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1 **Context**

1.1 With the construction downturn beginning in 2008/9 and the industry continuing to be hit hard by the impact of the recession, many companies have laid off experienced employees in a bid to cut costs. Training, apprenticeships and investing in their future workforce have suffered in this exercise. This meant they were heading for a major skills shortage in the industry and regional forecasts predicted that employment in the industry would increase 5.5% between 2010 & 2014 which equates to almost 10,000 jobs. According to recent research by the CITB, more than 182,000 additional construction jobs are needed across the country from 2014 to 2018 as output continues to grow.

1.2 The Construction Employers Engagement Forum, led by City College, identified this as their key area for concern and proposed that a working group come up with a solution.

1.3 A sub group of the forum was brought together to identify what the barriers were for employers taking apprentices and how we could develop a shared apprenticeship model that could combat those barriers. This group was made up of:

- Julie Venn-Morton – Construction Employment Unit (Coventry City Council)
- Pete Brady – Whitefriars Housing Group (Registered Social Landlord)
- Neal Turner – City College Coventry (FE College)

1.4 The barriers identified were:

- Employers believed that working with Apprentices brought with it high administration and management time/costs.
- Employers did not feel able to offer all units of work experience needed for the apprentice to achieve the framework for their apprenticeship.
- Their uncertainty regarding long term work commitments and order book meant that they would not commit to take someone for up to 3 years.
- High expectations of the apprentice to produce 'financial' return quickly.

1.5 Over a period of time the sub group developed a Shared Apprenticeship model, the aims of which for Young People were:

- To offer 30 young people the opportunity to access real work/site experience in order to produce competence evidence relevant to their chosen apprenticeship framework.
- To provide subsidised travel and tools where necessary.
- To provide a central point for the referral (on a carousel basis where relevant) to contractors signed up to the Scheme with relevant types of work.
- Employment for up to 2 years in order to provide security for learners undertaking their apprenticeship framework.
- To put the young person in a position where they can show perspective employers their employability worth and increase chances of permanent employment.
For Employers:

- To recruit sufficient numbers of work experience placement providers to sign up to the Scheme that can provide coverage for the various frameworks.
- To support them to ensure that they are “Health & Safety” and “Safeguarding” compliant and have the ability/resource and expertise to work with young people.
- To minimise the administration burden.
- To make the recruitment at the end of placement process simple for employers

1.6 Support (financial) from NAS (The National Apprenticeship Service) was secured at the setting up stage. It is important to note that this one-off grant received in 2010 was pump-priming and was provided to kick start the Scheme in terms of feasibility and support costs of the Scheme manager. Because our model has not followed the ATA (apprenticeship training agency) or GTA (group training agency) route, consequently no further funding support has been available from that source.

1.7 Initial meetings with Construction Skills (now CITB) to explore the ATA/GTA model were held but that route was not pursued. Consequently, the project does not receive any direct funding for the Scheme from Construction Skills. (CITB) A model similar to a GTA was preferred but without the formal structures and set up time/cost required for this type of Scheme. The sub-group wished the Scheme to be employer led. To achieve this, a tender specification was developed and distributed to organisations who had expressed an interest in becoming the ‘host employer’ in spring 2010. BAM Construct UK was the successful organisation and joined the subgroup as key partner.

2 The Model

2.1 The apprentices are recruited from the full-time biblical trade construction courses running at initially just City College Coventry and more recently Warwickshire College and a private training provider, Heart of England, via an application form and an interview. Interviews are carried out by BAM Human Resources and the Scheme Manager.

2.2 If successful the young person is placed in a ‘pool’ but continues on their course under the same conditions. Only when a suitable work experience provider with a suitable placement is found do they convert to an apprentice and become employed by BAM.

2.3 Through BAM’s payroll the Scheme pays the apprentices wages (National Apprentice Minimum Wage). They also claim a contribution from the Work Experience Provider for the time that the apprentice is on site only. BAM claim the relevant grants for apprentices etc. from Construction Skills/CITB and claim the difference in wages costs from Coventry City Council.

2.4 There are a number of agreements/contracts between the various partners including:

- All partners have signed up to a Memorandum of Understanding describing each partner’s roles and responsibilities.

Further contracts exist between:

- BAM and the Apprentices
- BAM and Coventry City Council
• BAM and Work Experience providers (WEP)

Additional legislative administrative paperwork includes:

• Work Experience Providers Health & Safety assessment
• Disclosure and Barring Service (formally CRB) check for the supervising member of staff at the WEP

2.5 Placements vary in length. To date they have ranged from 2 weeks to 18 months. This in itself brings issues as short term placements require a ‘carousel’ placement opportunity to be available at short notice in the same trade. Recruitment of further WEP’s is vital to address this issue and the ever increasing number of signed up organisations reduces the risk of not being able to ‘carousel’ an apprentice.

2.6 Our recruitment has predominately been within the biblical trades as the opportunities for placements are available on most traditional sites large or small for these.

2.7 The demand remains consistently highest for carpenters followed by painters and although the demand is similarly high for bricklayers they are predominantly short time span placements.

2.8 On the majority of sites we have found that carpenters are required on site nearly from day one, whereas the brickwork usually sub-contracted out in short block periods and sometimes different sub-contractors cover different parts of the build. This can require negotiation with new sub-contractors to become part of the Scheme. A close relationship between the site manager and the Scheme Manager allows for as much notice as possible when a ‘carousel’ might be required because of a change in sub-contractor.

2.9 Apprentices are inducted to the Scheme before going onto placement. They then undergo a full site induction with the site manager on day one. The Scheme mirrors the site induction to ensure all areas are covered, for example. Site specific conditions and restrictions of the tools and equipment the apprentice may use whilst on placement.

2.10 The Scheme Manager acts as the first point of contact for apprentices and employers for any issues, for example, the existing site running out of appropriate work, travel, attendance or discipline issues. The Scheme Manager also has the responsibility to support apprentices in identifying, collating and submitting evidence for their NVQ. This role is crucial to the smooth running of the Scheme; by being easily accessible via phone, email and text the apprentices can access advice and guidance immediately and address issues before they become barriers to progress.
3 Work Experience Providers (WEP)

3.1 The type of site offering the most placements is currently house building, predominantly mixed tenure Schemes. As the placement provider group has grown more diverse opportunities have become available including small domestic building companies, self-employed trades people and placements with a direct labour workforce for a housing group.

3.2 We currently have a number of “carousel” employers who are fully signed up and have already, or still are, providing placement opportunities to our current apprentices. To date these include:

- Chiel Construction Coventry
- Kevin Tonks Construction Coventry
- CV Build All Coventry
- NH Construction Coventry
- Hall Brothers Coventry
- WM group (Whitefriars Housing) Coventry
- Arran Fearn Carpentry Coventry
- Homeleigh Construction Ltd Coventry
- Quality Assured Decorating Services Nuneaton
- Cassidy Group Midlands based
- Thomas vale Midlands based
- Deeley’s Construction Midlands based
- KeepMoat Homes (Midlands) National
- Bovis Homes (Midlands) National
- Wates (Midlands) National
- BAM Construct UK (Midlands) National
- Costain Construction (Midlands) National
- Willmott Dixon (Midlands) National
3.3 Others have pledged their commitment including a number of sole traders and are currently considering joining the Scheme.

3.4 Contractors have engaged with the Scheme at different levels ranging from providing the placements with a view to recruiting the apprentices to their workforce or requiring an apprentice only for the period that trade is required on site.

3.5 Examples of how contractors use the Scheme:

**KeepMoat Homes**, the main contractor on the Spirit Quarters (New Deal for Communities) Development in Coventry who are not just committed to supporting the Scheme by providing a range of placements including making places available for new entrants from the college, but also ‘carouselling’ apprentices who have been on the Scheme for some time. They have also made available short term placements for specific areas of work that apprentices are struggling to get with their existing placement, for example the fitting of staircases. They are very proactive at encouraging their sub-contractors to join the Scheme. A further demonstration of their support to the Scheme is that they have recruited an ex shared apprentice to the position of Trainee Site Manager directly employed by them.

3.6 **Cassidy Group** has been very supportive of the Scheme and has put written clauses into their tendering process with their sub-contractors to ensure that the Shared Apprenticeship Scheme is supported as much as possible. This has resulted in a number of placements and is key to generating opportunities. Similarly, West Mercia Housing (Whitefriars) have done the same within their tendering process for large refurbishment projects of their tower blocks, the Scheme is a requirement in the schedule of works detailing numbers over the course of the project. The potential contractors are directed to the Scheme manager who provides Scheme details and costings they can include in their submission for the work. To date four contractors have contacted the Scheme manager and received details on how the Scheme works.

Over a number of years, Coventry City Council has been developing community benefit clauses within their procurement practices. By putting wording into contracts throughout the procurement process this ensures that specific measures in terms of employment & skills can be applied to benefit local residents. This work is now coming to fruition as contractors are being instructed to work with the scheme.

As the project progresses the original contractors have become more comfortable with the Scheme and have recommended it to other contractors they know and work with. This has recently resulted in three new placements becoming available without any direct marketing.
4 Finance

4.1 Expenditure for the Scheme is predominantly made up of Apprentices salaries, Scheme Manager costs, personal protective clothing, tools and travel costs. Wages are paid to the apprentices on a weekly basis through BAM as direct employees. The apprentices have to submit a weekly timesheet signed by the site foreman or their manager. Apprentices are provided with hard copy carbonated pads of timesheets and either fax or e-mail these to the workforce manager at BAM head office for processing by finance. The WEP also keeps a copy of these timesheets in order to track apprentice expenditure costs to the projects they manage.

4.2 Coventry City Council is the accountable body for the funding of the scheme and made an initial commitment to the project via the 3 year Jobs Strategy for the City. Over the period of the 3 years the Schemes costs have remained reasonably static. As the Scheme is multifunded each ‘income’ strand is vital to the continued success and growth of the Scheme. The steering group made the decision to increase costs to WEP’s in September 2013. Initially the charge per day was £10 for an apprentice on their first year on the Scheme and £20 for the second. In September 2013 this was raised to £20 a day for first year on the Scheme and £30 for second year. These rates coupled with the virtually non-existent recruitment costs; apprentice management from BAM and the removal of concerns about continued work for an apprentice represent excellent value for money for WEP’s. This increased ‘income to the pot’ for the Scheme, has enabled the recruitment of 3 apprentices in early 2014 with the knowledge that there are sufficient funds available to support all apprentices on programme at this point till they achieve their framework.

4.3 The colleges continue to contribute 30% of their attendance funding they receive from the Skills Funding Agency core funding for each apprentice on the Scheme. They also provide a venue and hospitality for monthly steering group meetings.

4.4 WEP’s are only charged for the days the apprentice is actually on site, so included within the apprentice’s weekly wages through BAM the Scheme funds PPE, Safety training, college days, holidays and any sickness/absence or study leave. The total actual financial input from BAM is on a par of that input by Coventry City Council; however, on top of this financial input BAM provide ‘in kind’ commitment via H.R. Services, administration and support of the Scheme Manager. They also draw down Apprenticeship grant funding from Construction Skills which is offset against ‘wages’ paid to apprentices.

Looking to the future and the plans to implement recommendations from the Richard Review the funding and provision for apprentices could look very different as we progress the scheme into its next three year phase. These changes will have to be closely monitored and will be a key challenge for the steering group to manage going forward.
The Apprentices

5.1 As of 31st March 2014 we have recruited 30 apprentices to the Scheme. Ten of those apprentices have ‘caroselled’ either one or more times, again a key advantage of the Scheme in training the young person to become part of a transient workforce. Following a number of requests from existing WEP’s about the possibility of recruiting administration apprentices on to the Scheme in September 2013 the steering group agreed to try this. This would test the model across another discipline and allow the Scheme to support the WEP further. The following month we recruited our first administration apprentice who has been placed as administration support to the site manager within the site office. A second administration apprentice has been recruited and placed in the head office of another WEP.

![Apprentices by trade](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade Area</th>
<th>Number of Apprentices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting &amp; Decorating</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Operations (Multiskill)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricklaying</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration (placed within existing WEP)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Since the start of the project one Apprentice has been dismissed for gross misconduct and four apprentices chose not to continue within the Scheme for various reasons including, “too much travel/long days”, personal reasons and finding other non-apprentice employment that paid more. All the apprentices in this group were offered support with issues from the Scheme manager on an individual basis in order to try and retain them. This ranged from discussions with parents, to looking at available additional finance the apprentice could access as well as offering alternative placements. The Scheme is
flexible in its approaches to personal problems, providing paid time off for apprentices to address problems, providing guidance as to professional sources of information for apprentices and where impractical for the young person to continue has assisted to make the transition off the Scheme as trouble free as possible.

**Age of apprentices on starting**

![Bar chart showing the age distribution of apprentices on starting.]

**Gender of apprentices**

![Pie chart showing the gender distribution of apprentices.]

- Male: 93%
- Female: 7%
6 Operational Structure

6.1 Coventry City Council is the accountable body for the Scheme and provides programme and financial management. Their commitment has been underpinned by the ambitious three years Jobs Strategy for the city which was approved by Cabinet in the spring of 2011. The Jobs Strategy resources three integrated work streams; securing job opportunities; Helping people get jobs and; Helping people improve their skills. In addition, through their commitment to Young people the Council have signed up for an Apprenticeship strategy which the Shared Apprenticeship Scheme links into.

6.2 Whitefriars Housing originally provided the Scheme Manager role. However the job role in Whitefriars that included Scheme Manager become redundant. As this role was fundamental to the stability and continued success of the Scheme BAM offered to facilitate the employment of the manager who now works direct for them. The manager has the responsibility of securing new placement providers and ensuring that the apprentices are linked up to appropriate initial/carousel placements. The manager and a BAM representative carry out interviewing of prospective apprentices using a scoring matrix and make the final offers for a place within the pool. When a suitable placement is secured the manager delivers pre start and day one on-site induction. Together with the workforce manager from BAM the Scheme manager deals with any issues apprentices have on site regarding appropriateness of work available and when ´carousel´ would be advantageous to the apprentice and benefit the employers.

6.3 City College, Warwickshire College and Heart of England Training provide the academic training needed for the young people to achieve their apprenticeship framework, co-ordinate site visits for assessors and monitor the progress towards framework completion

6.4 BAM, as employers to the apprentices, carries out the full Human Resource (HR) function. Their Workforce Manager has regular reviews with apprentices to ascertain progress. He works very closely with the Scheme manager and the College to ensure that attendance and attitude is good and supports wherever necessary. BAM also provide 1 day workshops on site safety; administer the CSCS card testing and certification and provide Basic PPE and tools

6.5 A steering group consisting of representatives from BAM, colleges, and Coventry City Council meet regularly to discuss progress of the Scheme. The group is extremely active and hands on with the project; they are fully briefed on each individual’s progress, the recruitment of apprentices and placement providers, finance and marketing/P.R. on a monthly basis. Issues that arise from the project are brought openly to the meeting and individuals take responsibility for taking actions to resolve these, these behaviours collectively are fundamental to the success of the project. Since the project began due to structural changes at City College a number of members have changed at the steering group, however, the Scheme’s simplicity and success so far has been able to enlist the support of new interim and permanent positions almost immediately who regularly attend the meetings and take actions.
7 Ongoing benefits of the Scheme

7.1 To date the statistics from the Scheme are shown in the table below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total on Scheme to date</th>
<th>30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of completers (Apprentice Framework)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completers into positive destination</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still on programme</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leavers (Non completers)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average length on programme (Months)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total weeks delivered (Completions only)</td>
<td>1154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Scheme has provided the following additional benefits:

- Provided real site experience and training opportunities to 30 young people.

- Provided a system that protects the young person from being laid off and consequently not being able to finish their apprenticeship framework due to shortage of work with employers by building a network of organisations who will provide placements.

- Developed a process that reduces the administration burden, the issues of continuous commitment to employment related to the nature of construction contract work characteristics.

- Created an established access gateway to the construction apprenticeship route for Coventry residents that they would not necessarily be able to access via a traditional route.

- Continues to develop progression opportunities for suitable candidates from other local programmes such as our “NEET” (Not in Employment, Education or Training) training projects, Traineeships and full time learners within FE.

- Opened up access to employers that the City Council and the colleges would not necessarily have worked with and enabled those organisations to build up new relationships for future work and other projects.

- Joined up our work with local programmes such as the Spirit Quarters (New Deal for Communities) Development, Friargate development and the Whitley Junction project, this maximises the success of the Scheme and the opportunities for local people and employers.

- Continues to support the achievement of the college’s targets in terms of apprenticeship starts, completions and income assisting them to build and maintain quality reputations as apprentice training providers within Coventry and Warwickshire and wider.
• Sustained full time employment for a project manager who was faced with redundancy.

• Contributed to the development of a truly Employer led model of apprenticeship delivery.

• Challenged and begun to change the established models of apprenticeship programmes from academic year delivery to the development of a roll on roll off model suited to employer demand.

8) Marketing and PR

8.1 The Scheme has produced a number of marketing tools, for example

- A flyer to promote the Scheme to both apprentices and employers
- Frequently Asked Question booklet for employers
- A Handbook for apprentices
- Information sheets for potential candidates, for parents and on becoming self-employed.
- A DVD that includes interviews with Placement providers, Employers, Partners and Apprentices describing what the scheme has done for them.

8.2 We held an official launch of the Scheme in February 2011 which was well attended by partners and placement providers. At the event the Memorandum of Understanding was signed by all partners.
8.3 During October 2012 we entered the Scheme into the National Local Government Cronical Awards. The submission written by Julie Venn-Morton Project manager at City Council and Pete Brady Scheme manager was shortlisted as a finalist in the Public/Private partnership category. Part one of the journey was to make a presentation to a judging panel in London before the awards on the 13 March 2013. The Scheme got to the finals and was commended for its innovation.
8.4 Early in 2013 one of our initial placement providers Hall Brothers Construction, nominated the Scheme for the National Federation of Builders Awards 2013. Representatives from the Council, BAM, the colleges and the apprentices went to a ceremony held at The Grand Connaught Rooms London on the 24 May 2013. The Scheme was successful in winning the `Apprenticeship of the Year award’ with the prize being presented at the event to Robert Hall of Hall Brothers and Matt Rose who represented the apprentices.

8.5 A number of the apprentices have come from disadvantaged backgrounds with many hurdles of their own to deal with. Because of previous work with this group of young people during the Scheme Managers time at Whitefriars Housing the scheme was asked if we would like to nominate one of our apprentices for the Youth Build award of `Young Builder of the Year’ This involved writing a detailed submission on the barriers and circumstances our nominee had to overcome prior to and during the Scheme. BAM workforce Manager Phil Manning prepared and submitted the nomination form. During August 2013 we were notified that our nomination had been successful and were invited to the House of Commons on the 16 October 2013 to attend the awards presented by architect George Clarke. Although not the outright winner our apprentice Elliot Seenan was commended for his determination and efforts to further his career in construction.
We held our second **Apprentice of the Year Awards** on 6th March at Charterhouse Training City College Coventry. Two prizes were presented by Councillor Tony Skipper, one for Most Improved Apprentice (Liam Harkin) and one for Apprentice of the year (Matt Rose) The Council, BAM and the colleges produced media releases following the event.

### 9 Conclusion

9.1 The model is working and has achieved the objectives listed in the context section at the start of this report. Several new employers have been engaged in learning who would not necessarily have done so without the Scheme. All the young people have experienced real site work and been able to gather competence evidence. Financially, using the multi-source approach has cemented the partnership and funds are sufficient at this point to meet the apprenticeship targets for the project 2011 to 2014.

9.2 The success is testament to the commitment and determination of all partners. Each one provides a crucial piece of the jigsaw and the spirit of ‘in kind’ activity and collective responsibility together with the determination to make the project successful illustrates true partnership working between the Local Authority, a major employer, Colleges of FE and construction companies. The Scheme has functioned well without the need of the formal structure, responsibilities and cost of the traditional ATA/GTA model.

9.3 The industry continues to have its unique characteristics, mobile workforce, predominantly sub-contracting workforce and short term working patterns which present new entrants and organisations working on their behalf major challenges and the need to adopt innovative solutions. We believe the employer led model described in this brief has begun to address these challenges and the Scheme will continue to develop and respond to the needs of the industry and the aspirations of young people as we move into the next three year phase of the Scheme.

9.5 The model has attracted interest from a number of other Local Authorities and organisations around the Country and is willing to share its experiences for the good of industry.

9.6 Scheme has been written into the City Councils Jobs and Growth Strategy for 2014 – 17 giving the scheme longevity.
### Priorities for 2014/17:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence college curriculum to cover work attitude and ethics.</td>
<td>Develop pre-employment sessions in partnership with colleges</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deliver ½ day ‘work-readiness programme to construction learners</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Secure commitment from WEP’s to provide ‘talks’ to construction learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to challenge the ‘academic year’ delivery cycle of apprenticeships</td>
<td>Work with colleges to develop ‘roll on-roll off’ apprenticeship programmes within the confines of core funding methodology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure that apprentices are supported as they come to the end of the apprenticeship</td>
<td>Develop Exit pack for apprentices.</td>
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<td>Negotiate with WEPS to try and secure full-time employment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ensure all available support is accessed including CCC’s Jobs Team and careers guidance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop customer insight strategy with employers to ascertain which businesses are the most likely to employ apprentices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secure funding for the sustainability of the project post 2014/15</td>
<td>Through the steering group member organisations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage the transfer of assessor led evidence and review process to apprentice led.</td>
<td>Work with colleges to</td>
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<td>Expose learners to NVQ standards and understanding of these early.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Familiarise learners with evidence collection via e-portfolio prior to commencement of apprenticeship.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate and secure understanding of self-assessment and reporting techniques to learners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contact details

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Phil Manning – Workforce Manager

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Thank you to all the main partners including

- BAM Construct UK
- Coventry City Council
- City College Coventry
- Warwickshire College

and especially all the Work Experience Providers for their continued commitment to the young people and the Scheme.

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