

End of Grant Report
Training Ground Pilot Evaluation Sept - Dec 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thank you for your generous support of Restore Hope's employment-readiness programme. Because of your partnership, we were able to launch the Training Ground pilot from **September to December 2024** — a programme designed to raise aspirations, build confidence, and help individuals discover meaningful pathways into employment.

Eight participants took part in the pilot, all of whom completed the full programme with an outstanding **98% attendance** rate. Through professional training workshops, one-to-one mentoring, coaching, and assessments, each individual made real and measurable progress.

Outcomes Star is an **evidenced based tool** for measuring and supporting change. It is used by Bucks Council, as well as many other local authorities, the NHS, care services, etc. Outcomes Star is a collaborative tool whereby a key worker meets with an individual to explore their needs and strengths, identifying specific actions to improve targeted outcomes.

We measured participants progress through a **work** specific Outcomes Star that tracks growth across **seven key** outcome areas that are essential for long-term employability and personal development.

1. Aspiration and Motivation
2. Job-Search Skills
3. Job Skills and Experience
4. Basic Skills
5. Workplace and Social Skills
6. Stability
7. Health and Well-Being

The most significant improvements were seen in **Aspiration and Motivation**, where 100% of participants showed growth; and in **Job-Search Skills**, where 50% improved. On average each participant showed improvement in 4 of the 7 outcome areas.

Feedback has highlighted the strength of the programme's **relational** approach and reinforced the importance of mentoring, progression routes, and simple accreditation — all of which will shape our next steps.

As we prepare for the full programme launch in **Autumn 2025**, we're building on everything this pilot made possible: a trained delivery team, stronger infrastructure, and deeper local partnerships. Future success will rely on sufficient funding for staff, equipment, resources, specialist engagement and marketing. With support we can expand the programme's reach and deepen its impact.

1. Program Overview

At its heart, Training Ground is all about raising aspirations and building belief in brighter futures. It's about empowering families to see meaningful employment not as a distant dream, but as a natural next step beyond formal education — a path that's possible, supported, and within reach.

Training Ground participants will:

- Have increased aspirations for themselves and their families
- Grow in confidence in their personal abilities
- Develop useful transferable skills
- Expand their independence
- Manage their home life to enable them to be employed
- Discover a sense of autonomy

Time line:

- ▶ June '24 Beneficiary Consultation
- ▶ Sept '24 Pilot Launch - cohort of 8
- ▶ Oct '24 Aspirations Fair
- ▶ Dec '24 Pilot End
- ▶ Jan '25 Program Evaluation
- ▶ April '25 Evaluation Report Shared
- ▶ Spring/Summer '25 Full Program Content design
- ▶ Autumn '25 Training Ground Launch

Key Partners:

Thank you to Beyond Finance and other generous individuals for funding the pilot, and to Neoskill and CAP for delivering the professional training.

2. Participant Engagement & Experience

All 8 participants successfully completed the program on December 13th with 98% attendance. 100% of the participants said they'd definitely recommend the program to others and are eager to be involved in the full program in Autumn '25.

3. Programme and Curriculum

Throughout the pilot, the eight participants engaged weekly in a range of activities designed to build confidence, skills, and aspiration:

- **Personal Discovery Clinics**

One-to-one sessions exploring career ideas, strengths, barriers, and personalised goals.

- **Mentoring Sessions**

Group and one-to-one support focused on motivation, mental health, and staying on track.

- **Outcomes Star Assessments**
Tracking personal growth across key areas of life and employability.
- **Building Emotional Intelligence**
Understanding emotions, self-awareness, and relationships — key to personal and work success.
- **Time Management Skills**
Learning how to prioritise tasks, manage time pressures, and create balance.
- **Managing Money**
Essential skills for budgeting, planning, and handling personal finances.
- **Cohort Coffee Catch-Ups**
Informal gatherings for participants to connect, share progress, ask questions, and support each other's journeys.
- **Graduation Ceremony**
A celebration of achievements, with certificates and encouragement from the community.

The pilot had an emphasis on inspiring people and building confidence. This came through clearly from the Outcomes Star evaluation where the 2 key areas of most significant change was in :

‘Motivation and Aspiration’ and
‘Job-Search Skills’

(See Appendix)

4. Aspirations Fair

In October 2024, midway through the Training Ground pilot, we hosted a one-off Aspirations Fair at Restore Hope Latimer — a bold step forward in the journey of inspiring and raising aspirations.

Gathered in the room that evening were creative thinkers, pioneers, experts, content builders, workshop deliverers, business leaders, entrepreneurs, and people with a passion for changing lives — all united by a shared desire to see lives transformed by meaningful employment. With real stories, creative sessions, and live demonstrations (including a drone pilot and a musician showcasing their talents), the Fair became a catalyst for energy, ideas, and connection. Participants weren't just there to listen; they helped shape the future.

The energy and feedback were incredible. We were able to test early ideas, refine our vision, and gather essential insights that will directly inform the full launch of Training Ground. The Aspirations Fair was more than just an event — it was a crucial first step in building a movement that reimagines careers advice, empowers dreams, and changes lives.

5. Outcomes & Impact

Together the seven key areas of the work Outcomes star give us a full picture of where participants are starting from, and where they're headed. Over the course of just three months, participants made a combined total of **43 steps** forward across all seven key

areas — averaging **5 steps of progress per person** — a strong indication of impact in a short space of time.

These results were achieved during a truncated pilot — a condensed version of the full 12-month programme. Even so, the progress made gives us real confidence in the impact a longer, sustained journey can offer.

All 8 participants successfully completed the programme, showing measurable improvement across several areas. The most **significant group-wide improvements** were in **Aspiration and Motivation and Job-Search Skills**, directly reflecting the programme's focus on raising confidence and preparing individuals for meaningful employment.

Aspiration and Motivation – All 8 participants (100%) showed growth in this area, with an average individual increase of **44%**.

Job-Search Skills – 4 out of 8 participants (50%) improved, with an average individual increase of **36%**.

Job Skills and Experience – Job Skills and Experience – 2 of the 8 participants showed a slight decline in this area. This decline happened for two key reasons:

1) They were overconfident in their initial ability which they began to perceive over the course of the pilot

2) Some participants shifted their career focus, stepping outside their existing skill set and experience as their aspirations for work grew.

Overview

* **High impact:** Aspiration and Motivation, Job-Search Skills

* **Moderate impact:** Workplace and Social Skills, Basic Skills

* **Emerging focus areas:** Stability, Health and Well-Being

Testimonial

One participant had been out of work for 15 years before taking part in the pilot. Through the programme, she **realised that her passion** for history, along with her extensive knowledge, could be more than just a hobby. With this **newfound confidence**, Deborah has started applying for roles as a tour guide at Hampton Court Palace, taking the first steps toward turning her passion into a meaningful career. While it's still a work in progress, Deborah is excited about the **possibilities ahead**.

Testimonial

Another participant used the skills and inspiration from the course to take the leap and **start his own photography business**. Thanks to his hard work and the confidence gained through the programme, Robert has secured paid work and continues to build his business. He also **sought out** a mentor to help him grow professionally, further expanding his horizons.

6. Stakeholder & Facilitator Feedback

Summary of Insights from our facilitators, mentors, and external partners including observations on participant engagement and progress:

- Strong support for the programme's impact on confidence and ambition.
- Recommend simple accreditation to boost recognition and improve participants motivation.
- Suggest one-to-one mentoring to guide each participants next steps and support them to build resilience.
- Advise planning for disengaged participants and offering refreshers for returners.
- Encourage exploring micro-business opportunities and setting clear, time-bound goals.

7. Challenges & Areas for Improvement

What Worked Well

- Blending group sessions with one-to-one support created strong engagement.
- Outcomes Star Evaluations helped tailor interventions to individual needs.
- Discovery Clinic offered a personalised and focused start.
- Providing food after sessions supported wellbeing and participation.
- Group texts kept participants informed and connected.

Key Challenges

- Matching participants with the right support (e.g. mentors, work coaches) was sometimes difficult.
- External providers needed clearer briefing before delivery to engage effectively.
- Limited room and staff availability affected delivery.
- One-way text communication reduced meaningful engagement.
- Lack of admin support created logistical strain.
- Strengthen integration with the Family Team through clearer communication and shared understanding of the programme's role.

Opportunities to Improve

- Boost admin support to ease coordination.
- Increase access to flexible spaces for sessions.
- Provide laptops to support CVs and job searches.
- Strengthen communication with families.
- Bring in dedicated work coaches to support career progression.
- To scale effectively, the programme needs dedicated staff and better integration with in-house support (HR and admin) etc, reducing reliance on a single lead.

8. Future Programme Development

Lessons & Adjustments for 2025 Launch

- We're planning a small delivery team to allow the programme manager to move flexibly between delivery and strategic oversight, depending on the needs of the programme.

- Staff and volunteers will receive targeted training ahead of the full launch to ensure consistency and shared responsibility in delivery.
- Outcomes Stars will continue, but require dedicated staff to walk alongside each engaged participant — offering regular check-ins, goal setting, and tracking progress to provide accountability and meaningful support.
- A clear entry process to include registration, group sessions, introductions, and baseline assessments to set expectations and build early connection.

Curriculum & Delivery Changes

- A flexible “Personal Plan” model will allow participants to adjust the intensity and focus of their journey, choosing the topics most relevant to their goals.
- The programme may use either set cohort intakes or a rolling start model within a delivery window.

Partnerships, Visibility & Resources

- Strengthening partnerships with local organisations and training providers will expand opportunities for progression and hands-on experience.
- A marketing strategy will be developed to raise awareness, share success stories, and promote the programme — including Russell’s personal journey, which will be shared both internally and externally to inspire and connect with wider audiences.
- Scaling the programme will require dedicated staff, admin and volunteer support, and funding for essentials such as participant laptops, interview-ready clothing, travel support, food, stationery, printers, and software licences. Additional investment is needed for accredited training, professional trainers, Outcomes Star tracking, marketing, and flexible, well-equipped spaces to deliver sessions.

Thank You & Looking Ahead

Thank you to all our funders and partners for your generous support of Restore Hope’s employability work. Your support has meant we’ve been able to design, deliver, and evaluate a pilot programme that’s already changing lives — helping individuals grow in confidence, discover their potential, and take their first steps toward meaningful employment.

As we look ahead to the full Training Ground launch in Autumn 2025, we’re excited to scale the programme and reach even more people. Stakeholders can support this next phase by offering funding, donations in-kind, resources, referrals, specialist input, or strategic partnerships that deepen impact and expand our reach. Together, we can open the door to brighter futures — one step at a time.

It’s been a privilege to lead this pilot, and I’m grateful to everyone who contributed to its success. I look forward to discussing the next steps.

Warm regards,
Russell

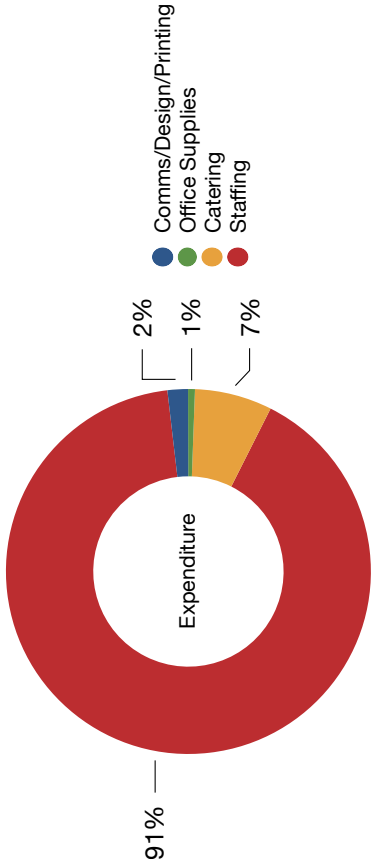
22/04/2025

Training Ground Pilot 2024 - Expenditure Report

Expenditure		
Comms/Design/Printing		£271.95
Solopress - 24/07/24		£32.03
Roller banner - orbit press		£82.80
Launch Gifts (Mugs)		£82.21
A3 printing - Amersham Bus Services		£24.91
Text Messages - cohort comms (credit)		£50.00
Office Supplies		£90.88
Flip Chart paper		£26.90
Stationary		£6.89
Blue Folders		£39.39
Note pads		£17.70
Catering		£1,029.77
Tesco food - 22/08/24 Cohort Registration		£15.85
Outcomes Star Training - Russell		£240.00
Lunch (Neoskill training)		£68.96
Lunch (Neoskill training)		£50.00
Lunch (CAP training)		£64.96
Ocado - Aspirations Fair		£140.00
Christmas Graduation Lunch		£450.00
Staffing		£13,614.80
Neoskill Training - 1.5 Days		£1,500.00
Joe Watt - freelance		£120.00
CAP Training - 1 Day		£250.00
Russell Time (2.5 days a week *20 weeks) (4/12/4)		£11,744.80
Total		£15,007.40

Income	
Beyond Finance	£5,000
Individual Donors	£8,500
Neoskill (Gift in Kind)	£1,500
CAP (Gift in Kind)	£250
Total income	£ 15,250.00

Sub totals by Category	
Comms/Design/Printing	£271.95
Office Supplies	£90.88
Catering	£1,029.77
Staffing	£13,614.80
Total Expenditure	£ 15,007.40



Summary	
Income	£15,250.00
Expenditure	£15,007.40
Core Costs @ 20%	£3,001.48
Total	£ (2,758.88)

Appendix

(ii) Outcomes Star Sample Data

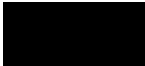


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Star Chart

Completed Star

Work Star (3rd Edition)



Star

