



A Brighter Future


An evaluation of End Youth Homelessness' Transforming Futures Programme

October 2019





**Doing that
course really
helped me get
out of the
darkness**



I had ideas, but I wasn't that confident. I didn't have the information. Rosie gave me more information about opportunities.

About

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The Young Foundation

The Young Foundation's mission is to develop better connected and more sustainable communities across the UK. As a UKRI accredited Independent Research Organisation, social investor and community development practitioner, we combine all our skills and expertise, to further that mission.

We amplify the stories and lived experiences of people in our communities; using this as a spur to drive locally-led community action and enterprise. And we use what we learn across different communities to spot national patterns of need and opportunity; working with national partners to support new ideas to tackle those shared, national challenges.

Bringing together our own – and other people's – work, we are building a shared body of evidence, tools and insight about how communities are taking action on the issues that affect them.

We have created and supported over 80 organisations including: Which?, The Open University, Language Line, Social Innovation Exchange, School for Social Entrepreneurs, Uprising and Action for Happiness.

Find out more at youngfoundation.org



End Youth Homelessness

End Youth Homelessness is a UK-wide movement of local charities that have joined forces to tackle youth homelessness together. It provides a national platform to raise awareness, share experience and generate voluntary income.

The funds we raise help our members to increase capacity, services and sustainability in extremely challenging times. Our Member Charities house and support over 30,000 young people facing homelessness.

EYH Member Charities:
1625 Independent People
Aberdeen Foyer
Amber Foundation
The Benjamin Foundation
Centrepoint
Llamau
MACS
The Rock Trust
Roundabout
St Basils
Step By Step

Find out more at eyh.org.uk



Contents

Foreword	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	7
Programme Overview	8
Evaluation Approach	10
Local Charities & Job Coaches	12
Findings	16
Overall impact of the programme	16
Evaluation of the programme's key components	21
Job Coaching	21
The Bursary Fund	29
Digital Coaching Platform	33
Jobs Innovation Forum	34
Conclusions & Recommendations	35
References	39

Foreword

End Youth Homelessness' Member Charities are unified by a series of core beliefs. In my view, the most important of these beliefs is that young people are not a problem to be solved or a resource to be harnessed, they are a power to be unleashed. In short, we believe in young people.

But we know they need help. Almost everyone reading this document will have been helped by their parents, guardian, relatives or friend. You will have been encouraged to respect and believe in yourself, motivated to overcome challenges and, ultimately, nagged to do what you need to do.

Many homeless young people simply did not have this support in their lives. Often, their role models were not positive and their experiences dispiriting, to say the least.

This report reinforces our faith in young people. It also makes clear that positivity is not enough. If we encourage young people to make plans but then they don't have the material where-with-all (i.e. the cash) to make it happen, they fail before they start. You can't succeed at college if you can't afford the bus fare to get there.

The Young Foundation has done a wonderful job getting under the skin of our Member Charities and how they work with young people. They have highlighted areas we can improve – which we take very seriously – but have supported our central thesis that if we help young people dream and commit to helping them making those dreams a reality, those young people thrive.

Nick Connolly
Managing Director
End Youth Homelessness

Executive Summary

At the end of 2018, 788,000 young people, aged 16 to 24, were not in education, employment or training (EET) in the UK[1]. Disadvantaged young people are twice as likely to be out of EET than their better off peers[2] and homeless young people are especially unlikely to be in school, college, training or jobs[3]. Being and remaining out of EET increases the likelihood of future unemployment, underemployment, disadvantage and negative health outcomes[4].

The evidence is clear that homeless young people want to access work and education, but they face many obstacles that prevent them from doing so[5]. Studies[6] have identified a range of barriers linked to experiences, attitudes, knowledge and finances including:

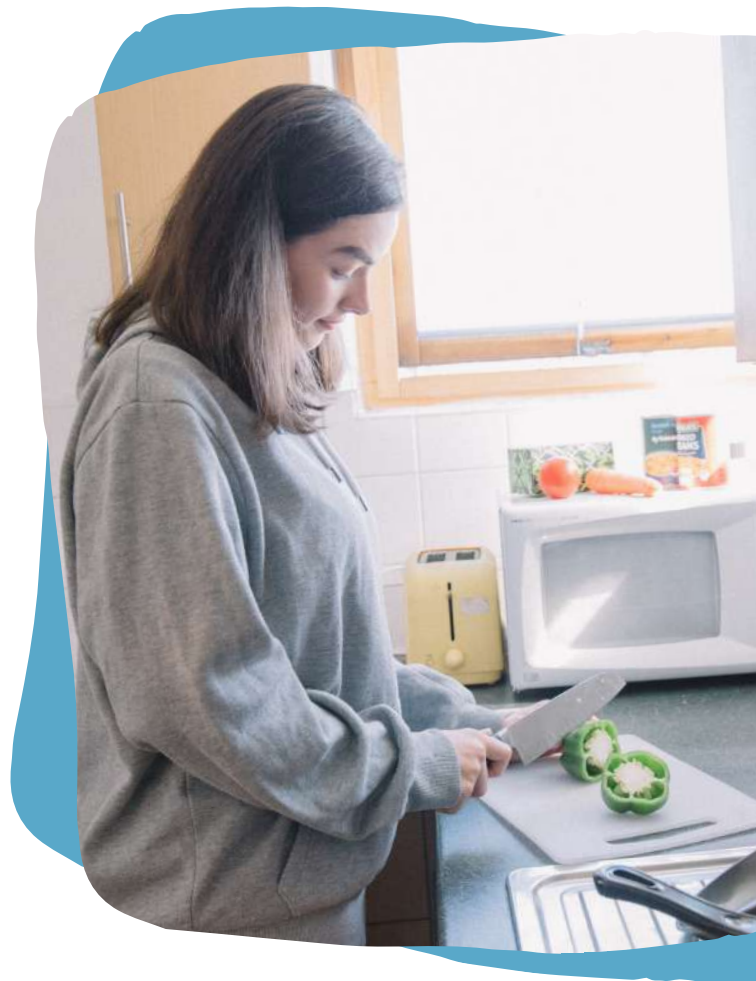
- Previous negative experiences of learning, low prior educational attainment, and a lack of work experience.
- Mental health problems, problems concentrating, shame around lack of basic skills, low confidence and motivation.
- Practical barriers associated with chaotic personal lives, the financial pressure of living independently and the costs associated with education, training or employment, such as travel.
- A lack of knowledge around EET opportunities and how to access them.

Introduction to Transforming Futures

Transforming Futures is a three-year programme funded by the H&M Foundation and launched by End Youth Homelessness in October 2016. The programme is delivered in four different charities across the UK, all of which were previously identified as having potential to offer increased support for homeless young people to access EET:

- 1625 Independent People in Bristol
- Aberdeen Foyer in Aberdeen
- Roundabout in Sheffield
- The Benjamin Foundation in Norwich

The goal of the programme is to provide specialist support for young people facing homelessness to help them access education, employment and training opportunities in their area. This is an essential step for them to lead an independent life.





Job Coach



Bursary Fund



Digital Careers Platform



Jobs Innovation Forum

Transforming Futures comprises four components, which are designed to tackle the complex factors that prevent young people from accessing EET opportunities.

- 1) Each charity employs a Job Coach who provides one-to-one support for young people on their journey to EET.
- 2) A bursary fund was introduced to overcome financial barriers faced by young people trying to access EET.
- 3) A Digital Careers Platform allows young people to explore potential career paths and search for local jobs.
- 4) Regular Jobs Innovation Forums are held to share learning and allow networking between charities and Job Coaches.

Programme Impact

Overall, our evaluation found that Transforming Futures offers a responsive and flexible model of support which allows homeless young people to make the transition into EET at their own pace. The key to success has been the combination of the individualised support offered by a Job Coach with the opportunity to access bursaries to help overcome practical barriers to EET.

All targets set by the programme have been achieved and, in addition, young people describe positive changes to their confidence, self-esteem, motivation and aspirations for the future.

The key characteristics of Transforming Futures that have led to its positive impact on young people are:

- **The combination of job coaching and the bursary fund**, which are seen by young people, and those involved in programme delivery, as essential and highly effective in supporting those on their journey into EET.
- **The Job Coaches' ability to build a trusting relationship with each young person** and be seen as independent from other Key Workers, such as Housing Officers, who sometimes have a punitive role.
- **An approach which provided young people time and space** to come to decisions about EET without pressure, and be given a second (or third or fourth) chance when obstacles presented themselves.
- **Job Coaches working in collaboration with others** who could offer additional support and services to young people including Key Workers, course providers, colleges, local employers and mental health providers.
- The largely **hands-off approach** by EYH and the ability for the Job Coach to operate independently within their charity, which allowed them to tailor the way they targeted homeless young people and have freedom to make decisions depending on their context.

Recommendations

The evaluation highlighted a number of recommendations, which are based on those made by young people, Job Coaches and charity staff. The full list of recommendations is included at the end of the report and includes:

- **Acknowledging that it is combination of job coaching and a flexible bursary that created impact for young people.** Whilst bursaries are a highly effective programme component and were held in high regard by young people, Job Coaches and charity staff, they are just one piece of the puzzle. It is essential that bursary awards are combined with ongoing job coaching to sustainably support young people into EET.
- **Finding ways to track young people's outcomes related to confidence, self-esteem etc. alongside reach and engagement targets.** Job coaches were interested in providing more information about the changes young people experience whilst engaged in the programme. One way to track this would be to have young people complete short, engaging surveys shortly after meeting with a Job Coach for the first time. These could be repeated further down the line when young people had progressed on their EET journey to see whether they self-report changes in outcomes such as confidence and self-efficacy alongside completion of courses, uptake of work experience etc.
- **Recognising that not all homeless young people are ready for EET.** Whilst Transforming Futures is focused on providing support for young people ready to access EET, it was frequently mentioned that impact could be enhanced by providing pre-EET support for those that are not yet ready to start employment, education or training. If funding is available in future, a programme of this nature could be delivered in parallel to Transforming Futures and could focus specifically on confidence building and providing mental health support such as counselling. This would increase young people's emotional wellbeing to be ready for EET. Young people who 'graduated' from the pre-EET programme could then enter Transforming Futures.
- **Utilising online job sites rather than a bespoke digital careers platform:** Compared to the programme's other components, the Digital Careers Platform was seen as contributing the least in terms of helping young people access EET. Instead, Job Coaches supported young people digitally by showing them other websites with opportunities such as indeed.com.
- **Being clear about line management and communications from the programme outset:** Whilst Job Coaches were recruited and managed by local charities, they expressed the wish to receive feedback for their work from EYH and also to be able to give feedback to them. If the programme is designed to be managed by local charities, it is important to clarify this from the beginning of the programme and adjust communication between local charities and EYH accordingly.



Introduction

End Youth Homelessness (EYH) is a UK-wide movement of local charities that have joined forces to tackle youth homelessness together. It provides a national platform to raise awareness, share experience and generate voluntary income.

The Young Foundation was commissioned to evaluate EYH's Transforming Futures Programme, which aims to support homeless young people across the UK to enter employment, education and training (EET). Transforming Futures was designed in response to the specific needs of young people facing, or at risk of homelessness, who are four times less likely to be accessing EET compared to their peers in permanent accommodation[7].

At the end of 2018, 788,000 young people (aged 16 to 24) were not in education, employment or training (EET) in the UK[8]. Recent research indicates that 26% of disadvantaged young people are not in EET - twice the rate of their better off peers[9]. Homeless young people are especially unlikely to be out of education and training, and unemployed[10]. For young people, remaining out of EET increases the likelihood of future unemployment, underemployment, disadvantage and negative health outcomes[11].

The evidence is clear that homeless young people want to access work and education, but face many barriers that prevent them from doing so[12]. Studies[13] have identified a range of factors linked to experiences, attitudes, knowledge and practical barriers, such as:

- Previous negative experiences of learning, low prior educational attainment, and a lack of work experience.

- Mental health problems, problems concentrating, shame around lack of basic skills, low confidence and motivation.
- Practical barriers associated with chaotic personal lives, the financial pressure of living independently, and the costs associated with education, training or employment, such as travel.
- A lack of knowledge around EET opportunities and how to access them.

Diverse programmes have, over the last 20 years, endeavoured to support disadvantaged young people into education, training and employment, typically focusing on addressing some or all of these barriers. Evaluations of these programmes, both in the UK and internationally, have demonstrated that there are a number of characteristics that successful EET initiatives have in common:

Flexibility: EET programmes should work on flexible hours, with open entry and exit[14] and drop-in and outreach services designed to accommodate participants' irregular availability[15]. The delivery style should also be flexible, to meet participants' varying needs and paces of learning[16].

Confidence building: Addressing young people's low self-esteem, self-confidence and motivation is a necessary precursor to helping them access EET[17].

Holistic and pre-EET support: Many homeless young people may not yet be prepared to enter into EET. Successful programmes incorporate holistic and pre-EET support, addressing housing[18], access to food, physical and mental health[19] and developing pre-EET life skills like time management and financial literacy[20].

Relationship with staff: A positive, trusting relationship between the practitioner and the young person where the young person feels supported by the staff member acting as a mentor and advisor is crucial[21]. “Staff should be understanding, open, non-judgemental and try to engage with the young person on a somewhat personal level[22].”

Practical support: Addressing the practical challenges disadvantaged young people face in accessing EET is fundamental, including the cost of travel and equipment like mobile phones they might need to engage in EET opportunities[23].

Job Coaching: This is a highly effective approach to getting homeless young people into EET. According to a study in the UK and Republic of Ireland[24] “The chance of integration into the labour market is 3.7 times higher among those who were supported by a Job Coach” compared to those who were not. Job Coaching combines individualised support, tailored to the needs of young people, with the provision of expert advice for navigating the job market. This significantly improves participants’ chances of achieving and sustaining employment.

Goal setting: It is important for practitioners working with young people to help them identify and set realistic and achievable goals in their EET progression.[25] This practice helps motivate young people as they begin to achieve their goals and gain momentum through small successes.

Programme Overview

Transforming Futures is a three-year programme funded by the H&M Foundation and was launched by End Youth Homelessness in October 2016. The programme is delivered in four different charities across the UK, all of which were previously identified as having potential to offer increased support for young people to access EET:

- 1625 Independent People in Bristol
- Aberdeen Foyer in Aberdeen
- Roundabout in Sheffield
- The Benjamin Foundation in Norwich

The goal of the programme is to provide specialist support for young people facing homelessness to help them access education, employment and training opportunities in their area. This is an essential step for them to lead an independent life.

Transforming Futures comprises four components, which are designed to tackle the complex factors that prevent young people from accessing EET opportunities.

- 1) Each charity employs a **Job Coach** who provides one-to-one support for the young person.
- 2) **A Bursary Fund** was introduced to overcome financial barriers faced by young people on their journey into EET.
- 3) **A Digital Careers Platform** allows young people to explore potential career paths and search for local jobs.
- 4) Regular **Jobs Innovation Forums** are held to share learning and allow networking between charities and Job Coaches.



Job Coach

Job Coach

The Job Coach directly identifies young people who are interested in accessing EET or may work with young people who are referred to them by colleagues within their charity. Their role is to support and guide individuals on their journey into EET, with a focus on building trusting relationships and providing encouragement and reassurance along the way.

The Job Coach holds individual and group sessions where they offer assistance in writing job applications and CVs, help with job searches and develop young people's interview skills. Furthermore, when young people need moral support, the Job Coach can accompany them to open days, interviews or other appointments. It is the Job Coach's role to establish relationships with training providers, colleges, and employers so young people can gain access to local EET opportunities.

The Bursary Fund

The bursary fund was introduced for cases where young people encounter financial barriers that prevent them from accessing EET. Young people apply for a bursary in a process assisted by the Job Coach and the application is judged against criteria such as the young person's ability to manage their own finances and the demonstration of a clear need for the funding to help access EET. The bursary is a flexible fund designed to address the multiple barriers that might prevent a homeless young person from engaging in EET. This includes travel costs, buying specialist equipment for a course, enrolment fees etc.



Bursary Fund



Digital Careers Platform

Digital Careers Platform

The Digital Careers Platform is an online careers and advice platform rolled out to offer young people an opportunity to gain knowledge of opportunities and career paths available to them. Users have the possibility to create a tailored profile detailing their experiences, skills and interests and find local jobs matching their profile. The goal of the platform is to enable young people to plot their journey to secure employment.



Jobs Innovation Forum

Jobs Innovation Forum

A bi-annual Jobs Innovation Forum is held to promote knowledge sharing and learning across charities in the End Youth Homelessness network. The forums offer a chance for Job Coaches to reflect on the progress of the programme and share successes and challenges. Usually, the forums take place over two days. The first day is exclusive to sharing and learning between Job Coaches while on the second day, employment workers from charities across the EYH network are invited. The events are hosted and facilitated by EYH.

Evaluation Approach

The evaluation of Transforming Futures was designed to understand how each of the four programme components worked, individually and in conjunction, and identify where changes could be made if a similar programme were to be rolled out in the future.

The evaluation design incorporated a mixed methods approach designed to gather a variety of perspectives:

- A quantitative analysis of programme monitoring data.
- Interviews with homeless young people who had participated in the programme, the four Job Coaches and other employees of the local charities as well as an interview with the EYH Programme Coordinators.
- The collection of observational data during location visits and at a Jobs Innovation Forum to gather first hand insights.

Qualitative interviews were at the centre of the evaluation and provided in-depth insight into programme design, implementation, impact, how changes were brought about and areas of development for the Transforming Futures programme. In total, interviews were held with 21 young people (12 female, 9 male) who took part in Transforming Futures across the four locations.

On average, the young people were 20 years old, with the youngest interviewee being 17 and the oldest 24 years old. In addition, 11 members of staff including the four Job Coaches, their line managers and one further employee of each charity were interviewed. All interviews were held in a semi-structured way through which pre-identified as well as emerging topics could be discussed.

The visits to the four locations allowed us to observe the daily activities of the charities delivering Transforming Futures and made it possible to compare the incorporation of the programme into each charity. Where consent was given, we used this opportunity to collect photos of the charities, their employees and clients.

While staff members were interviewed individually, young people were able to choose whether to be interviewed alone or in pairs. Focus groups were originally planned but feedback from young people and Job Coaches suggested they would feel more comfortable opening up in an individual setting or alongside a friend rather than in a group. In addition, due to the young people's insecure living situations and sometimes, chaotic lives, it would have been unfeasible to organise and interview a group of young people at the same time.

Young people sometimes cancelled last minute or did not show up for the agreed interview. However, thanks to the Job Coaches' efforts, we could often interview young people spontaneously during our visits to different charity offices and housing. We further endeavoured to increase the number of participants by offering the possibility to hold interviews via phone.

While all interviewees were invited to contribute to the evaluation with a short vox pop video – an approach often popular with young people – the vast majority declined, some saying they did not feel comfortable speaking on camera. To ensure anonymity, some young people's names have been changed in this report.

Preparing for interviews

Ryan's Story


Ryan, 19, experienced addiction after a well-paid fabrication apprenticeship gave him access to a disposable income for the first time. The addiction led to him losing his job and then family issues meant he was kicked out of home. Now Ryan is living in one of Aberdeen Foyer's accommodation units and building up the confidence to get back into work. He was referred to Graham by his Key Worker.

A big step for Ryan has been completing a number of Personal Achievement Records, which allow a young person to explore a subject they are interested in, conduct basic research and then plan a practical project related to it. Ryan had an interest in getting fitter so designed a project to document his visits to the local gym. He was provided with a free council gym pass by his Key Worker and still goes regularly every week.

While it may appear that there is no clear link between going to the gym and accessing EET, Ryan sees his new routine as the key to kick starting his motivation and improving his mental health, allowing him to attend appointments and even helping him manage his finances.

"Since I started going back to the gym I just got myself a bit more motivated to do stuff. Now I can go to meetings and things like that"

His goal is to get back into full time work, but he is taking his time to build up his confidence at the Foyer first. He says, **"I'd like to help young people who were in my position ... I've done talks to drug addicts who are trying to change. Told my story. I'd like to stick with [Aberdeen Foyer] if I move out of here and come back and do some group work."**



I just got myself a bit more motivated to do stuff. Now I can go to meetings and things like that.

Meet the Local Charities & Job Coaches



Aberdeen Foyer

Focus Aberdeen Foyer works on youth homelessness, unemployment and related issues such as housing, finances, substance abuse and addiction, health and mental health.

Approach Aberdeen Foyer takes a holistic approach tackling a variety of factors that cause youth homelessness. It prides itself in being solution focused, flexible and listening to young people.

What's special? The Foyer has its own training centres, offering courses including Prince's Trust, First Aid, CWR, manual handling and food hygiene.

The Job Coach Graham has worked at Aberdeen Foyer for over 25 years in a number of positions and now works full time as a Job Coach. His aim is to support young people facing homelessness in breaking down boundaries to EET and preparing them to take on education or training. His approach to the role centres on building relationships with young people and working at their pace and ability. When he starts working with a new client, he always takes the time to assess whether they are ready for EET or need support in other areas first. He emphasises the importance of the one to one support the programme offers. Due to his long history working at the charity, he is highly integrated with the staff and feels that his connections with other departments in the charity help him to be effective.

Graham from Aberdeen Foyer:

I love the role – I am able to work with people from different departments and can help people to achieve, make people happy. What I do is open doors for people.



Sharon from The Benjamin Foundation:

The way you talk to them determines whether they find something that they are motivated to do.



The Benjamin Foundation

The Benjamin Foundation

Focus The Benjamin Foundation works with young people and families and has a specific focus on supporting them with housing and homelessness, childcare and emotional wellbeing.

Approach The Benjamin Foundation takes a flexible and understanding approach to young people that gives them independence in their living situation and life.

What's special? The Foundation works with young people across Norfolk and Suffolk and has accommodation centres that support over 100 vulnerable young people every night. They deliver a range of services including working to prevent youth homelessness, helping families to build stronger relationships, offering emotional wellbeing support and providing positive activities for young people with limited opportunities in life.

The Job Coach Sharon previously worked as a Young Persons Advisor within the Education and Guidance team with the Council, which made her feel like 'the job police' as she found her role to be very invasive and numbers-driven. She is now working full time as a Job Coach at The Benjamin Foundation. It is a role she much prefers. As a Job Coach she gets to serve as an advocate for the young people with whom she works. She is someone that they can confide in who is separate from the Support Workers they see every day. She aims to be available to all young people and meets with every young person who moves into the Benjamin Foundation's hostels. In addition, she holds drop-in sessions at the hostels so that the young people living there can get to know her. She tries to understand the barriers preventing them from entering EET and to help determine what motivates them and what they want to do in future. For her, the role is all about being flexible and understanding and providing reliable and holistic support to the young people she meets.



Roundabout, Sheffield

Focus Roundabout provides shelter, support and life skills to young people aged 16-24 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Approach Roundabout is committed to preventing youth homelessness and delivers highly effective mediation and drop-in services as well as homeless education in schools.

What's special? Roundabout provides several services for young people under the same roof, which allows for them to be referred from one worker to another when their needs change. They work with peer educators who have experienced homelessness themselves.

The Job Coach Before coming to Roundabout, Rowena had a similar position in a different organisation focused on getting young people into employment. Her approach is to find out what a young person is interested in and work at their pace. She emphasises the importance of being empathetic, reliable and trustworthy. She works as part of a team that includes a Housing Support Officer and a Mediation Professional. So, while she works independently she feels highly integrated in the charity. Rowena works by arranging meetings that can last anywhere from 15 minutes to three hours, and holds informal drop-in sessions as well. In her view, the strength of the programme lies in its focus on positivity and support and a willingness to listen.

Rowena from Roundabout:

For me, the goal is to support as many people as you can in a positive way. This doesn't necessarily mean that they have to be in work for I don't know how many months. But it's making sure that you are giving people opportunity.



1625 Independent People, Bristol



Focus 1625 Independent People (1625) provides essential services for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Approach 1625 provides holistic support for young people, helping them find secure homes, learn life skills, seek advice and access training and job opportunities. Ultimately they aim to help young people live happily and independently.

What's special? 1625 is a large organisation with four offices and over 100 staff. They manage supported housing including shared houses, self-contained flats and two hostels. They also have an entire team providing EET support to young people.

The Job Coach Before coming to 1625, Rosie worked in recruitment and business administration for Bristol City Council and other local authorities. She feels that the Job Coach role combines skills gained through these experiences. She currently works three days a week at 1625 and the rest of the time at Barnardo's. Rosie wanted the role because she used 1625's services when she personally experienced homelessness as a young person. She meets with young people who have been referred to her and also holds drop-in sessions at 1625's supported housing units. She helps young people build action plans towards their EET goals and adapts each session to the needs of the individual young person. Rosie sits within 1625's EET support team and feels that she is able to fill in the gaps of support between what housing officers offer.

Rosie from 1625 Independent People:

What makes the programme successful is being committed to the young person, building up their confidence and finding something that they want to do and reinforce that there are so many different opportunities out there.



Findings

This section describes the overall impact of the programme on young people’s lives and details how funding was used and perceived by the local charities.

What impact has Transforming Futures had on young people?

The programme monitoring data clearly shows that Transforming Futures has helped a large number of young people to enter education, employment and training. In September 2019, one month before the programme’s end, a total of 883 young people have met a Job Coach at least once, 617 have accessed EET and 690 qualifications have been achieved. This means that all Job Coaching targets were achieved and exceeded.

Similarly, while there was a target to distribute 300 bursaries, to date 537 have been awarded. 87% of the total bursary funding has been spent, indicating that individual bursaries awarded are smaller than originally anticipated.

	Young people supported	Young people accessing EET	Qualifications achieved	Number of bursaries	Bursary spend
Target	702	327	525	300	£78,890
Actual	897	644	758	550	£75,593.79**
%	127.78 %	196.94%	144.38%	183.33%	95.82%

Job Coaches were inducted by staff in their local charity but, as a result of programme start dates being after the full programme’s kick off, there was no formal induction of Job Coaches by EYH at the beginning of the programme. Due to this, Job Coaches initially struggled to understand how targets were defined, which led to some inconsistency in the reporting at the outset. This became particularly evident in the target around ‘Number of young people accessing training’, which was under reported by Job Coaches. “In the beginning, I didn’t report Personal Achievement Records* as a qualification but after realising that [another Job Coach] was reporting these, I started adding them to the monthly report.”

*See Personal Achievement Awards in Scotland: <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/57037.html>

**The outstanding bursary funds will continue to be spent.

My Job Coach and Roundabout have helped me so much to get me out and actually do something with myself instead of sitting in my flat all day, every day. Now I feel like I'm actually doing something with my life. My life is a lot better now than how it used to be.

Cathy, 24, Sheffield

I thought that [the Job Coach] engaged with me really well and wanted to just get stuck in and start working ... I was a little bit down, a little bit hopeless before. It really got me back on my feet and determined to get back to it.

Jordan, 18, Bristol

With my Job Coach's help, I can definitely achieve that goal. I think it's just the fact that she doesn't give up. She'll sit there and explain something to you 100 times if you need it. It's just nice to know you have that extra support.

Taylor, 19, Bristol

To keep the burden of reporting to a minimum, targets focused on numbers of young people accessing EET, rather than longitudinal data relating to whether a young person sustains EET or if taking a course then leads to employment. Whilst longitudinal data would provide a more holistic picture of young people's experiences and insight into what works, it also comes with increased administrative effort.

Despite monitoring being focused on programme reach, it is clear from interviews conducted during the evaluation that impact on their emotional and psychological wellbeing has been significant. Young people report increased motivation, aspirations, direction, knowledge and confidence as a result of Transforming Futures.

The newly gained confidence and realisation that they can achieve their goals helps young people feel able to succeed in job interviews and sustain employment.

For many young people the support of the Job Coach has been transformative and several said they would like to return the support they received to other young people. Through the programme, some have already gained qualifications related to supporting other young people and two have started full-time paid employment in youth work.

How was Transforming Futures integrated into local charities?

Embedding the programme within the charities has been essential to its success, as it has allowed the Job Coaches to build a client base of young people through the referrals from other workers in the charity. **"[The] integration of [our] services is key"** (Support Worker, Aberdeen). Being able to refer young people internally within a charity also maximises their chances of succeeding in EET, particularly because barriers they are facing may not be directly linked to EET.

Job Coaches often make 'warm handovers' to other staff, which involves them accompanying a young person and making a physical introduction to a colleague, rather than just pointing them in the right direction. The 'warm handover' is seen as a much more effective way of linking young people with other services and removes the fear of having to go and speak to someone for the first time alone.

Having access to other offices, training centres and accommodation provided by charities also helps build relationships with staff across different teams with many then referring young people on to Job Coaches if they are deemed to be in need of EET support. Other charity staff commented on the positive relationships between Job Coaches and young people and see the role filling a gap:

"Graham's knowledge of Aberdeen Foyer and its services, as well as his relationships across the organisation and its various programmes are key to the added value of his role."

(Manager, Aberdeen)

Job Coaches all say they were well supported within their charities and could ask line managers for help when needed. As a result of the Job Coach being integrated into local charities, managers and co-workers report that teams like those dealing with housing feel more connected to EET.

How did Job Coaches collaborate with other organisations?

Existing and new relationships with local organisations offering training courses and employment to young people have been crucial to the programme's success. Job Coaches stress the need to meet potential employers in person and to arrange regular check-ins once young people start jobs or placements. If employers understand the issues young people might be facing, they are much more likely to provide them with a supportive environment and a second chance if things go wrong. Yet despite working closely with local employers, there are still those who stigmatise young people who have experienced homelessness and do not think they will be reliable or trustworthy enough to employ.

"Make contact with lots of employers. Have a lot of face-to-face time with employers so they understand who they are taking on and the issues they might be facing. If it goes wrong, put in the effort to meet with employer and speak to the young person and employer about what happened. The key is meeting face to face. Older employers understand better, newer ones don't, so don't promise the world!"

(Manager, Aberdeen Foyer)

Being able to brand the programme under the charity's name in each location has also helped to improve visibility and build trust, as both employers and homeless young people know about local charities but not necessarily about EYH.

How is programme funding perceived by charities and Job Coaches?

Beyond the Job Coaches' work with young people, the funding that supports Transforming Futures, and its flexibility, is perceived by charities as unique. It allows for the programme to fit around young people's needs and fills gaps in funding faced by the charities involved.

"After EYH [funding] ends there will be a funding gap and there's no other funding that's as flexible and accessible."

(Support Worker, Aberdeen)

The flexibility of funding ensured that the programme could respond effectively to local needs. One practical example of this was the ability to redirect underspend between budget lines to where it was needed most. In Aberdeen underspend on project materials was transferred to the bursary fund, which could then be accessed by a greater number of young people.

Job Coaches have struggled with the insecurity of their positions in the long term. All charities are incredibly keen to keep Job Coaches in post but finding funding for an independent position is very difficult.

The young person doesn't fit into the service, the service has to fit them.

Graham, Job Coach, Aberdeen

How does communication between EYH, local charities and Job Coaches work?

Three of the four Job Coaches occupy a unique position within their charity and are the only person doing their role. While this gives them the freedom to spend more time with young people than other staff, and to tailor the way they work to young people's needs, it can also be an isolating experience for those working alone.

During the programme, the Job Coaches have communicated and supported each other by email, which makes them feel like part of something bigger than their individual roles. This sense of 'being a team' is important to all Job Coaches and something they would have liked to have seen built into the programme more consistently from the outset. There was a check-in after the first three months of programme delivery but having this earlier would have been beneficial.

"If we [the Job Coaches] had come together in our first month to talk about our services and talked about how we are going to do the role and exchanged ideas, that would have been much more useful". (Sharon, Job Coach, Norfolk)

Local charities appreciated being included in the development of the original funding bid to the H&M Foundation. The targets on the number of young people to be supported, accessing EET and achieving qualifications through the programme set together with the local charities and seen as achievable. Job Coaches and their managers said that targets are useful to monitor not only the programme but also their charity's work in general:

"The targets were helpful not just for monitoring of the programme, but for the charity to track its own success, which it hadn't been doing before."

(Job Coach line manager, Norfolk)

However, Job Coaches would like to have been involved in setting or reviewing the targets, but all joined the programme after its start, when there was no inception period to revise numbers or budget.

Moving into Youth Work

Jess' Story

Jess, 19, was kicked out of her home shortly before her GCSEs. She moved into a Benjamin Foundation hostel at the age of 16. During this time, she failed her GCSEs and was left confused about her future. She enrolled in a couple of courses at nearby colleges but did not enjoy them. She was unable to afford the course she really wanted to do, which was focused on youth work. That is when the staff at her hostel referred her to Sharon.

Sharon helped her enrol in a Level 2 certificate in Youth Work and apply for a grant that covered the tuition. When Jess found out she would need a laptop and printer to do her course work, Sharon used a bursary to buy them for her.

Having successfully completed the course, Jess is now enrolled on Level 3. With help from Sharon, she has found a full-time job as a Youth Worker, supporting vulnerable young people locally. Sharon's support has given her the motivation to set even higher goals for herself. She now aims to study Youth Work at university, and feels more independent than ever. She is cooking for herself and has moved out of the hostel. She loves her work and says, **"One thing that makes me so passionate about helping other people is that I have been through a similar process."**

Sharon was the first person who actually listened to me. I said, 'this is what I want to do, I'm 100% sure I want to do this. How do I go about it?'



Evaluation of the programme's key components

In this section, we review how the different programme components were implemented, the impact they had on young people's lives and their EET situation, and how change came about. Of the programme's four components, Job Coaching and the bursary fund were seen as contributing most to the programme's success, with the Digital Careers Platforms of least direct benefit. The Jobs Innovation Forums were a mechanism for sharing learning and best practice between Job Coaches, EYH and members of their networks.



Job Coach



Bursary Fund



Digital Careers Platform



Jobs Innovation Forum

The programme's four components and their importance in interviewees' eyes



Job Coach

What are Job Coaches' responsibilities in supporting young people?

For Aberdeen Foyer, Roundabout and the Benjamin Foundation, having a dedicated EET worker was a new addition to their services. The H&M Foundation funded Job Coach was the first dedicated EET Support Worker at 1625 and they subsequently built an EET team around her. Job Coaches in the four locations deliver their support to young people differently depending on the context in which they work. This is due to their professional backgrounds, working styles and the specificities of each location in terms of connectivity, local opportunities and other services provided by the charity.

Having a dedicated Job Coach who focuses solely on EET meets a previously unmet need in the services provided by the local charities and is equally valued by members of staff and programme participants. It is important that the Job Coach's main responsibility is to offer EET support because it takes a lot of time for them to develop expertise in this topic. It also means that meetings with young people are not distracted by other issues such as housing and that Job Coaches are different from other workers young people might have come into contact with in the past.

Despite prioritising face-to-face time with young people, all Job Coaches report that programme administration accounts for a substantial part of their workload. While they acknowledge the need to report their cases, they would prefer to keep the administrative side of their role to a minimum as it reduces their availability for meetings with young people. The volume of administration is more of an issue when the role is part-time or when Job Coaches cover a large geographical area.

It's more like a professional relationship and not like the one with the housing worker which has an educational component.

Rosie, Job Coach, Bristol

A great part about my job is that I can make it my own, I have a lot of flexibility. I setup a Facebook page where I share all job opportunities I find or get sent to and then the people I work with can see it there.

Rowena, Job Coach, Sheffield

How are young people referred to Job Coaches?

Young people are usually referred to Job Coaches through other workers in their charity. Most of those referred currently live, or have lived in, the charities' accommodation. In the case of the Benjamin Foundation, young people's tenancy agreement with the charity requires them to meet with a Job Coach. However, there are some who got in contact with the Job Coach following their participation in other programmes delivered by the charity.

As a result of the referral system, Job Coaches schedule a session with young people after they move into supported accommodation. This means a broad range of young people are supported by Transforming Futures, independent of their EET situation. This widens the pool of young people Job Coaches have contact with, providing opportunities to those who need short term as well as ongoing support to access EET.

What does a meeting between a young person and a Job Coach look like?

Whereas the Job Coaches in Bristol and Sheffield manage a predominantly urban area with short travel times for young people to the charities' offices, the Job Coach in rural Norfolk relies on her car to visit those living in the Benjamin Foundation's supported accommodation units. Due to this, she mainly holds drop-in sessions, whereas other Job Coaches schedule meetings in advance or offer them in combination with drop ins. Graham in Aberdeen also serves young people in both the town and shires, visiting them in Aberdeen Foyer's rural centres using one of the charity's minibuses.

Most Job Coaches meet with young people in their charity's office as well as in local cafes or other places where the young person feels comfortable. Meetings can last from 30 minutes to look through a CV to three hours when the Job Coach accompanies a young person to hand out CVs or visit a college before enrolment.

The young people we spoke to received support over different lengths of time. James was thinking about dropping out of his Level 3 Childcare course, as he did not have a laptop to complete his coursework. He met with a Job Coach just a few times and they were able to quickly identify the barrier and address it with the bursary fund. On the other hand, Susy in Sheffield has been meeting her Job Coach off and on for the past two years, getting in contact with her whenever she wanted support to change jobs.

In some cases, the responsibilities of Job Coaches extended beyond EET support. Sharon, the Job Coach in Norfolk, often has to support young people with mental health problems that need to be addressed prior to receiving EET support. She refers young people to external mental health providers or even accompanies them to their appointments. In Aberdeen, Graham is able to refer young people to other services offered by the Aberdeen Foyer for instance providing help with housing, managing finances, health and addiction.

Even when Job Coaches are working closely to support young people's holistic needs and help get them into EET, some feel they are battling against a system, which is designed to keep people unemployed. John in Bristol said his experience with the Job Coach was 'brilliant' but that ultimately it was not up to her whether he ended up in a job.

What works well for meetings between the Job Coach and young people?

For young people, meeting a stranger in an unfamiliar place can be intimidating. In recognition of this, Job Coaches meet young people wherever they feel most comfortable, and sometimes schedule their first meeting together with their Support Worker. This 'warm handover' is an essential step for those with low confidence who might otherwise miss their first scheduled appointment with a Job Coach.

The programme's reach is further increased by its long running nature- young people who are initially hesitant about meeting a Job Coach will often meet them informally at their accommodation or the charity they are working with, or hear about the experiences of others, and can then schedule a formal meeting when they feel more settled in their supported accommodation.

Young people appreciate the way Job Coaches help build their capacity, leaving them with sustainable skills they can use in future: **"The Job Coach won't just do an application for you, they'll help you do it. Which is a lot better than someone who fills out your application. Because you don't learn anything then. So when you ever have to fill something out yourself, you can't do it."** (Susy, 22, Sheffield) On top of that, leaving the session with something to take away, like a CV or motivation letter **"makes the programme more real".***

Most young people said it is easy to make appointments with their Job Coach and that they would follow up on aspects agreed during the meeting which, for some, was a new experience after being let down by Job Centre workers. When a meeting is set to explore opportunities related to EET, Job Coaches stress that creating knowledge is essential as many young people simply aren't aware of the range of opportunities available to them or the different potential pathways into EET. They also emphasise the need to respond to requests for meetings quickly.

The Job Coaches gained some knowledge about what works along the way, such as accepting that some young people will cancel last minute or not turn up at a meeting and that this is nature of this work. Most learnt not to make appointments with young people early in the morning! In general, Job Coaches say it is important to think creatively when arranging meetings with young people.

*Support Worker, Sheffield



**From unaccompanied minor
to aspiring lawyer**

Ali's Story

Ali, 19, came to the UK in 2016 as an unaccompanied minor refugee from Ethiopia. Since arriving he has lived in a number of different youth hostels around Bristol and now lives in a flat provided by 1625. Ali, is currently doing his GCSEs at college, where he also studies English as a second language.

Ali first met his Job Coach Rosie a few months ago when he was revising for his exams and wanted to find work for the summer. Ali's dream is to go to university to study law or economics so Rosie helped him find work experience in the mayor's office, supporting him to update his CV and navigate /the job application process. He says, **"I like law because I want to help people. And there are some people who feel the way that I felt before. I want to work with young people and including refugees as well. I want to help those that don't get enough support from the legal side."**

Ali feels really lucky to have completed a placement in the mayor's office and says he is on his way to achieving his goals. Before meeting Rosie, he says he was not confident when writing job applications.

She showed him the Digital Careers Platform and helped him understand the kind of jobs available to him. Ali has recently sent in applications to a number of jobs. He has already gone for an interview for a retail position at JD and is planning to apply for a 3-week training at M&S that Rosie told him about. He says, **"I have the morale to do all this now and I think my morale won't change!"**

**I had ideas, but I wasn't
that confident. I didn't
have the information.
Rosie gave me more
information about
opportunities.**

Essential job coaching skills

The relationship between a Job Coach and young person was found to be a key factor in supporting their journey into EET. This section explores the essential or 'soft' skills required to support young people and the relationships between different actors in the programme.

Building Trust

Very often young people facing homelessness feel they have been let down by the system or by individual staff of the institutions designed to assist them. Job Coaches all recognise the need to distinguish themselves from the people and processes that are seen as authoritarian or punitive by young people.

Young people across the four locations describe their Job Coaches as 'honest and level headed', 'non-judgemental', 'caring', 'reliable', 'patient' and 'open-minded'. There were many examples of the Job Coach going above and beyond for an individual, which make them feel valued and that they don't want to let them down. Jill in Bristol described a time when Rosie stopped by her house to drop off a laptop so she could start an online course saying **"she really went out of her way"** (Jill, 21, Bristol).

Young people also appreciate the time Job Coaches take to understand their needs and situation from their first meetings together, to the point where they are ready to take part in education, employment or training independently. As Jordan describes it, the Job Coach is: **"more focused around you and making sure that you get to where you need to be. They won't just leave you high and dry in a situation where there's more to be done. They make sure they finish it ...They follow up, they make sure you're alright. They make sure you're in a situation where you don't need them anymore."** (Jordan, 18, Bristol)

For some young people, the Job Coach was the first person who made them feel 'listened to' and saw their potential, even when they couldn't see it themselves. Because Job Coaches have the freedom to spend more time one on one with young people than other charity staff, they often find that they start thinking differently about their future when they have greater awareness of all the potential EET opportunities available to them. The idea of building a 'capacity to aspire' within young people is familiar to all Job Coaches and they describe the process of discussing potential pathways to EET and how young people's interests change as they are introduced to different types of training or jobs they could work towards.

"I don't want to let her down, because she makes me try harder"
(Kerstie, 22, Norfolk)

"For the young people, they can't see a way past their barriers. I think she helps them to be creative and ambitious about what barriers they can overcome."
(Support Worker, Bristol)

There are examples of young people who have worked with Job Coaches referring their friends and siblings to them or the charities they operate from. After her positive experience with the Job Coach in Sheffield, Cathy tried to get her brother involved with Roundabout saying, **'I know how good a charity it is' (Cathy, 24, Sheffield).**

Giving young people a second chance

Young people supported by Job Coaches describe trusting relationships, where you are given another chance if you make mistakes or are not able to see something through. This ethos is often seen across the charities delivering Transforming Futures, but the addition of the one to one support provided by the Job Coach means young people are interacting with someone who is able to take the time to understand them and work at their pace, often meeting them over a period of weeks or months, before they need to make any decisions about next steps. This approach also means the Job Coaches are less focused on signing young people up for 'quick win' courses that would help meet programme targets.

"There are some that I've seen 6 or 7 times before they actually wanted to do something. It's about understanding them, understanding what their needs are, what their barriers are." (Sharon, Job Coach, Norfolk)

Young people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless often lead chaotic lives and are trying to address issues beyond EET including mental health, access to benefits, housing or alcohol and drug addiction. This means setbacks related to accessing EET do happen and all Job Coaches have worked with individuals who sign up for courses or receive bursary funds and then don't follow through with agreed commitments. The key to keeping young people engaged with the programme is avoiding 'guilt tripping' or punishing those who may have faced challenges and trying instead to work out how solutions can be found together.

"The difference with Aberdeen Foyer is that you get a 4th or 5th chance if you mess up." (Manager, Aberdeen)

Sometimes young people are not in a position where they feel ready to take on a job or placement and end up dropping out. Rowena, the Job Coach in Sheffield described a girl who was very engaged in coaching sessions and finding a job but then didn't go in on her first day.

"When you work with somebody for whom things have always gone wrong and something starts to happen that's good, in their head it's really scary. So they sabotage it."

Young people may also only be motivated to work in order to maintain their benefits. When this is the case, Job Coaches feel it is important to still try and work with them to find them work they are genuinely interested in, even if they are not initially keen to explore this.

Rosie in Bristol described the case of a young person who was highly in debt and initially seemed engaged but then never went to the job interviews Rosie had arranged for her. She only came back after she spent all the money she got from Universal Credit.

"When she came back, we kind of had to start again from day one. It's hard to stay motivated but at the end of the day you just have to remember that they are young people and they are on their own journey. Now the girl is successful and got a job, so you just have to stick to it."

Taking time to understand a young person's potential

Feeling like the Job Coach is trying to support you in finding a job you actually enjoy is a new experience for many young people. A co-worker in Aberdeen describes how not being told 'this is what you have to do' means young people are given the freedom to explore new areas of interest. In the longer term this means that the work placements they eventually take on are more likely to lead to them sticking with it and gaining skills where they have a genuine interest.

"I want to make sure the young people do what they want to do and not just do 'something'." (Rowena, Job Coach, Sheffield).

"What makes the programme successful is being committed to the young person, building up their confidence and finding something that they want to do and reinforcing that there are so many different opportunities out there and you don't need to stick to something you don't like." (Rosie, Job Coach, Bristol)

Nonetheless, Job Coaches all recognise that engaging young people over an extended period can be challenging. In Sheffield, for instance, the Job Coach acknowledges that there is a substantial proportion of young people she saw once but who didn't come back. In Bristol, the Job Coach stressed the importance of establishing with young people that she is different from the housing worker. Once she has done this and secured a first meeting, it is much easier to keep young people engaged.

Not seeing EET in isolation

While the priority focus of Transforming Futures is on getting young people into education, employment and training, young people facing homelessness often have more pressing issues they need to address before being able to consider their future. These include worries about accommodation, poor health, drug and alcohol use, mental health, finances and family. It is important for Job Coaches to recognise that achievements for homeless young people experiencing uncertainty may be very small at first, for instance getting out of bed every day, rather than a qualification or enrolment on a course.

Understanding all the factors affecting young people's lives and wellbeing is an important part of a Job Coach's role and their position within charities offering non-EET support means they often take a 'triage' role when first meeting with young people who are not in education, training and employment, referring them to colleagues and services that can address other needs.

"Essentially he always tries to see the young person as a whole, rather than only focus on EET." (Manager, Aberdeen)

Young people sometimes recognise that they may not be at a point in their lives where they are ready to work. Emma in Aberdeen is passionate about photography and after completing a Prince's Trust course with Aberdeen Foyer she was helped by her Job Coach to find a placement at a local photography business. However, Emma, who has a learning disability, is currently in the process of moving to supported living accommodation and is receiving help in managing her finances. She also attends weekly sessions focused on mental health at a partner organisation to Aberdeen Foyer. With everything going on so she doesn't feel like now is the time to be going back to work, although she would like to be in a position to work in the future:

"At the moment I'm focusing on the transition to the flat rather than employment ... I'm trying to get to the point where I'm ready to go back to work. Trying to do courses to build up the skills so I'm ready for a placement, to get myself back." (Emma, 22, Aberdeen)

Overcoming barriers - from training to employment

Susy's Story

In 2017, Susy left home due to a difficult relationship with her family and moved into one of Roundabout's hostels. Whilst there, she started meeting with Rowena to talk about her EET options. Rowena helped Susy get on a Level 2 course for Youth Work, which she finished successfully. In addition, she worked with Rowena to apply for jobs and update her CV, which Rowena helped her hand out to local employers. She had never felt confident filling out job applications before, but Rowena helped her do them and explained how to approach them in a way that Susy could understand. **"Rowena helps you feel like you're worth something."**

After she finished her Youth Work course, Susy moved away and started a position as a Support Worker for adults with disabilities but had to leave the job due to health reasons. Since then, she's moved back to Sheffield and has gotten back in contact with Rowena who has helped her get interviews for a number of different positions. Rowena used the bursary to get Susy interview clothes and a bus pass, and Susy says that Rowena's support has been really important to her. She says, **"When I get a job, she's just as happy as I am!"**

Recently, she was offered a job at Roundabout helping 16-18 year old care leavers in supported accommodation, which she is really excited about. She says, **"I never had confidence before I came to Roundabout. The work they do, to be a part of it, is amazing. Dream job. As soon as I got offered the job, I cried."**



“As soon as I got offered the job, I cried.”

Evaluation of the programme's key components continued...



The Bursary Fund

Even if young people are able to access EET, financial hurdles that appear small can be a major barrier to them regularly attending courses, college or a job. Young people often dismiss certain opportunities due to the anticipated costs.

"I couldn't afford the course without the bursary fund. This is also one of the reasons why I don't want to go to Uni ... I don't want to be in debt, that's a big anxiety." (Cathy, 24, Sheffield) Even travel costs to meetings with the Job Coach are sometimes insurmountable for young people on a restricted budget.

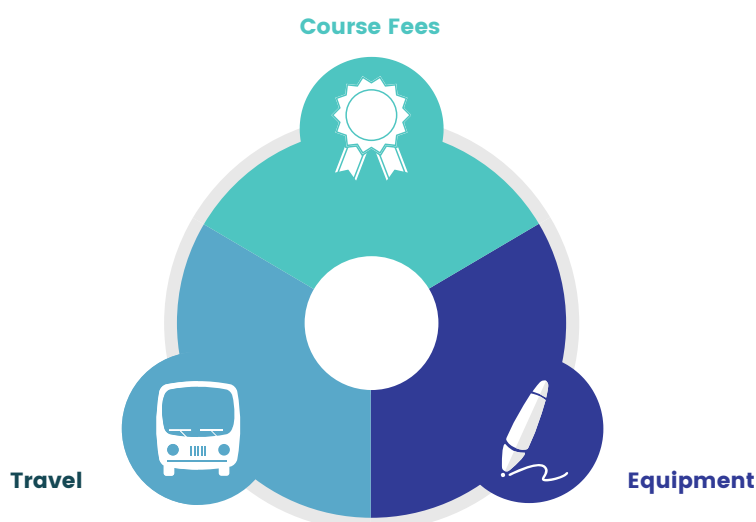
In addition, counterintuitively, once a young person finds employment, this can often result in a cut to the welfare benefits they are eligible for, including supported accommodation, and result in an overall reduction in income. **"There are many policy barriers, like when a person works full-time she/he has to pay full rent and in most cases it's not worth it, because they might end up with just £10 more a month compared to if they didn't work."** (Rowena and Rosie, Job Coaches in Sheffield and Norfolk)

To ensure young people sustain employment or education and training, they need to be financially supported in the first weeks of accessing EET. Job Coaches also encourage young people to see the non-financial gains from working, including gaining a sense of purpose, self-sufficiency and improved self-esteem.

What did young people use bursaries for?

There are three different uses of the bursary fund.

Course fees: Using the bursary to pay for course fees allows young people to access education and training that would otherwise be out of their reach. Bursaries spent on courses account for approximately 40% of those given.* The courses vary from Food Safety courses, taken by 15 young people at a cost of £13 per student, to Construction Skills Certification Scheme qualifications, taken by 25 young people. The cost of CSCS qualifications varied from £48 in Sheffield to £200 in Aberdeen. The most expensive courses were Banksman and Slinger qualifications, which are required for crane and slinger operators, for £580 (awarded twice in Aberdeen).



*This is calculated from data on bursaries from Year 2 and 3 of the programme



Travel: This could be travel to a job interview, to work during the first month of employment or even travel to meet the Job Coach. A third of the bursaries in Years 2 and 3 were given out for travel. However, as the value of bursaries in this category tends to be smaller (starting at £4 for a single ticket), only around a fifth of the total spending was given out for travel costs.

“[The Job Coach] gave me bus tickets because sometimes I wasn’t able to make it down [to their office] myself, so she made sure I could actually go down. It was good because I didn’t have to worry about how to get down there. The money to get there was always there.” (Taylor, 19, Bristol)

Equipment: Around 40% of bursaries were used to buy items that allowed young people to access or sustain EET. Items bought ranged from clothes to wear at an interview (ranging from £20 to £150) to passports and work permits (£10 to £122) and in some cases laptops to do coursework (£180 to £429 for laptop and printer). The Job Coach in Norfolk awarded a bursary to a young person who had undergone a make-up course and needed equipment to start her own business in this field (£155). Sometimes the bursary was used in simple but innovative ways, for instance to buy an alarm clock which helped a young person who kept arriving late to appointments and missed interviews due to oversleeping.

James from Norfolk was awarded a bursary to purchase a laptop and printer in order to continue his Level 3 Childcare Course, says:

“I found it quite a quick and easy process to get the laptop and printer. [It] took about two weeks to get both and I only had to fill out a few simple forms. There wouldn’t have been funding besides the bursary to get the equipment I needed.” (James, 18, Norfolk)

Jordan, who received a bursary to apply for a passport to then be allowed to work, says: **“Getting the bursary fund was definitely the most important part [of the programme]”** (Jordan, 18, Bristol).

The flexibility of the bursary fund has allowed the Job Coaches to use it in the most appropriate ways for their location. In Norfolk, for example, there are eleven tablets in circulation between the young people to use for searching and applying for jobs or courses. The Job Coach says that it is important to keep an eye on where the tablets are, but that to date, only one of the tablets has been lost.



James (18) needed the bursary to buy a laptop



How did young people access bursaries?

The Job Coaches have a great deal of freedom and flexibility in assessing when a young person might benefit from a bursary. Similar eligibility criteria are used by Job Coaches in each charity and include an assessment of whether they can demonstrate a clear need for the funding and an ability to actually use items that are being purchased. For Kerstie, the bursary has made her more reliable at her job in a clothing store. In the past, when she didn't have much money, she would sometimes miss work so she wouldn't have to pay for the bus. A travel bursary means she can get to work even when she is running low on cash and, to date, she hasn't missed a day. This has had a knock on effect on her self-esteem and sense of purpose. **"I don't have that guilty feeling of not having gone and not doing anything and just being useless and lazy."** (Kerstie, 22, Norfolk)

In Aberdeen, the Job Coach is the main person identifying people in need of a bursary but other teams in the charity can also refer young people to the fund. This multiplies the number of young people who can then access EET, even if they are not currently being supported by the Job Coach.

In Norfolk, the Job Coach established a rule to only give a bursary when she had seen a young person at least three times. This allowed her to ensure that the young person was engaged and likely to use the bursary awarded in the way intended. It also gave her the chance to speak to the young person's Support Worker to get a comprehensive picture of the young person's EET situation and aspirations and see how the request fits within this.

What impact did bursaries have?

"For young people there are so many barriers, many personal barriers but also really structural stuff such as rents – if someone gets off benefits and wants to get a job, not being paid for one month with such high rents in Bristol is impossible. Also, zero-hour contracts and all of that makes it really difficult. There are so many obstacles – the bursary has helped overcome some of these." (Learning Manager, Bristol)

The bursary fund has been a highly effective and necessary component of the programme. Both young people and staff frequently mentioned that the bursary filled gaps in EET funding.

It allows young people to access courses, qualifications and training opportunities which would otherwise be inaccessible to them. In Aberdeen bursary funding filled a gap left by the premature closure of the Scottish government's Individual Training Account (ITA).

The unrestricted nature of the fund provides a simple solution to overcome small but sometimes previously insurmountable financial and practical barriers to EET for young people. As the fund can be released immediately, young people are able to access it when expenses occur at short notice, for instance when receiving an invitation for a job interview the next day that they don't have appropriate clothing for. Another positive outcome related to the immediate release of funds is that it enables a young person to access a course soon after they have shown interest, and when their motivation is the highest and the likelihood of success greatest.

"With public funding, young people sometimes have to wait several months before they can start a new course. With the Transforming Futures funding, they can start immediately when they are more motivated, rather than after several months' wait." (Support Worker, Sheffield)

The success of the bursary fund is also due to its flexibility in terms of the amount awarded to each person. In some cases, larger investments ensure a young person can both access and sustain their EET placement. The Job Coach in Aberdeen describes a case in which he decided to give out a large fund: **"A boy living in the rural Shire stayed with his grandma four miles from college and struggled to get there on time every day, especially during winter when there were problems with buses. [I] used the bursary to buy the boy a push bike, which he used to get to and from college every day."** (Graham, Job Coach, Aberdeen)

Beyond its direct impact on the young people's EET situation, the bursary fund increases their motivation and commitment and instils a sense of responsibility for getting into and sustaining EET. Susy, who received funds for a bus pass during her first month of employment and work clothes, said: **"You make sure you stick to it because if not, it's just funding wasted that someone else could have used."** (Susy, 22, Sheffield)

Preparing for university

Kim's Story

Kim, 21, left home when she was 16. She lived in a hostel for 18 months and then moved into Roundabout accommodation. At the time, she was not interested in looking for EET opportunities, but then she started to meet with her Job Coach, Rowena, who made her see that there may be opportunities she could access.

During their first meeting, Rowena drove Kim out to tour the Northern College to show her where she might be able to study in the future. Kim found this really motivating and after spending more time talking with Rowena, realised she wanted to do youth work. Rowena helped her enrol onto a Level 2 course in Youth Work, which she has just completed. She is now living on her own and aims to pursue youth work at university.

Before working with Rowena, Kim felt she had no direction and lacked the confidence to even get out of the house. **“Doing that course really helped me get out of that darkness.”** She now feels more confident in her own abilities and in the way she presents herself. **“I’ve seen now that I’ve done that course what I can do.”** Her dream job would be to work as a manager in the kinds of hostels she lived in as a teenager because she feels that her own experience would allow her to relate to the young people living there.

“I felt like there was no use in trying. But the way Rowena puts it is, ‘What do you want to do?’”



Evaluation of the programme's key components continued...



Digital Careers Platform

As part of Transforming Futures, an online careers platform was introduced where young people can plot a potential career path, learn about expected salaries and find local job, training and educational opportunities. The platform was built using a pre-existing website, startprofile.com, originally developed for 11-18 year old pupils.

While most of the young people interviewed did not know about the platform, it had been useful for a small number of them. Rowena in Sheffield reported that one of the young people she supported had found a job through it. Ali in Bristol, who is currently doing his GCSEs, said: “[The Digital Careers Platform] is useful. If it’s not now, then in the future. When you go on there, you get ideas, even if you just click through it and don’t apply.” (Ali, 19, Bristol)

Interviews with young people and Job Coaches revealed that the platform is mainly used to explore potential career options rather than find out about local job opportunities. This is due to a mismatch in terms of the target group the platform was designed for (11-18 year olds) and the age of young people in the programme (16-25 years old). As the site was designed for school pupils, the main purpose is for users to gain knowledge about future career paths. However, many of the young people taking part in Transforming Futures want to find out about local job opportunities.

Job Coaches reported that using the platform could be demotivating for some of their clients, as few job opportunities are posted on the site. Sharon in Norfolk said the platform was not suited to more rural areas – in these places advertised jobs even five miles from where young people live are impossible to reach without a car or when there is little public transport.

“It’s useful for people who don’t know what they want to do, because it gives ideas and makes them realistic about salaries. But to my knowledge, none of the young people I supported accessed EET through the website.”

Rosie, Job Coach, Bristol

Evaluation of the programme's key components continued...



Jobs Innovation Forum

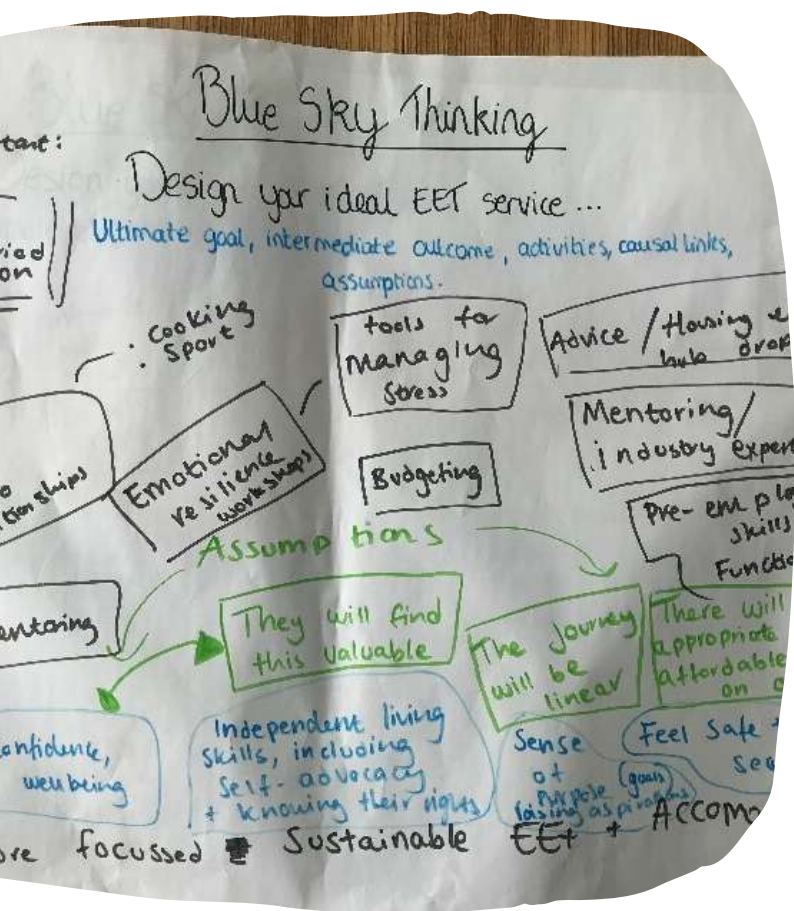
How were Jobs Innovation Forums held?

Bi-annually, Job Coaches and members of other charities in the EYH network attended a Jobs Innovation Forum. The Forums were predominantly held in London, except for one, which took place in Birmingham.

The two-day Forums give Job Coaches and Programme Coordinators an opportunity to catch-up on the progress in each location and meet with other employees of charities in the EYH network. Job Coaches are given an insight into other organisations and work supported by EYH and workshops are held to take a step back from the day-to-day delivery of the programme and think about how an ideal EET service would look through activities such as 'Blue Sky Thinking'.

For the event in April 2019, a representative from a large construction company was invited to explain their recruitment and take part in activities. Job Coaches shared that for young people simple things such as lacking appropriate clothing for an interview might be because they have no access to a washing machine and only have one set of clothes. This allowed her to understand the perspective of a homeless young person trying to access employment and reflect on how this might shape her company's own recruitment processes.

Job Coaches appreciated the opportunity to share knowledge and learning from other charities and their peers during the Jobs Innovation Forums and would have liked additional ways to share peer to peer learning outside of Forums.



Output of a 'Blue Sky Thinking' activity

Conclusion

Overall our evaluation found that Transforming Futures offers a responsive and flexible model of support which allows homeless young people to make the transition into EET at their own pace. The key to the programme's success has been the combination of the individualised support offered by a Job Coach with the opportunity to access bursaries to help overcome practical barriers to EET.

All targets set by the programme have been achieved and in addition, young people describe positive changes to their confidence, self-esteem, motivation and aspirations for the future.

The key characteristics of Transforming Futures that have led to its positive impact on young people are:

- **The combination of job coaching and the bursary fund**, which were seen by young people, and those involved in programme delivery, as essential and highly effective in supporting those on their journey into EET.
- The Job Coaches' ability **to build a trusting relationship with each young person** and be seen as independent from other key workers, such as housing officers, who sometimes have a punitive role.
- An approach which provided young people **the time and space to come to decisions about EET** without pressure, and being given a second (or third or fourth) chance when obstacles presented themselves.
- Job Coaches **working in collaboration with others who could offer additional support and services** to young people including key workers, course providers, colleges, local employers and mental health providers.
- The largely **hands-off approach** by EYH and the ability for the Job Coach to operate independently within their charity, which allowed them tailor the way they targeted homeless young people and have freedom to make decisions depending on their context.

Recommendations

The evaluation highlighted the following recommendations, which are based on those made by young people, Job Coaches and charity staff.

Programme set up and administration

- Provide a clear and comprehensive induction for all new Job Coaches: Job Coaches would have liked to have been formally inducted to the programme together. This would have allowed them to collectively set expectations and agree a common way to record and report against targets and enhanced their sense of being a team with EYH.
- Consider asking funders for an inception period at the programme outset: Job Coaches said that the programme would benefit from an initial period where the priority was set up, building relationships and establishing systems before starting to meet with young people.

"One [challenge] was the way the programme kicked off, which involved no proper induction and focused too heavily on meeting targets from the moment the programme started. Therefore it felt like there was lots of catching up to do in the first few months to meet the targets."
(Job Coach)

Monitoring and evaluation

- **Set meaningful EET targets and complement quantitative data with qualitative insights into young people's experiences in the programme:** Despite the programme targets being achievable, both Job Coaches and charity staff see them as 'too numbers focused' and believe they do not fully reflect the realities and iterative nature of day-to-day work with homeless young people.

This becomes evident, for instance, in the instruction that each young person could only be counted once, which gave Job Coaches a dilemma when a person came back after being supported previously. They stressed that this way of reporting suggests a linear pathway for young people into EET which is not the case for many of them.

"Our young people's journey is very much stepping stones and they might do a taster-course and then volunteering and then they get a part-time job and do a college course alongside it. It's very much stepping stones because even when they are job ready, they might not be ready to commit to something full-time. And sometimes young people want to try something." (Job Coach)

- **Find ways to track young people's outcomes related to confidence, self-esteem etc. alongside reach and engagement targets:** Job coaches were interested in providing more information about the changes young people experience whilst engaged in the programme. One way to track this would be to have young people complete short, engaging surveys shortly after meeting with a Job Coach for the first time. These could be repeated further down the line when young people had progressed on their EET journey to see whether they self-report changes in outcomes such as confidence and self-efficacy alongside completion of courses, uptake of work experience etc.

"Sometimes EYH feels a bit office-based. We need this and that number, etc. And then it's not about the person [in the programme]."
(Job Coach)

Job coach roles and responsibilities

- **Be realistic about the geographic area one Job Coach can cover:** When Job Coaches operate over a large geographical area it can sometimes be difficult to reach young people, especially when scheduled meetings are changed at short notice.
- **Be clear about line management and communications from the programme outset:** Whilst Job Coaches were recruited and managed by local charities, they expressed the wish to receive feedback for their work from EYH and also to be able to give feedback to them. If the programme is designed to be managed by local charities, it is important to clarify this from the beginning of the programme and adjust communication between local charities and EYH accordingly.

“I would like to get more feedback. I still don’t know whether I’m doing things the way I should be.” (Job Coach)

Bursary

- **Do not see the bursary as a silver bullet:** Whilst bursaries are a highly effective programme component, they are just one piece of the puzzle and it is essential that bursary awards are combined with ongoing job coaching to sustainably support young people into EET.
- **Be consistent in eligibility criteria for bursaries:** For a small number of bursaries spent on equipment, Job Coaches experienced difficulties in assessing whether they were going to be used to access EET. Sharon described an example where one young person might want to do a CBT course to use their moped to get to work, whereas another young person might want to use the moped just to visit friends. In a case like this, particularly when the two live in the same accommodation, Job Coaches have to evaluate how to justify their decision to give the bursary to one young person but not the other.

- **Collaborate with others to decide when to award bursaries:** When the assessment of whether a bursary should be given proves difficult, it is advisable to take a decision together with a colleague who has insight into the applicant’s background and commitment to the EET opportunity. It is important for this decision to be taken locally, so that the fund’s success factors of immediacy and flexibility are still guaranteed.

Digital careers platform

- **Use online job sites rather than a bespoke digital platform:** Compared to the programme’s other components, the Digital Careers Platform was seen as contributing the least in terms of helping young people access EET. Instead, Job Coaches supported young people digitally by showing them other websites with opportunities such as indeed.com.

Jobs Innovation Forums

- **Where possible hold knowledge sharing meetings outside of London:** All Job Coaches expressed a wish to consistently rotate hosting of Forums between their locations in order to see each other’s work directly and take the newly gained knowledge back to their charities. However, the option of holding the Forums locally needs to be weighed against the costs and travel time associated with meeting in London, which is more central than other locations.

“The Job Forums should be continued because they offer an opportunity to communicate and actually feel part of EYH. It would have been good to go around and see the other workplaces.” (Job Coach)

- **Follow up on actions agreed at meetings:** Job Coaches expressed the need to turn points raised and agreed on during the Jobs Innovation Forums into actions that are followed up, to increase their impact on the programme’s outcomes.

- **Find ways for Job Coaches to share learning outside of in-person meetings:** Job Coaches reported being supported by and learning from their peers as something that could be built on in the future through establishing mechanisms for continuous knowledge sharing and team building.

"[It would be great if there were] study visits of Job Coaches to the other locations that deliver the programme to see how it was implemented there." (Job Coach)

- **Increase opportunities for Job Coaches to meet with potential employers:** Attendance at Forums by employers was seen as very useful and Job Coaches would like to increase employer engagement at events in future, particularly those who have employment opportunities in their locality. EYH is currently scaling up this aspect of the programme and inviting employers from five different sectors to the Forum in October 2019. EYH will increase their advocacy work during the Forum by exploring with employers how to better support homeless young people into work.

Future funding

- **Look for funding to extend to pre and post-EET support:** Whilst Transforming Futures is focused on providing support for young people ready to access EET, it was frequently mentioned that impact could be enhanced by providing pre-EET support for those that are not yet ready to start employment, education or training. If funding is available in future, a programme of this nature could be designed to be delivered in parallel to Transforming Futures and could focus specifically on confidence building and providing mental health support such as counselling. This would increase young people's emotional wellbeing to be ready for EET. Young people who 'graduate' from the pre-EET programme could then enter Transforming Futures.
- **Maintain support for young people who have entered work:** Funding for a programme like Transforming Futures should be extended to the period directly after a young person has started EET. During this time, vulnerable young people need support and incentives to be able to sustain the placement and have someone to rely on when facing potential setbacks.

"Aberdeen Foyer has an open door and you can just walk in and say hello. Usually you get a hello back! Past members of other programmes come in to let the team leader know how they're doing, if they got a job or anything... it's an open place to improve yourself" (Adam, 23, Aberdeen)

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