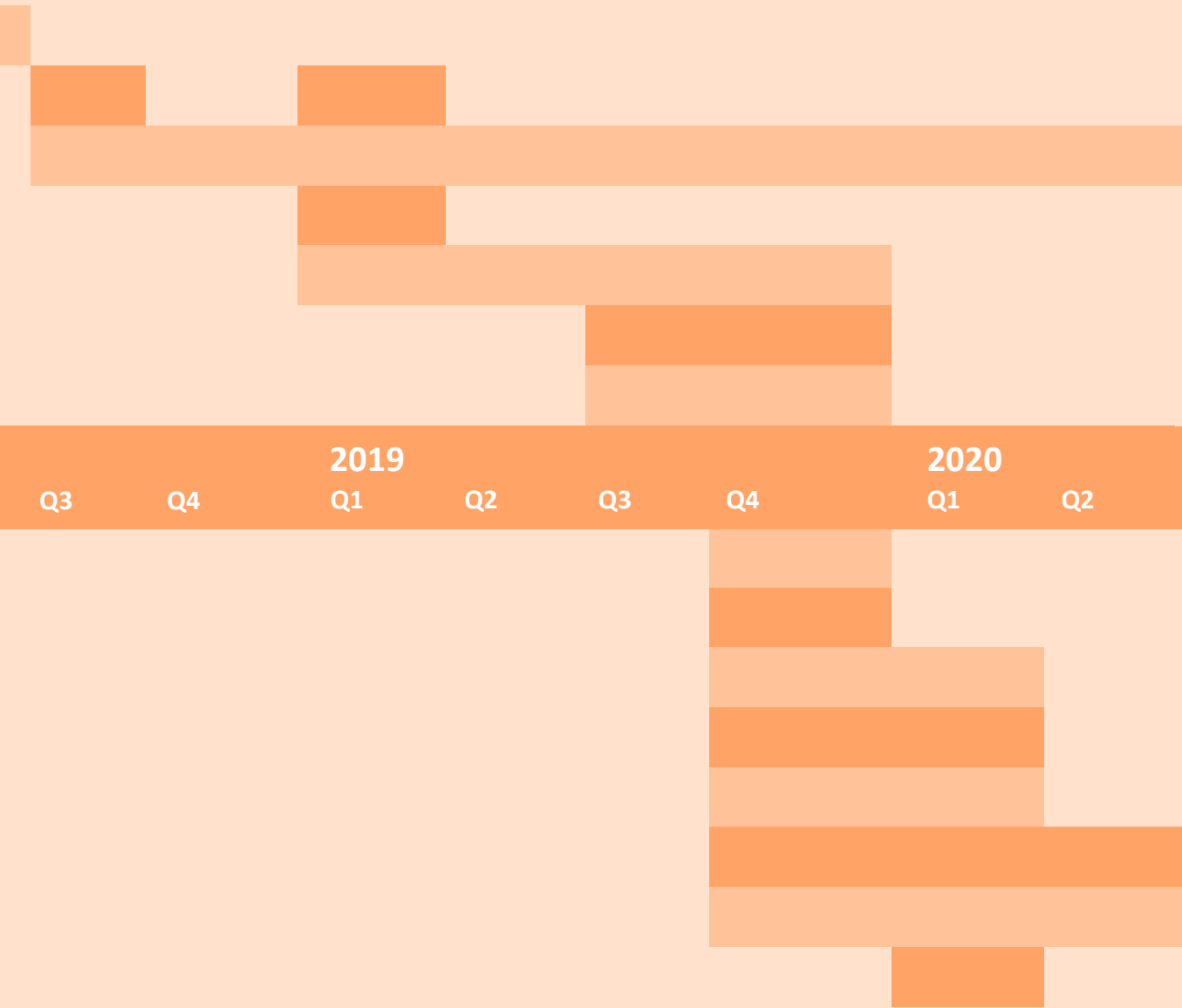
5.1

INNOVATION FUND PROJECTS AND TIMELINE

	PROJECT	PARTNER	DURAT
	Unlocking Potential ↗	Petroc	
	ESOL Careers Fair ↗	ODILS	
	Welcome Bags ↗	Young Devon	
	North Devon Social Fair ↗	DCT; Young Devon	
	Basic Self-Employment Course	ODILS	
	CSCS Course Plymouth	Petroc	
	Simply Great Media	Young Devon	
			2018
			Q2
	Christmas Celebration	Young Devon	
	Wild Ideas	Young Devon	
	Female and LGBT+ Engagement	Young Devon	
	Rural Research ↗	DCT	
	Rural and Urban Isolation Toolkit ↗	Battling On	
	Confidence in Okehampton ↗	I Can Do That!	
	Young Entrepreneurs	Battling On	
	Positive Perspectives ↗	Petroc	



ION OF PROJECT





Partner	ODILS
Location	Plymouth

Date	August 2018 - December 2019
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IDENTIFIED ISSUE: As was anticipated, throughout the first year of delivery, it became apparent that employers' perceptions of ESOL students' abilities often created a barrier to these students accessing the job market and finding employment.

PROPOSAL: To organise and facilitate an ESOL-targeted Careers Fair at ODILS in the Autumn term of 2018. The plan was to put ESOL participants in direct contact with businesses and training providers by inviting ODILS students and a wide range of employers and educators to attend the event as jobseekers and stallholders respectively. ODILS students, including ESOL Empowering Enterprise participants, would be able to browse through opportunities at the fair, and would be encouraged to talk with employers from a range of sectors.

OBJECTIVES: To improve employment prospects for speakers of other languages within the UK, by:

1. improving knowledge in local businesses surrounding ESOL levels and legislation;
2. improving access to work experience, particularly those with no previous qualifications;
3. speeding up language acquisition for target group to improve employment prospects.

WHAT HAPPENED: The careers fair took place on Wednesday 24th October 2018 between 11am-3pm. ODILS liaised with a range of potential referrers as part of their strategy to publicise the event, and also engaged a range of stallholders. Specifically, it was a challenge to engage both 18-24 year olds as attendees, and employers as stallholders.

OUTPUTS

1. 31 people attended the event from 17 different nationalities, with the most common being Polish (16%), followed by Syrian and Romanian (both 10%). This event only drew one attendee from our target age range of 18-24 years, with an average age of attendees at 35 years.
2. 13 stallholders consisted of four training providers, two self-employment support services, two volunteering providers, two programme providers, one employer, and DWP offering guidance and advice.

IMPACT & MOVING FORWARD: Through this activity, contributions were made towards the first two objectives. Stallholders were given information about ESOL levels in the stallholders packs, though the extent to which this impacted knowledge of local businesses is limited considering only one employer attended. Access to information and support was certainly provided through this activity, and trainers, volunteer providers and the employer were able to highlight potential work experience opportunities to attendees. Following this event, it was felt that there was scope to hold a second event, but adapt and improve on the existing strategy, to ensure further contributions to the objectives. Two further careers fair events were held in 2019, as well as establishing of a weekly drop-in career hub. These projects were not directly funded by the innovation fund, but drew upon experience, networks and research established using the innovation fund in 2018. These further events were successful, with 78 and 23 attendees respectively, and stallholders reflecting that their knowledge of these communities and ESOL levels had substantially improved through participation in these events.

5.3

EXAMPLE TWO - WELCOME BAGS



Partner Young Devon

Date December 2018 - July 2020

Location All areas

IDENTIFIED ISSUE: Mentors were finding that a significant number of participants struggled with personal hygiene, self-care and day-to-day readiness. It was felt that many young people lacked the motivation or opportunity to take care of themselves on a basic level (e.g. cleaning their teeth, washing, managing appointments). Additionally, due to its sensitive and personal nature, hygiene and self-care can be a difficult topic to approach, for both mentors and participants.

PROPOSAL: To co-design, create and produce 'Welcome Bags', containing essential personal-hygiene items. These would be distributed to young people that engage with the project.

OBJECTIVES: It was intended that the Welcome Bags would:

1. play a role in developing the readiness, competence and confidence of participants, in their journeys towards increased social integration, good mental health, and work-readiness;
2. enable mentors and young people to discuss personal hygiene more easily;
3. provide an opportunity for participants to develop their enterprise and design skills;
4. provide participants with a comfortable environment in which to explore issues such as gender, mental health, empathy, peer-support and community.

WHAT HAPPENED: In December 2018, Young Devon mentors designed, produced and distributed the first round of 30 Welcome Bags, as an initial prototype. Participants who received the Welcome Bags in the first round were then invited to create group sessions where they took the lead in planning, sourcing and packing the next round of Welcome Bags and their contents. Mentors witnessed many rich discussions amongst partici-

pants in these sessions, surrounding themes of vulnerability, hygiene, diversity and environmental sustainability. Sourcing products that were made sustainably and had low environmental impact was important to both mentors and participants. Feedback on the Welcome Bags was collected through these discussions, as well as through the feedback forms included in each Welcome Bag. Typically, the Welcome Bags contained around 30 items, with some variance for male, female and gender neutral. Sanitary products were given in all female bags and extra products were kept for those who were transitioning or identified as gender neutral. As the Covid-19 lockdown period commenced, mentors purchased 60 additional bags. The delivery of these proved useful for many participants as online shopping is often not an option for participants who have no fixed address or a lack of money.

OUTPUTS:

1. 180 participants people got a Welcome Bag.
2. 15 participants took part in design and production workshops.

IMPACT & MOVING FORWARD: All four intended objectives were achieved by this project. Mentors report having seen a marked improvement in participant's motivation—having eliminated hygiene difficulties they have been more able to engage with social activities, reducing loneliness and attributed low mood, and have also gained confidence to work on their employability, with greater willingness to attend meetings, go to college or move towards employment. Young Devon plan to continue a similar strategy in other lines of work and have been supporting other youth work organisations to develop their own strategy which uses the Welcome Bags concept to engage, equip and empower young people.

5.4

EXAMPLE THREE - RURAL RESEARCH



Partner	Devon Communities Together	Date	October 2018 - April 2020
Location	All Areas		

A KNOWN CHALLENGE

The original Empowering Enterprise bid demonstrated awareness of the likely challenges of operating across Devon, a county with such diverse geography and settlement patterns. The bid identified that:

Communication and access issues in rural areas (lack of transport, poor broadband and mobile coverage) mean that timings and locations need special consideration, and best means of communication may need to be agreed on an individual basis. Group or team activities can also be challenging to organize, due to the distances between individuals and the lack of public transport... (28)

The challenge of making engagement possible, for potential participants in rural areas, was matched by anticipated challenges pertaining to identification and recruitment of eligible participants:

Whilst we will work closely with our local/unitary authorities and other data sources to ensure we have up-to-date data on geographical hotspots throughout the lifetime of the project... Many of those we are seeking to engage will not appear on official statistics... Hotspot data may not recognize areas with relatively high numbers of eligible young people... (29)

With these challenges in mind, solutions were written into the project design, which included:

- partners being ‘partly selected on the basis of securing appropriate geographic coverage.’ The partners identified to cover rural areas were Westward Pathfinder, Battling On and Inspiring Arts;
- using a ‘variety of rural connections and networks to ensure individuals in remote areas are not overlooked due to the challenges of isolation.’;
- the partnership producing a ‘guide to who is delivering what and where, which will be reviewed and updated regularly’ to ensure that participants’ needs could be met by one partner’s provision, if outside another’s.

RESEARCH MOTIVATED BY LOW RURAL RECRUITMENT RATES

October-November 2018 – Disproportionate recruitment from urban compared to rural areas was identified during research for the 2018 interim Impact Report. It was thought that the collapse of Westward Pathfinder, a key rural delivery partner, and the consequent challenge to geographic provision, would have partially contributed to this. Initial planning was then carried out for a 2019 research project, led by Devon Communities Together, to help the project partners understand and address this disparity.

Research during planning included looking at common challenges faced by young people in rural areas, and statistics for geographical spread of youth unemployment in Devon - notably looking at the ratio of unemployed 18-24 year olds compared to total number of young people in the parish.

January 2019 – Common challenges, and contextual information were drafted into conversational-interview questions. These were trialed with two young people living in rural areas, who were already participants in Empowering Enterprise. The two young people, along with their Mentors, met DCT in Princetown, Dartmoor for an afternoon workshop to explore the topic and co-design the questions and approach going forward.

March-June 19 – Fieldwork interviews took place in areas across Devon which were ‘representative’, including market towns and small villages. 13 interviews with young people were carried out, as well as additional interviews with community leaders and employers. An insight tool resource was created where key themes and personas were distilled and illustrated with quotes from the interviews to create empathy and easily accessible introductions to the topic. A practicalities page was also included with a link to helpful resources, which included the potential for self-employment and the gig economy.

July 19 – A meeting was held to discuss and provide feedback on this draft insight tool resource. Additionally partners were encouraged to develop their action plans for their work going forward in rural areas. The meeting was with two delivery partners who operate in rural locations; Petroc staff; support partner Cosmic (digital skills specialists); and external organisation Wheels to Work who can provide alternate transport options.

August 19 – The finalised insight tool was distributed to partners. Petroc created a new output plan, including target recruitment numbers allocated to 3 specific areas, and an appeal for partners to start work there. These areas were Ilfracombe, South Hams and Okehampton. It was the intention that the fieldwork research and insight tool would inform the approach to recruitment in these areas. South Hams and Okehampton were to be approached through Innovation Fund projects. Further details can be found in Appendix 6. Learnings from this work can be found in section 10.0 of this report.

Confidence in Okehampton

Partner	I Can Do That!
Location	Okehampton
Date	January 2020 - March 2020

ICDT! proposed to deliver intensive workshops with groups of six young people covering confidence, motivation and employability Skills. Each workshop course would last four weeks and there would be six courses. Sadly this project, despite all organisations’ best efforts, did not achieve its aims and was cut short. This project illustrates the essential need for time to develop trusted relationships with individuals and referral pathways in an area.

Rural & Urban Isolation Toolkit

Partner	Battling On
Location	South Hams
Date	January 2020 - April 2020

Planned as a 10-week programme bringing together young people from rural and urban areas (with 4-week lead-in for recruitment and evidence gathering and a 4-week transition to exit). At the end of the programme the young people would produce a practical toolkit that could be published online and be available to all young people who may be at risk of social isolation, and the adults who work with them. Whilst an initial workshop was held, the Covid-19 pandemic affected delivery. A WhatsApp group was established and monitored by mentors. This group was used daily by participants to update each other on their interests (e.g. photography, drawing, gardening), and by mentors to share videos and activities. The group proved to be essential support for participants, in rural and urban locations, all isolated in their own way. A ‘Toolkit’ video [↗](#) was created by participants using photos and advice shared in the WhatsApp chat during lockdown. The information explains the importance of getting out in green spaces, opening our minds to nature and reaping the benefits of where we live.

6.0

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Sustainable Development (SD)
Gender Equality and Equal
Opportunities (GEE0)

The two Cross-Cutting Themes (CCT) are Sustainable Development (SD) and Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities (GEEQ) and have been embedded in all aspects of Empowering Enterprise.

The CCTs run throughout the work of the European Social Fund, with all ESF projects being contractually required to implement and report on them. Within BBO projects, in particular, the CCTs are given even greater prominence and all BBO managing bodies are required to produce CCT Action Plans for the Big Lottery and report on their progress.

Petroc, and subsequently the partnership in its entirety, have committed themselves to embedding these themes in all aspects of Empowering Enterprise. Under both SD and GEEQ, all partners have achieved this implementation in two key ways:

WITH PARTICIPANTS

Including, but not limited to, providing advice and guidance for participants facing difficulties; co-creating activities and community engagement; championing best practice and challenging assumptions and beliefs.

WITHIN ORGANISATIONS

Including, but not limited to, changing policies on how partners manage their project or organisation; championing best practice and challenging assumptions and beliefs.

The Real Junk Food
Pop-up Lunch ♡

- * potato & cheese frittata
- * Veggie noodle salad *
- * Pulled Pork * Bread
- * mini veggie burgers
- * garlic Naans * Roast
- * Salad.
- * chocolate treats!
- * fruit salad.

- All of our ingredients
been rescued from
destined for landfill
Feedingbellies Nor Bl

ESTABLISHING CCTS ACROSS THE PARTNERSHIP

In the project development process, Petroc drew together **sub-groups of partners** with particular expertise in the areas of SD and GEE0. These sub-groups developed the **Action Plans** for each CCT, with the intention of producing a dynamic document against which progress and impact could be measured. The **DTQ** (3.1) was also designed to measure the influence of CCTs on participants. Furthermore, all partners supplied their internal policies relating to the CCTs and signed a **Partnership Commitment document**, indicating their commitment to the Action Plans and completion of quarterly progress reports.

A JOURNEY

Throughout the first half of Empowering Enterprise, with some changes in members, the **sub-groups continued to meet**. Initially, they oversaw the implementation and regular review of the Action Plans, before sharing headlines and specific action points with the entire partnership. This work centred around ensuring the project's live delivery structure and strategies reflected CCT values and encouraged further participant and partner engagement with both sustainability and equality.

As part of this work, **in 2017 resources were developed** by sub-groups to introduce participants to GEE0 and SD issues and empower them to implement CCTs in their own individual and group activities. However, after trialling these resources with participants in early 2018, partners reported that they found them 'dry and boring'. The conclusion that they could be useful tools for BOBs to use when planning group activities, but were not engaging or accessible for young people themselves.

In terms of the sub-groups moving forward, **fluid membership led to a lack of consistency and momentum**. Notable examples are the withdrawal of Westward Pathfinder and lack of continued involvement from support partners, such as CAB Devon, WECIL, WESC and EDP who were involved in the Action Plan's original development.

Furthermore, active focus on the CCTs was compromised by a need to address adherence to new GDPR regulations, web-site development and the need for accelerated recruitment of participants.

In **February 2019**, however, the remaining members of the sub-groups focused their attentions on creating a **new 'Partner Action Plan'**. It was intended that this would better enable the CCTs to be more actively embedded on the ground for both mentors and participants. Two features of this plan were particularly successful:

- The request for all partners to contribute to Petroc-led **SD and GEE0 Toolkits**, which would come to be practical partnership-wide resources for use with participants. Over 20 resources were created by members of the partnership (many having been co-designed with young people), through drawing on, and consolidating existing partner knowledge and practices.
- **Amendments being made to** case study and quarterly reporting **forms**, that enabled partners to better capture the work that they were already doing around CCT and demonstrate how they were integrated into their delivery practices and strategies.

Though the **sub-groups disintegrated** shortly after this, and Petroc took an increasingly directive lead in overseeing the CCTs, the two activities described above, implemented from Spring 2019, marked a **shift in the partnership's understanding of the CCT**. Both sustainability and equality had been present in partners' delivery thus far, but these changes enabled them to better understand this and therefore invest **more intentionally in delivering CCT activities**.

6.1

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

From staff travel to partnership meetings and reduction of paper use, to many focused activities with young people, consideration for, and implementation of, SD held a constant presence throughout the project.

Initially, each partner established their own individual goals pertaining to SD, before the partnership, led by the SD sub-group and Petroc, commissioned Planet First to design a 'Carbon Calculator' for the project. The intention was for this to offer insights on the environmental impact of the partnership over time, and track the progress it made in reducing its carbon footprint.

Whilst some partners reported their data contributions for the Carbon Calculator efficiently, others did not and it was difficult to get all partners to play their role in ensuring that the Carbon Calculator reflected realities on the ground. Further-

more, due to the way that the project structure works, with delivery partners being external organisations that have a wide range of other work going on within their organisations, it was difficult to hone in exclusively on the environmental impact of Empowering Enterprise. In addition to this, it quickly became apparent that the partnership's carbon footprint would naturally increase with time, as more young people were engaged and delivery was accelerated. Ultimately, this innovative and ambitious venture was a steep learning curve, with the conclusion being that a Carbon Calculator was neither effective nor appropriate in reporting on the impact of a project like Empowering Enterprise.

Fortunately, however, this did not take away from the rich and varied contributions to SD on the ground. Some examples include:

Horticultural Traineeships and the development of I Can Do That!'s allotment which participants tended regularly

Second Hand September—a campaign by Young Devon to open discussions with young people around the environmental impact of the textile industry

Of the participants that completed an exit DTQ, 65% felt their understanding of, and engagement with, SD had improved

EE's strong engagement with the sustainability theme was recognised by BBO. In 2018, Petroc were asked to provide support to the YES project in Leicester and also gave a presentation at an event which was hosted by Ecorys with a particular focus on SD

"We've realised there's always room for improvements, and that it's [SD] something that should (and will) be more central to our work. "
Project Manager of Delivery Partner

Participant Beach Cleans and work with Surfers Against Sewage

6.2

GENDER EQUALITY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Ultimately, the entire Empowering Enterprise project existed to make equal opportunities a reality for young people in Devon. This also sits at the heart of the delivery partners' broader organisational work and identity. Consequently, the project was defined by this ethos and saturated in activities to further its agenda. These were often second nature to delivery staff and so were not often recognised by them as explicit GEEO activities. Demographic data pertaining to participants is presented in section 2.2. It's notable that only 41% of participants are female. Though this aligns with national trends in the gender split for unemployed youth, the partnership was aware of and regularly discussed this imbalance. GEEO activities included:

Creation of an Autism Awareness Card [↗](#)

1-2-1 support, group work activities with Proud2Be and creation of resource around LGBTQ+ identities

Of the participants that completed an exit DTQ, 63% felt their understanding of, and engagement with, GEEO had improved

Focused work on ensuring equal opportunities for young people in rural locations, including the development of a Rural Insight Tool and two IF projects in specific un-reached rural locations. See section 5.4 [↗](#)

"Specifically this project brought trans issues & intersectionality to the fore. This was our first project where these issues have been central to our work with a young person. The regular monitoring and reporting around these issues have embedded a culture of reflection and learning within our organisation." Project Manager of Delivery Partner

ODILS' ESOL Careers Fair. See section 5.2 [↗](#)



PARTNERSHIP BUY-IN

Towards the beginning of Empowering Enterprise, it was a challenge to get buy-in from partners, in terms of explicit focus on the CCTs. Though the sub-groups didn't have the longevity that had first been intended, the foundational work achieved by them paved the way for greater bursts of CCT activity on the ground in the latter half of the project. The ambitions and strategies have needed to be refined throughout—as articulated elsewhere, sometimes resource had to be focused on other aspects of project delivery, meaning a number of items in the Action Plans did not come to fruition. However, the activity that has taken place has been innovative and exciting, with the impact evident across the board. It has influenced the practices and attitudes towards these themes of both partners and young people moving forward. Partners reflected:

“We have learned so much from the project on these issues, we have worked with customers to develop resources for use by mentors and grown our understanding especially surrounding gender equality.” I Can Do That!

“Taking the time to consider the issues as a team has definitely made us realise that there's always room for improvements, and that it's something that should (and will) be more central to our work.” Inspiring Arts

Petroc reflect that this has been a very valuable element of the project and that they have learnt a lot and benefitted hugely by undertaking this journey of leading on SD and GEE0.

In the future, momentum around the CCTs would ideally be consistent throughout the project, in terms of sub-group meetings and more overt action. This investment could be achieved through:

- making partner presence at at least one CCT sub-group meeting mandatory;
- doing more comprehensive consultation with partners around CCT implementation and priorities during the project design phase;
- splitting even smaller sub-groups to focus on specific topics, such as recycling, LGBTQ+ identities, food waste, and lone parenting. This may focus the attentions and energies of partners and individual staff members who have personal interests in certain topics.

The emphasis should be on upskilling and equipping partners under the leading question of ‘What skills and capacity would you like to develop in these areas?’ and should steer firmly away from framing CCTs as a merely contractual requirement.



ART BY PARTICIPANT, HAYLEY WHETTER

7.0

CO-PRODUCTION

Within the bid, it was stated that young people would play a focal role in designing the project itself and, at a delivery level, 'the principles of co-design and co-production would underpin every aspect of a young person's experience within the project'. (45) It was intended that each participant would work with their mentor to co-design their own bespoke package of support, to ensure that they led on their own development and demonstration of skills and experience. Furthermore, the intention was to provide opportunities and encourage participants to co-design and co-produce project activities that would address local needs, foster community cohesion and influence policy. Management and evaluation of the project were also identified as areas that participants would be involved in. Finally, plans were put in place to regularly collect both structured and unstructured feedback from participants, through informal discussions with Mentors, as well as official Quality Assurance processes, including spot checks and customer care calls.

PURPOSE & BENEFITS

The partnership have understood co-design and co-production with young people as serving a dual purpose. First, it can provide excellent opportunities' and spaces for young people to assume responsibility and purpose in a supported environment. These opportunities can further their work and life skills, social integration, engagement with communities, and self esteem and confidence. Second, it ensures that the project is informed and shaped by the people it is intended to serve, rather than best interests and needs being assumed by the partnership. The meaningful insight that is generated through this could not be acquired by the partnership by any other means. This makes co-design fundamental to the partnership's ability to deliver high quality provision.

PROJECT DESIGN

From the earliest stages of project design, young people were consulted and encouraged to contribute their insights. In late 2015, the partnership undertook co-design sessions with over 100 young people, who were or had been NEET. The Stage One proposal for Empowering Enterprise was heavily shaped by this activity. In August 2016, for the Stage Two proposal, Petroc brought together a subgroup of partners with significant expertise in supporting young people and communities to co-design services and activities. This group co-produced a training day to deliver to a wider subgroup of partners, which was held in September. This wider subgroup then facilitated co-design sessions with approximately 90 young people to consider the following specific topics: **Gender Equality & Equal Opportunities Action Plan; Sustainable Development Action Plan; Communications Plan; Participant Characteristics and Barriers; Geographical Hotspots; and Employer Engagement.** As well as valuable inputs that young people offered on these specific topics, three fundamental insights were gained by the partnership. Young people:

- felt that past projects had let them down due to a lack of continuity in support offered, and interventions being time limited and focusing on project outcomes, rather than the individual;
- expressed that their priority would be to gain and sustain employment as a result of the project. Some referred to a wish for employers to change the way they view young people;
- wanted their voices to be heard and to be involved in making decisions which affect them; they wanted to be listened to and not 'done to'.

BESPOKE PACKAGES OF SUPPORT

Each participant worked on an individual basis with their mentor to analyse their talents, aspirations and barriers, design and produced a bespoke package of support, and ultimately produce their own Personal Development Plan (PDP). In all cases this was person-centred and mentors encouraged and empowered participants to take ownership of driving their progression and journey forward, with the mentor framed as a coach, guide and facilitator.

FOCUSED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Specific project activities were regularly designed in collaboration with participants. Innovation fund projects, activity surrounding cross-cutting themes, group work and peer support were all shaped, to varying extents, by young people, and were often primarily driven by them, with mentors taking a back seat and simply facilitating the space and guidance required. These cases increased as the project went on, with both mentors and young people becoming more confident and enthusiastic about working in this way over time. Examples of these instances are offered on the next page.

STRATEGIC INPUT

After the initial design phases in 2015-2017, young people were not consulted on the strategy and management of the project at a macro level, as much as had initially been intended. The partnership discussed whether it would be appropriate or mutually beneficial for representative participants to attend and contribute to local and partner meetings. This did not happen due to the general consensus that the content of these meetings could be too heavily weighted on administrative processes to be of interest to young people. With hindsight, however, it may have been prudent to adapt the structure of these meetings to enable young people to be represented there in a way that was appropriate and ultimately ensured that, at the highest level, the partnership talked 'with' young people, as opposed to 'about' them. The project's conferences could also have been excellent opportunities to include young people at a more strategic level.

NORTH DEVON SOCIAL FAIR (5.5)

Young people played a central role in designing and hosting this event. DCT facilitated an event planning workshop and the participants who attended conducted risk assessments, research into potential stallholders and created floor plans for the venue. Young Devon participant, Hayley, also volunteered at the event, meeting and greeting stallholders and attendees, reflected “that was a really really good thing for me, because the thought of being in a room with even just a few people would fill me with dread. But I did [the event] and I was ok! That was a huge realisation that I’m actually progressing.”



CONTENT PRODUCTION

On multiple occasions, participants were enthusiastic to take the lead on creating various resources. The Transgender Toolkit, Young Mum’s Covid-19 Cookbook, and Wellbeing Through Nature video were all produced by groups of participants who were interested in these topics and felt these resources would be valuable for other young people.

SOCIAL GROUPS & PEER SUPPORT

Eat That Frog participants identified their common interest in film and TV and created a Film Club to enjoy this and tackle some of their experiences of social isolation. Participant Poppy, who previously struggled with social anxiety, was one of the key players in making this happen. About Poppy, her mentor reflected “She’s been so proactive in getting everyone else involved... Poppy’s always there to bring everyone else in now.”

WELCOME BAGS (5.2)

Participants who received the Welcome Bags in the first round were then invited to lead the planning, sourcing and packing of the next round of Welcome Bags. These co-design sessions also facilitated opportunities for participant-led discussions around basic needs, social inequality, hygiene and stigma.



ESOL CAREERS FAIR (5.1)

Within the design phase of this project, ODILS participants were encouraged to highlight their preferred career sectors, to inform the engagement of prospective stall-holders. Participants who attended the first fair went on to volunteer at future ESOL careers fairs, welcoming attendees and helping to support stall-holders.



FACING CHALLENGES

Some challenges have already been identified in this report. In section 3.1, challenges pertaining to the support of young people and their barriers were examined and, in 3.2, so too were issues around the accessibility of external support services. In this section, three significant challenges are outlined: the need for re-profiling, the opportunity and journey to apply for an extension, and the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects.

ADAPTABILITY IN LIGHT OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

Petroc felt that they have always approached the project “flexibly from the start”, anticipating targets and budgets to move around and be re-profiled internally, throughout. This adaptable approach has been a key strength, as it’s allowed the project to respond to live insights. They also communicated this to partners from the offset, explaining that they’d be regularly reviewing and responding to the needs of the project as they developed. They also anticipated that partners would actively *want* the opportunity to “move things around and ask for extra numbers” throughout the course of the project. Consequently, Petroc had an ‘Expression of Interest’ form available and ensured that project managers knew that they were able to submit one at any time.

RECOVERY PLAN

These expectations and planning for internal changes were helpful when re-profiling became a more urgent need. In September 2018, Petroc recognised that the partnership needed to engage more young people in order to meet the funders’ targets. Up until this point the project was under target and, therefore, also reporting an underspend on their funding allocation. The reasons behind this are discussed in section 3.1 (challenging participant barriers), 4.10 (the loss of multiple delivery partners) and 9.0 (difficulties navigating paperwork requirements).

From the start of the project Petroc had maintained close working relationships with partners and regularly discussed action plans with each organisation on how they could increase their recruitment. This pre-empted the Big Lottery’s own review of the project in Q4 2019, when partners were formally asked to re-profile their targets as part of a request for a recovery plan. In managing the plan, Petroc conducted individual partner reviews and accounted for each organisation’s unique structure and approach. The delivery of this recovery plan can be deemed to have been successful, considering the partnership exceeded its initial engagement and results targets, and demonstrated the achievement of its four intended outcomes.

EXTENSION

In January 2019 a BBO panel met to discuss Petroc’s proposal for an extension into 2021 and although this full extension was not granted, it was agreed to grant the project an extension until end Q2 2020, six months beyond the original end date for delivery in December 2019. This extension did not, however, include any extra funding or targets, but rather was seen as providing time and opportunity to use existing funding underspend to reach original targets. Following this decision in early 2019, formal re-profiling of targets and finances took place with partners to account for the recovery plan, as well as the extension.

57% of Project Managers feel that Petroc communicated well with them with regards to the process and outcomes surrounding the recovery plan and extension. Those that didn’t, largely commented on their impression that Petroc shared as much as they could with them. Some delivery partners did express that they found this time very challenging.

“There were so many things coming through at the same time. It was all a bit overwhelming and confusing.”

In terms of managing under-recruitment and consequent underachievement of targets, Petroc acknowledge that they made a calculated decision to increase the amount of pressure that was placed on partners. This was done on an individual basis, and also at Partner Meetings. This involved increased levels of transparency and communication over potential participants that were being ‘promised’ by Project Managers. Once Petroc began keeping account of these and following up on them more closely, they found that the conversations that they were having with Project Managers around targets were more helpful in predicting performance at the end of a quarter. **100% of Project Managers felt that the pressure placed on them by Petroc, with regards to meeting targets was justified, appropriate and effective.**

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

INITIAL MENTOR STRATEGY

The partnership's intention was always to continue delivering the project throughout the lockdown period, which began in March 2020, just four months before project delivery was due to finish. Remote mentoring sessions were planned to take place via telephone and video calls. Some organisations felt that they were already set up well to facilitate this when lockdown commenced whereas, for other organisations, remote mentoring sessions were new territory and presented a challenge to staff, at least initially.

Fortunately, Empowering Enterprise had hosted the Positive Perspectives conference at the end of February 2020. This event brought together over 120 delegates who work with young people across Devon and explored how they can help young people to maintain good mental health. The conference received excellent feedback and, with hindsight, could not have taken place at a more appropriate time.

CHALLENGES TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Mentors have reported that, for the young people they work with, a number of issues have arisen in relation to lockdown.

- Young people who sofa-surf were struggling to comply with social distancing measures and were needing to move around to ensure that they have somewhere to sleep each night.
- Increased anxiety relating to health, safety and financial security concerns.
- Increased levels of depression and low mood being experienced in relation to experiences of loneliness, as well as the crisis at a macro level and consequent lack of hope.
- Relapses into alcohol and drug use and abuse.
- Social isolation and loneliness.
- Financial struggles impacting ability to connect with others (e.g. buying mobile data, no WiFi).
- Decreased levels of motivation to move forward with their personal development plan – potentially stemming from inability to meet with mentors physically, or more abstract psychological barrier of the world 'coming to a stop'.
- Some more motivated young people were seeking volunteering opportunities to keep busy and contribute to their community but were not receiving responses from their applications.



- Many young people not engaging well with remote communication, mentoring sessions and activity, despite usually engaging with the project well when able to meet with their mentors face-to-face. This could stem from lack of motivation or mental health issues.
- Despite widely accepted generalisations regarding young people and technology, video calls in particular have been identified as a ‘huge leap out of many young people’s comfort zones’. Those that struggle with social anxiety, confidence or body image, for example, may find video calls particularly difficult. In some cases video calls have actually exacerbated social anxiety.
- Some mentors have planned and facilitated quizzes, cooking sessions and socials remotely to encourage remote communication between participants (alongside the 1-2-1 mentoring) but have had very little engagement.

APPROACHES OF MENTORS

With regards to those young people whose engagement with project activity has decreased, those who are particularly struggling, or have ‘dropped off the radar’, mentors seem to agree that the best approach is to ‘just keep trying’, ‘all you can do is make sure they know that you are there if and when they would like your support’, ‘just keep letting them know that you are there for them’.

Mentors also identify that ‘a lot of young people will be taking some time to just process their response to the crisis and will probably just need some time out whilst they do that.’

One mentor highlights that, throughout the lifetime of the project, it’s been a common occurrence for young people to disappear and then re-engage, regardless of this current climate of lockdown and the necessity to deliver project activity remotely. In ‘normal times’ mentors ‘kept the contact up, kept our doors open, kept positive messages flowing and hoped that they [the young people] would re-engage.’

Mentors were communicating with one another regularly to share experiences and employ a joined-up approach to problem-solving.

PROGRESS MADE BY YOUNG PEOPLE

Mentors also reported, however, that some young people were:

- engaging positively and regularly with mentors and project activity;
- doing online courses;
- seeing the lockdown as an opportunity to get some work, where they may have usually struggled in the competitive job market – employers were taking on quickly in changing times;
- using this time to get ready for possible emerging opportunities that were likely to arise after the lockdown ends.

THE NEED FOR PROVISION

The three challenges outlined here are inter-linked. With the increased difficulties faced by young people during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the accompanying impacts on economic climate and unemployment rates, provision such as Empowering Enterprise is needed now more than ever.

Throughout, the partnership would have like to have continued its delivery beyond the initial project end date, and for as long as possible, as all partners acknowledged the powerful impact that this work has had on the lives and communities of young people across Devon. This feeling increased when Covid-19 hit in early 2020. Unfortunately, due to a limited extension period, the partnership was only able to continue supporting young people up until July 2020, when delivery ended.

With hindsight, the partnership recognises that had project targets been met and maintained earlier on, thus mitigating the need for a recovery plan, it would have been more likely that a longer extension, and potentially additional funding, would have been granted. As things stood, however, Petroc and the partnership were able to complete the recovery plan effectively, and work seven months longer than planned, enabling them to support young people in very destabilising and challenging times.

LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

UNCOVERING POTENTIAL STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

Much of what has taken place here is exemplary and should, with contextual consideration and adaptation, be imitated in similar activity moving forward. As demonstrated throughout, the vast majority of the work undertaken through Empowering Enterprise has proven to be exceptionally successful. Many positive learnings have been showcased throughout, with clear indications that the activities, approaches and strategies employed have been effective.

This work has also proven to be powerful in uncovering prospective approaches and strategies that would make the engagement and support of young NEETs even more sophisticated in order to generate greater impact. Key learnings from this work are offered here, and recommendations are made for similar future work. There are also some activities that were outlined in the bid, but did not come to fruition to the extent to which they had been planned. This happened for a variety of reasons, ranging from a shift in strategy following live insights, to periods where the immediate need was to channel the partnership's resource into recruitment and mentoring to ensure that targets were being met.

COMMUNICATING PARTICIPANT JOURNEYS

There was an intention to map out and develop illustrative participant journeys in a number of dynamic ways to use as a tool to communicate the project to stakeholders, external referral agencies, and to support the young people to recognise their progress. The Inclusive Opportunities Toolkit supported employers to better understand the journeys of the young people involved on the project, and some delivery partners produced literature that offered narratives to support external parties to better understand the project. The Empowering Enterprise YouTube channel offered many diverse stories that offer insight into the lives of young people, alongside the project's website. Public engagement with this, however, was limited. Overall, this work was not developed as intended and there would be scope in future activity to invest more energy into producing dynamic narratives that better communicate to external parties.

This could include the development of personas, increased showcasing of participant case studies throughout the lifetime of the project, and a greater emphasis on external public relations with potential stakeholders and the general public.

THE INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE HIGHEST STRATEGIC LEVEL

The intention to engage three young people in strategic stakeholder and influencer groups, as well as in the partnership management schedule, did not happen. This plan arose from the feedback during initial consultations with young people during the project's design phase, in which they unanimously expressed that they wanted to be 'listened to' and not 'done to'. This issue was not bypassed by the partnership, but was discussed on numerous occasions, with unofficial conclusions being that current project participants did not have the confidence to engage with the partnership in formal contexts such as partner meetings. With the partnership rightly confident that participants were contributing to the design and delivery of activity on the ground at a localised level, strategies to include them at a higher managerial level were not pursued. Young people's initial statement, however, that they want to be involved in decisions that affect them, was confirmed throughout Empowering Enterprise. For co-design to be implemented to the greatest and most effective extent, it is suggested that increased efforts should be made in future activity to involve young people at a managerial level. This would not necessarily have to be done through attendance at partner meetings, but could be undertaken through a unique activity, such as an Innovation Fund project, that explores young people's inhibitions to engage with formal formats and develops strategies to dismantle barriers to these settings. This could also contribute to an intergenerational agenda, as well as the development of participants' work-readiness.

SHARED UNDERSTANDING

As suggested on the next page, there were occasional arising issues that may have benefitted from focused collaborative problem-solving exercises to tackle arising issues as a partnership, in increasingly dynamic and innovative ways.

As explored in section 3.1 there did appear to be some kinks in communication chains, regarding issues such as participant eligibility and anticipated participant barriers. These kinks can ultimately be explained by the fact that there is often one set of people sitting around the table at initial project planning meetings, and another set of people that ends up working on the ground with the young people. Furthermore, some of these issues are open to subjectivity and are not always 'one-size-fits-all' issues. A recommendation would be to implement more formal structures to ensure consistency in staff understanding, regardless of when they join the project. Potential ideas include a centralised induction process and more project-wide information resources, such as mentor handbooks or welcome videos, to ensure a consistent narrative for all new feet on the ground.

INTERIM REVIEW FOR INDIVIDUALS

As many participants were on the project for an extended period of time, with the highest number of hours engaged by one participant being 240, it was suggested by multiple staff members that a standardised interim DTQ could prove beneficial. DTQs could be logged multiple times, but it was not a formal requirement. By ensuring that the DTQ is repeated at regular intervals (every three months has been suggested), mentors and participants would be able to better track participant progress and adapt PDPs accordingly, incorporating live interventions, to address apparent gaps in progress.

JOINED UP WORKING

As heavily demonstrated in section 3.4, the partnership made great strides towards authentic collaboration, in terms of employing a joined-up approach to achieve the best possible results for young people and their communities. Petroc and many delivery partners recognised the unique dynamic that allowed them to do this, more so than in other projects with which they had been

involved in the past: the funding follows the participant, as opposed to the partner. This made it much easier for staff to wholeheartedly focus on person-centred delivery, as opposed to being concerned about losing any funding to another partner. Though this took some time to come to fruition, as partners spent some time at the beginning of the project understanding this unique way of working, over the lifetime of the project genuine and effective co-operation became a reality across the partnership. In future, it would be prudent to build on this and ensure that all staff on the ground completely understand the funding and caseload dynamics, and their implications for cross-partnership working. This should work to reduce any inhibitions at the beginning of the project, in terms of all partners coming together to work on a single shared goal.

CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES

It was felt by some delivery staff that some participants were enrolled into the project under the 'wrong' entry status, which affected the possibility of having their progress recognised. A typical example was a young person coming into the project as a 'Job Seeker' but, within a few sessions with their mentor, it became apparent that they were not, and often were not able to be, job searching. When progress was then made by that participant, and they came to a place where they *were* job searching, this would not count as a result because of their initial entry status. Some mentors felt that it would be helpful to have more of an open dialogue with BBO regarding the entry status of participants, or be able to submit a request for a change in circumstances to be recognised, when one realises that the evidenced entry status of a participant is not actually appropriate or reflective of reality. For future provision, the partnership would value further exploration into these issues, by those who are able to make these adjustments, to ensure that young people's progress is formally recognised.



DEFINITIONS OF PROGRESS

A significant number of participants started out on the project studying low level courses, and on exit progressed into higher level and mainstream classes. This unfortunately does not satisfy the BBO result 'moving into education' and educational progress was not an official result for this programme. ODILS, expressed that this appears to put ESOL students in particular at a disadvantage, in light of the considerable differences in style between ESOL and 'mainstream' classes that contain native speakers. To ensure participants who are new to the UK have an equal chance of achieving official results, in future it would be prudent if the definition of 'Education' could be expanded and for a 'Personal Development' outcome to be added. The latter point would be welcomed across the partnership, as per the need for Petroc to introduce an informal 'Completer without Result' status to recognise the many achievements of those participants who did not qualify for one of the official BBO results.

ADMINISTRATION AND DELIVERY CAPACITY

A recurring and significant challenge highlighted by nearly all delivery partners was the quantity of paperwork and the processes surrounding it. At every local and partner meeting (of which there were 49 in total), issues and queries were raised pertaining to paperwork processes, including financial claims, participant expenses, eligibility paperwork, recording of session logs, and more. All partners demonstrated an understanding and respect for the necessity of robust administrative procedures, in order to guarantee the funding was being used appropriately and for the target group, ensure effective delivery, monitor progress, and enable impact measurement. It was also understood by partners that a significant amount of the administrative requirements derived from the ESF, who need a robust audit trail beyond the life of the project.

On many occasions, however, it was also expressed that the paperwork seemed unnecessarily laborious, which frustrated staff. They felt that the resource required to navigate and complete this work had substantially reduced their capacity to spend more time with young people and deliver change in local communities. Comments were often made about the duplication of hard and soft

copy documents, with a partnership-wide frustration with the need for nearly all paperwork to be submitted as a (albeit scanned) hard copy. It was strongly suggested that this was very inefficient and did not corroborate with the project's cross-cutting theme of environmental sustainability. Some partners also expressed that the wealth of paperwork often made mentoring uncomfortable, as participants felt overwhelmed by procedure, which was reported to stifle person-centred rapport and support in some 1-2-1 sessions.

Petroc certainly went to great lengths to mitigate this challenge as much as possible. As outlined in section 3.4, they had a virtual open-door policy and provided a wealth of support to partners, to enable them to better understand and complete BBO paperwork requirements. Partners praised this support often and speculated that they would have struggled even more significantly without the expertise and support of Petroc.

Some partners reflected that in their other work, this was not a necessity and they were still able to ensure that resource was channelled into eligible service users and that data was reported for progress monitoring. Additionally, from March 2020, adaptations were made to allow staff to submit the vast majority of paperwork as soft copies. Mentors were unable to acquire participant signatures due to the remote working climate under the Covid-19 lockdown. It is hoped that this demonstrates that there are ways around the 'need' for hard copies of forms and wet signatures.

Some delivery partners stated that, despite how much they have valued working on Empowering Enterprise, they would be reluctant to work on a future project with the same paperwork requirements, as they felt it compromised their commitment to effective and efficient delivery.

Whilst partners have certainly increased their capacity to navigate such administrative requirements, it is hoped by all members of the partnership, that these structures can be updated and modernised to enable easier access for potential partners. Members of the partnership are keen to explore this further with governing bodies to collaborate on new ways of ensuring that project activity is evidenced and funding is channelled into target groups, whilst also prioritising effective and efficient delivery to young people and their communities.

DATA COLLECTION OF EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

A great deal of work was carried out, in terms of engagement with communities and employers, which has been evidenced through the presentation of activity and consequent case studies. Primarily, it is not the work itself that requires development, but the capturing of the many conversations and activities with employers and consequent shifts in attitudes and employment practices. There are some limitations to the way in which the impact of this work can be assessed due to low levels of quantitative data.

As the evaluation partners, Devon Communities Together made multiple attempts to collect quantitative data pertaining to engagement with both employers and communities and the consequent impacts. First, though attempts were made to collect feedback, it proved difficult to re-engage employers and community groups after the activity had taken place. Second, 'paperwork fatigue' across the partnership, meant that requests to track employer engagement, for example, were not fulfilled by partners, as their focus was primarily on their caseload of young people and the paperwork pertaining to them.

Furthermore, though community engagement was embedded in the very fabric of all project activity, it has been a challenge to generate hard evidence that can be used to assess the overall impact on communities and employers. There was a hope that Empowering Enterprise would impact perceptions and attitudes towards young people in the wider community. Though the community portfolio provides many isolated instances of young people immersing themselves in, and serving, their local communities, a developed strategy to track the impact on community perceptions of young people would provide valuable insights on the influence of this engagement.

In future, a more sophisticated data collection strategy should be developed and implemented from the beginning of the project, including consultation of employers and community groups on how best to do this, as well as partnership-wide commitments to specific activity tracking.

ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES - PRE-EMPTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

As section 3.2 identifies, it was acknowledged by the partnership that the visibility of support services does not inherently equate to their accessibility. This was anticipated at a strategic level, but as became apparent at the Mentors' Voice workshops late in 2018, many mentors on the ground were taken aback by the severe challenges they were facing in supporting participants to access support services.

Consequently, it would have been beneficial to ensure that insight into this issue was initially shared formally across the partnership, with delivery staff on the ground coming together early on to undertake collaborative problem-solving activities that would pre-empt and mitigate the effects of this challenge. As proven in this project, navigating under-resourced external support services is an exceptionally challenging task which youth workers across the country struggle with. It does, therefore, require innovation and proactive planning. In any case, through acknowledging, and developing strategies to tackle the initially subtle, but very significant, nuance between visibility and accessibility to support services, a partnership is better equipped 'to hit the ground running' with supporting young people effectively.



ENGAGEMENT WITH GROUP WORK

As examined in section 3.1, the original STEVIE-BOB dynamic did not play out in the way that it was originally designed. Delivery partners put a significantly greater emphasis on the STEVIE role, and Project Management Evaluation in 2019 showed that many mentors were not even aware of the concept of BOB. Suggestions pertaining to communication and cohesive understandings are offered elsewhere in this section. In terms of the intended design of STEVIE and BOB, in-depth analysis should be undertaken by managing bodies and partners to explore, with hindsight, whether this is an effective approach for this demographic. It was regularly voiced by the partnership that participants were 'not ready for group work', however, on being strongly encouraged by Petroc to attempt group engagement, some delivery partners had excellent results with group activities.

Some possible considerations for the future include: whether delivery design should intentionally focus on 1-2-1 support initially and have a formality around participants engaging with group work after two months of 1-2-1 mentoring, for example; whether Dame Kelly Holmes Trust's GoT provision should be imitated by delegating specific BOB delivery partners, reducing confusion and split resource within each partner's delivery; further centralised project-wide courses and groups, commissioned by the managing body; and ultimately robust consultation and co-design with young people around the topic of group work, during early project development stages.

RURAL ENGAGEMENT

The bid intended to use recent data on geographical hotspots in its recruitment strategies to en-

sure comprehensive geographical reach. During Devon Communities Together's research for the development of a prompting tool in early 2019, data sources were consulted to identify hotspots. A challenge was that demographic data comes from a range of different bodies, released at different times and in different formats. Additionally, there is a difficulty in establishing a working definition of 'rural' when, for example, a location may appear geographically close to necessary services and opportunity but be lacking in transport infrastructure.

Despite these challenges, an attempt to further define 'rural' for the purposes of the project and a baseline understanding via the mapping of data would have been valuable for referring to when targeting recruitment. It could have been used for the establishing of firm targets and outcomes to be tracked in the project's monitoring and evaluation processes, in a similar way to how targets for gender, or ethnicity were set. Although certain adjustments were made during the project to reach participants in rural locations, this would have allowed the topic to be built into the project's initial design.

A main learning upon reflecting on the targeted rural participant projects (in South Hams and Okehampton) related to further process that could be adopted in future projects. It was found that when seeking to reach into a new area and gain referrals, a partner must either: have strong enough formal and informal existing networks to connect with local services and gain referrals; or be given a significant lead-in time to allow for contacts in the area to be developed without expecting immediate participant recruitment. These learnings should be incorporated into future procurement of partners and approval of funding awards.



10.0

SUMMARY OF IMPACT

FROM INPUTS TO IMPACT

Inputs facilitated many **activities** to take place, as illustrated throughout this report: 1-2-1 mentoring, group sessions, Innovation Fund activities, partner meetings, conferences and more, all undertaken with a consistent consideration for, and inclusion of, the two Cross-Cutting Themes and an ethos of co-design with participants and other parties. The partnership was lively and active throughout the four years of delivery and the resource certainly saw many ideas come to life for a wide range of individuals and communities. What has made Empowering Enterprise unique is that it facilitated these activities simultaneously, and was also flexible, offering person-centred support that was not time-bound, with the exception of project closure. It was not solely orientated towards achieving targets but also held the ambition of addressing and dismantling underlying barriers in high regard.

Though initially a little slow off the ground, these activities ultimately saw **outputs** that exceeded original targets, with the headlines being that 657 young people went live on this project and engaged with project activity, 379 of whom achieved a recognised result of exiting into employment, training or education, or job search. These results were attained by a broad range of young people with diverse demographic backgrounds and locations across Devon.

The journeys towards the attainment of these outputs saw a breadth of young people, partnership organisations, external support services, community stakeholders, members of the general public, employers and educators and so many more, come together.

Though the four project **outcomes** were established during the design phase and were aspirational, they do, with hindsight, articulate the achievements of this work accurately. As detailed in section 3.0, the countless moving parts geared towards these outputs, across Devon's communities over the past four years, have enabled the following goals to be realized, and it can confidently be concluded that they are now a reality:

- Young people participating in the project *have* improved their employability, entrepreneurial and life skills.
- Existing support services *are* more visible and accessible to young people and their communities, and are more sustainable.
- Communities and businesses *are* more cohesive and resilient.
- Project partner organisations *have* increased their capacity and capability to support young people through a more joined-up approach, sharing of best practice and access to training and resources.

These outcomes transcend the partnership's direct work with its 657 participants, and one can identify a gentle but powerful ripple effect regarding the project's influence across Devon's holistic infrastructure, which brings us to the project's overall **impact**. Substantial contributions have been made towards transforming the culture, attitudes, realities, and climate of individuals and communities across Devon.



Devon is now home to 600+ more young people who have experienced support and encouragement to desire and pursue a future that serves their own and their communities' best interests. Many of the fruits of this have already been illustrated in sections 2.0 and 3.0. It is, however, also reasonable to assume that, by helping young people to address their barriers and design their own next steps (rather than solely focusing on employment skills), these young people are more resilient in several dimensions of their character and will, hopefully, be able to better navigate life's challenges. It is also fair to acknowledge that the progress of an individual can impact on their surrounding networks. The resilience and resource acquired by participants through project activity should certainly enable them to make further valuable contributions to their communities. Furthermore, their increased understanding of, and engagement with, support services, themes of sustainability, equal opportunities, and gender equality will most likely be shared in some participants' personal and professional networks going forward.

Another significant change to have come out of this work, comes in the form of dozens of youth organisations, support services, employers and community groups having engaged with young people who are NEET. Just two ex-

amples are the delivery partners, who have worked closely with hundreds of young people for extended lengths of time, and those employers who have decided to try something new by offering a young person who is NEET a workplace opportunity.

The full impact of this kind of change tends to be difficult to capture at this early stage, but we can be confident that it will far transcend the 657 young people engaged on Empowering Enterprise. It is hoped that the work carried out over the past four years will continue to permeate the attitudes, strategies and practices of many parties which, over time and with future activity from other provision, will continue to generate a powerful shift in culture. Using the achieved outcomes of Empowering Enterprise activity as indicators, this shift should be defined by the continued dismantling of barriers faced by young people seeking to access education, employment or training.

Hypotheses aside, we can be certain that Devon is now home to an abundance of individuals, institutions and establishments who have greater insight into, and experience of, supporting young people to be the best that they can be, as well as utilising their agency to bring about greater social mobility in their local communities.



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APPENDIX 1 Impact Measurement Framework	APPENDIX 2 Breakdown of Participant Data	Impact Reports for 2017; 2018; 2019
APPENDIX 3 Distance Travelled Questionnaire	APPENDIX 5 Partner Profiles	Toolkits for Young People and Mentors
APPENDIX 4 Community Portfolio		
APPENDIX 6 Innovation Fund Project Profiles	Inclusive Opportunities Toolkit for Employers	...and more.

This report was produced by Devon Communities Together, who have worked throughout Empowering Enterprise as the project's evaluation and impact measurement partner. ↗



