

Fair Start Scotland

Annual Report
Year 3



Contents

Ministerial Foreword	3
<hr/>	
1. Introduction	5
<hr/>	
2. Story of Year 3: Highlights	9
<hr/>	
3. Experience of Services	13
3.1: Participants	13
3.2: Partnerships	20
3.3: Employers	26
<hr/>	
4. Summary and Next Steps	32
<hr/>	
5. Annexes	34
Annex A – Providers How Fair Start Scotland is Delivered	35
Annex B – Finance	37
Bibliography	38
Endnotes	39

Ministerial Foreword

As the new Minister for Just Transition, Employment and Fair Work, I am pleased to present this third Annual Report on Fair Start Scotland (FSS), our national employability support service. This report shows how well the service has responded to the significant challenges that COVID-19 has brought over the last 18 months, and how we have been able to maintain the momentum on our journey towards our No One Left Behind ambitions of locally aligned and integrated employability support.

Despite the challenges of lockdown in the early part of Year 3, we moved quickly to provide continuity of support for participants, flexing the delivery model to encourage new referral routes and virtual engagement, and allowing “Day 1 unemployed” access to services for those people experiencing the most disadvantage.

In response to ongoing labour market uncertainty, the then Minister for Fair Work Business and Skills decided to extend FSS contracted delivery for a further two years to March 2023, again providing support and much needed stability for those facing unemployment.

Our quarterly statistics releases and supporting evaluation findings show that the pandemic has affected all aspects of FSS participation. Perhaps not surprisingly, those with health-related barriers were less inclined to engage with services. It's likely that the national lockdowns and health concerns over COVID-19 have discouraged more vulnerable people from engaging with support and that for many, seeking employment was not a priority at this time. We have seen a change in the types of people engaging with FSS services: participants were more likely to be younger (aged 16-34) and more recently out of work (less than 6 months unemployed). COVID-19 impacts also led to lower rates of completion for equalities data and other characteristics, meaning that we are less able to report on progress in supporting some groups this year.

However, despite the pandemic, the evaluation evidence shows clearly that those who did join FSS rated the support and ethos of the service very highly and that many moved into work as a result. The offer of up to 12 months in-work support is also highly valued by participants and the majority of those who start work go on to sustain their employment. Furthermore, the economic evaluation of the service shows that FSS delivers value for money and positive benefits, not just for those who participate, but also for Scottish society and the public purse.

Challenges remain, particularly in decluttering the complex local funding and provision landscape, and sharpening our focus on reaching out to those communities that have been pushed further away from the labour market by the economic impacts of COVID-19. Through our continuous improvement initiatives we are engaging with under-represented groups and will also publish reviews of specialist services – Supported Employment (SE) and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) – later this year. We are also using provider and participant feedback to enhance our support, ensuring that we can respond to the changing employability landscape and the different ways that participants want to engage with services.

As we enter the fourth year of FSS delivery, we are firmly focused on high-quality delivery and outcomes, and making our services inclusive and accessible for all. We continue to work towards our No One Left Behind ambitions, working with local government and other partners to develop a locally responsive and flexible employability system that delivers the right support at the right time for those who need it most.



Richard Lochhead MSP
Minister for Just Transition,
Employment and Fair Work

1. Introduction: Employability services in Scotland



1. Introduction

Fair Start Scotland

Fair Start Scotland (FSS) launched in April 2018 and has been delivering employability support across the country in response to the [“Creating a Fairer Scotland: A new future for employability support in Scotland”](#) consultation.

The aim of the service is to support people towards and into work through personalised, one-to-one support, tailored to an individual’s circumstances, treating them with fairness, dignity and respect.

The COVID-19 pandemic had, and continues to have, a profound impact on the service and its users, and our priority remains delivering a quality service which supports people in their journeys towards and into work.

Fair Start Scotland Extension Period 2021-23

FSS contracts were awarded in October 2017 to a mixed economy of suppliers from the public, third and private sectors to deliver the service across Scotland. Launched for an initial three year period, the contracts were set to expire on 31 March 2021, but carried the option of a two-year extension, pending performance.

In July 2020, the then Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills took the decision to extend Fair Start Scotland contracts for a further two years, allowing more people to join the service up to 31 March 2023, and providing consistent support throughout a period of uncertainty.

The contract extension has provided a strong foundation from which to respond to COVID-19-related labour market changes, as well as delivering on our ‘test and learn’ approach to employability support. As part of our continuous improvement activities, we have already made a number of improvements to FSS delivery to better reflect participants’ needs in these challenging times.

Extending the current contracts has also allowed further development time to deliver on our [No One Left Behind](#) ambitions. Building on the foundation of successful FSS services, we continue to work with local government partners and the broader public, third and private sectors to develop an employability system that delivers joined-up, flexible, responsive, person-centred provision.

Labour Market – Year 3

Scotland’s economy and labour market faced unprecedented challenges during the third year of delivery of FSS following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. The first lockdown in Spring 2020 led to falls in demand for staff as businesses were required to close or limit activity in line with necessary public health restrictions. This led to record declines in people in PAYE employment and a sharp surge in the number of people claiming Universal Credit as people fell out of work and incomes reduced.

While Scotland’s official unemployment rate remained relatively low over the year, supported by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, Real Time Information data published by HMRC showed a large decline in the number of payrolled employees in Scotland. For example, between February and December 2020, the number of payrolled employees in Scotland fell by more than 85,000 (3.6%).ⁱ

We also know that the COVID-19 crisis has not impacted everybody equally. For example, there are indications that disabled people have been disproportionately impacted with Scotland’s disability employment gap widening between 2019 and 2020.ⁱⁱ Also, the unemployment rate of 16-24 year olds increased by more than any other age group,ⁱⁱⁱ partly driven by the sectoral nature of the crisis and that young people are employed in large numbers in customer facing sectors, e.g. accommodation and food, which have been particularly affected by public health restrictions.

1. Introduction

While there are signs of recovery in our labour market in 2021, we recognise that even when the labour market is performing well, inequality of outcomes for particular groups remain. Women, disabled people, minority ethnic groups and lone parents still face barriers and challenges to entering and progressing in work, and negative labour market experiences for young people can have long-lasting effects. In addition to the FSS extension, The Scottish Government has also scaled up its Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) offer to support people made redundant, and established a package of support to help young people through the Young Person's Guarantee and low income families through the Parental Employment Support Fund.

Impacts of COVID-19 on Fair Start Scotland delivery and performance

In March 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, referrals to the service from Jobcentre Plus were suspended until June 2020. This was to allow the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to refocus their workforce on processing the unprecedented volume of Universal Credit claims made during lockdown. DWP statistics show 3.2 million claims were made between 16 March and 23 June 2020.^{iv}

Referrals continued to be made through “third party organisations” via Service Providers or alternatively by self-referral during this time. However, as a result of the lockdown restrictions implemented, Service Providers had to significantly alter the ways in which they promoted FSS during Year 3, leading to the increased use of social media campaigns to generate referrals. As a result, the vast majority of referrals made between March 2020 and June 2020 were generated by Service Providers via digital platforms and social media.

Service Providers also had to adapt quickly to ensure they were able to provide support to new and existing participants in the face of lockdown restrictions. Since the initial lockdown was imposed on 23 March 2020, Fair Start Scotland Providers had to pause their preferred face-to-face interaction offer and deliver support to participants either over the phone or online.

Through the flexibility of support inherent to FSS, Service Providers were able to transition to a fully remote delivery model with minimal impact to participants. Evidence from Service Providers demonstrates that this approach continued to meet individual's needs, and that it was particularly beneficial to some participants who had previously found it difficult to attend support meetings in person (e.g. due to childcare demands or because of rural transport issues).

The change to a digital support model also appeared to have a less positive impact on the collection of some demographic and equalities monitoring data, with a corresponding increase in the levels of “unknown” or “not reported” data in Year 3 across a range of demographic variables. We have been working with analysts and Service Providers to improve response rates throughout the year, but this has impacted on the patterns of participation for some more disadvantaged groups, as seen in the Story of Year 3: Highlights section. For more information, see the Data Quality section in the Background Information.

When looking at the length of time that participants had been unemployed before joining FSS services, we see a marked shift in the patterns of participation from Years 1 and 2. The figures in the Highlights section show that Year 3 participants were far more likely to have been unemployed for 6 months or less before starting on the service, and that the proportion of people long term unemployed (for 24 months or more) accessing services had dropped considerably (by 20 percentage points).

We also see that the pattern of participation for those who are both disabled and long term unemployed has changed, showing a marked drop in starts in Year 3, from around 20% for Years 1 and 2 to 9% in Year 3. The proportion of “unknown” data recorded for this group increased by 4 percentage points to 10%. The changes in the overall patterns of participation this year suggest that the COVID-19 lockdown and (probably) shielding behaviours have led to less engagement by those who are more vulnerable to illness.

1. Introduction

Purpose of Report

This report highlights the progress FSS has made in its third year and provides an insight into the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on service delivery.

The report draws on a range of sources including analysis of management information, demographic and background characteristics of Year 3 participants and information from Service Providers who deliver FSS, including first-hand experiences of the participants themselves.

Many of the findings outlined are taken from the [Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 4 – Overview of Year 3](#), published on the Scottish Government website. The Scottish Government also publishes quarterly statistics on the performance of FSS. These can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/>

Case Study

SK's Story

SK is in her fifties and although she has lived in this country for a number of years had very limited English. She started on Fair Start Scotland during the school holidays and therefore was able to bring one of her daughters to her appointments to translate for her. SK had limited work experience.

SK made all her own clothes as well as clothes for family and friends and was interested in finding work as a sewing machinist. However, she had arthritis in both hands which made working for long periods difficult and painful for her.

After completing an initial assessment, an action plan was agreed with SK. The action plan incorporated a wide range of support interventions tailored to her specific needs. SK's key worker arranged a referral to a weekly ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) course along with attending a lunch club to further progress her English. SK's key worker also made a referral to Occupational Health. This allowed health care professionals to assess SK's arthritis and provide advice and recommendations regarding any adjustments that may be required in the workplace. A referral was also made to the Service Providers' NHS Health in Work provision and SK attended several appointments with a nurse where she received advice on pain management, exercises for her hands, support splints and a recommendation to take regular breaks to rest her hands when working.

SK's key worker approached a local employer who manufactured clothing, including uniforms for the NHS and other services, to discuss any job opportunities. A meeting was arranged and the key worker accompanied SK to meet with the manager. She brought her items of clothing that she had made to show the employer, who was impressed with the quality. The key worker suggested reasonable adjustments that could be implemented to aid SK with her arthritis including an application to Access to Work and recommended a work trial to see if she liked that type of work. This was agreed by both SK and the employer and the work trial was set up.

On completion of the work trial, SK was offered a job as a machinist which she accepted. SK has now been in her job for two years.

2. Story of Year 3: Highlights



2. Story of Year 3: Highlights

Key figures^v

Year 3 (Apr 2020 – Mar 2021)



Despite the significant impact that COVID-19 has had on Fair Start Scotland, the service **continued to perform well in its third year.**



14,000 referrals were made to the service in Year 3.



10,357 people joined the service in Year 3.



4,170 people who have joined the service started a job in Year 3 by June 2021.

Years 1 - 3 (Apr 2018 – Mar 2021)



A total of **48,755 referrals** were made to Fair Start Scotland in the first three years of the service. Of those, **67% subsequently chose to participate.**



A total of **32,505 people** joined the service.



11,522 (35%) participants had started a job.



71% of those who started a job sustained employment for at least 3 months.



78% of those who sustained employment for at least 3 months went on to reach at least 6 months.



77% of those who sustained employment for 6 months went on to reach at least 1 year.

Comparisons between Years 1, 2 and 3



The pause on Jobcentre Plus referrals impacted the overall number of people who joined the service in Year 3. However the conversion rate from referrals to starts and job starts both increased in Year 3.

2. Story of Year 3: Highlights

Key figures

Comparisons between Years 1, 2 and 3

Number of people who joined the service



Year 1: **10,063**
Year 2: **12,085**
Year 3: **10,357**

Conversion rates for referrals to starts



Year 1: **57%**
Year 2: **71%**
Year 3: **74%**

Number of people who started jobs¹



Year 1: **3257**
Year 2: **4095**
Year 3: **4170**

Who is using Fair Start Scotland?²



64% of those joining Fair Start Scotland reported having a long-term health condition.



43% of those joining Fair Start Scotland were disabled.³

Proportions of women / men joining the service

Year 1



Female: **35%**
Male: **65%**

Year 2



Female: **37%**
Male: **63%**

Year 3⁴



Female: **40%**
Male: **59%**

Minority Ethnic participants joining the service



Year 1: **364**



Year 2: **739**



Year 3: **454**

Compared with Year 2, Year 3 had:

- A higher proportion of female participants
- A lower proportion of disabled participants
- A higher proportion of younger participants (aged 16-34)

With the exception of lone parents, which remained the same compared to Year 2, Year 3 had a lower proportion of:

- Participants with convictions
- Refugees
- Those who are care experienced

1 It should be noted that FSS provides 12-18 months pre-employment support, so the number of job starts reported during Year 1 and Year 2 may relate to those starting on the service in earlier years.

2 It is important to note that the change to a digital support model has also impacted the collection of equalities data. We have been working with Service Providers to ensure response rates are maximised. For more information, see the Data Quality section in the Background Information of the Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary.

3 These figures are for overall starts on service up to end March 2021.

4 Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

2. Story of Year 3: Highlights

Key figures

Length of time unemployed before joining Fair Start Scotland

% Unemployed less than 6 months



Year 1: **3%**
Year 2: **18%**
Year 3: **27%**

% Unemployed 24 months or more



Year 1: **36%**
Year 2: **41%**
Year 3: **21%**

Early leavers



11,954 (49%) of people who started Fair Start Scotland left the service early.⁵



Where we have a complete picture (i.e. data from Years 1 and 2) **49%** of people left the service early.



There has been a reduction over time, **53%** of participants who joined in **Year 1** left early, and **46%** of participants who joined in **Year 2** left early.

What people think of Fair Start Scotland^{vi}



Participants' overall satisfaction with the service has remained consistently high across each year of the service.



95% of people feel they were treated with dignity and respect (a 4 percentage point increase from Year 2).



82% of people felt the service took account of their individual needs and circumstances (a 2 percentage point increase from Year 2).



84% of people felt the service offered support to improve their general quality of life and well-being (a 3 percentage point increase from Year 2).



83% felt they were in control of their progress on the service (a 3 percentage point increase from Year 2).

⁵ An early leaver is defined as someone who leaves the service before the end of the pre-employment support period without achieving a known job outcome. Early leaver rates can only be reported for start cohorts where enough time has passed in pre-employment support and for outcomes to be achieved. The figures here cover the first three years of delivery and the first quarter of Year 4.

Source: Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary 7 (26 August 2020).

3. Experience of Services



3. Experience of Services

3.1: Participants

Fair Start Scotland continues to build on the key principles that we know are important to participants, that employability support should be voluntary, flexible, centred around the needs of the individual and that people should be treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

In response to participant feedback from the Year 2 Evaluation we have worked with Service Providers to implement various continuous improvement activities to better tailor our services to individual needs.

During Year 3 Service Providers and participants had to adapt to the restrictions that the pandemic presented whilst continuing to ensure that, where possible, progress was made towards and into fair and sustainable work. For example, Service Providers sought feedback from participants on their engagement preferences during lockdown. In Year 4 we are moving towards a blended delivery model that incorporates the successful elements of our COVID-19 response.

“The support I’ve received has been immense. I felt in control of my journey at all times.”

FSS Participant

Voluntary Approach

90% of participants knew the service was voluntary.^{vii}

The voluntary nature of FSS is one of the main driving forces behind the service. People should be motivated to participate without the threat of benefit sanctions and evidence from Year 3 continues to suggest this approach is welcomed by participants.

“I knew the time was right to get back into employment and a routine. The process of going through the Fair Start Scotland service was seamless. It was so easy, helping me get to a point where I was comfortable applying for different roles.”

FSS Participant

Dignity and Respect

95% of participants felt that they were treated with dignity and respect.^{viii}

As FSS moves into its fourth year of delivery, the evidence from the first three years clearly shows that treating people with dignity and respect remains a key principle that is embedded throughout the service.

“Fair Start Scotland has been really supportive. I was frequently asked about my mental health, which I’ve found extremely important. Not only did they support me to find new employment, but they also have a genuine interest in my well-being.”

FSS Participant

3. Experience of Services

3.1: Participants

Person-Centred Approach

90% of participants continued to access support by phone during the lockdown period.^{viii}

During the third year of FSS delivery and amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, it was more important than ever that support was centred around each person's individual needs and circumstances. The range of support offered by Service Providers adapted to address the challenges that lockdown presented. Examples of this include Service Providers responding to requests for assistance from participants about ordering medicines online, shielding and the latest COVID-19 guidance and support available. Individually tailored action plans remained the key starting point for a participant's journey, and these were generated and updated digitally, as a result of lockdown restrictions preventing face-to-face support.

// I went to Fair Start Scotland after caring for my father for 15 years, who had to go into full-time care. I was depressed, run down and couldn't sleep. The people at Fair Start Scotland gave me help and advice. I received counselling which was a great source of help to me. They really cared and helped me with my well-being. I am now working in a care home, my confidence is back and I feel better than I have in a long time. Even with the dark times we are in now I have moved on in a positive way thanks to the great work that they do."

FSS Participant

Pre-Work Support

82% of participants felt the support took account of their individual needs and circumstances.^{viii}

We continued to flex the FSS delivery model and adapt it in response to the impacts of COVID-19, in line with our "test and learn" approach to improving services. A number of easements were introduced to the service at the start of lockdown, allowing for quicker access to the service and to respond to the restrictions on face-to-face interventions. These easements included:

- ▶ Amending the induction process to enable delivery by phone or digital means.
- ▶ No requirement for Service Providers to carry out face-to-face contact with participants. However weekly interventions continued to be carried out via phone calls or other digital means.
- ▶ No requirement for physical signatures on the participant agreement.
- ▶ Participants remained able to "pause" their time on service to facilitate any health or personal situations that may have arisen as a result of COVID-19.
- ▶ Amending the financial support model for Service Providers to protect their delivery capacity and ensure continuity of support for participants.

// The help I received from FSS to build and improve my confidence and communication skills definitely helped my progression into work."

FSS Participant

3. Experience of Services

3.1: Participants

Service Providers adapted quickly to ensure participants remained supported from the outset of the pandemic. They embraced the digital model to incorporate one-to-one appointments, webinars and online group developmental sessions into their support offer so that multiple participants could attend. These events not only focused on employability support, but also helped to support participants' mental health and well-being throughout the continuous changing of lockdown restrictions.

“ During Year 3 we supported nearly 1,000 people through various employability, mental health and well-being, and pre-employment route ways. We developed new content and adapted our existing content to be more engaging in a virtual environment.”

FSS Service Provider

Whilst the change to a digital form of support was largely favoured by participants, it presented additional barriers to those who may not have been able to access the resources required to attend their appointments or obtain valuable support. Service Providers undertook a range of actions to ensure that participants were not digitally excluded by purchasing and supplying mobile phones, Chromebooks and data top-ups as well as liaising with Connecting Scotland and charities to provide equipment. Thus, participants were able to continue to receive support, and for some, maintain an essential connection with the outside world.

“ Just wanted to share my first video call experience. It was so nice, the participant has advised that her daughter moved out on Monday so she has not seen anyone, so I talked her through a FaceTime call and she was absolutely over the moon that she could see me – it honestly gave me such an overwhelming feeling that I had made someone’s day by a FaceTime call.”

FSS key worker

As FSS moves into its extension period, and with the easing of lockdown restrictions, we continue to work together with Service Providers to learn from participants' feedback. We have permanently moved to a more blended delivery approach of face-to-face and digital support to ensure that FSS continues to deliver a high-quality service that best suits each person's individual circumstances.

In-Work Support

The majority of participants who took up each type of In-Work Support found it useful, ranging from 80% for one-to-one regular support, 83% for workplace inductions, to 100% for support with financial guidance.^{viii}

“ I got a role with the COVID-19 Helpline during the pandemic. It could be stressful at times but Fair Start Scotland’s In-Work Support allowed me to discuss my anxieties and provided support and advice where needed.”

FSS Participant

3. Experience of Services

3.1: Participants

In-Work Support continues to be a vital part of the support offered as part of the service, especially in the wake of COVID-19 and continuing labour market uncertainty. Delivery of In-Work Support has been the element of services least impacted by COVID-19, as the majority of activity is carried out via regular phone calls or other digital means.

Evaluation evidence from the participant phone survey shows that fewer people had been offered (and took up) In-Work Support in Year 3 than in previous years. This is likely due to Year 3 participants being closer to the labour market, with fewer barriers and having spent less time out of work. However, the survey results also show that the majority of participants who do take up In-Work Support continue to find it very useful.

// We have several staff being supported by Fair Start Scotland through their In-Work Support. They have been helpful in advising and helping us support new colleagues as much as we possibly can during this unsettling time."

FSS Employer

Health

64% of those joining Fair Start Scotland reported having a long-term health condition.^{viii}

Mental health conditions remain the most commonly reported health condition in Year 3, representing 36% of all participants with a health condition.

As previously outlined, we have seen a change in the pattern of participation for disabled participants, with an overall reduction in starts by disabled people as well as for those who are both disabled and unemployed for two years or more. This change is likely due to the impact of lockdown restrictions and the introduction of shielding for those who are more vulnerable, and has also impacted on how Supported Employment (SE) and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) was delivered in Year 3.

Supported Employment (SE)

732 participants had received SE through FSS as of 31 March 2021.^{ix}

In 2019, the Scottish Government conducted an internal review of how SE was working in practice, and where improvements could be made. The review incorporated a broad range of evaluation activities including field visits to Service Providers where case management systems were reviewed, and a Service Provider self-assessment, supported by a review of participant case notes. In addition, a survey was undertaken with Scottish Local Authorities regarding their Supported Employment Provision. The Scottish Government then commissioned an independent review of how SE is being delivered across Scotland and how Fair Start Scotland SE provision fits with that.

This review fulfils commitments by Scottish Government as part of Scotland's Learning Disability Strategy, "[The Keys to Life](#)" – Scottish Government's framework for improving quality of life for people with learning disabilities and "[A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Employment Action Plan](#)".

The review seeks to address the following core research questions:

- ▶ Where is supported employment being implemented and where are the gaps in provision?
- ▶ What type of service is being provided by local authorities, for whom, and what are the outcomes?
- ▶ What are some of the reasons for gaps in the service and how can these be addressed?
- ▶ How can the service providers be further supported to promote greater consistency and use of supported employment services?

A final report of findings will be published in late 2021.

3. Experience of Services

3.1: Participants

Individual Placement and Support (IPS)

60 participants were receiving IPS support on Fair Start Scotland as of 31 March 2021.*

IPS is an integral part of the Scottish employment support landscape for people who are affected by severe and enduring mental ill health. Without this support, many people would find it more challenging to enter into the labour market.

An independent review of IPS was commissioned in the summer of 2020, with the aim of assessing current service quality and providing practical recommendations for Service Providers to build capacity and improve delivery.

Elements assessed included the profile of clients, integration of IPS workers and FSS teams, structure of IPS teams, commissioning structures and training/qualifications of IPS delivery staff. Future workforce development needs were also evaluated. The Scottish Government will respond to the findings of the IPS review, with a view to improving the overall quality of specialist support services as part of our transition towards No One Left Behind. Full findings of the review will be published in Autumn 2021.

Service Providers had to adapt to how they delivered IPS to FSS participants during year 3. Here is just one example of how this was achieved:

// We have been able to adapt and continue to deliver all our health provision, including our Health in Work programme delivered by the NHS for people with physical and/or mental health issues, and our IPS provision delivered by the Scottish Association for Mental Health for people with enduring mental health issues. Appointments for these services were carried out by telephone or virtually and we found that the rate of attendance increased from around 70% to around 90%. We were also able to introduce a telephone counselling service delivered by Well-Being Solutions, which helped participants cope with bereavement, the effects of lockdown and other mental health or mental well-being issues. Take up of this service grew in the second half of Year 3".

FSS Service Provider

3. Experience of Services

3.1: Participants

Case Study

Joseph's Story

Joseph has a learning disability that was caused by a lack of oxygen to his brain during his birth. Joseph needs support with many aspects of adult life, including all stages of any recruitment process. Joseph has limited literacy skills and he needs support with IT.

When Joseph started on Fair Start Scotland, he had recently lost a job that he had held for years in a food production warehouse. He knew he wanted another job, but he did not know where to start. FSS started working with Joseph and it became clear that he would benefit from the Supported Employment model. After expressing an interest in retail, Joseph was supported to secure a volunteering position in a charity shop to help him improve his confidence and people skills.

When the opportunity for a paid internship with a distillery arose, Joseph was interested in applying. He was supported through the recruitment process with interview support, and attended various information sessions with the employer to gain an understanding of the company and the role. Joseph was offered the position and continues to be supported during his time in work, for example with his key worker providing advice on how to effectively manage his finances.

The internship position is for a period of six months and Joseph is already very proud of his own progression and achievements during his time on the service.

3. Experience of Services

3.1: Participants

Summary

- ▶ The number of people who understand that FSS is voluntary and who believe that they have been treated with dignity and respect continues to increase as the service matures.
- ▶ In collaboration with partners, FSS remained accessible to those who needed support during the pandemic.
- ▶ We continue to consider and develop the lessons learned from both Years 1 and 2 to ensure that FSS continues to serve the individual needs of participants.
- ▶ Participants in Year 3 continue to value the underlying principles of FSS and are positive about their experiences of receiving support.

Next Steps

- ▶ Whilst we recognise the impact of COVID-19 on FSS delivery during Year 3, we also acknowledge the innovative solutions and easements which were implemented. The Scottish Government will use this learning and experience to review delivery model options post pandemic, ensuring that FSS continues to provide person-centred tailored support.
- ▶ The Scottish Government will seek opportunities to review and implement recommendations from the Supported Employment and Individual Placement and Support external reviews in collaboration with a range of stakeholders and as part of our journey towards implementing No One Left Behind.
- ▶ The Scottish Government will continue to actively seek out and learn from the lived experience of participants and other service users to further develop and improve employment support services across Scotland, incorporating other policies and initiatives such as Connecting Scotland.

3. Experience of Services

3.2: Partnerships

Collaboration with a wide range of partners continues to be a key component of Fair Start Scotland's success. It was vital that existing and new relationships were strengthened and developed during Year 3 to meet the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic, ensuring that those who needed support were able to receive it.

Although the lack of face-to-face interaction challenged existing ways of engagement both on a participant and a partnership level, alternative methods were implemented proving to be successful and leading to further developments implemented during the service extension.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, we continue to progress activities to widen the reach of FSS to under-represented groups. This has been achieved through our continuous improvement initiatives, extending Day 1 unemployment eligibility and Service Provider collaboration with a broad range of local support organisations. Improving services to under-represented groups remains a key priority as we progress through the extension period.

A key theme that continues from both Year 2 and Year 3 Service Provider feedback and evaluation was around the crowded nature of the current employability landscape, potentially causing confusion for individuals and referring organisations. The Scottish Government continues to work with local government and other partners to encourage greater alignment within the employability landscape as we progress towards No One Left Behind.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

47% of participants in Year 3 were referred on to FSS by Jobcentre Plus.⁶

The Scottish Government continued to engage with DWP throughout the third year of delivery to ensure that the FSS service offer remained visible during lockdown. Whilst understandably DWP switched their focus to benefit payments in the early stages of lockdown, the Scottish Government and DWP worked collaboratively to agree a temporary streamlined referral process which allowed thousands of participants to commence their journey on FSS without the requirement to go through Jobcentre Plus verification checks.

The Scottish Government also worked closely with DWP to ensure that as soon as DWP were able to refocus their efforts on supporting individuals back to work, FSS marketing materials were updated across all Scottish Jobcentre Plus offices, with Work Coaches receiving refresher sessions on the FSS service offer. The recruitment of additional DWP Work Coaches also allowed Service Providers to continue to engage with DWP during the referral pause, delivering presentations at JCP team meetings to ensure all new staff were fully aware of the benefits of FSS support and how to refer individuals. Since the final quarter of 2020-21, DWP referral volumes have returned to pre-COVID-19 levels.

⁶ Scottish Government Management Information

3. Experience of Services

3.2: Partnerships

As part of our collaborative approach to continuous improvement, the Scottish Government and DWP took action to implement changes in Year 3 to ensure early and effective engagement with potential participants and those who are most vulnerable to the effects of long-term unemployment. As a result, we extended eligibility for particularly vulnerable groups to allow “Day 1 unemployed” access, including:

- ▶ Individuals with a conviction
- ▶ Care experienced young people
- ▶ Lone parents
- ▶ Refugees
- ▶ Individuals from minority ethnic groups
- ▶ Individuals who are resident in the 15% most deprived SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) areas
- ▶ Individuals who are unemployed with a health condition that is a barrier to work

Case Study

Connor's Story

Connor joined Fair Start Scotland after finding out about the service from Jobcentre Plus. Connor is on the autistic spectrum and found it difficult to concentrate in his previous role at a call centre. Connor was unemployed for seven months before joining the service, leaving him feeling very demotivated.

Connor was provided a dedicated key worker who supported him with job searching, applications and identifying other areas of support that would help him in his journey towards work. “With the support of my key worker I was able to do various courses online which covered everything from interview skills and communication skills, as well as receiving mental health support. At the beginning of the courses, I was apprehensive. However, the trainer put me at ease and really helped me”.

Connor was eventually successful in getting a job with Glasgow City Council in a graduate position within change management.

3. Experience of Services

3.2: Partnerships

Community Benefits

Service Providers continue to play an active role in their local communities, despite the challenges presented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaboration with charities such as the Prince's Trust has continued through digital fundraising via social media and where possible, staff volunteer days have been utilised to facilitate support to communities where face-to-face contact is not required, such as the increased demand for support from local food banks, and COVID-19 shielding helplines.

Service Providers have also worked with a range of supermarkets and food production/distribution companies to respond to the increased demand in this sector. Through promotion on digital platforms, and working in collaboration with partners such as the DWP, over 500 individuals were moved into this area of work during the first lockdown.

Moving forward, Service Providers continue to engage with local authorities and third party referral organisations to identify where they can maximise the impact of their support to their local communities as we continue to move into a post-COVID-19 world.

Third Party Referral Organisations

53% of referrals in Year 3 have come from outwith JCP.

The importance of collaborative working between Service Providers, DWP and local communities remained vitally important throughout Year 3.

However, with the temporary pause to DWP referrals and lockdown restrictions impacting the ways in which the service could be promoted, Service Providers were required to identify and undertake new methods of sourcing referrals in Year 3.

This presented challenges as the majority of engagement with third party organisations was previously undertaken face-to-face and many had to close due to lockdown restrictions.

Although promoting the service through digital platforms had been undertaken in Years 1 and 2, Service Providers had to adapt the way they reached a wider audience. For the majority, this involved an increase in social media promotion, for example Facebook and Twitter. This proved to be successful and Service Providers will continue to use this method as a key promotion tool throughout the extension period. Other forms of engagement included leaflet drops with housing associations, education sectors, GP Practices and the NHS.

Over the course of Years 1 to 3, there has been an increase in the proportion of participants from the two younger age bands (16-34) joining FSS, with 52% of all starts in Year 3 aged between 16 and 34.⁷ This may be a result of the changes in promotion of FSS services.

During Year 3, and similar to the trend between Years 1 and 2, the number of people referred and then choosing to join FSS has significantly increased, with the number of people leaving the service early continuing to reduce.

However, as part of the recommendations from the Year 2 Evaluation Report, we recognised the continued need to ensure that FSS was accessible to those groups who are currently under-represented on the service for example, people from minority ethnic communities, lone parents and care experienced young people. In response, the Scottish Government worked in collaboration with Service Providers during Year 3 to develop action plans to identify and engage with both national and local organisations to extend the reach of FSS. Consultation has been undertaken with a wide range of organisations including Who Cares Scotland, Refugee Resettlement teams, Cyrenians, RNIB and Pathways Scotland.

⁷ [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary – gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/04/Scotland's_Devolved_Employment_Services_statistical_summary.pdf)

3. Experience of Services

3.2: Partnerships

Training workshops were also held digitally where both Scottish Government and Service Provider staff attended to develop an understanding of Race Equality and Disability Awareness, facilitated by Radiant and Brighter and Values Into Action Scotland. This learning has continued into Year 4, with joint working groups established to embed lessons learned and identify further opportunities for engaging with engaging with minority ethnic and disabled participants.

Service Providers also continued to carry out local and national partnership events through digital means. The transition to online meetings allowed for additional organisations to attend and further opportunities to embed the FSS offer.

In partnership with JCP and Service Providers we have continued with action to facilitate more appropriate referrals from JCP, responding to JCP's recruitment of a large number of new Work Coaches and the introduction of new DWP-led employability services. In some locations Service Providers and Work Coaches made good use of virtual three-way appointments to ensure that potential participants were fully aware of the service offer, allowing them the opportunity to determine whether it was suitable for them.

Local Authorities

Through our partnership with Local Authorities we have made progress with our jointly managed No One Left Behind approach which provides employability support to individuals of all ages. The first set of statistics, reporting on those receiving support through No One Left Behind in the first year, shows 3,824 individuals benefiting directly from No One Left Behind Employability delivery. This is part of a much wider range of local employability support activity, with the SLAED Indicators Report 2019/20 reporting that over 36,000 unemployed people participated in Local Authority funded or operated employability activities over the same period.

We have also made progress on implementation of the Young Person's Guarantee with local partnerships having a significant role in the design and delivery of a range of local support measures, including support to employers to help create new and additional employment opportunities, including apprenticeships. Our jointly managed partnership approach is helping remove the barriers to engaging and participating in support and helping to increase confidence, skills and experience, assisting people to progress towards or enter employment. The example below from Dundee demonstrates how partners, including FSS Service Providers, are able to work together, across and outside organisational boundaries, to prioritise the needs of local service users.

Case Study

Local Authority Discover Work Dundee Group.

The Dundee Fair Start Scotland Service Provider is a key partner within the Local Authority Discover Work Dundee Group. The group includes a wide range of partner services who work collectively in supporting participants into employment. We have worked well together sharing and discussing all opportunities for the Dundee area and working on how we can best strengthen this. We are in the process of building an Action Plan for the area of improvements and to promote the services throughout Dundee. The Network is built on trust, openness and ensuring that everyone shares their views and ideas on working together through the pandemic to ensure the needs of our customers are supported.

3. Experience of Services

3.2: Partnerships

Criminal Justice

As part of our efforts to continuously improve the service offer to our participants throughout the lifetime of FSS and following a successful simplified eligibility pilot in Years 1 and 2, the Scottish Government took the decision to allow individuals with convictions “Day 1” access to FSS, thereby ensuring that they, along with others with more significant barriers, have immediate access to support during these challenging labour market conditions.

Summary

- ▶ Effective partnership working during Year 3 ensured that FSS participants continued to receive support towards and into employment.
- ▶ The Scottish Government and Service Providers remained committed to the aim of widening the reach of FSS to our most vulnerable participants, undertaking tangible activities to increase the knowledge and awareness of frontline staff, and ensure that support is accessible and tailored to their needs.
- ▶ Increased collaboration between Service Providers and partners continues to have a positive impact on the service and its participants.
- ▶ The Scottish Government introduced changes to the eligibility conditions for the service, allowing immediate access to support for a wider range of disadvantaged groups.

Next Steps

- ▶ Looking forward to Year 4, we will continue to work closely with DWP to implement key eligibility changes to the service to help those most likely to be disadvantaged due to COVID-19.
- ▶ We will continue to work collaboratively with local employability partnerships (LEPs) as part of local governance measures to progress towards closer alignment and flexibility of services.
- ▶ Through ongoing engagement with colleagues in the Scottish Prison Service and DWP, we will jointly undertake a number of pilots to help promote the FSS offer to individuals with convictions pre- and post-liberation, ensuring support is immediately available post-liberation.
- ▶ We will work closely with Service Providers, Encompass and the Women’s Support Network to undertake a series of pilots to ensure that FSS remains available and accessible to those who most require support.

3. Experience of Services

3.2: Partnerships

Case Study

Clare's Story

Clare left her previous supervisor role in retail as she has Hypermobility and Crohn's Disease and the role was becoming too physically demanding for her. This had a very negative impact on her emotional and physical health. Clare's confidence took a huge knock and she felt she could no longer work in that role. She wanted to move to an office-based position that would allow her to help others like her.

Clare required support to help build her confidence so her key worker arranged for her to attend several workshops as well as creating a new CV and cover letter that effectively portrayed the transferrable skills she had gained in her previous role. Clare also attended an applications and interviews workshops held by the Service Provider which helped build her confidence and self-belief when it came to engaging with potential employers.

Clare's key worker identified a role as a DWP job coach and after discussion with her key worker, Clare felt this would be a good opportunity for her. She was eager to apply and was supported by her key worker to fill out the application form and accompanying documents required. Clare was delighted to be offered an interview, receiving support in preparing for this through mock interviews to ensure she was comfortable with the process.

The interview was a success and Clare was offered the role. She was delighted with the outcome as she felt the new job would greatly improve her well-being as well as her financial position. Clare said: "I am really appreciative of all the support I received on Fair Start Scotland. The coaching I received while on the service gave me the confidence I needed to apply for the job coach role. Everyone took the time to understand my needs as an individual and find a job perfect for me."

Clare continues to be supported through In-Work Support to ensure she is settling in well and has everything she needs to succeed.

3. Experience of Services

3.3: Employers

Building and maintaining relationships with employers remains a key aspect of the Scottish Governments, ambition to deliver and promote Fair Work Principles through FSS. As Service Providers continue to establish new relationships in the face of a changing employability landscape post COVID-19, they continue to educate and support employers on policies such as the Scottish Living Wage and the Scottish Business Pledge, while also supporting wider ambitions like Tackling Child Poverty and the Gender Pay Gap by supporting people into fair and sustainable work.

Service Providers had to significantly adapt their approach to employer engagement during Year 3, as entire sectors such as hospitality and non-essential retail were impacted by lockdown restrictions. They had to focus their engagement activity on sectors where they identified increased demand, such as health and social care. Working closely with recruitment companies like Staffline, Brightwork and Pertemps, Service Providers have been able to fill roles across various key worker areas including hospitals and COVID-19 testing and vaccination centres.

Service Providers were also required to modify how they helped participants prepare for job interviews and assessments, the majority of which were undertaken online. Lockdown restrictions also impacted on how Service Providers developed employer relationships and gained an understanding of each organisation's culture and employee requirements.

Despite the barriers experienced by participants, and the further challenges from COVID-19 faced during Year 3, 4,170^{xi} of the participants who started in Year 3 entered employment up to 30 June 2021, with further opportunities for others to move into work as they progress through time on the service.

// We had to be adaptable and able to change tack quickly, depending on the changing labour market. During lockdown it was quite clear that working from home roles would see an increase in demand. After spending a lot of time researching employers, the team managed successfully to engage with the company responsible for the NHS Track and Trace vacancies. We then gave an overview of the Fair Start Scotland service and how we could potentially help fulfil their recruitment requirements."

FSS Service Provider

Service Providers continued to build on the success of their sector-based training in Year 3, enabling participants with no prior experience to gain insight into specific areas of work and giving them the skills and knowledge to be able to apply for and secure jobs in these sectors. Production, essential retail and distribution were key sectors where an increased demand was identified during the pandemic, resulting in vacancies being filled across companies like Albert Bartlett and Sons, Morrisons, Sainsburys, Finsbury Foods and XPO Logistics. Service Providers have also been working together to share vacancies across different contract areas.

3. Experience of Services

3.3: Employers

Employer Feedback

Service Providers continued to build on their strong working relationships with existing employers in Year 3, for example with a large distillery who were supported with recruitment for their apprentice programme. Through a co-designed recruitment package, new staff were able to gain extensive knowledge on the company and their new roles through presentations and virtual tours, ensuring they were fully prepared for entering employment.

“ We have been working in partnership with Fair Start Scotland for almost two years now and as a partnership we are able to understand participants barriers, commitments, home lives, needs and ambitions; formulating strategic and tactical objectives with one common goal; to place the individual at the forefront of everything we do.”

Virtue Recruitment

“ As a homecare service provider, we were looking for an organisation to meet the growing recruitment requirements of our business. Fair Start Scotland fulfils that need by supplying potential staff that have been screened prior to interview and have the necessary training attributes that a homecare service provider would be looking for.”

All New Beginnings

“ When we're hiring for any opportunity it's important that we get the right fit; ideally we need people with some site experience, a current CSCS card and, most importantly, a good attitude to work. Working with Fair Start Scotland has proven to be a good way of helping local people into employment opportunities and we've got two very different people on site from this exercise.”

Marshall Construction

Self-Employment

Self-Employment continues to offer FSS participants an alternative route to employment. Evaluation findings show the number of participants starting their own businesses has dropped from 6% last year to 3% this year, which may again be related to the economic uncertainty brought about by COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns.

“ We have begun a self-employment pilot, supporting Fair Start Scotland participants into self-employment. The length and the intensity of the programme can be flexed in line with participant need but averages at either 8 or 12 weeks. In addition to one-to-one support and coaching from experienced self-employment key workers, we offer a series of workshops on topics such as financial forecasting and cash flow management, market research, book-keeping and accounts etc, covering the key information participants would need to develop a robust business plan and start a viable business.”

FSS Service Provider

3. Experience of Services

3.3: Employers

Public Sector Opportunities

During the last three years, the Scottish Government Fair Work, Employability and Skills Directorate and FSS Service Providers have worked in collaboration with Social Security Scotland (SSS) and other areas of the Scottish Government to support those who experience labour market inequalities into employment by offering advice on applying for SSS vacancies and running joint recruitment information sessions.

During Year 3, work was undertaken to further support participants by proposing that FSS be granted an exemption by the Civil Service Commission which enables its participants to apply for employment within the Civil Service through a streamlined recruitment process – [Going Forward into Employment \(GFIE\)](#).

Employment opportunities are initially offered for a period of up to two years with the option to convert to a permanent role, subject to performance. During the 12 months initial employment period, FSS Service Providers will support both the candidate and line manager by offering and delivering In-Work Support.

“ The GFIE programme offers an excellent opportunity to recruit candidates from diverse backgrounds, needing extra employability support. We will certainly use this programme again to recruit candidates who are representative of the population we serve.”

**Johnbosco Ekejuba,
Recruitment Manager,
Social Security Scotland.**

Public and Third Sector Integration

Fair Start Scotland continues to play a key role in our ambition to at least halve the disability employment gap by 2038, as set out in [A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People – Employment Action Plan \(2018\)](#). In March 2021 the Scottish Government published its second annual progress report of the Action Plan: [Fairer Scotland for Disabled People – Employment Action Plan: Progress Report – Year 2](#)

Key progress during 2020 included the establishment of a Public Social Partnership (PSP), led by SUSE (Scottish Union for Supported Employment), that is now taking forward actions around supporting employers in relation to disabled workers, focusing particularly on mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 on disabled people.

The Scottish Government is also taking forward actions in relation to the Disability Recruitment and Retention plan, including for example around workplace adjustments, and have established a Scottish Access to Work Stakeholder forum, which includes representation from FSS Service Providers. The forum meets quarterly, and gives disabled people in Scotland a formal mechanism through which to help shape the service's delivery.

We will also be undertaking work to further support employers to recruit and support disabled workers. This will be hands-on, practical support, and will focus on what employers need and want and this learning will be shared with Service Providers to enhance the FSS offer to disabled people. We are continuing to strengthen our focus on the integration and alignment of employment and health policy, with the aim of improving access and quality of support for participants on current and future services.

3. Experience of Services

3.3: Employers

In response to the findings from the Year 2 Evaluation report and direct feedback from disabled people, we commissioned external Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training for Service Provider frontline staff in both disability and culture & diversity awareness. The aim of this training was to enhance Service Providers' knowledge and understanding of the range of challenges faced by disabled people, people with limiting health conditions and people from a wide range of cultural and minority ethnic backgrounds, and to consider how they could then improve the support offered through FSS.

We will use the recommendations from the training providers to inform our ongoing work with specialist support organisations, for example Values Into Action Scotland and Radiant and Brighter, as part of our test and learn approach to improving service delivery.

Veterans

We continue to provide support for the Armed Forces Community, providing advice for those leaving service, and their families, as they assimilate into civilian life, including support into accessing employment opportunities. We have an established Veterans Employability Strategic Group, which has recently expanded its membership to include representatives from employers, who are actively promoting the skills and benefits of recruiting veterans into the workplace and recognising and aligning the skills Service leavers can bring to the civilian workplace.

Partners on the Strategic Group continue to work on the [veterans' portal](#) and we are developing work with the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to ensure veterans' skills and qualifications are aligned and recognised by employers considering recruitment.

FSS continues to support veterans and the Strategic Group has led work in mapping out the employability path of veterans leaving the armed forces, ensuring that our employability services such as FSS are able to understand the transferrable skills veterans leave service with and the tailored support needed to support their journey not only into employment, but also into civilian life.

3. Experience of Services

3.3: Employers

Summary

- ▶ During its first three years of delivery, FSS has already helped to support over 11,522 participants into work.
- ▶ Despite the challenges that COVID-19 presented during Year 3, in collaboration with Service Providers, we have continued to deliver Fair Work ambitions and support participants into sustainable employment.
- ▶ The Scottish Government has actively sought enhanced opportunities for FSS participants to have access to its own recruitment processes via the Going Forward into Employment programme.

Next Steps

- ▶ Looking forward, we will work with our Service Providers to continue to explore additional opportunities within a new employability landscape post-COVID-19.
- ▶ We will continue to promote the benefits of the GFIE programme within core Scottish Government and other Governmental agencies.
- ▶ In collaboration with Service Providers and partners, we will review the FSS delivery model in response to the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 and further changes to the labour market.
- ▶ We will continue to work with specialist support organisations, such as Values Into Action Scotland and Radiant and Brighter, as part of our “test and learn” approach to improving services for disabled and minority ethnic participants.

4. Summary and Next Steps



4. Summary and Next Steps

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 changed life for everyone and has certainly had a lasting impact on the delivery of employability services such as FSS.

All those involved in delivering FSS services have had to move quickly to adapt to the changing rounds of lockdown restrictions, and to the longer term impacts on our economy. We have introduced new ways of delivering and promoting FSS services and have maintained our Service Provider capacity, all to ensure that we can continue to support existing and new participants.

Despite the various challenges faced by participants and Service Providers during our third year of delivery, the service has supported over 10,000 people, 4,170 of whom had moved into work by end June 2021.

While we recognise that not everyone will gain employment through FSS, the Year 3 Evaluation findings clearly demonstrate that the service is a positive intervention that treats people with dignity and respect, and continues to have a positive effect on those who chose to participate.

The economic evaluation has confirmed that FSS performed well in achieving value for money and an overall net benefit to society. It succeeded in helping some participants find sustainable jobs while upholding its values and principles of dignity and respect to individuals. By taking into account the impact of FSS on the broader society and economy, including public finance savings, improved quality of life, and income redistribution, the results indicate that for every £1 spent on the service, the estimated benefit was £3.60 to society, £1.60 to public finances, and £2.60 to FSS participants.

While this is clearly a welcome conclusion, the economic analysis also shows that this positive benefit in fact arises from FSS having supported more participants with fewer barriers, and therefore lower costs than originally anticipated. It also reinforces the wider evaluation finding that FSS did not reach as many people with disabilities and health conditions as it set out to do. However, the evidence suggests that, when compared to other programmes such as the Work and Health Programme, FSS has reached a larger share of unemployed people, and that the jobs achieved by FSS participants are more stable.

Over the last three years we have listened and responded to the evaluation findings and direct feedback from participants, Service Providers and partners. The cumulative evidence to date shows that the demographic profile of participants has changed over time, and they are now more likely to be younger and closer to the labour market, with fewer barriers to overcome. This must to some extent reflect the impacts of COVID-19 on our labour market. However, we recognise that there is still work to be done in making FSS services accessible and effective for all who need them, and this remains a priority for us throughout the extension period.

Our continuous improvement activity has, and will continue to focus on enhancing our reach to and engagement with groups that are under-represented and those who could be better supported by our services. We will also continue to review and flex the FSS delivery model to ensure that we maintain the successful initiatives introduced this year, as well as developing new approaches to encourage participant engagement, identify employment opportunities and provide improved specialist support for those who need it. We will also share this learning with our local government, private and third sector partners, to make sure that it is reflected in the development of future devolved employment services as part of our implementation of No One Left Behind.

4. Summary and Next Steps

In developing [No One Left Behind](#), our shared vision for the future of employability in Scotland, the voice of service users has been critical to shaping the products that will ultimately guide delivery in local areas. Through our Lived Experience Panels, we have been working to co-produce a Customer Charter that sets out clearly what users should expect from No One Left Behind services. These Charter commitments, along with learning from FSS evaluations and delivery and wider partner and stakeholder input, are also shaping our collaborative development of Service Standards and a Shared Measurement Framework.

Our intention is to build upon the evidence and learning from our delivery of FSS, rather than look to “re-invent the wheel”. For example, the user research work carried out as part of No One Left Behind work streams highlighted common themes with FSS evaluations, such as the significance of a trusted and supportive key worker and the importance of on-going support even after finding employment.

Learning from what works in FSS delivery, and looking for ways to embed this in the products developed to support No One Left Behind will be crucial to our longer term aim of better aligning and integrating employability support.

5. Annexes



Annex A

Provider breakdown

Fair Start Scotland is delivered in nine geographical Lot areas across Scotland with the ambition of better reflecting local labour market and economies.

Contract Area	Local Authority	Successful Bidder	Delivery Partners/Sub Contracted	Estimated Value (up to £million)
1 – Glasgow	Glasgow	People Plus Group Ltd (Private)	▶ The Lennox Partnership (Third Sector)	19.1
2 – Lanarkshire	N Lanarkshire S Lanarkshire	Remploy Limited (Supported Business)	▶ ENABLE Scotland (Third Sector) ▶ Routes to Work South (Third Sector)	12.6
3 – Tayside	Angus Dundee City Perth and Kinross	Remploy Limited (Supported Business)	▶ No delivery partners	7.3
4 – Forth Valley	Falkirk Stirling Clackmannanshire	Falkirk Council (Public Sector)	▶ Falkirk Council (Public Sector) ▶ Clackmannanshire Council (Public Sector) ▶ Stirling Council (Public Sector) ▶ NHS Forth Valley (Public Sector)	5.0
5 – East	City of Edinburgh East Lothian Midlothian Scottish Borders West Lothian Fife	Start Scotland Limited (Private and Third Sector Partnership)	▶ Start Scotland/ Fedcap (Third Sector) ▶ Triage (Private)	21.3
6 – Southwest	North Ayrshire South Ayrshire East Ayrshire Dumfries and Galloway	Start Scotland Limited (Private and Third Sector Partnership)	▶ The Lennox Partnership (Third Sector) ▶ Start Scotland/ Fedcap (Third Sector)	10.1

Annex A

Provider breakdown

Contract Area	Local Authority	Successful Bidder	Delivery Partners/Sub Contracted	Estimated Value (up to £million)
7 – Northeast	Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire	Start Scotland Limited (Private and Third Sector Partnership)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ENABLE Scotland (Third Sector) ▶ Aberdeen Foyer (Third Sector) ▶ Enterprise Mentoring Ltd (Private)** ▶ Start Scotland/ Fedcap (Third Sector) 	5.6
8 – Highlands and Islands	Argyll and Bute Eilean Siar Highland Moray Orkney Islands Shetland Islands	People Plus Ltd (Private)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Argyll and Bute Council (Public Sector) ▶ Lochaber Hope (Third Sector) ▶ Third Sector Hebrides (Third Sector) ▶ Triage (Private) ▶ 2020 Clearview Ltd (Private) 	6.2
9 – West	E Renfrewshire Renfrewshire E Dunbartonshire W Dunbartonshire Inverclyde	The Wise Group (Third Sector)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Lennox Partnership (Third Sector) ▶ ENABLE Scotland (Third Sector) ▶ Enterprise Mentoring (Private)*** ▶ The Wise Group (Third Sector) 	8.8

NOTES:

* Momentum Scotland delivered FSS services in Lot 7 throughout Year 2. However, they withdrew from Lot 7 and were replaced as Lead Provider by Start Scotland/Fedcap from 1 July 2020.

** Enterprise Mentoring delivered FSS services in Lot 7 as a delivery chain partner for Start Scotland. However, they withdrew from Lot 7 on 31 October 2020.

*** Enterprise Mentoring delivered FSS services in Lot 9 as a delivery chain partner for The Wise Group. However, they withdrew from Lot 9 on 14 December 2020.

Annex B

Finance

The spend for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 is outlined in the table below.

Summary	2018/19 (£000s)	2019/20 (£000s)	2020/21 (£000s)	Cumulative (£000s)
Grand Total	£14,748	£15,529	£20,938	£51,216
Service Fees Total	£13,807	£8,284	£5,522	£27,613
Outcomes Total	£981	£6,676	£9,993	£17,650
CostPlus Top-Up (COVID-Related)	n/a	£591	£5,424	£6,015
Credits Total	-£40	-£22	0	-£62
Total Payments	£14,748	£15,529	£20,938	£51,216

Outcomes Breakdown	(£000s)	(£000s)	(£000s)	(£000s)
13 Week	£459	£1,582	£1,650	£3,691
26 Week	£522	£3,002	£3,481	£7,005
52 week	£0	£2,092	£4,862	£6,954

Note: figures may not add exactly due to rounding

Bibliography

[Office for National Statistics – Annual Population Survey Jan – Dec 2020](#)

Universal Credit declarations (claims) and advances: management information
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-declarations-claims-and-advances-management-information>

[A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People – Employment Action Plan \(2018\)](#)

[A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People – Employment Action Plan: progress report – Year 2](#)

[No One Left Behind](#)

[Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Reports Year 3](#)

Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary (August 2021)
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-devolved-employment-services-statistical-summary-11/>

Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary (May 2021)
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-devolved-employment-services-statistical-summary-10/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-start-scotland-year-three-evaluation-and-annual-reports-accompanying-statistics>

Endnotes

- i) [Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, seasonally adjusted – Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)
- ii) ONS, Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec
- iii) Ibid
- iv) [Universal Credit declarations \(claims\) and advances: management information – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- v) Sources: Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report Year 3; Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary (May 2021); Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary (August 2021);
- vi) Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report Year 3
- vii) Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report Year 3
- viii) Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary (May 2021)
- ix) Scottish Government Management Information
- x) Ibid
- xi) Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary (August 2021)



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2021

OGL

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.scot

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80201-458-7 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, October 2021

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS949466 (10/21)

W W W . G O V . S C O T