

Clothworkers' Foundation

Proactive Better Futures Initiative

February 2018

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Introduction and background context

In 2013, The Clothworkers Foundation set up the proactive Better Futures grants initiative largely as a response to the riots that occurred in England in 2011. The purpose of the grants was to prioritise young people from urban areas and work with them to help them reach their full potential. By working directly with young people and having a positive impact on them and their larger communities, it was hoped that the interventions could help avoid reaching the tipping point of the riots again. Six charities were awarded grants from the proactive Better Futures initiative and they, along with each grant amount, are listed below:

Charity	Grant
YMCA England	£290,000
One in a Million (OIAM)	£143,000
RECLAIM	£136,000
Making the Leap (MTL)	£150,000
Catch22	£300,000
Stephen Lawrence Trust (SLT)	£150,000

The Clothworkers' Foundation commissioned nfpSynergy to research the impact the grants have had on disadvantaged young people engaged in the programmes delivered by the charities. Through both desk research and qualitative methods, nfpSynergy investigated the six grantee charities in order to understand the impact on individuals and their surrounding communities. This report details the research in depth, including case studies from the interviews with young people and staff.

Background Context

In August 2011, riots occurred across several cities in England. Starting in Tottenham, a series of protests against the police, incidents of looting and episodes of violent eruptions spread to other boroughs across London as well as cities such as Birmingham and Manchester. Young people were largely associated with encouraging, participating or witnessing the unrest. During and immediately after the riots, political rhetoric and media headlines responded by placing the blame of 'broken Britain' and the 'erosion of morality' firmly with young people. More than 3,000 arrests and 1,000 criminal charges were issued as a response. The public aftermath and media perception frequently framed young people as criminal opportunists. The underlying causes of the riots were however, much more complicated.

Tenuous race relations between the police, anger and resentment of authority, social and economic inequality and limited job prospects and career aspirations are often cited¹ as contributing to young people's response in 2011.

¹ Solomos, J. (2011), 'Race, Rumours and Riots: Past, Present and Future', *Sociological Research Online*, 16 (4) 20;

NatCen, (2011) 'The August Riots in England – Understanding the Involvement of Young People' – Report for the Cabinet Office

Although a cross section of people participated in the riots, it is largely considered that poorer members of society were more heavily involved (court records indicate that 59% of rioters were from 20% of the most deprived areas in the UK areas²). Since the riots, there has been little change for young people. Many of the young people involved remain within the same situation and face the same community difficulties and lack of opportunities as before. Youth disengagement persists, and the last seven years has seen increasing cuts to the services, schooling, and support offered to young people.

The role of charities, such as those in this report, is to potentially fill these gaps for the young people they work with; but the context is stark. It is beyond the reach of the Proactive Better Futures Initiative to tackle every root of every problem.

What we have found in this research is that the funding has had profound impacts on the lives of many of the young people affected, ranging from increased confidence, gaining employment and being exposed to opportunities beyond what they had imagined for themselves. In a post-Brexit Britain, and with austerity deeply entrenched, touching the lives of disadvantaged young people in this way is an intensely meaningful act. The vital question emerges: in what ways can this work continue to benefit young people?

² *LSE and The Guardian (2011) 'Reading the Riots' see:*

[http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/46297/1/Reading%20the%20riots\(published\).pdf](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/46297/1/Reading%20the%20riots(published).pdf)

Methodology

This impact evaluation used desk research to frame and provide a background for the project. This was carried out in addition to a qualitative research methodology. This qualitative research allowed an exploration of the individual experiences and perspectives of young people who attended projects, and staff who had been funded by the proactive Better Futures initiative.

The original proposal recommended three telephone depth interviews with project staff from each grantee charity, and three telephone depths with young people who had been part of the project per charity. This was to be supplemented by two focus groups with young people from two different grantee charities. However, after the initial rounds of recruitment with both staff and the young people, we identified some recruitment challenges. For example, a significant obstacle for the project where funding had finished was that staff had moved on and thus, it was difficult to identify personnel with a historical knowledge of the direct work with young people. In addition, some projects worked through schools, which posed specific difficulties as the charities themselves did not liaise directly with young people or store their personal details. For these particular projects, we took advice from each relevant charity and contacted the schools to explore our recruitment options. Some schools replied, and we were able to make progress and plan fieldwork with these schools for the young people still in school. For other schools however, their busy schedules and lack of availability for personnel to assist as gatekeepers meant they were unable to participate.

The breakdown of the fieldwork can be seen below:

Charity	Staff Interviews	Young Person interviews	Focus group / Observation
YMCA England	3	3	
One in a Million (OIAM)	3	3	
RECLAIM	1 ³	5	
Making the Leap (MTL)	3	3	
Catch 22	1	1	1
Stephen Lawrence Trust (SLT)	3	1	1

More detail of each phase of research is given below.

³ Some of the young people in this project are funded to run their own campaigns and programmes, leading other young people. We therefore interviewed one key member of staff, three young person campaign leads, and two further young people involved in the project.

Desk research

The desk research delved into the individual charities' existing reports, providing an outline of the activities that had taken place due to the grant funding, and often, the numbers of young people involved. The reports from some charities also included the numbers of young people involved from different backgrounds, and an insight into the existing levels of deprivation in the areas. This research was used as the background and foundation for the qualitative research; however due to the varied nature of the charities, their projects, and their reporting structure, it is not possible to compare them in a quantitative format.

Interviews

In total, we conducted 14 interviews with project staff members who had received funding from the proactive Better Futures initiative with a split as outlined above. As mentioned in our original proposal, engaging with staff on behalf of funders does create a power imbalance as grant makers have the funds that charities need. We started all of the interviews by explaining that we are an independent research agency and talking through issues related to confidentiality. This was largely to reassure participants that they could be open and honest with us about the project, as it would have no impact on their further contact or relationship with the Clothworkers Foundation.

The staff interviewed provided overviews of the project and how they considered the intervention had directly impacted on the lives of young people. The project workers talked through how the grant made a difference to the charity and, where possible, what has happened since the funding finished.

The young people's interviews were more personal, investigating how they and their peers got involved in the project, and what their experiences of being involved were. This included discussions around their motivations, specific activities, and whether they enjoyed being involved. We then focused the discussions on impact and if the project had made any difference to them, their lives, as well as wider family and community.

These interviews were, on the whole, carried out over the telephone to provide the most efficient method that could fit around the project workers busy schedules. Telephone interviews are also a comfortable manner of communication for young people who are often using technology. This allowed the young people to remain in the comfort of their own homes or other safe spaces and to speak openly to the researchers in a format they are familiar with. There were two face-to-face interviews carried out with young people where the project staff did not have their contact details as they worked through schools. The young people consented to being part of the research, and the interviews were carried out in their schools. The interviews all lasted between 30 and 50 minutes.

Focus groups and observations

In order to access the largest range of young people to take part in the research, we allocated the 'focus group' aspect to Catch22 and the Stephen Lawrence Trust.

As Catch22's funding had finished, there was only one member of staff who had been funded by the proactive Better Futures initiative available to do an interview. The contacts with local young people were not available. Instead we were able to organise a focus group as well as a face-to-face interview with a young person through two of the schools that had benefitted from the Catch22 programme last year.

The Stephen Lawrence Trust also works through London schools. Therefore, there was difficulty in organising times at which to conduct a focus group or interviews for the young people, as the schools were very busy and unable to coordinate. We had several conversations with the Stephen

Lawrence Trust who were keen for us to meet the young people they were working with and gain more of an insight into their work. We agreed to attend one of their pre-arranged day activities in a London school with young people. This was an opportunity for us to observe the activities, to meet more staff, as well as talk to the young people in attendance.

Common themes of impact from the proactive Better Futures initiative

The diversity of charities and projects funded by the proactive Better Futures initiative mean this research has necessarily been a complex comparative process, and one which we have greatly enjoyed. Broadly, staff spoke passionately and evidenced projects with in-depth knowledge and expertise of the areas in which they worked. The impacts were consequently multiple and valuable. Investment into young people is seen as an investment in the future. Better equipped young people can grow to make a meaningful contribution to society, the economy etc. In return, the young people expressed a strong sense of gratitude to the charities, staff, and in turn, The Clothworkers' Foundation.

The overall reflections here have been split into themes that can be drawn out across the six grantee charities and are woven throughout the more detailed section which proceeds this. The following section attempts to summarise the overarching impacts of the proactive Better Futures initiative on young people's lives.

Having a 'safe space'

The creation of a safe space – that is, a place for young people to relax, socialise, and be supported – was identified by nearly all the staff and young people with regard to each of the projects. All the charities worked to create a haven away from the negative situations and external contexts of the young people's lives. For some, this was described as a literal physical space off the streets or out of their homes. For others, it was more of a symbolic space where they were able to be '*a young person again*' (Staff, OIAM, S4). Importantly, the creation of these spaces provided the opportunity to have fun, learn and even be vulnerable and open with project staff and their peers in a way they were not afforded in other areas of their lives.

'You can go out into the world and... they're just, basically saying you can come and be safe'
(Staff, YMCA, P12)

'We used to finish school and go to the skate park every night and just play football, whereas when [name of project worker] told me, ... we've got a youth club and there's an Xbox and there's ping pong table and there's this and that, you know, lots of different things, I thought yes, it's a change and it's somewhere else for us to go when it's dark and when it's cold, it was, it was more like, it was like a little hibernation for kids around the area' (Young person, OIAM)

The decision of where to locate a project where young people already were was something staff said they considered. The spaces were places the young people liked and could get to, but the challenge was to use them in a different way - to get young people to work positively together and to create a safe community with the staff and each other.

'We base them in the middle of areas of high levels of deprivation... That's where all the children are hanging out and that's where they are anyway, so we're right in the centre of that' (Staff, OIAM)

'So there's an ethos that's promoted of 'We're all in this together', 'We're all in the same boat' (Staff, MTL)

The strength of being listened to

Being given a chance to be heard was something that emerged across many of the projects. Multiple projects provided activities to not only engage with the young people, but also to grant them opportunities to be listened to and supported in expressing themselves. Many discussed the value they found in being listened to by project staff, which was considered empowering and reassuring that their lived experience was valid.

'If you needed to talk...someone would always listen and you knew that someone would be there' (Young person, OIAM)

'We're doing what we want to do and no one's saying that we can't or we're not allowed... and being listened to and not being used' (Young person, RECLAIM)

'Thank you, it was nice having someone to speak to' (Young person, Catch 22)

Being an ear to young people was a value that ran through all these projects, beyond the activities that they provided for the young people. It was not only the project staff and volunteers who listened to the young people.

Some of the projects also provided a platform from which they could speak to a wider audience. For example, RECLAIM trained young people to be advocates and to speak and campaign on issues that were important to them at a regional and national level. Members of the YMCA North Tyneside youth clubs attended the Children's and Young People's Conference, and also organised their own residential trip.

'[Before] They didn't know how to speak to people formally on the phone, how to book things so it gave them the confidence to pick up the phone and do that. As a result of that they started to do things on their own' (Staff, YMCA)

'We know exactly what they're all going through and then to see ... them stand up there and deliver a speech that actually on that day adults couldn't do, it's just really incredible and that's all from a commitment to the cause and belief in themselves and a shift in perception about what they can do' (Young persons' campaign lead, RECLAIM)

Positive role models

The role of the project staff was crucial to the motivation and continued engagement of young people. What was more apparent however, was how the staff themselves were considered positive role models and for some, their only avenue of support. For example, one participant in the Catch 22 programme talked of how he has 'nobody to talk to about his struggles' since the project closed. Other similar views were also expressed.

'I think they've supported me through sometimes where I'd think to myself what would I actually have done if I hadn't have turned to them... I always tell [project staff name] this, I am so grateful' (Young person, OIAM)

'The staff were incredibly understanding and helpful and they weren't dismissive at all which I think was really important because it's very easy to dismiss the concerns and worries that young people have nowadays' (Young person, MTL)

The staff and volunteers often illustrated an alternative reality and opened young people's eyes to career opportunities and engagement in different types of employment. This was particularly

pertinent when the project workers and volunteers were from similar backgrounds and/or had similar life experiences. For example:

'If they can speak to people who have been through a career journey, who started from a similar background to them, they can really see how it is achievable in bite-sized steps. It really increases their confidence speaking to somebody who has been through what they are hoping to do' (Staff, SLT)

'They have a mentor who is from their community, who is their pastoral lead, builds their confidence' (Staff, RECLAIM)

'I really looked up to him' (Young person, Catch22)

The value of volunteers

An extension of the staff were the volunteers on the projects, many funded by the proactive Better Futures initiative. The volunteers were seen interchangeably with the staff by some of the young people, suggesting the quality and consistency of the commitment the volunteers showed. Volunteers took different roles in the charities, often running sessions or helping out in the organisation, or providing mentoring. In addition, many young people themselves volunteered their time for the charities to help run different activities and engage more young people. This also provided inspiration and encouragement for others.

'[name of project worker] he was looking for people to give him a hand on a night after school so I said I would and then I started off as a participant and then ended up volunteering and I've just done that ever since' [3 years volunteering in youth group]. (Young person, OIAM)

'Yes, so for example there was a girl on my course who was on the first day very shy, very timid and didn't even want to speak in front of everyone, and by the end of the course you saw that she'd volunteered to take part in Making the Leap's careers fair' (Young person, MTL)

'This original group is passing that passion on to the younger ones who are now coming through. They are in the youth club talking to the younger ones and are buddies to them... becoming role models' (Staff, YMCA)

Building confidence

An increase in individual confidence was a significant theme which emerged across both young people and staff interviews. Each project seemed to work closely with young people to help them feel valued, as well as offering them new opportunities and experiences. This was a key motivator for both staff and young people. Staff described young people as 'coming out of their shells', of 'believing in themselves more' and 'talking to people more'. Staff often talked of how rewarding it was to see the young people develop and grow in confidence:

'They might be coming in with a negative attitude or a bit closed up... the next week, it might just be a 'Hello' as they get to know you a little bit more. Then you'll start finding that they'll actually start coming over and chatting to you... It turns into a weekly conversation and you get to know them a little bit better. I'd say there's a lot of individuals like that that we've had and there's just an obvious growth in confidence: it's sort of happiness, really' (Staff, OIAM)

Similarly, young people across all projects expressed how they felt their confidence had grown by being involved in the projects. Young people often talked with great passion about how this was particularly important to them and their well-being, as well as creating opportunities for them.

'[I] Improved the ability to speak to people I wouldn't normally' (Young person, Catch 22)

'I think the biggest thing I gained was a kind of self-awareness and self-confidence and realising my own self-worth and value ...it helped me remember that I am good enough and that I was capable enough and that I should remember that going forward, and I think that's where it truly helped turn things around for me as well' (Young person, MTL)

'That confidence is irreplaceable, they wouldn't have had that if they didn't work with us which is something they often say, they often say I would never have been doing any of these things if it wasn't for Reclaim because their families and communities aren't in a place to be able to connect them to the various opportunities that we offer' (Young persons' campaign lead, RECLAIM)

Raising aspirations

This confidence contributed to a development and advance in many of the young people's life ambitions. The young people became confident in themselves and their ability to achieve beyond what they felt society sometimes deemed for them.

'They [young working-class people] are frequently told that because of where they're from they're not going to get anywhere in life or they're not going to be able to have a future... I think that's the main thing, it opens their eyes to the fact that where they're from won't dictate what they achieve and actually they are more than capable' (Young persons' campaign lead, RECLAIM)

'Their confidence has improved and they know the steps they need to take to get to where they need to go so it is not just a pipe dream or something they want to do but have no idea how to get there, now they actually know what to do' (Staff, SLT)

Making the Leap, Catch22 and the Stephen Lawrence Trust worked directly to encourage young people to increase their aspirations regarding their further education and/or employment. These projects worked not only to provide the skills for the young people to achieve their aims of going to university, getting a competitive apprenticeship, or starting a career, but also to give them an insight into the possibilities within the working world.

'The two-week workshop is absolutely fundamental in ensuring that the young people that attend not only start to believe in themselves but actually start to see that they are capable, that they have a right to apply for those opportunities, have every single bit of support that they can get from us to enable them to do so' (Staff, MTL)

These aspirations not only lead the young people along the right path and guided them to achieve their potential, but also encouraged their engagement at school as they realised the importance of education as a stepping stone on their journey. When the young people changed their aspirations, this also helped them to move away from possible negative life choices. When young people began to aspire to successful education and employment, the draw of truancy, drugs or gang involvement was reduced.

'What we know from the local police, when the project is operating there's a clear reduction in the levels of not only recorded crime but reported crime as well, so these can only be positive for the wider community' (Staff, YMCA)

'It might mean that a young person who was tinkering on the border of doing something unsavoury is not going to do that anymore because now they're working. I think it has massive community and family impacts' (Staff, MTL)

Forging networks

One of the ways that all the charities worked to raise the young people's aspirations was to connect them with external individuals and encourage the young people to network. This could happen through work experience visits, or through individuals coming to the project and speaking to the young people, e.g. mentoring. The charities themselves also worked to create networks that the young people could use.

Many of the young people had very limited geographical and social networks, and therefore had no link or opportunity to access certain sectors or work experience. For many of the charities, forging networks for young people was an important objective. For example, One In A Million worked with local professional sports clubs so that young people had the opportunity to train there and become trainers. Making the Leap provided networks and encouraged engagement by local employers to give opportunities to young people in disadvantaged areas. YMCA provided young people with connections to set up a summer festival, and RECLAIM worked closely with young people to help them identify and extend relevant networks which would help build and promote their campaign.

'[We form networks to] engage employers, it's to allow employers to meet young people who are sometimes underrepresented in those organisations because they are from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds, because they are from black and minority ethnic groups, because they haven't attended the right establishment for education, their parents don't have the sort of social circle that perhaps other young people have' (Staff, MTL)

'I had the passion and the determination and the knowledge but I didn't have the people to do it with, to express it with, to work with, so it [the project] gave me that community' (Young persons' campaign lead, RECLAIM)

Continued support and consistency

Another key theme which emerged in this research, and often arises in similar projects that we have evaluated, is the importance of continuity. This is especially vital for young people whose lives might otherwise be chaotic, interrupted, and subject to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. family breakdown). There were some great examples of the importance of enduring relationships which emerged in this research. For example, even after some of the young people had completed their time on the project or moved on, they were still welcomed back by project staff if they needed additional support to stay on track. This was reflected in both staff and young people's interviews.

'I would not have been where I am at the moment without Making the Leap... I can never see myself not being involved with them' (Young person, MTL)

'We still keep in touch with them... just to make sure that everything's okay within that position for them... Knowing that we're there for that additional support can make such a difference' (Staff, MTL)

This demonstrated not only the trust that had been built up between the project staff and the young people, but also the importance of long-term support for young people who may not have stability

at home. Building trust and having lasting impact takes time, commitment and resources. This is something that is very hard to achieve for small charities with limited resources. We feel that the importance of continuity and long-term security for projects of this nature is something for The Clothworkers' Foundation to consider.

Impact of the proactive Better Futures initiative across the individual charities

YMCA England

Desk research summary

The YMCA delivers high quality street work projects in disparate areas. The Better Futures funding was a timely opportunity to develop valuable expertise and extend their previous work into more disadvantaged and under resourced areas. In YMCA North Tyneside the project targeted 13-15 year olds, with high priority for young people that were not yet in the system and had not yet been flagged as at risk. In YMCA Sutton Coldfield the project targeted young people aged 10-25 who were NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training), socialising in anti-social behaviour hotspots and were threatened with exclusion from school. The project provided 3 street-based sessions per week, focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots. At YMCA Thames Gateway the project targeted hard to reach young people that would not normally have had access to youth provision, focusing on those 11-19 and prioritizing those 13-19 years old.

Areas: The North East (YMCA North Tyneside), a region with high socio-economic disadvantages. Youth unemployment has nearly doubled from 2008-2011 and there are only 2 youth clubs. There are high levels of alcohol consumption (25% of 15 year olds drink over 10 alcohol units per week) and gang activity.

The Midlands (North Birmingham – YMCA Sutton Coldfield), an area with high youth unemployment (30% higher than average in the constituency) and an area recently affected by huge cuts to support service.

South East London (Woolwich Riverside – YMCA Thames Gateway) a ward that is economically deprived and is in the bottom 5% of London. 67% of lone parents are unemployed and 33% of people over 16 have no qualifications.

Aims

3 year aims	Number	Achieved
Number of young people to be supported across the three projects	320	1307
Number of young people in North Tyneside having access to role models and gaining improved inspirations from street-based interventions.	100	255
Number of hard to reach young people in South East London engaged with positive activities and positive experiences with the police.	100	419
Number of young people from deprived neighbourhoods in North Birmingham taking up opportunities and engaging with provision through street based youth work.	120	633



Of all young people engaged in the projects, 56% were male and 44% were female.

The project also aimed to develop longer-term solutions to address the underlying causes of the riots for young people.

The Better Futures Street Work Project was a flagship project of England's Youth Participation Programme.

YMCA North Tyneside - activities and achievements

- Youth evening projects ran in a local church, attracting around 20 young people a week. Two of these young people were chosen to represent the club at the North Tyneside Children and Young People's Conference.
- At least ¾ of the 16+ age group are now working, and almost all the others are at college.
- Regular street-based sessions diverted young people away from anti-social behaviour and less were seen 'loitering' on the streets. This was supported by a letter from the police that reflects the reduction in anti-social behaviour in Howden.
- Young people were encouraged to organise a youth leadership residential in the Lake District, and further young people engaged in the 'Leaders for Life' residential programme focusing on building their self-confidence.
- Around 175 young people took part in the programme that ran across the summer holidays in 2015.
- A group of Romanian refugees became fully involved and integrated into the community through the programme.
- YMCA North Tyneside received grants from other areas including a £2,000 grant from the Northumbria Crime and Police Commissioner Fund. The Howden Project was awarded a grant of £11k a year for three years, and Heritage Lottery invested a 40k grant in the 'Young Roots' programme that engages young people in their local heritage. This project has secured more funding and will continue for at least two years after The Clothworkers' funding.
- The work at this project was nominated for the High Sheriff's Award.

YMCA Sutton Coldfield - activities and achievements

- Won the Birmingham City Council Shining Stars Award 2013 and the Stockland Green Community Award 2013 for working in partnership.
- Sessions and youth club were attracting between 25-30 young people each week.
- A further 50-80 young people were also contacted through the street work.
- Activity days of 13 different types including cooking workshops, beat box classes and street dance classes have been run.
- Young champions were recruited throughout the area with increasing numbers from 5-10. These young champions helped organise an event that was attended by over 400 people in summer of 2015.
- 28 young people were taken on an 8 day camping trip; they were well behaved and participated fully.
- Since taking part in a leadership programme, 50% of the young people have actively been seeking out extra responsibilities, paid or part-time work or apprenticeships.
- One young woman who hadn't previously taken part in any exercise was challenged to start a rugby team. She took up the challenge and a year later has a core team of 25 young women playing rugby.

- Received grants including £3,500 from the Community Safety Partnership; £3,000 from the City Youth Service; £3,000 from the Kingstanding Regeneration Trust and £15,000 to deliver a detached sports programme after The Clothworkers' funding finished.
- 60-70 young people attended the weekly Conker Island sessions.

YMCA Thames Gateway - activities and achievements

- The team engaged with 85 young people and told them about Better Futures. The group is made up of 18 young women and 67 young men with 75% in the target age-range of 13-18. A core group of 55 are very keen to get involved in football and other key areas of interest including drama, dance, athletics, hair and beauty, and music.
- Football sessions were a major engagement tool and training was run for around 30 young people a week. Following feedback from the young people, a football league was also set up.
- Two young people were empowered to start groups. One set up a basketball team where they were supported by a professional coach, and the other started a photography class.
- Around 30 young and ethnically diverse people at any time during the project were being supported intensively.
- Won GAVS Sector Award – local award – for making a positive contribution to young people's lives, and the Thames Gateway team reached the semi-final of the FA People's Cup for the BBC.
- Positive links with local organisations including free English/Maths courses, and Charlton Athletic Football Club which offered free football coaching.
- 4 young people helped to plan and organize a residential trip that allowed many young people to go on their first trip out of the area.
- The 'Better Futures Youth Festival' was formed by 6 young people who took part in the Youth Events Management programme and culminated in a successful summer festival that over 120 young people attended.

Summary of impact from staff and young people interviews

Background to the projects

Howden - A huge community with all the hallmarks and characteristics which might lead to gang culture. YMCA wanted to work in this area but had no spare capacity, so it targeted the Better Futures funding specifically for this area. The team "went in cold", knowing it would be a long and challenging process. As with OIAM, there was an element of 'will we be able to do it?' but at the same time, they had confidence that the outcomes would be achieved.

The funding only enabled 3 street visits per week which YMCA didn't think would be sufficient to cope with demand and build relationships, so very early on they developed a consortium to increase their capacity. Now, even the police contribute funding, which shows how well regarded their work is.

Birmingham – A staff member joined the project in year 2 as a project manager and combined the role of both project management and programme delivery. Typically, these roles are separate, but combining them created the advantage of greater consistency and seamlessness across the project. This was because one person managed the programme, the team, and the development of the project – and also formed direct relationships with the young people. This way of working was so effective that it was rolled out to the other YMCA projects in Birmingham. Had it not been for the Better Futures funding, this insight would not have been realised.

It also had another 'unintended consequence', relating to staff motivation. Colleagues were experiencing disillusionment with the direction youth work was going in; it no longer felt like it was achieving what it was meant to achieve. The nature of youth work is about being a catalyst for change and transformation, and perhaps staff were beginning to feel as though they weren't able to affect much change. The Better Futures funding reversed the trend and reignited passion amongst staff for youth work; remembering that *'this is what youth work is'. 'It's about giving people a safe space, where they feel cared for, can be themselves, and feel no judgment whatsoever'* (Staff). On a personal note, *'it changed things for me massively. The energy and love for youth work has been reignited and that feeling is still going strong three years on. It's exciting'* (Staff).

Thames Gateway/Woolwich – A staff member came in at the end of year 1 as a project worker. The work consisted of a small outreach team, who spent a couple of months meeting with young people aged 12-18 on 3 large estates. They listened to their needs and then put activities together to meet these needs, in the form of after school clubs, holiday activities and residential.

Perceived Staff Objectives

- Build relationships with local community that would be sustainable. Sustainability was put first and foremost, with funding seen as the 'first rung of the ladder'.
- Create a trusting environment by taking time to demonstrate that the team is reliable and 'on the side' of the young people.
- Start to create opportunities for young people.
- To overcome generational barriers to engagement with the community and inspire feelings of love and respect for the area and each other; giving young people a reason to care about their community. The existing belief was *'there's no adult who gives a crap here so why should we?'* (Staff).

Achievements

Howden

- 'There are 101 'good news stories' around truancy, leadership programmes etc. (This is also seen in Maxine Green's report - she was commissioned by YMCA England to evaluate all 3 projects).
- Gangs haven't emerged, despite having all the hallmarks for the development of gang culture (and this was a key area of work for the proactive Better Futures initiative).
- They've raised the expectations, aspirations and self-esteem of individuals and the community they live in.
- The positive benefits cascade into the wider community; for example, the young people who went on a leadership programme brought resulting learning and skills back into their community.
- There was a large awards ceremony in the community and this was a high point for the project workers to see the positivity and success of the community.

Birmingham

- A sense of ownership and pride in the community and sense of responsibility – the example of picking up litter dropped by someone else might sound trivial but speaks volumes about the shift in attitude.
- The young people have grown and transformed – coaxing is no longer required; they are proactive, self-initiating new projects, taking things forward in their own ways and coming up with new ideas in their spare time about how to make the changes they want to see.

- The first cohort of young people from year 1 of the project have become known as 'the elders' and they are inspiring younger children in the community and becoming positive role models.
- Perceptions have also shifted among adults about teenagers; breaking a generational legacy from holding a view about young people 'all being up to no good', to holding them with positive regard.
- The funding has been a '*catalyst*' for change across the whole of the YMCA - creating a '*chain reaction*' of change – '*it's had a huge impact on how we're doing everything now*' (staff). This unexpected impact on YMCA working practices and the motivation of staff will create even more positive benefits for young people.
- Evidence for community engagement and transformation: The Conker Island open air cinema and food festival for all the family, attracted around 150 families; '*singing and dancing along to Grease with a hot chocolate*' (staff). This was the height of the manifestation of a new community spirit, which had been growing in strength and reached a culmination in this event. Birmingham staff members talked through some case studies based on their experience:
 - There was a young woman who is a young carer who got in trouble with the police for fighting and was suspended from school. Now she is getting all the support she needs from this YMCA project and other YMCA services in relation to being a carer, and she has applied to join the armed forces.
 - Several young people organized a family disco and it turned out that one individual '*who had always been a character, just shone*' (staff). He was the compere for the night and turned out to be a natural entertainer. It was a unique platform in which he could realise and express this aspect of his personality, and wonderful for everyone around him to enjoy it. Supremely confident, telling jokes, chatting; all of which was highly inspiring for his peers.

Thames Gateway

- A coming together of community and a growth in understanding of each other across the breadth of the local society.
- Being united as young people and having the opportunity to gain new experiences and learn from each other, each bringing different experiences and gifts to the table.
- A sense of ownership of life on the estates and wanting to be part of something bigger as a community.
- Facilitated confidence around recognizing that young people have a valuable contribution to make.
- A shift in perceptions among older people about young people – breaking down stereotypes (as in Birmingham).
- More positive role models who show the youngest age groups that there are different pathways in life to the ones that older siblings have perhaps gone down.
- Reduction in complaints about young people hanging out on street corners.

Critical success factors across the projects

- The quality of the staff on the outreach teams: '*if young people learn to trust the workers on the ground then the sky's the limit*' (Staff).
- The funding from The Clothworkers' Foundation was 'clean' funding, coming with few strings, which enabled the project to be flexible, responsive and wide in scope. Rather than needing to know everything in advance, it let the projects evolve organically in response to needs in the community.

- Staff expressed that the amount of time for the Proactive Better Futures Initiative was beneficial. *'Some funders want to see change in 6 months and this isn't always feasible but The Clothworkers' Foundation gave the time to see real change'* (Staff).
- Getting young people involved in designing activities meant they were all applicable and well attended. Having a flexible grant allowed this approach to develop.
- Empowering young people to run activities and events themselves: giving them a sense of agency, empowerment and responsibility so that they can feel all the pride and satisfaction of seeing their ideas come successfully to fruition.

**Right funding + Right staff + Right approach + Realistic objectives
= You can make a difference**

The downside of the approach is that it is hard to articulate impact in quantitative terms. It might not be possible to claim that, for example, *'80% of our young people went onto achieve grades A-C'* but families say things like, *if it wasn't for this project, little Jimmy would have been locked up by now...'* (Staff).

Key challenges and obstacles

- Resource: a reliance on volunteers and part time staff means that it takes time and effort to get the whole team 'on the same page' – this has been addressed with finding effective and regular ways to communicate.
- Encouraging communities to open up where there has been history of racism, where communities can often be suspicious of 'outsiders' due to prejudice or past experience.
- As the activities and events got more successful they were outgrowing their venues, resulting in staffing and health and safety issues. (Birmingham)
- It proved difficult to engage young women. This could be due to the history of youth clubs being predominantly male driven. (Thames Gateway)
- It was also harder to work with the 17-19 year olds, who were more entrenched in their behaviours and physically in the spaces or territories that felt most comfortable to them. This was a key learning around the importance of starting interventions with the youngest age groups to break this cycle. (Thames Gateway)

Comments around the 2011 riots

Staff saw that when youth club services are cut back, young people have nothing particularly constructive to do with their time, and this creates conditions for anti-social behaviour and negative behaviour. Associated with this is the attitude that it is acceptable to behave in this way because no one around cares and there are no consequences. Staff talked about how they believed that they had witnessed noticeable differences in the community. Through greater engagement, an increase in pride, and an understanding that there are negative consequences, this has changed.

A further observation made by the YMCA staff was that there were two responses to the riots; some who were shocked and some that thought it looked like a lot of fun. These two perspectives were openly debated and discussed with young people, who talked through alternative responses in the future.

Literature on the 2011 riots suggest that young people got involved in mindless ways often because their peers were. The programmes offered by organisations like the YMCA aim to turn this around by using peer influence in positive ways. Here, YMCA encourage young people to participate in activities which are fun, engaging and healthy rather than those which are fun, engaging and risk-taking.

Moreover, staff also felt that the Proactive Better Futures Initiative was integral to the 8-12 age group who are particularly affected by the cuts and removal of youth service.

Descriptions of individual impact

- The main theme that emerged from the young people was that of providing a safe space; all three described this concept.

Male, young person

This young person has been involved with the YMCA for about 10 years. His involvement has primarily been the Monday night sessions. He heard about it from a friend of the family. He also attended a residential weekend two years ago. He describes the weekly sessions as a safe place, and that the staff work hard to keep it safe. He talked openly about how being involved with the YMCA has provided him with a positive alternative which means he '*stays of the streets*'. He feels that he has had the opportunity to learn new skills that are not taught in school including social skills, managing personal finances, how to cook, knowing interview techniques etc.

He also talked about how he has grown in confidence, and feels that he is better equipped to develop and maintain both friendships and relationships. He was also really hopeful about his future stating that '*I feel 100% more confident that I will be able to handle myself after college*'.

Moreover, he also talked about how he valued the team building aspect of the Monday night sessions and the weekend away. He feels that this has taught him lots, and that he is now able to recognize new qualities in himself such as how much he enjoys looking after 'the younger ones'. His chosen path of football coaching has also been greatly nurtured by his involvement with the YMCA as they have enabled him to attend some courses and provided opportunities to work with the younger children.

Male, young person

This young person has been involved with the YMCA for 5 years and also regularly attends the Monday night sessions. He heard about it when it was promoted on his estate and was attracted by the range of activities – table tennis, pool, and a recording studio. He describes it as a place where you can '*chill out and enjoy yourself*'. He also attended the weekend residential from the Better Futures project where he was given the chance to try multiple activities, climbing, canoeing etc. – this was much appreciated and he benefited from the new challenges and grew in confidence.

The staff are described as encouraging and supportive. There is a sense of being part of a team; if you are having a bad day, there will be someone you can talk to. He seems to be well engaged with 'social talks', on issues and topics relevant to young people's lives, e.g. bullying, and said that they are helpful, that they '*[give] you messages to take on board*'. It would appear his involvement with the YMCA has raised his aspirations as he describes feeling inspired or motivated to go out into the world and make an impact.

This young person recognises that the Monday night sessions are proof that there is an alternative way to spend free time rather than joining gangs. Importantly, he goes on to observe that this has given him a greater sense of freedom, '*if you isolate yourself [from the gangs] you feel better about yourself*' - this is a very powerful insight and one which will provide a solid foundation for this young person staying on track.

Female, young person

This young female started at the YMCA when she was 13, attending the youth club on a weekly basis. She was initially motivated to attend because her friends were going but found it a little daunting at first. Her involvement with the YMCA has been with the youth club sessions, the Aspire programme, field trips (e.g. to Cornwall) and has now become a volunteer.

There is an element of surprise that she has stayed so long with the YMCA; seeing it initially as *'just a youth club'* but over time she realised that it has been a significant influence helping her to *'improve'* and stay on track. This young person is also a young carer, which has meant she was able to find out about and access other YMCA services that are relevant to her situation.

She attributes the quality of the staff as a major factor in creating positive benefits. Unlike perhaps many other adults in young people's lives, there is a sense that these adults *'genuinely care'*, and create an atmosphere which is *'completely different'* to school. *'They are really amazing people and I am so glad I was able to join the YMCA when I did'*. She also cites the *'safe space'*; that there is a strong sense of confidentiality - you can raise something with a member of staff and feel utterly confident it won't go any further. The qualities of being trustworthy and reliable serve as examples of positive attributes in her life.

She described how her priorities in life are college and family, and how the *'YMCA come into every aspect of that without me even realizing it'*. *'If I'm having a bad day, they cheer me up'*. It is seen as amazing by the young people to know there are people out there who place value on them and who *'make a difference'*.

When asked what might have happened had she not got involved with the YMCA, the suggestion was things might have looked very different. She describes how this time last year she was in a very different place, at risk of going off the rails; in with the wrong crowd, getting involved in fights and getting into trouble at school. What she perceives now is that the YMCA were aware of this and gently guided her back in the right direction without her even realizing it. For example, they kept bringing her back into the youth club sessions and encouraging her to come more often.

Aspire programme – 10 week programme about building relationships, confidence, team building, leadership, and broadening horizons. This was held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for 90 minutes. Note - she was unable to attend the Thursday evening sessions owing to a clash with college timetable. The *'adult'* learning environment was appreciated, which made it very different to school. Rather than feeling forced into being there and participating, it was made appealing in such a way that you wanted to take part.

Her involvement with the YMCA has enhanced her confidence and her choice of career. *'I think it's helped my confidence a lot. I already felt quite confident but now I'm more confident. I feel more confident about being able to do my college work'*. Similarly, there has been a positive impact on her motivations - *'it has made me feel more motivated about what I want to do'*.

Becoming a volunteer has also helped with her confidence and communication skills. Crucially, she spontaneously describes how it's helped her to relate well to all ages and genders. She also cites being treated more as a *'grown up'* and being treated with respect from the young participants.

One in a Million (OIAM)

Desk research summary

The overall aim of the charity is to “Invest hope into the lives of disadvantaged and excluded children and young people”, to avoid letting the negative statistics and stereotypes of deprived areas limit young people, and to help them make a wider contribution to society. The project ‘Streetwise’ aimed to get young people off the streets and into an activity where they can be exposed to positive mentoring, focus, direction, and messages of social education. These activities provide skills, confidence and knowledge to progress onto pathways of employment, education and training. This aims to further tackle the problems of unemployment, low educational attainment and broader social issues.

Area:

Bradford – The charity is working in areas in the top 1% of national deprivation levels and broader areas in the top 20%. These communities were affected by the Bradford riots in 2001. The experience of racial divisions and tensions, and social and economic deprivation have left young people feeling marginalized, unsupported and with little direction in their lives. Statistics on crime, truancy and anti-social behaviour among young people is also much higher in this region than the national average.

Aims and outcomes

The charity uses the existing OIAM model to provide healthy activities, social education and lifestyle training to young people to empower them to reach their full potential.

Specific targets:

- Manningham: additional 50 young people a week
- Windhill: around 100 young people a week
- Keighley: around 100 young people a week

Summary and achievements

Many of the young people have gained qualifications, including over 80 achieving the Lord Mayor’s Award. In addition, two project attendees were successful in trials at Halifax town which includes studying BTeC sports qualification. There has also been an increase in the numbers doing the accredited Sports Leaders Course and training for the staff.

Three new community activators were employed to build relationships with the community, as well as building trust with, and providing consistent support to, the young people who attended multiple activities. The project was the start of reducing NEET figures (young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training), engaging more BAME communities, helping young people to become work ready, and developing the activities to increase the participation of girls. A key measure of success was the fact that many young people who had been attendees of the project wanted to continue and volunteer on the project, benefitting the project as a whole and increasing their own employability.

Participants



The highest month was Feb 2016 which had 1,982 attendances to the activities

One of the focuses of the project was to attract BAME participants within Bradford, where the population has 63.9% classed as White British and 20.3% Pakistani. By the second year, the participants were beginning to reflect the ethnic make-up of Bradford.

- White British: 76%
- Pakistani: 11%
- Indian: 7%
- White & Black Caribbean: 2%
- Bangladeshi: 1%
- Other ethnicities: 3%

Projects

Streetwise football clubs: These sessions for 11 to 18 year olds engaged young people in sport but also themed projects around different subjects; within the first two years this included racism, drug and alcohol abuse, and football hooliganism. This provided a community space for young men to aid development, confidence, and improve their employability through leadership opportunities. These projects had up to 4,500 attendees in the second year.

Kidz Club: These well attended sessions run a few times a week in each area for 5 to 12 year olds who spread knowledge of the club by word of mouth. Kidz club provides a contact with younger children to feed into the further youth groups, development projects and Streetwise football clubs. By year 2 of the funding, Kidz club had become very popular and part of the normal week, providing taster sessions and a safe space. This format was used in the **Enrichment After School Clubs** that had 526 hours of contact and delivery over the first year with activities ranging from film club to dance, football, school of rock, cooking, and an eBay business school.

Other activities include:

- Dance development group
- Youth sessions
- Community football
- Summer activities
- Girls football

Partner organisation relationships

Key partnerships were created across the community. For example, The Bangladeshi centre provided space and engagement with this community. It had 432 attendances in the second year, of which 67% were BAME young people, just from Keighley. Local sports teams got involved to offer taster course and open days for young people. Leeds Beckett University encouraged students to volunteer on the project and Bradford Community Environment Project ran cook and eat sessions at Kidz Club.

Community database

The community database, implemented in the second year of funding, was a key development aim for OIAM to help form systems to provide easy data entry that could track the progress and impact of the projects and activities. The data that OIAM has about the young people who attend their project can be mapped against the known deprivation levels in the area to give a clear view of the

attendees of the projects. This can give OIAM a perspective on where they are having an influence, and where they can work to engage more young people from deprived areas.

Summary of impact from staff and young people interviews

Background to the projects

The funding was required to extend an existing programme into 3 new areas:

- Windhill and Shipley
- Manningham
- Keighley

Funding from stakeholders like The Clothworkers' Foundation is even more important in the wake of statutory funding cuts. In the Bradford area, statutory services are now focusing on a narrower age range (13-19) so OIAM is plugging a vital gap by providing services to younger age groups as well as older. Overall, it is supplementing school education with experiences and opportunities which will develop young people's interests and skills.

The after-school clubs aim to be a safe place; friendly, encouraging and supportive, where participants can be '*a young person again*' (Staff). Staff develop one to one relationships with young people, as well as working in groups, anything from around 10 people to 45 or more.

Key challenges and obstacles

- Statutory funding cuts are now starting to bite, and this is impacting venue costs. Despite previously being given usage of community spaces free of charge, OIAM are now being charged for use. Venue hire is a sizeable overhead for which OIAM now needs to be able to secure additional funding.
- The nature of the work means it can be slow and frustrating at times, with limited resources to invest in presence, services and relationship building. It takes time, and sustained effort to prove to the local community (which typically can be quite closed) that OIAM is constant and reliable. OIAM has had to work harder to overcome the fact that the community is jaded or reluctant to get involved having witnessed plenty of organisations '*dipping in and out*' (Staff).
- Resourcing is a challenge in terms of not having enough staff. OIAM relies heavily on volunteers who can be hard to retain (often looking for employment or in full-time education).
- It takes time to understand the nature of the issues surrounding a young person, the difficult and challenging behaviours some of the young people display, and to appreciate the causes and contributing factors. For this reason, it also takes time and sensitivity to develop a programme that works for diverse individual needs and situations which is hard to achieve with finite resources.

Main achievements

- Establishing OIAM for the long-term; achieving longevity as short-term funding can be detrimental, adding to the instability of young people's lives. OIAM have avoided this by building a long-term model, not subject to funding whims or short-term contracts.
- As a result of longevity, they are beginning to see people come out the other side; taking on voluntary roles within the programmes, gaining employment, and gaining accreditations. These impacts are beginning to be felt in year 3 of the project.
- OIAM has invested in relationship building with local organisations in order to deliver high quality sessions.

- Setting up the accreditations has supported the professional development of young people. This provides them with qualifications that allow them to gain employment and move forwards into a positive future.
- Broadening young people's horizons. Young people in deprived areas may have ventured only very short distances and travel a short radius from home. OIAM offers *'threshold experiences'* and *'taster courses'* (run for 6/7 weeks by a professional alongside the regular sessions) which expose young people to the wider world and to new experiences such as dinghy sailing in the Lake District. These are all experiences, which would have otherwise been un-imaginable.

Impact

It is possible to infer that the services and activities provided will all contribute to the breaking of cycles of deprivation and unemployment – changing the course of a young person's life and opening their horizons to new opportunities and experiences.

The impact on the individual is frequently seen in their personal development. Staff described when young people begin attending the clubs, their level of confidence is low, and they might be exhibiting behavioural issues. As time goes on, and as they are shown care, love and attention from the staff (qualities they may or may not receive in other areas of their life), shifts in attitudes and demeanour start to be seen. This might manifest in ways which could appear relatively minor but for this particular audience represent a huge shift. For example, initially body language will be negative, a lack of eye contact etc., then over time a young person might be able to say hello as they arrive, and then in time they will initiate a conversation. This is a huge shift!

One member of staff particularly emphasised the outcome of the programme in giving young people a voice (this also relates to the 2011 riots issue), which helps them to feel empowered, engaged, and have a sense of agency about the course of their own life. The young people have a voice and a say to influence how the programme is shaped, in line with what they want and how they want it. They are engaged and empowered, not overlooked and marginalized.

In terms of employability, whilst not being a direct objective in terms of numbers, OIAM activities support the development of young people's interests, often as a first stepping stone to identifying a career path. The area of employability has been boosted by the introduction of the accreditations, in areas such as First Aid at Work, Food Hygiene and Football Coaching.

By way of feedback, the staff at OIAM are *'constantly getting thanked'* (Staff) for what a great job they are doing in the area, especially by parents – sometimes repeatedly by the same parent, who has witnessed dramatic positive improvements in the behaviour and attitude of their child.

Wider impact

Because of the longevity of their programme, and the fact OIAM staff develop direct relationships with young people (as opposed to working through an intermediary such as a school), staff also get to know families, which helps widen their influence. Frequently, siblings and cousins will also get involved. In many cases, the young people will be involved with the organisation for many years; in a very real sense a young person can 'grow up' with OIAM.

In terms of community, OIAM has created strong provision in the area. The popularity of their activities has significantly increased. The Friday night football session can attract upwards of 70 young people. Increasingly, young people are choosing to come and engage with the activity rather than *'knocking around on the streets'* (Staff).

Comments around the 2011 riots

The work carried out by OIAM addresses some of the issues around the causes of the 2011 riots. For example, staff members work alongside Mosques and other cultural and religious centres in the community. Inclusion is a focus; the ethnicity of Bradford itself is matched in participants attending the groups so everyone is included. Overall, the support provided to young people is about helping them to become well-rounded individuals who realise or believe they can contribute to society. Less directly, OIAM partner with or signpost to other organisations who are providing services relevant to this area.

Internal impact of funding

One staff member commented that the impact of the Clothworkers' Foundation funding has been bigger than simply allowing them to extend provision to new areas; it has enabled the growth and strengthening of the whole organisation. This is a hugely significant and positive outcome for the future of the organisation and its sustainability. It has been, *'without a doubt, a positive experience'* (Staff).

Descriptions of individual impact

An area of significant impact is around the growth in confidence and hopes individuals now have about their future.

Male, Manningham

This participant has been involved with OIAM for 5 years and has now become a volunteer. He enjoys this as it involves supporting young people across a range of activities such as high rope courses, sailing, and running other local youth club activities. He also attended the sports leadership programme over the summer and sees that this has helped him become *'better as a volunteer'*. His volunteer role is important to him and he would like to develop this more in the future. *'It's made me better as a person and I can help others'*.

A primary area of impact described by this young person has been his growth in confidence in terms of relationship building and friendships. *'When I first came to school, I was quiet and rarely spoke to people'*; he now observes that he has learnt how to make friendships much more easily. This makes school more enjoyable and meaningful, a prerequisite for encouraging his attendance, and engagement.

Another key area where OIAM has also had a positive influence is in affirming his choice of career. This young person knew from a relatively early age that he wanted to pursue a career in the army. Consequently, OIAM arranged for him to spend time at an army training ground which has inspired him enormously.

For this participant, he feels that without OIAM he would still be struggling to talk to people and would still be anxious about the impressions or views others might have about him. There is a clear sense overall that his involvement with OIAM has provided him with a much wider circle of friends, and therefore, more enjoyment from life and also a wider base of people he can rely on.

Male, Keighley

This young person has been involved with OIAM for a year or two, having heard about OIAM from his brother. He attends the Thursday night training sessions and intends to be more involved in the future.

Like the previous case study, when asked whether OIAM had made a difference to him, he talked about how his confidence had grown and that he now has an ability to make friends much more easily. This participant also describes how he feels OIAM have helped him *'feel calm and relaxed'* as he indicated feelings of isolation and anxiety prior to his involvement in OIAM.

He feels that a continued involvement with OIAM will help him in the long term and with his career aspiration. He talked about how his positive experience with OIAM will definitely benefit his CV as he is gaining communication and leadership skills, which are not possible at school.

Female, Windhill & Shipley

This participant started attending youth club sessions with her friends when she was 13. Over time she built up a good relationship with the staff leader, and when a new youth club was being set up she offered to take on a volunteer role. A few years prior to that, this young person had witnessed a significant traumatic experience to a close family member, and OIAM has provided vital healing space over that time. Her depth of gratitude drives her motivation to give back to the organisation and other young people. *'They were there for me at a key time in my life. At that time One in a Million was the only charity working in our area, I really don't know what I would have done without them'*. She recognises that it would have been quite conceivable that she would have spiralled into substance abuse, knowing that they were being used by others on school nights. Becoming a volunteer enabled her to give back, help her community and she also knew it would be of benefit in terms of future career opportunities. An example of this is how her role as a volunteer is directly supporting her college studies, where she spends time in a school helping with a PE session. *'My volunteering work has made me more successful. I was able to bond more easily with the young people because I know how to be around them'*.

This young person feels she has benefited from learning about 'life', and also comments on the favourable adult to child ratio at the youth club as compared to school. *'At school they teach you the basics to pass exams but here I was learning about life. I was talking to adults, forming useful relationships'*. It's a place where young people receive more attention; *'if you need to talk you know there will be someone there who will listen'*.

RECLAIM

Desk research summary

RECLAIM works with disadvantaged and vulnerable young people from deprived areas in Greater Manchester. Stemming from the Moss Side Boys project that was a response to black gang violence, The Clothworkers' Foundation provided a grant to extend the LEAD (Leadership, Enterprise, Activism, Development) programme. Unlike other projects funded by the Proactive Better Futures Initiative, this project is highly focused on 7 young people each year (21 over the three-year period). With masterclasses and individualised mentoring, the aim is to establish the young people as community leaders. These young people led projects and campaigns which aim to allow young working-class people to lead change in and for their communities.

Area: There are high levels of deprivation in Greater Manchester, with 59% of young people in Moss Side living in poverty in 2009. Some of the areas in this project are within the top 1% of income deprived areas. A-level results are also significantly below the national and regional average.

Aims

RECLAIM aims to increase the confidence and self-worth of the selected young people. It also aims to equip them with greater confidence in public speaking and greater self-awareness, both of their social and personal identity. The young people would learn to challenge stereotypes and the importance of social action. These aims were transferred through the following practical targets:

- Community action projects were set up within the first 3 months of each young person's campaign.
- 3 coaching sessions with Result CIC and 12 individual coaching sessions.
- Marketing campaigns, one from each young person a year in the activism stream.
- 6 masterclasses a year, focusing on creating and developing an idea and financial management of the individual campaigns.

This is a difficult project to quantify since it invests deeply in small numbers of young people. However, there have been large scale impacts on the individuals and the communities around them. This summary therefore looks at the data available but also presents some key case studies to understand the depths of its impact.

Achievements

In year one, 20 out of 24 of participants graduated from the programme; 10 in leadership and 10 in activism. 100% of participants said they now feel 'passionate about social change', described themselves as a leader, could deal with difficult situations better and want to become peer mentors for future participants. In year two, 92% of the young people considered themselves engaged with politics (a 40% jump in political engagement from joining RECLAIM) and 100% left believing that they are young leaders.

Key achievements

- The Clothworkers' funding has enabled a young woman who was a victim of Child Sexual Abuse to lead an award-nominated campaign to tackle stigma and improve service delivery for vulnerable children.
- The grant enabled them to occupy public spaces with campaigns. For example, the 'Built By' campaign allowed 13 year olds to engage with financial brokers and hedge fund managers and talk about life on council estates.

- BBC documentary lasting one hour based around the work from 'REIGN' campaign/programme on tackling child sexual exploitation.
- Completed 7 youth led campaigns, 4 of which have secured additional funding and will be rolled out.
- Across all 7 campaigns, 9 young pioneers have gone on to work with an additional 55 people.
- Recently launched the RECLAIM institute, a formal entity acting as an incubator for youth lead social change.

Campaign case studies

Disruptive Leaders: 'Stand up, speak up and be heard': Biggest campaign of year 1, raising awareness and debating the issue of leadership inequality.

- Highlighted the lack of working-class representation across mainstream political parties.
- It featured: a city-wide billboard campaign, an animation about leadership inequality, a young person presenting at a Conservative Party Conference event, a young people led debate with politicians including Ruth Davidson.

Educating All: Led by 2 RECLAIM university graduates, this was a youth-led research project which explored the barriers faced by working-class students at university.

- At the New Economics Foundation in February 2017, Educating All brought together 50 university representatives, students and policymakers to discuss issues and identify solutions. 88% of respondents who attended the event evaluated it as "Amazing".

Key findings of their research were:

- Working-class students lack a sense of belonging and entitlement to their place at university and feel isolated and alienated. There is a need for improvements in mental health support.
- Financial support is adequate during term time but support over non-term time periods for students may be necessary to remain at university.

Moss Side Must Fly: A project to show individuals the positive side of Moss Side. Akeim Mundell, the leader of the project, received a British Empire Medal for the significant impact his work has made to his community in December 2016.

- When the attendees were asked, 'will you do anything differently as a result of this experience?' 50% stated a positive shift in their perception of Moss Side. This ranged from 'feeling more relaxed in Moss Side', to looking for a home in Moss Side when moving.

Summary of impact from staff and young people interviews

Outline of programme

In year 1, a selection of 12 and 13 year-olds who have proven they have the appetite to be a leader or agent of social change are facilitated to come up with their manifesto of change; six areas in which they want to see change in their community. Using a variety of funding streams, the young people are helped through the process to implement their manifesto. The Clothworkers' Foundation funding came in specifically for year 2, when 12 young people worked with professional coaches to develop and implement their social change campaigns. The focus of the campaigning work was related to giving young working-class people a voice and changing perceptions held by others about this demographic. The 3-year funding expired in November 2017.

Main objectives

- Amplify the voice of working-class people in the north
- Drive greater awareness of RECLAIM so that it has a voice nationally

The outcome so far has been well beyond what was expected. RECLAIM now has a significant national profile, a reputation for being the voice for young working-class people and has been invited to represent this audience on a multitude of issues, such as Brexit and Grenfell Tower. Brexit was a big opportunity for RECLAIM because it revealed the massive disengagement and alienation felt by so many young people outside of London, which became the springboard for a specific political campaign.

RECLAIM is very explicit around being about, and for, the working-class. Not in a pitying sense for being less wealthy, but with a positive spin – positioning its young people as experts in the lives they lead. This is a key reason why young people will feel engaged to get involved. RECLAIM asks them: do you want to be a leader? Do you want to create change, be a change maker, or change the world? If so, we can help you do that. Young people self-nominate and from there a group of 30 are selected. The first event is a weeklong high-level conference they attend during a half-term.

In the first year, participants learn about theories of social change, and in the second year (with Clothworkers' Foundation funding) the focus is on personal development and putting the theory into practice. Staff describe the intensity and volume of face-to-face time (around 100 hours in the first year) as a key difference when compared to other youth leadership programmes.

Challenges

- It is intensive in terms of resource
- It is not easy to fund
- It is slower and more difficult to scale up
- Talking about class is a turn off for some funders, but RECLAIM retains this as it is the key term that engages the young people
- It has a unique perspective in that it is not in London

Sustainability and longevity

Staff feel that longevity is imperative: *'Dropping in and out of people's lives does not work'*. It takes time and effort to build trust, and then go on to make change. Previous experience has taught them that short-term investment is not enough; in the long term, young people will be prone to go back to their negative behaviour. This is why they now implement a ten-year plan for young people. RECLAIM now works with young people from the age of around 12 to 22. It is a pyramid which sees the most face-to-face contact in year 1 (the 100 hours) and gradually tapers off as they move young people towards independence. However, they remain a 'steady arm', recognising that young people could still be exposed to life events that can throw them back off course.

Impacts

1. Creating confident agents of social change

The impact on young people and the positive influence they can have on their society can be dramatic. For RECLAIM, the first step is to make young people realise that they are able to achieve social change – *'it's not just for Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King'*. *'When a young person sees themselves on billboards in the centre of Manchester, or is invited to an interview on Radio 5 Live, or in the Guardian, it is a game changer'* – it instils the self-belief that they can be an agent of

change. As staff stated, it is about giving young people the key to how they can make change. These are young people who may have experienced all kinds of abuse and trauma; young people who have never before been told they have the answers to the problems they see around them.

2. Helping young people navigate the adult world

Another way in which RECLAIM supports its young people is in showing them how power and influence works, and how to network. This includes how to overcome obstacles for example, if the network is closed off, how to create a new one. This is about supporting young people to understand for themselves how they can best play a role in society, to identify what role is the best fit for an individual, and to enable them to make the most difference.

3. Raising the profile of RECLAIM

The funding from The Clothworkers' Foundation has created a positive spiral of wider awareness for RECLAIM, which in turn has seen more people engaged in social issues and getting involved in campaigns for the first time in their life.

Comments on the 2011 riots

RECLAIM was mid-conference with young people when this was happening, a situation which enabled them to have an immediate response to headlines. For example, young people in London were being labelled 'feral rats'. RECLAIM were able to counter this immediately through a campaign called 'Reclaim our name'. The focus of this was to communicate a message about seeing working-class young people not as a problem of society but rather as an untapped resource. *'If you ignore a child for long enough they will rise up and cause disruption'* (Staff). Giving communities a stake and a voice is essential, and The Clothworkers' Foundation funding has given them this pathway.

Descriptions of individual impact

A key impact of this project has been:

- Increasing young people's networks
- Young people becoming agents of social change

Male, young person campaign lead

The RECLAIM approach gives a small number of young people a depth of experience, and one-on-one input to help them develop. As a result, the effects can be profound for individuals. *'I think my life would have been really different if it wasn't for RECLAIM'*.

This young person's involvement with RECLAIM began during his early teens. A teacher suggested he join the programme, and he felt he 'was quite lucky' to have been given the opportunity. He was part of a year-long programme to develop leadership skills and tackle and address issues in his community. As was the case in a couple of other examples, this young person subsequently went on to work for RECLAIM, as part of a project funded by The Clothworkers' Foundation. He was employed full-time and as a result his relationship with RECLAIM spans over a decade, which had provided a good source of support and continuity.

Consequently, this young person is in a unique position in terms of assessing impact. That is, he has experienced impact both from the perspective of a young person supported by the charity and as someone on the other side of that equation, who is supporting young people.

One of the most notable impacts of being involved with RECLAIM personally, was that he felt he had been able to access opportunities outside of his home context, for example, visiting the

European Parliament. *'[For] someone with my background, [it] was a really enlightening experience, especially at that age... broadening your horizons and feeling like you could be empowered and be bold and reach those places, grasp the future'*. The added benefit of this for him was in opening up possibilities beyond what he knew from his community, and those around him, to see another path forward for himself. This was something he observed had not happened in the same way for peers. *'Being able to access RECLAIM made me think that there were things beyond [my community]. I think a lot of my friends growing up unfortunately didn't have that, and when opportunities don't come to you or you feel like you can't take opportunities, you don't know how to and it's really easy for people in working-class communities to resort to other things'*. For this young person, this spoke directly to the context of the 2011 riots, which he saw as partly being caused by a situation *'when people feel like they don't have a future'*. Giving young people a sense of possibility and hope is one way to counter this. *'If a young person feels like they're supported... it in some ways addresses what happened in 2011'*.

He had also observed notable impacts for the young people he himself worked with, especially around the increased initiative and confidence they showed through being involved. *It's 'drawing out that confidence to challenge themselves intellectually and their aspirations... [it] is a different type of confidence, and you can see instantly, people talking about their careers... they're more aware of the possibilities. They start developing that confidence... like just talking to you, being confident to ask questions, taking the lead on sessions and so on'*.

This young person felt this could be seen in terms of the long and the short term: *'it helps them with immediate studies, attainment out of school and then further down the line as well'*.

He defined the aim of RECLAIM's work as *'support to empower young people to do things and change the things that matter to them, that are important in their lives, so whether it's education, whether it's campaigns around CSE...'*

Looking ahead, he saw the challenges largely being about resources. *'Everyone is doing multiple things, so I think it will be important to get some resources and more staff'*. In the interview, he mentioned that question marks around funding mean *'it can be hard to plan ahead at times'*.

Male, young person

This young person joined RECLAIM when he was in Year 11, whereas most of the intake had joined in Year 8 or 9. The first campaign he was involved in was, '2016 Powerhouse Pioneers' – about devolution for Manchester. He describes that first involvement with RECLAIM as *'the first stepping-stone in me becoming the person I am today... enabling me to grow in so many ways'*.

Prior to getting involved, this young person anticipated he would be working on a small project but from the outset he was put on a *'massively big platform. My face was on billboards across Greater Manchester'*. Naturally, this was a formative experience and he articulated it powerfully; he saw that when *'a strong team of passionate young people who want their voice to be heard'* collaborate with *'amazing staff and mentors'*, there is no limit to what can be achieved, in spite of one's background and despite how many times you might have been told *'you can't make a difference'*.

'The most inspiring thing was to see my dream become real; that I could change my community. And this has motivated me to keep going and has changed me even more as a person'.

The group sessions were seen as practical and effective, demonstrating to this young person that he was *'not alone'* with the issues, challenges and barriers he faced. Seeing so many young people from many backgrounds, wanting to change the same issues; *'you knew you were not alone'*. For anyone, of any age overcoming some sort of adversity, solidarity is a powerful healing force.

The testimonial from this young person supports or endorses the approach taken by RECLAIM; that the programme empowers young people, delegates responsibility to them, and in response, they thrive. *'I genuinely felt and believed that I was a leader because of the work I was doing. It was a massive leap from the feeling of a young person drifting, into someone who feels that they can genuinely affect their community and city'*. Since RECLAIM has worked hard to raise its profile and get onto national and even global stages, the opportunities for its young people are huge. For example, this young person had the opportunity to deliver a speech on a global platform and the video of the speech went viral. He appreciates that this is a *'massive stand out opportunity'* and experience in his life. Unsurprisingly, a significant impact of this programme was his growth in confidence as a public speaker.

One of the most valuable things this young person felt he learnt in this programme, and something he wasn't getting taught in school, was the knowledge about inequality in society; issues around poverty, race, and gender, locally, nationally and globally. This was new and motivating knowledge, igniting his passion for social activism.

A key change he observes in himself is around his identity as a young person and learning to see his background as an advantage. This feels hugely significant for him in terms of his personal growth and development, and is another positive aspect of the approach taken by RECLAIM. This works by reversing the negativity associated with a disadvantaged background and reaffirming it as a positive attribute. *'The most important thing has been to see my identity as an advantage rather than a disadvantage'*. He sees he has been able to become a leader because of, rather than despite, his background. He has been supported by RECLAIM to use these experiences as a *'springboard for being a truly authentic leader'*. This is a powerful and life-changing experience!

'When I first joined RECLAIM I had confidence issues. I couldn't speak in public. I didn't have much belief in my own voice. RECLAIM began to challenge me in such a way that I had to grow up. They helped me articulate what I wanted to achieve, and how to do it. It helped me realise my identity as a young person, an identity I share with all young people across Manchester, the UK and the world – all young people who want to make a difference in their communities. So much has happened in two short years. It's changed my life in ways I never could have imagined. I am the person I would want to be. [And it showed me that] you never know how far you are from achieving what you want.'

This young person observes that all the young people attending the course went on a similar journey of growth and development of self-confidence. He attributes the discovery that *'their voices mattered'* as a key catalyst to growth. The group felt like a *'family [...] that's what stood out. I felt comfortable there'*. It feels like the group was a significant part of the impact, in terms of realizing you are not alone in your dreams, ambitions, and presumably frustrations – there are others like you. This seems to have shown this young person how he wanted to be, what he wanted to be able to achieve, and crucially – that he would be able to achieve it.

When asked what he thought his life would be like if he had not been involved with RECLAIM he stated: *'my life would have been completely different. Being able to be part of RECLAIM opened so many doors and helped me reach so many different organisations'*

This young person is now in his second year of college and applying for university. Prior to his involvement with RECLAIM he knew he wanted to go to university but there wasn't a clear plan around it; now he has a clear sense of direction, *'Now when I'm in class, or revising... I'm now doing it with purpose. That my motivation is that I'm doing this to change people's lives in the same way that [RECLAIM] changed mine'*.

He is still involved with RECLAIM. Their latest campaign was called Team Futures and was a response to Brexit, a response to show that young people need their voice to be heard, to stop being locked out of decisions affecting their future. On 21st August they organized a march involving a diverse range of youth organisations through Manchester City Centre, showing how young people, in a city where division might seem rife, could unite against a common cause in a display of solidarity. On this day, many different beliefs came together to push for change, *'and on that day, our voices were heard'*. It is clear from this case study how powerful RECLAIM has been as an agent of change and transformation.

Male, young person

This young person first heard of RECLAIM when he was an undergraduate at Oxford and wanted to pursue a Masters in Journalism. At university, he got involved in fundraising among alumni for hardship schemes. This led to a meeting with RECLAIM, owing to an overlap in interest around inclusivity; he was invited to get involved in the project launch of the 'Educating All' campaign. This involved giving a talk on the night and being part of the group discussions that followed afterwards.

He describes RECLAIM as *'looking to create leaders among working-class communities'* through youth led initiatives. He perceives that RECLAIM have been successful in gaining momentum in Manchester, and likes how many young people tend to end up joining as staff. His experience on this campaign solidified his views about the importance of issues around exclusion and the barriers working-class people might feel or experience. Being given a voice through the work with RECLAIM, will help to show the education sector how it can make improvements.

Making the Leap (MTL)

Desk research summary

Making the Leap's (MTL) mission is to transform futures by raising the aspirations of young people and helping them to develop skills to succeed in the careers they choose; *'Our aim is that there is no young person left behind'* (Staff). One of the main parts of this project is the Future Skills training programme which provides support with all aspects of the job application process including CV writing, interview technique, completing application forms and presentation skills. Following the workshop, the young people receive tailored coaching, job readiness support and customised follow up from MTL's careers coach.

Area: Based in London, working with young people living in all areas (mainly deprived areas) of London who are from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The Future Skills programme is run at the MTL office in Kensal Green.

Aims

MTL aimed to support 360 bright but economically disadvantaged young people over the three-year course of the grant. The aim is to build their employment skills, increase their confidence, motivation, aspirations, leadership skills and work ethics through the Future Skills programme. The project is aimed at breaking cycles of *'revolving doors of being employed and unemployed'* (Staff), helping young people walk *'a path confidently, in the right direction, knowing there is support available to them and knowing there is meaningful employment at the end of it'* (Staff).

Each year:

- 225 young people have received the initial assessment each year
- 120 young people to attend the two-week Future Skills training programme each year
- 30 young people to be placed into life changing career opportunities each year

Participants



Characteristics of young people involved

- 72% of the young people live in social housing
- 55% were eligible to receive free school meals
- 20% have experienced homelessness
- 51% grew up in families with parents who were unemployed
- 39% have no or little work history
- 75% are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Needs identified by the young people:

- 65% of the young people identify that they need help improving their confidence and self-esteem
- 86% require assistance with interview technique
- 77% need support accessing meaningful job roles

Achievements and Summary

Community outreach, which was initially based in careers fairs and local events, has extended to holding surgeries, open days and workshops at Job centres, Housing Associations, schools, colleges and other social providers. This approach is deemed more effective in engaging young people as they are already there and in their comfort zones. Social media has also increasingly been used to contact the young people and communicate new job opportunities, with 30% seeing the services on social media or through referrals from friends and family.

The initial needs assessment is used as an introduction to bring young people into the scheme and form an individual action plan to encourage and measure their development whilst identifying any barriers to their potential employment. Many of the young people then feed into the Future Skills employability training, which is a two-week process. One young person said of it: *'I have had a life changing experience here at Making the Leap so far. This workshop has provided me with the unique and exclusive opportunity to develop essential skills and enhance my employability. I am amazed at how much knowledge I have been able to gain already at this point. '85% of the young people who have attended the two-week workshop have felt an improvement in their self-development, particularly in: confidence, work ethic, motivation, attitude and their aspirations.*

Around the Future Skills training is a whole network of support. Group and individually tailored support is provided by both MTL and the volunteers that work with them. MTL introduces the young people to individuals that can draw on personal and professional experience to help guide them towards employment. The individual tailored support can be both general, or help in applying for specific jobs to improve their applications and give the young people an opportunity with the employers. The ongoing support has helped the young people to stay in employment, with 80% of their young people still in full time work 6 months after the first year of funding.

There has also been growth in the areas of employment that are offered as opportunities to the young people including Barclays, Snapchat, HSBC and top property companies. The relationships that have been built with organisations also provides insight into recruitment and can be used to directly support the young people through the application process. These employers have also become engaged by encouraging their own employees to volunteer and offer their expertise.

'I have changed as a person, now I am more determined. With the help of MTL and using everything I have learnt, I was able to secure a Data Analyst role at a global media company they partner with. It's my dream job! I feel as though my life has finally started and it's due to the invaluable support and encouragement of the MTL team. Making the Leap has opened so many doors for me which I didn't even know existed!' (Young person)

Summary of impact from staff and young people interviews

Main objectives of the project

This project works holistically with young people, looking after the whole person and working on their soft skills, building social, emotional, and psychological wellbeing as well as the practical tools to write a CV and contact details of who to approach to gain employment. The young people are approached at many different locations from school to job centres in order to get them engaged; *'it's quite a proactive approach'* (Staff). The starting point is the quality of the outreach team and how effective they are at building rapport with young people *'Once they have decided that they're going to stay, generally, our retention is very good'* (Staff).

One member of staff described the two-week workshop (and the support that follows afterwards) as fundamental for cultivating self-belief, belief in personal capability, and belief in the right to work in these organisations. She observes a massive transformation in the young people; *'you see smiles, confidence, drastically different ideas, expectations'* (Staff), fostered as result of the content of the modules and the way that they are delivered, by people who genuinely care. Young people want to engage when *'they see that we care about them and want the best for them'*.

Within the programme modules, there is space for a young person's story to unfold, and any issues to be held in a safe space with a one-to-one route available if needed. *'You get somebody that comes in on the first day and they're unable to say a single word and then you watch this flower open and*

they're able to hold their own and communicate in front of a big room of people. That's quite special' (Staff).

What emerged strongly from the project workers was the positive promotion from the young people themselves in how they advocate the programme to their friends and family. It's very compelling to see someone *'like you'*, with the same obstacles, hurdles, and challenges telling you how they managed to get a dream job. This happens both informally and formally, with MTL constantly capturing case study journal material to use with new participants. These ambassadors are described as *'amazing'*, in the way they talk about their experiences and how open they will be about their challenges, which is very inspiring to others. The programme creates an increasing circle of influence around the young person, their peers and family; *'for a young person who comes from a disadvantaged family, getting a job can change the whole household'* (Staff).

Comments on the 2011 riots

This staff member described how all the young people they work with initially feel there is nothing for them; no reason to seek employment and no reason to continue with study because it won't get them anywhere, so they end up caught in a cycle of disengagement. This programme shows them that there is something for them. There is value in earning a living, contributing, paying your way, and having aspirations.

Descriptions of individual impact

The key impacts young people describe are around increase in skills, confidence and opportunities. All young people spoke about how they considered MTL to be:

- A 'support system'
- A place to gain valuable skills
- Extremely friendly
- A place where the staff genuinely care

Female, young person

This young person joined the training programme in January 2017. She describes MTL as a *'hub'* and has remained in contact with them following completion of the programme. She attributes the experience and support she received at MTL as directly influencing her career path, helping her to make decisions about the direction to go in.

This young person realised after leaving university that she didn't have the skills to take the next step in getting a career so was looking for something to fill that gap. When she heard about MTL, her expectation was that this was the organisation that would help plug that gap. Her expectations were way exceeded and she could not speak highly enough of MTL and has recommended it to friends and family.

'I had never before come across an organisation that genuinely cares so much about young people. The staff were amazing and care so much. They know your name from the moment you arrive.'

It also offers a powerful combination of skills training in conjunction with a network to make the following outcomes possible:

- 1) Plugging gaps in specific skills which aid employment.
- 2) Building a network – a network of support, and a network of contacts, which bridges the gap between the individual and the companies they may want to work for in the future.

This young person was involved in a wide range of activities; off site visits, meeting with industry

professionals, entrepreneurial presentations, public speaking, and conducting mock telephone interviews in front of the rest of the group. She had the task of presenting articles every morning and said, *'every day my confidence improved'* and that she felt more able to convey her ideas in a clear manner.

She described feeling *'extremely confident at the end of the programme'* and challenged in a positive way. *'I like challenging myself and the challenges set by MTL were very engaging and relevant'* – relevant to the task of getting a career off the ground. This is described as the kind of support you don't get at university. She perceives it was the first time she had ever come across that level of emphasis on how to get a job. *'As a result [of MTL] I know now what I want my career path to be.'*

'Once I left the two-week training, I felt extremely empowered and confident, and knew what I had to do to get a job. I learnt about myself, where I am as a person... having a positive outlook on life... an open mind-set... saying yes to and embracing opportunities.'

This young person had a job interview on the day she graduated from the MTL programme and got the job; she attributes her success in that interview entirely to the two-week programme.

'MTL changes people's mind-sets and lives. It's the starting point of the rest of their lives. It helps shape you and define you.'

Female, young person

This young person first learned of MTL after they attended her college to talk about apprenticeships. Until that point, she had not considered that as an option. She felt this presentation *'opened [her] eyes to the world of apprenticeships'* which felt much more relevant and exciting than she had preconceived. She was then invited to take part in the two-week 'ACE' workshop over the summer.

Through MTL she met people who were on a non-university track that resonated strongly with her. Initially, MTL helped her to get a short apprenticeship with Barclays which turned into a yearlong spell of employment (Aug 2015-2016). Following from that, she was successful in getting onto a one year PWC apprenticeship scheme. Currently just over half way through, she is enjoying the job and it gives her lots of responsibility. MTL had helped to light a spark about the path to go down.

She has maintained her involvement with MTL (3/4 years now) and is an active member of the Fellows board.

This young person has nothing but positive feedback about the impact MTL has had on her life. *'I wouldn't have got to where I am without them'*. There were a couple of instances where she suffered a setback, and the MTL team were there for her, *'they were calming and reassuring and kept me on track'*. She cannot express her gratitude for this highly enough. MTL also recognised that there was a need to bring this young person's family on board with her decisions and path, and so arranged to meet with her father and sister. This supports the claim that MTL is a truly holistic approach and the organisation provides evidence to the assertions about how much MTL cares.

There is a sense of huge personal and professional growth with this participant. She feels strongly that the things she is achieving now would not have been possible without MTL. The confidence she's gained personally and professionally enables her to meet the challenges of public speaking, client meetings and being able to talk to senior staff with ease. She notes that she has gained a

particular appreciation of the importance of networking and now feels entirely comfortable networking with strangers at events.

Male, young person

This young person is from a family where neither of his parents but all of his siblings went to university and found work easily afterwards. However, he has had a different experience, attributed to the challenges in the job market and economy today. He graduated from university in 2014 but found funding cuts to the NHS made trying to find work in this area challenging. Unemployment, knock backs and lack of success greatly lowered his confidence. His contact at his local job centre recognised that he needed extra support and recommended MTL, leading to him take the two-week course in October 2016.

At first, this young person was quite cynical about whether it would be useful, based on previous experience of similar courses. He described how on the first day he was unhappy and *'stubbornly thinking I'm not going to come back', 'it's easy to feel like things aren't going to help'*. However, he described how the staff understood these feelings and apprehensions and without any forcing or coercing, gently encouraged him to stick with it one day at a time. This made it easier for him to stay with it, which is highly positive feedback for the support offered by the staff. He also commented that the other courses he had been on were not *as 'well put together as Making the Leap's'* and not as in depth. On reflection, he now feels that attending the course was *'one of the most important decisions in [his] life'*.

The biggest gains from involvement with MTL was improved self-awareness, self-confidence and a sense of self-worth. This young person pointed out that it is easy to get down when you are long-term unemployed and start to see yourself as not good enough. Whilst he says he learned all the *'hard'* practical skills, for him this was secondary to *'the primary/most important factor [which] was how it helped with my mental state'*. He learnt that he was capable and good enough, and that he should remember that going forward, *'it really turned things around for me'*.

Catch22

Desk research summary

Catch 22's Engage in Education is an intensive programme of support for secondary school pupils in Manchester aged 11-14 at high risk of exclusion from mainstream education. It focuses on pupils with low attainment, poor attendance, prior records of exclusion and complex needs, including social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, often from deprived backgrounds. The aim is a 'wraparound' approach to delivering services by engaging the individual, family and school through interventions that involve group work, one-to-one support and family support. It is estimated that 66% of those excluded from secondary education have communication difficulties, so Catch22 partnered with I CAN to train teachers in communication.

Area: Based in Manchester, where 27% of children live in severe poverty and the overall rate of poverty is 42%.

Aims

To involve a minimum of 600 young people across Greater Manchester each academic year who have low attainment, poor attendance, prior records of exclusion and complex needs.

- 4 schools to participate each academic year
- 500 students to participate in the group with over three years
- 180 students to receive 1-1 support over the three years
- 150 teaching staff to receive training in communication needs by I CAN
- Employment of a project coordinator, and two key workers alongside work with I CAN

Participants

All of the participant schools had similar challenges of:

- Young people with challenging behaviour
- Staffing issues
- Levels of support and a joint understanding of what will be achieved with the young people
- Exams and assessment



**Male: 599
students 80%
of the total**



**Female: 150
students 20%
of the total**

Learners with English as a second language:

15 engaged through group work and 8 engaged in 1-1 work

Disadvantaged learners (Eligibility of school meals was used as a disadvantage factor):

2 engaged through group work and 65 engaged in 1-1 work

Learners assessed as having special needs:

6 engaged through group work and 6 engaged in 1-1 work

Summary

The programme operated across 12 schools, and even though behaviour as a whole did not have a target measure, there is evidence through both exclusion statistics and anecdotal evidence that shows the programme has had a positive change on student behaviour. The initial problems recruiting schools to participate were overcome by the new Ofsted inspection framework that showed more clearly how interventions such as Catch22 could engage learners and improve their

attainment and attendance. This programme therefore not only met many of its own objectives, but also helped schools to meet central Government targets, all of which reflects the impact on young people's lives.

The main subject areas explored with the students (linked to PSHE and SMSC) were:

- Co-operating with others
- Anger management
- Debate and discussion
- Making positive changes
- Body language and non-verbal communication
- Listening and asking questions
- Planning for the future
- Assertiveness

These aimed to make the learners more self-aware, empowered and supported to make good decisions.

"Even my parents thought I would be excluded by Year 11 but Catch22 made me think differently about my education. I am still myself, but I behave differently." (Young person)

"I didn't used to want to get out of bed in the morning to go to school but working with Catch22 made me think more about what I could achieve if I put my mind to it." (Young person)

Summary of impact from staff interview, young person interview and focus group

Background to the project

Catch22 focuses on an initial 13 week programme that engages young people within school. The programme was initially difficult to propose to schools, however once the outcomes of the programme began to match OFSTED requirements, there was far higher support and buy in from local schools. Catch22 could encourage schools through this; *'if a particular school had certain things highlighted within their previous Ofsted report, we could then try and help them with that through our programme'* (Staff). Essentially, Catch22 was now talking in the same language as the school, rather than 'youth worker language'. This also meant that Catch22 could adapt the programme to suit specific OFSTED issues a school might be working on.

The programme initially started with schools referring the young people; however, the complex needs of many of the young people resulted in more personal requirements. This led to Catch22 offering both one to ones as well as group projects so they were able to meet individual needs. *'It felt a lot more personal to them and we really home in on the individual issues'* (Staff). This was a turning point in the scheme, as the programme then became more relevant to both the school and the young people individually. This is seen as a key reason for the improved outcomes in year two of the project.

The main objective of the project was to help young people who were on the brink of exclusion to be more engaged in schools. This was achieved through providing a space where the young people could learn new skills and be supported by individuals who were not teachers, an aspect which proved to be significant. There was also a large amount of importance placed on learning communication skills, as many of the young people facing exclusion had communication difficulties.

Main achievements

The growth of the team and the programme during the process was seen as a key achievement alongside the impact on young people themselves. It started with a singular aim of re-engaging young people, but '*when you get stuck in with young people you open a can of worms*' (Staff). So, another significant achievement came through introducing more content to the programme to meet young people's extracurricular needs. This was termed the 'wraparound' approach, where young people were supported but also encouraged through programme contact with the school and even home. They also developed an activity programme in the summer holidays, delivering a condensed version of the 13 week programme so that it could be accessed by more young people.

The young people were also easy to engage in the project as it offered something different to the normal classroom and lesson experience. The groups and individual sessions had a friendly, open and counselling style, rather than the atmosphere normally experienced in a classroom. The quality of the staff leading the sessions was an important factor, and all the staff successfully worked to keep the participants engaged and motivated to keep attending. This helped to draw in the students and encouraged a retention of the young people who kept coming back as they were drawn into the confidence and skills building activities.

Challenges

The first challenge was with engagement, as it could be a '*struggle to get schools involved*' (Staff) and proved difficult as Catch22 was not well known in Manchester when the project started. Working through schools is a key way to engage with and have access to the young people that really need support; however, the relationship between the charity and the school can be difficult to coordinate. Catch22 were unable to form direct relationships with the young people as there was always an intermediary. This limits the circle of influence the intervention can have on the individual, and their wider family.

There was an appetite for there to be higher levels of engagement and intervention such as home visits and daily phone calls during tough times or crisis. This was not possible, however, as the school owned the relationships and even though aiming for the best for the young people, had limited capacity to facilitate the communication and support.

The team were committed and working hard on this project, but it was in the wider context of a time of change at Catch22 which made it difficult for the project to remain the sole focus and keep the team motivated.

Impact

A significant achievement of the project was keeping young people in school and getting them more engaged in education. For the young people, their ambitions were raised, and they learnt to use their education as a stepping stone to their future rather than seeing it as a block to their freedom. This also had a huge impact on the whole school community as it facilitated a space where all students could learn, with fewer disruptions.

Comments on the 2011 riots

A lot of the content being used within the Catch22 materials was drawn from PSHE and British Values so it addressed issues around ethnicity, morality, care, respect and ethics which were all identified by Catch22 when exploring some of the underlying causes of the riots. Moreover, a key aim of the project is to get young people re-engaged in education and to find positive alternatives to truancy. By investing in young people's self-esteem, confidence, social skills and self-worth, young people are more able to see the value in education and widen their horizons to opportunities. By providing this alternative landscape, young people are less inclined to engage in gangs and negative anti-social behaviour.

Descriptions of individual impact

The key impacts young people spoke about was:

- Increased confidence
- Engagement in school

Male, young person

This young person was involved in the Catch 22 programme a year ago. He talked about how much he enjoyed being part of the project, and how he really valued working with the Catch 22 project worker.

He originally got involved because his school thought he would benefit from the activities. At the time, he had very high truancy and little or no interest in school. After missing so many lessons, he fell significantly behind his peers' academic attainment. The prospect of catching up felt so overwhelming he did not want to return to school. It was at this time that Catch 22 contacted the school outlining their plans and intention. His teachers told him about the project and he was happy to *'try it'*.

He was *'really surprised'* with how much he enjoyed the project, which consisted of a weekly groups session and one to one time with the project staff. He felt that he made more friends at the group sessions, and made sure he came into school more during this time so that he could attend. He found the most value however in the one to one sessions. For him, this was the first time he felt he had someone to talk to about what was *'stressing'* him out and how he was feeling. He talked about how he had never had this type of relationship before and this was the thing that he misses the most from his life now. For this young person, the project worker was his role model and really inspired him to *'be a better person'*. He was clearly very close and very connected to the project worker, which made not seeing him or having any contact with him anymore very difficult.

He described how he felt *'really sad'* when the project finished, and that he wished it would have continued for longer. He spoke about how during the course of the project his attendance increased and working with Catch 22 made him *'want to be at school more'*. At the time of the interview it had been over a year since he had had any contact with Catch 22 and unfortunately, he feels that he has *'gone back to [his] old habits'*. He no longer has any interest in school and his truancy has increased over the last few months.

General discussions from the focus group

4 male and 3 female, young people

The participants from the focus groups were all engaged with the Catch 22 project a year ago. Their schoolteachers identified them due to both their high truancy and anti-social behaviour, or their low self-esteem or confidence that was also leading to truancy and disengagement. During the focus groups, the young people talked openly about how they knew this was why they were enrolled on the Catch 22 project, and felt that this was an accurate description of how they were before Catch 22.

There was an overwhelming positive response to the work of Catch 22 and with the exception of one young person, all other participants felt it had *'changed their life'*. People really valued the group session; however, they all seemed to love the one to one sessions and having the space to talk to someone who *'had a genuine interest in how I was feeling'* (Female). All participants talked about how much they miss the Catch 22 project and wished they were still part of it, or that it had continued. There was a sense of disappointment from the young people, who clearly thought that

just as they were all starting to enjoy it and feel the benefits, it stopped, and they never had any contact with Catch 22 again.

Areas where Catch 22 was considered to have had a particular positive impact was on people's education, confidence, communication and socialisation.

Education

All of the young people talked about their high truancy before being involved in Catch 22. They spoke of not being very engaged in school, having little interest in school lessons and education, and a dislike of some of their teachers. When asked, participants did not really know why they had this attitude before, but with the exception of one individual, they all felt that they were more engaged in school now.

People spoke of having a much higher attendance than before Catch 22, although some described still having a few days where they 'can't be bothered'. Participants largely put this change down to Catch 22, and how the programme had helped them to understand more about themselves and taught them to have a more positive approach to school. In addition, there were a few conversations about how their attitude had changed towards their teachers since being part of Catch 22. Some participants talked of understanding their teacher's perspective more and how now, they felt they could approach and talk to their teachers about things. One young person also talked about how he has started to see his grades go up, which is also contributing to him enjoying school much more.

Confidence

A dominant theme throughout the focus group was how the young people felt their confidence had grown since being part of Catch 22. What was particularly noticeable was how positively young people described who they are now, in comparison to who they were before they worked with Catch 22.

During the focus group, young people were asked to write down what they learnt from Catch 22. The quotes below are taken from their answers which they left on post-it notes:

'[it] built up my confidence'
'not to be shy, be who you are'
'to be happy the way you are'
'I feel more confident with who I am'
'to believe in myself more'
'to be yourself'
'[it] Improved the ability to speak to people I wouldn't normally'

Communication

Similarly, participants also noted that they felt Catch 22 had improved their communication skills. This included people's ability to listen, to talk, to reflect and to not react in a negative way. In particular, young people also felt that their communication skills in school and with teachers had changed for the better.

'I'm better able to talk to the teacher without being angry and ignorant' (Male)

'I've learnt how to listen and not jump to conclusions' (Male)

'I now have agree/disagree conversations' (Female)

Socialisation

Another key aspect of the Catch 22 programme that young people talked about was how much fun they had with Catch 22. The ability to enjoy the activities really helped to foster positive relationships with their peers and Catch 22 staff. Young people talked of how much they *'laughed'* and *'had fun with each other'* and how they enjoyed *'meeting new people'* as pivotal highlights from the project.

Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust (SLT)

Desk research summary

SLT was founded after the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, and aims to provide opportunities for young people, support young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to get into employment, and develop a more cohesive society that values and supports young people. They work with young people aged 13 to 18 in an educational setting to broaden their view of what is possible. They gain the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need to pursue their career of choice and are then supported to progress through the early stages of their career. The Transitions programme, specifically funded by The Clothworkers' Foundation, offers advice, guidance, support and inspiration to disadvantaged young people at key transition points between Year 8 and 9 when entering their GCSEs, Year 11 when they are entering A-levels or apprenticeships, and Year 13 as they enter higher education and employment. The older age groups were hard to access in the first year, but many more have been involved moving into the second year.

Area: Lewisham and Greenwich London boroughs

Aims

- Annually 60 young people aged 13-18 will feel more confident and informed as a result of taking part in relevant work experience/shadowing/visits.
- Annually 100 13-18 year olds will report feeling more informed about their career options after attending inspirational talks and career seminars.
- Annually 40 young people aged 13-16 will report that one-to-one support increased their confidence and a further 20 young people will report that having a mentor has helped to achieve their goals/raise their aspirations.
- Annually 70 young people will report feeling more confident and informed about their career options after attending employability workshops. Additionally, 70 young people aged 17-18 will report that they are better informed about higher education/employment and have a good understanding of employment/apprenticeship entry routes.

Participants (year 1)



Young people forming the focused group

The programme aimed to work with more students, but due to starting difficulties, will engage with 90 students each year moving into year two.

School	Students from BAME backgrounds	Eligible for free school meals
A	60%	80%
B	87%	57%
C	80%	50%

Activities

Employability Workshops: These workshops help to increase employability skills and prepare students for work/higher education. These focused on key skills that are of use in any career, such as communication, personal branding, CV surgeries and apprenticeship sessions.

Careers Seminars: These sessions help students to find out what it's like to work in a particular job or industry.

Inspirational Lecture Series: Speakers are invited from law, medicine, IT, architecture, politics, and the music industry to inspire students and inform them about the range of opportunities available to help them.

Professional Visit breakdown: Providing insight into various workplaces, structures and gaining access to these careers, including the Houses of Parliament, the Battersea Arts Centre and the Stephen Lawrence Centre in partnership with Simone De Gayle Architecture practice.

Work Experience: To tackle the skills gap between what employers are looking for and what skills young people possess.

Mentoring: These sessions support participants to reflect on, plan for and scope out their career paths with a professional.

One to One Support: With a qualified careers advisor to track progress and complete action plans, to map career and educational goals.

Achievements

- **Barriers to opportunities removed or reduced** by giving young people access to professionals and mentors from specific sectors. Indicated by 9 young people benefitting from support from a professional mentor and over 200 having access to professionals to provide contacts and knowledge across the different sectors.
- **Greater knowledge** leading to a better sense of direction in terms of careers and life choices as a result of career workshops. Indicated by the provision of 8 employability workshops across core groups, which has covered a range of topics including what employers are looking for and transferable skills for work.
- The creation of **work related activities** – work experience, volunteering, mentoring, job brokerage and job matching – with the hope that organisations will train young people and provide them with invaluable work experience. 21 students have taken part in work related activities to date and many more are set up for the following years.
- In the first year alone, **177 students report feeling more informed** about their career options after attending inspirational talks and career seminars.
- **Positive feedback** from schools and demand for extra work place visits, seminars and career workshops has been requested from core schools. The project is trying to get more students involved in industry seminars and work experience from outside of the core groups of students.
- Lots of **professionals are interested in being mentors**, with 16 already recruited for the programme. These have all attended the mentoring training days. In addition, SLT is continuously recruiting mentors from a range of sectors.

Summary of impact from staff and young people interviews

Please note staff interviews were held only 9 months into the funding.

The programmes manager oversees both the administrative side of the programme and the delivery. In this sense, there is synergy with the project manager at the YMCA who talked about the unique approach of combining both roles in to one, and how much more effective this can be. For SLT, this might also be a symptom of the fact that they are a very small team – only 8 people. *'We are small but we are mighty!'* (Staff)

Wider context of school cuts and background to the programme

One project worker expressed her view that careers advice has 'dropped off the radar', and young people struggle to succeed due to factors beyond their control. Previous SLT pilots had shown that while their interventions were making an impact, they could do more to fill the gaps in careers advice in schools. The pilots showed that the particularly vulnerable points were times of educational transition – e.g. at the point of choosing GCSE's, A-levels or further education. The programme is aimed at helping young people navigate these decisions in a more informed way; taking the fear out of some of it, and broadening horizons in terms of what kinds of careers are possible. Another gap was specifically identified for Year 13 students who are not planning to go onto university. Schools were often ill-equipped or lacking the resources to support students to find alternative pathways. These were the gaps identified by SLT and which they wanted to fill using the Better Futures Initiative funding.

Method of working and levels of engagement

All their activities are provided face to face. SLT would love to offer telephone and online support, but it's not possible owing to safeguarding. It would be a significant enhancement to the programme to be able to email students in between sessions to sustain relationships, provide support, reminders etc. This may change as one school has approved email contact with Year 13s (aged 17/18) so that SLT can send timely emails about any post-school opportunities. This is a school in which a large proportion will not go on to university, and they recognise that SLT is filling a vital gap in information, services and opportunities which they do not have the resources for, or capacity to provide.

Typically, SLT find that the younger age groups (e.g. Year 8/9) are easy to engage. The SLT programmes are delivered to them within their usual timetable and a lesson will be dropped to make way for it. By Year 12/13 the students have other pressures and priorities and the teachers become more protective of their time, particularly if exams are coming up. It can feel like more of a battle for the SLT staff as the students want to be there, but often they can't get there because of self-imposed pressure to use the time another way or because teachers will not let them attend a session.

Co-operation from the school is therefore key, and the team has invested effort in engaging senior leadership teams so that the support for attendance at sessions is coming from the top; *'sometimes we have to continuously keep them on board with the benefits of the programme'* (Staff). This also requires a willingness that schools will value other outcomes for the young people's futures, rather than simply good academic grades. Given that schools are not assessed against career outcomes, it is something which is easily dropped from the agenda. SLT have been actively taking things into their own hands, for example by creating 'work place visits' in case school-organised work experience falls off the list. SLT have also found innovative ways to bring the activities to the students if they are unable to get off site such as organizing career lunches in school and providing pizza.

These career lunches have proved very successful – a win/win for the school, the students and the various corporate partners who come to speak as lunchtime suits their busy schedule better. Pizza is key to encouraging the young people to miss their lunch times.

Mentoring is also a key way that the programme invests in individual young people. SLT has a *'pre-existing network of mentors that we have used previously on other programmes so we would reuse those people because we know their value and know they are already committed to volunteering with us'* (Staff). The mentors are professionals who commit to mentoring individual young people and support them with their career plans and their journey to get there. To best

facilitate this, the young people and the mentors are matched by career and personality so that the professional and the young person have a positive experience.

In addition, SLT has been coming up with solutions to solve the problem of two-week work experience placements which often fall off the agenda. SLT instead tried to take some of the young people away for a week which could have been more manageable, but they still found that this was too long a period of time, so they compromised with firstly hour long and now day long workplace visits. These visits aim to expose students to all departments, and to have enough time in each department to do some interactive exercises and activities to bring it to life.

SLT found that Year 13s were more able to make the time commitment, even sacrificing a half term holiday, as they were older and had a more urgent need for the insight and information.

Main objectives

To deliver support in a variety of ways;

- Mentoring from a wide range of professionals which will broaden young people's horizons beyond the school or home environment.
 - There are no specific outcomes measured against the mentoring aspect, but it seems that the process is helping with attendance and attainment.
 - Evidence: The Year 11 group in Jan-Jun were selected as a cohort because they had been excluded from school on behavioural issues, and there was not much in place to actually try to turn things around for them. SLT have seen big shifts in attitudes and motivation levels from these young people. They feel failed by the education system, and SLT helps by showing them there are other pathways, e.g. apprenticeships.
- Inspirational talks from a wide range of speakers, often including those from diverse backgrounds that the young people can relate to.
- Work experience in many different sectors and roles.
- One to one meetings with young people at the baseline when they join the programme, during and post interventions.
- Support and help students plan for future career development.

Some activities are offered just to a core group, while others are widened out to the year group as much as possible where it doesn't impact on resource or cost; for example workplace visits for the core groups, and inspirational talks for all.

Main achievements 9 months

- There has been a massive oversubscription to the programme, with 177 people feeling more informed about career options versus target of 100.
- Seen a positive peer-to-peer effect with young people encouraging each other to attend.
- An increase in confidence among the young people.
- An increase in awareness of job roles and opportunities outside the traditional roles they may be aware of or have been exposed to.
- A genuine sense that *'the world is their oyster'*.
- No limits in terms of what they can achieve and raising their aspirations.
- This evaluation is too early to say if it has had a positive effect on school attendance and attainment, but it is having a positive effect on attitudes towards school generally. If a student is exposed to a career that he/she realises they would love to do, then it changes their motivations about having to gain a maths GCSE, for example.

- The project shows them how their school years will be useful in the wider world, and how they use their education to help them be employable in the path they would like to go down.
- The young people are much more actively engaged and empowered in school, rather than passively drifting with no particular aim.
- This project worked in an interesting space of being of particular benefit for the 'kids in the middle' – those that are neither demanding attention for being particularly academic, or needing additional attention due to educational or behavioural needs. This project made sure that those 'in the middle' are also being pushed and encouraged.
- The speakers in the inspirational talks are from similar backgrounds to the students they are talking to, which is a key driver in raising aspirations as they model to students what's possible for them in a credible way. First impressions might suggest a speaker came from a middle-class family and went to private school, but when it turns out they are working-class, struggled at school, and had learning difficulties etc., it is hugely inspiring.

At the end of every session, participants are given feedback forms. SLT try not to make these onerous and so use a simple tick box smiley face system. However, they have found that the young people provide lots of written feedback, which supports the idea that the programme facilitates giving young people a voice.

A direct aim of SLT is for young people to realise that a career which they may never have considered before is accessible to them. This is exactly what they are hearing back, *'I didn't realise and now I know, that I can do this career.'* (Staff)

The future?

SLT want to create a model of good practice in the borough. They have decided to swap one of the 4 schools for a new school in the next year of the project to widen their impact. They are attending council schools' meetings to show how the model could be spread. Currently, statutory careers advice consists of one person running sessions in Lewisham library; it *'doesn't even touch the surface'* (Staff). There is a clear need for a robust programme embedded in the curriculum, rolled out across the borough so more students can benefit. SLT has seen that their interventions work but it is difficult when schools are facing such big cuts. They cited the example of a school where a library has been turned into a double classroom and one teacher is teaching 60 students. Schools are facing tough times but, as SLT argue, to make a student well rounded they need well rounded skills and knowledge. With a narrow focus on grades, and lack of careers advice, SLT highlight how a new problem is being created once students have left school.

Comments on the 2011 riots

SLT pointed out, as did many other staff from the other charities, that if youth centres are being closed due to cuts and home lives are not productive, then young people will end up at risk of getting into difficult situations. This is simply because there is nowhere for them to go, and nowhere to belong other than on the streets. The riots served to highlight the urgent need to positively engage with young people by providing activities at lunch time and after school so that they have a safe and fun place to go.

A further comment is that often, young people need a vision of the future to aim for; being able to see past school to what they will do beyond. The SLT interventions help with this, for example with the exposure to positive role models, by showing that actions have consequences and *'if young people have something to aim for then they are more likely to be focused and less likely to be distracted by troublesome peers'* (Staff). The young people become aware that there is a future

worth working towards, and this helps them to think before taking certain actions as it may affect their future.

Impact from the perspective of young people and school staff

Observation of the lunchtime talk and one to one meetings

The SLT programme worked with a core group of young people at the school, who were all chosen by the school through an internal process. The programme had to work flexibly with each individual school to schedule around a careers advisor, or staff contact, and work with practical limitations such as classroom availability or the allowance for some of the young people to be excused from their classes. There was also a requirement for staff availability to ensure that the activities were not de-railed to become behaviour management situations.

The school had a good relationship between SLT and the careers advisor, who saw their work as filling many gaps caused by a lack of school funding and the overstretching of teachers' time. She saw the value in the work of the SLT, especially considering the background of many of the young people; *'Most children do not have these working experiences in their family network'*. This positive relationship made working and liaising with the school much easier for the programme and encouraged the success of the activities as staff were on board. However, even the careers advisor saw that this was not always a priority for the school as there were competing academic pressures and targets for the staff to make the students achieve. Although it had not happened in this school, there was a discussion around schools cancelling sessions or visits last minute which can damage the relationships with the volunteers and professionals that are sacrificing their time to be part of the work.

The main observed activity was a careers lunch session. There were seven young people at the session out of the possible group of ten core students. The session was not formal, but had an instructive structure, whereby the visiting professionals gave an interactive talk about their jobs and their journey to get where they were today. The talk was given by two individuals who had been asked by SLT as they were both local and had not followed traditional or easy routes on their career paths. The SLT staff facilitated the communication with the young people, who had a positive and friendly relationship with the SLT staff, by asking questions during the talk to ensure technical phrases were understood by the young people; *'It is important for young people to feel that professionals are on their side'* (staff).

The young people were engaged in the talk, and at the end five of the seven young people asked questions, and two asked multiple questions about the content of the presentations and advice for their own careers. One young person who expressed an interest in the specific sector was writing down notes from the discussion in their book. SLT staff remarked that they were surprised one young person asked a question as he tended to normally be quite quiet, which they felt was a positive mark of the session and proof of his interest and growth in confidence. The positivity that these young people expressed about the programme was reflected onto their friends, with many asking to join the scheme. SLT tries to facilitate wider involvement where possible. However, one of the key aspects of choosing the core group is that the young people are not from the same friendship groups so that they can come with no preconceptions, explore, and learn freely at the sessions.

SLT also provided one to one sessions with some of the young people on the day, where they were given personal guidance and advice about following the employment plans and aims. The young people arriving for their sessions were positive and appeared comfortable in the setting. Other young people who saw the SLT staff in the corridor asked when they would be seeing them next, and were actively engaged in looking for opportunities to interact with and learn from the staff.

Male, young person

This participant had been involved with SLT for a few months, and already felt that he had gained confidence as a result of the programme, especially in public-speaking.

The trips and work experience were the most memorable parts of the experience he'd had so far, as they gave him the opportunity to leave his area and experience sectors of work he had not considered. He was very positive about a recent trip to a publishing company, where he became aware of the breadth of employment opportunities within each sector, and that employment opportunities at a publishing company were not just about editing books. This encouraged the young man to consider the breadth of employment opportunities and how he could pursue opportunities in different firms. This exposure to new ideas and settings is a key area that SLT work towards, and this young man expressed how the scheme had broadened his knowledge of possible employment, and also his ambitions for the future.

This young person felt it was ok to be taken out of lessons to do the activities, as he was *'fast at catching up'*. The only recommendation that this young person could offer would be to spend more time with the SLT, demonstrating his positivity towards the programme and the value he deemed to be receiving from it.

Initial impact

The young people have the opportunity through SLT to discover hidden talents (these sometimes surprise the young people themselves), such as a young woman who had never considered design who was praised for some drawings she did as part of an app designing activity with a tech company. This boosted her confidence and opened her eyes to the breadth of possible employment she could go into, and even surprised the staff there; *'Employers are blown away by the skills that are natural to the students'* (staff). There is also a value placed on the young people during the work trips that can increase their self-worth; as one young woman said, *'I feel so special'* when being shown round a London law firm.

This increase in confidence is seen on many of the feedback forms that the young people fill out at the end of the sessions, from small acts such as the young man speaking in the group to ask external speakers a question, through to another young man admitting that he had always wanted to be an engineer and that he now thought it was a possibility for him. There was also an overarching value placed on the importance of going outside of the school context, by both students and school staff alike. These new spaces provide a sense of possibility that might not otherwise have been considered.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Clothworkers' Foundation's proactive Better Futures initiative was put in place to prevent social disengagement following the warning signs of the 2011 riots. This study reflects much previous work by charities and academics showing that preventative work is key, especially when this starts early to prevent issues becoming entrenched in older young people.

As outlined at the beginning of the report, there are numerous ways that these charities have impacted young people's lives. One of the ways in which this can be seen is through the creation of safe spaces, and access to staff and volunteers who can guide and support young people through this transformative period in their lives. Staff not only organise the activities for the young people, but go beyond this to ensure they feel valued by listening to them and act as important role models for many of the young people that do not have secure and positive relationships with the adults in their lives. From being involved in the projects and interacting with the staff and volunteers, the young people grow in confidence both in themselves, in their relationships, and also in their abilities. As their confidence grows, these projects provide the communities and networks for their aspirations to be realised, acting as the links that are not normally accessible by young people from deprived areas.

Through the process of undergoing this evaluation, we feel that the ambitions of the proactive Better Futures initiative have been met; however, there is still work to do. We must remember that the underlying problems that The Clothworkers' Foundation is attempting to deal with through this stream of funding are extremely deep-rooted and complex. Poverty, deprivation, and social inequality are issues that are society-wide, long-term and embedded in British society, with little sign of alleviation. To solve these problems would take an enormous amount of money and agreement from all parts of British society and establishment, to an extent that is unlikely to happen in the near future. Therefore, it's worth remembering that the funding offered by the Proactive Better Futures initiative cannot change this context, but it can help (and has helped) to tackle young peoples' response to it. However, given that this is a critical evaluation, it may be worth considering whether there are ways the funding and these funding relationships could be even more powerful.

With any grant making that is attempting to heal the sorts of rifts described above, it is hard to tell how effective a short-term intervention can be. This research and nfpSynergy's other work shows that **continuity** of projects, people and places is important to building the trust and confidence of individuals in an intervention, and promoting change to seemingly intractable problems. This seems to be particularly the case for young people. We know that for many marginalised young people, relationships have broken down (e.g. in families or schools), and trust in institutions and responsible adults around them is low. Where this is the case, intervention projects (and the trust that their staff build with young people) being around for an extended period is crucial. So many young people experience people 'passing through' their lives and being let down by adults that it is very important that these projects avoid being another 'flash in the pan'. So, should funding for these projects be on a longer-term basis? Could there be an even bigger impact if projects, networks and people are there to support individuals for their whole transition to a stable adulthood?

The transition point from young person to adulthood is complex in Northern European economies. In the last fifty years, it has become very difficult to articulate the experiences or life events that mean that a young person has become 'an adult'. In our more complex, connected 21st Century

world, the markers of adulthood are shifting. This means that there is rarely a straightforward path into adulthood; for many it is a yo-yo transition of moving forwards (going to university, getting a job, starting a relationship) and then backwards (accumulating student debt, relationship breakdown, moving back into the parental home).

Some of the projects in this evaluation were particularly helpful as they allowed young people to return to the 'safety' of the physical space and staff or volunteers of the project they had been part of if something went wrong, or if they had an idea and wanted a supportive environment to help it grow. This onward support can be critical to the success of individuals.

So, we come to the thorny issue of short term vs long term funding. This was not something necessarily discussed by all of the project workers directly, nor was it a question posed by the Clothworkers' Foundation; however, it does seem a missed opportunity particularly when projects have broken new ground either in terms of new audiences or geography. The time and effort it takes to build networks, awareness and trust is immediately lost if the project is pulled. Projects also lose the benefit of seeing their young people succeed and come back to encourage others, as has been identified as so key within the cases outlined above, if there is no project to come back to. A potential virtuous circle is thus destroyed. In the current economic climate/post-Brexit world and with austerity here to stay, is there even more need for projects able to provide the level of sustained resource that will help young people overcome years of disrupted home/school life, and potential negative spirals?

We pose this question as well as others outlined below, to challenge The Clothworkers' Foundation in looking to the future.

1. Multiple ways of investing in young people are valid. Fund a variety

Among the projects funded by The Clothworkers' Foundation Better Futures proactive grants initiative, there are different levels of investment in individual beneficiaries. From high investment in a small number of young people, to medium investment in a broader range or community, all of these approaches have their strengths. Therefore, we believe that funding a variety of models to ensure a comprehensive approach appears to be a real strength of the programme.

RECLAIM, for example, stands out as being a project with a small number of beneficiaries. The work done by this organisation is very direct, personalised and tailored to each individual (e.g. individualised coaching and mentoring). Consequently, there is a highly profound personal impact for those involved. Through being so focused on a small number of young people over the course of many years, this approach is notable in the concentrated nature of its intervention. An example is that 100% of participants said they now feel '*passionate about social change*'. The duration of the commitment to the young people (in some cases expanding beyond the year, with several examples of young people returning to work with the charity in subsequent years), likewise served to produce long-term and lasting impacts for people.

Some of the other projects worked with larger numbers of young people, for example, OIAM which offers '*threshold experiences*' and '*taster courses*' run by a professional which exposes a group of young people to new experiences. SLT invests in a core cohort among each of the year groups it works with, but will open up particular sessions to a whole year group where possible, with indirect benefits for the additional students. Unlike RECLAIM, a larger cohort can participate in the activities, allowing access not only to the selected few who show some kind of spark of making a great change, but a wider body and breadth of young people that have been excluded from the opportunities and support of different areas of society.

Ultimately, each of the models explored above has different strengths. Our recommendation would be to ensure The Clothworkers' Foundation continues to fund projects which utilise a variety of models to retain a comprehensive approach.

2. Sustained funding could provide much-needed continuity

The feedback from each of the projects has been hugely positive, but something we see across this research and our other work is the importance of security, and continuity in the lives of young people. We touched upon this in the opening to this section above, but pose the question of whether this is a job well done or a job well started. More than ever, it seems important that the voices of young people are heard, and are part of forming and shaping the programmes, activities and services which serve them. This will ultimately ensure they become active participants in their communities and from there, the wider world. But is this possible only with the support of people and organisations they trust, rather than those which are transient and uncertain? The challenge is in providing sustained support to weather turbulent times ahead.

3. Get evaluation embedded from the beginning

Consistent and regular evaluation processes are vital in informing the progress and strategic direction of any project. Measuring achievements against aims helps you to know whether you're on the right track. This also serves to build a body of evidence for areas of improvement and success which can be demonstrable to others outside of your project.

During this research process, we have engaged with a variety of different forms of data collected by each of the projects, and in many ways, this reflects the diversity of charities and programmes funded. However, a future direction for The Clothworkers' Foundation to consider might be in thinking about how to support projects to embed evaluation into their everyday work. In this case, we feel there has been a bit of a missed opportunity to share data across the projects and even potentially out to other funders. What is best practice in these areas, and what could projects have learnt from others before they even started? This ensures that the value that The Clothworkers' Foundation holds is more than simply financial assets. In addition to the money, the organisation can support causes and projects through ideas, advice and guidance based on their own experience.

The ideal would be for this to facilitate a consistency of approach across the work the Foundation funds. We would recommend that frameworks for data collection and evaluation be worked into the process early, with regular engagement from the project team and frontline staff. Not only will this support staff to get into a habit of best practice record-keeping, it will ensure impact is captured at different points throughout the project. Feelings about a project can vary and may be different at the point of completion. It is important to be able to capture both perspectives. Whether conducted by an external organisation or not, frameworks and evaluations help set expectations and measures for a project. We would ideally recommend using a framework that is easy to administrate and not time or resource intensive. Likewise, any approach used should be flexible enough to allow for the different and varied outputs/aims of each project – whether to help young people gain access to university or to encourage sports leadership. This will help individual projects to continually monitor and be able to articulate their progress to varied stakeholders, including The Clothworkers' Foundation, and provide an insight, as explored through this report, into the impactful work they are doing.

Appendix

YMCA: Better Futures Street Work Project

Grant amount: £290,000 | Project Complete

 <p>The North East (North Tyneside) The Midlands (North Birmingham) South East London (Woolwich Riverside)</p>		<p>Feedback from the police stated that crime decreased when projects were running and they received fewer call outs.</p> 	<p>Project activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football • Basketball • Youth club • Drama • Dance • Summer activities • Future Leader for Life programme • Better Futures Youth Festival • Residential trips • Youth Events Management Programme
<p>1307 Young people supported across the three projects (aim 320)</p> 	<p>255 Young people in North Tyneside had access to role models and gained improved inspirations (aim 100)</p> <p>419 Hard to reach young people in South East London engaged with positive activities (aim 100)</p> <p>633 Young people from deprived neighbourhoods in North Birmingham taking up opportunities and engaging with provision (aim 120)</p>		

One in a Million: Year 1 and 2

Grant amount: £143,000 | Project ended: August 2017

 <p>Bradford: working in areas in the top 1% of national deprivation levels and broader areas in the top 20%, alongside experiencing the Bradford riots in 2001. Projects are funded in Manningham, Shipley (Windmill) and Keighley.</p>		<p>Kidz Club runs taster and enrichment sessions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football • Girls Football • Cricket • Rock School • Music Tech • Junior Sports Leadership Award • Art Club • Enterprise ICT • Dance • Rugby • 3D Art • Cooking • Youth Leaders Award • Film Club 	<p>Partnership with the Bangladeshi Centre increased engagement with the BAME community, with attendances for the 'train like a pro' initiative up from 164 to 432 in year 2</p> <p>In year 2 the participants were beginning to reflect the ethnic make-up of Bradford:</p> <p>White British: 75.97% Pakistani: 10.92% Indian: 7.02% White & black Caribbean: 1.85% Bangladeshi: 1.11%</p>
<p>Average of 1075 young people attend OIAM projects each month</p> 	<p>Streetwise Football: Multi-purpose event engaging young people in sport, leadership and projects on including racism and drug abuse</p> <p>Attendances year 1: 4051 Attendances year 2: 4482</p> <p>69 young people achieved the Lord Mayors award across the first two years</p>		

RECLAIM: LEAD

Grant amount: £136,000 | Project ended August 2017

	<p>Greater Manchester: working across 7 areas surrounding Moss Side and Gorton South that fall into the top 1% of income deprivation areas and A-level results are significantly below the national and regional average</p>	<p>“Team Future is one of the most exciting and inspirational new movements in Britain today. If the UK has a future, it lies with young working class people organising and making their voices heard.” - Owen Jones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 voices from young people were collected across Greater Manchester to shape the manifesto. • Led to a meeting at Downing Street to aim to link top politicians into the campaign
<p>In year one 20 participants graduated from the two scheme streams</p> 	<p>100% of participants said they now feel ‘passionate about social change’, described themselves as a leader, could deal with difficult situations better and want to become peer mentors for future participants.</p> <p>100% of young people left feeling they were a young leader.</p>	
		<p>RECLAIM Manager: “The YP’s feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. They’ve developed as a direct result of the coaching... it has given them clear goals, understanding of networks, further introspection and critical thinking.”</p>

Making the Leap: Years 1 and 2

Grant amount: £150,000 | Project ends August 2018

	<p>Deprived areas across London and based out of the main office at Kensal Green</p>	<p>“I have changed as a person, now I am more determined. With the help of MTL and using everything I have learnt, I was able to secure a Data Analyst role at a global media company they partner with. It’s my dream job! I feel as though my life has finally started and it’s due to the invaluable support and encouragement of the MTL team.” – Young Person</p>	<p>Young people have gained job opportunities in top companies such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSBC • Snapchat • Barclays • PwC • Foxtons <p>In roles that can lead to social mobility</p>
<p>454 Young people received the initial assessment</p> 	<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% of the young people live in social housing • 55% were eligible to receive free school meals • 20% have experienced homelessness • 51% grew up in families with parents who were unemployed • 39% have no or little work history • 75% are from ethnic minority backgrounds 		
<p>68 young people have been placed into career opportunities</p>		<p>256 young people have attended the 2 week employment workshop</p>	

Catch22: Engage in Education

Grant amount: £300,000 | Project Complete

	<p>Manchester: 27% of children live in severe poverty and the scheme aimed to support students where the risk of exclusion is 22.7% compared to 8.4% nationally.</p>	<p>"All young people who completed the 12 week programme showed an improvement in overall behaviour during the following term"</p>	<p>Learners with English as a second language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 engaged through group work • 8 engaged in 1-1 work
<p>749 Students from 12 different schools engaged in the project (aim 608)</p> 	<p>55% of young people increased school attendance across the programme</p>		<p>Disadvantaged learners (Eligibility for school meals)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82 engaged through group work • 65 engaged in 1-1 work
<p>66% of young people with increased core attainment post programme</p>	<p>Learners assessed as having special needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 engaged through group work • 6 engaged in 1-1 work 		
<p>57% of young people reduced their rates of exclusion in post <u>EiE</u> term</p>			

Stephen Lawrence Trust: Year 1

Grant amount: £150,000 | Project ends: December 2018

	<p>Based from the centre of south London in the Stephen Lawrence Centre working with disadvantaged young people</p>	<p>76% of students involved are from BAME backgrounds</p>	<p>Successful workplace visits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battersea Arts centre • Houses of Parliament <p>Many more organised for the next year</p>
<p>50 Young people worked with in the first year</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 students feel more informed and 12 students feel more confident as a result of taking part in relevant work experience/shadowing/visits (aim 60) • 177 students report feeling more informed about their career options after attending inspirational talks and career seminars (aim 100) • 9 students report that having a mentor has helped to achieve their goals/ raise their aspirations (aim 9) • 66 young people feel more confident and 57 feel more informed about their career options (aim 70) • 9 young people aged 17-18 will report to be better informed about higher education/ employment and have a good understanding of employment/ apprenticeship entry routes (aim 70) • 10 young people aged 13-16 report that one-to-one support increased their confidence. (aim 40) 		<p>"I will now focus more and work my best to achieve what I have waiting for me at the end of the finish line" – Young Person</p>

About nfpSynergy

nfpSynergy is a research consultancy dedicated to the not for profit sector. Our aim is to provide ideas, insights and information that help non-profits thrive. From our origins in syndicated tracking research on public attitudes for non-profit clients, we have grown our portfolio to include several key audiences as well as tailored research and consultancy programmes. We are now widely recognised as one of the leaders in non-profit market research.

Our size and our story

nfpSynergy was created in 2002 as a division of the Future Foundation. Two years later the founder Joe Saxton led a management buy-out. In 2015 we had an annual turnover of £1.5 million and around 20 staff members including a variable number of interns. We own our own premises in Spitalfields.

Tracking research

We run tracking surveys that monitor the attitudes and opinions of stakeholder groups relating to the not for profit sector. The research is carried out on behalf of a syndicate of participating charities who share costs and data. The aim of our tracking studies is to provide lower cost, more frequent and more detailed research than any organisation could achieve by acting on its own. Our monitors include:

- Charity Awareness Monitor (CAM) – the general public
- Journalist Attitudes and Awareness Monitor – journalists
- Charity Parliamentary Monitor (CPM) – MPs and Lords
- Families Insight – young people and their parents
- Brand Attributes (BA)
- Health Professionals Monitor – primary healthcare professionals

In addition, we have developed syndicated tracking studies on the general public in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland.

Consultancy

Each year we carry out around 30 projects for non-profit clients. We carry out focus groups, depth interviews, either face-to-face or over the phone, conduct workshops as well as small and large scale desk research projects. Our clients include charities, housing associations and public bodies who use our research to inform their strategies and planning. Our projects and consultancy work covers a vast range: from helping the British Council to develop an income-generation strategy to investigating apprenticeships in the NHS to researching the barriers and opportunities for young people in seeking help. In particular, we specialise in stakeholder audits and in supporters and client/user satisfaction studies.



Social investment

Here at nfpSynergy we are proud of our company culture. We not only work on behalf of non-profit organisations but we also strive to ensure that our ethics thoroughly soak through every part of the organisation. This applies to staff, clients and industry partners as well as the research that we carry out. It is important that we lead by example and that we can continue to be the trusted source of industry research for the non-profit sector.

At the heart of our social investment programme is the range of research reports that we produce each year. We have already produced more than 80 reports, which are free to download and benefit all non-profit organisations. These documents provide valuable information that can feed into an organisation's planning and fundraising processes.

We support the sector with practical needs too. We provide free office space and working facilities for CharityComms (the membership network for communications professionals working in UK charities). We have a pot of 100 volunteering days every year where staff can take paid time off help at their chosen charity.

Topics on which we have produced free reports include:

- understanding young people's help seeking behaviour
- branding
- fundraising
- volunteering
- how charities use the internet and new technology
- governance

By producing free reports, editorials, and presentations we help small charities (with little or no budget for research) benefit from our wealth of data and knowledge of the third sector. Please see descriptions of all

of our free research at www.nfpsynergy.net/freereports

As full members of the Market Research Society, we comply with their code of conduct at all times, ensuring that research is carried out in a professional and ethical manner. We also have high standards of data protection – find out more about on our website at

www.nfpsynergy.net/about-nfpsynergy/privacy-policy



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