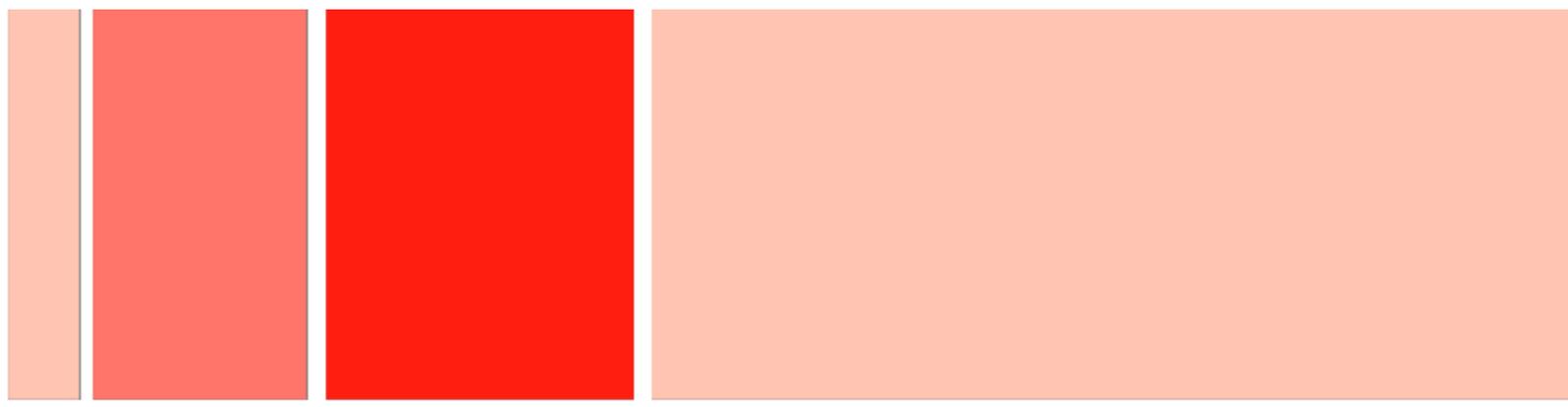




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Evaluation of the Lift Programme

Final Evaluation Report



Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

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Glossary

Glossary text

Acronym/Key word	Definition
CfW	Communities for Work
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CEA	Cost Effectiveness Analysis
CF	Communities First
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
JSA	Jobseekers Allowance
NDC	New Deal for Communities
NHS	National Health Service
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PaCE	Parents Childcare and Employment
PSM	Propensity Score Matching
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In March 2015, the Welsh Government commissioned Wavehill to undertake an evaluation of the Lift Programme. The Lift Programme was designed to respond to the commitment set out within the Welsh Government’s Tackling Poverty Action Plan (in 2013) to provide 5,000 training and employment opportunities for people in long-term workless households by the end of 2017.
- 1.2 The Lift Programme operated in nine delivery areas based on 12 Communities First Clusters¹ across Wales. The delivery areas selected for Lift were intentionally diverse (in terms of scale, rurality and the nature of deprivation encountered) to enable the Lift service model to be tested in a range of settings. Whilst most Lift Programme delivery areas covered a single Cluster, three delivery areas — Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Flintshire² — covered two Clusters each.

Table 1.1: Lift Delivery Areas

Delivery Area (Communities First Cluster)	Local Authority
Anglesey	Anglesey
Flintshire East and West	Flintshire
Afan Valley	Neath Port Talbot
Swansea North West	Swansea
Llanelli	Carmarthenshire
Ebbw Fawr and Tredegar	Blaenau Gwent
Caerphilly Basin and Upper Rhymney Valley	Caerphilly
Cardiff East	Cardiff
Taf West	Rhondda Cynon Taf

- 1.3 In each delivery area, small teams of Mentors/Job Brokers (subsequently referred to as Mentors and typically two per delivery area) were recruited to engage working-age adults living in long-term workless households (households where all members have been out of work for a minimum of six months). Eligible participants accessed

¹ There are 52 Clusters in total covering the most deprived communities (10 per cent) in Wales.

² Flintshire and one of the Caerphilly areas joined Lift at a later date.

the Programme voluntarily, with the Mentors assessing a participant's aspirations for employment, determining their training or education needs, and helping them to develop personal development (action) plans to structure their move towards work. Suitable training and employment opportunities were then identified.

- 1.4 Mentors identified the training and employment opportunities at a local level. At a national level, Welsh Government departments, public bodies and others were invited to expand the pool of employment and training opportunities that may be suitable locally for long-term workless people; these include Local Health Boards, Registered Social Landlords, and opportunities within existing Education and Skills Programmes.
- 1.5 The first Lift delivery area became operational in January 2014 and the last of the nine areas commenced work in the summer of that year. In 2016, the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty agreed a programme budget for 2016-17 and 2017-18 to enable the Programme to continue up to March 2018; however, the target of 5,000 training and employment opportunities was achieved by November 2017.

Scope and Aims of the Evaluation

- 1.6 The evaluation had two overarching aims:
 - To assess how the Programme had been set up in each of the nine delivery areas and how it was being operated; and
 - To provide an indication of its effectiveness in helping participants to find work or to undergo activities that would considerably boost their job prospects.
- 1.7 The evaluation took place over three phases, each with a specific focus on key elements of the Programme.

Phase 1 - The Logic of the Lift Model

- 1.8 The focus of the initial phase of the evaluation was on understanding the inherent logic underpinning Lift, i.e. testing the extent to which Lift was based upon a plausible 'Theory of Change' and the extent to which the Programme conformed to this model in the delivery areas. The research culminated in the development of a Theory of Change for the Programme (see Appendix A).

Phase 2 – The Structural Form and Operational Practice of Lift

- 1.9 Phase 2 of the study involved a detailed analysis of how the Programme had been established in each area and the processes applied during its implementation. This phase included an examination of the adequacy of monitoring and reporting systems in each delivery area.

Phase 3 – The Effectiveness and Efficiency of Lift

- 1.10 In Phase 3, the efficiency and effectiveness (the efficacy) of the Programme in achieving its intended outcomes was reviewed. It included an analysis of the costs and benefits accrued by the participants on the Programme, as well as exploring the operational efficiency of Lift and whether there is scope for improvements in the design.
- 1.11 This report is the final, overarching evaluation report for the Lift Programme.

Structure of this Report

- 1.12 The remainder of the report is structured as follows:
- **Section 2** provides an overview of the methodological approach applied in the evaluation.
 - **Section 3** provides a brief overview of the Lift Programme, reflecting on the original rationale and the evolution of policy throughout the delivery process.
 - **Section 4** reviews the approach to delivering the Lift Programme in each of the delivery areas.
 - **Section 5** reviews the performance of the Lift Programme and the impact associated with the support.
 - **Section 6** provides a summary of the findings of the evaluation and a series of recommendations for future programmes.

2. Methodological Approach

2.1 This section of the report provides an outline of the evaluation approach. Across the three phases of the evaluation, the following methods were applied:

Policy and Literature Review

2.2 A review of the evolving strategic and policy context within which the Lift Programme was placed was repeated during each phase of the evaluation. This process was complemented by a literature review (available as an Annex within the Phase 1 report³) examining the efficacy of active labour market initiatives within the initial phase of the evaluation, revisited as part of the final phase. The review provided an understanding of the context within which Lift has been developed and its legacy, as well as the extent to which the Lift Programme model reflected existing evidence and, therefore, a plausible Theory of Change.

Review of Monitoring Systems

2.3 On behalf of their Lead Delivery Bodies, Lift teams held the role of 'data controller', requiring them to capture and store all beneficiary data related to the Programme's delivery. Research in Phase 1 identified that each team had designed its own systems and forms for capturing participant data, placing the ability to measure the performance of the Programme at risk. This prompted a more detailed assessment which focused on:

- what specific data was being captured and at what point in the process
- how that information was being stored
- to what extent could the data captured for each participant be linked to track a participant's journey and outcome

The review led to a series of enhancements in the monitoring data captured by Lift teams, with the majority of areas transferring their data to a consistent data capture system.

³ The various reports can be found on the following web page: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/evaluation-lift-programme/?lang=en>

Programme Management Interviews

- 2.4 The WG's programme management team (two Welsh Government staff members along with their line manager) have been interviewed at regular intervals throughout the evaluation (either face to face or by telephone), discussing the implementation, progress and legacy of the Programme. The evaluation team has also attended several Lift Board Meetings to deliver emerging findings and to gather feedback and insight regarding the Programme's progress and success.

Interviews with Cluster Managers

- 2.5 All Cluster Managers were interviewed during Phases 1 and 2 of the evaluation and seven of the nine Cluster Managers were interviewed during Phase 3. Interviews were conducted of either by telephone or via face to face interviews (predominantly the latter as part of observational visits during Phase 2 of the evaluation). The emphasis of the semi-structured interviews reflected the focus of each phase and the discussion guides used in these interviews are available in the Annexes of the Phase 2 and Phase 3 evaluation reports.⁴

Interviews with Lift Mentors

- 2.6 Lift Mentors were also interviewed during each phase (nine in Phase 1, 15 in Phase 2 and 13 in Phase 3) through a further semi-structured approach, involving telephone or face to face interviews. Once again, the emphasis for each interview reflected the evaluation's emphasis at each phase with discussion guides used in each phase contained within each of the evaluation reports.⁵

Telephone Survey of Participants

- 2.7 Lift participants were randomly sampled from a population of participants who had first engaged with the Programme during the previous six months. A repeat interview design was adopted where the initial survey establishes the baseline for subsequent comparison and the subsequent re-interview captures progression over time. These interview and re-interview surveys can be found in Appendices B and C. The survey of Lift participants operated across several waves (see table 2.1 below) and ultimately led to 381 participants being interviewed at baseline, of which 164 participated in a re-interview (table 2.2 below).

⁴ The various reports can be found on the following web page: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/evaluation-lift-programme/?lang=en>

⁵ Ibid.

Table 2.1: Participant Survey Waves

	May 2016 (Phase 1)	Dec 2016-Jan 207 (Phase 2)	Jun-Jul 2017 (Phase 3)
Wave 1	Interview	Re-Interview	
Wave 2		Interview	Re-Interview
Wave 3			Interview

Table 2.2: Participant Survey – Number of Respondents

	Eligible Population for Interview ⁶	Number of Interviews Secured	Response Rate	Number of Re- Interviews Secured	Re-interview Response Rate
Wave 1	244	105	43%	62	59%
Wave 2	412	195	47%	102	52%
Wave 3	236	81	34%	n/a	n/a
Total	892	381	43%	164	55%

Interviews with Employers

2.8 Employers were interviewed during Phase 2 (10 employers) and Phase 3 (24 employers) of the evaluation by telephone using a semi-structured research tool (the discussion guides can be found in the Annexes to each evaluation report).⁷ Prior to commencing the interviews in the Phase 2 evaluation, it was anticipated that a larger number of employers would be eligible for the research; however, employers are often unaware of the Lift Programme or that those they have employed were previously Lift participants (with participants typically securing employment through openly advertised employment opportunities) and to have engaged with these employers would have breached confidentiality. During the Phase 3 evaluation, nationally brokered employers were interviewed in addition to local employers. The employer research focused on how employers first became aware of the Lift Programme and their experiences of engaging and employing Lift participants.

⁶ The eligible population included Lift participants who had first engaged with the Lift Programme in the six months prior to sampling taking place.

⁷ The various reports can be found on the following web page: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/evaluation-lift-programme/?lang=en>

Interviews with JCP Representatives

- 2.9 As part of the third phase of the evaluation, three representatives of Jobcentre Plus participated in a semi-structured telephone interviews in order to gather their perspectives on the referral process to the Lift Programme and on the perceived effectiveness of the Lift model.⁸

Analysis of Monitoring Data

- 2.10 Following the review of monitoring data in earlier phases of the evaluation, the final phase involved gathering monitoring data from each delivery area for participants who engaged with the Lift Programme from January 2016 onwards. This timeframe for the participant data was chosen as it followed the implementation of enhancements to the nature of monitoring data captured by delivery areas.
- 2.11 The data gathered enabled a detailed assessment of individuals engaging with the Lift Programme since January 2016 as well as a thorough analysis of any patterns associated with the types of participants securing employment outcomes through the Programme.

Impact Assessment

- 2.12 Following initial explorations regarding the use of Propensity Score Matching (PSM) to measure the counterfactual (what would have happened in the absence of Lift), this was ultimately tested through the application of a 'matched data' approach. The matched data approach was chosen as data limitations (associated with the Lift Programme management information and the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS)) restricted the number of variables and cases possible for inclusion in a PSM. We concluded that the method was not sufficiently robust to allow for meaningful statistical comparison. Subsequently, we identified a *heuristic sample* – i.e. one that was matched using simple selection criteria based on the face value of labour market history variables (long-term unemployed) from the QLFS. The impact assessment informed the implementation of a cost benefit analysis (CBA). Detail on the approach to the CBA is contained within the Phase 3 evaluation Annex.⁹

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Methodological Limitations

2.13 A number of methodological limitations were encountered in the evaluation:

- There was a lack of consistency in the gathering and storing of monitoring data through the Programme which undermined the ability to conduct an analysis of effectiveness and impact (much of the information had been collected in multiple ways and stored using a mixture of electronic and hard copy formats). This was partially due to the lean management structure adopted by the Programme at both local and national level. Consequently, through a review of data capture methods it was agreed that all data required to analyse the effectiveness of the Programme in relation to activity that had taken place from January 2016 would be stored digitally and made available to the evaluation team two years after the commencement of the Lift Programme. This timeframe was chosen as tracking prior to this date was considered unreasonably demanding in terms of resources and it also coaligned with the initial participant survey conducted through the evaluation. The narrow timeframe within which full analysis of management information could take place has, in turn, limited the number of Lift participants subjected to that analysis. Unfortunately, this has undermined the ability to compare the success of delivery areas by participant type/background.
- As local areas were the owners of data associated with the Lift Programme, the evaluation team needed to develop an approach that would allow a sufficient window for delivery teams with limited resources to gather participant data and share it for the survey activity. It was felt that six months post-enrolment would provide a sufficient window for the gathering and sharing of participant data. However, it is likely that this cohort of participants had a degree of exposure to the Lift Programme support during that period. Since this exposure may have occurred prior to the initial interview, that interview may have captured some of the positive programme effects and therefore cannot be considered as a true (pre-programme) baseline. A further confounding factor was that 15 per cent of participants (56/378) had already entered into employment prior to the first interview while others had not. Thus, while the re-interview can be used to capture longitudinal 'distance travelled' effects, these should not be considered as 'programme effects' that would be captured in a true 'pre-post' design.

- Resource limitations for the evaluation meant that participants involved in primary research have been tracked for six months (and typically 12 months since initial enrolment in the Programme). Given the nature of the participant group and the emphasis on securing participants with career orientated, sustainable employment opportunities, there would be value in tracking participants against the comparison group over the longer-term. However, resource limitations combined with probable rates of attrition (which would likely lead to further reductions in the responding cohort) in tracking the intervention group, as well as the fact that the longitudinal QLFS only retains individuals for five quarters, limits the length of time for which either group can be tracked despite the potential value that may be gained from this process.
- A further methodological limitation related to research with employers. At the commencement of the research it was anticipated that the evaluation would produce a large population of employers for random sampling. However, the tendency of Lift participants to access employment through the open market resulted in a much smaller population of employers who were aware that they had engaged with the Lift Programme. Furthermore, the number of local employers aware varied significantly across delivery areas (depending on the extent to which local employers had been engaged in each area). The approach to employer engagement therefore relied on the provision of local employer contacts from delivery areas and therefore may be subject to systematic (i.e. non-random) bias associated with the particular data collection methods unique to each area.

3. The Lift Programme

- 3.1 Operating in nine delivery areas across 12 Communities First (CF) Clusters, the Lift Programme received £4.1m of Welsh Government funding to deliver 5,000 Training and Employment Opportunities by the end of 2017. The use of CF Clusters as the delivery vehicle drew on the assumption that Cluster infrastructure offered a degree of efficacy, enabling service delivery with limited resources and a reliance upon the Lift Programme linking with or drawing on other forms of support.
- 3.2 The final selection criteria included (i) the extent to which the Clusters had a proven track record in the delivery of the CF Programme, and (ii) the need to trial the model in a range of settings under the assumption that the Programme's effectiveness would be influenced by geography, population and employment densities, and infrastructure.
- 3.3 The initial budget for each delivery area (2013/14-2015/16) varied from approximately £190,000 to £390,000, reflecting the level of funding requested by each Lead Delivery Body. The finances and wider resources (financial and personnel/intervention-related) have provided a high degree of flexibility in the nature of support available for participants to help overcome barriers to employment. The Programme (unlike many others in Wales) was funded by the Welsh Government, thus offering a greater degree of flexibility than that enjoyed in European Social Funds funded activities. The approach adopted assumed that this flexibility would enable different participants in varying situations to respond positively and to actively engage with Lift.
- 3.4 Funding included the allocation of a local Barrier Fund, which provided a flexible resource to Mentors to assist them (where no other resource is available) in overcoming any significant barriers faced by an individual in gaining or moving towards employment. Each delivery area was allocated a proportion of its funding as a Barrier Fund; typically, this averaged between £20,000 and £30,000 per delivery area, per annum.

3.5 Each identified delivery area appointed at least two members of staff¹⁰ (two Brokers/Mentors) to deliver the Lift Programme. The staffing quota was largely commensurate with the financial resources available and draws on the assumption that this level of staffing resources was sufficient to deliver the Lift Programme, albeit not without risk of discontinuity should staff members become unavailable.

Programme Management and Governance

3.6 The Programme's delivery was managed by two Welsh Government staff members (with line management support) and with additional administrative support in the initial stages. A Programme board,¹¹ meeting biannually, was also set up to provide information, advice and assurance to the team regarding the following areas:

- strategic and cross-cutting issues and risks that may affect the Programme
- effectiveness of communication
- the adequacy and integrity of governance arrangements
- the delivery of the outcomes and benefits
- the resolution of strategic and operational issues from a strategic perspective.

Rationale for Intervention

3.7 Tackling poverty has been established as one of the Welsh Government's highest priorities. In 2012, over one-fifth (21.5 per cent) of households in Wales containing someone of working age were workless (compared to 18.1 per cent across the UK as a whole); this equated to more than 200,000 households across the country.¹²

3.8 Evidence of the uneven distribution of worklessness in Wales was evident at the commencement of Lift where, according to 2012 data, almost one in three households in Blaenau Gwent (where 23 per cent of LSOAs¹³ are in the 10 per cent most deprived) were workless compared to less than one in seven households in Monmouthshire (where no areas within the authority are within the 10 per cent most deprived). Furthermore, at the neighbourhood level, it was estimated that almost two-thirds of households with working-age adults were workless in some neighbourhoods within CF Cluster areas.¹⁴ Whilst the estimated proportion of

¹⁰ A third broker/mentor has been recruited in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Cardiff.

¹¹ Lift Implementation Board - Terms of Reference

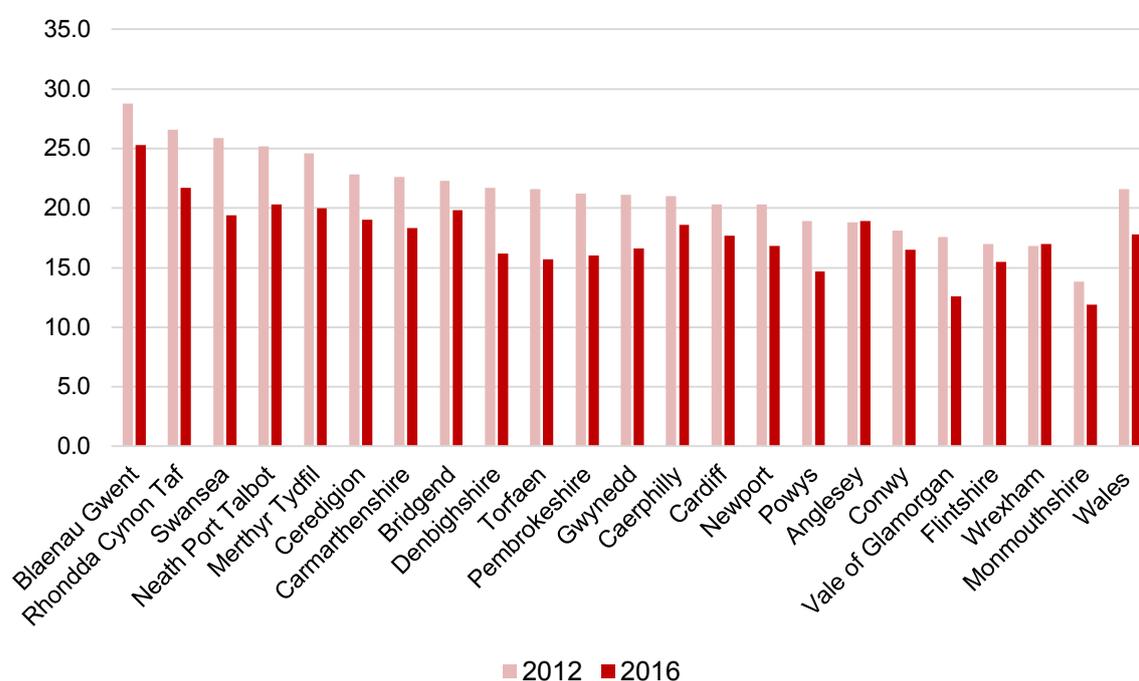
¹² Welsh Government, *Labour Market Statistics for Households, 2012* - Statistical Bulletin, 4 September 2013

¹³ LSOAs – Lower Super Output Areas – are typically local areas with a resident population of around 1,500

¹⁴ Analysis of Census 2011 data by the Communities First Team in Welsh Government using Census 2011 based on the proportion of households where no adult (over 15) was in employment within their household using lower super output area.

households considered to be workless in Wales has fallen (from 21.6 per cent in 2012 to 17.8 per cent in 2016) ,¹⁵ some areas have marginally reversed that decline (Anglesey and Wrexham) and significant local disparities in the rate of workless households have persisted (figure 3.1 below). Explicit reference to the variation in concentration of workless households in certain communities (justifying the area-based approach) in Wales is made in the rationale underpinning the Programme’s Theory of Change (Appendix A).

Figure 3.1: Percentage of Workless Households in Wales by Local Authority Area – 2012 and 2016



- 3.9 The growth of single-adult households has had a considerable impact on the number and rate of workless households both in Wales and throughout the UK. The majority of this cohort comprises single adults with no children; however, it also includes single adults with children. Although Wales-specific data is not available, UK statistics suggest that at least two thirds of children in workless households live with a lone parent.¹⁶
- 3.10 Lift targeted members of households who have been workless for more than six months due to the likelihood that longer periods of worklessness will increase the

¹⁵ Statistics for Wales (2017) Labour Market Statistics for Households, 2017, published 13th December 2017, Welsh Government.

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics (2014) *Families in the Labour Market, Labour Force Survey*; ONS

chance of experiencing severe and persistent poverty and deprivation, poor health and well-being, and the intergenerational transfer of risks and disadvantages.

- 3.11 When the number of individuals claiming jobseekers allowance (the historical claimant count measure of unemployment) is analysed, it becomes apparent that between January 2013 and March 2017¹⁷ the number of claimants fell by over 65 per cent. However, when the duration of claimant is factored into the analysis, the overall fall in the number of JSA claimants masks variation in performance. Table 3.1 illustrates that whilst the total number of claimants fell by 65 per cent, while over the same period the number of JSA claimants claiming for in excess of five years increased by 604 per cent.

Table 3.1: Change in JSA Claimants by Duration¹⁸

	Claimants January 2013	Claimants March 2017	Percentage change in no. of claimants – January 13- March 17
Total Claimants	81,329	28,328	-65%
Total claiming JSA for over 6 months	33,545	13,670	-59%
Total claiming JSA for over 2 years	7,935	5,525	-30%
Total claiming JSA for over 5 years	275	1,935	+604%

The impact of worklessness¹⁹

- 3.12 The continued concern with worklessness stems, in part, from the understanding that unemployment and economic inactivity are associated with a range of adverse outcomes. For instance, long-term unemployment and economic inactivity can lead to sharp increases in material deprivation, deteriorating mental and physical well-being, the removal of social support, and broader social exclusion.²⁰
- 3.13 Research suggests that the long-term effects of unemployment on subjective and objective well-being are negative. Protracted periods of inactivity, for example, can

¹⁷ (when the influence of the transition to Universal Credit is from that point onwards it is deemed by the ONS to potentially provide a misleading representation of the labour market)
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/news/statementsandletters/publicationarrangementsfortheclaimantcount> accessed - 03/11/17

¹⁸ Jobseekers Allowance Rates and Proportions Data, ONS – obtained from the Nomis website:
<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

¹⁹ See also Annex A.

²⁰ Davies, A.R., Homolova, L., Grey, C., Bellis, M.A. (2017) *Mass Unemployment Events (MUEs) – Prevention and response from a public health perspective*, Public Health Wales, Cardiff.

contribute to higher levels of stress and depression, which can, in turn, reduce the likelihood of finding and sustaining employment.²¹ Increased duration of unemployment is associated with significant increases in alcohol abuse and substance dependency, domestic violence, criminal activity generally, and convictions. Unemployment is also associated with low levels of self-efficacy, the lack of which may lead to an unemployed person becoming resigned to their situation. This fosters the impression that they will never get a job.

- 3.14 One of the greatest challenges presented by worklessness is poverty and social exclusion. Changes in employment status or earnings are the main causes of moving into or out of poverty.²² Being out of work considerably increases the chances of experiencing material deprivation. This includes fuel poverty, the inability to heat or light a home, or going without essentials such as sufficient food, adequate housing or clothing. For many living in poverty this also means living without access to services and social activities, exacerbating social exclusion. The lack of employment is itself viewed as a form of social exclusion and prolonged worklessness can contribute to increased social isolation and a reduction in social support.
- 3.15 There is extensive research on the relationship between parental worklessness and children's outcomes, including cognitive development, educational attainment, and transitions into adulthood. For instance, research drawing on data from the Millennium Cohort Study found that parental worklessness was significantly associated with poorer academic attainment. Children growing up in workless households, for example, spend 11 per cent more time out of work than children in employed households from leaving full-time education to the age of 23.²³ However, the intergenerational transfer of disadvantage remains contested. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicated a lack of evidence regarding 'cultures of worklessness' — transmitting values, attitudes and behaviours discouraging employment and encouraging welfare dependency — within workless households.^{24,25}

²¹ Crowther et al. (2000) 'Helping people with severe mental illness to obtain work: systematic review', BMJ <http://www.bmj.com/content/322/7280/204>

²² Pantazis (2006) Poverty and social exclusion in Britain: The Millennium Survey.

²³ Schoon et al. (2012) Intergenerational transmission of worklessness: Evidence from the Millennium Cohort and the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England.

²⁴ JRF (2012) <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/cultures-of-worklessness>.

²⁵ Ibid.,

In Work Poverty

- 3.16 Whilst unemployment rates and rates of workless households have fallen, those in poverty increasingly originate from households where at least one adult is in work with the latest analysis suggesting that the proportion of people in poverty who are in a working family has reached 55 per cent - a record high.²⁶ In 2014, 67 per cent of children in income poverty across the UK lived in households where at least one adult worked, which is an increase from 54 per cent in 2003.²⁷ It is estimated that abolishing all household worklessness (based on 2014-15 figures) would only reduce income poverty among households with children from 28 per cent to 23 per cent,²⁸ suggesting a need for policy to shift towards the quality, salary and hours of employment.
- 3.17 In this context, the Lift Programme placed significant emphasis on the quality of employment secured for participants (particularly through the national brokering of employment opportunities). It also encouraged the provision of in-work support for participants once they secured work opportunities.

Policy Response

- 3.18 Reducing worklessness has remained a key policy objective for successive governments within Wales and the UK more broadly. The policy response has included area-based initiatives, such as CF in Wales, the Social Inclusion Partnership in Scotland, and the New Deal Programme and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in England. Since 2008, UK Government policy has shifted focus from positive activation towards negative activation policies through sanctions and benefit reductions.

²⁶ Tinson, A. et al (2016) *Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2016*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

²⁷ Belfield, C. et al. (2016) *Living standards, poverty and inequality 2016*, Institute for Fiscal Studies.

²⁸ Ibid.

3.19 In 2011, the UK Government launched the Work Programme, a welfare-to-work initiative providing support for people who are long-term unemployed or are at the highest risk of becoming so. Mandatory referrals to the Work Programme were triggered following the claiming of unemployment-related benefits over a certain timescale. The Lift Programme was designed for focus resources on participants prior to referral to, or once they had left, the Work Programme.

Welsh Government

3.20 The Lift Programme was identified in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan, which sought to prioritise the needs of those most at risk of poverty and exclusion. 'Building Resilient Communities: Taking forward the Tackling Poverty Action Plan,' published in 2013, provides a series of key actions that the WG would facilitate with clear measurable targets as to where they sought to make the biggest difference. This included: '*... the creation of 5,000 training and employment opportunities for people in households where there is no adult in work, starting with at least six of our Communities First areas*' with the aim of the commitment to be fulfilled by the end of 2017. The Lift Programme was developed as the intervention to deliver this commitment.

3.21 The Tackling Poverty Action Plan identified that the risk of poverty for children in workless families remained high at 58 per cent, considerably above the Welsh average of 22 per cent; consequently, the Lift Programme was closely aligned to the WG's Child Poverty Strategy.²⁹

3.22 CF, the vehicle through which the Lift Programme has been delivered, was the WG's community-based programme for tackling poverty, targeting 52 Clusters across Wales including the most deprived communities in Wales. The Programme had three strategic-level objectives which contributed to the aims of the Tackling Poverty Action Plan, namely:

- Prosperous Communities – To reduce inequalities in income and opportunity for the most deprived communities in Wales, ensuring that people have access to the resources needed to provide for themselves and their families and to improve their life chances.

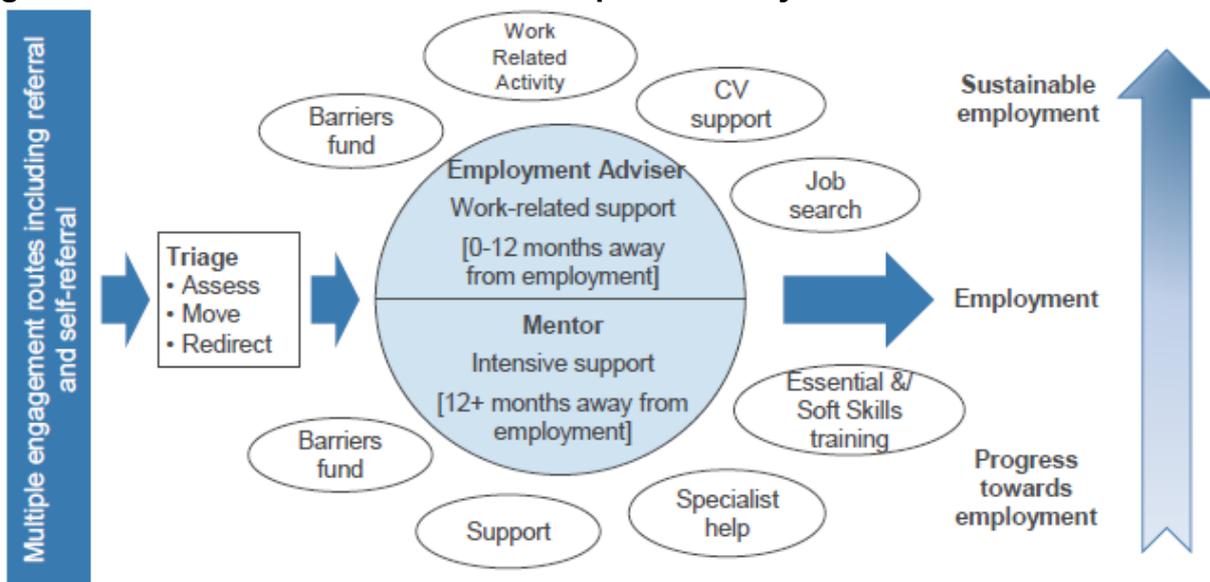
²⁹ Welsh Government (2015) *Child Poverty Strategy for Wales*, Welsh Government
<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/child-poverty/?lang=en>

- Learning Communities – To promote a culture of learning within Welsh communities where everyone, regardless of age or ability, is encouraged to recognise his or her own potential and is supported to reach it.
- Healthier Communities – Improved health and well-being for all with the pace of improvement increasing in proportion to the level of disadvantage.

3.23 Part of the rationale for CF was that, as a community-focused, poverty-tackling programme, it would not only deliver activities by itself but also provide a platform for the successful delivery of other WG programmes that seek to tackle poverty and act as a coordinating mechanism within deprived communities, with the Lift Programme a clear example of that approach. In May 2015 the Welsh Government expanded its employment support in CF Clusters through the introduction of Communities for Work:

3.24 Communities for Work (an ESF supported programme) builds on the early learning from the Lift Programme and is delivered by Employment Advisors (employed by JCP but integrated into CF teams) and Employment Mentors (based in CF teams) depending on an individual’s distance from the labour market (see figure 3.2 below for an overview of this programme). An initial triage process is undertaken through the Programme to categorise individuals to ensure the appropriate support is provided, a procedure which includes redirection to other provision if that is more appropriate (including the Lift Programme when and where it was available).

Figure 3.2: Communities for Work Participant Journey³⁰



³⁰ Welsh Government (2017) *Evaluation of Communities for Work – Stage 1: Theory of change and logic model*, Welsh Government.

- 3.25 In February 2017, the Communities and Children Secretary set out plans for a new approach to building resilient communities. The approach focuses on employment, early years and empowerment and involves the phasing out of the CF programme.
- 3.26 To facilitate the phasing out of CF, funding for 70 per cent of the 2016/17 financial year allocation was provided to the Communities First programme until March 2018 alongside a legacy fund of £6m per year introduced in April 2018 to enable some of the Programme's most effective projects to continue.
- 3.27 In addition, the launch of a new £12m a year employability grant was announced to support those who are furthest from the labour market. Communities for Work Plus is being designed to build on learning from the Lift, Communities for Work and PaCE programmes. The grant will enable local authorities to enhance support that is targeted at those people often faced with complex barriers who are furthest from the labour market. Unlike Lift and Communities First, the grant will enable support to go beyond tightly defined geographical boundaries which have been considered a constraint within the existing provision. Communities for Work Plus will also feed into the wider Welsh Government 'Employability offer' led by the Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning.
- 3.28 The reshaped Employability programme 'Working Wales' consists of three strands delivered from April 2019 - Adults (age 18 years or older), Youth Engagement (16-17 year olds furthest from the labour market) and Youth Training (16-17 year olds closer to the labour market). It combines several existing programmes, namely ReAct III, Jobs Growth Wales II, the Employability Skills Programme and Traineeships, and will work alongside Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus.

4. Programme Delivery

- 4.1 This section reviews the model of delivery and compares and contrasts the approach to service provision in each of the delivery areas.

Programme Implementation

- 4.2 Initially eight (and subsequently nine) CF Clusters were invited to participate in the Lift Programme, all of which submitted an application for funding.
- 4.3 Programme guidance provided by the WG to the delivery areas was described as 'light touch' with an emphasis on locally tailored solutions to the issues of worklessness within their localities. The guidance comprised the specifications for the employment of two Mentors, the provision of resources for back office costs and the Barrier Fund. Job description templates for Mentors were also provided; whilst some Clusters replicated these templates, others chose to design their own.
- 4.4 The flexibility and autonomy provided to local areas was welcomed by most with an appreciation of the flexibility to adapt the model to suit local requirements. However, in the early stages of the Programme some delivery areas noted the need for additional guidance, particularly around monitoring and eligibility for the Programme. Additional monitoring requirements have been developed for the Programme as it has progressed. This has led to the chasing up of additional information from participants and to some Mentors raising concerns about being drawn away from service delivery to ensure that the enhanced monitoring requirements were adhered to.

Recruitment and Staff Structure

- 4.5 Recruitment of Lift staff in each delivery area commenced in January 2014 with all Mentors appointed by August 2014. Whilst most areas broadly followed the two Mentor model, requests for additional administrative support relating to recording of monitoring data were successfully made in some delivery areas.
- 4.6 In most cases, the Lift teams were employed by the Lead Delivery Body and line managed by the Cluster Manager. The most notable deviation from this structure was in Cardiff East where the team was managed by the Cardiff Community Housing Association.

Table 4.1: Lift Programme Staffing Structure by Delivery Area

Delivery Area	Staffing³¹	Line Manager
Anglesey (Anglesey)	Mentors (x 2 FTE) Administrator (PT)	Môn Communities First Employability Manager
Flintshire East and West (Flintshire)	Mentors (x2 FTE)	Communities First Cluster Manager
Afan Valley (Neath Port Talbot)	Mentors (x 2 FTE) (one post unfilled from April to August 2016)	Communities First Cluster Manager
Swansea North West (Swansea)	Mentors (x 2 FTE)	Swansea Lift & Communities for Work Manager
Llanelli (Carmarthenshire)	Mentors (x 2 FTE)	Communities First Cluster Manager
Ebbw Fawr and Tredegar (Blaenau Gwent)	Mentors (x 3 FTE) – 1.5 in each Cluster	Communities First Cluster Manager
Caerphilly Basin and Upper Rhymney Valley (Caerphilly)	Mentors (x 3 FTE) 1 Mentor in each Cluster, 1 senior Mentor (the senior Mentor now manages Lift and CfW)	Senior Employment Mentor
Cardiff East (Cardiff)	Mentors (x 3 FTE) Administrator (PT) Volunteer Lift Participants (administration)	Cardiff Community Housing Association Representative
Taf West (RCT)	Mentors (x2 FTE)	Communities First Cluster Manager

4.7 The staff appointed as Mentors typically had extensive experience of employability related activity and/or community development. Staff emphasised the importance of previous connections and/or existing networks in enabling them to engage with potential participants and to identify relevant training/employment opportunities for Lift participants. When asked about the key traits required for the role Mentors

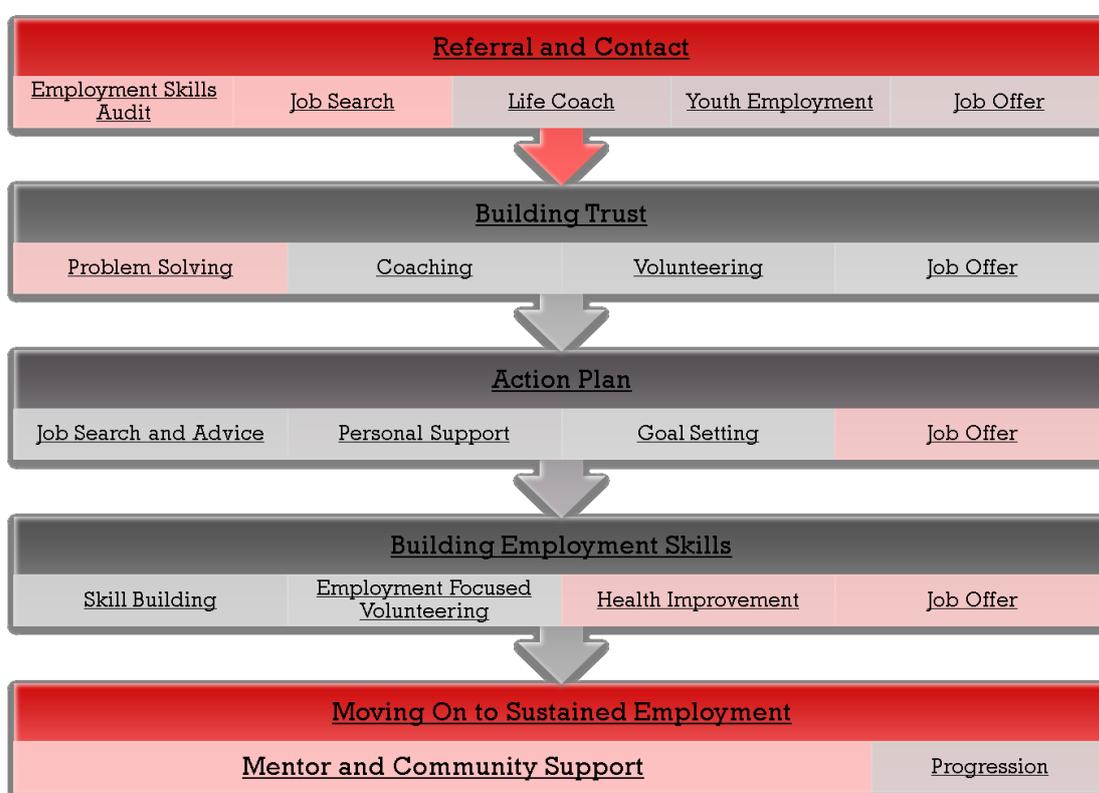
³¹ In the table above the term 'Mentors' describes delivery staff whose job titles include Brokers, Senior Brokers or Senior Mentors.

highlighted the importance of empathy, the ability to communicate at all levels, knowledge of social policy, and the ability to be flexible, innovative, responsive and solution orientated.

Delivery Model

4.8 The Lift model incorporated a five-stage approach, allowing participants to progress quickly or benefit from more intensive, longer-term support in cases involving significant barriers and needs. Figure 4.1 illustrates the key stages of referral and engagement, building trust, action planning, moving towards employment and ultimately gaining sustainable employment.

Figure 4.1: Planned Delivery Model for the Lift Programme³²



Engagement/Referrals

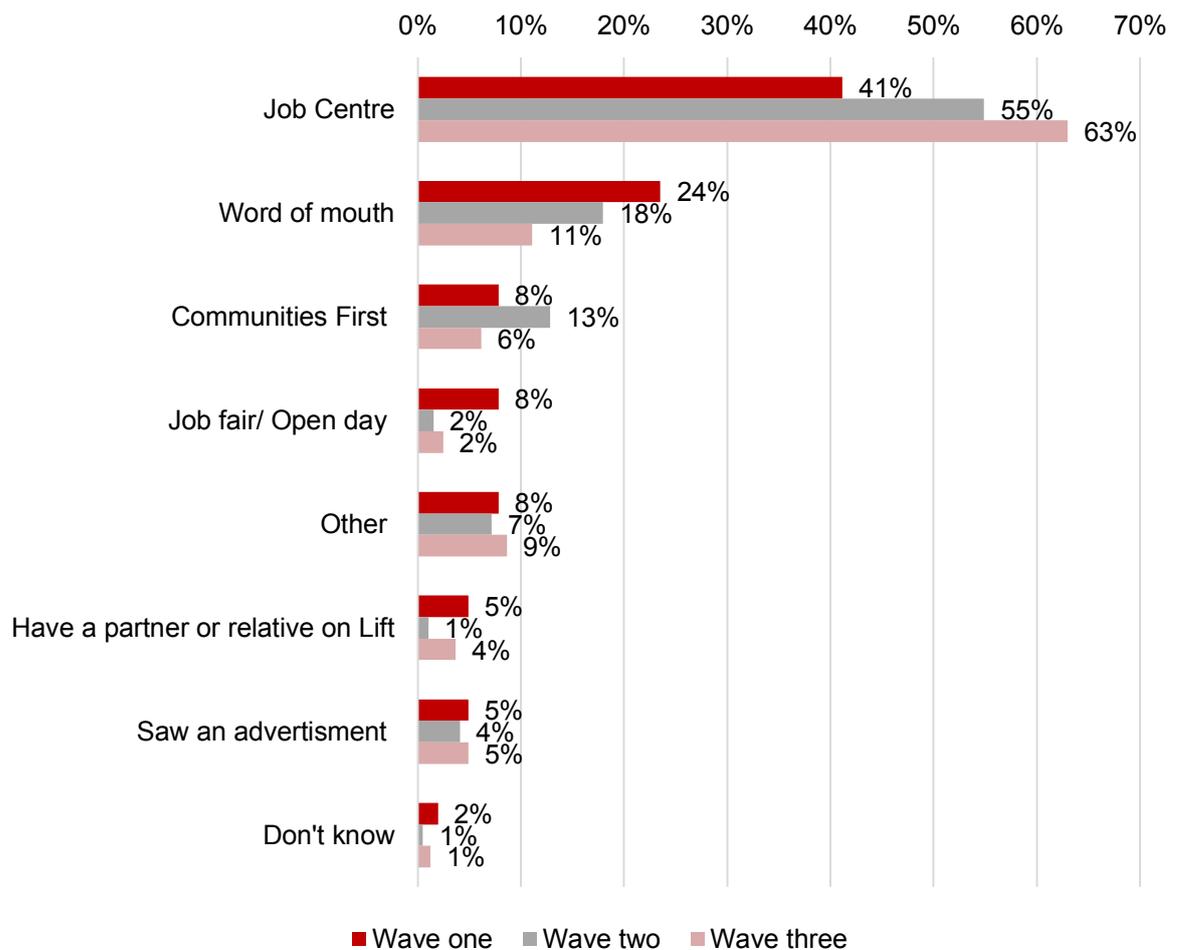
4.9 Lift’s design was heavily reliant upon referrals from other organisations based on the assumption that Lift teams would be able to effectively engage with key referral agencies, particularly the CF Cluster and the local Jobcentre Plus (JCP) offices. Throughout the Programme, Jobcentres were identified as the most prominent referral route to the Programme and relationships with the local Jobcentres strengthened as the Programme progressed. However, the quantity and nature of referrals was found to depend on individual relationships, which varied greatly from

³² Welsh Government (2013) *Tackling Workless Households Programme – Brief*, Welsh Government

one Jobcentre to the next and from one Work Coach to the next. Some participants, for example, thought they had been mandated to the Programme; in these circumstances, the voluntary nature of engagement was emphasised by Mentors to diffuse difficult situations, and others were referred who resided outside the target area and were consequently ineligible for the Programme. To overcome issues of miscommunication at least one delivery team established a physical presence in their local JCP office on a regular basis.

- 4.10 CF engagement activities provided another common referral route to the Programme. The effectiveness of this route was heavily dependent on the nature of the relationship between CF Cluster staff and the Lift team. The strength of the relationship reportedly had a clear bearing on the volume and quality of referrals. Where weaknesses were apparent these most typically occurred at an individual rather than organisation-wide level.
- 4.11 A range of other routes to engagement have arisen, including referrals via local GP surgeries, via Registered Social Landlords, Probation Services, Careers Wales, Job Fairs/Employer Engagement Events and Families First/Flying Start.
- 4.12 The Programme also benefitted from self-referral. Lift Programme teams with facilities based in prominent locations, enjoying high footfall and offering a range of services, were found to benefit most from ad hoc engagement through drop-ins or self-referrals.

Figure 4.2: How did you become aware of the Lift Programme?

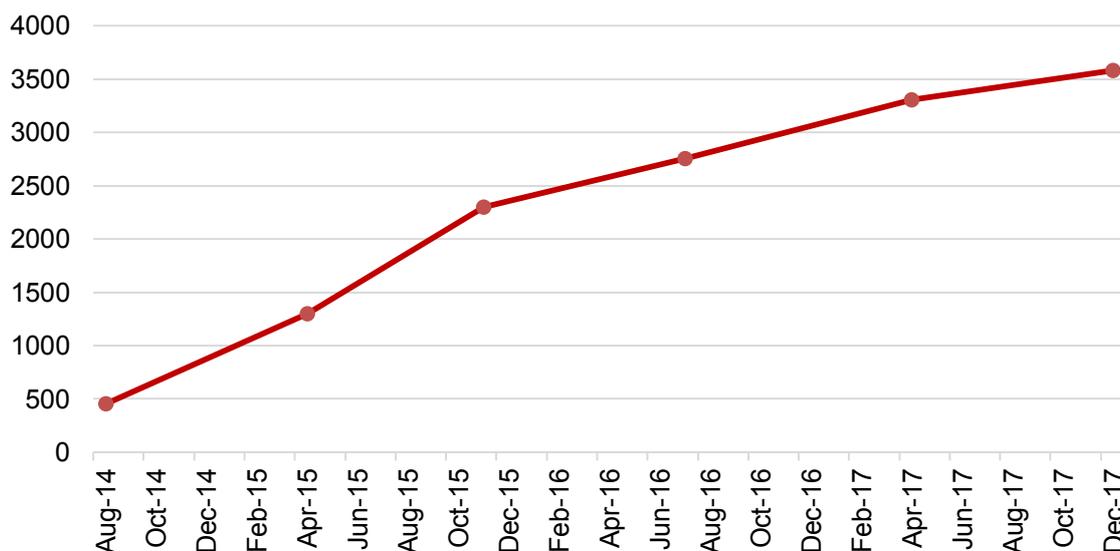


4.13 The launch of Communities for Work (CfW) in 2015 created an opportunity for the Lift Programme to benefit from the increased promotion and presence of employability support within the CF Clusters. Initially, there were concerns that rather than its introduction leading to mutual benefit, it may lead to the marginalisation of the Lift Programme. Concerns were particularly evident amongst Mentors who had a weaker relationship with their CF Cluster.

4.14 A reduction in referrals to the Programme was reported by Mentors in the latter stages (particularly in early 2017), which is highlighted in figure 4.3. Some delivery areas attributed CfW becoming increasingly active in target areas as the primary cause of the reduction (others felt it may have reflected a reduction in the size of the population eligible for the Programme). Further, in some locations, there was a perception that JCP was referring directly to their own staff on CfW rather than Lift. Several locations also referred to the introduction of the Triage model as being expected to benefit the Lift Programme as well as CfW by becoming a key referral route. However, during the early implementation of CfW, Lift Mentors lacked a clear understanding of the referral process and where referral processes were outlined

they lacked consistency from one delivery area to the next. That said, several delivery areas deemed the introduction of CfW to have enhanced the existing offer by enabling provision to respond to a broader, more diverse set of needs. In these instances, this had been facilitated by the effective implementation of the triage system with Mentors stating that having both the Lift Programme and CfW available could strengthen the breadth of offers available to participants.

Figure 4.3: Trends in the Cumulative Caseload of Participants referred to the Lift Programme³³ over time³⁴



Participant Backgrounds

4.15 Lift participants were typically some distance from the labour market and often had complex or chaotic backgrounds, some of which presented challenges with engagement. Other Mentors reflected on the challenge of dealing with multiple barriers and prioritising accordingly: *‘We have clients with multiple barriers, e.g. substance misuse, domestic abuse, homelessness, debt, criminal records, child care. We deal with these barriers based on a hierarchy of needs so if we are talking about a training course available and someone is about to be made homeless then obviously we prioritise the latter.’*

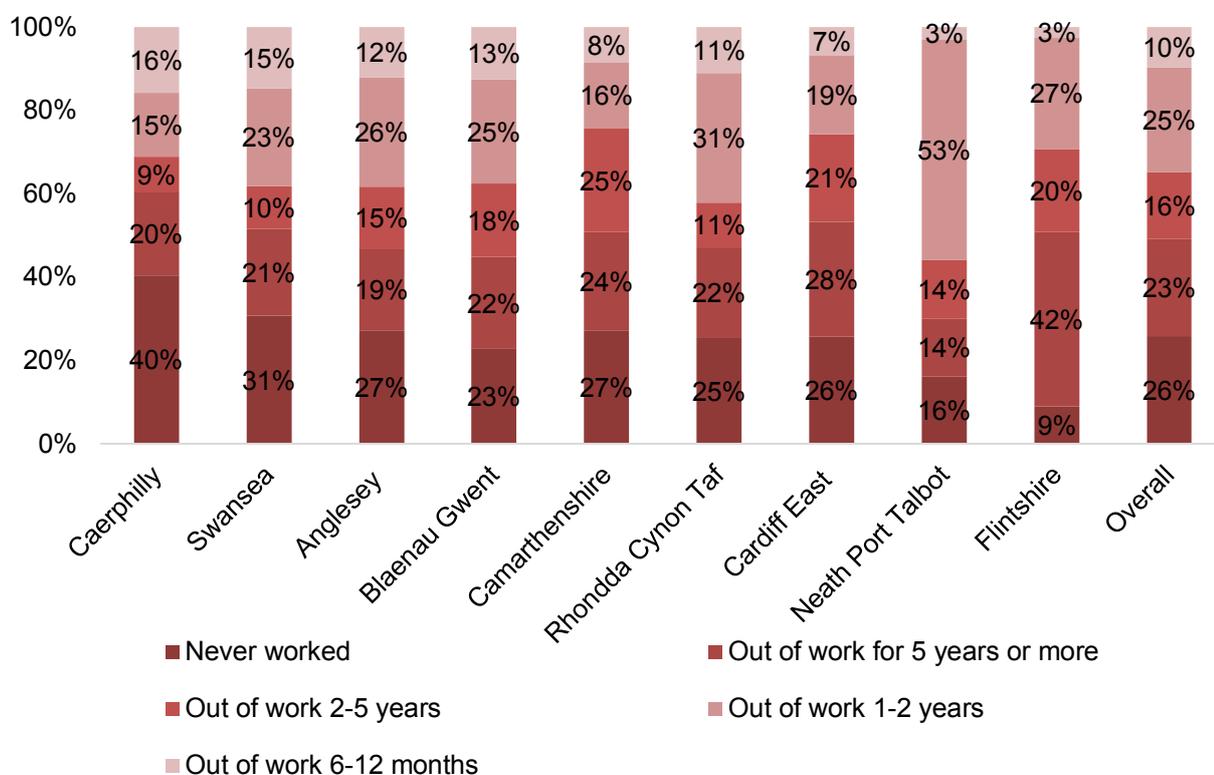
³³ This chart includes individuals who, following referral, initially engaged with the Lift Programme but who then dropped out prior to taking up an opportunity, hence the total figure is greater than the 3,375 participants who actively engaged in the Lift Programme (as outlined earlier within this section).

³⁴ Welsh Government Management Information – Outcomes Data.

4.16 In illustrating the scale of barriers faced by participants, it was also evident that for many participants they would need support of considerable intensity and duration. *‘Some are really far away, for some it’s fifteen months since they first engaged, but they are constantly engaged and they are actively achieving mini goals.’* This is further illustrated by the fact that 60 per cent (228/381) of participants reported never having received support to secure employment in the past and 39 per cent (62/157) of re-interview respondents remained in receipt of Lift support at re-interview 6-12 months after initial engagement.

4.17 Figure 4.4 below provides further insight into the distance from the labour market of Lift participants through analysis of the length of time they were out of work at enrolment. The figure illustrates that 26 per cent of all Lift participants had never worked and 65 per cent of participants had been out of work for over two years. A degree of variance is evident across each delivery area; for instance, in Caerphilly 60 per cent of participants had been out of work for at least five years (or had never worked at all), whereas in Neath Port Talbot over half the participants (56 per cent) had been unemployed for between six months and one year.

Figure 4.4: Employment History of Lift Participants at Enrolment³⁵



³⁵ Welsh Government Participant Tracking Data (cumulative) to Quarter 1, 2017/18

4.18 Ultimately, 3,375 individuals actively engaged with the Lift Programme. Table 4.2 illustrates that more men than women engaged with the Programme (especially in Carmarthenshire and Neath Port Talbot), whilst four in five participants were aged 25 or over.

Table 4.2: Demographic Breakdown of Participants in the Lift Programme by Delivery Area³⁶

Area	Number of Participants	Male	Gender Female	Age 16-24	Ethnicity White British
Afan Valley	327	61%	39%	22%	99%
Anglesey	321	55%	45%	25%	99%
Ebbw Fawr and Tredegar	520	58%	42%	22%	96%
Caerphilly Basin and Upper Rhymney Valley	470	43%	57%	23%	98%
Cardiff East	533	51%	49%	14%	86%
Llanelli	352	64%	36%	11%	88%
Flintshire East and West	271	58%	42%	16%	97%
Taf West	218	50%	50%	36%	100%
Swansea North West	363	52%	48%	25%	89%
Overall	3,375	54%	46%	21%	94%

4.19 Seventy-nine per cent of Lift participants described themselves as single (compared to an England and Wales average of 35 per cent).³⁷ The marital status and living arrangements of Lift participants are of interest as eligibility for the Programme was associated with a participant being a member of a workless household and research³⁸ has identified that one of the key influences on workless households has been the rise in single person households. The eligibility criteria may therefore have inadvertently favoured those who were (or were at least reporting to be) living alone.

³⁶ Welsh Government Participant Tracking Data (cumulative) to Quarter 1, 2017/18. Delivery areas have been referred to throughout as the Local Authorities within which they are based.

³⁷ Office for National Statistics, Population estimates by marital status and living arrangements, England and Wales 2016 (July 2017).

³⁸ Ibid.,

Building Trust

- 4.20 Building trust was perceived to be critical to the success of the Programme and all Mentors reported that they prioritised this during initial engagement with participants. The association with the Cluster, the disassociation with mainstream service provision, and the voluntary nature of engagement was reported as being helpful in this regard.
- 4.21 The approach to building trust was also highly consistent with the application of a person-centred approach. From a participant perspective this was valued, as was the ability of Mentors to engage with the participants on an informal basis.

‘[They are] more like people like us, on our level and down to earth, like speaking to a friend. They are all about community too, not stuck up. [the Mentor] speaks in layman's terms; he explains everything to me.’ (Lift Participant)

Action Planning

- 4.22 The action planning process of Lift sought to identify the barriers that participants faced and to find appropriate solutions. Within the delivery model, it was anticipated that goals identified within the action plan would inform the Mentors’ judgement regarding the type of opportunities that would be most suited to an individual.
- 4.23 In some areas, action planning was found to be a central element of the Lift delivery model; in others, it was more peripheral to the approach. Some Mentors felt it placed undue pressure on participants, whereas others felt it was critical for identifying goals.
- 4.24 The timing for introducing action planning activity varied from participant to participant and across Lift teams, however most typically the process was introduced at either the second or third appointment with a participant.

Ongoing Support

- 4.25 Again, the approach to ongoing support through the Programme was flexible and participant-led with some participants attending fortnightly meetings whilst others met on a daily basis. Some participants struggled with regularity and time keeping and some Mentors felt that the voluntary nature of engagement may have heightened these issues (and may have increased the level of non-attendance) but, typically, the frequency of meetings was guided by participant needs.

Training and Employment Opportunities

- 4.26 The integration of the Lift Programme with other localised provision enabled Mentors to broker to other, wider support systems if there were immediate priorities/barriers that needed addressing before employment, training or volunteering opportunities could be explored.
- 4.27 Once participants were ready to progress, Mentors typically supported them in developing their employment skills by encouraging them to participate in volunteering and work placements along with vocationally orientated training courses. Some Mentors deployed a series of in-house courses to build confidence and interview skills, whilst others utilised the local Job Clubs (for example) for this type of service. Once participants attained a position to progress towards employment, delivery areas established suitable routes to employment and training.
- 4.28 In pursuing opportunities Mentors described the importance of managing expectations. Managing the training budget was described as an associated challenge (for instance where participants sought training provision that was particularly expensive). Areas that were more geographically isolated, or had accessibility constraints, were most likely to identify challenges in the identification of suitable opportunities for their participants.
- 4.29 In some areas (Anglesey for example) the CF Cluster team and/or the relevant Local Authority department played a key role in securing employment opportunities due to their ongoing dialogue with local employers. In other areas, for instance Llanelli (Carmarthenshire) and Swansea, the Mentors themselves typically undertook the liaison with employers.

Nationally Brokered Opportunities

- 4.30 Following the launch of the Programme, the First Minister invited other ministers to identify potential training and employment opportunities from departments within their portfolio for participants of the Lift Programme to supplement the opportunities that could be identified by delivery areas on a local scale. The WG also engaged with Registered Social Landlords to encourage them to consider assigning opportunities to Lift-eligible areas and participants in addition to Social Care Partnerships.

- 4.31 In the early stages of the Lift Programme, variance in the prominence of nationally generated opportunities between delivery areas appeared to be influenced by:
- The extent to which nationally derived opportunities were accessible to a delivery area.
 - The strength of the relationship with an organisation(s) that may have offered opportunities to participants.
 - The extent to which the delivery area had been successful in engaging opportunities from local employers.
- 4.32 The usefulness and utilisation of nationally brokered opportunities varied from one area to the next and evolved as the Programme progressed. By June 2016, less than one per cent of opportunities in Flintshire had been secured through the nationally brokered agreements; on the other hand, in Taf West and Cardiff East almost all of the opportunities secured were through nationally brokered agreements.
- 4.33 Nationally brokered opportunities gained increased prominence with the Lift Programme as it progressed with the proportion of outcomes from nationally brokered opportunities increasing from 8 per cent of all outcomes in 2014/15 to 15 per cent in 2016/17 and in 2017/18. The health sector has been particularly influential in the rise in the number of nationally brokered opportunities and reportedly has been the most popular source of national opportunities amongst participants.
- 4.34 The increase in nationally brokered opportunities was not uniformly felt; whilst most areas experienced an increase over the Programme (particularly in 2016/17 and 2017/18), Cardiff East witnessed a fall in opportunities of this nature compared to previous years when its offer had been dominated by them. These findings indicate an emerging pattern in the provision of these opportunities with a typically slow and steady increase in opportunities as familiarity and relationships are established with an emphasis once again on the importance of individual (rather than organisational) relationships.

Additional opportunities were made available through the JGW programme. Although some areas did take these opportunities, this did not take place to the extent expected (the aim was for 500 opportunities to be ringfenced for participants of the Lift Programme). Only one fifth of Lift participants (709) were eligible for JGW

(they were aged 16-24) and therefore the JGW opportunities for Lift were of a lower scale than anticipated.

The Barrier Fund

- 4.35 The Barrier Fund was considered a vital element of the Lift offer by all delivery areas. The fund's flexibility of use and accessibility (thereby making it a highly responsive tool) were widely welcomed. Mentors struggled to identify how the Barrier Fund could be improved other than by increasing the scale of funding available. Some however felt that the Barrier Fund did become a victim of its own success due to its relatively simple application process being preferred to similar resources offered elsewhere, resulting in a small number of instances where partner organisations referred their participants to the Barrier Fund via the Lift Programme rather than using similar resources of their own.

Sustained Employment: Post-Employment Support

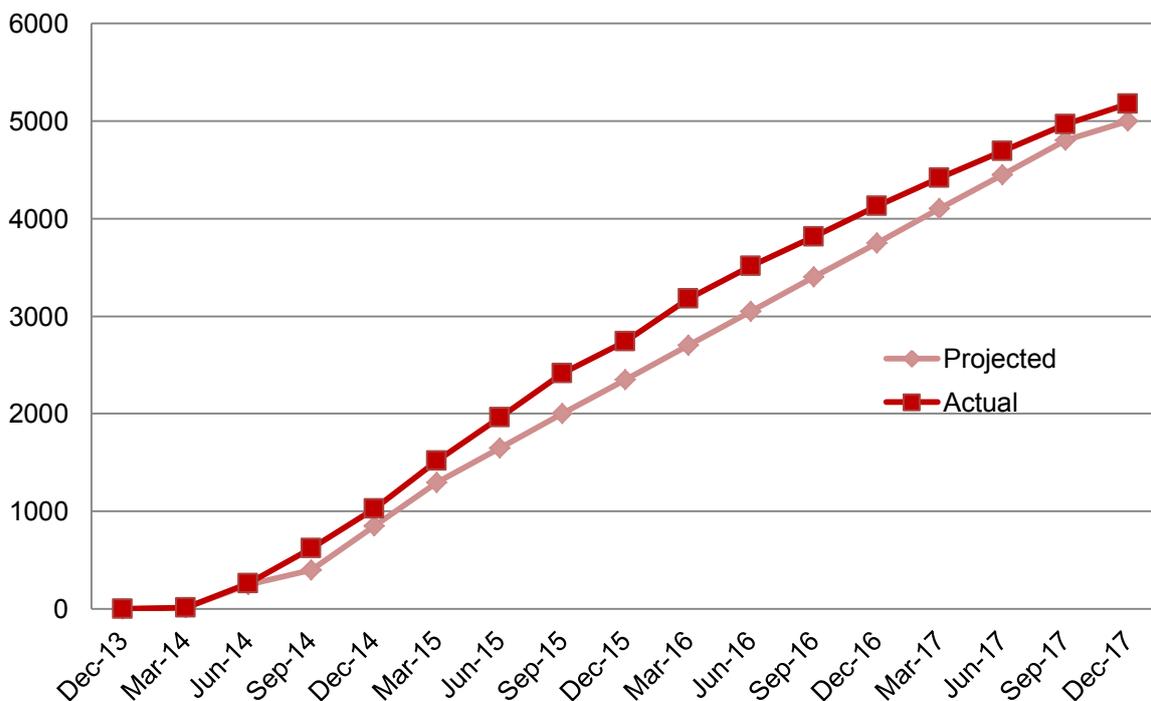
- 4.36 In the majority of delivery areas (five out of nine) local employers were reportedly unaware that they were recruiting Lift participants. This is because participants typically secured employment through the open market, usually following successful completion of work placements. In the remaining areas where local employers were aware of Lift, work placement opportunities where participants had the possibility of progressing onto permanent positions with that employer were typically offered.
- 4.37 Support for participants once they gained a work placement and/or employment was undefined, partly as a result of the challenges of engaging a participant once they were in post. Mentors would typically follow-up with a participant via telephone, although predominantly only on a needs-led basis. Capacity related limitations were found to have influenced the extent of post-employment support offered through the Programme to both Lift participants and local employers.

5. Programme Performance

5.1 This section reflects on the performance and impact arising from the Lift Programme, summarising the findings from the analysis of monitoring information, participant surveys and the impact assessment.

5.2 Figure 5.1 below tracks the performance of the Lift Programme in terms of outcome delivery and shows that the Programme delivered ahead of profile from its launch. Ultimately, the target of delivering 5,000 employment and training outcomes by the end of 2017 was met several months earlier than profiled (at the end of October 2017). According to the WG management information, by the end of December 2017, a total of 1,099 Lift participants had secured an employment outcome which equates to 32.6 per cent of those participants actively engaged in the Programme.

Figure 5.1: Lift Programme Outcomes (Cumulative) 2014-October 2017

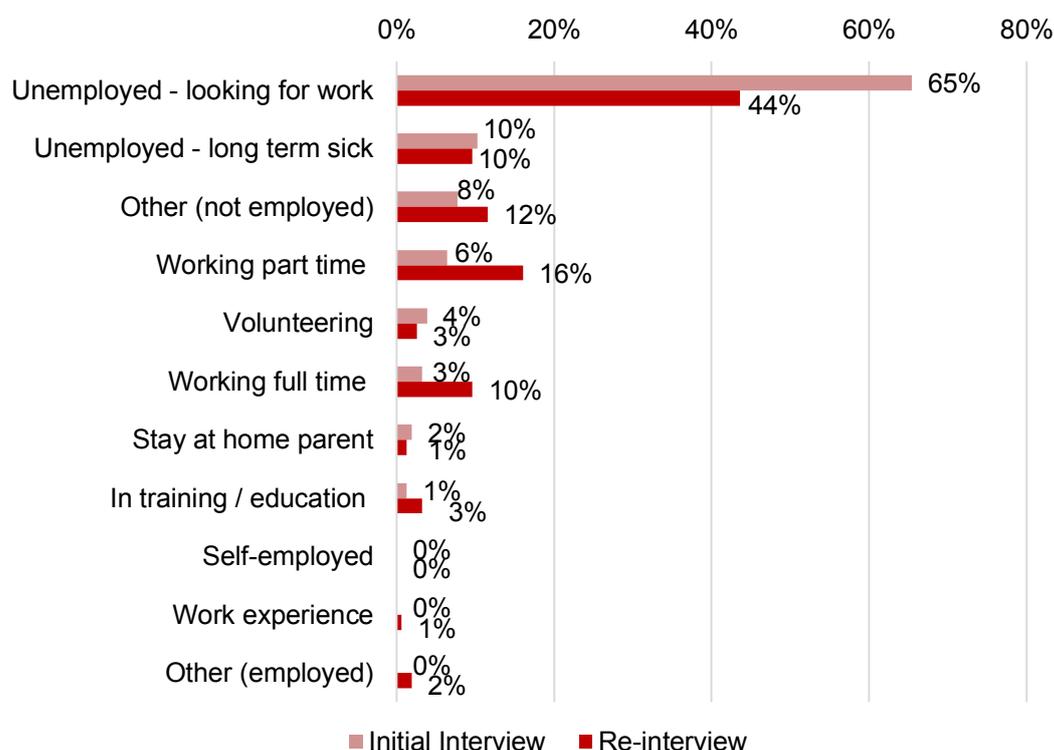


Source: Welsh Government Management Information – Lift Outcomes Data

5.3 For the initial interview (undertaken within six months of a participant's initial engagement with the Lift Programme), almost two thirds (65 per cent) of respondents (244/378) described themselves as 'unemployed looking for work'. Fifteen per cent of respondents described themselves as working full-time (9 per cent) or part-time (6 per cent), illustrating that for some Lift participants the transition into employment has been relatively rapid.

5.4 In terms of their status at re-interview, as illustrated in figure 5.2 there was a clear shift towards employment amongst participants between the two surveys with an increase from 9 per cent to 26 per cent (44/156) (slightly below the reported programme-wide figure).³⁹ Conversely, the number of respondents describing themselves as ‘unemployed looking for work’ fell from 65 per cent (102/156) to 44 per cent (69/156). This surpasses the equivalent performance of the Work Programme over a similar timeframe (20.6 per cent of participants into employment for over six months for those engaged since March 2016).⁴⁰ Ten per cent of Lift survey respondents described themselves as being in full-time employment, which is just within the parameters for the estimated conversion rate of between one in 10 and one in six moving into sustained FTE employment set out within the business case for the Programme.⁴¹

Figure 5.2: Comparison of Lift Participant Situations – at Interview and Re-interview



N= 156

Source: Wavehill Telephone Surveys (initial and re-interviews) of Lift Participants

³⁹ The proportion in employment at interview differs from that described in figure 5.2 as only those who participated at re-interview are included in the interview, re-interview analysis.

⁴⁰ Work Programme Statistics - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/work-programme-statistics> published 21st September 2013, accessed 22nd February 2018.

⁴¹ Lift Business Case (unpublished), Welsh Government – the conversion rates are based on WEFO guidance regarding conversion rates into sustainable employment for those furthest from the labour market.

Who is Securing Employment?

5.5 Management information illustrates clear patterns of employment outcomes in relation to a participant's prior employment experience and education. Table 5.1 analyses 'conversion rates' into employment for participants based on length of unemployment at the point of enrolment onto the Lift Programme; the table illustrates the challenges of supporting those who are furthest from the labour market into employment but also highlights that Lift support has successfully secured employment outcomes for 15 per cent of participants who were unemployed for at least five years, many of whom had never worked before.

Table 5.1: Conversion Rates of Lift Participants into Employment by Duration of Unemployment

Length of Unemployment	Number of Participants	Into Employment	
		Freq.	Percentage
6 months to 2 years	397	130	33%
2-5 Years	219	58	26%
Over 5 years/never worked	415	64	15%

Source: Wavehill analysis of Delivery Area Management Information Jan 14-May 17

5.6 Analysis of conversion rates by highest qualification obtained by Lift participants at enrolment presents a similar pattern: just 18 per cent of Lift participants with no prior qualifications secured employment whereas one third of Lift participants with a Level 3 qualification or above secured employment through the Programme.

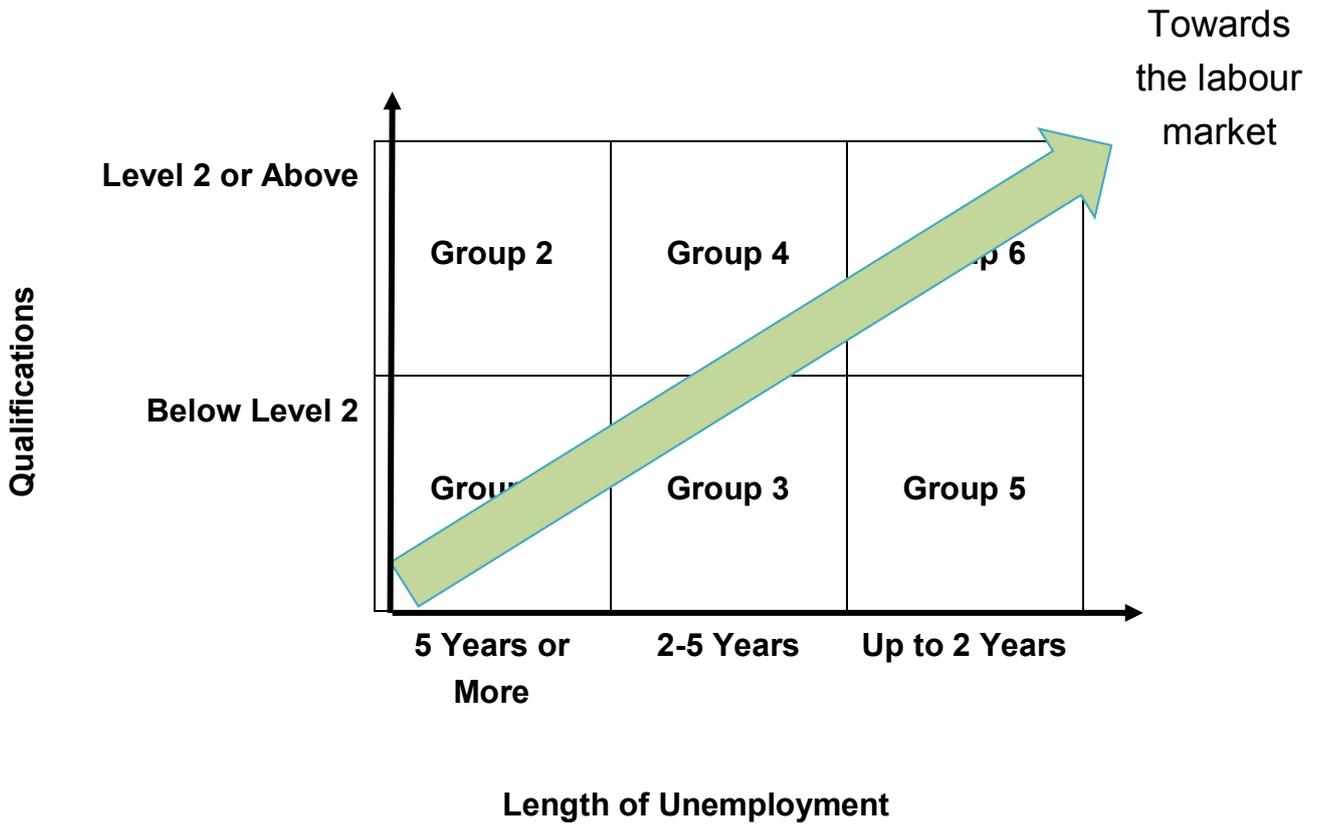
Table 5.2: Conversion Rates of Lift Participants into Employment by Highest Qualification

Highest Qualification (NQF Equivalent)	Number of Participants	Into Employment	
		Freq.	Percentage
No Qualifications	280	51	18%
Up to Level 2	335	91	27%
Level 2	231	55	24%
Level 3	81	27	33%
Level 4 and Above	41	14	34%

Source: Wavehill analysis of Delivery Area Management Information Jan 14-May 17

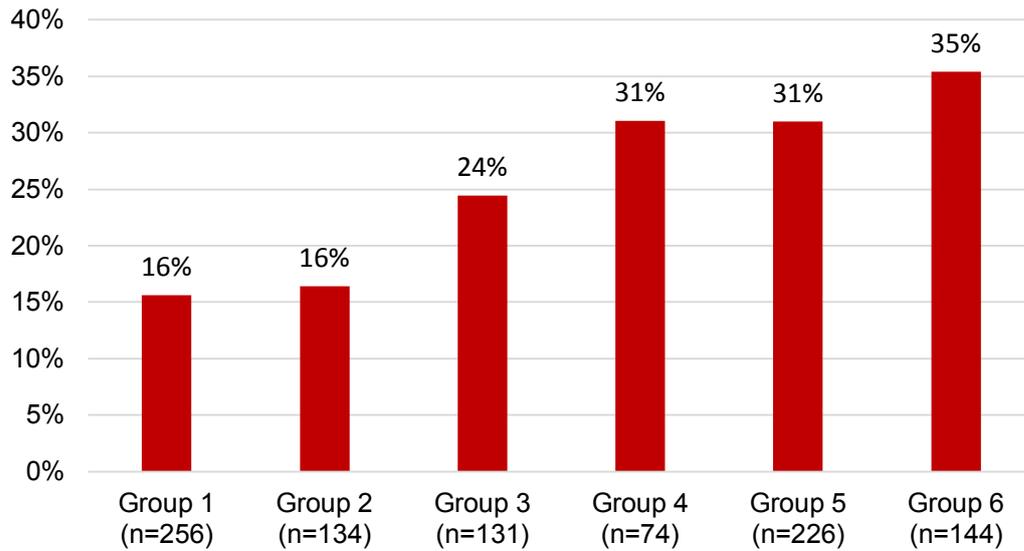
5.7 The employment history and qualification levels of participants have been combined to create a typology of participants within the Programme that reflects an assumed distance from the labour market based on qualifications and employment history. Group 1 participants are those deemed furthest from the labour market and Group 6 represents those closest to the labour market (see figure 5.3 below).

Figure 5.3: Typology of Lift Participants Based on Distance from the Labour Market



5.8 Applying these typologies to Lift Programme participants illustrates an explicit relationship between qualifications gained and length of unemployment prior to engagement and the likelihood of securing employment. The analysis illustrates that even amongst those with few/no qualifications who have typically been unemployed for in excess of five years (some of the furthest groups from the labour market), almost one in six participants secured an employment outcome through the Lift Programme (figure 5.4 below).

Figure 5.4: Conversion Rates into Employment by Participant “Group”

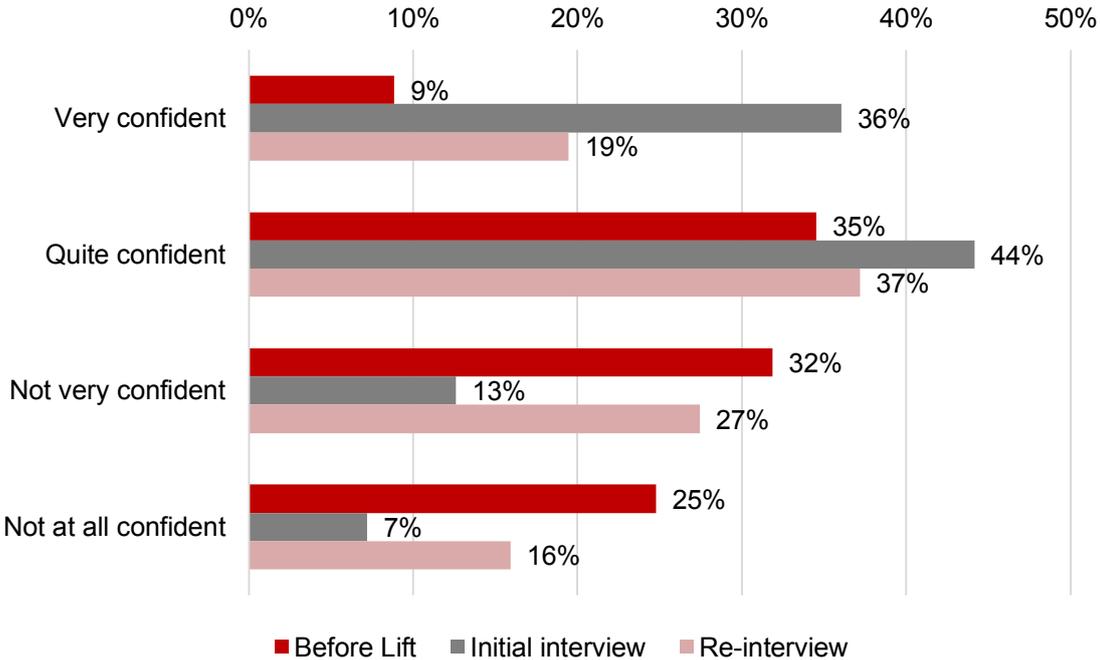


Source: Wavehill analysis of Delivery Area Management Information Jan 14-May 17

Soft Outcomes and Distance Travelled

5.9 The Lift Programme primarily focused on moving people towards the labour market rather than a narrow focus on employment outcomes in recognition of the nature of the target group being supported. To help track the extent to which out of work participants had progressed, those participants out of work at re-interview were asked to rate how near or far they personally felt from being able to find a job. They were then asked how confident they felt in finding employment. Across both questions there was clear evidence of a boost in confidence and a shift towards the labour market. However, at re-interview both questions illustrated an element of regression, perhaps suggesting a reality check for those who had remained unsuccessful in securing employment despite the Lift Programme support (see figure 5.5 below).

Figure 5.5: Analysis of Responses to “How Confident do you feel of finding Employment?” amongst the cohort which participated in a re-interview and remained out of work

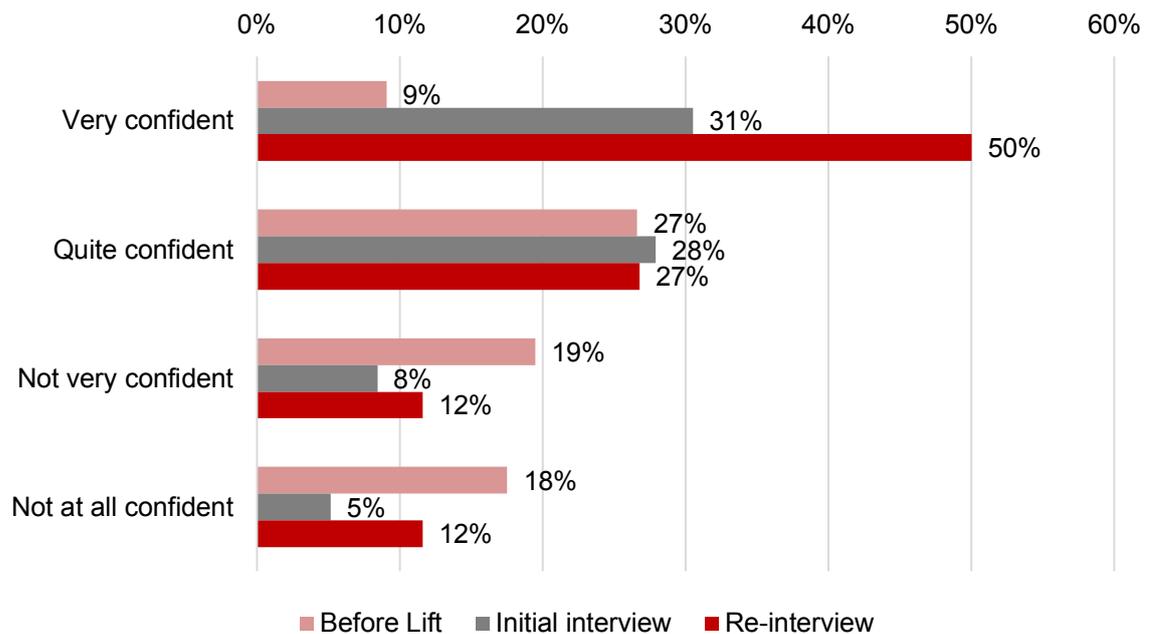


N = 113

Source: Wavehill Telephone Surveys (initial and re-interviews) of Lift Participants

5.10 When asked how confident they felt about holding down employment if/when they secured a position, steady progression amongst participant responses was evident, with more than three quarters (77 per cent) of respondents feeling very confident (50 per cent) or quite confident (27 per cent) in doing so compared to 59 per cent at initial interview and 36 per cent prior to engagement on the Programme. Anecdotally, Mentors have often referred to the chaotic lifestyles of Lift participants and the need to provide a range of support to address the wider, more immediate issues that they face; this change could therefore be attributed to the ‘wraparound support’ on offer through the Programme, which may be having a positive effect on an individual’s self-perceptions regarding their ability to hold down a job.

Figure 5.6: How Confident do you feel holding down that Employment? (Out of Work Participants Only)



n = 112

Source: Wavehill Telephone Surveys (initial and re-interviews) of Lift Participants

5.11 The wraparound, intensive support offered through Lift led to the expectation that progress towards employment could be captured by exploring softer outcomes likely to be associated with the support received.

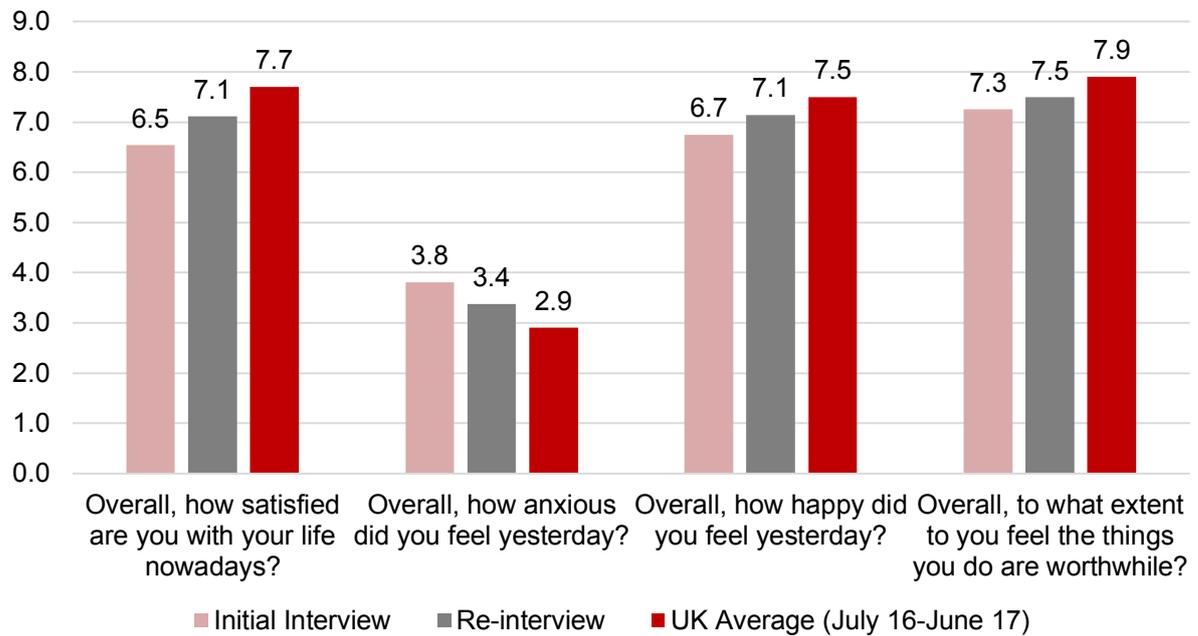
'I don't know what I would have done without them, I'd be at rock bottom, I'd just be alone in the house depressed and drinking, just going in and talking about things has given me more confidence, I used to be very quiet and timid and it's really boosted my confidence.' (Lift Participant)

5.12 To aid this assessment, respondents were asked a series of questions relating to their self-efficacy (general, employment and learning self-efficacy). The data presented little evidence of tangible change amongst participants which somewhat contradicts the other soft outcomes evidence gathered. Participants were also asked for their ratings against national ONS Well-being Questions⁴² at both interview and re-interview to track changes in perceptions of well-being. Figure 5.7 demonstrates substantial improvement in feelings of well-being amongst the

⁴² UK benchmarks derived from Estimates of Personal Well-being for the UK and Countries of the UK for the year ending June 2017. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/july2016tojune2017> Accessed 7th November 2017.

respondents and, although levels of well-being remain below the UK average, the gap has closed as a result of these changes.

Figure 5.7: Responses to ONS Well-Being Questions (score out of 10)



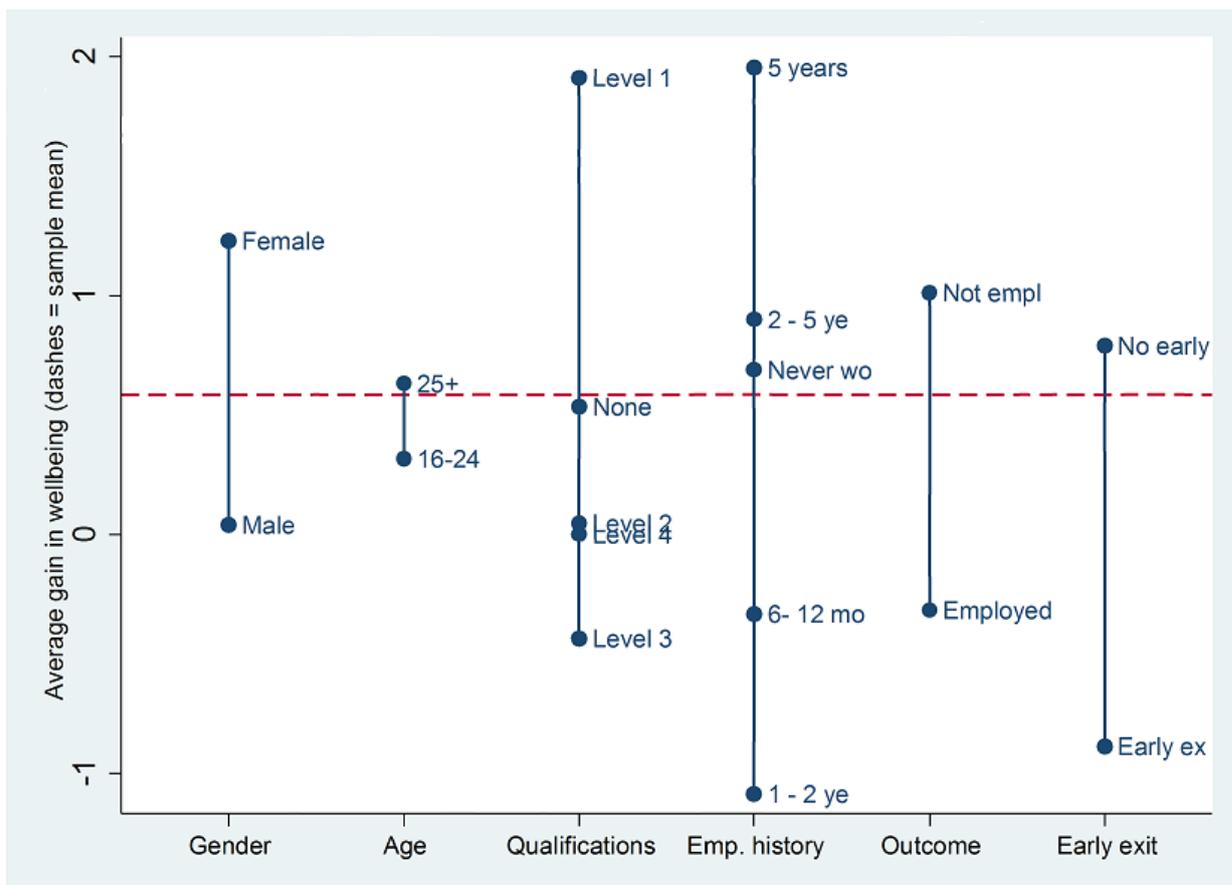
N=157

Source: Wavehill Telephone Surveys (initial and re-interviews) of Lift Participants

Linking Employment Outcomes to Well-Being

- 5.13 Analysis was undertaken to assess whether the positive indicators of well-being were linked to employment outcomes. Of 67 “early leavers” from the Lift Programme who had been interviewed through the survey, 50 had been recorded as not having completed a personal plan *and* not having gained employment/training at time of exit. Of this identified group 19 were also re-interviewed, allowing us to use them as a counterfactual group in our analysis of programme effects on well-being. We looked at the gains in well-being reported above and compared the mean gain for each measure by groups (figure 5.8).
- 5.14 The evidence suggests that gains in well-being are generally highest among women and those traditionally furthest from the labour market (those with lower levels of qualifications, those with a longer history of unemployment), as well as those who did not gain a positive employment outcome.

Figure 5.8: Average Gain in Well-being from Interview to Re-Interview by Sociodemographic Groups⁴³



Emp = Employment, ye = years, mo = months, empl = employed, early ex = early exit

5.15 Further analysis was undertaken to assess whether gains in well-being might be connected to a positive employment outcome; however, none of the control variables applied⁴⁴ showed any association with gains in well-being thereby illustrating that the gains in well-being were not about securing an employment outcome but rather related to the act of being supported through the Lift Programme. This illustrates the broader role and effect of the Lift Programme beyond the emphasis on employment gains.

⁴³ The gain in wellbeing was calculated as the *mean gain across the four indicator variables* for wellbeing displayed in Figure 5.6. There was an overall sample gain of 0.7, represented by the dashed line. Groups that are above the dash line show a higher than (sample) average gain in wellbeing, and those below the line present a lower than (sample) average gain in wellbeing.

⁴⁴ See the Phase 3 Evaluation report for further detail.

Impact

Cost effectiveness analysis

- 5.16 Cost effectiveness analysis (CEA) compares the relative costs of a programme with the delivery of the intended outcomes (effects) of that programme to produce a 'cost per unit of outcome' estimate. Although it is typically a more simplistic approach to testing value for money than a cost benefit analysis (CBA), it can be a useful guidance tool for judging the comparative effect of an intervention.
- 5.17 A straightforward CEA can be applied to the Lift Programme through a collation of the costs associated with delivering Lift and dividing those costs by the number of employment outcomes achieved, which provides a 'cost per job' figure. In considering this figure it is important to reflect on the Lift Programme's broader emphasis of shifting participants towards as well as into employment. The broadened scope of Lift would therefore reduce the level of cost effectiveness based on this measure.
- 5.18 The CEA has been applied using programme associated costs from 2014 to the end of June 2017 based on:
- Claimed fees from each delivery area
 - Costs borne by the Welsh Government for the management and administration of the Programme.
- 5.19 The CEA does not include:
- Any costs borne by Communities First Clusters in support of the Lift Programme
 - Any training or supervisory costs borne by local and nationally brokered employers that have taken on Lift participants through work placements.
- 5.20 The application of the CEA leads to a cost per job calculation of £3,744 (see table 5.3 below). This is at the lower end (and therefore the higher expectation) of the Welsh Government's business case with an anticipated cost per job of £3,500-£6,000, well within the value for money envelope of £3,000-£8,000.⁴⁵ This represents good value for money on a cost per outcome basis, particularly so when it is considered that the Programme has supported individuals furthest from the labour market (on a qualification and employment history measure) into employment.

⁴⁵ Based on WEFO ready reckoning as described in the Lift Business Case.

5.21 This also compares favourably with the ESF Ex Post Evaluation Priority Paper⁴⁶ which highlighted significant variations in the cost per job outcome across ESF funded employability projects, with ‘higher costs per outcome ... often attributed to the fact that projects were working with participants who were most removed from the labour market and required intensive support to overcome complex barriers to work’. The costs per job outcome on employability projects ranged from £5,768 to £22,000, significantly more than the cost per employment outcome achieved on the Lift Programme.

Table 5.3: Cost Effectiveness Analysis

Programme Cost	Employment Outcomes	Cost per Job
£4,115,000	1,099	£3,744

Approach to the Impact Assessment

5.22 To provide a more robust assessment of the impacts of the Lift Programme, a comparison group of similar unemployed people was constructed from the five quarter Longitudinal Labour Force Survey (QLFS) through the use of a *heuristic match* based on unemployment history (long-term unemployed).

5.23 The ability to perform a statistically generated match (using Propensity Score Matching) was negated by three factors:

- In the first instance, the data gathered from the Lift centres participating in the project only contained outcome data that was sufficiently reliable for impact analysis beginning in Q1 2016. Thus, we had to restrict the impact analysis to the 1,069 participants for whom we had complete data and who had engaged with the Lift Programme during Q1 2016 or later.
- The second limitation was imposed by the necessity to be able to explore long-term effects of the Lift Programme, i.e. not merely looking at the into-employment data for a single quarter subsequent to engagement with Lift. In order to look at longitudinal (over time) effects, we wanted to match Lift participants with QLFS respondents for whom we had data for all five quarters. Given the timing of our analysis, this restricted usage of QLFS data to those whom entered the survey in

⁴⁶ OB3, (2017) Wales Ex Post Evaluation Priority Review Paper: Increasing employment and tackling inactivity.

Q1 and Q2 2016 and who consequently ‘exited’ (i.e. did not participate in) QLFS in Q2 and Q3 2017 respectively.

- The third factor ruling out Propensity Score Matching (PSM) came from the way in which data was captured across the participating Lift areas. Although every effort was made to standardise that data capture as much as possible, the variable quality of the data (i.e. the way in which age cohorts were recorded) meant that we would only be able to use a fairly narrow set of variables to perform the match with the comparison (QLFS) group. Successful Propensity Score Matches rely on a robust set of common indicator variables with common variation; because of the way that data had been captured locally, we had to limit the number of variables available for analysis and reduce the variation within them.⁴⁷

5.24 From the Lift data, we were able to isolate 415 participants who had engaged with the Programme in either Q1 or Q2 2016 and for whom we had valid outcomes data. We then matched these programme participants with respondents from the QLFS who met the threshold criteria and for whom the survey provided data that corresponded to the demographic, social, and employment history data within the Lift dataset.

5.25 Using a heuristic match, we were able to identify 177 individuals in the QLFS who form a heuristic counterfactual group.

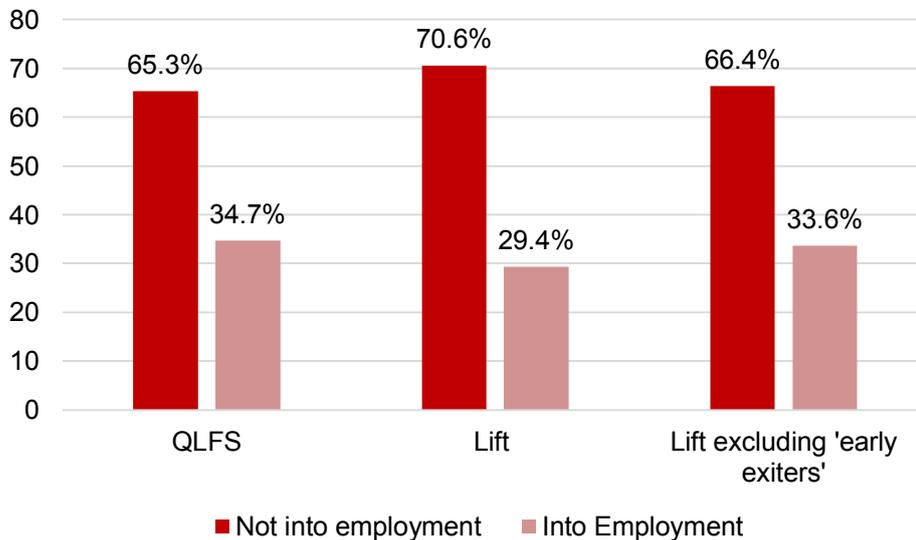
Employment impacts

5.26 Figure 5.9 shows the relative proportion of both samples that were in employment after four quarters (i.e. in either Q1 2017 for those engaged in Q1 2016 or Q2 2017 for those engaged in Q2 2016) and illustrates that, at an equivalent point, 35 per cent (62/177) of QLFS respondents were in employment after four quarters, compared to 29 per cent (122/415) of the Lift participants included in the analysis. However, there are a proportion of participants reported in the management information who, according to our survey, are defined as “early exiters” – individuals who did not complete a Personal Development Plan and did not secure employment before their exit. When these are removed from the cohort the rate of transition into

⁴⁷ Just as one example, age was only recorded as a category rather than a raw number (continuous variable) in several Lift centres. The highest common denominator that we could produce was a variable coded 16-24 or 25 and over; we then had to align the QLFS (continuous) age variable with our Lift categories.

employment increases to 33.6 per cent,⁴⁸ which is comparable with the QLFS figure and very similar to the Programme-wide figure reported at the beginning of this section (32.6 per cent).

Figure 5.9: Proportion into Employment after Four Quarters, Lift versus QLFS



5.27 This analysis cannot control for the local socio-economic context within the communities targeted through the Programme as their eligibility is derived from their designation as Communities First Clusters, which in itself reflects increased, multiple deprivation within those areas relative to the Welsh average. In contrast, we have no information relating to the socio-economic context of the QLFS sample and thus no direct means of statistically controlling for potential contextual effects. A similar challenge emerged in the impact evaluation of the New Deal for Communities (NDC) Programme (one of the most significant Area Based Initiatives ever launched in England), a £1.71bn programme designed to support 39 of the most deprived areas in England over a 10-year period between 1998 and 2008. The evaluation concluded that ‘after considering individual respondent characteristics there is no significant difference between the likelihood of an NDC resident entering work compared with a counterpart living in comparator areas’.⁴⁹ The evaluation also identified that there are better odds of residents being in employment if the targeted area is located within stronger, wider labour markets. Further analysis within the evaluation also demonstrates that a parent local authority employment rate is

⁴⁸ The survey data shows an employment rate 30.7 per cent compared to 29.4 per cent from management data across all participants, easily within the survey margin of error. We therefore believe it to be reasonable to generalise from the survey to equate to the Lift population, hence using the 33.6 per cent employment ratio.

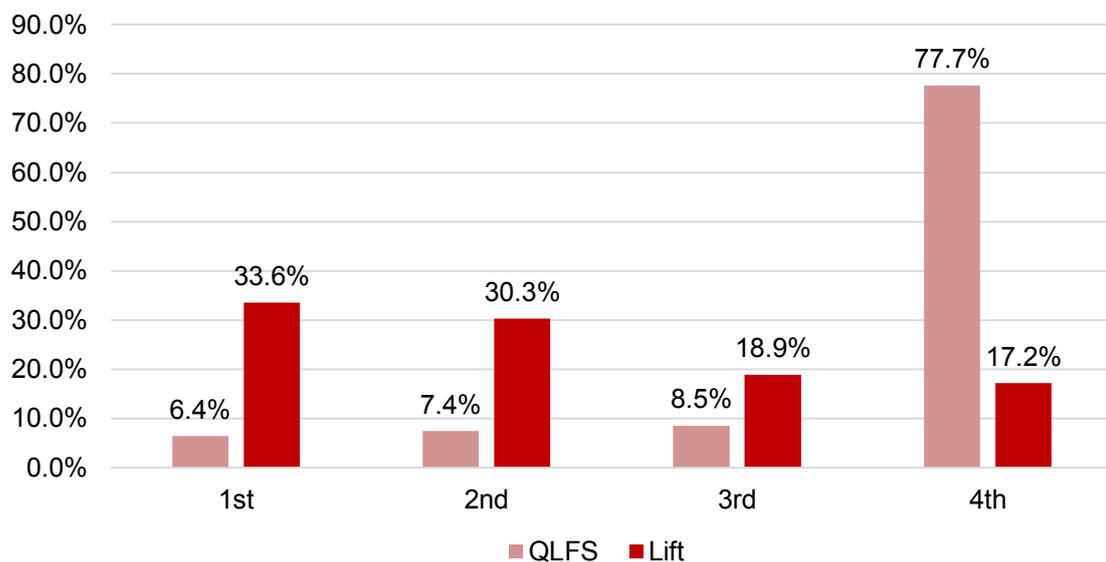
⁴⁹ Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University (2009) *Understanding and tackling worklessness volume 1: Worklessness, employment and enterprise: Patterns and change, evidence from the New Deal for Communities Programme*, DCLG.

significantly and positively associated with an increased likelihood of being in employment.⁵⁰

Time taken to secure employment

5.28 Figure 5.10 below, shows the **length of time taken** to secure employment after enrolment (Lift) or first survey (QLFS). For Lift participants, those who secure employment within one year of engagement do so on average 2.2 quarters (i.e. 185 days) after engagement versus 3.6 quarters (i.e. 302 days) for those reporting having gained employment within a year within QLFS.

Figure 5.10: Length (in quarters) of Time Taken to Secure Employment, Lift versus QLFS (Employed after Four Quarters Only)



5.29 Therefore, where Lift participants are able to find employment within one year of engagement with the Programme, they spend on average 117 fewer days unemployed in comparison to the comparison group. This illustrates clear acceleration effects into employment.

⁵⁰ Ibid.,

Cost Benefit Analysis

5.30 The costs and benefits of the Programme have been considered from the perspectives of:

- the Lift Programme participants;
- participants' employers;
- the Exchequer (i.e. the Government budget perspective); and
- society.

Programme Costs

5.31 The costs of setting up and administering the Lift Programme represent a cost to the Exchequer and society (diverting economic resources from alternative users). The total cost of the Programme was £4,115,000. The average cost of the Programme per participant engaged is £1,219 whilst the average cost per employment outcome is £3,744.

Referral Costs

5.32 The Lift Programme benefits from referrals from multiple sources (including Communities First and Jobcentre Plus). The referral process incurs a cost for the referral organisation/agent, however, the referral process is extremely efficient with little/no administrative burden. Therefore, although costs are incurred they are likely to be minimal in scale and insufficient to warrant inclusion in the CBA.

Employer Costs

5.33 The cost of training incurred by local employers (representing a potential cost to employers and therefore society) would have been incurred for both work experience placements and employment opportunities. Despite this, only a small number of local employers knowingly engaged with the Lift Programme with many work experience and employment opportunities secured from participants through the open market. Consequently, only a small number of participants may have generated an **additional** training cost for local employers (where dedicated, bespoke training was offered to Lift participants) and consequently this cost would likely be minimal in scale.

5.34 Amongst nationally brokered employers, all employers knowingly engaged with the Lift Programme to offer work placements, training and employment opportunities. Opportunities of this nature became increasingly common as the Programme

progressed and likely incurred a cost borne by employers. That said, in several areas the opportunities would have been offered to the open market anyway with the Lift Programme leading to an initial allowance for interested participants. Thus, whilst not insignificant, the net additional cost is not easily calculated for application in the CBA.

Increase in Wages

- 5.35 The impact analysis for the Lift Programme has identified an acceleration into employment and, therefore, the increase in wages refers to the additional time spent in employment by participants. Wages represent a benefit to participants but a cost to their employers; this means they do not represent a cost or benefit to society as a whole.
- 5.36 The average wage for the two quarters of Lift participants into employment under analysis here was reported at £8.42/hr, and the average number of hours per week worked by this cohort was reported as 28 hours per week. Scaling up, we calculate that the average Lift participant who was accelerated into work through programme participation gained £3,940.56 in wages.⁵¹ In our analysis 33.6 per cent⁵² of participants secured employment, equating to an estimated £1,324 additional wages per participant.

Increase in Output

- 5.37 Increase in output refers to the economic output produced by participants as a result of additional time in employment. This output represents a benefit to employers (who sell it) and society (who consume it). DWP research⁵³ suggests that in the absence of evidence a number of simplifying assumptions can be used:
- The labour market is perfectly competitive and employers will hire workers up to the point where the value of an additional unit of output is equal to the associated marginal cost or production.
 - The cost of production and therefore the value of the output is equal to gross wage payments and employers' National Insurance contributions.

⁵¹ £8.42 per hour for 28 hours per week equates to £33.68 per day, multiplied by 117 for the accelerated days into employment.

⁵² See earlier rationale for the uplift from 29.4 per cent to 33.6 per cent.

⁵³ See Department for Work and Pensions (2016) *Sector-based work academies – a quantitative impact assessment*, DWP, and Department for Work and Pensions (2016) *Work experience – a quantitative impact assessment*, DWP.

Reductions in Benefit Payments

- 5.38 Reduction in benefit payments refers to the net reduction in benefit entitlement and take-up that occurs when participants spend additional time in employment as a result of the Lift Programme. This represents a cost to participants but a benefit to the Exchequer, which means there is no net cost or benefit to society as a whole (except via redistributive effects, see below). Analysis of the reduction in benefit payments equates to an estimated £1,058 saving for the Exchequer per Lift participant into employment (based on acceleration effects) and £355 per participant when the ratio of Lift participants into employment (33.6 per cent) is applied.

Increase in Tax Receipts

- 5.39 This refers to income tax, National Insurance and indirect tax revenue resulting from participants spending additional time in employment as a result of the Lift Programme. This represents a benefit to the Exchequer but a cost to participants and employers, which means there is no net cost or benefit to society as a whole (except via redistributive effects, see below).

Reduction in Healthcare Costs

- 5.40 This refers to the anticipated reduction in National Health Service (NHS) costs when an individual secures employment. Anecdotal evidence suggests a host of additional barriers amongst Lift participants that would likely have incurred a cost for the NHS, whilst research⁵⁴ presents evidence of a causal relationship between an individual's employment status and NHS usage.⁵⁵ This therefore represents a benefit to the Exchequer (via reductions in NHS expenditure) and society (as economic resources which had been allocated to healthcare provision can be reallocated to alternative uses).

Increase in Travel and Childcare Costs

- 5.41 This refers to the additional travel and childcare costs that are incurred by participants as a result of securing employment. Knowing the marital status and household situation of Lift participants who have secured employment enables an estimate of likely participants into employment who will be affected by childcare costs.

⁵⁴ Fujiwara, D. (2010) *The Department for Work and Pensions social cost-benefit analysis framework*. DWP

⁵⁵ Which estimates that when an unemployed person moves into employment they incur £614 less in NHS costs (based on 2016 prices) per annum.

Both travel and childcare represent a cost to society as they divert economic resources from alternative uses.

Impacts on Well-being

- 5.42 Participants in the Lift Programme have reported marked improvements in personal well-being. These have positive effects on the individual and on society, however quantifying the value of these benefits is extremely difficult and beyond the resources available for this evaluation.

Redistributive Costs and Benefits

- 5.43 This refers to the redistributive costs and benefits associated with monetary transfers between participants, employers and the Exchequer in line with the methodology prescribed in the HM Treasury Green Book.⁵⁶ It is based on the assumption that participants (who have relatively low incomes) value each additional pound more highly than employers and the average taxpayer (who both have a relatively high income compared to participants). In line with guidance,⁵⁷ redistributive costs and benefits are estimated by applying a 'welfare weight' of 25 to monetary transfers made to and from programme participants.

Social Cost of Exchequer Finance

- 5.44 Social cost of Exchequer Finance refers to the cost of raising the tax revenue required to fund the Lift Programme. Initial recommendations⁵⁸ suggest that the social cost of Exchequer Finance is assumed to equate to 20 per cent of the net cost of the Programme to the Exchequer, yet, as this estimate is subject to considerable uncertainty, it is only considered as part of the sensitivity analysis.

Cost Benefit Analysis Findings

- 5.45 Table 5.4 presents estimates of the costs and benefits of the Lift Programme, which are based on the following baseline assumptions:
- The higher rate of transition into employment recorded amongst the comparison group is heavily influenced by contextual factors and the strength of the wider local labour market

⁵⁶ HM Treasury (2003) *The Green Book*. HM Treasury.

⁵⁷ Fujiwara, D. (2010) *The Department for Work and Pensions Social Cost-Benefit Analysis Framework*. DWP.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*,

- A conservative estimate that, were the contextual situations of the comparison group and the intervention group similar, rates of conversion into employment would at least be the same as that encountered amongst the comparison group
- The value of the output produced during the accelerated employment period is equal to the commensurate gross wage payments and employers' National Insurance contributions
- The Programme results in redistributive costs and benefits but does not result in substitution effects or social cost relating to Exchequer Finance

Table 5.4: The Estimated Costs and Benefits of the Lift Programme for Lift Participants under Baseline Assumptions⁵⁹ (Rounded to the Nearest £50)

Lift Programme Impact	Cost/benefit (£)			
	Participants	Employers	Government	Society
Programme costs	0	0	-1,200	-1,200
Referral costs	0	0	0	0
Employer costs	0	0	0	0
Increase in wages	+1,300	-1,300	0	0
Increase in output	0	+1,400	0	+1,400
Reductions in benefit payments	-350	0	+350	0
Increase in tax receipts	-100	-50	+150	0
Reduction in healthcare costs	0	0	+50	+50
Increases in travel and childcare costs	-100	0	0	-100
Impacts on well-being	0	0	0	0
Redistributive costs and benefits	+1,900	0	0	+1,900
Social cost of exchequer finance	0	0	0	0
Net benefit	+2,650	+50	-650	+2,050

5.46 Based on the cost benefit analysis, it is evident that Lift Programme participants are net beneficiaries of approximately £2,650 per participant; society is also a net beneficiary primarily as a result of the additional output produced by those participants who had been accelerated into employment. However, there is a cost to the Exchequer of approximately £650 per participant supported which is heavily influenced by the cost per participant engaged through the Programme.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Analysis underpinning these calculations is presented within Appendix C of the Phase 3 evaluation report

⁶⁰ See Phase 3 evaluation for further analysis including sensitivity analysis of the data.

6. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Rationale for the Programme

- 6.1 Tackling poverty remains one of the Welsh Government's highest priorities. Although rates of unemployment in Wales have declined during the Programme, the overarching figures mask an increase in the proportion and number of adults unemployed for in excess of five years. Over one third (39 per cent) of Lift Programme participants fall into this category and since January 2016 15 per cent of this cohort of Lift Programme participants have secured employment, illustrating the role that the Programme has played in engaging and supporting individuals often referred to as some of the hardest to reach and help.
- 6.2 The emphasis on provision, personalised to an individual's circumstances as illustrated in the Programme's Theory of Change, would appear to be a key ingredient in the Programme's success, helping to tackle immediate issues yet also providing clear pathways towards employment.
- 6.3 The rationale for the Programme emphasised eligibility associated with individuals from households that have been workless for more than six months. Where this criterion has been stringently applied the evidence suggests it may have led to an inadvertent bias towards single person households.
- 6.4 The restrictions on geographical areas of eligibility for the Programme were based on sound assumptions, with CF Clusters viewed as providing the most appropriate platform through which to deliver the Programme. During its development, the tight restrictions on eligibility have been met with some frustration and there is perhaps evidence emerging of market saturation for eligible participants at this localised geographical level. It is therefore welcome that Communities for Work Plus will operate without geographical targeting.
- 6.5 Whilst rates of unemployment have fallen, there is increasing evidence of in-work poverty in Wales (and UK-wide). Nationally brokered opportunities offered through Lift were reportedly held in high regard by Lift participants due to the perception that these may be opportunities which would lead on to a career with that (typically) large employer. The inability to track participants over the longer-term has restricted the ability to test both the sustainability and career trajectory of these routes to employment compared to those who have secured employment through local

employers or against the comparison group. This would be a useful area to revisit in the future to assess the longer-term impacts that may arise.

Resources

- 6.6 The Lift Programme has operated on a limited budget, which is illustrated by the fact that despite the intensity of support on offer it is still cheaper to run on a cost per participant basis than the Work Programme at approximately £1,000 per enrolment and £1,200 per active participant engaged (compared to an anticipated cost of £1,333 per participant for the Work Programme).⁶¹⁶² In the vast majority of delivery areas, the Programme made effective use of the platform offered by CF. The model for the Programme anticipated reliance upon the Clusters for promotion, referral and engagement, which is reflected in the delivery areas to varying degrees.
- 6.7 The model trialled across a variety of different locations sought to test the influence of population and opportunity density on the Lift Programme. Whilst there was a greater abundance of opportunities in more densely populated areas (for both employment and training) any direct effect on delivery area performance has been limited; the flexibility offered through the Programme has enabled delivery areas to pursue opportunities of relevance to their location as well as to the participant's needs.
- 6.8 The Barrier Fund was highly valued by all Mentors, with its flexibility and ease of access enabling it to become a highly responsive tool that can react to barriers as they are identified. Its effectiveness also gained wider recognition, with other programmes readily referring to the Lift Barrier Fund offer as a more straightforward alternative to their own.
- 6.9 The allocation of staff to the Programme reflected suggested allocations in the business plan. This level of resource provided high intensity support from a highly skilled, experienced team of Mentors; however, it offered little resilience if one individual became unavailable. Where this has arisen the impact on programme delivery within that area has been significant. The planned move away from area-based interventions of this nature should lead to increased staffing resources, thus significantly reducing the exposure of a programme to the loss of delivery staff.

⁶¹ NAO (2014) The Work Programme, The National Audit Office.

⁶² Although the Learning and Work Institute produced more recent analysis which estimated a cost per participant at £1,214, they expected this to rise further as the programme continued. See: Learning and Work Institute (2016) *Work Programme Statistics – Learning and Work Institute Analysis*, Learning and Work Institute

While the quality of staff has been instrumental to the Programme's success, whether these staff can be found in larger number to fulfil a Wales-wide offer remains to be seen.

- 6.10 The relative lack of administrative resources is replicated at the Programme level with two dedicated staff within the Welsh Government tasked with managing Lift.
- 6.11 Delivery areas were designated as the data owners for evidence gathered through the Programme, which has limited any detailed tracking of participants through the Programme until the last phase of the evaluation. The data gathering process to enable tracking to be conducted was resource intensive for both delivery areas and the evaluators.

Recommendations

- For future programmes, a funding formula for resource allocation should be applied that is reflective of the need (eligible population) within a target area and proposed delivery targets.
- For future programmes, clear requirements for participant data should be agreed at an early stage and informed by previous impact evaluations.
- Future programmes should adopt consistent approaches to collecting and categorising information gathered.
- Future programmes should ensure that data gathered is uploaded onto a central database to enable a comparative assessment of the consistency and comprehensiveness of data gathered.
- Sufficient resource and preparation time needs to be provided to enable the development of detailed guidance on requirements and expectations of those involved in service delivery.

Activities

- 6.12 The Lift Programme was heavily reliant on referrals for its success with JCP remaining the most prominent referral source throughout the Programme. Regardless of referral route, individual rather than organisational relationships proved instrumental in the success (or otherwise) of these pathways. Integration with CF Clusters has varied in its level of success and at times has caused confusion amongst external stakeholders as well as between Lift and Cluster staff.

- 6.13 The introduction of Communities for Work had a variable impact, typically linked to the extent of integration between Lift teams and the Clusters. Ultimately, in some areas it led to heightened competition for participants within tight geographical areas whilst in other delivery areas it acted as a useful complementary offer with both programmes benefitting accordingly.
- 6.14 Another factor that aided engagement was the extent to which the Lift offer was community-based. Delivery areas where facilities were based in prominent locations that enjoyed high footfall with a range of services, benefitted most from ad hoc engagement through drop-ins or self-referrals.
- 6.15 Building trust early within the engagement process was universally viewed by Mentors as critical to a successful relationship with a participant. The association with the Cluster, the disassociation with mainstream service provision, the voluntary nature of engagement and the person-centred, informal approach adopted by mentors have all helped in this regard.
- 6.16 It was not uncommon for Lift participants to be supported for in excess of 12 months in their journey towards employment, with participants often constrained by multiple and complex barriers to employment. Effective integration with other localised provision, including that offered through the Cluster, enabled wider support to be brokered if immediate priorities/barriers needed addressing prior to the exploration of employment, training or volunteering opportunities.
- 6.17 The prominence and focus of action planning within the Programme fluctuated from area to area and participant to participant and is further evidence of the flexibility of the model to enable the adoption of a person-centre approach that is reflective of a local situation. This has been made possible through the avoidance of ESF to fund the Programme, thereby offering a degree of flexibility not enjoyed by ESF funded activity.
- 6.18 The business plan stressed the importance of nationally brokered opportunities. Their number and range (in terms of the number of organisations providing opportunities) increased as the Programme progressed. Initially, the geographical distribution of nationally brokered opportunities was far from uniform; however, as relationships between employers and local delivery teams became more established the distribution of opportunities increased.

6.19 In the final year of the Programme national opportunities represented 10 per cent of all opportunities provided and are reportedly highly valued by Lift participants as routes to sustainable, stable careers. There is increasing evidence to suggest that this model of cross-departmental collaboration can be particularly impactful on employment schemes with recent policy announcements from the WG illustrating further pursuit of these avenues in the future.⁶³

Recommendation

- The pursuit of cross-departmental collaboration in the provision of employment-related opportunities should be retained in future employability schemes.

Results

6.20 Despite the apparent deceleration in referrals, the Programme continued to operate ahead of profile and met its target of the provision of 5,000 opportunities several months earlier than forecast.

6.21 Analysis of the management information has illustrated that almost one in three Lift participants secured an employment outcome, surpassing those achieved after 12 months of support within the Work Programme. The numbers into employment are all the more impressive when the participants' backgrounds are analysed further to provide an informed judgement on distance from the labour market: one in six participants held lower than Level 2 qualifications and had been out of work for in excess of five years before securing employment.

6.22 From a results perspective, particularly with regards to the number of participants securing employment, the Programme has exceeded expectations. Analysis of the management information suggests a degree of variation in performance in this regard which warrants further investigation to ensure that the best practice in service delivery is shared. For other opportunities delivered through the Lift Programme, several options (Vocational Training; Work Placement; Preparation for Full-Time Employment) are not clearly distinguishable from each other. This limits the ability to identify the role these opportunities have played in the success of the Programme.

6.23 There is evidence of 'distance travelled' towards employment amongst those participants who remain out of work, albeit with a degree of regression in relation to

⁶³ Welsh Government (2016) *Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021*, Welsh Government

their confidence in securing a job arising where participants continued to struggle to find employment at the point of re-interview. However, it is especially important to note the improvements in self-perceptions of the ability to hold down a job and across all indicators of well-being for those actively engaged in the Programme. Analysis of this data has illustrated that regardless of outcome, participation in the Lift Programme has had a positive effect on well-being, the importance of which is widely recognised but difficult to quantify through CBA.

- 6.24 Research and analysis exploring an individual's self-efficacy has produced unclear results which, when reflected against the well-being and other measures of distance travelled, would appear at odds. On reflection, this model of questioning may be too complex and convoluted for the target cohort.
- 6.25 Resource pressures on Lift delivery teams have meant that post-employment support and tracking of Lift participants has been less structured than anticipated. Despite this, the majority of local employers remained positive about the Programme, although additional proactive support of participants and employers post participant-employment would have been welcome.

Recommendations

- Dedicated resources should be provided to support both participants and employers (where employers are aware that they have recruited through an employability programme).
- Clear narratives associated with outputs and results (opportunities in this instance) should be established to ensure there is clarity and consistency in the way these are interpreted and recorded.
- Additional indicators (successful referrals for example) for monitoring programmes of this nature should be provide to help gather evidence of the broader role played by Mentors beyond employability support.
- Mechanisms should be put in place to enable the timely collection of participant data for primary fieldwork at key junctures within the client's journey through a programme of support.
- Future interview and re-interview approaches to tracking participants should be conducted over timeframes that align with the comparison group to aid the assessment of participant impact.

- Options for the longer-term tracking of participants post-programme exit should be explored, particularly where the likely sustainability of employment is perceived to be a key element of additionality derived from the support on offer.

Impact and Value for Money

- 6.26 Assessing the value for money of the Lift Programme through cost effectiveness analysis leads to a cost per employment outcome of £3,744. This is at the lower end of the anticipated figures within the business plan and of employability schemes in general. Given the target group supported through the Programme, on the basis of this analysis the Programme represents very good value for money.
- 6.27 In terms of the wider cost benefit analysis (CBA) measure, the analysis shows that Lift participants, society and employers are net beneficiaries of the Programme. However, for government the Lift Programme represents a net cost. There are several limitations in the dataset that undermine the robustness of the approach. The targeted nature of the Lift Programme and its engagement with those typically seen as the hardest to reach and help is reflected in the fact that only a small number of individuals responding to the longitudinal Quarterly Labour Force Survey (as the source of the comparison group) match the key characteristics of Lift participants.
- 6.28 The small sample size and the lack of detailed information on geographical location made it impossible to control for the socio-economic context within which the comparison group are based and it is unknown whether those from the comparison group reside in those areas designated as some of the most deprived in the country. In this regard, undertaking a robust CBA on a tightly targeted area-based initiative is fraught with difficulty.
- 6.29 Government research⁶⁴ and other evaluations⁶⁵ have suggested that the labour market history reports contained within the Labour Force Survey are less reliable than administrative data routinely collected by DWP. Despite this, DWP has thus far been unable to make full labour market history data available for programme evaluation purposes. Were this information made available, it would significantly strengthen the robustness of the CBA and enable a more closely matched comparison group to be assigned to the research.

⁶⁴ Bibby, D. et al. (2015) *Impact of skills and training interventions on the unemployed: Phase I report*. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Research Paper. 158

⁶⁵ Learning and Work Institute and Wavehill (2016) *Skills conditionality pilot evaluation: Final report*, Welsh Government

Recommendation

- Agreements should be sought with DWP to share administrative information, therefore improving the validity of the labour market history data for the comparison group and increasing the purchase of the statistical analysis underpinning the CBA.

Conclusions

- 6.30 The Lift Programme has operated successfully as a geographically targeted, flexible employability programme responding to spatial concentrations of workless households in Wales and supporting individuals distant from the labour market.
- 6.31 The Programme operated with an efficient delivery model, utilising existing infrastructure (albeit to varying degrees) and targeting available resources at the Programme's participants. The minimal resources associated with the Programme did however limit its resilience to the loss of delivery area staff who played a critical role in the success of the Programme.
- 6.32 The emphasis on personalised, participant-led provision that uses the building of trust as a foundation to the model appears to have been a key ingredient in the Programme's success. Evidence of distance travelled towards the labour market is illustrated through gains amongst participants in their confidence to hold down a job in addition to positive well-being effects.
- 6.33 The programme also presents clear evidence of accelerating participant transitions into employment and has delivered employment outcomes in a cost-effective manner to almost a third of participants, many of whom had never worked or had been out of work for over five years.

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Rationale:

Tackling poverty is one of the Welsh Government's highest priorities. There is a greater concentration of workless households in certain communities across Wales. Members of households workless for in excess of six months are more likely to experience severe and persistent poverty and deprivation, poor health and well-being, and the intergenerational transfer of certain risks and disadvantages. Helping people to address the barriers they face in finding and sustaining employment may protect them against these outcomes.

In order to be effective, support needs to be personalised to individual circumstances and capabilities, wide ranging (tackling lifestyles/situations) yet with clear pathways to work evident. This can be best achieved by sustained engagement from a named individual who participants are familiar with who can act as a mentor to participants.

Goal of the Programme:

Contributing to the achievement of the Tackling Poverty Action Plan by offering to adults in long-term workless households, 5,000 opportunities to find sustainable training or employment by the end of the calendar year 2017.

Long(er) Term Outcomes (Impact):

- Reduction in the number of workless households and NEETs in Wales.
- Reduced levels of persistent poverty experienced by those living within Cluster areas.
- Spill-over effects to broader household, including reduced prevalence of child poverty.
- Reduction in educational and health inequalities.
- Reduced barriers to sustainable employment.
- Increased savings to the public purse.
- Greater recognition amongst stakeholders of the return derived from the provision of opportunities to target groups

Resources:

- Economic: c.£2.4m (2013-16) WG funding – ranging from £190k-£390k (2013-16) per Delivery Area
- Barrier fund – resources within the above allocation to overcome barriers to training/ employment (worth £280k across the Lift programme in 2015-16)
- Timescale: c.Jan14-Mar16 (initially) – extended to Mar18
- Service delivery: 22 brokers - typically two brokers in each Delivery Area
- Programme management: two staff with admin support leading the overall programme from WG.
- Stakeholders: Leveraging a range of resources (coaching, line management, advice etc.) from WG Departments, public, third and private sector organisations derived from the provision of training, work placement/taster or employment opportunities.

Activities:

- Brokers/Mentors map available and accessible support/opportunities for target groups
- Identification and engagement of individuals living in households who have been without work for six months or more by Brokers, Cluster teams, Jobcentre Advisors and other referral agencies
- Agree personal development plans with participants to record "distance travelled"
- Broker of opportunities to target groups to address and overcome any barriers to employment, including issues around well-being.
- WG Lift team working with other WG Departments and other external organisation to identify possible opportunities
- Provision of opportunities to include: Basic skills training, vocational training, work placements, work tasters/trials (min. 2 weeks) and employment
- Tracking of participants and monitoring household characteristics
- Maintain engagement/provide ongoing support to participants (for up to 1 year) following commencement of training and employment opportunities.
- Integrate activity with "core" Cluster Activity, Jobs Growth Wales, Communities 4 Work and local partner agencies incl. Local authorities, health services and third sector etc.
- Evaluation activity to assess how Lift operates in each delivery area and to provide an indication of its effectiveness in helping participants find work or boost their job prospects

Outputs:

- No. of eligible participants actively engaged
- No. of participants that have attended work interviews
- No. of personal development plans completed
- No. of maps of local support created
- No. of opportunities created for essential skills or vocational training, work placements, work trials, tasters or employment opportunities
- The provision of xx opportunities from various WG Dep'ts, LHBs and RSLs
- The provision of xx "new" opportunities from WG Dep'ts, LHBs and RSLs

Results:

- Improved self-efficacy and other protective factors, incl. well-being, self-confidence etc.
- No's gaining employment, over 16 hours per week.
- Xx% sustaining employment for 6 months
- Conversion rate of between 10% - 17% (no. of opportunities secured to no. into employment (over 16hours per week)
- No's into self-employment
- No. of Participants that completed their Personal Development Plan but did not find employment through Lift
- No. of early exits (left prior to PDP completion
- 5,000 opportunities in relation to training, work placement or employment that participants engaged in.

Assumptions:

- CF Clusters provide the most appropriate platform to deliver the Lift programme
- Circa two Brokers in each delivery area provides sufficient resource and continuity to deliver the Lift programme
- Additional interventions of this nature are most suited to those workless for over six months
- Other "stakeholders" have similar goals/objectives and are willing to "buy-in" to the process, offering opportunities themselves which are accessible/suitable to target groups
- That the Lift programme's effectiveness is influenced by the density of the population, the proximity of employers and training providers and the existing transport infrastructure (accessibility to opportunities)
- The Lift model is universal – the flexibility of approach enables a variety of participant types to respond to and engage with the Lift model.
- Nine competent teams have been appointed in each delivery area
- Relatively small-scale resources are available for the programme.

Assumptions:

- Brokers are able to engage with target households, and accurately assess barriers to training and employment.
- Effective relationships exist for referrals between JCP representatives (e.g. parent advisers) and Lift Teams
- Brokers are able to identify and match appropriate local opportunities that effectively address needs of participants
- The Cluster is seen as a trusted/independent organisation and affiliation to the Cluster assists brokers in the engagement of participants
- Brokers accurately capture and update information on participants, their households and the activities undertaken
- Brokers are able to sustain/maintain client relationships (caseloads) with a variety of clients
- Lift effectively aligns with other interventions within the CF areas with little or no duplication/competition
- Integration of Brokers with Cluster Teams is taking place and enhances the effectiveness of the service

Assumptions:

- WG Departments and other stakeholder organisations have suitable opportunities for the target cohort
- There are sufficient, suitable opportunities created for participants in each Cluster.
- Opportunities created have equal value and potential impact.

Assumptions:

- Participants typically engage with (no more than) several opportunities.
- Taking up an opportunity has a positive impact on participants, including improved self-efficacy.
- Substitution and displacement effects do not significantly undermine the additional impact derived from the support.
- Spill-over effects will arise, particularly within households of participants supported
- Monitoring systems applied in each delivery area enable an assessment of the attribution of outcomes to the Lift Programme
- Progression towards work can be evidenced/ measured
- That Brokers are able to track participants for six months after gaining employment

Appendix B: Lift Participant Interview Survey Tool

1. We'd like to find out a little about yourself and how you came to be supported by the Lift Programme:
 - a. Specifically, how did you become aware of the Programme?
 - b. Roughly when did you first engage with the Programme?

2. When you first started engaging with the Lift Programme, what were you hoping to get out of it?

3. Can you provide an overview of the type of support and advice you've received?
 - a. From your mentor/broker (**Interviewer note:** reference names of Lift employees if required to help participant)
 - b. Through the opportunities you've participated in

4. What is your current situation? (tick all that apply)
 - a. Working full-time
 - b. Working part-time
 - c. Self-employed
 - d. In training/education
 - e. Volunteering
 - f. Work experience
 - g. Unemployed Looking for work
 - h. Unemployed – long-term sick
 - i. Stay at home parent
 - j. Other

5. On a scale of 0-10, could you tell us how near or far did you personally feel you were from being able to find a job before you began receiving support through the Lift Programme?

(0 nowhere near and 10 work ready)

- a. Thinking back to when you first engaged with the Lift Programme, how confident did you feel:

	Very confident	Quite confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident
Finding employment				
Holding down that employment				

6. On a scale of 0-10, could you tell us how near or far do you personally feel you are from being able to find a job before you began receiving support through the Lift Programme?

(0 nowhere near and 10 work ready)

- a. Having received support through the Lift Programme, how confident do you now feel with regards to:

	Very confident	Quite confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident
Finding employment				
Holding down that employment				

7. (Only ask of those who are not employed) What do you still need to do to get to that stage (of having a job and holding it down)?
 - a. Are there any specific barriers that you feel you need to overcome to get to that stage?

8. (Only ask of those who are not employed) What difference would having a job make to your life?
 - a. And to the lives of those close to you?

9. What do you feel are the main benefits to you from your participation in the Lift Programme?

10. Has participation in the Lift Programme changed how you feel about education or training in any way (yes/no)
 - a. (If yes) – in what ways
 - b. (If no) – please explain why

11. Has participation in the Lift Programme changed how you feel about gaining employment?
 - a. (If yes) – in what ways
 - b. (If no) – please explain why

12. Do you think your job prospects are better now/since your enrolment in Lift?
 - a. Is that due to the support that you've received?

13. Is there any type of support that you need that is not available through Lift?

14. Thinking back to the support you have received from the Programme so far, which aspect have you found the most helpful with regards to securing employment?

15. Can you recall receiving any support to help you access employment in the past? Yes/No/Don't know

15b. (If yes) Can you recall the names of the companies that provided this support?

15c. (If yes at 15) Could you tell us how the Lift Programme compares with the other programmes?

A lot better than other programmes	Somewhat better than other programmes	About the same as other programmes	Somewhat worse than other programmes	A lot worse than other programmes
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15d. Could you please tell us why?

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15e. Open box for any additional comments for Q15

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16. Could you please tell us whether you:

Live alone (skip to next)	
Live with parents (skip to b)	
Live with a partner or as part of a family	
Other, please specify	

- a. Does your household include anyone, excluding yourself, over the age of 16?
- b. Is anyone else in your household receiving support from the Lift Programme?

Longitudinal Element

The following questions are a list of statements about how you respond to a range of situations. Please can you tell me how far you agree with each item using the following scale:

1 = Not at all true 2 = Hardly true 3 = Moderately true 4 = Exactly true

All 20 questions will be administered randomly

General Self-Efficacy Scale:

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. If someone opposes me, I can find a way of getting what I want.
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

Self-efficacy for Learning Scale:

11. I find learning new skills interesting.
12. When I see that I need to, I can develop new skills.
13. I get a lot of out of learning.
14. I find it straight forward to attend a training course.
15. I find I remember the things we cover in training.

Attitudes towards Employment:

16. I could get a job if I wanted one.
17. Work can be rewarding.
18. There is a job out there for me.
19. If I can't get one job, I will get another one.
20. I can achieve my goals around work.

ONS Wellbeing Questions:

21. The following questions are about your current feelings. Please answer each on a 0-10 scale, where 0 is not satisfied at all and 10 is completely satisfied:

- a. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- b. Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do are worthwhile?
- c. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
- d. Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

Appendix C: Lift Participant Re-Interview Survey Tool

1. Are you still receiving support through the Lift programme? (*briefing note – it may be difficult for a participant to determine whether they are still in receipt of support or not; in this instance, ask them when they last met or spoke with their mentor/broker*)
 - a. (If no) when was the last month that you received support? (month added)
 - b. (if yes) could you confirm the nature of support you are currently receiving

2. Can I just check a few things from the last time we spoke to you in May/June this year? You told us that you were [*insert previous response from baseline*]:
 - a. Working full-time
 - b. Working part-time
 - c. Self-employed
 - d. In training / education
 - e. Volunteering
 - f. Work experience
 - g. Unemployed Looking for work
 - h. Unemployed – long-term sick
 - i. Stay at home parent
 - j. Other

3. Have there been any changes to this? (*if no, skip to 4*) If yes could you confirm what your situation is now?
 - a. Working full-time
 - b. Working part-time
 - c. Self-employed
 - d. In training / education
 - e. Volunteering
 - f. Work experience
 - g. Unemployed Looking for work
 - h. Unemployed – long-term sick
 - i. Stay at home parent
 - j. Other

Employment Outcomes

This section is only for those who are in some form of employment (*only those who responded a/b/c to 2/3 above and are employed – all others, next section*)

4. Is the role that you are employed in a job that you secured through the Lift Programme?
Yes (q5) / No (q6)
5. (*Those who secured a Lift employment opportunity*) Could you outline the process you went through to secure this position? (*explore whether it commenced as a work experience placement, the nature of support they had to secure the post etc.*)
 - a. What support (if any) have you received from your Mentor/the Lift Programme since gaining that position?
 - b. Which organisation are you working for?
 - c. In which month did you start this role (start getting paid for this role if work placement)? (now go to q7)
6. (*Those who secured employment outside of Lift*) Could you briefly describe how you secured this role?
 - a. Is this the first job you have gained since receiving support from the Lift Programme? (yes (go to 7))
 - i. (*If no*) What other jobs have you had since receiving support through the Lift Programme? (*interviewer to capture number of jobs and length of time in each post*)
 - b. In which month did you start your latest role?
7. (*All in employment*) Could you briefly describe your current role to us including your job title?
[Coded to SOCs post survey]
 - a. Would you mind telling us your salary?
[record figure and stipulate whether figure represents daily/weekly/monthly/annual salary]

8. Having received support through the Lift Programme, how confident do you now feel with regards to:

	Very confident	Quite confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident
Getting a promotion or pay increase in the job you are currently in				
Finding a new job with higher wages and/or more responsibility				

a. Please explain your answer (for both the above) – open answer

9. What difference does having a job make to your life?

(open answer – probe for reasons other than financial, i.e. confidence, routine, structure, opportunity to meet people, different kinds of people etc.)

10. What difference does / has having a job made to the lives of those close to you?

(open answer - probe about the impact it has had on other people in the house they live in, their close friends/family and peers etc.)

Now go to q14

Lift Participants not currently employed

11. Can I ask what are the circumstances as to why you are not currently working?

12. On a scale of 0-10, could you tell us how near or far you personally feel you are from being able to find a job? (0 nowhere near and 10 work ready)

a. And how confident do you feel...

	Very confident	Quite confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident
Finding employment				
Holding down that employment				

b. Are there any specific barriers that you feel you need to overcome to get to that stage? (of having a job and holding it down)?

(Open answer)

13. Is there any type of support that you still feel you need to help you into employment that you did not get through Lift?

Reflections

14. Which elements of the support do you feel have been most useful to you and why? (open answer)

15. Do you think your long-term job prospects are better now than when we last spoke to you? Yes/no/don't know

a. (If yes) Is that due to the support that you've received?

b. Is it for any other reason as well? (please explain)

16. Since we last spoke to you, have you received any additional support to help you access employment or to help with training in addition to that you received through the Lift Programme? (if no go to q 17)

a. (If yes) Can you recall the names of the organisations that provided this support and/or the nature of support provided?

b. How does this other compare with the support you received through Lift?

A lot better than Lift	Somewhat better than Lift	About the same as Lift	Somewhat worse than Lift	A lot worse than Lift
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c. (if not the same as Lift) Could you please tell us why?

17. Last time we talked to you, you told us that you (fill from previous q16 [their home arrangements]); is this still correct? (if yes, skip to 17a), if no can you confirm your current situation?

(interviewer will identify if they live alone, with parents or with partner/as part of a family and numbers over the age of 16 in the household)

If any are over the age of 16 in the household ask 17a, otherwise go to 18

a. Last time we spoke, you stated that there is [someone/no-one] in your household receiving support from the Lift Programme. Is this still correct? (if yes, skip to 18)

(if no) Is it correct then that there is [someone/no-one] in your household receiving support from the Lift Programme?

18. Could you tell us if you have experienced any of the following major life events since we last spoke?⁶⁶

- a. Started a new long-term relationship
- b. Got married
- c. Moved in with a partner
- d. Had a birth in the family
- e. Broke up with a partner or spouse
- f. Got divorced
- g. Experienced a death in the family or someone close to you
- h. Had difficulty finding housing
- i. Started a new job
- j. Ceased a previous job
- k. Experienced financial difficulties
- l. Been the victim of a crime
- m. Had difficulties with the law
- n. Other

the major life events listed above] How would you rate your feelings about [this event]?

Very bad	Moderately bad	Neither good nor bad	Moderately good	Very good
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Longitudinal Element: Telephone interviews only

The following questions are a list of statements about how you respond to a range of situations, the questions are a repeat of a list asked last time we spoke to you. Please can you tell me how far you agree with each item by saying if you think it is either:

1 = Not at all true 2 = Hardly true 3 = Moderately true 4 = Exactly true

All 20 questions will be administered randomly

General Self-efficacy Scale:

⁶⁶ The major life events questions have been included to control for factors that research has shown contribute towards changes in well-being, self-efficacy, and happiness (see, for example: “Resilience to Major Life Stressors Is Not as Common as Thought”, *Perspectives on Psychological Science* March 1, 2016 11: 175-194; “Adaptation and the Set-Point Model of Subjective Well-Being; Does Happiness Change After Major Life Events?”, *Current Directions in Psychological Science* April 2007 vol. 16(2): 75-79). In essence, the old (assumed) model of hedonic adaptation – the notion that people basically return to baseline levels of wellbeing and life satisfaction after major life events have temporarily displaced those levels – has been overturned by mass survey evidence that has convincingly demonstrated that such life events can move levels of satisfaction in a durable manner. Thus, for example, what may matter in a life course history is not whether an individual is married or not; rather, the act of getting married is the displacement factor. In order to control for the disruptive influence of major life events upon wellbeing and self-efficacy levels, we believe that it is necessary to include a ‘lean’ (parsimonious) version of the general MLE questions that have been included in mass surveys on wellbeing. Here, we have adapted the events from the exhaustive Major Life Events questionnaire pioneered by the University of California School of Nursing, although we note that in contrast to that survey we are not asking the directionality of MLE (positive impact, negative impact).

I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
If someone opposes me, I can find a way of getting what I want.
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.
I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

Self-efficacy for Learning Scale:

I find learning new skills interesting.
When I see that I need to, I can develop new skills.
I get a lot of out of learning.
I find it straight forward to attend a training course.
I find I remember the things we cover in training.

Attitudes towards Employment:

I could get a job if I wanted one. [*remove if in employment*]
Work can be rewarding.
There is a job out there for me. [*remove if in employment*]
If I can't get one job, I will get another one.
I can achieve my goals around work.

ONS Wellbeing Questions:

The following questions are about your current feelings. Please answer each on a 0-10 scale, where 0 is not satisfied at all and 10 is completely satisfied:

Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do are worthwhile?

Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?

Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

Finally, would you be willing to be contacted in the future about your experience on the Lift Programme?