

Borough Report 2022
Sutton



Introduction

Welcome to our Better Working Futures Borough Report 2022 for Sutton.

We are pleased to present the latest information on delivery of our employment support to job-seeking residents in the borough.

This year we have seen the programme continue to make a difference in the community. Against performance targets for helping people into employment, we have seen some of our best ever results over recent months.

This performance is set against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions lifting and our team continuing to adjust our support to reflect an ever-changing labour market.

Given many people's experiences of the past two years, the need for joined-up support that addresses employment and health priorities has never been more important.

Across the UK there are now **one million more disabled people in work than five years ago** (ONS, May 2022).

The employment disability gap – the difference in employment rates of disabled and non-disabled people – has narrowed. It is currently 28.2%, down from 33.8% in 2017.

Funding for programmes like Better Working Futures was provided to achieve results like these.

There is clearly still more to do to make work accessible for everybody.

The agility and dedication our team at Reed in Partnership has displayed since I joined as Programme Director for the programme last year means we are well placed to continue playing an important role.

I have also been inspired by so many of the other local support services and community partners in Sutton that integrate with what we do here to support local residents.

I hope that this report provides a good overview of the work and impact I believe we are having.

As always, we are very happy to hear from you. If you are ever interested in dropping in to see our programme in action, or have your questions answered, please do feel free to contact me at chris.paterson@reed.com

Best wishes



Chris Paterson
Programme Director



Programme overview

The Better Working Futures service, our name for the Work and Health Programme, launched in March 2018.

The programme is commissioned by South London Partnership and co-funded by the Department for Work and Pensions and the European Social Fund. It is delivered across the five boroughs of the South London Partnership: Croydon, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Richmond upon Thames and Sutton.

Better Working Futures provides support to help people find and keep a job. It is available, on a voluntary basis, to those with health conditions or disabilities, and to various groups of vulnerable people who have early entrant access.

It also provides support to those who have been unemployed for over two years. For this group, the programme is compulsory.

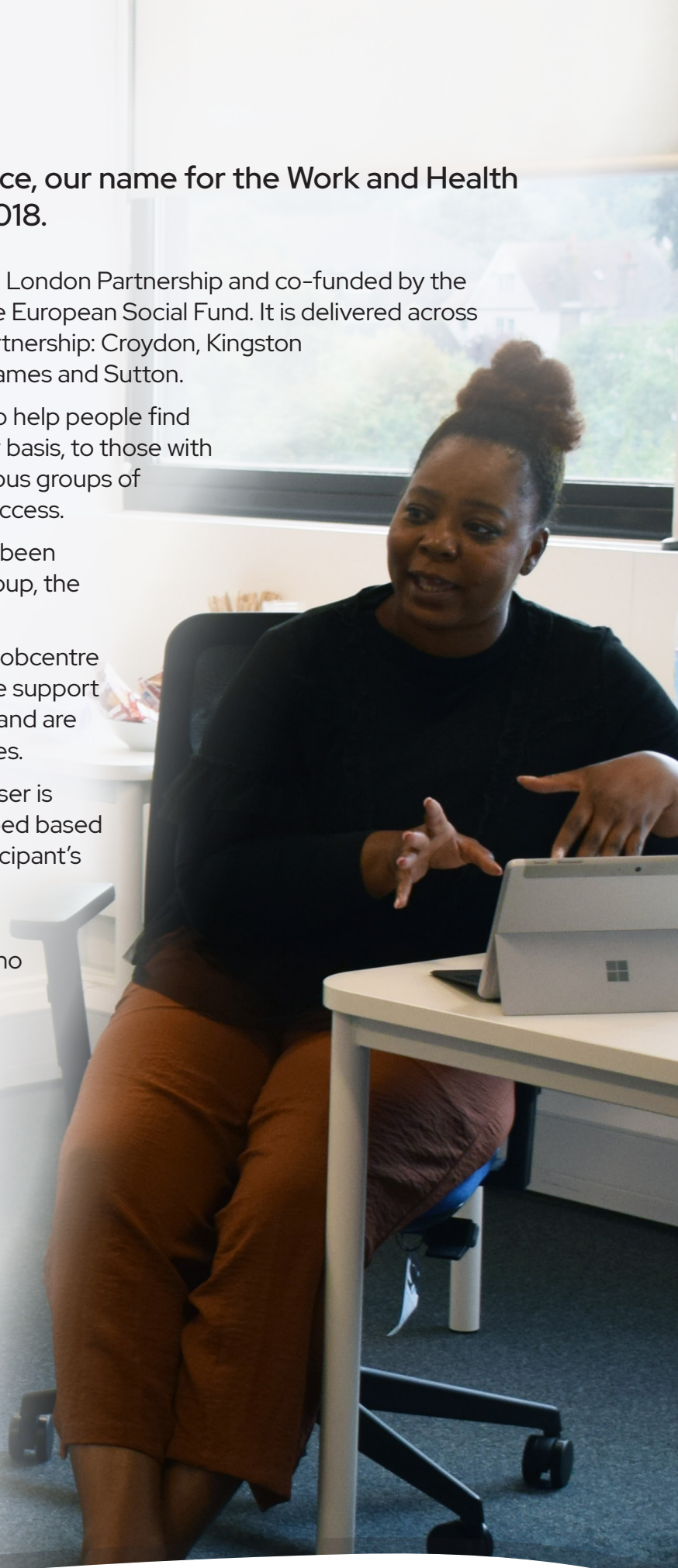
Participants have been identified by their Jobcentre Plus Work Coach as needing more intensive support to overcome their barriers to employment and are therefore referred to Better Working Futures.

On referral a designated Employment Adviser is allocated. A personal action plan is developed based on a comprehensive diagnostic of the participant's circumstances, needs and ambitions.

Minimum fortnightly one-to-one meetings take place with the Employment Adviser who organises all the support required by the participant.

A Better Off Calculation takes place to ensure that the participant will be financially better off in work.

Funding is available for help with the cost of travel, childcare and work/interview clothing.



Seven areas of support



1. Mindset

We help participants to get motivated and start thinking positively about employment and their own abilities.



2. Employability

Practical skills development for job searching, CV writing and interview skills. Self-employment support is also available.



3. Skills and qualifications

Work specific skills development that match local employer needs. Access and funding is provided for accredited training and qualifications. Sector taster sessions are available.



4. Personal circumstances

An extensive range of support, confidential advice and advocacy to overcome personal barriers, including housing issues, caring responsibilities, financial issues and previous convictions.





5. Health and disability

Our delivery was developed in partnership with Disability Rights, the UK charity run by and for people with lived experience of a disability or health condition. Health and Wellbeing Advisers provide one-to-one and group support to help participants manage a health condition, in and outside of the workplace.



6. Employment options

We have links with employers across South London. We work with employers of all sizes and types to source a wide range of appropriate vacancies that match the ambitions of our participants. We support employers to develop their understanding of health conditions and make reasonable adjustments through our role as a Disability Confident Leader.



7. In-work support

An In-Work Plan is produced that provides ongoing support once the participant starts employment. A progression review is offered to help increase the participant's salary, hours or review trading for self-employed participants.

Additionally, a wide range of support through external provision is available. Our Route Planner Tool contains details of local Sutton services that can provide coordinated support with specialist interventions for health and lifestyle factors and training options.

Programme data

March 2018 - August 2022

Location

Wandle Valley Ward	11%
Sutton Central Ward	10%
Beddington South Ward	8%
St. Helier Ward	8%
Wallington North Ward	7%
Sutton North Ward	7%
Sutton South Ward	6%
Carshalton Central Ward	5%
Wallington South Ward	5%
Worcester Park Ward	5%
Beddington North Ward	5%
Belmont Ward	4%
The Wrythe Ward	4%
Sutton West Ward	4%
Carshalton South and Clockhouse Ward	3%
Nonsuch Ward	3%
Cheam Ward	2%

5%
18-24

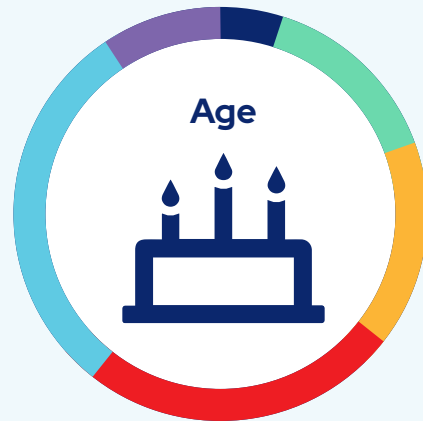
15%
25-34

16%
35-44

9%
65+

30%
55-64

25%
45-54



92% (54% male, 46% female)

Disability / Health Condition (Voluntary)

5% (62% male, 38% female)

Vulnerable Early Entrant Access (Voluntary)

Includes people who are: a carer or former carer homeless; a former member of the armed forces or a reservist; the partner of a current or former member of the armed forces; a care leaver; a young person in a gang; a refugee; a victim of domestic violence; have or have had a dependency on drugs or alcohol; an ex-offender

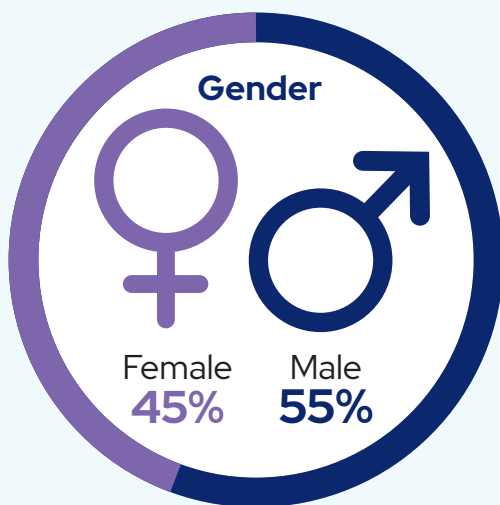
2% (47% male, 53% female)

Long-Term Unemployed (Mandatory)

People who have been unemployed for 24 months or longer

1%

Autism Spectrum Group





- 96%** Disability / Health Condition
- 3%** Vulnerable Early Entrant Access
- 1%** Long-Term Unemployed

- White** (British) **76%**
- Black** (African / Caribbean / British) **8%**
- Mixed / Multiple / Other** **8%**
- Asian** (Bangladeshi / Chinese / Indian / Pakistani / British) **8%**



Most common health barriers to work

- 1** Mental health issues
- 2** General poor health and lifestyle
- 3** Physical health

Most common barriers to work

- 1** Not knowing how to customise a CV
- 2** Poor interview skills
- 3** Missing or poor quality CV

Most common job goals



Service performance

Participant starts to date	877
Job starts to date	339
Job sustainments to date	149

Sustainments are achieved when the participant has reached a specified level of earnings from employment or has reached 6 months of being in self-employment.

Benefitting Sutton

Local job starts

5,727 South London unemployed residents – **877** of them in Sutton – have had the opportunity to access the programme and make a plan to find employment.



339 participants from Sutton have started working with our help. **59%** of those using the service in Sutton come from jobless households, where inter-generational unemployment often increases the number and severity of barriers to finding work. Breaking this cycle is important to the prospects of all household members.

Generating income

The average wage for jobs started by residents in Sutton is **£10.04** and the most common contracted hours are **40 hours** per week. We can see from our data that **149** of the participants supported into work have sustained until they have earned **£3,000** in income from their job so far, with many more approaching this figure soon. This shows that the roles participants are supported to access are meaningful, secure work.

However, only 17% of Sutton participants start work earning above the London Living Wage. With the current cost of living issues facing people, we are helping participants by working with our key partners such as **Citizens Advice Bureau, Shelter** and **Beam**.

We are also running Cost of Living events for our participants where they can discuss their challenges and concerns with Sutton-based representatives from local Housing Authorities, financial wellbeing organisations, foodbanks and the Citizens Advice Bureau.



Partnerships that break down barriers

In Sutton, the top three most common health barriers participants report are mental health issues, general poor health and lifestyle and physical health issues.

Our Health and Wellbeing Advisers provide a range of in-house personal and group support that address these key barriers, including managing anxiety, stress awareness, sleeping well, mindfulness, being more physical active, understanding nutrition and mood management.

We also work in partnership with local health support organisations to complete our service. This includes **IAPT, Croydon Talking Therapies, Chiltern Clinic and Living Well CIC** - who provide our participants with a six-week programme if they have a long-term health condition, such as diabetes, arthritis, chronic pain, depression, HIV or long Covid-19. The programme helps participants learn new skills to manage their condition with a healthcare professional, meet others and share experiences and use their new skills and knowledge to improve their quality of life.

Participants also benefit from our local partnership with **The Nehemiah Project**, an independent charity with five houses in South London where male participants with a history of substance misuse can access a therapeutic programme with keyworker meetings, counselling, psychotherapy, Family Support Service, and supported attendance at AA meetings.

The other most common, non-health related barriers to work among Sutton participants are not knowing how to customise a CV, poor interview skills and a missing or poor quality CV.

We help participants overcome these issues through dedicated support from their Employment Adviser, access to CV builders and workshops, and integration with community services. This includes **South Thames College Group** and **Croydon Adult Learning and Training (CALAT)**, who complement our service with additional bespoke CV support, digital skills training and ESOL skills.

Participants in Sutton are most likely to want to work in administration, customer service or retail.

To ensure suitable job vacancies and opportunities we have our own Recruitment Managers who are responsible for the Borough of Sutton. We also liaise with the local Employment & Skills Lead from the Borough as well as **Back2Work Compete Training**, the pre-employment training provider.

“We are delighted to work with Better Working Futures. Both organisations are committed to working collaboratively and taking a person-centred approach in supporting our clients.”

Living Well

Employer relations

WH Smith

Following the success of a job fair that we held last year, we have continued to maintain a strong relationship with WHSmith, with over 17 participants now placed into their South London and Gatwick branches. Additionally, WHSmith has particularly encouraged applicants with disabilities and has been very flexible with our participants' barriers to work, including accommodating flexible working arrangements.



We recently began working with financial services company Fidelity International who have been looking for entry-level Client Service Associates to join the team in their Kingswood Office. For ease of access, a free Shuttle collects employees from Sutton Station, other South London stations, to limit the cost-of-living effects which makes them a very attractive employer for our participants. Fidelity International have been impressed by the participants we have sent them so far, with four participants having received offers of employment so far.

cardfactory

We created a strong relationship with the manager of the Sutton branches of The Card Factory after we were able to lend her support during a Seasonal Recruitment Campaign. She was keen to help residents gain or develop their retail experience for future opportunities. One of the successful applicants, who is now a permanent staff member, has just gone on maternity leave having never worked prior to starting at The Card Factory.

People's stories

Mark was referred to Better Working Futures after months of unemployment. Mark was frustrated as he wanted to work, however he has Asperger syndrome and found this to be a big barrier for him as his condition affects his communication skills. As a result, he found himself quite down and unoptimistic.

Mark had been taking part in a welding course, however he struggled to participate. Mark's Employment Adviser Josh noticed his struggles and agreed a SMART action plan with him. Together, they created a CV targeted towards working in the automotive trade as Mark has expressed interest in working with cars.

Mark had several sessions with our Employability & Skills Trainer to gain confidence in his interview skills, application forms and problem solving. Mark also had some sessions with our Health Professional, who subsequently put him onto our Anxiety Management and Mood Management courses. This helped Mark with learning to relax and

reflect before reacting and he has since said that he feels much more in control of his mental health.

Mark's Employment Adviser worked with our Recruitment Managers who found a vacancy for a Valet with Assured Group. Mick, one of our Employment Support Officers, accompanied Mark to the interview, and Mark was offered the job on the spot! Mick then met with the company's HR representative and Mark's new line manager to agree upon the adjustments that Mark would need to do his job.

Mick accompanied Mark to work for the first week to make sure that he could manage his workload and that he integrated into his team. Mick even went shopping with Mark to help him choose some clothes for his new job. We still speak with Mark's employer weekly to ensure that he is managing at work, and we are pleased to say Mark is still employed at the same location and is loving his job.

Emma joined the Better Working Futures service due to being out of work with poor mental health. Her Employment Adviser Jackie explained the kind of support she could receive to get her back into work. Emma was regularly informed about the workshops and courses available to her, and she happily took part in several, including Confidence Building, an online Mindfulness workshop, Anxiety Management, Transferable Skills, and an accredited course in Problem Solving at Work.

Emma also had access to our online platform which has sections to help prepare for work, build your CV, identify your skills and strengths, and prepare for interviews.

Emma said: **"My adviser Jackie helped me look for any suitable jobs regularly but without pressure, always being understanding and gently encouraging. She helped to build my confidence along with the workshops and courses and made me excited to get back into work.**

"Thanks to the programme I was helped to find a new job, which has completely turned my life around. My mental health has improved greatly, and I am now excited about my future career. I'm incredibly thankful I had access to such support and would highly recommend the programme to anyone that needs help."

better
working
futures
WORK AND HEALTH PROGRAMME

