

PILOT ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: SUPPORTED SELF EMPLOYMENT ACADEMY (SSEA), CROYDON

January 2018

This report summarises the work of Tree Shepherd, Croydon Council and Status Employment in developing a local enterprise network in Croydon for people with disabilities, supporting this group of people to self-employment, thereby building a stronger local economy. This programme was the first of its kind designed specifically and exclusively to support those with disabilities to progress along their enterprise journeys. The project was a pilot programme designed to test viability/feasibility of the **'Start Your Own Enterprise' (SYOE)** training course, devised by Tree Shepherd, alongside the specialist supported employment model with 1:1 support.

The course was delivered at Croydon's Central Library. Accompanying business clinics took place between the 8th and 10th session, delivered by the course tutor and business specialist. Progression People supplied additional mentoring support after the classroom sessions were completed.

Weekly learning sessions were interspersed with 1:1 support provided by both Status Employment and Croydon Council representatives enabling individuals to identify challenges and work towards overcoming barriers faced in pursuit of their personal and business goals.

The SSEA has been delivered in partnership with Croydon Council, Status Employment and supported by Individual Direct Payment contributions.



'Excellent!...a really enjoyable, positive course and we were fortunate to have a really good trainer too!'...

Learner, Start Your Own Enterprise Croydon, December 2017

Summary of the programme's activities to date (Oct 2017 – Dec 2017)

SSEA training course: 1st cohort

10 x weekly sessions, Tuesdays 10am-4pm.

10th Oct 2017 – 16th Jan 2018

Celebration/ graduation event: 1st SSEA cohort

6th Dec 2017



- One-to-one business clinics with Tree Shepherd SYOE tutor/business adviser providing personal/business related advice to learners starting or developing their enterprise.
- Weekly one-to-one personal/practical/signposting support offered by Status Employment and Croydon Council's, Senior Employment Support Officer.
- From December 2017, towards the end of the learning programme, the 'Progression People' provided weekly group support.

Start Your Own Enterprise (SYOE) course

The SYOE course

10 full-day group sessions + 1 intensive one-to-one advice session

Each learner completes the course with a draft business plan

Themes covered include:

- target market
- pricing and selling
- marketing
- managing customers
- compliance and governance
- raising and managing finance



The 1st SYOE course (10th October – 16th January 2018)

13 learners successfully completed the 1st SYOE course and graduated from their learning programme. 3 learners withdrew due to personal circumstances. A profile of these learners can be found on the next few slides.

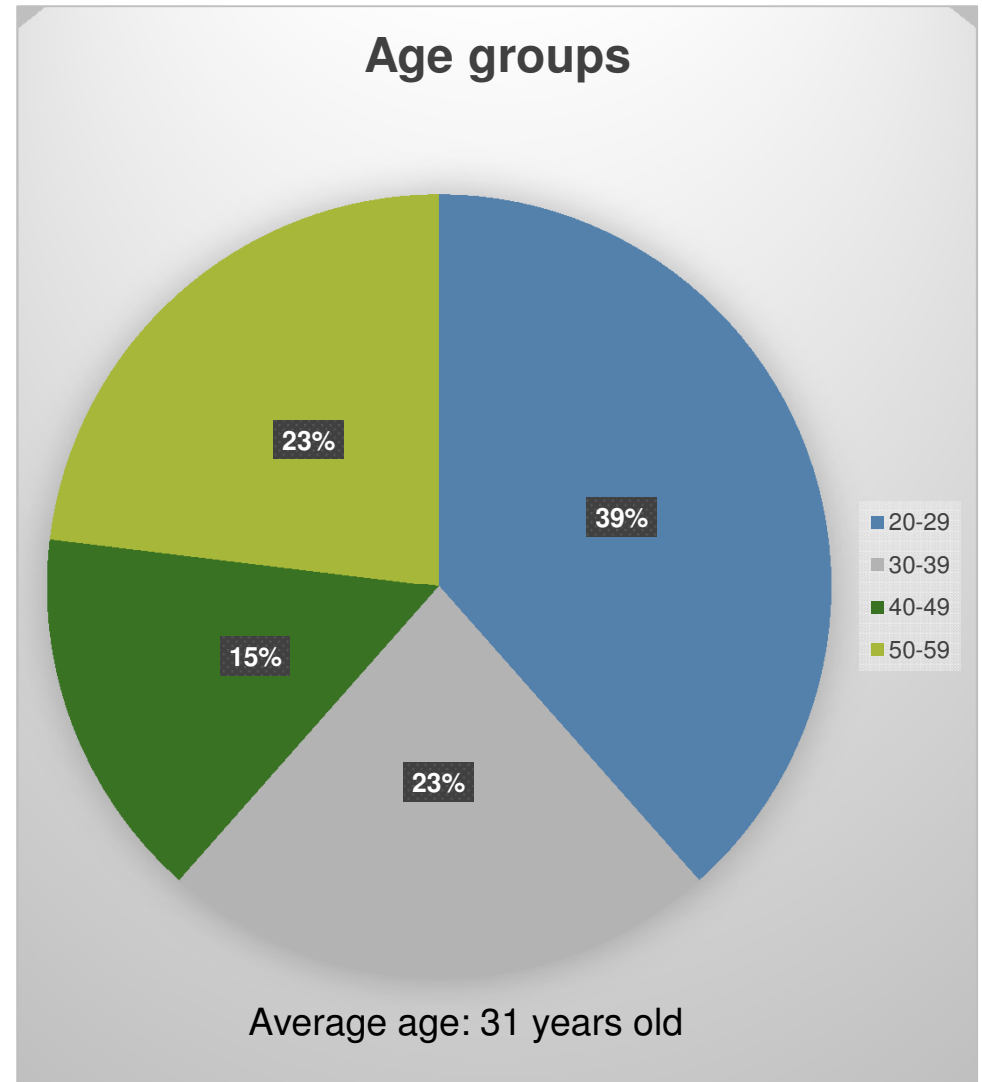
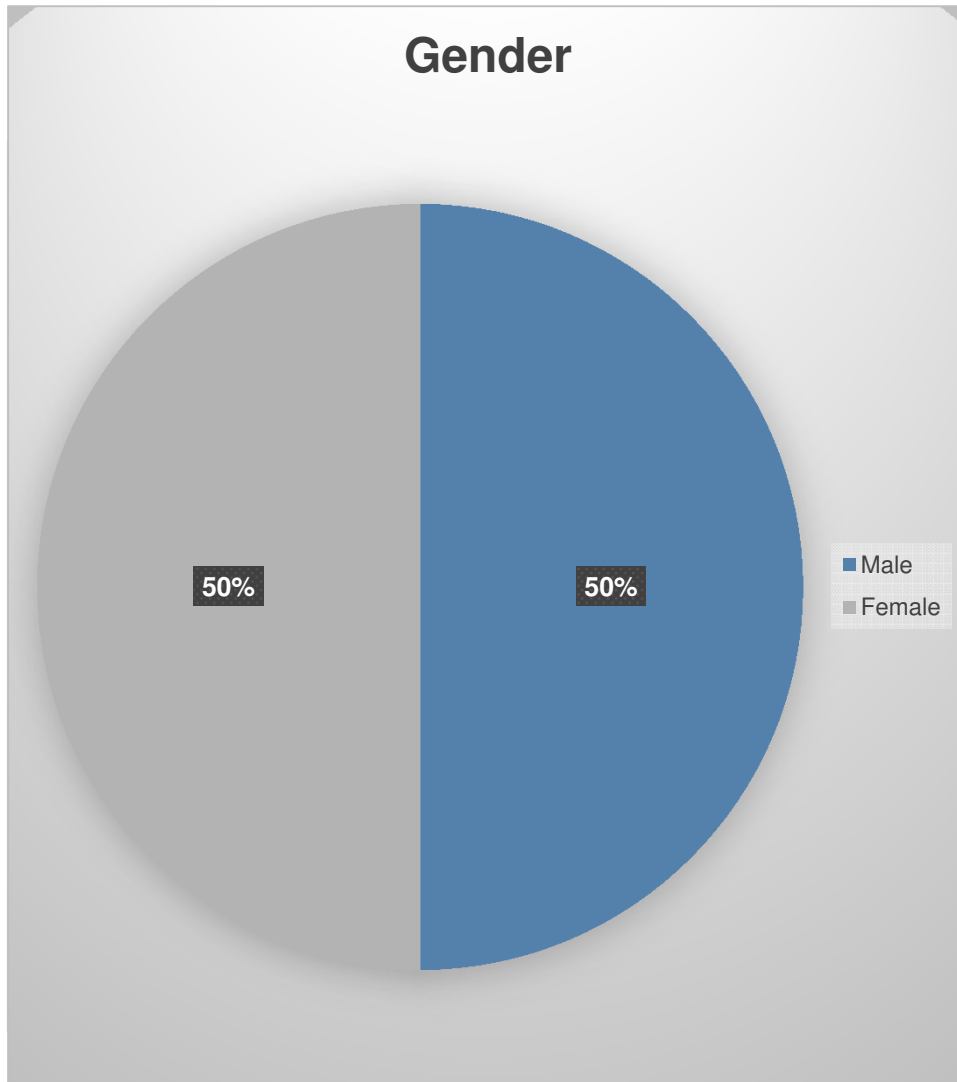
ONE TO ONE SUPPORT

This has taken the form of direct one to one support from Status Employment and one to one business advice clinics from Tree Shepherd. The support is programmed for a full year from commencement of the training so is still being delivered

There was no template for the direct support aspect of for the entrepreneurs. So far the role could be described as an “entrepreneur enabler” taking experience and skills from several disciplines:

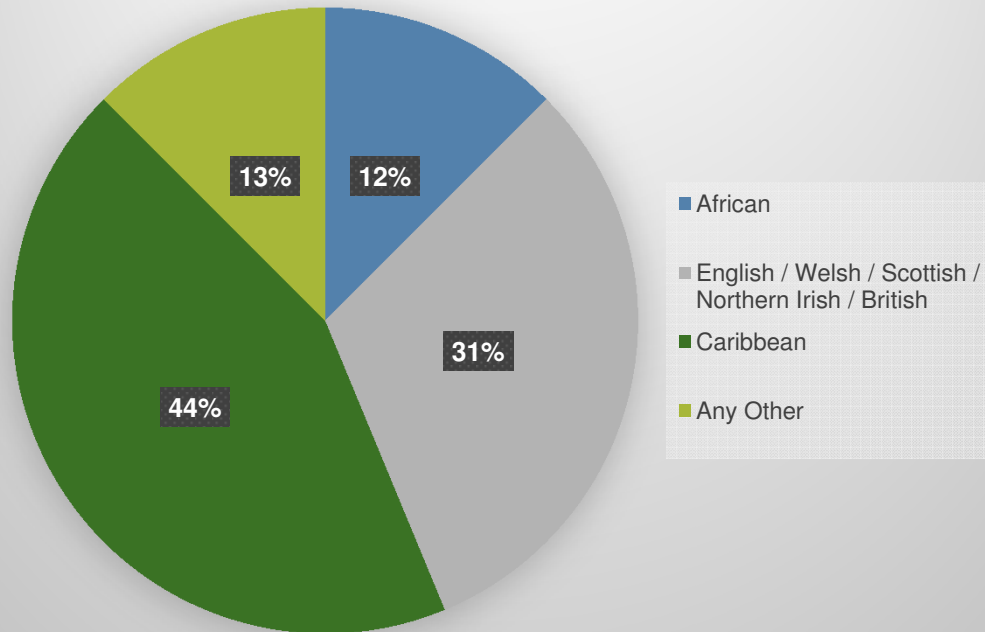
- Job coaching
 - Enterprise coaching
 - Business circles
 - Peer supports
-
- The demand for direct one to one support has been more intense and extensive than expected. The team was struck by the preparedness of the clients and the high levels of motivation they exhibited. As a result a greater number of the business ideas moved faster and further than anticipated
 - The clients have valued the one-one sessions and taken full advantage of them
 - It is important for the support worker to test the candidates business proposition, without compromising their self-belief
 - There is a need for the support person to have a wide knowledge of how to set up a business
 - The support worker does not need to know everything about what the candidates wants to do, but does need to be able to link them to appropriate services.
 - There is a need to be flexible; it is not enough to do the support to be done in a group it needs to be individually tailored
 - There is a constant need to build confidence throughout the programme and by the support worker

Our learners

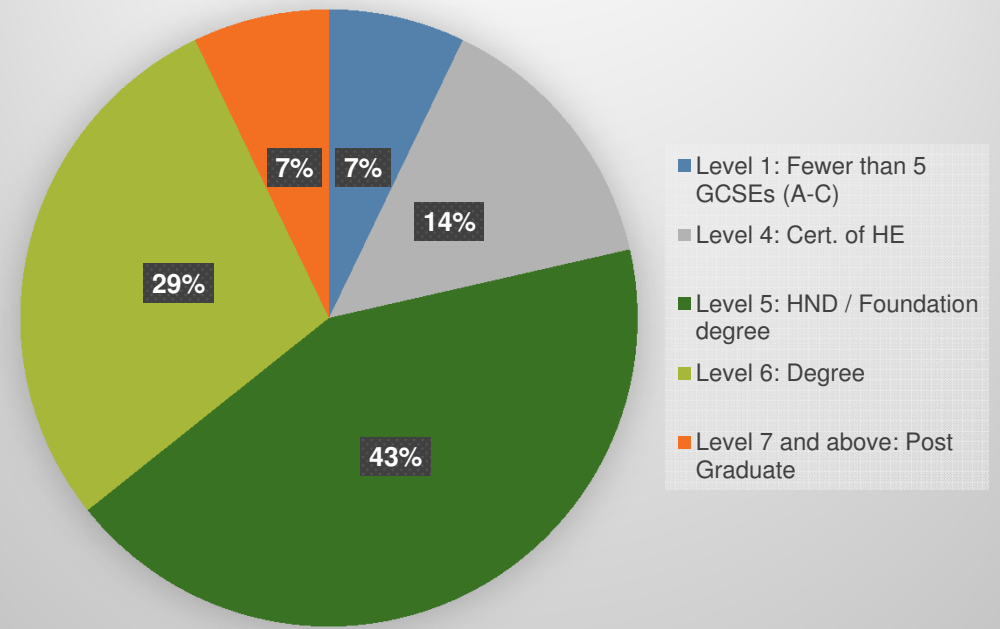


Our learners

Ethnicity



Highest qualification



Learning Difficulties/Disabilities (LDD) learner declarations

- Autistic spectrum disorder: 3 x learners
 - Mental health issues: 7 x learners
 - Depression: 2 x learners
 - Disability affecting mobility: 3 x learners
 - Physical disability: 2 x learners
 - Learning difficulties: 4 x learners
 - Sickle cell Anaemia: 2 x learners
 - Psychosis: 1 x learner
 - Long-term illness (cancer): 1 x learner
 - Visual impairment: 1 x learner
 - Speech, language and communication skills (Downs Syndrome): 1 x learner
 - Dyslexia: 1 x learner
- A high proportion of learners declared a combination of the above LDD.

Where do our learners come from?

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the address bar showing the URL: <https://www.batchgeo.com/map/72cab8e6dc9be931b23358ed3fed3502>. The browser's address bar also shows the page title "batchgeo.com" and a contact name "Contact: Ms. Sarah Vaz ~ Salesf...". The browser's menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "View", "Favorites", "Tools", and "Help". The browser's search bar is empty. The browser's toolbar includes icons for "Sign in to your account", "Home", "Booking.com", "eBay", "Skyscanner", "Spotify Music", and "TripAdvisor". The browser's status bar shows the system tray with icons for "Type here to search", "Spotify", "Excel", "File Explorer", "Word", "Outlook", "Chrome", and "Edge". The system tray also shows the date and time: "14:57 28/01/2018". The main content of the browser is a map of London and surrounding areas, showing various districts and the River Thames. The map is overlaid with several red location pins, each labeled with a letter: F, J, H, P, E, A, M, G, N, D, O, C, B, L, I. The map is displayed at a zoom level of 100%.

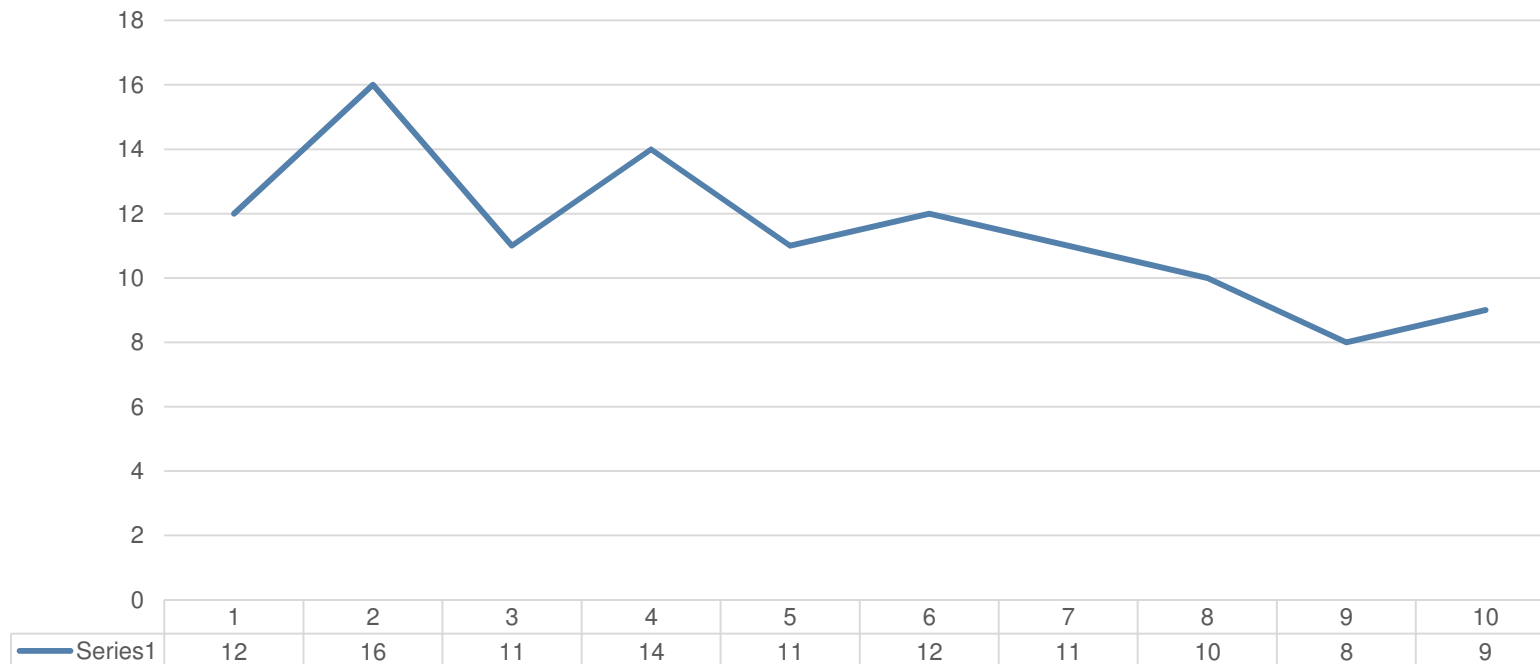


Learner attendance

Out of the 16 learners initially recruited, 12 attended week 1, rising steadily to 16 in week 2, then dipping to 11 in week 3 as 2 learners withdrew from the programme and 3 were unable to attend. In week 4, attendance rose to 14. From week 5 onwards, there was 1 further withdrawal and attendee numbers stabilised between 10 and 12 until the graduation event during week 8. Following the Christmas break, there was a slight dip in attendance with 8 and 9 learners attending sessions 9 and 10 respectively.

There was an average of 11 learners attending across the 10 week provision with 13 learners graduating from the programme having successfully achieved all of their course targets.

No of learners present, sessions 1-10



Types of businesses our learners are starting/developing

- ❖ Wedding planning
- ❖ Project design workshop for furniture upcycling
- ❖ Food preparation
- ❖ Floristry
- ❖ Support service for victims of abuse
- ❖ Animal sitting
- ❖ Producing creative materials to be used as recovery tools for those with mental health/learning difficulties
- ❖ Online brokerage/exchange service for technology/tools to launch a new business
- ❖ Gluten free restaurant/consultancy
- ❖ Property services
- ❖ Natural support for autistic learners
- ❖ Alternative health products
- ❖ Selling games consoles/games online with specific branding/design options for specialist users
- ❖ Web design



At the end of the 1st SSEA course, how did the learners rate their experience?

The majority of learners completed an end-of-course survey rating their overall experience at the end of session 10:

Overall, 100% of learners rated the course as good/excellent and 100% said they would recommend the course to a friend.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Disagree
I was happy with the teaching and learning	100%			
My learning sessions were well-planned and met my needs	57%	43%		
My tutor gave me the feedback I needed so I knew how to improve	72%	28%		
I enjoyed my course and made good progress	86%	14%		

Confidence levels

All learners confidence levels increased in relation to applying specific areas of enterprise competence compared to the beginning of their learning journey. However, with continued support, there is scope to continue to increase confidence levels and further progression of individual business ideas.

Cited confidence levels at the end of the learning programme:

	Very Confident	Confident	Fairly confident	Not at all confident
How Confident are you that you have the skills to set up your own business?	71%	29%		
How Confident are you about making important decisions (without support from others) about your business?	50%	50%		
How Confident are you about marketing your business idea?	29%	57%	14%	
How Confident are you about planning your own personal career/business goals?	71%	29%		

Development of Employability Skills

Learners were asked how confident they were in applying the following employability skills both pre and post course. The majority of learners confidence increased compared to the beginning of their learning programme.

Cited confidence levels at the end of the learning programme:

	Very Confident	Confident	Fairly confident	Not at all confident
Time management skills?	38%	38%	24%	
Problem solving skills?	43%	57%		
Team working skills?	43%	57%		
Negotiation skills?	14%	43%	43%	
Managing your own money?	72%	28%		
Being self-employed will improve your current financial situation?	29%	57%		14%
Your understanding of equality and diversity?	57%	14%	29%	

Wellbeing

Using the widely recognised ‘5 steps to mental wellbeing’, learner confidence levels were assessed both pre and post course. Confidence levels relating to aspects of wellbeing had increased compared to the beginning of the learning programme. At the end of the learning programme, learners were asked ‘How confident are you about taking action in the following areas’:



	Very Confident	Confident	Fairly confident	Not at all confident
CONNECTING WITH OTHERS (e.g. working with others, finding out about different opportunities, making new friends)	72%	14%	14%	
BEING ACTIVE (e.g. taking part in group tasks, carrying out independent research, focussing on the benefits of exercise/eating healthily)	57%	29%	14%	
LEARNING NEW SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE (e.g. trying something new, exploring different self-employment options, following your goals and future aspirations)	86%	14%		
TAKING NOTICE (e.g. seeing things from different points of view, being aware of your own feelings and considering those of others, developing new ways of thinking, recognising your strengths and being proud of your achievements)	57%	43%		
GIVING TO OTHERS (e.g. sharing ideas and skills, helping out with tasks, supporting others in group work, volunteering to help clear up your classroom, listening to others, helping people out with things they may find difficult)	57%	43%		

New skills learnt from the course and proudest achievements

NEW PERSPECTIVE/DEVELOPING 'EMPLOYABILITY' SKILLS

- *Motivational skills...how to motivate myself'*
- *To believe in myself....to become more confident in my business..I am proud that I was able to speak in the USA about my journey...'*
- *'Sticking with the course'*
- *'Setting up the business and growing'*

CURRICULUM CONTENT/MAKING CONNECTIONS

- *'The break down of what is needed to focus on to start a new business...how to present it and put it on paper...'*
- *'Motivation, mechanics and marketing in business settings'*
- *'How to build relationships with customers'*
- *'I learnt about business and marketing...I have produced and sold calendars...'*
- *'How to progress with a business'*
- *'Budgeting and cashflow'*
- *'Cashflow principles'*
- *'Putting together my business plan'*
- *'Developing my business plan'*
- *'Networking and telling my story'*



How has this course helped learners in their everyday life?

'Self-belief'

'I feel a bit more positive, more committed, organised and able to focus on my original path...'

'I have developed self-esteem and confidence in my own self-worth and my abilities to achieve'

'More confidence!'

'More confident in setting up my own business, building the business and getting customers'

'My confidence and my organisation skills'

'Self-belief, challenging my mind-set, stepping into uncomfortable situations, taking risks...'

Future progression: At the end of the course, what did learners say they would like to achieve within the next 6 months?

- ✓ Design and produce Business cards
- ✓ Have a Facebook page
- ✓ Update my website
- ✓ Start a blog
- ✓ New customers
- ✓ Test trading
- ✓ Have a registered business
- ✓ One additional contract
- ✓ 4 x employees (1 x facilities, 1 x permanent property)
- ✓ 8K per month (net)
- ✓ Office space
- ✓ Get into a shop
- ✓ Set of at least 5 x long term links
- ✓ Increase my sales
- ✓ More confidence
- ✓ To create more products
- ✓ Completed business plan
- ✓ Application for funding
- ✓ More speaking engagements
- ✓ Register and launch by business
- ✓ Look at different platforms e.g. exhibitions
- ✓ Bring Jamie Oliver's food ministry to Croydon!

Business stage – before and after



Tree Shepherd measures the progress of our learners' businesses using a 7-point scale.

82% of those graduating from the course reported progress along the 7-point scale during the course:

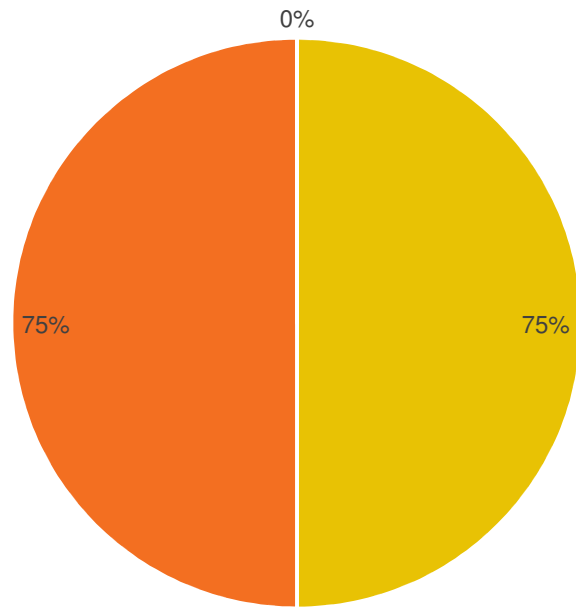
- 1 learner moved from Stage 1 to Stage 2
- 1 learner moved from stage 1 to 3
- 1 learner moved from stage 1 to 4
- 1 learner moved from stage 2 to 3
- 1 learner moved from stage 2 to 6
- 1 learner moved from stage 3 to 4
- 1 learner moved from stage 3 to 5
- 1 learner moved from stage 4 to 6

At the end of the course:

- 8 learners had progressed beyond stage 1 (Vague idea)
- 1 learner was at Stage 2 (Clear Idea)
- 2 learners were at Stage 3 (Test Trading)
- 2 learners were at Stage 4 (Operational)
- 1 learner was at Stage 5 (Formalised)
- 2 learners were at Stage 6 (Operational)

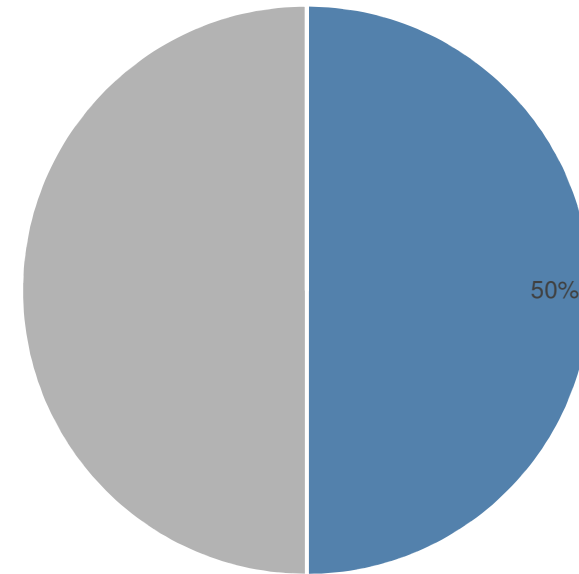
Current employment status of our learners (January 2018)

Employment Status



■ Not in paid employment ■ In part-time employment ■ In full-time employment

Looking For Work vs Not Looking For Work



■ Looking for work ■ Not looking for work

Next steps.....

13 learners out of 16 who originally signed up for the Supported Self Employment Academy course graduated having achieved all of their course targets. 10 of these learners attended their graduation event on 5th December 2017 at Croydon Central Library following the 8th session of their course. The event, a celebration of achievements to date, was attended by Tree Shepherd staff, Status Employment, Croydon Council, Progression People, The Department for Work & Pensions and the Mayor of Croydon who presented alumni with their certificates of achievement. Entrepreneurs also took the opportunity to present and discuss their individual business ideas with the Mayor and were delighted with the feedback and encouragement received.

This is just the beginning of the story for this new network of entrepreneurs...





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