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Analysis for Policy



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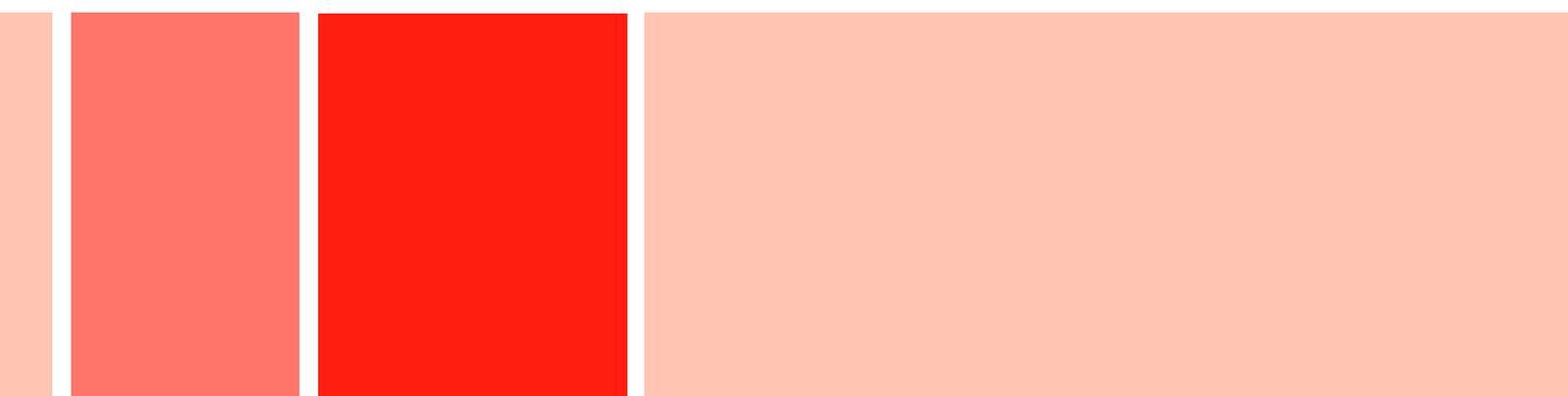
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# Evaluation of the Lift Programme

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Phase 1: The Logic of the Lift Model



## Evaluation of the Lift Programme - Phase 1: The Logic of the Lift Model

Wavehill



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

For further information, please contact:  
Semele Mylona  
Knowledge and Analytical Services  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ  
Email: [Semele.Mylona@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Semele.Mylona@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

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## Table of contents

List of figures.....	2
Glossary.....	3
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Methodological Approach: Phase 1 .....	7
3. Theory of Change and Logic Model.....	9
4. Rationale for the Lift Programme.....	11
5. The Design of the Lift Programme.....	21
6. Programme Implementation .....	31
7. Summary of Findings.....	38
References.....	42

**List of figures**

Figure 1: Lift Programme Logic Model ..... 10

Figure 2: Percentage of workless households by Local Authority area ..... 13

Figure 3: Planned Delivery Model for the Lift Programme ..... 24

Figure 4: Projected number of opportunities attended by participants against  
recorded opportunities attended ..... 34

Figure 5: Total number of opportunities taken up by area to date (August  
2015) ..... 35

## **Glossary**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
CF	Communities First
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESA	Employment Support Allowance
ESF	European Social Fund
ESICC	Employment Services in Integrated Children's Centres
IB	Incapacity Benefit
JCP	Jobcentre Plus
JGW	Jobs Growth Wales
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
LDB	Lead Delivery Bodies
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
NEET	Not in Employment Education or Training
ONS	Office for National Statistics
TPAP	Tackling Poverty Action Plan
VVP	Vibrant and Viable Places
WG	Welsh Government

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

In March 2015, the Welsh Government (WG) commissioned Wavehill to undertake an evaluation of the Lift Programme. The Lift Programme is designed to respond to the WG's Tackling Poverty Action Plan (TPAP) 2013 and, more specifically, to a commitment to provide 5,000 training and employment opportunities to people in long-term workless households<sup>1</sup> by the end of 2017. It is envisaged that the support will help participants to secure jobs or considerably increase their prospects of finding a job.

The Lift Programme operates in nine delivery areas based on 12 Communities First (CF) Clusters<sup>2</sup> across Wales. Whilst most Lift Programme delivery areas cover a single Cluster, three delivery areas – Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Flintshire<sup>3</sup> – cover two Clusters each so that 12 Clusters in total are included in the Lift Programme.

In each delivery area, small teams of job brokers (typically two per delivery area) have been recruited to engage working-age adults living in long-term workless households (those households that have been out of work for at least six months). Eligible participants access the Programme voluntarily with the brokers assessing a participant's aspirations for employment, training or education and helping them to develop personal development (action) plans to structure their move towards work. Suitable training and employment opportunities are then sourced for the participants.

Brokers are identifying the training and employment opportunities at a local level. At a national level, WG departments, public bodies and others have been invited to expand their pool of employment and training opportunities which may be suitable locally for long-term workless people. These include

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<sup>1</sup> A workless household is where no household member is in employment, i.e. all members are either unemployed or inactive, including full-time education or training. This includes all household members, irrespective of age. Therefore, a young unemployed participant living with retired grandparents would be counted as living in a workless household.

<sup>2</sup> There are 52 Clusters which cover the most deprived communities (10%) in Wales.

<sup>3</sup> Flintshire and one of the Caerphilly areas joined Lift later.

Local Health Boards, Registered Social Landlords, and opportunities within existing Education and Skills Programmes.

The first Lift delivery area became operational in January 2014. The Programme was formally launched in March 2014 and the last of the nine areas commenced work in summer 2014. The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty recently agreed a Programme budget for 2016-17 and 2017-18 to enable the Programme to continue up to March 2018.

## **1.2 Scope and aims of the evaluation**

The evaluation has two overarching aims:

- To assess how the Programme has been set up in each of the nine delivery areas and how it is being operated; and
- To provide an indication of its effectiveness in helping participants to find work or to undergo activities that considerably boost their job prospects.

The evaluation is being delivered over three phases (this being the first) with each discrete phase having a specific focus on key elements of the Programme.

### ***Phase 1 - The Logic of the Lift Model***

The focus of this initial phase of the evaluation is on understanding the inherent logic model underpinning Lift, i.e. testing the extent to which Lift is based upon a plausible 'theory of change' and the extent to which the Programme is conforming to this model in the delivery areas.

### ***Phase 2 - The structural form and operational practice of Lift***

Phase 2 of the study will involve a detailed analysis of how the Programme has been set up in each area and the processes being applied in its implementation. It will also include an examination of the adequacy of monitoring and reporting systems in each delivery area.

### ***Phase 3 - The effectiveness and efficiency of Lift***

Phase 3 will draw on findings from the previous phases alongside a focus on assessing:

- The effectiveness of the Programme in achieving its intended outcomes (to include an analysis of the costs and benefits accrued to the participants of the Programme).
- The operational efficiency of the Programme and whether there is scope for improvements in Programme design.

### **1.3 Structure of this report**

The structure of the remainder of this report is as follows:

- Chapter 2 provides an overview of the methods applied in this phase of the evaluation.
- Chapter 3 introduces the Theory of Change and the Logic Model associated with the Programme.
- Chapter 4 explores the rationale for the Programme.
- Chapter 5 provides an overview of the design of the Programme and considers the anticipated activities, outputs and outcomes associated with it.
- Chapter 6 summarises the findings from the primary research, particularly in relation to the initial implementation of the Lift Programme.
- Chapter 7 provides a summary of the findings.

## **2. Methodological Approach: Phase 1**

The first stage of the evaluation focused on explicating the logic model underpinning the Lift Programme. To this end, the research attempted to identify the following aspects of the Programme's design:

- The issues being addressed and the context within which the Programme takes place;
- The inputs, i.e. the resources (money, time, people) being invested;
- The anticipated activities that need to be undertaken to achieve the Programme's outcomes;
- The anticipated initial outputs of the policy;
- The anticipated outcomes (both short-term and long-term); and
- The assumptions made in relation to how these elements link together to produce outcomes (including identification of any risks and dependencies).

### **2.1 Evidence review**

The analytical work commenced with a review of the strategic and policy context within which the Lift Programme is placed, complemented by a literature review examining the efficacy of active labour market initiatives. This background review aimed at improving the understanding of the context within which Lift has been developed, as well as the extent to which the Lift Programme model reflects existing evidence and, therefore, a plausible theory of change.

## **2.2 Scoping consultations**

Twenty-five semi-structured, face-to-face and telephone interviews were carried out in August 2015. Five were with WG key stakeholders responsible for the design and initial implementation of the Lift Programme and 20 with Senior Lift Brokers and Communities First Cluster Managers. These consultations fed into the development of the theory of change associated with the Programme, as they sought to gain an initial insight into the application of the Lift model in each of the delivery areas and to provide an understanding of some of the nuances of the model from one area to the next. The theory of change for Lift, illustrated by a draft logic model, was subsequently refined based on the feedback provided by the evaluation steering group.

### 3. Theory of Change and Logic Model

A theory of change seeks to describe and illustrate how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It identifies a series of goals associated with the desired change and then maps the activities, the assumptions and the associated causal processes that theoretically would lead to the achievement of the identified goals.

A logic model is a graphical depiction of a Programme and is useful for succinctly describing its key components and interacting relationships. The key components typically comprise the Programme's inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts<sup>4</sup>.

For the purposes of this report, the logic model and the theory of change have been combined into a single illustration, presented in Figure 1<sup>5</sup>, describing:

- What the Lift intervention does.
- Why intervention is necessary.
- What it seeks to achieve.
- How, theoretically, the intervention will lead to achieving its desired goals.
- The underlying assumptions.

The summary within each step of the model and the assumptions associated with the Programme are further explored in the subsequent sections of the report. Particular focus is placed on the assumptions, as testing their veracity in the subsequent phases will be a key focal area of the evaluation.

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<sup>4</sup> The Magenta Book, Guidance for Evaluation, HM Treasury (2011)

<sup>5</sup> Please note: Figure 1 should be printed on A3 paper to make it readable.

Figure 1: Lift Programme Logic Model (the figure can only be printed on A3 paper)



#### 4. Rationale for the Lift Programme

This chapter explores the evidence underpinning Lift's rationale and Programme goal. It considers the broader policy landscape associated with the Lift Programme, the key theoretical assumptions underpinning its design, and the extent to which they conform to the evidence identified in the literature review (see Annex A).

##### *Rationale statement*

The rationale illustrated in the logic chain seeks to summarise the evidence, which justifies the application of the Lift Programme as a policy intervention. Briefly, that is:

- Tackling poverty is one of the WG's highest priorities.
- There is a greater concentration of workless households in certain Welsh communities.
- 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 is best achieved by sustained engagement from a named individual, familiar to participants, who can act as their mentor.

### ***Programme goal***

When applying a theory of change approach to an intervention, it is necessary to consider the goal of the Programme. The goal of Lift, as described by the logic model, is:

*‘Contributing to the achievement of the Tackling Poverty Action Plan by piloting an approach of offering to people in long term workless households, 5,000 training or employment opportunities by the end of the calendar year 2017’*

### **4.1 Rationale**

Tackling poverty in Wales is one of the WG’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). This equated to more than 200,000 households across Wales<sup>6</sup>. In this context, the definition of workless refers to people who are without a job, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks. It also includes the economically inactive population, those without a job who have not actively sought work in the last four weeks and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks<sup>7</sup>.

There is an uneven distribution of workless households in Wales. According to 2012 data, almost three in 10 households in Blaenau Gwent were workless, whilst almost a quarter of households were workless in much of the rest of the Welsh valleys (see Figure 2). At a local level, almost two thirds of households were workless in some neighbourhoods within CF Cluster areas<sup>8</sup>.

The growth of single-adult households has had a considerable impact on the number and rate of workless households in Wales and the UK more broadly. The majority of this cohort includes single adults with no children; however, it

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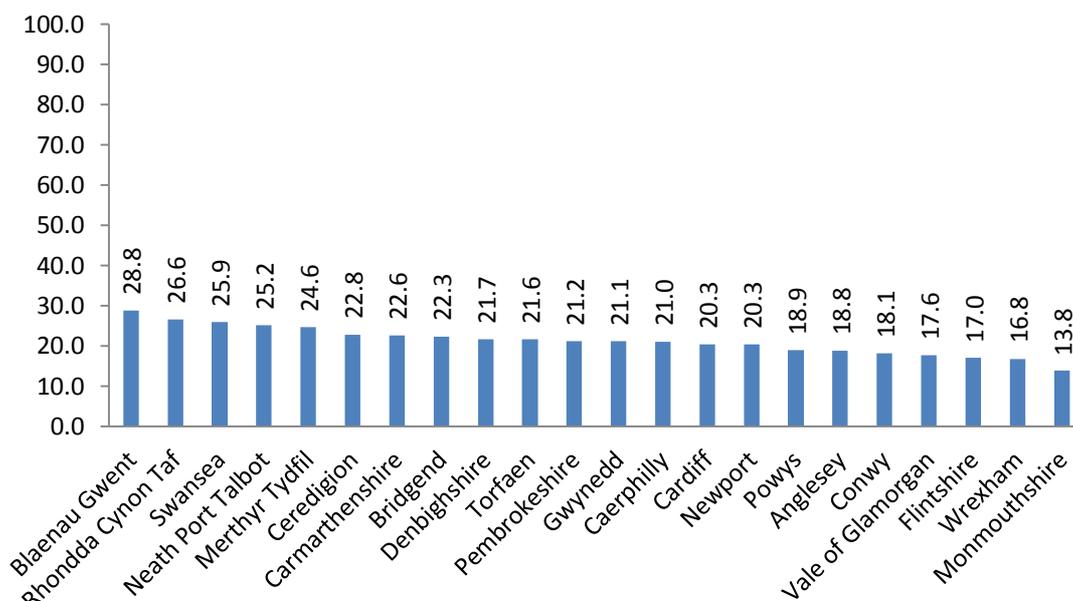
<sup>6</sup> Welsh Government, Labour Market Statistics for Households, 2012 - Statistical Bulletin, 4 September 2013

<sup>7</sup> Barnes, H. et al. (2011) *Understanding the worklessness dynamics and characteristics of deprived areas*  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/214564/rrep779.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214564/rrep779.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Analysis of Census 2011 data by the CF Team in WG using Census 2011 based on the proportion of households where no adult (over 15) was in employment within their household by lower super output area

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<sup>9</sup>.

**Figure 2: Percentage of workless households by Local Authority area**



*Source: Annual Population Survey - Households by Combined Economic Activity Status (January-December 2012)*

## 4.2 The impact of worklessness<sup>10</sup>

The continued concern with worklessness stems, in part, from the understanding that unemployment and economic inactivity are associated with a range of adverse outcomes. 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.

<sup>9</sup> Families in the Labour Market, Labour Force Survey; ONS (2014)

<sup>10</sup> Also see Annex A.

Research suggests that the long-term effects of unemployment on subjective and objective well-being are negative. Protracted periods of inactivity, for example, can contribute to higher levels of stress and depression, which can, in turn, reduce the likelihood of finding and sustaining employment<sup>11</sup>.

Increased duration of unemployment is associated with significant increases in alcohol abuse and substance dependency, domestic violence, criminal activity generally, and convictions. An Australian study concluded that exposure to unemployment accounted for between 4.2 and 14 per cent of the risk of experiencing these significant negative outcomes<sup>12</sup>. 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, fostering the idea that they will never get a job.

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 in or out of poverty<sup>13</sup>. 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.

There is extensive research on the relationship between parental worklessness and children's outcomes, including cognitive development, educational attainment, and transitions into adulthood. Research drawing on data from the Millennium Cohort Study, for example, found that parental worklessness was significantly associated with poorer academic attainment. Children growing up in workless households, for example, spend 11 per cent

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<sup>11</sup> Crowther et al. (2000) 'Helping people with severe mental illness to obtain work: systematic review', BMJ <http://www.bmj.com/content/322/7280/204>

<sup>12</sup> Fergusson et al. (2014) 'Unemployment and psychosocial outcomes to age 30: A fixed-effects regression analysis' in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* Vol. 40: 8: pp. 735-742

<sup>13</sup> Pantazis (2006) *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain: The Millennium Survey*

more time out of work than children in employed households from leaving full-time education to the age of 23<sup>14</sup>. However, the intergenerational transfer of disadvantage remains contested. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicated a lack of evidence of ‘cultures of worklessness’ – transmitting values, attitudes and behaviours discouraging employment and encouraging welfare dependency – within workless households<sup>15,16</sup>.

### 4.3 Barriers to work

Workless people typically face a combination of barriers to work. Within Wales, poor health is the single most frequently stated barrier to work for both women and men. Health and disability are the dominant barriers for men. For women, these are more varied, including primary care giving<sup>17</sup>. According to the Annual Population Survey, the prevalence and incidence of worklessness are considerably higher amongst people with disabilities than the population as a whole. Yet, a considerable proportion of unemployed people with health conditions – at just over 24 per cent– would like to work, suggesting that disabled people face a greater range of barriers, including discrimination, in finding and securing work<sup>18</sup>.

Research suggests that with each barrier a person faces there is a considerable reduction in the probability of employment, independent of the effects of other barriers. In Blackaby et al. (2003), only four per cent of individuals facing no barriers were unemployed, compared with 90 per cent of those who faced more barriers (namely disability, low qualifications, being over the age of 50, being a member of an ethnic minority group, being without a partner, and living in an area with weak labour demand)<sup>19</sup>. Barriers can also

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<sup>14</sup> Schoon et al. (2012) Intergenerational transmission of worklessness: Evidence from the Millennium Cohort and the Longitudinal Study of Young People In England

<sup>15</sup> JRF (2012) <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/cultures-of-worklessness>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/are-cultures-worklessness-passed-down-generations>

<sup>17</sup> MacInnes et al. (2014) *Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion 2014*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

<sup>18</sup> Annual Population Survey (2014), *Disability Level by Economic Activity*, <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk>, accessed 27<sup>th</sup> August 2015

<sup>19</sup> Blackaby et al. (2003) *Identifying Barriers to Economic Activity in Wales*, Report for the Economic Research Unit, Welsh Assembly Government, 2003  
<http://www.learningobservatory.com/uploads/publications/1179.pdf>

be interrelated in subtle but significant ways that amplify distance from the labour market, such as the lack of transport and mobility-limiting disabilities.

#### **4.4 The policy response across the UK**

Reducing worklessness remains a key policy objective for successive governments within Wales and, more broadly, the UK. It has included a number of positive activation initiatives that have sought to reduce its prevalence. These have included area-based initiatives, including CF in Wales, Social Inclusion Partnerships 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. This has included replacing Incapacity Benefit (IB) with Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and reducing the age of the youngest child after which lone parents are required to seek work.

In 2011, the UK Government launched the Work Programme, its flagship welfare-to-work programme providing support for people who are long-term unemployed or are at most risk of becoming so. Various benefits claimants are mandatory participants in the Work Programme with referrals triggered following the claiming of unemployment-related benefits (JSA, ESA or Universal Credit) over a certain timescale. For example, those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) are referred to the Programme 9 months after first claiming JSA, if aged 18-24, and after 12 months of claiming, if aged 25 and over.

The Work Programme allows the freedom to apply a 'black box' approach<sup>20</sup> to service provision. Following referral, participants remain on the Work Programme for up to two years. Given the breadth of provision potentially available to a Work Programme participant, WG decided to focus Lift Programme resources on participants prior to referral to, or once they have left, the Work Programme.

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<sup>20</sup> The Programme does not prescribe specific interventions or activities that each provider must deliver.

Despite government intervention, worklessness is still a prominent feature within the labour market. Thus, the policy challenge is to design and implement locally sensitive responses that effectively support members of workless households within these deprived neighbourhoods. This necessitates a detailed understanding of the characteristics and dynamics of worklessness, and of the factors contributing to positive outcomes.

#### **4.5 Welsh Government policy**

The TPAP seeks to prioritise the needs of those at most risk of poverty and exclusion under the following key objectives:

- Preventing poverty
- Helping people in poverty to improve their skills and enhance the relevance of their qualifications
- Mitigating the impact of poverty

According to the TPAP, the risk of poverty for children in workless families remains high, at 58 per cent, which is considerably above the Welsh rate of 22 per cent. Tackling worklessness is closely aligned with the WG's Child Poverty Strategy, which in 2011 defined three strategic objectives for tackling child poverty. In 2015, following consultation, these were slightly revised but remain highly pertinent to the Lift Programme.

1. To reduce the number of families living in workless households, as children living in workless households are particularly at risk of living in poverty.
2. To increase the skills of parents and young people living in low-income households so that they can secure well-paid employment and in-work progression, as in-work poverty is a growing issue.
3. To reduce the inequalities which exist in the health, education and economic outcomes of children and families by improving the outcomes of the poorest. Preventing poverty is fundamental to our long-term vision of supporting low-income households.

In terms of policy intervention, the CF Programme is WG's community-based programme for tackling poverty. The Programme concentrates on the most

deprived communities in Wales and was established in 2001. The latest phase of the Programme (commenced in 2012) included a focus on delivery in a smaller number of larger areas. The Programme now delivers across 52 Clusters which include the most deprived communities (10 per cent) (at lower super output area (LSOA<sup>21</sup>) level and equating to 25 per cent of the total population)<sup>22</sup> in Wales. The Clusters are managed by 19 Lead Delivery Bodies (LDBs). The CF Programme has three strategic-level objectives, which collectively contribute to the aims of the TPAP:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Healthier Communities - Improved health and well-being for all, with the pace of improvement increasing in proportion to the level of disadvantage.

Part of the rationale for CF is that, as a community-focused, poverty-tackling programme, it will 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.

'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 following action: '*... 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 Tackling

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<sup>21</sup> Each LSOA has an average of 1,500 residents and 650 households.

<sup>22</sup> Based on evidence derived from the Welsh Indices of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2011

Workless Households Programme (the original name of the Lift Programme) was developed as the intervention to deliver this commitment.

#### 4.6 Complementary policies/activities

Through targeted delivery within CF Clusters, the Lift Programme is placed within a geography with other targeted interventions (in addition to those services provided by the Clusters themselves) which should complement the Programme. These include:

- Employment Services in Integrated Children's Centres (ESICC): The Lift Programme builds on an intervention model initially delivered in some CF Clusters (five of which participate in Lift) in partnership with Jobcentre Plus (JCP) where JCP advisors (Parent Employment Advisors) were embedded within CF Cluster teams and provided services via Integrated Children's Centres in Cluster areas. This Programme has now been incorporated within Communities for Work.
- Jobs Growth Wales (JGW), supported by the European Social Fund (ESF), provides financial support to SMEs and other organisations to help cover the cost of 6-month employment opportunities for unemployed young people (16-24) to enable them to gain experience, acquire new skills, and improve their long-term employment prospects. Five hundred JGW places have been ring-fenced for Lift participants, allowing Lift to 'prepare' those individuals not yet job-ready and enable them to subsequently benefit from the JGW Programme.
- Vibrant and Viable Places, the regeneration framework for Wales, aims to improve the local economy and quality of life in town centres, coastal communities and CF areas (which are also among the intervention's priority areas).
- Communities for Work has recently secured ESF support and is co-sponsored by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The Programme will be delivered in CF areas and is operating as a community outreach service. The Programme's model builds on early learning from Lift, and is delivered by Employment Advisors (employed by JCP but integrated into CF teams) and Employment Mentors (based

in CF teams). There are two types of mentors: Adult Mentors (for those aged 25 or over) and Youth Mentors (for young adults under the age of 25). The staff will identify the barriers that individuals face in getting into work, agree an Action Plan, provide support, and offer actions and activities to help them to find work or full-time education (seen as a step towards work). Individuals can independently apply to join this Programme, and be referred by various statutory and third-sector bodies. Participation is purely voluntary.

## 5. The Design of the Lift Programme

The Lift Programme commenced in January 2014 and initially targeted seven CF Cluster areas. The Programme subsequently expanded to nine areas, with three of these areas requesting an expansion to encompass a neighbouring Cluster. The Programme currently operates across 12 Clusters in nine delivery areas<sup>23</sup>.

The Programme shares a series of key principles and strengths of the CF Programme:

- Community-based solutions
- Using community intelligence
- Community-based support
- Intensive support outreach workers
- Employment action planning<sup>24</sup>

### 5.1 Programme resources

The Lift Programme is operating with relatively small-scale resources. The Programme secured £2.5m of WG funding for the initial 2013-16 Programme period (prior to the Programme's extension to March 2018). The use of CF Clusters as the delivery vehicle drew on the assumption that Cluster infrastructure offers a high degree of efficacy enabling service delivery with limited resources. Much of the efficacy of this model, however, is reliant upon the Lift Programme linking with, or leveraging in, other support.

#### *Identification of delivery areas*

The proportion of the population in receipt of income-related benefits is higher in CF Clusters (30 per cent) than typically found throughout Wales (12 per

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<sup>23</sup> These are: Môn (Anglesey), Tredegar & Ebbw Fawr (Blaenau Gwent), Caerphilly Basin and Upper Rhymney Valley (Caerphilly), Cardiff East (Cardiff), Taf West (Rhondda Cynon Taf), Swansea North West (Swansea), Carmarthenshire (Carmarthenshire), Afan Valley (Neath Port Talbot), and Flintshire East and Flintshire West (Flintshire).

<sup>24</sup> Welsh Government (2013), *Tackling Workless Households Programme* (unpublished).

cent)<sup>25</sup>. Using such benefits as a proxy for worklessness, this translates to higher concentrations of workless households within CF Clusters<sup>26</sup>.

WG identified potential participant Clusters and invited them to participate in the Programme. The final selection criteria included (i) the extent to which the Clusters had a proven ability to deliver the existing CF Programme, and (ii) the need to trial the model in a range of settings on the assumption that the Programme's effectiveness would be influenced by geography, population and employment densities and infrastructure.

Each identified delivery area has appointed at least two members of staff<sup>27</sup> (a Broker/Mentor and Senior Broker/Mentor) to deliver the Lift Programme. The staffing quota is largely commensurate with the financial resources available, and draws on the assumption that this level of staffing resources is sufficient to deliver the Lift Programme, albeit not without risk of continuity should staff members become unavailable.

### ***Programme management and governance***

Two WG staff members, initially with additional administrative support, manage the Programme's delivery. A Programme board<sup>28</sup>, which meets biannually, has also been set up to provide information, advice and assurance to the team and assist in:

- Strategic and cross-cutting issues and risks that impact on the Programme;
- Effectiveness of communication;
- The adequacy and integrity of governance arrangements;
- The delivery of the outcome and benefits; and
- The resolution of strategic and operational issues from a strategic perspective.

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<sup>25</sup> Stats Wales, *Key Indicators by Communities First Cluster*, sourced from Welsh Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2012), <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Community-Safety-and-Social-Inclusion/Communities-First/KeyIndicators-by-CommunitiesFirstCluster>

<sup>26</sup> Welsh Government (2013), *Employment related benefits as a proxy for worklessness* (unpublished).

<sup>27</sup> A third broker/mentor has been recruited in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Cardiff.

<sup>28</sup> Lift Implementation Board - Terms of Reference

### ***Finances***

The budget for each delivery area over the initial Programme period (2013-16) varies widely from around £190,000 to £390,000, reflecting the level of funding requested by each Lead Delivery Body. The finances and the wider resources (financial and personnel/intervention-related) provide a high degree of flexibility in the nature of support available to participants to help to overcome barriers to employment. This approach assumes that the offered flexibility will enable different participants in varying situations to respond positively and to actively engage with Lift.

### ***Creating opportunities***

Creating opportunities for Lift relies on national employers (guided or encouraged by WG) and local employers and training providers bringing forth opportunities that are accessible and suited to the target cohort. Participation in these opportunities should facilitate ‘Lifting’ the Programme’s participants towards and into the labour market. This approach assumes that employers and training providers have opportunities accessible to and suitable for this target cohort. It also assumes a willingness amongst employers and training providers to “buy-in” to this Programme.

### ***Resource-associated assumptions***

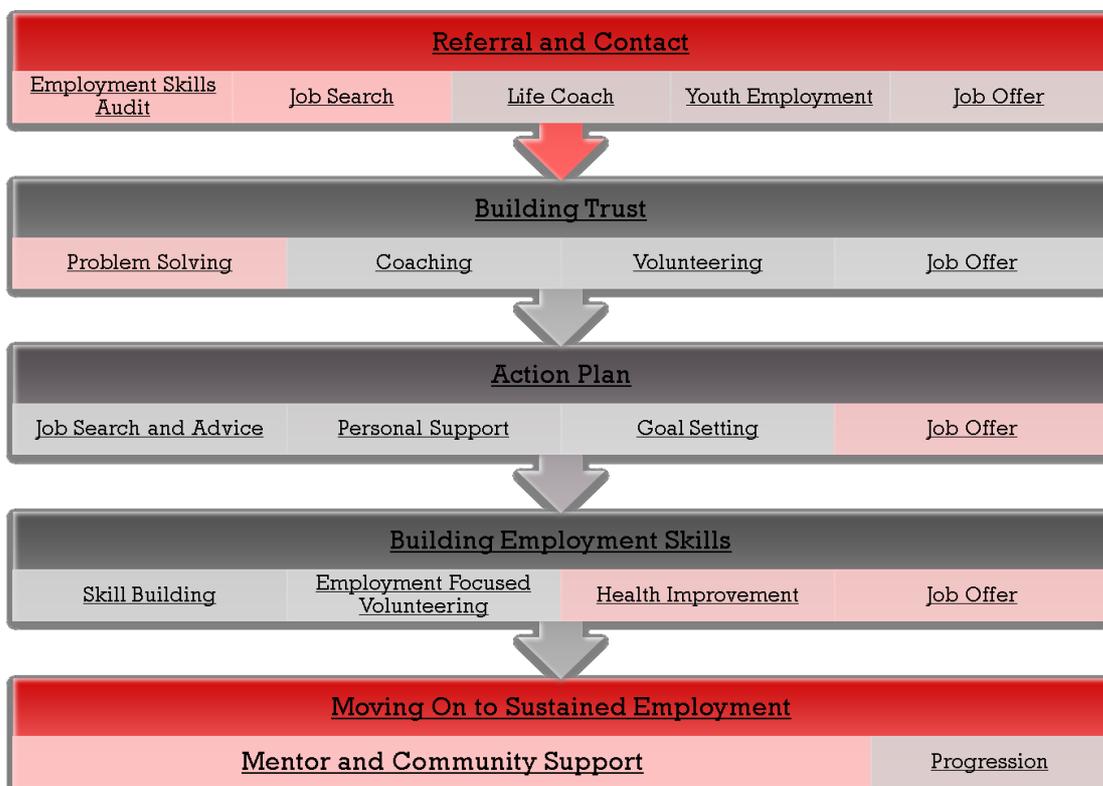
- CF Clusters provide the most appropriate platform for delivering the Lift Programme.
- Circa Approximately two brokers in each delivery area provide sufficient resources and continuity to deliver the Lift Programme.
- Nine *competent* teams have been appointed in each delivery area.
- Interventions of this nature are suited to those who have been workless for over six months.
- Other “stakeholders” have similar goals/objectives and are willing to “buy-in” to the process by offering opportunities accessible/suitable to target groups.
- The density of the population and the accessibility to opportunities (i.e. the proximity of employers/training providers, existing transport) will influence Lift’s effectiveness.

- The flexibility of the approach enables a variety of participants to respond to and engage with the Programme.

## 5.2 Activities

The Lift model incorporates a five-stage approach, allowing participants to progress quickly or benefit from more intensive, longer-term support, if there are more significant barriers and needs. Figure 3 illustrates the key stages of referral and engagement, the building of trust, action planning, and moving towards employment and then into sustainable employment.

**Figure 3: Planned Delivery Model for the Lift Programme<sup>29</sup>**



Although the activities associated with the Programme vary from Cluster to Cluster, all areas were encouraged to map the support provision and associated opportunities available to participants. Opportunities considered appropriate to record as Programme outcomes include<sup>30</sup>:

- Training on basic/essential skills: often classroom-based training.

<sup>29</sup> Tackling Workless Households Programme - Brief, Welsh Government (2013)

<sup>30</sup> Welsh Government (2013), *Lift Opportunity Definitions* (unpublished)

- Vocational training, ideally with employer engagement in developing the content and delivering the courses/training Programmes.
- Work placement or work experience of a minimum duration of two weeks.
- Preparation for full-time employment of a minimum duration of two weeks (e.g. through work tasters or work trials, permitted work or volunteering linked to employment outcomes).
- Employment: a minimum of 16 hours per week.

### ***Identification of eligible participants***

Due to the limited resources available, the Programme heavily relies on referrals as routes to engagement. This includes participating in community engagement events run by the Cluster, getting referrals from advisors at the local Jobcentre and/or from other agencies with a strong emphasis on community engagement/outreach. This assumes that Lift teams can effectively engage with the key referral agencies, particularly the CF Cluster and the local JCP offices.

Eligibility is determined at the point of entry. Although JCP hold the information on an individual's household required for directly assessing eligibility, other referral agents are unlikely to have the prerequisite level of detail for making this assessment. Thus, where referrals emanate from other sources, Lift relies on a participant's self-declaration of eligibility for the Programme.

### ***Engagement and action planning***

Lift is a voluntary scheme and its target client group is harder to reach/help. Thus, the model assumes that eligible participants want to work or progress towards work, and that the brokers are able to secure participants' voluntary engagement. The model also assumes that the communities view CF Clusters as trusted, independent organisations, distinct from many public sector services (such as Social Services or DWP), due to CF Clusters being embedded within, and led by, the community, thereby strengthening the likelihood of engagement.

The Lift model is centred on the development of an action plan (often termed a personal development plan) to identify a series of goals and measurable steps. Once the participant has engaged with the Lift team and a reasonable level of trust has been established, the participant follows that plan as part of a structured plan to move towards and into employment. The action planning process seeks to identify the barriers that participants face and find appropriate solutions. The goals identified within the action plan will inform the brokers' judgement on the type of opportunities that would be most suited to an individual. Brokers are assumed to be able to identify and match relevant and accessible opportunities to participants. However, a diverse blend of nationally derived and locally obtained opportunities is critical to the success of this approach.

### *Integration with other programmes*

Workless individuals (particularly in excess of 6 months) typically have multiple barriers limiting their engagement in, or movement towards, employment (also see Annex A). The difficulty in reaching Lift's target groups highlights the importance of effective integration with key organisations (including the CF Clusters) offering support or providing additional routes of referral.

CF Cluster areas benefit from a number of targeted interventions with similar outcomes, in addition to the various schemes delivered by the Prosperous teams in each Cluster (also see pp. 17-18). The alignment of Lift with the Clusters assumes little or no overlap, duplication or competition with other interventions.

The Programme seeks to maintain engagement with participants for up to one year following the commencement of their participation in training and/or employment opportunities. Given the voluntary nature of engagement and the barriers associated with the target cohort, the model assumes that brokers can successfully engage with participants in the long term, including after they secure their desired goal.

### ***Activity-associated 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 advisors) 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 with 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 happening and this enhances the effectiveness of the service.

### **5.3 Outputs**

The overarching target for the Programme at launch was to *'offer 5,000 training and employment opportunities for people living in workless households by the end of the 2017 calendar year'*. In some Programme-related materials, the target is *'to create 5,000 opportunities for people living in workless households'*. This target, if interpreted as merely an offer or creation of an opportunity, is an output of the activities of the Programme. Where the target is interpreted as participants supported in 5,000 opportunities (as described in some more recent Programme-related materials), it should be considered a direct result of the creation of that opportunity. Whilst the terminology in some Programme-related materials lends itself to the former, the target is, in fact, related to the latter definition and has therefore been considered a result/immediate outcome in the logic model.

The opportunities (regardless of whether they are an offer of an opportunity, a creation of an opportunity or the attendance of participants on an opportunity) carry equal weighting (regardless of which of the five categories they fall into, see pp. 22-23). In this respect, there is an implicit assumption that all opportunities within the Programme are of an equal value. In reality, this assumption may conflict with some perspectives on the Programme. Whilst the Programme places considerable weighting on distance towards employment, the ultimate goal is for participants to gain sustainable employment following the receipt of support.

### *Output-related assumptions*

- WG departments and other stakeholder organisations have suitable opportunities for the target cohort.
- Participants in each Cluster deem the opportunities to be suitable and there is sufficient interest in them.
- Opportunities created have equal value and potential impact.

## **5.4 Results**

To achieve the outcome of 5,000 opportunities, it is imperative that there be a sufficient number of eligible participants actively engaged in the Programme. It is also unlikely that a perfect market of supply and demand exists for the Lift Programme, so some opportunities may prove unattractive or misaligned with the goals of a broker's caseload. Therefore, a greater number of opportunities will need to be created to meet the target of 5,000 provided.

With an emphasis on targeting the long-term workless, the Programme seeks to deliver intensive, sustained support to meet their complex needs. The assumptions made in this respect are: (i) participants may require multiple opportunities to move them towards sustained employment; (ii) attendance at opportunities suitable to the identified needs and goals will have a positive impact on participants, including improving their self-efficacy and well-being; and (iii) journeys towards employment may shift direction following a participant's exposure/experience.

With an overarching target outcome of opportunity attendance (rather than securing employment), the Programme acknowledges participants' distance

from the labour market. Assessing the effectiveness of the intervention will therefore involve looking beyond the hard outcomes of mainstream employment or education, to measuring the distance travelled towards, or into, employment and the extent to which this is attributed to the support received. Monitoring data being captured by the delivery areas (the assigned “data controllers” for the Programme) should enable the assessment of self-efficacy, well-being and other protective factors identified within the review of the evidence base.

Whilst the number of participants in employment is not associated with an explicit outcome indicator, there is an expectation that conversion rates are likely to be comparable to other Programmes of a similar nature<sup>31</sup>.

For those entering mainstream employment or training, there is a desire to sustain engagement for at least six months post-employment to ensure that the placement is successful and sustained. Brokers are also tasked with a 12-month follow-up after the participant’s initial engagement in their first opportunity. Another inherent assumption, thus, is that Lift staff are able to retain this contact with clients.

### ***Substitution/displacement effects***

Substitution and displacement effects may arise by offering what may be existing opportunities to a specific target group in order to “benefit” from the Programme. These opportunities may otherwise have gone to someone workless but outside the target geography. These risks are identified in the business case for the Programme, but as part of a progressive policy for the redistribution of wealth to more deprived areas, substitution may arguably be seen as a desirable outcome. *‘Replacing a short-term unemployed person or someone from a household with other earners with someone from a workless household is one of the outcomes that Lift is trying to achieve.’*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Evidence from the 2007-2013 ESF Programme suggests a conversion rate of between 1 in 10 (10%) and 1 in 6 (17%) of participants moving into sustained full-time employment for those furthest from the labour market.

<sup>32</sup> Lift Business Case Annex 1 (Draft), (2013), Welsh Government

Based on the evidence review (see Annex A), there is a heightened risk of poverty in a family where an entire household (rather than one individual) is workless. When the labour market is in a period of expansion, substitution is less of an issue. In a period of contraction, however, where competition for what may be a dwindling number of employment opportunities is heightened, it can be more of a factor. Similarly, the intervention is likely to lead to displacement effects. Targeted support, either through training or through work experience, will make participants more competitive within the labour market, likely at the expense of competing jobseekers potentially ineligible for the Programme. Thus, whilst substitution and displacement effects exist, they may not be significant enough to undermine the additional impact (social and economic) derived from the support.

Spillover effects arising from the support are another associated assumption. It will be important to test this assumption by exploring changes amongst other household members or other non-participants of the Lift Programme (as, for example, increased aspirations of employment amongst the wider community due to successful Lift participants).

### ***Result-associated assumptions***

- Participants typically engage with several opportunities.
- Taking up an opportunity has a positive impact on participants, including improved self-efficacy.
- Substitution and displacement effects are not significant enough to undermine the additional impact derived from the support.
- Spillover effects arise, particularly within households of supported participants.
- 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.
- Brokers are able to track participants for six months after gaining employment.

## 6. Programme Implementation

Initially, eight (and subsequently nine) CF Clusters were invited to participate in the Lift Programme, all of which submitted an application for funding.

### 6.1 Guidance

The guidance provided by WG was concise and described as a 'light touch', reflecting a desire for Clusters to identify locally tailored solutions to the issues of worklessness within their locality. The guidance comprised the specifications for the employment of the two mentors, the provision of resources for back office costs and the Barrier Fund. Job description templates for brokers were also provided; whilst some Clusters replicated these templates, others chose to design their own.

Most delivery areas welcomed the flexibility and autonomy provided to local areas to shape the model as they saw fit. They found the guidance to be useful and appreciated the flexibility to adapt the model to suit local requirements (the provision of additional resources to employ an administrative post being one such example) and to fit with existing provision/infrastructure: *"they were very keen to fit with what we were already doing"*. However, some noted the need for additional guidance, particularly around monitoring and eligibility for the Programme. There were some concerns that requirements have been drip-fed into the Programme as it has progressed, with increasing demands on the delivery teams, such as chasing up additional information from participants.

Generally, the support of WG throughout implementation and delivery of the Programme to date has been well regarded, with close relationships formed with the WG Lift team.

*"The lines of communication have always been open; they're really supportive in responding to our queries. We can just call them and usually get a very quick response."*

*"They're always available to talk and always able to provide answers to questions. They come back quickly to respond; they're good at listening to ground level staff when we make suggestions."*

## 6.2 Recruitment and staff structure

The recruitment of the Lift staff in each delivery area started in January 2014. All Brokers/Mentors were appointed by August 2014. Each delivery area broadly followed the model of two brokers (although three brokers have been appointed in Blaenau Gwent, Cardiff and Caerphilly). Requests for additional administrative support on the recording of monitoring data were made in some delivery areas.

In most cases, the Lift teams are employed by the Lead Delivery Body and line managed by the Cluster Manager<sup>33</sup>. Typically, the Lift teams have close links with the Prosperous teams of their respective CF Cluster but this relationship varies from one delivery area to another.

## 6.3 Identification and engagement of participants

### *JCP as a referral route*

Whilst Lift brokers undertake some outreach and engagement, they are more likely to rely on other organisations to identify and refer appropriate participants to the Programme. Maintaining a close relationship with JCP is seen as a critical aspect to engaging these groups, as JCP Work Coaches can provide an effective referral mechanism, particularly for those claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)<sup>34</sup>. The referral process with JCP involves providing the details of eligible clients or referring claimants directly to the brokers. In the delivery areas where the Jobcentre (or the JCP Work Coaches) did not readily engage with the local Lift team, the WG Lift team stepped in to help strengthen the relationship.

The 'nature' of the referral from JCP to Lift has caused some confusion, as in some cases Lift clients thought that they had been mandated to the Programme (despite it being a voluntary referral from JCP). In other instances, Work Coaches have referred clients residing outside the target areas in the

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<sup>33</sup> For example, the Cardiff team is employed and managed by a local Housing Association.

<sup>34</sup> The ESA claimants are part of the Work-Related Activity Group, who the DWP consider will be capable of work at some time in the future and who are capable of taking steps towards moving into work (work-related activities) immediately.

hope that the application of 'flexible' boundaries on the CF Programme would be repeated on the Lift Programme<sup>35</sup>. The lack of flexibility on geographical eligibility on the Lift Programme has been met by some disappointment by prospective clients and Lift staff.

### ***Other routes to engagement***

A range of other routes to engagement has been applied by the Lift teams (primarily in partnership with the CF Clusters), including:

- 'Piggybacking' on existing community engagement schemes (event open days, community days, family fun days) delivered through CF
- The CF Employment Support Project
- Referrals via local GP surgeries
- Job clubs
- Through drop-in (particularly where the Lift Broker Team is operating from a prominent location with high footfall)
- Via Registered Social Landlords
- Police and Probation Services
- Youth Work Groups
- Libraries
- Social media

### ***Opportunity generation***

Following the launch of the Programme, the First Minister invited other ministers to identify potential opportunities from departments within their portfolio. The number of opportunities that each department is targeting has been arrived at through either a "top down" designation approach by senior members of each department or a feasibility approach through liaison with departmental managers. WG also engaged with Registered Social Landlords to encourage them to consider assigning opportunities to Lift-eligible areas and participants.

The provision of WG-generated opportunities has been welcomed by most delivery areas. Brokers estimate that they account for between ten to sixty per cent of all the opportunities offered in a local area. However, according to the

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<sup>35</sup> A portion of beneficiaries for CF Cluster activities can be from outside the Cluster.

participant tracking data, a lower proportion has been delivered via WG at this stage. Variance in the prominence of nationally generated opportunities appears to be influenced by:

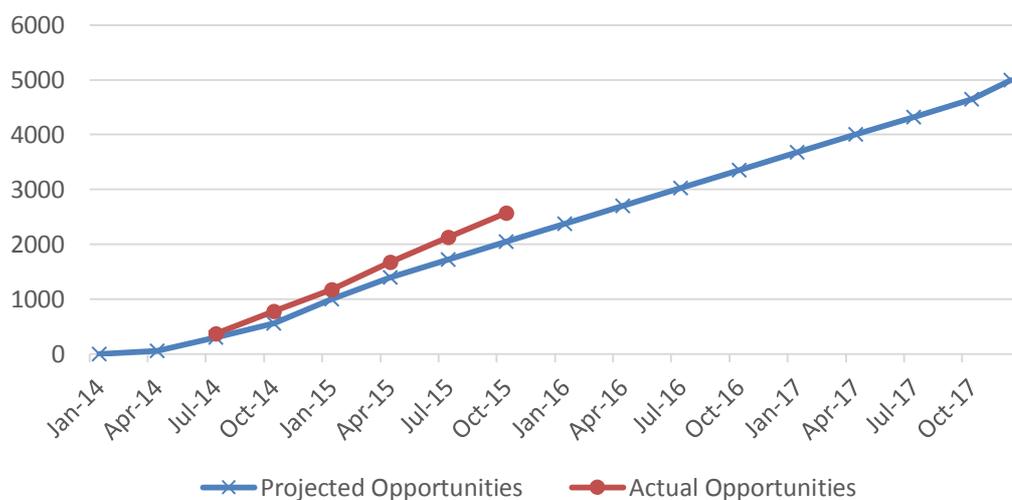
- The extent to which nationally derived opportunities are accessible to a delivery area.
- The strength of the relationship with an organisation(s) that may offer opportunities to participants.
- The extent to which the delivery area has been successful in engaging opportunities from local employers.

In terms of the sourcing of opportunities locally, a few Lift teams were involved in mapping potential local employment and training opportunities. In other instances, the teams used the existing knowledge and/or outputs of Clusters, particularly from the Prosperous or Learning teams, to identify potential employment- or training-related opportunities locally.

### 6.3 Early progress of Lift following implementation

Each delivery area submits the number of opportunities taken up by Lift participants to WG on a monthly basis. Figure 4 illustrates Lift’s progress to date against anticipated opportunity take-up to October 2015.

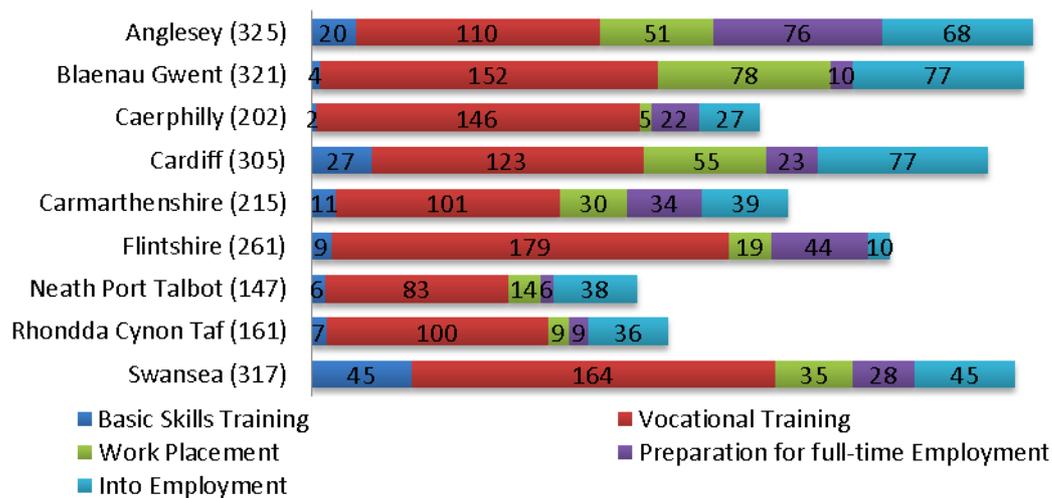
**Figure 4: Projected number of opportunities attended by participants against recorded opportunities attended**



Source: Lift Project monitoring data<sup>36</sup>

There are considerable variations in delivery when opportunities are analysed by type and delivery area<sup>37</sup> (see Figure 5). The preference for certain opportunities is also evident, with vocational training being the most popular.

**Figure 5: Total number of opportunities taken up by area to date (August 2015)**



Source: Lift Project monitoring data

#### 6.4 Emerging lessons in service delivery

Sixteen of the 20 interviewees (10 Cluster Managers and 10 Senior Mentors/Brokers) were positive about the progress made to date, citing the flexibility of the approach and the intensity and longevity of support as some of the key elements of the Programme. When asked what is working well, the majority of respondents (n=13) referred to the sustained, one-to-one, mentoring support that they are able to offer their clients. Some (n=8) also referred to the quality of opportunities offered, especially the work placements with reputable employers (as they offer a recognised opportunity to gain a career). Others praised the flexibility of the Programme, and the range of

<sup>36</sup> Projected opportunities were only given for consecutive months up until April 2015, and then were projected quarterly (as illustrated by the dashed line).

<sup>37</sup> This was anticipated as the delivery expectations informed the selection of participant Clusters in the first place.

opportunities on offer, complemented by the Barrier Fund<sup>38</sup>. Many expect increased volumes of participants as awareness about the Lift Programme and its successful client's increases.

Employer engagement is seen as key in delivering the employment outcomes, particularly from the delivery areas more successful in securing these outcomes. The brokers also noted the importance of being able to liaise with the work placement providers to negotiate terms and conditions of a placement (e.g. working hours, particularly if a participant has dependants).

*“We had one person who had his benefits sanctioned for seven months; the agencies weren't helping him at all. He had no energy at home, no food. We helped him to get hardship payments, he was without any support and he was starving to death. He was then in work within three months. We got him that support after he had been going round and round in circles.”*

### ***Challenges delivering Lift***

The mode of interaction between Lift and other service provision/support agencies, particularly the relationship with the core Cluster teams, comprises the key challenge in terms of service delivery. While many initial issues have been addressed, several delivery areas think that Lift would benefit from a stronger relationship with the core Clusters.

In three areas, brokers felt that they were not benefitting from the number of WG-generated opportunities for which they had hoped, whilst others felt that there were insufficient placement and training opportunities accessible for their caseload. The administrative requirements associated with delivering the Programme were also highlighted, and in some areas, interviewees were concerned that adhering to the enhanced requirements is drawing staff away from service delivery.

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<sup>38</sup> The Barrier Fund provides a flexible resource to mentors to assist them (where no other resource is available) in overcoming any significant barriers that an individual faces to gaining or moving towards employment.

Finally, several also referred to the challenges created by the Work Programme, with one interviewee describing the Programme as the *'bane of their life'*. Being mandated to the Work Programme whilst receiving support through Lift is the main cause of frustration. There are also isolated instances where a broker could be unknowingly supporting an individual on the Work Programme. However, in some areas, the Work Programme may enhance Lift's potential clientele list, as its unsuccessful clients<sup>39</sup> can subsequently participate in Lift when they leave the Work Programme.

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<sup>39</sup> Work Programme 'returners': those who completed two years on the Work Programme without securing employment.

## 7. Summary of Findings<sup>40</sup>

The Lift Programme offers outreach as a central element of the model. Eligible participants access the Programme voluntarily with the brokers assessing a participant's aspirations for employment, training or education and helping them to develop personal development plans to structure their move towards work. Brokers identify suitable training and employment opportunities locally, whilst WG departments, public bodies and others identify suitable opportunities nationally for the participants to engage in.

Flexibility is another important component of the Programme's operation. Each delivery area was allowed a degree of flexibility in implementing Lift reflective of the local circumstances. The model also benefits from diversity of support, particularly in terms of the range of employment and training opportunities, and is supplemented by the use of the Barrier Fund, which acts as a tool to respond to any specific issues encountered.

The Lift model aims to address the range of adverse impacts arising from unemployment and economic inactivity, including reduced income, higher risk of poverty, and material deprivation. It also builds on the notion that a mixed package of support, tailored to the needs of the individual, is a critical success factor in Programmes of this nature.

### 7.1 Targeting Lift in CF Clusters

The targeting of provision in CF Clusters relates to a reported strong relationship between the number of employment-related benefit claimants (which are typically higher in CF Clusters) and workless households. In addition, the Programme's delivery through CF Clusters provides a considerable degree of efficiency, as it provides a useful community-based infrastructure from which to identify and engage target groups. Cluster alignment also provides access to a range of complementary activities, which broaden the offer for participants likely to have a series of complex barriers restricting their ability to move towards, or into, employment. The approach

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<sup>40</sup> Section published separately in the Summary document (ISBN 978-1-4734-5137-7)

heavily relies on effective interaction between the Lift Programme, the Cluster teams and other service providers. Poor relationships and poorly integrated service provision appear to be the greatest risks to the successful delivery of the Lift Programme.

The introduction of Communities for Work in the Cluster areas provides further scope for effective integration (if implemented successfully) or competition (if a delivery area suffers from ineffective interaction). Using a triage system to assign residents to the most appropriate support on initial engagement is a reflection of a positive partnership working amongst providers. Whilst this appears to be a highly effective way of handling initial engagement of residents, it is only possible where there is a mutual agreement amongst service providers as to the attribution of outcomes across Programmes or services.

The judgements for awarding Clusters with Lift funding drew on several factors. To certain Clusters, the funding allows testing the Lift model in various demographic scenarios. Whilst various factors are likely to be influential, research identifies links in performance to the strength of the relationship with other support providers, employers and training providers that may offer opportunities to these groups.

## **7.2 Role of Broker/Mentor**

The model places heavy responsibility on the role of the Broker/Mentor in each delivery area. Building and sustaining strong relationships with the target cohort relies on them. Their role requires the ability to build an element of trust with participants, to identify or unearth complex needs, and to respond to these needs. They also build relationships with the support infrastructure to ensure that the brokerage of support is appropriate to a participant's needs/goals. Although they have risen to this challenge thus far, the limitations of staffing resources pose a risk to the continuity of support in each area in case of any turnover of staff.

### **7.3 Voluntary engagement**

The Lift Programme relies on voluntary engagement; thus, it places much emphasis on the assumption that people want to work. It also assumes that the opportunities available to participants match their interests and needs and that participation in these opportunities assists them in gaining sustainable employment. In some areas, there is evidence of a mismatch between the supply of opportunities and the nature of opportunities demanded by participants. The extent to which this mismatch exists is unclear, so further investigation may provide useful insight into the patterns of participant demand.

Despite some evidence of a mismatch in opportunities, the Programme is performing well, surpassing targets against overall opportunities and securing higher conversion rates to employment than anticipated. As the Programme progresses, it will be interesting to monitor the conversion rates to employment, as the initial successes may reflect those individuals who are better equipped to actively engage in, and benefit from, Lift. However, the long-term support provided to individuals is likely to maintain the conversion rate seen to date, and the “harder to reach/help” may increasingly engage with it when considering how its profile grows in each delivery area.

### **7.4 Spillover effects**

The targeting of workless households rather than individuals assumes that spillover effects will emerge for the family. Although this is plausible, the increase in workless households is primarily a result of changes in the nature of occupancy in housing, with single-parent households being the most common profile of a workless household<sup>41</sup>. In these circumstances, spillover effects within the household will be limited but wider spillover effects (to peer groups and the rest of the community) may take place.

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<sup>41</sup> Families in the Labour Market, Labour Force Survey; ONS (2014)

## 7.5 Monitoring

WG currently receives a monthly update of the number of opportunities taken up, alongside a quarterly return detailing the characteristics of the participants and the opportunities provided. The Lift teams, on behalf of their Lead Delivery Bodies, have the role of “data controller”, which requires them to capture and store all beneficiary data related to the Programme’s delivery. Each team has designed its own systems and forms for capturing relevant data for each participant due to the limited guidance associated with capturing this information. Thus, assessing the comprehensiveness and accuracy of monitoring systems for each area is challenging. The potential lack of consistency in data recording provides risks in judging the effectiveness of the intervention.

Being in a workless household is a dynamic status, which needs to be monitored on a continuous basis since it constitutes the main eligibility criterion for the Programme, though eligibility is determined at a participant’s point of entry. An audit of data capture systems has recently commenced to explore the ways in which each delivery team is recording information relating to participant eligibility, activities and outcomes. If data capture is insufficient or inaccurate, it could prove difficult to determine participants’ ongoing eligibility for the Programme. Robust data capture will also aid in accounting for the outcomes achieved and in judging the effectiveness of the Programme.

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