

Transforming Lives in Tayside and Lanarkshire: Our Impact Report





Foreword by Gareth Parry

As we mark the sixth year of Fair Start Scotland, it's important to reflect on and celebrate the impact of the service and what our teams have achieved.

To date, in Lanarkshire and Tayside we have supported more than 5,000 people into paid employment, often supporting individuals disadvantaged in the labour market or who have never worked before. Our success is driven by our commitment to partnership working, and our ability to operate at scale, meeting the needs of employers, while being highly responsive to local areas and community need.

We can only achieve real impact through these deep-rooted community connections and continued integration. We've been delivering employability support in Scotland for more than 25 years, and disability services for more than 75 years - and continue to draw on our extensive experience to provide a constant presence and ongoing support.

Through the scale of our work - helping thousands into employment, working with more than 350 Scottish employers, and collaborating with over 100 community partners - we've been able to address the economic challenges of the day and the changing labour market caused

by the Covid-19 pandemic, an issue which has impacted every community in Scotland.

I'm particularly proud of our collaboration through the Community Partnership Network (CPN), working alongside local organisations to facilitate joint working, fund local services and provide expert support for our participants. Leaving a legacy of collaboration and providing social value where we operate is an integral part of our service delivery as we harness a diverse supplier base to find tangible solutions that strengthen local labour markets.

This report outlines the impact of the Fair Start Scotland service on participants, employers, partners, and the wider community. As the service receives record referral volumes, engaging with hard-to-reach communities and those under-represented in the labour market remains a key priority for us to ensure we deliver a high-performing and inclusive service.

We can be proud of what we've achieved so far, and as we look to the year ahead, our teams remain dedicated to delivering vital employability support to Scottish residents most in need.

Our impact

Since 2018, we have been working in partnership with the Scottish Government to deliver the Fair Start Scotland service in Lanarkshire and Tayside. Through our delivery of this vital employment and skills service, we're proud to directly support the Scottish Government's central priorities, helping to tackle poverty, improve public services and build a growing economy.

As a voluntary service, we welcome self-referrals alongside referrals from local Jobcentre Plus offices and partner organisations. Our service offers 18 months of one-to-one, tailored, and localised support to thousands of people - supporting disadvantaged groups who face the greatest challenges accessing the labour market, including those with disabilities, health conditions and convictions.

Independent evaluations highlight the vast economic and social benefits, with the Fair Start Scotland economic evaluation in 2022 estimating that for every pound spent on the service, it generated £3.60 of return to society, £2.60 to participants and £1.60 to public finances. We've been able to deliver this service at scale, providing value for money, tailored responses to community need, and continued alignment with the Scottish Government's priorities.

Following the recent extension of the service, we are pleased to continue our delivery for a further 12 months, helping thousands more Scottish residents to overcome their barriers, build skills and confidence, and secure sustainable employment. In the year ahead, our dedicated teams will continue to work closely with the Scottish Government to build a better future for our participants, and ultimately, a stronger and more resilient Scotland for all.

Addressing economic inactivity

Long-term health conditions remain one of the leading barriers to people finding work, and have contributed to a significant increase in those who are economically inactive. New statistics reveal that in Scotland the levels of economic inactivity rose by 1.4% in the first quarter of 2023 to 22.2% - returning to a higher level than the rest of the UK.

In Scotland, the problem of long-term sickness has been particularly pronounced, with more than 700,000 people currently classed as economically inactive and absent from the labour market due to ill health, a figure that remains higher than pre-pandemic levels.

As part of its investigation into the impact of the pandemic on Scotland's labour market, BBC Reporting Scotland visited our Airdrie office to meet our colleagues and participants. This coincided with a visit from Scottish Parliament's Covid-19 Recovery Committee to learn more about our delivery of the Fair Start Scotland service and the impact of employability provision in helping to boost the Scottish economy.

"Since my first phone call with the team, I immediately felt supported and relieved that I was no longer alone. Eighteen months since the onset of my illness, I achieved my goal of returning to work thanks to Remploy."

- FSS participant

Supporting the Fair Work agenda

Breaking the cycle of poverty

Around one in four children in Scotland live in poverty. Employment has been identified as one of the leading ways out of poverty - providing an opportunity to break intergenerational cycles of poverty, inequality and deprivation.

Reducing poverty remains one of the Scottish Government's biggest priorities, and by helping people into employment, we're assisting individuals and families to rise out of poverty whilst contributing to building a fair and inclusive Scotland.

"Fair Start Scotland has helped me in several important and long-lasting ways. Remploy's support has shown me that, as a single mum, it's possible to find balance - I can find something that I'm passionate about, while providing for my son."

- FSS participant

Supported more than 350 families experiencing child poverty over 12 months

Marie's story

Marie, from Rutherglen, had been struggling to find work for more than five years when she joined the Fair Start Scotland service. Marie's Key Worker, Gillian, worked closely with her to identify and apply to local vacancies that fitted around her needs as a single parent.

"My Key Worker worked with me to update my CV and support me with my job search. I have had a few knockbacks; however, the team were there to support me and offer me advice through any difficult times."

As she didn't drive, Marie received financial assistance to support her whilst awaiting her first pay check - covering the costs of travel to interviews, training sessions, and her first month in work.

Marie was referred to one of our Community Partnership Network members, Smart Works, for additional support. The charity provided her with clothing for interview, followed by one-to-one coaching with a HR professional to help her prepare for upcoming interviews. When Marie was successful in securing employment, she also received a capsule working wardrobe.

"I was worried that it was going to cost me a lot of money to buy new clothes for my upcoming interviews and starting a new job. Remploy organised for me to get new work clothes through a local charity - they were amazing and supplied me with everything I would need to look the part, I felt amazing."

Following ten months of support, Marie secured a Security Officer position that suited her needs as a single mother.

Rehabilitating people on probation



We have been working in collaboration with a number of prisons including HMP Addiewell, Perth, Glenochil, Castle Huntly and The Bella Centre, to minimise the barriers for people with convictions and help them to move forward with their lives.

Through a series of in-person workshops, our Engagement Teams have been helping people in prison to develop their skills, prepare for a return to work and contribute to the growing economy. Alongside this, we have been attending job fairs to support prisoners on how to appropriately disclose convictions, whilst working closely with employers to identify suitable opportunities for our participants.

"Remploy has been delivering information sessions to inmates at HMP Addiewell preparing for release. This is a great opportunity for inmates to find out what employment support is available and having a familiar face who they know is easy to contact for help."

"This relationship is built upon shared values, and we are working together to ensure that those with a criminal conviction have the necessary stability and support needed to get their lives back on track."
Peter Sargent, Employment Lead for Sodexo Prison Services

Frank's* story

In September 2021, Frank, joined the Fair Start Scotland service following his release from prison. He was excited at the prospect of returning to work, and with the team's support, he was able to get his life back on track.

"My main barrier to employment was my criminal conviction. My Key Worker was very understanding of my circumstances and supported me on my journey back into work, whilst being non-judgemental."

With encouragement from Remploy, Frank attended a range of development sessions to improve his self-esteem, confidence, and employment skills. In December, he started working as a telephone interviewer and continued to receive in-work support for 12 months - ensuring that he was supported to settle into his new job and adapt to life after prison.

**Name anonymised at request of participant.*



200 people with a conviction supported through the service

Supporting Ukrainian refugees

The conflict in Ukraine has devastated the lives of millions, and since 2022, thousands of Ukrainians have been welcomed into Scotland to seek refuge. We remain dedicated to supporting their resettlement across the nation - ensuring that individuals and families have the support and safety they need whilst facing the challenges of settling into a foreign country.

Across Tayside and Lanarkshire, we've formed a close partnership with the Scottish Refugee Council, an independent charity committed to supporting refugees, to help Ukrainians access vital employment and skills support.

As part of our efforts to support Ukrainian nationals, we have also been delivering a series of community events alongside other local organisations - signposting support for refugees, providing vital resources and helping them to familiarise themselves with their new community.

Our Head of Operations, Amanda Edwards, and Partnership Manager, Peita-Anne Paterson recently supported the Scottish Government in hosting a 'This is Scotland' event. This was part of the Warm Scottish Gatherings series, a range of events designed to promote resettlement for Ukrainian Displaced Persons.

We have more events planned in the future and are excited to continue engaging with Ukrainians to help them gain employment and create a home in Scotland, for as long as they need.

**More than 50
Ukrainian refugees
joined programme
since March 2022**

Ivan's* story

In May 2022, Ivan moved to Hamilton from Ukraine with his wife and four children. When he arrived, he spoke little English and was not familiar with the local area.

To help him settle into life in the UK, Ivan was supported to apply for a UK driving licence and sign up for an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course and IT classes with South Lanarkshire Council.

As he was struggling financially without a regular income, Ivan was provided with vouchers for shopping, gas, and electricity. He was also referred to Hamilton District Foodbank, a member of our Community Partnership Network.

During the festive period, this support continued, and Ivan and his family were provided hot meals and Christmas gifts to try and make their first Christmas in Scotland as special as possible. In March 2023, Ivan started a temporary position as a Food Production Operative and is waiting for a start date to begin his training to become a Bus Driver.

"Thanks to Remply's support, I am now working in a role I always dreamed of, and I wish I had done it sooner. I am in a very different place to when I first joined the programme thanks to the development opportunities and support that I have received."

- FSS participant



Working with leading employers

Across Scotland, vacancies remain high with many employers struggling to recruit in a number of priority sectors. The scale of our delivery of the Fair Start Scotland service enables us to work with more than 350 national and local employers to help thousands return to employment and contribute to growing the Scottish economy.

Serving up success in the hospitality sector

Employing around 220,000 workers and accounting for 8.6% of all jobs, the hospitality industry is a major contributor to the Scottish economy. But the sector has faced further challenges since the Covid-19 pandemic, with rising prices and staff shortages adding to existing pressures.

By supporting businesses in the hospitality sector, we can contribute to the industry's recovery while creating more opportunities for our participants in local communities.

Tim Hortons

Since August 2022, we have been working closely with Tim Hortons and have supported more than 24 participants into work at their new site in Dundee - including several participants who have already been promoted.

"With Covid, it's been quite turbulent trying to hire and maintain staff in the hospitality sector. The pandemic affected recruitment and the stability of workforces, which is why we are working alongside Remply - to bring new people into our business and help them to build a brighter future."

Kristopher Gault, Area Manager at Tim Hortons



More than
5,000 people
supported
into work

Supporting local employers in Tayside and Lanarkshire

Small and medium sized businesses are the backbone of the Scottish economy. We have partnered with more than 150 employers across Tayside and more than 200 across North and South Lanarkshire, helping to address sector shortages and build diverse and inclusive workforces.



FURNITURE GROUP

Remply has been working with JTC Furniture Group, one of Dundee's largest employers, for more than four years. Since 2019, they have employed 38 Remply participants through the Fair Start Scotland service. JTC Furniture Group and Remply share the same passion of offering people the chance to grow and progress, regardless of their barriers and background.

"Thanks to Remply, we have more diverse applicants that might not have otherwise considered a career in manufacturing."

Paul Freeman, Production Manager at JTC Furniture Group



After experiencing a substantial growth in demand, Finsbury Food Group expanded their Scottish sites and came to Remply for tailored support with their recruitment. Since 2021, the partnership has gone from strength to strength with more than 50 participants joining in Hamilton and East Kilbride.

"In order to support with our new business, I started working closely with Remply. They have been instrumental in assisting with our recruitment, especially during such an important and busy period of growth."

Mandy Coffey, Operational Resource Lead at Finsbury Food Group

Addressing skills shortages within care

Figures show that skills gaps tend to be more prevalent in Scotland than the rest of the UK, with a steady decline in Scottish employees receiving job related training over the past 15 years. This combined with persistent sector specific skills gaps is proving a challenge for many businesses.

Through our partnership with LOVE Care, we are committed to making the care industry more accessible for local people whilst tackling the care staff shortage. In the past year, more than 10 participants have been supported into the industry with our specialised support.

The relationship works both ways and offers dual benefit to both organisations. If LOVE Care receive an application from someone who needs additional support, they will refer them to Remply with a guarantee that when they are ready, they will be interviewed for a position.

"Our partnership with Remply allows us to provide a full-360 process for people looking to start working in the care industry. We have an increasing number of job starts from Remply and they have proven themselves to be hard-working, self-motivated, committed, and passionate about making a difference to the lives of others. The ongoing in-work support has been a great help and we are looking forward to continuing to grow and celebrate this partnership." **Kelly McAteer, HR & Recruitment Manager at LOVE Care**

"Remply saw my true potential at a time when I was struggling to see this myself."

- FSS participant

Working in partnership

Our Community Partnership Networks (CPN) remain at the heart of our employability contracts, helping us to bring together public, private, and voluntary sector organisations to support our participants, increase collaboration and align provision. In Scotland, we have developed relationships with over 100 local and national partners – from training organisations to mental health support providers, debt advice services to disability charities, who all work collaboratively with us to help our participants to move forward in their lives.

Dress for Success

Our long-standing partnership with the charity Dress for Success Scotland recently marked its sixth year. This partnership allows Fair Start Scotland participants to access their services free of charge – receiving specialised fittings for interview outfits and sittings for a capsule wardrobe once they secure employment.

For women who are unemployed and lacking financial stability, this service provides vital specialist support to help boost their confidence ahead of interview. Of those referred, nearly 50% secured employment and more than 70% reached 26 weeks in work.

88% of organisations valued being part of the CPN

110 organisations part of the CPN in Scotland

DGC Training

We work with a range of established training providers across Scotland, like DGC Training Services, to provide our participants with the opportunities to upskill. DGC Training Services offer a number of courses including Forklift Training, CSCS Green Labourers Card and Driver CPC Training, among many others.

“We have built a very professional, flexible, and beneficial partnership with Remploy over many years. This ultimately contributes to the best outcomes for the candidates we work with, helping them to achieve industry specific qualifications and gain employment.” **Maureen Cunningham, Director at DGC Training Services**

SSAFA

The Community Partnership Network allows us to build a network of specialised and varied support for our participants. In Tayside, this support extends to veterans through our partnership with the armed forces charity, SSAFA, helping them to adapt to life and return to employment after leaving the armed forces.

“Our relationship with Remploy is greatly beneficial. Working alongside them means that veterans can be provided with specialised support to get back on their feet and into work.” **John Alexander, Coordinator at SSAFA**



Giving back to our communities

Our colleagues are committed to giving back to their local communities, and through our Volunteering Scheme, every colleague is entitled to time off to volunteer and fundraise to support causes of their choice.

Donating to worthwhile causes

Maximus Foundation UK, the not-for-profit arm of Maximus, recently donated £2,500 to Grassroots Clothing, a charity that provides men across Scotland with new and pre-loved interview wear at no cost.

With a centre in Edinburgh, the charity supports disadvantaged men in our delivery areas with their national postal service - helping participants to boost their confidence and overcome barriers to employment.

Since 2015, Maximus Foundation UK has awarded grants totalling £585,000, with charities and community organisations directly nominated by our employees.

Fundraising for those in need

Throughout the past year, we have been fundraising for local foodbanks and charities to support our Fair Start Scotland participants.

July marked the start of the annual Maximus Foundation summer fundraiser, which brings together our colleagues and encourages them to get active whilst raising vital funds for charities across the country. For every pound raised, Maximus is committed to matching it – helping us to raise thousands for a number of worthwhile causes.

In December, the team in Dundee, hosted a special event for our participants. Joined by one of our employer partners, Embark Group, participants were gifted donated toys and presents to help them in the lead up to Christmas, whilst learning about some of the additional benefits available to them to ease financial pressures.



