youth futures FOUNDATION

JobsPlus: Feasibility study



Mags Bexon, Joe Cook, Kyla Ellis, Amy Fox, Helen Gray, Rakhee Patel, Sravanthi Vempalli

L&W LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

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Contact:

Get in touch

Youth Futures Foundation
Fivefields
8 - 10 Grosvenor Gardens
London
SW1W 0DH

Email: evaluation@youthfuturesfoundation.org

www.youthfuturesfoundation.org



Executive summary

Youth Futures Foundation commissioned this feasibility study to assess whether the JobsPlus model—originally designed and trialled in the United States—can be effectively implemented for young people aged 16–24 in the UK. As well as assessing the feasibility of the JobsPlus model in supporting young people, the report explores options for robust impact evaluation.

JobsPlus is a place-based, saturation model of employment support which aims to create a culture of work in areas with a high density of social housing. It is described as a 'saturation' model because it seeks to promote work to all residents of working age through word of mouth from neighbours, as well as housing association staff. By changing attitudes to work, the saturation approach is expected to affect outcomes for residents, even if they do not register for the intervention.

Housing associations are responsible for delivering intensive employment support to local residents, irrespective of whether they live in social housing. The JobsPlus model includes youth-focused outreach, community mobilisation, and access to financial incentives to seek to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and to improve their prospects in work. The JobsPlus pilots are running in 10 areas of England and commenced delivery in July 2024.

Implementation feasibility

The implementation and process evaluation found strong fidelity to the core JobsPlus model across all ten pilot sites. The sites were selected to reflect a mix of local contexts, with between 300 and 1,000 households per site, a high proportion of residents in housing association accommodation, and a relatively large proportion of households with no one in work. Delivery has matured over time, with housing associations offering accessible community hubs, intensive caseworker-led support, and a growing range of partnerships. The model is perceived by young people as more personal, flexible and supportive than mainstream provision, such as that provided by Jobcentre Plus.

Young people showed higher levels of engagement with JobsPlus than was expected at the outset. They made up 35% of all individuals registering for support, compared with initial expectations that 20% of young people in the pilot sites would come forward to access the intervention. Participants were from a diverse range of backgrounds and had a range of support needs, including mental health challenges, limited work experience, financial insecurity, and low self-confidence.

The hyperlocal, youth-friendly approach employed by the pilots, which included developing relationships of trust with young people and providing tailored support, was key to successful engagement. Alongside this, Community Champions played an important role in raising awareness of the support available through JobsPlus, although this varied between sites.

Young people accessed a mix of employment, wellbeing, financial, training and practical support. There are early signs of improvements in confidence, motivation, job-readiness, and wellbeing for participants.

Feasibility of Impact Evaluation

The feasibility study concluded that a randomised control trial (RCT) is not likely to be compatible with the fact that JobsPlus relies on a saturation model, where even non-participants living within the pilot sites are potentially affected by any impact that the intervention has on the culture of work in the local area. Randomising at cluster level, and using a control group drawn from outside the pilot sites is also unlikely to be feasible.

From the quasi-experimental options assessed, an area-based difference-in-differences (DiD) analysis appears most likely to provide a robust estimate of the counterfactual. An area-based approach could capture both direct and indirect effects from JobsPlus by estimating impacts on outcomes for all young people living in the JobsPlus pilot areas rather than only participants. Using linked administrative data would reduce the likelihood of the robustness of the analysis being undermined by attrition or non-response. The feasibility of the analysis depends on securing timely access to linked DfE, DWP and HMRC datasets, but provided this can be negotiated by early 2027, it should be feasible to estimate 12-month outcomes for the 2025/26 cohort by March 2028.

Outcomes and Measures

An impact evaluation using administrative data could estimate impacts from JobsPlus on the percentage of 16–24-year-olds in education, employment or training 12 months after the baseline observation. It is proposed that this should be the primary focus of the analysis, given the aims of JobsPlus. In addition to this, it would be beneficial to conduct exploratory analysis to see if JobsPlus affects a wider range of secondary outcomes including participation in training, apprenticeships, qualifications, employment and benefit outcomes, as well as taxable earnings.

Recommendations for Strengthening Delivery

The implementation and process evaluation identified a number of ways in which the JobsPlus model might be strengthened for young people. The expectation is that this could potentially increase the effectiveness of JobsPlus for those in the 16-24 age group. Firstly, increasing employer engagement may make it easier to secure opportunities for work experience and access to entry-level roles. Secondly, consistency of access to wider specialist services, such as mental health support and debt advice, across all the pilots could be improved. There is a need to increase the recruitment, training and retention of Community Champions. The role that young people play in pilot governance and the co-design of services could be enhanced. Finally, ensuring that there is more stable, long-term funding for the pilots would improve staff continuity, helping to build relationships of trust between individual staff members and young people.

Conclusions

JobsPlus appears to be reaching young people effectively and is offering support they value and cannot easily access elsewhere. The prospects for robust impact evaluation are good, subject to gaining timely access to administrative data. With some modest adjustments to delivery, JobsPlus has the potential to improve education, employment and training outcomes for young people living in social housing and so there are strong grounds for testing the effectiveness of the model through impact evaluation.

Introduction

Aims

The aim of this feasibility study is to determine how the effectiveness of the JobsPlus model for young people between the ages of 16 and 24 could best be evaluated. It describes the intervention and reviews how it has been implemented in practice, with a particular focus on how it appears to be working for young people. It reviews potential methods to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus on outcomes for young people and makes a series of recommendations on both the feasibility of estimating the impact of JobsPlus for this particular age group and the most feasible methods to conduct the analysis.

The intervention

The JobsPlus pilots received support from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through the Labour Market Evaluation Pilot fund, administered by HM Treasury. The final selection of 10 pilot sites was confirmed in Spring 2024 and the pilots commenced delivery in July 2024. Youth Futures Foundation provided matched funding from November 2024 to March 2026 for delivery and evaluation activities focused on participants aged 16-24. Subsequently, in June 2025, additional funding was confirmed by DWP to support full delivery for a second year (April 2025 to March 2026). DWP have recently published the findings of an evaluation of JobsPlus using linked extracts of DWP and HMRC data to estimate the causal impact of the intervention for those of working age in the pilot sites (Fox et al. 2026). However, this study was only able to estimate impacts on very short-term outcomes (over a period of 5 months).

The JobsPlus model was based on earlier pilots of a similar intervention in the United States (US).

The pilot sites were selected to include:

- a mix of urban and rural areas;
- sites that contained between 350 and 1,000 households.

JobsPlus is open to everyone of a working age resident within the defined geographical area covered by the pilot who wishes to access support. This avoids the complex eligibility criteria associated with many employment schemes and reduces the stigma

associated with seeking support. However, it also means that business as usual provision (the support that would have been available in the absence of JobsPlus) for young people in the pilot sites varied depending on their personal circumstances and the availability of local provision. JobsPlus primarily aims to help those not in education, employment or training (NEET), or those in low-paid jobs, but this could include young people on benefits and required to attend Jobcentre Plus on a regular basis, those with no work-related activity requirements or those with access to support through Youth Guarantee Trailblazers or other local provision. Young people who were not claiming benefits and not living within one of the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer areas, may not be offered any employment support in the absence of JobsPlus.

The UK JobsPlus model

JobsPlus is a community-led support model designed to provide employment and wrap-around support for residents in social housing. It is delivered by housing associations in partnership with local agencies. It consists of:

- **Onsite employment services** delivered from community hubs in or near social housing estates. Specialist employment advisers deliver one-to-one employment support alongside related services such as housing assistance, mental health support, Jobcentre Plus services, and financial aid.
- **Community support for work** Networks of local services and community groups act as 'trusted intermediaries' to raise awareness of JobsPlus. Residents shape support and promote the programme, with some acting as community champions, facilitating outreach through community events and developing links between residents and staff. Community involvement builds credibility and trust, reducing the stigma associated with seeking support, particularly for those who have struggled to engage with employment support services in the past.
- **Financial incentives** tied to job outcomes. Those who secure and maintain employment/self-employment for two consecutive months earning at least £677 per month are eligible for a £400 Into Work Bonus, exempt from income tax and excluded from benefit assessments.
- **A saturation approach**, meaning it is open to everyone of working age within a defined geographical area who wishes to access employment support. JobsPlus offers support to anyone who wishes to engage and aims to create positive spillover effects so benefits are felt beyond direct participants. This is achieved by fostering a shared culture of work, where the success of some inspires and influences others in the community.

Notes: Based on description of the JobsPlus UK model in Fox et al. (2026).

The pilot sites were selected to have at least 10% of tenants in the 16–24 age range as well as high levels of worklessness. Housing Associations also had to commit to meeting the delivery requirements of the JobsPlus model. Based on the profile of tenants in social rented accommodation in the UK and the age profile of beneficiaries in the US JobsPlus programmes, it was estimated that 20% of beneficiaries would be aged between 16 and 24.

Table 1 provides a summary of the number of young people resident in each of the pilot sites and the numbers expected to be NEET. It also shows the number of young people in each site who participated in JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. In Rotherham, the number of participants exceeded the number of young people in the area expected to be NEET. This is partly due to the lack of accurate data on the number of NEET young people in the 16-24-year-old age group at this level of disaggregation.[1] Also, as later analysis shows, around 20% of young people were in work when they registered for support, reflecting the fact that JobsPlus was targeted at young people in low paid employment, as well as those who were NEET. Across all pilot sites, around 16% of the estimated NEET population registered for JobsPlus in the 13 months from the start of December 2024, but with higher participation rates in the six smallest pilots.

Table 1 List of pilot sites and details of resident population aged 16-24

PILOT	RESIDENT POPULATION AGED 16-24	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF 16-24 YEAR OLDS NEET	NO. OF 16-24 YEAR OLDS PARTICIPATING IN JOBSPLUS
BOREHAMWOOD	397	87	17
BARNET	335	73	16

[1] As a result, the estimate of NEET 16-24 year olds was calculated from Social Mobility Commission figures on the percentage of 16-24 year olds from lower working class backgrounds who were NEET in 2024 (21.9%)(Social Mobility Commission 2025). This was used in preference to the UK average NEET rate to reflect the fact that the pilot sites were in more deprived areas with a higher density of social housing, where NEET rates were likely to be higher than the national average. See the footnote to Table 1 for details.

LEYTON	168	37	30
ROTHERHAM	194	42	57
PENGE	708	155	12
SITTINGBOURNE	2,063	452	26
STOCKTON-ON-TEES	593	130	37
LIVERPOOL	1,383	303	16
WIRRAL	162	35	13
SHEFFIELD	1,059	232	25
TOTAL	7,062	1,547	249

Notes: Resident population aged 16-24 based on mid-year population estimates for 2024, revised in November 2025 (ONS 2025). Estimate of the numbers of NEET young people based on the Dec 2025 Social Mobility Commission State of the Nation report for 16-24 year olds from lower working class backgrounds (Social Mobility Commission 2025). Final column based on JobsPlus management information analysis 1 December 2024 to 31 December 2025, IES, 2026. Pilot sites ranged in size from a single lower layer super output area (LSOA) (in the case of Barnet, Leyton, Rotherham and Wirral) to one pilot site which consisted ot 12 LSOAs (Sittingbourne), although on average they consisted of 3 LSOAs.

While the US pilot was targeted at those of working age, this did not include 16-18 year olds. In the US the support was available to those aged over the age of 18 (Bloom et al. 2005: 23). The US analysis focused on those aged 21-61, but included a subgroup analysis by age (for the 21-24; 25-34; and 35-61 age groups). In 2000, around three-quarters (76%) of targeted residents (those aged 21-61) lived in households where someone was enrolled in JobsPlus. As the US pilots focused on housing developments which had access to data on all residents, it may have been easier to reach a high proportion of the local population compared with the UK pilots which included some people who were not housing association tenants.

Given the focus of the US pilots on a slightly older age group, the primary goal was to improve employment-related outcomes such as earnings and employment rates and

welfare receipt. The subgroup analysis found that the positive earnings effects from JobsPlus were greatest for the youngest age cohort (those aged 21-24). However, given the inclusion of a younger age cohort in the UK pilots than in the US study, the expectation was that the intervention would affect a wider range of outcomes, including participation in education and training.

Findings from the US JobsPlus pilots

The JobsPlus model was originally piloted in public housing developments in six US cities. In each site two or three housing developments were identified, of which one or two were randomly assigned to a control group. The US evaluation explored the impact of JobsPlus from when it was first introduced in 1998 over a period of six years.

Overall, JobsPlus increased earnings for residents, regardless of whether they continued to live in the same area or moved elsewhere. However, earnings effects did vary between areas.

There were large and sustained impacts on earnings in three sites where the implementation of JobsPlus adhered more closely to the intended model. No earnings effects were evident in two sites where there was less fidelity to the model. A renovation project disrupted delivery In the final site and strong early earnings effects were not sustained.

The impact of JobsPlus in raising earnings was more obvious in sites where fewer residents moved out to other areas over time. However, wider social conditions, such as material wellbeing, personal safety, residential satisfaction and child wellbeing did not appear to be affected by JobsPlus.

Where delivery of JobsPlus was closer to the intended model it had a positive impact on earnings for a wide variety of residents. Earnings impacts were greatest for immigrant men. JobsPlus had smaller impacts on employment rates for residents, but these were also positive. It had no impact on welfare receipt, but there was a steep decline in welfare rolls over this period which may have affected the likelihood of observing effects on this outcome.

The research

Youth Futures commissioned L&W, in partnership with the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), to conduct a transportation study to assess whether the JobsPlus model developed in the US could be successfully implemented for young people in the UK. The transportation study evaluated the implementation of the JobsPlus model for young people across 10 pilot sites. This research found that the model could be successfully implemented in the UK context and offered support that additional to what was already available to young people. However, as the research was carried out at an early stage in the delivery of the pilots it was acknowledged that there was a need to further develop provision to ensure that the model was fully effective for young people.

Research questions

Given the promise that the intervention showed in the transportation study phase, it was decided to proceed with a feasibility study, the findings of which are set out in the current report. This seeks to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1 How likely it is to be able to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus?
- RQ2 How successful is JobsPlus in reaching young people in need of support?
- RQ3 How many young people have received support from JobsPlus?
- RQ4 How many young people engage with each of the different elements of JobsPlus support?
- RQ5 How long do young people engage with the support offered by JobsPlus and what factors influence the length of their contact?
- RQ6 How many young people receive all elements of the JobsPlus support package?
- RQ7 What would business as usual provision be for young people eligible for JobsPlus and to what extend does Jobs Plus provision differ from business as usual?
- RQ8 What methods could be used to estimate the impact of JobsPlus and which would be most appropriate and feasible?
- RQ9 What data sources will be used to estimate the impact of JobsPlus and which would be most appropriate and feasible?

- RQ10 What outcomes are JobsPlus likely to effect and how can these be measured within the available data sources?
- RQ11 When will outcomes be observed?
- RQ12 What primary data capture tools are required to observe participation in JobsPlus and the outcomes experienced by participants?
- RQ13 What data sharing agreements and arrangements are needed to support the evaluation of JobsPlus?
- RQ14 To what extent are each of the pilot sites adhering to the JobsPlus model of delivery?
- RQ15 Do any aspects of JobsPlus delivery need strengthening prior to undertaking a future trial?
- RQ16 How many young people would need to participate in any future trial of JobsPlus to determine whether it is effective?
- RQ17 Are there any potential barriers to undertaking a future impact evaluation and if so, how likely is it that these can be overcome?

The concluding chapter set out brief responses to each of these questions, summarising the research findings across the following four chapters.

Approach to answering research questions

An evaluation framework was developed to set out the evidence sources to be used to answer the research questions. In summary, the following data sources were used:

- **Management Information (MI)** collected by pilot sites, which recorded key information about participants' characteristics and employment outcomes. 249 young people were recorded in the MI data compared with 314 young people over the same time period in monthly monitoring information provided by sites for the purposes of grant management processes. This suggests approximately 79% of young people consented to data sharing and linkage. Information on those who did not consent to sharing data is limited. Therefore, it is not possible to rule out differences between participants included in the MI analysis and those excluded.
- **Baseline survey data**, completed by JobsPlus participants at registration, which included questions about their work history, current employment, barriers to finding

work, goals, financial inclusion, and demographics. It also featured two validated measures to assess changes in wellbeing and job-search confidence. A response rate of 92% was achieved from the 249 young people participating in JobsPlus. As the survey was optional, responses from participants who completed the baseline survey may not reflect the views of all programme participants.

- **Endline survey data**, completed online or over the telephone by JobsPlus participants six months after registration. The survey repeated questions from the baseline survey and also asked a small number of additional questions about perceived outcomes. A response rate of 29% was achieved from the 101 young people who registered for JobsPlus between the start of December 2024 and the end of May 2025 and would therefore have been eligible to complete the endline survey. As before, the survey was optional so responses may not represent the views of all participants in the programme.

- **Depth interviews with key stakeholders**, completed 15 months after the programme's start. For each pilot site, the interview sample consisted of up to three HA staff members (project managers, employment advisors, and Community Champions), delivery partners, and strategic stakeholders, such as local authority representatives and employers. These interviews were semi-structured and focused on stakeholders' experiences of programme engagement, partnership working, and implementation.

- **Depth interviews with JobsPlus participants** were carried out between October 2025 and January 2026 to gain insights into participant experiences of the programme. These took place predominantly face-to-face, with some completed online through a video call. The sample, of 38 participants across 10 sites, included a diverse mix of ethnicities, genders, and personal circumstances, as well as employment status and job outcomes achieved through the JobsPlus programme, including people who disengaged from the programme.

- **Site visits** to observe programme delivery and engagement with support took place between October and December 2025.

The study is underpinned by a Theory of Change (ToC) which maps the links between pilot activities, target outputs, and planned outcomes and impacts. The ToC for young people was adapted from the existing programme-level ToC so that it specifically set out the programme's intentions for those aged 16-24. The ToC is considered in more detail in the next chapter.

Assessing the feasibility of delivery

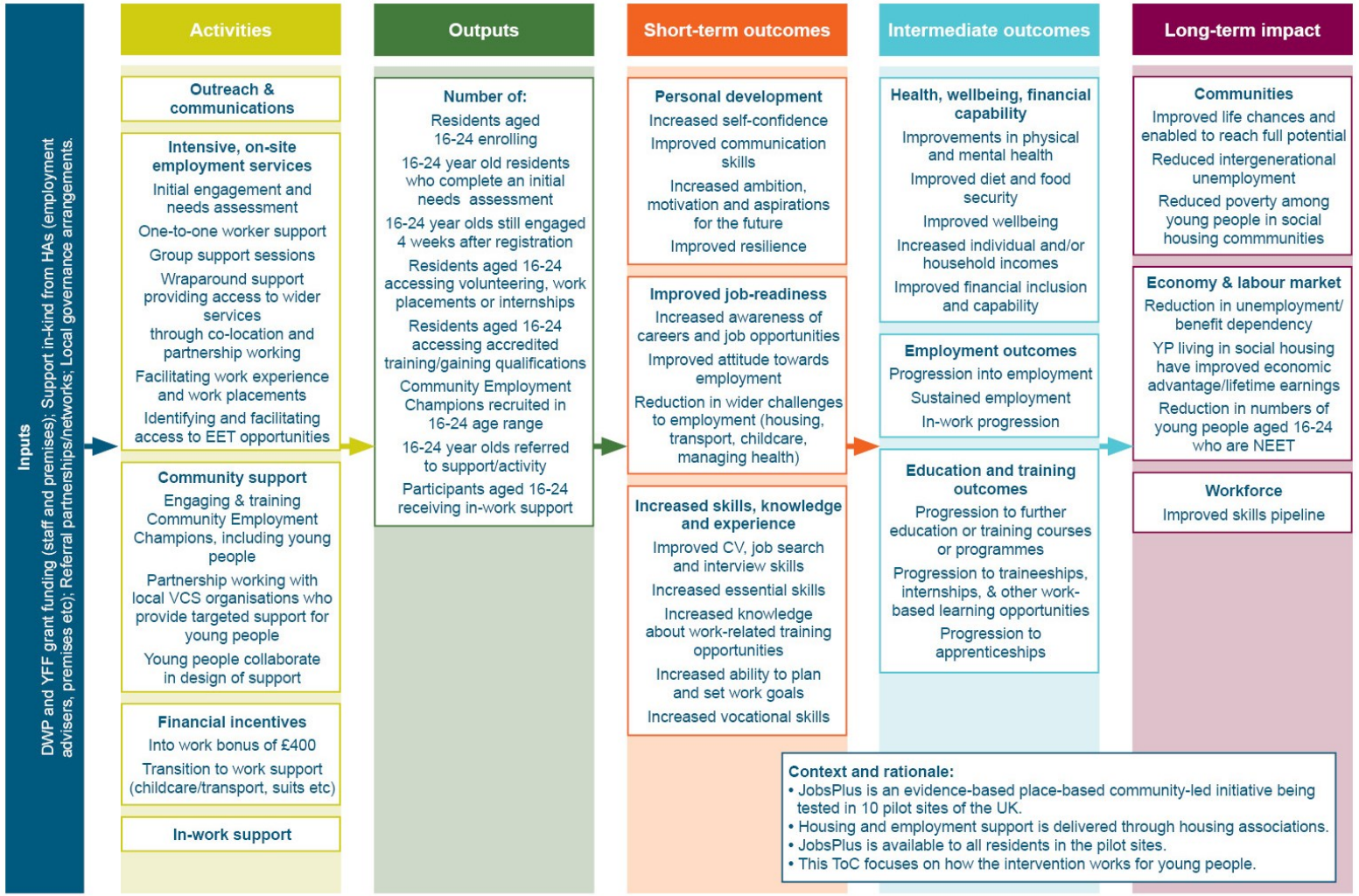
Introduction

This chapter starts by reviewing how the JobsPlus model is expected to work for young people, based on its ToC. It then reviews what has happened in practice, based on the levels of participation and engagement in JobsPlus by those in the 16-24 age range, their circumstances on accessing support and the type of support received. It concludes with some early evidence on the outcomes experienced by young people who have received support from JobsPlus. The findings are drawn from MI data on 249 young participants, together with qualitative evidence from interviews with young people, housing association staff and delivery partners. While the findings are presented for individual sites and participant groups where possible, sample sizes for some groups are relatively small and should be taken into account when interpreting differences between them.

Theory of Change for Young People

The JobsPlus Theory of Change outlined below in Figure 1 sets out how the programme is expected to support social housing residents move towards and sustain employment. It explains how programme inputs (funding, in-kind support from HAs, referral partnerships, and local governance arrangements) enable activities such as intensive on-site employment support, outreach and communications, community support, financial incentives, and in-work support. These activities are designed to work by building trust, increasing motivation, reducing stigma, and normalising employment support to produce short-term gains in personal development, job-readiness, and skills, knowledge, and experience. These changes are expected to lead to improved well-being and financial stability, and support the ability to enter, sustain and progress in employment. A fuller description of the JobsPlus model is provided in the figure overleaf, with further details in Appendix A.

Figure 1: JobsPlus Theory of Change



Young people's participation in JobsPlus

Numbers of young people registering for JobsPlus

Between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025, 249 young people (aged 16-24 years old) participated in JobsPlus. This represents over a third of all people (35%) who registered for JobsPlus over this period (see Appendix Table 1) and compares to an initial expectation that 20% of those registering for JobsPlus would be aged 16-24. Interviews with housing association staff suggested this is partly driven by the focus that the Youth Futures funding has placed on young people, but is also reflective of high levels of need among young people and a lack of similar alternative provision.

There was variation across sites in the proportion of JobsPlus participants who were aged 16-24. For example, in Rotherham young people accounted for 55% of participants, compared with 25-43% across most other sites. In all sites, young people represented a greater share of JobsPlus participants than of the resident population.

Qualitative data provides some insights into reasons for this variation. Pilot sites with the highest proportion of young participants (Rotherham, Wirral and Borehamwood) benefited from close relationships with referral partners that had well-established links to young residents. On the other hand, some sites with a lower proportion of young participants did not have a tailored approach to engaging young people and described challenges around this.

Across the pilot areas as a whole, as Table 1 showed, there were an estimated 1,547 young people aged 16-24 who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), assuming that NEET rates in the pilot sites were at the upper end of the expected range.[2] This indicates that the pilots directly engaged roughly 16% of 16-24 year olds from the main target population (Table 2). Young people were much more likely to register for JobsPlus in the smaller pilot sites where the absolute numbers of young people expected to be NEET were lower.

[2] As noted earlier, this estimate is based on Social Mobility Foundation analysis that suggested that in 2024 21.9% of young people from lower working class backgrounds were NEET (Social Mobility Commission 2025).

Table 2: Proportion of young people registered on JobsPlus compared with the proportion of young people in the local area

SITE	YOUNG PEOPLE ON JOBSPLUS (%)	RESIDENT POPULATION AVERAGE (%)	YOUNG PEOPLE ON JOBSPLUS AS PERCENTAGE OF NEET ESTIMATE (%)
BOREHAMWOOD	40%	11%	20%
BARNET	28%	15%	22%
LEYTON	38%	13%	82%
ROTHERHAM	55%	12%	134%
PENGE	32%	11%	8%
SITTINGBOURNE	37%	11%	6%
STOCKTON-ON-TEES	31%	12%	28%
LIVERPOOL	26%	14%	5%
WIRRAL	43%	11%	37%
SHEFFIELD	25%	12%	11%
TOTAL	35%	N/A	16%
ENGLAND AVERAGE	N/A	11%	N/A

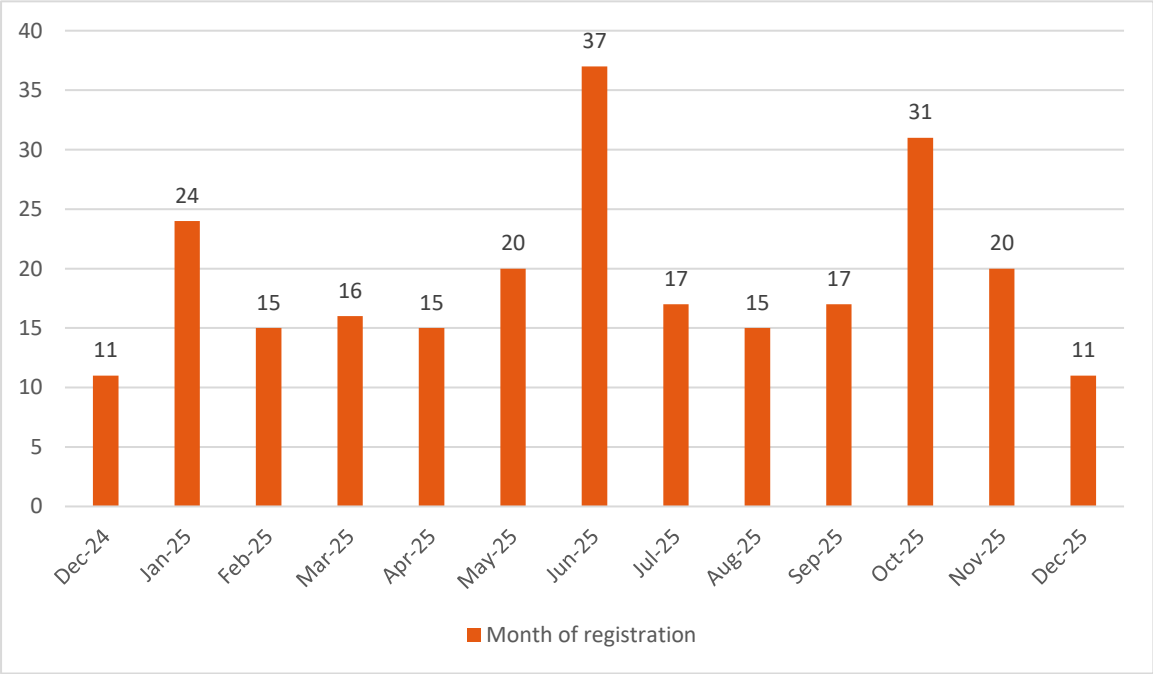
Base: 702 people on JobsPlus (all ages) between 1 December 2024 to 31 December 2025 with age data available. Resident population data from 2021 Census. Estimate of the numbers of NEET young people based on the Dec 2025 Social Mobility Commission State of the Nation report for 16-24 year olds from lower working class backgrounds (Social Mobility

Commission 2025). Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026, 2021 Census Data and analysis of the 2024 Labour Force Survey.

Programme registrations by month

Programme registrations since December 2024 have fluctuated, with lower numbers of registrations (n=11, 4%) in December 2024 and 2025, likely due to Christmas and New Year. June 2025 saw the largest proportion of registrations from young people (15%) with figures dropping rapidly over the summer months of July (7%), August (6%), and September (7%) before picking up again in October (12%) and November (8%) (see Figure 2). Overall, the figures suggest a regular flow of registrations over time, with little evidence that the numbers are either growing or declining as the intervention becomes more established.

Figure 2: JobsPlus registrations of young people by month



Base: 249 people on JobsPlus aged 16-24 years old. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis 1 December 2024 to 31 December 2025, IES, 2026.

Profile of young people taking part in JobsPlus

A diverse range of young people took part in JobsPlus. Their profile suggests differing needs that would benefit from the additional and intensive support provided by the pilot:

- There were more male participants (53%) than female (47%) (Appendix Table 2).

- Just over three-fifths of young people were white (62%), with Black participants accounting for the second largest ethnic group (19% of participants). Asian and Asian British participants were the least represented among young people (5%) (Appendix Table 3).
- Under a quarter of young people were recorded as having a physical or mental health condition or illness expected to last 12 months or more (22%) (Appendix Table 4). Participants were also asked whether their health condition affected their ability to undertake day-to-day activities. About half of participants with a health condition reported that their health did not affect day-to-day tasks (51%), with around one-in-eight feeling that their activities were impacted 'a little' (12%) and just over one-in-twenty reporting that their activities were affected 'a lot' (6%) (Appendix Table 5).
- Of the baseline and endline survey respondents who provided further details of any health condition and/or disability that they had, many had more than one condition. The majority reported having a mental health condition (66% for the baseline survey and 64% for the endline survey).
- The majority (73%) of participants held an existing qualification when they registered for JobsPlus. Most commonly, the highest qualification was at Level 2 (31%), followed by Level 1 (11%). A small proportion reported that their highest qualification was at Entry Level (3%), while 8% reported having no qualifications at all. Around one-fifth of participants (17%) did not know, or did not report, their highest qualification level (Appendix Table 6).
- A small proportion of young people (9%) had parental or caring responsibilities (Appendix Table 7).
- 15% of baseline survey respondents reported that they had fallen behind with household bills in the previous 12 months while one-in-eight (12%) reported that they or their partner had used a foodbank in this period (Appendix Table 8).

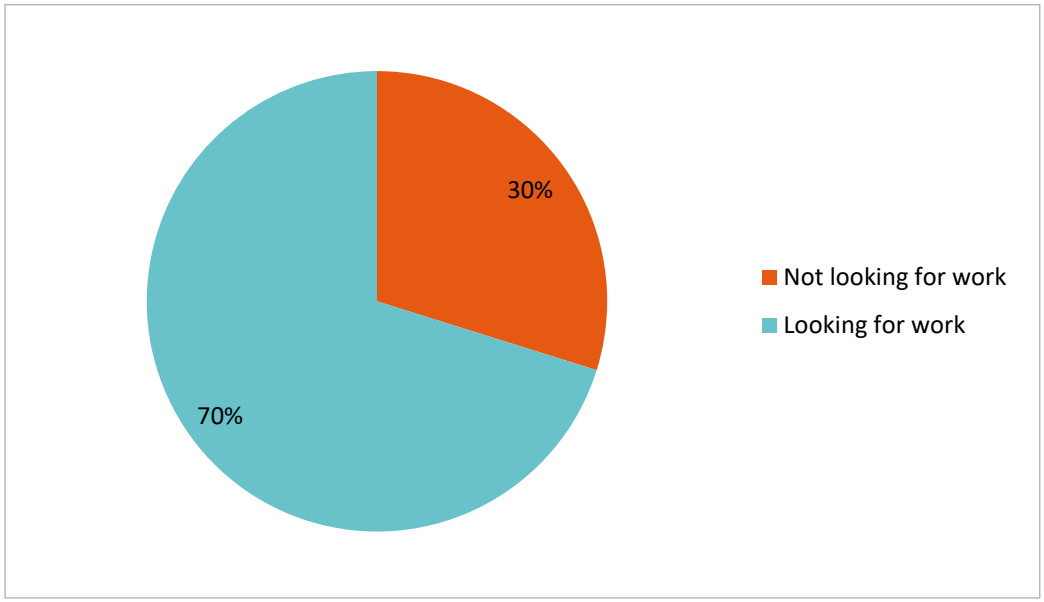
Work history at registration

The baseline survey found that young people had varied employment histories:

- One-fifth (20%) had mostly been in paid employment prior to joining JobsPlus.
- One-third (33%) had been in and out of paid employment.
- Nearly one quarter of respondents (24%) had never been in paid employment (Appendix Table 9).

- Four-fifths (80%) of young people were not in work at the point of registration. Approximately one-third (30%) of this group had not looked for work in the past four weeks (Figure 3). Close to three-quarters of this group (74%) had not engaged in any education, employment or training-related activities in the seven days before enrolment (Table 3). Around on- in-10 were engaged in either part-time (11%) or full-time (8%) education, a training scheme or an apprenticeship.

Figure 3: JobsPlus participant work search status in the last four weeks, from the 80% not in work at registration



Note: This question was only asked of participants who were not in work on registration and not temporarily away from paid employment in the past seven days. Base: 183. Source: JobsPlus participant baseline survey, IES, 2025.

Table 3: JobsPlus participant activities in the 7 days prior to registration, for the 80% not in work at registration

Activity	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
FULL-TIME EDUCATION, TRAINING SCHEME OR APPRENTICESHIP	21	11%
PART-TIME EDUCATION, TRAINING SCHEME OR APPRENTICESHIP	15	8%

VOLUNTEERING	10	5%
WORK EXPERIENCE	6	3%
NONE OF THESE	135	74%
TOTAL	187	102%

Note: This question was only asked of participants who were not in work on registration and not temporarily away from paid employment in the past seven days. Base: 187. Source: JobsPlus participant baseline survey, IES, 2025

Barriers to finding work

The three most common barriers to finding work reported by JobsPlus participants at the time of registration were a lack of vacancies or too much competition in the labour market (37%), a lack of work experience (37%) and not having the right skills for the jobs that they were interested in (24%) (Appendix Table 10).

Beyond this, respondents reported having physical or mental health issues or disabilities (21%); a lack of self-confidence (19%); or felt that the length of time they had spent out of work or between jobs (8%) was a barrier to finding employment. Other barriers mentioned included transport-related problems, caring responsibilities, housing issues and criminal convictions.

The JobsPlus model in practice

This section presents key findings on how the pilot has reached and supported young people. The findings are based on analysis of MI data collected by pilot sites, alongside qualitative evidence gathered through interviews with young participants, housing association staff and delivery partners. The MI data sample sizes did not allow for sub-group analysis to explore variations in experiences and outcomes.

Overall, there was strong evidence that the intended JobsPlus model was adhered to in practice. Delivery approaches varied across sites; these adaptions reflected local circumstances while retaining all core components of the model.

Reaching young people in need of support

A hyperlocal presence that removes barriers

Community hubs located on or near estates were central to reaching young people. Their proximity reduced transport barriers and provided a safe, informal space distinct from more formal employment services such as Jobcentre Plus. Young people consistently described hubs as relaxed, welcoming and non-judgemental – crucial for those experiencing anxiety, low confidence, or with negative prior experiences of employment support.

Youth-focused outreach and communication

Sites used tailored messaging and activities designed to appeal to young people, including creative workshops, barista training, coding sessions, and GCSE celebration events. These provided non-threatening entry points that enabled relationships to develop before employment conversations began. Young people most commonly became aware of JobsPlus through family members or friends (56%) and local organisations (48%), highlighting the importance of trusted local networks in promoting the programme. Posters and flyers (26%) also played a role in raising awareness (see Appendix Figure 1).

Strong partnerships with youth-facing organisations – including schools, football clubs, mentoring programmes, and creative arts providers – were also a defining feature of successful youth engagement. These partnerships offered trusted referral routes, provided aspirational activities, and gave access to structured pathways into training, volunteering and work experience.

Role of Community Champions

Community Champions, particularly those who were well-connected local residents, were instrumental in increasing trust, visibility and credibility. Community Champions were typically recruited informally by housing association staff through local networks, community events and participation in JobsPlus activities rather than through formal advertising. The role was initially voluntary at most sites, although some sites later introduced paid positions to support recruitment, retention and engagement.

Champions countered misconceptions (for example that JobsPlus was the Jobcentre), promoted services informally, and drew in young people who may be reluctant to engage with regular staff. Sites with effective Champions consistently reported greater youth participation, although only 4% of baseline survey respondents said they heard about JobsPlus through a Community Champion (Appendix Figure 1)

Peer-to-peer influence and confidence-building approaches

Word-of-mouth referrals from friends and family were the most common way young people heard about JobsPlus (56%) (Appendix Figure 1). Some sites encouraged this through "bring-a-friend" models and small referral incentives, which have proven particularly helpful for young people who lack confidence to attend alone. Around a fifth of baseline survey respondents also said they heard about JobsPlus through a local organisation (21%) reflecting the emphasis on community outreach by trusted organisations.

Role of the into work bonus in engaging young people

The into work bonus is a payment of £400 available to participants who have sustained new employment or self-employment for at least two months and earn at least £677 monthly. The bonus was used in the promotion of JobsPlus, but young people were more likely to be motivated by a desire for employment or the support itself. However, it was helpful for those who needed additional financial support when starting work and useful to encourage continuation in employment or re-engagement with JobsPlus.

Duration of young people's engagement in JobsPlus and influencing factors

There is limited information on how long young people received support from JobsPlus because it employed an 'open door' approach, meaning participants could disengage and re-engage. Staff and participant interviews indicated that the duration of young people's engagement varied widely. Staff commented that young people facing complex barriers (mental health issues, caring responsibilities, neurodivergence, low confidence) tended to require support for longer. Some needed extended support around wellbeing, confidence, or foundational skills before employment was realistic. Progress for these young people was measured by smaller steps e.g., regular attendance, improved confidence and independent travel. Others disengaged earlier due to health issues, personal circumstances, or limited suitable job opportunities but staff indicated that young people did sometimes re-engage when their circumstances changed.

Support provided to young people

Initial engagement and needs assessment

JobsPlus caseworkers carried out needs assessments as part of the initial engagement process with young people. Just over four-fifths of young people registered after

December 2024 had completed their needs assessment and agreed an action plan (81%) (See

Appendix Table 13).

When a young person was referred or first attended the hub, caseworkers completed the necessary paperwork and conducted a structured assessment to understand their background, circumstances and barriers. This assessment gathered information on the young person's life situation, including their motivations, skills, confidence, health, finances, housing, education, and employment history. Caseworkers then worked collaboratively with young people to agree an action plan that outlined short-, medium- and long-term goals.

Although the process was broadly consistent across sites, staff adapted their approach to build trust, with some delaying formal paperwork and instead prioritising rapport-building in early conversations. Other sites used tailored questionnaires to draw out young people's interests, hobbies and strengths so that transferable skills and potential job pathways could be identified. Across sites, the assessments were described as comprehensive yet friendly, with caseworkers using their experience to help young people relax, open up and feel understood. Overall, the needs assessment process helped caseworkers identify barriers, prioritise support, and tailor the JobsPlus offer to each young person's goals and circumstances.

The majority of young participants were recorded as having reached their four-week check-in point (73%), indicating the initial registration and needs assessment process were successful in gaining commitment and motivation among participants. Notably, a tenth (10%) were reported as no longer being engaged and 12% had missing data, possibly indicating that the four week-check-in milestone had not been reached by the end of 2025 or that data fields were incomplete (Table 4).

Table 4: Engagement at 4-week check-in

4 WEEK CHECK-IN REACHED	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	182	73%
NO	26	10%
MISSING OR MILESTONE NOT MET	31	12%

TOO SOON TO KNOW	10	4%
TOTAL	249	100%

Base: 249 people on JobsPlus aged 16-24 years old between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. Percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Employment support post-assessment

JobsPlus provided intensive, personalised employment support to young people through regular one-to-one sessions with dedicated caseworkers. Sites typically had a core offer focused on employability skills, such as help developing CVs, writing job applications, preparing for interviews, and searching for suitable vacancies. Caseworkers also offered coaching-style discussions that built confidence, improved wellbeing, and helped young people set realistic employment goals. Over three-quarters of respondents (76%) to the baseline survey said that support in applying for jobs, including CV writing, completing job applications and interview training, would be most likely to help them move into work, suggesting the type of support provided was well-aligned to young people's stated needs.

Support was flexibly delivered, with meetings arranged in person, online or by phone, and scheduled according to the young person's needs. Caseworkers adapted their approach for younger participants, particularly those with limited work experience, low confidence, mental health needs or neurodivergence. Caseworkers helped participants to access employability skills training, external support or to link participants to volunteering opportunities or if they lacked specific knowledge caseworkers were able to direct them to relevant training.

One-to-one meetings with caseworkers were also often supplemented by courses or sessions run by caseworkers or JobsPlus partners.[3] These provided a focus on specific areas such as self-employment, goal setting or dealt with potential issues in the workplace, what employers want and interpersonal skills. Support was therefore tailored

[3] MI records registration dates but not the number, frequency or content of one-to-one sessions. Delivery teams reported that most young people met caseworkers weekly or fortnightly, but this varied by site and was not logged. Group sessions were ad hoc, not offered at all sites, and attendance was not recorded consistently

to the individual and their specific needs, participant journeys were highly individual, often non-linear and drew on caseworker expertise.

Caseworkers considered that being able to tailor support and focus on relationships and barriers was what made JobsPlus unique. This was particularly obvious at two sites which adapted their offer for young people by focusing on education and training pathways first, with the aim of supporting them into sustainable employment over the longer term. Where sites used external providers there was a particularly strong emphasis on careers guidance for young people. Their pathway was noticeably different from that of older workers in that it reflected the distinct needs and starting points of this age group. For instance, young people expressed that they wanted networking with employers and communication skills training which caseworkers were then able to accommodate.

Young people reported that employment support helped them feel understood, motivated, and better prepared for the workplace. Many described their caseworker as supportive, collaborative and respectful of their choices. They highlighted improvements in confidence, job-search skills, and clarity about suitable roles. Compared with other employment services—particularly Jobcentre Plus—young people said JobsPlus offered more time, empathy, continuity and practical help, which made it easier for them to progress.

In-work support

JobsPlus offered follow-up support once young people entered work, with caseworkers checking in regularly to help them settle, resolve early problems, and maintain stability in their new roles. Only a small number actively sought continued support, but those who did often received practical help—such as assistance with transport costs or purchasing work clothing—which enabled them to sustain employment during the first few weeks. Although many young people disengaged once they felt secure in their jobs, they valued knowing that support remained available if needed.

Wider support

JobsPlus provided a broad package of wider support to help young people address non-employment barriers that affected their ability to progress. This support complemented core employability assistance and was an essential part of preparing participants for work, training or education.

Wider support for health and wellbeing needs was accessed by over a fifth (22%) of young people and was the most accessed form of support outside of the catch-all

category of 'other' (43%[4]), with education and training and support from Jobcentre Plus as other forms of commonly recorded support. (See Table 5)

Table 5: Support accessed

WIDER SUPPORT ACCESSED	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING	55	22%
EDUCATION AND TRAINING	34	14%
JOBCENTRE PLUS	33	13%
SOCIAL CARE	*	*
SUBTANCE AND ALCOHOL MISUSE	*	*
'OTHER' SUPPORT	106	43%

Base: 249 people on JobsPlus aged 16-24 years old between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Health and wellbeing support

Sites were well placed to signpost participants to specialist support services they were unable to provide themselves through their knowledge of the local and national support landscape. JobsPlus referred and signposted young people to a wide range of health-related services. Support included:

- Referrals to mental health services, including counselling, and for ADHD and other neurodiversity support pathways.
- Access to NHS-funded wellbeing programmes offering courses on pain management, stress, stop-smoking services and healthy living.

Some sites made specific health-focused partnerships so they were better placed to provide direct and quick links to advice and services. While this was not possible for all

[4] Analysis shows 43% of 16–24-year-old JobsPlus participants accessed 'other' support, 32% did not, and no support was recorded for 26%.

sites, some continued to try to build more formal partnerships and to address health needs in other ways in the meantime, for example, by hosting health and wellbeing days with healthcare providers and sexual health clinics providing health checks and advice.

A significant proportion of young people reported mental health challenges, and caseworkers routinely checked in on wellbeing, with one site providing rapid-access private psychotherapy when statutory waiting lists were long. Participants described this support as transformative. A number of sites also provided groups or sessions tackling confidence, anxiety, or supporting general wellbeing.

Financial Support

JobsPlus also provided targeted financial help to remove practical barriers to work and engagement. For example, financial support was provided for bus passes and travel assistance; food vouchers; help with rent arrears or bills; interview clothing, work uniforms, equipment, and laptops; and payment for ID documents. Partners such as money-coaching services or housing association financial inclusion teams also provided advice on debt, budgeting, unclaimed benefits, and utilities.

Support Through Volunteering, Training and Work-Based Learning

A proportion of young people accessed wider developmental activities facilitated by JobsPlus. Around 1 in 10 young people undertook a qualification of some kind while on JobsPlus (n=23, 9%). Volunteering and work-based learning were less common, with just 4% (n=11) and 3% (n=7) respectively of young people accessing this type of support (Appendix Table 14). One-in-eight (12%, n=31) young people accessed at least one kind of support activity from qualifications, volunteering, or work-based learning (Appendix Table 15).

Partners and partnership working

JobsPlus relied on extensive partnership working to broaden the support available to young people and strengthen delivery. The nature of partnership relationships varied across sites, but most areas had increased the range and number of partners over time.

Most sites worked with a wide range of organisations, including housing associations, local councils, training providers, colleges, local and national businesses, and voluntary and community sector organisations. These partnerships enhanced the programme offer, strengthened community links, and enabled more holistic support.

Partnerships with Jobcentre Plus(JCP) were significant and often highly productive:

- Five sites reported strong JCP referral routes, with one estimating that JCP accounted for nearly 80% of referrals.

- Some sites benefitted from a dedicated JCP work coach identifying eligible residents and flagging JobsPlus in Universal Credit journals.
- Co-location with JCP strengthened collaboration, offering immediate access to **'better off in work' calculations** and facilitating warm handovers and two sites planned future co-location arrangements.

Working with employers was described as one of the most challenging but essential elements of JobsPlus. Most employer links were informal and ad hoc, driven by caseworkers' personal networks. Examples of partnership working with employers included: local employers sending vacancies to JobsPlus teams; employers agreeing to give guaranteed interviews; and in some sites, innovative offers, such as paid work experience programmes with no financial risk to employers.

Barriers to working in close partnership with employers included limited suitable local vacancies (including a lack of flexible working opportunities) and employer misconceptions about JobsPlus participants. Caseworkers felt these misconceptions were likely based on negative previous experiences of Jobcentre Plus sending unsuitable candidates to employers.

Some partnerships proved difficult to establish or maintain, often due to the short-term funding creating reluctance among partners to invest time and resource in the work. Prospective partners, particularly in the voluntary sector, were also sometimes reluctant to engage with JobsPlus due to their perceived concerns about the restrictive nature of the pilot boundaries, potential funding clashes, double funding rules or because they saw JobsPlus as competition. Once partners were engaged, some sites faced ongoing practical challenges with partnership working. For example, constraints linked to GDPR and communications, which meant it was hard to track and monitor referrals to see if the partnerships were leading to effective external support. Nonetheless, JobsPlus staff recognised that partnership working was integral in meeting the aims of the JobsPlus programme.

Outcomes

As this report focuses on a relatively short period of delivery, this section focuses primarily on short-term and intermediate outcomes. It draws on qualitative evidence and MI data.

Short-term outcomes

Young people taking part in JobsPlus experienced a wide range of short-term outcomes that strengthened their readiness for work. These outcomes were consistently described

by staff and participants as the most visible and immediate benefits of the programme, and as essential stepping stones toward securing employment.

Participants **developed greater personal confidence**, motivation and self-belief. Many young people, particularly those with mental health issues, SEND or neurodivergence, became more able to articulate their needs, express themselves, and engage positively with job-seeking activities. Improved social skills, such as maintaining eye contact and speaking to new people, were widely noted. Several participants reported that JobsPlus gave them renewed hope, clearer aspirations, and a stronger sense of direction. In areas affected by crime, staff felt that these personal development gains also reduced young people's risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour.

Young people also **improved their job-readiness**, gaining practical employability skills such as identifying job opportunities, writing CVs and applications, and understanding workplace expectations. Those who undertook employability courses reported significant gains in confidence and competence.

These new skills translated into more effective job-search behaviour. Participants described sending higher-quality applications, receiving more interview invitations, and in some cases moving into employment.

Intermediate outcomes

Staff and participants reported that for many of those young people who progressed into education and training, this was often a deliberate step toward achieving their career goals. Participants accessed apprenticeships, full-time college courses, university routes, and a wide range of short vocational courses such as barista training, self-employment skills, digital skills, health and safety, and qualifications including CSCS cards, HGV licences and Advice and Guidance accreditation. These opportunities were made possible through tailored careers guidance, brokerage by caseworkers, and financial support that covered course fees, equipment and laptops. Providers working with JobsPlus observed that referred young people were well-matched to their courses and highly engaged, supported by ongoing communication from caseworkers.

Young people also experienced notable improvements in mental health and wellbeing, which were regarded as essential to becoming work-ready. There was extensive qualitative evidence on improvements to mental wellbeing, Participants described reduced anxiety, improved resilience, and less social isolation over time. There were examples of young people who had entered the programme with significant mental health challenges and who reported substantial improvement a year later, attributing this change to the routine, encouragement and emotional space provided by JobsPlus advisers. Trusted relationships with caseworkers, opportunities for social connection

through group activities, and referrals to external mental health services all contributed to these outcomes. A smaller number also experienced improved physical health, particularly those who took part in structured activities such as sessions at the local gym, which helped build confidence, motivation and a more positive outlook.

Overall, around a quarter (26%) of young people participating in JobsPlus achieved an employment outcome over the period considered in the analysis. Most of those who entered employment sustained work for 12-weeks, but only around half of those eligible for the into work bonus appeared to have actually received the payment. Appendix B provides more information on outcomes attained, but this should be treated with caution, given the small sample sizes.

Potential methods to estimate impact

Introduction

This section starts by reviewing key aspects of the design of JobsPlus which shape the options for a future impact evaluation. It then moves on to consider the suitability of a range of experimental and quasi-experimental methods, given these design considerations. This involves evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each potential approach. Data sources and outcome measures suited to capturing impacts using the most promising methods are considered in the next chapter.

Eligibility criteria

Other than the requirement that young people be resident within the boundaries of one of the pilot sites, there were no other eligibility criteria that participants had to meet in order to receive support. However, JobsPlus aimed to help those living in the social rented sector in the pilot sites who were economically inactive, unemployed or in low-paid employment. Anyone of working age was able to access support, but this feasibility study focuses on ways of estimating the impact of JobsPlus on those aged 16 to 24 in particular. If in future JobsPlus delivery ended for those aged 25 or more, this might open up some alternative approaches to impact evaluation. However, as this might jeopardise some aspects of the model e.g. the saturation approach, this feasibility study assumes that the eligibility criteria will remain unchanged.

Business as usual provision

After excluding full-time students, around half of all young people in social housing are economically inactive, with the remainder either unemployed or employed (on low pay, or in higher paying work) or studying part-time (Office for National Statistics, 2021). The diverse range of activities that those aged 16 to 24 could be expected to be engage in means that, without JobsPlus, they might access a wide range of different types of provision. For example, those on benefits would receive support from Jobcentre Plus, while others might use local provision targeted at NEET young people and others might not access any support services at all. The variety of provision available to young people, depending on their personal circumstances and where they live makes it difficult to generalise about what business as usual provision might consist of across all

pilot sites. However, for many young people, JobsPlus was their first experience of employment support.

Among those who did have previous experience of employment support, young people consistently compared JobsPlus very favourably with other employment support programmes. They described compliance-focused, and transactional support from Jobcentre Plus, with limited opportunity to explore aspirations or address wider barriers to work. The environment was often experienced as formal and intimidating, in contrast to the friendly, relaxed community hubs. They commented on lack of continuity, stating they often saw different staff members. Participants commonly contrasted the short appointments of standard employment support with the longer sessions available through JobsPlus. Young people noted the lack of personalised support and that wider support for mental health, financial help, wellbeing, or social activities, were not available. Across staff, partners and young people, there was agreement that JobsPlus filled a gap in existing provision and there were no other similar services.

Six of the pilots were known to be within an area running a Youth Guarantee Trailblazer. These were launched in the Spring of 2025 and aimed at 18 to 21 year olds (DWP 2024). It was announced in August 2025 that the trailblazers would be extended for another year and there are plans for national rollout in the future (DWP 2025). The range of activities and support provided by trailblazers varies from area to area, even within each trailblazer site. It is therefore important to consider how the introduction of trailblazers in 2025 and plans to extend them to additional areas may affect a future impact evaluation. For example, this would include seeking to identify potential comparators with similar patterns of trailblazer activity to each of the JobsPlus pilot sites.

Saturation model

As JobsPlus uses a saturation model, an analysis which focused purely on the impact of the intervention on direct participants would potentially underestimate the impact of JobsPlus. This is because the approach seeks to effect outcomes by building a culture of work in the local area, meaning that a wider pool of residents might benefit from the intervention, including those who do not register to use JobsPlus services. It is therefore important to consider how any impact from JobsPlus on indirect beneficiaries might affect the suitability of particular approaches to estimating impact.

Randomised control trial

This section considers whether it might be feasible to use experimental methods to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus. If feasible, a randomised control trial would be

likely to provide the most robust estimate of impact. The following subsections take into account any aspects of the model and the targets of the intervention which might present a barrier to this approach. It starts by reviewing the potential to use similar methods to the US pilots and then considers other potential ways of conducting the randomisation. It concludes by assessing some of the limitations and challenges of an RCT design in this context.

Randomisation in the US pilots

The US pilots used cluster-level randomisation to assign housing developments to the treatment or control conditions at random. This was achieved by asking each local public housing authority to nominate 2 or 3 housing developments to participate in the trial and then randomly assigning one development to receive the treatment. The relationship between the local public housing authority and the developments was key to securing cooperation with the trial.

As the treatment and control groups included all individuals living within the housing development in each area, irrespective of whether they came forward to use JobsPlus services, it was possible to capture the indirect effects from the saturation model.

The approach to randomisation taken in the US pilots was possible because the housing developments were able to share data on residents with the evaluators. This was linked to historical data from welfare and Unemployment Insurance wage records to build up a complete picture of longitudinal outcomes for every person who was resident in the developments. This was supplemented with 2 surveys of residents in 3 of the treated sites to explore changes over time

It is unlikely to be feasible to employ a similar approach to randomisation in the UK context because of the following key differences with the US pilots:

- The close relationship between the local public housing authority and housing developments in the US meant that the local authority was better able to direct activities to support the trial, including sharing data on residents in pilot and control developments.
- The UK pilot sites are areas with a high density of social housing, rather than particular developments where all residents are in social housing.
- The UK pilots commenced delivery without any process of selecting multiple developments within a local area that might be suitable and then randomly assigning some to the treatment. To implement this approach in future it would be

necessary to identify a new set of areas suited to running a trial with cluster-level randomisation, away from existing JobsPlus provision.

Given these constraints in the UK context, the following sections consider whether there might be other feasible options for randomisation.

Approach to randomisation

Cluster-level randomisation in the UK context would depend on identifying housing associations willing to be randomised to either treatment or control conditions. However, it is unlikely that housing associations would be able to share data on young residents for the purposes of a trial without their prior consent. It is also unlikely that many residents would consent to data collection, or to have their personal data linked to administrative data sources on outcomes, if they were not directly receiving support from JobsPlus. Therefore, it is unlikely to be possible to emulate the approach to randomisation used in the US pilots in the UK context.

For cluster-level randomisation to be feasible, it would probably be necessary to offer the control group a light-touch intervention that would motive young people to participate in the trial. This would mean that the impact of JobsPlus would not be assessed against business as usual provision, although the support offered to the control group may be sufficiently limited to avoid significantly compromising the trial. However, there is a risk of contamination if housing associations assigned to the control group gain knowledge of the JobsPlus intervention and decide to develop their own version of the treatment.

There are also potential difficulties in **randomising individuals to the treatment or control groups within pilot sites**. It may be practically feasible to randomise young people to treatment and control conditions as they come forward to receive support from JobsPlus, for example, with caseworkers making the trial arm assignment (with the aid of a randomisation tool) when they conduct the initial interview with those interested in participating in JobsPlus. However, this would only capture the impact of direct participation in JobsPlus and not the model itself. The saturation model means there may be a wider group of young people who benefit from any impact JobsPlus has on the culture of work in the local area who do not directly access support from JobsPlus. Therefore, individual-level randomisation might underestimate the impact of JobsPlus by only focusing on its impact on outcomes for direct participants. This is particularly likely to be the case, because, with individuals randomised to the treatment and control conditions within the pilot sites, outcomes for those assigned to the control group may also be affected by the indirect impact of JobsPlus. This contamination from the

saturation model could result in outcomes improving for the control group as well as the treatment group.

Limitations and challenges

Aside from the difficulties of implementing a cluster-level RCT design in the UK context and the risk of under-estimating the impact of JobsPlus with individual-level randomisation, there are a number of other potential barriers to using an experimental approach to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus for young people.

Firstly, while direct participation in JobsPlus by 16-24 year olds has been higher than expected, the numbers of young people coming forward to receive support from the intervention are unlikely to be sufficient for an adequately powered trial with individual-level randomisation. For this to be viable, it would be necessary to see higher levels of over-subscription for JobsPlus among the 16-24 age group.

Secondly, if the short-term availability of support was more limited relative to demand, it might be feasible to implement a **stepped wedge design** where the control group received support at a later date, mitigating some of the ethical concerns in denying access to the treatment to a subset of those who came forward to access JobsPlus. However, as the intervention is largely expected to be taken up by NEET young people, it is likely to take some time before even short-term impacts start to emerge. This would mean delaying treatment for the control group for a matter of months at a minimum. A stepped wedge design would also eliminate the possibility of estimating longer-term effects from participation in JobsPlus as the control would disappear as they became treated.

Arguably, even an individual-level RCT with a stepped wedge design might go against the principles of JobsPlus, given its aim to support people at the point they are ready and able to engage with support. Assigning young people to a control group when they are keen to engage undermines the model and presents ethical challenges given that they may not otherwise receive any support. In these circumstances there is a risk that the experience of coming forward to access help only to be assigned to the control condition might reduce the likelihood of young people seeking support again in the future.

Quasi-experimental methods

Given the likely difficulties in implementing an experimental design, either with cluster-level randomisation, individual-level randomisation or a stepped wedge design, the

following sections move on to consider the feasibility of using quasi-experimental methods to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus.

Difference-in-differences analysis

An area-based difference-in-differences (DiD) analysis is well-suited to estimating the causal impact of JobsPlus, given that the model relies on a saturation approach. Non-participating areas which have similar business as usual provision for young people as the pilot sites could be used to estimate counterfactual outcomes i.e. the outcomes that young people could have been expected to attain if JobsPlus had not been introduced. By capturing outcomes for all young people in an area likely to be exposed to JobsPlus, a DiD analysis would more fully capture the effectiveness of the saturation model than methods which focused on outcomes for direct participants.

The credibility of the impact estimates depends on identifying comparison areas where young people experience a similar trend in outcomes to those seen for young people in the pilot sites prior to the roll-out of JobsPlus. As long as there are no other factors which cause outcomes to diverge after JobsPlus is introduced, it can then be assumed that outcomes in the pilot and comparison areas would have continued to follow a similar trajectory after the introduction of JobsPlus. For example, the age thresholds for entitlement to different rates of the National Minimum and National Living Wage have changed over time which may have affected earnings for young people in employment, but as this would affect those in the pilot sites and comparison areas at the same time, this would be unlikely to cause outcomes to differ. As noted earlier, it would also be important to consider whether outcomes in pilot and comparison areas might have diverged following the introduction of the Youth Guarantee trailblazers. Provided the common trends assumption is met, any divergence in trends in the pilot sites compared with the comparators after the roll-out of JobsPlus can be attributed to the impact of the intervention.

Strengths

As noted in the previous section, a major advantage of the DiD analysis is that it could capture indirect effects from JobsPlus on young people living within the pilot sites who did not directly access support. In addition to this, as the JobsPlus pilots generally cover quite small geographic areas (an average of 3 lower layer super output areas (LSOAs)), there are a large number of potential comparators to choose from (33,755 LSOAs in England). This means that there is a good likelihood of being able to identify comparison areas which meet the common trends assumption and have similar business-as-usual provision to the pilot sites.

The DiD analysis would focus on outcomes for all individuals within the pilot and comparison areas who were the intended targets of JobsPlus at a given point in time. Conducting the analysis at individual-level makes it possible to track outcomes even if the individual moves to another area. The US pilots found that individuals who experienced positive benefits from JobsPlus often chose to move, resulting in the positive impacts seen for this group being missed.

Another key benefit of using DiD analysis compared with experimental methods is that it would be possible to conduct the analysis using existing data and without a lengthy period to design randomisation and data collection procedures. The burden on delivery staff and individuals in the pilot and control groups would be minimised and it is likely that outcomes could be observed for a much larger proportion of potential beneficiaries than would be the case if the analysis relied on primary data collection. The fact that it would not be necessary to allow time to design the trial before delivery could commence means that it would be possible to estimate the impact of JobsPlus based on existing delivery and maximise the length of time over which outcomes could be observed. Suitable data sources to conduct a DiD analysis are considered in a later chapter.

Limitations and challenges

An area-based DiD would seek to estimate the impact of Jobsplus on all young people who might be expected to benefit from the intervention within the pilot sites. If only a small proportion of the total number of individuals expected to benefit do actually make use of the support offered by JobsPlus in some way, the impact of the intervention will be diluted. As noted in Table 2, in the period from the start of December 2024 to the end of December 2025, the number of young people registering for JobsPlus made up about 16% of those estimated to be NEET in the pilot sites. As JobsPlus aims to support everyone who comes forward for support, the pool of potential beneficiaries is large. However, in practice, JobsPlus is targeted at young people who are NEET, as well as those with low earnings from employment. Focusing the DiD analysis on the subset of young people who are NEET or who are in work, but with low earnings, will increase the likelihood of capturing the impact of JobsPlus on individuals who are most likely to make use of the intervention and minimise the risks of dilution.

DiD analysis is only possible with access to longitudinal data for both the treatment and comparison groups which shows how outcomes develop over time. Compared with other methods, the robustness of the analysis can only be assessed with access to a long period of pre-intervention data. Whether this is likely to be feasible in the case of JobsPlus is considered in the chapter on Data sources and outcome measures.

Propensity score matching

Propensity score matching (PSM) involves first estimating the likelihood that an individual participates in an intervention, based on their characteristics, and then matching treated individuals to those who do not actually participate, but who have a similar propensity to be treated. Outcomes for untreated individuals with a similar propensity score can be used to estimate counterfactual outcomes for the treatment group.

For PSM to yield a robust estimate of impact, it is necessary to match individuals on all characteristics (whether observed or unobserved) that are likely to determine both their likelihood of participating in the intervention and the outcomes they attain as a result of participation. The question of whether this is likely to be the case with the data available for an evaluation of JobsPlus is considered in the section on Data sources.

It is possible that the comparison group will consist of people who differ from participants on unobserved characteristics which might be related to the outcomes they attain. For example, those who have the option of accessing JobsPlus, but chose not to take up support may be less motivated to enter employment or training than direct participants in JobsPlus. This could mean that the comparison group would be less likely to achieve the same outcomes as participants even if JobsPlus was not available within the pilot site. Also, the saturation model that JobsPlus seeks to implement has implications for how participation should be defined when estimating the propensity score. If only those who registered to receive support from JobsPlus were regarded as participants and the comparison group was drawn from non-participating individuals within the pilot sites, there is a risk the analysis would fail to take account of any impact on outcomes for comparators who benefit indirectly from the intervention. As a result, **drawing the comparison group from non-participating individuals within the JobsPlus pilot areas could mean that the PSM analysis overestimates the impact of JobsPlus**.

Drawing comparators from individuals with a similar propensity to be treated in non-participating areas has the advantage of minimising the risk that the comparison group benefits indirectly from JobsPlus, reducing the likelihood that the impact of JobsPlus on direct participants is underestimated. However, the impact estimates would still not capture any impact that JobsPlus has on individuals living within the pilot sites who do not register for JobsPlus. One way of overcoming this might be to define participation as being resident within a pilot site and from the group of intended beneficiaries. The PSM would then involve estimating the probability of being in the pilot site, given observed characteristics, with matched comparators drawn from non-participating areas. It would be important to ensure that labour market conditions were similar in these non-participating areas and the pilot sites to obtain a robust estimate of counterfactual outcomes based on outcomes for the closest matched comparators. This also has the advantage of reducing the risk that the treatment and comparison groups differ on

unobserved characteristics which are related to the outcomes they achieve, because the comparison group would not have the option of participating in JobsPlus if they lived outside of the pilot areas. Of course, the method still relies on being able to observe the factors that do determine participation in JobsPlus and the outcomes attained and can only be used to produce a credible estimate of impact if the available data on the pilot and comparison groups satisfies this requirement.

If the characteristics of young people most likely to benefit from JobsPlus in the pilot sites were very different to those in the available comparison areas, PSM could potentially be used to increase the likelihood that outcomes for the comparison group better reflected the outcomes those in the pilot sites would have attained in the absence of the treatment. **The fact that there are a large number of potential comparison areas relative to the number of pilots improves the chances of being able to find comparison areas which experienced a similar trend in outcomes prior to the introduction of JobsPlus and therefore obtain a robust estimate of impact using DiD analysis**. However, there may be value in using PSM in combination with DiD analysis to control for any differences in individual-level characteristics between those in the pilot sites and those in the comparison areas which might cause outcomes to differ. **PSM could be used to estimate outcomes for a comparison group which more closely matches the characteristics of those in the JobsPlus pilot sites before and after the intervention, increasing the likelihood that the impact estimates are credible**.

Strengths

Provided the data used in the analysis satisfy the assumptions underlying the PSM approach (that we can match treatment and comparison groups on all factors likely to influence participation in JobsPlus and the outcomes likely to result from participation), it should be possible to identify a matched comparison group from non-participating areas who would be expected to attain similar outcomes to those in the pilot sites in the absence of the intervention. Provided the treatment and matched comparison groups are similar in terms of observed characteristics and there are no other factors that might cause outcomes in the pilot and comparison sites to differ, it should be possible to obtain a robust estimate of the counterfactual.

Compared with DiD analysis, PSM does not require access to longitudinal data prior to the roll-out of an intervention to conduct pre-programme tests to establish whether the assumptions underlying the analysis are met. However, this advantage is lost if it is necessary to combine PSM with DiD analysis.

Limitations and challenges

The main challenge for PSM is obtaining access to data that satisfies the assumptions underlying the robustness of the analysis – namely that it is possible to ensure that the

treatment and comparison groups are matched on all characteristics likely to determine whether an individual participates in the intervention and the outcomes that they attain as a result of participation. This requires access to rich individual-level data for both the treatment and comparison groups and it is often impossible to directly observe some key determinants of participation and outcomes, such as motivation. At a minimum this needs to cover baseline characteristics and outcomes. Given the focus on young people, this is likely to include background information on participation in schooling and family background as well as educational attainment, participation in further or higher education, benefit receipt and any history of employment.

Regression Discontinuity Design

A regression discontinuity design (RDD) can be used to estimate the impact of an intervention around the margin of treatment where particular criteria determines whether those just above (or below) a certain threshold receive the intervention. For example, the adult rate of the national living wage applies to those aged 21 or over in the UK. In this case the threshold to be eligible for the intervention is a hard cut-off, but in other cases the threshold may be fuzzy, meaning that those in a certain range may, or may not be treated. For example, eligibility for an intervention might be decided based on test scores, plus the local availability of places on the intervention. In this case, while having a test score over a certain threshold increases the likelihood of receiving an intervention, it does not guarantee it for everyone over that threshold.

With a RDD approach, outcomes for those just below the threshold for treatment can be used as a proxy for the outcomes that those just above the threshold would have obtained in the absence of the treatment (the counterfactual). Unlike the other impact evaluation methods considered so far, this provides an estimate of the local average treatment effect (the impact at the treatment margin), rather than the mean impact of the intervention across the full eligible population (the average treatment effect). For example, an RDD approach might be used to estimate the impact of the national living wage on those aged 21-22 years old compared with those aged 19-20, but it is unlikely the findings would be representative of the true impact of the national living wage on everyone aged 21 or more.

JobsPlus is currently open to all residents of working age in the pilot sites. As the eligibility criteria are loose, there is little potential to use a RDD to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus at present. It is possible that if the eligibility criteria were adjusted in future, an RDD might be feasible. For example, **if JobsPlus was no longer available for those aged 25 or more, it might be possible to compare outcomes for those just above the age cut-off to those just eligible to receive support.** However, narrowing the eligibility criteria presents a number of problems:

- Imposing age criteria to access JobsPlus risks undermining the saturation model. As noted earlier, the most common way that young people heard about JobsPlus was through family or friends. If only 16-24 year olds were eligible to receive support, it is less likely that the pilots would be effective in changing aspirations and attitudes towards work in the local area because fewer individuals would have direct experience of the help available and share these experiences through word of mouth.

- An RDD is only likely to produce conclusive results if the number of individuals either side of the margin of treatment is large. While the take-up of JobsPlus by 16-24 year olds has been greater than expected, it would probably be necessary to focus on outcomes for a more limited age range, closer to the treatment threshold. There are likely to be substantial differences in history and outcomes for those in a wider age band around a future hypothetical treatment threshold of 16-24 (compared to those aged 25-33 say). As a result, the RDD may need to estimate the impact of JobsPlus on those aged 23-24 compared with those aged 25-26 (assuming that at some point in the future this older age group were no longer able to receive the intervention). However the numbers of individuals in these age bands in the pilot sites will be small, so it is likely to be difficult to detect any statistically significant differences in outcomes between the treatment and comparison groups even if JobsPlus does have a sizeable impact.

- Given the likely differences in experience and outcomes for those at the younger end of the 16-24 age range compared with those at the upper end, the fact that a RDD approach would only provide an insight into whether JobsPlus was effective for those at the upper end of the age range would be a significant limitation. The analysis would not be able to assess whether JobsPlus had a positive impact on outcomes for the youngest participants.

A RDD is not a viable approach to estimate the impact of the current JobsPlus delivery model. While it may be worth reconsidering if the eligibility criteria were adjusted in future, it is only likely to be of value if other methods do not prove viable.

Survival analysis

Survival analysis can be used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention in circumstances where there is a delay in offering the treatment to individuals who meet the criteria to be treated. This situation can arise where the number of individuals coming forward for treatment at a given point in time exceeds the available resources. If individuals were offered support in an order unrelated to the outcomes they were expected to attain, a survival analysis could produce a robust estimate of impact. If,

alternatively, individuals were prioritised for treatment based on an assessment of need, outcomes for those who received support at a later point in time would not provide a reliable estimate of the counterfactual. This is because the outcomes achieved by those treated first, with the highest level of need, would be likely to differ from outcomes for those treated later, even in the absence of the intervention. In these circumstances, a survival analysis could not be expected to yield a robust estimate of impact.

Survival analysis can be a viable means of estimating impact when demand for in intervention exceeds the resources available to meet that demand at a given point in time. However, in the case of JobsPlus, there is no evidence that demand exceeds the available capacity to offer support to the extent that would be required to conduct a survival analysis. Any delays in starting to receive support after registering with JobsPlus are relatively short and so it would only be possible to estimate counterfactual outcomes over a very short period. Given the nature of the client group, the expectation is that any impacts would only be seen over a matter of months or years, so survival analysis is unlikely to be a viable means of estimating the impact of JobsPlus for young people unless demand increased substantially.

A further limitation of survival analysis in the case of JobsPlus is that even if individuals did not receive direct support from housing associations for some time, their outcomes might still be affected by any indirect effects arising from the saturation model. It is therefore likely that a survival analysis would underestimate any impact from JobsPlus because counterfactual outcomes would potentially be affected by indirect impacts experienced by those living within the pilot sites while they waited to receive direct support.

Instrumental variables

An instrumental variables (IV) approach can be used to estimate the impact of an intervention if a characteristic determines access to the treatment in a way that is unlikely to be related to outcomes. For example, in the case of JobsPlus, those who live closer to the local hub may be more likely to make use of the available support than those who live further away. Variation in proximity to the hub may not affect the outcomes that individuals experience in the absence of JobsPlus (except perhaps in the case of pilots located in more rural areas), but it could determine whether they access the intervention. Outcomes for those who lived further away from a hub might therefore provide an estimate of counterfactual outcomes for those closer to the hub and the difference in outcomes for these two groups would then be used to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus. Under conditions where the instrument which determines access to the treatment is as good as random, IV methods can produce a robust estimate of impact.

However, in practice most of the JobsPlus pilots cover a small area consisting of an average of 3 LSOAs. In these circumstances it is unlikely that being further away from a hub would make much difference to the likelihood that a young person participated in JobsPlus. Alternatively, young people who are resident just outside the catchment area for a JobsPlus pilot might provide an alternative group of potential comparators provided that they are definitely unable to access the intervention. However, the boundaries of the pilots were determined taking into account the likely feasibility of delivery in a specific area and so even if neighbouring areas appear similar, there may be factors which mean the outcomes experienced by young people just outside the pilots might differ from those within the pilots. Also, if in practice the pilot boundaries are not strictly enforced, it is possible that some young people from just outside the catchment areas might receive support from the intervention, or at least benefit from aspects of the saturation model. There is therefore a risk that outcomes for a comparision group of young people drawn from just outside the pilot sites are contaminated by the intervention with an IV approach, resulting in the impact of JobsPlus being underestimated.

A further challenge in using IV methods to estimate the impact of JobsPlus is that it depends on having sizeable numbers of young people in areas neighbouring pilot sites that are comparable in terms of the density of social housing, the characteristics of young people and barriers to employment. While this may be the case for some of the pilots, it is unlikely to be a feasible way of estimating the counterfactual across all 10 areas. In some cases it is likely that the number of neighbouring LSOAs that are suitable comparators are small relative to the size of the pilot site. Overall it seems unlikely that there would be sufficient numbers of potential comparators neighbouring the JobsPlus pilots for IV methods to be able to detect any impact from JobsPlus. Finally, the approach would not provide an estimate of the impact of the JobsPlus model as a whole – only its impact on individuals who choose to register for support.

Synthetic Control methods

In circumstances where there is a shortage of comparison areas which are similar across the range of characteristics expected to influence the outcomes an intervention is expected to effect, synthetic control methods can be used to construct an estimate of the counterfactual by combining information from multiple sources and comparators. However, as the JobsPlus pilot sites generally cover quite small geographic areas and there are only 10 in total, the likelihood of being unable to identify suitable real comparators in order to estimate counterfactual outcomes through other means is low. As a result, there is likely to be limited value in seeking to use synthetic control methods to estimate the impact of JobsPlus.

Data sources and outcome measures

Introduction

The saturation model used by JobsPlus means that all young people targeted by the intervention are potentially treated to some extent. As a result, it is not necessary to know whether a given individual was a direct participant in JobsPlus. To estimate the impact of the model, it is not essential to collect personal data to distinguish between participants and non-participants, as would be the case if the aim was to estimate the impact of registering to receive direct support. Instead, it is possible to identify those most likely to be treated based on where they are resident. This is possible using anonymised or pseudo-anonymised data without the need for individual-level consent.

This chapter reviews data sources that are most likely to be suited to estimating the causal impact of JobsPlus, focusing on the most promising methods identified in the previous chapter. It sets out a series of proposed outcome measures, based on what can be observed in each of the potential sources. It also evaluates the main advantages and disadvantages of each source, including the likely ease of access and time before outcomes will be observed.

Data sources

Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO)

The Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset is compiled from administrative data sources and includes records on participation in schooling, further and higher education, employment and benefit receipt (Administrative Data Research UK 2026). It includes detailed information on background characteristics and history as well as a wide range of potential outcome measures. It is a near-census for everyone educated in England from the 2001/2002 academic year onwards, so provides longitudinal data on multiple cohorts of young people between the ages of 16-24 over time. This means that it is well-suited to estimating the impact of JobsPlus using difference-in-differences methods and testing the underlying assumption that young people in the pilot and comparison areas experience a common trend in outcomes in the period before JobsPlus was introduced.

Identifying young people in the JobsPlus pilot sites and comparison areas

As the LEO data includes all younger people educated in the English school system (those born since 1985), it includes young people living in all the JobsPlus pilot sites over time, as well as a large number of potential comparison areas. The LSOA of residence is recorded at termly intervals, based on the pupil's postcode when they were in school, further and higher education. In addition to this, everyone who has registered and been issued with a national insurance number in the UK appears on the DWP Customer Information System (CIS) database. Any child subject to a child benefit claim automatically receives a national insurance number as they approach the age of 16. LEO records the 2011 Census output area for all individuals on DWP CIS based on the single residential address where the individual lived longest in each tax year.[5] This means that Provided a young person was educated in the state sector in England at some point, it should be possible to observe whether they were resident in one of the pilot sites (or a comparison area) in the first full tax year following the introduction of JobsPlus (2025/26). It would then be possible to observe outcomes for this cohort of 16-24 year olds in later tax years.

As well as identifying whether young people are resident in a pilot or comparison site it will be important to be able to identify those who are most likely to be the targets of support from JobsPlus. As LEO is a census of all people born since 1985 who were educated in England at some point it is possible to observe outcomes for those who are not observed to be in education, employment or training, as well as those who are actively participating in further or higher education, employment or claiming out-of-work benefits. Focusing on outcomes for the subset of 16-24 year olds who were NEET, claiming out-of-work benefits or employed, but earning less than the administrative earnings threshold at a specific point in the 2025/26 tax year would increase the likelihood of detecting any impact from JobsPlus.

Disadvantages of using LEO data

There are a number of potential disadvantages in using LEO data for the impact analysis. Firstly, it only records the Census Output Area where the young person was resident for the longest period within the tax year. For those who moved around a lot during a tax year, any exposure to JobsPlus may have been very limited, so those identified as treated will vary in terms of the level of support received. However, this is a

[5] The Census Output Area was not tracked accurately until Oct 2012, but this would only be likely to present problems for the analysis if using pre-intervention cohorts based on a period before Oct 2012.

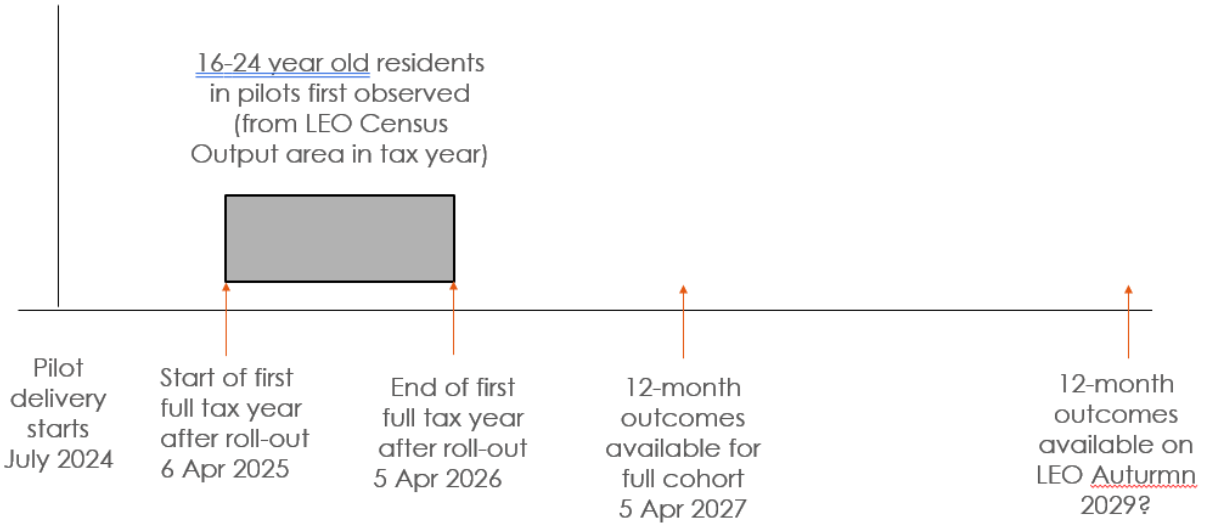
feature of any area-based intervention and so the impact estimates will reflect the design of the intervention. Also, those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are known to be less likely to move for work or study than those from more affluent backgrounds, so the intended targets of JobsPlus are likely to be less geographically mobile than the average 16-24 year old (Papoutsaki et al. 2020).

There is also a potential risk that some of those recorded as resident in comparison areas may in fact have received support from JobsPlus if they were also resident in a pilot site during the year. This could result in contamination, where the estimate of counterfactual outcomes is biased upwards by exposure to the treatment, resulting in the impact of JobsPlus being underestimated. However, given the small number of pilot sites relative to the number of potential comparators, it seems unlikely that this would pose a major risk to the robustness of an impact evaluation.

At any given point in time, there are likely to be some young people in the pilot areas who do not appear in the LEO data because they did not attend school in England. This means that it will not be possible to observe outcomes for everyone in the 16-24 age cohort who is resident in a pilot site, or in one of the chosen comparison areas. However, again, it is unlikely that failing to observe outcomes for some young people resident in the pilots or comparators because they were educated outside of England will bias the impact estimates in a systematic way.

The most substantial disadvantage in using LEO data to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus is that it is subject to severe data lags, making it unlikely to be possible to observe outcomes following participation in JobsPlus for a number of years. At the time of writing the education data only covers the period up to July 2021, around three years before JobsPlus started, although the data on benefit receipt, employment and earnings extend to the 2023/24 tax year. There are plans to update LEO on an annual basis in future, but there is no published timeline for this and it is likely that it would still be subject to a lag of many months, if not years (Administrative Data Research UK 2026). Based on the timings of the most recent data release (in Autumn 2023), it is likely to be Autumn 2029 before 12-month outcomes are available for those resident in JobsPlus pilot sites (or comparators) in the 2025/26 academic year. Figure 4 provides an illustration of when outcomes following participation in JobsPlus might be observed in LEO data for those observed to be in the pilot or comparison sites in the 2025/26 tax year.

Figure 4: Timeline to observe JobsPlus outcomes in LEO



Alternative data sources

Given the delays in observing outcomes following the roll-out of JobsPlus, one possibility might be to seek to negotiate access to the underlying data through other routes. With Youth Futures support it may be possible to negotiate access to each of the LEO constituent datasets (the National Pupil Database, Individualised Learner Record, Higher Education Statistics Agency data and DWP and HMRC data on benefit receipt and employment) with DfE and DWP. Indeed the recent impact evaluation of JobsPlus for DWP has already used linked extracts of DWP and HMRC data to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus for those of working age in the pilot sites and selected comparison areas. Given DWP's support for the JobsPlus pilots, it seems probable they would support a request for access to the required data. Access to the DfE data is less certain, but the DWP Employment Data Lab already have access to linked DfE/DWP data[6] and so it may be possible to build on this existing data share for the Youth Futures evaluation of JobsPlus. With DWP and DfE agreement to data sharing and support for the evaluation, it might be feasible to start work on the impact evaluation in Autumn 2027 and report findings by the end of March 2028.

[6] There is a possibility that the DWP Employment Data Lab might consider evaluating the impact of JobsPlus themselves, but they have limited resources and currently only use PSM methods. It therefore seems unlikely that they would be able to conduct the proposed analysis in a shorter timeframe.

One further option might be to use data from the National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) to estimate impacts from JobsPlus on the youngest group of potential targets. The NCCIS is compiled from data supplied by local authorities on those who have not yet turned 16 on 31 Aug 2025 (for the 2025/26 NCCIS) and who are in their final year of compulsory education, plus those aged 16 or 17 up to the end of the academic year in which they turn 18.[7] However, as NCCIS would not cover most young people in the 18-24 age group, it would be unsuited to estimating the impact of JobsPlus for most of those in the age cohort of interest. For this reason, the option of using NCCIS data in the impact evaluation is not considered further.

There is a risk that it will not be possible to gain access to the data required to conduct the impact evaluation. However, a number of steps can be taken to reduce the likelihood of this being the case and avoid unnecessary expenditure in the event that access to the required data is not granted:

- Dividing tasks into work packages in a planning phase will help minimise expenditure on activities that are impossible to complete if it does not prove feasible to gain access to the required data.
- Initiating discussions with data owners at an early stage in the project will make it possible to take an early decision to pause further work if there is a low likelihood of negotiating access to the data needed for the impact evaluation.
- Discussing and agreeing with data owners a detailed timeline covering the development of the data sharing agreement, supply of data extracts and analysis and reporting, will help identify when the data sharing agreements would need to be signed to meet reporting requirements. If this deadline is not met, a decision could be taken to end any further work on the impact evaluation.

In addition to these steps, the potential risks of unproductive activity can be minimised through the involvement of an evaluation team with past experience of negotiating access to DfE and DWP data for other similar projects. This includes having a good understanding of restrictions on data sharing and how to minimise the burden on data owners.

[7] In addition to these groups, young people with a current EHC plan in the 18-24 age group are also included in NCCIS.

Outcome measures

Most of the short-term outcomes, and some of the intermediate outcomes that JobsPlus was expected to affect for young people could only be observed with bespoke primary data collection. For example, outcomes such as confidence, improved job readiness and health, wellbeing and financial capability are not recorded in the administrative data sources considered in the previous sections. However, these sources would be suited to capturing some of the intermediate and longer-term outcomes that JobsPlus is expected to affect, including engagement in education and training, movement into employment, sustained employment and earnings progression.

Given the overarching aim of JobsPlus to reduce the number of people aged 16-24 who are NEET, the proposed **primary outcome measure is the percentage of young people (aged 16-24) who are in education, employment or training 12 months after they are observed to be resident in one of the pilot sites**. If JobsPlus has an impact on outcomes for young people, it is expected that this outcome would be affected. In addition to this, impacts on a range of secondary outcomes could also be estimated:

- The percentage of young people in education or training at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people participating in a qualification-bearing learning aim in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people participating in learning aims to improve basic skills in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people doing an apprenticeship at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people in employment at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people on out-of-work benefits at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people employed at monthly intervals over the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people on out-of-work benefits at monthly intervals over the 12 months following observation in a pilot site

- Total taxable pay for young people in the tax year following observation in pilot site

The final choice of outcome measures can be refined once there is greater clarity on data access, taking into account the need for multiple hypothesis testing. Provided it is possible to gain access to the required DfE and DWP administrative data for the impact evaluation by the Autumn of 2027, it should be possible to estimate impacts on 12-month outcomes for young people who are observed to be in the pilot sites and comparison areas in the 2025/26 tax year by March 2028. Ideally impacts would be assessed over a much longer timeframe (as mentioned previously, the US pilots estimated impacts over six years following roll-out), but this is unlikely to be possible within expected reporting timelines.

Recommendations

The intervention

Mechanisms of change

A mechanism for change is how young people are expected to engage with activities, feel when they are part of JobsPlus, and relate to programme staff if planned activities are to result in outcomes. At the start of the delivery of JobsPlus, intended mechanisms were identified and have been tested through the research. Overall, there was strong evidence, based largely on extensive qualitative research (interviews with a wide range of stakeholders and observation across all sites), for the following mechanisms of change in the JobsPlus model:

- **People feel safe to express themselves, talk about their lives and aspirations:** JobsPlus caseworkers were adept at creating a safe and supportive environment for young people to come into and feel able to discuss their lives and aspirations in a non-judgmental environment. Participants reported being able to discuss personal barriers such as their mental health and getting the support they need.

- **People feel valued and supported:** The JobsPlus approach has enabled caseworkers to invest time in developing trusting relationships with participants. Consequently, participants report that the support they receive is part of a collaborative process in which their voices, needs and preferences are valued.

- **The saturation approach normalises employment support for a wider range of people and creates more positive perceptions:** The saturation approach enables a wide range of people to access intensive and holistic support, including people who

would not otherwise have access to employment support. This element was viewed positively by participants. Positive perceptions appear to stem from positive experiences with the programme and the spreading of this via word-of-mouth. However, there is little evidence yet that this normalises employment support or creates more positive views of employment support overall.

- **The use of Community Champions makes the programme feel relevant to residents and believe it is 'for them':** Community Champions play a role in building trust and raising awareness of the JobsPlus offer within the community. Not only are Champions able to build a bridge between JobsPlus staff and residents, but they are also able to tailor messages about the service to emphasise specific elements of the support. At some sites, Community Champions supported the strategic direction of local teams and have helped to make services more relevant to local communities. However, the involvement of Community Champions has not been developed to this extent across all sites, and some continue to struggle to recruit into the role.

- **Community hubs build trust because of their familiarity and ease of access:** Participants report that community hubs are a safe and welcoming spaces. The proximity of the hubs enabled regular attendance for meetings, events and casual conversations with JobsPlus staff. The removal of travel and transport barriers has been particularly beneficial for young people. The flexibility in which hubs operate has also suited young people as they have been able to engage at their own pace, and especially where drop-ins are encouraged.

The research also identified an additional mechanism of change:

- **Partnership working means that needs can be better met:** JobsPlus teams formed a variety of relationships with a wide range of local provision. This enabled them to provide wraparound support in a number of areas (for example housing debt, childcare, transport, health). This helped to remove practical and emotional burdens to help people regain the mental space needed for planning and job seeking.

The evidence was weaker in relation to the financial incentive as a mechanism of change and the direct link between co-location of services in the community hub and engagement:

- **People are motivated by financial incentives because they show that work pays:** Participants appreciated the into-work bonus and in some cases, it was a useful tool to support engagement and retention. However, most people were motivated to engage with JobsPlus because of the support provided and a desire to find work rather than a financial incentive. Qualitative interviews suggest that the bonus was

valued by participants but was rarely identified as a primary motivation for engaging with JobsPlus.

- **Community hubs offering both housing, employment support is more convenient for residents and so increases engagement**: There was evidence that co-location of services, including housing and employment support, as well as financial support, health and wellbeing services, created ease of access for residents, which was valued. In some cases, this included making referrals smoother, for example through 'warm handovers' in person from one service to another. However, it is important to note that even where services were not co-located strong partnership working could also create improved access to wider services. Additionally, there was limited evidence so far that co-location of housing and employment support in a community hub directly led to increased engagement.

Aspects of delivery that could be strengthened

Overall, the key elements of the JobsPlus model were adhered to in practice. The evaluation identified ways in which outcomes could potentially be increased, which primarily related to greater consistency across sites and more time to establish delivery:

- Sites would benefit from stronger brokerage to secure flexible, entry-level roles suited to young people and residents with complex needs. This might help to overcome employers' concerns and, in some cases, negative perceptions of recruiting via employment support programmes. Having dedicated roles for this function, would provide the necessary focus and specialist skills required to engage employers.

- Greater consistency in access to wider services. While co-location and referrals to wider services worked well in some hubs, availability of specialist services (e.g., mental health, substance misuse, debt or financial advice) varied widely. This was in part due to differences in the local service landscape in difference areas. Nonetheless, the model could be strengthened by securing more consistent partner presence in hubs where space allows, or establishing clearer referral pathways where this is not possible.

- Long-term staffing and funding stability. Short-term funding constrained strategic planning, recruitment and retention. Sites noted that more stable funding would have supported consistent staffing, reduced pressure on caseworkers, and improved continuity of support.

- The Community Champion role showed much potential and was evidenced as an importance mechanism for engagement. However, sites experienced challenges in recruiting suitable Champions with the right skills, community standing and

confidence. Even when Champions were recruited, retention was difficult. Many Champions moved on quickly into paid work, faced health issues, or had caring responsibilities and lacked time to sustain voluntary commitments. Some sites observed that when key skills, such as the confidence to advocate publicly, were lacking, the Community Champion role was less successful. Caseworkers and managers were often too stretched to supervise, train or mentor Champions consistently. This limited the development of the role for maximum impact. In areas with low community cohesion or histories of mistrust (including mistrust of Housing Associations), Champions had fewer existing networks to leverage. Given the many successes also associated with the Community Champion role, tackling these challenges could strengthen delivery of the programme.

- All sites recognised the importance of community members and groups on governance boards. However, in practice, there were gaps in membership in some sites, including around young people's participation in governance. Enhancing opportunities for young people's voice, ensuring young people can influence design and delivery will improve trust and the programme's relevance to young people.

Method

This feasibility study has found that it is likely to be possible to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus for those aged 16 to 24 using area-based DiD methods. With access to linked administrative data from DfE, DWP and HMRC covering background characteristics and history, participation in education, training and employment, as well as benefit receipt, there is a good prospect of identifying comparison areas where outcomes for young people followed a similar trend to those observed in the pilot sites, prior to the roll-out of JobsPlus. Using administrative data to produce the analysis avoids the need for data collection and reduces the risk of attrition, increasing the likelihood that the findings are conclusive.

The small size of most of the pilots means that there should be a large choice of suitable comparators. A preliminary analysis of publicly available data sources will be used to narrow the available selection down to those that are most likely to be similar to the pilot sites. For example, this analysis will consider the level of deprivation and numbers of residents in the 16-24 year old category to ensure that the comparators are chosen from clusters of LSOAs which have similar features to the pilot sites. If it proves difficult to find comparison areas which appear similar to the pilot sites, the option of conducting PSM to match young people resident in the pilot sites to those in non-participating areas with a similar propensity to participate in the intervention prior to conducting DiD analysis will be considered as an alternative.

Having reduced the selection of potential comparators to those which are most likely to be suitable, we will then conduct pre-programme tests for individual pilots to identify the comparators where outcomes for young people follow the most similar trend to each pilot site prior to the introduction of JobsPlus. This analysis will be used to make the final selection of comparators for each pilot, choosing those where the trend is closest to zero in the pre-intervention period. The final selection will also take into account whether any other interventions are known to have been introduced over the same period as JobsPlus which might have caused outcomes in the pilot and comparison areas to diverge after JobsPlus was introduced. One example of this would be the introduction of the Youth Guarantee trailblazers in 8 pilot areas from Spring 2024. It will be important to ensure that the comparison areas have a similar mix of trailblazer activity to the pilot sites to be able to estimate the net impact of JobsPlus compared with business as usual.

The DiD analysis will focus on outcomes over a period of 12-months for a cohort of 16-24 year olds resident in the pilot sites or the chosen comparators in the 25/26 tax year i.e. those born between 6 April 2001 and 6 April 2009, with outcomes observed in the 26/27 tax year. To ensure outcomes for the pre-intervention cohort are observed before JobsPlus was rolled out (July 2024), this cohort would focus on those aged between 16 and 24 in the 2021/22 tax year i.e. those born between 6 Apr1997 and 6 Apr 2005. Their outcomes could then be observed in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 tax years, before JobsPlus was introduced. To conduct pre-programme tests to assess the robustness of the assumptions underlying the methods, it would be possible to compare outcomes for earlier cohorts of young people resident in the pilot sites or comparators in the 2017/18 tax year, with outcomes observed in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 tax years.

Data sources

Given that the comparison group will be drawn from areas that are not participating in JobsPlus, any primary data collection with the comparison group is likely to be subject to high levels of non-response. The prospects for any causal analysis of impacts on outcomes that cannot be observed in administrative data sources are therefore low. Instead the impact evaluation will focus on estimating impacts on outcomes that can be observed in linked DfE, DWP and HMRC data for young people aged 16-24 educated in the English school system and resident in either the pilot sites or the chosen comparison areas in the 2025/26 tax year.

Although LEO would be the ideal source for accessing these data, with established routes to apply for access, the severe lags in data being released to analysts mean that it is unlikely to be possible to conduct an impact evaluation using LEO until the Autumn of 2029. To produce the analysis at an earlier data it would be possible to negotiate

access to extracts from the constituent datasets that make up LEO by approaching DfE and DWP directly. The risks inherent in this approach and some potential mitigations are discussed in the concluding chapter.

As the impact evaluation would seek to estimate the impact of existing delivery of JobsPlus, it would also be feasible to draw on findings from the implementation and process evaluation collected as part of this feasibility study to interpret the results of the impact evaluation. This includes management information on young people participating in JobsPlus in the 2025/26 financial year, as well as responses to surveys at baseline and 6-months after registering for JobsPlus. Existing data from qualitative interviews and site visits can also be used to understand provision for young people and their experiences while on the programme. This will provide a rich source of data to explore the findings of the impact evaluation around the time the 2025/26 cohort were starting to engage with JobsPlus provision. Re-analysing these sources in light of findings from the impact evaluation will help understand and interpret the findings. As this analysis will be closely related to the original purpose of data collection, it is covered by the research consent previously gained from participants.

Power calculations

The saturation model employed by JobsPlus makes it challenging to conduct conventional power calculations. The intervention is potentially open to any young person resident in the pilot sites who comes forward to access support, although the primary targets are those who are NEET, or in low-paid employment. The model may also have an impact on young people who do not directly engage with JobsPlus delivery. For the purposes of conducting power calculations assumptions might vary from assuming that all young people within the pilot sites receive the treatment (directly or indirectly) to assuming that only those who register for support are treated.

According to mid-2024 population estimates, there were an estimated total of 7,062 people aged between 16 and 24 in the JobsPlus pilot sites (Table 1). Analysis by the Social Mobility Commission estimated that around 21.9% of 16-24 year olds from lower working class backgrounds were NEET in 2024. If the NEET rate is similar in JobsPlus pilot sites this suggests that there would be roughly 1,547 NEET young people – the group most likely to be the targets of JobsPlus activity - in 2024. By the January 2026 JobsPlus project board 314 young people had participated in JobsPlus across all the pilot sites. If most direct participants in JobsPlus in this age range were NEET, approximately one-in-five NEET young people in the pilot sites appeared to have participated in JobsPlus to some

degree over this period, although the participation rate would be lower if participants included some young people in employment, but with low earnings.[8]

With 80% power and an alpha of 0.05 and an assumption of covariates explaining around 50% of the variance in the primary outcome between individuals, the minimum detectable effect size is around 0.18 standard deviations if we assume that all NEET young people in the pilot sites are treated to some extent.[9] For a more conservative estimate which assumes that only young people who are known to have registered for JobsPlus are treated, but with all other assumptions the same, the minimum detectable effect size is around 0.24 standard deviations.

This is just a rough guide to the size of effect we could expect to detect because it depends on the final choice of covariates to use in the analysis and the proportion of variance explained may be different. Unfortunately the US pilots did not look at the impact of JobsPlus specifically for 16-24 year olds (the youngest participants were 18 and the impact analysis focused on those aged 21-61)(Bloom et al. 2025). Furthermore, the analysis of the UK pilots found no impact across those aged 16-64 over a 5-month period (Fox et al. 2026). Therefore the earlier studies do not provide a guide to the likely effect sizes for the 16-24 age group against which the calculated MDESs can be judged.

Table 6 Power calculations

ELEMENT	IF ALL NEET YOUNG PEOPLE IN PILOT SITES TREATED	IF ONLY YOUNG PEOPLE REGISTERED FOR JOBSPLUS TREATED
MINIMUM DETECTABLE EFFECT SIZE (MDES)	0.18 standard deviations	0.24 standard deviations
INTRACLUSTER CORRELATIONS (ICCS)	0.02	0.02

[8] These numbers are known to be small because in October 2024 there were only a total of 38,807 people aged 16-24 across England as a whole who were in the 'Working with requirements' Universal Credit conditionality regime.

[9] The power calculations also take into account the clustering of individuals within pilot and comparison areas. The Intra-cluster correlation is assumed to be small (0.02), given the focus on relatively small areas with high levels of deprivation. The proportion of variance in the outcome explained by level 2 covariates is set to 0.2.

PROPORTION OF VARIANCE EXPLAINED BY LEVEL 1 COVARIATES	0.50	0.50
PROPORTION OF VARIANCE EXPLAINED BY LEVEL 2 COVARIATES	0.20	0.20
ALPHA	0.05	0.05
POWER	0.8	0.8
1-SIDED OR 2-SIDED?	2-sided	2-sided
NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN PILOT SITES	1,547	314
NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN COMPARISON AREAS	1,547	314
TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	3,094	628

Notes: Power calculations conducted using PowerUpR v1.1.0 available at https://powerupr.shinyapps.io/index/

Outcome measures

The proposed **primary outcome measure is the percentage of young people (aged 16-24) who are in education, employment or training 12 months after they are observed to be resident in one of the pilot sites**. In addition to this, the impact evaluation would estimate the impact of JobsPlus on the following secondary outcomes:

- The percentage of young people in education or training at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people participating in a qualification-bearing learning aim in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site

- The percentage of young people participating in learning aims to improve basic skills in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people doing an apprenticeship at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people in employment at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people on out-of-work benefits at some point in the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people employed at monthly intervals over the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- The percentage of young people on out-of-work benefits at monthly intervals over the 12 months following observation in a pilot site
- Total taxable pay for young people in the tax year following observation in pilot site

It should be feasible to estimate 12-month outcomes on all of these measures by March 2028.

Ethics

The proposed impact analysis poses relatively few ethical issues compared to other potential options. For example, randomising young people to treatment or control groups might mean that some of those in need of support are not offered the intervention at a point when they are ready to engage. This could discourage them from seeking support in the future. There would be no need to limit access to the intervention in order to conduct the DiD analysis – indeed the analysis would be based on a cohort of young people supported by the intervention in a period before the methods were decided. The ethnical issues would largely be the same as those pertaining to the feasibility study itself. For example, there is a risk that some young people who might have otherwise have sought support from JobsPlus might have been deterred from doing so because of consent procedures. However, as the objective for seeking consent was to allow research assessing the effectiveness of JobsPlus to be undertaken, the benefits of the research can be argued to offset the limited ethical concerns.

A further ethical issue arises in that young people in the pilot sites and potential comparison areas will not be aware that their administrative data is being used for the

JobsPlus evaluation. However, the datasets to be used in the proposed analysis are covered by existing privacy notices and so this is unlikely to raise any additional ethical issues than would be the case for any other analysis using administrative data sources, such as analysis of LEO data. The proposal to use existing data sources to conduct the impact analysis and to base the analysis on anonymised or pseudo-anonymised extracts with results presented at aggregate level means that the proposed analysis does not present any burden for young people in the pilot or comparison areas or carry a high risk that individuals could be identified in the analysis.

Timeline

Table 7 sets out an indicative timeline to estimate impacts over a period of 12 months for young people observed to be resident in the JobsPlus pilots or comparison areas in the 2025/26 tax year. If data delays mean that this is not feasible, it may be possible to estimate impacts on outcomes over a slightly shorter period. The general approach is to focus on tasks that must be completed in order to gain access to the required data in the early stages of the project to avoid spending time on activities that are only beneficial if access is granted. This should minimize the risk of unnecessary expenditure on tasks that are not ultimately productive.

A project inception meeting in April 2026 would be used to agree the scope and outputs from the project. These discussions would then inform the development of a detailed project plan. The aim would be to start conversations with DfE and DWP regarding data access in May 2026. A detailed methodology for the impact evaluation would be developed alongside this so that a data specification could then be shared with the data owners. The additional IPE analysis would also be planned at this point.

The data specification will be revised in light of conversations with data owners over the summer of 2026. This will then be used as an input into the development of data sharing agreements. The aim will be to have these signed by January 2027. If it is not possible to secure access to the required data by the end of March 2027, it would probably be necessary to cease any further work on the impact evaluation at this point as it is unlikely to be feasible to estimate the impact of JobsPlus on young people by the end of March 2028.

Gaining access to data on the pre-intervention cohorts prior to the data on the post-intervention cohort would make it possible to set up syntax to derive baseline characteristics and outcomes and select the best-matched comparison areas using pre-programme tests. Conducting this work at the earliest opportunity would reduce the time required for manipulation of the data at a later stage in the project when the time available to complete the analysis is likely to be very limited. Assuming it is possible to

obtain data on the pre-intervention cohorts by May 2027, the syntax to derive baseline characteristics and outcomes will be developed in June and July and pre-programme tests to identify suitable comparators will be conducted in August and September. Further analysis of management information and survey data will also be carried out in late summer as part of the implementation and process evaluation to provide context for the impact evaluation findings.

Provided data owners are able to supply data on the post-intervention cohort in November 2027, the data will be prepared for analysis in December and impacts estimated impact in January 2028. Robustness checks will also be carried out at this point (using pre-programme tests to ensure the assumptions underlying the difference-in-differences analysis are met). Once the impact estimates are available, the qualitative findings from the earlier IPE will be used to seek to explain the findings on impact. Findings from the impact evaluation will be written up and synthesized with findings from the IPE strand of work in the remaining phase of the project.

Table 7 Project timeline

	2026									2027												2028		
TASK	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
PROJECT INCEPTION MEETING																								
DEVELOP DETAILED EVALUATION PLAN (IMPACT AND IPE)																								
NEGOTIATING ACCESS TO DATA AND AGREEING DSAS																								
DEVELOP DETAILED IMPACT METHODOLOGY & DRAFT DATA SPECIFICATION																								
PLANNING ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS FOR IPE																								
DECISION POINT TO CONTINUE OR TERMINATE PROJECT																								
DATA OWNERS SUPPLY PRE-INTERVENTON DATA EXTRACTS																								
DERIVE BASELINE & OUTCOME MEASURES FOR PRE-INTERVENTION COHORTS																								

	2026									2027												2028		
TASK	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
ANALYSIS TO SELECT COMPARISON AREAS																								
ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF MI AND SURVEY DATA FOR IPE																								
DATA OWNERS SUPPLY POST-INTERVENTON DATA EXTRACTS																								
DERIVE BASELINE & OUTCOME MEASURES FOR POST-INTERVENTION COHORT																								
IMPACT ANALYSIS																								
PRE-PROGRAMME TESTS																								
REVIEW OF QUALITATIVE MATERIAL FROM FEASIBILITY STUDY																								
REPORTING, SYNTHESIS AND QA																								

Conclusions

This chapter provides a brief answer to each of the research questions set out at the start of this report, including a discussion of the potential limitations of the proposed analysis and ways of seeking to mitigate these issues.

RQ1 How likely it is to be able to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus?

There is a good likelihood of being able to estimate the impact of JobsPlus on a range of outcomes for a cohort of young people (aged 16-24) resident in the pilot sites. However, this does depend on being able to successfully negotiate access to DfE, DWP and HMRC data prior to it being available through LEO.

RQ2 How successful is JobsPlus in reaching young people in need of support?

JobsPlus has been very successful in reaching young people: 35% of all participants were in the 16-24 age range, exceeding expectations that around 20% of participants would come from this age group. Only 11% of the resident population in the pilot sites were in the 16-24 age range, based on 2021 census data. The IPE found that JobsPlus provided support that is otherwise unavailable to many young people. For example, many young people had not previously received any employment support.

RQ3 How many young people have received support from JobsPlus?

Delivery monitoring data indicate that a total of 314 people in the 16-24 age range have registered to receive support from JobsPlus. Management information records a slightly lower number of young people to have registered for JobsPlus (249) between December 2024 and December 2025, but this may be partly because some young people did not consent to their data being shared for the evaluation.

RQ4 How many young people engage with each of the different elements of JobsPlus support?

Of the 249 young people who registered for JobsPlus between December 2024 and December 2025, 201 completed a needs assessment and action plan (81%) and 182 (73% of the total registered) were still engaged 4 weeks later. In terms of the support accessed, 55 young people (22% of those registered) made use of support with health

and wellbeing, 34 used support with education and training (14%), 33 (13%) received support from Jobscentre Plus and 106 young people received some other type of support (43%).

RQ5 How long do young people engage with the support offered by JobsPlus and what factors influence the length of their contact?

The support offered by JobsPlus is not time-limited and so engagement lengths can vary a great deal. This means that it is difficult to generalise about the typical length of engagement. However, longer spells of engagement are common among young people with complex needs, such as mental health challenges, caring responsibilities and low self-confidence. Others may engage briefly or re-engage later in response to changing circumstances.

RQ6 How many young people receive all elements of the JobsPlus support package?

The flexible nature of the JobsPlus model, with access to particular elements dependent on the needs of the individual means there is limited value in trying to calculate the number of young people who received all elements. This is also difficult to assess because the recording of management information on participation in different elements of JobsPlus was not always complete. However, it was apparent that JobsPlus did provide some elements of support that many young people had not received previously, such as employment support.

RQ7 What would business as usual provision be for young people eligible for JobsPlus and to what extend does Jobs Plus provision differ from business as usual?

BAU provision for young people varied depending on their personal circumstances and locally available provision, but often consisted of no support at all. Some research participants had previously received support from Jobcentre Plus, but this tended to be time-limited and focused on compliance with benefits eligibility requirements, rather than wider supports needs. By comparison, JobsPlus was able to provide more intensive, locally-based support, tailored to the particular needs of the individual.

RQ8 What methods could be used to estimate the impact of JobsPlus and which would be most appropriate and feasible?

An area-based DiD approach is likely to be feasible, given the relatively small size of most of the pilots and the large number of potential comparison areas. The analysis

could estimate impacts for the subset of young people who are most likely to benefit from JobsPlus provision within the pilot and comparison sites i.e. 16-24 year olds not in employment, education or training or those in this age range who were in low-paid employment. The analysis could estimate the impact of being in one of the pilot sites on subsequent outcomes, to capture both the impact of JobsPlus on those who directly receive support and those who experience any benefits resulting from the saturation model. If it proves difficult to identify comparison areas where the common trends assumption, underlying the robustness of the DiD model is met, the option of combining DiD with PSM to ensure the characteristics of the comparison group match those of young people in the pilot sites could be considered as an alternative option.

RQ9 What data sources will be used to estimate the impact of JobsPlus and which would be most appropriate and feasible?

Ideally LEO would be used to estimate the impact of JobsPlus as it contains detailed information on successive cohorts of young people educated in England over a long period of time, allowing the common trends assumption underlying the DiD approach to be tested. However, there are long delays in updating LEO which mean it may not be possible to estimate impacts on 12-month outcomes until Autumn 2029 at the earliest. Instead it is proposed to seek to negotiate access to DfE, DWP and HMRC administrative individual-level data to compile a dataset on young people in the pilot sites and selected comparators in order to conduct the analysis at an earlier point in time.

RQ10 What outcomes are JobsPlus likely to effect and how can these be measured within the available data sources?

JobsPlus is expected to increase the percentage of 16-24 year olds in education, employment or training. The proposed primary outcome is the percentage of young people in education, employment or training 12 months after the baseline observation. In addition, JobsPlus is expected to influence a number of different secondary outcomes, including the likelihood of participating in education and training, attaining additional qualifications, being in employment or sustained employment, earnings and benefit receipt. The expectation is that impacts on these outcomes could also be estimated around 12 months after the baseline observation. Although JobsPlus is also expected to affect a range of short-term outcomes, these cannot be observed in administrative data sources and so it will not be possible to estimate the causal impact of JobsPlus on these outcomes.

RQ11 When will outcomes be observed?

Most of the outcomes that can be observed in administrative data sources are classified as intermediate or longer-term outcomes in the theory of change. Evidence from the US pilots also found that it took time for impacts to emerge. The proposal is to estimate impacts over a period of around 12 months, but ideally a future study would also consider impacts over a much longer period of time.

RQ12 What primary data capture tools are required to observe participation in JobsPlus and the outcomes experienced by participants?

The proposed analysis could be conducted without the need for further primary data collection. Instead it would draw on reanalysis of data already collected on participation in JobsPlus from December 2024 to the end of the 2025/26 financial year to interpret findings from the impact evaluation. These sources include management information, baseline and follow-up survey data and qualitative data collected through interviews with participants, staff and other stakeholder in the pilot sites. The impact evaluation itself would be based on analysis of existing data collected by DfE, DWP and HMRC.

RQ13 What data sharing agreements and arrangements are needed to support the evaluation of JobsPlus?

In addition to the existing data sharing agreements with the pilot sites, it will be necessary to develop DSAs with DfE and DWP. DWP may be able to share HMRC data that they hold through an existing data sharing agreement with HMRC, but if not, it may also be necessary to agree data sharing arrangements with HMRC. Although it would be necessary to link data on individuals, the extracts could be anonymised or pseudonymised.

RQ14 To what extent are each of the pilot sites adhering to the JobsPlus model of delivery?

Adherence to the JobsPlus model of delivery has strengthened over time as the pilots have become more established. Overall there is strong fidelity to the model, with some variation to reflect the local context. However, even with local tailoring it was apparent that the core elements of the model are consistently implemented.

RQ15 Do any aspects of JobsPlus delivery need strengthening prior to undertaking a future trial?

Some elements of JobsPlus implementation could be strengthened to support future delivery. For example, there is a need for greater stability of funding and staffing, including strengthening the recruitment and supervision of Community Champions to reap the full benefits of this role.

In terms of aspects of delivery specific to young people, there is a need to strengthen existing links with agencies and organisations aiming to support this age group. In particular, there is a need for more consistent access to wider specialist services such as those to support mental health and provide financial advice and offering careers guidance. It would also be beneficial to build stronger links with employers to increase opportunities for young people to gain work experience. Helping young people to improve their communication skills and develop their networks is an important area for further development. This could include enhancing the voice that young people have in the governance of the pilots.

RQ16 How many young people would need to participate in any future trial of JobsPlus to determine whether it is effective?

The proposed analysis would estimate the impact of JobsPlus on young people who received support from the pilot in the 2025/26 tax year and so the number of participants is already known. The minimum detectable effect size is likely to range from around 0.18 to 0.24 standard deviations depending on whether only those who registered for support from JobsPlus are considered to be treated, or whether saturation effects have an impact on all young people who are NEET within the pilot sites.

RQ17 Are there any potential barriers to undertaking a future impact evaluation and if so, how likely is it that these can be overcome?

The main barriers to undertaking a future impact evaluation of JobsPlus for young people are likely to be difficulties in gaining accessing the required administrative data in order to produce the analysis in a timely fashion. The proposal to seek access to individual datasets, rather than waiting for the release of LEO data is one potential way to reduce the time needed to estimate impacts. However, there is a risk that this is not possible. The aim would be to prioritise tasks which have a direct bearing on the likelihood of gaining access to the required data and only embark on activities which could be undertaken at a later point in the project once it is known whether access is likely to be granted.

Linked to this, there is a risk that any impacts from JobsPlus may only become apparent over a longer period of time than it will be possible to consider in the analysis. Future research would ideally be used to estimate longer-term impacts to supplement the analysis of 12-month outcomes proposed here.

Variation in existing provision for young people between pilot sites and potential comparators complicates the process of estimating the counterfactual and there is a risk that outcomes diverge over time due to the influence of unobserved factors, such as differences in Youth Guarantee Trailblazer provision. Careful selection of comparators and analysis of the detail of local provision would help to mitigate the risk that these differences bias the impact estimates. Having reduced the selection of potential comparators to those which are most likely to be suitable, based on analysis of publicly available data, pre-programme tests for individual pilots will be used to identify comparators where outcomes for young people followed the most similar trend to that seen in each pilot site prior to the introduction of JobsPlus. The final selection of comparison areas will then be made from the closest matches on the pre-programme tests after excluding potential comparators which had different patterns of Trailblazer activity, or any other interventions, which might have caused outcomes in the pilot and comparison areas to diverge after JobsPlus was introduced.

The numbers of young people in the pilot sites at any given point in time are quite limited (around 6,000) and there is likely to be greater mobility in and out of pilots for those between the ages of 16 and 24 than for older individuals. This potentially means that some young people may only be exposed to the JobsPlus model for a limited period of time, thus limiting its effectiveness. However, the proposed approach to impact evaluation would still allow outcomes to be tracked for young people who move out of the area and if mobility patterns mean that young people only experience limited exposure to JobsPlus the impact estimates will nevertheless reflect the realities of delivering the intervention to this group.

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Technical appendix

Appendix A Theory of Change

This section presents the Theory of Change (ToC) for young people taking part in JobsPlus and provides a commentary on its key components. The ToC was designed to understand how the JobsPlus model is expected to benefit young people by mapping inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts, and causal links/pathways between these.

Context

Social housing residents face high levels of disadvantage and exclusion and are more likely to house higher proportions of economically inactive, out of work and disabled people, and those in low-skilled, low pay jobs. Many have had little prior access to employment support, are ineligible for other support due to strict participation criteria, or have limited awareness or negative perceptions of support. Social landlords are well-placed to engage and support their communities in participating and progressing in the labour market as they can help to overcome the mistrust of statutory services that may exist.

Inputs

The main inputs for the JobsPlus programme for young people are:

- Grant funding from the HM Treasury Labour Market Evaluation and Pilots fund and Youth Futures.
- In-kind contributions from HAs (in the form of employment advisers and premises, for example).
- Referrals into the programme from partner organisations.
- Time and input from strategic partners as part of local governance arrangements.

Activities

The JobsPlus model features the following key elements:

Target group, outreach and communication

JobsPlus is available to all residents in the pilot sites and there are no eligibility criteria beyond postcode. Housing Associations are expected to undertake extensive outreach and communications activities to reach young people and encourage them to take part in JobsPlus.

Intensive, on-site employment services

Each site is expected to identify a building which could be used as a JobsPlus hub. The hubs should ideally be well-located within the local community and already serve as centres for a range of local services and events, so that residents are familiar with them. Residents are expected to be signposted to these centres for support to find work. Employment services comprising the following are intended to be delivered from the JobsPlus hubs:

Initial engagement and needs assessment. Through initial engagement, caseworkers will start to build rapport and trust and understand the young person's needs and barriers to employment. This will result in an action plan that sets out short-, medium-, and long-term goals and takes account of the young person's strengths, needs, and interests.

One-to-one case worker support. The one-to-one caseworker is intended to be at the core of support, and the frequency of sessions should be tailored to the needs and circumstances of individuals. Support can take place at the hub, other locations preferred by the young person or via telephone.

Group support sessions. These are intended to provide a range of optional support for young people alongside the one-to-one support. The content of group sessions is likely to be wide-ranging and centred, for example, on building employability skills, mental health and wellbeing or digital skills.

Hubs will provide access to wider support services (for example, for budgeting, health or drug and alcohol support, access to food banks) through referral or sign-posting. In some hubs, wider services will be co-located with JobsPlus.

Identifying and facilitating access to education, employment and training (EET) opportunities, including facilitating work experience and work placements, through partnership working with education and training providers and employers, and matching and brokerage.

Community Support

The JobsPlus vision anticipates that local services and community groups will promote JobsPlus and share information about its services. The concept of residents helping other residents is at the heart of JobsPlus and the programme aimed to build social ties between residents. Some residents, including young people, are expected to be trained by HAs as community champions to facilitate outreach and provide peer support, receiving ongoing support for their role. It is planned that others will join local steering groups to co-design and oversee the programme. It is anticipated that this involvement will build credibility and trust, reduce stigma, and leverage existing social capital within the community.

Financial incentives

A unique feature of JobsPlus is its use of financial incentives. These are tied to job outcomes, offering a £400 Into work bonus for those who secure and maintain employment or self-employment for two consecutive months, earning at least £677 per month gross. This bonus is excluded from benefit assessments, ensuring it is not affected by lower benefit payments.

In-work support

Case workers plan to offer support to young people once they have moved into employment if they wish to receive further support. This could be either in person or over the phone, at unspecified intervals for as long as the person wishes to receive it.

Saturation

The JobsPlus model is designed to be implemented at saturation-levels so that all residents in a JobsPlus site benefit from the programme, whether they are directly registered and receiving services or indirectly by building a culture of work. In practice, this means that those who do not register on JobsPlus may still benefit from, for example, community events or conversations with friends or neighbours about work. This might increase their awareness of employment opportunities or positively affect their motivation to find work.

Mechanisms for change

A mechanism for change is how young people are expected to engage with activities, feel when they are part of JobsPlus, and relate to programme staff if planned activities are to result in outcomes. At the start of the delivery of JobsPlus, the following mechanisms of change have been identified:

- People are motivated by financial incentives because they show that work pays.
- People feel safe to express themselves, talk about their lives and aspirations.
- People feel valued and supported.
- The saturation approach normalises employment support and creates more positive perceptions.
- The use of community champions makes the programme feel relevant to residents and believe it is 'for them'.
- Community hubs build trust because of their familiarity and ease of access.
- Community hubs offering both housing and employment support is more convenient for residents and so increases engagement.

Outcomes

Intended short-term outcomes identified at the outset of programme implementation and perceived to be important stepping stones to intermediate outcomes are:

- Personal development including increased confidence, ambition, motivation, aspirations, and improved communication skills and resilience.
- Improved job-readiness including increased awareness of opportunities and pathways, improved attitudes towards employment and reduced wider challenges to employment, such as drug and alcohol dependency, housing and transport.
- Increased skills, knowledge and experience, increased vocational and essential skills, improved CV, job search and interview techniques, increased knowledge about education, employment and training opportunities, and increased ability to plan and set work goals.

Intermediate outcomes young people are expected to gain:

- Improved physical and mental health, wellbeing and financial capability, including improved diet and food security, increased financial inclusion and increased individual and/or household incomes.

- Employment outcomes including progression into employment, sustained employment, or in-work progression to new or higher-level jobs or increases in pay or hours worked.
- Education and training outcomes could include progression to further education or training/courses or programmes, Skills and qualifications gained from participation in education and training, Progression to traineeships, internships, and other work-based learning opportunities and apprenticeships.

Long-term impact

The long-term impacts of taking part in JobsPlus are anticipated to be related to:

- Communities in which people have improved life chances and are enabled to reach their full potential, a reduction in inter-generational unemployment and reduced poverty among young people in social housing communities.
- Economy and labour market demonstrated by a reduction in youth unemployment/benefit dependency, young people having improved economic advantage and lifetime earnings, and reductions in numbers of young people aged 16–24 who are not in education, employment and training (NEET).
- Workforce, with an improved skills pipeline that leads to fewer skills shortages and gaps in local areas.

Appendix B Additional Tables

Appendix Table 1: JobsPlus participant age group

AGE GROUP	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
16-24	249	35%
25+	453	65%
TOTAL	702	100%

Base: 702 people of all ages who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025 with a valid response to this question. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 2: JobsPlus participant gender

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
MALE	126	53%
FEMALE	112	47%
TOTAL	238	100%

Base: 238 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025 with a valid response to this question. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 3: JobsPlus participant ethnicity

ETHNICITY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
WHITE	147	62%
BLACK, AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN OR BLACK BRITISH	45	19%
ASIAN AND ASIAN BRITISH	11	5%
MIXED AND MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS	21	9%
OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS	14	6%
TOTAL	238	100%

Base: 238 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025 with a valid response to this question. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 4: Proportion of JobsPlus participants with a health condition

HEALTH CONDITION LASTING 12 MONTHS OR MORE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	53	22%
NO	183	78%
TOTAL	236	100%

Base: 236 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025 with a yes or no response to this question, excluding those who did not answer, or answered 'prefer not to say'. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 5: JobsPlus participant health condition day-to-day impacts

HEALTH CONDITION IMPACTS DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES, A LOT	15	6%
YES, A LITTLE	30	12%
NO	128	51%
NOT APPLICABLE	59	24%
DATA MISSING	17	7%
TOTAL	249	100%

Base: 249 people on JobsPlus, aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 6: JobsPlus participants highest qualification level at registration

QUALIFICATION LEVEL	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
ENTRY LEVEL	8	3%
LEVEL 1	28	11%
LEVEL 2	76	31%
LEVEL 3	43	17%
LEVEL 4-6	23	9%
LEVEL 7	*	*
NONE OF THE ABOVE	*	*
NONE	21	8%
DON'T KNOW, DATA MISSING, PREFER NOT TO SAY	42	17%
TOTAL	249	100%

Base: 249 people on JobsPlus aged 16-24 years who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. * Suppressed due to being based on five or fewer people. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 7: Proportion of JobsPlus participant's with parental or caring responsibilities

PARENTAL OR CARING RESPONSIBILITIES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	21	9%
NO	217	91%
TOTAL	238	100%

Base: 238 people on JobsPlus aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025, with a valid response to this question, excluding a small number who did not answer or stated 'prefer not to say'. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 8: Household bills, food bank use and bank account access for JobsPlus participants

FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	BASE
FALLEN BEHIND WITH HOUSEHOLD BILLS	35	15	228
USED A FOODBANK	27	12	228
HAS ACCESS TO A BANK ACCOUNT	204	90	227

Source: JobsPlus participant baseline survey, IES, 2025

Appendix Table 9: JobsPlus participants ' employment history at registration

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
I HAVE NEVER BEEN IN PAID EMPLOYMENT	55	24
I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN OUT OF PAID EMPLOYMENT	34	15
I HAVE BEEN IN AND OUT OF PAID EMPLOYMENT	76	33
I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN IN PAID EMPLOYMENT	46	20
MISSING	17	7
TOTAL	228	100

Base: 228 Source: JobsPlus participant baseline survey, IES, 2025

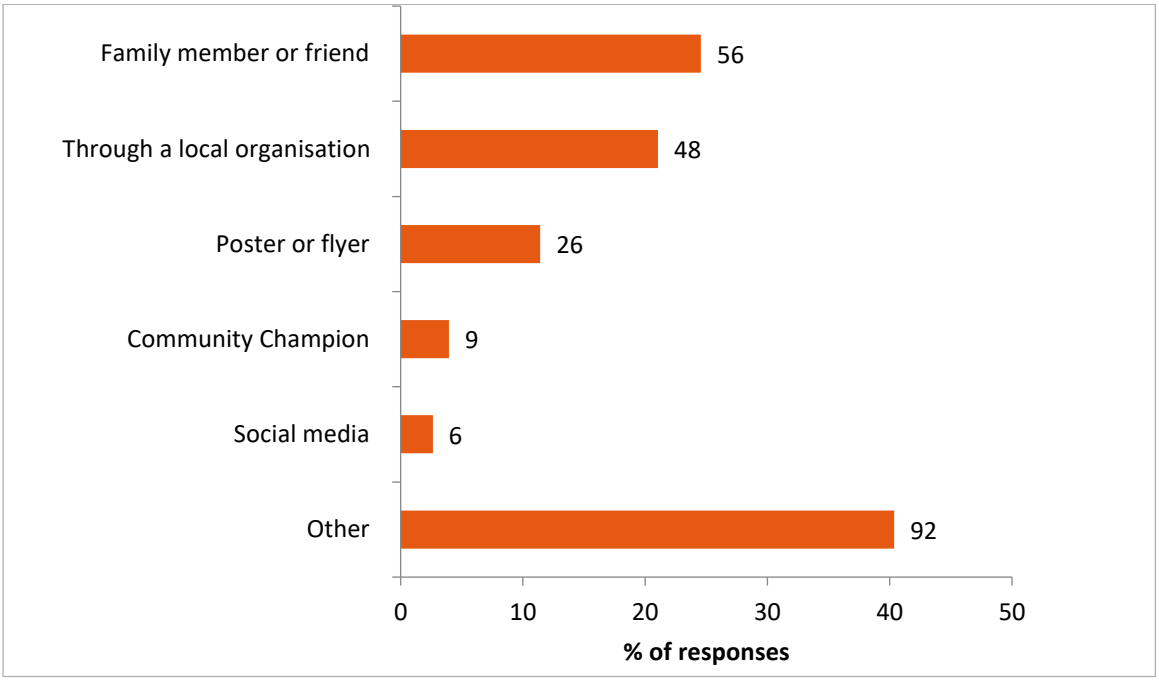
Appendix Table 10: Barriers to finding work for JobsPlus participants at registration

BARRIERS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
LACK OF VACANCIES/TOO MUCH COMPETITION FOR JOBS INTERESTED IN	85	37%
LACK OF WORK EXPERIENCE	84	37%
NOT HAVING RIGHT SKILLS FOR JOBS INTERESTED IN	55	24%
PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OR DISABILITIES	47	21%
YOUR OWN SELF-CONFIDENCE	44	19%
LENGTH OF TIME OUT OF WORK / BETWEEN JOBS	19	8%
LACK OF ADEQUATE REFERENCES FROM PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT OR VOLUNTEERING	17	7%
AGE-RELATED FACTORS	13	6%

OTHER	42	18%
NONE OF THESE	27	12%
TOTAL	433	190%

Base: 228. Note: This question was multiple choice, therefore the base and % exceeds the total number of respondents for this question. Source: JobsPlus participant baseline survey, IES, 2025

Appendix Figure 1: How participants heard about JobsPlus



Base: 228. Note: This question was multiple choice, therefore the total and % exceeds the base number of respondents for this question. Source: JobsPlus participant baseline survey, IES.

Appendix Table 11: JobsPlus participant registrations by site

SITE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
BOREHAMWOOD	17	7%
BARNET	16	6%
LEYTON	30	12%
ROTHERHAM	57	23%
PENGE	12	5%
SITTINGBOURNE	26	10%
STOCKTON-ON-TEES	37	15%
LIVERPOOL	16	6%
WIRRAL	13	5%
SHEFFIELD	25	10%
TOTAL	249	100%

Base: 249 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 12: Employment rate by quarterly cohort

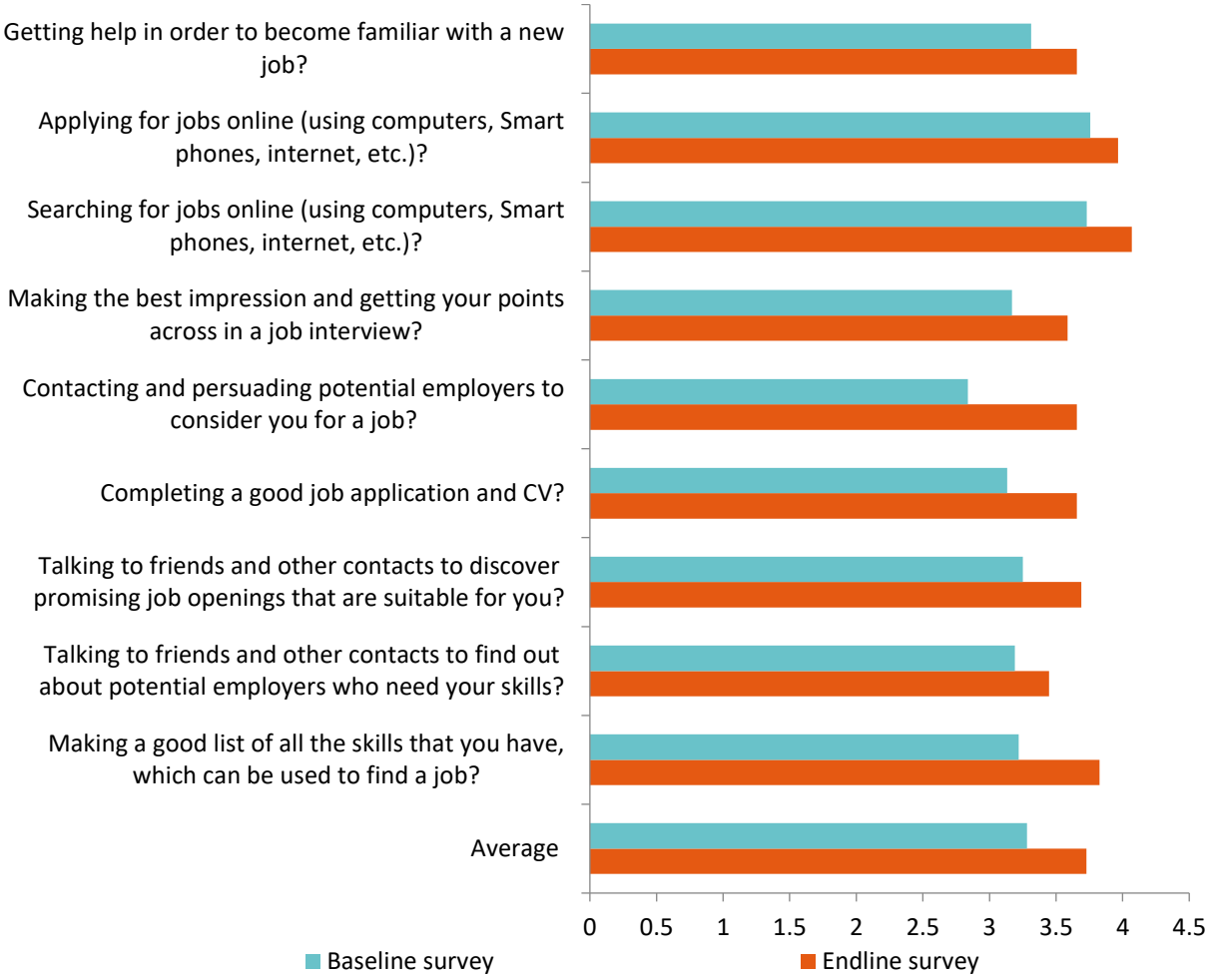
QUARTERLY COHORT	NUMBER ACHIEVING AN EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME	PERCENT OF ALL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES	TOTAL REGISTRATIONS IN THIS QUARTER
DECEMBER 2024[1]	*	*	11
JANUARY TO MARCH 2025	20	8%	55
APR TO JUNE 2025	24	10%	72
JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2025	9	4%	49
OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2025	7	3%	62
TOTAL	65	26%	249

Notes: Quarterly cohorts reported here reflect those used by DWP to report registrations since JobsPlus pilot began in July 2024. Therefore, December 2024 is one month of data from the October to December 2024 cohort. Base: 249 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 13: Proportion of JobsPlus participants that completed a needs assessment and action plan

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN AGREED	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	201	81%
NO	48	19%
TOTAL	249	100%

Appendix Figure 2: JobsPlus participants' Job Search Self-Efficacy (JSSE) mean scores



Base: 218 to 228 (baseline survey) and 29 (endline survey). *Source: JobsPlus participant baseline survey and endline survey, IES, 2025*

Appendix Table 14 Proportion of young people on JobsPlus accessing qualifications, volunteering, or work-based learning support

SUPPORT ACCESSED	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
QUALIFICATIONS	23	9%
VOLUNTEERING	11	4%

WORK-BASED LEARNING	7	3%

Base: 249 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Appendix Table 15: Proportion of participants accessing support activity

SUPPORT ACCESSED	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
AT LEAST ONE ACTIVITY ACCESSED	31	12%
NO ACTIVITIES ACCESSED	134	54%
DATA MISSING	84	34%
TOTAL	249	100%

Base: 249 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 year -old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Outcomes

Overall, around a quarter (26%) of young people achieved an employment outcome (Appendix Table 16). This is similar to the rate of employment among all participants (27%).

Appendix Table 16: Proportion of participants who achieved an employment outcome

EMPLOYMENT ACHIEVED	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME	65	26%
NO EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME	184	74%
TOTAL	249	100%

Base: 249 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025, regardless of employment status at registration. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Employment outcomes were slightly higher (28%) among young people not in employment at registration (n=207)(Appendix Table 17)

Appendix Table 17: Proportion of participants achieving an employment outcome who were not employed at registration

EMPLOYMENT ACHIEVED	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME	58	28%
NO EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME	149	72%
TOTAL	207	100%

Base: 207 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025 with a recorded job outcome, who were not employed at registration. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

A very small number of participants were already in employment at registration (n=25), with just under a quarter (n=6) achieving an employment outcome, indicating that JobsPlus is able to support career progression or job role changes for participants (see Appendix Table 18).

Appendix Table 18: Number of participants who achieved an employment outcome who were employed at registration

EMPLOYMENT STATUS ACHIEVED	NUMBER
EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME	6
NO EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME	19
TOTAL	25

Base: 25 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old who registered for JobsPlus between 1 December 2024 and 31 December 2025 with a recorded job outcome, who were employed at registration. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Into work bonus

Participants who were not employed at registration were eligible for a two-month into work financial incentive (bonus) of £400 when they sustained a single employment outcome for this length of time, whilst earning at least £677 per month. Of those eligible to reach this two-month threshold at the time of analysis (n=48), under half were recorded as receiving the payment (n=22) (see Appendix Table 19).

Appendix Table 19: Number of participants receiving the into work bonus

£400 INTO WORK SUSTAINMENT BONUS	NUMBER	TOTAL ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS
ACHIEVED	22	48

Base: 48 JobsPlus participants aged 16-24 years old unemployed at registration who had entered work at least eight weeks before the end of the data collection period (1 December 2024 to 31 December 2025), and were therefore eligible for the bonus. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

Based on the qualitative research, reasons for young people in work not receiving the into work bonus included: some participants not returning to claim the bonus and those in part-time work not meeting the earnings threshold.

Sustained employment outcomes

Additionally, participant employment journeys were tracked using 12-week, six and nine-month milestones for sustained employment outcomes. Overall, of those who entered employment and were eligible to reach the 12-week milestone (n=38), the majority were recorded as reaching the milestone (n=23). As the milestone marks increase, the number of participants reaching the milestone naturally decreases. For the six-month sustained employment milestone, just 20 participants were eligible to reach this point, with the majority having a recorded outcome (n=12). Figures for young people reaching the nine-month milestone were too low to report in these findings (Appendix Table 20).

Appendix Table 20: Number of participants achieving 12-week, six-month, and nine-month employment milestones

SUSTAINED EMPLOYMENT MILESTONES REACHED	NUMBER	TOTAL ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

12 WEEKS	23	38
SIX MONTHS	12	20
NINE MONTHS	*	*

Base for 12 weeks: 38 participants who had an employment outcome recorded at least 12 weeks before the end of the data collection period. Base for Six months: 20 participants who had an employment outcome recorded at least six months before the end of the data collection period. * Suppressed due to being based on five or fewer people. Source: JobsPlus MI analysis, IES, 2026.

The cohort with the greatest proportion of employment outcomes was the January to March 2025 cohort with 20 outcomes from 55 registrants (36%). As expected, the most recent cohort of participants registered between October-December 2025 (n=62) had the lowest number of employment outcomes (n=7) likely due to how recently (three months or less) they registered for JobsPlus (see Appendix Table 12). The greater likelihood of those in earlier cohorts moving into employment was evident for all JobsPlus participants, not just young people. It suggests that those who joined the programme in the earlier months may have been more motivated and/or have fewer barriers to employment than those who joined the programme later on.

About the authors

Mags Bexon is a Research Manager at Learning and Work Institute.

Joe Cook is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Employment Studies.

Kyla Ellis is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Employment Studies.

Amy Fox is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Employment Studies.

Helen Gray is Chief Economist at Learning and Work Institute.

Rakhee Patel is a Principal Research Fellow at the Institute for Employment Studies.

Sravanthi Vempalli is an Economic Researcher at Learning and Work Institute.