

Engage 4 Change

Impact Report 2025/26

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Providing hope to explore aspirations and goals, with encouragement into education, employment and training.





The Journey

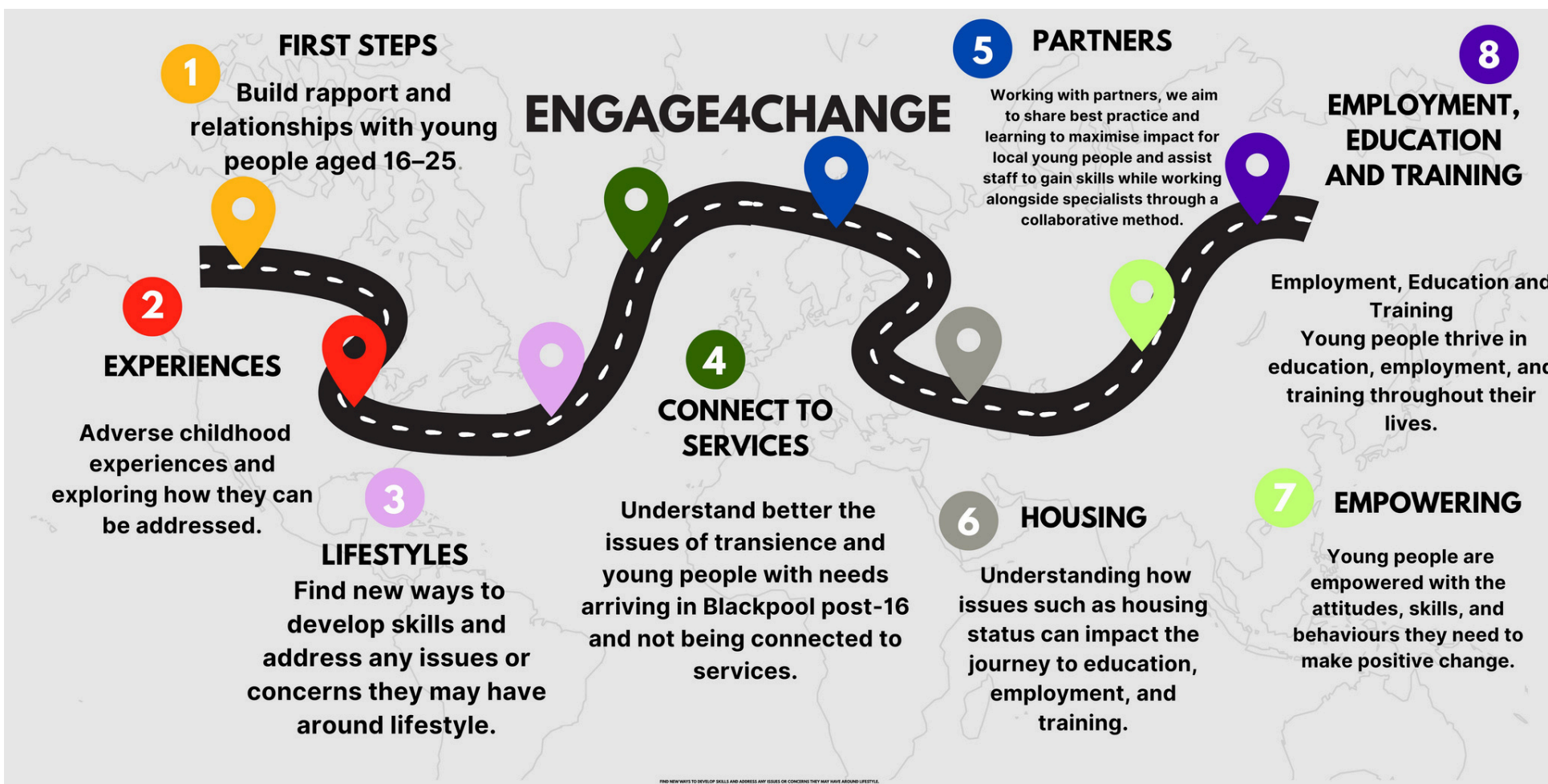
Our purpose is to help young people take positive steps towards employment, education or training by building positive and safe relationships.

Working with partners, we aim to share best practice and learning to maximise impact for local young people. This is achieved by providing opportunities for staff to gain skills while working alongside specialists through a collaborative approach. This approach helps to address gaps in areas where there is little to no statutory provision.

Seven neighbourhoods in Blackpool rank among the top 10 most deprived in England, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025. Our teams operate in four of these: Talbot, Claremont, Brunswick, and Bloomfield wards.

The team gives young people the opportunity to pursue their aspirations and goals, explore new ways to develop their skills, and address any issues or concerns they may have regarding their current lifestyle.

As such, young people will develop their skills and progress onto pathways into education, employment, or training. This, in turn, will improve the community and promote access to support services.



Activities

Splinter Group

Weekly Community Woodwork Group

Benefits: Practical skills, confidence and pride, improved focus, achievement for non-academic learners, problem-solving, positive routines, pathways into trades.

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Mayor's Parlour

Attending Blackpool Town Hall Mayor's Parlour

Benefits: Increased sense of belonging, youth voice and confidence, raised aspirations, understanding of democracy, positive behaviour and respect, connection to community.

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Christmas Market

Young People Planned and ran a Christmas Market

Benefits: Enterprise skills, confidence boost, responsibility and teamwork, real-world experience, creativity and pride, financial awareness, community connection.

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Case Study

Claremont Ward

This young person has experienced significant adversity in early life, including the tragic loss of his father in a knife attack when he was eight years old. Following this, he was relocated to Blackpool to live with his grandparents. More recently, his grandmother passed away, and his grandfather was no longer able to provide care. These cumulative experiences contributed to a significant deterioration in his circumstances, resulting in homelessness, substance use (including alcohol and cannabis), involvement in drug supply, and engagement in anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Our team visit the hostels three days per week, and this is where we first engaged with him. At the point of initial contact, he was socially isolated, spending much of his time alone in his room, using cannabis, and not engaging with staff or peers.

We have worked collaboratively with him to identify and encourage positive engagement opportunities, including regular group meetings, walk-and-talk sessions, male support groups, Streetlife activities, Blackpool FC Community Trust sporting opportunities, empowerment groups, and one-to-one support sessions delivered alongside the lived experience team.

Practical support has also been provided, including the supply of football boots and transport to and from the local sports centre to enable participation in structured football sessions led by a member of our team. This represents a significant positive step in building routine, trust, and pro-social engagement. Further engagement is now being developed through boxing sessions.

In addition, he has been supported to explore education and training pathways. He has been guided through a local college course booklet and provided with information about a training provider offering vocational courses in bricklaying, plastering, roofing, and other construction-related skills, supporting longer-term employability and progression.

"Thank you for seeing and spending time with me, but most importantly, for taking the time to listen and not judge me. I can feel my confidence and motivation coming back and that is down to the E4C Team"

And now...

He has demonstrated improvements in communication skills and is actively working on developing his time management, substance management, and personal hygiene. There has been a noticeable positive change in his presentation and engagement, with increased social interaction with other residents and staff. He is now more frequently seen outside of his room and is beginning to take greater pride in his appearance, including maintaining personal hygiene and wearing clean clothing.

The development of trust with the team has enabled him to engage in open and honest conversations across a range of topics. He presents as a complex case with multiple challenges and unresolved aspects relating to his early life experiences. Despite this, he continues to engage positively with support and demonstrates increasing willingness to reflect and communicate.

We continue to provide consistent support, guidance, and a reliable point of contact. He is aware that the team remains available to him whenever needed, offering ongoing stability, encouragement, and continuity of care in his daily life.

Case Study

Talbot Ward

The participant is a 23-year-old man. He has used cannabis for many years and drinks alcohol heavily, often to the point of blacking out. He has experienced significant trauma and has poor or no relationship with his family. When he was referred, he was homeless and sleeping on sofas. He had been banned from several hostels due to behaviour linked to his drinking, drug use, and mental health.

At our first meeting, he was very intoxicated, upset, and had fresh self-harm marks on his arms. He became emotional and was not in a state to engage in a full conversation. Building trust was important. I met with him regularly, set small goals, and ensured support was steady and reliable.

At first, he did not attend sessions regularly, but over time he began to attend more consistently.

A key step forward was supporting him to join the Engage4Change sports sessions. He started attending weekly, playing table tennis, and speaking with other young people. This helped him build confidence, routine, and a sense of belonging.

With support, he secured a bed in an emergency night shelter, which was a significant step given his high-risk status and previous hostel bans. I offered to attend substance misuse appointments with him, and he agreed. I have attended several sessions with him for support.

And now...

He took part in the Engage4Change Work Experience Programme at the Arc Cinema. His attendance was mixed, but he participated more than was initially expected. He completed a First Aid course and received a certificate, which boosted his confidence.

He is now:

- Attending social activities more often
- Living in safer, more stable accommodation
- Improving his confidence and social skills
- Building positive friendships through sports sessions and feeling less lonely
- Knowing how to access support when he needs it

Future Goals:

- Re-engage with emotional regulation support
- Improve mental health and reduce substance use
- Explore entry-level courses in IT, digital skills, or science
- Build consistent routines and attend appointments independently
- Move toward long-term housing
- Increase confidence for work or training



Case Study

Brunswick Ward

She is a 20-year-old woman who currently lives at home with her mother and two younger brothers. At the time of referral, she was using cannabis and ketamine regularly, which created significant tensions within the family home and placed her at risk of homelessness. She completed secondary school and passed her GCSEs, but a sensitive personal matter prevented her from progressing to college, having a lasting impact on her confidence and wellbeing.

Her substance misuse, poor mental and physical health, and strained relationship with her mother led to her engagement with Engage4Change. Her mother, who attends St Thomas Church, disclosed these issues to a church worker who linked her with Emily from Engage4Change. At the time, employment, education and training felt out of reach due to substance use, low mood, risk of homelessness, lack of confidence and isolation.

The first meeting was arranged through her mother, who initially doubted that she would engage, but after rapport-building she agreed to engage. On the second visit, she discussed her job search struggles, substance use and health issues. She expressed feelings of low mood, depression and ongoing bladder pain. She agreed to a referral to Adolescent Services and attended a GP appointment. Emily built trust through consistent engagement, liaised with her family for stability, identified her incomplete CV as a barrier, and began co-creating an updated version. They explored support options for her substance use, wellbeing, and daily structure.

“Before I met the Engage4Change team I felt lost and now with guidance and support I can look forward to my future.”



And now...

Explored opportunities such as a Prince's Trust interview, short-term bar work, and pursuing roles in support work. Completed online courses in Safeguarding, First Aid, and NHS Care Support, and continues to apply for support worker roles while enhancing the CV.

Developed several new skills, including understanding job readiness and CV writing, advocating for self, and setting achievable goals. Became more comfortable sharing struggles, recognised links between substance use and wellbeing, and began developing motivation and structure.

Goals include securing a support role, building daily structure, strengthening mental health, and gaining a driving licence. Dreams of future travel, symbolising hope for a fulfilling life.

Case Study

Bloomfield Ward

The participant lives with his mother and younger siblings. The family are originally from out of town and relocated to Blackpool after experiencing a domestic abuse situation. Since moving, the family have faced significant housing instability, including living in an HMO, a temporary B&B with limited internet access, and more recently being placed in a hostel in the Grange Park area.

At present, employment feels out of reach due to unsettled living arrangements, low confidence, and increased family responsibilities. The recent move to a hostel has added further challenges, including travel issues for his younger brothers attending school. The participant prioritises supporting his mother and siblings, which leaves little time or headspace to focus on his own progression.

Initial contact was made at a Family Hub, where the participant and his family were accessing a free hot meal and enrichment activities. He presented as withdrawn and low in confidence. He expressed missing his hometown and feeling unsettled and unsure about his future. He also shared that he used to play in a flute band, which was an important part of his identity and social life, and that he has been unable to find anything similar locally.

He was encouraged to attend Ballers on a Thursday afternoon to play pool in an informal, low-pressure environment. This provided an opportunity to build rapport, reduce isolation, and offer support focused on relationship-building. It also offered a safe and welcoming space while keeping engagement flexible and person-centred, rather than pushing immediate outcomes.

“It’s good to have somewhere to go and just talk without pressure.”



And now...

At this stage, progress has been focused on engagement and confidence rather than formal skill development. The participant has begun re-engaging socially and discussing future aspirations. Confidence remains low, but there has been a small positive shift in willingness to engage, attend sessions, and talk openly about interests and goals. He has expressed appreciation for having somewhere safe to go and someone to talk to. Increased confidence: a small but noticeable improvement through regular attendance and engagement.

Improved management of anxiety: informal social activity has provided a welcome distraction and a sense of normality.

Reduced loneliness/feelings of isolation: attendance at Ballers has reduced isolation and helped rebuild social interaction.

He is aware of ongoing support available through Engage4Change and related community services.

Activities

ARC Cinema

Film trips + 6-week work experience

Benefits: Improved employability skills, improved confidence in communicating with customers, reduced anxiety around interviews, positive structure and routine, increased motivation. One young person gained employment!

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Sports Centre

Attending weekly sessions

Benefits: Increased confidence, reduced anxiety, teamwork & communication skills, increased resilience, healthy routines, inclusion, improved peer relationships.

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First aid at work

First Aid at Work qualification (certified training)

Benefits: Recognised qualification, increased employability, confidence in emergencies, responsibility and maturity, reduced anxiety, pathways to work.

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Collaborations

Connection with the local community has been vital in providing opportunities for young people to gain work experience and vital skills



The Platform is a youth skills hub for 16 to 24-year-olds

“Engage 4 Change continue to make a significant contribution to our skills & employment operational group, providing valuable insight, consistency and support for young people who are on their journey from NEET status to becoming economically active. The programme offers a much-needed bridge for those who require additional guidance, stability and tailored interventions to move to positive and healthy futures. The team’s weekly presence at the platform has created an accessible, welcoming and dependable point of contact”

Phillip Hollis

Programme Manager



Vinci are a large construction firm currently working on several contracts in Blackpool

“VINCI Building’s Blackpool team has valued working with Streetlife on their Engage4Change programme so far, helping map out opportunities for vulnerable young people together. The recent site visit was a fantastic way to give participants first-hand insight into the construction industry, and their request for ‘day in the life’ documentation shows how keen they are to support individuals in exploring career pathways by informing them in various ways. This plans to be an impactful programme, and we’re proud to play a part in helping young people take steps toward employment and personal growth.”

Hannah Bailey

Social Value Manager

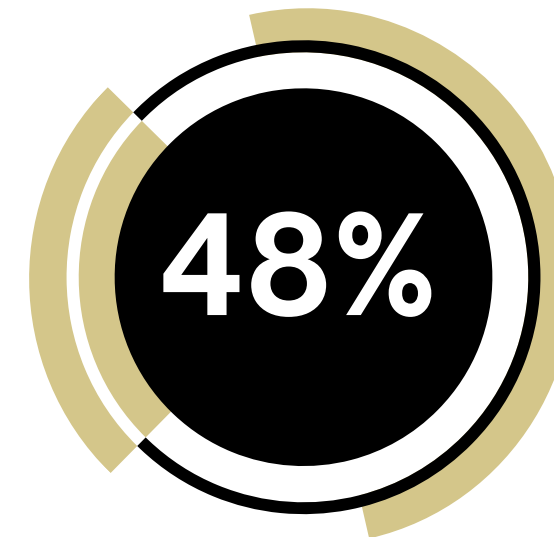
The Numbers



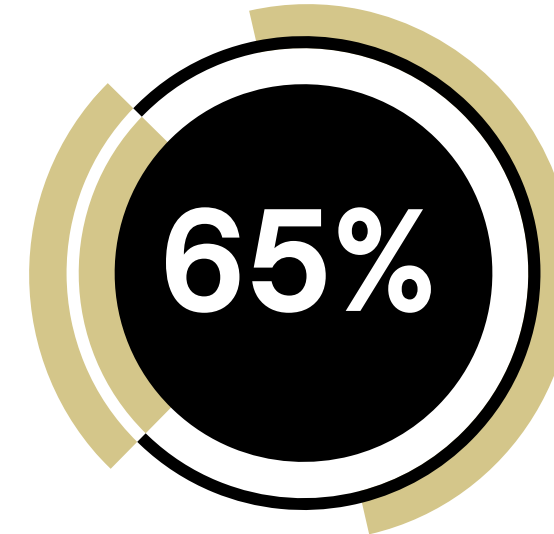
**Young People
Engaged With
Our Service**



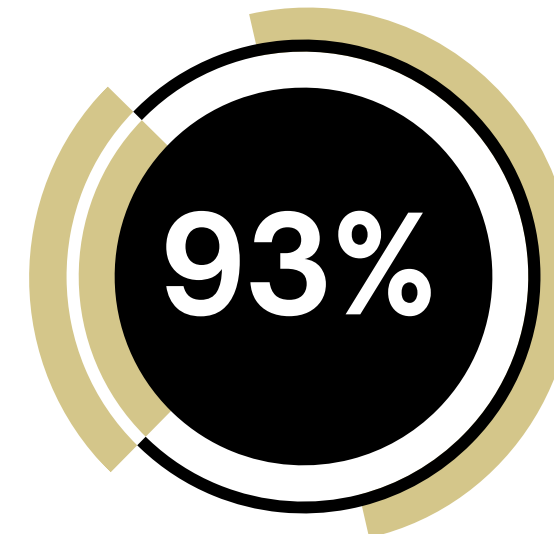
**Felt Increased
Confidence**



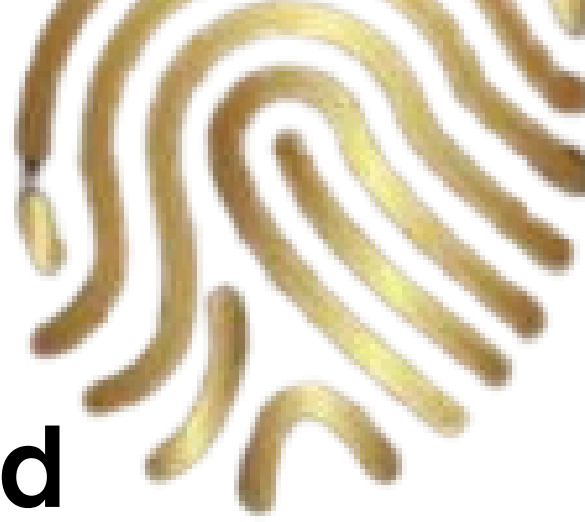
**Felt Reduced
Anxiety**



**Felt Less Lonely
& Isolated**



**Know Where To
Access Support**



Key Barriers

1 Multiple Complex Needs

Many participants present with multiple disadvantages including alcohol dependency, drug addiction, sexual abuse history, childhood trauma, multiple suicide attempts, mental and physical health challenges, homelessness/housing instability, experience of the criminal justice system, undiagnosed learning needs.

We approach each participant holistically, recognizing the complexity of their circumstances. Support plans are tailored to meet individual needs, with a trauma-informed and strengths-based approach, ensuring participants feel safe and supported while addressing immediate and longer-term needs.

2 Overwhelm

Young people often report that they are overwhelmed as their current circumstances remain chaotic, making it difficult to prioritize. They have lots going on in their lives and don't know where to start; sometimes the suggestion of adding another task can push them away. We focus on breaking tasks into small, achievable steps and allow participants to set their own priorities. By working collaboratively and avoiding overwhelming demands, we build trust and gradually increase engagement without adding pressure.

3 Attendance

Attendance to planned activities can be inconsistent due to unstable and chaotic lifestyles. We adopt a flexible approach, allowing young people to engage at their own pace and rejoin activities if they miss sessions. Outreach and check-ins help maintain connection, and adapting sessions to participant availability encourages sustained engagement.

4 Practical Needs

Practical issues such as unreliable transport, limited access to phones or the internet, and irregular daily routines can affect engagement.

We prioritize addressing basic needs first, including housing, access to food, and essential services. By resolving these barriers, participants are more able to engage in training and employment conversations, and we offer support for transport or digital access where possible.

5 High Turnover

Many young people are met in unstable environments like hostels and crisis services, with high turnover rates, making trust-building and data collection difficult.

We focus on building rapid rapport through consistent, empathetic interactions and flexible delivery methods. While quantifiable data may be challenging, qualitative insights and participant feedback are captured to measure impact effectively.

5 Seasonal Constraints

The winter period is challenging, with fewer young people out and about, and limited indoor opportunities at times when sessions are delivered.

We adjust delivery methods seasonally, offering outreach or indoor sessions at accessible times and locations. Alternative engagement strategies, like small group activities or digital communication, help maintain connection during challenging periods.



Key Learnings

1 Client Paced

Some young people don't fully trust services because of previous experiences. This has shown us how important it is to build relationships slowly, create a safe and relaxed environment and let the young person move at their own pace. Understand that these young people are likely dealing with several complex unmet needs that may take priority over discussions about employment. It is important to build rapport and trust first.

2 Keep it Informal

Holding sessions in local, easy-to-reach community spaces has made it easier for young people to join, especially those who wouldn't normally access traditional services. These environments feel more relaxed and less intimidating than formal offices or buildings. The young people we work with may have negative experiences with statutory institutions such as the education system, so we need to lead with relationship-based support. Some feel anxious about anything that seems too formal or structured and they can be reluctant to take part if it feels pressured. Activities such as walk & Talk, brew and chat, Gym sessions, Boxing (2-1), Snooker, football, small group sessions have proven effective in garnering engagement.

3 Consistency

Young people really value seeing the same staff regularly. Having familiar faces helps them feel safe and build trust. Being regularly present in the ward helps develop familiarity and young people feel more comfortable and secure. Our structure builds trust and improves consistency, especially in high-turnover environments.

4 Partnerships

Effective partnership working has enabled strong referral pathways to enable holistic support, specialist referrals (suicide prevention, counselling, follow up to respite care) access to lived experience teams, expanded activity options, foodbank, practical support and structured activities beyond our direct provision.

5 Staff Wellbeing

Given the nature of the complex needs experienced by young people in Blackpool, the team are exposed to trauma disclosure, suicide attempts, crisis presentations, repeated loss of contact which can create an ongoing risk of compassion fatigue and burnout. We proactively include regular staff wellbeing check-ins, debriefs and build awareness of trauma triggers.



Opportunities

- Strengthen pathways into education, employment, and training (EET), including accredited courses, work experience, and volunteering opportunities
- Continue developing partnerships with employers such as Vinci Building to provide on-site work experience opportunities
- Expand delivery of accredited training including CSCS cards in partnership with Blackpool and The Fylde College (shortened, more accessible courses) and First Aid training through H.W Services
- Maintain a consistent E4C presence across community venues and trusted spaces, including indoor provision during winter
- Increase use of personalised support plans (NEET roadmaps) to support progression and overcome individual barriers
- Strengthen support around key barriers including housing, mental health, and low confidence
- Continue confidence, wellbeing, and routine-based activities including expanding the Splinter Group in partnership with Youth Justice
- Strengthen joint working with Adolescence Services, Horizon, and community-based therapy and counselling providers
- Develop new partnerships with organisations such as Recycling Lives, probation services, and CAT 3 housing to support rehabilitation and progression for prison leavers
- Improve sustained engagement and reduce drop-off through consistent support and relationship building
- Maintain flexible, informal approaches to meet young people where they are
- Continue attending local job fairs to increase opportunities and exposure for young people



Achieved



Young people back into Employment, Education and Training!

Employment

- 55+ Jobs (Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Wetherspoons, Blackpool Tower, Baxter Care, Greggs, The Spyglass, Coyote Ugly Bar, Blackpool Pier, Burton's Biscuits, Fleetwood Fisherman's Friends, McDonald's, Helping Hands Home Care, and more)
- 40+ Volunteering
- 18 – Enterprise (Fleetwood Market and Christmas Markets at Streetlife)

Education

- 200+ (Learning Rooms, The Platform, Blackpool & The Fylde College, and Blackpool Football Club College)
- 60+ Online Courses (OpenLearn – Mental Health & Wellbeing, Confidence Building and Communication Skills, Preparing for Work / Employability, Understanding Young People & Society, and Basic Life Skills / Personal Development)

Training

- 21 – Attended Splinter Group workshops
- 24 – Completed Emergency First Aid at Work
- 20+ – Completed Tenancy Training
- 8 – CSCS Cards (Build Up)
- 10 – Site Tours (VINCI Building)
- 4 – Community Stalls
- NHS – Healthcare Certificate (Online)



Blackpool Coastal
Housing

Thank you to all our partners!

