

Closer to Work: helping young people with health barriers move forward

What young people told us — and what we're testing in response.

July 2026



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Foreword

In summer 2025, Shaw Trust asked itself, “What more can we do to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training?”

We spoke with our frontline teams and local partners and learned that there is a **growing group of young people aged 18-24 with a health or disability challenge who are economically inactive (i.e., they are not looking for work, education or training) and not engaging with public services.** Potentially facing a life on benefits and no work, we decided that we had a moral duty to do something. Whatever we tried needed to be evidenced, so that if it worked, it could be repeated and scaled.

Funded by the **Shaw Trust Foundation**, we embarked on an innovation trial drawing on best practices from our teams and the wider sector. We recognised that true success required designing this service directly with the young people we sought to help. To ensure their voices led the way, Shaw Trust commissioned **Livity**, a youth specialist consultancy. As Livity celebrates its 25th anniversary, they bring a radical model of working ‘with’ rather than ‘for’ young people, centring youth agency, equity, and ownership in every aspect of the outreach with local organisations, parents, and carers.

This report summarises what we learned from young people — their experiences, challenges, ambitions and needs — and how they want to be supported. Shaw Trust is launching the trial service called ‘Reframe’ in Ealing and Brent, with the hopes of expanding to other areas through partnerships with like-minded funders.

Together, we want to make sure that no young person is left behind. Thank you for joining us in this mission.

Julie Leonard | Chief Impact Officer, Shaw Trust

Alex Goat | CEO, Livity



Executive summary

The link between youth economic inactivity and poor health is a significant yet underserved challenge.

The data is clear. The solutions less so. There is a lack of practical solutions for the 600,000 ‘hidden’ young people — those with disability, mental and/or physical health conditions who remain furthest from the labor market.

Our research focused on understanding this group’s specific needs by meeting them in their own communities to listen to their lived experiences. We found that these individuals are not unwilling to work; rather, they face complex, overlapping barriers that require a specialised approach to support.

With their feedback, we’re shaping a new readiness model, building trust, confidence and resilience and helping young people start their journey towards employment, training and education.

By applying these design principles, Shaw Trust have launched ‘Reframe’ in West London, a dedicated programme designed to reach the unreached and provide the paced, person-centered support necessary to help them transition toward work.

Core themes for re-engaging economically-inactive youths with a health or disability barrier

Make the offer immediately appealing



There is no such thing as a hidden young person



Help them cope and build confidence with a single coach

Drop in skill development



Low pressure introduction to employers

PART 01

What it's like to be a young person not engaged in the job market.



During the fieldwork in Brent and Ealing, we engaged with 26 young people aged 18-24 in focus groups and one-to-one interviews.

23 of the participants were currently NEET — 11 of whom had been unemployed for two years or longer. The other three participants were either recently NEET or working only minimal, irregular hours. The young people in this research were rarely facing a single challenge. Most were managing several concurrent barriers: poor health, low confidence, disrupted routines, thin support networks and repeated experiences of services that had not worked for them.

Their health needs were varied and often overlapping, spanning mental health conditions and neurodivergence, cognitive disabilities, and long-term physical disabilities or health conditions. Many had little trust left in the systems meant to help them, having been passed around, misunderstood or let down over a number of years.

Most felt that the realities of moving into work were daunting. But that is not the same as young people not wanting to move forward. With the right support, offered in the right order, these young people want to and can move forward. **The difficulty is that they sit in a gap - no longer supported by local authorities' children's services because they've passed 18 (unless they have an EHCP), but not ready to engage with intensive programmes like Individual Placement Support (IPS) services.** While these programmes show great results in supporting young people aged 18-24, participants need to be ready to participate in a high fidelity, intensive support. The young people with whom we spoke are much farther from the labour market.

Alongside young people, 13 stakeholders brought expertise across employability, youth work, wellbeing and community support. Many had extensive experience supporting young people facing overlapping challenges related to mental health, neurodivergence, confidence, instability and long-term disengagement from work or education. Their perspectives helped contextualise the structural and emotional barriers described throughout the research.

Pen portraits

They/Them, 21 Lives with family Has Autism and ADHD and has been NEET for 3+ years.

Lives at home with their family and has been looking for work for over two years. After leaving education at 17 and completing a Level 3 diploma in animation and game design, they were later diagnosed with autism and ADHD.

They have struggled to sustain customer-facing work, describing how autism made it difficult to understand what customers wanted. Limited social contact, fluctuating mental health and repeated knock-backs finding work have affected their confidence.

They have tried several ADHD medications without success, feel unsupported by their GP, and are keen for programmes to offer practical adjustments and understanding around neurodivergence.

“Autism makes it hard to understand what people want. I used to work in a bowling alley and I didn’t understand what people wanted so I lost that job.”

She/Her, 22 Lives alone with undiagnosed ADHD, recovering from depression.

“Sometimes I wouldn’t leave the house for weeks on end. I would get groceries delivered in and eat at home. I’d only really go out to take out the bins.”



PART 02

What holds young people back.

The young people in this research were rarely facing one challenge at a time. Poor health, low confidence, a long time out of work: each one made the next harder to overcome.

What might be a manageable barrier for someone with support behind them becomes something much harder to get past when it lands on top of everything else. The longer these pressures go unaddressed, the further work moves away.



“Even to leave your house, you need money.”

Brent Focus Group Participant

“Anxiety is currently difficult for me on a day-to-day basis, as I live alone and am managing my own responsibilities.”

Female, 22, Ealing

“I can be in bed all day and no one can tell me I’ve done anything wrong.”

Male, 19, Ealing

Poor health has already knocked them off course

Poor mental health, neurodivergence and the compounding disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic had already disrupted education, work and daily life, creating instability that made progress harder.

The research reflected what is widely understood by specialists; that mental health and neurodivergence rarely exist in isolation. For some, anxiety and depression had pushed education or work off course. Those with ADHD spoke about struggles with focus, routines, productivity, memory and sleep.

Running through their stories was how much energy young people are already spending trying to function, organise themselves and stay emotionally stable before work or education is even added into the picture.

For many, the fear was not work itself, but that the pressures and structures of work could make them ill again. They explained that they were in a recovery phase – rebuilding confidence, resilience and emotional stability after difficult periods in their lives – which made rigid schedules and high-pressure workplaces feel frightening and overwhelming. They feared demanding work environments that would destabilise the progress they had made.

“It got too hard and I was going through a lot at that time and I couldn’t manage my mental health and my personal life with college.”

Female, 20, Ealing

“Sometimes I’m quite an insomniac, I don’t sleep until like 3:00.”

Female, 22, Ealing

Local worlds made smaller by poor health

For many young people, daily life takes place within a very small local world, a pattern that narrows their horizons and limits exposure to new opportunities.

Most described spending the majority of their time at home, at a friend’s house, or in familiar local spaces such as sports grounds, gyms, food banks or youth centres, with little exposure to new environments, networks or opportunities outside their immediate area. This was true even in London, where opportunities are dense but still felt distant from their day-to-day lives.

For this group, poor health made those worlds smaller still. Anxiety, low mood and the effort of managing a condition pulled young people inwards, away from unfamiliar places, new people and the spaces where opportunities and connections are found. A world that was already narrow contracted further. Information about careers and opportunities came largely through immediate networks, so exposure to different pathways depended on who a young person already knew, and a shrinking world meant fewer of those people, not more. The pattern was not isolation, but limitation – small worlds that quietly narrow access to wider opportunities.



A lack of structure hits those with complex health needs hardest

For many young people, unemployment feels uncertain, repetitive and emotionally draining. One participant described it as a “*limbo type of state*”, a feeling echoed across interviews. Without work, education or training shaping the week, many described drifting through long periods at home, with little separating weekdays from weekends, leading to boredom, low motivation and feeling stuck.

For a young person managing poor health, lost structure is not simply a gap to fill. It is a slope. The less structure they have, the more their health and confidence erode, and the weaker their health, the harder structure is to rebuild. Several recognised this and were trying to hold a routine through family businesses, chores, the gym or community projects, but with poor health pulling against them, that structure was fragile. **The longer they were out of work, the smaller their world became and the harder the next step felt.**

A closed labour market hits the most vulnerable hardest

The labour market is hardest to enter for the young people least equipped to get their foot in the door. Information about work came largely through immediate networks, so exposure to opportunity depended on who a young person already knew, and those furthest from work were also those with the fewest people who could pull them in. For young people whose confidence and health was already fragile, rejection can hit harder and cause disengagement.

Willing to move forward, but unsure where to start

For all the barriers they described, the young people we spoke to were not standing still by choice. Running through the research was a clear desire to expand their worlds, to move into work, and to build a more independent life. Their ambitions were

real and wide-ranging, spanning psychology, law, teaching, software engineering, music production and zoology, alongside a steady wish for financial independence and stability. Several spoke about peers who inspired them, and wanting to see and experience more.

What held them back was not a lack of will but a mix of fear and uncertainty. Many wanted to work but were afraid they were not yet ready, worried that stepping in too soon, or into the wrong thing, could set back the progress they had made on their health. Some had accessed employment support previously but they didn't like how the support was not tailored to the individual, they felt it too generic to be relevant. Others were applying into silence, with no clear route, no one to guide them, and no sense of what a realistic first step might look like. As one young person put it, what they wanted was something “*more targeted to transitioning me out of the gap in my unemployment*”, rather than being left to apply into the void and hope.

These young people are not unwilling and not unable, only further back than they should be, wanting to move forward but unsure how. The right support, offered in the right order, is what would help them take that first step. Part 3 turns to what, in their own words, that support should look like.

“My confidence has been knocked a lot by realising I have such a massive gap in my employment history. I've been out of work longer than I've worked. So it's daunting. I'm not sure how I would be able to transition back into employment on a career path I'm happy with.”

Female, 22, Ealing

PART 03

Rebuilding trust, confidence and readiness.

The barriers young people described in Part 2 point directly to what would help them move forward.

Where their worlds feel small, there is scope for exposure. Where poor health makes progress feel fragile, there is scope for support that feels safe and well-paced. Where systems have felt generic, there is a place for relationships and clarity.

One principle runs through everything that follows: employability cannot be separated from emotional stabilisation and trust building. As one stakeholder put it, employability is often “*the second step*”. Before skills or work pathways become realistic, many young people first need to feel safe and supported enough to engage at all. This shapes how support should reach young people, how to draw them in and how to keep them engaged.

No two young people were the same distance from work, but most did not feel ready to move straight into a job. What follows is what young people themselves said would help.



“People will trust and be more likely to listen to someone they know.”

Male, 19, Ealing

“If they can guarantee I’m going to be listened to, I’m open.”

Female, 20, Ealing

Reaching them: how young people hear about support

As many young people live within small, familiar local worlds, they are most likely to notice and trust opportunities that feel close to them, shared by people they recognise, in places they already know.

Effective support starts locally, but its purpose is to gently expand these worlds by widening exposure to people, pathways and environments they wouldn't otherwise encounter.



“My mum goes to church, she’d bring home information for me.”

Brent Focus Group Participant

Trusted people and familiar spaces matter most

Young people said they are most likely to hear about and take notice of opportunities when the information comes through people they already trust — siblings, cousins, friends, youth workers or job coaches. Trust in the person mattered.

This extended to the spaces where information is shared. Young people explained that while they might see a poster in a physical space, it gained further significance if it appeared somewhere they already had trusted relationships. Going a step further, they said they were more likely to take it seriously if a trusted person from that space could vouch for it — for example, a youth centre where a youth worker could explain it. The worker’s credibility was the gateway.

They described a simple but powerful flow: if a message is ‘allowed in’ by the community setting — such as a church or mosque — it is trusted by the senior person in that space, and is more likely to be taken seriously by people it is shared with in that setting e.g., parents, who could then pass it onto young people. In this, **the community setting and its leadership act as gatekeepers of credibility.**

Stakeholders highlighted the role of health and wellbeing gatekeepers. Young people experiencing anxiety, depression or neurodivergence often already have trusted relationships with practitioners or support workers, making these networks effective routes for outreach.

Drawing them in: what makes them walk through the door

Trusted networks may get young people to listen, but that alone won't lead to engagement.

Due to the anxiety and health conditions that this cohort are managing, they can experience many challenges with accessing support. In the first instance, the idea of support needs to feel gentle, manageable, reassuring and not overwhelming. Beyond this, what motivates initial engagement is seeing immediate value.

This came through most vividly when young people were asked to design their own employment support event as part of the research activities. They consistently rejected traditional presentations or talks in favour of something human and low pressure, a space where they could ask questions, be themselves and build genuine connections. As one young person put it, *"Talks are useless, it's better to just speak with people."* Emotional safety mattered too: some suggested multi-day formats so they could acclimatise and feel confident before engaging fully.

"I would want to see a clear outline of what I would gain from a programme, like marketable skills or connections to a work pathway."

Male, 19, Ealing

Four things drew young people in:

01 | Clear immediate value

Young people wanted to understand what they would gain from support, whether that was skills, confidence, work pathways or practical outcomes. When designing events, freebies or token incentives were dismissed; what mattered was progression and a real answer to "what's the opportunity?".

02 | An accessible local venue

Location and travel time shaped whether support felt manageable to attend consistently, particularly for young people experiencing anxiety or overwhelm. The events they designed were rooted in familiar, accessible community spaces.

03 | People who care

Relationships mattered. They wanted support to feel conversational, personalised and rooted in genuine care rather than transactional processes.

04 | Varied, social and engaging formats

Repetitive or overly formal approaches quickly become disengaging. Support should feel interactive and social. Young people pictured music, games and food as part of creating an environment relaxed enough to take part.

Keeping them engaged: what sustains interest over time

Drawing young people in is only the start. What keeps them engaged was a person they could trust, support that continues to prove its worth, and getting the practicalities of the programme right.

01

A person-centred approach is the foundation

Many young people are managing poor health, anxiety or neurodivergence, which means support must adapt to their pace, communication style and circumstances. Young people also told us that existing systems often left them feeling unseen, treated as cases. Support must feel human, consistent and grounded in real empathy.

For young people, a person-centred approach meant: one constant advisor, someone who genuinely cares, support that is personalised, flexibility, out of hours contact, and in-person interaction. They spoke to the value of personal telephone calls to build rapport, reminder text messages and follow up calls to ensure attendance, all via one person. One person may need this level of engagement and another may not, that is precisely why a personal approach matters.

Stakeholders reinforced this by pointing to different communication and processing styles. Several reflected that traditional formats can unintentionally disadvantage young people managing anxiety, neurodivergence or low confidence. More flexible and creative methods, including drawing, journaling, mood boards or voice notes, were discussed as ways to help young people engage more comfortably and express themselves in different ways.

A person-centred approach:

One constant advisor

Someone who genuinely cares

Personalised

Flexible

Out of hours support

In-person

“We need encouragement, our generation is hugely depressed.”

Brent Focus Group Participant

“I would prefer support that feels more like a personalised conversation.”

Male, 19 Ealing

02

Support has to keep proving its value

Put simply, young people will keep engaging with the programme if they continue to get something out of it. Since the labour market feels increasingly closed off, they want support that gives them practical skills, employer contact and experiences that make work feel possible.

The first thing they wanted was a skills toolbox that helps them navigate the world of work and adulthood more broadly. Across discussions, young people were clear that the ‘skills gap’ extends far beyond CV writing or interview techniques. They described gaps in emotional, practical, work and life readiness, as well as real-world skills needed for today’s job market — all underpinned by a wider sense of not having the tools to navigate adulthood. As one stakeholder put it, *“No one has written the how-to-be-an-adult handbook yet.”* These gaps were shaped by disrupted education, poor health, limited support networks and difficult experiences navigating systems from a young age.

The second was direct access to employers, in ways that feel personal, practical and low pressure.

Employer contact is a powerful lever to expand small worlds and build confidence about what feels possible, in ways that make employment feel open again. This was central to the events young people designed, where they wanted to hear from relatable role models, recent graduates, local creatives and brands that hold cultural weight, and people who could explain *“how to get in”* in real terms. Smaller conversations felt less intimidating: one-to-one conversations and small group Q&As, with people close to their world in age and area, delivered in ways that feel relaxed.

They wanted to see industries up close through trips to workplaces, shadowing and hearing directly from employers, with opportunities that give them something tangible for their CVs. They valued pathways that feel realistic: tailored links to available roles, clear guidance into industries and next steps, and paid work experience.

A skills toolbox to help young people navigate the world of work

Work readiness

Help with navigating professional environments

- Professional expectations
- Rules of engagement
- Professional conduct
- Office culture
- Communication
- Teamwork

“Not knowing I shouldn’t text my boss at 8pm. I never knew this.”

Female, 19, Ealing

Life readiness

Help with navigating the wider pressures that surround long-term stability

- Managing money
- Long term planning
- Understanding and using jobs resources

“It’s always good to learn how to manage money more ‘cause no-one taught me.”

Female, 20, Ealing

Emotional readiness

Support to feel emotionally equipped to cope with pressure and uncertainty

- Confidence building
- Coping with change
- Adapting to different situations

“Being able to adapt to different scenarios.”

Male, 19, Ealing

Practical readiness

Support with managing day-to-day demands that make work, training or education feel manageable

- Timekeeping
- Establishing a fixed schedule
- Maintaining routine

“I would like to learn how to be in a work environment — like what’s professional.”

Male, 19, Ealing

03

The practical conditions have to be right

A person-centred approach and continued value are the substance of what keeps young people engaged. But neither can land unless the practical and place based conditions are right.

Practical factors won't keep young people engaged on their own, but if they aren't factored in they quickly become barriers. This is especially true for young people with unstructured routines, for whom poorly timed or overly demanding commitments can be unrealistic, and for those managing anxiety, neurodivergence or recovery, for whom unfamiliar or high pressure environments can feel overwhelming. Duration, timing, meeting cadence, communication style and locality all shape whether ongoing engagement feels achievable.

Because many young people's worlds are small and shaped by the people and places immediately around them, support felt more credible when it was visibly rooted in their communities. Young people felt that support would be effective when delivered by people who understand the area, reflect their realities and show that opportunities and progression were possible *"for people like us."*

Some young people spoke positively and proudly about their local areas, particularly where strong community or cultural identity existed. They were more likely to trust support that recognised and built on this. It was no coincidence that the events they designed were local by default, set in familiar, accessible spaces.



“Has to be people we can relate to, what people did 20, 30, 40 years ago, who cares?”

Brent Focus Group Participant

“If it was work experience, I would need it to be paid.”

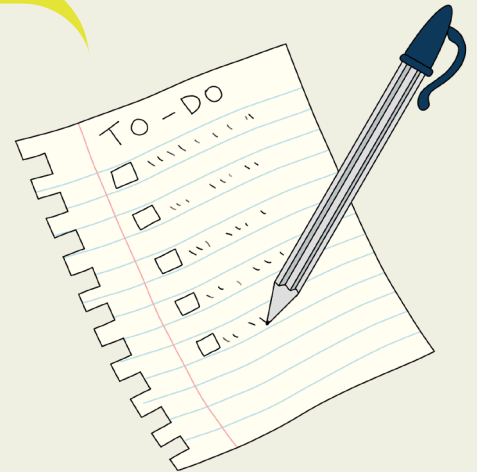
Female, 20, Ealing

“Trips to various different companies, one-to-ones, guidance, people coming in, talking from these companies.”

Male, 19 Ealing

PART 04

Reframe: a model for getting young people into work.



The young people in this research told us what would help them move forward. Their accounts point to a clear set of design principles for any programme trying to reach and support this group into work.

The starting point matters. Because many young people do not feel ready and fear that work could compromise their health, pushing them toward employment too quickly can be a setback. However, a lack of readiness is not the same as a lack of ability. When the right support is provided in the proper sequence, these individuals can successfully move forward.

Three quarters of young people described suspected or confirmed barriers rooted in health, yet when asked what would help them move towards work, they did not frame their needs in health terms. They asked for trusted people, relatable employers, practical skills and one consistent person who genuinely cares.

Young people point to a clear set of design principles:

01 | Trusted introduction

Reach and engage young people through their existing trusted circles, such as friends, parents, coaches and GPs. Support this outreach by providing resources and micro-grants to local community and faith organisations, health practitioners and youth workers, ensuring the initial introduction comes from a familiar and reliable source.

02 | Trusted coach

A single coach helps young people manage the fear of working and the anxiety of trying new things. This steady relationship is the constant that holds everything else together.

03 | Drop-in skills and social sessions, not a classroom

A safe space to build the softer skills young people asked for: emotional, work, practical and life readiness, delivered interactively and on a drop-in basis so they engage at their own pace alongside peers.

04 | Micro-introductions to employers

Short, flexible, informal employer interactions that expand their world and make work feel possible.

05 | Warm handovers to existing support when they are ready

For those ready to move faster, introduce them to existing employment support such as Individual Placement Support (IPS), which offers a rapid, evidence-based route into work for those with health-related barriers.

Testing a new approach: Reframe

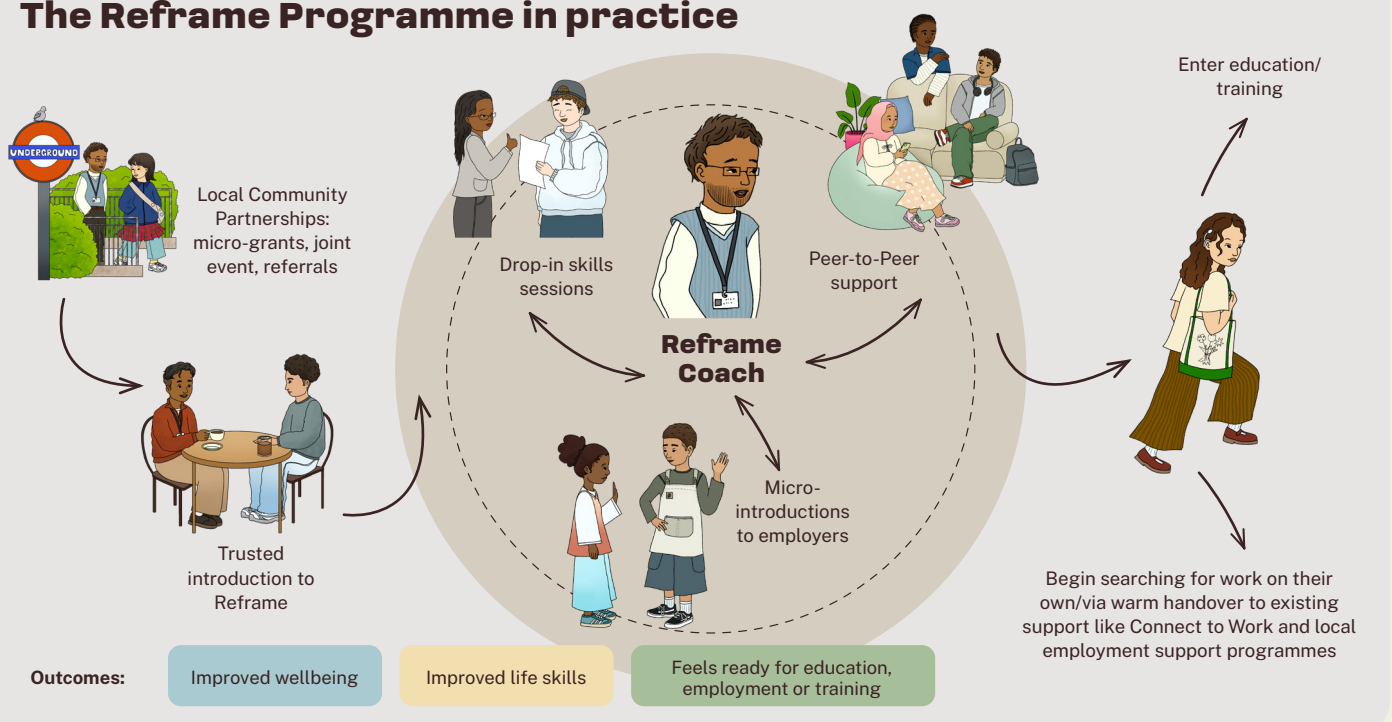
We have used the outputs from this report to create a readiness model of support for those who are furthest from the labour market with health barriers. It can act as an ‘on-ramp’ type of support which connects with local employment provision, particularly Government’s Pathways to Work programme.

Based on this research and years of experience in working with young people, Shaw Trust is launching an innovation project called Reframe to test a new solution for this group of young people created solely for them. It does not replace the employment support that already exists. Instead, it plays the part that the current system misses: it reaches young people who are not visible to or reachable through mainstream channels, builds the trust and readiness that existing support assumes is already there, and then connects them, when they are ready, into the provision that can take them the rest of the way.

The diagram below shows the approach that Shaw Trust is testing. A trusted introduction brings a young person in. A consistent coach builds the relationship and the stability that has to come first. Drop-in skills support, taken at their own pace, rebuild confidence, routine and capability. Micro-introductions to work expand their world and make employment feel possible again. Underpinning every stage, continuously, is the coaching relationship that holds it together. At the point a young person is ready, the programme hands them on, no longer further back than they should be, but ready to take the next step.

We will be trialling this approach for the next year in two London Boroughs of West London. We’re funding the first phase through our charity and building the evidence to bring more funding partners so that we can scale what works.

The Reframe Programme in practice



ANNEX

Research design

The study used a qualitative research approach involving stakeholders and young people.

13 stakeholders participated in one-to-one in-depth interviews. Stakeholders were recruited on the basis of their experience working with young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), their understanding of health-related barriers to employment, education and training, and their ability to provide either a local or national perspective on the issues being explored.

A total of 26 young people participated in the study.

- 14 young people took part in one-to-one interviews, of which 12 were conducted online and two face-to-face.
- 17 young people participated in three focus groups held in accessible locations across Brent and Ealing, with one focus group conducted online. Five young people participated in both an interview and a focus group.

All fieldwork was conducted between 19 February and 23 April 2026.

Participant eligibility criteria

Young people were screened to ensure they:

- Were aged 18–24
- Lived in Brent or Ealing
- Were currently NEET or had previous experience of being NEET
- Were experiencing poor health, or had experience of health-related barriers affecting participation in education, employment or training

For the purposes of this study, poor health included:

- Mental health conditions and/or neurodivergence
- Cognitive disabilities
- Long-term physical disabilities or health conditions

These categories were not mutually exclusive, and some participants experienced multiple forms of poor health.

Recruitment was designed to achieve diversity across age, ethnicity and experiences of disengagement from employment, education and training. Screening also captured information on length of time out of work, education or training, highest qualification achieved, caring responsibilities and any additional support needs. While these factors were not eligibility criteria, they were used to ensure a breadth of perspectives across the sample.

Additional suitability assessment

Following initial recruitment, all young people participated in a secondary screening conversation with the research team. This enabled researchers to better understand participants' individual circumstances, confirm alignment with the study objectives, identify any communication or support needs, and ensure a balanced mix of experiences across the final sample.

Sample overview

The final sample included young people with a range of health-related barriers, educational backgrounds and employment experiences. Participants varied in the length of time they had been out of work, education or training, ranging from less than six months to more than five years and represented a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds.

25 participants were living in Brent or Ealing at the time of the research. One participant resided in neighbouring Harrow but met all other eligibility criteria and was included due to their relevance to the study objectives.

Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without the young people who took part and shared their experiences so openly. We are deeply grateful for their time, honesty and willingness to reflect on both the challenges they face and their hopes for the future.

We would also like to thank the practitioners, professionals and organisations who generously shared their expertise, experience and insights throughout the research process. Their contributions have helped build a richer understanding of the opportunities, barriers and support needs facing young people not in education, employment or training across Brent and Ealing.

We are particularly grateful to contributors from Brent Start, Ealing Council, Department for Work and Pensions (West London District), JE Delve, Making The Leap, Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, Partnership for Young London, which runs Pan London Children in Care Council (CiCC), Youth Careers Collective, The King's Trust and Psalt. In addition, we would like to thank contributions from Rina Modi, Therapeutic Practitioner and Dr Hannah Hayward, Chartered Psychologist specialising in autism, ADHD and neurodiversity.

A special thanks also goes to Crystal Patterson who created the illustrations featured throughout the report, the storytelling of which captures the very essence of the Reframe programme and the young people we seek to support.

Finally, we would like to thank the teams at Shaw Trust and Livity for their collaboration, guidance and commitment to ensuring that young people's voices remain at the heart of this work.



Shaw Trust the good work^{*} charity. We help people find meaningful jobs that give them purpose, unlock their potential and improve quality of life - especially for those with health conditions or other barriers such as wellbeing, resilience, stable housing, and community relationships.

Livity is a youth specialist consultancy. We blend deep research with an industry-leading co-creation methodology to transform raw youth perspectives into future-proofed strategies. We don't just 'reach' young people, but innovate alongside them to solve real-world challenges.

Crystal Patterson is a London-based illustrator who curates visual stories and narratives for publishers, charities, fashion collectives, editorial brands and more to create meaningful material; focusing on diversity within representation and the centring of significant life moments.

^{*} Our definition is informed by the Learning and Work Institute's research into progression and job quality, defining good work as work "which provides a decent income, security, and an opportunity to develop and progress."

