

Employment and Skills Hub Outreach (ESHO) project



**GLOUCESTERSHIRE
EMPLOYMENT
AND SKILLS HUB**
Outreach

Pete Carr and Sam Henson,
ESHO project manager
Gloucestershire County Council

Overview

Reminder of what we set out to do and why

- The ESHO partnership – District partners and Countywide specialists
- Employment Support Co-Ordinators
- What our support looks like
- How to refer potential customers
- Progress to date
- Our customers and their needs
- Emerging themes
- Implications and next steps for Districts taking on funding of ESHO

A reminder of what we set out to do and why

The Employment and Skill Hub Outreach (ESHO) project set out to engage and support economically inactive people in the County, understand their needs better, and help those who want and are able to, go into/back into employment, education and training or volunteering.

We sought to bridge the gap between the GEM Project and funding from the Districts' UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in March 2024 by providing £600k of GCC funding.

“Economic inactivity refers to people are not active in the labour market –they have not sought work in the last four weeks and/or are not available to start work in the next two weeks. Economic inactivity individuals include the long-term sick who are in receipt of benefits, early retirees and individuals who do not claim any state benefit”.

The ESHO partnership – District partners and Countywide specialists

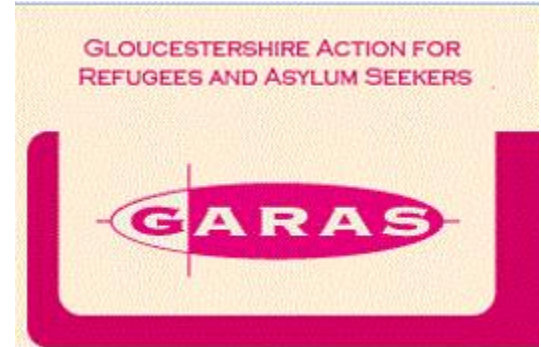
The ESHO project is a partnership of 10 Voluntary and Community Sector Enterprise (VCSE's) in Gloucestershire. The project aims to build from the foundations and partnership work of the GEM project and deliver employment support via Gloucestershire district partners. Our partners can use their local knowledge and expertise to engage participants and deliver the ESHO contract in their locality.



Our Gloucestershire district partners



Our specialist countywide partners



Employment Support Coordinators (ESCs)

Employment and Support Coordinators (ESCs) are employed by the delivery partner organisations and provide individual, tailor-made support to empower participants to reach their goals. They focus on enhancing employability skills, building motivation and confidence, and provide ongoing support to participants who need access to advice, support, training, apprenticeships, employment and much more.



What our support looks like



How to refer people into the ESHO project

You can refer into ESHO and the Employment and Skills Hub by completing our [online form](#) or call us on 01452 425776 for a chat

Website: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/employment-and-skills-hub/>

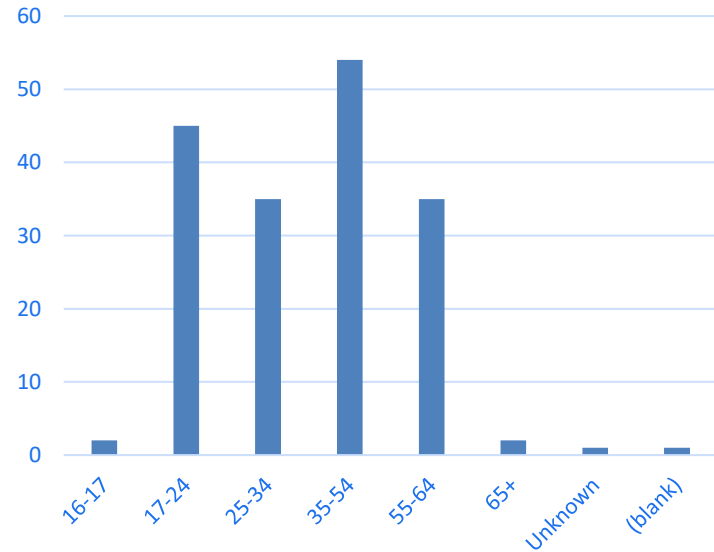
Progress to date...

**GLOUCESTERSHIRE
EMPLOYMENT
AND SKILLS HUB**
Outreach

Referrals

- Total Referrals – 264 (to 1st Sept)
- 242 participants to date
- 63% declared a disability or health condition
- 35% do not claim any benefit
- 47% claim Universal Credit
- 11% claim Employment and Support Allowance
- 27% BAME
- 68% referrals come through partner organisations and 18% through E & S Hub triage

Count of Name by Age Range



Participants

How long economically inactive?

50% between 1 and 4 years, 30% over 10 years

How did they become economically inactive?

Most left work because of:

- Mental health issues
- Physical health issues
- Caring responsibilities

Previous jobs?

Wide range: from cleaning, painting and decorating to PA and microbiologist

Outcomes to date

To 1st Sept 2023:

Into employment

60 (25 % of participants)

Into education/training

31 (13 % of participants)

Into volunteering

47 (19 % of participants)

Initial findings: Customer needs and barriers

- The **'Post-Covid Customer'** - multiple and more complex needs, expectations about what working is like – digital/IT skills, hybrid working...can I cope?
- **Lack of confidence** in applying for work and finding a work environment that meets their needs and reasonable adjustments
- **Fear of losing benefits** (e.g. ESA average time on this = 7 years)
- **Mental health issues**
- **Long-term health conditions and disabilities** (60% of participants)
- **Transport:** availability of buses; timing of buses; availability of accessible taxis; confidence in travelling; catchments and links to towns out-of-county e.g. Evesham
- Limited **digital skills and connectivity** vs 'digital by default'
- Cash economy
- Further customer survey/feedback is underway

Initial findings: Delivery partners and District implications

- Most partners have good networks across their District but we need to look outside of partner organisations for additional referrals
- Working to the District boundaries and linkage with countywide specialists has caused issues for some partners
- Links with District Councils are mainly strong, which will help with the UKSPF-funded phase
- By the time UKSPF funds the project, performance and proactivity issues with some delivery partners will have been resolved
- A referral matrix has been developed to share knowledge of wider support available
- Re-evaluating the “customer journey” as people who are economically inactive may need more “pre-employment support”

Next steps for Districts

With Vikki Walters vikki.walters@gloucestershire.gov.uk :

Please confirm:

- Your 'People and Skills' UKSPF funding for continuation of the ESHO project to if haven't already done so
- Your District UKSPF lead name and contact details if this is not your economic development officer
- Please also ask your UKSPF lead to inform us of any other employment and skills projects you are funding so that we can link to and collaborate with this

We will then follow-up with these named contacts and firm up plans, funding and reporting arrangements for the extension of the ESHO project.

Thank you for listening

