



# Acknowledgements

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YAWR would also like to thank the Trustees and Staff of YAWR, the people who participated in this research, Miles Crompton who has supported YAWR Services in producing this report and Taiba Yasseen for her advice on the study.

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# 1. Introduction

This report details the feasibility of Work and Enterprise Clubs as a method to improve the employment prospects of young people in Rotherham, particularly those who are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities in central Rotherham which has high levels of both deprivation and ethnic diversity. People from BAME backgrounds often have a low take-up of mainstream services which may reflect lower awareness of opportunities or lack of inclusive services.

The study is funded by the Community Renewal Fund which funds pilot initiatives to empower places to explore how best to tackle local challenges by building skills, supporting local businesses, supporting communities and places and providing employment support to build sustainable communities.

Rotherham has a long history of industrial change and employment challenges which continue to affect local communities. The communities of central Rotherham are particularly disadvantaged in terms of access to employment, reflecting barriers to employment such as low levels of skills and qualifications.

This study will focus on what can be done to engage younger adults with the world of work, link them to employment opportunities, benefit from working alongside their peers and to be better able to help themselves. The study will explore people's work related experiences and seek to identify what activities should be delivered by a Work and Enterprise Club. This report details the findings of a survey carried out by You Asked We Responded (YAWR) Services as part of efforts to promote the employment prospects of people from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially those from BAME communities. Also described is a pilot work mentoring event organised by YAWR Services.

## 2. Background and Context

### **Work and Enterprise Clubs and Associated Provision**

#### **Job Clubs and Work Clubs**

A job club is a meeting group that helps members find meaningful employment through networking, training and coaching opportunities. Members of job clubs can assist each other by conducting mock interviews, helping create resumes and cover letters, providing job leads, assisting with application processes and conducting training on specific job skills. Job clubs may also provide members with the opportunity to network with other members of the club and industry professionals. Jobs clubs provide valuable services to individuals who are looking for a job. They can help members with minimal professional work experience find organisations that are looking for entry-level candidates, and they can help experienced members find positions that match their career goals and interests. These clubs provide their

members with the opportunity to learn valuable skills from other members which they may use throughout their careers.

Work clubs are very similar to job clubs and have been promoted by DWP to provide unemployed people with a place to meet, exchange skills, share experiences, find opportunities, make contacts and get support to help them in their return to work. Work clubs can be set up or supported by any suitable group including voluntary sector organisations, local authorities, community groups, and both local employers, and national employers through their local outlets.

Job clubs and work clubs are essentially seen as the same thing and there are several clubs operating in Rotherham, usually called job clubs. There is also other provision which helps people to find work and/or improve their employability. Job club provision may include some or all of the following services:

- Employment / careers advice
- IT and internet access
- Free printing
- Free phone
- CV writing / support
- Interview skills
- Covering letters
- Application form help
- Help with accessing job sites / job search
- Referrals to training / volunteering opportunities
- 1:1 help
- accessing volunteer placements
- accessing education and work-related training
- job applications
- self-employment advice
- funding for training and employment
- information and support on potential barriers to work e.g. convictions etc

Coalfields Regeneration Trust operates a job club in Wath and also Mexborough, near Swinton

Cortonwood Children's Centre has a job club every Tuesday afternoon and offers services at other times.

Rotherham United Community Support Trust run Millers Job Clubs at New York Stadium and Maltby Library.

Pathways Rotherham can help identify transferable skills, training needs, and help to get a job.

Autism Plus has a specialist job club.

Crisis Skylight offers 1:1 support across South Yorkshire.

Clifton Learning Partnership offers Information, advice, and support for people from Roma, Slovak and other ethnic minority communities in the Clifton and Eastwood areas, including support around housing, benefits, employment and training.

Other locations and providers offer support such as access to IT at libraries or courses to study for qualifications (RNN Group), training courses (Morthyng) or starting a business (Launchpad Fast Track).

Only Clifton Learning Partnership provides employment related services aimed at BAME communities although not a job club or work & enterprise club. Whilst other services are generic, they may not be perceived as inclusive by people from BAME backgrounds. There may well be scope for a work and/or enterprise club in central Rotherham which sets out to be inclusive and takes the needs of BAME residents into account.

### **Enterprise Clubs**

Enterprise Clubs have been promoted by DWP to provide a place where unemployed people who are thinking about setting up their own business can meet, share ideas and receive expert advice and support from local business people. Enterprise Clubs are private organisations run by businesses or partnerships which can offer the opportunity to network with other entrepreneurs and self-employed people; financial, legal, market and business advice; office services (including internet access); and advice about benefits and in-work support. There don't appear to be any Enterprise Clubs operating in Rotherham. **However, RIDO operate the launchpad scheme that supports individuals in developing their business ideas. They do not provide advice and help in other aspects of benefit advice, etc.**

### **Work and Enterprise Club**

The concept of a Work and Enterprise Club is to combine the format and activities of a job club and enterprise club within a single club. This would be a meeting group that helps members find meaningful employment, self employment or start a small business, through networking, advice, training and coaching opportunities. Members of such a club would help each other by sharing skills, knowledge and experiences, and encouraging each other. A Work and Enterprise Club could serve a wide variety of members from different work backgrounds and offer a wide range of services, to suit community needs. This appears to be a novel approach which would benefit from the diversity of offer and participants. There have never been any Work and Enterprise Clubs in Rotherham.

### **YAWR Services**

In 2010 Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA) was commissioned by Rotherham MBC to support the development of a Joint Improvement Programme

(JIP) Toolkit to improve BAME access to adult social care services. This work resulted in the establishment of You Asked We Responded (YAWR) as a BAME social care advocacy project overseen by REMA and funded by the Yorkshire and Humber JIP.

The project soon developed into a social enterprise which was approved as a social prescribing provider for the 2012 Social Prescribing Service pilot. YAWR have been delivering social care and social care advocacy ever since, working mainly with Rotherham’s BAME communities. YAWR became a registered charity in November 2020.

## Central Rotherham Communities

For the purposes of this study, Central Rotherham covers a radius of about 2 km from the town centre, including Clifton, Eastwood, East Dene, Herringthorpe, Broom Valley, Canklow, Ferham, Masbrough, Bradgate and Meadowbank. This area had a population estimated at 40,400 in 2020, an increase of 7.8 per cent since the 2011 Census. The working age population aged 18-64 in 2020 was 24,600 or 61 per cent of the total. The ethnicity of the population in 2011 is set out below, showing that 31 per cent of residents were from BAME backgrounds, almost four times the Borough average of 8 per cent. Unfortunately, the results of the 2021 Census for ethnicity have not yet been published. The current picture for young people can be modelled based on people who were aged 0-24 in 2011, who will now be aged 11-35, where the BAME proportion is significantly higher at 42 per cent.

2011 Census Ethnic Group	All Ages		Aged 0-24	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
White British	25,798	68.9%	7,792	57.6%
Other White	1,898	5.1%	768	5.7%
Multiple Heritage	825	2.2%	567	4.2%
Pakistani	5,796	15.5%	2,954	21.9%
Other Asian	1,374	3.7%	615	4.5%
Black	970	2.6%	452	3.3%
Other	800	2.1%	369	2.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,461</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13,517</b>	<b>100%</b>

Some communities have fairly stable populations, namely East Dene and Herringthorpe which both have high proportions of council housing. Areas with much private rented housing, notably Eastwood and Ferham, have grown significantly due the migration of Roma and other people from Eastern Europe, whilst new housing in the Town Centre and Canklow has contributed to population growth there.

Almost two thirds of neighbourhoods within Central Rotherham are within the most deprived ten per cent of England, with Eastwood, Canklow, Ferham, Masbrough, the Town Centre and parts of East Dene being in the most deprived five per cent.

Central Rotherham is entirely within the Rotherham Parliamentary Constituency which allows for more localised employment information than using the whole Borough. Furthermore, the Rotherham constituency is the most deprived of the three covering Rotherham so better reflects deprived areas of the Borough.

## **BAME Communities in Rotherham**

Rotherham's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population is a relatively small proportion of the Borough population compared with the national average but has grown and become increasingly diverse over the last two decades. According to the 2011 Census, there were 20,842 people from BAME communities or 8.1 per cent of Rotherham's population, more than double the number in 2001 when the percentage was only 4.1 per cent. As the 2011 Census is now 10 years old, more recent data should be taken into account. The school census (PLASC) shows that the percentage of BAME pupils in Rotherham schools grew from 13.7 per cent in 2011 to 18.7 per cent in 2020, which would suggest that around 11 per cent of the total Borough population is now BAME, about 29,000 people.

School Census data shows that the three central wards of Rotherham have very different ethnic profiles to the Borough as a whole, with BAME pupils being in the majority in Boston Castle and Rotherham East wards and 46 per cent of pupils in Rotherham West ward. Asian pupils, mainly Pakistani, outnumber White British pupils in Boston Castle. Around 15 per cent of pupils across the central wards are of White ethnicities other than British, of which the largest group are Roma.

<b>2020 School Census</b>	<b>Boston Castle</b>	<b>Rotherham East</b>	<b>Rotherham West</b>	<b>Rotherham Borough</b>
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White British	34.8%	48.8%	54%	80.8%
Other White	13.5%	15.4%	13.8%	4.7%
Multiple Heritage	4%	4.6%	4.2%	3.2%
Asian	41.7%	23%	22.4%	8.3%
Black	3.4%	4%	3.4%	1.6%
Other	2%	3.6%	1.5%	0.8%
Unclassified	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The largest BAME community in Rotherham is Pakistani/Kashmiri with an estimated 10,000 people in 2019, just over a third of the total BAME population. Like almost all BAME communities, the Pakistani/Kashmiri community is relatively young.

Other Asian communities number about 3,400, the largest groups being Indian and Chinese. There are also around 700 Arabs in Rotherham, mainly Yemeni who are a well established community.

Rotherham's Black population has increased significantly from 400 in 2001 to around 2,300 in 2019, mostly Africans who include many who arrived as refugees from Zimbabwe and other countries. There are a wide variety of backgrounds in terms of country of origin and circumstances.

The white minority population (mainly European) increased from 2,368 in 2001 to 4,320 in 2011, mainly as a result of immigration from the EU after 2004, a trend which continued until the UK left the EU in 2020. The largest group moving to Rotherham were Slovak Roma, who often arrived as whole families, intending to settle permanently. By 2020, there were 2,115 school children from non-British European backgrounds in Rotherham schools, part of a wider population estimated to be about 9,000. Around half of this population are Slovak/Czech Roma (4,600) and a further third are either Polish or Romanian. Almost all people from European migrant communities (post 2004) are of working age or younger.

Rotherham's BAME population is concentrated in the inner areas of the Borough with the majority living within two miles of the town centre. Using the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 and 2011 Census ethnicity, 44 per cent of BAME residents lived in areas within the most deprived 10 per cent of England, double the average for Rotherham. Although English is widely spoken by BAME residents, there are many community languages in Rotherham, the most widely spoken being Punjabi, Urdu, Slovak, Polish and Arabic. In the 2011 Census, 44 per cent of BAME residents aged 3+ did not speak English as their main language and in 2020, 10.5 per cent of children in Rotherham schools spoke English as an additional language.

Rotherham has a diversity of communities whose characteristics and needs vary considerably. The same is true of their understanding of local services and ability to access them. A high proportion of people from new migrant communities are of working age and are keen to work but may face language barriers and are less familiar with mainstream services and their providers. Longer established communities are more likely to have health conditions and family commitments, and can still face language or cultural barriers. Non-white people are much more likely to be unemployed than White people and non-white women are far more likely to be economically inactive. Although most BAME communities are concentrated in central Rotherham, some such as the Chinese, Indian and Irish communities are widely dispersed across the Borough. Many White British residents in central Rotherham are disadvantaged and face barriers to employment such as low qualifications, low literacy and lack of skills.

## **Economic Activity and Ethnicity**

Rotherham has a long history of economic adversity which is reflected in current patterns of economic activity. According to the ONS Annual Population Survey 2020-22, 12.9 per cent of people aged 16-64 in Rotherham Constituency are deprived of work, either unemployed or long term sick, compared with 8.7 per cent in England.

The economic activity rate is 72 per cent, below the national average of 78.8 per cent. The town also has a high proportion of people, mainly women, looking after their home and family. Conversely, the employment rate and self-employment rates are below the national average.

The unemployment rate (2020-22) for Rotherham Constituency is 5.5 per cent, above the English average of 4.8 per cent (based on the economically active population). However, when unemployed benefit claimants are expressed as a percentage of all people aged 16-64, the contrast becomes clearer, with 8.2 per cent claiming in Rotherham Constituency and 11 per cent in Central Rotherham, compared with only 4.1 per cent in England.

<b>Annual Population Survey</b>	<b>Rotherham Constituency</b>		
<b>Average over 2020-22</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Per Cent</b>	<b>England %</b>
Employed	38,650	75.6%	79.1%
Self-Employed (included above)	5,150	10.1%	11.0%
Unemployed	2,250	4.4%	3.7%
Long Term Sick	3,475	6.8%	4.9%
Looking After Family	4,425	8.7%	4.3%
Retired	1,450	2.8%	2.8%
Student	1,950	3.8%	5.7%
Other	1,700	3.3%	2.7%
<b>Total Aged 16-64</b>	<b>51,100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Due to the small sample size in Rotherham, the data for both Rotherham and England is the average of the last 8 quarterly figures published by ONS over the years 2020-22.

The employment rate for non-White people is 58 per cent, far below the average for White people of 73 per cent, and well below the English average for non-whites of 67.5 per cent. The lowest employment rate in Rotherham is for non-white women at just 48 per cent, compared with 61.4 per cent nationally. Across South Yorkshire, non-white people are more than three times more likely to be unemployed than White people (14.8 per cent compared with 4.7 per cent).

The 10,200 people who are economically inactive in Rotherham include many people who don't want paid work but also many who would ideally like a job. A high proportion of people who are long term sick or looking after their family are detached from the labour market. The Annual Population Survey suggests that 3,750 economically inactive people in Rotherham want a job, far more than those who are seeking work as unemployed. The total number of people who are not working but want a job is thus 6,000 or 11.7 per cent of the working age population.

The proportion of economically inactive people who want a job is 37 per cent in Rotherham, much higher than the 21 per cent figure for England. Across Rotherham, there are 975 more people long term sick and 2,225 more people looking after family than would be the case if the English average applied. Those who are long term sick, 61 per cent are men and 39 per cent are women. For those looking after family, 92 per cent are women (87 per cent in England).

People from non-white backgrounds in Rotherham are more likely to be economically inactive at 32.5 per cent compared with 22.7 per cent for people from white backgrounds. The Annual Population Survey data for Rotherham is based on too small a sample to provide reliable data by ethnicity combined with gender. However, the data for South Yorkshire shows that the economic inactivity rate for Pakistani women is 55 per cent, much higher than for Black women at 26 per cent and White women at 27 per cent.

Of the working age population in Rotherham Constituency, 59,000 (90 per cent) are White and 6,800 (10 per cent) are non-white. Just under two thirds of all non-white people of working age in Rotherham Borough live in Rotherham Constituency.

Of young people aged 18-24 in Rotherham Borough, 65 per cent are in employment and 20 per cent are students, leaving 15 per cent who are neither. Around half of those not working or studying are unemployed, the remainder being economically inactive.

### **Unemployment and Employment trends during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

Like most parts of the UK, there was relatively low unemployment in Rotherham Constituency during 2019/20, with the claimant count at 1,670 in February 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic began to affect all areas during March, leading to a national lockdown. Despite the use of furlough, economic contraction caused claimant unemployment to increase by 73 per cent between March and May 2020. For people aged 18-29, the increase was even higher at 82 per cent. Claimant unemployment continued to increase slowly to reach a peak of 3,580 in March 2021, more than twice the pre-pandemic level. Thereafter, economic recovery began to reduce unemployment to 2,790 by February 2022, still 67 per cent higher than two years earlier.

Across South Yorkshire, employment fell by 2.7 per cent between 2019 and 2021, whilst unemployment increased by 10.3 per cent. Long-term sickness also increased by 17 per cent, reflecting long covid and more people with mental health conditions. These figures give an additional 12,700 workless people, an increase of 14.3 per cent. The number of students fell as some of those from overseas returned home. Another change was a large increase in “other inactive”, up 28 per cent, which according to the Institute of Employment Studies, was prompted by lockdown, reflecting fear of the virus, unavailability of work and dropping out of the labour market..

Across Yorkshire and the Humber, workplace jobs fell by 94,300 or 3.4 per cent between March 2020 and December 2021. The main reductions were in Transport, Retail and Wholesale Distribution, Hospitality, Manufacturing, Financial Services and Other Services. There was also job growth in some sectors, notably Education, Health & Social Care, Public Administration and Entertainment & Recreation.

The local picture is complex with total employment in Rotherham Borough increasing from 116,600 in 2019/20 to 120,700 in 2021/2. Whilst the number of employees hardly changed, there are an extra 4,200 people self-employed. Payroll employment increased in Rotherham by 3.6 per cent December 2020 to December 2021, lower than the national average of 4.8 per cent. Although there are more people in employment, the average number of hours worked fell by 14.4 per cent between March and December 2020 compared with the same period in 2019. Universal Credit claimants perhaps show the impact most clearly, more than doubling from 3.5 per cent of the population pre-pandemic to 7.4 per cent in May 2020 before falling to 5.3 per cent by the end of 2021, still well above the figure two years earlier. The number of retired people aged under 65 increased by 17 per cent during the pandemic, indicating people leaving work and not returning.

One impact of the pandemic has been the growth of home and hybrid working which has reduced travel costs and created new opportunities for people who prefer to be home based. The Rotherham DPH Report 2022 gives an estimated 31 per cent of workers able to work from home. The growth of online working from home and more flexible hours has enabled some economically inactive women caring for children, or older or disabled relatives, to take on paid work.

### **3. Survey Methodology**

This feasibility study was commissioned by VAR to assess the need and viability of a Work and Enterprise Club in Rotherham. The choice of YAWR Services reflects a desire to engage with people from BAME communities. YAWR has growing experience of community research, notably involvement in BAME access to Social Prescribing research in 2021. YAWR has many years experience as a social care provider and has experienced BAME staff delivering to BAME service users.

YAWR developed and conducted a survey targeted towards BAME people aged 18-34 years in April-June 2022. A questionnaire was designed (see Appendix 1) for self completion although staff provided support to some participants. The questionnaire was piloted with YAWR staff to ensure that the questions were understood. YAWR identified adults in the target age group and worked through their community researchers to reach further contacts.

A total of 72 people took part in the survey and the results were compiled to provide aggregated information. Most respondents were from the Pakistani & Kashmiri community and women were in the majority. It was not possible to target people based on economic activity so respondents could have any economic status, allowing comparison between people with different work related experience.

The confidentiality of respondents has been respected in how the results are presented in this report. It should be noted that this is a relatively small sample and provides results which are more qualitative than quantitative. The survey aimed to

provide an in-depth understanding of the target group. Whilst the survey did not mention the Covid-19 pandemic, it may have some impact on both engagement and the results.

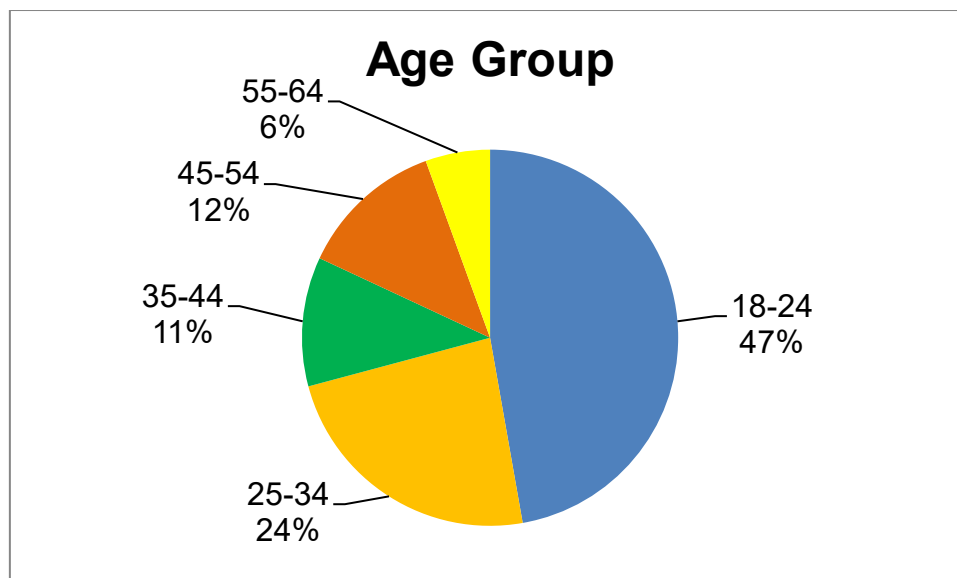
## 4. Research Findings

This section details the results of YAWR's Work and Enterprise Survey which asked people about their employment status and experiences, and related views.

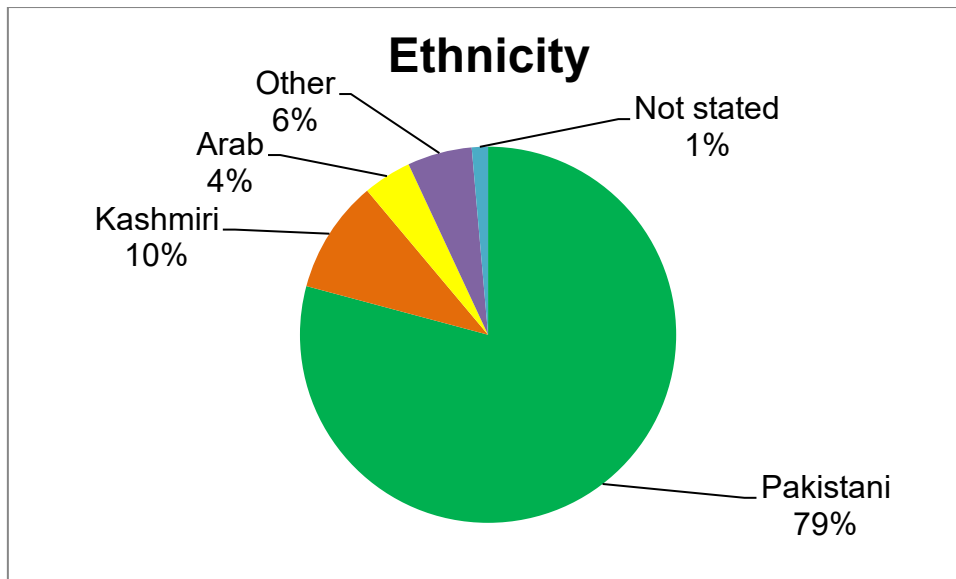
### Participant Profile

The majority of respondents were women, with 62.5 per cent compared with 37.5 per cent who were men. This may reflect a greater willingness to participate amongst women and/or the gender balance of YAWR contacts. 94 per cent of respondents were heterosexual and 6 per cent had a different sexuality or preferred not to say. Analysis of the survey results will take account of gender differences and report any significant differences found.

The survey was targeted at people aged 18-34 who made up 71 per cent of respondents. There were also some respondents in older age groups with 24 per cent aged 35-54 and six per cent aged 55-64. This enables comparisons to be drawn between younger and older people of working age.



Most respondents were either Pakistani or Kashmiri, with 89 per cent of respondents. There were also 10 per cent of respondents from other ethnic groups. Almost all the respondents were Muslims, with 97 per cent of the total. This reflects YAWR's contacts and location in central Rotherham.

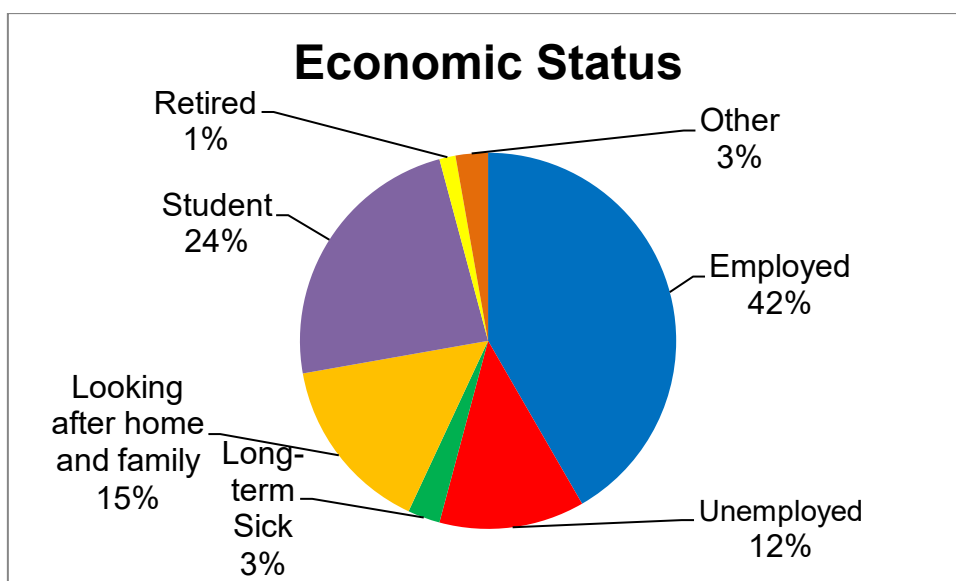


Just six per cent of respondents considered themselves to be disabled and eight per cent had a limiting long-standing illness or disability, a reflection of the age profile of respondents. In addition, 11 per cent reported that they were unpaid carers, including some of those who were disabled themselves.

## Economic Characteristics

### Economic Status

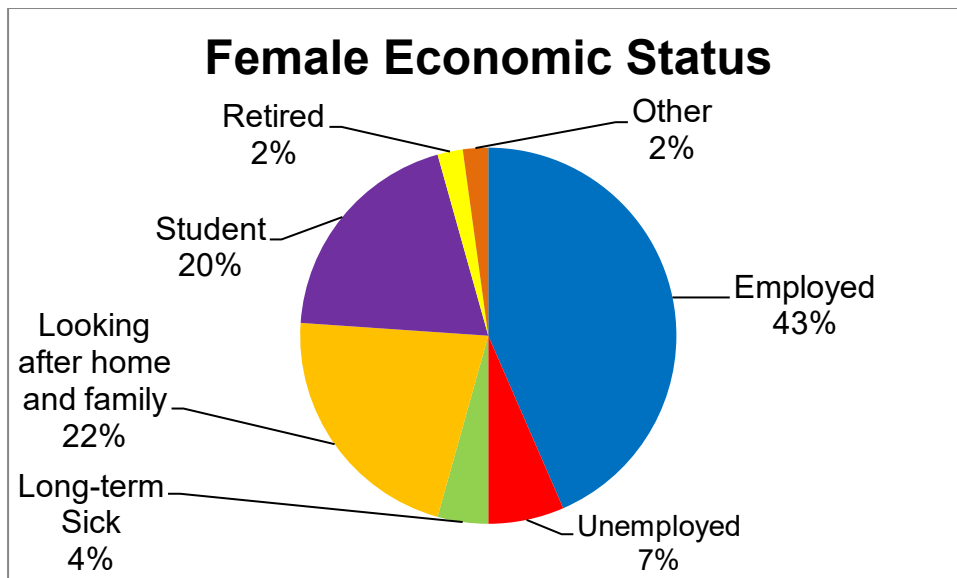
The majority of respondents were economically active, making up 54 per cent of the total. The employment rate was 42 per cent and the unemployment rate was 22 per cent (of those economically active). There were notably few people long term sick, which partly reflects the age profile although the results suggest that this group is less easy to reach. Of those who were economically inactive, about half were students and most of the rest were looking after their home and family.



Two thirds of employed respondents were women whilst two thirds of those unemployed were men. Of respondents looking after the home and family, over 90 per cent were women. There was a close gender balance for students. There were clearly different economic profiles for women and men which will be illustrated through analysis by gender.

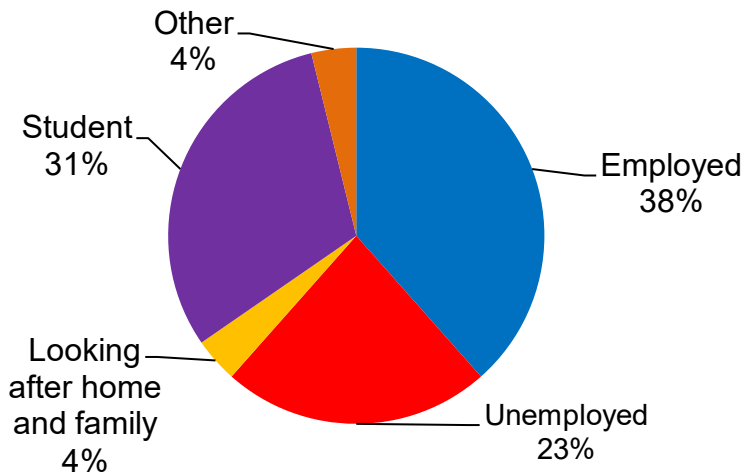
Women had a higher employment rate than men but much lower unemployment rate, with those men surveyed being three times more likely to be unemployed. If long term sickness is added, men were still twice as likely to be workless than women. Women were over five times more likely to be looking after their home and family than men.

In summary, most women were either employed, students or looking after their home and family, whilst most men were either employed, students or unemployed.



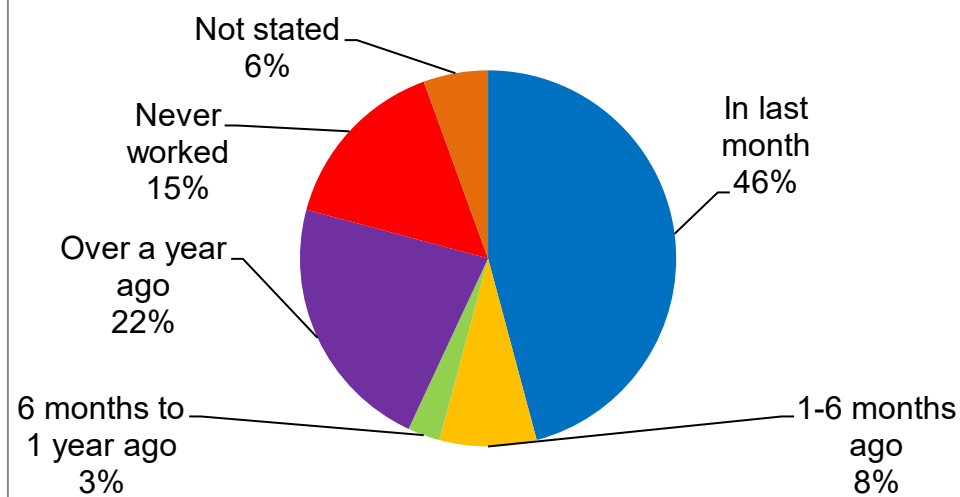
Although the male employment rate was lower than for females, the male economic activity rate was higher at 61 per cent compared with the female rate of 50 per cent. The results reflect the fact that most respondents are from the Pakistani/Kashmiri community where economic activity rates for women are known to be notably low, only 45 per cent in South Yorkshire compared with 72 per cent for Pakistani men.

## Male Economic Status



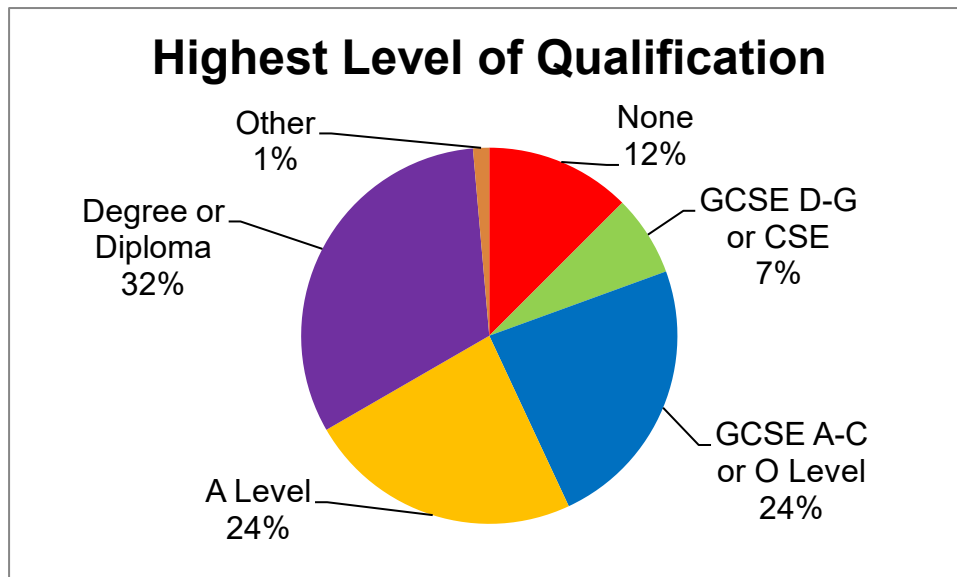
Respondents were asked if they had ever worked and the great majority, 79 per cent, had done so. However, only 46 per cent were currently working or had worked within the last month. The second largest group were the 22 per cent who had last worked more than a year ago. When added to the 15 per cent who had never worked, the total proportion disengaged from the labour market was thus 37 per cent. Of those disengaged, 40 per cent were looking after their home and family, mainly women. A further 27 per cent were students and 17 per cent were unemployed, mainly men. This shows that the great majority of those who had not worked in the last year were economically inactive, at 83 per cent. None of those who were long term sick had worked in the last year. The majority of students had some experience of work although often more than a year ago.

## Last Worked:



## Qualifications

Almost a third of respondents were qualified to at least Degree or Diploma level (NVQ Level 4) and the majority (56 per cent) qualified to at least A Level (NVQ Level 3). However, 12 per cent had no qualifications and in all 19 per cent were qualified below NVQ Level 2.

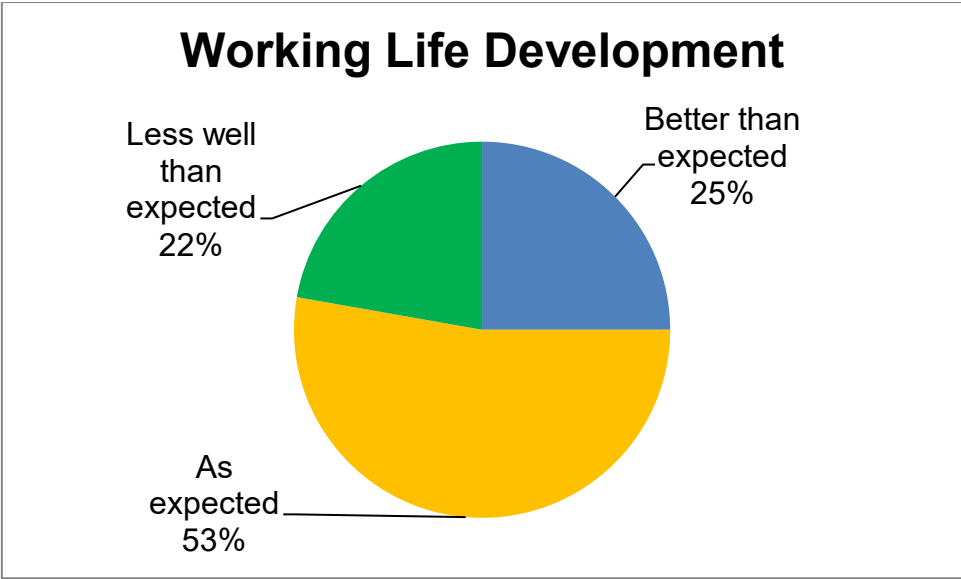


There were some notable differences by gender with 35 per cent of women having a Degree or Diploma compared with 24 per cent of men. Men were far more likely to have GCSE A-C or O Level as their highest level of qualification, whilst women were far more likely to have no qualifications. Women's qualifications were linked to age, with nearly all of those with a Degree or Diploma aged under 45 but most of those with no qualifications were aged over 45.

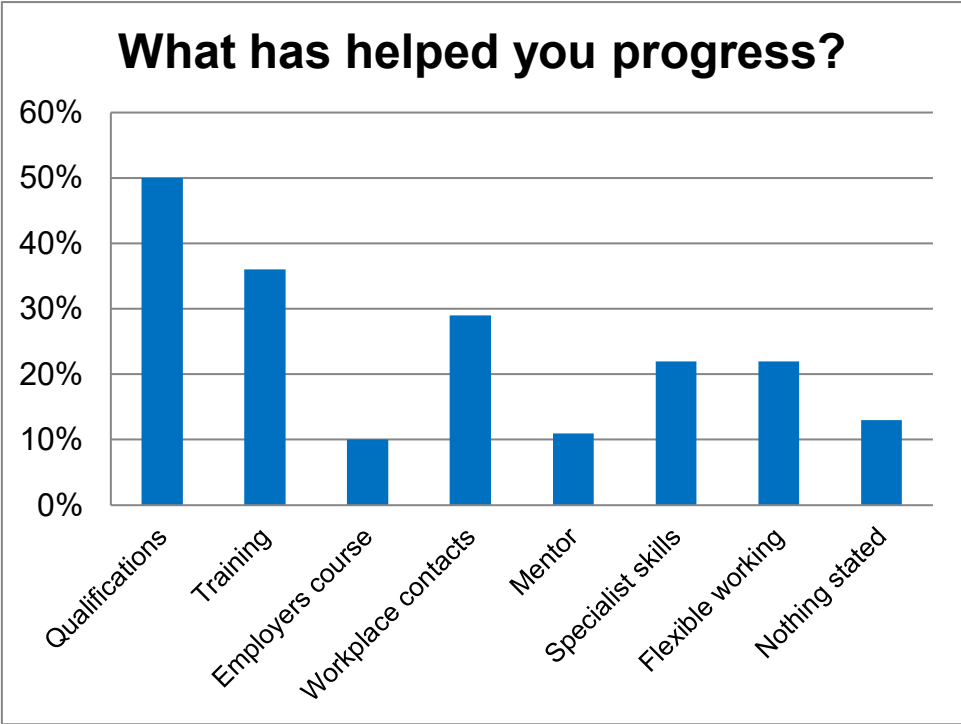
People with a Degree or Diploma had the highest employment rate at 65 per cent and the lowest unemployment rate at just four per cent. Those qualified to A Level were most likely to be students at 53 per cent and only six per cent were unemployed. Respondents qualified to O Level had the highest unemployment rate at 28 per cent. Those with no qualifications (mainly women) were most likely to be looking after their home and family or long term sick.

## Experience of Working Life

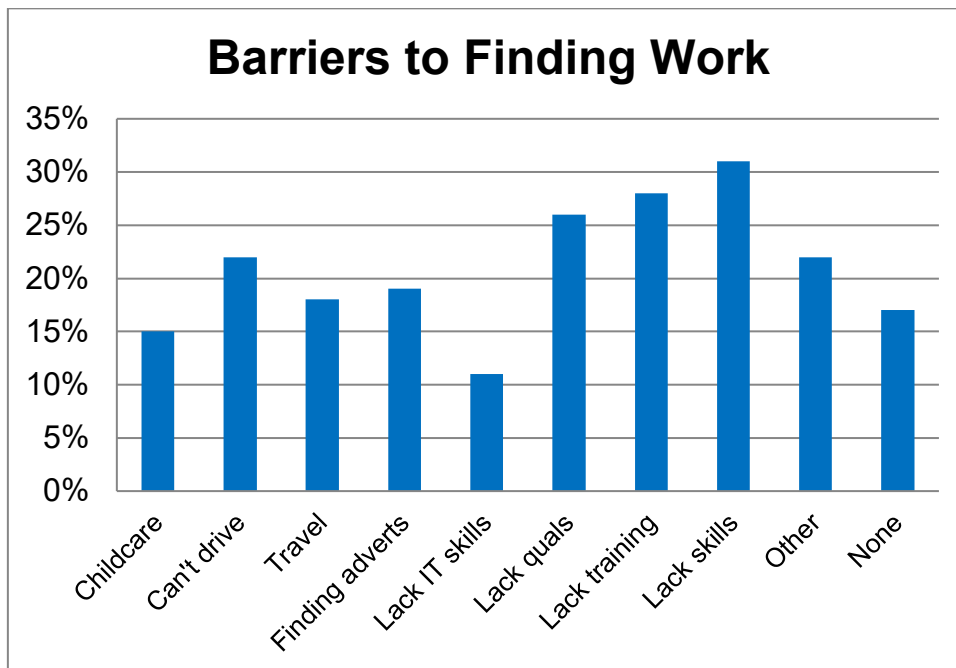
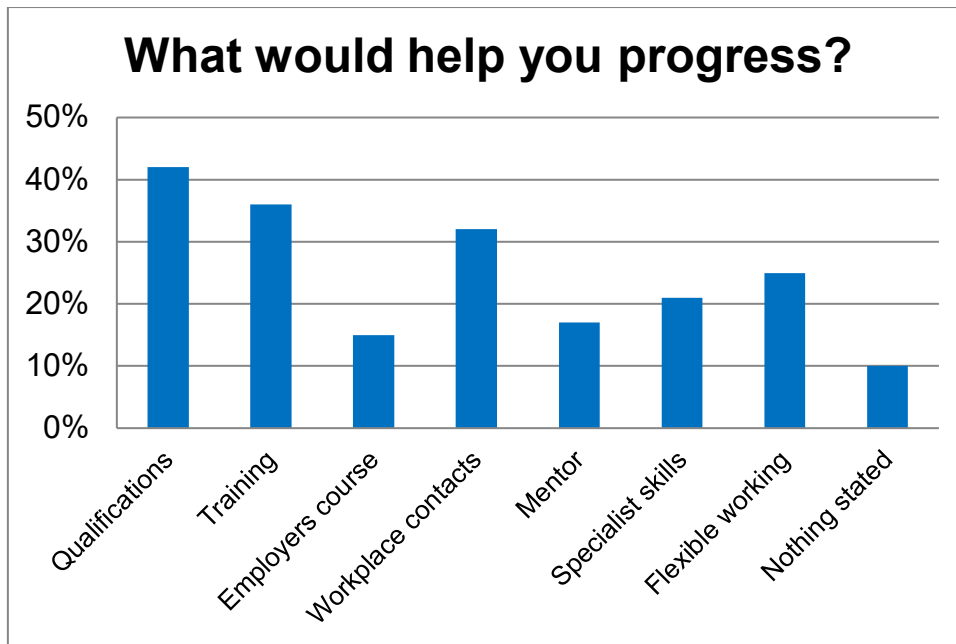
Around half of participants felt that their working life had developed as expected with the remainder divided fairly evenly between those who felt it had developed better than expected and those who felt it had developed less well. Of those who felt it had developed better, 56 per cent were in employment. This was true of only 19 per cent of those who felt it had developed less well. Of the latter group, 38 per cent were either unemployed or long term sick. Women were more likely to feel that their working lives had developed better than expected whilst there was no gender difference in the proportions feeling that it had developed less well than expected.



Respondents were asked what had helped them to progress in their careers and most listed at least one of the possible options. The most common factor was qualifications, mentioned by half of respondents, often in combination with other factors such as training, mentioned by 36 per cent of respondents. Having specialist skills and having flexible working were equally mentioned. Another help was to know people working in the relevant sector, often listed alone.



There was a similar pattern for what respondents thought would help them to progress further. Those factors mentioned by slightly more respondents compared to what had already helped them progress were a course funded by employer, knowing people in the relevant sector, a mentor and flexible working.



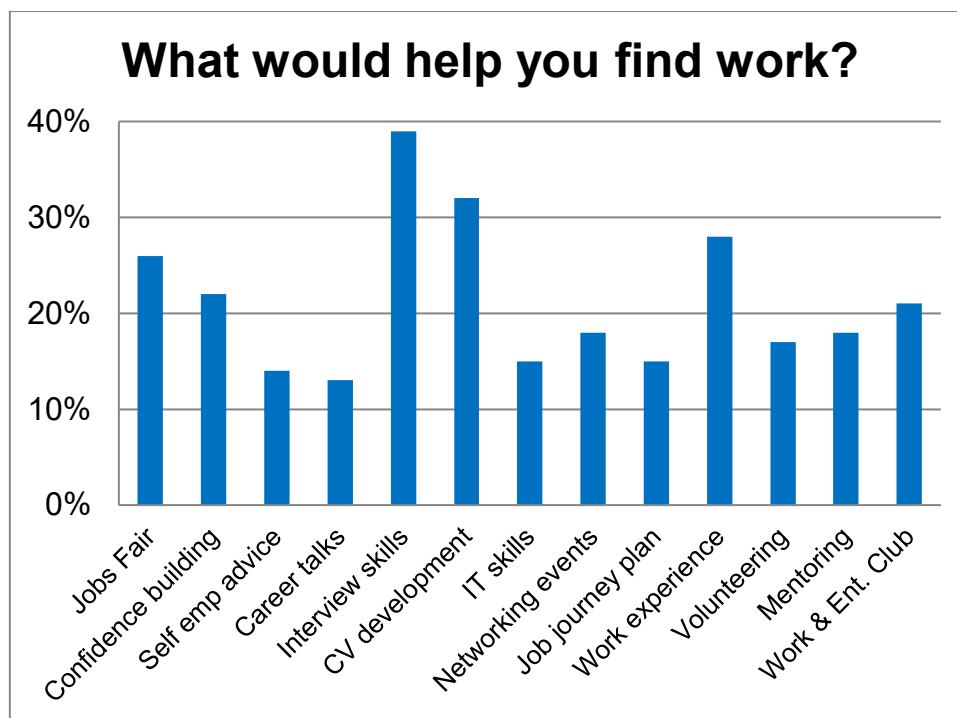
Respondents were asked what barriers they had faced in finding work. Only 17 per cent reported that they had faced no barriers. The most frequently mentioned barriers were lack of skills, lack of training and lack of qualifications, often mentioned together. More practical barriers relating to travel and childcare were also significant, with inability to drive being mentioned by over a fifth of respondents. A need for childcare was mentioned by 22 per cent of women and 27 per cent of women mentioned inability to drive, compared with 15 per cent of men. Almost a fifth of respondents also stated that not knowing where to find job adverts had been a barrier.

When asked where they saw themselves in a year's time, most respondents saw themselves working or continuing to study. Many employed people expected to have progressed to a better paid or otherwise better job. Unemployed people saw themselves working, only one student saw themselves as unemployed in a year's time. Women who were looking after their home and family had more varied views, most still expecting to be doing the same thing but some saw themselves in paid work or learning English which they recognised as a need to progress.

## Views on Employment Support

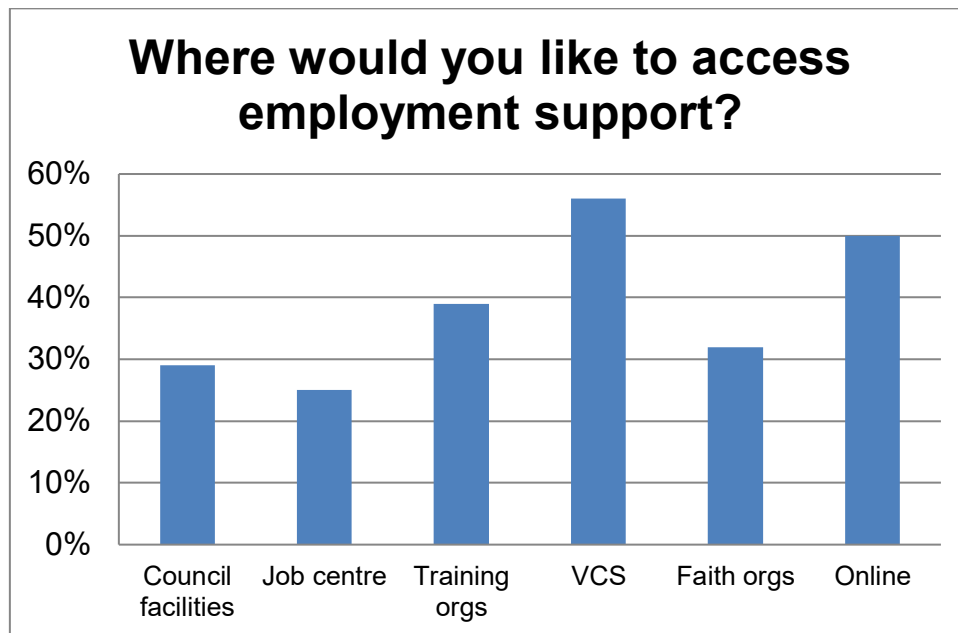
Respondents were asked what would help them to find work. There was a wide variety of answers, the most popular of which was interview skills training. CV development was the second most popular and often listed with interview skills training. Over a quarter of respondents favoured a work experience placement, reflecting the high proportion not in employment. A careers/jobs fair, confidence building workshop and work and enterprise club were also favoured by over a fifth.

A work and enterprise club was supported by 21 per cent of respondents. Of these, 80 per cent were aged 18-34 and both women and men were interested, 22 per cent of women and 19 per cent of men. Their economic status varied with a third being in employment, 27 per cent unemployed, 20 per cent students and 13 per cent looking after their home and family. In all, 40 per cent were economically inactive.



Respondents were asked where they would like to access employment support. The most popular setting to access support was the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, favoured by 56 per cent. Online opportunities were favoured by half of respondents followed by training organisations. Notably, there were more

people who would like to access employment support at faith organisations (most likely a mosque) than at a DWP job centre or Council facilities. These results illustrate a desire to access employment support at venues or organisations where people feel comfortable rather than public sector bodies. Access at the job centre was least favoured, possibly due to negative associations with benefit conditionality and sanctions. Online support could be provided by any organisation but the interest in this illustrates a desire to access support at home rather than attending organisational premises to receive support.

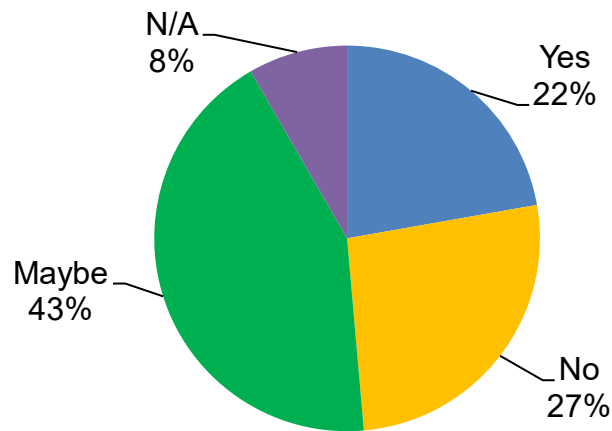


### Interest in a Work and Enterprise Club

Interest in attending a Work and Enterprise Club closely reflected that shown when respondents were asked about what would help them to find work, with 22 per cent definitely being interested. There was a close gender balance amongst those interested and almost all were Pakistani or Kashmiri. Most of those interested were well qualified, with 63 per cent having reached at least A Level or NVQ3.

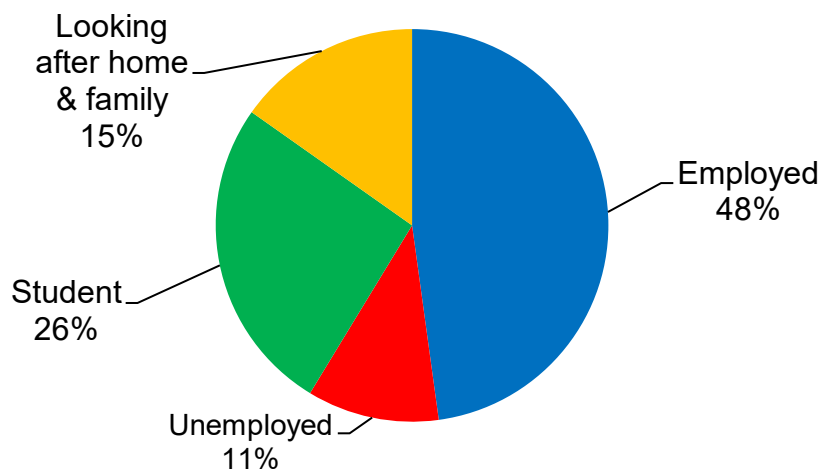
The most striking feature of responses to this question was the high proportion of people answering 'maybe', those who might be interested but are unsure. This was perhaps because the concept was unfamiliar to them or they are not sure if it would offer relevant help. The large proportion who might be interested suggests that if a club were available, interest could be considerably higher than the 22 per cent who were definitely interested. In all, 65 per cent of respondents showed some degree of interest.

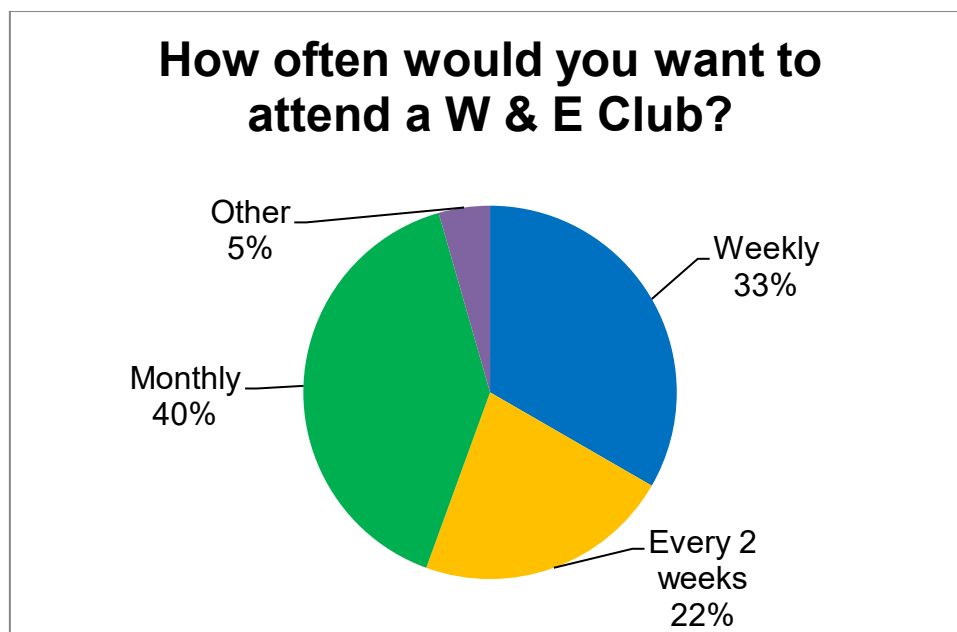
## Would you be interested in a Work & Enterprise Club?



Most of those who were definitely interested in a Work and Enterprise Club were either employed (44 per cent) or students (31 per cent). Of those showing some interest (answering Yes or Maybe) almost half were employed, a quarter were students and more people were looking after their home & family than were unemployed. Amongst women who showed some interest in a club, half were working and a fifth were looking after their home & family. Some unemployed people were not interested in a club although they may just be unsure about what such a club would involve or who would run it, possibly worried about potential DWP involvement as part of benefit conditionality.

## Economic status of those with some interest in a W & E Club





Anyone who might be interested in attending a Work and Enterprise Club was asked how often they would want to attend such a club. A total of 45 people responded to this question or 63 per cent of all respondents. There was no consensus about how often people wanted to attend a club although the most popular option was monthly at 40 per cent. Amongst those definitely interested, 44 per cent favoured monthly attendance, with the remainder equally divided between weekly and every two weeks (25 per cent each). This suggests that a monthly club would be the most popular option amongst those who were more likely to attend.

## 5. Work Mentoring Event

As part of its wider work on employment support, YAWR organised a pilot Work Mentoring Event on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022, held at Mowbray Gardens Library and Neighbourhood Hub. The following providers were in attendance:

- Reed Partnerships
- RMBC- employment solutions team (adults)
- RMBC- Early Help ambitions program (age15-25)

The event featured a panel with members from different professions. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from the panel members about their career journeys and had the opportunity to ask questions. The panelists were: Taiba Yasseen (The University of Sheffield), Maryam Akram (Optician) and Shukria Khan (Pharmaceuticals).

There were around 28 attendees excluding staff and panel members. Participants were a mixture of university students, school leavers, college students and unemployed people.



Pathways to Employment Mentoring Event at Mowbray Gardens, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Attendees were also able to access support from providers and find out about training and employment pathways and opportunities.

Feedback from those attending was positive. Attendees found the event interesting and helpful to hear about different career paths and the support available from providers. This gave attendees more confidence about exploring different career opportunities available when thinking about their future.

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions from YAWR's Work and Enterprise Study and Survey

The economic challenge for deprived communities like central Rotherham and for many BAME communities is clearly high. The town of Rotherham has significantly higher rates of unemployment, long term sickness and other economic inactivity than the national average. There are 6,000 people in Rotherham Constituency who are not working but want a job. Across South Yorkshire, non-white people are three times more likely to be unemployed than white people. Pakistani women have very low rates of economic activity compared to the average for women, mainly because they are looking after their home or family.

The survey of 72 people has provided a valuable insight into the economic characteristics, experience and views of Rotherham's BAME communities, mainly the Pakistani & Kashmiri community. It should also be noted that the majority of respondents were women although any major gender differences are revealed in the analysis. The survey was targeted towards younger adults under 35 so the results will reflect their views more than for older people of working age.

The employment rate of respondents was relatively low at 42 per cent although this reflected the high proportion of students, given the age profile. A notable gender difference was shown with men being more likely to be unemployed whilst women who were not working or students were mainly looking after their home and family. The survey also showed that a high proportion of people were disengaged from the

labour market, either because they have been studying and never worked or have not worked for over a year. Qualification levels are mostly high although this relates mainly to younger adults. There was significant polarisation between highly qualified young women and poorly qualified older women who often with no qualifications.

Most respondents identified barriers they had faced in finding work. The most frequently mentioned barriers were lack of skills, training and qualifications. In addition, women often faced barriers relating to travel and childcare. Not being able to drive was seen as a barrier, as was finding job adverts.

Most of those surveyed were interested in some form of support to either find work or find a better job. The most frequently mentioned forms of support were aimed at improving the way people come across to employers – interview skills training and CV development. Work experience and confidence building were also sought to help make people more employable. These are types of support which a Work and Enterprise Club could offer. People were most likely to want to access support based in the VCS or online, possibly a combination of the two.

The concept of a Work and Enterprise Club was reasonably well supported, especially considering that it would be unfamiliar. It is important to note that most of those showing strong interest or any interest were either employed or students. This suggests that a Work and Enterprise Club appeals to anyone looking for a job, be they workers looking for a better job, students looking for their first job or people trying to get back into work. The traditional concept of a job club being for unemployed people is at odds with community views and perceptions. The great majority of people interested were not unemployed but from a range of economic backgrounds. People interested were mainly young (under 35), fairly well qualified and fairly balanced between male and female.

The most widely supported meeting frequency for a Work and Enterprise Club was monthly which would make a club easier to host than a more frequent cycle. Given the desire to access support within the VCS, a club would be best hosted within this sector, possibly by or in partnership with a training organisation.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Establish a Work and Enterprise Partnership in Rotherham**

The partnership would involve VAR, YAWR and a training provider, supported by RIDO. **Possibly involve faith groups who have a captive audience and mentors who have lived experiences could support young people.**

### **2. Define the diversity of offer for a Work and Enterprise Club**

Identify who can provide what services for the club, such as interview training, CV development, job search, digital literacy etc.

### **3. Identify a host venue for a Work and Enterprise Club**

Identify a community venue which can host a monthly Work and Enterprise Club and co-ordinate with partners to provide the desired services. **This needs to be in an area where it is accessible to individuals from the BAME communities. Mainstream and some VCF organisations may not be conducive as individuals may have negative experiences.**

**4. Promote and publicise the Work and Enterprise Club**

Establish referral pathways from colleges, job centre, community organisations etc to attract a range of people to the club, who could be unemployed, students, workers, family carers or long term sick. Also advertise the club via social media aimed at the target group.

**5. Explore how to improve community engagement**

Enhance the response to future surveys and links between service providers and the people they seek to serve. Address the impact of the pandemic on community engagement.

**6. Build on this study to better understand the experience of wider BAME community groups**

People from other BAME communities such as Roma or Black African are likely to have different employment experiences and needs for progression, we need to understand the diversity of employment support needs within BAME communities.

# Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

## Appendix 2: References

The Sheffield 4 Jobs Hub, Rotherham Work Clubs, 2022

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