FUTURES



Social Value Summary Report

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire

2025–2026

Mission and values

Futures is a not-for-profit organisation working across Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and the East Midlands to support young people who are NEET, adults facing complex barriers and people furthest from employment.

We reach people whatever their starting point – including those who may not yet have the confidence to seek help themselves – connecting them to the right services and tracking their progress every step of the way.

Working in partnership with employers, local authorities and community partners, we create lasting pathways into employment and learning.

£4,558,278
investment from contracts

12,782
customers supported

£60,412,215
estimated present social value, including future benefits.

£6.60–£13.25
of social value for every £1 invested

1,372
young people aged 18–24 and NEET supported

96.2%
of 16–17-year-olds in Nottinghamshire in education, employment or training, delivered through Futures' NEET contract

Indicative estimated range based on the evidence and assumptions explained in the full report. Summary of the Social Return on Investment Evaluation – October 2026.

What we do – and how we measure it



Who we help

We work with people at every stage: from teenagers at risk of becoming NEET to adults who have been out of work for years – and everyone in between.

Employment support

Sustained, personalised support for young people and adults facing complex barriers – including care leavers, people with mental health challenges and those who are long-term unemployed. We provide follow-on support after people move into work, ensuring progress is lasting.

NEET provision

Specialist services for young people aged 16–24 who are not in education, employment or training. We track young people's progress, connect them to learning or work, and work closely with local authority partners to meet NEET reduction targets.

Local partnerships

We work in partnership with employers, community services and local partners to create pathways into work. Our Employment and Skills Triage Service in Mansfield, for example, has helped bring together employment guidance and community support in one place.



Purpose of the evaluation

1. To understand the difference Futures makes by following international principles and standards for measuring social value.

2. To use good quality social value data to improve support and increase impact.

SOCIAL VALUE INTERNATIONAL
ADVANCED PRACTITIONER
1 2 3

What is Social Return on Investment?

Social Return on Investment (SROI) translates the difference our work makes in people's lives into a financial value. It captures employment and economic benefits alongside confidence, wellbeing and belonging. It accounts for what might have changed without our involvement.

Investment, reach and evidence

Investment

£4,558,278
Amount invested (contract income)

Programme funding included:

- NEET provision
- Connect to Work
- Youth Guarantee programmes
- Adult Skills Fund
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Supported Internships
- IASS
- National Careers Service funding attributed to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

NEET outcomes

1,372
young people aged 18–24 and NEET supported – 322 moved into employment and 321 into learning. For the others, support focused on building the confidence, stability and foundations that make future progress possible.

96.2%
of 16–17-year-olds in Nottinghamshire in education, employment or training

94.4%
in Nottingham City – both areas ranking 4th lowest for NEET rates nationally

5.5%
Nottingham's NEET rate outperforms the East Midlands (6.2%) and England (5.8%)

Reach and outcomes

12,782
customers supported – 7,261 of whom were identified as facing significant barriers to employment or learning, including NEET young people, care leavers, people with SEND and those with complex needs.

2,135
job outcomes across all services. Customers have different goals, not all employment-related.

4,719
completed learning outcomes

548
people accessed training services

Transform Your Future

25%
into employment in the county

25.2%
into employment in the city

32%
into employment in deprived coalfield areas

Stakeholder engagement methods

The evaluation integrated interviews, surveys, internal records and external research featuring:

- 31 consultation participants: Customers, staff, parents/carers and employers
- 34 eligible survey responses from service users
- Five staff survey responses (provisional analysis across 66 support staff)

The supplied funding values relate to 2025/26 contracts. They are not a separately verified statement of expenditure for the evaluation period.

Limitations: Qualitative evidence was stronger than in the previous evaluation (2022–2025). Results are based on a sample of customers and should be read as indicative rather than representative of all those Futures supports.

Outcomes and change

For many of the people Futures supports, progress begins long before employment or learning is in sight.

By working alongside people in their own communities – shaped around local needs and local lives – change becomes possible even for those facing the greatest barriers. These are some of their stories.

> Futures helped me find a job and continued supporting me afterwards. My adviser helped me understand and resolve communication difficulties, which helped me stay in employment longer. I felt less alone and more confident.

> I used to avoid going into town and felt isolated. Support to access learning in a way that suited me helped reduce my anxiety and build my confidence. I can now go out more and have greater freedom.

> After repeated rejections, I had lost confidence and did not know how to move forward. My adviser helped me understand my options, improve my applications and aim higher. I secured the apprenticeship I wanted and could see a career pathway ahead.

> I felt overwhelmed and lacked confidence. Futures supported me at my own pace, helping with applications, interviews and practical requirements. The service felt like a family: I felt at home, accepted and that I belonged.

Customers' reported outcomes	Total customers	% of customers
Improved confidence and self-esteem	19 of 34	55.9%
Felt listened to and understood	18 of 34	52.9%
Greater employment readiness	17 of 34	50.0%
Greater hope and optimism	16 of 34	47.1%
Increased awareness of opportunities	16 of 34	47.1%

Internal surveys of NEET and Bought Provision participants identified significant confidence gains: 80 of 87 (92%) reported substantial improvements – changes that help people take steps towards employment, learning and greater independence.

Footnote: Respondents could select several outcomes. Percentages describe the survey sample, not confirmed rates across all customers.

Social value created

£60.4m
Total social value
(including future benefits)

£13.25
Best estimate –
for every £1 invested

£6.60
Cautious estimate –
for every £1 invested

Futures generates an estimated £6.60–£13.25 of social value for every £1 invested. The lower figure reflects a cautious sensitivity scenario; the upper figure is the main-model estimate. These are indicative estimates, not guaranteed returns.

How the social value breaks down – year one

This shows the social value generated during the year, by outcome. Some benefits – such as sustained employment – continue beyond the year, bringing the total estimated value to £60.4 million.

Outcome	Value
Skills and confidence — barriers group	**£19,423,800**
Skills and confidence — general support	**£1,861,596**
Mental wellbeing — recorded mental-health-related needs	**£79,520**
Mental wellbeing general support	**£429,520**
Employment outcomes	**£15,565,072**
Belonging and social inclusion	**£8,633,551**
Negative customer social value	**–£9,235,863**
Staff pride and happiness	**£115,302**
Staff emotional strain and reduced wellbeing	**–£3,120**
Net total	**£36,869,379**

What this tells us

- Supporting people facing the greatest barriers – including NEET young people, those with complex needs and long-term unemployed adults – creates the greatest social value: £19.4 million of this year's total.
- Belonging and inclusion are valuable outcomes in their own right, not just steps towards employment.
- Futures improves mental wellbeing – supporting people to feel less distressed and more able to engage with work and learning.

How this compares

The previous evaluation (2022–2025) reported approximately £4 of social value per £1 invested. This year's main model estimates £13.25, with £6.60 used as the cautious estimate.

Learning for the year ahead

What the evidence tells us

- Futures' support goes beyond employment readiness – it changes lives.
- Customers gained confidence, hope, belonging, wellbeing and resilience.
- These shifts improved engagement with learning, work and everyday life.
- Strong progress was made on learning and employment outcomes – particularly for young people who are NEET and those facing significant barriers.
- Parents and carers reported benefits in accessibility, awareness and reduced stress.
- Employers reported a more diverse workforce and savings in time and cost.

Priorities for increasing social value

1. Set up a quarterly Social Value and Performance Group, including customers, to guide decisions.

2. Build an impact framework from existing records, surveys and proportional follow-up.

3. Investigate the gap between progress and paid work, and engage not-for-profit and charity employers.

4. Give named-contact support at three and six months after progression.

5. Recognise self-employment, social enterprise and independence as valid routes to progress.

6. Reduce negative social value through improved accessibility, communications and continuity of support.

Looking ahead to the next year

- For more than 30 years, Futures has supported individuals and local communities, particularly young people who are NEET, adults facing complex barriers and those furthest from work.
- As national reforms reforms – including Get Britain Working, the Youth Guarantee and Connect to Work – reshape the employment support landscape, Futures is well placed to meet new and growing demand.
- Futures is committed to strengthening partnerships with employers, local authorities and combined authority partners – expanding reach and deepening impact across the region.

Recommendation

With deep roots across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, a proven track record of reaching people who face the greatest barriers and a commitment to continuous improvement, Futures should build on the foundation this evaluation sets out – strengthening employer relationships, deepening local partnerships and ensuring that young people who are NEET and adults facing complex barriers have access to the long-lasting support they need.

Let's achieve your goals, together



FUTURES

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