



Jericho

Youth Strategic Investment Fund

Partnership Summary

2019-24

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Welcome



Birmingham has a stubbornly high youth unemployment rate with some areas of the city having a rate almost three times the UK average. If you have never had a job it is hard to get one, especially when you couple this with other challenges such as health and wellbeing needs, education barriers and communication difficulties.

JERICHO aims to level the playing field and provide a stepping-stone into mainstream employment for young people facing complex barriers to social and economic inclusion.

In this report, we highlight the achievements of JERICHO and the positive impact of their work throughout a five-year partnership with Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Youth Strategic Investment Fund.

This document reflects on their journey, showcasing how their dedication and sustained efforts have led to positive change for young people and strengthened the role of social enterprise as a force for good in the West Midlands.

We hope this report provides valuable insights and inspires continued support from like-minded partners to ensure JERICHO continues to realise the talents of marginalised young people.

Thank you for your interest and commitment to this important work.

Who are JERICHO?

JERICHO is an award-winning Birmingham charity and family of seven social enterprises that provide supported work opportunities for people who are disadvantaged in the labour market and in wider society. JERICHO primarily support marginalised young people, and survivors of modern slavery, at risk of long-term social and financial exclusion and people with complex, intersecting needs.

“ I felt good before starting work because I had everyone at JERICHO. I felt good emotionally and economically. ”
Kay

What do JERICHO do?

JERICHO provide a stepping-stone to longer-term employability through supported work opportunities in one of its social enterprises. There is more to JERICHO than just work: what makes JERICHO different is its combination of work experience and training activities along with individualised pastoral support. JERICHO guides participants towards more fulfilled and connected lives by offering wrap-around support that can include counselling, career guidance, key skills, language and housing support, with links to services that provide specialist referrals and/or longer-term social support. A JERICHO supported work placement is a pathway towards social and economic inclusion.

Kay is a young Albanian woman whose experiences of exploitation and modern slavery had resulted in trauma, deprived her of further education opportunities and hope of achieving her dreams.



How JERICHO do this?

At the heart of JERICHO are **seven social businesses** that provide the working environments for supported employment projects. These businesses generate much of the income needed to deliver its services and are central to its approach. However, due to the nature of the challenges faced by participants, and the wrap around support they need to succeed, it costs more to operate the businesses than a typical employer. It is for this reason that JERICHO also require grant funding to ensure their projects genuinely change lives. This sets JERICHO apart from regular private-sector businesses and enables the bespoke support its participants need to achieve social and economic inclusion.



Jericho
Workspace



Jericho
Construction



Jericho
Cleaning



JERICHO runs **six Social Projects** that engage with its social businesses:

Apprenticeships

providing a paid post in one of the social businesses that opens doors to life-changing work training and qualifications for those who need it most.

Back to Work

providing six-month-long paid work placements, helping build the skills and confidence required to enter, or re-enter, the workforce.

Workwise

a schools project that offers real work experience to pupils at risk of educational and social exclusion.

Volunteer Work Placements

for people for whom paid work placements are not yet suitable.

Equiano Plus

a work-focused after-care project which helps survivors of modern slavery rebuild their lives after exploitation.

JERICHO Job Club

providing training and support for community volunteers to work with local unemployed people to help them address their needs and barriers to employment.

Who is Paul Hamlyn Foundation?

Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) was established by Paul Hamlyn in 1987. He died in 2001 and left most of his estate to the Foundation, creating one of the largest independent grant-making foundations in the UK.

PHF uses its resources to support social change, working towards a just and equitable society in which everyone, especially young people, can realise their full potential and enjoy fulfilling and creative lives.

What is the Youth Strategic Investment Fund?

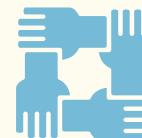
The Youth Strategic Investment Fund is a high-value and long-term package of support in the region of £750,000 over five years. The Fund is by invitation only and targets a small number of organisations each year that are already known to the Foundation through its Youth Fund.

The Foundation invites organisations to join the Fund that align with PHF's current priorities, share their values and have demonstrated a track record of working with young people to achieve positive change.

The Youth Strategic Investment Fund is designed as a strategic investment that will:



enhance the organisation's impact in working with young people



strengthen the organisation's position within a specified field of practice



secure its longer-term future through a focus on organisational development

The Fund was launched in 2017, and invites up to three organisations to join annually. It supports up to fifteen organisations at any one time through its five-year package of support.



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Why JERICHO were invited to join this Fund

JERICHO was known to PHF through receipt of a Youth Fund grant between 2016 and 2019 that had contributed to the development of its entry to employment model for young people in the West Midlands. During this time JERICHO had demonstrated a conscientious approach to shaping employment opportunities through voluntary and formal (apprenticeship) placements within its social businesses, growing to offer 60 concurrent placements across its portfolio of social enterprises. A 2019 study into JERICHO's social return on investment estimated that every £1 spent or invested in JERICHO saved the public purse £7.

JERICHO demonstrated a readiness for a longer-term strategic investment through presenting a compelling case for restructuring the business model and growing the quality and quantity of supported employment opportunities to 120 concurrent placements for young people over three to five years. This would involve rationalising the number of social enterprises and 'spinning off' JERICHO Construction as a complementary commercial business that would provide a sustainable income stream and offer formal apprenticeship routes for young people. There was also a vision for exploring replication of the JERICHO model and/or enabling other agencies to develop similar models within and outside of the West Midlands.

JERICHO's proven track record, a strong focus on the strengths of young people, and willingness to restructure for growing impact, clearly aligned with the Fund's priorities and made it a good match for the long-term investment offered through the Youth Strategic Investment Fund.

“ JERICHO had demonstrated a conscientious approach to shaping employment opportunities through voluntary and formal (apprenticeship) placements within its social businesses. ”

Paul Hamlyn Foundation



Organisational and strategic development needs

JERICHO identified four areas where the Fund would provide the resource and support to consolidate its social business model and grow its supported employment opportunities.

These were:

- + to consolidate JERICHO's infrastructure at business and oversight levels
- + to refresh the JERICHO brand, its messaging and methods for communicating impact
- + to secure complimentary grant and commercial funding that underwrites the intensive support for participants
- + to invest in leadership and representation at the centre of the organisation

There was a clear plan for implementing the steps required to secure these developments and a targeted use of the Fund's package of support.

Anticipated impact

JERICHO planned to enhance its impact through a combination of:



Reach

through doubling the number of placements from 60 to 120 concurrent placements available for young people across the suite of social businesses.



Quality

through strengthening the pastoral support, advice and relationship with allied services available to young people in securing long-term social and economic wellbeing.



Influence

through partnering with think tanks, larger commercial partners and public sector decision makers to celebrate impact and amplify opportunities for shared learning.

In summary, JERICHO anticipated the Fund would provide the foundation for consolidating its growth and building a platform for wider reach and impact.

“Before I came to JERICHO my life had been traumatic and really difficult. Now I look to the future and I have so many dreams for myself. My goal is to have a business, something to call my own. ” JERICHO Participant



Overview:

JERICHO have had to navigate substantial organisational, social, and societal changes throughout the funding partnership. Some of these were anticipated but others were forced upon them. This involved the intentional restructuring of the social business portfolio to focus on the most sustainable models of delivery, only for the abrupt interruption to all business for two years during the pandemic (requiring a major refocus of time and resources); and a further re-evaluation and rebuild post-lockdown that required a reimagining of working practices and expectations. Throughout, the JERICHO team have demonstrated remarkable resilience and high levels of commitment to navigating changes for supported employment participants. It can be argued – given JERICHO’s small business model – that JERICHO’s greatest achievement has been to simply survive a period of unprecedented economic uncertainty. However, they have gone much further and have emerged in a position to thrive as they have refined, refocussed and reaffirmed their commitment to the social good in social business.



2019-2020

The Start of a New Chapter:

The beginning of the YSIF grant aligns with what JERICHO's CEO called 'the start of a new chapter', where JERICHO restructured its business portfolio in order to 'do less to do more' and focus on delivering the greatest impact by 'doing more of what we are good at'. In 2019 a significant restructure gets underway: the Catering and Paper Recycling businesses close (the closure of JERICHO catering eventually paving the way for the joint venture partnership JERICHO now enjoy with Change Kitchen); the closure of JERICHO Landscaping commences; and the Wood Shack business is moved to co-locate with the ReUsers business with an immediate uptick in sales.

The Fund provides the core resources to recruit a Deputy CEO, who takes responsibility for fundraising and securing extra resources for supported work placements. The Fund's additional support package is used to facilitate infrastructure upgrades and a 'Critical Friend' is appointed to support the development of social businesses. Early successes are witnessed in the form of recognition in being presented a Centre for Social Justice Award, a further three-years award from the National Lottery, and appointment as community partner for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. However, JERICHO's progress and ambitions are abruptly interrupted in March 2020 by the global pandemic as workplaces and wider society were placed under Covid-19 restrictions.

“JERICHO restructured its business portfolio in order to 'do less to do more' and focus on delivering the greatest impact by 'doing more of what we are good at.'”

“During lockdown, ChangeKitchen enabled more than 31,000 free meals for people in need to be produced and distributed. ”

In March 2020, as the UK went into lockdown, the majority of JERICHO's operations were forced to pause, The ReUsers department store, The Wood Shack, ChangeKitchen, Miracle Laundry and JERICHO Workspace were required to lock their doors. Consequently, 70 staff were furloughed (a mechanism that was devastating but 'saved us from catastrophe'). Fortunately, JERICHO Construction and Cleaning were able to continue, with JERICHO Cleaning expanding its services during the pandemic to support enhanced hygiene requirements. As lockdown continued, ChangeKitchen were able to repurpose, pivoting to mobilise volunteers in providing delivery meals to the most vulnerable people across Birmingham via city-wide schemes. By spring 2021, ChangeKitchen enabled more than 31,000 free meals for people in need to be produced and distributed.

As restrictions continued and fluctuated throughout the year, a residual staff team shifted to online engagement and developed a package of virtual check-ins and door-step welfare visits for furloughed and house bound participants.

The gap in usual business activity was further utilised to progress a brand refresh, to upgrade the ReUsers department store infrastructure, advance online commerce and repurpose a recently acquired property as a safe-house for young women. Slowly, businesses and the Workspace re-opened under new restrictions or more limited hours. These re-purposing, re-openings and support services were financed by a range of emergency Covid grants that helped to keep JERICHO afloat and stabilise income levels at a challenging time.

The focus turned from survival to recovery towards the end of the year. There were some false starts as lockdown was lifted and then resumed, but time was used to strengthen the team including appointing a People Support Officer, HR Manager and Marketing Manager to prepare for resuming full services. The rebrand, financed by the Fund, was completed with publication of a new website, issuing new workwear and business graphics. The team also secured three years continuation funding from the Sutton Charitable Trust to support JERICHO's apprenticeship programme.

2021-2022 Building on Strong Foundations

The 'new chapter', that started in 2019, was able to progress as Covid restrictions were lifted in 2021. JERICHO had used the time wisely to build the foundations for regrowing its work. A clear division of leadership was established between social businesses and social projects, providing the support to businesses for regrowing post-Covid and for social projects to reconnect with participants facing the greatest needs. New branding and digital resources go live with all social businesses. Construction, Cleaning and Laundry businesses build back quickly while the retail businesses, ReUsers and Woodshack, recover more slowly. Re-engaging participants in supported employment is also slow, with the ripples of Covid-19 shifting engagement and trends in the employment market.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, JERICHO had become a more resilient, self-aware and sustainable organisation. A notable development

was a cross-organisational Wellbeing Group that supported the implementation of revised flexible working practices, which in turn allowed JERICHO to attract and retain talented staff. This team continue to build on JERICHO's vision for extending supported work opportunities as a pathway towards social and economic inclusion.

By spring 2022 the social businesses were showing signs of growth and engagement had increased with the range of JERICHO's social projects, including the launch of Workwise – a supported work project for students at risk of exclusion. JERICHO were also successful in securing finances to provide a training and production facility at The Wood Shack; a larger preparation space and new takeaway shopfront for ChangeKitchen; and JERICHO begin work on Stepping Stones House, a new supported housing project that provides five one-bed flats as the first phase of a 'Live, Work and Heal Hub'.

“ Despite the challenges of the pandemic, JERICHO had become a more resilient, self-aware and sustainable organisation. ”



“ The changeable landscape required JERICHO to focus further on diversifying income and securing its place as a valued provider of supported work opportunities of the under-employed. ”

JERICHO set about consolidating their gains in 2022, building on a solid business platform, extending its public recognition and piloting opportunities for young people from increasingly diverse backgrounds to access JERICHO work opportunities (through Jumpstart and Aspire). A particular highlight of the year was engagement with the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games. JERICHO cleaning expanded considerably during this period, cleaning numerous venues thanks to a corporate partnership with GL Events. Two of JERICHO's apprentices were also chosen as baton bearers for the Commonwealth Games.

This ‘high’ was set against a backdrop of further social and economic uncertainty following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. JERICHO responded positively by welcoming two Ukrainian refugees into one of its social businesses. However, growing inflation and a cost-of-living crisis was pushing its lowest

2022-2023 Consolidating the Gains

paid workers into poverty, while simultaneously reducing business income and increasing business expenditure. A careful rebalancing of business costs and a successful round of grant applications allowed JERICHO to provide a one-off cost-of-living payment to all staff in Winter 2022-23 and undertake a salary review to secure the wellbeing of its workforce.

The changeable landscape required JERICHO to focus further on diversifying income and securing its place as a valued provider of supported work opportunities of the under-employed. The Rank Foundation enabled a Fundraising Assistant to add capacity to the team, and additional effort was placed into commercial relationships and recognition through public awards. JERICHO were presented with a Birmingham Signature Award for Community Excellence in February 2023 and fundraising efforts resulted in turning an expected deficit into small surplus for the year.



2023-2024

Celebrating the Past and Securing the Future

As JERICHO moved into 2023, it marked the beginning of their 30th Year Celebrations. This would be recognised at a public event at Fort Dunlop in October, hosted by BBC West Midlands Nikki Tapper with guest speaker, Andy Street, Metro Mayor for the West Midlands. This was an opportunity to recognise the 8,500 people supported by JERICHO over 30 years, to tell the stories of changed lives and look to the future – a task continued by the JERICHO trustees as they kick started a three year strategy review.

This year also secured the launch of ChangeKitchen's expanded preparation space and its takeaway venue; a new workshop at Wood Shack; and the completion of the Stepping Stones House with Gilgal secured as its delivery partner. National Lottery Funding was secured for a further three years along with another three years funding from Sutton Coldfield Trust towards supported apprenticeships. There was

also further recognition of JERICHO's impact as they were named as one of the UK's top 100 social enterprises in the NatWest SE100, received a visit from Jess Phillips MP, and were invited to speak at a Commonwealth Games Legacy event about social impact.

As JERICHO reach the end of the five-year PHF investment, as evidenced in the above, the distance travelled in strengthening JERICHO's position as a leading social enterprise was clear. However, it is the social impact – as demonstrated when a former participant on JERICHO's apprenticeship programme became acting manager of Miracle Laundry to cover maternity leave in 2023 – that marks its real success. But this is not the end of the journey, as the need for JERICHO is ever present against a backdrop of continuing social and economic pressures that prevent so many young people from finding personal and financial security.



“**JERICHO is named as one of the UK's top 100 social enterprises in the NatWest SE100. „**

JERICHO utilised the Fund to strengthen the capacity of the organisation and grow the impact of its social businesses. It implemented a clear plan for development and made targeted use of the Fund's package of support.



“
If I had worked somewhere else I would have lost my job many times over, but at JERICHO they support you because they want you to succeed. They build you up as a person so you can go on to greater things. ”

Chris,
JERICHO Construction Apprentice

The case studies, data and statistics on the next few pages evidence the impact of these developments at JERICHO and how its interventions change lives.

Feature:

Apprenticeships

Jared* joined the team after lockdown ended in April 2021. He spent his secondary education in a specialist disability college. We first met Jared on a Zoom call with his parents, he only said one word which was "yes" when his dad asked if he wanted to do an apprenticeship with us. In conjunction with our apprenticeship provider and staff at his college, we decided that we could offer Jared a supported apprenticeship. This meant he would do the same course work as others with additional support but did not need to pass English and Maths to the same level as those not on a supported apprenticeship.

Jared was very quiet with both colleagues and customers when he started with us and would say hello but not engage further. By the time Jared's apprenticeship ended in August 2022, he had gained confidence engaging in conversations and was able to work in any area of the business.

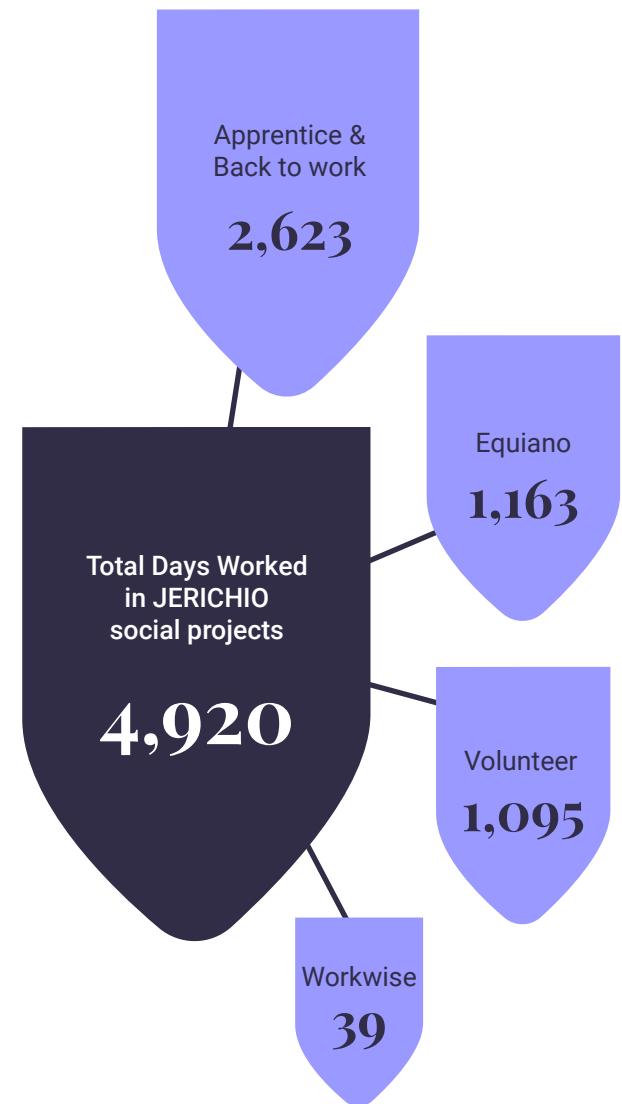
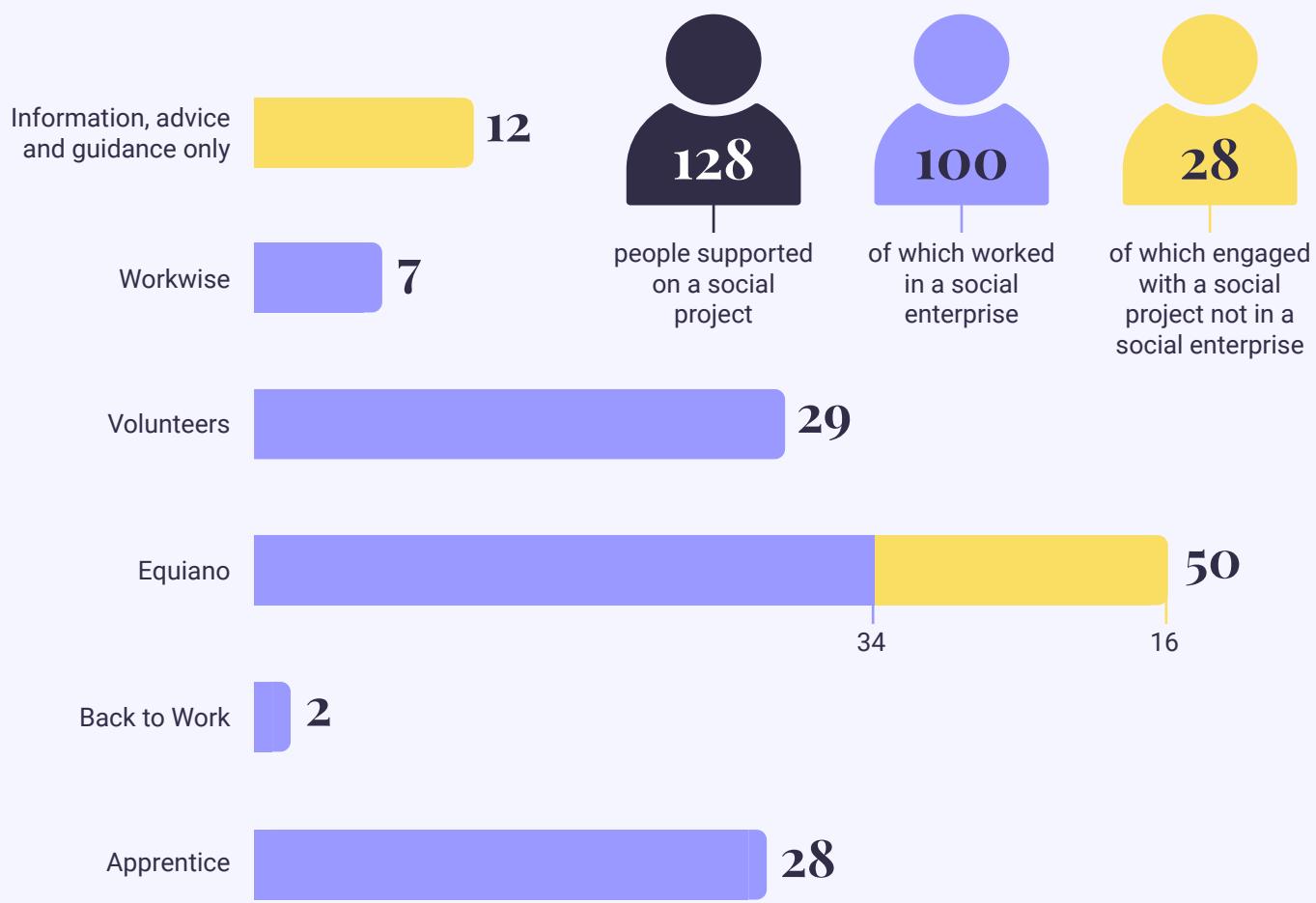
He passed his NVQ level 2 Customer Service qualification end point assessment - the first student from his college he attended to do this with JERICHO. He is now employed by the NHS in a building service team.

*names have been changed and generalised photos are used throughout this document to preserve anonymity.



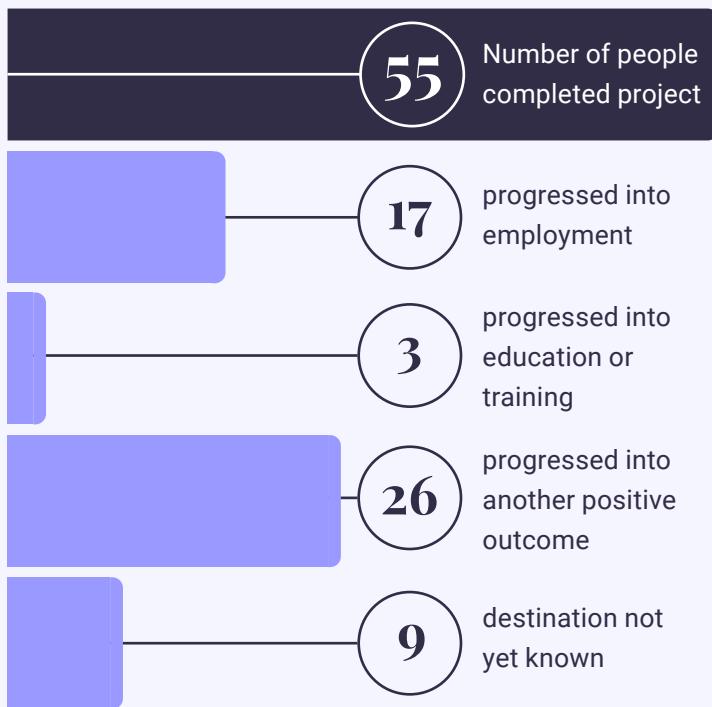
Social Impact Data:

JERICHO set out to double its supported placement offer from 60 in 2019 to exceed 120 after five years. The 2023-2024 impact assessment in the final year of the Fund reads as follows:



84%

of people who undertook a work placement progressed into mainstream employment or education or achieved another positive outcome



£2million

of social value¹ was generated by providing work opportunities in JERICHO social enterprises and providing support for issues related to confidence, housing, debt and other critical needs.

¹Measuring Social Value

JERICHO moved, during the Fund, to using the UK Social Value Bank (HACT/ Simetrica Jacobs) to measure social value. This looks at 88 outcomes including supporting someone from unemployment into employment, tackling accommodation issues, improving confidence and helping individuals manage their finances effectively. In addition, wellbeing values represent the improvement to an individuals life satisfaction using money as a common metric along with savings to the exchequer.

Feature:

ChangeKitchen

Betsy* is a care leaver, who had already experienced abuse, homelessness and addiction when she came to ChangeKitchen at 17 to take part in a healthy eating course, to help her better take care of herself. Immediately we saw her potential and encouraged her to start an apprenticeship. It wasn't an easy journey. Betsy had a huge amount of trauma, an unsteady living situation, and was experiencing mental health issues. However, with the support and guidance of her ChangeKitchen colleagues, as well as her own tenacity and hard work, she was able to complete her studies, find a more permanent home, and build real confidence in her own abilities.

Betsy was a core part of the ChangeKitchen team for two years while she completed a Level 2 Commis Chef Apprenticeship at University College Birmingham. She graduated with an incredible three distinctions, something only ever achieved by ten other students in the course's history. Betsy and has now left us to start a new career in a city centre restaurant.

Betsy says, "I don't like to think about where I would be without JERICHO and my colleagues at ChangeKitchen. Before I came here my life had been traumatic and really difficult. Now I look to the future and I have so many dreams for myself. My goal is to have a business, something to call my own. I worked hard to achieve all this, but I couldn't have done it without ChangeKitchen and JERICHO."

*names have been changed and generalised photos are used throughout this document to preserve anonymity.





Recognition for Impact:

JERICHO also wanted to use the Fund to influence thinking and draw further attention to the social good in social enterprises. They have been successful in drawing recognition for impact, receiving:

- ⊕ The Work and Welfare Award from The Centre for Social Justice Awards in 2020
- ⊕ The Birmingham Signature Award for Community Excellence in 2023
- ⊕ Named as one of the UK's top 100 social enterprises in the NatWest SE100 in 2023, and again in 2024.
- ⊕ The Building Homes and Sustainable Communities Award from the Purpose Coalition Awards in 2024

“ JERICHO has given me experience of working outside of school. It's given me a better understanding of life. ”

Chris,
JERICHO Construction Apprentice

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Future strategic priorities for JERICHO

JERICHO used support from the YSIF in the final year of the Fund to produce a refreshed three-year strategic vision (2024-2027). The strategy maintains a focus on 'supported work opportunities for people facing extreme challenges in getting a job', with a vision to 'reduce isolation, support recovery and promote inclusion to transform lives and help people become more employable.' The focus of this work remains on providing stepping-stone opportunities in one of its seven social enterprises for, primarily, marginalised young people and survivors of modern slavery.

JERICHO has identified six priorities designed to 'cement the gains' from five years of PHF investment, seeking to create a context in which the organisation thrives while navigating a changing fundraising, economic and political landscape.

The 6 priorities are:



1 Ambition to become a 'best in class' employer

this means continuing to invest in people, fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace, and championing well-being and professional development. By valuing the team, JERICHO will ensure they are equipped and motivated to deliver its mission effectively.

2 Diversifying fundraising income streams to achieve greater financial sustainability

by reducing reliance on traditional grants and funding, JERICHO aim to build resilience and adaptability, allowing it to continue supporting those most in need regardless of external pressures.

3 Prioritising investments that enhance carbon reduction, improve staff welfare, and increase accessibility by investing in our premises

these efforts reflect JERICHO's expressed responsibility to the environment, team, and the communities it serves.

4 Growing the profitability of the businesses

in order to provide greater independence from external funding. Expanding this revenue stream will enable JERICHO to reinvest in its programs and support services.

5 Commitment to offering a mix of paid and unpaid placements

ensuring these opportunities remain accessible to the individuals who benefit most but finding new and sustainable ways to fund these.

6 Growing JERICHO's reach

by introducing low-cost, higher-volume interventions such as job clubs, information, advice and guidance sessions, and training programs. These initiatives will empower more individuals to access support tailored to their needs, helping them to take meaningful steps toward employment and self-sufficiency.



Through setting out these strategic goals, created collaboratively by staff, trustees and participants, JERICHO is poised to embrace the future with confidence, delivering lasting change for individuals and communities while building a stronger, more sustainable organisation.

The Funding Relationship

JERICHO has been supported between 2019-2024 with a five-year, fixed-term package of support through the PHF Youth Strategic Investment Fund that includes:

A core grant in the range of £500,000 over five years to support the core costs of senior leadership and/or specific developmental posts that create the capacity for the organisation to evaluate, implement and embed strategic development.

A restricted annual budget of up to £30,000 per year to spend on development priorities that are agreed with the Foundation, for example: short-term commissioning of consultants, skilled developers, system upgrades and researchers.

The appointment of an independent consultant as a 'Critical Friend' to the Chief Executive, senior leadership team and Board of Governance as they navigate strategic development.

A relationship manager for the Foundation who meets regularly with the partner organisation to co-ordinate the full package of support, monitor the organisation's strategic development journey, share learning insights and facilitate access to a learning community of senior colleagues from across the YSIF portfolio. The Fund also holds an annual convening event to address common strategic themes and encourage networking.

The investment targets and monitors strategic development that will include a focus on at least two of the following areas:



Quality

strengthening their services and consolidating their position as a leading organisation within their field of practice



Reach

enabling greater engagement for young people in an established service through the development of projects, methods or technologies



Scale

replicating a project or service through, for example, geographical expansion, social franchising or digital technologies



Influence

in terms of shaping sector-wide practice, amplifying impact through knowledge exchange, advocating for systems change and/or enhancing policy approaches

Fund approach

Four principles guide the Foundation's relationship with funded partners:



1 Partnership

The Fund adopts a collaborative approach, working closely with funded partners to identify their priorities for strategic development throughout the funding period. It seeks to build relationships of trust that, while remaining fundamentally supportive, can withstand critical challenge in pursuit of a shared vision between stakeholders for working with young people to achieve positive change.



2 Ownership

The Fund works alongside an organisation's own plans, goals and ambitions to grow its impact in work with young people. It seeks to support these plans through providing financial resources, commissioning expert advice and offering guidance that will strengthen the organisation to achieve its expressed mission and purpose.



3 Flexibility

The Fund is designed to support the complexities of organisational development and the organisation's ambitions to achieve growth in impact. A bespoke package of support is tailored to support the leadership of each organisation in a responsive, timely and flexible way. The focus is maintained on strategic development but priorities are reviewed quarterly and acknowledge that things change during the lifetime of the investment.



4 Dialogue

The focus for engagement, monitoring and feedback is conversation and dialogue. The regular cycle of face-to-face meetings and continuous communication enables responsive decision making to support each organisation's needs. This approach allows for learning to be actioned and applied in the 'here and now' using a record of continuous dialogue rather than waiting for any formal reporting points.

JERICHO have reflected on their journey through the Youth Strategic Investment Fund to support Paul Hamlyn Foundation to learn what impact this funding approach has. The Foundation wants to understand whether the Youth Strategic Investment Fund is tailored effectively and proportionate to the role that it plays alongside other funders, agencies and individuals that support any given organisation.



What JERICHO valued through the Youth Strategic Investment Fund:

JERICHO found that 'every element of the fund has been incredibly valuable to us'. In qualifying this, JERICHO pointed to how 'the nature of core funding, particularly during a period of economic instability, provided unparalleled flexibility and security. This allowed us to address priorities that would have otherwise been impossible to justify in tighter circumstances.'

JERICHO highlighted how the annual £30,000 development budget was particularly impactful, 'It enabled us to invest in areas that are crucial to our long-term sustainability but often overlooked due to more immediate operational demands.' JERICHO used these funds, 'to invest in our team through initiatives like coaching for our newly appointed Deputy CEO, purchase essential tools such as a Gift Aid system and HR software, and even upgrade equipment.' JERICHO valued the fact that this aspect of the Fund was ring-fenced for development as 'it compelled us to focus on infrastructure improvements—steps that were vital for our growth and stability but not directly linked to delivery.'

Another 'invaluable aspect' was the support of a Critical Friend (funded by PHF). It was observed that, 'his personal and professional investment in our CEO and organisation was transformative, especially during the challenges of Covid-19 and its aftermath.' The regular engagement and access to a Critical Friend 'provided clarity and confidence in navigating difficult decisions.'

The £15,000 allocated to wellbeing also 'made a significant difference, enabling us to create a dedicated Happiness Officer part-time role. This investment in staff welfare has had a lasting positive impact on our team's morale and resilience.'

JERICHO summed up the Fund by describing how 'the supportive, trusting, and flexible nature of the fund stood out.' This was exemplified in the additional Wellbeing Grant made available as the organisation emerged from Covid-19, providing 'a lasting positive impact on our team's morale and resilience.' JERICHO were grateful that, 'unlike many other funding sources [the Fund] wasn't prescriptive, and that trust gave us the freedom to act in the best interest of JERICHO, our businesses and our participants.'

What changes the investment contributed to at JERICHO?

JERICHO had, proactively, embraced the Fund as an opportunity for restructuring the organisation and consolidating its social enterprises. On reflecting on this journey, JERICHO observed how the Fund 'has been a catalyst for significant change and development within JERICHO, particularly in driving a cultural transformation.' Of note was that, 'by investing in our infrastructure, we've transitioned into a more professional and mature organisation, which has fundamentally shifted how we operate and are perceived, both internally and externally.'

In qualifying where these changes have had the greatest impact, JERICHO highlight that: 'with improved systems and tools in place, we now make decisions in a more calculated and strategic manner.' And that, 'our ability to tell our story has also evolved, as we are now driven by data and enhanced marketing skills, supported by a stronger online presence.' JERICHO had observed that, 'this has not only helped us engage more effectively with our stakeholders but also increased their confidence in us. As a result, we are better positioned to attract additional funding and talented staff to further our mission.'

In summing up the overall changes and impact of the Fund, JERICHO expressed how the Fund's package of support 'has instilled a greater sense of confidence within JERICHO. We have a clearer understanding of our strengths, our unique place in the market, and a sharper focus on our purpose and mission. This clarity has enabled us to move forward with conviction, knowing that we are building on solid foundations for sustained impact and growth.'

“ We have a clearer understanding of our strengths, our unique place in the market, and a sharper focus on our purpose and mission. ” JERICHO

What could the Fund have done differently?

JERICHO described the experience of being 'in' the Fund as 'exceptionally well-suited to the needs of the sector, prioritising the challenges and realities faced by organisations like ours rather than adhering strictly to the preferences of funders. This thoughtful approach has been highly effective and appreciated.'

More challenging was exiting from the Fund and, despite JERICHO being in a relative position of strength, leaving the Fund after five years (especially having weathered the Covid-19 pandemic) 'can feel quite abrupt, even with the 12 months of post-programme support that is provided.' It was suggested that 'including a reduced or reducing financial element as part of the post-programme support would make a significant difference... allowing organisations to adapt more gradually, ensuring they can sustain the progress achieved during the funding period while continuing to grow and stabilise their operations.'

JERICHO is part of the third annual intake of organisations to exit the Youth Strategic Investment Fund. PHF was clear when launching this Fund that it would be committed to listening, learning and changing the way it works in order to provide targeted organisational development that leads to an increased impact with and for young people.

Partners that have completed the five-year investment cycle have taught us:

- + The Fund rationale, design and investment model have withstood the test of time. Each element has merit in its own right but has proven most effective when blended to form a package of support that can flex and respond to the changing needs of an organisation over the five-year investment. This focused but flexible approach has been well received by funded partners and provides the tools for a sustainable focus on organisational development and impact.
- + There is high value in a long-term but fixed-period of support for strategic development. It takes time for an organisation to fully assess its needs, identify the best use of available resources and implement change. It also takes time to build trust between the organisation and the funder. Conversely, it needs an 'end point' to focus attention on using the Fund effectively in a given period of time. The nature of exit from the Fund and post-Fund support will continue to be evaluated as organisations are monitored post-exit.
- + That growth for growths sake should never be the focus of an investment. A common assumption is that strategic development is about growing the size of an organisation and too often at the expense of securing strategic position and impact. The Fund was, initially, called 'The Growth Fund' and – although it placed the focus on growth in impact – it was clear that this created a pressure to seek out growth opportunities when it was not always in the best interest of the organisation. The Fund was renamed the Youth Strategic Investment Fund in 2020 and funded partners have taken a more measured approach to growth with the three exiting partners in 2024 demonstrating greater stability, strength and sustainability at the point of exit.



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That codifying and valuing different types of strategic investment provides permission for organisations to use funds in the most appropriate way to achieve their mission. The Fund is developing a language and support mechanism that recognises different pathways for sustainable development. These pathways allow for strategic journeys that can be categorised as:

 - 1 **Consolidation:** typical of organisations after a period of accelerated growth.
 - 2 **Refresh:** typical of more established organisations seeking to renew or implement change.
 - 3 **Scaling:** typical of organisations seeking to replicate or amplify a successful model at scale.

The Fund has been evaluating the scale pathway in more depth throughout 2024, with recognition that 'scaling impact' through replication has presented particular challenges for the integrity and sustainability of some organisations. Conversely, the Fund is observing more success in organisations that adopt an amplification approach that involves shared learning and empowering other like-minded organisations with a view to scaling impact outside the organisation's geographical reach. We aim to share more from this learning in 2025.
- +

That building a healthy and regular working relationship between the funder, the organisation, and other external expertise cannot be underestimated. The Foundation committed to meeting in-person on a quarterly basis and providing independent support through a Critical Friend. This provides the basis for continuous feedback with support that is both proactive and responsive to ensure the full investment is used effectively. The relationships between the Foundation, Critical Friend and partner organisation provides valuable insight to decision making that gives the investment its best chance of success.

Paul Hamlyn Foundation has been pleased to work with JERICHO throughout the investment in their ambitions to make a positive difference in the lives of young people through supported work placements in its social businesses. They have fully embraced the opportunity presented by the Youth Strategic Investment Fund and used the full package of support to extend reach, secure quality and to influence the wider landscape for social enterprise.

The Foundation's aim for the Youth Strategic Investment Fund is that, on exit, the funded partner has good evidence of its impact in working with young people, is strategically placed within its field of practice and has strengthened its organisational sustainability. JERICHO has achieved excellent progress across all of these aims and it is the Foundation's view that it occupies a strategically important role in amplifying the function of social enterprise as a model for social good. JERICHO has demonstrated the power of meaningful work as an enabler for transforming the lives of young people facing multiple barriers to social and economic inclusion.

JERICHO has been bold in recognising the organisational journey required to achieve its mission. They have positioned themselves through careful use of resources to secure quality in programme delivery, representation of lived experience, and secured commercial success in their business model. Their focus on data collection and telling the story of participants has demonstrated the social value in supported work as a route towards young people realising their full potential.

JERICHO has also maintained an unwavering determination – especially during the Covid-19 crisis – to address the needs and wellbeing of young people who find themselves marginalised in society. They have reviewed, rebuilt and reimagined their social businesses in order to provide stepping-stone work opportunities that reduce isolation, support recovery and promote inclusion across a range of socially responsible businesses and innovative developments. Their 'live, work and heal' hub is the latest development in realising this mission.

“ It is the Foundation's view that JERICHO occupies a strategically important role amplifying the function of social enterprise as a model for social good. ”

However, with a vision to unlock the potential of many more young people and, given the lingering impact of economic stagnation post-Covid-19, this work will require persistence and perseverance in order to achieve lasting change. JERICHO will need the continuing support of foundations, agencies, sponsors and individuals who share in their vision. Their success will require a collective effort from those that support their mission to use supported work placements to unlock the potential of individuals to live more fulfilled and connected lives.

We hope our investment has provided confidence in how JERICHO is positioned to achieve better outcomes with and on behalf of young people. We are grateful to the JERICHO team for working with us in this partnership and encourage like-minded funders to support their future ambitions.

**The Youth Strategic Investment Fund
Paul Hamlyn Foundation**

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