

# Reviewing Peabody's Employment and Training Programme

Final Report – March 2020

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## Executive summary

Peabody is seeking to review their Employment and Training (E&T) programme, to ensure that it meets customer needs, and to understand how a future support offer could increase the service's impact.

This report presents the findings of the service review. It explores the current delivery model and performance of the E&T programme, and how this compares against other employment services. It then outlines the recent and anticipated changes in E&T's operational context and the implications for the service. The report concludes with six evidence-based recommendations on how to make more effective and efficient use of resource and increase programme impact.

Peabody's E&T programme embodies many aspects of best practice and delivers value for money. **For every £1 spent, the programme achieves £3.14 of social value, resulting from the positive impact of programme outcomes on customers' lives and wellbeing.** Over one in three (36%) who engage with E&T move into work, and the programme achieves a slightly higher job outcome rate at a lower cost per outcome against comparators. The programme has a strong reputation amongst partners, and customers value its holistic one-to-one support offer and jobs brokerage service. While the programme is performing well and viewed positively, there are a number of reasons to believe that E&T can deliver even greater impact for residents.

At present, just one in five customers are Peabody residents, which limits the impact the service can have for this priority group. A large proportion (up to 46%) of E&T customers are short-term unemployed (0 to 5 months) - many of whom would likely find a job without E&T support. This limits the impact that the E&T programme can achieve and its potential return on investment.

Since the service was developed in 2010, there have been significant changes – in the labour market, the policy context, and to Peabody's organisational strategy.

Taking these external changes together with the findings of the service review, there is a strong case for change in order to maximise the impact of the service. We recommend that the E&T service:

- embrace a blended model that combines digital and face-to-face delivery;
- refocus advisor resource to provide more intensive support to those with more profound barriers to work;
- set an organisational-wide aim to boost the number of residents able to benefit from E&T support.

The report concludes with six evidence-based recommendations on how this can be achieved. They build on the programme's strengths to retain the benefits of the current model, whilst aiming to increase impact by focusing more on residents and those with greater barriers to employment.

## Introduction

Peabody is a large housing association in London and the south east that have been in operation for over 150 years. In addition to housing, Peabody provides a wide array of care and support services to both its residents and the wider community, helping people to better handle life's challenges and live independent and happy lives.

With social housing tenants at higher than average risk of labour market disadvantage, many housing associations choose to invest in employment and training support<sup>1</sup>.

Peabody has invested in employment and training support for over twenty years. The current model of delivery was launched in 2010, in the midst of the recession.

The last decade has seen significant changes to the labour market and policy context. The employment rate now stands at a record high of 76%, and major reforms to social security and the employment support and skills landscape have taken place.

It is in this new environment that Peabody is looking to review its E&T programme, exploring the extent to which the current service meets customer need and what a future service might look like within a changing operating environment.

Peabody commissioned Learning and Work Institute (L&W) to conduct a review of their E&T programme and make recommendations on how a future employment support offer could build on the strengths of the current programme and deliver on Peabody's new area-based approach.

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<sup>1</sup> IPPR (2018) [Building communities that work.](#)

# Methodology

Our work explored the following three areas:

- The appropriateness of the current service and the extent to which it meets customer needs.
- What excellent employment support looks like, and how Peabody compares.
- What a future service might look like in a changing operating environment.

## Phase 1: Scoping research

- A desk-based review of documents relating to the E&T programme.
- Three semi-structured interviews with senior E&T stakeholders, focused on the evolution of the E&T programme, its aims and objectives, how it fits into Peabody's strategy, and views on its current impact.

## Phase 2: Review of current service

- A review of E&T Management Information (MI) data to assess current performance.
- Two focus groups with staff working on the E&T programme to explore staff views of the service.
- Two focus groups with E&T customers to explore customers views of the service.

## Phase 3: Review of best practice

- A desk-based review of similar services to understand best practice.
- A rapid evidence appraisal of literature relating to the future of work to understand how the changing nature of work will affect E&T customers and how it might want to respond.

## Phase 4: Action workshop and recommendation development

- An action workshop with E&T senior management, exploring and refining options for the direction of the programme.

# 1. The current offer

This chapter provides an overview of Peabody's Employment and Training (E&T) programme, how it fits within organisation aims and the current delivery model.

## Housing associations and employment support

Social housing tenants face significant labour market disadvantage. The Hill Review in 2007 highlighted the extent to which social housing tenants – even controlling for other factors – were far more likely to be out of work<sup>2</sup>. This remains true to this day. Housing association tenants are twice as likely to be unemployed and three times as likely to be economically inactive as the average. Those who are in work are likely to earn less<sup>3</sup>.

As a result, many housing associations choose to invest in schemes and programmes to support their residents into employment, education and training. A survey in 2014 found that one in three housing associations see this support as a top organisational priority, with around the same proportion saying they expected to increase investment in employment and training in direct response to the introduction of Universal Credit (UC)<sup>4</sup>.

Housing associations are well placed to provide employment support due to their understanding of and relationship with their tenants. They often operate in areas facing significant disadvantage, they play a significant role as anchor institutions in the local economy, and they are a touch point for key target groups of employment and skills policy<sup>5</sup>.

## E&T: Inception and evolution

Peabody has invested in employment and training support for its tenants and the wider community for over 20 years. The offer has changed over time, adapting to both changing customer need and available funding streams. Previous iterations of the service were grant funded and focused on supporting people onto training courses, predominantly in the IT sector. Peabody then began to self-fund their E&T programme from 2007 onwards, in response to a decline in available funding.

The current E&T programme was launched in 2010, offering employment related training, advice and guidance, and a London-wide job brokerage service. Peabody invest just over £1 million each year into the programme and also deliver support through an external contract – Love London Working (LLW)<sup>6</sup>. LLW is an ESF-funded employment support partnership led by a number of housing associations.

Peabody's E&T offer is delivered by 31 staff members across 12 locations; 11 in London and 1 in Essex. This includes:

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<sup>2</sup> John Hills (2007) [Ends and means: The future roles of social housing in England](#).

<sup>3</sup> IPPR (2018) [Building communities that work](#).

<sup>4</sup> National Housing Federation (2014) [A home, a job, a future](#).

<sup>5</sup> IPPR (2018) [Building communities that work](#).

<sup>6</sup> Delivered between 2017-2020.

- **Direct delivery staff** – 8 Employment Advisors, 8 Employment Brokers and 4 Employment Caseworkers.
- **Operational support staff** – 1 Training coordinator, 1 Apprenticeship coordinator, 4 (FTE) Administration staff and 3 Employment Managers.

### Programme objectives and fit with organisation aims

The E&T team sit within the Peabody Community Foundation (PCF), formed in 2016, which brings together community investment services across the Peabody group. Building on the vision of their founder, PCF's vision is to help build communities that are healthier, wealthier and happier.

The E&T programme fits into this vision by contributing to making communities wealthier, supporting people to boost their incomes. However, senior stakeholders within the E&T programme viewed the programme in a broader sense, as contributing to all three of PCF's aims, stating that *“...to deliver a healthy, wealthier and happier community, employment and training is an important part of it”*.

### The current offer

The E&T programme delivers against three work streams: supporting people into employment; apprenticeships; and training. It is a voluntary and flexible programme, which aims to place people into secure, meaningful, well-paid and full-time employment, which ensures financial independence. More recently, the E&T programme has included supporting people to progress out of low paid and insecure work as a priority. We heard from internal stakeholders that the emphasis on meaningful, 'good' employment

differentiated the E&T programme from statutory services, which are often more focused only on entry to employment.

Stakeholders emphasised a range of additional aims beyond 'hard outcomes' (job starts and 3, 6 and 12-month sustainments), such as increased confidence and aspirations.

*“We always say to customers ‘we are not the DWP, we are not interested in just moving you into employment’...So, it’s always about what makes them comfortable, what makes them think, ‘yes, we are making a step forward by taking this opportunity or applying for this opportunity’.”*

- Senior E&T stakeholder.

*“We want to develop peoples’ abilities, their skills to make them more employable or get them into better employment, and we want to see improved aspirations as well.”*

Senior E&T stakeholder.

## **Customers**

The service is a voluntary programme, available to both residents and non-residents aged 16 and above. No screening criteria are placed on residents accessing the programme, while non-residents must be either unemployed or underemployed (working 16 hours or less) to qualify for support. Between 2017 and 2019, around one in five (19%) E&T customers were Peabody residents.

In terms of level of need, senior E&T staff believed that most E&T customers could be categorised as low to medium, and as being relatively close to the labour market. The team will support people who are long-term unemployed, but senior staff said they don't receive many referrals of this kind.

## **Delivery model**

The E&T's current delivery model is focused on the provision of advice and guidance, work related support, and a jobs brokerage service. The customer journey is composed of four broad stages:

### **1. Referral**

As a voluntary programme the E&T service relies on three main referral routes: self-referrals; internal referrals from a number of internal teams across the Community Investment and Resident Services directorates, and; referrals from external partners including Jobcentre Plus and local authorities. Internal teams refer residents in need using a referral form, which is managed through a shared E&T inbox.

### **2. Assessment & Action Plan**

Customers are given a full assessment on being referred to the programme, enabling advisors to determine their needs, tailor their support journey and refer to appropriate external services for specialist provision. Individuals with more specialist support requirements, such as ESOL needs, mental health issues or substance misuse issues are referred on to specialist support organisations. Subsequently, an action plan is developed, setting SMART objectives in conjunction with the customer.

### **3. Support to get job ready**

Customers who are not 'job ready'<sup>7</sup> will remain with an employment advisor. The advisor will work with the customer until they are job ready, undertaking activities such as: CV support; referring to appropriate employability training opportunities; interview preparation support, and; ensuring they have appropriate clothes for interviews.

### **4. Jobs brokerage and matching**

Once an individual is job ready, an employment broker will try to match their skills and capabilities with available vacancies, providing ongoing support until customers find

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<sup>7</sup> Interview respondents used this term to refer to individuals who may require CV support, employability training, interview preparation, or who may benefit from other activities before being matched to a job vacancy.

employment. Employment brokers work with local partners as well as employers to source vacancies, promote the service and increase the number of referrals to the service. In addition, the E&T programme employs an apprenticeship coordinator to work with employers in Peabody's supply chain, linking customers into apprenticeship opportunities.

### **Supply Chain Apprenticeships**

Peabody are a major purchaser of goods and services, particularly so within the construction industry. In 2018/19 Peabody built 1,103 new homes, started building a further 1,002, and intends to build 3,300 homes a year from 2021/22 onwards<sup>8</sup>. A significant number of jobs are created through the building of new homes (development), and the management and repairing of existing stock (asset management).

Peabody employ an apprenticeship coordinator who works with contractors in Peabody's supply chain to ensure that they adhere to their Section 106 obligations<sup>9</sup> and create jobs for the local community. In addition, Peabody place further requirements on their contractors – the creation of one apprenticeship for every £2 million spent, for example – to provide as many opportunities as possible to their local residents and the wider community.

Apprenticeships are offered at levels 2 to 6, and a pre-apprenticeship programme was recently developed to support individuals move on to higher level provision. In the first instance, preference is given to E&T customers with new opportunities sent to E&T advisors and brokers who then cascade information to existing E&T customers. In some instances, when a large number of vacancies are created, Peabody will hold significant recruitment drives and invite E&T customers and external partners to take part.

### **Training**

Peabody offer a range of externally delivered accredited courses and internally delivered non-accredited training opportunities as part of the E&T offer, with the aim of upskilling E&T customers and promoting the development of soft skills. The training offer - developed during late 2018 - focuses on;

- **Non-accredited employability training**, including interview skills and confidence building for job entry and progression in work.
- **Accredited, short occupational courses**, covering health and safety, customer service, emergency first aid, food safety, and computerised accounting.

Peabody largely self-fund the training through an annual budget of around £30,000, which is offered to Peabody residents and customers of Peabody services<sup>10</sup>. Courses are delivered flexibly, based on the demand of E&T customers and advisors.

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<sup>8</sup> Peabody (2019) [Annual report and accounts 2019](#).

<sup>9</sup> Section 106 obligations place a number of requirements on development proposals to mitigate and manage its impact.

<sup>10</sup> This includes the E&T programme, Peabody's volunteering programme and childcare programme.

## Chapter Summary

- *Social housing tenants are at higher risk of labour market disadvantage. Many housing associations choose to invest in employment support for their residents.*
- *Peabody invest just over £1 million each year into their E&T programme, delivered by 31 staff members across 12 locations in London and Essex.*
- *The E&T programme works with people aged 16 and above, across London, supporting them into employment, apprenticeships and training opportunities.*
- *The voluntary and flexible programme provides advice and guidance, signposting services and sector wide job brokerage to its diverse group of customers.*

## 2. Reviewing the current offer

This chapter reviews the impact of the E&T programme. It begins with a quantitative description of the service and its performance, focusing on the profile of customers and their outcomes. This is followed by the views of E&T staff and customers on the service's performance and how a future offer could build on what is working well and improve aspects that are working less well.

### Service performance: a look at the numbers

This section reports on analysis of the programme's Management Information (MI) data for customers who engaged with the programme during financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19. It looks at who is engaging with the programme, the outcomes that are being achieved and how these are distributed across customers' characteristics.

#### Engagement

Analysis of the MI data shows that a total of 2,944 people were engaged onto the programme between April 2017 and March 2019.

Table 1 shows the characteristics of these individuals. The data shows that slightly more women were engaged compared to men, while just over half (54%) were aged 25 to 49. The majority of those engaged were either underemployed or short-term unemployed<sup>11</sup> (46%) or long-term unemployed (39%), with only 14% being unemployed for six to 11 months.

There is significant variation in the volume of customers engaged at each of the 12 delivery centres. This is due to E&T's growing footprint during 2017-19, with some delivery sites still in their infancy and others with established partnership networks. Total engagements range from 481 people at the busiest centre (The Link in Thamesmead), to just 16 people engaged at the least busy centre<sup>12</sup> (Pitsea in Basildon, Essex).

Only 19% of those engaged during 2017/18 and 2018/19 were Peabody residents.

**Table 1 – Engagement by characteristic, 2017 – 2019**

	Count	% of total
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	1,387	47%
Female	1,549	53%
<b>Age</b>		
16-24	642	22%
25-49	1,584	54%
50+	700	24%
<b>Length of unemployment (18/19 only)</b>		
0-5	692	46%
6-11	214	14%
12+	590	39%
<b>Peabody Resident</b>		
Yes	571	19%
No	2,245	76%

Totals within each characteristic will not always sum to 2,944 or 100% due to missing information.

<sup>11</sup> Both underemployed and short-term unemployed are included in the '0-5' months unemployed category. To look at prior length of unemployment, we analyse only 2018/19 data due to inconsistencies in the way this variable was measured in 2017/18.

<sup>12</sup> There are no records for the Pitsea centre prior to November 2018

Information on the number of referrals from different external sources was unavailable, but internal referrals are explored below.

**Table 2: Internal referral routes**

Internal Team	Total referrals 2018/19	
<b>Community Investment (total)</b>	<b>66</b>	Referrals from PCF Community Investment teams and wider Peabody resident services totalled 255 in 2018/19. 27% of these referrals engaged and attached to the programme, resulting in 68 individuals engaged from internal partnerships. This accounts for just under 5% of the total number of people taking part in the programme during 2018/19. A failure to attend an appointment and being unable to make contact after two attempts were the two most common reasons cited in the data for why referrals could not be engaged.
Care and Support	14	
Community Development	0	
Outreach	47	
Socio-economic and Inclusion	0	
Volunteer	3	
Young People Services	1	
Children's Community (Pembury)	1	
<b>Resident Services (total)</b>	<b>189</b>	Just under half (44%) of all internal referrals in 2018/19 were from the revenues and finance team.
Community Safety	4	
Tenant and Family Support	8	
Warden	1	
Welfare Benefits	12	
Lettings Team	2	
Neighbourhood	49	
Revenues / Finance	113	

## Job Outcomes

To calculate an outcome rate, we look at a defined cohort of customers – those engaged with the programme between April 2017 and March 2019 – and then calculate the proportion of that cohort who achieved a job outcome<sup>13</sup> by January 2020, which is the latest available data.

Of the 2,944 people that engaged with the programme, 1,036 achieved a job outcome – a 35% job outcome rate. This will represent the lower bound of the programme's outcome rate. This is due to a number of factors:

- Engagement and job outcome data are recorded in separate spreadsheets. A matching exercise<sup>14</sup> was undertaken to identify job outcomes achieved by the cohort, which identified 1,306 jobs. Additional potential matches were identified but could not be verified in the data due to user input error. Further investigation by Peabody indicates these are correct matches, putting the job outcome rate at 36%.
- The outcome rate only includes customers who engaged between April 2017 and March 2019 – and who achieved an outcome by January 2020. Any customers who

<sup>13</sup> A job outcome is defined as an individual entering paid work. The E&T team apply strict criteria to evidencing an employment outcome, requiring monthly proof of employment in the form of a payslip, employment contract, offer letter or employer declaration.

<sup>14</sup> 'Fuzzy matching' was used to identify the same individual across different spreadsheets, and to account for verifiable user input error.

engaged during that time period, but who went on achieve a job outcome beyond January 2020 would not be included in this figure.

- The outcome rate only includes customers for whom there is evidence of a job outcome. Peabody use stringent criteria to evidence outcomes. Any customers who were supported by the E&T programme and who moved into work, but for some reason did not provide the necessary evidence for a job outcome, would not be included in this figure.

The outcome rate of 36% should therefore be seen as a conservative figure, and the true job outcome rate is likely to be slightly higher than this.

There has been an improvement in performance over the two-year period: the programme achieved a 32% outcome rate for those engaged during 2017/18, rising to 38% for those engaged during 2018/19. The 2018/19 cohort have also had a shorter timespan in which to achieve a job outcome and so this figure will likely rise as E&T have more time to work with them.

On average, just under one in two (44%) outcomes were achieved within three months, rising to 64% within 6 months and 83% within 12 months.

Looking at contract type, over half (57%) of the 1,036 jobs created were permanent while 22% were temporary and another 6% were on zero-hour contracts<sup>15</sup>. Just under half of the jobs entered (47%) were full time while 39% were part-time<sup>16</sup>, and 14% had unknown working hours. This represents a similar proportion of part-time jobs and temporary contracts compared to other employment support services<sup>17</sup>.

The higher rate of part-time job outcomes is reflected in the salary ranges of the jobs entered. One in two (51%) earned up to £15,000 annually, while 32% earned between £16,000 and £30,000. Two per cent earned over £30,000 and 15% were of an unknown salary.

### **Outcomes by Gender**

56% of all job starts went to women. Women outperformed men in terms of job outcome rates: 38% of women engaged on the programme moved into work, compared to 32% of men. However, proportionally more job outcomes for men were of a higher salary: 36% of male jobs had a salary range of £16,000 to £30,000 compared to 28% for women, while around half of both men and women earned £15,000 or less.

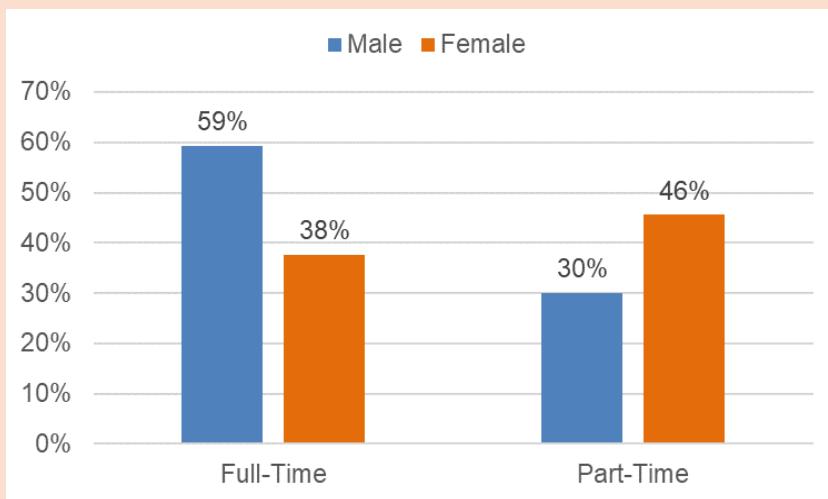
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<sup>15</sup> 15% of the 1,036 job outcomes were of an unknown contract type and therefore the real percentages for permanent, temporary and zero-hours may be slightly different. Additionally, the MI data records zero-hours, temporary and permanent contracts as mutually exclusive categories, however, it is possible to be on either a temporary or permanent zero-hours contract.

<sup>16</sup> Part-time is defined within the data as working up to 34 hours a week. Full time work is defined as working at least 35 hours a week.

<sup>17</sup> Part-time (up to 30 hours) employment outcomes made up 44% of job outcomes for Work Programme participants and temporary jobs outcomes accounted for 29% ([DWP, 2014](#)).

**Table 3: Contracted hours by gender**



Higher male salaries reflect, in part, the gender split in the number of hours worked, with over half (59%) of male jobs being full time compared to only 38% for women. Just under half the jobs entered by women were part time, whereas this figure is under one in three for men.

This reflects the higher prevalence of part time work among women in the wider economy, which is in turn linked to the greater number of women acting as primary carers.

### Outcomes by age

Middle aged customers achieved a higher job entry rate compared to those in younger or older age groups. 37% of the age group 25-49 entered work, compared to one in three (34%) aged 16-24, and 31% of those aged 50 and over.

Each age group achieved broadly similar outcomes in terms of salary, hours worked, and contract type. However, younger (16-24) customers were far more likely to enter lower paid work with two thirds (65%) earning under £16,000, 17 percentage points higher than the proportion of other age groups.

### Outcomes by resident status

Peabody residents accounted for 20% of job outcomes and achieved a 36% job outcome rate, broadly in line with the job outcome rate for non-residents which stood at 35%. Salary ranges and contract types were similar for residents and non-residents. Proportionally there were slightly more non-residents in full-time jobs whereas proportionally there were more residents in part-time jobs.

### Supply chain apprenticeships

In 2018/19, 155 apprenticeships were created and delivered through Peabody's supply chain. Only seven (5%) of these went to Peabody residents - an interview respondent stated that this was due to a low number of internal referrals, which had not exceeded single figures over the past five years.

### Training

Between January and October 2019;

- 182 accredited qualifications were achieved by 175 individuals
- 48 non-accredited employability training sessions were completed by 45 individuals

Looking at the type of accredited training offered, Level 3 Emergency First Aid at Work was the most frequently delivered and accounted for a third (31%) of all qualifications delivered. Level 2 Food Safety qualifications accounted for around a quarter (26%), followed by Level 1 and 2 Computerised Accounting courses (11%).

### **Data limitations**

The E&T programme provides support both for customers who have been out of work for a long period (12 months or more), for those who have been out of work for a shorter period (up to 6 months), and for some customers who are currently in work.

Due to data limitations, it was not possible to calculate outcome rates for these different groups, as Peabody's management information includes both those in work, and those who have been unemployed for less than 6 months in the same group. This limits our ability to understand how effective the programme is at supporting each group.

We set out recommendations for improving the collection of management information in section 4.

### **Service performance: listening to peoples' stories**

This section reports on the qualitative work undertaken for the review: interviews with 3 managers and 2 senior managers; interviews with the apprenticeship and training coordinators; 2 workshops with operational staff; 2 workshops with E&T customers, and; 10 interviews with internal and external programme partners<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Two internal partners were interviewed, from a PCF Care and Support team and the wider Peabody Financial Inclusion team. Eight external partners were interviewed, including individuals from local authorities, an employer in Peabody's supply chain, complimentary support organisations, and apprenticeship providers working with Peabody and their contractors.

## Customer views

### Key points

- *Trusting human relationships and holistic one to one support are the main strengths of the programme from customers' point of view.*
- *Volunteering and confidence building are viewed as key steps towards employment.*
- *Supportive and unpressured environment viewed as particular strength of the programme.*
- *Many suggestions for improvement centre around a desire for more staff time and for higher staff numbers in each centre.*
- *Additional suggestions for improvement include drop-in sessions and wider choice of training courses.*

### Referral and entry

Customers discussed a variety of entry routes to the programme including being referred by an external organisation – such as the National Careers Service or the Job Centre – or by a friend who had recommended the service. In some cases, individuals found the support offer as a result of using the computer facilities at Peabody centres.

Generally, customers spoke of very positive initial interactions at support sites and felt warmly welcomed. Where less positive experiences were brought up, this was due to a low staff presence at the site upon arrival, or the absence of a staff member altogether.

### Needs

Customers who attended the workshops discussed a broad array of personal circumstances, support needs and outcomes they wanted to gain from the programme. Some were looking for major career changes, while others had just moved to London and were looking to enter employment as quickly as possible. A range of different industries and careers were being sought by the customers we spoke to.

The level of need fluctuated within each workshop, from those with relatively low support needs, an extensive employment history and numerous recent qualifications, to more moderate levels of need - people who had experienced recent spells of unemployment or mental health issues. Customers who lacked prior experience described it as being particularly difficult to secure employment.

### Experience of Support

Trusting relationships between customers and the E&T team emerged as a common element in the experience of support. Customers stressed the friendly, approachable and helpful nature of the E&T team. Many emphasised that "*they go the extra mile*" when supporting customers and create a supportive and uplifting environment. This was often compared to their experiences of other support services, highlighting that they felt other

services often push people into ‘any job’ instead of listening to and accounting for what people want.

Customers who faced more barriers tended to welcome having an advisor to spend time with them on a one to one basis. Many spoke extremely positively about the help they received in job searching, updating their CV or preparing and practicing for an interview. The main benefits that resulted from these sessions were increases in confidence.

*“Nobody is pushed before they are ready”*

*E&T customer*

*“They go the extra mile.”*

*E&T customer*

Many pointed to the job brokerage service as a major positive of the service, which in some instances circumvented the need to fill out long application forms or provided customers with work trials and placements. One person immediately told their friends to get in touch with Peabody if they wanted a job, after finding they didn’t have to interview and could walk straight into a retail job that was brokered through the E&T team.

In addition to job placements, E&T customers spoke positively of the volunteering opportunities they accessed. These were often cited as vital in bridging the experience gap to paid employment and building confidence. Some who took up volunteering opportunities, often within Peabody itself, also discussed the benefits in terms of their mental health and wellbeing. One customer stated that volunteering at Peabody had given them a daily structure again, which provided focus, direction and a reason to get up in the morning at a time when they had been low.

## Strengths

- **Facilities** – the availability of computers to use for job searching and internet access was seen as extremely beneficial, particularly for those without a computer.
- **Caring staff** – customers explained that staff provide an unpressured and supportive environment.
- **One-to-one support** – customers highly valued having a personal advisor who provided support tailored to their needs.
- **Jobs brokerage** – the availability of job opportunities was highlighted as a particular strength.
- **Volunteering** – volunteering options were seen as an effective way to bridge the experience gap to paid employment.

## Areas for improvement

Many customers were very positive about the service. However, some areas for improvement were identified:

- **Inconsistency in staff availability across sites** – some customers had to wait long periods before seeing an advisor, and felt that some sites were understaffed.
- **Generic service** – those who wanted to move into something outside of entry level retail, construction and security roles sometimes felt less well served by the programme. One individual thought he didn't fit well with the programme because he was looking for a retail manager position. We heard from another self-employed customer who was unable to find support in making grant applications for her business.
- **Limited number of courses** – many expressed a desire for a greater choice in the courses available, and for longer, more in-depth courses. As Peabody currently offer E&T customers the ability to build a business case for undertaking any accredited training course of their choice, it is unclear the extent to which this results from a lack of communication about the current offer.
- **Booking appointments in advance** – having to book an appointment in advance sometimes prevented customers from accessing support when they needed it. One customer discussed the fact that they had not been able to access interview preparation support in time because they were unable to book an appointment in a short space of time.
- **Group sessions** – some customers expressed a desire to discuss their experiences of work with others in a similar position to themselves.
- **Awareness raising and advertising** – many believed the E&T team were doing a great job, but thought that more could be done to ensure that more people know about the service.

## Staff views

### Key points

- *Staff members perceive the service to be effective and believe that it embodies the ethos and values of Peabody.*
- *While staff value the ability to support both Peabody residents and non-residents, there is an eagerness to better engage with residents.*
- *Staff believe that the E&T programme has a strong brand, it is well respected by its large network of partner organisations and highly valued by customers.*
- *Internal partnership working is as an area for improvement and staff want to increase the number of internal referrals.*

### Aims of the service

Operational staff viewed their collective role as supporting people into employment, training and to progress in work. Workshop attendees were keen to emphasise the focus on finding the right job for each individual, seeking high quality and sustainable employment instead of pushing individuals into 'any job'.

In addition to employment outcomes, staff highlighted the ‘soft outcomes’ of the service. These include supporting individuals to overcome barriers they may have to gaining employment, increasing their confidence, supporting people into volunteering opportunities and providing advice and guidance. Mirroring the stories of E&T customers, these soft outcomes were seen by staff as critical in the journey towards achieving employment, particularly for those further away from the labour market.

While PCF views the E&T programme as making residents and communities wealthier, staff view it in a broader way. The service was seen to contribute to all of PCF’s aims, helping residents and non-residents to be happier, wealthier, and healthier.

*“It goes with the Peabody ethos – from George Peabody – of helping people out of poverty. It’s the overall strategy of making people healthier, happier and wealthier.”*

*E&T Staff member*

### **Target Group**

The service has no entry criteria for residents, supporting any individual aged 16-65. Staff stressed that this ability to work with anybody, sets the service apart from other providers that tend to be focused only on certain groups. The fact that the service is able to work

### **In focus: Estimating the reach of the service**

To estimate the reach of the service – and the potential level of unmet need – we focused on the eight boroughs that were selected for developing Local Area Plans, and that had an E&T centre situated within the borough: Islington, Hackney, Waltham Forest, Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark, Westminster, and Hammersmith and Fulham.

An estimate for the number of Peabody’s general needs residents who stand to benefit from the E&T offer was calculated<sup>1</sup>. This includes unemployed residents and those paid under the London Living Wage. In these eight boroughs, in 2019, an estimated:

- 2,900 residents were unemployed and looking for work
- 9,600 residents were in-work and paid under the London Living Wage.

In 2018/19 the service engaged 284 residents on the programme. However, this is small relative to the scale of potential need. Looking at residents in these eight boroughs of interest, we estimate that 12,500 were either unemployed or paid under the London Living Wage.

<sup>1</sup>The number of general needs residents in each borough is estimated using information on general needs properties in Peabody’s Community Foundation Strategy 2019-22, and Office for National Statistics data on the number of households and people living in London. Peabody’s Slice of Life survey provides information on the employment status of Peabody’s general needs residents.

with both residents and the wider community was seen to confer additional benefits, enabling partnership working with a broader range of external organisations. However, staff stressed that they would like to increase the number of Peabody residents who engage with and benefit from the programme.

### Referrals

Staff see external referrals as working extremely well, with Jobcentre Plus, community organisations, Local Authorities, and other employment support providers all referring into E&T relatively frequently. A high number of word-of-mouth referrals and repeat customers were viewed as evidence of the service's good reputation.

However, staff believed that more could be done to increase referrals from the different teams and departments within the organisation to boost resident engagement. This is reflected in the MI data which shows that internal referrals accounted for just a quarter (24%) of residents who engaged with the programme, and 5% of all E&T customers in 2018/19. While the number of referrals could be increased across the board, staff pointed to a relatively low number of referrals from other teams within PCF as a particular challenge and an area to improve upon.

*“Unless they actually work in your office, you need to instil the fact that we are here”*

*E&T Staff member*

*“If we have everybody on board with us, we would be much stronger.”*

*E&T staff member*

Staff were puzzled as to the cause but offered some suggestions for why this was occurring:

- **Internal promotion/awareness.** Staff felt that greater internal promotion of the service was needed, stating that “we need to sing our praises more”.
- **Paperwork.** Staff recognised that other teams were extremely busy and thought that the additional step of filling out an internal referral form may disincentivise internal referrals.
- **Resident marketing.** It was felt that more could be done to get the word out to residents that the E&T team were available to support and advise them.

### Meeting customer needs

Staff felt that they felt the programme met the range of needs that customers presented with, either through direct delivery or through the support that partner organisations provide.

Staff found it difficult to identify groups of individuals who were better or less well served by the programme. Emphasis was instead placed on motivation as a factor that

determined how easily someone could be supported, and hence benefit from the programme.

However, some suggestions were made for those who are better served, including mothers returning to the labour market<sup>19</sup>, young people who are NEET, and those aged 50+ who are long term unemployed.

Some suggestions were made for those less well served, including people looking for niche or specialist jobs, those with complex needs, and people in work. People in work were said to have less time to engage with the E&T programme, and staff recognised that their opening hours, during the working day, may prevent access. However, other staff members spoke of the ways they overcame this challenge by using multiple channels of communication to reach those in work: WhatsApp, texts, email, and skype.

## **Supply chain apprenticeships and training**

### **Apprenticeships**

A number of strengths of the apprenticeship offer were identified, including an emphasis on quality. Peabody ensure that all apprentices are paid at the National Minimum Wage rate for those aged 21 and above, which is nearly twice the level of the apprentice minimum wage.

A number of areas for improvement were also highlighted, chief amongst these was the desire to increase the number of residents accessing the programme. Only seven of the apprenticeships delivered in 2018/19 went to residents and we heard that the number of internal referrals received over the past five years did not exceed single figures.

We heard that work had been undertaken to bridge the potential skills gap that residents might face in accessing an apprenticeship, including the development of pre-apprenticeship routes and traineeships, yet take up was still low. There was some concern about the effectiveness of communications regarding apprenticeship vacancies, and that information about the opportunities was not reaching the right residents.

### **Training**

Staff view the current training offer positively, pointing to its universal and on demand nature as particular strengths. Accredited courses on offer are delivered locally by external partners at E&T centres so that customers do not incur additional travel costs to take part. Unaccredited courses are delivered by Peabody staff at E&T centres.

Suggested improvements centred around more effective marketing of courses to residents in order to ensure that more were able to benefit from the training offer, and tightening the link between the training offer and local employer demand.

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<sup>19</sup> Staff spoke of the childcare team and Level 2 teaching assistant training that was available as particularly relevant for this group.

## Service strengths

- **Hitting targets** – staff explained the service has hit its targets year on year and enjoys good customer feedback.
- **Holistic, person-centred approach** – the service's approach to support was seen as a huge strength: tailored to each individual to provide a bespoke service.
- **External partnerships** – strong links with local stakeholders were seen as effective in both driving referrals and allowing the E&T team to refer those with complex needs to specialist support.
- **Links with employers** – strong relationships with local employers enable the E&T team to access work trials and broker job opportunities for customers.
- **Universal access** – the self-funded nature of the programme provides the flexibility to work with all customer groups. This was seen to contribute to maintaining strong partnerships and staff highly valued the fact they didn't have to turn anyone away.
- **Strong reputation** – the service was thought to be highly regarded. Staff spoke enthusiastically about events such as the apprenticeships and jobs fair, which attracted wide interest from other organisations within the sector and members of the general public.

## Areas for improvement

Generally, staff believed the service to be working well. However, the following suggestions were made on how the service might be improved:

- **Internal communication** – closer working with other Peabody teams to generate referrals was seen as an opportunity to increase the number of residents who access the programme.
- **Working smarter** – concerns were raised about duplication of processes and burdensome IT systems that created unnecessary administrative work. Staff expressed a desire to streamline processes and make them 'smarter'.
- **Larger reach** – some staff expressed a desire to expand and open more centres to cover a wider geography.
- **Wider outcome measurement** – staff wanted the ability to track the 'distance travelled' by customers, particularly for those that have not yet achieved a job outcome.
- **In-work cohort** – some staff believed there was scope for further work to be done with people who are in-work, who may be underemployed or want to progress.
- **Staff training** – while industry knowledge was cited a strength of the programme, some expressed a desire for further training. Particularly so around supporting individuals with mental health issues and understanding the skills that employers need.

## Partner Views

### Key points

- Internal and external partners viewed the service positively. Internal partners recognised E&T's value in supporting residents and external partners highlighted the positive impact on their organisation through working with Peabody.
- Internal partners highlighted that the focus on engaging 'work ready' individuals could leave residents with more profound barriers to work with less support.
- Co-location was seen as having a positive impact on the support customers received and boosted the volume and quality of referrals.
- Health and disability, Brexit, and Universal Credit were identified by partners as key external changes set to impact the E&T programme in the immediate future.
- Partners raised concerns of possible disruption to the brokerage model posed by moving to an area-based approach.

### Views of internal partners

Internal partners<sup>20</sup> recognised the value of the E&T team in supporting residents into employment and enabling them to improve their household finances.

Internal partners thought that some Peabody residents were unable to benefit from E&T support because they often were not sufficiently 'work-ready' - they had more profound barriers to work. We heard that E&T's perceived focus on supporting people who are job-ready left some residents without the help they needed getting ready to move into work.

*"The encouragement is always to try and get people off benefits and into work. That's one of our priorities, but not everybody is job-ready."*

*Internal Partner*

Internal partners also provided some suggested areas for improvement. They highlighted that the E&T team may benefit from upgraded IT systems that would automatically send messages to new referrals.

Co-location of E&T within wider PCF teams was seen to be effective at increasing the visibility of the E&T team both internally and among residents, and improving the volume and suitability of referrals.

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<sup>20</sup> Two internal partners were interviewed, from a PCF Care and Support team and the wider Peabody Financial Inclusion team.

## Views of external support partners

External partners<sup>21</sup> viewed the service as effective and impactful, highlighting how their customers benefit from E&T support through accessing free training and an effective jobs brokerage service.

External partners also highlighted the low level of support needs amongst the programme's current target group. They spoke of the benefits of being able to refer lower need customers to Peabody's service, which enabled them to focus on individuals with greater support needs. A respondent at a local authority employment support service, described referring individuals to E&T when they did not meet the criteria of the target groups outlined as a condition of ESF funding.

*"I wouldn't say they're great with people who are needier. They're very good with people who are job-ready."*

*External Partner*

External partners stated the benefits of where E&T staff had been co-located within their premises. They highlighted the opportunity this provided to pre-screen potential referrals to ensure they were suitable, and the benefits of warm handovers.

The supply chain contractors interviewed were positive about the E&T programme, and the calibre of candidates referred to them. Peabody's proactive approach to supporting contractors in the successful delivery of apprenticeships, and their commitment to providing ongoing support to apprentices were highlighted as particular strengths.

*"What struck me about Peabody, is they're with you every step of the way. There's probably one other housing association I know that has the same level of engagement. It's truly partnered, I think that's what's important"*

*Internal Partner*

Apprenticeship providers and contractors recognised the added value of the E&T offer throughout the hiring process and beyond. Respondents cited boot camps, E&T's investment in pre-interview and post-placement support as being effective. E&T customers were viewed to be well prepared and ready for work, contrasting this with individuals recruited from alternative sources, such as college leavers.

Some apprenticeship providers gave areas for improvement, including a desire for greater responsiveness, particularly from wider Peabody teams beyond E&T, and for further integration and information sharing.

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<sup>21</sup> Eight external partners were interviewed, including individuals from local authorities, an employer in Peabody's supply chain, complimentary support organisations, and apprenticeship providers working with Peabody and their contractors.

## Partner views on the future of the service

Partners identified three key changes that they expected to impact on the E&T service going forward: health and disability, Brexit, and Universal Credit.

Partners recognised that – because of the stubbornly high disability employment gap – supporting those with a health condition or disability should be a priority. A supply chain contractor highlighted the impact of Brexit and feared even greater skills gaps and shortages for the sector. Finally, the impact of Universal Credit, with its emphasis on requiring those in work to find higher paid work, was highlighted as an area that Peabody should focus on.

## Area-based approach

PCF have developed a new strategy that moves away from centralised, thematic delivery and towards an area-based approach. As part of this new strategy, Peabody will develop Local Area Plans (LAPs) with key stakeholders in the thirteen local authorities of highest density of stock, over the next three years. These plans will first map local need and current provision. Peabody, in partnership with local stakeholders, will then seek to deliver place-based services to address these needs. Internal staff and partners interviewed for the review were asked about the perceived opportunities and potential risks of moving to an area-based approach.

Among E&T staff, there was a lack of a clear view about what an area-based approach meant for their service. Some felt unsure about the new direction, while others thought that the current service was already area-based and effectively responding to local need. Similarly, partners were keen for clarity on what this new approach would mean in practice.

In terms of risks, staff and partners highlighted concerns that a move towards a more local focus may undermine the effectiveness of the jobs brokerage support, which allows Peabody to match employer needs and customers across London.

Some opportunities with the move to a local approach were identified, including the ability to integrate and coordinate services to a much greater extent, and the potential to increase the number of residents accessing the service.

## Chapter Summary

- For customers engaged between April 2017 and March 2019, the service achieved a 36% job outcome rate.
- Women outperform men in terms of both number of job outcomes and job outcome rates, however, proportionally more job outcomes for men were of a higher salary. This reflects the gender split in the number of hours worked.
- In 2018/19, 155 apprenticeships were created and delivered through Peabody's supply chain. Just 7 went to Peabody residents, with the apprenticeship programme receiving less than ten internal referrals over the past five years.
- Between Jan – Oct 2019, 182 accredited qualifications were achieved by 175 individuals.
- Peabody's E&T programme has a strong reputation and is well respected by customers and partners. Staff, customers and partners believe the programme meets, and often exceeds its aims and objectives.
- From the perspective of staff and customers, holistic one to one support and trusting relationships are the main strengths of the programme. Both view volunteering opportunities and confidence building as key steps towards employment.
- Suggested areas for improvement included: internal partnership working; boosting resident numbers; improving internal systems; greater staff availability; expanding in-work support provision, and; further development of the training offer.
- Internal partners recognised the value of the E&T team in supporting residents to improve their finances and manage their tenancy. However, in some instances they felt that a focus on work-ready individuals left residents with greater barriers to work without support.
- External partners viewed the service positively. They also highlighted the low needs nature of the programme's current target group and emphasised that collaboration should be central to the new area-based approach.

### 3. Comparison to other programmes

In this section, we review similar services to understand how their performance compares, and to explore alternative delivery models. Key themes from the available literature on employment support are also discussed, highlighting best practice.

#### Comparing delivery

This section explores three employment and training programmes delivered by housing associations, focusing on the delivery model implemented. Key learning points for the E&T programme are then highlighted.

#### Affinity Sutton's Ready2Work

Ready2Work<sup>22</sup> is Affinity Sutton's voluntary employment service that helps residents in their journey back into work. It was developed as part of their wider community investment programme, funded through Affinity Sutton's Community Foundation.

The programme is delivered in-house by the Ready2Work team. The service focuses on:

- Routes to work: providing tailored training programmes, designed around the needs of employers, with a focus on achieving sustained employment.
- Apprenticeships: internally focused programme that encourages managers to take on apprentices.
- E-learning: providing online courses open to all residents across the UK.
- In-work Support – all residents are offered in work support and free post-employment training to upskill them in the workplace.

#### Plymouth Community Homes' (PCH) Learn for Free

Learn for free<sup>23</sup> is a training programme offered to tenants to reduce worklessness, improve skills, confidence and support more residents to get connected with the internet. PCH state that the programme forms a bridge connecting residents to statutory services, helping tenants to meet their Claimant Commitment.

PCH utilised tenant data to recognise that one in two tenants have a self-declared disability or health condition. Training sites were therefore adjusted to accommodate those with a disability, promoting engagement by enabling access to all.

#### Hyde Housing's Hyde Plus

<sup>22</sup> Reviewed in 2014. See: National Housing Federation (2014) *A home, a job, a future*.

<sup>23</sup> Reviewed in 2018. See: Centre for Social Justice (2018) [Social housing and employment](#). Housing commission, interim report 1.

Hyde Plus<sup>24</sup> is a resident-only employment support programme. The programme provides CV advice, job search and employment support to help their unemployed residents move into work.

Hyde Housing maintain comprehensive data records on tenants registered as responsible for paying rent, including benefits claimed, education level, employment status and age. Upon moving into their new home, a meeting is set up between new tenants and a Hyde Plus employment advisor. During this meeting, the advisor asks a series of questions to understand the tenant's personal circumstances and their preferences.

Hyde Plus then use this data to identify residents who are eligible and interested in gaining employment, and tailor their marketing to their stated preferences. As a result of this targeted and data-led approach to engagement, Hyde Plus saw programme enrolments increase and saved time and money in the process.

### Key learning points for E&T

- *Affinity Sutton's Ready2Work programme utilises digital platforms to provide a wide-reaching universal learning offer, at low cost, to residents across the UK.*
- *Hyde Plus uses tenant data to identify adults who are interested in and eligible for employment support. This targeted and data-led approach resulted in higher resident participation.*
- *PCH utilises tenant data to tailor their support offer and ensure it is accessible for all residents.*

### Best practice

This section briefly looks at the wider literature on employability support and how E&T compares. We find that **Peabody's E&T programme embodies many aspects of best practice.**

Effective employment and training programmes tend to rely on **experienced and well-trained employment advisors**, who have both a good understanding of the local labour market, and effective coaching skills. This was highlighted as a strong point of the E&T programme by both customers, staff and stakeholders, with the advisors being seen as knowledgeable, skilled and highly committed.

The E&T programme has **strong partnership working and partner buy-in**, which both leads to high numbers of external referrals, and allows for effective links to organisations that can offer specialist support to E&T customers. The programme has a strong and well-

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<sup>24</sup> Reviewed in 2015. See: Centre for Cities (2015) [Delivering change](#): what housing associations can tell us about employment and skills.

respected brand within the areas of its operation. The E&T programme works extensively with both Jobcentre Plus and local authorities in the areas it operates.

Research highlights the critical importance of **face to face, intensive and personalised support** in helping people prepare for work, search for work, enter work, and stay in work<sup>25</sup>. The personalised and holistic advisor support provided by Peabody is highly valued by customers and reflects best practice in employment support. However, the evidence indicates that personalised support is more suited to instances where customers are further away from the labour market and face significant barriers to employment, rather than job ready<sup>26</sup>. Such intensive support for those closer to the labour market can come with a high level of deadweight.

Effective employment support programmes tend to feature **employer engagement and job brokerage** in order to identify suitable opportunities for customers<sup>27</sup>. The E&T programme has effective and well-established employer engagement, which is valued both by staff and by customers. The evidence also indicates that employer engagement provides opportunities to link training to local demand, which is key to job matching and achieving sustainable employment<sup>28</sup>. This was also highlighted by staff as a potential area for development.

## Understanding E&T's performance

### E&T's social return on investment

To determine Peabody's social return on investment, we have adopted the HACT Social Return on Investment model. In this model, the total social benefits are compared against the costs of the intervention to provide an overall assessment of the value for money of activities.

HACT's Social Value Bank is the largest set of methodologically consistent social value metrics including areas particularly of interest to UK housing providers: employment, local environment, health, financial inclusion and youth. The values are calculated through statistical analyses of four large national UK datasets that contain data on wellbeing and life circumstances: British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), Understanding Society, the Crime Survey for England and Wales, and the Taking Part survey. These datasets include not just peoples employment status, but responses to questions relating to wellbeing, health, volunteering, and many other areas.

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<sup>25</sup> CESI (2015) [Worklessness, welfare and social housing](#).

<sup>26</sup> Adam et al. (2017) define job ready customers as those who are either temporarily out of work, or out of work but keen to re-engage with the labour market and who need some assistance with skills or the application process. See Adam, D., Atfield, G. and Green, A. (2017). What works? Policies for employability in cities. *Urban Studies*, Vol. 54(5) 1162-1177.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

The total cost of the programme during financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19 was £2,074,517, and **for every £1 spent, the programme achieves £3.15 of social value, resulting from the positive impact of programme outcomes on customers' lives and wellbeing.** The overall social value is £6.53 million and the net benefit of the programme (taking into account deadweight) is £4.46 million.

**Table 4: E&T social return on investment**

Overall budget	Overall social impact	Analysis of benefit	
		Budget: social impact	Net benefit
£2,074,517	£6,534,475	1 : 3.15	£4,459,958

### Deadweight

To assess the effectiveness of a programme, we need to understand the additional impact of the programme, above what would have happened anyway. This requires looking at 'deadweight'.

With employment programmes, deadweight calculations estimate the proportion of employment outcomes that would have occurred anyway in the absence of the programme. This allows us to understand what the social value of the programme was that is attributable to the intervention itself.

HACT comes with built-in deadweight assumptions for employment and training programmes of 15% - it estimates that 15% of all outcomes would have occurred anyway. L&W believe that HACT's default deadweight assumption is low when compared to with other deadweight evidence, and particularly so for the customer profile of the E&T programme – with around half of its participants short-term unemployed. Based on this wider evidence<sup>29</sup> and prior evaluation experience, we have estimated deadweight at 33.5%.

The actual deadweight figure may be higher, because many short-term unemployed individuals move into work without support. Looking at benefits data, around 50% of newly unemployed people move off of Jobseekers Allowance – a legacy benefit claimed by jobseekers – within three months, rising to 70% within 6-9 months and to 80% within a full year<sup>30</sup>. Some will stop claiming Jobseekers Allowance to begin claiming another benefit but the majority will stop because they moved into work. This suggests that up to 80% of newly unemployed individuals will find work within a year, regardless of support received.

<sup>29</sup> The BIS report 'Research to improve the assessment of additionality' ([BIS Occasional Paper 1](#), 2009) shows that the deadweight figure for sub-regional programmes that focus on workforce and skills development is 19 per cent and the figure for regional programmes is 35 per cent. A weighted average of both (based on the number of programmes used in the calculation) is 33.5 per cent

<sup>30</sup> Learning and Work (2018) [Labour Market Statistics](#). See Chart 12.

## Comparing E&T's performance

Directly comparing the performance of different programmes is inherently difficult, owing to differences in customer groups, operating context and delivery model.

To benchmark performance, we have selected five comparator programmes, funded by ESF and delivered by London based housing associations between 2008 and 2011. These are GLOBE, Excite, Moving into Employment, Shaping Your Future, and Links2Work. They implemented similar delivery models, focused on the provision of one-to-one advisor support and employability training, to help social housing tenants into work.

For a more recent comparator, we also look at the Work Programme - launched in 2011 by the UK government to support unemployed welfare claimants back to work. The programme provided one to one advice and guidance to a range of welfare claimants who were mandated to attend the programme.

In comparing performance, we look at two-year job outcome rates<sup>31</sup> for the selected comparators and the associated cost per outcome achieved. For the E&T programme, we look at the jobs achieved up until January 2020 for those engaged between April 2017 and March 2019. This means that those joining E&T towards the end of the reference period have had a shorter window in which to achieve a job outcome<sup>32</sup>.

We find that £704.66 is spent per person engaged on the E&T programme and £2,002.43 is spent for each job outcome.

Table 5 shows E&T performance against the chosen comparators. It is clear that the **E&T programme achieves a higher job outcome rate at a lower cost per outcome**.

However, caution is urged in making comparisons between these programmes given:

- *Differences in the programme target group.* Programmes that only target social housing tenants or people long-term unemployed will expect lower job outcome rates than those that provide support to broader groups – as the E&T programme does – given the greater barriers to work that social residents and the long-term unemployed face.
- *Differences in labour market conditions over time.* London's labour market was very different in 2008-11, with a significantly higher unemployment rate, making employment support more challenging.
- *Differences in the voluntary and mandatory nature of participation.* Voluntary programmes will generally expect higher outcome rates as customers are more motivated to find work.

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<sup>31</sup> This means that participants have a two-year window, from initial engagement, in which to achieve a job outcome for it to be captured and included in the two-year job outcome measure.

<sup>32</sup> Those joining in March 2019 have only had eleven months to achieve a job outcome.

**Table 5: Benchmarking against other programmes**

Programme	Year	Target group	Voluntary or mandatory	Job outcome rate	Unit costs: actuals	
					Starts	Job entry
GLOBE	2008-2011	Social Housing	Voluntary	15%	£1,250	£8,621
Xcite	2008-2011	Social Housing	Voluntary	18%	£1,645	£9,259
Moving into Employment	2008-2011	Social Housing	Voluntary	19%	£1,466	£7,783
Marching On	2008-2011	Social Housing	Voluntary	10%	£967	£9,245
Shaping Your Future	2008-2011	Social Housing	Voluntary	19%	£544	£2,903
Links2Work	2008-2011	Social Housing	Voluntary	23%	£2,275	£9,744
Work Programme (JSA 18-24)	2011-2014	Long-term unemployed and health-related	Mandatory	35%	Unknown	Unknown
Work Programme (JSA 25+)	2011-2014	Long-term unemployed and health-related	Mandatory	27%	Unknown	Unknown
Peabody E&T Programme	2017/18 - 2018/19	Unemployed and underemployed	Voluntary	36%	£704.66	£2,002.43
Peabody Love London Working	2016 – 2020 <sup>33</sup>	Unemployed	Voluntary	34%	Unknown	Unknown

While the E&T programme is achieving a higher outcome rate than these comparators, there is reason to believe the programme could be even more effective

<sup>33</sup> It was not possible to identify a specific cohort within the data; therefore, a job outcome rate has been calculated for the duration of the Love London Working project to date (January 2016 - December 2019). This will represent a lower bound estimate as those joining the programme towards the end of the reference period will have had a short period in which to achieve a job outcome.

## Chapter Summary

- *E&T achieves a £3.15 return in social value for every £1 spent on the programme.*
- *Compared to other programmes, the E&T programme achieves a slightly higher job outcome rate at a similar cost per job. However, there is reason to believe that the E&T service could be even more effective.*
- *Looking at the wider evidence suggests that the E&T programme embodies many aspects of best practice, including: experienced advisors; strong external partnership working and buy in; effective employer engagement and jobs brokerage, and; intensive personalised support.*
- *The wider evidence also provides examples of how Peabody's E&T offer could be improved:*
  - *Using employer engagement activities to link training offers in with local employer demand.*
  - *Focusing the intensive and personalised support on those who are furthest away from the labour market.*
  - *Using tenant data to effectively target tenants and market the offer to them.*
  - *Further developing the current in-work progression offer.*

## 4. E&T's changing operational context

This section looks at recent and anticipated changes in the operating context of E&T - changes to the labour market, policy landscape, and organisational strategy – and the implications for the service.

### 1. A changing labour market

The UK labour market has changed significantly since the E&T programme was designed nine years ago. London's unemployment rate has halved since 2010, and the employment rate has increased to a record high<sup>34</sup>.

However, persistent problems remain. Real earnings remain below pre-recession levels<sup>35</sup>. There has been a significant increase in in-work poverty in the capital, and three in five (58%) people in poverty in the capital now live in a working household<sup>36</sup>. For too many Londoners, work is no longer a root out of poverty.

There has also been a significant growth in insecure work. One in eight (12.5%) people in work in London in 2018 were in some form of insecure work, such as zero hours contracts, agency work, or low paid self-employment<sup>37</sup>.

Despite the rise in employment, some groups still face significant barriers to work. There remains a stubbornly high disability employment gap. Across the country, the employment rate for people with a disability is 28.6 percentage points lower than those without a disability<sup>38</sup>. Disabled people are twice as likely to fall out of work over the course of a year, compared to non-disabled people<sup>39</sup>.

### The future of work

The nature of work is anticipated to change radically in the coming years. Here we outline three of the key trends – automation, demographic change, and decarbonisation - that are set to shape the future of work in the coming decades and how they could impact on the E&T programme.

*Automation and technological change.* Rapid advances in technology are set to transform the labour market. An estimated two in five jobs in the capital are at high risk of automation<sup>40</sup>, with certain industries – such as accommodation and food services, wholesale and retail, and transport and storage – set to be hit particularly hard. There is a high potential for automation across many of the sectors where the E&T programme

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<sup>34</sup> NOMIS time series data on [London's unemployment rate](#).

<sup>35</sup> Monthly Wages and Salaries Survey ([ONS](#), 2018).

<sup>36</sup> Trust for London (2017) [London's poverty profile 2017](#).

<sup>37</sup> Trade Union Congress (2018) [1 in 9 workers are in insecure work says the TUC](#).

<sup>38</sup> Housing of Commons Library (2020) [People with disabilities in employment](#).

<sup>39</sup> DWP and DoH (2017) [Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability](#).

<sup>40</sup> IPPR (2017) [Managing Automation: employment, inequality and ethics in the digital age](#).

currently places customers. Low skilled occupations have a particularly high potential for automation and women tend to work in jobs with a higher potential for automation<sup>41</sup>.

While we are unlikely to see a significant decline in the demand for labour, we will see changes in the kind of jobs that are available, and their skills needs. This has important consequences for employment and skills services in the future:

- **Workers will need to be supported to adapt as their jobs change.** Workers will increasingly have to work with and alongside technology, with certain tasks within their roles being automated.
- **Digital skills will become increasingly important.** A large and increasing number of jobs require at least basic digital skills. Improving your digital skills can help workers access jobs that are less vulnerable to automation<sup>42</sup>.
- **Workers who are displaced from the labour market will need to be supported to re-train and return to a suitable role.** Workers in disrupted sectors will need to be supported to re-train for the work that is available, and welfare to work support should ensure that workers are supported to enter sectors where there is likely to be future demand.

*Demographic change.* The UK population is set to continue to age at a rapid rate, driven by growing life expectancies. In the next fifty years, the UK population is set to increase by 17%, but the number of adults aged 65+ is set to grow by 71%, with those aged 85+ set to grow by 219%<sup>43</sup>. This will have a number of important consequences for the labour market:

- **Adults will be expected to work longer into later life**, driven by increases in the state pension age and growing healthy life expectancies. Employment and skills services will have to adapt to this change, and support adults to remain in decent employment for longer.
- **We will see growth in the ‘care economy’.** A greater number of elderly adults will need to be cared for, creating growing demand both for healthcare and for social care in the future.

*Decarbonisation.* The International Panel on Climate Change have estimated that the world has 11 years to significantly reduce emissions in order to avoid severe and irreversible climate change<sup>44</sup>. In response, the Government has committed to reaching net zero by 2050. Reaching net zero will require significant changes in our economy, with profound impacts on the labour market:

- **Workers in carbon-intensive industries will face significant disruption**, with large reductions in demand in some sectors of the economy. Workers affected by

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<sup>41</sup> Office for National Statistics (2019) [The probability of automation in England 2011 and 2017](#).

<sup>42</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (2019) [No longer optional: employer demand for digital skills](#).

<sup>43</sup> L&W analysis based on ONS (2017) [Living Longer: how our population is changing and why it matters](#).

<sup>44</sup> IPCC (2018) [Summary for policymakers of IPCC special report on global warming](#).

this transition will need to be supported to adapt and retrain for the jobs that will be available.

- However, there will be **significant growth in demand in some sectors**. Tens of millions of buildings will need to be insulated, tens of millions of boilers will have to be replaced, and tens of millions of electric vehicle charging points will need to be installed. This will require a comprehensive effort to re-skill the existing workforce across a number of sectors, as well as a massive increase in demand for skills in some of these sectors<sup>45</sup>.

## 2. Changing Policy

In addition to significant changes in the labour market, there have been important changes in policy over the last decade since the current E&T programme was designed.

Major reforms to social security have taken place since 2010 with the introduction of Universal Credit (UC). This brings together a number of in work and out of work benefits, with the aim of creating a single simplified system, which supports people to enter into and progress in work. A key part of UC is the increased focus on in-work progression and the introduction of in-work conditionality, which will require claimants who are in-work, but on a low income, to seek to increase their earnings. Support for those in low pay to progress is currently extremely limited.

Following the completion of the Work Programme – the Coalition Government's main commissioned welfare to work programme – the Government has developed the Work and Health Programme. This smaller programme is more focused on supporting people with a disability or a health condition. The Work and Health Programme in London has been devolved to sub-regions of London boroughs who are responsible for commissioning the programme. This is part of a wider approach to work health and disability, which has been overseen by the new Work and Health Unit.

The European Social Fund (ESF) has been a major source of funding for employment and skills support in recent years, including some of the support provided by the E&T programme. After the UK leaves the European Union, we will no longer be able to access the ESF. The government is developing the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which will replace the ESF.

## 3. Changing strategy

PCF have developed a new strategy, moving away from centralised, thematic delivery and towards an area-based approach. Place matters, and different communities have different needs, resources and opportunities. PCF have identified key regions across London and are in the process of developing Local Area Plans (LAPs) with local stakeholders to inform future delivery. The development of the LAPs is ongoing, guided by four key principles,

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<sup>45</sup> Committee on Climate Change (2019) [Net Zero: the UK's contribution to stopping global warming](#).

ensuring services are *place-based, responding to local need, working in partnership and attracting co-investment in local areas*.

Among E&T staff and partners, there was a lack of a clear view about what the area-based approach meant for their service. Some felt unsure about the new direction, while others thought that the current service was already area-based and effectively responding to local need.

### Chapter Summary

- *Since the design of Peabody's current E&T programme, there have been significant changes in the labour market, in employment and skills policy, and in Peabody's wider strategy. This includes:*
  - o **A record high employment rate** but a stubbornly persistent disability employment gap.
  - o **A rise of in-work poverty and insecure work** with the majority of people in poverty in the capital now living in a working household.
  - o **Automation, demographic change and decarbonisation** set to transform the world of work, and employer demand for labour and skills.
  - o **The introduction of Universal Credit** leading to an increased focus on in-work progression, but with a lack of support in this area.
  - o **Peabody's new strategy**, rooted in the development of Local Area Plans, will move delivery towards a place-based approach.
- *Taking these external changes together with the findings of the service review, there is a strong case for evolving the E&T programme to ensure it is making most efficient use of resources in a changing environment.*

## 5. The future E&T offer

We found a consensus among internal stakeholders, external partners, staff and customers that the service is largely delivering on its aims and objectives as they are currently set.

However, there is also a strong case for Peabody to evolve the programme. Given the profile of E&T customers, levels of deadweight are likely to be very high, and there is a low level of resident engagement with the service, which limits its potential impact for this target group. Staff, customers and partners also suggested areas for improvement, including: expanding the in-work progression support offer; further investment in the training offer, and; improving internal partnerships.

### Service recommendations

To increase the impact of the service for Peabody residents, we recommend that the E&T service:

- embrace a blended model that combines digital and face-to-face delivery;
- refocus advisor resource to provide more intensive support to those with more profound barriers to work;
- set an organisational-wide aim to boost the number of residents able to benefit from E&T support.

This section draws on findings from the service review, and the wider literature, to make six recommendations on how to achieve these aims. They combine what we know about what works in employment support with suggested improvements from E&T senior management, delivery staff, customers and partners.

#### 1: Improving data usage

##### Current situation

E&T currently work across multiple spreadsheets and IT systems that were designed to support performance monitoring rather than operational delivery and evaluation. This enables management to monitor performance and quickly identify problem areas, but also prevents E&T from taking full advantage of available data.

The current management information (MI) system groups together in-work and short-term unemployed customers, leaving E&T unable to segment the customer group based on employment status or compare programme performance for each group. The system also does not link to residents' rent accounts, preventing an evaluation of the impact of E&T activity on residents' finances and rent arrears.

## Recommendation

- **Peabody should explore improving their current management information system, or upgrade to a new system to better support delivery and enable robust evaluation.**

An improved, or new MI system should aim to do the following.

- *Enable E&T to segment the customer cohort into three groups – in-work, short-term unemployed, and those long-term unemployed – and tailor support accordingly.*
- *Integrate apprenticeship, employment and training records within a single system* to support evaluation and provide on-demand information to brokers about the pipeline of newly qualified E&T customers.
- *Record income and earnings data in the highest granularity possible.* Recording earnings – to the nearest pound – at the point of engagement, and again when customers move into work will enable Peabody to assess how much wealthier customers are as a result of E&T support.
- *Link E&T records with resident rent accounts* to enable E&T to assess the impact of their employment support on residents' rent arrears.
- *Integrate referral management, triage and on-going case management information.* An upgraded system should also streamline and digitise referrals within the PCF directorate.

## Implication for resourcing

In the first instance, Peabody should explore the extent to which the current data infrastructure has the capacity to deliver on these priorities. For example, grouping customers into three groups - in work, short term unemployed, and long term unemployed - could be done with relatively limited change to the existing system. Developing a new system could be costly and involve some disruption to service delivery.

If Peabody were to develop a new system, they should first agree internally on a set of requirements and desired functions of the new system, and then engage a reputable developer – such as Empowering Communities or Northgate – to assess the cost implications.

## 2: Focusing on residents

### Current situation

E&T's customer cohort is split 80:20 between non-residents and residents. Keeping the service open to all does provide some benefits, however, the low level of tenants accessing support limits the impact the service can deliver for this priority group.

At present, just one in five customers are Peabody residents. This leaves a significant amount of unmet need amongst residents; levels of unemployment and economic inactivity

are higher among Peabody tenants than the London average, and those who are in work are more likely to be in low paid work.

In the eight boroughs selected for developing Local Area Plans with an E&T delivery site in the borough, there are an estimated 12,500 residents who are either unemployed and looking for work or who are in-work and paid below the London Living Wage (see page 20).

### **Recommendation for change**

- Peabody should set an organisation-wide aim to significantly boost the number of residents engaged on the E&T programme.**

This would retain the benefits of the universal offer, by keeping the service open to non-residents, whilst also increasing the focus on Peabody's residents, maximising impact for this priority group.

Boosting resident participation can be supported with the following actions.

*Developing a better understanding of residents who could benefit from E&T support.* Peabody should explore taking advantage of two key data collection opportunities:

- Tenancy sign-up: New tenants should be asked about their employment status, qualifications, and if they consent to being informed about free training opportunities and employment support. To do this, Peabody could automatically arrange an appointment between an employment advisor and new tenants, in a similar way to Hyde Plus.
- New UC claimants: E&T should work with the Financial Inclusion and Collections team to identify residents making new UC claims<sup>46</sup>. E&T should emphasise the importance of their in-work progression support for low-paid workers moving to UC, who will face new requirements to increase their earnings while in-work under UC.

*Undertaking targeted marketing to residents who could benefit from E&T support.* Peabody should market employment support, training and apprenticeship offers directly to residents who are not yet E&T customers, but who have given the appropriate permissions.

Marketing employment support services works best when it is relevant to the specific needs of the recipient and contains simple and clear messages<sup>47</sup>. Peabody should therefore develop new resident marketing collateral, tailored to the recommended priority groups: long-term unemployed, those with a disability or health condition, and residents stuck in low paid or insecure work. New collateral could use testimony from previous customers and emphasise the positives of E&T support and how it is different to statutory services.

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<sup>46</sup> Social landlords will be notified by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in one of three ways if their tenant has made a claim to UC – via a UC179 form, a UC182 form or the UC Landlord Portal.

<sup>47</sup> Learning and Work (2019) [In-work progression: Guidance for commissioners](#).

*Reviewing and simplifying internal referral processes.* Staff reported that the current paper-based referral system was working to disincentivise internal referrals by creating additional paperwork. E&T should look to streamline and automate this process by digitising the referral process.

*Embedding E&T support throughout the organisation to drive referrals.* Boosting resident engagement can only be achieved and sustained if the E&T message is embedded in the everyday activities of wider teams. A range of options are available to achieve this:

- New starters at PCF could shadow E&T during induction sessions to better understand the offer.
- Regular emails to wider teams could be sent to emphasise how residents can benefit, using testimonials and case studies to dispel any perceptions that E&T support is only for 'work-ready' individuals.
- E&T could regularly attend team meetings across the organisation and engage with managers to ensure the E&T message filters down from all levels of the organisation.
- Peabody should explore further co-location of E&T staff within wider PCF teams to raise awareness and support warm handovers.
- Introduce internal referral targets into wider PCF teams' KPI figures to drive internal referrals.

### **Implications for resourcing**

Many of the suggested changes require altering internal processes and would not entail significant additional cost. However, undertaking targeted marketing would require the design and development of new collateral.

Digitising the referral process may also incur additional cost. Peabody should explore the extent to which referrals can be digitised within the current IT framework. However, if Peabody were to upgrade their IT system, the cost of streamlining referrals should be covered within this.

## **3: Focusing on those with greater barriers to work**

### **Current situation**

A large proportion (up to 46%) of E&T customers are short-term unemployed, however, due to uncertainties in the data it is unclear exactly how large. High proportions of short-term unemployed customers on the programme contributes to a high level of programme deadweight. This results in a situation where resources are being invested to support those who would most likely find a job without E&T support. While the programme is currently achieving value for money, high levels of short-term unemployed customers limits the potential social return on investment that the E&T programme could achieve.

## Recommendation for change

- **Peabody should develop a blended and tiered support model to enable them to focus on supporting those with more profound barriers to work, whilst still maintaining a universal digital offer.**

Focusing on those with more profound barriers to work could greatly increase the impact of the programme, and therefore its value for money.

To do so, Peabody will need to move to a blended approach that uses both digital and face-to-face modes of delivery, reserving more intensive face-to-face support for those who would not be able to move on without it. This will require Peabody to make a number of changes to the service, including segmenting the customer cohort into one of three groups depending on their support requirements.

Firstly, *Peabody should briefly triage all customers at the point of referral to determine their support requirements*. Advisors should ask a short series of questions to determine which of three support groups – Universal, Light Touch, or Intensive – is most appropriate. The suggested criteria for each group are summarised in table 6. The triage process should ensure that those streamed into the Universal offer have the digital skills required to make the most of being supported through a digital platform.

**Table 6: Suggested three-tiered and blended support model**

Support group	Criteria	Activity delivered	Mode of delivery	Average support frequency
Universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No entry criteria</li></ul>	Access to an online web portal providing skills assessment webtools and detailing available training, apprenticeship and job vacancies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Digital platform<sup>48</sup></li></ul>	No advisor support
Light Touch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unemployed</li><li>• In low pay</li></ul>	Web portal access, job matching and brokerage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Digital platform</li><li>• Telephone</li><li>• Restricted hours face-to-face drop-in service</li></ul>	20-30 minute telephone support every four weeks and access to drop-in service

<sup>48</sup> In the future, employment and skills support will increasingly embrace digital technology. There are several recent examples of services making greater use of digital platforms for delivery as part of a blended model. This includes the National Careers Service and Get Help to Retrain, which is a digital-focused service run by the Department for Education to help people understand their skills needs.

Intensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term unemployed (12 months +)</li> <li>• Disability or health condition</li> <li>• Stuck in low pay (have not seen a pay progression in the last five years)</li> </ul>	<p>Full, personalised, one-to-one support offer.</p> <p>Needs assessment and action planning</p> <p>Flexible training budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face</li> <li>• Telephone</li> <li>• Digital platform</li> </ul>	45-60 minute advisor time fortnightly
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To support those closest to the labour market – the Universal support group – *Peabody should explore the use of bespoke digital platforms*. This would enable a large number of customers to access support and opportunities, whilst focusing advisor time on those who would not be able to move on without it.

To support those with more profound barriers to work, *Peabody should invest in training staff to provide more intensive support, or should commission an external organisation to provide specialist advisor support*.

This approach would provide the flexible, person-centred support that staff and customers perceived to be so effective, whilst aiming for maximum impact and value for money by targeting the intensive face-to-face support where it is most needed.

### Implications for resourcing

Moving to a blended and tiered support model would require a number of changes to the current service, including: altering the current triage process; an improved MI system capable of segmenting the customer cohort into three support groups, and; a digital platform to provide universal support.

The first step would be to explore a suitable digital offer, and whether this could be hosted on the existing Peabody website. If this were not possible and Peabody were looking for an externally hosted digital support platform, a number of options are available, including Stay Nimble<sup>49</sup>.

The cost of a tiered model is difficult to estimate as there are both upfront costs and greater efficiencies to consider. Providing a digital platform to support those closer to the labour market could incur an upfront investment but would result in greater efficiency, with advisor time focused on those who need the support. Providing intensive face-to-face support for those further away is resource intensive but achieves maximum impact by helping those who would be unable to move into work without support. As such, this could be a cost-neutral exercise, which delivers greater impact for the current budget.

<sup>49</sup> <https://staynimble.co.uk>

## 4: Developing a flexible training budget

### Current situation

Peabody already have a focus on training and skills as part of their E&T offer. E&T customers are offered free short accredited courses and non-accredited employability training.

The review found a consensus view amongst staff and customers that further development of the E&T training offer would benefit customers, and voiced a desire to further link training opportunities to local employer demand.

There is an increasing link between qualification levels and labour market outcomes. Adults with higher levels of qualifications are more likely to be in work, and those in work are less likely to be in low pay and in-work poverty.

### Recommendation

- **Peabody should increase its focus on and investment in training by introducing personal learning accounts for those requiring intensive support.**

Research has shown that personal learning accounts can help to empower adults to take part in learning<sup>50</sup>. Peabody should explore providing personal learning accounts to E&T customers who meet certain criteria – those in the Intensive Support group.

To ensure that learning is work-related and effective, the personal learning account should be embedded into the action planning process, with advisors guiding customers to in-demand qualifications with strong earnings returns. This 'dual key' approach, whereby both advisor and customer agree on the appropriate use of the funds, empowers individuals and makes effective use of resources.

### Implications for resource

To estimate the cost of developing personal learning accounts for the Intensive support group, we looked at the Skills Escalator programme – an initiative combining specialist advisor support and training budgets to support in-work progression. The programme worked; it achieved a positive impact on participants earnings against a matched comparison group. The average cost of a Skills Escalator training course was £679.55, and a third of all participants did work-related training as part of the programme.

Table 7 displays the training budget required for different possible sizes of the Intensive support group. It assumes that the same proportion of E&T's customers in the Intensive support group undertake training as Skills Escalator customers (one third), at the same average cost.

It shows that offering personal learning accounts to 30% of E&T's customers would require an additional £84,843.95 investment in the training budget.

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<sup>50</sup> Learning and Work (2016) [Power to the people: the case for personal learning accounts](#).

**Table 7: Cost of a flexible training budget offer for different E&T customer compositions**

Proportion of E&T customers in Intensive support group	Number of customers (based on 2018/19 data)	Number taking up training (at 35.7% take up rate)	Total cost of training (at £679.55 per course)
30%	472	169	£114,843.95
25%	393	140	£95,137.00
20%	314	112	£79,109.60

## 5: Delivering specialist in-work progression support

### Current situation

The E&T programme was designed at a time of relatively high unemployment, with poverty concentrated amongst those not in work. Today, poverty is more an issue of low pay than worklessness; those living in relative poverty are more likely to be in-work than out-of-work, with social renters more likely than others to be in working poverty. Peabody residents are no exception. One in two working residents are paid below the London Living Wage.

The introduction of Universal Credit is set to place new requirements on claimants to increase their earnings, but as yet, there are relatively few services available to support people to progress from low pay.

E&T currently works with some in-work customers, however, there is a shared view amongst staff and partners that a greater focus should be placed on supporting in-work progression.

### Recommendation

- Peabody should develop a specialist in-work progression offer, delivered by an in-work progression advisor to those stuck in low pay.**

This would provide greater support for a currently under-served customer group and would ensure that E&T are responding to the changing nature of poverty in Britain.

A successful in-work progression offer should combine flexible, specialist advisor support and work-related training, in order to increase earnings and income security for low paid workers<sup>51</sup>. A number of changes would be required to develop such an offer.

Firstly, increasing the number of in-work customers accessing E&T would require Peabody to more actively target their in-work residents with tailored messaging. The evidence

<sup>51</sup> The latest DWP in-work progression pilot suggests that participants who received training and advisor support increased their earnings more than those who just received advisor support.

suggests that simple messaging focused on tangible benefits – “a better job” or “more money” – and promoting the relevance of support to the target group is vitally important<sup>52</sup>.

Delivering in-work progression support requires advisors to be flexible and adaptive to the limited availability of in-work customers. A digital support offer is particularly relevant for this target. Where necessary, the advisor responsible for delivering this support should be able to meet customers during or outside of regular working hours.

As with into-work support, in-work customers must be assessed at the point of engagement to understand their barriers to progression and work-related goals, with action plans developed to achieve these goals.

Progression support works best when combined with work-related training linked to local employer demand. As such, Peabody should provide access to personal learning accounts as part of their in-work progression offer to those stuck in low pay. The budget should be embedded into the action planning process, with advisors guiding customers to in-demand qualifications with strong earnings returns.

### Implications for resource

Peabody could explore either refocusing the role of an existing advisor or advisors, or employing additional members of staff to deliver specialist in-work progression support.

## 6: A Local Approach

### Current situation

Peabody’s stock is concentrated within certain locations, with seven in ten homes in just thirteen London boroughs. In addition to the concentration of stock, the level of need varies between local areas, as does the level of current provision.

Peabody have limited resources with which to provide services and have decided to focus efforts on the thirteen local authorities with highest density of stock. Peabody will develop Local Area Plans in these areas over the next three years as they move to an area-based approach to service delivery.

E&T staff believed the existing service to be place-based and were unclear on how a local approach would be different from the current delivery model.

### Recommendation

- Peabody should consider focusing advisor resource in boroughs with high stock density, whilst retaining a London-wide job brokerage and apprenticeship support focus.**

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<sup>52</sup> Learning and Work (2016) [Power to the people: the case for personal learning accounts](#).

After Local Area Plans have been developed, Peabody should explore focusing resource only in areas with a high density of Peabody stock and where E&T support would not duplicate existing provision within the authority.

Focusing advisor support on a limited number of local authorities would have a number of benefits. It would allow for more intensive support, which is more visible to tenants. It would allow for closer partnership working with local stakeholders, and a more targeted approach to the needs of local residents.

While advisors should be focused on a local authority level, brokers, should work across larger geographies. This would allow for greater flexibility in matching employer demand with work-ready residents, and it would give customers in areas of lower employment demand greater opportunities. Peabody should explore publishing vacancies and apprenticeships that are created through E&T activities on a digital platform. This digital platform should be accessible to all E&T customers.

To provide the best opportunity to those with greater barriers to work, E&T could provide early access to vacancies for the Intensive and Light Touch support group, before publishing them online for applicants from the Universal group. This would prioritise support for key groups, whilst sustaining employer relations with the provision of quality candidates across London.

### **Implications for resourcing**

Utilising digital platforms is the only change associated with significant cost implications.