May 2025

Submission to the Mayfield Review

Communities that Work (CtW) is the national body in England focused on social housing and employment. CtW is led by our members, social landlords with 1.6 million homes across England who play a vital role in supporting people to thrive through meaningful and sustainable employment. Our members support people who may be economically inactive, unemployed or returning to work after some time out of the labour force.

A commitment to integrating work, skills and housing services is essential to breaking down barriers to good work for those who need it most. The JobsPlus pilot offers valuable insights into how community-led employment support can empower people to secure decent work and progression opportunities. Backed by a strong evidence base in the United States, this model is now replicated in ten sites across England through HMT's Labour Market Evaluation and Pilots Fund.

JobsPlus is delivered through an integrated local place that brings together housing, employment, and other local partners. It is open to all in the neighbourhood, removing formal barriers and stigma to participation. JobsPlus takes an explicitly person-centred, community-led approach. Residents play an active role in shaping provision, championing engagement and providing peer support. Evidence shows that this helps build trust and engagement in the service and address challenges around stigma and access. JobsPlus demonstrates the importance of in-person, community-based support and its potential to complement a modernised, digital employment support service. For many people facing difficult barriers to work, face-to-face visibility in a safe and welcoming environment increases trust and engagement. JobsPlus pilots are innovative, but their impact is limited to just ten sites. This indicates a significant opportunity to build more sustained partnerships to deliver the most joined-up support across our communities.

Employment support for individuals is meaningless without employers. Employers need support, confidence and surety to provide meaningful work, work experience, work placements and supported employment chances for people who may be further from the labour market or returning to work after a period of inactivity.

Experience drawn from JobsPlus (described above), Kickstart (2021/2), ESF & ERDF/housing employment and self-employment projects (2017-24) and the Future Jobs Fund (2009/10) shows that employer support is critical in enabling more people to enter, re-enter and sustain employment. Salary subsidy can help, but equally important is an employer's access to advice, guidance, and buddying around the most effective ways to support people who may need additional support (Access to Work and other types of support) and in supporting people who may be new or newly returning to workplace environments that are unfamiliar, perhaps daunting, and challenging.

Communities that Work endorses the Supported Employment model spearheaded by the British Association of Supported Employment: 'Getting a job is the very beginning of everyone's journey, and in-work support focuses on providing personalised support to enable individuals to learn and integrate into every aspect of their job and providing the support the employers need to feel Disability Confident in Action. This support will be over and above the reasonable adjustments needed and will help to address and overcome barriers throughout the lifecycle of an employee. Trained Job Coaches are the heartbeat of the Supported employment model and build the confidence and competence of the whole partnership.

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