



Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 3: Local area case studies - year 2 (November 2020)



ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 3: Local area case studies - year 2

November 2020

Research undertaken and reported by Rocket Science UK Ltd., Blake Stevenson and the Institute of Employment Studies on behalf of the Scottish Government

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from our in-depth exploration with providers, partners and participants in localities in three Fair Start Scotland (FSS) contract areas – Drumchapel (Glasgow), Dundee (Tayside), and Peterhead and Fraserburgh (North East). This follows the focus last year on Alloa in Forth Valley, Irvine in South West, and Wick in Highlands and Islands.

The three areas provide a valuable contrast in terms of context:

- **Drumchapel** - A deprived peripheral estate with high and sustained unemployment, few local jobs and a relatively costly and time-consuming journey into the jobs of central Glasgow.
- **Dundee** - A compact city with a recent history of sustained high unemployment and deprivation but with a well-developed infrastructure of support and close partnership working across both employment and health.
- **Peterhead and Fraserburgh** - Two towns with a narrow employment base set in a rural context and, again, with a relatively difficult and costly journey to the jobs of Aberdeen.

Many of our findings from our three detailed case study areas and participants interviews from year one still apply in terms of:

- The value of the provider/s having a prior presence in the area and an extensive network of organisational and employer relationships
- The primary importance of the experience and expertise of frontline staff, and their knowledge of the local labour market
- The inability of the service – however well it performs in terms of effective personalised support – to help participants deal with fundamental local issues like limited job availability and transport difficulties.

However, this year has brought some additional findings, some which relate to it being a more mature service and some to the emerging context of Covid-19. Our analysis of the management information for the three areas reveals some important differences (overleaf).

Drumchapel	Dundee	Peterhead and Fraserburgh																								
164 individuals participated in 2019/20	682 individuals participated in 2019/20	193 individuals participated in 2019/20																								
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<p>Despite the high incidence of issues around health and disability in the area, these figures show by far the lowest proportion of participants with a disability or health condition. The pattern also shows the lowest proportion of those under 35 years old. The pattern of client characteristics in Drumchapel does not seem to match the profile of local need. This would be worth exploring in more detail.</p>	<p>By far the largest by client numbers, and the highest proportion of those sustained in work – which may be related to the number and range of jobs available in Dundee. This may also explain the relatively high sustainability rates.</p>	<p>A similar scale to Drumchapel but with a much higher incidence of disability and health conditions.</p>																								

Our main findings are:

- Overall, FSS continues to deliver a service which is valued by participants, who feel it has made a difference to them and helped them to get into work and sustain a job.
- In our first detailed study in a peripheral estate – with its associated features of high and long term unemployment and related issues of poor mental and physical health, sometimes associated with alcohol and drug misuse – we found that FSS has become the main locally based provider of employability services, and its design features seem to have allowed it to respond effectively to the range of needs presented by participants.
- In two of the areas, concerted efforts have been made to create a more strategic relationship between the FSS provision and the wider employability support service landscape. Despite both of these being pursued with energy and strategic clarity, neither has succeeded, mainly down to the way in which the application of double funding rules around European Structural Funds (ESF) are interpreted.
- Despite this work, relationships between Lead Providers and Local Authorities remain difficult. Although the impact of these weak relationships is reduced by the fact that in most areas ‘there are more than enough clients to go round’ there remains the fundamental issue that a separately procured service that is driven by outcome funding is likely to attract mistrust in terms of the way in which clients are reached and recruited.
- On the other hand, compared with last year, we saw evidence of a marked improvement in the quality of the relationships with Jobcentre Plus. There are regular incidences of close working relationships developing between JCP work coaches and FSS front line staff, consultation about the appropriateness of referrals, and the presence of FSS staff in Jobcentres – sometimes carrying out ‘warm handovers’ alongside work coaches. This has been reflected in increases in referral numbers from JCP, though Third Party Organisation (TPO) referrals and self-referrals have also been increasing.
- There are signs that, over time, the design of FSS and the design of other local employability services are converging, since both draw on good practice and are underpinned by the principles established by the Scottish Government. While this may help in the evolution of the No One Left Behind (NOLB) Approach¹, in the short term it is creating some issues about the distinction between services and difficulties that clients may have in distinguishing them.
- There is strong support for the principles of No One Left Behind, and the action that is following in terms of the allocation of funding through local authorities. In at least two of the areas there is a strong Local Employability Partnership (LEP) and there is general agreement that the coherence and

¹ [No One Left Behind: next steps for employability support.](#)

collaboration that can be driven by the LEP will be a key contributor to the success of NOLB.

Lessons for the future

- The context for FSS in 2020/21 will be **fundamentally changed by the impact of Covid-19**. This will affect the character of FSS, the scale of demand, and the likelihood of achieving sustainable outcomes. In practice, while FSS may retain its key design features and principles, it may also need to become quite a different service. This means that the evaluation of FSS next year will need to take these potential changes into account. While it would still be appropriate to cover the remaining three contract areas, it will be important to focus on how, in each of these areas, the service has been able to respond to a very different economic context, how the service has evolved over the third year, and what the lessons are for the focus and delivery of the service over the subsequent 2 years.
- Local partners are clear that **No One Left Behind provides a sound basis for the evolution of national and local employability funding and services** to create a more coherent and comprehensive local employability service in each area. The presence on the LEP of Lead Providers in two of the areas we have looked at has enhanced mutual awareness and understanding but has not been enough to create strategic coherence. Although the element of ESF in programmes / services has got in the way of developing more collaborative and complementary local approaches it is hard to avoid the conclusion from our evaluation that any separately procured national service will always struggle with gaining local support unless it is fully owned by the LEP.
- However, it will be important that demanding **outcome-based funding is not lost in this evolution**. Central to the success of the No One Left Behind approach will be retaining some of the important features of FSS: **accountability**, in the case of LEPs for delivery against outcome targets, and ensuring that LEPs have the **information and structures they need to actively manage the performance** of the different funding streams, and **identify and act on weak points and poor performance**.

Recommendations for this FSS contract

Many of the issues we identified for our recommendations in Year 1 were not mentioned this year. The administrative system now appears to be working well – though there remain some concerns about how much time it absorbs.

We recommend that the Scottish Government:

- Reviews the current provision of effective start up support and funding for FSS participants who want to become self-employed and/or start a business – the current provision does not appear to be meeting the need for both intensive support and appropriate start-up funding. This may become even more important as the economy recovers from the impact of Covid-19 and self-employment options may become more appealing in the absence of more conventional jobs.
- Reviews the guidance about the ability of clients to leave and return to the service that go beyond the current ‘freeze’ option. This may be particularly valuable in the context of the impact of Covid-19 and the problems that may be caused by an unpredictable recovery period which may require local responses to infection spikes and related issues in terms of caring responsibilities and job insecurity.
- Revisits the issues that seem to have prevented more aligned local approaches between local employability services and FSS. Local partners felt that they had considered the implications of ESF carefully and come up with approaches that would be entirely conforming with ESF requirements, but that they had not gained approval to proceed.

Year 3 will be dominated by the impact of Covid-19. What this means is that there will need to be clarity about the role of FSS alongside Jobcentre Plus. Although as some providers admitted ***“it is now possible to justify the referral of almost anyone onto FSS”***, there are a range of risks around the delivery of FSS in 2020/21:

- There may be demands on the service from relatively short term unemployed people for whom the main issue will be a lack of jobs rather than any particular barriers to work.
- Those further from work (i.e. the core client group for FSS) will be in even greater need of intensive support to become competitive in the labour market and – depending on the length of the recession – it may make sense to link FSS support more strongly to follow up intensive vocational training to make good use of the time and enable participants to enter the labour market at a higher skill level, with associated benefits in terms of job satisfaction, pay and sustainability.
- One of the striking lessons from the lockdown period has been the success of focused and well managed Facebook marketing and we recommend that the Scottish Government reflect on the implications of this more widely for the marketing of employability services and the implications in terms of how to link this with national marketing to reach those who could most benefit from support.

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1 Introduction and Context

The Scottish Government commissioned Rocket Science UK Ltd, in partnership with Blake Stevenson and the Institute for Employment Studies, to complete a three-year evaluation of FSS. This evaluation will be centred around nine case studies of localities within each of the nine contract areas. In the first-year report we focused on the first three of these in-depth explorations – covering Alloa (Forth Valley), Irvine (South West) and Wick (Highlands and Islands). This year we focus on Drumchapel (Glasgow), Dundee (Tayside) and Peterhead and Fraserburgh (North East).

Through these case studies this evaluation seeks to:

- Understand how FSS is being implemented across the different lot areas in Scotland
- Understand the experience of FSS for lead providers, partner organisations, participants and employers
- Identify what is working well and less well in the implementation of FSS
- Identify the lessons learned and recommend changes to consider for the remainder of the FSS contract period as well as shaping what the next iteration of employment support in Scotland might look like

We focused on the period up to the end of February to capture the pre-Covid performance of FSS, but we did explore the initial impact of Covid-19 on the service and its participants. Our Year 3 evaluation will have a distinctly different focus in the light of the impact of Covid-19, and the locality case studies will be selected in the contract areas of Lanarkshire, East and West.

This report is structured as follows:

- A detailed look at each of the three localities including the socio-economic context, the management and performance data, the core features of the service in that locality and the lessons that can be learned from delivery in that locality
- Analysis of the views of participants and non-participants interviewed in each of the localities
- Key findings and conclusions that draw together lessons and implications from each of the case study localities

FSS builds on the Scottish Government ambition and strategic direction to move Scotland towards a more integrated and aligned employability landscape that is better able to support those with a complex array of needs, infused with principles around fair work, respect and dignity. FSS offers significant scope for learning around:

- The local flexing of a national service to local needs and conditions
- How it can complement and support other local provision
- How its governance and performance can be more locally 'owned', so driving service quality and outcomes
- How to better integrate employability support with more specialist support which can include health and housing

The programme of participant and stakeholder research that makes up this evaluation has been designed to make a contribution to the achievement of this vision. In this second year report we have:

- Drawn out the lessons that FSS offers to date in terms of the changes that we have identified from our Year 1
- Identified the outstanding issues and challenges that exist around the approach
- Described the impact and implications of Covid-19 and what this may mean for the design and delivery of a national employment service over the next 12 months

This year 2 evaluation report is underpinned by the following methodology, and involved telephone interviews with people in each locality between May and July 2020. The timing of these interviews is earlier than the fieldwork period in 2019 as the work was brought forward to ensure we would be able to talk about the pre-Covid-19 period up to the beginning of March 2020. Because of the impact of Covid-19 on Jobcentre services, we did not speak to Jobcentre staff, so their views are not reflected in these findings. In addition, some other organisations that would have had useful insights were not available to speak to during the reporting timescales because of the demands that the impact of Covid-19 has placed on them – this also included employers, and we were not able to talk to a representative sample of employers in any of our focus areas.

Our work does cover the impact of Covid-19 but the main focus is on the way in which FSS was delivered in the three areas up to March 2020:

Evaluation activity:
Desk-based analysis of socio-economic and employment trends in each locality
Analysis of the management and performance data of FSS in each locality
Interviews with participants and their FSS key workers in each locality
Follow up interviews with participants who we initially interviewed in our Year 1 localities, to provide insights into the longer term impact of the experience of FSS
Interviews with FSS service staff including lead providers, and their partners and supply chain
Interviews with other relevant stakeholders in the area

2 Fair Start Scotland in Drumchapel

This chapter outlines the key features of FSS in Drumchapel. This chapter covers:

- A description of Drumchapel including the socio-economic context and labour market
- Analysis of the FSS management and performance data for Drumchapel
- A description of the delivery of FSS in Drumchapel
- Key lessons we can draw from this case study area

Area profile

This section provides information about labour market patterns and socioeconomic trends in Drumchapel - and North West Glasgow more broadly - focusing on levels of deprivation, unemployment and skills and education. Given the lack of availability of regular data on the relevant topics at a Drumchapel area level, socioeconomic trends will be frequently examined in an Area Partnership/Glasgow City Ward level (Drumchapel/Anniesland) where possible.

This section also provides descriptions of local efforts to increase employability and encourage economic growth in the area. Drumchapel is a neighbourhood in north west Glasgow with an estimated population of 12,967.² It was constructed as a response to slum housing in Glasgow in the 1950s, but while it provided much better and healthier housing the lack of local jobs and the distance from the jobs of central Glasgow, combined with the deterioration in the housing stock, led to Drumchapel – and the other Glasgow peripheral estates of Easterhouse, Castlemilk and Greater Pollok - becoming characterised by high unemployment and associated features of deprivation. The Drumchapel/Anniesland electoral ward is the most north westerly ward in Glasgow City and had a population of 29,590 in 2018.³

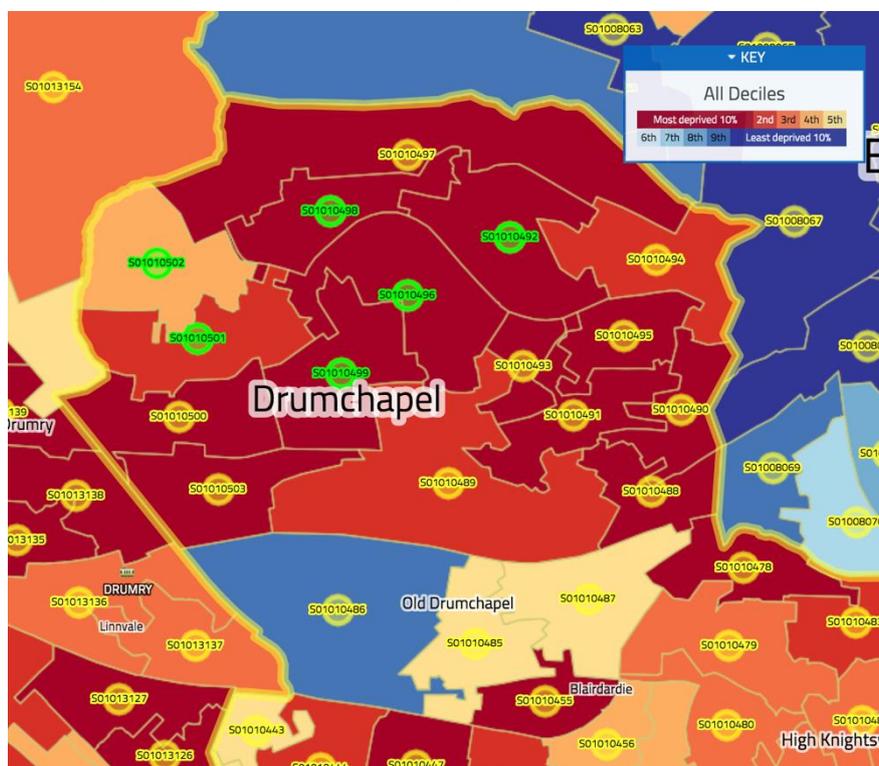
² [The Glasgow Indicators Project. Understanding Glasgow.](#)

³ [Scottish Government. Electoral ward – Drumchapel/Anniesland. Glasgow City Council. City Ward Factsheets 2017 – ward 14: Drumchapel/Anniesland. 2017](#)

There are high levels of deprivation and associated health problems in Drumchapel

According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020, 15 out of 16 data zones in Drumchapel were amongst the top 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.⁴ In 2016, 11 out of the 16 data zones in the area were in the top 5% most deprived zones in Scotland.⁵ Additionally, 42.5% of the population in Drumchapel North and 32.8% in Drumchapel South are income deprived within SIMD income domain compared to 12.1% in Scotland overall.⁶

Figure 1: Levels of deprivation in Drumchapel, colour coded according to the Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation deciles. The neighbourhood has a large spread of areas in the most deprived decile [Source: Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation 2020: Drumchapel]



⁴ [Scottish Government. Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020](#)

⁵ [Thriving Places. Living in Drumchapel – consultation report, April 2019.](#)

⁶ [ScotPHO. Health and wellbeing profile – Drumchapel South and North \(Intermediate zone\) compared against Scotland.](#)

High levels of deprivation in Drumchapel have had an impact on health outcomes, with high levels of child poverty and P1 obesity.⁷ Drumchapel has one of the highest rates of child poverty in Glasgow, with 48% of children living in poverty in 2016.⁸ 37.9% of children in Drumchapel North and 41.7% in Drumchapel South live in low income families, compared with 16.7% of children in Scotland.⁹ Approximately a quarter of residents in Drumchapel are children under the age of 16, compared with 17% across Glasgow.¹⁰

There is a low level of ethnic diversity in Drumchapel (5% of the population) compared with Glasgow as a whole (12%).¹¹ Additionally, there are more people in Drumchapel who are disabled or have a long-term illness than in Glasgow overall (15% compared with 9%).¹²

There are high levels of alcohol and drug-related hospital admissions and mortality in the area compared with Scotland overall. The rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions in Drumchapel North was significantly higher than the Scottish average in 2018/2019 (2,540 per 100,000 compared with 669 per 100,000).¹³ Drumchapel South had a lower rate, but this figure was still higher than Scotland overall (1,210 per 100,000).¹⁴ The proportion of the population hospitalised due to drug-related conditions in North West Glasgow area is higher than the Scottish average from 2015-2018 (295 per 100,000 compared with 181 per 100,000).¹⁴ The rate of alcohol-specific deaths is also higher than in Scotland overall (32.7 per 100,000 compared with 20.6 per 100,000 from 2014-2018).¹⁴

Drumchapel South has a significantly higher number of deaths from all causes (all ages) per 100,000 population compared with Scotland from 2016-2018 (2,457.3 per 100,000 compared to 1,153.7).¹⁵ Drumchapel North has a lower rate of 1,776 per 100,000.¹⁶ Life expectancy for females in Drumchapel North and South is lower than in Scotland overall (75.3 years in Drumchapel South

⁷ [Glasgow Centre for Population Health. *Children and Young people's profile for Drumchapel*.](#)

⁸ [Glasgow Community Planning Partnership. *Drumchapel/Anniesland area partnership profile 2016*.](#)

⁹ [ScotPHO. *Health and wellbeing profile – Drumchapel South and North \(Intermediate zone\) compared against Scotland*.](#)

¹⁰ [Thriving Places. *Living in Drumchapel – consultation report, April 2019*. *National Records of Scotland. Mid-year population estimates Scotland, mid-2018*](#)

¹¹ [Thriving Places. *Living in Drumchapel – consultation report, April 2019*](#)

¹² [Ibid.](#)

¹³ [ScotPHO. *Health and wellbeing profile – Drumchapel North \(Intermediate zone\) compared against Scotland*.](#)

¹⁴ [ScotPHO. *Health and wellbeing profile – Drumchapel South \(Intermediate zone\) compared against Scotland*.](#)

¹⁵ [ScotPHO. *Health and wellbeing profile – Drumchapel South and North \(Intermediate zone\) compared against Scotland*.](#)

¹⁶ [Ibid.](#)

and 76.7 years in Drumchapel North compared to 81.1 years).¹⁷ Life expectancy overall in Drumchapel is lower than the Glasgow average.¹⁸

Drumchapel has one of the highest rates of unemployment in Glasgow

According to the 2011 census, 66% of the population in Drumchapel/Annie'sland were aged 16-64.¹⁹ This is a lower rate than North West Glasgow (68%) and Glasgow City (70%).²⁰ 70% of the population aged 16-64 were economically active in Drumchapel/Annie'sland and 30% were economically inactive.²¹ A high percentage of these economically inactive residents in the area are students (13.5%) compared with the rest of Glasgow (5.9%).²²

In 2016, Drumchapel had one of the highest rates of unemployment (14%) in Glasgow which was more than double the Scottish rate at the time (6%) and higher than the rate across Glasgow (9%).²³ In 2011, almost half (49.3%) of working age residents in Drumchapel were not in employment – this was significantly higher than other neighbourhoods in the Drumchapel / Annie'sland ward (Temple / Annie'sland, 35.7%; Blairdardie, 35.3%).²⁴

There is insufficient data available to provide a gender breakdown of unemployment in Drumchapel/Annie'sland and North West Glasgow. However, the rate of unemployment amongst males in Glasgow is more than double the rate of unemployment amongst females (6.3% compared with 3%).²⁵

In 2015, more people of working age living in the Drumchapel/Annie'sland area claimed out of work benefits than in Glasgow, (22.2% compared with 17.9%).²⁶ 32.7% of working age residents in Drumchapel claimed out of work benefits from 2008-2013.²⁷ This figure is much higher Temple/Annie'sland (18.6%) and Blairdardie (16.4%) over the same timeframe. This is also much higher than the rate in North West Glasgow (17.2%); Glasgow (19.6%) and Scotland overall (12.9%).

In 2016, 14% of out of work claimants aged 16-24 in the Drumchapel/Annie'sland ward were claiming Employment Support Allowance

¹⁷ [*Ibid.*](#)

¹⁸ [Understanding Glasgow. Neighbourhood profiles – Drumchapel.](#)

¹⁹ [Glasgow City Council. City Ward Factsheets 2017: Ward 14 – Drumchapel/Annie'sland. 2017.](#)

²⁰ [Glasgow City Council. North West Sector Profile.](#)

²¹ [Glasgow City Council. City Ward Factsheets 2017: Ward 14 – Drumchapel/Annie'sland. 2017.](#)

²² [Glasgow City Council. North West Sector Profile.](#)

²³ [Glasgow's Housing Strategy. Factsheet 6/2016: employment change in Glasgow. 2016.](#)

²⁴ [Glasgow City Council. General information about the Drumchapel/Annie'sland \(D/A\) Area Partnership.](#)

²⁵ [NOMIS. Labour Market Profile – Glasgow City.](#)

²⁶ [Glasgow Community Planning Partnership. Drumchapel/Annie'sland Area Partnership Profile 2016.](#)

²⁷ [Glasgow City Council. General information about the Drumchapel/Annie'sland \(D/A\) Area Partnership.](#)

and incapacity benefits; 6.9% were receiving income support/other benefits and 2.5% were receiving job seeker benefits.²⁸

Based on 2011 census data, 17% of residents in the Drumchapel neighbourhood reported that they had never worked/were long term unemployed, compared with 11.2% in the Drumchapel/Annie'sland area partnership.²⁹ This rate is more than double the rate in North West Glasgow (7.7%) and higher than the rate in Glasgow City overall (9.1%).³⁰

In 2015, there were a total of 7,000 employee jobs in Drumchapel/Annie'sland.³¹ (Employee jobs are the number of jobs held by employees (excluding self-employment, government-supported trainees and HM forces).) 61.4% of employee jobs were full-time and 38.6% were part-time.³² The biggest industry in Drumchapel/Annie'sland in 2015 was public sector services providing an estimated 2,300 employee jobs.³³ This is followed by manufacturing, construction and utilities (1,500 employee jobs); wholesale and retail (1,300 employee jobs); professional services (1,000 employee jobs) and other activities including motor trades, transport, food services, arts entertainment and recreation (900 employee jobs).³⁴

There are good public transport links between Drumchapel and the Glasgow labour market but they may be restrictive due to times and cost

There are good public transport links in Drumchapel to and from the Glasgow labour market. Drumchapel is around 5 miles/8 kilometres from Glasgow City Centre.³⁵ There is one bus service which travels from Drumchapel to Glasgow City centre; the journey lasts 30 minutes. Single adult tickets are £1.70 and the night bus is £3.00.³⁶ The bus operates frequently (every ten minutes or less) from 8am to 5.40pm and comes more infrequently outside these hours (6.00pm to midnight).³⁷ The service is less frequent on the weekend.³⁸ There is a train station in Drumchapel which serves the Drumchapel, Blairdardie and Old Drumchapel neighbourhoods.³⁹

²⁸ [Glasgow City Council. City Ward Factsheets 2017: Ward 14 – Drumchapel/Annie'sland. 2017.](#)

²⁹ [Glasgow City Council. General information about the Drumchapel/Annie'sland \(D/A\) Area Partnership.](#)

³⁰ [Ibid.](#)

³¹ [Glasgow City Council. City Ward Factsheets 2017: Ward 14 – Drumchapel/Annie'sland. 2017.](#)

³² [Ibid.](#)

³³ [Ibid.](#)

³⁴ [Ibid.](#)

³⁵ [Google Maps. Distance between Drumchapel and Glasgow City Centre.](#)

³⁶ [First. Ticket prices.](#)

³⁷ [Ibid.](#)

³⁸ [Ibid.](#)

³⁹ [ScotRail. Drumchapel.](#)

The train to Glasgow City centre is frequent (around 35 one-way journeys a day) and operates from 06.00am to 11.30pm with an average journey time of 19 minutes.⁴⁰ Train fares start at £3.60.

For residents of Drumchapel who use public transport to travel outside the area for work are more likely to commute by bus/coach.⁴¹ However, for those working irregular hours or with caring responsibilities, both the train and bus links may not be accessible. Additionally, transport costs may be prohibitive for job seekers and those on low incomes.

However, commuting patterns show that residents of Drumchapel who travel outside the area for work are most likely to commute by car⁴².

On average, residents in Drumchapel have lower levels of qualifications and education compared with Glasgow overall

At 26.3%, Drumchapel has a nearly half the proportion of adults with qualifications at Higher level and above compared with Glasgow. This is reflected in a high proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (20.9%).⁴³ This figure was higher (39%) for 16-19 year olds in Drumchapel in 2012.⁴⁴ Pupil attainment in Drumchapel was significantly lower than the Glasgow average with only 15% of pupils achieving 5 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5 in 2012-2013.⁴⁵ However, 88% of school leavers had a positive destination in 2013 (higher/further education, employment or training).⁴⁶

Local employability support services in Drumchapel focus mainly on young people

These include:

- **Jobs and Business Glasgow** is the main source of employment support in Glasgow and it has a presence in Drumchapel. They work in partnership with Glasgow Life Libraries to deliver employment support in communities. This partnership is important as it provides a less formal setting where people seeking employment support can continue to use the library resources after their support session has ended.

⁴⁰ [Trainline. Trains from Drumchapel to Glasgow Central.](#)

⁴¹ [DataShine. Scotland Commute.](#)

⁴² [Ibid.](#)

⁴³ [Understanding Glasgow. Drumchapel.](#)

⁴⁴ [Glasgow Centre for Population Health. Children and young people's profile for Drumchapel.](#)

⁴⁵ [Ibid.](#)

⁴⁶ [Ibid.](#)

- **Glasgow Community Learning and Development Strategic Partnership (GCLDSP)** is a multi-agency group led by Glasgow Life responsible for establishing and implementing the Community Learning and Development Plan to improve people's outcomes and opportunities as a result of economic growth and a reduction of inequalities.⁴⁷
- **G15 Youth Project.** Located in Drumchapel community centre, the G15 Youth Project is a charity working for young people aged 12-35 who live locally. The organisation provides one-to-one support in areas such as employability and hosts awareness workshops on various issues including gang culture and sexual health.⁴⁸
- **Pathfinder** is a partnership programme delivered by Workingrite and Dumbarton Road Corridor Youth Project across North West Glasgow. The programme aims to help young people into employment, education or work experience. Working with referral partners such as the G15 Youth Project, Skills Development Scotland and The Princes Trust, the programme supported 78 young people from Drumchapel / Anniesland in 2018 through engagement sessions and placements up to 12 weeks.⁴⁹
- **Right Track Scotland** provides training, employability support and opportunities for self-development and practical work experience for young people across Scotland including Drumchapel. It does through group work and one to one support to help individuals overcome personal development challenges and barriers to employment.⁵⁰

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19, the Drumchapel/Anniesland Area Partnership introduced two projects in April 2020 to help support those vulnerable in the community especially as a result of increased levels of unemployment.⁵¹

- **Covid-19 Community Support Response** – aims to provide support to the local community with regards to health, finances and social isolation
- **Storehouse local foodbank** – increased unemployment levels have meant that the foodbank could not meet demand and needed increased support from the council to purchase food and supplies for those most in need in the area

⁴⁷ [Glasgow Life. Glasgow CLD Strategic Partnership.](#)

[Glasgow's Learning. Glasgow Community Learning & Development Strategic Plan 2018-2021. 2018.](#)

⁴⁸ [The G15 Youth Project.](#)

⁴⁹ [Workingrite. Pathfinder Project.](#)

[North West Glasgow Voluntary Sector Network. Drumchapel/Anniesland Area Partnership.](#)

⁵⁰ [Right Track Scotland Ltd. Our approach.](#)

[Right Track.](#)

⁵¹ [Glasgow Community Planning Partnership. Drumchapel/Anniesland Area Partnership – area budget April 2020.](#)

Glasgow City Council has introduced a number of initiatives aimed at increasing economic growth and the availability of jobs across the city

- **Community hubs** – Glasgow City Council has made a commitment of £20 million to create new community hubs across the city in areas including Drumchapel/Anniesland to engage with the local community and provide local services.⁵²
- **Drumchapel Thriving Places.** Introduced in 2016 to improve the quality of life for people who live and work in the area, the strategy aims to use local knowledge and lessons learnt to help support residents of Drumchapel in areas including health and wellbeing, community safety, education and employment.⁵³
- **Glasgow Economic Strategy 2016-2023** which aims to make Glasgow the most productive major city economy in the UK by making a number of investments in areas such as tourism and infrastructure.⁵⁴
- **Glasgow City Region Deal** was a capital investment of £1.13 billion which aimed to create jobs, boost local businesses and fund infrastructure projects over ten years from 2014.⁵⁵
- **Glasgow City Region Economic Action Plan** - joint economic plan launched by 8 Glasgow City Region councils to create 100,000 jobs, 6,500 new businesses and improvements to qualifications and skills in the area. It aims to support the building of 110,000 new homes.⁵⁶
- **The Glasgow Guarantee.** The £50 million Glasgow Guarantee programme was launched in 2015 after the city hosted the Commonwealth Games to help local people into employment and job training as well as supporting businesses.⁵⁷
- **Glasgow Supported Employment Service** supports people with learning disabilities or autistic spectrum conditions to enter and sustain employment.⁵⁸
- **Youth Employability Partnership** – Glasgow City Council developed a strategy to meet the needs of and support children and young people into employment and education.⁵⁹

What this means for FSS in Drumchapel

⁵² [Glasgow City Council. Council to deliver £20 million CommunityHubs investment across Glasgow.](#)

⁵³ [Glasgow Community Planning Partnership. Drumchapel Thriving Places.](#)

⁵⁴ [Glasgow City Council. Glasgow Economic Strategic 2016-2023.](#)

⁵⁵ [Glasgow City Council. £1.13 billion City Deal for Glasgow City Region signed today.](#)

⁵⁶ [Glasgow City Region. Economic Action Plan. 2017.](#)

⁵⁷ [Glasgow City Council. Glasgow Guarantee.](#)

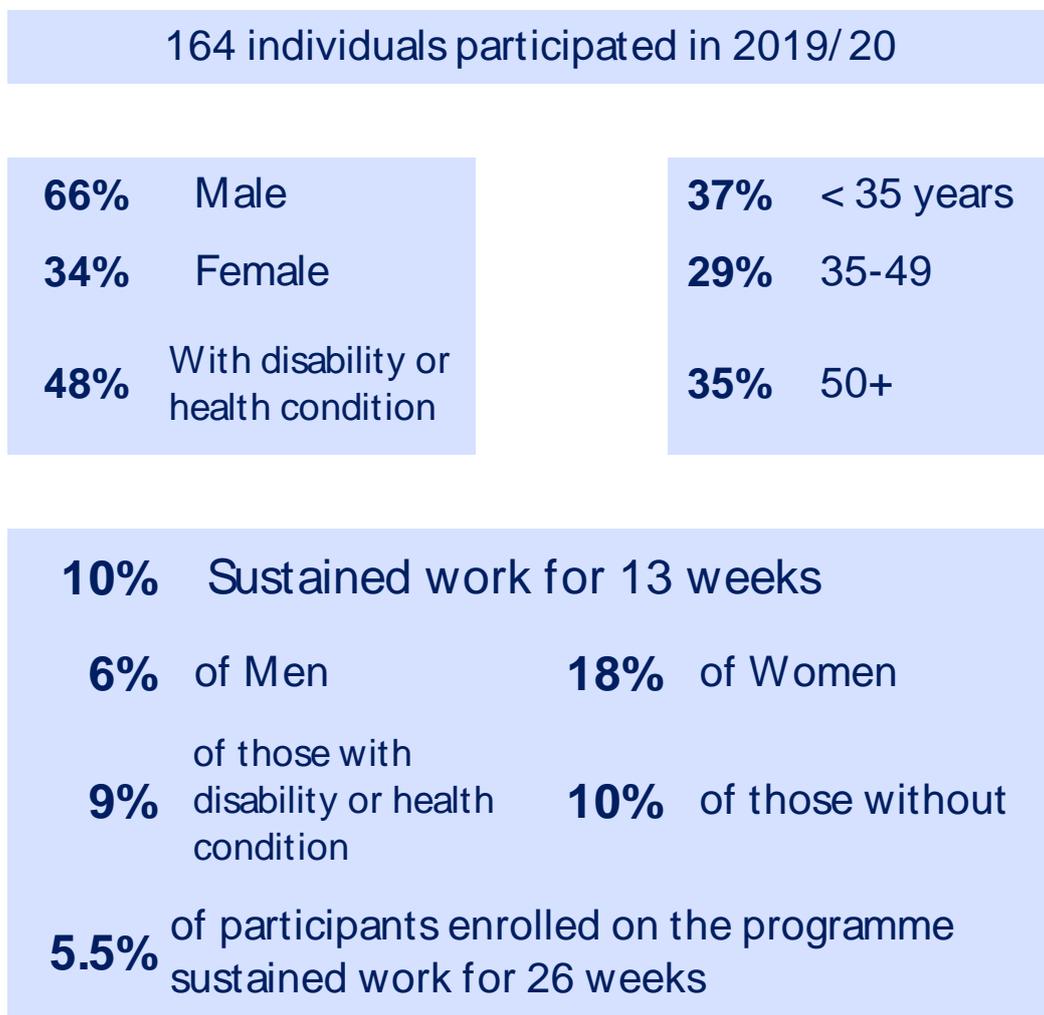
⁵⁸ [Glasgow City Council. Supported Employment.](#)

⁵⁹ [Glasgow City Council. YEP Glasgow's Youth Employability Partnership.](#)

As one of the more deprived communities in Scotland, it is important to understand the extent to which FSS has been able to create an effective local presence in Drumchapel, how it has been able to draw in local residents and help them to connect with accessible jobs, and how it works with and complements other local support.

Management and Performance Data for Drumchapel

The infographic below draws on the management and performance data collected between April 2019 and March 2020. It covers all FSS participants who were registered with the Drumchapel Jobcentre (i.e. those who were enrolled on the service).



Description of service

It is important to note that Drumchapel was selected as a pilot site, so FSS has been present in the area since 2017/18.

The lot area covers the local authority area of Glasgow. The FSS contract is held by People Plus who have subcontracted the delivery in Drumchapel to The Lennox Partnership (TLP). Initially the contract was also subcontracted to Remploy, but they are no longer part of the delivery team. Their delivery was mainly focused on participants requiring more intense support and, when Remploy withdrew, support for these participants was incorporated into TLP's delivery of FSS. People Plus and TLP work closely together to deliver FSS in the Glasgow lot area and have developed good working relationships. However, it is important to note that TLP are wholly responsible for delivery in Drumchapel.

As part of the FSS contract, early on People Plus allocated key workers to specific Jobcentre areas so that they were able to build stronger relationships with both the participants and Jobcentre staff in each area. TLP were allocated Drumchapel as they are a well-known and established provider in the area with over 30 years of experience. They were established to "support the regeneration of the Clydebank area following the demise of the shipbuilding and heavy engineering sectors, and to continue the work of the Scottish Development Agency's Task Force who were pulling out of the area"⁶⁰.

When TLP first started delivering FSS in Drumchapel, they were based out of their office on Dumbarton Road in neighbouring Clydebank (15 minutes by bus or 30 minutes' walk) which required Drumchapel participants to travel to Clydebank to complete their initial assessments and start receiving support. Within the first two week, TLP realised that this model was not working as participants did not want to or did not feel comfortable travelling outwith Drumchapel. TLP and Drumchapel Jobcentre agreed that the TLP support worker could be based out of the Jobcentre one day a week, in addition to providing daily email or telephone contact with the key Jobcentre work coach.

The decision to co-locate one day a week came as a result of few participants travelling to Glasgow for their initial assessments, but also due to very low Jobcentre referrals (2 or 3 per month), in the early days of delivery. TLP therefore now meet all Drumchapel participants face to face in the Jobcentre. This has increased the number of individuals starting the service as well as other referrals coming through as Jobcentre staff are seeing positive results for these participants. TLP have access to a private room in the Jobcentre one

⁶⁰ [The Lennox Partnership. About us.](#)

day a week where they can talk to potential participants, which provides participants with more privacy when discussing their support needs.

This change saw increases in the number of referrals (up 7% in the first 8 weeks) and starts on FSS. A key part of the referral process is a “warm handover” between Jobcentre work coaches and the TLP support worker, who then completes the initial assessment and enrolls the participant. TLP have received ~128 referrals from Jobcentre work coaches, of which 79 have started the service.

Interviewees stated that the mindset of people in Drumchapel can be very inward looking – this extends to a lack of willingness to travel outwith the area for work:

“Generally, people are born in Drumchapel, live in Drumchapel, work in Drumchapel.”

- FSS Provider

The main point of contact for FSS in Drumchapel is through the dedicated TLP support worker. There are 9 other TLP support workers who also have Drumchapel FSS participants on their caseloads. As we understand, they do not work exclusively with FSS participants from Drumchapel as they are working on a range of TLP services.

Relationship between the provider and the Jobcentre

The relationship with the Jobcentre has been described as ***“going from strength to strength” (FSS Provider)***. Despite some challenges at the beginning, they set up several meetings, with both managers and their teams which allowed TLP to talk about what the FSS service looked like and what support and input they required from Jobcentre staff. It did require a lot of time and effort upfront to develop and build on the relationship with the Drumchapel Jobcentre. The senior work coach at the Jobcentre was important in setting up this strong and positive relationship and TLP now feel that they have a well managed and maintained relationship.

TLP feel that it is important to keep the Jobcentre work coaches up to date on how participants are getting on, but have also written a letter of recommendation and thanks acknowledging the key Jobcentre work coach who is working with TLP. This approach appears to be working well and interviewees feel that it is a key part of the success of FSS in the area which TLP are seeing through an increase in the number of referrals to FSS.

“They can see the successes – the good things that are happening [for participants] – it raises the profile [of FSS].”

- FSS Provider

“It is a very deprived community, and a service like this [is] absolutely pivotal in small communities. It’s very hard to get people from Drumchapel to Glasgow city centre until they 100% believe you, understand and trust you.”

- FSS Provider

The Jobcentre is located in a shopping centre in the middle of Drumchapel in a busy area with banks, the library, social work services, and other community hubs nearby.

“The Jobcentre team have created a welcoming environment and they work well together as a team. It’s a small, but friendly office, with 5 work coaches who are participant facing”

- FSS Provider

In addition, the location of the Jobcentre means that TLP find it easy to meet participants in other locations if they don’t want to meet in the Jobcentre. There is a community hub within walking distance which is happy for TLP to use their space to meet participants, in addition to the library.

Referral pathways and considerations

Despite these positive relationships, referrals from Jobcentres have been much lower than initially anticipated. As a result, People Plus and TLP have set up community engagement teams to establish referral pathways to get participants into the service. This includes talking to third sector organisations in the area including mental health services, drug and alcohol addiction teams, as well as Housing Associations and community groups.

“We find having a presence wherever participants are seeking support is important.”

- Other employability provider

However, one interviewee mentioned that the pattern of referrals needs to be put into context:

- Drumchapel is a complex area in terms of need and the circumstances that people living there face:
 - The participants that the Jobcentre and TLP work with are facing multiple barriers to work which include mental health and drug and alcohol addictions

- Many come from workless households with multiple generations of unemployment, there are high numbers of lone parents, and many do not have qualifications
- There is high unemployment and the area has high levels of deprivation. Although there is some regeneration in the area, opportunities remain low.
- Drumchapel is a small Jobcentre, with 5 Work Coaches available to make referrals to FSS, so the referral numbers coming in are good for a small area.

“We need to consider the number of people coming [to the Jobcentre], and the barriers they face. We need to be realistic about the area and a small site – [Jobcentre work coaches] are proactive, keen to engage – so getting this number is really good.”

- FSS Provider

Although challenging to begin with, establishing referral pathways themselves has created some positive benefits for TLP. It has resulted in a larger portfolio of partners, led to a stronger presence in the local area (i.e. increased awareness of TLP), and achieved a wider variation of participant caseloads (i.e. they have had access to participants who might not visit the Jobcentre). There was seen to be value in investing in community engagement to attract additional referrals. There is also a feeling that the community work has increased the number of referrals that have come from the Jobcentre: it is creating a greater awareness of FSS and as a result people are more willing to be referred onto the service as they know more about it.

“Our community work has increased JCP referrals ... They are still not as high as we would like, but very much improved.”

- FSS Provider

TLP feel that another reason for this success is because they have a very experienced team of support workers:

- The key workers at TLP are experienced (all have over 10 years' experience) which is important in an area like Drumchapel where many participants have multiple complex needs, face multiple barriers to work, grow up in workless households, and do not want to travel outwith Drumchapel for work.
- Although there are certain conditions of the service set by the Scottish Government (such as when the initial assessment needs to be completed, a CV on file for each participant etc.), the support workers have a lot of say in what activities they can provide to participants. They provide a catalogue of services for additional support and have well

established relationships with providers. This ensures that participants are able to get the support they need (e.g. financial advice, mental health, drug and alcohol support).

- As part of their support to participants, TLP provides education and advice on the employability market in terms of the available opportunities, the skills that are required, and where the jobs are located. They focus on the participant's transferrable skills and match these up to vacancies to help participants realise what options are available to them. Part of this process is also about bringing some participants round to the idea that they will have to travel outwith Drumchapel for these opportunities. This takes time, and they have to help participants transition by moving their support sessions into the Clydebank TLP office to get them used to travelling out of Drumchapel. It is hoped that this will help some of them make the next step of travelling into Glasgow where most of the jobs are.
- Support workers also have to educate some participants on the financial side of moving from benefits to employment.

“We do financial calculations that let people know they are better off in employment. Lack of knowledge, maybe generational behaviour – trying to re-educate people that benefits aren't a lifestyle choice – so we spend a lot of time going into financial calculations.”

- FSS Provider
- The caseload for each key worker is capped at 40 individuals, which they feel results in a better service for individuals. Some of these participants are seen individually, and some take part in group sessions.
- Co-location of TLP and the Jobcentre, but more importantly, the working relationships between TLP and JCP staff result in a more joined up and coherent support service for participants. For example, it was mentioned that participants often tell the Jobcentre one thing and tell TLP another. By having a good working relationship, it means that a more comprehensive picture of the participant and their circumstances is built up more quickly and the right support is identified and provided in the first instance.

Apart from The Lennox Partnership and the Jobcentre, there does not appear to be many other local provision for employability support in the Drumchapel area. There are some providers in Glasgow, such as Jobs and Business Glasgow, that cover the Drumchapel area, but they were not able to provide insight on how FSS was operating on the ground and do not appear to analyse data by area.

Although a few organisations have been mentioned, there does not appear to be any direct competitors for FSS.

There are some other third sector organisations that provide services to the local community such as the North West Drugs and Alcohol addictions team, Elevate, and Cope. There are other services that operate out of Drumchapel Jobcentre such as the Careers Service (SDS), and other organisations provide training supported through the SDS Employability Fund. Our impression from the interviews is that FSS is becoming the main single source of employability support in Drumchapel, and is complemented by a small number of local employability providers, and from the wider Glasgow lot area.

Employment pathways for participants

TLP have built up a strong relationship with the Wheatley Group who run an Environment Routes service which involves removal of waste, graffiti removal, and maintaining communal areas. The Wheatley Group now recruit the staff for this work from FSS participants. TLP were also in talks prior to Covid-19 with both the Wheatley Group and Drumchapel Housing Association to get a desk within their offices.

Another important aspect of TLP's delivery of FSS is around employer engagement. TLP as well as People Plus spend a lot of time building and maintaining employer relationships:

“We want FSS to be the provider of choice for employers and for them to come to us with vacancies.”

- FSS Provider

The employer relationship is important for People Plus and TLP, with each key worker having a range of “go-to” employers for their participants. The key workers spend a lot of time with both employers and participants to ensure that the employment opportunity is right for both parties. TLP explained that for participants, it was about explaining that these opportunities weren't local and building them up to commute to Glasgow. The first step is to transition participant's appointments with their support worker from Drumchapel to Glasgow, before placing them in a role.

This approach was described as being positive as it focused on ***“selling the participants skills, promoting people to ensure that they are getting jobs that are suitable for them”*** (FSS provider) (i.e. in terms of skills, progression, ambition and so on) and that crucially ***“...they are not setting the participant up to fail”*** (FSS provider).

“Same for participants – need to manage their expectations. An important part of the support that FSS provides is around determining the skillset, transferrable skills, not about what the person wants to do

all the time –it’s about being realistic, changing their outlook and what opportunities are out there.”

- FSS Provider

The support worker talks to the employer about the participant, what their circumstances are, their likely in-work support needs and ensuring employers are aware of the participant’s strengths and weaknesses. Spending this time with employers is valuable, as once a participant is placed, it allows key workers to provide appropriate in-work support and act as a go between which contributes to a sustainable outcome. For example, the key worker will talk to the employer on behalf of the participant to address support needs, and the employer can approach the key worker if they have concerns about the participant. This open, two-way relationship is felt to be important, especially in the first 13 weeks, where they are most likely to fall out of employment.

For TLP, more important than just getting a job outcome, is getting the right job outcome, a sentiment which was echoed by another interviewee. Although they do not always get it right, the time spent with employers reduces the likelihood of employers having false expectations of the participant.

“We spend time making sure it is the right opportunity for the participant. We need to work at their pace, listen to them. It’s not just trying to get them into a job – it’s spending time up front to get the right opportunity.”

- FSS Provider

Most of the employment opportunities for TLP participants are year-round in entry level positions. But where participants have specific skills, the support workers look for opportunities and contact likely employers on behalf of participants. In addition, they spend a lot of time reviewing and writing CVs, and help with online applications, especially where participants have limited abilities and access to IT.

Employability providers in Glasgow and Drumchapel who we spoke to are really pushing for sustainable jobs as there are benefits to both individuals and employers. The key sectors where participants receiving employability support (from FSS and others) get jobs are in Care, Administrative Occupations, Construction and building trades, Retail, Call / Contact Centre, Domestic and Industrial Cleaning, and Security.

There have recently been a few starts in food preparation with individuals sustaining outcomes for 13 weeks. In addition, **other providers** mentioned that they were doing well in terms of outcomes for participants, leading up to February 2020 which was likely down to the NHS who tend to employ a lot of their participants.

Leading up to February 2020, Scotland was experiencing record levels of employment and there were a lot of opportunities⁶¹. Although there were limited opportunities in Drumchapel itself, the opportunities in Glasgow were considered to be numerous and varied, and the feeling was that if people wanted to work, that they were able to. Rather than a lack of opportunity, participants were facing other barriers such as access to childcare, and zero-hour contracts. Some employability providers we spoke to were concerned about Brexit: and **“any other events that loosen the labour market” (Other employability provider)**, such as Covid-19 which is discussed below.

One interviewee mentioned that Brexit will be likely to affect retailers and as these jobs are not as secure or sustainable there is concern about companies leaving the UK or going out of business. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, we had already seen the first casualties of shifts in demand, with large, well established chains filing for administration^{62, 63}. The importance of Glasgow’s retail sector means that this will affect employment levels across the city.

There were some concerns mentioned by a service provider about some of the opportunities that are available for FSS participants, mainly in supermarkets. They have not had success in the past and are concerned about the zero hour contracts that participants are offered as this does not offer them sustainability. Glasgow (up until February 2020) had high levels of contract and agency work (e.g. warehousing, manual labour, constructions etc.). The concern with this type of work was that, although an individual may be suited / qualified for the position, they jump from job to job which makes it hard to evidence sustainable 13 week outcomes, even if they get consecutive contracts.

⁶¹ [Scotland’s Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2019.](#)

⁶² [Business Live – shops in administration 2020.](#)

⁶³ [The Telegraph – shops in administration 2020.](#)

Lessons from this case study

Providers are finding ways to overcome some of the challenges and barriers that are unique to Drumchapel

Drumchapel is the first peripheral estate that has been a case study as part of the FSS evaluation. These estates are characterised by high unemployment, limited local job opportunities, and an expensive, time consuming and not necessarily straightforward journey to the much greater opportunities of the city centre. Although there are good transport links between Drumchapel and Glasgow, the cost can often be prohibitive, and this can be compounded by a reluctance to look outside the immediate area for work. This case study is of particular significance because it starts to offer insights into the significance of the service (compared with existing local services) in such areas, and the extent to which aspects of the service design should be adopted by the LEP in taking forward the NOLB approach in due course.

Specifically, the key questions are:

- How significant is FSS in the context of a peripheral estate?
- How successful has FSS been in penetrating the market of those further from work and successfully engaging people in this group?
- How well has FSS been able to respond to the lack of local opportunities and helped connect service users to opportunities further afield?
- To what extent have those who have found opportunities further afield been able to sustain them and the travelling that this may have involved?

Drumchapel is a unique area and has different characteristics to Glasgow and the surrounding areas. There is a high proportion of participants who have a history of drug or alcohol misuse and mental health problems and the area is characterised by historic and generational unemployment:

“Community teams dealing with drug and alcohol addictions are bursting at the seams. We normally get someone in the recovery period – clean now but spent last 10 years living with an addiction – so not work ready.”

- FSS Provider

“... Kids being brought up in this culture, expectations to work are far less.”

- Other employability provider

“... a lot has to do with confidence level. A lot of 18 – 24 year olds never had a lot of positive direction, haven’t been told to work, and the older people have fallen into the benefit trap.”

- FSS Provider

There are high levels of deprivation, and a lack of opportunities locally. This, coupled with the perceived mindset of many in the area of wanting to work in or close to Drumchapel, means that it can be quite difficult to move people into employment.

The key principles of FSS seem to work well in a deprived area like Drumchapel and are important aspects of delivery for the participant group. The flexible nature of FSS, the person centred and led aspects, and the fact that it is a voluntary service appear to be contributing to FSS becoming the provider of choice for employability support in the local area. For Drumchapel in particular, the local approach seems to be an important aspect of delivery.

There is a reluctance for participants to travel outwith Drumchapel for employment, and TLP have identified some of the barriers people face in gaining, and sustaining employment outwith the area and are delivering a service which connects people to where the job opportunities are (i.e. Glasgow).

“The Voluntary nature of FSS sets it apart, gives people choice, and the difference in performance lies here. Empowering people to make a choice about their support and make a better life.”

- FSS Provider

“[FSS] is probably the most effective service in recent years: a) because it is voluntary, and b) because it is participant led. We tailor services to needs of individual participants.”

- FSS Provider

“Very deprived, a service like this absolutely pivotal in small communities. Very hard to get people from Drumchapel to Glasgow city centre until they 100% believe you, understand and trust you.”

- FSS Provider

FSS and the wider employability landscape are struggling to align, but there is a desire to improve

There is a general recognition that the employability landscape in Glasgow is crowded and there are a lot of organisations doing similar things and targeting the same participants. Despite this competition, interviewees feel that there

are enough participants who need employment support to keep all the providers busy.

“Before FSS, there was a bit of revolving door syndrome, some people had gone through every service but couldn’t hold down a job.”

- FSS Provider

“Every Jobcentre in Glasgow is probably overwhelmed by employability providers. They all look very different, so it must be overwhelming for Work Coaches to try and figure out where the customers can go.”

- FSS Provider

However, there are differing views of the landscape and infrastructure between FSS providers and other employability support providers in the area.

“The days where providers worked on their own are gone, the best results come from working in partnership...This joined up approach is happening across Glasgow. We have a clearer understanding of what we are trying to achieve.”

- FSS Provider

However, this view is not shared by other providers who feel that the delivery of employability programmes is still discrete, different funding and reporting requirements means services are not comparable, ESF funding in particular restricts people being on multiple services but GDPR means that providers struggle to highlight these individuals. One interviewee felt that, until Glasgow employability provision is brought together under one framework, such as that provided by No One Left Behind, they will not be able to achieve a joined-up approach across the city.

“Employability is too complex, made up of discrete programmes that bump into each other, and FSS is an example of this. There is a need for a more joined up approach built on No One Left Behind.”

- Local Authority

“[FSS] needs to have a better understanding of, and process to deal with this – GDPR does complicate this – but it starts with an awareness of what else is out there and available to an individual.”

- Other employability provider

In terms of the wider employability landscape in the wider Glasgow area, there is a feeling from other employability providers that FSS has not fully engaged with other providers to understand how they can work together, where there is overlap, where participants may already be enrolled on another service and considering what is in the participant’s best interest. Although there are

Partner forums across Glasgow where providers come together to share best practice, the view is that FSS (generally in Glasgow,) has not done enough to fully understand and work with the existing employability infrastructure in Glasgow.

“Another programme of scale ... which did not take license of what was going on in the city... [or the existing] infrastructure”.

- Local Authority

One interviewee mentioned that the delivery of FSS does not feel innovative or different to what employability providers were already delivering (i.e. in the community, person-centred, flexible etc.) and that **“FSS has reinforced what people already knew – that a discrete employability service is not the right approach and further reinforces the need for all providers in the Glasgow areas to deliver under one framework”** (Local Authority) (such as No One Left Behind). This will also help answer:

“... how providers support those furthest removed from the labour market; and how these services are funded. The payment model isn’t working, and not just in terms of FSS, but other providers also don’t have this right”.

- Local Authority

There is the acknowledgement from the Lead Provider that there are still a number of challenges. Progress has been made, but more work can be done to improve relationships with the Local Authority and the Health and Social Care Partnership, as well as understanding other services in the area and develop a common understanding of how they can work together.

One employability provider felt that, although FSS does provide a much higher level of support and flexibility than previous programmes, they still don’t have the resources to support participants with additional employment support needs (such as learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those with health conditions). They feel that it is important for FSS to signpost individuals who require additional support (particularly those with hidden support needs such as autism) to providers who are better able to support them as the current employability market and support is designed for and operates for more able individuals.

“Feels like an opportunity lost – all funders fund differently and it doesn’t work yet. A genuinely joined up services might make some headway here.”

- Local Authority

The impact of Covid-19 requires a careful response in term of how employability services can work together to help people who are not in employment

Covid-19 has forced employability providers to change their delivery. Some of this is positive, such as reduced operating costs which may have a positive impact for participants as providers can invest more money in delivery. While they are still delivering support for participants, this is all online and via the telephone. They are providing online accredited training, with a focus on getting participants ready for when we emerge from the pandemic. Some providers have focused on investing in their participants by upskilling them at the moment and letting them know there are still activities that they can be doing.

While they have adapted well, the providers we spoke to are finding it difficult not seeing their participants and being able to provide in-person support. There are also concerns around the outreach work which has been affected, but TLP have reported that almost all of their referrals have come via social media (100% in April and May), with a few from employers since then. There have been no referrals from the Jobcentre during this time as their focus shifted to registering clients for Universal Credit.

Covid-19 was a concern for most of the interviewees. While some were more open about the challenges, others took a more practical and optimistic view. The work they do is impacted regularly by changes in the employability market, whether this is as a result of seasonality (i.e. Christmas and Easter), or as a result of businesses closing. They react to the changing needs of employers and they view the Covid-19 pandemic as one of these shifts, albeit on a much larger and more serious scale.

A couple of interviewees mentioned that any event that tightens the labour market and reduces the number of entry level jobs, will impact their participants (i.e. those furthest from the labour market) hardest as competition for vacancies increases.

“Very uncertain – for all participants, heart-breaking for them. The landscape ahead of them looks so depressing and hopeless.”

- Local Authority

“When a big thing like this happens – it’s the ones that have the least skills, less resilience, at the lower end of the job market. They are always hit worse.”

- Local Authority

“[It will become more of an] employers’ market. They will pick and choose, so those further back and with a disability / health condition aren’t going to be as attractive [as a new graduate].”

- Local Authority

A looser labour market affects those furthest from the labour market more severely and there is a very real risk of them being pushed even further away from employment. This is creating a serious problem for providers as they need to make a choice about their eligibility criteria. They are starting to ask whether they continue to work with their target groups, or do they change their eligibility criteria to those who have become unemployed as a result of Covid-19?

There were different views on this – FSS providers felt that a relaxation of the eligibility criteria would be beneficial as they would be able to work with more participants, but others have cautioned this approach. One interviewee has suggested that there is an urgent need to better understand the employability landscape and who is best placed to work with specific groups, rather than all providers changing their eligibility criteria.

“It would be easier to focus on the easier people to get into employment- but we can’t do this as those further away will slip even more.”

- Other employability provider

One interviewee talked about the lessons learned from the financial crash where they changed their focus to primarily support young people. While this was the right thing to do, on reflection, they should have taken a more proportionate response and continued working with their normal participant group in addition to supporting more young people. She urged the same caution and approach in response to Covid-19.

There are a number of areas where interviewees feel there will be key changes and challenges:

- Some providers are anticipating a change of need for their participants. For example, some might have been furloughed and will likely need some support to get them ready to return and additional in-work support.
- There is concern over how and when Jobcentre referrals will pick up again (on hold since March, with one coming through in July from Drumchapel JCP)
- The level of vacancies that are available and the number of redundancies. This remains unclear and it is changing regularly, so they are waiting to see how this evolves to better inform their approach.
- There has not been enough promotion of the service over the last few months. One interviewee suggested TV and radio adverts to introduce

the service to people across the country explaining the service and how people could get involved: ***“these employment services are essential for the recovery plan”*** (FSS Provider). They also mentioned that a competitor had been doing advertising.

3 Fair Start Scotland in Dundee

This chapter outlines the key features of FSS in Dundee. This chapter covers:

- A description of Dundee area more generally, including the socio-economic context and labour market
- Analysis of the FSS management and performance data for Dundee
- A description of the delivery of FSS in Dundee
- Key lessons we can draw from this case study area.

Area profile

This section provides information about the socioeconomic context and labour market in Dundee City, focusing on levels of deprivation, unemployment and skills and education. It also provides descriptions of local-level efforts to increase employability and to revitalise the local economy, as well as common barriers to employment within the area. The mid-2019 population estimate of Dundee City was 149,320.⁶⁴

According to the 2020 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, Dundee City has one of the highest levels of deprivation in Scotland

The 2020 SIMD indicated that Dundee City had the 5th largest local share of deprived areas in Scotland with more than a third of data zones (38%) among the 20% most deprived in Scotland.⁶⁵ Linlathen and Mid Craigie is the most deprived area in Dundee City and is the 7th most deprived area in Scotland overall.⁶⁶ Further, Dundee City has the second highest rate of child poverty in Scotland with over 31% of children living in relative poverty, after housing costs.⁶⁷

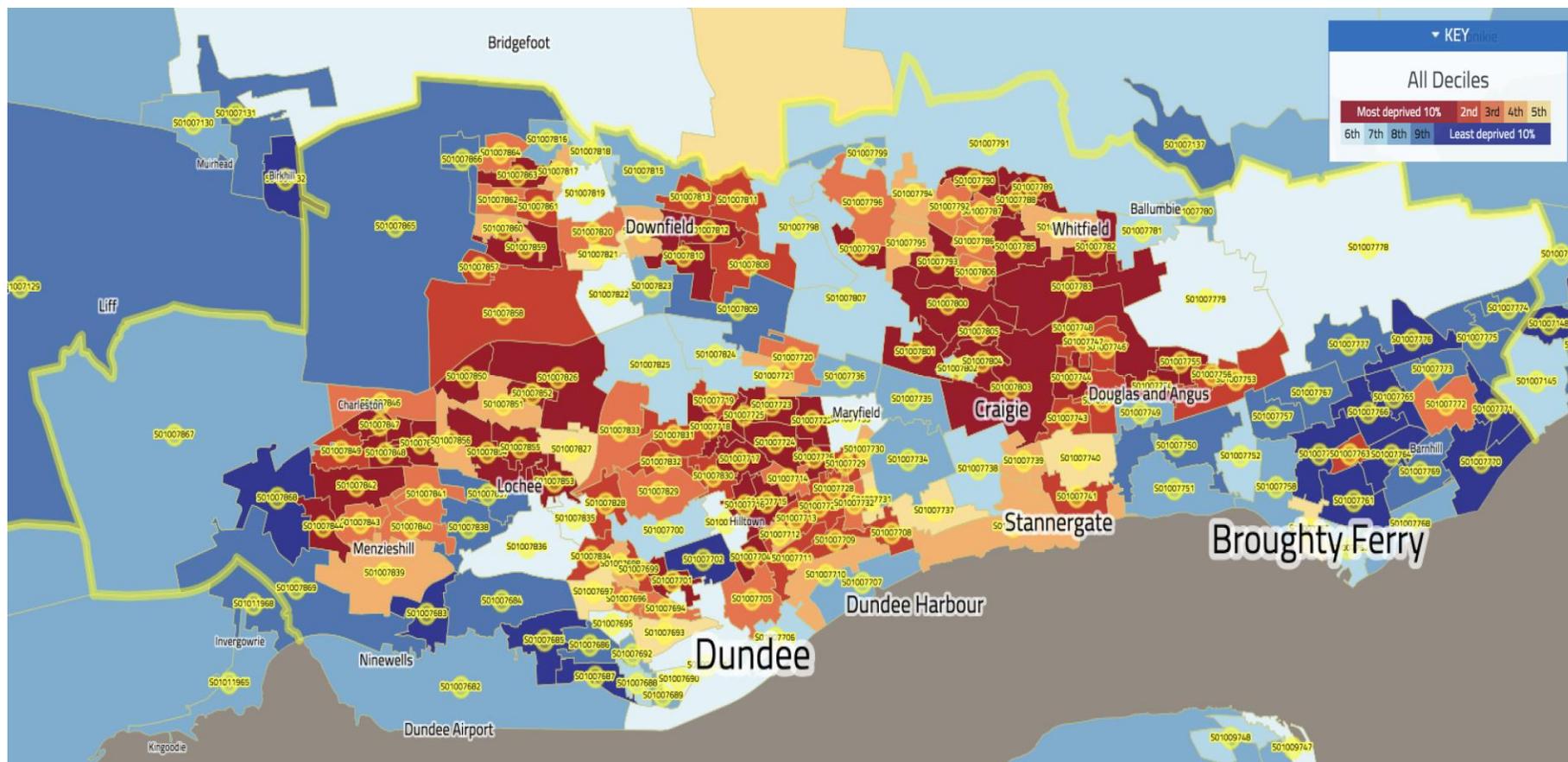
⁶⁴ [National Records of Scotland. Dundee City Council Area Profile – Population Estimates. 2020.](#)

⁶⁵ [Scottish Government. Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020. 2020.](#)

⁶⁶ [Ibid.](#)

⁶⁷ [NHS Health Scotland. Child Poverty: scale, trend and distribution in Scotland. 2019.](#)

Figure 2: Levels of deprivation in Dundee City, colour coded according to the Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation deciles. The north east, central and west areas of the city are in the most deprived decile [Source: Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation 2020: Dundee City]



There is a higher proportion of residents in Dundee who are unemployed or living in workless households compared with Scotland overall

The rate of unemployment is significantly higher in Dundee City (5.4%) than in Scotland (3.5%) and in Great Britain (3.9%).⁶⁸ More males are unemployed than females (with 6.3% of males being unemployed compared with 5% of females).⁶⁹ In 2018, a quarter of households in the area were workless (13,100 households or 25.2% of all households). This is significantly higher than the percentage of households that are workless in either Scotland (17.1%) or Great Britain (14.3%).

In March 2020, 4.5% of people in Dundee City (4,455 people) claimed out-of-work benefits.⁷⁰ This is higher than the rate of claimants in Scotland overall (3.3%) and Great Britain (3.1%). The claimant rate was highest amongst those aged 18 to 24 (5.3%), followed by those aged 25 to 49 (4.8%) and those aged 50+ (3.7%).⁷¹

While the unemployment rate amongst males and females is similar (6.3% for males compared to 5% for females), males are twice as likely to claim benefits than females (6.1% compared with 3%).⁷² There is a significant gender pay gap in Dundee City, with males earning £59.50 more on average per week than their female counterparts.⁷³

There is a relatively high job density in Dundee City, however, rates of economic activity amongst the population are lower than Scotland overall

Dundee City has a working age population of 71,000.⁷⁴ The area has a job density of 0.84 compared with 0.82 in Scotland and 0.86 Great Britain.⁷⁵ There were 75,000 estimated employee jobs in Dundee City in 2018.⁷⁶ 65.3% of these were full-time and 34.7% were part-time.⁷⁷ From 2009 to 2019, total employment in the area hardly changed, compared with a Scottish increase of 1% over the same period.⁷⁸

⁶⁸ [NOMIS. Labour Market Profile – Dundee City.](#)

⁶⁹ [Ibid.](#)

⁷⁰ [Ibid.](#)

⁷¹ [Ibid.](#)

⁷² [Ibid.](#)

⁷³ [Ibid.](#)

⁷⁴ [Ibid.](#)

⁷⁵ [Ibid.](#)

⁷⁶ [Ibid.](#)

⁷⁷ [Ibid.](#)

⁷⁸ [Skills Development Scotland. Dundee City: current and future skills demand. 2019.](#)

72.8% of those aged 16-64 were economically active in 2019.⁷⁹ This is a lower rate than Scotland and Great Britain overall (77.5% and 78.9% respectively).⁸⁰ The rate of females who are economically active (70.5%) is lower than that for males (75.2%). Dundee City also has a lower employment rate (68.6%) than in Scotland (74.8%) and Great Britain (75.8%).⁸¹ 14% of the working age population are classified as employment deprived within SIMD income domain, compared with 10.6% of the working age population in Scotland overall.⁸² 16.3% of the population in Dundee City are income deprived within an SIMD income domain, compared with 12.1% of the population in Scotland.⁸³ 23.1% of children are in low income families (compared with 16.7% of children in Scotland overall).⁸⁴

The biggest employment sector in Dundee City is human health and social work activities, providing 21.3% of employee jobs in the area.⁸⁵ Dundee has in Ninewells, a major regional hospital complex with substantial related research activities. This is followed by wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (14.7%), accommodation and food service activities (10.7%) and education (10.7%).⁸⁶ It is predicted that human health and social work, wholesale and retail, and education will be the top 3 employing sectors in 2029.⁸⁷

The largest forecast employment growth from 2019 to 2029 is in administration and support services (17%), professional scientific and technical (15%), and construction (13%).⁸⁸ The largest forecast employment decreases are in manufacturing (-25%), electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning (-10%), and water supply sewerage and waste (-8%).⁸⁹

From 2019 to 2029, it is forecast that there will be 32,800 people needed to fill job openings in Dundee City.⁹⁰ 30,400 of these jobs will be created through replacement demand and 2,500 will be due to expansion demand.⁹¹

⁷⁹ [NOMIS. Labour Market Profile – Dundee City.](#)

⁸⁰ [Ibid.](#)

⁸¹ [NOMIS. Labour Market Profile – Dundee City.](#)

⁸² [ScotPHO. Health and wellbeing profile- Dundee City \(Council area\) compared against Scotland.](#)

⁸³ [Ibid.](#)

⁸⁴ [Ibid.](#)

⁸⁵ [NOMIS. Labour Market Profile – Dundee City.](#)

⁸⁶ [Ibid.](#)

⁸⁷ [Skills Development Scotland. Dundee City: current and future skills demand. 2019.](#)

⁸⁸ [Ibid.](#)

⁸⁹ [Ibid.](#)

⁹⁰ [Ibid.](#)

⁹¹ [Ibid.](#)

On average, residents in Dundee City have similar levels of qualifications and skills to those of Scotland as a whole

The population in Dundee City has a similar proportion of people with the highest level of education (NVQ4 and above) to that of the national level in Scotland (44.9% compared with 45.3%). It has a smaller proportion of people who have no qualification than in Scotland overall (7.9% compared with 9.8%).

42% of jobs in Dundee City in 2019 were higher level occupations, 29% were mid-level occupations and 29% were lower level.⁹² The occupational structure of jobs are forecast to be similar in 2029 to levels in 2019: 43% are forecast to be higher level occupations, 24% mid-level jobs and 33% are predicted to be lower level occupations.⁹³

There are a number of local employability services and centres in Dundee City which provide support for residents

In 2016 the Dundee Partnership approved an ambitious strategy to move towards a high performance single employability service for the City. This led to the creation of the **Discover Work Service**, the city-wide employability service which aims to present a single door approach for Dundee's wide range of employability support. The Discover Work Service is overseen by an Executive Group made up of Dundee City Council, the Dundee Third Sector Interface, Skills Development Scotland, Dundee and Angus College, DWP, NHS Tayside and Remploy Scotland. It supports job seekers and employers in Dundee and provides training and tailored support in order to help people overcome barriers such as health, debt, welfare, childcare and convictions so that they can move into work. Discover Work can also arrange work placements and volunteering opportunities.⁹⁴ Behind the Discover Work brand are two Dundee City Council services as well as a wide range of other services:

- **Employment Unit, Dundee City Council**, provides employability support to those aged over 16 years and face barriers to entering employment e.g. health or disability, single parents, problematic drug use. Individuals are supported through job clubs, work experience placements and ongoing support.⁹⁵

⁹² [*Ibid.*](#)

⁹³ [*Ibid.*](#)

⁹⁴ [Discover Work Dundee. About Discover Work.](#)

⁹⁵ [Dundee City Council. Dundee's youth employment activity plan.](#)

- **Youth employability service, Dundee City Council**, supports young people aged 16-24 living in Dundee into employment, apprenticeships or training courses through the help of a key worker. The service also advertises job vacancies on their various platforms and offers support through the application.⁹⁶

There have been sustained efforts to incorporate employability approaches in multi-service centres in the most deprived neighbourhoods in Dundee, providing early support on the employability journey close to client's homes.

In addition, Dundee City Council has led a number of major partnership initiatives and strategies to improve employment opportunities in the surrounding area, some of which include:

- **Tay Cities Deal** aims to invest £1.83 billion to directly benefit 500,000 residents and 15,5000 business in the region with the aim to create 15,000 job opportunities over 10 years⁹⁷
- **City Plan for Dundee 2017-2026** aims to help 4,700 people living in the region into jobs over a 10-year period.⁹⁸

What this means for FSS in Dundee

Dundee is a compact city with long standing issues around unemployment, earnings and poverty. There has been a substantial long-standing infrastructure of support with strong leadership from Dundee City Council, and significant attraction of ESF and ERDF funding to run substantial employability programmes.

The review of employability support in 2015/16 identified the need to work towards a coherent 'employability service' in Dundee, and this remains the aspiration of the Dundee Partnership. Despite the scale of the partnership effort, FSS is a significant presence, with the opportunity to work in a complementary way to tackle problems which exist at a significant scale. The Discover Work Partnership provides a forum for discussion around how FSS can complement and supplement other local services. A review of the employability strategy and a concerted effort to restart progress towards a high performance employability service for Dundee has just been launched, so this Case Study is particularly timely in informing the LEP's thinking about the way forward as it maps its route through the stages of NOLB.

⁹⁶ [Twitter. Youth Employability Service.](#)

[Facebook. Youth Employability Service.](#)

⁹⁷ [Taycities. The Tay Cities Deal. 2018.](#)

⁹⁸ [Dundee Partnership. City Plan for Dundee 2017-2026.](#)

Management and Performance Data for Dundee

The infographic overleaf draws on the management and performance data collected between April 2019 and March 2020. It covers all FSS participants who were registered with the Dundee City Jobcentre (i.e. those who were enrolled on the service) which supports participants from across the Dundee area.

682 individuals participated in 2019/20

66% Male

34% Female

77% With disability or health condition

49% < 35 years

27% 35-49

24% 50+

21% Sustained work for 13 weeks

21% of Men

22% of Women

22% of those with disability or health condition

18% of those without condition

13% of participants enrolled on the programme sustained work for 26 weeks

Description of service

Dundee is in the Tayside contract area, together with Perth and Kinross and Angus local authority areas. The Lead Provider in Dundee is Remploy. Their supply chain originally included Rathbone but they withdrew in 2019, with all their staff being TUPE'd across to Remploy who are now the direct provider of all FSS support.

Remploy have a dedicated manager for the FSS service in Dundee. The service is based in the Nethergate Centre in Dundee. The office is in the centre of Dundee and is a 10 minute walk from the Jobcentre in Wellgate House (in the Wellgate shopping centre), with good access to bus routes. There are 2 offices next door to each other as they have expanded from the original office. The main office is open plan with partitions for private conversations. The second office is made up of 3 separate rooms for development sessions or confidential one to one discussions. The offices are busy with a regular flow of clients visiting.

Remploy has 11 full time key workers in Dundee:

“They come from really varied backgrounds – only 1 or 2 have employability backgrounds – we look for personality, and how they fit into the team and will relate to people with barriers. So they may have been working in sales or be ex nurses, ex forces, in recruitment, or mental health support staff.”

- FSS provider

From the start of the contract, most referrals have come from TPOs, and it was stated that those referred from TPOs have a higher conversion into jobs and sustainability than those referred from JCP. The high proportion of TPO referrals may be related to the longstanding presence of Remploy in Dundee and its well established network of contacts.

There was also thought to be a higher sustainability of outcomes by those referred by TPOs, and this was considered to be because these third parties may have had a better awareness of those clients who need and could benefit from the FSS service – in other words they are better at referring appropriate participants who can benefit from the service.

Strengthening the relationships with Jobcentre Plus

Partly in response to the low referral rates from JCP, a Remploy key worker is now present twice a week in the Jobcentre to meet new recruits (after referral). There are 60 work coaches in the Jobcentre and it has been seen as important to invest regular time to help them all understand FSS as, with staff turnover, not all of them will be familiar with FSS. The awareness of work coaches is felt by the FSS provider to have improved in the last 6 months (to May 2020). This effort was driven by a particular concern about the scale of those referred who are not appropriate or don't turn up:

“50% of referrals in Dundee are not appropriate or don't turn up. It's worse in Dundee – better conversion in Perth and particularly Angus where we meet participants in the Jobcentre and can have a warm handover. We haven't got to this place yet in Dundee. This would transform the conversion rate. Our place in the Jobcentre is not about warm handovers, just about picking up as people come through.”

- FSS provider

“JCP may have thought that FSS is like Work Choice – in other words, it is not a provision that can help a wide range of participants.”

- FSS provider

In addition, Remploy has a table set up in the Jobcentre and work coaches can send potential participants over for an initial discussion about the FSS service and its suitability. If the key worker thinks they are suitable they book them into welcome session at the Remploy office. These welcome sessions take place 3 times a week and include referrals from Jobcentre Plus and TPOs as well as self-referrals. This is a refinement of the previous approach:

“Before, Jobcentre was sending people over who may not be suitable – they were telling people to come along – many did not realise FSS was voluntary and they thought if they didn't come they would be sanctioned – a lot used to get up and leave when they realised it was voluntary.”

- FSS provider

Although Remploy still get referrals from Jobcentre work coaches who they haven't met, there is agreement by provider staff that they are now building a better relationship with Jobcentre work coaches and most of the work coaches now have a better understanding of FSS and who is it appropriate for.

The number of unsuitable referrals is now considered by staff to be very low.

“There are still one or two not suitable – for example, if someone has been out of work for 20 years and don't want to do voluntary work or look at placements.”

- FSS provider

Managing and referring the FSS caseload

The key workers each manage a caseload – this will consist of regular contact and placing participants onto in house development sessions for between 6-8 people which cover key skills and issues. These cover topics such as:

- Barriers to employment and how to deal with these
- Confidence and motivation
- CV and job search

There are some participants who don't want to join a group setting in which case these will be covered in one to one sessions.

“In the main a lot of our support is reassurance calls – sometimes we need to provide face to face help with mental health or safeguarding – but it is mainly phone calls checking that they are ok – and if they have lost their job.”

- FSS provider

For those who fall out of employment after their successful placement there is a rapid response system to help them get back into work in the balance of time – this is the focus of one key worker.

Remploy has a structured way of building its network of partners, through their Transforming Lives Community – this applies across all their contracts in Scotland and it is a national community. The concept is to build a group of partners who can support the participant and will share Remploy's values. When organisations join they go through due diligence process to ensure that they are safe to refer to – covering each of the barriers that participants may face – for example, mental health, money and benefits advice, energy poverty, skills development and adult learning.

Local authorities do not need to go through the due diligence process and Remploy try to work closely with Dundee City Council in terms of housing advice and money advice.

The TLC is an actively managed network and members can take part in an annual Scottish forum for all TLC members. There is an intention to complement this with more local forums including one for Tayside TLC members.

Of their different regional networks Remploy consider Dundee their strongest, because of their previous contracts to deliver Work Choice and Work First (when they started to attend the Local Employability Forum).

“Being in Dundee before FSS helped us – there are a lot of key partners who have worked with over the years – SDS is quite big for us, but also The Helm, and DEAP Ltd.”

- FSS provider

The range of local provision is considered to be very comprehensive with no obvious gaps:

“There is a lot of free provision and some paid provision. We will pay as and when we need to, but 90% of the provision [we use for FSS participants] is provided free.”

- FSS provider

Remploy get most of their referrals from TPOs. There has been a noticeable increase in the referrals from JCP in the last 6 months:

“It was supposed to be 80% JCP, but across Tayside we have been getting 60% from TPOs and 40% from JCP. Dundee is the largest Jobcentre but we get the smallest number of referrals from it. We have worked with the Scottish Government on this.”

- FSS provider

Remploy work closely with a range of local services – the main ones being Penumbra, with FSS participants regularly using their 6 week Ready Steady Work course for those with mental health issues (this is paid through FSS funding). Dundee was part of the Health and Work Support (HWS) Pilot funded by the (then) Work and Health Unit within the DWP and the Scottish Government. HWS staff have been into Remploy to present the service and FSS staff. In terms of the HWS service, Remploy staff advised us that there was an issue about double funding (because of ESF funding) but towards the end of the HWS pilot there was an agreement that FSS participants who were in work could use the service.

“We have used the [HWS] service quite a lot – really impressed by it.”

- FSS provider

Remploy have used SALUS but they have found that the service they were getting from key workers was similar, so they have stopped using SALUS. FSS participants are also referred to Dundee Money Action for help with debt issues, and local food banks.

Remploy see the positioning of FSS in the local employability landscape as:

“Providing a person-centred approach, tailored to individual needs, with a key worker who gives one-to-one support throughout the journey – supported by employer routeways.”

- FSS provider

They emphasise the value of the TLC approach in terms of tackling a wide range of barriers, and the value of the internal development courses for participants.

Relating to the wider infrastructure of support

In terms of the wider landscape of employability support and the way that FSS fits into and complements this, Dundee has a dense and varied collection of local support services, reflecting its history of high long-term unemployment.

There is an active LEP which includes Remploy. In 2015 the LEP took forward a 12 month process to review and refine its employability strategy, with a focus on transforming performance and creating a clear and coherent ‘Dundee Employability Service’ for both individuals and employers (the partners are about to review this strategy). The resulting action plan was co-designed by all the key partners and led to a clarification of respective roles and to Dundee City Council’s own procurement approach, with funds being used to implement the LEP strategy and with a focus on complementarity and reducing duplication.

Remploy used to work closely with Dundee City Council (e.g. on the Fairy Job Mother programme for 16-24 year olds), but this relationship has come to an end because of the issues around European Social Fund and the risk of duplicate spend.

“We used to work closely with the Council, but double funding prevented this and it feels like we are in competition. We may get a referral and they then start on a Council programme and then we have to try to work out who gets the credit.”

- FSS provider

“We don’t have very much to do with FSS – we run our programmes and they run their programme – we may compete with clients but it is hard to get a sense of the scale of this.”

- Local Authority

However, there is a general agreement that there are ‘more than enough clients to go round’, and there have been concerted joint efforts to forge a complementary role for FSS:

“It feels less competitive that it could be. We tried to come up with ways of integrating our services and felt there were ways to do this, but we couldn’t get agreement with the Scottish Government. We thought carefully about ESF and cut off points (e.g. clients could do some work on the pipeline and then leave to go onto FSS), so we aimed to complement FSS in terms of childcare funding, financial inclusion etc. We could then hand over clients to FSS and vice versa.”

- Local Authority

This work does appear to have got somewhere in terms of local operation agreements, and at a local management level there appear to be good relationships.

“...but when it comes to front line staff, they have personal targets and this is where the competition comes in.”

- Local Authority

But despite this, we did hear about examples of the cross referral of clients when it was apparent that another service was the most appropriate.

There are strong similarities between FSS and some of Dundee City Council funded services, though the latter are more closely targeted at particular areas and client groups. However, we heard about clients who were confused about what service they were receiving from whom, and what they had received in the past.

There is a clear mutual respect between the managers of the different services on the ground about the design of their respective services and the quality of support they both offer to clients.

This kind of relationship applies to employer engagement as well:

“They keep their employers and we keep ours. When we talk to employers they say the landscape is confusing and they do get calls about services from different providers. Employers pick and choose who they want to work with – drawing on their personal connections and prior experience.”

- Local Authority

“We have a gentleman’s agreement with our 6 providers – we are only a support service – the other partners will contact us and we will see if it is already done. This works really well. We tried to do this with Remploy but they said all their market is client targeted (i.e. we target employers according to the needs and abilities of the client).”

- Local Authority

Overall, referrals rates are been good in Dundee, and Remploy have consistently achieved their referral targets.

Again, reflecting their long presence in Dundee, Remploy have a wide range of established employer contacts in Dundee. Many of these were with manufacturers but significant numbers of their jobs have disappeared recently with the closure of the NCR manufacturing base and more recently Michelin with their well-paid, relatively highly skilled jobs. The main profile of the employer engagement effort by Remploy is in manufacturing, production, and call centres (e.g. with the BT and Tesco call centres). There are also relationships with Social Security Scotland – which with 750 employees will be one of the larger employers in Dundee – and Balfour Beattie in terms of employment on the dualling of the A9.

The impact of Covid-19

The lockdown period saw a stop to referrals from JCP as they focused on Universal Credit registrations. In Dundee this has seen a focus by the FSS provider on the use of social media to attract participants – and notably the use of Facebook. This has proven to be a notable success, providing a steady flow of clients from a range of backgrounds and facing different issues. Remploy are now also starting to receive referrals for newly redundant participants.

“The Scottish Government have opened up eligibility and we can help anyone – but most of time they have barriers anyway: mental health issues, anxiety and depression, or debt.”

- FSS provider

From a situation where the main source of FSS referrals was from TPOs, and with a growing proportion of referrals from JCP, the majority of referrals are now self-referrals through social media. Most of these come from the Remploy Facebook pages. Last month (May 2020) there were 60 new inquiries (across the whole of the Tayside contract area) from Facebook and also from the local newsletter which goes to partners in Tayside.

“People are now sitting in front of social media – some share the page once the post is on – they might share it on groups, key workers will share and others will link etc.”

- FSS provider

Lessons from this case study

FSS and the wider services have found a way to live together – but it is not ideal

There have been concerted efforts to find a way to create some clarity about respective roles and relationships between FSS and other local employability services, but it has not been possible to confirm these – mainly because of ESF related issues. There is a clear mutual appreciation of the respective value of these programmes and services and the risk of competition has been reduced by the scale of the problem in Dundee.

Some clients remain confused about the service they are receiving

Despite increasing clarity about the nature and content of FSS there are still clients who are confused about what programme / service they are on, and the role and status of their provider. This appears to be particularly true in Dundee because of the wide range of support available, with much of it looking similar. Part of this is down to the success of developing design principles around FSS that respond to extensive findings about best practice – it is hard for local partners to develop programmes that don't match some of the key features of FSS.

Balance of time remains an issue

There is concern about the fact that, when participants complete FSS, they are not able to return: in other words, if they don't leave for training or a job or if they disengage after a few months. The option to 'freeze' participants on the service is available, but if they disengage or want to leave service this does not apply, even though they may want to re-join later. Particularly in the light of the disruption created by Covid-19 in terms of caring responsibilities and job insecurities it may be worth reviewing this aspect of the service design.

There have been important lessons from the lockdown period in terms of marketing

The active use of social media during the lockdown period has proved successful, and at the time of our interviews was the source of most new clients. This has significant implications for the focus of the marketing effort post lockdown, partly because of the learning involved in making it work, but also in the finding that it seems to be reaching clients who were not being reached by the previous engagement with JCP and TPOs.

4 Fair Start Scotland in Peterhead and Fraserburgh

This chapter outlines the key features of FSS in Peterhead and Fraserburgh. This chapter covers:

- A description of Peterhead and Fraserburgh, including the socio-economic context and labour market
- Analysis of the FSS management and performance data for Peterhead and Fraserburgh
- A description of the delivery of FSS in Peterhead and Fraserburgh
- Key lessons we can draw from this case study area

Area profile

This section provides information about the labour market and socioeconomic trends in Peterhead and Fraserburgh, focusing on levels of deprivation, unemployment and skills, and education. It also provides descriptions of local efforts to increase employability and encourage economic growth in the two areas. In 2018, the population of Peterhead was 19,270 and of Fraserburgh 13,180.⁹⁹

The most deprived areas in Aberdeenshire are concentrated in Peterhead and Fraserburgh where there are high levels of child poverty

The 2020 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) identified that Fraserburgh and Peterhead have areas which are in the top 10% and 20% most deprived in Scotland.¹⁰⁰ While Aberdeenshire overall contains a large portion of the 20% least deprived areas in Scotland, the most deprived areas in the region are concentrated in Banff and Buchan, primarily in Peterhead and Fraserburgh.¹⁰¹

In 2018, Fraserburgh and District had the highest rate of child poverty in Aberdeenshire (20.9%). Peterhead and North and Rattray was third highest at 19.1%.¹⁰² These rates are higher than the rate of child poverty in Aberdeenshire (12.6%) and Scotland as a whole.¹⁰³ Single parent households

⁹⁹ [Aberdeenshire Council. Population. 2018.](#)

¹⁰⁰ [Scottish Government. Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 – Aberdeenshire.](#)

¹⁰¹ [Ibid.](#)

¹⁰² [The Poverty Alliance. Tackling child poverty in Aberdeenshire: lessons from local voices. 2018.](#)

¹⁰³ [Ibid.](#)

made up 6% of all households in both towns according to the 2011 census.¹⁰⁴
The 2019 average household income in Peterhead (£27,071) and Fraserburgh (£26,093) are below the Scottish (£29,832) and UK (31,979) average.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Peterhead. 2019.](#)

[Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Fraserburgh. 2019.](#)

¹⁰⁵ [Aberdeenshire Council. Household income in Aberdeenshire. 2019.](#)

Figure 3: Deprivation levels in Fraserburgh, colour coded according to the Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation deciles. The north and west areas of the town are in the most deprived decile [Source: Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation 2020: Fraserburgh]

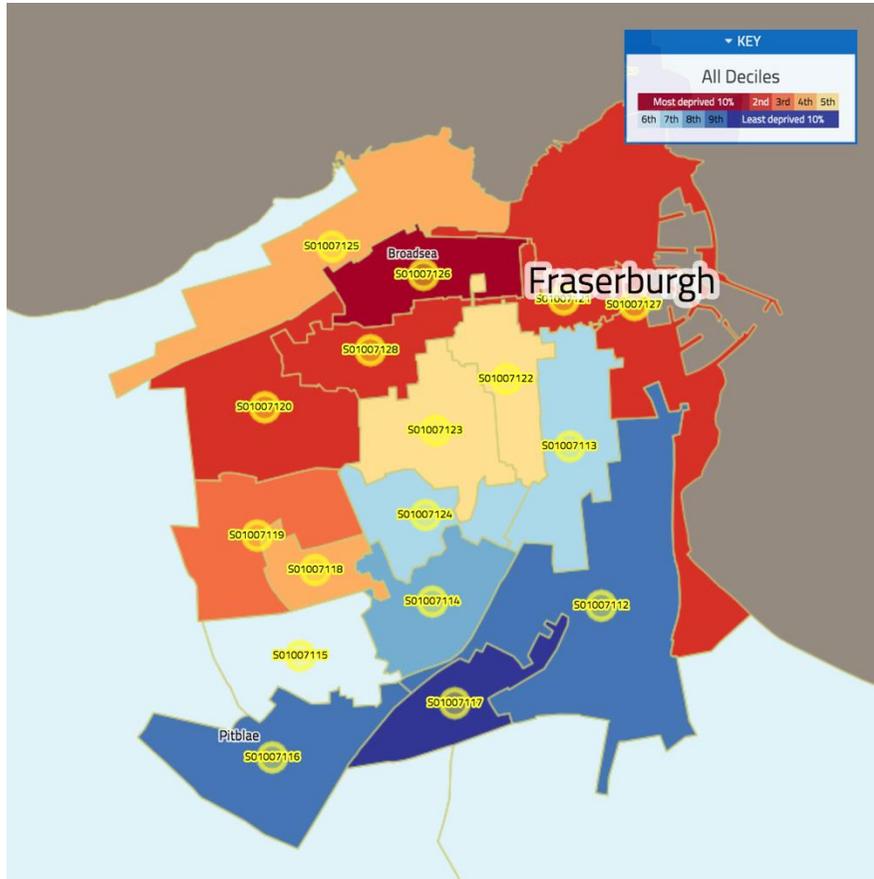
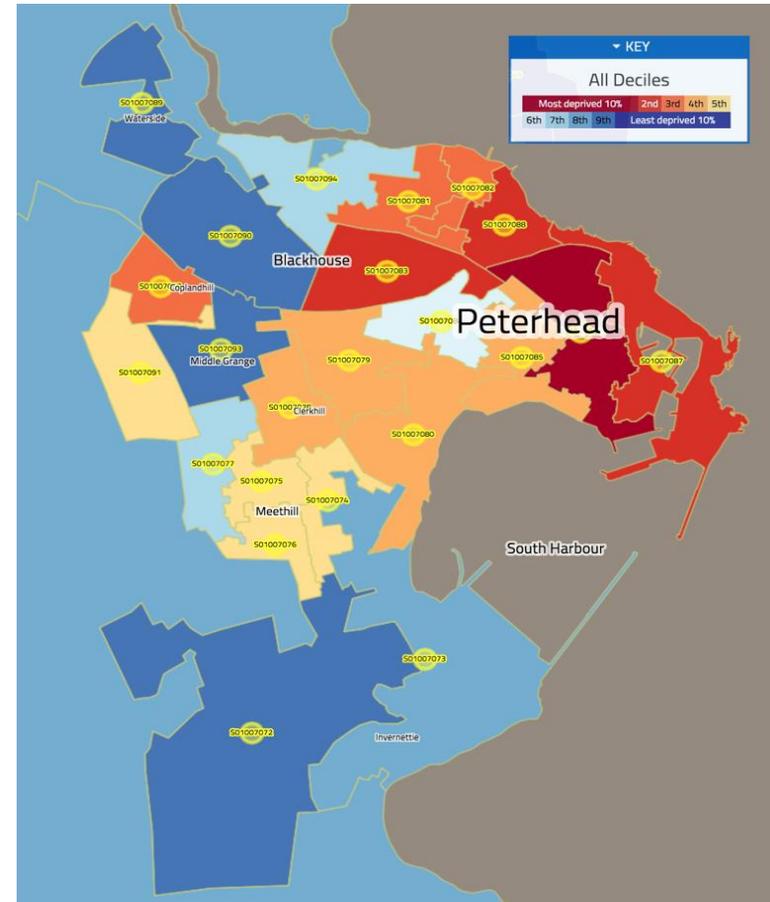


Figure 4: Deprivation levels in Peterhead, colour coded according to the Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation deciles. The eastern areas of the town are in the most deprived decile [Source: Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation 2020: Peterhead]



Residents in Peterhead and Fraserburgh have lower levels of health and education compared to residents in Aberdeenshire on average

High levels of deprivation in Fraserburgh and Peterhead are associated with poor health and education outcomes for residents. Compared to Aberdeenshire as a whole, residents of Peterhead are twice as likely to require an overnight stay in hospital for both alcohol and drug related incidents.¹⁰⁶ Rates of emergency admission to hospital are high in Fraserburgh, with significantly lower life expectancy for male and females, as well as high levels of problem alcohol and drug use especially amongst young people.¹⁰⁷

A third of Aberdeenshire's data zones in the top 20% most educationally deprived are in Peterhead and Fraserburgh.¹⁰⁸ Many of those living in Peterhead (66%) live in the top 10% most educationally deprived areas in Aberdeenshire.¹⁰⁹ Both Fraserburgh and Peterhead have a smaller proportion of pupils achieving 5 awards at level 5 (S4); 3 awards at level 6 (S5) and 5 awards at level 6 (S6) than the 2018 Aberdeenshire average. Additionally, 7% of Peterhead's population aged 16-19 are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to the Aberdeenshire average (3%).¹¹⁰

There are high levels of unemployment as well as economic inactivity in Peterhead and Fraserburgh

Both Peterhead and Fraserburgh have a similar proportion of the population who are working age (64% and 63% respectively) to Aberdeenshire (62.2%) and Scotland overall (64.2%).¹¹¹ Nearly two-thirds of those who are working age in Peterhead (72%) and Fraserburgh (70%) are economically active.¹¹² This is significantly lower than the rate in Aberdeenshire overall (83%) and Scotland (77.5%).¹¹³

In the latest unemployment figures (November 2019), Fraserburgh travel to work area (TTWA) had 385 out of work claimants (aged 16+) compared to 650

¹⁰⁶ [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. 2016 report. 2017.](#)

¹⁰⁷ [Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership. Strategic Plan 2016-2019.](#)

¹⁰⁸ [Scottish Government. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2016 briefing note.](#)

¹⁰⁹ [Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership. Locality Planning Approach: Peterhead.](#)

¹¹⁰ [Ibid.](#)

¹¹¹ [Ibid.](#)

¹¹² [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Peterhead. 2019.](#)

[Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Fraserburgh. 2019.](#)

¹¹³ [Ibid.](#)

[Nomis. Labour Market Profile – Aberdeenshire.](#)

in Peterhead TTWA.¹¹⁴ Both Fraserburgh and Peterhead TTWA had a higher rate of claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 than across Aberdeenshire (2.7% in both Fraserburgh and Peterhead compared with 1.8% across Aberdeenshire).¹¹⁵ The majority of people who claim out of work benefits in Peterhead TTWA are male (3.3% compared with 2.2%).¹¹⁶ 2.9% claimants in Fraserburgh TTWA are male compared with female claimants (2.2%).¹¹⁷

Both Fraserburgh and Peterhead have higher levels of economic inactivity than Scotland overall (30% and 28% respectively compared with 22.5%).¹¹⁸ Both areas have a high proportion who are retired and a higher rate of those who are long-term sick or disabled compared with Aberdeenshire overall (6% and 4% respectively compared with 2%).¹¹⁹

The area of Banff and Buchan is largely rural, and its economy is mainly based on fishing and agriculture, and both Peterhead and Fraserburgh have a large fishing industry and make up much of the fish landed and fishers employed.¹²⁰ Fraserburgh employs the largest number of fishers (774; 16% of the total fishers employed in Scotland in 2018) and fishers who work regularly (647).¹²¹ However, in Fraserburgh, the biggest industries are manufacturing, retail and health.¹²² In Peterhead, the biggest industries are manufacturing, retail, and transport and storage (including postal services).¹²³

Transport is a major issue for job seekers in both towns as car ownership is low and residents face barriers in accessing public transport including availability, costs and delays

Finding affordable and available transport is a major challenge for job seekers in Peterhead and Fraserburgh. The most common distance for commuters from Peterhead and Fraserburgh to travel to work is up to 5km (36.7% of those travelling to work in Fraserburgh compared to 35.4% in Peterhead).¹²⁴ Fraserburgh and Peterhead have the same proportion of commuters who

¹¹⁴ [Aberdeenshire's Labour Market. North East Scotland's Unemployment Figures – November 2019. 2020.](#)

¹¹⁵ [Ibid.](#)

¹¹⁶ [Ibid.](#)

¹¹⁷ [Ibid.](#)

¹¹⁸ [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Peterhead. 2019.](#)

[Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Fraserburgh. 2019.](#)

¹¹⁹ [Ibid.](#)

¹²⁰ [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's Economy Annual Review. 2019.](#)

¹²¹ [Scottish Government. Scottish sea fisheries statistics 2018.](#)

¹²² [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Fraserburgh. 2019.](#)

¹²³ [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Peterhead. 2019.](#)

¹²⁴ [USP. Fraserburgh and Peterhead.](#)

commute within the wider Aberdeenshire area (65%).¹²⁵ 12% of commuters from Peterhead and 9% of commuters from Fraserburgh travel to Aberdeen City which has the largest labour market in Aberdeenshire.¹²⁶

Both Peterhead and Fraserburgh are located in areas which are at the highest risk of transport poverty in Aberdeenshire.¹²⁷ Car ownership is low in both towns: 29.1% of residents in Fraserburgh and 28.7% of residents in Peterhead do not own a car.¹²⁸ Additionally, commuters from Peterhead and Fraserburgh face multiple barriers in accessing public transport to and from Aberdeen city including major bus delays, congestion on roads, poor waiting facilities and passenger capacity at Aberdeen station.¹²⁹ Further, there are no train stations in Peterhead or Fraserburgh.¹³⁰ The nearest train station to Peterhead is in Aberdeen (32.6 miles away).¹³¹ This journey takes 50 minutes when driving and, by bus, takes around 2 hours. The distance between Fraserburgh and Aberdeen is 60km (37.5 miles) which takes over around 1 hour to drive and over 90 minutes by bus.¹³²

The bus services from both Peterhead and Fraserburgh depart hourly during peak times and cost £3.30 for a day pass.¹³³ Additionally, there are park and ride services from both Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen city centre.¹³⁴ These challenges in public transport also mean interchanging services between bus and train can be difficult for job seekers.

Aberdeenshire Council has in place a local regeneration strategy and a number of employment initiatives for people living in the area, with a particular emphasis on youth employment

Aberdeenshire Council's local regeneration strategy is aimed at four communities on the north coast focusing on Banff, Macduff, Fraserburgh and Peterhead.¹³⁵ This regeneration strategy has put in place development

¹²⁵ [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Peterhead. 2019.](#)

[Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Fraserburgh. 2019.](#)

¹²⁶ [Ibid.](#)

¹²⁷ [North East Bus Alliance. Assessing the state of the bus network in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. 2019.](#)

¹²⁸ [USP. Fraserburgh and Peterhead.](#)

¹²⁹ [North East Bus Alliance. Assessing the state of the bus network in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. 2019.](#)

¹³⁰ [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Peterhead. 2019.](#)

[Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Fraserburgh. 2019.](#)

¹³¹ [Aberdeenshire Council. Aberdeenshire's towns: Peterhead. 2019.](#)

¹³² [Google Maps. Fraserburgh to Aberdeen.](#)

¹³³ [Stagecoach. Day bus pass tickets in Aberdeenshire.](#)

¹³⁴ <https://tison-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/North%20Scotland/Bluebird/Buchan%20Guide-26th%20October%20Changes.pdf>

¹³⁵ [Aberdeenshire Council. Regeneration in Aberdeenshire.](#)

partnerships consisting of local business and community representatives for each of the four towns.¹³⁶ These partnerships have developed specific regeneration action plans (covering 2016-2021).¹³⁷ Additionally, the Council has introduced a variety of initiatives aimed at supporting residents into work:

- **Employment support team** – the team is the Council’s central point for employment support and aims to help anyone living in Aberdeenshire seeking employment or education. It offers support from a Key Worker and practical assistance. The assistance offered includes training courses; support finding affordable childcare and short-term financial assistance; financial advice; and information from partner agencies. The support team also coordinates the Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership.¹³⁸
- **Job Club** – Open to all ages, Aberdeenshire Council runs job clubs in both Peterhead and Fraserburgh as part of the Employment Support Team community sessions.¹³⁹
- **Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership (EmploymentCONNECT)** – this service uses the Scottish Government Employability Pipeline as a framework for a range of services and aims to provide the support and assistance to individuals at each stage to enter employment.¹⁴⁰
- **Modern apprenticeships** – Aberdeenshire Council offers apprenticeships to help start people’s careers. The apprenticeships offer training, a formal qualification and payment in areas such as leisure, early years childcare and ICT.¹⁴¹
- **Employability Service** – This is a confidential service aimed at supporting people with disabilities and health related condition to find paid employment, experience, voluntary work and training. The service offers practical support helping individuals find employment through help with CVs and job searching as well as in-work support e.g. advice on rights at work and career progression. The service also offers support for employers.¹⁴² The Employability Service has a local focus in both Fraserburgh and Peterhead.
- **Aberdeenshire Youth Employment Activity Plan** – setting out opportunities for young people who are 16+ and are furthest from

¹³⁶ [Aberdeenshire Council. Local regeneration – Fraserburgh.](#)

[Aberdeenshire Council. Local regeneration – Peterhead.](#)

¹³⁷ [Aberdeenshire Council. Peterhead Development Partnership.](#) [Aberdeenshire Council. Fraserburgh Regeneration Partnership.](#)

¹³⁸ [Aberdeenshire Council. Employment support.](#)

¹³⁹ [Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership. Youth Employment Activity Plan. 2016.](#)

¹⁴⁰ [EmploymentCONNECT. Aberdeenshire employability partnership – job seekers.](#)

¹⁴¹ [Aberdeenshire Council. Apprenticeships.](#)

¹⁴² [Aberdeenshire Council. Employability service.](#)

learning in a 5-stage employability pipeline. It outlines a number of charities and programmes that will give in-depth support to help young people issues and overcome barriers to employment. It also offers support for after young people find a job.¹⁴³

- **Young people** – The Council has a work placement unit to ensure there are adequate placement opportunities for pupils and young people. The unit provides information on types of placements, health and safety checks on employers taking part, and lists opportunities and case studies for those searching for opportunities.¹⁴⁴

What this means for FSS in Peterhead and Fraserburgh

Both towns have relatively high unemployment and are relatively remote within North East Scotland, with public transport to the much larger employment centre of Aberdeen being expensive and irregular. As a result, for many, local jobs provide the only opportunity, but this opportunity is constrained by the limited number of local jobs. In this context FSS is potentially a significant addition to the landscape of support, with the scope to help those further from work to pursue well supported journeys to the opportunities that do exist, and to use entry level opportunities as the basis for subsequent progression through in work support.

¹⁴³ [Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership. Youth Employment Activity Plan. 2016.](#)

¹⁴⁴ [Aberdeenshire Council. Work placement opportunities for pupils.](#)

Management and Performance Data for Peterhead and Fraserburgh

The infographic overleaf draws on the management and performance data collected between April 2019 and March 2020. It covers all FSS participants who were registered with the Peterhead and Fraserburgh Jobcentres (i.e. those who were enrolled on the service) which supports participants from across the Buchan area.

193 individuals participated in 2019/20

61% Male

39% Female

78% With disability or health condition

52% < 35 years

13% 35-49

27% 50+

10% Sustained work for 13 weeks

8% of Men

12% of Women

9% of those with disability or health condition

11% of those without

5.7% of participants enrolled on the programme sustained work for 26 weeks

Description of service

Peterhead and Fraserburgh are in the NE corner of the North East contract area. The North East contract is now held by FedCap, but at the time of our interviews in May – July 2020 it was held by Momentum, with four delivery partners – Momentum itself (with a 65% share of the outcomes), Aberdeen Foyer (15%), Enable (15%), and Enterprise Mentoring (5%).

These partners work as a team across the area, sharing referrals, premises, vacancies and courses. There are weekly calls between delivery partners, monthly face to face reviews and quarterly continuous improvement meetings.

The presence of Enterprise Mentoring means that there is a specific provider focusing on support to help people move into self-employment or start a business – this is one of two FSS contract areas where Enterprise Mentoring are part of the supply chain (the other being West).

All these providers had an existing presence in the area, delivering a range of services and contracts, so they are a known presence, bringing personal networks and local knowledge with them to FSS.

All these delivery partners have access to same pool of clients and they share information about events. There are some meetings to share good practice and learning, for example about generating and getting appropriate referrals and how to claim outcomes at 13 and 26 weeks.

“There is healthy competition between us, but we try and share and learn together.”

- FSS provider

“Momentum run different courses, but we work together as one team – so if Momentum had a Mental Health course they would say to us, ‘Is there anyone you want to send?’. Ditto Aberdeen Foyer. We all offer and support each other. We are one team and always have each other’s back (for example our Key Worker in Fraserburgh helped another team get their outcomes one month).”

- FSS provider

All referrals from Jobcentre are directed to a central hub in Glasgow where they allocate 65% to Momentum and spread the rest across the other providers. If a client wants to become self-employed they will be diverted straight to Enterprise Mentoring.

“But this is all about relationships, and we are lucky in terms of our relationships with Jobcentre Work Coaches who can say, ‘I want this person to go to Momentum’.”

- FSS provider

Although the different FSS providers described ways in which they were working together for the benefit of FSS clients, there is a clear sense that the arrangements in place at the time of our interviews were not ideal, and that referrals being made to a Glasgow hub and back out again is neither efficient nor client centred. A preferred model would be for Work Coaches to be able to make referrals directly to FSS staff on the ground, and/or for participants to be given the choice if they have pre-existing relationships or have been recommended a particular person, and warm handovers can happen to respond to this particular preference. Momentum's other programme in the area, Pathways, has provided a valuable internal referral process for those coming to the end of their Pathways experience.

Self-referrals will go to the organisation that participants approach (e.g. to Momentum if they approach the Job Coach in Peterhead library), but there is still a need for the details to go through Glasgow to have them entered onto the administrative systems.

FSS in Peterhead and Fraserburgh is delivered from the community hubs in the two Jobcentres and from the Libraries in the two communities. These community hubs follow the widespread Jobcentre model – they are place where a range of community organisations can meet clients, including FSS.

Momentum has one Job Coach covering Aberdeenshire, and she spends 1 day a week in each of Peterhead and Fraserburgh. She spends a morning in Peterhead Library (a short walk from the Jobcentre) and 2 hours every other week in Peterhead Jobcentre (Work Coaches book up her diary). In Fraserburgh she spends a morning in the Jobcentre delivering the Health Model and this is followed by 30 minutes of FSS appointments – following this she works from Fraserburgh Library in the afternoon.

During these visits the Momentum Job Coach works with the local member of staff from Enable.

“I work with Enable on a Tuesday in Fraserburgh and a Wednesday in Peterhead. We talk to each other and support each other, but in essence we are in competition.”

- FSS provider

Since her appointment to focus on Aberdeenshire in October 2019 there has been an emphasis on developing relationships with Jobcentre Work Coaches –relationships that had not been in place before.

“I am focused on the Jobcentre relationship so I haven’t devoted much time to TPOs but when I do it will be through JCP and the TPOs involved in community hubs.”

- FSS provider

There has also been an effort to engage with local third sector organisations to attract referrals and to identify complementary sources of specialist support. They have been invited to give presentations to FSS participants and some now make referrals to FSS. As an example, there have been engagements with Home Energy Scotland to help vulnerable participants who were struggling to pay their bills – this has led to reciprocal referrals – and Instant Neighbour, who take people on work placements, now refer clients to Momentum.

The relationships between Momentum and Jobcentre Plus staff is close and most referrals come from JCP. Even during lockdown, most of the self-referrals through Facebook had heard of FSS from a Work Coach. Prior to formal referral by JCP to FSS, the Job Coach usually has a discussion with the potential participant at the Jobcentre:

“I brief them one to one at the community hub at each of the Jobcentres – 10 mins before formal referral. They want to know a bit more detail. The Work Coaches are confident they don’t need to say much before I see them as I will go through everything - how long it is, what it involves.”

- FSS provider

Enable have a presence in Fraserburgh and Peterhead – these areas are covered by different key workers and Enable focuses mainly on clients who have learning difficulties or autism. We talked to the Key Worker who covers Fraserburgh, where he is based every Tuesday from 0800 – 1700/1730, mainly in the Library, but initially in the new Sports Centre which opens at 0800 and provides IT access and open spaces for confidential discussions. In the Library a small private room is available if needed and it is used roughly once a month.

The relationship with the Jobcentre is strong with regular calls from JCP Work Coaches asking for advice about suitability or checking up on a referred FSS participant. FSS often discuss the suitability of the service with a potential participant in the Jobcentre before referral is confirmed. A lot of work has been put into building the relationship with Jobcentre Work Coaches and ‘Work Coaches have a pretty good sense now of what FSS can offer and who it could help’

“We get quite a mix – sometimes we get people not suitable for FSS – sometimes they are not quite ready – they need more support, and could not get a job in 12 months. For example, we had someone referred on bail and in a tricky place – difficult criminal charges and waiting to be sent down.”

- FSS provider

Once participation has been confirmed, there are regular appointments as part of FSS:

“Normally, appointments are 45-60 minutes, focusing on an update on a participant’s week, looking at getting in the way of working, looking forward. Later on, we focus on tailoring CVs, making sure they are doing this, highlighting jobs we have found.”

Fraserburgh Health Model and Pathways

There was a specific initial focus on working with the Jobcentre in Fraserburgh to run a 'Health Model' as a preparation for FSS (and Pathways, the other programme which Momentum is contracted to run in the area).

Momentum ran the Health Model in conjunction with Fraserburgh Jobcentre. An issue had been identified with people with mental health issues, and alcohol and drugs misuse, and this was a way of trying to encourage them to start looking forward. It was marketed by Fraserburgh Jobcentre and it focused on positive thinking and healthy lifestyles, with a participant led approach. The programme runs one day a week for 8 weeks in an allocated room in the Jobcentre. At the end of the programme participants are encouraged to proceed onto either FSS or Pathways, and it has proved to be a successful preparation for FSS and has helped to build up the Job Coach's caseload. Fraserburgh Jobcentre is keen to run the programme on an ongoing basis and there is an intention to start running the programme at Peterhead Jobcentre.

Partly because of the success of the Health Model, the Momentum Job Coach's current caseload (at June 2020) is 54 pre-employment and 18 in employment receiving in work support. Given the limited staff time available that it dedicated to Peterhead and Fraserburgh – as part of a role across a much wider area of dispersed communities, there was a clear sense from our interviews of a service that was stretched in terms of resources, with experienced and committed front line staff making it work through hard work and effective marketing and relationship building.

More generally, mental health is seen as a significant problem among FSS participants.

“We assumed that people would come on the service [FSS] and get a job in 12 months, but they have other issues. So I have used other specialist services. Some participants have gone on to Occupational Psychologist help. She used to travel up from Glasgow and we booked up FSS clients on one to one basis. One client had 8 sessions with her and is now working part time and is and one of our great success stories.”

- FSS provider

The value of FSS

The FSS front line staff we talked to were clear about the value of FSS for participants, but they recognised that this could vary by motivation and expectations, and a contrast was drawn with the expectation of clients from previous programmes, with the implication that there were higher expectations placed on clients by FSS, in terms of what they were expected to do between meetings:

“The value of FSS for the client depends on their motivation to find work – sometimes it is a box to tick to keep Jobcentre off their back. They like the face to face contact – they like been seen every week and being chased – they like to show you what they have done.”

“Lots of clients are used to being spoon-fed – they get into the routine that someone will find them a job.”

There was a clear appreciation of the significance of the in-work support and a recognition of its value in helping clients deal with initial teething issues and the transition from (often) a long period of unemployment and the demanding routines of work:

“The in work support is invaluable.”

In particular, clients appeared to recognise the value of the dedicated time that they were offered, the accessibility of this, and the ability to build a working relationship with the same member of staff over time:

“Participants are hugely appreciative of the work done – Jobcentre don’t have time any more, and they like the security of knowing I am there and it’s still me.”

There was also a recognition of the nature of the local area and its communities and inequality – which raised both issues around the suitability of a small number of referred clients, and the wider value of FSS for families:

“It’s important to understand the areas and how poor people are here – it’s a rich fishing community but there are £1m houses at one end and at the other end there are generations who haven’t worked. It can sometimes feel we are wasting our time and their time with FSS – they probably should not have been referred – these are the ones that Jobcentre don’t ring me about. One had pending court cases. I spent an hour going through the initial paperwork which felt like wasted time.”

“There is a lot of poverty and deprivation particularly with the focus on fishing and oil. There is a lot of child poverty in these areas and if we

can get to the parents and help them get them on a path to employment they can get out of poverty.”

- FSS providers

Relating to the wider infrastructure of support

There is a range of employability services available across Aberdeenshire and including Peterhead and Fraserburgh, including a comprehensive offer from Aberdeenshire Council. There is an active LEP, the Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership, chaired by Aberdeenshire Council, with 25 member organisations, including Momentum. The LEP is seen to have a key role in the implementation of No One Left Behind, ensuring strategic clarity about objectives and respective roles, and with Aberdeenshire using the LEP as the place to identify priorities and play out employability funding coming to the local authority.

This collaborative approach is branded as Employment CONNECT and it has a comprehensive [website](#)¹⁴⁵ which acts as a central clearing house for jobseekers, employers and (password protected) partners. FSS is not mentioned on the website, but Enable and Aberdeen Foyer are included as partners.

The Council has 6 key workers operating across the Shire, with two covering Peterhead and Fraserburgh areas and their hinterlands. In addition, there is an employability service for those with additional support needs, with a team of 20 attached to the Health and Social Care Partnership dealing with people with disabilities.

Both Aberdeenshire Council and Momentum share the view that the relationship between them is not good, with the Council concerned about the lack of data sharing, a lack of referrals of clients to Aberdeenshire Council services where these may be more appropriate, and ‘hoovering up clients’. However, both organisations recognise that they each have good, committed people on the ground. There is also a mutual recognition that FSS and the other local programmes are well designed. There have been efforts to strengthen the relationship but these have not worked, and there is very little connection or communication between the two sets of staff on the ground and there has been no successful cross referral of clients between them.

The landscape of support in Aberdeenshire – and specifically in Peterhead and Fraserburgh – is therefore not coherent and Aberdeenshire Council and the FSS Provider have not been able to reach explicit agreement about how they can work together in a coherent way across the areas. An initial effort by

¹⁴⁵ [EmploymentCONNECT](#)

the Council focused on an approach with the services offered by the Local Employability Partners feeding appropriate clients into FSS and acting as a 'safety net' for those falling out of FSS or reaching the end of the service without a positive outcome.

“There is not enough joint promotion of local support services. One of the biggest complaints is about participants is being passed from pillar to post no one getting to grips with it – there is no one central hub with rounded advisers who can spend time and help them.”

- FSS provider

“There are so many different organisations out there – Aberdeen Foyer, Employability Team for those with health issues, Enable, Barnardo’s and Employability Fund training. In certain areas too many people are trying to get clients and people become very effective with their clients.”

- FSS provider

The self-employment option

The provision of intensive support for those interested in self-employment is – with the West contract area – a distinctive feature of the North East contract area and FSS provision in Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

“There is very little encouragement to look at self-employment [as part of the FSS service]. Other providers are using Business Gateway. They do a good job but they are not able to address the holistic support needs that the FSS client group has.”

- FSS provider

To date, referrals and starts in the Northeast contract area have been under profile but the proportion of participants setting up as self-employed and sustaining this status is above expectations. The main issue has been the lack of compatibility with DWP's New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) provision:

“NEA offers £1,274 additional funding to individuals entering self-employment, but offers very little one-to-one mentoring support. What this means is that at present FSS participants miss out on financial support. As most FSS participants have limited access to funding, this can be a deciding factor.”

- FSS provider

Responding to a limited local job market

FSS staff recognise how limited the job market is in Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

“We are only 30 miles from Aberdeen but the culture is very different – lots of clients are not prepared to travel and this is a huge barrier, unless they want to work in fish factories or oil and gas. We are working on entry level jobs but most of the positions available are specialist. So the market is cleaners, retail, security.”

- FSS provider

“I’ve got a lot of 40-60 year old women who find it really hard – there are some admin jobs, some cleaning but there is a high turnover. Lots of jobs will go to the same families...[i.e. informal recruitment processes are significant and it can be difficult to break in].”

- FSS provider

“There are a lot of foreign nationals – they will come in and do the jobs – but local people won’t because the jobs are not well enough paid – it is not realistic to expect them to take these jobs.”

- Other employability provider

The travel issues are significant. The bus journey from Peterhead to Aberdeen takes nearly 1 hour 10 minutes and from Fraserburgh to Aberdeen takes 1 hour 25 minutes. Many people will need to get two buses, and the availability during the day is limited and may not get them to Aberdeen for an early start (e.g. for cleaning or retail). Both these return bus trips cost £18.50.

“We get a lot who don’t live in Fraserburgh – they live in St Combs, Sandhaven – transport is very difficult and it is hard for them to see me and to get work. We have a good relationship with the food processing place in Turriff – but there are no direct buses – it would take one bus to Macduff and another to Turriff so no one can get there before 10.”

- FSS provider

FSS staff try to get round the barrier by doing ‘better off in work’ calculations – assessing the impact of being off benefits and into paid work. But for most entry level jobs in Aberdeen, once travel costs are included most participants will not be better off.

Employer engagement is carried out by a member of the Lead Provider’s staff, based in Glasgow and covering the whole of Scotland. In the Peterhead and Fraserburgh area the focus is both on large employers like Morrisons and

Tesco for both retail and security staff, agencies (e.g. for agricultural work) and on a wide range of SMEs. There is a close working relationship between Momentum, Enable and Aberdeen Foyer with the sharing of opportunities between frontline staff.

For follow up calls when in work, the Employer Engagement lead will ring the employer and the local key worker will call the client.

The impact of Covid-19

Frontline staff delivering FSS and Aberdeenshire Council's services talked of the scale and scope of the impact of Covid-19 on their clients.

“In the first 6 weeks the impact was massive – a lot of participants were shocked and quite scared. Some don’t have internet access – so the day they saw me was their only access to the service. It has got better, they have realised this is the new normal, so they realise they need to answer the phone. A lot are resigned to the fact that they won’t be working for some time, it is hard to motivate those who are longer term unemployed.”

- FSS provider

“More of face to face – easier to keep motivated. Now if don’t want to speak to you don’t answer the phone.”

- FSS provider

One of the striking successes in the area has been the effective use of Facebook – by both Enable and Aberdeenshire Council – to attract clients.

“Before lockdown we got most of referrals from JCP – we have been meeting a lot of other organisations to get TPO referrals. Now we are generating all our own referrals. Facebook is our main selling point...To begin with we didn’t have much success – then we decided that one person would focus on this – making sure post looked professional and trying to capture right market and that worked – using graphics.”

- FSS provider

Enable have now replaced their previous referral numbers just from Facebook – and they are getting participants who they feel are appropriate and motivated.

“All people [we are getting through social media] who want to work – so we are getting much better outcomes – more open to what they want to

do, motivated. A lot of them not highly skilled but they have a good work ethic.”

- FSS provider

Lessons from this case study

Changes in staff have led to an improvement in performance

There appears to have been a significant improvement in reach and performance over the 6 months to March 2020, related to new management and a new local staff member for Momentum covering the Peterhead and Fraserburgh area (and its hinterland), with an active approach to engaging with JCP. FSS works with limited resources, with one member of staff covering the Shire, and employer engagement being led by one person who covers the whole of Scotland from a Glasgow base. This means that Momentum offered quite a limited service locally in Peterhead and Fraserburgh - but when a new area manager and local staff member were introduced during Autumn 2019 there was a concerted attempt to strengthen the engagement with JCP and TPOs. This appears to have led to an increase in referrals from JCP and a more substantial engagement with a wider range of clients.

There is a weak relationship between FSS and the local authority

The current relationship between the Lead Provider and the Local Authority – and the wider LEP, which the Lead Provider is a member of – is not strong. There have been efforts by the LEP to develop a strategic agreement about respective roles and relationships but this has not led to anything. There is mutual respect about the value of respective services and the commitment and experience of staff, but this has not led to an effective working relationship.

The enterprise strand is distinctive and important but is currently at risk

Enterprise Mentoring provide support for those who wish to pursue the self-employment option, but this effort has been hampered by the need for clients to make a choice between the intensive support offered by FSS and the financial assistance offered through the Enterprise Allowance Scheme (which does not offer intensive support).

The impact of FSS is seriously constrained by the limited range of local jobs and the difficulties around travelling to the much more substantial and varied labour market in Aberdeen

There are limited job opportunities in the area and few are able to work where the jobs are – in Aberdeen – because of the difficulties of reaching it by public transport. People in Peterhead with cars prefer to work in Ellon which can be reached in 30 minutes.

There is now a strong working relationship with JCP

The new Momentum key worker in Peterhead and Fraserburgh has focused on strengthening the relationship with JCP and raising the awareness of work coaches in the two jobcentres. This has worked through to a very positive working relationship with regular consultation on referrals, a presence in the two Jobcentres and both briefings and warm handovers taking place in Jobcentres. This has significantly improved referral numbers from the Jobcentres.

The use of Facebook was triggered by the lockdown and has proved to be effective

Both Momentum and Enable have made effective use of Facebook in response to the drop in referrals from JCP- the number of self-referrals now matches the numbers previously referred from JCP. The main impact followed the creation of a clear lead for Facebook management and the use of client stories.

5 Participant views

In this chapter, we discuss participants' experiences of FSS in Year 2 of the service, considering in particular how participants may have benefitted from the support delivered, and the types of support that work best for individuals.

We have based the information presented in this chapter on interviews with 30 participants and 18 key workers¹⁴⁶ in the three selected case study areas. This year's evaluation activity also included follow-up interviews with 9 participants interviewed as part of the Year 1 evaluation (three each from Alloa, Irvine and Wick), in order to explore the longer-term impact of the service.

In this chapter, we outline the key findings from these interviews, organised under the following sub-headings:

- Referral processes
- Motivations for taking part in FSS
- Strengths of FSS
- Challenges
- Areas for consideration
- Impact of FSS
- Barriers to progression

Referral processes

As in Year 1, the most common referral route into FSS in Year 2 was Jobcentre Plus (JCP). Twenty-two of the 30 interviewees reported that they were referred in this way. Seven of the others self-referred to the service after a friend or family member told them about it, and one was advised to access the service by a local authority homelessness officer.

Participants reported no issues with the referral arrangements. JCP seems to be an effective link into the service for most, but participants also appreciated being able to self-refer.

Motivations for taking part in FSS

FSS is voluntary, unlike previous national employment support services, and participants can decide whether or not to take part. The participants we

¹⁴⁶ The 18 key workers, between them, worked with 28 of the participants. In two cases, we were unable to contact the participant's keyworker.

interviewed in Year 2 identified a range of reasons why they decided to engage with the service.

Some participants noted that they took part because they hoped FSS could help them address challenges that made it difficult for them to look for and/or find work. In a few cases, participants had physical and mental health conditions that limited the types of jobs they could undertake, and they wanted support from FSS to find a suitable job. Lack of confidence was a barrier for some participants who needed support with this before they could find (and sustain) a job.

Others had been looking for work for some time with no success so wanted some additional support. One participant, for example, said that they engaged with FSS because they were “**hitting a brick wall**” and another said they decided to take part because they were “**not getting anywhere**” on their own. Another few, meanwhile, explained that they had unexpectedly been made redundant after their employers went out of business or closed the factory they worked at. These interviewees’ key workers felt they had good employability skills and were well-placed to find another job, but the participants explained that they wanted help to “**brush up on approaching employers**” and to find a new job as quickly as possible.

Although participation in FSS is voluntary, in a very small number of cases participants said they felt they had to take part because JCP had suggested it. In one of these cases, the participant felt they were not given a choice. While this may have been a misinterpretation on the part of the interviewees it reinforces the importance of explaining the voluntary nature of the service clearly to potential participants before they agree to take part. This is especially important because key workers reported that better outcomes can be achieved when the participant is motivated and wants to take part.

Strengths of FSS

Overall, participants this year again described their experience of FSS in very favourable terms and they identified several strengths of the service. These are similar to the strengths identified by participants in Year 1 and include:

- The service's comprehensive and tailored approach
- The caring, respectful, and supportive key workers
- The holistic support offered
- The voluntary nature of the support.

We describe FSS's strengths in more detail below and, where possible, include comparisons with other employment support services that participants have engaged with.

Comprehensive support

Participants appreciated the comprehensive support that FSS provides to help them prepare for employment. Interviewees explained that the service helped them to identify suitable employment sectors, find job vacancies, prepare CVs, make applications and prepare for interviews. They also noted that FSS gave them help and advice to access suitable work placements, training and volunteering opportunities to enhance their skills and experience. Some participants reported that the service continued to provide valuable help and advice after they had moved into employment and, in one or two cases, the participant returned for further support when they became unemployed again.

A key worker compared FSS favourably to the support provided by JCP in terms of how comprehensive its support is. This interviewee said that while JCP "monitors progress" towards employment, FSS is more pro-active in helping participants make progress towards finding a job and gives them **"tools and encouragement"** they need to enter the job market.

We note some potential areas for improvement later in this chapter, but very few participants reported any support needs that FSS could not help with. Comments from participants include the following:

"They went out their way to help as much as they can."

"I think it was really great all round."

"What they do seems to be fine for me. They've got it structured well."

"My experience was nothing but positive."

Tailored support

A common theme in our interviews this year was the tailored nature of the support that FSS offers. Participants valued the fact that the support they received was tailored to their individual needs and that their key workers helped them to identify vacancies and access training and placement opportunities that suited their interests and skills. Some participants with children, for example, explained that their key workers helped them to find opportunities with start and finish times that would fit around school drop off and collection times, while others said they were supported to look for work in sectors that interested them or in which they had experience. Others reported receiving wide-ranging support to address individual needs, such as a bus pass being arranged for a participant who cannot drive, and helping to enhance a participant's digital literacy so they could seek and apply for jobs online more confidently. One said, “...**there was a personal touch, they got to know me**” and another observed that the key worker, “...**asked me lots of questions about what I wanted and I felt like she was listening to what I was saying**”.

Key workers agreed that it is important to tailor the type and extent of support provided to the needs of individual participants. One, for example, explained that “**everyone's journey to meet their end goal is different, and this participant-led programme meets everyone's different requirements to get there**”. Another key worker noted that some participants, “...**come ready to work, and some have more work to do on their skills and need a slower pace. We work at whatever pace suits the individual... what we do is tailored to the individual**”.

Key workers explained that, as FSS is targeted at people who are far removed from the labour market, participants need a soft approach involving taking smaller steps. As a result, for some participants, finding a job might not be a realistic aim in the short-term, and in cases like this the service's support is more “...**about building confidence, not about a job**”. We note some examples like this later in this chapter, where we discuss the impact of the service on participants.

Key workers and participants compared the personalised nature of FSS favourably with other similar services. Interviewees praised FSS for its flexibility and the ability to tailor the support to the needs of the individual participants, in contrast with other “one size fits all” employment support services.

Participants and key workers also valued the one-to-one approach of FSS, in contrast to other group-based services. Interviewees reported that this approach allowed the service to meet participants' individual needs. A participant said that they previously took part in a group-based service but

preferred FSS because it was “***focused on me – what do I need, what do I want to do?***”.

As well as the content of the support, participants reported that aspects of the way in which the support was delivered was tailored to their needs. For example, one participant appreciated being able to meet their key worker in a local library because it meant their children could be occupied reading books while they spoke with the key worker, while others noted that their key workers were willing to schedule appointments around childcare. Some said that they valued being able to meet their key worker in local settings, instead of travelling to the nearest Jobcentre, which in some cases can be a lengthy journey, particularly in rural areas. One described this arrangement as “***...very, very convenient***” and “***...miles, miles better than JCP***”.

Holistic support

Participants appreciated the holistic nature of the support and reported that the service helped them with a wide range of issues that affected their ability to find work. For example, one participant reported that FSS had helped them to access counselling related to their childhood, and another was helped to access a psychologist to help address mental health issues that were making it difficult for them to find work. In another case, the key worker helped a participant to source a special chair to use in their new call centre job to ensure that their back problems were not exacerbated and to help ensure that they could sustain the job.

Participants noted that they felt able to discuss anything with their key worker. One said “***...you can share your challenges with your health and your relationships with [the key worker]***” and another commented that they were able to talk to their key worker about “***...things that were on my mind***”.

While these issues are not directly linked to the skills or competencies that participants need to look for, find and sustain employment, by helping with challenges like these, FSS helps participants to address the various challenges in their lives that present a barrier to entering employment and, by doing so, helps to prepare them for work. Key workers felt this was an important part of their job and one said that, “***...sometimes it's not about work, it's about being in the right place and state of mind to look for work***”.

Caring, respectful, kind and supportive key workers

Similar to our findings in Year 1, participants described the approach of FSS key workers as caring, respectful, kind and supportive. This is consistent with FSS's principles of dignity and respect and, across all localities, that the evaluation has covered to date, interviewees reported that the key workers

were friendly, made the effort to get to know them and understand their needs, and genuinely cared about achieving the best outcome for them. Comments from participants include the following:

“Really helpful. It was good to know that there was someone who could back me up and was there to fight my corner.”

“[My key worker is] sound. I can always have a chat and a bit of banter with him. He’s checked in with me these past few months and kept in contact.”

“They are very kind and phoned regularly to check I was doing ok and see if I needed anything. The staff are easy to talk to and very friendly.”

“[The key worker] would listen and let me rant and rave. I never got a negative word out of him at all. If he hadn’t been so positive, I wouldn’t have found a job, wouldn’t have been in the right place to find work.”

Voluntary participation without risk of sanctions

Taking part in FSS, in contrast to other previous national employment support services, is voluntary, and people can choose to take part without the risk of sanctions if they miss a meeting or do not complete the service. Participants enjoyed “***...not feeling pressured***” by the service and felt this approach helped them to engage with the support on offer more willingly and effectively. One, for example, said that FSS offered “***a more relaxed environment***” in which to look for work because it was voluntary and they found this more effective than more formal services where attendance is mandatory.

Key workers agreed that this is a positive aspect of the service, noting that, because participants decide whether they want to take part, those who do “***genuinely want the help***” and this helps participants to achieve better outcomes. Another key worker noted that FSS “***has a different feel to it***” compared to other services: “***it’s not about having to do things, it’s about [participants] wanting to do it***”.

Challenges

Across the two years of the service to date, feedback from participants has been highly positive about FSS. However, a small number identified some challenges that have made it difficult for them to access, or participate fully in, the service.

Unsurprisingly, the main challenges identified in Year 2 related to the Covid-19 lockdown. Since March, providers have not been able to deliver face-to-face, in-person support due to social distancing restrictions, and instead have delivered support using platforms such as telephone calls, text messages and messaging over the internet. Some participants have been able to access online training opportunities during lockdown, often at the suggestion of their key workers, and this has been an opportunity to gain new skills. Others, however, have been unable to do this because they have had no access to IT equipment, either at home or at public libraries due to their closure during the lockdown.

Levels of support to participants during lockdown have varied in their intensity. Most participants were positive about the support they had continued to receive and understood the restrictions that have been placed on providers. They appreciated their key workers' efforts to continue supporting them.

However, a minority of participants have not had the level of support that they felt they have needed during lockdown. One participant, for example, reported that their support during lockdown has been limited to one text message a week, which they did not feel had enabled them to discuss their challenges in sufficient detail.

Areas for consideration

Again, participants' feedback has been very positive overall, but our interviews identified some important factors to consider to ensure that FSS continues to deliver effective support. These are outlined below.

Ensuring that FSS is the most appropriate service for participants

It is important that referral to FSS continues to be appropriate - FSS might not be the most appropriate service for all participants. Most notably, some interviewees suggested that FSS might not be best suited to people with university qualifications or those who already have extensive employment experience. It is possible that greater value for money could be achieved by directing these participants to other services more appropriate to their needs, and ensuring that those referred to FSS are in need of the intensive support that the service offers.

One participant with a degree, for example, felt that the service was geared more towards people seeking jobs in call centres, care or basic administrative positions rather than **“roles for those who are better qualified”**. Another university graduate, with over 45 years’ experience, applied for jobs without his key worker’s support and reported that FSS was **“not terribly useful”** in finding suitable opportunities. Key workers also cited a few highly qualified and/or experienced participants who **“did not need a lot of help”**. This suggests that participants like these who have relatively low support needs should potentially be signposted to other less intensive sources of support, which would allow FSS to focus on supporting people who need a higher level of support, as was intended when the service was designed.

At the other end of the spectrum, there were a few participants who were very far removed from the labour market due to severe health problems or childcare issues. FSS may not be the most appropriate service for these people as entering employment did not appear to be a realistic goal for them in the short- to medium-term. This was emphasised by the follow-up interviews conducted with Year 1 participants, which confirmed that at least two participants, while satisfied with the support they had received from FSS, had not moved into employment in the year since we last spoke to them. These two participants acknowledged that employment is a very difficult objective to achieve just now given their personal circumstances, and they were not surprised that they had not found work.

In addition, a small number of interviewees wanted to set up their own business (and this was their intention at the point of referral). It is not clear why they were referred to FSS as, although key workers helped as much as they could, there are other agencies that specialise in supporting people in this position.

This feedback related to a very small number of interviewees only and, overall, most participants seemed to be well suited to the support that FSS can offer. However, these examples emphasise the importance of ensuring at the point of referral that FSS is the most appropriate service for all participants, taking into account their experience, qualifications, aspirations and circumstances.

Ensuring the right fit between participants and key workers

In most cases, interviewees reported satisfaction with their key worker, but there were a handful of examples where the participant and key worker did not develop a productive relationship. In most of these cases, the participant was transferred to another key worker with more success. A key worker explained that **“...you have to be able to talk on the same level, to establish a relationship - and get a rapport going - to dig around enough and find out what they need and what’s stopping them from getting there”**.

This only relates to a small number of cases, and it is inevitable that some participant-key worker pairings will be less successful than others. However, this finding emphasises the importance of support providers matching participants with key workers appropriately, ensuring that the worker's expertise is aligned with the participants' interests, needs and level of experience.

Impact of FSS

Participants and key workers reported a range of benefits for participants as a result of engaging with FSS. These impacts were similar to those reported in Year 1. They included improved skills related to searching and applying for jobs, enhanced confidence, improved skills for employment, support to plan their future careers, and support to enter and sustain work. We discuss each of these impacts overleaf.

Improved skills for searching and applying for jobs

A common theme among many participants was the support that FSS provided in improving their ability to search and apply for jobs. Participants found this support helpful, and it included the following:

- Learning how to access sources of job adverts. Key workers made participants aware of the various sources of job adverts online and, in some cases, supported participants to upload job search apps to their smartphone. One participant said, "***now I know how to search for jobs online***".
- Support to prepare CVs. For example, one noted that their key worker "***changed my CV for the better***".
- Assistance with completing job application forms. Some interviewees felt they would have been unable to complete forms without their key worker's help, but now felt more able to complete applications independently in the future.
- Enhanced skills in job interviews. Many mentioned taking part in mock interviews with their key worker, and this helped them to feel more prepared and less nervous about interviews.

In addition, consistent with the personalised, caring nature of the support discussed above, some participants described the moral support and encouragement that key workers offered with job interviews. In particular, participants appreciated the encouragement that key workers provided after unsuccessful interviews, in terms of emphasising that being unsuccessful was nothing to be embarrassed about. Participants observed that this helped to

maintain their morale and motivation to apply for further opportunities, and one said that **“the support when things went wrong was great”**. Given the fragile state of many participants’ confidence (as we discuss below), this is an important element of the support.

Enhanced confidence

FSS has had a significant positive impact in enhancing participants’ confidence in their ability to find work. Many participants reported that they lacked confidence when they were referred to FSS, and key workers agreed that participants often need help to improve their confidence before they could make further progress towards work.

Some participants credited improvements in confidence to the support and encouragement provided by key workers. Participants explained that this helped them to recognise the skills they already had and built their confidence to try new things. There were several examples of participants who described being supported in this way, and one, for instance, described themselves as **“very shy, reserved, and not open to trying out new things”** when they joined the service but is now **“very different...I’m a very confident person... I’ve also got a ‘can do’ attitude that I didn’t have before”**. They attributed this improvement to the key worker’s **“chilled out, understanding approach”**. Another, who said that they had previously lacked the confidence to leave the house on some days, said that their key worker **“gradually built up my confidence, just with chit chat, talking to me”**.

Some participants who lacked confidence in social interactions reported improvements in this respect as a result of the activities they took part in with FSS. Some said their meetings with their key worker were important in providing experience of building a relationship with someone whom they did not know. One, for example, said that interacting with their key worker helped to develop the confidence they needed to take up a voluntary position at a local library. Others said they felt more comfortable interacting with other people as a result of attending training, work experience and volunteering opportunities arranged by FSS, and this helped them to feel more confident to apply for and enter employment.

Many participants also reported that taking part in FSS helped them to gain new and improved skills, and this further helped to enhance their confidence. We explore FSS’s impact on participants’ skills in the next section.

Improved skills for employment

Many participants reported that the training, work experience and volunteering opportunities that FSS helped them to access enabled them to gain new and improved skills for employment. These included skills that are transferable to

any job, such as communication and teamwork, as well as sector-specific competencies such as electrical testing, food hygiene and skills required for workplaces in the retail and construction fields. Participants felt that these skills strengthened their CVs, made them more attractive to employers, and increased their confidence to apply for positions that they were previously not qualified for.

Support to plan their future careers

For some participants, the key benefit of taking part in FSS was getting help to identify the sector(s) they would like to work in. These interviewees said they were lacking direction and were unsure which sectors to apply for jobs in and that FSS had helped them to identify opportunities that aligned with their skills, experience and interests. In one case, a participant had not previously considered working in retail but FSS helped him to arrange a voluntary position in a charity shop and to take part in a training service with a large retailer, at the end of which he secured a job. Another said that they have a ***“better view of what I want to do as a job”*** as a result of FSS.

In a few other cases, participants were unable to work in the sectors they had previously been employed in for various reasons, so FSS helped them to identify opportunities in other sectors. For example, one used to work in construction before sustaining an injury, while another travelled across the world during a career in the oil and gas industry before a change in personal circumstances meant this was no longer possible. In these cases, key workers helped the participants to identify opportunities in the cleaning and hospitality sectors, and to gain skills necessary to apply for positions in those sectors.

Support to enter and sustain work

FSS aims to help people move towards employment, and many participants we interviewed reported that they had found work as a result of the support they had received. Participants reported starting jobs in a range of sectors including call centres, retail, manufacturing and administration, and they felt that FSS had been crucial in helping them to build the confidence, skills and experience to successfully enter employment.

Some participants also described the importance of the in-work support provided by FSS in helping them to sustain their job. As noted earlier, for example, a participant said that their key worker had helped them to source a special chair to ensure they could undertake the job while minimising pain caused by back problems, and others said that key workers helped them to liaise with their managers when they needed support in their role. Participants, many of whom had been out of work for a significant period of time, appreciated this on-going support to help them address any issues that could affect their ability to sustain their employment.

Barriers to progression

Interviewees reported various barriers that restricted participants' ability to move into and sustain work. These included the following.

Reluctance

A few key workers reported, in a small number of cases, that participants' reluctance to fully engage with the service and the opportunities on offer restricted their ability to progress. One gave an example of a participant who refused to take part in basic IT courses to enhance his ability to use the internet to look for job opportunities, while another commented that ***“the people who take part have to be in the right space...we can't help people if they don't want to be helped”***. This emphasises the need to ensure that people referred to FSS are willing and motivated to engage with FSS and the opportunities it offers.

Age

In a small number of examples, participants felt that their age was making it difficult for them to find work. A key worker said that one participant who is 60 believes that his ***“age is going against him”*** while a participant in their 50s reported that ***“I'm a difficult case... age is against me”***. Another, in their 60s, felt that the service was more suited to helping younger people. This demonstrates the importance of FSS in enhancing participants' confidence and ability to find work, regardless of their age and may suggest a need for further training of key workers to ensure that they have the skills to support older people seeking employment.

Covid-19 lockdown

The Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown was a key barrier identified by participants and key workers this year. Interviewees reported a reduction in the number of job opportunities to apply for, as well as training courses and work experience placements being cancelled. Some participants were hopeful that the situation would improve once lockdown is eased, while others were more pessimistic about the longer-term impact of the pandemic on their chances of finding work.

Similarly, there were at least two examples of participants who had found work shortly before the lockdown began and have now been informed that their position is no longer available due to the economic pressures created by the pandemic.

While there is little that FSS can do to influence this situation, it is important that support providers stay abreast of the latest developments related to the pandemic and its impact on the labour market, and are prepared to support participants accordingly. It is also important to note that this demonstrates that, while FSS was developed while employment levels were high, substantial revision may be required to help the service respond to the significant impact of the pandemic on the economy.

Lack of local job opportunities

Some interviewees, particularly in Peterhead/Fraserburgh, reported a lack of job opportunities locally that existed even before the pandemic. A participant said there is **“nothing out there for me for what I do”** and a key worker acknowledged that local opportunities outside the fishing and care sectors are limited. While this was a barrier to successful outcomes, participants in Peterhead and Fraserburgh praised key workers for being **“keyed into to the local job market”**, and for finding out about job opportunities that were not advertised. This emphasises the importance of key workers, regardless of the profile of their area, having an in-depth knowledge of the local labour market and strong links with local employers.

Transport issues

Transport is an issue that restricts the opportunities accessible to some people, and this was particularly the case for participants in Peterhead/Fraserburgh. The nature of the area, and limitations in public transport links, means that being able to drive and having access to a car can enhance an individual's employment prospects. Two participants noted challenges related to this – one is currently suspended from driving due to a drink driving conviction and another cannot drive, lives in an area not served by public transport, and is reliant on their parents for lifts – and this can restrict the opportunities available to them. This illustrates the importance of key workers helping participants to identify and overcome barriers such as this through, for example, helping participants to access driving lessons and/or public transport, as happened in Peterhead/Fraserburgh, where a participant was helped to apply for (and get) a bus pass.

The importance of the on-going contact is further illustrated by a few examples of participants who started a job but then left it for various reasons. These participants were able to immediately access support from FSS to help them to respond to this setback. For some, this support focused on finding a new job (**“back to the drawing board”** as a key worker said) while others required support with other problems before they could start to look for work again.

One, for example, had to leave their job after falling ill, so the FSS key worker helped them to address the sudden reduction in income by supporting them to

apply for Universal Credit and to access a food bank. This is another example of the holistic support offered by FSS and demonstrates the importance of the on-going support provided by FSS after a participant enters work.

Case Studies

We have created 9 Case Studies based on our discussions with clients and these are presented in Appendix 3.

6 Findings and recommendations

In this chapter we draw out the most important findings from our examination of FSS practice in three locations, together with the responses from participants.

Findings

This year we explored the role and impact of FSS in three very different areas:

Drumchapel is the first of Scotland's peripheral estates where we have examined the role and impact of FSS. There are clear indications that FSS has become the main – though by no means sole – local provider of employability support, and that its combination of a local presence in the Jobcentre, a personalised and tailored service, and a voluntary engagement has proved appealing to local participants. A particularly interesting feature of the FSS service in Drumchapel is the way that it focuses on helping participants start to connect to the wider Glasgow job market, with initial support in Drumchapel leading to follow up support in neighbouring Clydebank. It is hoped that this short journey may help participants to become comfortable travelling more widely to work, and particularly to the substantial job market in the centre of Glasgow.

There is a strong working relationship with the local Jobcentre, with the FSS key worker being based there one day a week. Warm handovers take place in the Jobcentre offices. However, more widely, it is fair to say that, while there is a general sense that there are more than enough clients for all providers, there appears to be no coherent local provision in Drumchapel, in terms of clarity about respective roles and the effective use of specialist local provision for those who most need it.

In **Dundee** there is a well-developed strategic approach to the local delivery of employability services, with an active LEP driving a coherent approach to tackling the significant and long lasting unemployment issues in the city, and committed to the creation of a collaborative 'Local Employability Service'. The intention is that this will provides clarity to both individuals and employers about where to go for what kind of support, and what they will receive. A serious mutual effort has been made by the two key players (i.e. the Lead Provider and Dundee City Council) to agree complementary roles and how they can both work together to contribute to this overarching model, but it has not been possible to work this out in practice, mainly to do with difficulties about ESF funding and the risk of double funding.

A similar effort has been made in Aberdeenshire, which would have created a much clearer relationship between the services provided by the LEP partners and the Lead Provider and would have clarify respective roles in **Peterhead and Fraserburgh**. In this case the concept was that all the main providers (not just Jobcentre Plus) would refer appropriate clients to FSS (i.e. those who required more intensive, long term support which would need to continue into work), and

they in turn would both pick up those who may drop out of FSS, or reach the end of the service without finding a job. As with Drumchapel there is a view that the practical impact of this failure is reduced because there are plenty of clients for all the providers to play an effective role.

It is notable that all the relationships in these three very different areas have been **underpinned by a mutual recognition** (i.e. by both FSS staff and the staff of other key providers) about the quality of the design of their respective services, and that front line staff are experienced and committed and delivering a high quality service for clients.

Particularly notable is the **improved relationship between Jobcentre Plus and FSS providers**. Close working relationships are now the norm, and in all areas the relationships is growing stronger and this has led to increasing referrals. FSS staff are welcomed into Jobcentres and often have a part time base there, both to talk to potential participants about what FSS involves and in some cases (but not all) supporting a warm handover. There is clear evidence of growing awareness of FSS and appropriate referrals among work coaches.

Alongside these strengthening relationships with Jobcentre Plus have been **increasing referrals through the TPO and self-referral route**. In some areas the TPO referral rate has been relatively high from the start – mainly because of the prior presence of the FSS provider, with well-developed local relationships and trust (as we saw in some areas in last year's visits). But FSS providers have been working hard to build relationships with a wider range of organisations – both as providers of specialist services and as a source of referrals.

More generally we have identified the following findings:

- There is a clear disconnect in some areas between both the different levels of relationships and between the experience of clients and the engagement of local partners. In some areas there is a very poor or weak working relationship between Local Authorities and the Lead Provider. Sometimes the relationship is stronger between front line staff, and on the whole there is a widespread recognition in each area that front line staff are able and experienced and doing a good, committed job. This is also reflected in the experience of clients – which is on the whole positive, and this is consistent across the areas.
- At the strategic level, the quality of the relationship is underpinned in some areas by **a lack of trust between Local Authorities delivering a public service, and providers who are providing a target driven service**. This lack of trust lies in the behaviours that this outcome funding model can encourage – in other words, a fear or a perception that such providers will seek to maximise their client base and will need to claim the outcomes, and that this may both reduce their own client base and may not be in the best interests of the client. We heard stories about FSS providers 'hoovering up' clients.

- This issue can be reinforced by a **convergence between the design features and principles of FSS and those of local programmes**. Since the design of FSS drew on extensive reviews of good practice in terms of its key features and principles, there is growing evidence that these features are shared with local programmes that also wish to draw on good practice. In the medium terms this will be helpful in terms of the evolution of the No One Left Behind framework, but in the short term it can create confusions among clients and some partners in terms of the distinction between programmes.
- This issues of a lack of agreed strategic approaches extend to **employer engagement**. In all three areas the different services go about their employer engagement activities in a way that is not coordinated with other local employer engagement approaches. This is in part down the choices made by employers – they have a trusted relationship with a FSS provider (sometimes going back to a time before FSS) or to a particular individual now involved in FSS. Sometimes it is about the creation of national relationships that FSS Lead Providers have agreed with major employers which works out into preferred local engagements. However, despite this, we heard stories of the exchange of vacancies that FSS could not fill (and vice versa) – in other words, there are some genuinely employer driven behaviours being displayed.
- In many areas **the quality of the FSS service is undermined by local constraints on the outcomes that can be achieved**. These constraints cannot be dealt with just by providing a high quality service – they include a lack of local jobs, and difficult and expensive and inconvenient public transport to nearby city labour markets (e.g. Aberdeen in the case of Peterhead and Fraserburgh, and Glasgow in the case of Drumchapel). These issues can condemn FSS clients to insecure and poorly paid local work with little scope for progression, but we did hear examples of participants who had been helped to learn to drive or get bus passes.
- Sometimes the transport issue is underpinned by a reluctance to travel outside a home area for work – notably in Drumchapel – with the provider seeking to tackle this but encouraging participants to travel initially a short distance outside the area in order to get face to face support and become more confident about travelling more widely.
- The employment landscape – both now and well into the future – has clearly been transformed by **the impact of Covid-19**, with a sudden switch from historically high employment rates to increasing rates of unemployment, that are expected to increase further with the end of the Job Retention Scheme. FSS clients are responding in different ways – some have given up looking for work, others are devoting themselves to caring duties, while others are still keen to work and are picking up opportunities: these started as supermarket retail, security, warehousing and delivery during the emergency phase of the crisis, but are now broadening out as the economy slowly recovers.
- It is clear from our discussions (and confirmed by the client feedback) that FSS staff on the ground have gone out of their way to keep in touch with participants during the very difficult lock down period and this has made a

difference to their state of mind and motivation. One of the most striking features of the lockdown period, and the stopping of all referrals from JCP as they focused on Universal Credit registration, has been the success of some providers in putting a very professional Facebook marketing approach in place. In some cases this has completely replaced previous JCP referral numbers, and ***this is a real success story with significant implications for the marketing of employability programmes in the future.***

The client feedback has generated a wide range of very positive feedback, focusing on:

- The service's comprehensive and tailored approach
- The caring, respectful, and supportive key workers
- Key workers' knowledge of the local job market and vacancies
- The holistic support offered
- The voluntary nature of the support.

Although not common, so

issues and challenges were identified from our interviews with clients:

- The extent to which FSS was appropriate for some particular client groups – notably graduates and older people. The latter may require some staff development work as a small number of older people felt that key workers had not been able to help them.
- Recurring issues – at a small scale – with the appropriateness of some referrals from JCP. There were still reports of people referred by JCP not being aware of the voluntary nature of FSS and not being motivated to take part. This also begs another issue about how JCP and FSS can work together to help to enhance motivation in potential participants.
- Ensuring that there was the right 'fit' between participants and key workers. We heard a few examples of where this important relationship had not been right – but in all cases a change of key worker had produced a more successful working relationship.
- The ***role and significance of start up support as part of FSS remains unclear.*** In one of the areas we studied – Peterhead and Fraserburgh – the delivery partners included Enterprise Mentoring, a high performance start-up support agency who were one of the award winners in the recently completely Health and Work Unit Challenge Fund. Their experience is that:
 - In most areas, FSS providers draw on Business Gateway to support clients who want to set up in business/self-employment, but Business Gateway are unable to provide the intensive support that FSS participants are likely to require.
 - The New Enterprise Allowance offers £1,274 additional funding to individuals entering self-employment, but offers very little one-to-one

mentoring support. At the moment, FSS participants can't draw on this Allowance.

What this means is that FSS participants who want to pursue a self-employment option can't combine the intensive support that can be offered as part of FSS (e.g. by Enterprise Mentoring in North East and West) with EAS and so they are tempted to prefer the EAS route which is then unable to provide the intensity of support that they may need.

Lessons for the future

- The context for FSS in 2020/21 will be **fundamentally changed by the impact of Covid-19**. This will affect the character of FSS, the scale of demand, and the likelihood of achieving sustainable outcomes. The evaluation of FSS next year will need to take these changes into account. While it would still be appropriate to cover the remaining three contract areas it will be important to focus on how, in each of these areas, the service has been able to respond to a very different economic context, how the service has evolved over the third year, and what the lessons are for the focus and delivery of the service over the subsequent 2 years.
- Local partners are clear that **No One Left Behind provides a sound basis for the evolution of national and local employability funding and services** to create a more coherent and comprehensive 'local employability service' in each area. The presence on the LEP of Lead Providers in two of the areas we have looked at has enhanced mutual awareness and understanding but has not been enough to create strategic coherence. Although the element of ESF in programmes has got in the way of developing more collaborative and complementary local approaches it is hard to avoid the conclusion from our evaluation that any separately procured national service will always struggle with gaining local support unless it is fully owned by the LEP.
- However, it will be important that demanding **outcome based funding is not lost in this evolution**. Central to the success of the No One Left Behind approach will be retaining some of the important features of FSS: **accountability**, in this case of LEPs for delivery against outcome targets, and ensuring that LEPs have the **information and structures they need to actively manage the performance** of the different funding streams, and **identify and act on weak points and poor performance**.

Recommendations for this FSS contract

Many of the issues we identified for our recommendations in Year 1 were not mentioned this year. The administrative system now appears to be working well – though there remain some concerns about how much time it absorbs.

However, we recommend that the Scottish Government:

- Reviews the current provision of effective start up support and funding for FSS participants who want to become self-employed and/or start a business – the current provision does not appear to be meeting the need for both intensive support and appropriate start-up funding. This may become even more important as the economy recovers from the impact of Covid-19 and self-employment options may become more appealing in the absence of more conventional jobs.
- Reviews the guidance about the ability of clients to leave and return to the service that go beyond the current ‘freeze’ option. This may be particularly valuable in the context of the impact of Covid-19 and the problems that may be caused by an unpredictable recovery period which may require local responses to infection spikes and related issues in terms of caring responsibilities and job insecurity.
- Revisits the issues that seem to have prevented more aligned local approaches between local employability services and FSS. Local partners felt that they had considered the implications of ESF carefully and come up with approaches that would be entirely conforming with ESF requirements, but that they had not gained approval to proceed.

Year 3 will be dominated by the impact of Covid-19. What this means is that there will need to be clarity about the role of FSS alongside Jobcentre Plus. Although as some providers admitted ***“it is now possible to justify the referral of almost anyone onto FSS”***, there are a range of risks around the delivery of FSS in 2020/21:

- There may be demands on the service from relatively short term unemployed people for whom the main issue will be a lack of jobs rather than any particular barriers to work.
- Those further from work (i.e. the core client group for FSS) will be in even greater need of intensive support to become competitive in the labour market and – depending on the length of the recession – it may make sense to link FSS support more strongly to follow up intensive vocational training to make good use of the time and enable participants to enter the labour market at a higher skill level, with associated benefits in terms of job satisfaction, pay and sustainability.
- One of the striking lessons from the lockdown period has been the success of focused and well managed Facebook marketing and we recommend that the Scottish Government reflect on the implications of this more widely for the marketing of employability services and the implications in terms of how to link this with national marketing to reach those who could most benefit from support.

Appendix 1 – Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation focuses on providing an insight into how delivery is playing out in practice and seeks to inform future iterations of employability programmes in Scotland through understanding what works.

This year two report focuses on our second lot of three case studies -Drumchapel (Glasgow), Dundee (Tayside) and Peterhead and Fraserburgh (North East).

This appendix breaks down the evaluation objectives and methodology.

Evaluation objectives

The key objectives of the evaluation are to:

Understand how Fair Start Scotland is being implemented across the different lot areas in Scotland

Understand the experience of Fair Start Scotland for lead providers, partner organisations, participants and employers

Identify what is working well and less well in the implementation of Fair Start Scotland

Identify the lessons learned and recommend changes to consider for the remainder of the Fair Start Scotland contract period as well as shaping what the next iteration of employment support in Scotland might look like

Evaluation methodology

We are carrying out the following tasks in each of the case study areas:

- Conducting desk-based area analysis of the socio-economic and employment trends in each of the localities to understand the local labour market context that FSS is operating in
- Analysing the management and performance data from FSS in each of the localities to understand the profile and numbers of participants and outcomes achieved in the area
- Conducting interviews with participants in each locality to understand their experience of and views on FSS
- This year we complemented this with follow up interviews with 9 of those we interviewed in our locality case studies last year – this included 3 from each of Alloa, Irvine and Wick. The purpose of these interviews was to explore the longer-term impact of the experience of FSS on participants.
- Conducting interviews with employers in one locality to understand their experience of and views on FSS. Because of the impact of Covid-19 arranging employer interviews this year has provide difficult this year as employers had appropriate staff on furlough or it was difficult to get hold of very busy staff on in HR roles, so the number of employer interviews was limited.
- Conducting interviews with service staff including managers and frontline staff delivering FSS locally to understand their experience of and views on the service
- Conducting interviews with staff in partners of FSS providers in the locality to understand their experience of and views on FSS
- Conducting interviews with relevant other stakeholders in the area to understand their experience of and views on FSS.

FSS participants were contacted through a database of all service participants supplied by Scottish Government. We emailed all participants living in Drumchapel, Dundee, and Peterhead and Fraserburgh who had taken part in the service for at least 6 months and issued an introductory letter to participants across all three areas. We followed this up with a telephone call to arrange an interview, making a maximum of three attempts to contact each participant.

In total, we conducted 30 interviews with participants and 18 key workers who – between them – worked with 28 of these participants. In addition, we interviewed 9 of those participants we first interviewed last year – 3 from each of the three areas (Alloa, Irvine and Wick). Our key findings from these are outlined in Chapter 5.

Appendix 2 – Area Case Study Interviews

Drumchapel interviews

Interviewee	Role	Organisation
Doreen Houghton	Regional Manager	People Plus
Graham Fulton	Integration Manager	People Plus
Lynne Anderson	Project Leader, and Project Manager for FSS	The Lennox Partnership
Karen Crawford	Key Worker	The Lennox Partnership
Angie Black	Service Manager	Glasgow Supported Employment Service Glasgow City Health and Social care Partnership
Alison McCrae	Economic Development Manager	Glasgow City Council
Zoe Welsh	Head of Employability and Skills	Jobs & Business Glasgow

Dundee interviews

Interviewee	Role	Organisation
Shubad Ujam	Operations Manager	Remploy
Claire McGuigan	Employer Services Lead - Scotland	Remploy
Michael Gibson	Partnership Lead	Remploy
Neil Bell	Regional Account Manager (Employer relationships)	Remploy
Carrie Ogilvie	Business Manager	Remploy
Allan Miller	Employability Manager	Dundee City Council

Michelle Guatier	Senior Policy Officer, Employability	Dundee City Council
Duncan Gardner	Regional Community Benefits Adviser	Balfour Beatty
Rory Flood	Resourcing Partner	Social Security Scotland

Peterhead and Fraserburgh interviews

Interviewee	Role	Organisation
Lynne Gallagher	Partnership Manager FSS	Momentum
Coleen Edwards	Manager FSS Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire	Momentum
Daniel Hughes	Employment Engagement Manager	Momentum
Natasha McLachlan	Job Coach	Momentum
Andrew Ewan	Job Coach	Enable
Rebecca Gibbons	Manager, Employment Coordinator	Enable
Anne Kain	Head of Services	Aberdeen Foyer
David Williamson	Managing Director	Enterprise Mentoring CIC
Ewan Allerdycce	Head of Service	Aberdeenshire Council
Pauline Robertson	Key Worker (Peterhead and Ellon areas) Employment Support Team	Aberdeenshire Council

Keith Anderson	Head of Development	Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action
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Appendix 3 – Participant Case Studies

As part of the Year 2 report, we conducted interviews with participants in each locality to understand their experience of and views on FSS. These are presented below as case studies and colour coded:

- Blue: 4 participant case studies from Drumchapel
- Red: 5 participant case studies from Dundee
- Green: 5 participant case studies from Peterhead and Fraserburgh

For the Year 2 report we complemented these with follow up interviews from those we interviewed in our locality case studies last year. Two of these are presented as case studies below (shown in grey), with 1 from Alloa and the other from Irvine.

Angela is 56 years old and lives in an area classified as within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

She is partially deaf and suffers from poor physical and mental health which has been a barrier to her continued employment.



The Job Centre referred Angela to FSS in September 2019.

Angela joined the service as she thought it would help her find a job that would suit her age and disabilities. She needs to work in a quiet environment.

Angela's key worker helped her to design a CV and complete online application forms as her IT skills were extremely limited.

Angela said her key worker was an **"expert at his job"** and was great at calming down her anxieties and building up her self-esteem.

FSS was **"exactly what I needed"**. Angela felt that she could discuss all her worries freely with her key worker due to the personal, 1:1 approach that FSS offered.

FSS supported Angela to enroll in a British Sign Language course, which she hopes to complete after lockdown eases.

Angela started to volunteer in a library before lockdown and will return to this once libraries re-open.

FSS was **"fantastic"** for Angela. She felt the less intense, softer approach boosted her confidence.

Area: Drumchapel
Provider: People Plus

Graham is in his late 20s and lives in an area classified as within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

Graham has been unemployed for a long time as a result of poor health. Due to his health issues he is looking for part-time employment.

Graham has taken part in other employability services in the past and has been volunteering in a charity shop for the past 6 months.



The Job Centre referred Graham to FSS in October 2019.

Graham felt his health issues counted against him when he was applying for jobs. He was looking to learn new interview techniques and different ways to search for jobs.

FSS has supported Graham to update and improve his CV and help with his interview technique.

He really enjoys FSS as it is **"a more relaxed environment"** than other services he has taken part in.

Before FSS he was just applying for jobs online. He has now learnt new ways to apply for jobs e.g. face-to-face and using a more direct approach.

FSS also assisted Graham to apply for jobs that he actually was interested in, rather than applying for a job **"just for the sake of it"**.

He is still in regular contact with his key worker during lockdown.

Graham is currently shielding due to COVID-19, and will not be applying for any jobs until restrictions are lifted.

FSS has given him the CV and confidence boost to hopefully lead to him finding employment after COVID.

Area: Drumchapel
Provider: The Lennox Partnership

Luke is 21 years old and lives in an area classified as within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

Luke went to college to study Graphic Design but left after a year due to stress.

He started a Street League course, but he left because he didn't think it was helping him to get any closer to finding a job.



Luke was referred to FSS by Job Centre Plus in September 2019.

He thought that the weekly 1:1 appointments would help him to secure employment.

Luke was interested in working in the hospitality sector so FSS arranged for him to participate in an Action for Children hospitality programme.

Luke's key worker said that his confidence grew from strength to strength and is delighted that he secured employment.

Through this programme, he was offered an apprenticeship in a hotel as a kitchen porter. Once hotels re-open after COVID he will be returning to work.

Luke thought that FSS was **“great.”** It was focused on him and, step by step, built up his confidence resulting in him securing employment.

Area: Drumchapel
Provider: The Lennox Partnership

Rebecca is a single mum in her early 30s and lives in an area classified as within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

Rebecca was struggling to find work. She had been unemployed for 8 years.

Her confidence was low and she felt that on her own, she was getting no closer to securing employment and she hoped FSS would help.

Rebecca was referred to FSS by Job Centre Plus in November 2019.

Rebecca started meeting her key worker who supported her with both job applications and improving her CV.

Rebecca was looking for a job that would fit in with her responsibilities as a single parent.

The 1:1 sessions gave Rebecca the confidence to enroll in the course. She said that without the support from her key worker she wouldn't have been able to do this.

Through FSS, she enrolled in a care course that was due to start in March but unfortunately was put on hold because of COVID.



She still has the confidence and motivation to start the course after lockdown. She hopes the course will lead to employment.

Her key worker said FSS suited Rebecca due to the service's structure, which enabled them to establish the right support to meet her needs.

Area: Drumchapel
Provider: The Lennox Partnership

Douglas is 57 years old and lives in an area classified as within the 30% most deprived areas in Scotland.

Douglas has been out of work for nearly two years after spending much of his working life on building sites or in factories, mostly on short-term contracts.

Douglas suffered a bad injury to his neck and shoulders that required an operation. He is unable to lift his arm above his shoulder and so his usual work is no longer suitable.

Douglas is very keen to find work. He said he is looking for **“anything that gets me in the door. I just want to work and earn a wage”**.

He was referred to FSS by the Job Centre in August 2019.

The main support from Douglas’s key worker has been encouraging him to look for new opportunities – trying cleaning jobs instead of building – and helping him look for work.

His key worker believes that once Douglas is in a job his employers will see that he is a hard worker and want to keep him on.

Douglas has accepted that he **“cannot go for the same jobs I did when I was younger, but there are other avenues I can pursue”**.

Douglas’s key worker described his main challenge as **“convincing Douglas he was no longer capable of certain jobs due to his health and age and that he should be applying for jobs in a different area”**.

Douglas and his key worker have talked every couple of weeks during lockdown. They are both still actively searching for work for Douglas, ideally cleaning or factory jobs but finding there are few opportunities to pursue because of COVID.

Douglas’s key worker is very keen to find him a job **“that will see him out until he retires – not just any short-term job that won’t last and mean he’ll find himself having to look for work all over again”**.

Area: Dundee
Provider: Remploy

Gemma is 29 years old and lives in an area classified as within the most deprived 30% in Scotland.

Gemma has an HNC in Administration and IT and has worked in a number of jobs but struggles with back problems and mental health issues.

Gemma recently lost her job. Her health conditions made it difficult for her to work and her employer had not been willing to accommodate her needs.

Gemma wanted help and support in finding a job. She wanted someone to advocate on her behalf when talking to employers about her health.

Gemma started taking part in FSS in July 2019. She self-referred after her husband saw an ad for the service on Facebook.

She said her first appointment with FSS was **“Really helpful. It was good to know there was someone who could back me up and was there to fight my corner”**.

Gemma’s key worker noticed that her mindset became more positive as time went on.

Her key worker helped develop Gemma’s self-confidence and ability to disclose her health issues to employers. They also worked on body language in interview situations.

Gemma’s key worker said getting work was **“a real boost to her confidence, she could see that she was more than capable of working. I feel like she turned a page”**.

Persistence and teamwork saw Gemma find clerical and administrative work with a temp agency.



Gemma is keen to find a permanent role after COVID. She is looking forward to working with her key worker to apply for jobs.

There has been very little temp work available during COVID but her key worker has **“checked in regularly to see if I’m OK”**.

Area: Dundee
Provider: Remploy

Grant is 30 years old and lives in an area classified as within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

Grant is long-term unemployed and has dyslexia. He has previously worked in gardening and construction roles but hasn't had a permanent job for 5 years.

His key worker said that his efforts to get a job over the past few years had been **"unlucky, just missing out, or simply no suitable jobs out there"**.

Job Centre Plus referred Grant to FSS in August 2019.

FSS is supporting Grant to find suitable jobs. He is looking for factory work, but it needs to be local or accessible by public transport as he does not drive.

His key worker says they are focusing on getting Grant some **"foot in the door experience – he's not looking to upskill or develop – he just wants a job and a wage"**.

Grant says his key worker is **"very friendly, very easy to talk to. She asked me lots of questions about what I wanted and I felt like she was listening to what I was saying"**.

Grant and his key worker have established a good working relationship. His key worker has helped him to prepare for job interviews by getting him to practice talking about himself.

His key worker believes Grant is ready to enter the job market and probably would have found work if it weren't for COVID and the subsequent lockdown.

Grant's key worker describes him as **"ready to work"** and hopes he will find something before the end of his time with FSS so he can benefit from in-work support.

Area: Dundee
Provider: Rempoy

Holly is 21 years old and lives in an area classified as within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

Holly studied Art & Design at college and then worked as a carer. She worked in two roles, each for two months, but neither worked out.

Holly suffers from back pain and this prevented her from using hoists and physically moving clients. Her anxiety around certain aspects of the job affected her own mental health.

Holly was looking for someone to mentor her through the job search process and give her some encouragement.

Holly joined FSS in October 2019. She self-referred, recognising that she needed help to find a suitable job.

With the support of her key worker, Holly started volunteering for a charity.

She said she **“wishes I’d done something like this much sooner. I find it so rewarding... and have found that speaking to different people is not as intimidating as I thought”**.

However, this time she had the confidence to talk to her boss and explain what was happening. Holly notes that this is a huge change from her previous experiences. **“In the past I wouldn’t have had the confidence to say anything.”**

Holly then found a job working in a call centre, but found that the job was having a negative effect on her mental health so she had to leave.



Holly is still keen to work in the care sector and is now hoping for a career in nursing.

Holly believes she is very different from when she joined the service. **“I’ve got a ‘can do’ attitude that I didn’t have before.”**

Area: Dundee
Provider: Remploy

Lauren is 26 years old and lives in an area classified as within the 30% most deprived areas in Scotland.

Lauren found a job as a travel agent after studying law at university. However, she lost her job after the company she was working for collapsed.



Her key worker looked over Lauren's CV, gave her a refresher on interview skills and suggested a couple of employment agencies that would welcome someone with her skills and experience.

Lauren started engaging with FSS in September 2019. Her partner had used the service a few years before to find work and recommended them to her.

Her key worker noted that **"she did not need a lot of help as she was very experienced. Her main issue was the sudden disappearance of a company she had worked for since leaving university"**.

FSS put Lauren forward for a job in a call centre. She worked there for a few weeks while looking for other work with more suitable hours for her.



She found this job independently of FSS but has been impressed that **"Fair Start have been in touch regularly to see how I am getting on and if they can offer me any support. Their support did not just stop when I got a job."**

In October 2019, Lauren found a job with a multinational telecommunications company in a new business department.

Just before the COVID pandemic, she interviewed for a promotion as a manager of a new department.

Lauren's in-work support worker has encouraged her to keep her CV up to date and take a look at the job market regularly just in case she ever finds herself in the same situation again.

Area: Dundee
Provider: Rempoy

Bruce is 54 years old and lives in an area classified as within the least deprived 20% in Scotland.

Bruce is highly educated with two university degrees. He worked for over 30 years in various positions across the world in the oil and gas industry.

He had to leave his job when he and his wife got divorced, his wife moved away and he became a single parent with two school-aged children.

Bruce liked the sound of FSS because it would be able to offer **“more individual”** bespoke support than the Job Centre.

Job Centre Plus referred Bruce to FSS in July 2019.



FSS has also helped Bruce to build new skills. The Key Worker helped him to access online training in PAT testing, health and safety, and food hygiene **“to add different things to my CV”** and open up new opportunities.

FSS support has helped to identify job opportunities that fit around childcare. Bruce likes that the key worker is **“keyed into the local economy”** and hears about job opportunities that are not advertised.

He cannot drive just now due to a drink driving conviction so Bruce valued the help FSS gave him in arranging a bus pass.

He appreciates that his key worker **“goes out of his way”** to meet him in a local library. This is **“very very convenient”** in contrast to the Job Centre, which involves a longer journey to another town.

Bruce said that FSS support is **“miles miles better”** and **“far more helpful”** than Job Centre Plus. The service involves weekly, hour-long meetings with the key worker, compared with monthly ten-minute meetings at the Job Centre.

The key worker felt that, as Bruce is highly-qualified, there was a **“fine line between helping him and patronising him”**.

Bruce has not found a job yet but is happy with FSS. He said **“I’m a difficult case... age is against me”** and he acknowledged that being over-qualified for jobs he has applied for has been a barrier.

He appreciates the support from FSS. **“I know more about how to get back into work”**.

Area: Peterhead & Fraserburgh
Provider: Enable

Billy is 19 years old and lives in an area classified as within the least deprived 40% in Scotland.

Billy has a learning difficulty and a mental health condition. He lives in a rural location where public transport is not easily accessible and he cannot drive, so often relies on his parents for lifts.

He had been unemployed since leaving school. He was **“not doing much at all”** apart from a brief, unsuccessful spell at college.

Billy decided to access the support because FSS could offer more intensive support than Job Centre Plus to improve his CV. **“I thought the extra help would be handy”.**

Job Centre Plus referred Billy to FSS in August 2019.

FSS helped Billy to look for jobs that he could apply for. His key worker walked around a local town with him to look at what opportunities might be available. Billy said the support involved **“telling me, showing me jobs I could apply for”**.



FSS helped him to arrange a placement in a charity shop which he enjoyed. This strengthened his CV and made him consider retail as a career, something he had not thought about before.

Billy appreciated FSS's support in applying and said he wouldn't even have known about the opportunity without them.

The key worker helped Billy to apply for a four-week training programme at a large retailer in Aberdeen, and he secured a job at the end of the programme.

Billy's key worker observed an improvement in his confidence and reported that Billy's family was pleased to see him getting out the house.

Billy worked for only three or four days before the COVID lockdown and is now on furlough. He has been in regular contact with his key worker by phone and text since then and hopes to return to work when the lockdown eases.



Area: Peterhead & Fraserburgh
Provider: Enable

Maria is 50 years old and lives in an area which is amongst the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.

Maria is a single mum to three children. She worked in retail when she was younger but left when she had her first child.

She returned to her retail job on a part-time basis for a few years before leaving again due to childcare issues. She has been unemployed for the past 8 years.

Job Centre Plus referred Maria to FSS in August 2019.

It took a while for Maria to figure out what jobs she wanted to apply for.

Maria started meeting her key worker on a weekly basis. They would discuss how Maria was getting on and had a lot of job matching conversations.



To explore Maria's career options, her key worker took her to a careers fair which many local employers attended. The careers fair was a big success and she contacted a few employers and got a few interviews as a result.

Maria said she was really nervous about attending the careers fair after being out of work for so long, but her key worker introduced her to a lot of people and **"took the pressure off"**.

She said that her key worker was especially supportive when she was unsuccessful. He gave her the confidence to keep applying by telling her that it wasn't her fault and she did all she could.

Maria had a few negative experiences at job interviews, where she felt she wasn't given a fair chance because of her age.

One of the interviews she secured from the careers fair was for a caring job. The interview went well and Maria was offered a position covering ad-hoc shifts in a care home.

She also managed to find a second part-time job as a bus cleaner. Maria is enjoying both jobs and the financial security that comes with regular income.

Area: Peterhead & Fraserburgh
Provider: Momentum

George is in his early 50s. He lives in a rural area classified as within the least deprived 40% in Scotland.

He has worked in the agricultural sector as a farm worker for most of his adult life.

Last year, he had an argument with his employer which resulted in him leaving his job. His license to operate farming machinery has since expired.

George wanted to find work and said **"I wasn't getting anywhere by myself"**. He wanted a full-time job and **"to get back on my feet"**.

Job Centre Plus referred George to FSS in July 2019.

His key worker said he had a very specific skill set related to farm labouring e.g. operating machinery, but he lacked some other general employability skills, e.g. IT skills.

His key worker helped him set up an email account and downloaded some job searching apps on to his phone.

George had weekly meetings with his key worker. They talked about what kind of jobs he was interested in and updated his CV. They introduced him to applying for jobs online which he was not familiar with previously.



George was really pleased with the support he received. He said they took his skill-set and preferences into account when searching for jobs.

George's key worker helped him to find work as a refuse collector, although this is a part-time, temporary position.

George still receives in-work support from FSS. He said **"they were really good... I've no complaint about them at all. They went out their way to help as much as they can."**



George would eventually like to get back into farming, but recognises he would need to renew his licence and invest in more training.

FSS has helped George to improve his digital literacy which will help with job searching in the future.

Area: Peterhead & Fraserburgh
Provider: Momentum

Peter is in his mid-50s and lives in an area classified as within the least deprived 20% in Scotland.

Peter worked for the same financial services company for 27 years. He worked his way up to senior management level and was in a very high-pressured role for 10 years.

A few years ago, Peter was signed off work due to stress and mental health issues. Peter left the company after being on sick leave for a year and remained unemployed for a few years after this.

Peter decided to take part because FSS allowed him regular access to a psychologist. He said this helped a lot and his psychologist **“gave me lots of good advice.”**

Job Centre Plus referred Peter to FSS in July 2019.

His key worker said that Peter was suffering from serious mental health issues when he first starting with FSS and was not ready to find work yet.

Peter said FSS respected his boundaries and that **“they didn’t push me. They went at my pace.”**

His key worker started by organising some volunteering opportunities within the community for Peter e.g. driving a community bus (where he drove elderly people to doctors appointments etc.)



The support from FSS has had a huge impact on his mental state and self-esteem. His key worker said he is **“like a different person”**.

With FSS's help, Peter felt ready to begin searching for part-time jobs.

Peter said **“they took me out the position I was in. Some days I wouldn’t leave the house, but they gradually built up my confidence.”**



Peter is now working 20 hours a week as a driver for a garage. He says he fits in really well with the team and his manager is very understanding and schedules his shifts so he can continue with his volunteering.

Area: Peterhead & Fraserburgh
Provider: Momentum

Alison is 49 years old and is a single mother with eight children. She lives in a neighbourhood classified by the SIMD as within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

Alison has been unemployed since she was 18 years old, and has spent much of her adult life raising her children.

She did not like it and felt **“spoken to like a bairn”**. It did help her to get a job, but not in a field that she was interested in. She left the job shortly afterwards, which led to a benefits sanction.

She previously took part in the Work Programme because she was told to by Job Centre Plus.



Despite some problems with attending appointments due to childcare issues, FSS helped Alison to arrange volunteering roles in local charity shops, which she feels are **“a good step”** towards employment.

Alison spoke positively of the support offered by FSS, noting that the key worker **“puts you at ease”** and takes into account your situation and preferences.

Alison was referred to FSS by Job Centre Plus in August 2018.

Alison also spoke positively about the wider emotional and practical support that FSS provided. The key worker helped her to liaise with the Citizens Advice Bureau over benefits, so she is now better off financially.

“[The key worker] is there if you need her” with **“the support I need”**. **“I liked going because I got used to her, she would listen to my other troubles”**.

FSS gave her a taster and made her think she might like to get back into work when the children are older.

Alison is no longer supported by FSS but is still supported by Clackmannanshire Works.

Having been out of work for 30 years, she had been **“terrified”** to start working again, but the service made her feel more confident. She used to find it daunting to go into shops and ask about any vacancies but now she does this regularly. **“I feel as though I’ve got a wee bit more confidence... I can go to a shop and hand my CV in. I wouldn’t have been able to before. Never.”**

Alison and the key worker both acknowledged that she is not ready for work just now, with eight children to look after on her own.

Area: Alloa
Provider: Clackmannanshire Works

Carlos is 23 years old and lives in a neighbourhood classified by the SIMD as within the most deprived 20% in Scotland.

He has been diagnosed with dyslexia and dyspraxia.

He did not find them helpful in raising his confidence. He preferred the workshops he attended through FSS.

Carlos previously attended two courses provided by the Prince's Trust.

He joined the service to gain more confidence in going for interviews.

Carlos was referred to FSS by Job Centre Plus in June 2018.

Carlos lives with disabilities and appreciates that his key worker **"actually took the time to read my case and see what I have"**. His felt his key worker understood his personal circumstances and adapted the service to suit his needs.

Carlos appreciated the support from his key worker when interviews were unsuccessful. They would "pick him up" and encouraged him to apply for other things.

FSS helped Carlos apply for a work programme for people with learning disabilities in a department store. He was successful in completing the initial four-week programme and went on to secure a job. He worked there for 10 months before leaving to go to college.

Carlos said his key worker was **"nothing but supportive"** and encouraged him to get involved in meetings and confidence-building workshops. This allowed him to apply for jobs he previously would not have had the courage to apply for.

Carlos had been wanting to return to his acting course for some time. He said he would not have had the courage to if he had not received support from his key worker.

Carlos started an acting course at college in September 2019.

FSS helped Carlos to put support in place to assist him through his college exams, including the use of a scribe and other reasonable adjustments. They also helped him to complete his application for college and to SAAS for financial support.

He would have liked extra support from FSS to re-visit his CV and incorporate the experience he gained throughout his time on the service.

Carlos is no longer in touch with FSS because he feels he no longer needs any support. He is glad he gained experience in retail through the service and is confident he could find a part-time retail job if he needed extra income while at college.



Area: Irvine
Provider: The Lennox Partnership

Profile data of FSS participants:

GENDER

Male	18	60%
Female	12	40%
TOTAL	30	100%

AGE

16-24	6	20%
25-34	11	37%
35-44	1	3%
35-49	2	7%
45-54	5	17%
55-64	5	17%
TOTAL	30	100%

ETHNICITY

White - British	26	87%
Asian	2	7%
White - other	1	3%
No data	1	3%
TOTAL	30	100%

SIMD DECILE

SIMD 1	11	37%
SIMD 2	8	27%
SIMD 3	3	10%
SIMD 4	2	7%
SIMD 5	1	3%
SIMD 6	1	3%
SIMD 7	1	3%
SIMD 8	0	0%
SIMD 9	3	10%
SIMD 10	0	0%
TOTAL	30	100%

DISABILITY STATUS

Disability	20	67%
No disability	10	33%
TOTAL	30	100%

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this <statistical bulletin / social research publication>:

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available via an alternative route <specify or delete this text>
- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact <email address> for further information.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.



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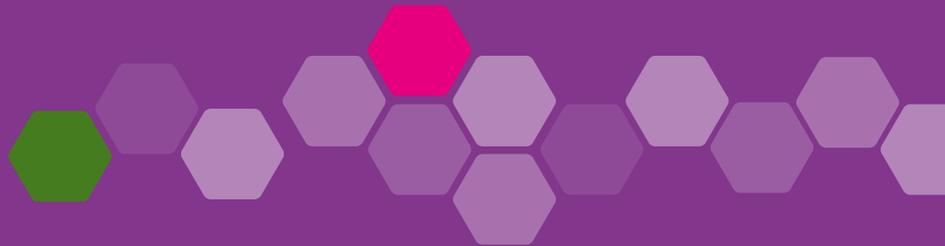
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