



Providing Choice



Addressing Inequalities



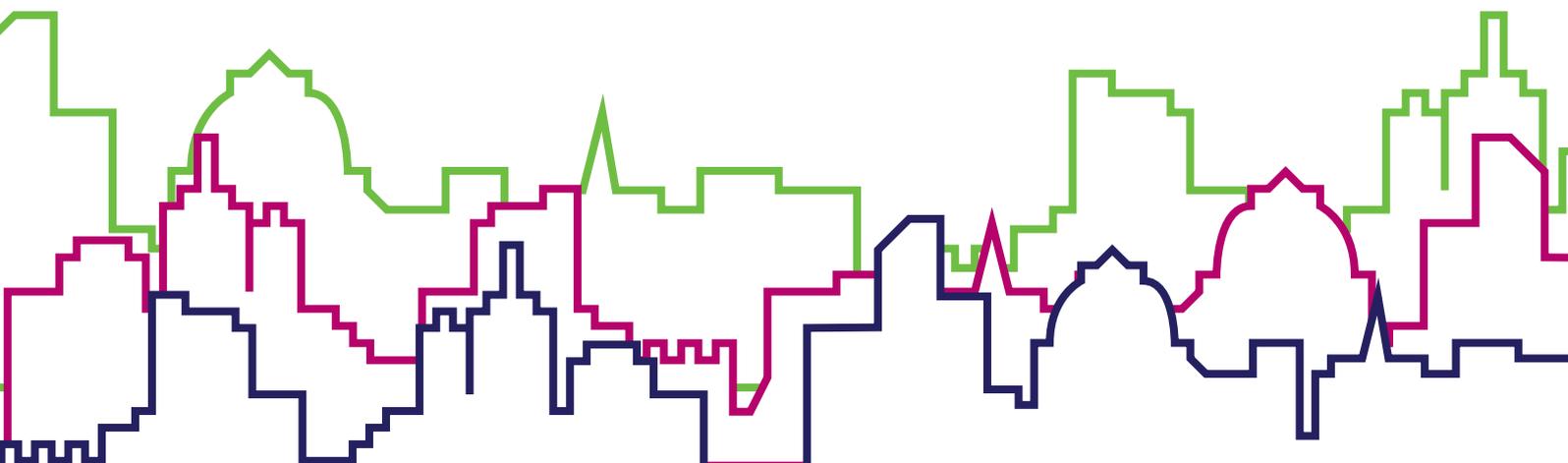
Improving Life Opportunities



## Employment Services Strategy

2018/19

Unity Homes and Enterprise recognises the need to support our tenants and the residents in the neighbourhoods in which we work by providing employment and training services.



# Background & Introduction

## Rationale

Unity Homes and Enterprise continues to recognise the need to support our tenants, and the residents in the neighbourhoods in which we work by providing employment and training services. Unity Employment Services Team aim to support tenants back into employment.

Helping to equip customers with the tools required to find employment increases the likelihood of them meeting their tenancy obligations, ultimately ensuring their rent is paid, and on time.

Unity Employment Services Team has worked hard to establish contacts within the local training and employment sector so that our customers have a variety of services they can access depending on their individual requirements.

## Identifying the need for Employment Services

The previous Tenants Into Work (TIW) project discovered there was a need to assist people that were furthest from the labour market. The Employment Services Team want to offer each customer the support they need to find employment, however due to their personal circumstances, individuals may also need additional support. The one to one sessions are a vital tool in identifying all barriers to accessing potential employment or training opportunities and can often be a good platform to signpost to other Unity Services. To assist the long term unemployed return to work, and stay in work, it is vital to help address all the potential barriers they may face as they have a huge effect on employability and their ability to remain in post.

Recent changes in Government Policy will impact our customers. The introduction of household benefit caps and changes to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) to Employment Support Allowance (ESA) will encourage more people to seek employment.

Since inception, the Employment Services Team has helped over 1,200 people into work or training placements. The Employment Services team will continue to build on previous outcomes to positively impact the lives of our tenants and community members.

	Prior 2013	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
<b>Employment</b>	73	44	60	77	95	110	459
<b>Training</b>	105	45	61	120	149	177	657
<b>Volunteering</b>	16	12	20	15	26	30	119

## Potential Barriers

When tenants meet the Employment Services Team they normally have, but not limited to, one or more of the barriers listed below:

- Lack of experience
- Lack of confidence
- No recognised qualifications
- Out of date qualifications due to regulatory changes
- Limited employment history
- Returning to work after a career break
- Criminal record conviction spent or unspent
- Long term health problems
- No knowledge of benefits
- English as a second language
- Difficulties reading and writing
- Fleeing domestic situations
- Benefits sanctioned
- Severe debts
- Economically inactive
- Having unrealistic expectations

Each person that the team meets has an individual reason for unemployment. It is part of the Team's scope of services to ensure that each customer develops an individual plan tailored to meet their specific needs. Their journey will be tracked on through a grading process based on the customers' job readiness' and positioning from the job market at any given time.

The Employment Services Team has worked with customers that are suffering from mental health problems with depression being the most common. The team work with support agencies that can provide the medical and counselling needs that help our customers move past these issues or deal with the issues in a more positive way. This aids the customer to re-address priorities and engage better within the labour market.

## The impact of unemployment on tenants

Changes in Government Welfare policy has and will continue to impact our customers.

Universal Credit has been partially rolled out since 2016 and has impacted our customers. It will continue to do so until fully rolled out in 2022. Its intention is to incentivise paid work and change behaviours. Major reforms implemented before 2017, namely underoccupation, the Benefit Cap and the localisation of Council Tax reduction scheme is expected to impact working households with a loss of income of approximately £23.01 per week (national average). The transition to Universal Credit will lead to a further loss of £11.18 per week (national average), this is due to cuts in work allowances. Families with children are more likely to be affected. Over 84% of working age households with children will see an income loss of over £50 per week.\*

As job opportunities become more competitive, we will

\*Source: adapted from Policy in Practice, "The Cumulative Impact of Welfare Reform in Britain". August 2017.

have to work more closely with our customers to help eliminate their barriers to work and ensure they are able to compete in a more competitive market.

## Objectives of the Employment Services Strategy

Unity's primary objective for Employment Services is to 'work with partners to encourage and support the regeneration of our target neighbourhoods'. The Priority for the Team is to 'Deliver services aimed at securing training and employment for our tenants and families'. The aims of Employment Services are:

- Minimise tenancy failure and arrears
- Assist our tenants, supporting their overall wellbeing, finding employment and training opportunities and to maintain their roles/sustain jobs
- Develop and review robust policies and procedures to reflect the professional services being offered to them
- Develop and maintain a network of agencies, advisors and service providers to maximise the effectiveness of signposting
- Maximise the potential for working in partnership to deliver projects
- Give confidence and motivation to customers to

The Employment Services team will assist the delivery of Unity's Business Plan 2016-2019 objectives. The team will work closely with other departments to meet the targets set in the service delivery plan.

The Objectives and priorities of the organisation that the Employment Services team will contribute towards are:

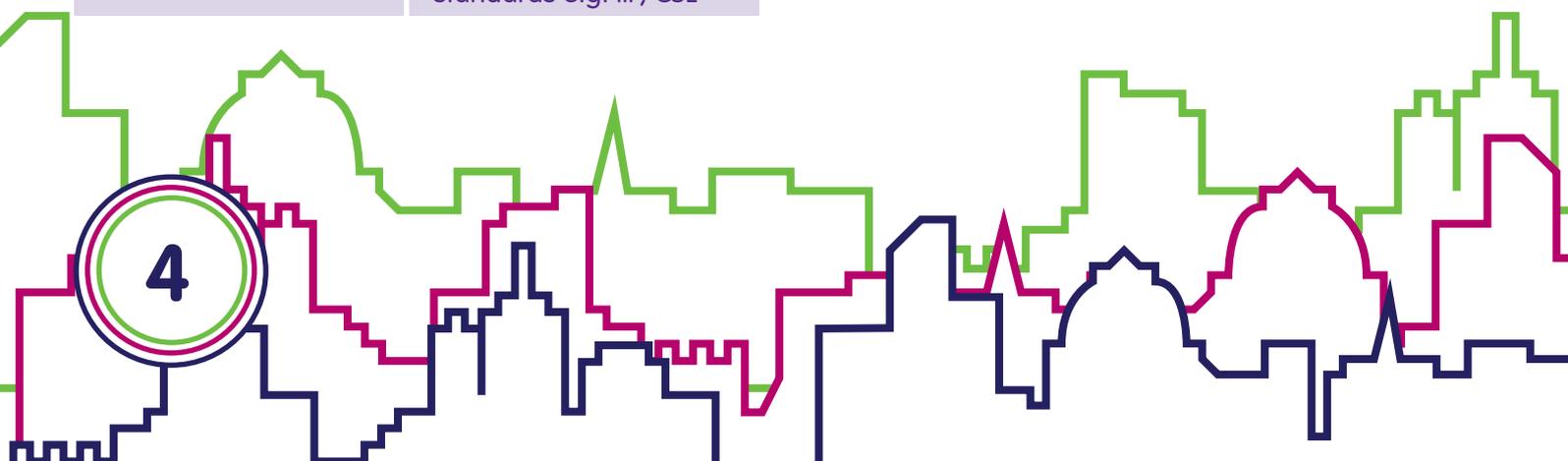


<p><b>Objective</b> <b>Objective 1</b> – Provide and continue to develop high quality mixed tenure housing which reflects needs and aspirations.</p>	<p><b>Priority</b> Work with partners and introduce revised programmes aimed at understanding the wider needs and aspirations of the communities in the neighbourhoods within which we work</p>
<p><b>Objective 2</b> – Provide high quality affordable housing services</p>	<p>Review our role in providing Housing Plus services and supplement our core housing services</p>
<p><b>Objective 3</b> – Involve and work with our tenants and the communities we serve to inform and improve services</p>	<p>Encourage and participate in neighbourhood regeneration initiatives relevant to our existing tenants and to areas in which we carry out new development</p>
<p><b>Objective 4</b> – Work with partners to encourage and support the regeneration of our target neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Deliver services aimed at securing training and employment for our tenants and families.</p> <p>Engage with our partners and local communities to review and update our understanding of the current and future needs of local people living within our target neighbourhoods</p>
<p><b>Objective 6</b> - Be a progressive and expanding business with a sound resource base</p>	<p>Continue to improve our management and staff development programmes and comply with relevant performance standards e.g. IIP, CSE</p>

## The Strategy

The Association aims to achieve these objectives through the following areas:

- Establish and maintain professional Employment Services practices at Unity.
  - Undertake an initial assessment with all referred customers. This will establish the customers' goals and the next steps. This is also the first opportunity to make referrals to relevant programmes / organisations for their needs.
  - Signpost customers where services can not be offered in house.
  - Regular progress meetings with customers to assess progress against goals set and tailor services to their requirements e.g. application forms, CV's, interview preparation, review training, I.T. support, advice and general guidance.
  - Review and monitor employment and training opportunities, disseminating information to customers, partners and other agencies.
  - Maintain and review all project data enabling clear reporting mechanisms and auditable delivery targets.
  - Community engagement activities, such as galas, festivals and learning markets
  - Promote the services provided by the Employment Services Team through an effective marketing strategy
- Establish and maintain working partnerships with other agencies and employment service providers to provide easily accessible facilities and to increase tenant uptake.
  - Delivery of training programmes.



- Promote good practice through partnership and joint working.
- Training staff and partner organisations to be aware of the services the Employment Team can offer.
- Liaise with the Income Management Team to maintain a fluid transition through welfare reform, to keep tenants informed.
- Work with customers to promote the resources available to them. In addition to promoting and increasing the uptake of other relevant tenants services e.g. MyWorkSearch, UK Online and Job Clubs.
- Keep all staff, particularly front line staff, aware of up to date Employment Services Procedures, changes in partnership services etc.
- The strategy will be up to date, innovative and practical to meet the needs of the Association's tenants and local communities.

This strategy forms the basis of Employment Services Policy. Specific procedures will be developed as the service expands.

## Delivery

The Employment Services Team will continue to work from Unity's main offices; however 'The Hub' at Unity Business Centre has been established and will be the base for delivery of training courses and outreach programme. The Hub will be developed to provide a local resource base and 'job club' activities.

Programmed courses and employability workshops will be run from the Hub as well as drop in session's and

one to one support.

Those who participate in activities at the Hub will:

- Develop job-seeking skills, such as:
- Preparation of curriculum vitae and covering letters. How to complete application forms, with emphasis on person specification criteria
- Preparation for and attending interviews
- Use of telephone job seeking
- How to access different job sites and complete on line applications
- Have access to the internet, including registration of UK Online courses
- Have the opportunity to explore local work opportunities
- Develop their own strengths and skills and match them to local work opportunities
- Develop a network of contacts which can actively assist them in obtaining work/training

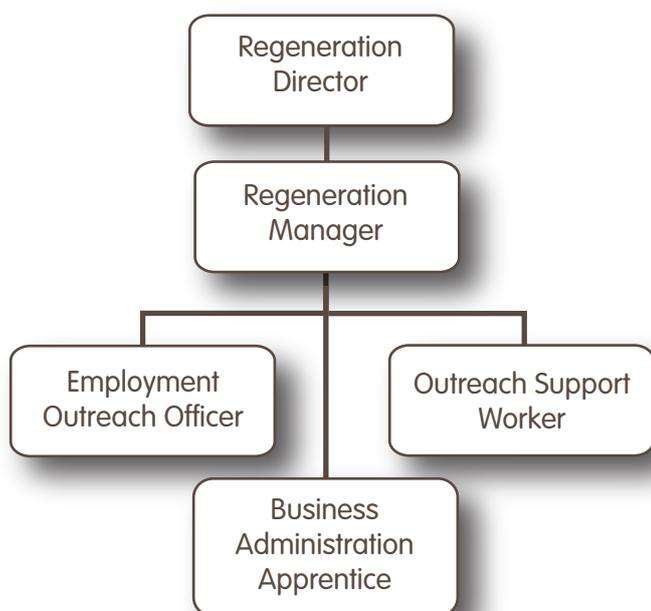
It is intended that the Hub be locally renowned and be used by our partners or other agencies to provide a wider range of employment services.

## Whole organisation strategic approach

The Employment Services Strategy and Action Plan are written to complement existing strategies and policies.

## Team Structure & Monitoring

The Employment Services Team sits within Unity's Regeneration Department. The reporting structure for the Team is as follows:



Referral to and uptake of the services provided, will be monitored by the Employment Outreach Officer, Outreach Support Worker and Business Administration Apprentice. Effective performance measurements will include numbers of people into training, employment, voluntary work and tenant satisfaction.

Customer progress will be tracked and Officer's caseloads will be monitored through the use of ICT and bespoke database i.e. MyWorkSearch. The database will help capture the needs and aspirations of the

customers, which in turn will help to coordinate direct marketing campaigns for specific opportunities, as they arise.

## Performance Targets

The following table illustrates how performance will be measured in 2018/19:

Monitored annual targets 2018/19	How and when measured
115 customers accessing employment	Measured & reported fortnightly at SMT, monthly at team meetings, Quarterly at Operations committee / Board level
175 customers accessing training courses	Measured & reported fortnightly at SMT, monthly at team meetings, Quarterly at Operations committee / Board level
Organise 30 work / voluntary placements per annum	Measured & reported fortnightly at SMT, monthly at team meetings, Quarterly at Operations committee / Board level
Tenant satisfaction	Satisfaction survey taken at the end of casework involvement

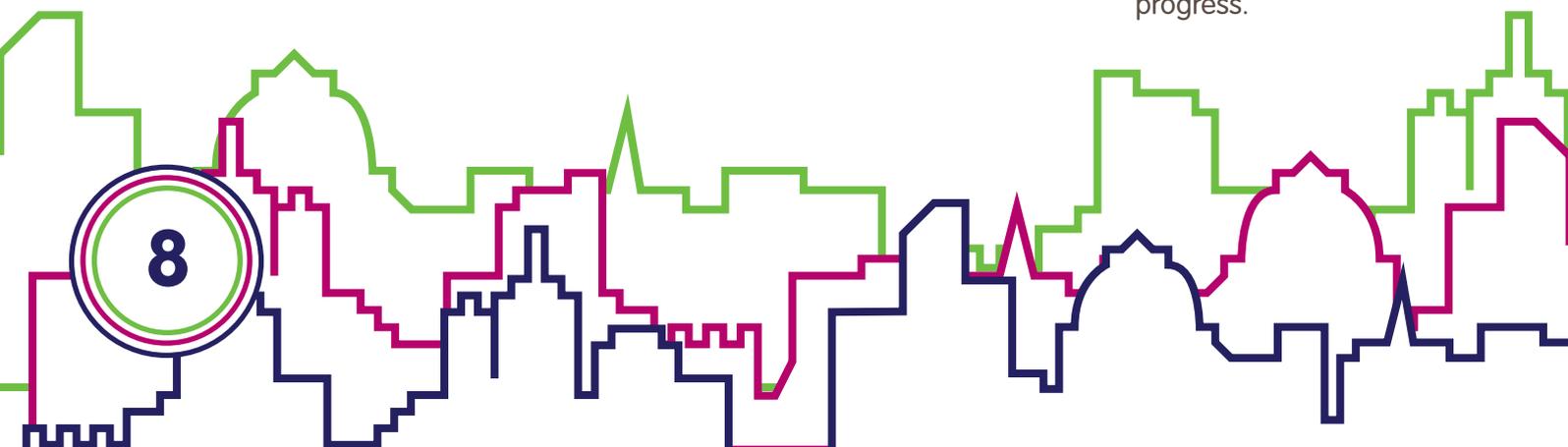
Indirect results of uptake shall also be monitored; such as referral rates and placements/employment secured by third party organisations.



# Employment Services Action Plan 2018/19

Strategic Aim	Activity	Link to Business Plan Objective	Resources/cost	Target Completion Date	Date Achieved	Commentary of progress
1. Establish and maintain professional working practices	Review departmental specific procedures.	Objective 6	Staff time	Mar 2019		Incorporate MyWorkSearch job searching tool
	Regular review and audit of implemented policies and procedures.	Objective 6		Annually		Audit programme will be developed.
	Share best practice with partner organisations.	Objective 6		Ongoing		Regular attendance at update and community meetings to help benchmark our services.
	Develop and maintain a network of agencies and	Objective 6		Ongoing		Develop network to assist signposting. Review and update quarterly.
	Identify potential gaps in external service provisions and develop spin off projects to meet demand e.g. format of digital inclusion and funding	Objective 3		Ongoing		Deliver range of in house workshops to meet customer demand. Work closely with partner organisations to provide other training and learning opportunities
2. Establish and maintain working partnerships	Maintain existing partnerships / relationships e.g. PATH, YMCA, Interserve.	Objectives 2 & 4		Ongoing		Regular review meetings and partner updates at Officer and Director levels.
	Establish partnership working with Unity Enterprise tenants as part of employer engagement to access jobs, training and volunteering opportunities	Objective 5		Ongoing		Connection through established network meetings

Strategic Aim	Activity	Link to Business Plan Objective	Resources/cost Target Completion Date	Date Achieved	Commentary of progress
	Establish community links with local education providers to assist careers advice and support their families back into work.	Objective 4	Ongoing		Create stronger links at grass root level and find path for engagement with hard to reach families.
	Review wider community engagement activities and develop long term strategy.	Objectives 1 & 6	Mar 2019		Formulate a strategy to shape future service provision.
	Work on joint bids for funding of future projects.	Objectives 1 & 6	Ongoing		Identify and obtain external sources of funding as and when spin off projects are developed.
	Continue to attend worklessness strategy groups and evaluate Unity's and the Hub's role in the future.	Objectives 1 & 6	Dec 2018		Further developing the Hub as a community resource base.
3. Promotion and effective marketing strategy	Develop and implement calendar of events for regular workshops and drop in sessions at the Hub.	Objective 4	Ongoing		Implement a programme of regular activities to strengthen the Hub's presence and our service provision.
	Undertake an annual review of the marketing strategy	Objective 1	Oct 2018		Communication methods to be reviewed to achieve best dissemination for the target audience.
	Develop MyWorkSearch as a reporting tool	Objective 6	Sep 2018		Database will be used to capture initial survey information, produce snapshot reports and track /monitors customer progress.



Strategic Aim	Activity	Link to Business Plan Objective	Resources/cost Target	Completion Date	Date Achieved	Commentary of progress
	Represent Unity and promote all services at marketing events such as open days, fairs, partnership events etc.	Objectives 3 & 4		Ongoing		Regular attendance at annual galas, community events and partner organisations.
4. Training (Delivery of)	Continue to deliver online, digital courses, employability training and make referrals. Review client needs and establish new training opportunities as required.	Objectives 1 & 4		Ongoing		Digital Inclusion has undertaken a transition to UK Online and is delivered at the Hub.
	Interdepartmental working - delivery of in house training sessions.	Objectives 2 & 3		Ongoing		Regular attendance at team meetings, training sessions and circulation of newsletters / briefs.
	Review project teams skill set and develop in line with PDP's and Unity's Training Plan.	Objective 6	Possible external course costs, staff time out of office	Ongoing		Implementation of actions within PDPs, regular review of team targets within Team Meetings and one to ones.
5. Targets	Establish reporting mechanisms for qualifying the teams' achievements.	Objective 6		Ongoing		Reports generated from database and revised statistics table produced for discussion at Team meetings and for information at SMT/Operations Committee meeting.
	Review satisfaction questionnaire and report customer feedback.	Objectives 1 & 3		Annually Mar 19		Satisfaction questionnaires are used to gauge customer satisfaction after initial meeting and completion of service.

**Our Mission:** Provide housing choice, improve life opportunities and address inequalities.



Supporting BME Communities and Multi-Cultural Neighbourhoods

**Integrity**

being honest, transparent and sincere with strong principles

**Respect**

in the way we treat people, service users and each other

**Flexible**

in how we work for the benefit of our tenants, other people, the organisation and each other

**Commitment**

to provide services to meet the needs of our tenants, local people and local neighbourhoods

**Business focussed**

continually review and adopt best practice and ensure we operate efficiently and effectively in order to make best use of resources.

**Equality and fairness**

in the way we work and deliver services

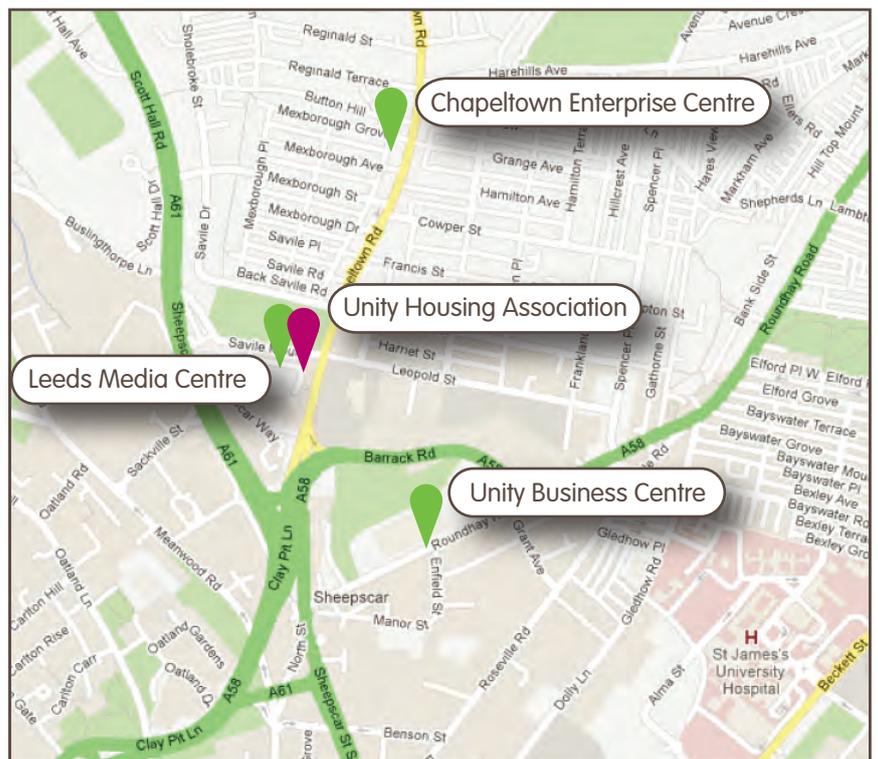
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