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THE IMPACT OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION PRACTICE IN THE HOUSING SECTOR

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CONTENTS	PAGE NO.
1 ABOUT THIS REPORT	7
2 THE POLICY CONTEXT	8
2.1 Housing associations and social value	8
2.2 The current policy landscape and social value in housing associations	8
2.3 EDI welfare reform and housing associations	9
2.4 Measuring social value in housing	10
2.4.1 Social Return on Investment	10
2.4.2 HACT Value Bank and Calculator	10
2.5 Our approach to measuring the impact of equality, diversity and inclusion	11
3 PLACES FOR PEOPLE	13
3.1 Places for People and equality, diversity and inclusion	13
3.2 Places for People Scotland Care and Support- Horizons Service: supporting young people	14
3.2.1 What does Horizons do?	14
3.2.2 Why is it important to have EDI programmes for vulnerable young people?	14
3.3 Understanding the social and economic impact of Horizons	15
3.3.1 What social value outcomes are there for young people?	18
3.3.2 How does Horizons' work with young people create knock-on benefits for other stakeholders?	19
3.4 Putting a price on the economic value of Horizons	20
3.5 Challenges and barriers	23
3.6 Summary of Places for People case study	23
4 AKSA	24
4.1 Aksa and equality, diversity and inclusion	24
4.2 Aksa and the Stepping into Work programme	24
4.2.1 What does Stepping into Work do?	24
4.2.2 Why it is important to have EDI programmes for BME women?	24
4.3 Understanding the social and economic impact of Stepping into Work	25
4.4 Putting a price on the economic value of the Stepping into Work programme	29
4.5 Summary of Aksa case study	30
5 CESTRIA	32
5.1 Cestria and equality, diversity and inclusion	32
5.2 Cestria and Go Figure Employment	32
5.3 Why is it important to have employment support for these groups?	33
5.4 Understanding the social and economic impact of Go Figure Employment	34
5.4.1 What are the social value outcomes for the job seekers?	36
5.4.2 How does the Go Figure Employment programme create knock on benefits for other stakeholders?	37
5.4.3 Challenges and barriers	38
5.5 Putting a price on the economic value of Go Figure Employment	38
5.5.1 Summary of the Cestria case study	40
6 WHAT DO THE FINDINGS MEAN FOR EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICE?	42
6.1 Creating social value via EDI practice	42
6.1.1 Creating an underlying culture that supports EDI is essential to delivering EDI-related social value outcomes	42
6.1.2 Understanding the specific needs and barriers of specific demographics	42
6.1.3 Articulating the wider economic and fiscal benefits of EDI practice creates a stronger case for EDI	42
6.1.4 Taking a holistic, systems approach to tackling barriers	43

6.1.5	Develop partnership approaches with wider organisations that benefit from EDI activities	43
6.1.6	Being flexible in support	43
6.1.7	Ensuring consistency of approach and personal relationships is important	43
6.2	Measuring the social value of EDI practice	43
6.2.1	Start by identifying the need for, and planning EDI activities	43
6.2.2	Engage with beneficiaries to understand outcomes	44
6.2.3	Understand linkages between different outcomes	44
6.2.4	Measure intermediate and longer-term outcomes for multi-stakeholders	44
6.2.5	Demonstrate the value of prevention	44

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

About this report

'Equality, diversity and inclusion' practice (EDI) concerns action that supports all individuals to have a chance to socially and economically participate, acknowledging and valuing the differences between people while ensuring all feel valued and included in society.

Challenging times lie ahead for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practice within the housing sector. It is no longer enough for a housing association to commit to EDI because of legislative requirements, or because it is morally the 'right thing to do'. In the current climate, where for many associations funding decisions are becoming increasingly difficult, there is increasing requirement for evidence of the impact of such activities: does investment in EDI practice provide evidence of wider social value to residents, housing associations and other key stakeholders?

The current report:

- ❑ Outlines the current policy context for housing associations and their EDI practice;
- ❑ Evaluates the social value enabled by areas of EDI practice at Places for People, Cestria Community Housing and Aksa Homes;
- ❑ Presents key learning to help support housing associations to deliver the most effective EDI practice, and key principles to measure the social value of EDI practice.

The policy context

Since the Social Value Act 2012 there has been greater emphasis on wider social, environmental and economic impacts an organisation's activities can have. As organisations that exist not just for profit, but to bring wider benefits to society, the prominence of the national social value agenda is very much in keeping with the purpose of housing associations.

However, delivering wider social value often requires investment. Recent policy reforms such as the 1% reduction in annual funding as a consequence of a reversal of the rental formula, means that many associations are finding it difficult to identify and justify this investment. The EDI activities of associations are a body of activities that are particularly vulnerable to difficult funding decisions. The legislative and regulatory imperative for EDI is diminishing, while prioritising EDI because it is 'the right thing to do' is no longer enough in the current climate. Furthermore, housing associations' business models depend on their diverse tenant base being in good social and economic circumstances. Recent welfare reforms have had detrimental impacts on large numbers of tenants, with some groups being impacted more than others. For example, cuts have been shown to disproportionately impact women on low incomes¹, black minority ethnic communities (BME)^{2 3} and those with disabilities⁴; therefore there is an even greater need for effective support to counteract the effect of these policies.

There are no specific tools for measuring the impact of EDI, but there are number of approaches for measuring social value, or elements of it, such as Social Return on Investment (SROI) or the Housing Association Charitable Trust's (HACT) Value Bank and Calculator. However, the field is still emerging, with the general consensus that any approach should have enough flexibility to provide good data, but not be too resource intensive for a given organisation's available resources.

The social value impact of Places for People, Aksa Homes and Cestria Community Housing

Using an approach to the measurement of social value that captures outcomes for all material stakeholders, we evaluated the impact of EDI projects at Places for People, Aksa Homes and Cestria Community Housing.

¹ Women's Budget Group (2015), The impact on women of July budget 2015: A budget that undermines women's security

² Sunak R et al (2014), A Portrait of Modern Britain, Policy Exchange

³ Shelter (2015) Who will be hit if the benefit cap is lowered?

⁴ Kaye A et al (2012), The Tipping Point: The Human and Economic Costs of Cutting Disabled People's Support, Hardest Hit coalition

Places for People

Places for People is one of the largest neighbourhood and property development companies in the UK, managing 143,000 homes and supporting a number of other ventures, such as leisure and care facilities. Places for People shows a cross-organisational commitment to EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion), both in terms of their internal operations, and how they work with the customers that live in the property that they manage, or access the wider services that they provide.

Places for People Care and Support Scotland is a company that provides support services for groups of individuals that are more likely to be disadvantaged than the general population. The company's Horizons service provide support for vulnerable young people, including care leavers. Providing support for vulnerable young people is important as they are more likely to face long-term issues around social and economic exclusion due to their past. Young care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group, as 62% of children in care are placed within the system due to abuse or neglect⁵. Furthermore, in 2013-14, 41% of 19 year old care leavers were not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared with 15% for all 19-year-olds⁶.

The social value created by the Horizon service

The survey and interviews that were conducted with young people, staff and wider stakeholders revealed a number of social value outcomes that there was current evidence of, or that were likely to occur in the future, as a consequence of the Horizon programme. These outcomes were:

- ❑ For young people accessing the service, increased self-esteem, improved skills, improved financial situation, more secure living conditions, more positive social ties, better relationships with wider community, improved health, and increased independence and control.
- ❑ There were a number of wider stakeholders who could experience knock-on outcomes as a consequence of the outcomes experienced by the young people:
 - For the wider community, the community could become a more positive place;
 - For staff, seeing the young people's circumstances improve could lead to job satisfaction;
 - For the housing provider, the increased independence of the young people could mean avoided rent arrears, avoided repair costs and avoided void costs.
- ❑ Finally, for wider public services, there could be a reduction or avoided use of health and social services, an increase in tax taken, and a reduction in benefits paid from the young person gaining employment, and in the long-term, potentially avoided criminal justice costs.

Based on the story of Callum, one of the young people engaged as part of the research, it was estimated that there are likely to be £12,387 of fiscal and economic benefits for the housing provider and wider public services, compared to the estimated £2,228 it costs to support Callum.

It is important to recognise that due to the vulnerable nature of the young people engaged with Horizons service, not all young people will achieve meaningful outcomes, and support is required for the long-term. However, with this considered, it is impressive that most of the young people engaged for this work had made positive progression during their time with Horizons.

Aksa Homes

Originally known as Oldham Muslim Association, Aksa Homes is part of the New Charter Group. The services delivered are tailored support programmes for specific communities, which are designed to enable vulnerable residents to become more economically active and independent.

Aksa's Stepping into Work programme offers personalised support to help tenants build their skills, find employment, training or a higher quality job. Whilst it is accessible to all tenants, it is primarily aimed at addressing the unique economic challenges and cultural barriers facing women and young people from BME communities. Over 80% of Aksa's tenants are from BME backgrounds, and these communities generally have lower economic activity rates, higher unemployment and lower levels of full-time workers than the White population⁷. BME groups are also likely to face a number of multiple and complex challenges in gaining entry to the jobs market, such as language barriers⁸ or as is the case with the current programme beneficiaries, have little or no experience of previous employment.

⁵ Department for Education (2015) Care leavers' transition to adulthood

⁶ Department for Education, *ibid*

⁷ Source: Policy Exchange, A Portrait of Modern Britain, May 2014

⁸ Source: Aksa, Stepping Into Work programme Summary overview

The social value created by Stepping into Work

The engagement with many of the BME women that are currently and have previously accessed Akxa's employment service revealed a number of positive outcomes from engaging with the programmes. As with Horizons, these outcomes could lead to a number of 'knock-on' positive outcomes for wider stakeholders:

- ❑ For the women engaging with Stepping into Work, the social value outcomes were increased self-esteem, improved employability skills, reduced social isolation, improved language skills, gaining employment, improved physical and mental health, better relationships with the community and increased independence and skills.
- ❑ Like with Horizons, Stepping into Work staff explained that there were a number of likely knock-on outcomes for other stakeholders:
 - For the wider community, a more positive community;
 - For staff, a sense of job satisfaction;
 - For the housing provider, avoided rent arrears, avoided repair costs and reduced use of wider services;
 - For wider public services, reduction and avoided use of social and health services, and an increase in tax taken and reduction in benefits paid should an individual gain work.

Based on the experiences of Nita, one of the women accessing Stepping into Work, it was estimated that £12,043 of financial benefits would be experienced by Akxa Homes and wider public services, compared to an estimated £444 cost to support Nita.

There can be little doubt that given the number of barriers that the women face, progressing into employment is a long-term and resource intensive process. However, the women achieved a number of outcomes beyond employability-related outcomes, such as reduced social isolation, that are of real value to them personally and to wider society. All the women we spoke to had experienced positive change since they first engaged with the programme.

Cestria Community Housing

Cestria Community Housing are a housing association based in County Durham that own and manage around 4,200 homes across Chester-le-Street and surrounding villages. Cestria view their commitment to EDI as fundamental to their belief that customers should be at the heart of everything that the organisation does. Engaging with and responding to customers effectively requires a deep appreciation of EDI issues, given the diverse demographics of Cestria residents, particularly in terms of characteristics such as age and disability.

Go Figure Employment is a service provided for community members who are a long way from the labour market. It offers tailored one-on-one support for individuals as well as job clubs. Cestria have noted that a high proportion of those accessing Go Figure employment are over 50 years old and/or have low-lying mental health issues. Both these groups experience a greater number of barriers to employment than the general population. Almost half (47.2%) of unemployed 50-64 year olds are classed as long-term unemployed, compared with 31.6% of 16-49 year olds⁹. A 2001 study found that only 37% of employers would take on an employee with mental ill health compared to 62% who said they would employ someone who was physically disabled, and 88% who would employ a lone parent¹⁰.

The social value created by Go Figure Employment

The bullet point below summarise the social value outcomes that were evidenced via engagement and surveys with people accessing Go Figure Employment, as well as via engagement with Cestria staff and other stakeholders:

- ❑ For the job seekers, improved employability, fewer practical barriers to employment, improved support network, improved financial situation, increased self-esteem, increased optimism, increased motivation improved health, and increased independence and control.

⁹ Saga (2015) Saga employment report for February 2015 available to download from <http://www.saga.co.uk/newsroom/press-releases/2015/feb/almost-half-of-the-long-term-unemployed-are-aged-over-50.aspx>

¹⁰ Department for Work and Pensions (2001) cited by See Me (n.d.) Stigma and discrimination in employment. Retrieved from <https://www.seemescotland.org/>

- ❑ There were a number of knock on outcomes for wider stakeholders that could result from the outcomes experienced by jobseekers:
 - For the **jobseekers' families**, a **more positive home life**;
 - The **staff**, like at Places for People and Cestria, experienced high levels of **job satisfaction** from supporting the jobseekers;
 - For the **housing provider**, a potential **avoided rents arrears** and **avoided void costs**;
 - For **wider public services**, similar to the other two case studies, there was potential **reduction in use of social and health services**, and an **increase in tax taken and reduction in benefits paid**.

Based on the experiences of David, we estimated that Cestria and wider public services are likely to experience £22,000 worth of fiscal benefits, compared to the estimated £211 it cost to support him.

Before being able to gain employment, it is essential that many of the 'softer' barriers that the jobseekers face to accessing opportunities, such as negative self-perception and low motivation are first overcome. Because of this, the journey to employment may take longer than for someone who has spent less time away from the job market. Furthermore, statistical data and on-the-ground testimony indicates that there are few jobs available in the area compared to elsewhere in the UK. In this difficult context, Go Figure Employment is highly effective at moving jobseekers closer to or into employment.

What do the findings mean for EDI practice and evaluation?

The findings from the case studies indicate that the EDI initiatives have enabled social value outcomes. As would be expected all the case study services experienced challenges in supporting individuals, nevertheless, the testimony and survey results from individuals accessing the services was almost entirely positive.

Based on the findings of the report, the bullet points below summarise key lessons for the delivery and social value evaluation of EDI activities by housing associations.

EDI practice:

- ❑ Developing an underlying organisational culture that supports EDI is essential to delivering EDI-related social value outcomes;
- ❑ It is important to understand the specific needs and barriers that certain demographics may face in order for an EDI intervention to be fully beneficial;
- ❑ It is important to be able to articulate the potential wider and fiscal benefits of EDI practice in order to create a strong case for EDI intervention;
- ❑ A holistic, system-wide approach to tackling barriers is the best way to ensure the maximum possible social value outcomes;
- ❑ Partnership approaches with wider organisations that benefit from the EDI activities of housing associations may an appreciation of these shared benefits, and a collective approach to EDI in reflection of this;
- ❑ While some issues are more common amongst particular demographic groups, it is important to be flexible and still tailor the service for each individual;
- ❑ Consistency of approach and space to develop long-term quality relationships with staff is important.

EDI evaluation:

- ❑ Planning for social value in partnership with beneficiaries is the most effective way of ensuring that when it comes to measuring social value you will have achieved the best possible outcomes;
- ❑ During evaluation, the best way of understanding the outcomes that have been achieved is via engaging with beneficiaries. Many of the outcomes named by beneficiaries are unlikely to be identified without this engagement;
- ❑ Understanding and articulating the causal pathways between outcomes is fundamental, particularly when outcomes of less strategic importance, such as 'improved self-esteem' are necessary intermediary outcomes towards the achievement of longer-term outcomes;
- ❑ It is important to measure intermediate outcomes, as well as longer goals, in order to ascertain whether progress is being made where ultimate goals have not yet been achieved;
- ❑ Many EDI initiatives intend to minimise the likelihood of negative outcomes such as homelessness or empty housing charges. Preventative initiatives can be hard to evidence, but it is important that organisations develop approaches to do so otherwise the value of EDI will be undervalued. The research presented in this report presents ideas for valuing prevention that can act as guidance.

1 ABOUT THIS REPORT

Housing Diversity Network (HDN) is a not-for-profit organisation working primarily with the housing sector to inspire and empower people, promoting equality, diversity and opportunity for all. HDN has a large number of housing association members to which it offers a range of equality, diversity and inclusion-related support, including a staff mentoring programme. Places for People, Cestria Community Housing and Aksa Homes are all members of HDN, and all have a strong emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion that spans their entire organisation.

HDN, Places for Peoples, Cestria and Aksa are all united in their recognition of the challenging times that lie ahead for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practice within the housing sector. It is no longer enough for a housing association to commit to EDI because of legislative requirements, or because it is morally the 'right thing to do'. In the current climate, where for many associations funding decisions are becoming increasingly difficult, there is increasing requirement to evidence the impact of such activities: does investment in EDI practice provide value for money, for residents, housing associations and other wider stakeholders?

With this considered, the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) have been working in partnership with these four organisations to further the evidence base on the impact of EDI activities taking place within the social housing sector. The current report:

- ❑ First outlines the existing policy context for housing associations and their EDI practice, focusing on developments such as the Social Value Act and the impact of austerity on different demographics; as well as existing social value measurement approaches typically utilised by the sector;
- ❑ 'Deep-dives' key areas of the three housing associations' practice to further understand the impact of EDI practice. These 'deep-dives' are complemented by two 'at-a-glance' reviews of EDI practice in two other organisations;
- ❑ Closes with key learning for EDI practice and evaluation, with concluding thoughts on whether investing in EDI practice can be considered 'value for money' for social housing providers.

2 THE POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Housing associations and social value

There is no question that housing associations operate a unique business model within the UK. In many ways they can be considered highly successful social enterprises: businesses that exist not just for profit, but that by definition have an inherent duty to bring wider benefits to society. Thus by definition, the purpose of housing associations is very much in line with the national 'social value' agenda. Social value refers to the wider social, economic and environmental impacts that an organisations activities can have, beyond immediate business benefits, such as increased profits. The term has been long-recognised in related concepts such as 'social impact measurement' in the charity sector, and 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) in the private sector. However, social value gained further prominence with passing of the Social Value Act 2012¹¹, which requires all public bodies, including housing associations, to consider how the goods and services that they buy could create wider value in society.

How housing associations interpret their wider 'social value' purpose varies substantially. All associations are required to provide social housing at an affordable cost that is below market price, and for many fulfilling this requirement is how they demonstrate their commitment to social value: providing rented housing at a cost that makes having a home feasible to those who would otherwise struggle. However, many housing associations have gone further in how they interpret their social mission. For these organisations, being a not-for-profit naturally means being 'for-social-good'. Within this, there is often a particular emphasis on being a 'good' landlord and a 'good' employer, by offering a level of support and benefits greater than that could be otherwise expected. For tenants, this could include employment support advice and community-based activities, while for staff this could include reasonable pay and good terms and conditions of employment.

2.2 The current policy landscape and social value in housing associations

While striving to deliver wider benefits for staff, residents and wider stakeholder is undoubtedly 'the right thing to do', it often requires additional investment, or external funding, to be identified by the housing association. Recent housing policy reforms have made it more difficult for many housing associations to justify such investment. The reversal of the rental formula, which currently allows housing associations to raise rents in line with the consumer price index (CPI) (forming a significant part of their investment profile), has resulted in a 1% cut to housing association's annual funding. Furthermore, the introduction of the recent Right to Buy scheme has further reduced housing associations' abilities to replace and or expand their stock, and manage their loan agreements due to the reduction in rent funding. In some cases this threatens the sustainability of their overall business model, with implications for how housing associations realise their wider social purpose. It is important therefore that the justification of investment in 'social good' moves beyond being just 'the right thing to do' to a clearer understanding of the value they bring to individuals and wider society. Moreover, in the current climate housing associations are becoming particularly interested in the direct business benefits that 'doing the right thing' can enable; many are considering whether it makes business sense to invest in wider 'social value' activities?

The equality, diversity and inclusion practices (EDI) of housing associations are a body of activities that are particularly vulnerable to difficult funding and investment decisions. EDI concerns action that supports all individuals to have a chance to socially and economically participate, acknowledging and valuing the differences between people while ensuring all feel valued and included in society. However, while the monitoring of equality and diversity metrics, such as the demographics of Boards or staff, is becoming more commonplace, there has been little exploration of the impact and outcomes of good EDI practice within housing, despite the linkages to the social value agenda.

There has always been a legal and regulatory imperative to prioritise EDI. Legislation like the Equality Act 2010 and accompanying Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. The duty applies to housing providers

¹¹ The full name for this act is Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

when they are conducting public functions¹². The consumer standards provided by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) include a Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard which specifically references a requirement to understand the diversity and different needs of their tenants¹³. However, standards such as these are no longer enforced directly by the HCA, with the duty now falling to councillors and boards.

With the above considered, it could be argued that the legal case for EDI within housing is diminishing, with the influence of the moral case no longer enough in the current climate. As such, it is becoming ever-more urgent to begin to consider the actual consequences and benefits that EDI practice brings for individuals, housing providers, and wider groups and stakeholders.

2.3 EDI welfare reform and housing associations

Issues of EDI are naturally of greater concern to housing associations compared to other, more typical business models. This is not just because of their social mission, but also because their business model depends on their diverse, and sometimes socially and economically excluded tenant base, being in good social and economic circumstances. Over recent years, it has become clear that the parts of the population that are more commonly the focus of EDI activity are more likely to be affected by changes brought about by welfare reform.

Reforms such as the 'Bedroom Tax', the benefits cap, and proposed cuts to housing benefit for young people have been found to disproportionately affect certain groups. For example the extension of the benefit cap, which places a cap on the amount of benefits a household is entitled to claim, has resulted in low income households facing a shortfall of £50 a week in more than one in six of England's 152 housing districts, while disproportionately impacting single parent and large families¹⁴. As a result the cap is more likely to impact women and black minority ethnic (BME) groups who are overly represented within such groups¹⁵ ¹⁶. BME communities are, on the whole, more likely to be overrepresented in vulnerable groups; all BME communities display higher levels of unemployment and lower level of full-time workers than the white British community, and as such are more likely to be affected by changes to tax credits and the introduction of the benefit cap¹⁷.

Disabled individuals have also been affected by the closure of the Independent Living Fund and cuts to Personal Independence Payments¹⁸. For people with severe disabilities, the combination of cuts in benefits and services means an average annual loss of £8,832 per person in benefits, 19 times more than the burden placed on most other citizens¹⁹. Women and families are also severely impacted by recent cuts, as the £13bn of cuts in social security spending by 2020/21 will disproportionately hit families and women on low incomes, regardless of the rise in the minimum wage²⁰.

The combination of such reforms are therefore likely to result in an increasing number of tenants and protected groups across the country being unable to afford their rent, leading to an increased risk of homelessness and reduced spending on household essentials, particularly food and utility bills. This in turn may have serious mental and physical health implications for tenants²¹. Such indirect impacts are likely to result in increased service demand, increased service delivery costs and a loss of income for housing associations due to rent arrears and unstable or vacant tenancies. Combined with the 1% rent cut and Right to Buy reforms, associations are therefore facing a policy context which poses both direct and indirect challenges to their financial sustainability.

¹² For guidance on this Duty and what is meant for housing associations see Chartered Institute for Housing/Places for People (2013) How to undertake an equality analysis. http://www.cih.org/publication-free/display/vpathDCR/templatedata/cih/publication-free/data/How_to%2520undertake_an_equality_analysis

¹³ Homes and Communities Agency (2012) Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. April 2012. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422709/Tenant_I_and_E_Standard_2015.pdf

¹⁴ Shelter (2015) Who will be hit if the benefit cap is lowered?

¹⁵ Sunak R et al (2014), A Portrait of Modern Britain, Policy Exchange

¹⁶ Shelter (2015) Who will be hit if the benefit cap is lowered?

¹⁷ Sunak R et al (2014), A Portrait of Modern Britain, Policy Exchange

¹⁸ Kaye A et al (2012), The Tipping Point: The Human and Economic Costs of Cutting Disabled People's Support, Hardest Hit coalition

¹⁹ Duffy S (2013), A fair society? How the cuts target disabled people

²⁰ Women's Budget Group (2015), The impact on women of July budget 2015: A budget that undermines women's security

²¹ Power A (2014), The Impact of Welfare Reform on Social Landlords and Tenants, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

2.4 Measuring social value in housing

With the above considered, it is clear that greater evidence on the impact of equality, diversity and inclusion practice is required. Although there are no specific tools for measuring the impact of EDI practice, there are a large number of approaches for measuring social value or elements of it, some of which are regularly utilised within the housing sector. The field of social value measurement is relatively new, and as such there are no universally recognised principles or approach for measurement, and the approaches available all have pros and cons. Two of the most commonly used approaches are Social Return on Investment (SROI)^{22 23} and the Housing Association Charitable Trust's (HACT) Value Bank and Calculator²⁴.

2.4.1 Social Return on Investment

Social Return on Investment is an adjusted form of cost benefit analysis (CBA) that captures the economic, social and environmental values of an intervention. What exactly is measured and valued in SROI depends on the specific intervention and the outcomes that have been or are intended to be achieved, but all SROI assessments are expected to be guided by the same set of underlying principles:

- 1) Involve stakeholders
- 2) Understand what changes
- 3) Value the things that matter
- 4) Only include what is material
- 5) Do not over-claim
- 6) Be transparent
- 7) Verify the result

A SROI approach is often regarded as the 'gold standard' of social value evaluation, given that for the most part, the methodology contains a level of rigour while still ensuring a level of flexibility. This means that the approach can be conducted in a manner which ensures that it is able to measure the outcomes that directly relate to a specific project. Furthermore, approaches by the G8, OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and the European Commission have endorsed the SROI principles over a more rigid approach, offering an opportunity for some degree of standardisation around social value measurement²⁵. However, there are some elements of SROI that are problematic. One of the most notable is the length of time and duration that an SROI evaluation typically takes to complete, meaning that for many organisations it is not a feasible option.

2.4.2 HACT Value Bank and Calculator

The HACT approach is often considered a tool for assessing social value and within the housing sector is often communicated in this way. However, while some of the values in the model are influenced by economic (or environmental) processes, for example, gaining 'full time employment', the values themselves reflect only the consequences of these processes on people's wellbeing, not economic or environmental outcomes that could result from the same process. In the case of 'full time employment' for example, this could mean economic outcomes such as 'improved financial situation' or 'decreased in benefit payments' are not accounted for. The approach assigns monetary values to different social outcomes or activities that were developed using the following method:

- ❑ Analysis conducted on responses to Government surveys that contain questions on personal wellbeing, salary and other aspects of an individual's life, for example, whether or not they are in good overall health;
- ❑ Using good overall health as an example the analysis looked at the relationship between these variables to calculate the extent to which having good health/not having good health influences the level of personal wellbeing, which in this case we could imagine is 7%;

²² SROI Network (now Social Value UK) (2012) A Guide to Social Return on Investment. <http://socialvalueuk.org/what-is-sroi/the-sroi-guide>

²³ For example of how Trafford Housing Association have applied SROI within their organisation see <http://socialvalueuk.org/blog/506-new-sroi-case-study-trafford-housing-trust>

²⁴ HACT (2014) Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment: A guide to using the wellbeing valuation approach. <http://www.hact.org.uk/measuring-social-impact-community-investment-guide-using-wellbeing-valuation-approach>

²⁵ Tomlins, R. (2015) Social value today: current public and private thinking on social value. House Mark/Cohesia. <http://www.housemarkinnovation.io/news/innovation-insight/thought-leadership/social-value-today-current-public-and-private-thinking-on-social-value>

- The researchers also alongside this looked at the relationship between wellbeing and salary, which meant that they were able to calculate the increase in salary that an individual would need to achieve the same 7% increase in wellbeing (in this case the figure is £20,141). This salary increase is then said to be the 'social value' of having good overall health.

Although the HACT model does not factor in any economic outcomes of interventions for individuals, housing associations or wider stakeholders, the consistency in valuation approach is a big 'plus' for HACT. Furthermore, while the analysis results produced by the HACT model may lack the some of the insight required to enable an organisation to understand how to improve on social value in the future, the tool is much less time consuming than SROI, so many organisations have found it useful where they have had limited resources.

Alongside these two commonly used approaches, there are a large number of different approaches to measuring social value, and the field is constantly developing. For example, new guidelines from the UK wide Inspiring Impact²⁶ collaboration are expected to be released in the near future.

2.5 Our approach to measuring the impact of equality, diversity and inclusion

Despite the continuously developing nature of social impact measurement, the key principles that underlie SROI are recognised to be an excellent basis for the assessment of social value. Furthermore, CLES' on-the-ground work assessing social value with a range of different organisations, including housing associations, has led us to recognise that social value measurement also needs to balance the characteristics laid out in Table 1:

Table 1: Social value method considerations

Simple, nationally-recognised metrics that are recognised by commissioners and other external funders and decision makers	Balanced with	Project-specific measures that more accurately reflect the impact of an individual programme
Measures that prove what has been achieved to date		Measures that help an organisation improve what it does and make strategic decisions that enable them to have even greater impact in the future
Numbers and statistics that summarise impact on a large number of individuals		Personal, human stories of different individuals' stories of their engagement with the project or organisation
Comprehensive, detailed, and robust information on the impact of the organisation		Easily administered, resource-light monitoring and evaluation tools

To reflect these considerations, we adopted the following methods to understand the social value created for projects delivered by Places for People, Aksa Homes and Cestria:

- 1) Interviews with beneficiaries, staff and other stakeholders involved in each of the projects to understand the outcomes that each project was achieving, or aimed to achieve.
- 2) We then constructed a Theory of Change, which demonstrated the linkages between the outcomes achieved by beneficiaries, and how this linked to 'knock on' outcomes for other stakeholder groups, such as the housing associations themselves, and wider public services.
- 3) For Places for People and Cestria, we then designed and distributed surveys²⁷ to beneficiaries. The surveys contained closed questions that were based on the outcomes identified in stage one, and enabled us to capture the extent to which outcomes had been achieved. There were also open questions that provided information on what exactly about the intervention had

²⁶ Inspiring Impact is a collaboration coordinated by New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) that aims to make good quality impact evaluation the norm for social enterprise and charities by 2022. See

²⁷ All surveys and interview schedules are available on request

- enabled the change to occur. Some of the questions were from national surveys, with others being developed to specifically reflect the project in question.
- 4) Finally, we took the story of one beneficiary of each project and calculated the potential business and wider economic benefits of supporting them. The stories that were selected were compelling 'good news' stories, that demonstrated the potential of each EDI activity.

3 PLACES FOR PEOPLE

3.1 Places for People and equality, diversity and inclusion

Places for People is one of the largest neighbourhood and property development companies in the UK, managing 143,000 homes and supporting a number of other ventures, such as leisure and care facilities. Places for People shows a cross-organisational commitment to EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion), both in terms of their internal operations, and how they work with the customers that live in the property that they manage, or access the wider services that they provide. To support their commitment to EDI, Places for People have a specific team dedicated to mainstreaming EDI. There is a focus on fostering a cross-organisational culture that recognises the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion for both staff and residents and how this contributes to bottom-line performance.

Places for People view prioritising EDI as not just a moral imperative, but as something that makes business sense: their customers are diverse and it is important that their staff reflect, respect and value that diversity. The range of different perspectives that the diversity brings to the business is seen as particularly beneficial.

For staff, the EDI team oversee a wide-ranging strategic approach that brings together a large number of initiatives that aim to support a diverse and inclusive workforce. Initiatives include mentoring and coaching programmes for those from diverse backgrounds, and an equalities champion network of 25 individuals that promotes EDI across the business. The team works closely with other staff and departments that have service improvement and quality assurance functions to map out the linkages between different initiatives. Such teams include those responsible for employee wellbeing and embedding the organisation's SPIRIT values throughout the business (Support, Positive, Integrity, Respect, Innovative and Together), given the complementary nature of these responsibilities, EDI is a natural component of many of these values.

Beyond their work with staff, Places for People also focus on initiatives that support and celebrate EDI among their customers, with a number of interventions focused on the sections of their tenant base that may be particularly vulnerable or excluded. Such work includes activity with refugee populations, and residents that have experienced domestic violence. There are also initiatives across Places for People that focus on specific issues that have the potential to impact all residents, such as digital inclusion, fuel poverty, and food poverty.

The case study below focuses on one aspect of Places for People's EDI work with customers: provision for vulnerable young people in Scotland, many of them care leavers, who are supported towards practical and emotional independence.

About Places for People's SPIRIT values and equality, diversity and inclusion

Our research suggests that ensuring a strong, positive organisational culture has been fundamental to achieving an enthusiasm for equality, diversity and inclusion across Places for People staff. The organisation's SPIRIT values are a strong driver of the positive organisational culture and these comprise the following:

- Support** - always there to help customers and colleagues
- Positive** - a 'can do' attitude; encourages others to achieve
- Integrity** - always delivers on promises; is open and honest
- Respect** - treats people fairly and with understanding
- Innovative** - open to new ideas; not afraid of failure
- Together** - believes more can be achieved by working well with others

The SPIRIT values were developed via focus groups with staff at all levels of the organisation. There was not a 'big launch' of SPIRIT values, instead over time interviewees reported to us they were gradually introduced into day-to-day language and Places for People's staff documents, such as appraisal forms and induction material.

'Our Investors in People assessor said he'd never been to an organisation where the values were so well embedded.'

The SPIRIT acronym enabled the underlying values to become part of everyday language.

'We talk about SPIRITed behaviour. If someone's actions are seen as inappropriate another colleague will say "actually, that isn't very SPIRITed, is it?'"

Because of the ingrained nature of the SPIRIT values and high profile of EDI across Places for People, there was reported to be little need to draw attention to specific issues.

'It just happens; it's part of the culture.'

Respect for diversity was reported to not just be a concept that applies to individual demographics, but also the diversity of different areas of the Places for People business, and the value that this diversity brings to the organisation.

The emphasis on SPIRIT values and EDI was reported to bring a number of valuable human resource benefits, such as attracting and retaining talent.

3.2 Places for People Scotland Care and Support- Horizons Service: supporting young people

3.2.1 What does Horizons do?

Places for People Scotland Care & Support is a company that provides support services for groups of individuals that are more likely to be disadvantaged than the general population, such as people with learning and physical disabilities, those experiencing mental ill health, and older people.

The case study below evaluates one element of what Places for People Scotland Care & Support offers: support for vulnerable young people. Horizons provides supported accommodation and a visiting support service to young people in Edinburgh aged 16 to 25. The service is designed to support young people who have experienced a history of care within social work, have experienced homelessness, or mental health issues. There are 25 properties that can be allocated to young people, with the service also able to provide support for young people with their own tenancies. Within the Horizons service is specific provision for young care leavers, with seven out of the 25 properties specifically for this group, although the young people accessing the other properties could also have a history of care. Young people are supported in this service for a maximum of two years.

Horizons aims to deliver a support service designed to help the young people in every aspect of their lives, such as building and maintaining relationships, budgeting, managing a home, and entering education and employment. To complement access to accommodation, activities include group sessions on topics such as self-development, and workshops for developing independent living skills such as cooking.

3.2.2 Why is it important to have EDI programmes for vulnerable young people?

Places for People Scotland Care & Support have developed Horizons' services in recognition that vulnerable young people are more likely to face long-term issues around social and economic exclusion due to their history. Young care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group, as 62% of children in care are placed within the system due to abuse or neglect²⁸.

Naturally this can have a significant and lasting impact on the mental health and emotional well-being of young people in care. As a result young care leavers are much more likely to experience a number of poorer social outcomes, such as homelessness, criminal convictions, teenage pregnancy, and poor educational and employment outcomes. For example in 2013-14, 41% of 19 year old care leavers were not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared with 15% for all 19-year-olds²⁹. In 2014, 22% of female care leavers became teenage parents. Research also indicates that 27% of the adult prison population has once been in care³⁰. Young care leavers are also much more likely to lack independent living skills, as they are more likely to live independently at a younger age than their peers. For example in 2013-14, 33% of young people aged 16 or over that left care did so before their

²⁸ Department for Education (2015) Care leavers' transition to adulthood

²⁹ Department for Education, *ibid*

³⁰ Social Exclusion Unit (2002) Reducing offending by ex-prisoners. SEU: London

18th birthday³¹. As a result of such challenges young care leavers are therefore much more likely to need a higher level of support than the 'typical' young person as they prepare to enter adulthood.

Homelessness can have similar negative impacts on young people as time in care. Centrepoin, the young person's homelessness charity finds that homeless young people experience more barriers to work, and are more likely to turn to crime and/or be in high levels of debt. Research conducted by the charity found that 82% of young people who access Centrepoin are in debt³². Similarly, poor mental health, another factor common in young people accessing Horizons, is associated with poor socio-economic circumstances over time, as described in a male cohort study by Tiffin, Pearce and Parker³³.

The demand for support such as that offered by Horizons is increasing due to a multitude of factors, for example increases in the number of young people leaving care. In total 10,310 young people aged over 16 left care during 2013-14, an increase of almost 50% since 2003-04³⁴. If care leavers are not supported to make this transition successfully, there are likely to be long-term costs associated with the difficulties the young people face. For example, it is estimated that the public finance costs of a young person registering as NEET is around £56,000 over the working lifetime of the young person³⁵.

Compounding this rise in the number of care leavers is the impact of austerity, and the likely impacts of future austerity measures on young people and their social and economic circumstances. Of particular concern is the proposed removal of housing benefit for unemployed people between the ages of 18 to 21 from April 2017³⁶. Although it is expected that there will be exemptions from this reform, such as 'vulnerable young people', it is as yet unclear how these exemption categories will be defined.

With the above considered, it is clear that preventing or reducing the likelihood of such negative outcomes and life journeys is therefore crucially important, not only for the young people, but also for public services and society more widely.

3.3 Understanding the social and economic impact of Horizons

The evidence above demonstrates that the life journey of young people who have been in care or engaged with social services is more likely to be 'difficult' than that of the average young person. This impacts not only on the young person, but on the rest of society, given that a 'difficult' journey is likely to result in, for example, a greater need for welfare and support services.

This suggests that providing preventative support is not just the 'right thing to do', but a 'must do' for wider society. However, in order to understand whether Horizons offers value for money, it is important to begin to understand whether the theory underlying the service, that EDI intervention will lead to better outcomes, or avoid an increase in issues, is evidenced in the effectiveness of the support.

Our engagement with the young people involved in Horizons and support workers revealed that unsurprisingly, those accessing the programme's support consistently display a level of vulnerability, with some individuals requiring a particularly high level of support. This is a key feature of all EDI work within housing: while the overall tenant base of social housing does experience lower social and economic circumstances than the general population, this is particularly the case for individuals that are the focus of EDI. As such, progress is often gradual and the smaller, short-term outcomes are particularly important first steps towards the achievement of more meaningful outcomes.

Figure 1 below presents our Theory of Change for Horizons. Drawing on evidence from the interviews, surveys and existing data,³⁷ it indicates outcomes for five key stakeholder groups: the young people themselves, their housing provider, the staff supporting them, statutory services, and the wider community that are neighbours of the young person. The Theory of Change demonstrates that in

³¹ Department for Education, *ibid*

³² Centrepoin (n.d) Effects of homelessness. Webpage <http://centrepoin.org.uk/about-us/the-issue/effects-of-homelessness>

³³ Tiffin, PA; Pearce, MS; Parker, L (2005) Social mobility over the life course and self-reported mental health at age 50: prospective cohort study. *Journal of Epidemiological Community Health* 59, 870-872 <http://jech.bmj.com/content/59/10/870.full>

³⁴ Department for Education: Care leavers' transition to adulthood, 17 July 2015

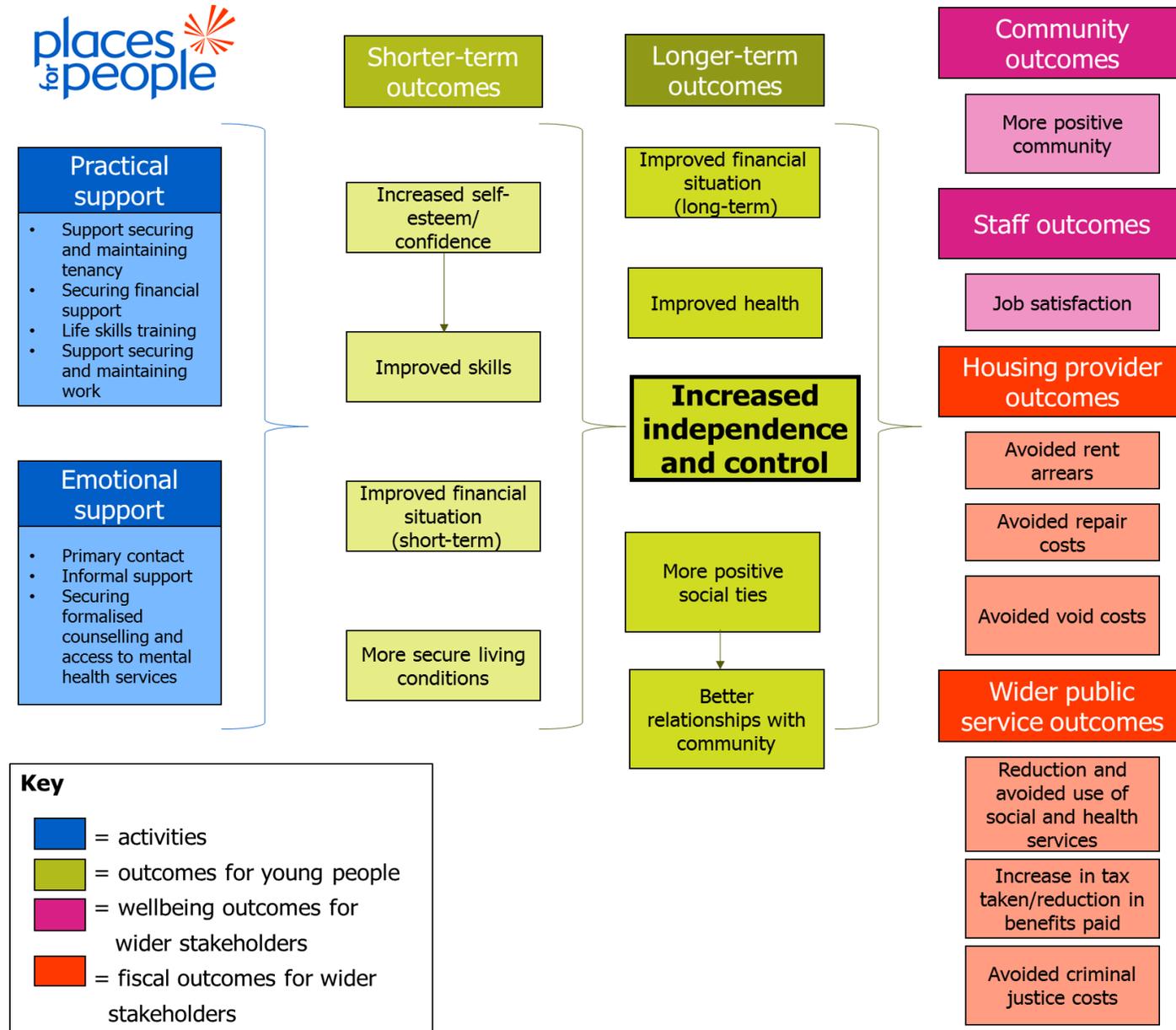
³⁵ Department for Education, *ibid*

³⁶ House of Commons Library (2015) *Housing benefit: withdrawing entitlement for 18-25 year olds*. Published 26th August 2015. <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06473>

³⁷ It should be noted that due to the difficulties engaging with this cohort the sample sizes are small. Four young people were engaged in interview, and 12 young people completed the survey. This should be considered when interpreting the findings. There are around 35 young people in total accessing the service at any one time.

order to achieve outcomes for young people, many of these outcomes often referred to as 'soft' or 'difficult to measure' are necessary to realise more long-term fiscal and economic outcomes. Below the Theory of Change, we describe how Horizons supports this to happen in more detail, evidencing this process using data from interviews and the survey. Together, this presents a picture of the social value created by Horizons: with the wider social, economic, and business benefits that emerge from providing EDI intervention for young people.

Figure 1: Places for People Scotland Care & Support Horizons' Theory of Change



3.3.1 What social value outcomes are there for young people?

Headline data from our survey shows that since their involvement with Horizons:

- 90% of respondents reported an improvement or maintenance in how good they felt about themselves, with the remainder reporting a reduction in their confidence;
- 83% of survey respondents reported an improvement or maintenance of their current financial situation, with the rest reporting that things have got worse;
- 66% of survey respondents reported feeling they had more of the skills and qualifications they needed to do what they wanted to in life;
- 64% of survey respondents indicated they felt they were more independent, with the remainder reporting no change.

Although, the survey findings are positive overall, it is essential not to disregard that some young people reported negative change since their involvement with Horizons. However, it is important to note that for the most part this negative change will not be the result of the actions of Horizons, but instead the consequence of external influences on the young person's life.

For the young people that experienced positive change as a result of their engagement with Horizons, the survey showed that they attributed between 25% and 75% of this improvement directly to the programme.

Both the **practical and emotional support** offered by the Horizons programme were valued by the young person, and were essential to the achievement of a number of social value outcomes. On the whole, young people reported that the support offered was tailored and adaptive, and interviews with staff revealed that there was clear boundary setting. These *ways* in which the service was delivered were as important as *what* was delivered.

The exact impact of Horizons on a young person will undoubtedly vary depending on the individual. For example, Horizons staff reported that some individuals were able to take on tenancies more readily than others, and needed a lower level of intervention and support from the service as a result. Staff noted that these individuals tended to join Horizons with an existing familiar support network, which aided the achievement of social value outcomes. However despite the presence or absence of wider enabling factors, the care leavers experienced a number of common outcomes as a result of the support of Horizons.

In terms of the practical support offered by Horizons, support in **securing and maintaining a tenancy** was particularly fundamental, which is unsurprising given the unstable housing arrangements experienced by many of the young people before their engagement with Horizons.

'Horizons have helped me get my flat and stay in work. They have helped me with problems with my flat when I've been unsure.' – young person

Alongside the support with housing, other practical support offered by staff included advice around identifying and **securing financial support** such as grants for furniture or clothes; **life skills training** such as cooking; and support with employability, and **securing, and maintaining employment**.

In terms of emotional support, Horizons key workers acted as a **primary contact** and a source of reliable and trustworthy emotional support. They offered **informal support** in the form of a listening ear and gentle advice and encouragement, as well as **securing formalised counselling and access to mental health services**.

'The staff have encouraged me to engage in situations that I wouldn't normally.' – young person

Combined, the practical and emotional support enabled a number of social value outcomes for the young people. Of all the social value outcomes enabled, **increased self-esteem/confidence** appears to be a 'lynchpin' outcome, with support to feel good about themselves and more resilient being essential to the achievement of a number of other outcomes. Many of the care leavers reported that it was the support they received through their relationship with their support worker that

enabled them to gain the confidence to develop **improved skills** in areas such as cookery, and address stressful issues such as Council Tax payments. These outcomes were often achieved in the short-term, along with a potential **short-term improvement in financial situation** resulting from access to grants; and the more **secure living conditions** resulting from having a flat.

'The grant has helped a lot, life isn't really worth living if you haven't got money for clothes. But the flat was the best.' - young person

Over time, the support and early outcomes that the young person achieves could lead to more significant, long-term outcomes, such as an **improved financial situation** resulting from employment or stable benefit support and **improved health**. Some of the young people that we interviewed reported that they were better able to control who they spent time with and who was able to enter their accommodation, leading to **more positive social ties**. This in turn could contribute to **better relationships with the community**, who were more positive about the young person given fewer social disturbances. It is important to note however that these outcomes are more long-term, and there are a greater number of wider factors that could enable or prevent their achievement.

Ultimately, the attainment of these outcomes could lead the young person to achieve **increased independence and control**. At this stage, the greater autonomy the young person experiences, and the mastery over both their present life and their future direction can lead to knock-on outcomes for a number of wider stakeholders.

3.3.2 How does Horizons' work with young people create knock-on benefits for other stakeholders?

There are four key stakeholder groups that may experience outcomes as a consequence of Horizons work with young people: the wider community where the young people live, Horizons' staff, the social housing provider where the young person lives, and wider public services. For the community and Horizons' staff, these outcomes are **wellbeing or social outcomes**. For the housing provider and wider public services, the outcomes are **economic**: for the most part they are avoided costs that could result from the preventative support offered by Horizons.

Headline data from our survey shows that on the whole, there is less evidence of achievement of outcomes for wider stakeholders. This is not surprising: as the theory of change shows, outcomes for wider stakeholders are longer-term and dependent on the successful achievement of outcomes for the young people. Key statistics include:

- 60% survey respondents reported they were more in control of who they let into their property, meaning over time there can be expected to be fewer issues with the local community, or repair costs for the housing provider. However at present the data shows there has not been a reduction in the number of repairs, or the costs of these since the young people joined Horizons;
- There was little overall change in the number of young people accessing health services and wider support services, with some individuals actually reporting an increase in visits. Based on interviews with young people it can be assumed that in most cases an increase in visits is due to support from Horizons leading to greater engagement with services for pre-existing conditions, rather than a consequence of worsening health.

Local community

Once a young person is placed within a tenancy, the service endeavours to support them to integrate into the local community by encouraging them to access opportunities such as volunteering. Due to the achievement of outcomes such as more positive social ties, the community is able to benefit from the positive addition of an emotionally resilient young person.

Horizons staff report a number of instances where young people have forged positive relationships with their neighbours, for example a number of young people check in on elderly neighbours as part of their responsibility to their communities. By supporting care leavers to become more independent and improve their well-being, the service also prevents incidences of antisocial behaviour, and mismanagement of tenancies which lead to problems with neighbours. Together these influences lead to a **more positive community**.

Staff

The current Horizons' staff team is relatively new and individuals have been in post for less than six months, however the majority of support workers in the service have previously been employed within Places for People Scotland Care and Support or wider relevant local authority services. The key outcome of the Horizons' service for staff members was greater **job satisfaction** they received in their role when compared to many other jobs, which is enabled by the development of a close working relationship between young people and support workers.

All staff expressed high levels of job satisfaction, for example as support workers they were able to see tangible expressions of an individual's progress due to the scheme and their relationship with staff members. The progress of the individuals they support was central to all staff members as they felt they were able to see and *'make a difference'* to young people's lives. For many it was this visual progression and close working relationship with young care leavers, which enabled staff to *'feel confident'* that they were *'doing something valuable.'*

Places for People and other housing providers

In the case of Places for People Care and Support, staff highlighted a number of potential business benefits experienced by the organisation.

The outcomes identified by Places for People Scotland Care and Support staff were **avoided rent arrears**, as the young person achieves a better financial situation and begins to manage their money better; **avoided repairs costs** as the young people begin to gain better control over their lives and take greater care of their homes; and **avoided void costs**, due to the young person maintaining their tenancy. If a young person is unable to maintain a tenancy Castle Edinvar Housing Association (Places for People Group member) often face an empty property charge which occurs while tenants are transitioning between properties. However staff emphasise that by delivering support to ensure that the young person remains in a sustained tenancy, the service is therefore able to prevent such charges as an additional benefit resulting from the delivery of its key outcomes.

At this stage in the Theory of Change, many of the outcomes remain theoretical. This is because they are very long-term in nature, and will only occur should the young person reach a stage where they experience a meaningful improvement in the level of independence and control that they have over their life.

Wider public services

If, over time, the Horizons programme enables a large number of individuals to improve their lives, this could have material long-term benefits for wider public services.

It was reported by some of those interviewed that they had improved physical and mental health as a result of their engagement with Horizons. In part, this is likely to be due to encouragement and support from Horizons for the young people to register with their GP and Dentist, attend regular check-ups, and make more positive life choices by providing support to exercise and eat healthily, and/or reduce any smoking or drinking habits. This is reflected to some extent in the increase in use of health services recorded by some of the survey respondents. This initial increase in usage could over the life course, lead to **reduction and avoided use of social and health services**, as the young person avoids more long-term health issues and becomes less dependent on services for support. In addition, finding or maintaining employment as a result of Horizons' support will mean greater levels of **tax taken/reduction in benefits paid**. Finally, should the young person maintain more positive social ties and achieve sustainable independence and control, this could, in the long-term result in **avoided criminal justice costs**, such as police callouts or the costs associated with arrests.

3.4 Putting a price on the economic value of Horizons

In this last part of the assessment of the social value created by Horizons, we have used economic valuation techniques to illustrate the business and economic benefits of Horizons to Places for People, or other housing providers, and public services. The valuation focuses on Callum, one of the young people that was interviewed for this research. It illustrates the potential costs and economic benefits associated with supporting young people with Horizons.

What is the economic impact of Horizons?

Callum's story

Before moving to Edinburgh and engaging with Horizons' Care Leaver's service, Callum was previously under the protection of East Lothian Council. Callum engaged with Horizons when he found himself homeless, and sleeping on his friend's sofas. After two months Callum was able to find a flat under Horizons, which reduced his concerns about the impact of his homelessness on his job at a supermarket. Callum noted that the help from his support worker had been crucial in enabling him to make this transition and to manage and reduce his high stress levels *'as it was very important to have someone to talk to.'* For Callum this personal support *'is the whole point of the service'* and as someone who lives alone this *'really helped'* him *'to cope with the challenges and took a lot of the pressure off.'* Having a single point of contact who understood his commitments was also important to Callum, as this enabled him to shape meetings with his support worker around his work commitments while still developing a routine. Callum noted that the support he received was particularly important to him as his situation was *'new and quite scary'* and *'having the support was really helpful.'*

Before working with his support worker Callum had *'never really considered overall fitness before'*, but he was *'encouraged to be healthier and go to the gym.'* His support worker also supported him to look at different memberships and balance different financial commitments within his budget. Callum describes himself as an independent person, although he would often worry when managing bills, or receiving official letters. However Callum feels that as a result of the service his *'confidence has been boosted quite majorly'*, as before he would *'shy away'* from problems but now feels able to *'tackle them.'*

Without the support he received from the service Callum felt *'he would have found it extremely hard'* in the beginning, and believed that it would have taken him a lot longer to find accommodation as East Lothian Council was unable to provide emergency accommodation. Because of this Callum believed that *'there's was a good chance'* that he *'would have given up'* and lost his job.

The wider economic impact of Care Leaver's Service support

Horizons has clearly had a meaningful impact on Callum and his future. However, the impact on Callum will also mean knock-on economic outcomes for other stakeholders. Based on Callum's personal testimony and evidence-based theory, this section outlines the likely knock-on economic and fiscal value of supporting Callum.

Callum has better mental health. Callum told us that he feels less stressed since accessing Horizons. Given the typical trajectory of young people who have experienced homelessness, we can assume that without Horizons' support his mental health would have worsened and he would have had to access mental health support. The cost of a one to one session with CAMHS team member is £86 per hour³⁸. The average length of time a young person accesses this support is 20 weeks, or twenty sessions if we assume that Callum has an average of one session per week³⁹. Supporting Callum to improve his mental health has therefore resulted **in a total avoided cost of £1,720.**

Callum has improved physical health. Callum also told us that he has now taken an interest in his physical health and makes a concerted effort to eat more healthily and go to the gym. Without this encouragement that he received from his support worker it is unlikely that Callum would have adapted his behaviour as his level of fitness was something he had not previously considered. It is therefore likely that Callum would have continued to have a more unhealthy and inactive lifestyle and would not have met the government's physical activity recommendations. The NHS has previously estimated that physical inactivity cost Britain £8.2 billion annually, excluding the

³⁸ These teams provide services for children and young people with particular problems requiring particular types of intervention and within a defined geographical area.1 Staff, caseload and cost information has been taken from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)2,3 mapping database, and is based on returns from 2,094 teams of which 60 were generic single-disciplinary teams. The staff in these teams are almost exclusively clinical psychologists, educational psychologists and other therapists. There are on average 4.13 wte per team (excluding administrative staff and managers). Costs have been updated to 2014/2015 price levels using the appropriate inflators. Personal Social Services Research Unit, Unit costs of Health and Social Care (2015), <http://www.pssru.ac.uk/project-pages/unit-costs/2015/>

³⁹ Personal Social Services Research Unit, Unit costs of Health and Social Care (2015), <http://www.pssru.ac.uk/project-pages/unit-costs/2015/>

contribution of physical inactivity to obesity⁴⁰. In 2013 34% of Scottish adults failed to meet the guideline to do at least 150 minutes moderate or 75 minutes vigorous activity over a week. One in five (21%) did fewer than 30 minutes of moderate or 15 minutes vigorous activity per week⁴¹. This represents an average annual cost of £307 (calculated using population statistics from the Office of National Statistics)⁴². It is difficult to predict whether Callum's lifestyle changes would have continued in the medium to longer term. We therefore conservatively assume that a year's interaction with State services at **£307 (resulting from physical inactivity) will have been avoided**⁴³.

Callum has found sustained accommodation. Horizons has supported Callum to secure and sustain his tenancy, and as a result Callum did not have to access homelessness support from the Council. The intervention by the Horizons service was therefore able to prevent the cost of a homelessness application to the local authority which stands at £2,724⁴⁴. Without Horizons' support in order to access temporary accommodation Callum is likely to have needed to access one-off homelessness advice and support at a cost of £699⁴⁵. Once Callum was placed in temporary accommodation an average stay of 20 weeks⁴⁶ at an average weekly cost of £117 pounds per week would equate to a total cost of £2,340⁴⁷. Overall, the support provided by Horizons has enabled the local authority to **avoid £5,763 in homelessness support costs**.

By providing support to enable Callum to sustain his tenancy, Horizons also enabled Places for People to avoid empty accommodation charges. For example if we were to conservatively assume that Places for People were unable to find another tenant for a month, then **Places for People would have faced an average void cost of £1,119**⁴⁸.

Callum has stayed in work. Callum reported that securing his tenancy was essential in allowing him to stay in work, and that if he had not been able to do this he would have lost his job. If this had occurred Callum would have registered as a young person Not in Employment Education or Training or (NEET). If we conservatively assume that Callum was registered as NEET for 9 months⁴⁹, **this would equate to a total cost of £3,478**⁵⁰.

Do Horizons provide value for money?

Based on the average cost of supporting a young person for Horizons per year⁵¹, and the length of time a young person is involved in the service⁵², **we estimate that the total cost of supporting Callum is £2,228, compared to the total financial and economic benefits of £12,387**. Most of these benefits are experienced directly by wider public services, with £1119 of benefits being accrued by Places for People.

⁴⁰The NHS Information Centre (2012), Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet: England, 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB05131/obes-phys-acti-diet-eng-2012-rep.pdf>

⁴¹The Scottish Health Survey 2013: Volume 1: Main Report, <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/12/9982/16>

⁴²http://www.nef-consulting.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Health-Exchange_FINAL-PDF.pdf

⁴³ONS, Population Estimates for UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, mid 2004. Retrieved from <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/popestimate/population-estimates-for-uk--england-and-wales--scotland-and-northern-ireland/2004/index.html>

⁴⁴New Economy, Unit Cost database, (2015) <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

⁴⁵New Economy, Unit Cost database, (2015) <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

⁴⁶See East Lothian Council website for Homelessness Performance Indicators http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/200464/housing_and_homelessness_performance_indicators/1606/housing_and_homelessness/10

⁴⁷New Economy, Unit Cost database, (2015) <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

⁴⁸Figures sourced from Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association

⁴⁹Leeds City Council, Increasing the Number of Young People in Education and Training (2015) <http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s66588/Increasing%20the%20number%20of%20young%20people%20in%20Employment%20Education%20or%20Training%20-%20Appendix%202.pdf>

⁵⁰New Economy, Unit Cost database, (2015) <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

⁵¹Horizons estimate service costs, based on service use for 2015

⁵²8.2 months, figure obtained from Horizons

3.5 Challenges and barriers

When articulating the social value created by EDI activities, it is important to also understand the factors that may inhibit or reduce the outcomes that have been enabled. For Horizons, despite the service's outcomes and positive service design, staff reported a number of barriers and challenges to positive change, many of which relate to the young peoples' previous experiences. Issues discussed included negative experiences of previous public services, and engagement fatigue, which result in a reluctance to engage with the service. This reluctance to engage is a particular barrier as the service's success relies on the ability of the support worker to create a positive relationship with a young person that is based on genuine engagement. Staff also report that as individuals have often been in the care system for a number of years, many young people have become dependent on, and expect a certain level of support, and are often reluctant to engage in more independent behaviour. As a result, staff note that some young people can begin their engagement with the service from an oppositional position. The young people interviewed also raised a recent high turnover in staff at Horizons as a negative barrier to their engagement within the service, as they found having to 'bond again and again' with new staff challenging.

3.6 Summary of Places for People case study

In conclusion, it is clear that the overall impact of Horizons on the young people it supports is positive. Although there are undoubtedly challenges to achieving positive progression with vulnerable young people, particularly if their experience of support services in the past has not been positive, for the most part young people made positive progression towards having greater independence and control over their lives.

Social value outcomes for wider stakeholders are 'knock on' consequences of those experienced by young people. For the housing provider and wider public services, these outcomes are predominantly avoided costs, due to the preventative nature of the programme. Using the example of Callum, we have been able to understand the probable value of these costs, thus demonstrating the economic value of Places for People Scotland Care and Support's Horizons' service over time.

4 AKSA

4.1 Aksa and equality, diversity and inclusion

Originally known as Oldham Muslim Association, Aksa homes is part of the New Charter Group. The New Charter Group is a social landlord which consists of New Charter Homes, based in the Greater Manchester area, Gedling Homes in Nottingham and Aksa Homes based in Oldham. Aksa Homes has the majority of its 750 homes within Oldham, Bury, Manchester and Ashton-under-Lyne. Aksa are also working with local authorities in Oldham and Rochdale to bring empty private sector homes back into use.

Since 2010 there has been a commitment to ensuring board diversity. Previous to this the board had primarily consisted of older Asian men, many of whom had been in their positions since 1990 when the association formed. A process was undertaken to recruit an entirely new board, with the resulting board diverse in both skills-set and visible/non-visible characteristics. As a result, the new board offers a broader range of activities to the community.

Aksa Homes shapes its service delivery around a number of key organisational values such as collaborative working, which are then delivered through its local partnerships, encompassing a range of activities from neighbourhood management to tackling anti-social behaviour. The association provides a range of advice and support services across the following areas: housing support and maintenance, mental health, and training and employment. Alongside these services are tailored support programmes for specific communities, which are designed to enable vulnerable residents to become more economically active and independent.

4.2 Aksa and the Stepping into Work programme

4.2.1 What does Stepping into Work do?

This case study evaluates Aksa's Stepping into Work programme, which offers personalised support to help tenants build their skills, find employment, training or a higher quality job. Stepping into Work is designed to improve rates of successful and sustainable entry to the jobs market, and whilst it is accessible to all tenants, it is primarily aimed at addressing the unique economic challenges and cultural barriers facing women and young people from BME communities.

The programme itself is centred on Aksa neighbourhoods in Oldham, Manchester, Bury, and Ashton-under-Lyne, and is delivered through a number of work clubs in each area. Alongside the work clubs the programme offers tailored support and advice on jobs and training, work placements and volunteering opportunities, skills development, and support with finding grants and scholarships. The programme itself is staggered according to three stages, with Stage 1 centred on developing an initial assessment and action plan with tenants; designed to improve their core skills, and assist with practical support and advice with applications and career guidance. Stage 2 is focused on building the core skills of tenants and supporting them to apply for job vacancies and funding with Aksa to help reach their goals, as well as motivating tenants and building their confidence through courses, training and volunteering. While Stage 3 is centred on developing Progression plans to ensure that tenants are able to remain in work, by providing them with the support, mentoring, and coaching they need to address any barriers they may encounter.

The design of the Stepping into Work programme is a particularly important element in achieving the positive social outcomes, which tenants experience as a result of their participation. The programme is designed to incorporate both individual tailored support and group working, alongside the development of support networks and key relationships between staff and tenants. This is key as many of the women on the programme often have little or no experience of work, experience language difficulties, and are often socially isolated and lack confidence.

By delivering support in this way the programme is able to deliver a number of social benefits for individuals such as **improved: confidence, mental health, personal relationships and language skills**; alongside wider financial impacts across both Aksa and local public services.

4.2.2 Why it is important to have EDI programmes for BME women?

The programme is designed to target the BME community as over 80% of Aksa's tenants are from BME backgrounds (particularly of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin). As a result the unique challenges

facing this group are therefore of particular concern to the organisation⁵³. For example BME communities generally have lower economic activity rates, higher unemployment, and lower levels of full-time workers than the White population⁵⁴. BME groups are also likely to face a number of multiple and complex challenges in gaining entry to the jobs market, such as language barriers⁵⁵ or as is the case with the current cohort of beneficiaries, have little or no experience of previous employment. The programme is specifically targeted towards Bangladeshi and Pakistani women as they display the lowest employment rates of all groups at just 30%⁵⁶. Two thirds of Bangladeshi women alone are registered as economically inactive, compared with just a quarter of White women⁵⁷. This is in part due to a severe lack of work experience within these groups, as 39% of Pakistani women and 42% of Bangladeshi women nationally have never worked⁵⁸. One of the reasons behind this is most likely due to low levels of English among first generations of people from the Indian subcontinent. However among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women, 'caring' is perhaps the most significant reason for such high rates of economic inactivity and low rates of work experience; as within these two communities multiple generations may live together with woman taking responsibility for the care of younger children and older relatives. Both Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities also experience specific difficulties in finding work either because they have a lower understanding of the employment market and the jobs available, or they are unable to find jobs with working hours which suit their additional caring responsibilities⁵⁹.

The challenges facing this group are particularly concerning given the wider austerity-driven policy context, and the raft of recent asymmetric welfare reforms described in Section 2 of this report. BME women in particular are more likely to be severely impacted as BME tenants are more likely to be overrepresented in vulnerable groups; and display higher levels of unemployment and lower levels of full time workers than the White British community. Consequently they are more likely to be affected by changes to tax credits and the introduction of the benefit cap⁶⁰.

Effective provision of specialist EDI programmes such as Stepping into Work are therefore key if these multiple and complex barriers are to be addressed and positive outcomes are to be achieved.

4.3 Understanding the social and economic impact of Stepping into Work

Like young care leavers, it is clear that the BME women face a number of unique challenges when attempting to access the labour market or wider services, and face additional practical and cultural barriers which make it more difficult for them to access employment opportunities compared to the average person. This impacts not only on the women and their families, but also results in financial impacts for the rest of society, given that a prolonged period of unemployment is likely to result in a greater need for welfare and support services.

However, as was the case with Horizon's service, in order to understand whether Stepping into Work offers value for money, we must understand whether the theory underlying the programme (that EDI intervention will lead to better outcomes, or avoid an increase in issues), is evidenced in the effectiveness of the support.

Figure 2 below presents our Theory of Change for Stepping into Work. Drawing on evidence from the interviews, and existing data, it presents outcomes for five key stakeholder groups: the women themselves, their housing provider, the staff supporting them, wider public services and the wider community. Below, the Theory of Change, we describe how Stepping into Work achieves these outcomes in more detail, evidencing the process using data from interviews;⁶¹ thereby presenting a picture of the social value created by Stepping into Work, and the wider social, economic and business benefits that emerge from providing EDI intervention for BME women.

⁵³ Source: New Economy, Aksa Homes' Tenants Analysis 2013

⁵⁴ Source: Policy Exchange, A Portrait of Modern Britain, May 2014

⁵⁵ Source: Aksa, Stepping Into Work programme Summary overview

⁵⁶ Source: Policy Exchange, A Portrait of Modern Britain, May 2014

⁵⁷ Source: Policy Exchange, Ibid

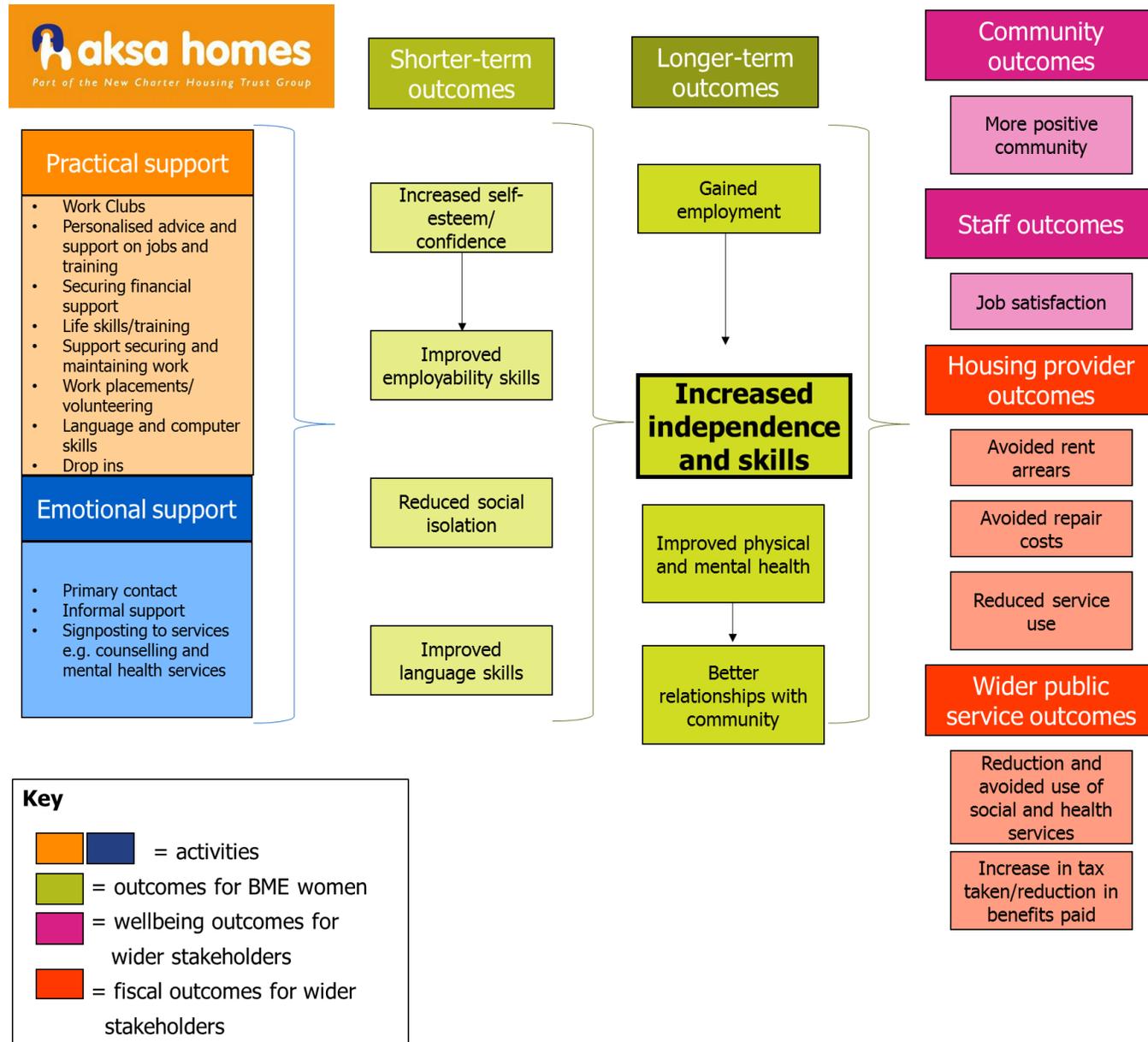
⁵⁸ Source: Policy Exchange, Ibid

⁵⁹ Source: Policy Exchange, Ibid

⁶⁰ Sunak R et al (2014), A Portrait of Modern Britain, Policy Exchange

⁶¹ Eight women and two staff members were interviewed. Approximately 25 people are accessing Stepping Into Work at any one time.

Figure 2:Stepping into Work Theory of Change



4.3.1 What are the social value outcomes for BME women of Stepping into work?

Most of beneficiaries on the programme were Asian women, many of whom had no previous work experience, as a result the majority of outcomes experienced by the beneficiaries centred on building: improved employability skills (i.e. interview techniques), improved self-esteem/confidence, improved language skills, increased independence, reduced social isolation, and improved physical and mental health. In a number of cases these outcomes enabled the women to gain employment, however for many of the women on the programme this would be a much longer term outcome.

All of the women interviewed described how the programme's design had enabled them to improve their confidence. Many cited the social element of the work clubs as being an important element in enabling this, as they were able to support one another and share their problems. This is encapsulated in the quote: *'in the work club we all get together, it's like a social circle where we can all work together and help each other as we're all at the same level, it's really enjoyable.'*

As was the case with young care leavers, the relationships and social elements within the programme proved to be particularly important in enabling positive outcomes and progression, as many of the ladies described previously feeling very isolated and depressed at home. However after participating in the programme the majority of ladies reported that they now felt much better about themselves, and felt much less depressed as the programme enabled them to get out of the house, socialise and learn new skills. For example *'if it wasn't for the programme I'd just be staying at home, going a little crazy and feeling depressed and bored.'* The one to one nature of the programme's support and the work of the project officer were also highlighted as very important, as the women felt they were able to trust the officer as she was able to understand the challenges they faced. The officer also supported them to overcome certain issues and fears, thereby instilling in them a greater sense of personal confidence. This can be seen in the following quote *'before I started the classes I was scared of talking, now I can talk with people and I feel more confident.'* The primary relationship between project officer and support worker in both the Stepping into Work and Horizon programmes can therefore be considered to be a crucial element in enabling the development of key short term outcomes such as improved confidence. The opportunity to work with Oldham Coliseum to develop personal confidence, speaking, inter-personal and interview skills was also highlighted as a positive experience. Many of the ladies involved expressed a strong sense of pride that they had completed something so out of their comfort zone, and felt it helped them with their confidence. This resulted in a number of women reporting that they now felt able to be more independent, and felt able to travel on their own whereas they had previously been isolated in the home and dependent on family members for transport support.

All of the women involved in the programme reported an increase in skills. For example the majority reported that their interview and application skills had improved, while a significant proportion highlighted a large improvement in their IT skills. For example *'I didn't have any IT skills before but now I can use a computer.'* A number of women also reported that the English classes provided within the programme had helped them improve their speaking, while at the same time serving to improve their confidence when facing everyday situations such as going to the Job Centre. Two of the women interviewed had recently become employed since taking part in the programme, and felt that Stepping into Work had been important in helping them achieve this. However whilst both of these women benefitted from the programme as regards skills support, they each had previous work experience and lacked the language barriers experienced by others on the programme. Therefore whilst employment is a clear outcome for the programme, due to the nature of the barriers facing the majority of women within Stepping into Work, it is likely to be a less common and a more longer term aim of the programme for many individuals.

4.3.2 How does the Stepping into Work programme create knock on benefits for other stakeholders?

There are four key stakeholder groups that may experience outcomes as a consequence of Akxa's work with women from BME backgrounds, these are: the local community, Akxa staff, Akxa itself, and wider public services.

As with Horizons, it should be noted that due to their long-term and indirect nature, many of these outcomes are theoretical.

Local community

Aksa staff felt that due to its impact on individual tenants, the Stepping into Work programme was able to indirectly support the development of **more positive communities**. Staff reported that the social element within Stepping into Work encouraged the tenants to be more confident and build relationships in their local community, thereby becoming more involved in community life as a result. For example staff cited an increased participation in Aksa's neighbourhood network. Staff felt this was also due to *'an unspoken agreement'*, where tenants felt that as *'Aksa has helped me I'm helping them.'*

Staff

As was the case for Horizons staff, Aksa's current programme team reported that for staff the key impact of the programme was the level of **job satisfaction** they experienced, as they were able to see the progress of individuals first hand due to the programmes three staged design. The progress of the individuals they support was central to all staff members as they felt they were able to see and *'make a difference'* to individuals. Because the *'support provided isn't machine like'* the staff *'have the freedom to be flexible'* which they felt was *'very important'* to ensuring successful outcomes. Staff also reported that the close working relationship between tenants and staff both within and outside the programme was important to them, as it enabled them to see the tangible and long term impacts of the programme. This is encapsulated in the quote *'it's really rewarding and you feel a sense of achievement and because you're joining in the journey you're buzzing from the positive outcomes.'*

Aksa

In the case of Stepping into Work, staff highlighted a number of potential business benefits experienced by the organisation as a result of the logical conclusion of the schemes services. Despite the indirect nature of the organisational benefits resulting from the programme, staff felt confident that Aksa experienced long term outcomes such as **reduced rent arrears**. Staff also believed that by supporting residents to become more resilient the programme supported communities to become more sustainable, thereby reducing instances of anti-social behaviour, which in turn **reduced the associated costs such as damage to Aksa properties**. Overall staff felt that by supporting tenants to become more confident, skilled, economically active, and gain a sustained income, the programme was able to **reduce the demand on Aksa's wider services** such as benefits, debt advice and mental health support. However these business outcomes are not evidenced beyond this qualitative interview evidence.

Wider Public Services

The professional experiences of staff highlight a number of outcomes which prevent long term costs to public services. For example staff reported that as tenants were supported to become more confident, independent, and less isolated, they were happier and less depressed. As a result staff note that in a number of cases the **reduction in mental health issues, which has led to a reduction in the use of local health services**. For example one individual interviewed was able to reduce her mental health medication and GP visits. As the majority of women also reported that they no longer felt depressed as a result of their participation within Stepping into Work, by implication the programme can also be said to be **preventing these women from accessing mental health services**.

Staff also noted that the success of the programme as regards employment outcomes **reduced the number of benefit claimants and demand for support from the local Job Centre**, although due to the size of the programme the likely impacts for public services are small in scale.

4.3.3 Challenges and barriers

Despite the schemes' outcomes and positive service design, staff report a number of wider societal and economic barriers, which restricts the impact of the programme. For example the significant language barriers and lack of work experience of many of the women on the programme mean that for many, progressing into employment is often a very long term and resource intensive process. Cultural barriers which encourage women to remain in a caring and domestic role can also make the transition into employment particularly challenging for BME women; while a lack of good public transport and affordable childcare presents many tenants with wider barriers to employment. As a programme, Stepping into Work also faces wider challenges as recent funding cuts have raised questions as regards the future sustainability of equality and diversity programmes.

4.4 Putting a price on the economic value of the Stepping into Work programme

In the case study below we have used economic valuation techniques to illustrate the business and economic benefits of the Stepping into Work programme on both Aksa and wider public services. The valuation focuses on Nita, a younger BME women who had successfully gained employment as a result of Stepping into Work. Nita was among a group of eight women, seven of whom were from BME backgrounds who were currently or had previously been on the programme. The case study below illustrates both the potential costs and benefits associated with supporting BME women and the Stepping into Work programme.

What is the economic impact of Stepping into Work?

Nita's Story

Before joining the Stepping into Work programme, Nita had undertaken a two year apprenticeship with Aksa homes. Once this came to an end Nita joined the Stepping into Work programme, and after three months was able to find a job as an administrator in a local call centre. While on the programme Nita received support to help her improve her interview and application skills, and overall confidence.

After finishing her apprenticeship, Nita felt that she had '*no confidence in getting a job*', and wasn't sure how to find job opportunities. Nita also felt worried as she felt she '*wasn't able to give the proper information for applications or answer the questions fully.*' Nita found the Job Centre to be unhelpful as they weren't able to support her with the skills she needed to help her to overcome issues such as low confidence and, to a lesser extent, language barriers. Overall Nita found the application process overwhelming and stressful. However Nita felt that staff supported her by going through common questions and helping her to develop useful techniques to answer questions. Nita was also able to attend a three week confidence boosting course at the Oldham Coliseum, through Aksa's partnership, which she '*really enjoyed*'. For Nita this support was very important as it helped her '*feel more confident and comfortable*', thereby enabling her to '*sell herself much better in interviews*'.

Nita felt that her overall experience of the programme had been '*very positive*' as she was given helpful feedback, could attend sessions whenever she needed to, and was given one to one support to prepare her for interviews. Nita found the experience to be '*accessible and personal*' and felt that her relationship with the project officer was '*very important*'. Nita felt that the project officer was able to understand the challenges facing her, and as a result Nita felt that they '*were able to trust in each other.*' If Nita had not received support from the programme she felt that she '*would be staying at home struggling, feeling isolated and unconfident.*'

For Nita the programme plays a very important role in helping members of the BME community, '*as there's a lot of ladies with language barriers.*' By providing support with English classes Nita felt that the course was shaped around helping women like her to improve.

Overall Nita considers both Aksa and the Stepping into Work programme to have had '*a huge impact*' on her life, and she is now aiming to become an administrator for the service in the future. Without the support of the programme Nita feels that she '*would be in a much more negative place.*'

Nita experienced improved emotional and psychological well-being. Nita told us that before using the programme she was feeling isolated and unconfident, but as a result of the programme '*now feels much better in herself*'. We can therefore assume that without support from the programme her mental health is likely to have worsened, and Nita is likely to have developed a low lying mental health condition such as depression. It is therefore likely that Nita would have had to access light touch mental health support such as Behavioural activation⁶². The

⁶² Behavioural activation provides a simple, effective treatment for depression. This group-based intervention is delivered over 12 one-hour sessions by two mental health nurses on post-qualification pay bands with no previous formal therapy training. They received 5 days training in behavioural activation and 1 hour clinical supervision fortnightly from the principal investigator. Sessions are usually attended by 10 people. Costs are based on Agenda for Change band 7, the grade normally used for this service. However, if we base the costs on Agenda for Change band 5, the cost per session per person is £10 (£12 with qualifications) and for 12 sessions £125 (£149 with qualifications).¹

cost of 12 one hour group sessions per person over the 3 month intervention would result in a **total avoided cost of £207 to wider health services⁶³**.

Nita experienced improved skills. Nita told us that she felt her skills had been improved as a result of her two year apprenticeship with Aksa, and her participation in the programme. A two year apprenticeship is equivalent to a Level 3 Apprenticeship qualification, if Nita had accessed this qualification from an external source, the cost of this qualification would have been £1,391. The skills support and provision of an apprenticeship at Aksa can therefore said to have resulted in a **total avoided cost to the Treasury of £1,515⁶⁴**.

Nita secured employment. By securing employment as a result of both her apprenticeship and improved confidence and employability skills, Nita has not needed to claim Job Seeker's Allowance. If Nita had not received support from the Stepping into Work programme it is likely that she would have continued to be unable to accurately fill in applications, perform in interviews and feel unconfident in gaining work. Due to these issues it is unlikely that Nita will have gained employment quickly on her own. Therefore if we estimate that without support from Stepping into Work, Nita would have remained unemployed for a year, the programme can be said to have resulted in a **total avoided cost to the Department of Work and Pensions of £10,321 in Job Seekers Allowance costs⁶⁵**.

Does Stepping into Work provide value for money?

Based on the number of individuals that Stepping into Work supports per year the estimate costs of supporting **Nita was £263⁶⁶, compared to the total financial and economic benefits of £12,043**. The majority of these benefits are experienced indirectly by wider public services as a result of the preventative nature of the programme.

4.5 Summary of Aksa case study

Stepping into Work has had a very positive overall impact on the BME women it was designed to support. Whilst there are both practical and cultural challenges to achieving positive progression and employment for BME women, all of the women on the programme described making positive progression as regards their confidence, independence, mental health and language and employability skills. The social value outcomes for wider stakeholders can therefore considered to be due to the subsequent effects, and consequences of the positive outcomes experienced by the women on programme. For Aksa and wider public services, these outcomes relate almost entirely to avoided costs, due to the preventative and long term focus of the programme. Using the example of Nita, we have been able to demonstrate the probable value of these avoided costs over the longer term.

⁶³ Unit Costs of Health & Social Care 2015, <http://www.pssru.ac.uk/project-pages/unit-costs/2015/>

⁶⁴ <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

⁶⁵ <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

⁶⁶ Based on figures provided by Aksa Homes

At-a-glance social value case study: Merlin Housing

Merlin Housing see their focus on EDI (referred to at Merlin as DEI) as a fundamental element of their business planning. EDI is not just 'the right thing to do'; being able to manage and respond effectively to the differences between people, whatever those differences may be, allows them to plan more effectively and efficiently which Merlin believe is important in an operating environment which is expecting organisations to do more with less.

Everything that the EDI and partnerships team at Merlin does is related back to organisation's overarching corporate plan objectives and EDI objectives.

- Continuously strengthening the organisation;
- Providing housing and support services right first time;
- Delivering repairs and maintenance right first time;
- Responsible investment in current and new homes.

If the team cannot show this link or prove how a piece of work can drive organisational performance or create efficiencies, they will not do it. Good EDI work though is a service improvement tool and at Merlin is treated as such.

Merlin use satisfaction survey results and other data on residents to unpick whether certain groups may be struggling, or have a poor perception or experience of Merlin. Mental health has been a particular area of focus across the organisation, with an emphasis on the mental well-being of both staff and residents. The decision to focus on mental health was made following data collected that identified a large number of mental health-related trends. For example, Merlin identified that those with mental health issues more frequently contact Merlin about a wide range of issues in comparison to residents overall. Data analysis also enabled them to identify that those with ill mental health were 10% less satisfied than customers without a common mental health disorder.

As 23% of Merlin customers have ill mental health, it was decided that this was a challenge that they needed to understand and plan for. Merlin carried out workshops with customers with ill mental health and delved deeper into areas which needed improvement. This has resulted in an action plan which it is intended will result in increased satisfaction levels for people with ill mental health.

5 CESTRIA

5.1 Cestria and equality, diversity and inclusion

Cestria Community Housing are a housing association based in County Durham that own and manage around 4,200 homes across Chester-Le-Street and surrounding villages.

Cestria view their commitment to EDI as fundamental to their belief that customers should be at the heart of everything that the organisation does. Engaging with and responding to customers effectively requires a deep appreciation of EDI issues, given the diverse demographics of Cestria residents, particularly in terms of characteristics such as age and disability.

Cestria ensure their EDI commitment via their centralised function for EDI matters. There is a senior staff member that drives EDI strategy forward, and oversees an 'Equal but Different' leadership group who collectively ensure that the strategy permeates all areas of the business. As a consequence of this, an emphasis on EDI is seen at all levels of the organisation. At governance level for example, a member of the Cestria board is part of the 'Equal but Different' leadership group, and champions EDI issues at board level. All the board members take part in annual EDI training, and there is an ongoing commitment to ensuring that the board represents the diversity of Cestria communities. There is also an emphasis on all elements of staff recruitment, retention, and day-to-day practice. There is a culture of EDI being something to celebrate, rather than being imposed.

Cestria strive to involve their residents and communities directly in EDI initiatives. For example, Cestria have diversity 'task and finish' groups for specific strategies and activities, with residents sitting on these groups. A key role undertaken by the task and finish groups is scrutiny of Equality Impact Assessments⁶⁷ (EIAs). The assessments are conducted to gauge whether general policies introduced or updated across the organisation, such as Data Protection, place fairness and equality at the heart of any key decision making.

Beyond involvement of residents in strategic decision making, Cestria also have initiatives that are specifically focused on improving the social and economic circumstances of their residents and communities, with many initiatives particularly focused at resident groups that may particularly benefit from EDI intervention. The Cestria case study focuses on an element of Cestria's EDI work with communities: their job club and one-to-one employment support for individuals that when they first come into contact with Cestria, are a long way from the labour market.

5.2 Cestria and Go Figure Employment

Go Figure Employment is a service provided by Cestria specifically for those that are a long way from the labour market. There are a variety of reasons why individuals access the Go Figure programme, but typically they face one or more barriers which mean that they have previously been excluded from the labour market. Go Figure Employment is part of a wider portfolio of employment support that also includes Back in the Game: a job readiness course that includes a BTEC in Personal and Social Development, and the opportunity of a two week work placement.

Go Figure Employment employ a specialist advisor who offers support for Cestria residents and individuals from the wider communities where Cestria owns property. Some of the Go Figure employment support takes the form of job clubs. The job clubs are offered in the community, in spaces where individuals feel comfortable accessing services. The advisor also provides one-on-one support for individuals who want it, and again efforts are made to ensure that individuals have the opportunity to access this support in a place that suits them, such as their home.

The support offered by Go Figure employment is tailored to suit the individuals' needs. Much of the support is practical, such as support writing CVs and applying for work, and sourcing funding to help with securing work, such as funding to access qualifications. However, the employment advisor also acts as a source of emotional support and encouragement for individuals.

⁶⁷ For more information on Cestria's approach to equality impact assessments see <http://www.cestria.org/about-us/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments/>

5.3 Why is it important to have employment support for these groups?

There a range of different barriers that the individuals accessing Go Figure Employment typically face in securing employment. However, Cestria have noted that there is a high proportion of individuals with low-lying mental ill health issues and those over the age of 50 accessing the support that they offer. This is unsurprising given that it is reported that both these groups are more likely to face difficulties securing and maintaining employment than the general population.

Research by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion⁶⁸ identified a number of different barriers to work and specific support needs that older people have when attempting to secure work. The report found that the journey into long-term unemployment varies between individuals, and as such they require tailored support that is not available in many programmes. Some individuals face a change in levels of health, which means that the number of jobs they could otherwise consider become inaccessible, and furthermore ageism could prevent a 'fair playing field' when it came to applying for work. These are perhaps some of the reasons that the report found that the Work Programme moves fewer people aged 50 or over in to sustained employment. Regardless of the reasons, the outcome is that almost half (47.2%) of unemployed 50-64 year olds are classed as long-term unemployed, compared with almost a third (31.6%) of 16-49 year olds⁶⁹.

Mental health is also associated with long-term unemployment, with much evidence suggesting a two-way relationship where mental ill health can be a cause but also consequence of unemployment, further exacerbating opportunities of re-securing employment in the future. It has been found that people with long-term mental health problems are more likely to be out of work than any other disabilities: 21% are in work in comparison to 49% of those with disabilities overall⁷⁰. A 2001 study found that only 37% of employers would take on an employee with mental ill health compared to 62% who said they would employ someone who was physically disabled, and 88% who would employ a lone parent⁷¹. It has been shown that mental ill health is high amongst the long term unemployed. For example, research by the Princes Trust found that 40% of long-term unemployed young people had symptoms of mental illness⁷². Perhaps even more worryingly, one 15 year longitudinal study found that periods of unemployment have the potential to permanently reduce the extent to which an individual is satisfied with their life, even once they have returned to work⁷³.

In the current policy context, the above findings are particularly concerning. Although much of the focus on the relationship between austerity measures and age has focused on younger people, Age UK report that 1.6 million older people live in poverty, but are less likely to use Food Banks than the general population. This means that staying in employment for longer, and therefore guaranteeing an income, can be one means of avoiding poverty, particularly given the extent of cuts of older people's services⁷⁴. Similarly, there is a large body of evidence indicating that austerity and cuts impact negatively on mental health, often due to increased stress due to cuts in benefits⁷⁵.

⁶⁸ Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (2014) Employment support for unemployed older people. Age UK. http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/sites/niace_en/files/publications/Age%20UK%20Report%20FINAL_0.pdf?redirectedfrom=cesi

⁶⁹ Saga (2015) Saga employment report for February 2015 available to download from <http://www.saga.co.uk/newsroom/press-releases/2015/feb/almost-half-of-the-long-term-unemployed-are-aged-over-50.aspx>

⁷⁰ DRC Disability Briefing (2003) cited by See Me (n.d.) Stigma and discrimination in employment. Retrieved from <https://www.seemescotland.org/>

⁷¹ Department for Work and Pensions (2001) cited by See Me (n.d.) Stigma and discrimination in employment. Retrieved from <https://www.seemescotland.org/>

⁷² The Prince's Trust (2014) Youth Index 2014. Available from <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/help-for-young-people/news-views/youth-index-2014>

⁷³ Lucas, R. E., Clark, A. E., Georgellis, Y. and Diener, E. (2004) 'Unemployment alters the set point for life satisfaction', Psychological Science, 15(1), 8-13

⁷⁴ Quality Watch (2014) Focus on: social care for older people. The Health Foundation/Nuffield Trust http://www.qualitywatch.org.uk/sites/files/qualitywatch/field/field_document/140326_QualityWatch_Focus_On_Social_care_older_people_0.pdf

⁷⁵ For example see O'Hara (2015) Cut off: how austerity relates to our mental health. New Statesman <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/welfare/2015/10/cut-how-austerity-relates-our-mental-health>

5.4 Understanding the social and economic impact of Go Figure Employment

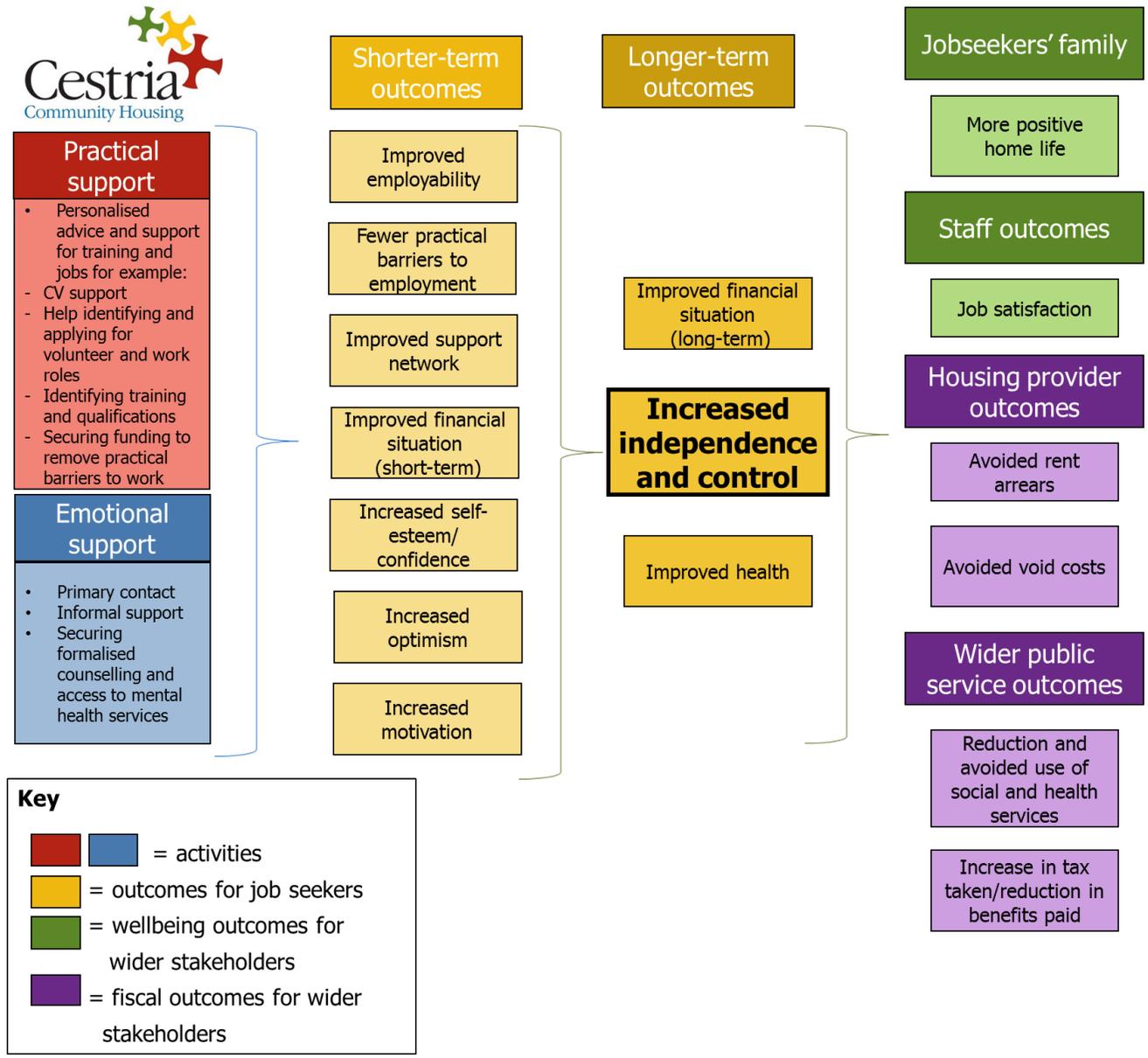
Figure 3 below presents the Theory of Change for Go Figure Employment. Like Horizons and Stepping into Work, our engagement with beneficiaries revealed that 'softer' outcomes such as increased self-esteem and increased motivation were critical first steps to achieving other outcomes. Our engagement with the individuals accessing Go Figure Employment also indicated that the personal qualities of the Go Figure Employment advisor was fundamental in achieving social value outcomes, again reflecting the importance of the personal relationships built between staff and EDI beneficiaries in the previous case studies.

In the longer term, the knock-on outcomes for wider stakeholders are similar to those for Horizons and Stepping into Work. Given the majority of the knock-on outcomes are long-term in nature, it is unsurprising that there was less evidence of the achievement of these outcomes than there was for more immediate outcomes.

Below Figure 3 we describe the process by which change happens in more detail, drawing on survey and interview data⁷⁶ as we explore the outcomes achieved for different stakeholder groups.

⁷⁶ Five beneficiaries were interviewed, four wider stakeholders and there were 15 beneficiaries that responded to the survey. Cestria supported 117 people last year although at a single point in time the number of individuals accessing support is approximately 25 individuals.

Figure 3: Cestria Go Figure Employment Theory of Change



5.4.1 What are the social value outcomes for the job seekers?

Headline data from our survey shows that since their involvement with Go Figure Employment:

The survey results paint an overall positive picture of the beneficiaries' involvement with Go Figure Employment. For example:

- 86% of respondents reported an improvement in their support network;
- 73% of respondents reported an improvement in their level of self-esteem;
- 79% reported feeling more optimistic about their future;
- 64% reported feeling that there were fewer barriers to employment, indicating they felt that there was little that could stand in the way of them getting the job they want;
- 50% reported an improvement in the extent to which they felt they had the skills and qualifications that they needed to get on in life;
- Five respondents reported an improvement in their employment status, including two individuals who are now self-employed but were previously not in employment.

Overall most individuals felt that their lives had got better since their involvement with Go Figure Employment. Amongst these individuals, on average 73% of this improvement was attributed to Cestria's support. However, one individual felt that things were more difficult for them, due to wider health issues.

Like at Aksa and Places for People, the combination of both practical and emotional support was important to improving the circumstances of beneficiaries. In terms of practical support, Cestria directed individuals to funding schemes that could remove practical barriers to employment by, for example, paying for transport for the first month of work, or paying for a suit so the individual could attend an interview. The employment advisor could also provide support to help them improve employability, as well as directing and finding them funding for qualifications or courses that could improve their CV. Support with practical day-to-day issues offered alongside the employment support, such as benefits advice, could lead to improved financial situation in the short-term as individuals gained a better understanding of welfare provision they were entitled to.

'My CV has been updated by [name of employment advisor], and she has given me benefits information.'

However, the personal qualities of the Cestria employment advisor were also valued, and her empathetic nature, patience and encouragement meant that many viewed her as an addition to their personal support network.

'[Name of employment advisor] is very helpful no matter what it is she will go the extra mile and is very friendly.'

The role that she played was important to building the personal resources of individuals. Interviewees reported having increased self-esteem and confidence, increased optimism and increased motivation.

'Before when I've looked at job descriptions, I've thought 'I can't do that', 'I can't do that', but they've taught me to look at it a different way and see that I can do things.'

The above outcomes could lead to the achievement of longer-term outcomes, key amongst which is an improved financial situation resulting from gaining employment. There was evidence of this outcome, with Cestria offering one survey respondent an employment opportunity within their own organisation, with four people experiencing an improved employment situation overall. There was also some evidence of improved health, with two interviewees reporting improvements in their mental health, with one of these individuals reporting that they believed they would still be on antidepressants if it was not for Cestria's support. Ultimately, as with Aksa and Places for People, in combination these outcomes could lead to the individual having increased independence and control over the lives.

5.4.2 How does the Go Figure Employment programme create knock on benefits for other stakeholders?

Headline data from the Go Figure Employment survey shows that there is likely to be impacts on knock-on stakeholders.

- Five individuals had recorded an improvement in their employment status. As well as bringing benefits for the individuals themselves, in most cases this will likely lead to a decrease in benefits paid and an increase in tax taken for national government;
- The improved financial situation that can be expected from finding employment is likely to lead to knock-on outcomes for further stakeholder groups. For example, Cestria can expect that this can lead to a reduction in rent arrears should any of the job seekers be in debt;
- Although overall there was no obvious trend in whether individuals were seeing their GP more or less since engaging with Cestria, more people reported that they were accessing wider services, such as counselling and benefits advice, more regularly, than the number of people that were accessing these services less regularly. Based on comments from survey respondents, this increase in service use is likely due to appropriate signposting by the Go Figure Employment advisor. Although this may lead to an initial increase in costs of wider services, there may be an overall long-term decrease as individuals access the support they need at an early stage, preventing the development of long-term needs.

The jobseeker's family and the Cestria staff directly involved in supporting the beneficiaries may experience **wellbeing social value outcomes**. For Cestria as a business and wider public services, there are potential **economic outcomes** in the form of avoided or reduced costs.

Jobseeker's family

Where jobseekers lived with family, the jobseekers reported that their families also experienced some benefits: **home life became more positive**.

"With the help of [name of employment advisor] I have bettered myself and my two boys' lives. I am a better role model for my boys and I believe more in myself now."

Jobseekers felt that their more positive outlook on life generated a positive impact on relationships at home. Looking ahead, they described how a more hopeful future for themselves also meant a more hopeful future for their families.

'I'm doing something positive for my future. I just want to have a positive future for me and my daughter. She's just turned 7.'

Although there was no explicit discussion of outcomes for the wider community, one individual explained that they had met other people through the job club that they now spoke to if they saw around the area, indicating that the job club had created social capital in the area.

"I've met Jane, Shirley, if I see them down the street we stop and chat. Meeting new friends around Chester le Street is good. I have got things in common to speak to them about."

Staff

Staff also benefitted from being employed in a role that enabled social value. It was rewarding to see the progress that individuals made, particularly given that the job seekers that typically engage with Go Figure Employment are further away from the labour market than the typical jobseeker.

"It's lovely to hear how I have helped people."

Cestria

Engagement with the Cestria staff team revealed a number of different reasons that the organisation felt that it made good business sense to undertake a programme such as Go Figure Employment. A number of the survey respondents reported that they had improved the number of hours they had worked, or moved from unemployment to employment since engaging with Cestria. This could potentially lead to **avoided or decreased rent arrears** or **avoided void costs** as a consequence of the improved financial situation of the individual. Cestria reported that in the current policy context getting

tenants into work was a particularly important priority as cuts to welfare meant that many residents were struggling. The local job market was perceived to be '*small and very difficult to access*' meaning that tailored advice and support had a particularly high value.

Although it would not lead to immediate cost savings, Cestria also valued the good relationships that offering the support enabled them to build with their residents.

Wider public services

A number of people responding to the survey indicated that they had found employment since engaging with Cestria, which is in most cases likely to lead to an *increase in tax taken/reduction in benefits paid* for central government. In addition to the people that had already found work, 50% reported that they had experienced an increase in job-relevant skills, with 64% reporting fewer barriers to work. This increase in employability indicates that it is likely that more Go Figure beneficiaries will gain employment in the near future, leading to a further increase in tax taken and decrease in benefits paid.

Although the survey indicates there are more people reporting that they are using wider services more often, over time it can be expected that there will be a *reduction in the use of wider services* as the job seekers personal circumstances improve as a consequence of gaining employment.

5.4.3 Challenges and barriers

As with the Places for People and Aksa case study, the personal circumstances of the individuals accessing Cestria's Go Figure Employment service can act as barriers to achievement of outcomes. The individuals accessing Go Figure are typically further away from the labour market, and as well as practical barriers to accessing employment, such as a low skillset or qualifications, experience 'softer' barriers such as negative self-perception and low motivation. This means that the journey to employment may take longer than with someone has spent less time out of employment and faces fewer barriers, and it is why the personal and emotional support from Cestria is important. For some of the beneficiaries, wholly overcoming the barriers will be extremely difficult.

Even when these barriers are overcome, there is perceived to be a low level of employment available in and around Chester-le-Street. This is supported by statistical data. For example, in 2013, the job density of County Durham was 0.57, indicating there were 57 jobs for every 100 of the population, compared to the north-east more widely where the figure was 0.68, and the UK as a whole, for which the figure was 0.80⁷⁷.

5.5 Putting a price on the economic value of Go Figure Employment

Below we use economic valuation techniques to illustrate the possible wider economic benefits of the Go Figure Employment by focusing on David, who is a beneficiary of the programme. We interviewed David about his experience of Go Figure Employment, and used the information he had provided to establish what this could mean for Cestria and wider public services.

⁷⁷ Nomis web (n.d) Labour Market Profile- County Durham retrieved from <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157058/report.aspx?town=chester-le-street>

What is the economic impact of Go Figure?

David's story

David had spent a long time in the Forces, but left 15 years ago. He became a stay-at-home Dad for his two children while his wife worked full-time, and spent time back in education to qualify as a nurse. Three years ago, David's wife left when she found someone else, taking the children with her. David's wife had managed the bill payments, but when she left he found that there was £5,500 debt in unpaid council tax and rent payments.

'I was at the lowest point of my life when my partner left.'

David managed to get support from SSAFA- the Armed Forces Charity, that paid off the debt he owed and supported him to apply for social housing, through which David found a property with Cestria.

David first found out about Go Figure when he struggled to pay his rent. Someone from Cestria came to see him. They gave him £10 towards food, put £20 on his electric meter and told him about the Go Figure programme.

'I didn't ask for that help from them, but it was unbelievable. That little touch there was incredible for someone like me who was really vulnerable and suffering from depression and anxiety.'

David last worked in 2005, and has now been getting support from Go Figure for eight months. He spoke to the advisor about how he would like to drive for a living. Cestria supported him to access funding to pay for a new licence and driving medical. David explains without that funding it would have taken him *'two years at least to save up'*. The emotional support he has also got from Go Figure has been invaluable.

'Psychologically, emotionally, confidence...they care about you. They listen. Without their support I would still be on antidepressants and have no confidence. My confidence is coming back now.'

David recently submitted his first job application and was not successful this time, however, with his new-found confidence he feels hopeful he will secure work soon.

'I've had a couple of bad years but now I want to focus on work. I am dying to get back.'

The wider economic impact of Go Figure and Cestria

It is clear that the support that Go Figure has provided to David has been deeply valued by him and fundamental to the more positive outlook he now has about his future. The outcomes that David has experienced to date and likely future outcomes will have wider economic outcomes for a number of knock-on stakeholders.

David is job ready. With Cestria's support, David has reached the point where he is likely to secure work. By David's estimation, without Cestria's support he would have been out of work for at least two further years. If David finds employment and stays in work for two years, **the fiscal value of David being in work for these two years rather than claiming Jobseekers Allowance is £20,642⁷⁸.**

David has better mental health. David was experiencing mental health issues when he first accessed support from Cestria. Without Cestria's support we can assume that David's mental health issues would have continued, and he would have continued to access support for poor mental health, including medication. Assuming that David's depression would have continued for the two years he anticipated being out of employment, **the cost of monthly appointments to see his GP is estimated at £1,056⁷⁹. The costs of providing antidepressants for David over this time is estimated to be £98⁸⁰.**

David has been able to stay in his home. Cestria provided support for David when he had rent arrears, enabling him to stay in his home. Without this support, David would have not been able to sustain his tenancy, meaning there would be empty accommodation charges for Cestria. The average length of time Cestria has an empty property for is 18 days, with the cost of managing the property over this time meaning that **Cestria has avoided £210 of empty property costs⁸¹.**

Does Go Figure Employment provide value for money?

Based on the number of individuals that Go Figure Employment supported last week, the estimated cost of supporting **David is £444⁸², compared to the total current and anticipated future fiscal benefits of £22,006.** This indicates that in the case of David, Go Figure Employment has provided value for money.

5.5.1 Summary of the Cestria case study

Both the interviews and survey conducted to ascertain the impact of Go Figure Employment revealed a large number of positive stories of beneficiaries' experiences of the programme. It was clear that they deeply valued the programme, and the personal and practical support that the employment advisor provided. The value was much wider than improved employability and ultimately gaining employment: there were wider social value benefits such as improved self-esteem/confidence, which have a value in themselves, as well as in many cases being critical first steps to achieving other outcomes.

The social value that is likely to be created by the programme in the long-term extends beyond direct beneficiaries to possible well-being type social value outcomes for wider family and Cestria employees, and economic cost saving outcomes for Cestria and wider public services. Because these outcomes are indirect and dependent on the achievement of beneficiary outcomes, there is less clear evidence of them in the survey, although the individuals that indicated they had found employment are likely to result in increase in tax taken/reduction in benefits paid for central government, as well as implications for Cestria regarding housing costs. Taking the example of David, we demonstrated the possible outcomes for Cestria and wider public services using economic valuation techniques.

⁷⁸ New Economy, Unit Cost Database (2015) <http://neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/unit-cost-database>

⁷⁹ Personal Social Services Research Unit, Unit costs of Health and Social Care (2015), <http://www.pssru.ac.uk/project-pages/unit-costs/2015/> This is assuming a monthly appointment to see a GP lasting 11.7 minutes costing £44 per appointment.

⁸⁰ Health and Social Care Information Centre (2014) Prescriptions dispensed in the community, statistics for England: 2004-2014 <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB17644/pres-disp-com-eng-2004-14-rep.pdf> shows the total cost of subscribing antidepressants in 2014 was £265 million. Taking the percentage estimates for men and women taking antidepressants, there are 5,400,000 (to the nearest 100,000) on antidepressants. Health and Social Care Information Centre (2014) Health Survey for England- 2013 http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB16076_gives_49 average prescription cost per year

⁸¹ Based on figures from Cestria

⁸² Based on figures from Cestria

At-a-glance social value case study: Tower Hamlets Homes

Tower Hamlets Homes is another housing provider (ALMO) that prioritises EDI. THH residents are from ethnically diverse backgrounds, with 77% of those confirming their ethnicity on one survey stating that they were from BME backgrounds^[1] Because of the diversity of residents EDI has always been a necessary focus, but over the last five years the emphasis has been even greater as the organisation has made a commitment to ensure that no residents are excluded from services. THH's vision for equality and diversity is to ensure that services are accessible, inclusive and fair for all.

In terms of staff, there has been a particular focus on recruiting more women and BME staff within the organisation. In the last year alone THH has made significant progress through positive action work which has seen more women and BME staff recruited to the more senior roles in the organisation, and there is a Women's Network group in order to encourage women to apply for senior positions.

'Ensuring diversity of the organisation at all levels including at more senior levels, ensures that all staff buy into what we are trying to achieve and support THH in meeting the diverse needs of residents through their diversity and experiences.' THH Customer Insight and Diversity Coordinator

Having a diverse staff base was also reported to improve communication and relationships with residents, particularly when the diversity means a wider range of languages within the staff team.

THH provides tailored projects and support for residents from specific groups that they have identified as being excluded or vulnerable because of diversity and inclusion issues. For example, one programme has focused on Somali residents, with Somalis being one of the biggest ethnic communities amongst THH residents. THH had noted a number of common issues within this community, such as overcrowded housing and rent arrears. Via enhanced engagement activity THH came to realise that one of the significant barriers for this community was that of language and communication. Some households were not able to read the rent arrears letters that came through their door, with this debt meaning that they were not permitted to apply for and transfer to a more suitably sized property. In one case, a family that previously had been in an overcrowded property for a number of years was able to pay off their arrears and move into a larger property within two months of direct engagement via the project. THH have employed a Somali staff member, and what was previously a 'hidden' community regularly engages with THH, who now have a deeper understanding of the community's needs and so are able to provide better services.

THH have won four national awards for their diversity work, have been awarded at the highest level of the Social Housing Equality Framework and recently awarded the Diversity Network Accreditation for Excellence in equality and diversity based on outcomes.

^[1] Housing Diversity Network (2015) Diversity Network Accreditation: Tower Hamlets Homes. Internal report, available from THT on request. On the same survey 17% reported that they were White British and 25% did not response or preferred not to say.

6 WHAT DO THE FINDINGS MEAN FOR EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICE?

The findings from the three main case studies and supplementary brief studies indicate that EDI initiatives have enabled social value outcomes. As would be expected all the case study services experienced challenges in supporting individuals, nevertheless, the testimony and survey results from individuals accessing the services was almost entirely positive. Social value outcomes were most evidenced for the direct beneficiaries using the services. Knock-on outcomes for other stakeholders, such as the housing association itself and wider public services were, for the most part, either theoretical or were achieved at a small scale. This is primarily attributed to high levels of need amongst the EDI beneficiaries, and because the short lifespan of the projects meaning that it is difficult to establish any meaningful fiscal outcomes, which are more long-term in nature.

Taking a long-term view on the achievement of business and fiscal outcomes is undoubtedly difficult in the current policy context, where financial pressures are meaning that many housing associations are making shorter-term decisions about where they invest in order that they can deliver their core business of affordable housing. In this context, it is unsurprising that, without appropriate evidence of the social value it creates, some EDI initiatives are being cut as they are considered little more than 'nice to have'. Although cutting EDI services may make short-term sense because of the financial savings, the level of need of EDI groups means that without appropriate support, longer-term, more entrenched need is likely to develop. It is important that EDI professionals can demonstrate the links between what they do and corporate and policy priorities, and can effectively articulate that even when immediate cost savings are not realised, there is a clear theoretical basis for being confident that this will happen. In the shorter-term, even though outcomes like 'increased self-esteem' do not have any immediate fiscal implications, they are of real value to the individual, and thus a crucial and deeply meaningful part of a housing association delivering against its social mission.

Based on observations as to what was working well and what could work even better in terms of creating social value outcomes, below we present key recommendations for any housing association that intends to support the maximum achievement of social value outcomes in their EDI practice and evaluation.

6.1 Creating social value via EDI practice

6.1.1 Creating an underlying culture that supports EDI is essential to delivering EDI-related social value outcomes

Although the three case studies and additional at-a-glance case studies all looked at project-level EDI, all of these were borne from a wider organisational culture within each organisation that respected and celebrated EDI. In these organisations, EDI was not a 'bolt-on' but a fundamental element of effective business practice, and a key component of all decision making processes. As such, an emphasis on EDI was a prominent focus at all organisational levels, from board level to how frontline staff engaged with communities.

6.1.2 Understanding the specific needs and barriers of specific demographics

It is important to recognise the specific needs and barriers that certain demographics may face in order that an EDI intervention is fully beneficial. Information of this nature can help an organisation to understand where to intervene in the first place, and then also the qualities of the intervention that are most likely to lead to social value outcomes. For example, Merlin use mental health and wellbeing data in the communities to target specific demographics that may be in need of particular support. Aksa Homes also used their understanding of the language barriers that BME women have when accessing employment to ensure that language support is part of their employment support offer.

6.1.3 Articulating the wider economic and fiscal benefits of EDI practice creates a stronger case for EDI

All the organisations that took part in the research were able to communicate the potential wider economic benefits of their work, for their organisation and for wider public services. In the current policy context, this is essential to ensure that the total value of EDI activity is understood. Having a clear underlying theory as to how EDI work could create wider economic and business outcomes, potentially illustrated with a Theory of Change as in this report. This approach is the important first

step before measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of EDI outcomes. Working backwards from the fiscal outcomes of strategic importance, such as reducing rent arrears, can help with more effective planning of EDI activity, by unpicking any unclear assumptions about how activity will lead to outcomes.

6.1.4 Taking a holistic, systems approach to tackling barriers

The beneficiaries in all three main case studies faced wider barriers to achieving the intended outcomes that were outside the immediate remit of the intervention in question. For example, in Akxa, many of the women faced cultural barriers to accessing employment. To improve the extent to which outcomes could be achieved, organisations should consider whether responses to these wider barriers could also become part of the service offer. For example, could Stepping into Work also consider working with the women's families to explore and overcome some of these barriers? For Horizons, the young people were often reluctant to engage because of previous experiences in the wider system, such as with social services. How could Horizons work collectively with services to learn from the young person's experiences, thus collectively improve service provision?

6.1.5 Develop partnership approaches with wider organisations that benefit from EDI activities

The stories of Callum, Nita and David suggest that most of the economic benefits of EDI intervention are experienced by organisations other than the housing provider. Housing associations should therefore consider bringing together multi-partner groups that recognise the interdependency and relationships between the actions of one organisation, and the economic benefits experienced by another. Mapping out these relationships would enable the organisations to deliver collective, intelligent approaches to the funding, planning, delivery, and evaluation of EDI and social value initiatives.

6.1.6 Being flexible in support

Although there are issues that are more common amongst particular demographics, for example, issues with independent living skills amongst those accessing Horizons support, every person is still unique and it is important that EDI provision recognises this. For example while most individuals accessing Horizons may need support with cooking and money management, others may have sufficient skills in these areas but need intensive engagement to build levels of personal trust. For these reasons, it is important that EDI provision is flexible and centred on the needs and priorities of each individual. Forming personal relationships with beneficiaries and providing support when, where and how they need it is a key ingredient to achieving sustainable social value outcomes. Cestria providing one-on-one employment support wherever an individual feels most comfortable is a good example of flexible, person-centred support.

6.1.7 Ensuring consistency of approach and personal relationships is important

The three main case studies demonstrated that personal relationships with staff are important. Although increasing the independence of residents and improving their economic circumstances was in all cases a primary motivator for the housing association, 'softer' outcomes such as improved confidence were critical first steps to achieving this. Achieving these outcomes depended on empathetic, approachable staff who were patient with beneficiaries and let them move at their own pace. However, building relationships that allow this can take time.

6.2 Measuring the social value of EDI practice

Below we present key principles for EDI measurement to guide organisations through the process.

6.2.1 Start by identifying the need for, and planning EDI activities

Before any project or initiative is undertaken, it is important to fully identify and understand the nature of the issues of the group in question, and then appropriately plan activities to respond to these issues. Equality and diversity monitoring data, such as that gathered by Merlin and Tower Hamlets Homes, can provide a high-level picture of local trends for particular communities, with wider research providing evidence of how policy and societal challenges can impact on different demographics. This evidence, as well as essential co-design activities with the individuals in question, will enable a housing association to develop the most effective intervention, thus ensuring that when it later comes to measuring the social value, you have achieved the best possible outcomes.

6.2.2 Engage with beneficiaries to understand outcomes

As the present report demonstrates, there are a large number of outcomes achieved for beneficiaries of EDI projects. Many of these outcomes would not have been identified, or the importance of them underrated, if the engagement with beneficiaries had not taken place.

Engaging with beneficiaries also allows the project factors that have enabled the achievement of outcomes to be identified, as well as the elements that may have hindered progression. This information is essential to maximise the learning from social value measurement, so that the most effective project possible can be designed in future.

6.2.3 Understand linkages between different outcomes

Engaging with beneficiaries can aid understanding of the linkages between different outcomes, for example, improved self-esteem being an important first step towards employment. Understanding these linkages helps make the case for the importance of intermediate outcomes, that may not always be of immediate relevance to wider strategic stakeholders but are necessary on the journey towards the longer term achievement of other outcomes, as well as having a personal value to the individual themselves.

6.2.4 Measure intermediate and longer-term outcomes for multi-stakeholders

In line with the above principle, it is important to measure intermediate outcomes, as well as those that are longer term. The high level of need of many EDI beneficiaries means that the achievement of the ultimate intended outcomes should be considered a long-term goal. Therefore, the measurement of only the ultimate outcomes would undervalue the achievement of a project and, certainly in the short-term, would make it appear that there has been limited success. Measuring shorter-term outcomes demonstrates progress on the journey towards ultimate goals.

6.2.5 Demonstrate the value of prevention

As the case studies demonstrate, much EDI activity tends to focus on prevention of negative outcomes, such as homelessness or empty housing charges. This can be difficult to evidence, as ultimately it is impossible to know for certain what the outcomes for beneficiaries would have been if your programme had not existed. However, by drawing on personal testimonies as we have done in this report, it is possible to map the likely alternative journey of beneficiaries such as Callum, Nita and Paul, and articulate the importance of EDI intervention not just to them, but to wider stakeholders, using valuation approaches.