

Future Bright Interim Evaluation

(October 22)

Highlights and learning points

**“Future Bright has
changed lives”**



Future Bright has changed lives.

The service supports residents through a holistic approach, offering one-to-one coaching to identify and overcome residents' individual barriers to progressing in work.

Building trust and accountability the service helps to increase residents' motivation and confidence, supporting them to achieve their career goals.

It is the only intensive and individualised 'in-work' progression support service offered in the West of England Combined Authority area.

This latest version of the programme has already returned £2,379 in increased incomes and social value for every £1,000 spent to date. The programme strongly aligns with in-work skills priorities for the region.

The interim review considered the following:

- Overall design of the programme;
- Delivery against targets;
- Experience of participants; and
- Impact of the service on participants lives.



Highlights

- 90% of participants said they would recommend the programme.
- The main areas of focus for which participants requested support from coaches included:
 - Confidence and motivation building;
 - Supporting mental health and well-being;
 - Advice and support with new job applications.

“Future Bright has been proven to help”

Future Bright has been proven to help residents identify and overcome a range of barriers to in-work progression. At the time of the evaluation:



91%

of participants said they felt motivated to progress (721 participants had achieved one or more action plan goals at exit).



99%

of participants reported an improvement in a skill, with 93% reporting an improvement in 3 or more skills.



265

participants improved their work situation and income as a direct result of engaging in the FB programme.

This totals over £2,258,629 million, an average of £8,523 per individual.

42%
of participants accessed some form of training

This training has helped address skills gaps and support in-work progression, and it is worth noting that a higher number of individuals with no qualifications have accessed the service than during the pilot project.

Participants have been supported to access various training opportunities to gain qualifications including maths through programmes such as Multiply and a range of other qualifications through Adult Education and bootcamps.

Conversely 29% of participants reported their highest qualification level is NVQ 6 which is equivalent to a degree with honours, showing the programme is relevant to a wide range of residents with a diverse range of needs.



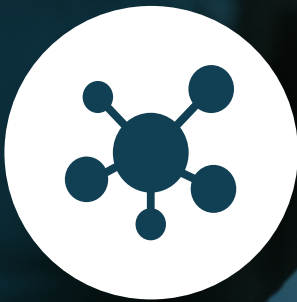
429

participants reported an improvement in their health and well-being.



70%

have improved goal setting (which in turn has supported in-work progression).



67%

are more aware of other services because of accessing Future Bright support.



81%

felt the programme addressed all their skills related needs.



The majority of those surveyed stated that the most helpful part of the programme was the 1:1 coaching element (someone to talk to, work through their barriers and help build confidence).

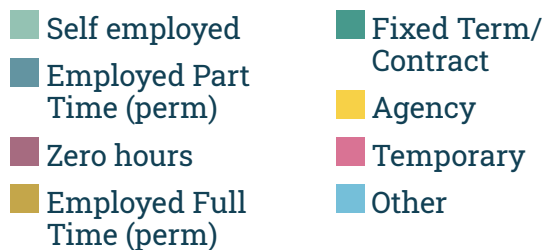
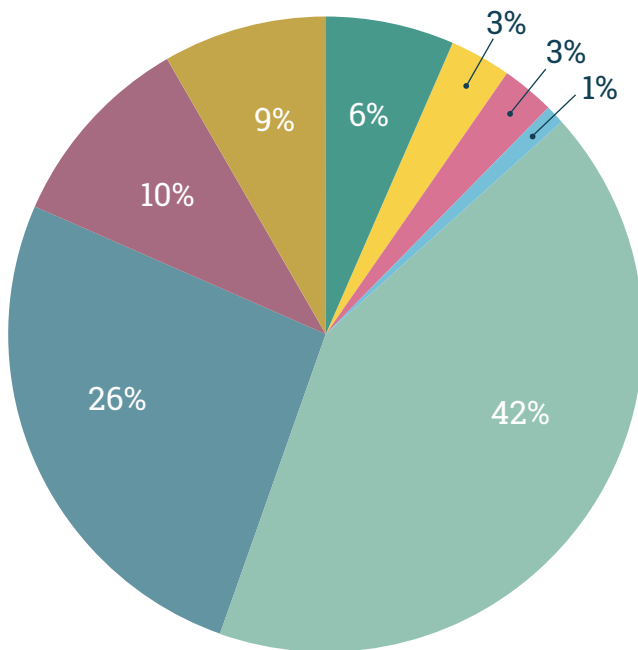
Additional impact and benefits

- 463 children have benefitted from improvements in motivation, skills, income and increased health and wellbeing of a parent/guardian/carer.
- For every £1,000 spent to date, this has generated an average of £1,370 of increased income and £1,009 of social value across the programme.
- The design and flexible nature of the programme allows it to be adapted to changing needs.
- By opening eligibility to include those earning below the real living wage, the programme was able to support an additional 195 residents (from March 2021-September 2022), at a time when the cost of living crisis has impacted many West of England residents.
- A larger proportion of participants are self-employed (42%) with a significant number of these looking for specific self-employment support, and we have been able to work closely with partners to help them.

“463 children have benefitted from improvements”

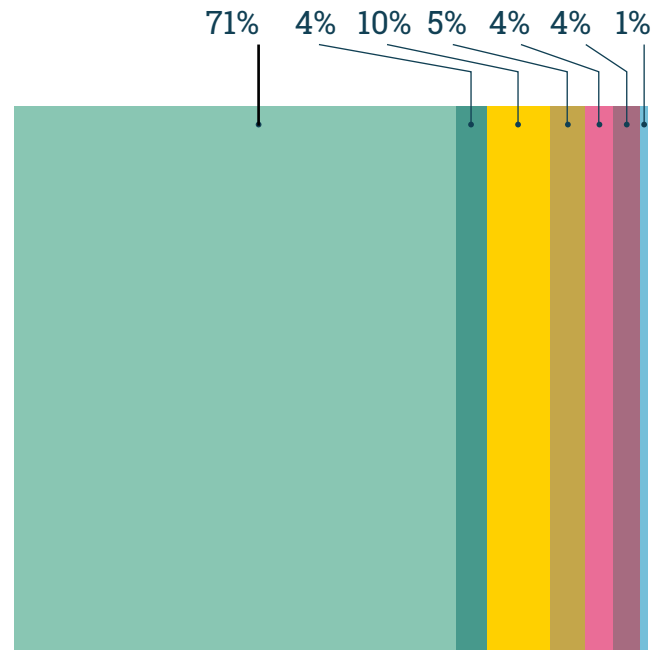


Breakdown by employment type



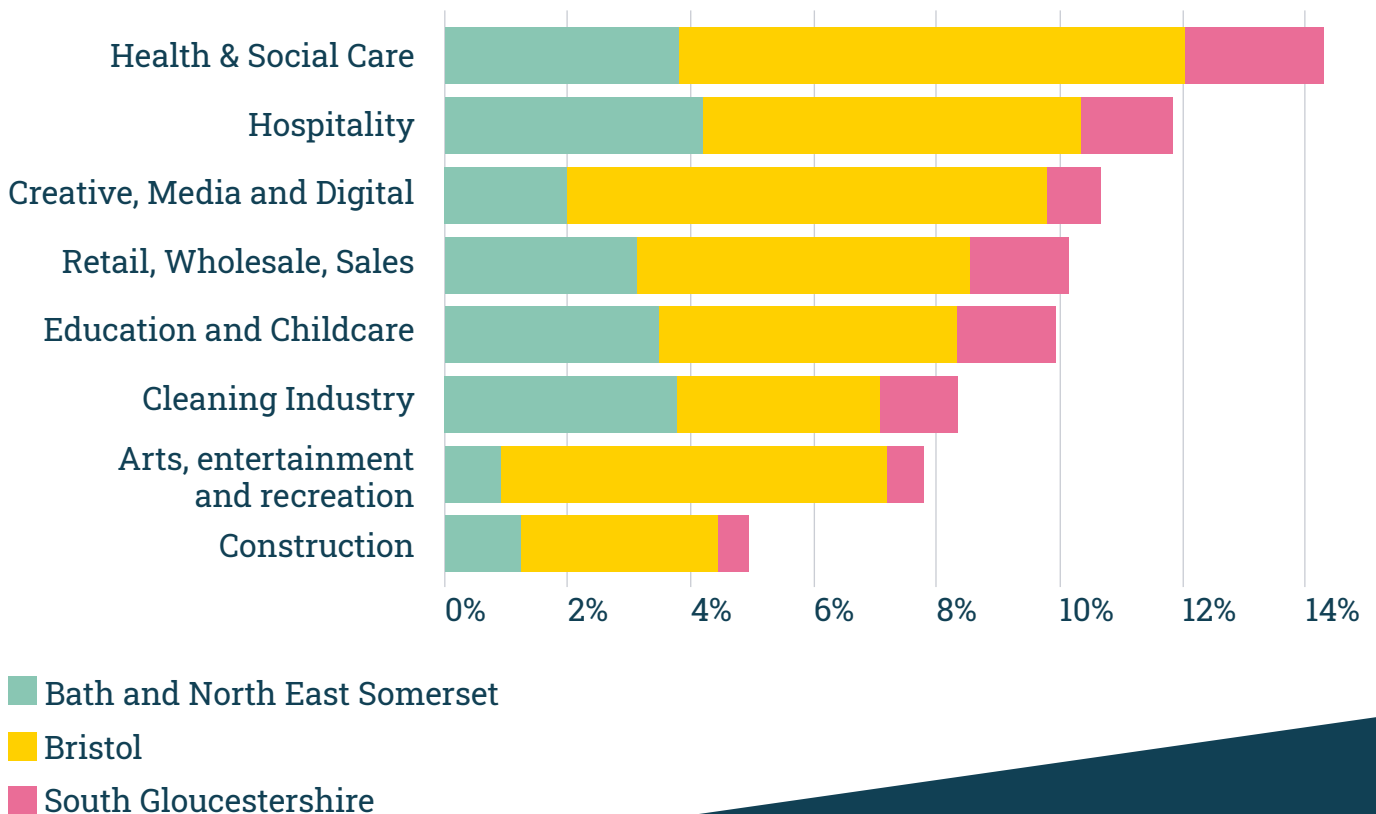
- Referrals into the programme have been a mix of both a) eligible and b) ineligible referrals, with an approximate 45/55 split (i.e. 2293 referrals between launch in March 2021 and September 2022, with 1045 eligible for the programme). The FB teams have been able to advise and signpost those who are ineligible to other relevant services (including Skills Connect since its launch) to support them and help them on their journey.
- Job Centres have been the most successful referral route for Future Bright, showing that the positive relationships built with DWP colleagues during the pilot continue.
- Ethnicity - regional statistics show that 10% of the employed residents in the region are of an ethnic minority which means the project has reached a greater percentage of ethnic minority residents (minimum of 19%), than those in work overall.

Breakdown of ethnicity



- Gender - a recommendation of the final pilot evaluation was to reach and engage more males. The figures show a shift from the pilot performance data (where 67% of participants were female, 32% were male), demonstrating that the service is now reaching a greater percentage of males. Currently 61% of participants are female and 37% male. 2% identify as non-binary, gender fluid, transgender or prefer not to say. This gender split aligns with project targets and is consistent across all LA areas.
- Participants come from a wide range of sectors to the programme. Overall, the greatest number of participants work in the Health and Social Care sector (14%), this is unsurprising given that 71% of people working in the social care sector are paid less than the real living wage and it is a major employment sector.

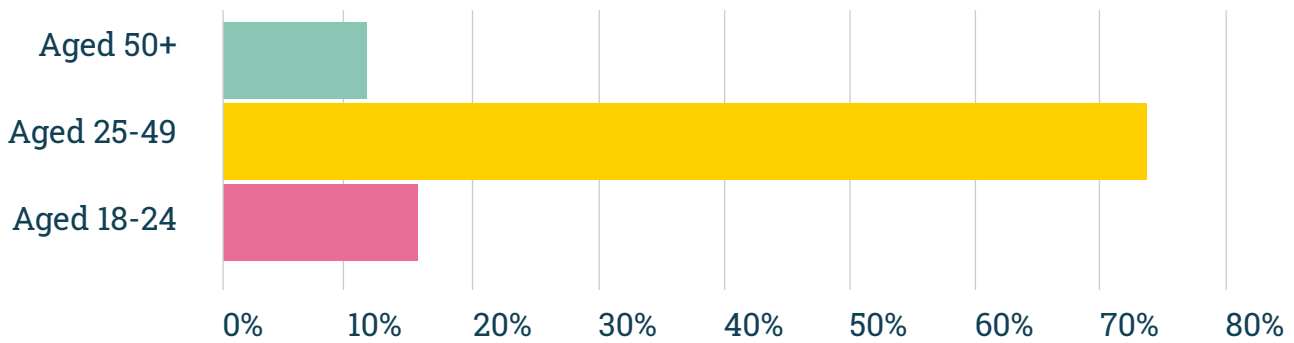
Top 8 Sectors showing local area breakdown



Learning Points

- Whilst the programme has well established referral routes and partners, further work is needed with community engagement partners to build on referral routes across the region, in particular engagement with people aged 50+ and parents/carers (families) as these have been identified as priority groups, developing better channels to reach them. (It is noted that the pandemic has impacted on project performance due to limited community engagement and face-to-face delivery on launch in March 2021.)
- The eligibility criteria regarding the Real Living Wage caused some confusion – the service has since been opened to anyone in work to access with the level of service offered depending on circumstances.
- Age – Data shows that the proportion of participants aged 50+ is 11%. In 2021 the regional age split of residents who were employed was 30% for those 50+. This suggests that there needs to be greater focus on reaching and supporting more 50+ participants, not least as it is recognised that this age group has been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic with a reduction in the number coming back into the labour market. The cost of living crisis is forcing more of this age group back into work.

Breakdown of age



- With the growth in green jobs, consideration needs to be given to how this can be incorporated better into future provision. Since the new Retrofit and Green Skills Manager will work with coaching staff to develop their knowledge around these roles.
- A need to identify and deliver additional staff training to meet changing project demands. For instance, how to better support the recent increase in self-employed participants and the rise in those with mental health and well-being problems coming to the programme. The complexity of mental health barriers is becoming more common putting strain on the Future Bright coaches.
- The learning from Future bright has helped inform the development of Skills Connect which has since launched (www.skillsconnect.org.uk) and will provide clear referral pathway to the service in the future.
- Carry out more regular participant feedback reviews to identify new themes emerging, informing future support needs and how satisfied participants are with the service meeting their needs.

Where participants stated the service did not meet all (or any) of their needs, they cited:

- Information on other services (signposting) was not as useful as they would have liked, or external providers did not follow up;
- They felt the amount of time they were allowed on the project was insufficient for their needs and/or
- An apparent lack of follow up after initial contact with a coach.
- Conduct a review of future funding and staffing models to further streamline the service particularly community engagement activities, participant onboarding and eligibility checks.
- Provide clearer guidelines for the personal budget in any future iterations of the service to improve consistency of offer for all residents across the region.
- Bring the social value measure used in line with other provision to allow for better comparisons across People and Skills Programmes.
- Review targets when developing future iterations of the project to better align with other provision to provide a clearer understanding of the skills landscape.