

Evaluating the impact of St Giles Trust's Choices Project in 2014



A Pro Bono Economics report

Supported by



Evaluating the impact of St Giles Trust's Choices Project in 2014

Pro Bono Economics report

*prepared by economists from
Economic Policy Associates and DECC*

Mary Davies
William Davies
Adam Harmon
James Foster
Sarah Lowe

July 2016



Contents

Overview	3
1. Introduction	7
2. Profile of Choices Beneficiaries.....	9
Gender	9
Ethnicity.....	11
Age.....	12
Types of Barriers	13
Multiple Barriers	14
Comparison with National Statistics	16
3. Employment Benefits evaluation	20
Evaluation Framework.....	20
Estimating the employment effect.....	22
Estimating Higher Tax Revenues	23
Estimating Reduced JSA Benefits	25
Estimating Reductions in Housing Benefits	27
Estimating Reductions in Costs of Crime and Prison	29
Conclusion.....	33
4. Cost benefit analysis of increased employment and avoided crime	34
Costs	34
Benefits	35
Cost-benefit analysis	36
5. Estimating Impact of Training, Education, Volunteering Outcomes	38
Training Outcomes	39
Volunteering Outcomes	40
Education Outcomes	40
Conclusion.....	41
6. Results of Qualitative Survey.....	44
Methodology.....	44
Summary	45
Team Leaders/Caseworker interviews	45
Client Interviews	47
Annex 1 – Interview questions.....	50

Overview

St Giles Trust's Choices project aims to help disadvantaged young people aged 16 – 24 who are not in education, employment or training to move their lives forward by targeting support to their individual needs. In evaluating Choices for St Giles Trust (SGT) the Pro Bono Economics (PBE) team has adopted a **mixed approach to measuring impact using both quantitative and qualitative techniques**. This is necessary to fully capture the benefits of Choices as simply quantifying benefits in terms of education, employment or training outcomes would fail to demonstrate the value of the harder to monetise outcomes in terms of how they equip their clients with life skills, thereby increasing their self-esteem, confidence and motivation.

We evaluated Choices in its first full year that it operated (2014) across its 3 centres that serve London, West Yorkshire and South Wales. **Data provided by SGT shows that 1,132 clients were registered in 2014 and 543 of these achieved an outcome (e.g. starting a new job, or entering training) during the year.** These clients obtained a total of 907 outcomes during the year through Choices, comprising **495 training, 324 employment, 45 volunteering and 33 education outcomes**. The pro bono team was tasked with evaluating the impact of these outcomes.

The first step was to assess the circumstances of Choice's clients and the challenges faced by the Choices project, as the impact will depend on the characteristics of the client base. As shown in Chapter 2, Choices clients have multiple barriers such as

homelessness, family breakdown, low education qualifications, a history of offending and substance abuse which makes it extremely difficult for them to obtain employment, education and training outcomes without support. **This all points to SGT clients being harder to reach than the average young person that is not in education, employment or training.**

To explore this in greater detail, we undertook a survey of Choices' clients and SGT staff in 2014 to understand better how they first came into contact with Choices, the barriers they face and the ways that SGT help them to move forward with their lives. The results are summarised in Chapter 6 which shows that **Choices not only helps clients to get into employment education and training but also provides additional support generally to overcome other issues often when they have been unsuccessful in getting sufficient help through other schemes (e.g. the government Work Programme).**

In terms of first contact with Choices some clients self-refer or come from another SGT programme. However most come from other agencies such as Job Centres, Youth Offending teams, probation services and housing associations. Referrals usually take place because it is considered that they are **clients facing multiple barriers that they would benefit from extra support that statutory services cannot provide**. In addition, Choices staff go into the community holding information sessions in hostels, educational institutions or simply meeting prospective clients outside Job Centres or where gangs hang out.

Given the barriers faced by clients, Choices not only provides them with support in job, education and training applications but also provides additional support generally to overcome other issues such as low self-esteem, family difficulties, homelessness, mental health or substance abuse problems (in certain cases signposting them to organisations that specifically deal with these problems). **The approach adopted by Choices is based on tailored one-to-one support** and at the outset the **caseworker works hard to engage with the young person and win their confidence.**

Choices is not a programme that must deliver certain outcomes so it has no specific start and finish or set steps that all participants must go through. **Unlike statutory funding Choices caseworkers are not restricted in the type of support they can provide nor is it target driven.** Choices continues to support the young person even when they get their first outcome to ensure that it is sustainable. For example, a young person may get into a training course but may require some financial support to travel there or buy course materials. This explains why on average clients get more than 1 outcome which can be both education/training and employment.

Given that Choices provides a multi-layered approach this posed a challenge for the PBE team. Some of the outcomes, such as **recorded employment outcomes lent themselves to a traditional quantitative cost benefits analysis where there are established methodologies.** However, Choices interventions may take time to have an impact, and so an early stage evaluation won't yet be able to detect these.

For example, as shown in Chapter 5, **training, education and volunteering will ultimately improve employability and lead to employment in the future and most likely also lessen re-offending rates.** However, in the absence of a re-contact survey it is not possible to have data that is precise enough to quantify this effect.

As shown in Chapter 3, in setting out to **model the value and impact of recorded employment outcomes the approach adopted was to seek to quantify public finance impacts resulting from obtaining employment outcomes and the resultant impact of these employment outcomes on reducing re-offending rates.** This differs from a full social cost benefit analysis which would have evaluated the impact on society as a whole, taking into account wider impacts for the clients such as improved health and wellbeing and other impacts beyond the clients themselves, but excluding public finance impacts, which represent transfers between one group of society and another. This approach has been driven by data availability and the resources available to do the evaluation and effectively shows the overall benefit to the UK public sector.

The approach used to quantify the net benefits of the employment outcomes of Choices is to identify the impact of the programme, compared to what would have happened without it. In particular, this means making some assumptions as shown in Chapter 3 about the number of clients who would have found work even without Choices (counterfactual), and whether the employment found by a Choices client simply comes at the expense of another individual's employment (substitution) as well as likely reoffending rates. These assumptions are subject to uncertainty,

and so we test the results' sensitivity to alternative values for these assumptions.

The model then values benefits derived from reduced unemployment by breaking them down into higher tax revenues, reductions in housing benefit and job seekers' allowance and lower costs of crime and prison. 325 Choices clients gained employment outcomes during 2014, this results in an **estimated total quantifiable benefits of Choice's projects from employment and related reductions in re-offending rates of around £794,000 in the first year of employment**. It should be noted that these benefit figures do not cover important other benefits such as improved welfare from Choices for example increased self-esteem and enhanced well-being, and improved health as a result of employment and greater income, which are difficult to quantify.

We assume that there is a one-quarter lag before benefits start to kick in and so measure the first year's employment outcome benefits occurring across the 2014/2015 financial year. We have also scaled back the benefits from 52 weeks to 45 weeks in the first year to allow for the fact that having obtained an employment outcome clients may not stay in the same job throughout the year and there may be breaks between jobs. It is highly likely many of these benefits would continue beyond this point although data has not been available to make an assessment of these on-going impacts. Assuming a reduction in the realised benefits of 50% in each subsequent financial year, and that any benefits only continue for five years, **the resulting overall benefit of the Choices is estimated at around £1.47m (using an HM Treasury social**

discount rate of future benefits of 3.5%).

In Chapter 4, financial data provided by St Giles Trust, relating to the costs of establishing and administering the Choices programme, shows total **costs of the Choices Programme in 2014 of are around £998,000**. However, these costs relate to all of Choices activities including training and education so we need to apportion these costs. Out of 907 Choices outcomes 325 were employment outcomes. However, there were 83 recorded training outcomes that occurred before the client achieved an employment outcome and it might be considered that to avoid double counting these outcomes should be excluded from the total Choices outcomes reducing them to 824 outcomes. Taking this into account **gives an estimated range for the proportion of Choices costs attributable to recorded employment outcomes of 39%-45% amounting to around £394,000 to £449,000 in 2014**.

These figures result in a benefit/cost ratio for recorded employment outcomes of between £3.3 and £3.7 for every £1 spent. Conducting a sensitivity using more restrictive assumptions shows that the likely outcome is for the benefit/cost ratio to be reduced to £3.0 and £3.4 for every £1 spent. What is clear is that this benefit/cost ratio does not capture important other benefits such as **improved welfare** arising from Choices employment outcomes, for example **increased self-esteem** and **enhanced well-being** which are difficult to quantify.

We also identified some benefits that fall outside what is modelled, such as reducing educational underachievement and entry into voluntary placements. Data provided

by SGT shows that for 2014 there are 495 training outcomes, 45 volunteering outcomes and 33 education outcomes. Whilst the data lacks the precision required to model the impact, through published research it is possible to show using data from published research the likely impact of some of these outcomes on life time earnings and productivity.

SGT's database of outcomes shows that the training undertaken by SGT clients ranged from Level 1 – Level 4 under the National Qualifications Framework. This included **training providing practical skills across a wide range of sectors and occupations such as plumbing, construction, beauty, sports, health and social care**. Most of the training outcomes were at Level 1 and 2 but a few were at Level 3 and Level 4. **BIS research into returns to Intermediate and low level vocational qualifications shows that in line with previous studies there continues to be large and significant wage gain for most vocational qualifications**. For example, the wage gain for Level 2 is 12% for BTEC, 16% for RSA, and 1% for NVQ Level 2, compared to similar individuals with qualifications below level 2.

In respect to the 45 volunteering outcomes, although this is not included in the headline figures above, some potential benefits can be illustrated by drawing on other. For example, US Research from the **Corporation for National Community Service in the US** looked at **volunteering as a pathway to employment** found that volunteers will have a 27 percent higher

likelihood of finding a job after being out of work than non-volunteers. The study also found that the association between volunteering and employment had the strongest effect on individuals without a high school diploma (which would equate to those with low educational attainment in the UK).

As regards the 33 education outcomes the majority of these were 'gained accreditation at Level 1' but some were at Level 2. Department for Education **research shows that there are high wage, and particularly employment returns to achieving 1-2 good GCSEs (i.e. Level 2 qualifications)**. These combine to produce very large lifetime productivity gains compared to no qualifications ranging from £110,395 (women) to £170,984 (men).

In conclusion, the mixed approach adopted to evaluation by the PBE team has allowed us to capture insights into the value and costs of Choice's support for its clients in 2014. The evaluation shows that it is not just a question of deriving a benefit/cost ratio but that where impacts cannot be modelled it is still important to provide indications of the likely level of impact drawing on available research. In addition, **any attempt to quantify impacts using standard techniques will not capture other social effects such as improvements to well-being that are highlighted in our qualitative survey**. Full assessment of these effects requires a combination of capturing this data both pre and post intervention which in practice it is difficult to do for such schemes.

Chapter 1: Introduction

St Giles Trust (SGT) is a charity helping ex-offenders and disadvantaged young people to move their lives forward. The HSBC-supported Opportunity Partnership launched in July 2013 and funded by HSBC saw four charities – one of which is St Giles Trust – coming together to tackle youth unemployment across the UK. SGT's Choices programme was supported through this funding in its work to help young people aged 16 – 24 in London, West Yorkshire and South Wales to re-engage with education, progress into training and/or move into or closer to employment thereby realising their potential. As shown by the Choice's Manager's introduction to Choices (see page 8) the young people they support may have struggled to move their lives forward for a variety of reasons. This includes experiences of homelessness, family breakdown, leaving care and having a history of offending. Through one-to-one and group work sessions, Choices provides advice and support to help young people become motivated and help to find a work placement, training course, apprenticeship or job.

Pro Bono Economics, a charity that matches highly skilled economist volunteers with charities who need their expertise, was asked to provide a team to help analyse the impact of Choice's client interventions. This work was first started in April 2014 and in Phase 1 of the study the team was comprised of economists from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and Department of Energy and

Climate Change (DECC).¹ They undertook a review of the data framework and analysed data currently held by SGT; a literature review to compare methods employed by other service providers in measuring impact; and a qualitative survey of SGT's team leaders and caseworkers and their clients to gauge how best Choices could be evaluated.

This report is the result of the work undertaken in Phase 2 that started in April 2015. The Pro Bono Economics team in Phase 2 comprised economists from DECC and Economic Policy Associates Limited (EPA).² As discussed below using the data supplied by SGT and drawing on established methodology a model was constructed to provide a quantitative assessment of the costs and benefits that arise from Choices. Drawing on earlier qualitative survey undertaken in Phase 1 some of the softer outcomes are also evaluated. This evaluation report assesses the first year impact for the cohort of clients in 2014, the first full year of Choices following the start of HSBC funding which allowed it to ramp up its activities.

SGT managers have provided the following introduction to the Choices project.

¹ DECC team comprised Adam Harmon and Matthew Behull. CMA team comprised Mary Davies, Kendra Thomson and Johanna Welsch.

² DECC team comprised Adam Harmon, James Foster and Sarah Lowe. EPA team comprised Mary Davies and William Davies.

St Giles' Trust Choices project commenced delivery in September 2013, with the ambitious objective of supporting over 3,000 young people aged 16-24 over a 3-year period to achieve (or move closer to) employment and other positive life-changing outcomes.

Funded by HSBC, our goal is to support clients on their journey towards sustaining successful lives, responding to individual needs and providing young people with the skills and confidence to realise their potential.

Delivered in London, West Yorkshire and South Wales, Choices works with individuals who have struggled to move their lives forward. Our clients face difficult and often complex barriers - experiences of homelessness, family breakdown, leaving care or having a history of offending, among others.

Our approach is holistic and provides much needed end-to-end support for young people – from initial confidence building to in-work support, and everything in between. We help young people to build a comprehensive picture of the barriers preventing them from succeeding, and put in place detailed action plans to overcome them.

Through tailored and intensive one-to-one sessions, Choices helps clients to identify and access the right progression opportunities, including training or skills development, work experience, apprenticeships or employment. We understand that in order to be able to access job and training opportunities young people need physical and financial stability, and we provide a wide range of support and advocacy including accessing benefits, housing, legal help and family mediation.

We also understand the importance of emotional support on this journey, so confidence building, motivational support and aspiration setting are all central in our approach.

By focusing on supporting the long term development of key skills and access to employment, education and training, Choices offers the long term solutions and support that young people need to achieve fulfilling lives.

St Giles Trust is committed to getting projects externally evaluated, whenever possible to identify findings which help us to improve services in the future. We are hugely grateful to Pro Bono Economics and the team from CMA and DECC for their time and expertise, and their patient work with us, which has resulted in this useful evaluation.

Since the team looked at the 2014 data, Choices have gone on to support many more young people. The benefits that this evaluation has highlighted will have continued, making a real difference to the lives of many young people.

Written by Miriam Keith & Daniel Chapman Choices Managers, St Giles Trust

Chapter 2: Profile of Choices beneficiaries

Choices SGT provides customised individual support to very disadvantaged young people (from ages of 16-24) in West Yorkshire (Leeds), London (Camberwell and Dalston) and South Wales (Cardiff) to help them re-engage with education, progress into training and/or move into or closer to employment. Choices clients can be characterised as Not being in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). SGT collects background information on its clients at the time that the client first registers with Choices. The data shows the barriers Choices clients face in seeking employment, education or training. Through this data it is possible to gain an understanding of the profile of its client base and make a comparison with official national statistics on the characteristics of NEETs. This can be useful indicator of the extent that Choices clients are disadvantaged and the distance they have to travel to move into education, employment or training.

The following factors are considered below:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Type of Barriers
- Multiple Barriers and Inter linkages

The barriers information is of particular importance, and includes factors such as education levels, housing status, underlying mental health conditions, the presence of any criminal record, and any history of substance abuse.

The analysis below is based on data held on Choices clients who were registered during 2014.

Gender

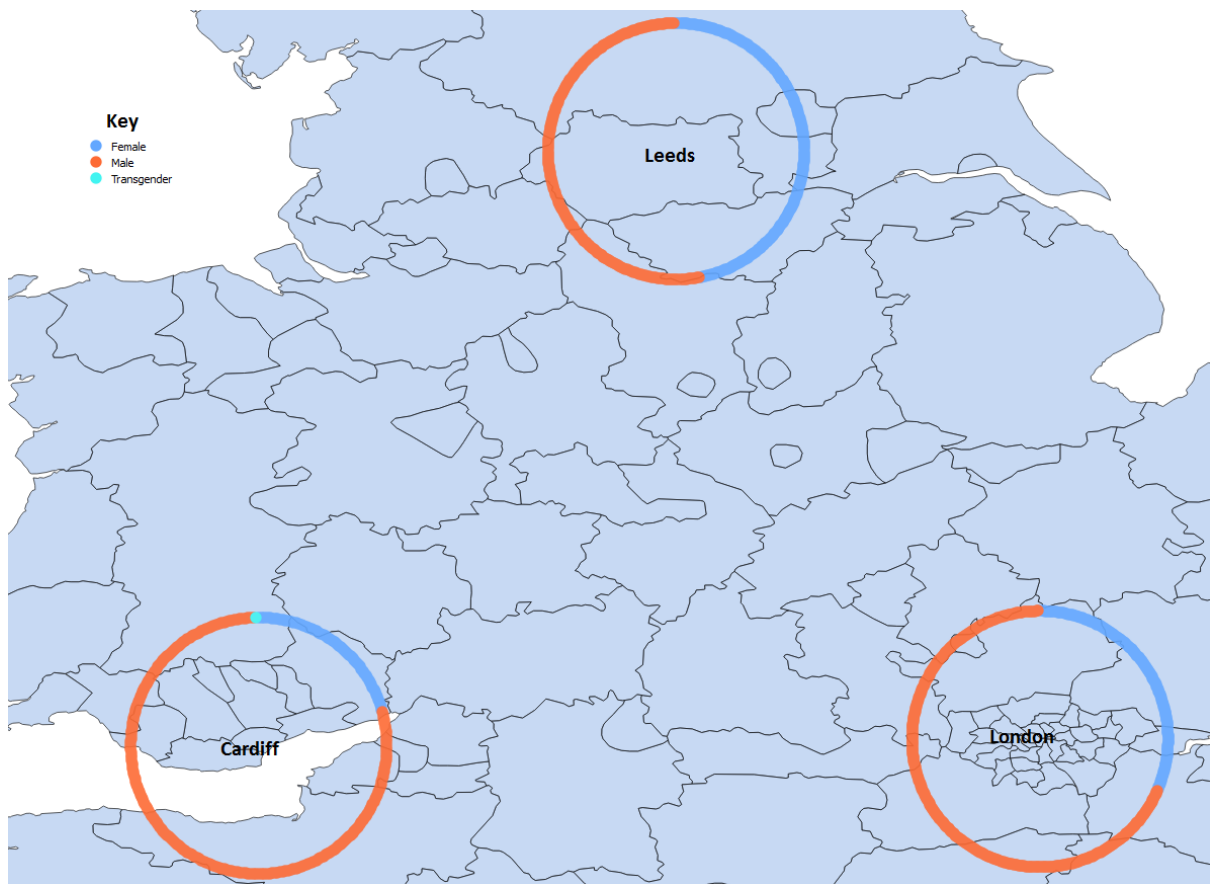
Table 1 shows the spread of male and female clients. There are more male than female clients in all regions, with the largest difference being in Cardiff. While there is only a small difference in Leeds.

This is also illustrated on the map which shows the ratio of male to female clients in each city (page 11).

Table 1: Spread by Gender – Choices 2014

	Leeds	London	Cardiff	Total
Male	203	308	235	746
Female	181	142	62	385
Transgender	0	0	1	1
Total by location	384	450	298	1132

Map 1: Choice's clients 2014 -Gender Difference by city



Ethnicity

Table 2 shows the spread of clients by ethnic groups and indicates that there are differences between the areas where Choices offices are based reflecting the local socio demographics of the area. For example, in London there are few white British clients compared to Leeds and Cardiff. While almost all of the clients who are Asian/British Asian- Pakistani are in Leeds. Additionally, St Giles Trust are known for having a very ethnically diverse front line delivery staff team, and this can mean young people from different backgrounds feel more comfortable to work with the charity.

This is consistent with information relating to the socio demographics of these areas. The effect can be quite localised, so for example, Guardian (2016) statistics show for Leeds overall 82.58% of the population is white British and only 6.9% Asian/Asian British. However, Postcode area (2016) statistics show that where SGT's offices are located (LS8) in Leeds the proportion of the white British population is only 68.9%, whereas 16.6% are Asian with large proportion from India (7.4%) and Pakistan (6.1%).

Table 2: Ethnicity of Choices clients, 2014

	Leeds	London	Cardiff	Total
Asian/British Asian - Other	3	14	4	21
Asian/British Asian - Pakistani	85	1	0	86
Black/Black British - African	14	110	3	127
Black/Black British - Caribbean	13	120	1	134
Black/Black British - Other	0	29	2	31
Mixed race	5	14	5	24
Mixed race - White/Black Caribbean	7	28	4	39
Other	17	30	6	53
Prefer not to say	4	14	1	19
White - Other	4	15	3	22
White British	211	67	251	529
Not stated	21	8	18	0

Age

Across Choices as a whole the table shows the age group with the most clients are those between 19 and 20 years old. Chart 1 shows that clients mostly lie within the 16-24 age group that Choices aims to support although there are a few that are 25 and above.

Chart 1: Spread by Age Group – Choices 2014

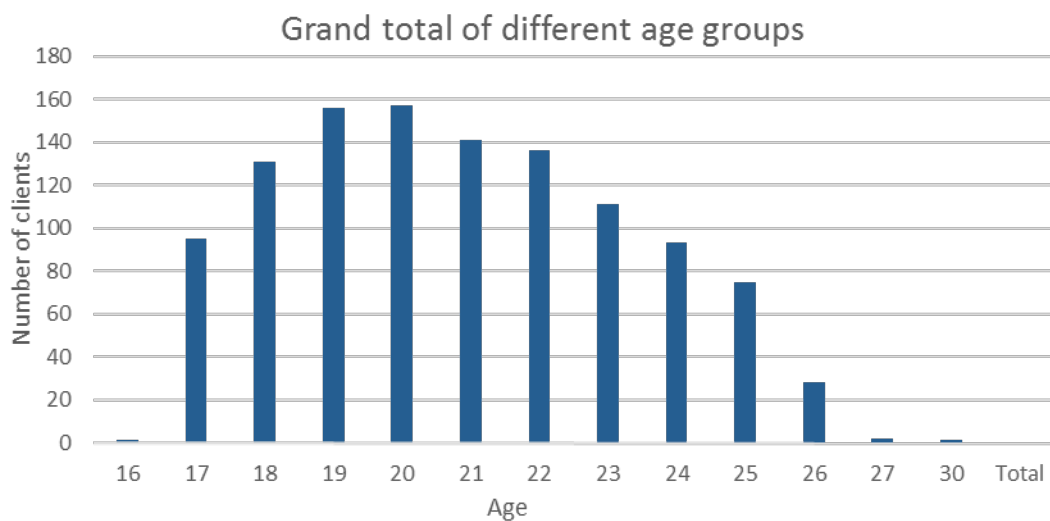


Chart 2: Age group of clients by city – Choices 2014

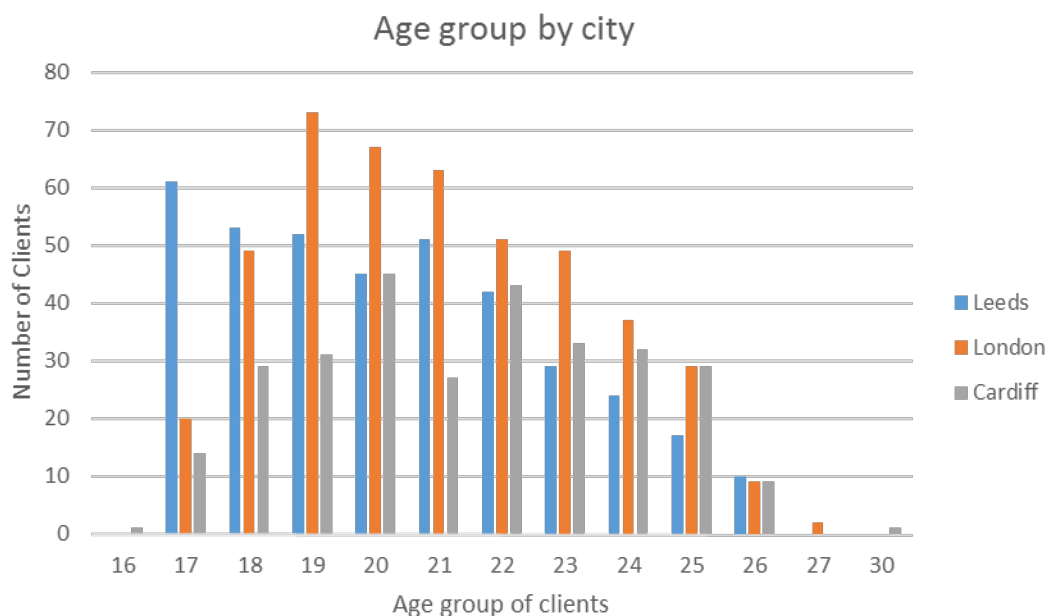


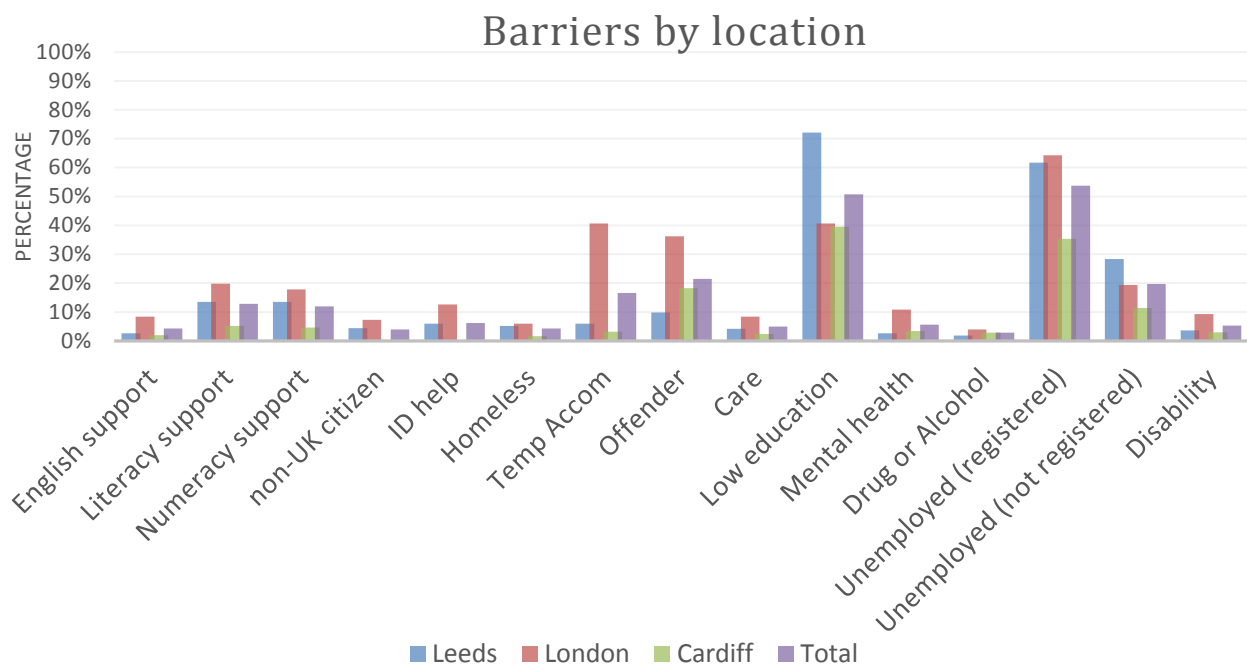
Chart 2 shows that there is little regional variation between offices, although Cardiff clients are slightly older on average (21.40 years), compared to London (20.98 years) and Leeds (20.31 years).

Types of Barriers

Chart 3 shows Choices clients face a range of barriers that prevent or inhibit them from finding employment, and achieving other positive, life changing outcomes. Most common are unemployment, low educational attainment, lack of permanent address and an offending history. Some also have mental health, drug or alcohol abuse issues or a disability.

Across the regional centres there are also marked differences. For example, there is a particularly low level of educational attainment among clients in Leeds. Clients in both Leeds and London have high levels of unemployment when compared to Cardiff. London has much higher proportion of clients with an offending history and in temporary accommodation.

Chart 3: Client Barriers by location – Choices 2014



Multiple barriers

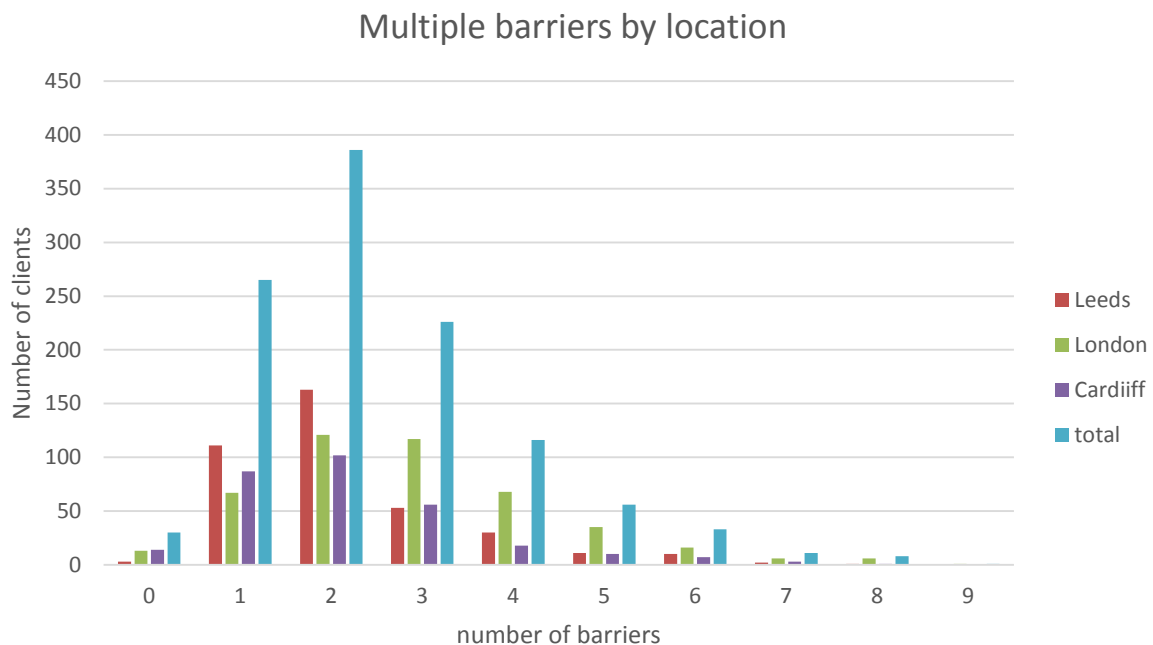
Table 3 shows that most clients (74%) have an average of 2 barriers or more, with 10% having 5 or more. 2 barriers are most common amongst Choices clients. It is important to note that different barriers may play more or less of a role in providing challenges to obtaining employment, education or training.

As such, they are not necessarily additive, and this provides an illustration of the extent of challenge faced across the Choices client base.

Chart 4 shows the spread of multiple barriers by location. London has the highest number of clients with 3 or 4 barriers who tend to be those with an offending history, low educational attainment, unemployment and in temporary accommodation. Leeds seems to have the most clients with only 1 or 2 barriers.

Table 3: Number of clients with multiple barriers – Choices (2014)

Barriers number	Cardiff	Leeds	London	Total
0	14	3	13	30
1	87	111	67	265
2	102	163	121	386
3	56	53	117	226
4	18	30	68	116
5	10	11	35	56
6	7	10	16	33
7	3	2	6	11
8	1	1	6	8
9	0	0	1	1
Grand Total	298	384	450	1132

Chart 4: Spread of clients with Multiple Barriers – Choices (2014)

It is possible also to examine the correlations between barriers i.e. the proportion of clients having other barriers given the presence of one barrier. Interlinkages may occur because the barriers are intrinsically related (e.g. a need for English, literacy, and numeracy support may lead to low educational attainment). Some barriers may be linked less directly (e.g. a history of drug or alcohol abuse, and a record of offending), and some correlations may be purely coincidental. The analysis below does not suggest causal link and so care must be taken when interpreting the information.

Table 4 shows the correlations between barriers. Each row focuses on a particular barrier. For each row,

the first column indicates the proportion of the total client base recorded as facing this barrier. Of those clients facing this primary barrier, the recorded proportion facing additional barriers is given by the subsequent columns.

For example, looking at the column for clients who state they are homeless (5% of all clients), 62% of these are in temporary accommodation, 36% have an offending history, 76% are registered as unemployed with a further 13% unemployed but not registered, 11% have a drug or alcohol abuse problem and 9% mental health problems.

Table 4: Inter linkages between barriers – Choices (2014)

		% clients with primary barrier	Secondary barriers: proportion of clients facing primary barrier, who also face given secondary barrier														
			English support	Literacy support	Numeracy support	non-UK citizen	ID help	Home less	Temp Accom	Offender	Care	Low education	Mental health	Drug or Alcohol	Unemployed (registered) (Ur)	Unemployed (not registered) (Un)	Disability
Primary barrier	English support	5%		90%	67%	34%	14%	7%	38%	26%	9%	60%	10%	7%	74%	17%	19%
	Literacy support	15%	31%		87%	12%	13%	5%	36%	30%	7%	68%	13%	7%	69%	24%	14%
	Numeracy support	14%	25%	94%		8%	15%	5%	34%	32%	8%	65%	13%	8%	68%	25%	14%
	non-UK citizen	5%	39%	39%	25%		18%	8%	43%	16%	4%	49%	6%	0%	61%	25%	6%
	ID help	7%	10%	28%	29%	11%		14%	43%	39%	13%	41%	13%	9%	78%	14%	16%
	Homeless	5%	7%	16%	15%	7%	20%		62%	36%	5%	49%	9%	11%	76%	13%	5%
	Temp Accom	20%	10%	27%	23%	10%	15%	15%		34%	14%	42%	18%	7%	82%	9%	10%
	Offender	26%	5%	17%	17%	3%	11%	7%	26%		12%	58%	11%	11%	66%	26%	9%
	Care	6%	8%	18%	18%	3%	15%	5%	46%	54%		68%	35%	15%	72%	23%	20%
	Low education	58%	5%	17%	15%	4%	5%	4%	14%	26%	7%		5%	4%	62%	20%	6%
	Mental health	7%	8%	28%	27%	4%	13%	7%	53%	43%	31%	48%		19%	81%	13%	32%
	Drug or Alcohol	3%	11%	29%	32%	0%	18%	16%	42%	82%	26%	71%	37%		79%	24%	16%
	Unemployed (registered) (Ur)	62%	6%	16%	15%	4%	9%	6%	26%	27%	7%	58%	9%	4%		0%	8%
	Unemployed (not registered) (Un)	22%	4%	16%	15%	5%	4%	3%	8%	30%	6%	53%	4%	4%	0%		4%
	Disability	6%	16%	34%	30%	4%	19%	4%	33%	36%	19%	54%	34%	9%	79%	16%	

The results of this analysis are shown in Table 4 which indicates that:

- There are strong correlations between barriers. For example, those with mental health problems are more frequently to be in temporary accommodation or have an offending history.
- English, literacy, and numeracy barriers are highly correlated
- Offenders generally do not have significantly more barriers than the average client
- Those with a history of drug or alcohol abuse tend to have more barriers
- Clients who are non-UK citizens are less frequently recorded as having offended or having a history of alcohol/drugs abuse,

but are more often recorded as having education-related barriers

In the next section we look at how the characteristics of SGT's clients compare with official NEET statistics. In this way we can consider the extent that they are similar to NEETs in this age group or display characteristics that indicate they are harder to reach.

Comparison with National statistics

It is possible to compare the SGT client group with national statistics prepared by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) for those that are

NEET, although the limitations of the Choices data recorded mean the statistical significance of any differences cannot be established. Within the ONS estimate, a person is considered to be in education or training if they are:

- doing an apprenticeship;
- on a Government employment or training programme;
- working or studying towards a qualification;
- have job-related training or education in the last four weeks; or
- enrolled on an education course and are still attending or waiting for term to (re)start.

Gender: ONS data for England shows that the proportion of 16-24 females who are NEET is higher than that of males, 457,000 females as against 330,000 males (ONS, 2014, Tables 3a). This reflects the large number of females who are NEET at older ages due to looking after home and family (42.6%) compared to only a few males (2.1%). As a result 33% of females who were NEET were unemployed compared to 67% of males, likely due to many of these females not actively seeking employment and so not included in the unemployment statistics. A higher proportion of males (17.0%) compared to females (10.5%) gave long-term or temporary sickness as a reason for being inactive.

National NEET gender statistics differ from SGT's cohort of clients which, as shown above, are predominately male (66%). Several factors may contribute to these figures, for example it could

reflect the high proportion of SGT clients that come from an offending background (20%). Looked at regionally London has the highest proportion with an offending history (36.2%) and the proportion of male to female clients is almost 2:1. The lower proportion of female clients may also reflect the fact that many young women are not actively seeking work as they have caring responsibilities but it is unclear why the differences are so great (for example only 20.8% of total clients in Cardiff are female) across the 3 SGT centres.

The Choices Manager has commented that the over-representation of males is reflective of who SGT are as an organisation e.g. that they are known for working with ex-offenders and as men are over-represented in the criminal justice system they tend to get more referrals to them. Many of their referral routes in come from agencies such as probation and youth offending teams, and these are generally young men. Additionally, as mentioned above, many young women have additional caring responsibilities meaning they may not be actively looking for work and are not engaging with agencies that may refer them to SGT e.g. job centres.

Ethnicity: Comparable ONS data is not available for the breakdown by ethnicity for 2014 but there is some official data from Department for Work and Pensions for 2013 (DWP, 2013). This shows that for the 16-24 age group White ethnic group has predominately the largest share (85%) of NEETs with Black and Mixed accounting for 5% of NEETS and the other ethnic groups (Indian,

Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese) much lower proportions.

In terms of SGT clients the data shows that these are predominately White British (46.7%) with the next largest ethnic groups being Black + Mixed Race (31.5%). This suggests that amongst SGT's clients the proportion of White British NEETs is significantly lower than national average but there may be a slightly higher proportion of SGT's clients from Black and Mixed ethnic groups than the national average. The ethnic breakdown shown in Table 2 shows that a high proportion of Black and Mixed race clients come from its offices in London based in Dalston and Camberwell, reflecting the ethnic composition of the local population. Likewise, almost all of the Asian/British Asian Pakistani SGT clients are located in Leeds. This is discussed in greater detail above.

Disability: Young people with health problems or disability are disproportionately NEET. Department for Education statistics (DfE, 2011, Table 4.1.1) show that of those young people with disabilities, 48% have experienced being NEET at least once (33%), twice (12%) and more times (4%). Of those without disabilities only 34% have experienced being NEET at least once (24%), twice (7%) and more times (2%). Amongst SGT's Choices clients, London is recorded as having the highest proportion of clients with disability (9.3%) whereas Leeds (3.65%) and Cardiff (3%) are fairly similar.

Low educational attainment: DfE statistics (DfE, 2011, Table 4.1.6) shows that low educational attainment is a contributory factor to being NEET. For example, amongst those young people who achieved 5+ A*-C GCSEs/ equivalents including English and Maths only 21% had ever experienced being NEET between the ages of 16 and 19. Whereas those young people that did not attain 5+ A*-C GCSEs/ equivalents including English and Maths 49% experienced being NEET between the ages of 16 and 19.

Amongst SGT's Choices clients just over half have low educational attainment defined in terms of those not having reached Level 1 (GCSE, grade D-G) or Level 2 GCSE, grade A*-C), with Leeds having a strikingly high level of educational underachievement (72%), whilst both London and Cardiff are at about the same levels (40%).

Regional Breakdown: ONS data for England (ONS, 2014, Table 2.a) shows that there is considerable regional variation in NEET rates, with the northern regions having the higher rates. With the average NEET rate for England for 16-24 year olds of 13.1%, the rate for Yorkshire and Humberside in which the Leeds office is based is higher at 15.2% whilst that for London is lower at 11.1%. For Wales, Annual population survey data (ONS, 2014 Table 2 NEW) is available broken down by age groups 16-18 year olds (8.1%) and 19-24 year olds (19.7), the latter figure suggesting that overall NEET rates are likely to be higher in Wales than in England.

References

Department for Education (DfE) (2011)
Youth Cohort Study & Longitudinal
Study of Young People in England:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219058/b01-2011v2.pdf

Department for Work and Pensions,
Labour market status by ethnic group:
data to September 2013- published
January 2014: available at
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/labour-market-status-by-ethnic-group>

Guardian (2016)
<http://www.theguardian.com/news/data-blog/2011/may/18/ethnic-population-england-wales>

Office of National Statistics (2014)
October to December 2014 Quarterly
Brief (Tables 2a and 3 a): available at
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/neet-statistics-quarterly-brief-october-to-december-2014>

Office for National Statistics (2014)
Annual Population Survey (APS)
<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/young-people-not-education-employment-training/?lang=en>

[Postcode area statistics \(2016\)](http://www.postcodearea.co.uk/postal towns/leeds/ls8/demographics/)
<http://www.postcodearea.co.uk/postal towns/leeds/ls8/demographics/>

Chapter 3: Employment Benefits evaluation

In devising the evaluation framework we undertook a literature review to see what approaches had been adopted to evaluate similar schemes. St Giles Trust's Through the Gates report evaluated the scheme that was aimed at reducing rates of re-offending (Frontier, 2009). They evaluated the positive impacts of Through the Gates in terms of avoiding the costs of re-offending (i.e. court costs, prison costs etc) and benefits arising from increased economic activity of ex-offenders through increased employment.

For the Choices project the focus is on clients with multiple barriers albeit that some will have an offending history. For this reason we looked at the evaluation of Tomorrow's People youth programmes (FTI, 2011) which are similar to SGT's Choices and indeed have also received funding from HSBC under the Opportunity Partnership, the three year, £30 million, scheme set up in 2013 to work with four specialist charities - Catch22, St Giles Trust, The Prince's Trust and Tomorrow's People - to help disadvantaged young people in the UK get their lives on track. The FTI evaluation undertook a cost benefit analysis measuring benefits in terms of savings to the Exchequer for the period 2006/07 to 2010/11. In devising its methodology the FTI report acknowledged a number of technical challenges that affect measurement of the impact of such schemes and we have considered these in devising the methodology set out below.

The literature review also highlighted some evaluations (MEAM, 2012, 2014) where attempts had been made to measure improvements in client well-being post intervention. This requires collection of data acquired through surveys pre and post intervention using well-being measures³. For example, housing status can be used as a proxy for well-being as movements from sheltered/temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation can indicate an improvement in wellbeing but this requires pre and post intervention data which was not available here. Lack of suitable post intervention survey data has meant it has not been possible to adopt this approach in this evaluation but the chapter outlining the qualitative survey results helps to capture some of these impacts on well-being.

Evaluation Framework

The purpose of the evaluation framework is to measure the value and impact of the work that SGT are doing in the Choices project, looking at the first full year of operation of the project, 2014. As shown in Chart 1 these benefits of Choices will be weighed against its cost in a detailed evaluation, with the focus on those elements of the Choices project where the value of impacts are more easily quantifiable such as reduction in unemployment rates and reduction in re-offending rate due to employment outcomes. Due to data limitations it is not possible to monetize the impact of

³ These include the NDT Assessment, The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale and the Outcomes StarTM.

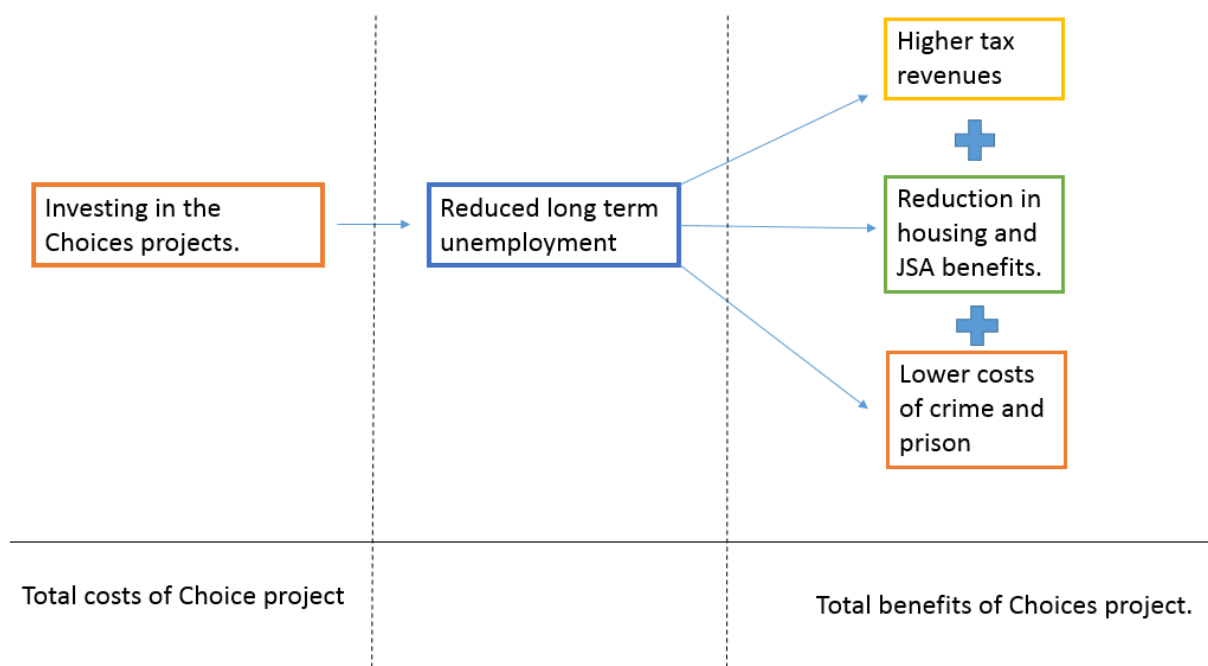
training, education, volunteering and apprenticeships which represent 63% of total outcomes. Instead the likely impacts are considered separately in chapter 5 drawing on published research to determine their likely impact on productivity and life time earnings. This approach makes it difficult to capture the extent that these non-employment outcomes will themselves reduce re-offending rates as well as the likelihood that they themselves will lead to employment outcomes in future years.

Benefits are measured in terms of the public finance consequences of increased employment and reduced re-offending resulting from employment outcomes. This mirrors the approach adopted in evaluation of similar schemes. This differs from social cost benefit analysis approach

adopted within the public sector where wider benefits and costs to society as a whole are taken into account which is more appropriate where more resources are available for evaluation.

For the reasons indicated above we decided to limit our quantitative assessment of Choices to direct employment outcomes recorded by SGT taking into account the likely impact these employment outcomes will have on re-offending rates. As Chart 1 shows the main benefits from the Choices project employment outcomes can be broken down into benefits that arise through higher tax revenues, reductions in Housing benefit and Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and lower costs of crime and prison. Each of these will be considered in turn below.

Chart 1: Cost-Benefit Analysis Framework – monetizing employment impacts



Estimating the employment effect

As Chart 1 shows a key driver for any calculation of the benefits of the Choices project is the estimate of the jobs gained over and above what would have happened in the absence of SGT's intervention. We cannot simply look at outcomes for Choices clients, as it is possible that in the absence of Choices, a proportion, even if small, would have achieved successful outcomes in any case.

The first step is therefore to establish a baseline against which to measure Choice's actual performance, and therefore estimate the additional impact of Choices. The measure of unemployment differs whether one is measuring it in terms of those that are registered as unemployed and those that indicate to Choices at the initial interview that they are unemployed. In 2014 there were 684 (64%) of Choices clients registered as unemployed whereas 929 (86%) said that they were unemployed.

Data provided by SGT shows that 325 Choices clients gained employment during 2014. This brings the level of registered unemployment of Choices clients down from 64% to 33% and that for registered and non-registered unemployment combined down from 85% to 56%.

Counterfactual

In measuring the impact of this rise in employment account must be taken of the fact that some of these clients would have got jobs anyway (the

counterfactual). It is important to note the high level of initial registered unemployment rates of Choices clients (64% is over 4 times the national average) point to Choices clients being harder to reach. Amongst those SGT clients that obtained an employment outcome, 86 had an offending history and will most likely have come to Choices through referral from statutory agencies. Even those without an offending history have barriers which make it difficult to achieve employment outcomes independently, irrespective of whether they have been referred or come to Choices through self-referral. Evidence of this is provided in Chapter 6 which records the outcomes of the qualitative survey and points to the fact that for Choices clients it is extremely unlikely that they would be able to achieve an employment outcome without some tailored support. For this reason we consider that a conservative estimate is that 10% (33 clients) of the 325 clients that found work through Choices would have done so without Choices intervention, in addition to those already employed.

Given the hard to reach nature of the clients, and the fact that some proportion were already in employment (presumably who, on average, will be those within the clients most able to do so without outside support), it is arguable that a reasonable counterfactual could be no additional employment. However, as a further cross check, ONS data suggests that among all 16-24 year olds, the rate of non-employment dropped by around 3.7%⁴. A crude application of this

⁴ Data from ONS, looking at change in total rate of non-employed 16-24 year olds from 2013Q4 to 2014Q4 :

change to the initial non-employed rate of Choices clients would suggest a counterfactual of 35 additional clients finding work. However, for the reasons discussed this is likely to be an overestimate.

Substitution

When measuring the impact of Choices on public finances, we also need to take into account the fact that Choices activities may crowd out other economic activities, meaning its overall impact may be less than its impact on Choices clients.

For example, if a Choices client gets a job this may prevent someone else getting it i.e. no additional job has been created, and SGT's intervention has simply resulted in what is known as substitution.

In estimating this effect it is important to note that the types of jobs that Choices clients apply for are not those that are generally available especially where they have an offending background – they in fact arise from jobs that are specifically created by employers who recognise their social responsibilities. And crucially, by effectively expanding the total supply of employable workers, this is also likely to result in net job creation and so lower substitution. FTI, in their report for “Tomorrow's People”, discuss estimates of 20% from DWP, and 8-19% from CLG, with DWP

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/employmentunemploymentandeconomicinactivitybyagegroupseasonallyadjusted/a05sa/current/a05sajun2016.xls>

noting that supply side programmes (i.e. like Choices focusing on potential employees) have a smaller substitution factor. For this reason we consider that a reasonable adjustment for the amount of substitution should be 15% (44 clients, accounting for counterfactual employment). As a conservative assumption it is assumed that all those jobs displaced are full-time.

The assumptions that have been made relating to the counterfactual and substitution effects will impact on the final results. For this reason at the end of this chapter where we report the results we undertake a sensitivity analysis to show how the estimates of benefits differ under different assumptions, increasing the substitution to 20%.

Estimating Higher Tax Revenues

A rise in employment can be expected to lead to a rise in tax revenues. The amount of income tax that is raised depends on the hourly wage rates of those gaining employment and the number of hours they work and the period of time worked during the year.

Choices clients that obtain work are likely to be employed in relatively low skilled roles given they have on average a low level of educational attainment. For this reason it is expected that the wage rate they will obtain will be close to the minimum wage.

For the purposes of the evaluation we have assumed that the wage rate is £6.01 per hour which seems

reasonable given minimum wages rates prevailing in 2014 (By age the rates were: 21 and over -£6.50, 18 to 20 - £5.13, Under 18 - £3.79, Apprentices (aged 16-18 only) - £2.73). As regards the number of hours worked some jobs will be part time and others will be full time. Using SGT's database we estimate that on average the proportion of full time jobs is 60%.

As regards the proportion of hours worked based on information supplied by SGT we consider that full time is likely to be 35 hours a week whereas part time is likely to be 16 hours a week.

In respect to the period of time worked we assume that in the first year of employment on average clients that obtain an employment outcome work for 45 out of 52 weeks - this allows for the fact that clients may not stay in the same employment for the full year, may still experience difficulty securing permanent employment, and there may be some time spent between jobs.

A more exact figure could only be obtained through a re-contact survey but as indicated above the survey that was undertaken in 2015 did not provide meaningful results due to low response rates.

The personal allowance (on which no tax is paid) for this age group in 2014 was £10,000 (HM Treasury 2014). As a result neither Choices clients that obtain full time or part time employment will pay income tax. However, the picture is different in respect to National Insurance contributions where the threshold in 2014 for paying contributions was an income level of £111 per week and as

Table 1: Estimate of Tax Raised

Assumptions	Income Tax Calculations
Full time jobs	
Hours per week	35
Weeks per year	45
Tax Band	10000
Tax rate	20%
Proportion Full Time	60%
wage rate - employed through Choices	6.01
wages earned - employed through Choices	9466
Income Tax paid per person	0 £
NIC payments per person	666 £
Total tax paid per person	666
Choices Clients with employment outcomes	325
Full time jobs	195 £
Total Tax paid	129,838
increase in employment under counterfactual with additionality taken into account	46 £
Total tax paid	30,628
Net Tax Paid after adjustments	£ 99,209

a result Choices clients in full time employment will pay national insurance contributions. The assumption used is that the clients are single without children, although in fact there may be a few single parents amongst the clients. Using HMRC tables for 2014⁵ on £210 a week the

⁵

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system>

total employee and employer contribution will be £14.80 a week. Over a year this will result in £666 in NIC payments for each client that is in full time employment.

When allowance is made for what would have happened in the absence of Choices intervention (counterfactual) as well as allowance for substitution the estimated amount of net income tax obtained is around £99,000.

Estimating Reduced JSA Benefits

Clients that obtain employment through Choices will lose their job seekers allowance so this reduction in costs should be included as a benefit.

Table 2: Estimate of Reduction in JSA payments

	JSA Calculations
Initial JSA Payment	
JSA Band per week	57.35
Choices Employment outcome	325
No of clients registered unemployed who go on to obtain employment outcome	198
Paid for 45 weeks	45
Total JSA payment	510,989
Adjustment for counterfactual/substitution	47
Benefits paid with counterfactual/additionality	121,295
Net reduction in benefits paid	389,693

During 2014 JSA rates for most of SGT's clients were £57.35 a week.⁶ Table 2 shows that taking into account adjustment for the counterfactual and additionality this will result in a reduction in JSA costs of £390,000.

⁶ Choices Mangers have told us that 'the 2014 rate for under 25's was £57.35 and this would be what most of our clients claimed. Single parents aged over 18 were able to claim £72.40 but only a handful of our clients would qualify for this so assumption looks reasonable'.

Estimating reductions in Housing benefits

Clients that obtain employment through Choices will experience reductions in their housing benefits. The amount of the reduction in housing benefits will depend on whether they were in hostels/supported accommodation at the time they get into employment through Choices. For those that are in supported accommodation/hostels there is no cap set on payments for supported housing although a local authority can challenge paying housing benefit if they think the rent is too high. Rents are set by the accommodation provider and approved by the local authority and in many cases reflect other elements of level of support offered (e.g. 24 hour on site support, inclusive of bills, self-catering or catered). For example, in London rents in supported accommodation can range from £120 - £240 per week depending on the level of support. For the purposes of this evaluation we can assume that the average rent for those in supported accommodation is £125 a week, based on the national average.

For those clients that are in private residential accommodation then their housing benefit is determined by the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). St Giles Trust has indicated that the LHA housing benefit rates for a single room per week in 2014 were £96.15 (London), £63.96 (Leeds), £55.23 (Cardiff). If we weight these figures by the proportion of SGT clients in these areas this gives us an average rate of £74.22.

To estimate the likely reduction in housing benefit paid for these two groups we need to take into account how a rise in income will impact the level of entitlement. Information provided by Shelter (2016) indicates that housing benefit is reduced by 65 pence for every extra pound that is earned above the basic amount the government says you need to live on. Information on housing benefit produced by DWP (2014) provides an indication of the reduction in housing benefit levels dependent on being in remunerative work.⁷ The table shows that for those whose gross income is less than £128.0 the reduction in 2014 is £14.15 whereas for those with gross income not less than £188.0 but less than £245.0 the reduction is £44.55 per week.

⁷ HB Circular A24/2013, Appendix B – DWP (2014)

Table 3: Housing Benefit - supported accommodation

Prior to Choices Intervention		
Housing benefit supported accommodation	125	
	6500	
Proportion of clients in supported accommodation	25%	
No of clients in supported accommodation who go on to obtain employment outcome, adjusted for counterfactual and substitution	62	
Total housing benefits pre intervention	404,016	
Post Choices Intervention	Full Time	Part Time
Reduction in Housing benefit for Clients in employment	44.55	14.15
	2005	637
Number of clients in supported accommodation who go on to get full time employment	37	25
Reduction in Housing benefit for clients in employment	74,176	16,018

As table 3 shows account must be taken of the fact that the reduction in housing benefit depends on remuneration. For those SGT clients that obtain full time work (35 hours) given that they are assumed to earn £6.01 their overall gross income will be in at or above £188.0 but less than £245.0 category so their housing benefit are expected to fall by £44.55 per week. For those SGT clients in part time employment their gross income will be below £128.0 per week so that the reduction in housing benefits is expected to be in the region of £14.15 per week. Overall for those in supported accommodation housing benefit will be reduced by £90,194.

For those in unsupported accommodation the reduction in overall housing benefit is less as they receive a much lower level of support determined as indicated above by the LHA. Based on information provided by SGT we estimate that only a small proportion of clients (5%) are in private rented accommodation receiving housing benefit and that on average the rate of housing benefit for these clients in 2014 was £74.22.

Undertaking a similar analysis as that for supported accommodation for those in unsupported accommodation results in housing benefits being reduced by £17,217 as shown in Table 4 (on following page).

Table 4: Housing Benefit- unsupported accommodation

Prior to Choices Intervention		
Housing benefit unsupported accommodation	74	
	3859.44	
Proportion of clients in unsupported accommodation	5%	
No of clients in unsupported accommodation who go on to obtain employment outcome, adjusted for counterfactual and substitution	12.0	
Total housing benefits pre intervention	46,313	
Post Choices Intervention		
	Full time	Part time
Reduction in Housing benefit for Clients in employment	44.55	14.15
	2005	637
Number of clients in unsupported accommodation who go on into employment	7	5
Reduction in Housing benefit for Clients in employment	14,033	3,184

Table 5 shows that taking both effects into account the overall reduction in Housing Benefit is estimated to be £107,000. In reality housing benefit can vary quite a lot as it is reassessed regularly and may go up or down in line with increases/reductions in income so these figures must be considered broad indicators of the scale of the effect.

Table 5: Overall - Housing Benefit Reduction

- unsupported accommodation	17,217
- supported accommodation	90,194
Total	107,411

Estimating Reductions in cost of crime and prison

In this part of the evaluation the focus is on estimating the benefits of avoiding the costs to society associated with re-offending (i.e. court costs, incarceration costs etc). To do this accurately it is necessary as shown in the Foundation Trust Company evaluation (FTC, 2011), to have a relevant comparison group to avoid selection bias in the results.⁸ They note that while most reliable results could be obtained from conducting randomized control trials this is not feasible for a host of ethical and practical reasons. FTC in the absence of availability of suitable matching data adopts a similar approach to that used in Frontier (2009) comparing re-offending rates with national reoffending rates⁹ and estimating the cost savings associated with reduced re-offending and applying these to the impact the programme has over and above the national average.

In response to the need for access to more accurate data on national reoffending rates the Ministry of Justice (MOJ, 2014) set up a Data Lab

⁸ Goodman et al (2011), p10 note that 'everyone who enters a community rehabilitation programme does so on a voluntary basis, and it may be that such people are fundamentally therefore less likely to reoffend than those who do not choose to participate. As such, finding a lower reoffending rate among those who participated in FTC programmes could be attributed to these selection effects, rather than due to the actual impact of the programmes'.

⁹ Re-offending rates show the proportion of offenders (ex-prisoners or those who received a community penalties) in a cohort offending at least once during the one-year follow up period, where the offence resulted in a conviction at court.

pilot, which gives organisations working with ex-offenders access to central re-offending data.

Unfortunately, due to issues of confidentiality of the data provided to SGT by its clients it has not been possible to use the Data Lab services. As regards the problem of selection bias that was highlighted in the FTC report this may not be as much a concern for Choices as while clients participate on a voluntary basis, for the most part the initial referrals for ex-offenders takes place through probation services, prison resettlement teams, and other organisations working with young ex-offenders.

For the period April 2013-March 2014 Ministry of Justice's (MOJ, 2016) statistical bulletin provides a breakdown by age group of re-offending rates. This shows that in the 18-20 years old age group re-offending rates are 30% whereas in the 21-24 years old age group they are 26.5%.¹⁰ Given SGT's client profile shown in Chart 1, where approximately 40% are in the 18-20 age category and 80% in the 21-24 age category, the average national re-offending rate for this age cohort would be 27.9%. The fact that SGT clients with an offending history mainly come to SGT through referrals from statutory agencies means that there is likely to be less of a self-selection bias.

To provide some illustrative examples of the scale of likely benefits of reduced costs of crime and prison we draw on studies that show that finding

¹⁰ Figure 3: Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven re-offence, by age, 2003 and April 2013 to March 2014.

a job reduces the likelihood of re-offending by up to a third. MOJ (2013) research shows that for custodial sentences of less than one year, the one year proven re-offending rate was 9.4 percentage points lower for those who found P45 employment after release than for the matched comparison group.

MOJ (2014) data shows the costs per prison place¹¹ for the period 2013-2014 was £36,237. Home Office (2000) data show that the Costs of Crime vary greatly according to the type of crime – a detailed breakdown has not been provided since so here the assumption is a conservative one based on the cost of robbery/mugging (average cost £4700) and burglary (average cost £2,300) shown in that report which may well have risen.¹² Statistics are also available from the MOJ (2014) which show that about 30% of defendants were found guilty¹³ and that about 27.5% were immediately put into custody.¹⁴

¹¹ Cost per place is the average cost of providing a prison place for the year. It is the Direct resource expenditure or Overall resource expenditure divided by Baseline Certified Normal Accommodation.

¹² Table 2, Summary of average and total cost estimates, by crime type and cost category. Home Office Research Study 217, 2000, The economic and social costs of crime.
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218135832/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors217.pdf>

¹³ Figure 3.2, MOJ (2014) Prosecutions at magistrates' courts and convictions at all courts, with conviction ratio, 2004 to 2014.

¹⁴ Figure 5.2, MOJ (2014) Figure 5.2: Sentencing outcomes (percentages of all offenders sentenced) at all courts, from 2004 to 2014.

Table 6: Calculations of reduced costs of crime and prison

Cost of crime		Central re-offend	Cost of prison		proportion going to prison
Without Choices	27.90%		Without Choices	27.50%	
Ex-offenders with employment outcome	86		number reoffending	22	
number reoffending	22.00		number going to prison	6	
Cost of crime	3,475		Cost of prison	36,237	
Total cost of crime	76,450		Total cost of prison	217,422	
With Choices	18.50%	re-offend	With Choices	27.50%	proportion going to prison
Ex-offenders with employment outcome	86		number reoffending	16	
number reoffending	16		number going to prison	4	
Cost of crime	3,475		Cost of prison	36,237	
Total cost of crime	55,600		Total cost of prison	144,948	
Reduction in cost of Crime	20,850		Reduction in cost of crime	72,474	
Total reduction in costs of crime and prison from reduction in re-offending rates					
93,324					

This information is used in Table 6 to calculate the savings in incarceration costs that arise from the increased level of recorded employment.

A conservative assumption of a reduction in re-offending rates of 34% from 27.9% to 18.5% is used to calculate savings from reduced costs of crime and prison.¹⁵ This shows that an estimated £93,000 can be saved through the employment effects of Choices even when allowance is made

for the counterfactual and substitution effects. It is assumed that the time spent in prison by each offender is one year.

This is broadly in line with Offender Management Statistics, which show the average time spent in prison for newly released offenders is around 9 months for 15-20 year olds, and 18 months for adults generally.¹⁶

¹⁵ Frontier Economics Through the Gates report (2009) concluded that SGT clients re-offending rate is 40% lower than the national re-offending rate,

¹⁶ Prison releases data, Offender Management Statistics
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2015>

Table 7: Calculations of reduced costs of crime and prison from those offending 1st time

With Choices		Offend 1st time (5%)	With Choices		Go into custody (20%)
Employment outcome	325		Employment outcome	325	
non offenders with employment outcomes	239	12	non offenders with employment outcomes	239	2
Cost of crime	3,475		Cost of prison	36,237	
Total cost of crime	41,700		Total cost of prison	72,474	
Allowance for counterfactual/substitution	60	3	Allowance for counterfactual/substitution	60	1
Cost of crime	3,475		Cost of prison	36,237	
Total cost of crime	10,425		Total cost of prison	36,237	
Net cost of crime	52,125		Net cost of crime	108,711	
Without Choices		Offend 1st time (10%)	Without Choices		Go into custody (20%)
non offenders	239	24	non offenders	239	5
Cost of crime	3,475		Cost of prison	36,237	
Total cost of crime	83,400		Total cost of prison	181,185	
Reduction	31,275		Reduction	72,474	
Total reduction in costs of crime and prison from reduction in re-offending rates = £103,749					

In addition to the employment effect on re-offending rates there is also likely to be an effect through a reduced likelihood of offending for those in employment. Table 7 sets out an assessment of the likely savings if it is assumed that the likelihood of

offending for the first time falls from 10% to 5%. For those that offend the likelihood of going into custody is assumed to be lower (20%) than for those that have an offending history (27.5%).

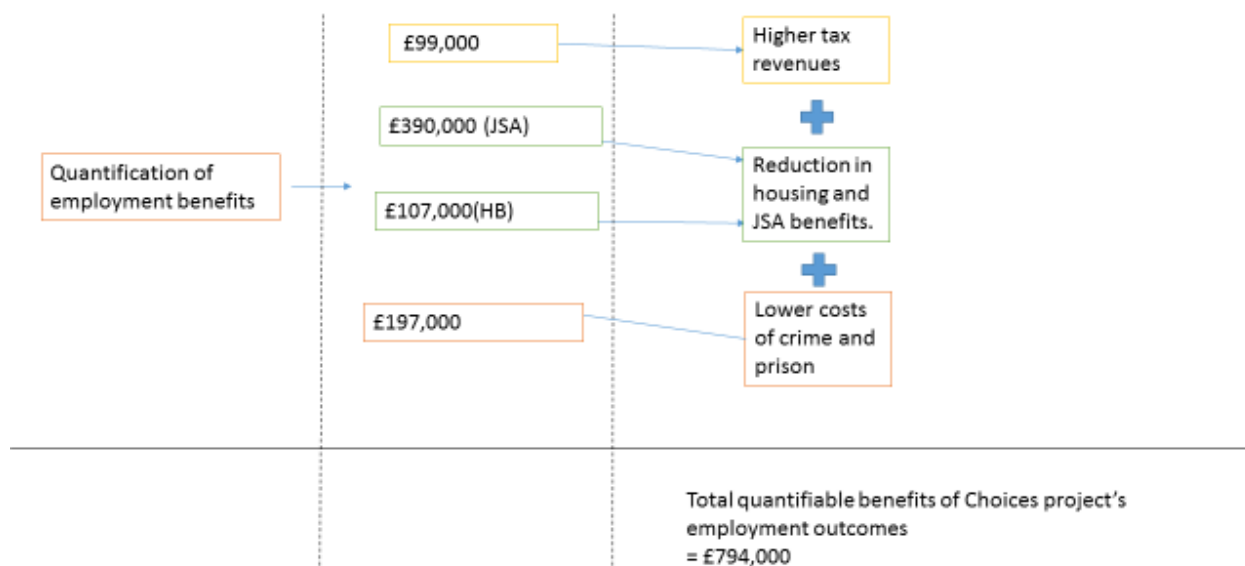
Conclusion

Taking all the impacts discussed in this chapter into account results as shown in Chart 1 in an estimated total impact of £794,000 in 2014.

To show how sensitive the final results are to the underlying assumptions relating to the counterfactual and substitution effects and re-offending

rates we have calculated the benefits assuming that they are 5% worse than previously assumed. Hence the combined adjustment for the substitution effect/counterfactual becomes 30% rather 25% and re-offending rates are assumed only to reduce by 29% from 27.9% to 19.9%. This results in the total quantifiable benefits being reduced to £721,972.

Chart 1: Total Quantification of Employment Benefits



Note that this can be regarded as a conservative estimate as there are wider social benefits such as increased self-esteem and improved well-being that are likely to accrue but for the reasons stated earlier cannot be captured in this evaluation. We have also fully adjusted the figures to allow for what might have happened in the absence of Choices (counterfactual) as well as considering

the extent that employment generated by Choices may displace other employment outcomes (additionality). These two effects together have lead us to revise downwards by 25% the estimated employment effects. While it is not possible to know for sure the direction of any errors in these estimates it could well be that this overstates the extent of correction for these factors are measured.

Chapter 4: Cost-benefit analysis of increased employment and avoided crime

This section provides an evaluation of the costs of delivering Choices during 2014. This is then compared with the monetised benefits of Choices relating to increased employment rates, and to reductions in re-offending rates of the client base.

The cost-benefit analysis should not be considered a full social cost benefit analysis, but rather viewed as presenting an evaluation of the impact on public finances. In particular, the evaluation is partial in the sense there are likely to be additional benefits of Choices beyond employment and crime-reduction impacts related to those employment outcomes that are not monetised (for example training, education and housing-based outcomes).

Furthermore, the analysis should not be considered an assessment of the overall impact on UK society, since for employment outcomes only impacts on public finances are considered whereas there are likely to be wider economic impacts (for example on economic growth), and a full social cost benefit analysis would usually not consider impacts on public finances. Nevertheless, the analysis provides an indication of the likely scale of impact arising from recorded employment outcomes.

Costs

Financial data has been provided by St Giles Trust, relating to the costs of establishing and administering Choices. Calendar year cost estimates have been made based on data relating to the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years, and include direct costs of the programme, plus an apportionment of fixed costs to Choices (e.g. estates, licensing). These are set out in the table below, and show an in-year cost of just under £1m. Activities relating to the launch of the Choices in reality should be attributable over its lifetime, however they have been included fully in the 2014 calendar year as a conservative assumption.

Table 1: 2014 costs of establishing, delivering, and administering the St Giles Trust Choices Programme

Itemised costs	2014 (nominal)
Staff costs	£545,000
Client costs	£51,000
Promotion/Launch	£5,000
Overheads	£370,000
Volunteers	£27,000
Total	£998,000

A value has been attributed to the time spent by volunteers on the Choices based on mean Choices Programme staff costs.

The costs identified in the above table relate specifically to the 2014 period. In practice the activities undertaken in this calendar year may result in outcomes outside this specific period. This is discussed in the cost-benefit analysis section below.

Benefits

The benefits of increased employment and avoided crime relating to employment outcomes are quantified within the evaluation of the Choices

Programme's benefits. These are summarised in the table below, and relate to only those outcomes recorded as having occurred in 2014, with an assumption that these first year benefits in financial year 2014/2015.

Table 2: Monetised 2014 employment and crime benefits of Choices

Monetised benefits		2014 clients
Reduction in JSA payments		£390,000
Reduction in housing benefits (supported housing)	Full time employees	£74,000
	Part time employees	£16,000
Reduction in housing benefits (unsupported housing)	Full time employees	£14,000
	Part time employees	£3,000
Increase in tax revenue		£99,000
Crime & prison costs - reoffenders	Avoided costs of crime	£21,000
	Avoided costs of imprisonment	£72,000
Crime and prison costs - first time offenders	Avoided costs of crime	£32,000
	Avoided costs of imprisonment	£72,000
Total		£794,000

Cost-benefit analysis

The social return on the activities undertaken through Choices can only be assessed on a partial basis. As described above:

- Not all benefits are monetised – only employment and crime-reduction benefits related to that employment outcome are captured.
- Monetised benefits are only evaluated over a single year. In practice, many employment and crime-reduction benefits related to those employment outcomes that occur in 2014 may continue beyond a single year. The sensitivity to the evaluation around enduring benefits is considered below.
- It is likely that activities taken in the 2014 year may only result in outcomes in subsequent years. These outcomes are not reflected in the analysis as we do not yet have the evidence to examine this which can only be done if clients can be re-contacted.
- For employment benefits, only impacts on public finances are captured. In practice, there are likely to be several wider benefits, in particular economic growth from increased employment in the economy, and improved health and wellbeing resulting from employment. These wider benefits are not considered in detail.

- While the benefits captured are only partial, the costs of Choices shown above are related to the full range of activities undertaken over a full calendar year. Many of these activities are likely to result in benefits not captured within this evaluation. To account for this, an assessment of the proportion of activities relating only to employment and crime-reduction outcomes related to employment has been considered.

Cost-benefit analysis of employment-related activities and outcomes

The full-year benefits relating to employment outcomes and their associated reductions in re-offending rates presented above amount to around £794,000 and as indicated above relate to the first financial year (2014/2015) given that not all of the impact will be felt within calendar year 2014. It is highly likely many of these benefits would continue beyond this point although data has not been available to make an assessment of these on-going impacts. Assuming a reduction in the realised benefits of 50% in each subsequent financial year, and that any benefits only continue for five years, the resulting overall benefit of the Choices is estimated at £1.47m (using an HM Treasury social discount rate of future benefits of 3.5%). It is also likely that these activities from 2014 will continue to result in new outcomes not yet observed. It has not been possible to account for these given lack of

evidence which is only possible if clients can be recontacted.

From above, the costs attributable to the full Choices Programme in 2014 are around £998,000. Not all costs of the Choices Programme will relate to employment or crime-reduction benefits related to these employment outcomes. Using data collected by St Giles Trust, it is estimated there were 907 beneficial outcomes for clients recorded in 2014 which as shown in Chapter 5 can be broken down into employment, training, volunteering and education outcomes. It is possible to use this information on the number and type of outcomes an indicative apportionment of the costs to employment-related activities of Choices. This is where it is assumed that the distribution of outcomes is representative of the distribution Choices costs relating to these outcomes.

Of the 907 total outcomes recorded, 325 were new employment outcomes. However, there were 83 recorded training outcomes by clients who were also subsequently recorded as obtaining new employment. To the extent these training outcomes are viewed as relating to additional Choices activities and are undertaken with a view to achieving the employment outcome, this gives an

estimated range for the proportion of Choices outcomes that are employment-related of 39%-45% of the total. Taking this proportion of the costs gives a range in 2014 of £394,000 to £449,000.

On the basis of these apportioned costs indicative benefits from employment outcomes with associated reductions in re-offending is estimated to range between £3.3 and £3.7 for every £1 spent. The sensitivity analysis has been conducted to show the impact of quantifiable benefits of increased substitution (of 20% rather than 15%) and re-offending rates being assumed to reduce by 29% from 27.9% to 19.9%. Total quantifiable benefits in the first year fall to £722,000 resulting in overall benefits of Choices being reduced to £1.34mn. As a result indicative benefits from employment outcomes with associated reductions in re-offending is estimated to range between £3.0 and £3.4 for every £1 spent.

Irrespective of which assumptions are used it should be noted that this benefit/cost ratio does not capture important other benefits such as improved welfare arising from Choices employment outcomes, for example increased self-esteem and enhanced well-being which are difficult to quantify.

Chapter 5: Estimating Impact of Training, Education, Volunteering Outcomes

The Choices programme resulted in 907 outcomes, including employment, education, training and volunteering outcomes. This equates to 1.7 outcomes per client who achieved outcomes. The outcomes are split into high level categories in Table 1 below. This section of the report gives further detail on the training, education and volunteering outcomes achieved.

SGT's Choices Project ran over 3 regions – London, South Wales and West Yorkshire. London achieved the highest percentage of outcomes. However, this does not mean that London was the most successful region as this does not take into account how many people each region was working with.

The majority of outcomes in all 3 regions were training outcomes. London and South Wales achieved a lower percentage of training outcomes than West Yorkshire, but a higher percentage of employment outcomes.

Table 1 – Outcomes broken down into high level groups

Outcome Type	Number of Outcomes	%
Training	495	55%
Employment	325	36%
Volunteering	45	5%
Education	33	4%
Housing	5	1%
Benefit Set Up	1	0%
Other	3	0%
Grand Total	907	

Source SGT database (2014)

Table 2 – Regional breakdown of Outcomes

Town	Number of Outcomes	% of Outcomes
London	372	41%
South Wales	302	33%
West Yorkshire	233	26%
Grand Total	907	

Source: SGT database (2014)

Training Outcomes

Over half of the outcomes achieved through Choices were training outcomes. As shown in the table below

by far the majority (71%) of these outcomes were 'Entry into further training with external provider'.

Table 3 – Training outcomes broken down by sub-category

Training Outcomes sub-category	Number of outcomes	%
Entry into further training with external provider	350	71%
Entry into further training with internal provider	71	14%
Additional Training (CHOICES project only)	48	10%
Completed workshop	26	5%
Total	495	

Source: SGT database (2014)

SGT's database of outcomes shows that the training undertaken by SGT clients ranged from Level 1 – Level 4. This included training providing practical skills across a wide range of sectors and occupations such as plumbing, construction, beauty, sports, health and social care. Most of the training outcomes were at Level 1 and 2 but a few were at Level 3 and Level 4. At level 1 many of SGT clients were improving their numeracy and English skills. For those with Level 2 training outcomes many of the clients were undertaking BTEC Level 2 employability training.

BIS (2011) research into returns for intermediate and low level vocational qualifications shows that in line with previous studies there continues to be large and significant wage gain for most vocational qualifications. The

wage gain for Level 2 is 12% for BTEC, 16% for RSA, and 1% for NVQ Level 2, compared to similar individuals with qualifications below level 2. For those attaining Level 3 the wage gain is higher with an average 20% wage gain from possessing a BTEC level 3, 16% for RSA level 3, and 10% for NVQ level 3, compared to similar individuals qualified to level 2. The lifetime benefits associated with the acquisition of Apprenticeships at Level 2 and 3 are very significant, standing at between £48,000 and £74,000 for Level 2 and between £77,000 and £117,000 for Level 3 Apprenticeships. However, there are relatively few SGT clients attaining apprenticeships possibly reflecting the relatively low level of pay which in 2014 for 16-18 year old age group was only £2.73 per hour.

Volunteering Outcomes

45 outcomes achieved through Choices were 'Entry into a voluntary placement'. This is valuable as it increases the chances of finding employment. Research from the Corporation for National Community Service (2013) in the US that looked at volunteering as a pathway to employment found that volunteers have a 27 percent higher likelihood of finding a job after being out of work than non-volunteers. The study also found that the association between volunteering and employment had the strongest effect on individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent (51% increase in likelihood) and individuals who live in rural areas (55% increase in likelihood). This suggests that volunteering may assist in "levelling the playing field" for these individuals who typically have a more difficult time finding employment, especially during a recession.

Education Outcomes

32 outcomes achieved through Choices were education outcomes. The majority of these were 'gained accreditation at Level 1'. Table 4 on the following page gives a further breakdown.

To help interpret these level outcomes Annex 1 below lists the levels of qualifications into more commonly recognised qualifications.

Department for Education (2014) research shows that there are high wage, and particularly employment returns to achieving 1-2 good GCSEs

(i.e. Level 2 qualifications). These combine to produce very large productivity gains compared to no qualifications ranging from £110,395 (women) to £170,984 (men). This disparity between lifetime productivity for men and women could partly be due to the different sectors and occupations that men and women go into.¹⁷

Conclusion

The results show that Choices has a significant number of training, education and volunteering outcomes. Whilst as indicated above there is literature available that points to the impact of these outcomes on wages earned there are several reasons why it has been difficult to include this in the quantification of benefits analysis.

Firstly, some of these outcomes will be associated with an employment outcome so if both impacts were included there could be an element of double counting.

For example, 125 clients have a training and employment outcome, for 83 of these the training outcome came before the client gained employment. Secondly, the benefit of these outcomes will not be fully realised until a period of employment commences that utilises these skills and is spread over many years rather than the year in question where outcomes are being evaluated.

SGT outcomes database is designed to ensure that the first outcome is

¹⁷ Table 4: Returns to achieving 1-2 good GCSEs relative to those with no qualifications

recorded – hence a subsequent employment outcome especially when it occurs when clients are no longer being supported by SGT is unlikely to be recorded.

This type of data is only available through a re-contact survey but in practice when this was tried by SGT there were very low response rates so the data that was obtained could not be relied upon.

However, this points to how the evaluation of schemes such as Choices can be refined in the future.

Table 4 – Education Outcomes

Education Outcomes sub-category	Number of outcomes	%
Gained accredited qualification at Level 1	22	67%
Gained accredited qualification at Level 2	4	12%
Gained an accredited unit towards qualification	4	12%
Gained accredited qualification at Level 3 – Other	2	6%
Gained accredited qualification at Level 3	1	3%
Total	33	

Source: SGT database (2014)

References

Corporation for National and Community Service (2013) Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment:

http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/upload/employment_research_report.pdf

BIS (2013) Returns to Intermediate and Low Level Vocational Qualifications, BIS research paper number 53:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32354/11-1282-returns-intermediate-and-low-level-vocational-qualifications.pdf

Department for Education (DfE) (2014) The economic value of key intermediate qualifications: estimating the returns and lifetime productivity gains to GCSEs, A levels and apprenticeships:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387160/RR398A -](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387160/RR398A_-_Economic_Value_of_Key_Qualifications.pdf)

[_Economic Value of Key Qualifications.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387160/RR398A_-_Economic_Value_of_Key_Qualifications.pdf)

FTI (2011), "Measuring the social impact of the Tomorrow's People welfare to work and youth programmes between 2006/07 to 2010/11"

Gov.uk website (2016) Compare different qualifications levels

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/compare-different-qualification-levels>

ANNEX 1: Full LIST of Training and Education Qualifications

Level	NQF examples	QCF examples	FHEQ examples
Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entry level certificate Entry level Skills for Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry level award, certificate and diploma - Entry level Functional Skills - Entry level Foundation Learning 	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCSE (grades D-G) Key Skills level 1 NVQ level 1 Skills for Life level 1 Foundation diploma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BTEC award, certificate and diploma level 1 - Foundation Learning level 1 - Functional Skills level 1 - OCR National 	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCSE (grades A*-C) Key Skills level 2 NVQ level 2 Skills for Life level 2 Higher diploma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BTEC award, certificate and diploma level 2 - Functional Skills level 2 	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AS and A level Advanced Extension Award Cambridge International award International Baccalaureate Key Skills level 3 NVQ level 3 Advanced diploma Progression diploma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTEC award, certificate and diploma level 3 BTEC National OCR National Cambridge National 	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate of higher education Key Skills level 4 NVQ level 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTEC Professional award, certificate and diploma level 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate of higher education HNC
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HND NVQ level 4 Higher diploma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTEC Professional award, certificate and diploma level 5 HNC HND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diploma of higher education Diploma of further education Foundation degree HND
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NVQ level 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTEC Advanced Professional award, certificate and diploma level 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's degree Graduate certificate Graduate diploma
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTEC Advanced Professional award, certificate and diploma level 7 Fellowship and fellowship diploma Postgraduate certificate Postgraduate diploma NVQ level 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTEC Advanced Professional award, certificate and diploma level 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master's degree Postgraduate certificate Postgraduate diploma
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NVQ level 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational qualifications level 8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doctorate

Notes:

NQF = National Qualification framework (now called Regulated Qualification Framework)

QCF = Qualifications and Credit Framework

FHEQ = Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

Chapter 6: Results of Qualitative Survey

In Phase 1 of the evaluation the PBE team undertook a qualitative survey of SGT's team leaders and caseworkers and their clients. This helped the team develop a better understanding of the impacts of SGT's Choices programme and informed the process of creating an evaluation framework. A telephone survey was conducted in Summer 2014 with interviews taking up to 30 minutes. Overall 4 team leaders and 6 caseworkers and 18 clients were interviewed spread across each of SGT's centres in London (Camberwell and Dalston), Leeds and Cardiff. The aim of the survey was to get an indication from participants in the scheme of what benefits they obtained from the scheme and from the team leaders/caseworkers insights into how they supported clients and what they thought contributed to Choices effectiveness. It was only possible to interview clients who were still in contact with SGT so it was not possible to capture the views of those that had registered but failed to engage with Choices.

Methodology

Questionnaires were designed with the help of Darren Coulby and Miriam Keith at SGT and contact details were provided. Clients permission to be interviewed was sought by SGT's team leaders/caseworkers ahead of being contacted by the PBE team which improved response rates, but by the

nature of Choices itself the clients are more difficult to reach than with a typical contact survey.

Team leader/caseworker interview questions were aimed at finding out:

- How contact with client is first made
- How Choices is delivered
- Skill set of staff and challenges they face
- Characteristics of clients and ways Choices helps them
- Key features that contribute to Choices effectiveness and any areas for improvement

Client interview questions were aimed at understanding:

- How clients first heard about Choices
- Background of clients and reasons for joining Choices
- How clients benefitted both at the initial stages and later from participation in Choices
- Key features that they think contribute to the way Choices work and any ways that Choices could be improved.

The full list of questions asked is set out in Annex 1. Results were aggregated to maintain confidentiality and a summary of the main findings is set out below.

Summary

The survey showed that young people first hear about Choices due to word of mouth or because Choices comes to their hostel or educational establishment. Many are referred by statutory agencies such as job centres, youth offending teams or probation services as it is considered they require more tailored support that will help them overcome some of the barriers that prevent them being able to getting into education, training or employment.

Clients take part in Choices to get into employment, education and training. However, they also get help and additional support generally to overcome other issues and often when they have been unsuccessful in getting help elsewhere. Often clients come to Choices through referrals from other agencies such as job centres, prison and probation services, hostels such as YMCA and the Princes Trust.

Choices clients obtain practical skills such as job search, how to write CVs and complete applications and interview skills. They also acquire softer skills such as how to motivate themselves and work towards goals and gain confidence. Improvements in their ability to communicate is an important factor allowing them to deal more effectively with professional people they meet in the world of work and education. In addition, Choices helps clients to succeed in finding jobs, apprenticeships and places on education or training courses. Clients see this as being put on 'the right track' and staying occupied.

These benefits are achieved primarily through tailored one-to-one support.

Clients were unanimous in their view that Choices staff had done all they could have done to help them and that they had materially helped to change their lives by getting them on 'the right track'. In some cases the support was quite simple and effective, giving a young person money to buy shoes for an interview rather than them wearing trainers but in other cases support was sustained over much longer periods of time in order to get them work ready. With Choices unlike other programmes there is no prescribed path nor predefined end point. Once the client engages the caseworkers support them for as long as and in whatever ways are most appropriate to help them move forward.

Team Leaders/Caseworkers interviews

Team leaders/caseworkers indicated that the first contact with clients usually comes when they are referred by statutory agencies such as job centres, youth offending teams or probation services. These referrals occur as the agencies consider that given the difficulties these clients face they would benefit from more tailored support that will help them overcome some of the barriers that prevent them being able to getting into education, training or employment. Choices also does outreach work going out into the community to make vulnerable young people aware of the services they provide. This could be at hostels, schools or even outside Job Centres

or where gangs hang out. As there has become an increased awareness of Choices through word of mouth there has been an increased number of self-referrals often by clients who have not found the statutory agencies able to provide them with the support they need to overcome the barriers they face.

The survey indicates that there are a variety of reasons clients took part in Choices. Those who wanted to get a job wanted help with applications and being work ready but also to overcome specific barriers such as providing finance to attend mandatory training courses for jobs already secured. Those who wanted to get help with training wanted assistance to identify which course to take and in putting together their applications as well as on occasions with getting funding.

Team leaders/caseworkers said that clients also wanted support with more general personal development. This could be due to boredom as they were not doing anything or realisation they needed help to identify and reach their goals to get their lives back on track. In many cases they had to overcome multiple barriers. This could include being homeless, living on housing support, suffering domestic violence, alcohol or substance abuse or mental health problems, or being single parents. Hence clients needed support through housing advice, benefit advice, living costs and legal advice. In many cases these clients had been

unable to get help from statutory services.

As one team leader summarised it "Essentially we do what we say on the tin. We give them choices" by spending time on a one-to-one basis and working at the client's pace. So Choices is a bespoke, flexible client-led service providing individual support. The aim is that clients gain the confidence to make decisions and think about the consequences of their actions as well as gaining the ability to engage with agencies and with their peers. Essentially, Choices seeks to empower clients by getting them to believe in themselves. It works with them to show them what they need to do, rather than creating a dependency. Through training and coaching, it provides them with real life skills not acquired either through education or at home and at the same time gives incentives for progression/attendance by acknowledging clients' achievements. Even when an outcome has been secured they sustain contact as it can be at this stage that the client requires additional support. For example, it could be that clients have secured a job/training but do not have sufficient funds to get there or that they need help in dealing with tensions that arise at work. In such circumstances a hardship fund can be used to cover small essential expenditures such as bus fares, luncheon vouchers, clothes for work or some advice can help them to know how to deal with problems they face and stay in work.



Hence the key feature of Choices is the focus on what the young person wants. It is their choice to take part albeit that first contact often comes through referrals from other agencies such as the probation service. The focus is on helping clients on a journey by focusing on realising their potential. It does this by using targeted individual support aimed at removing barriers that can get in the way of achieving outcomes. These barriers can vary greatly from issues with personal hygiene, homelessness, illiteracy, poor numeracy, mental health problems and substance abuse. Unlike statutory funding Choices is not restricted in what they can and cannot do by scheme parameters nor is Choices target driven. Choices staff have different abilities often drawing on personal experience when supporting clients. They are given the flexibility to work in different ways that allows them to find out what is the most effective way to support their clients.

Client interviews

In terms of first contact with Choices the survey shows that some clients self-refer or come from another SGT project such as the SOS project that supports vulnerable young people in the criminal justice system and those at risk of becoming so to rebuild their lives. Many clients are referred by other agencies such as through Job Centres, Youth Offending teams, probation services and housing associations. In addition clients often first become aware of the services that Choices provides when a caseworker comes to their hostel or school or meets them outside a job centre or where their gang hangs out.

The reason for clients taking part in Choices varied greatly. For some it was just about getting into education, employment and training and so it was about help with job search, finding

suitable courses, making applications and mock interviews. However, there were others that needed help with family problems and issues going on in their life such as substance abuse or mental health problems before they could be work ready.

Clients thought that SGT staff had learnt through experience how young people think. They said they were approachable and understood young people and went out of their way to help. For example, one caseworker helped a client who was new to the area and lacked confidence by driving her to college so she could find out what had happened to her application. They considered SGT staff were very knowledgeable and knew where to look for things like courses/training and housing and could draw on an extensive network of contacts. They found them friendly and helpful, always willing to listen and to encourage them. SGT staff showed strong

communication skills, being empathetic and taking time to explain things. Clients said caseworkers would do anything to help them and if they were not able to do so themselves then they would find someone who was able to help.

One Choices client summarised the help Choices provided by saying "Help everyone in different ways, some want a job, some want help in general better at life, everyone has a different story. Help a lot of people". In addition to help with searching for jobs and courses and applications caseworkers helped secure funding for courses. Activities organised by SGT helped a client to learn how to approach and talk to people even her peers. One client explained it helped to get him off his backside and was a big boost to his ego.

Benefits



Clients provided a variety of answers to the question what they can do differently following support provided by Choices. One client said that before they did not think they had the ability to do anything but now they considered they could. Another explained that they had been scared to talk to professional people but were encouraged to give it a try and now were able to do so.

One client thought that the activities were really important way, they had never taken part in activities before done and it taught them how to interact with their peers. Several clients said that they were now better at doing job searches and writing CVs and knowing how to dress and speak at interviews. One person said that they had learnt how to be patient and more organised. Another explained he had a better understanding of where to go and who to contact if he needed help and that he had a more positive mind set and had become more proactive. Clients were asked what they thought were Choices key features. One-to-one help was seen as a key feature. Also, caseworkers did not stop support once clients got a job as they still called

them up from time to time to check that clients were OK. In other services support stopped once the client got a job.

Overall, clients thought Choices was a friendly environment and that SGT staff work as a team –if the client's allocated caseworker was not available another caseworker would help out. One client said that Choices was more active in helping than other programmes and that "they do the stuff they say they will". Another commented that Choices was not judgemental and that they helped everyone they could and if the caseworkers are unable to advise they would provide other contacts. Another explained that staff knew the system and what routes to go down.

Clients that were interviewed were unanimous in their view that SGT were doing everything that they could do for them. Responses included – "Don't think so honestly, if there was anything else the caseworker could have done she would have done it" and "he would be lying if he said so, doing more for him than you can imagine".



Annex 1

Pro Bono Economics – St Giles Trust – Choices Project Team Leader /Case Worker Interview Sheet

1. What is your role in the SGT Choices programme?
2. How long have you been a team leader/caseworker for the Choices programme?
3. What skills do you think you have that contribute to your personal effectiveness in helping clients?
4. How many clients do you have at any time? Does this vary at all? If so, why.
5. Do clients come to you or do you go out into community to find them?
6. What are the reasons given by clients for taking part in the Choices programme?
7. How would you characterize your client's typical socio/demographic background and types of problem?
8. In your experience, at the initial stage, what works best and works less well in terms of getting the client to engage?
9. How do you maintain contact with clients and how do you determine the frequency of interactions?
10. On average how many contact hours would you expect to have with a client while they are in the Choices programme and over what period of time? Provide a range of time if that is easier e.g. 15-30 contact hours over 6-12 months.
11. Are there certain clients that are easier to help and some that you find more difficult? Can you explain why this is the case.

12. Do some clients drop out of the Choices programme – if so at what stages and for what reasons?
13. What are the main ways you consider that the Choices programme helps clients?
14. In your view are there particular skills they acquire? Prompt for examples of softer skills they mainly gain e.g. increased self-esteem
15. Are there any key features that contribute to the Choices programmes effectiveness?
16. Is there anything that SGT could do to improve the effectiveness of the Choices programme?

Pro Bono Economics – St Giles Trust– Choices Project

Client Interview Sheet

1. How did you first hear about Choices?
2. When did you first join Choices?
3. Why did you decide to take part in Choices?
4. At the initial meeting what did you say you wanted to get out of being in Choices?
5. At the initial stage what did the caseworker help you to do?
6. How often have you had contact with the caseworker and on average how long does it take?
7. What sort of help was provided to you last time you met with your caseworker.
8. Were there any times when contact with the caseworker was less frequent and if so why was that?
9. Does the caseworker have any particular skills that contribute to how they can help you?
10. What are the main ways you consider that the Choices has helped you?
11. Is there anything you do differently since taking part in Choices?
12. Are there any key features that contribute to why Choices works well?

13. Is there anything more that Choices can do for you?
14. Have you taken part before in any similar programmes to Choices that aims to help young people? If so which one and how did it compare to Choices?
15. Have you recommended Choices to your friends or family? If so, why?