



Improving employment support for over 50s in Greater Manchester

Final Report and Recommendations
January 2022

ageing-better.org.uk



Executive summary

Increasing economic activity among people aged over 50

The **Centre for Ageing Better, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)** and the **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)** are partners in a project to increase the numbers of people aged over 50 to State Pension age (SPa) in work.

The project brings together GMCA's ambition to make Greater Manchester the UK's first age-friendly city region, and the Centre for Ageing Better's work to ensure equitable access to work for people in their 50s and 60s.

Humanly, an award-winning design studio specialising in human-centred design for social impact, was commissioned to develop new approaches to supporting people over 50 as part of the project.



Executive summary

Between July 2020 and January 2022, Humanly led the project team through an iterative process to:

- Understand users
- Challenge assumptions
- Redefine problems
- Co-create potential solutions with people over 50
- Develop innovative solutions to prototype and test



Executive summary

Despite COVID-19 challenges, Humanly conducted meaningful and accessible activities with:

- 90 people aged over 50 with lived experience of being involuntarily out of work
- Service providers and voluntary and community sector organisations
- Commissioners
- Employers
- Experts in labour markets, economics, procurement and coaching for people aged over 50

To find out more about good practice for remote user engagement and co-production, read [this report](#), co-written by the Centre for Ageing Better and Humanly.

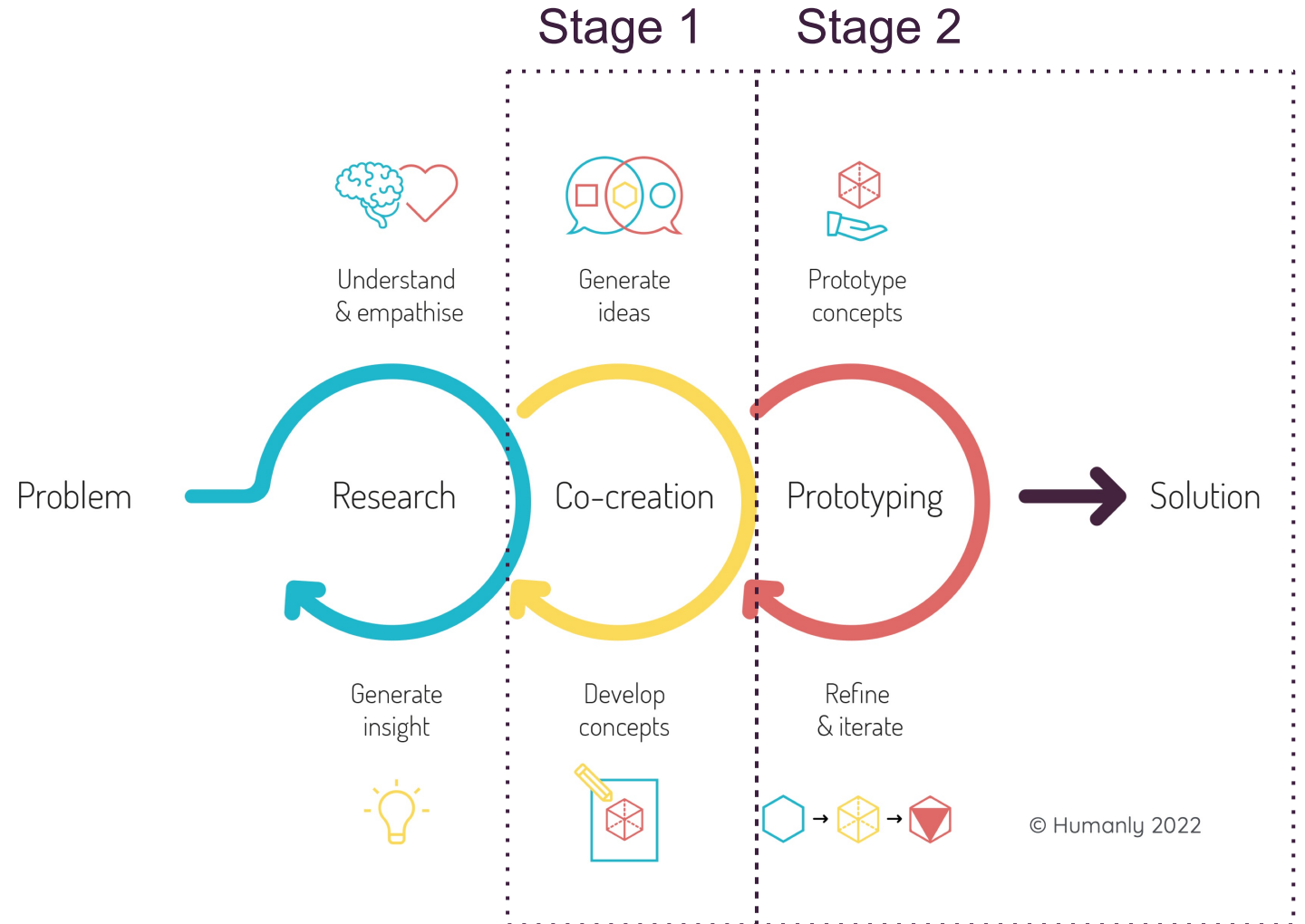


Executive summary

This work was carried out across two stages of co-creation and prototyping.

The first phase of work began with reviewing existing insights and building on these to define areas of opportunity. It continued into the generation of ideas, development of concepts and development of plans to prototype these concepts.

The second phase of work focused on testing and learning through low, mid and high-fidelity prototyping activities, while revisiting prototyping plans as ideas became more refined.



Executive summary

Outcomes and recommendations

Humanly recommended that two interventions are taken forward into a pilot:

Reach: A largely digital service, available to all people aged over 50 in Greater Manchester.

Reach enables people to identify existing and transferable skills, with 1:1 support available to help people identify their goals and develop plans. This is tailored to each individual's preferences, giving people the autonomy to choose how much support they need, and when and how they access it.

People are supported to move towards sectors that are growing or sustainable through the use of local labour market data.

Person-centred procurement: An innovative process for commissioning, procurement and contract management that is:

- Based on local, person-centred support to help people to access good work
- Led by people with lived experience
- Designed to remove barriers for small, local organisations to bid for funding and deliver employment support

Executive summary

Pilot

A two-stage pilot is recommended that makes best use of the new person-centred procurement process to enable the effective delivery of Reach. This includes:

- Commissioning the development of the Reach platform, tailored to people in their 50s and 60s to help them identify local activities, skills and employment opportunities.
- Appointing and working with local community based organisations to deliver the coaching and outreach support linked to the Reach platform.

It is also recommended that GMCA play a ‘supportive commissioner’ role to ensure services are best suited to individuals and sustainable for organisations.

Detailed guidance around Humanly’s recommendations for the pilot include:

- A service blueprint
- A pilot timeline
- Costings
- Key principles to support the roll out of Reach and Person-centred Procurement

Contents

Co-creation

Prototyping

1. Personal Budgets
2. Give Back
3. Reach
4. Person-centred Procurement

Pilot recommendations



Co-creation

Target locations and participants

Insights

Key opportunity areas

Development of initial concepts

From concepts to prototyping



Co-creation: Target locations and participants

Selection ensured a diversity of:

- Ethnicity, age, socio-economic profiles
- Levels of unemployment or economic inactivity
- Transport links, links to industry
- Experience of long-term ill health or disability

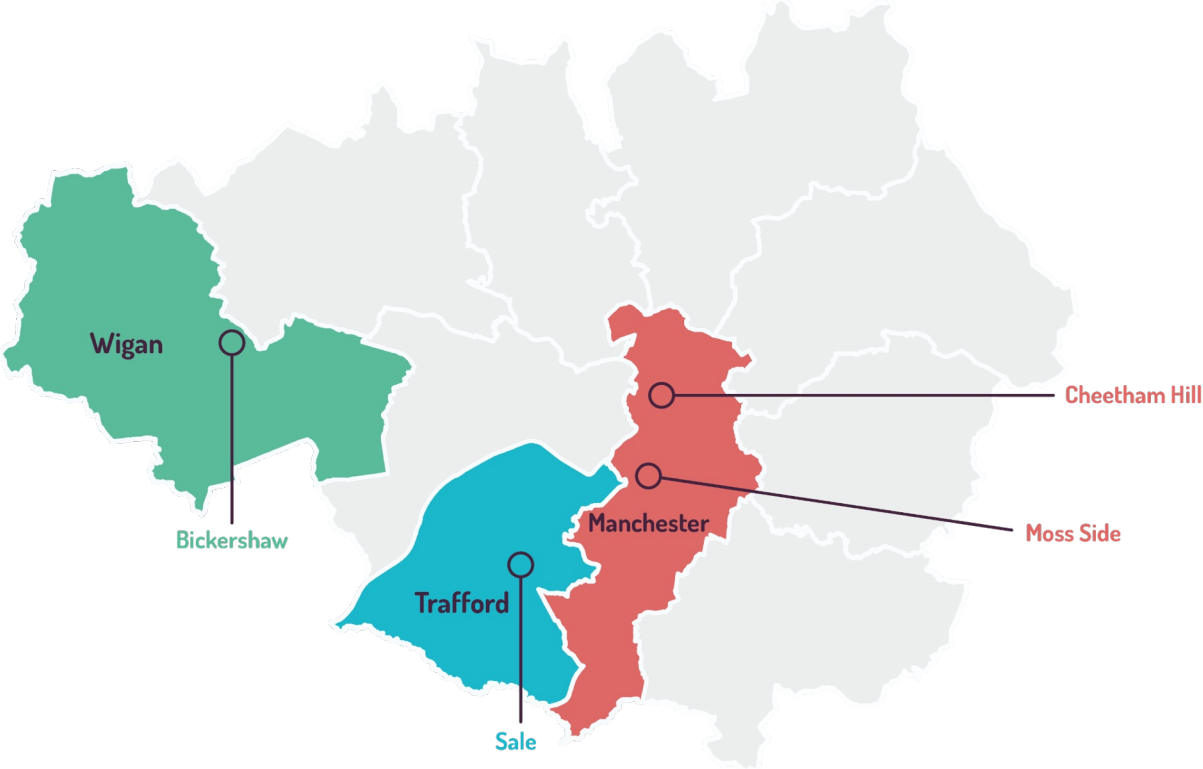
53	People with lived experience
62	GMCA, DWP and local area stakeholders
31	Local service providers
14	Employment and labour market experts
8	Local employers

168

Stakeholders engaged in co-creation

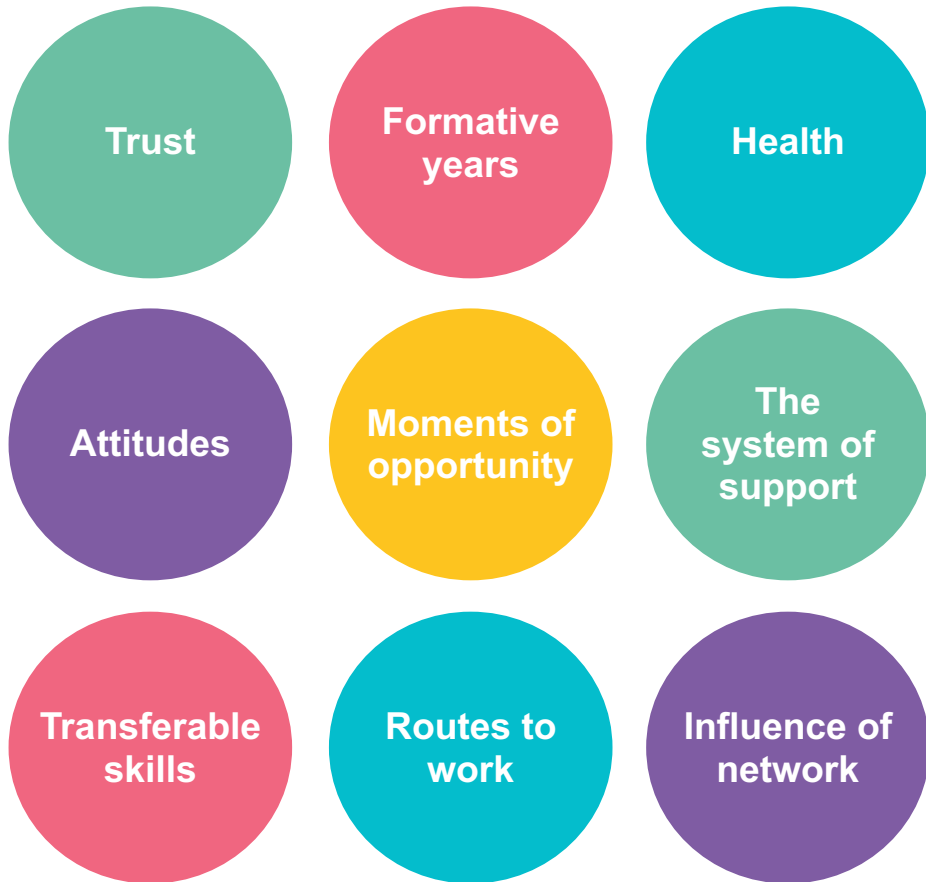
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Co-creation activities including interviews, postal activities, workshops, and survey responses



Co-creation: Insights

Nine themes emerged from insights gained from people with lived experience and employers:



People over 50 identified key ‘ingredients for good employment support’:

- Help uncovering transferable skills to improve confidence in moving into new industries
- Empathy for circumstances and a holistic view of the person’s life, not just their qualifications
- Support from people who understand their needs, industry and aspirations
- Education and training information in one place
- A mix of local online and face-to-face training
- The ability to try a job before applying, to see if it is suitable for both employee and employer

Co-creation: Key opportunity areas

The project team analysed these key insights and ‘ingredients for good support’ alongside ideas from people with lived experience and stakeholders.

Six key opportunity areas emerged.

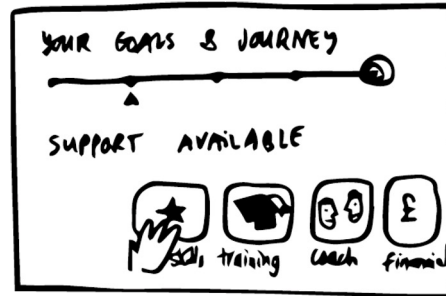
For each one, we asked local stakeholders a ‘How Might We?’ question in a series of creative workshops to explore opportunities further.

Opportunity area	How might we...
Pathways of support	make support across all providers visible, easy to navigate and joined up?
Access to training	enable equity of access to training?
Returning to work	support individuals who have been out of work for a period of time to transition back into work?
Transferable skills	enable people to identify and communicate the value of their transferable skills?
Moments of opportunity	help people to build their network of support, in order to increase their opportunities?
Commissioning differently	change the way support is commissioned, procured and managed to foster innovation and person-centred support?

Co-creation: Development of initial concepts

From the ideas that showed the most promise, Humanly developed **six initial concepts** to share with people with lived experience and providers.

Feedback was gained via an online survey, which included a seventh concept to consider – re-imagining how employment support is commissioned in Greater Manchester.



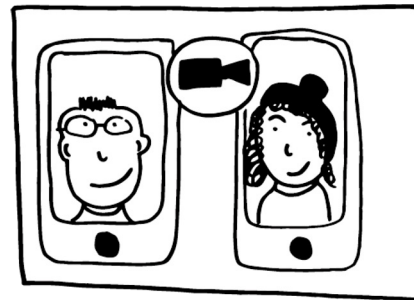
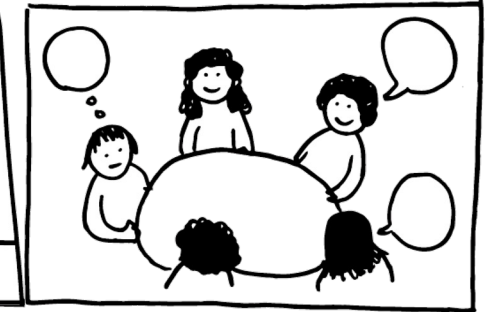
1. Steps to your goal



2. Equal access to training



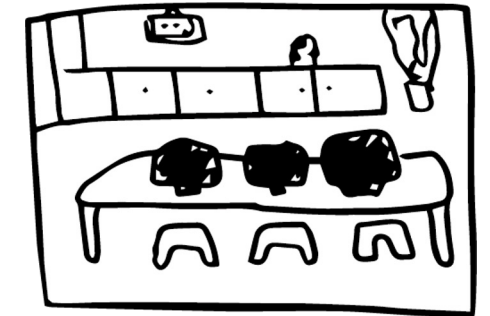
3. Group sessions



4. Match making



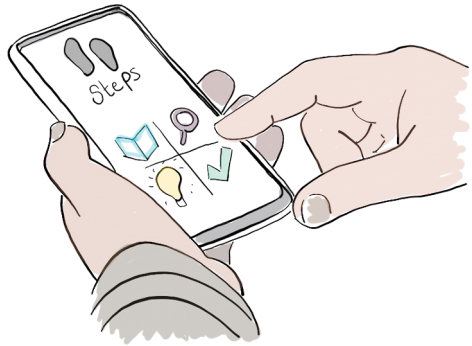
5. Meaningship



6. Workplace immersions

Co-creation: From concepts to prototyping

From the survey feedback, four concepts were chosen to be developed further and taken forward to the prototyping phase.



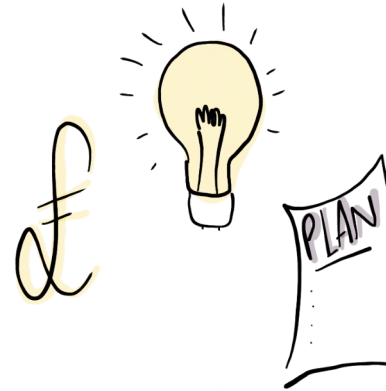
1. Reach

A step-by-step process that helps people to identify and then work towards their goals. Personal experience, preferences and aspirations are used to provide suggestions, content and inspiration.



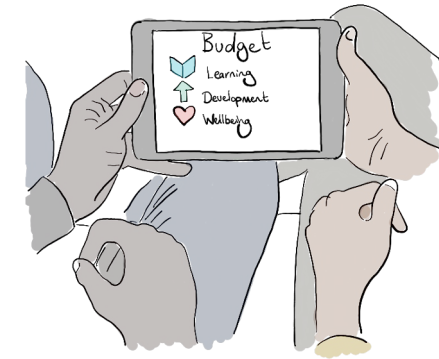
2. Give Back

A meaningful paid placement with mentoring, extra training and social elements to enhance learning and development and increase positive outcomes.



3. Person-centred Procurement

A reimagined version of the commissioning, procurement and contract management process. This is designed to promote innovative local support that helps people towards work, volunteering or training.



4. Personal Budgets

An allocated fund for a person without work or looking to change career. Everyone has access to the same maximum amount to spend in the way they feel will best support them towards work.

Prototyping

Approach

Target locations and participants

Prototyping concepts:

1. Personal Budgets
2. Give Back
3. Reach
4. Person-centred Procurement



Prototyping: Approach

Prototyping was conducted in three rounds: low, mid and high fidelity.

Low-fidelity prototyping

Concepts are tested quickly and inexpensively.

The prototypes in this round communicate the concept but don't look or feel like a 'real' service.

Mid-fidelity prototyping

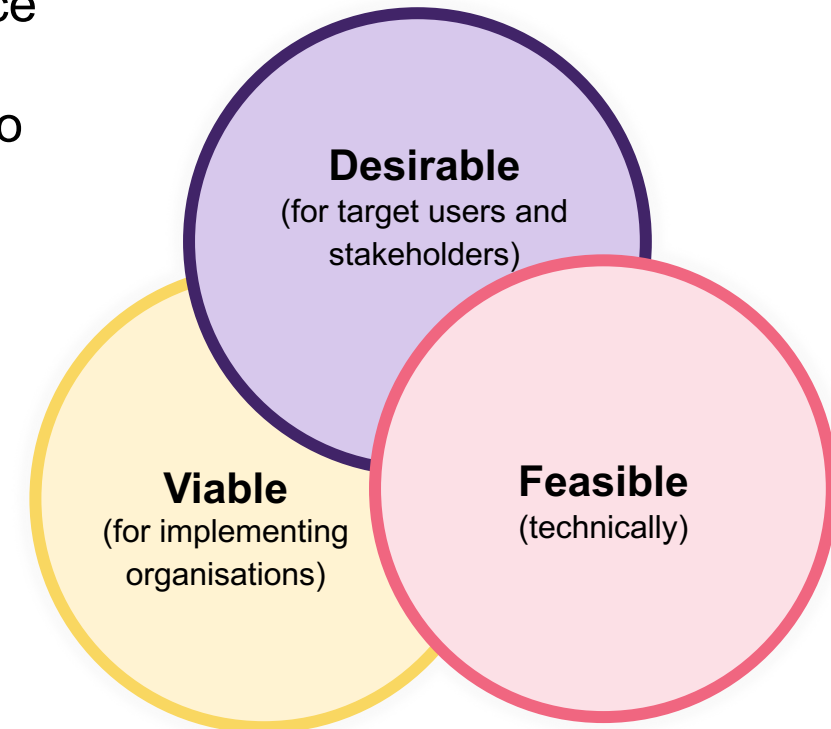
Ideas with potential are tested further.

'Live' prototypes enable participants to try out the concept for short periods in 'real world' settings.

High-fidelity prototyping

Prototypes look and feel like a real service and may involve other stakeholders to test feasibility and outcomes.

Each concept's desirability, viability and feasibility were assessed at every stage of prototyping.



Prototyping: Target locations and participants

Prototyping was focused in Manchester, Trafford and Wigan. People across GM were also recruited to broaden the range of participants.

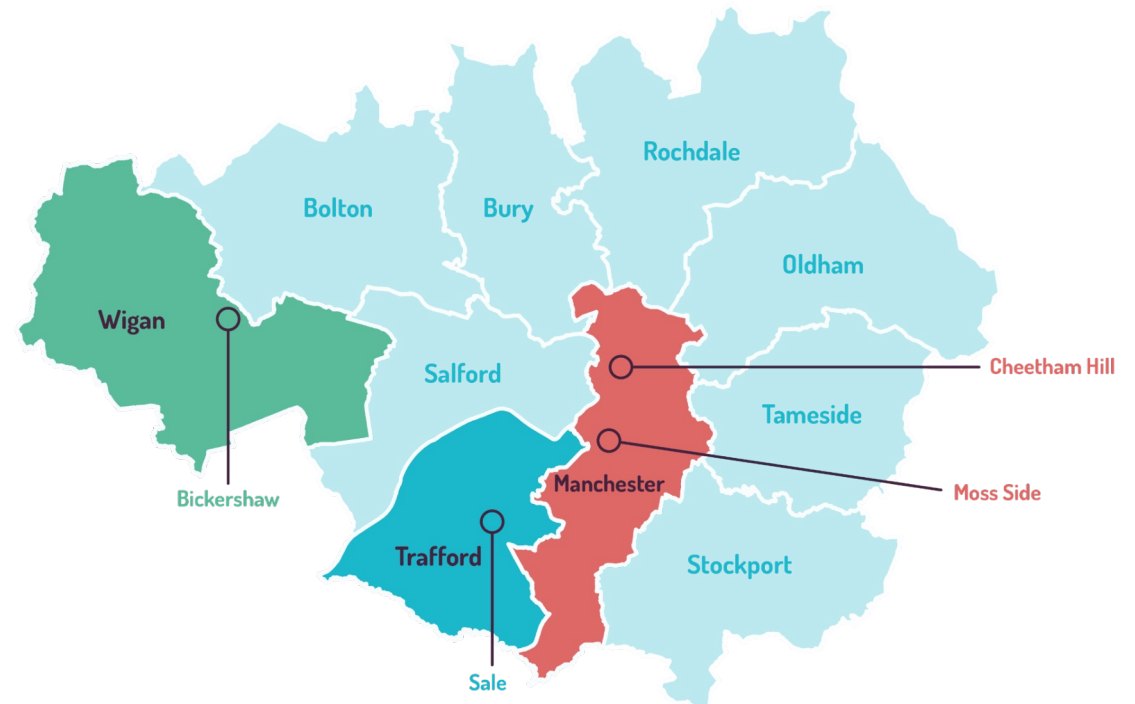
A specialist recruitment agency, Criteria, sourced a group of participants for the final round that was diverse in:

- Ethnicity and age
- Length of unemployment or economic inactivity
- Experience of long-term ill health or disability

Prototyping involved a mix of remote and in-person testing during COVID-19.

Stakeholders engaged in prototyping:

84	39	People with lived experience
	15	GMCA, DWP and local area stakeholders
	6	Local service providers
	3	Employment and labour market experts
	21	Local employers



Prototyping concepts

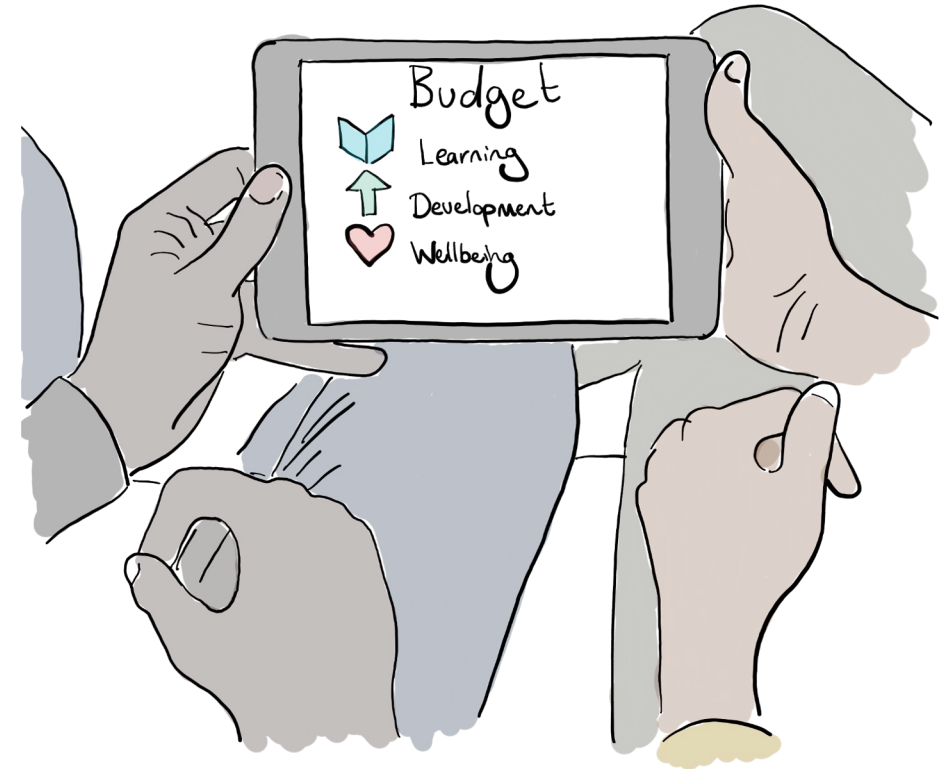
1. Personal budgets

1. Personal budgets: Concept summary

People without work, or looking to change career, receive a budget (up to a set maximum) to spend how they feel will best support them towards work.

A budget planning tool shows them the support available, how others have spent their budget, and the results they achieved.

People then share with an advisor how their personal budget plan will support their journey towards work.



Opportunity areas

Commissioning differently | Access to training

1. Personal budgets: Insights

What impact does it have to offer people a personal budget?

People were excited by the idea of a personal budget and could explain what they would spend it on, but mainly identified things that were already available.

In theory, a budget would help make access to training and resources more equal, but...

- Some were uncomfortable with a ‘budget’ and would want to pay it back.
- Others with experience of trialling personal budgets reported that some people try to spend all of the available budget.

“ I could spend money... with a budget to go on the IT course that is unreliable and didn’t go ahead.”

“ Loan until [you] got back on your feet.. get you beyond next horizon. When get job [you] can pay it back.”

1. Personal budgets: Insights

Is there appetite within GM for personal budgets?

Stakeholders were excited by the idea and felt that it was potentially empowering. However they had serious concerns about its feasibility.

What are the implications of personal budgets?

Benefits may be affected by a personal budget.

The way courses are run might be affected if funding was impacted.

Implementing budgets in employment support and health & social care has proved very challenging.

“ Asking ‘what do you feel you need to make that next step?’ – this is what makes it empowering.”

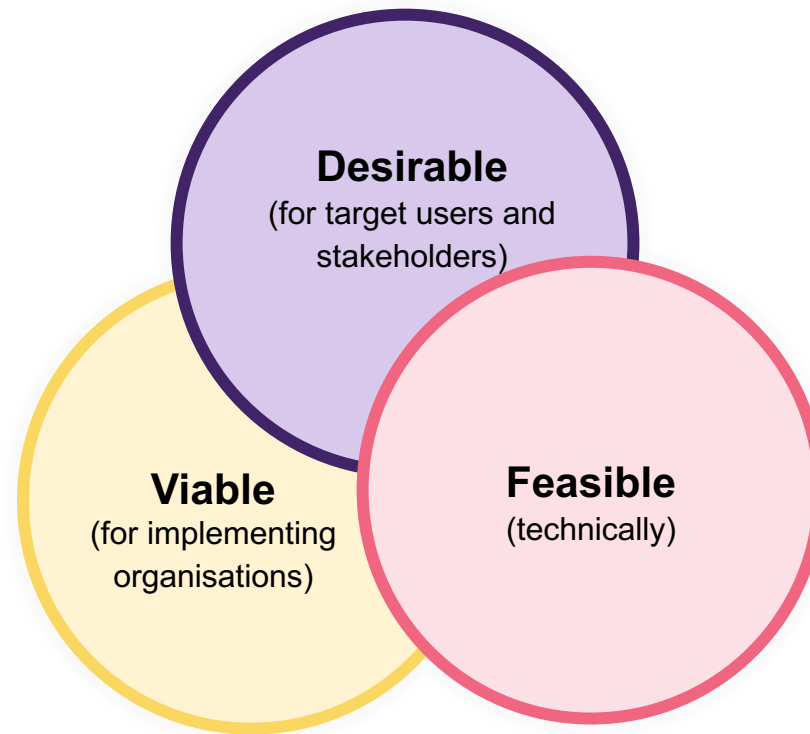
“ Need to take lots of risk-averse people on a long journey, especially in times of constrained public spending.”

1. Personal budgets: Decision

The personal budget concept was not taken any further. This decision was based on the balance of desirability, viability and feasibility.

Exciting to stakeholders and people aged 50+ with lived experience of unemployment, but suggested budget uses were often for activities that are already available.

Personal budgets are unlikely to be viable, as extra financial support to people receiving benefits may negatively affect their finances.



Opportunity areas

‘Commissioning differently’ was further explored through ‘Person-Centred Procurement’.

‘Access to training’ was further explored through ‘Steps to Your Goal’.

Real concerns about the feasibility of personal budgets included the risk to reputation of the proposed flexible use of budgets.

Prototyping concepts

2. Give Back

2. Give Back: Concept summary

A meaningful paid placement with mentoring, extra training and social elements to enhance learning and development and increase positive outcomes.

Each journey is tailored to the individual to reflect varying skill sets, passions, and personal views on what is 'meaningful'.

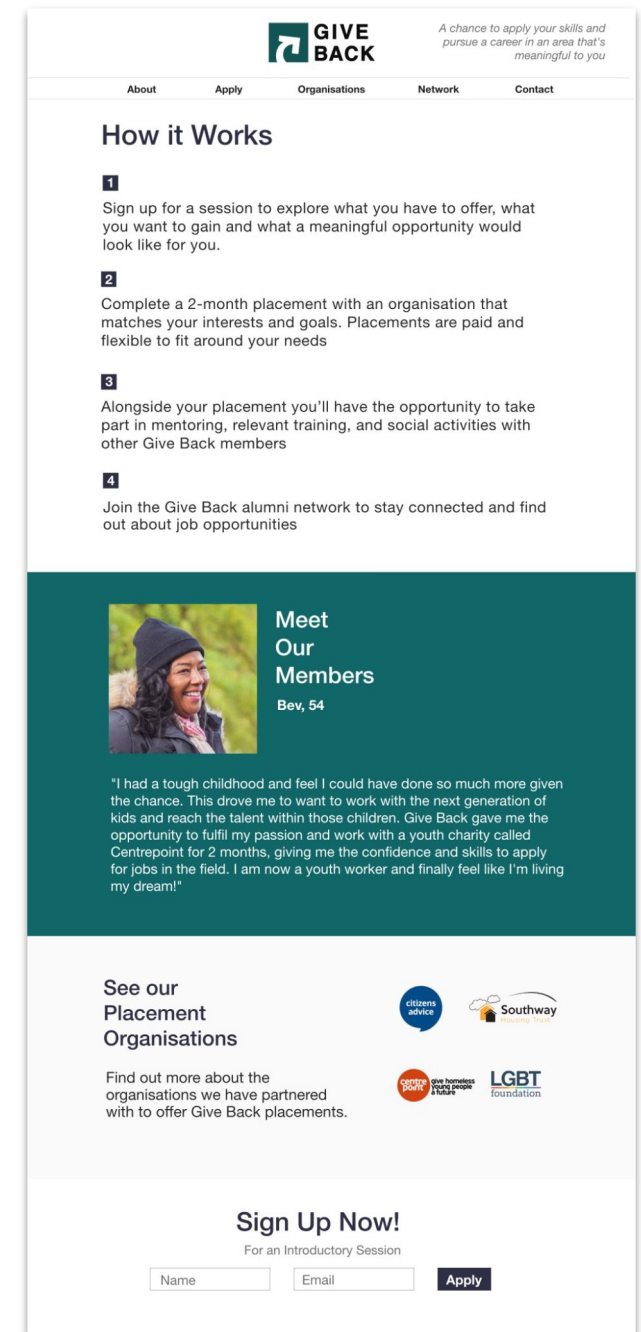
Opportunity area
Returning to work



2. Give Back: Low-fidelity prototyping

We created a website mock-up to gauge reaction to Give Back and how it would work. We tested the mock-up with three groups.

People aged 50+ with lived experience of unemployment						
Purpose	Explore interest and identify desired support alongside placements					
Response	Initial survey	24	Follow-up	3	Interviews	3
Local employers						
Purpose	Explore willingness and ability to provide placements to 50+, and support required					
Response	Initial survey	13	Follow-up	3		
Greater Manchester stakeholders						
Purpose	Explore stakeholder views on Give Back					
Response	6 interviewees: Matt Ainsworth (GMCA), Lynne Bates (National Careers Service), Anna Twelves (GMCA - Kickstart), Penny Applegate (DWP - Kickstart), Sophie Hope (GMCA - Bridge GM), Amy Glanville (GMCA - Apprenticeships)					



2. Give Back: Insights

Desirability

Enthusiasm for Give Back from people over 50 and GMCA/DWP stakeholders.

Flexibility was important for people over 50.

People want part-time placements because of commitments e.g. caring responsibilities.

Roles that explicitly 'give back' appealed to some, but the emphasis was on roles that are meaningful to the individual.

Employers responded positively.

Initially nine out of 13 employers said they would take part in a small-scale trial. However only three engaged in a follow-up survey about support needed to do this.

Viability and Feasibility

Some key systemic barriers.

Employers said financial support would be essential if they were to offer paid placements.

Stakeholders highlighted a long history of work placement programmes including mandatory, unpaid placements, which have had a negative reputation.

Give Back drew comparisons to the Kickstart scheme, which was flagged as very resource-intensive.

2. Give Back: Plans for further prototyping

An opportunity arose to prototype Give Back with 10-12 participants aged 50+ as part of Trafford's COVID Emergency Fund. A test bed was designed to prototype Give Back at a range of fidelities.

Unfortunately, the scope for the funding changed, removing this option. Our revised plan focused on employers that had responded positively to Give Back, to explore prototyping placements on a small scale.

Lead	Element of concept	Prototyping approach
Trafford working with local employer(s) and providers	Paid work placement	Four-week placement with employer
	Training	Training provided to participants before and after placements
	Coaching	Group and/or one-to-one coaching provided to participants
Humanly and Centre for Ageing Better	Mentoring	Test appetite for mentoring and preferences for delivery
		Set up mentoring relationships for participants who express interest in having a mentor
	Social activities	Organise activities or facilitate contact between participants to socialise and share experiences
	Alumni network and jobs board	Explore through paper prototyping in a workshop setting or simple mock-ups shared remotely
Test main features using a Facebook group where participants connect and share information, and where job opportunities can be posted		

Key to prototyping	Low fidelity	Mid fidelity	High fidelity
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2. Give Back: Exploring placement prototypes with employers

Home Instead was the first employer approached. The national care company has a positive reputation for hiring people aged over 50. Their clients know and see a small pool of carers, and care is provided at times that work for the client.

Home Instead's branch covering Trafford was looking to recruit more people aged over 50. They saw placements as a positive way for people to gain experience and for them to source new employees. The opportunity addressed key elements of Give Back:

- Placements for people aged 50+ to try a 'giving back' role
- Genuine job prospect after placement
- Training during the placement
- Part-time and flexible work (to an extent)

Despite everyone's best efforts, placements did not go ahead because of operational challenges. These placements would have exposed Home Instead's clients to multiple people, some of whom they may not see again.

The care provider felt that their clients may not welcome new people on placements, as they are used to a consistent and personalised service from Home Instead.



2. Give Back: Exploring placement prototypes with employers

After Home Instead's decision, we approached two employers who had responded positively to Give Back in the initial survey, and a construction company in Trafford involved in planned prototyping activities with Trafford.

Only **Southway Housing Trust**, who were involved in co-creation and low-fidelity prototyping of Give Back, responded. Southway Housing showed real enthusiasm and a determination to offer genuinely meaningful placements to the people taking part.

However, logistics proved a barrier to offering placement for Southway, who had concerns about:

- Practical arrangements e.g. supervision
- Structuring day-to-day activities for new starts while working remotely
- Data protection in relation to their tenants

Southway's Equality & Inclusion Officer and Head of HR were interviewed to understand these challenges and barriers. The interviews also explored the support they would need to host placements in the future.



Southway Housing Trust is a not-for-profit housing association that provides affordable housing and services for tenants, residents and wider community across south Manchester.

Over 60% of their tenants are over the age of 50 and their workforce also has a large number of people aged over 40. The range of services they offer includes employment support and activities for older tenants.

2. Give Back: Insights from employers

The greatest challenge for this concept was finding organisations willing and able to offer placements.

Many were enthusiastic and responded to early engagement positively.

However, each step towards providing placements saw an increase in the drop-off of providers.

Give Back was consistently the most challenging concept to prototype. Therefore, in later prototyping phases, we shifted our focus to generating learning.

13	Survey respondents
9	Positive about providing a placement
3	Responded to a follow-up survey to explore practical support for placements
2	Interested and able to provide placements
1	Responded to follow-up emails about testing a placement on a small scale
0	Able to offer a placement after further conversations

2. Give Back: Desirability

For people over 50 with experience of unemployment, the idea was highly desirable.

However for employers, its viability and feasibility were challenging. They had concerns about how placements would work in practice.

Factors that made Give Back appealing

Using the skills that people have developed over their lifetime to help others

Learning about unfamiliar sectors and roles that people were unaware they could try

The appreciation of skills, experience and age as valuable assets

A fairer opportunity to get a job than the usual 'application and interview' process

Valuable experience for people aged over 50 who were out of work for a long period

'Try before you buy' without committing to the job before you know if it suits

2. Give Back: Desirability

People aged over 50 were asked what features would make a 'good' placement

What a good placement would look like	
Payment	The desired level of payment varied. Participants did not expect to be worse off as a result of taking up a work placement
Choice	Participants expected a range of placement options across different sectors and skills, education levels and experience
Part-time	Many participants said they would not want to work full-time
Flexible	Flexibility of placements was a common concern for potential participants
Prospects	Participants wanted placements to come with the potential of a job at the end

Although these features are not based on real-world testing, they align with DWP research* into placements for people over 50, which found greater levels of satisfaction where:

- Expectations were managed and met
- Placements included 'real' tasks rather than work shadowing
- Employers were responsive and flexible e.g. fitting working hours around other commitments or health issues
- Placements resulted in new skills, more confidence or secured employment

*Department for Work & Pensions (2017) Sector-based work academies and work experience trials for older claimants: Combined quantitative and qualitative findings

2. Give Back: Insights on employer support needed

Employers willing to provide placements wanted extensive support to do so. For example, one employer said that for placements to be meaningful, they would have to be:

- Tailored to individual needs and aspirations, as well as role requirements
- Supported by a flexible framework or structure within their organisation
- Provided with a mentor or coach to provide candidates with continual assessment and guidance
- Funded separately to develop the placement and pay candidates

“ We are an equal opportunities employer. Anything we can do to help support people back into work is a good thing... [but] there are some real hurdles to get over before we make this mainstream.”

“ It is important that there is some kind of framework behind a work placement.”

2. Give Back: Learning from other schemes

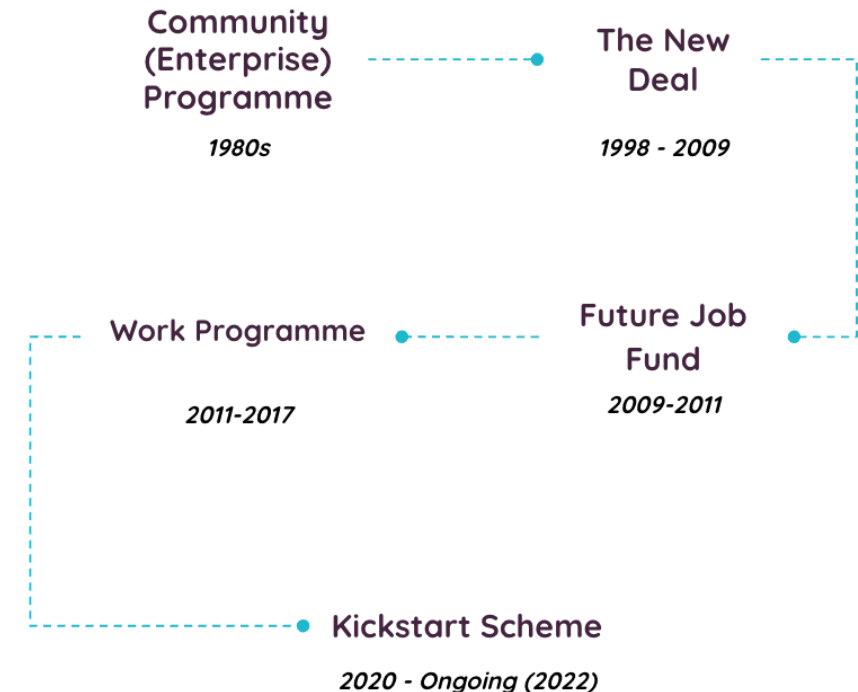
Due to the challenges in prototyping Give Back, we researched other placement schemes to add to our learning from employers.

We learned that success has been varied because:

- Schemes with paid placements (e.g. Kickstart) are extremely expensive and are burdensome for the employer to set up and run.
- Unpaid placements, especially mandatory ones, have a negative reputation.
- Employers may be fatigued by the placements and other schemes running at the same time (e.g. Kickstart).

However, we also learned about Bridge GM, an example of good practice for younger people in Greater Manchester.

Timeline of Schemes



2. Give Back: A comparable placement model

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) helps people with severe mental health conditions to find a job using personalised and strength-based approaches.

Approach	'Job first' approach, working with people to find paid employment within weeks of referral. Training, coaching and meetings to make the transition into work sustainable.
Principles	Based on eight simple, evidence-based principles. Open to all who want to work, with no exclusions based on diagnosis or health condition. Includes benefits counselling.
Service user support	Employment Specialists in clinical teams embed a return to work into treatment and recovery. Specialists update clinical teams and attend community mental health meetings.
Caseload	20-25 service users (intensive support)
Employer support	Employment Specialists build and maintain relationships with local employers. They also provide ongoing support after placing people into work as the scheme is time unlimited.
Funding	NHS England, with some funds from DWP.
Scale	NHS England will expand IPS to make it accessible to 55,000 people by 2023.

2. Give Back: Viability, feasibility and conclusions

Give Back was not recommended for implementation, as it was found unlikely to be viable or feasible for implementation. Several barriers and risks suggested Give Back lacked the potential for scale:

- Lack of commitment from employers
- Expensive and difficult to fund
- Reliance on intensive 1:1 support
- Mixed success of previous schemes
- Potential for competing against other schemes
- Risk of abuse e.g. employers accessing the scheme who were hiring anyway
- Sector-specific challenges
- Impact of COVID-19 and other restrictions

Recommendations

To address the barriers encountered to date, any further attempts at prototyping would require:

- **Collaboration with DWP** so people involved in paid placements avoided any risk to their finances
- **Funding** to cover payment for participants and the time for employers to plan, prepare and support placements
- **Resources** to engage employers and address their individual requirements, and to support participants and employers during placements

We also recommend further investigation into how IPS, or similar, could work for people aged over 50.

Prototyping concepts

3. Reach

3. Reach: Concept summary

A step-by-step process that helps people to identify and work towards their goals. Personal experience, preferences and aspirations are used to provide suggestions, content and inspiration.

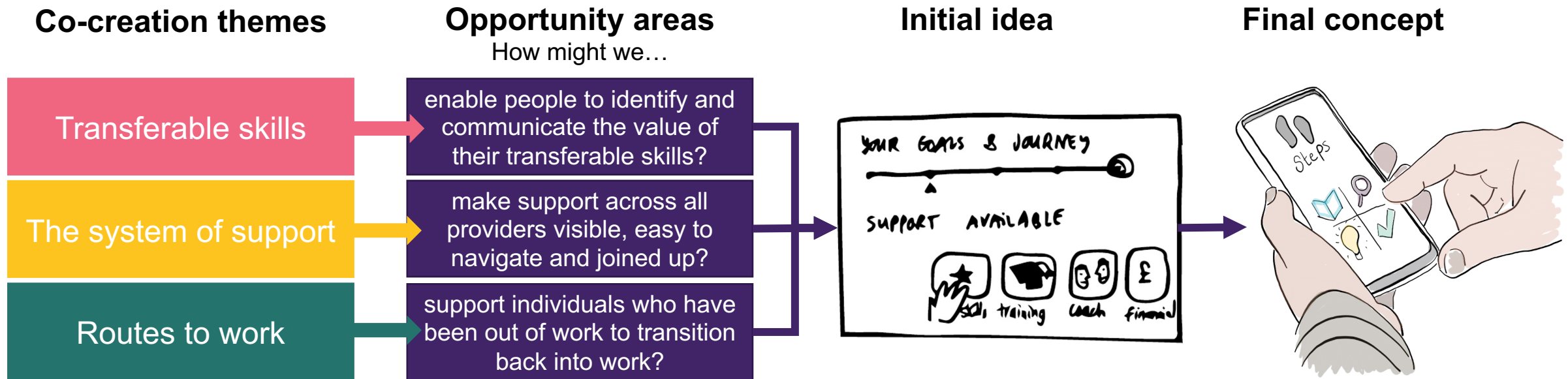
1	Identify skills and support development	Support to identify existing/transferable skills of people in and out of work. Extra training boosts employability in their desired area. Local support is easy to navigate, with clear information on what they can access.
2	Set goals and tailor plans	1:1 support available to help people identify goals and develop plans. Support tailored to individuals, who are free to choose how much support they need and when and how they access it.
3	Match people to in-demand jobs	Using data on current and projected employment landscapes, people are supported to move towards sectors that are growing or sustainable.

Opportunity areas
Pathways of support
Identify training



3. Reach: Concept development

Reach was developed through the co-creation process, emerging from themes around transferable skills, the system of support and routes to work. We developed the idea by asking people to reflect on their journey and experiences, identify their goals, and plan tangible steps towards these goals with support. The concept was tested through low, mid and high-fidelity prototyping.

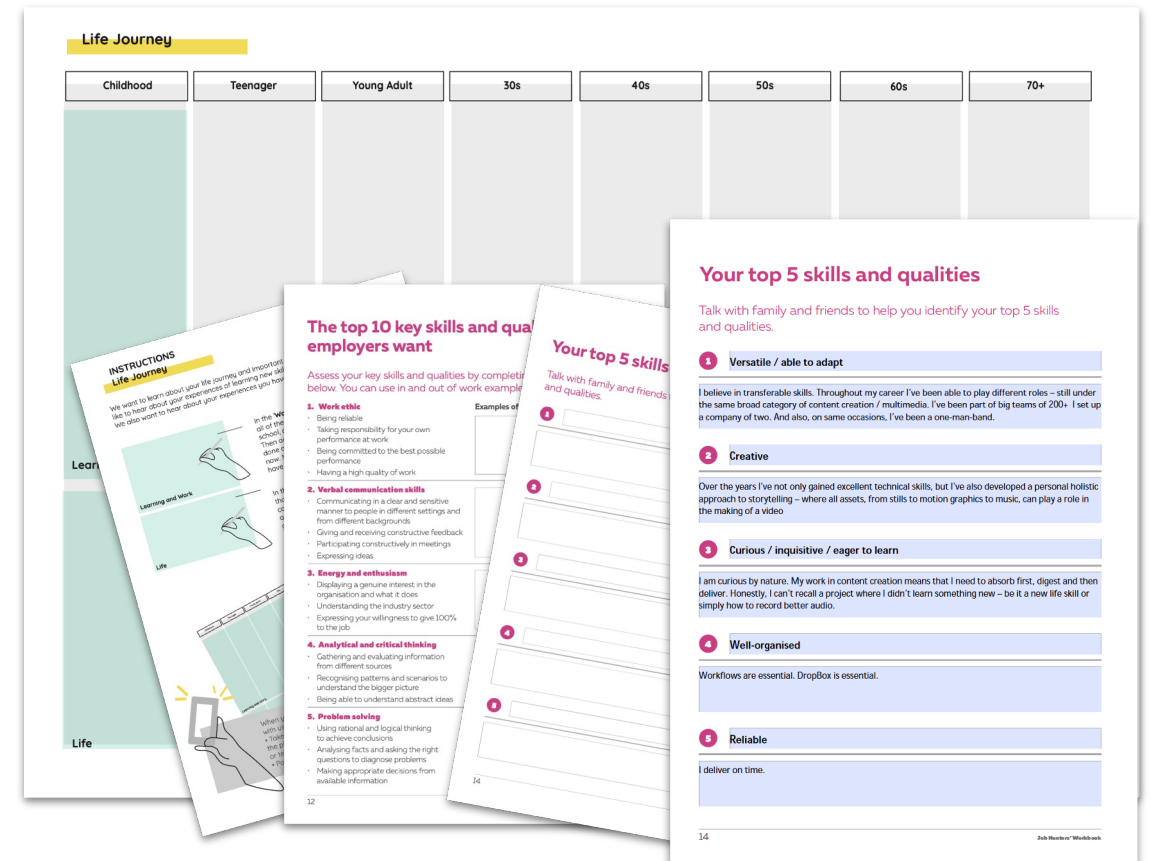


3. Reach: Low-fidelity prototyping

Two people aged over 50 with lived experience of unemployment participated in:

- Self-reflection exercises, such as mapping out their ‘life journey’.
- 1:1 coaching to encourage reflection on their experience, their ideal job, and their skills, qualities and values. This 75-minute coaching session over Zoom also explored their goals and potential actions to move towards them.
- A follow-up email to summarise goals and actions and share helpful links.
- A debrief interview to feedback on the experience.

We also interviewed seven Greater Manchester stakeholders and one provider to explore the desirability and feasibility of Reach.



3. Reach: Insights from low-fidelity prototyping

Participants found the combination of reflective activities and coaching helpful.

Coaching was valuable in helping people to set realistic goals.

The most useful pre-coaching tools were reflective. The Life Journey activity was highlighted as:

- Valuable (although time-consuming)
- Useful in helping people identify unrecognised transferable skills

“ I am finding this conversation really really useful...I got a lot more clarity doing the exercises and then having this coaching session with you.”

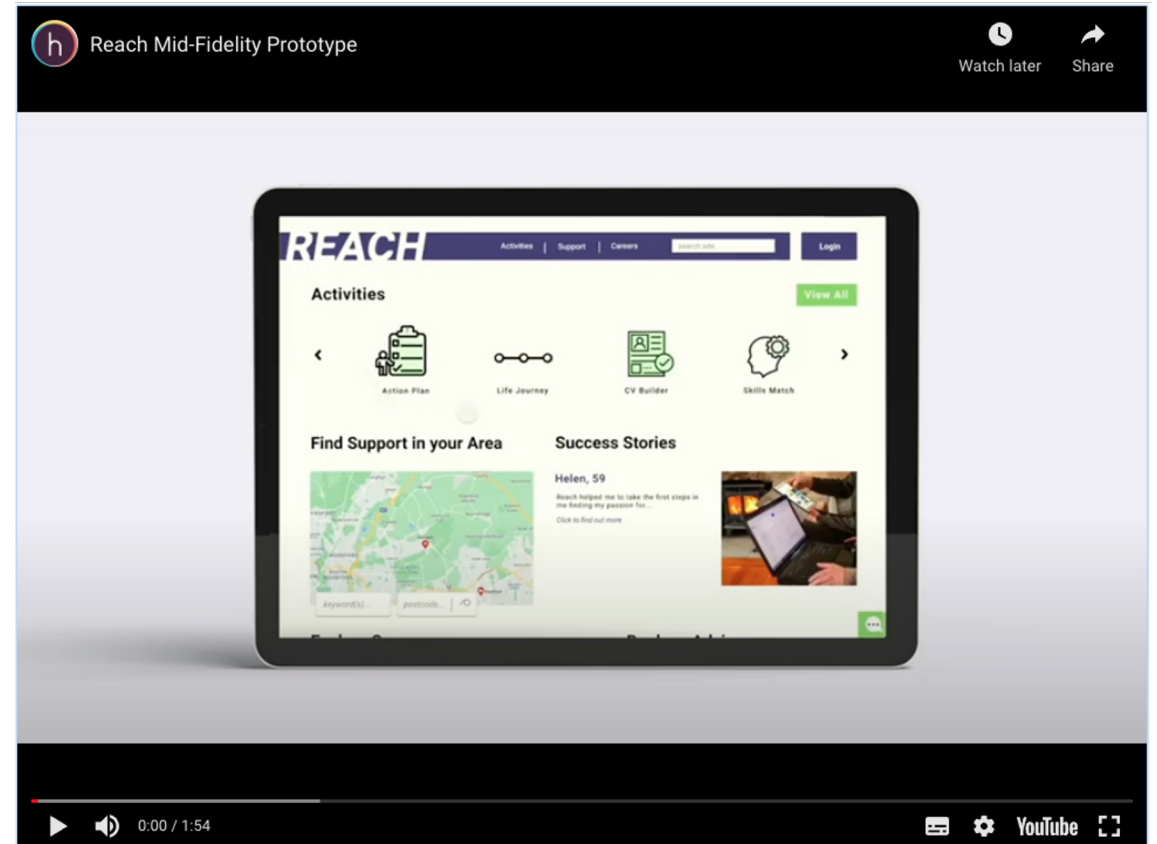
“ The Life Journey mapping activity was the most useful. Reflecting on life experiences, there were hidden transferable skills that I hadn't necessarily thought about.”

3. Reach: Mid-fidelity prototyping

After branding the concept 'Reach', we developed a video prototype to show how a web-based digital platform could integrate:

- Self-reflection exercises like the Life Journey
- Tailored suggestions
- Searches for jobs in demand powered by labour market data
- Searches for available support
- Support via Live Chat or appointment booking

We tested the prototype with people aged over 50 with lived experience of unemployment and GM stakeholders to understand its desirable features and potential routes to delivery.



3. Reach: Insights from mid-fidelity prototyping

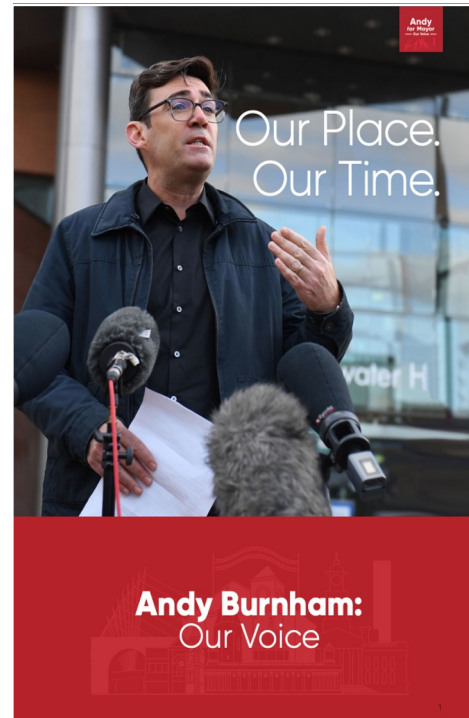
Response to the Reach digital mock-up:

All respondents said they would use Reach.

They liked web chat and phone appointments because they would take up less time.

They identified Life Journey, Skills Match, Cover Letter Checker, and Action Plan as the most useful tools and activities.

Stakeholders thought Reach could dovetail with GM Works, offering a route to delivery that could create accessible support for all.



“ We will establish ‘GM Works’ – a single front door for people seeking training, advice, support and funding to get into work or set up a business or not-for-profit enterprise, pulling together all of our existing support programmes, simplifying and extending them.”

Andy Burnham,
Mayor of Greater Manchester

3. Reach: High-fidelity prototyping

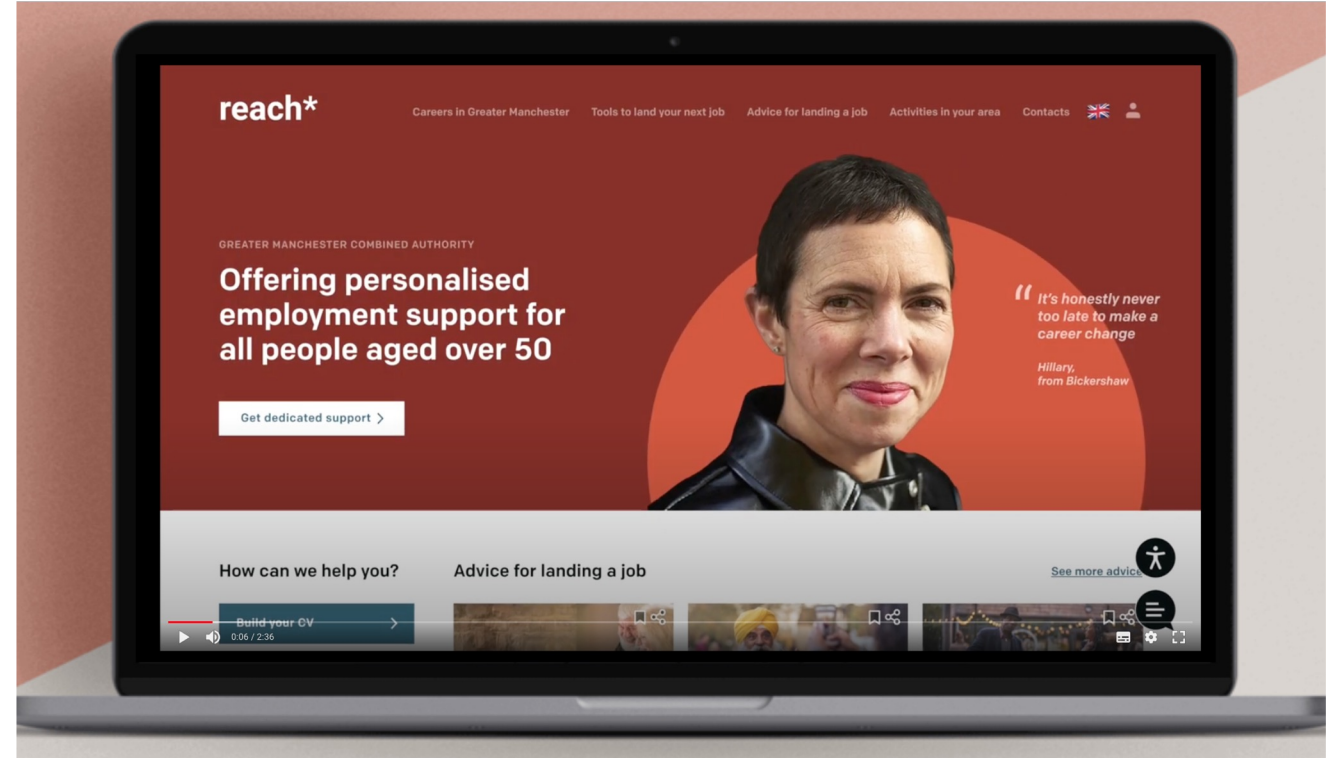
We tested a clickable prototype of Reach with eight people aged 48-62 with lived experience of unemployment. They were asked to think aloud and share their thoughts as they explored the website.

We presented two versions, targeting:

- People aged for 50
- Everyone in Greater Manchester

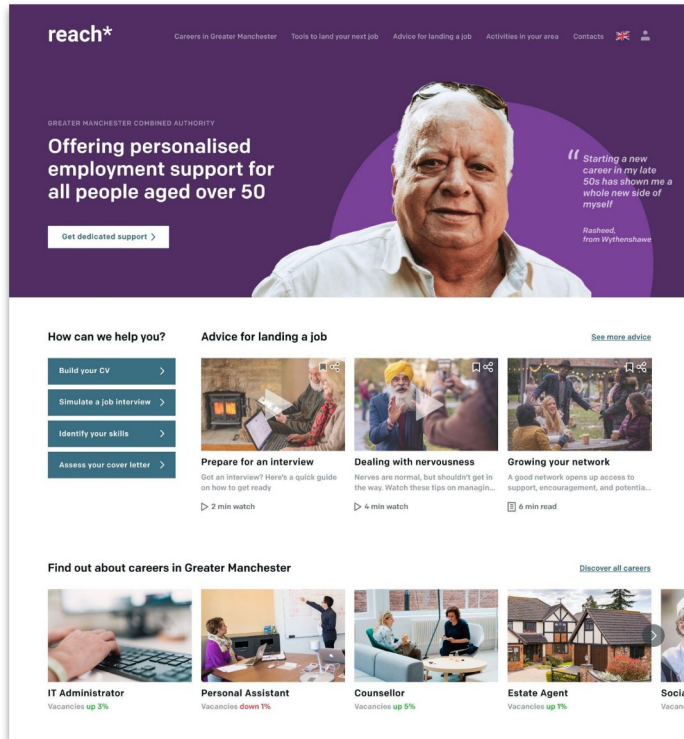
Participants' first task was to choose which website to use.

We also tested the prototype with stakeholders involved in GM Works to explore the route to delivery.

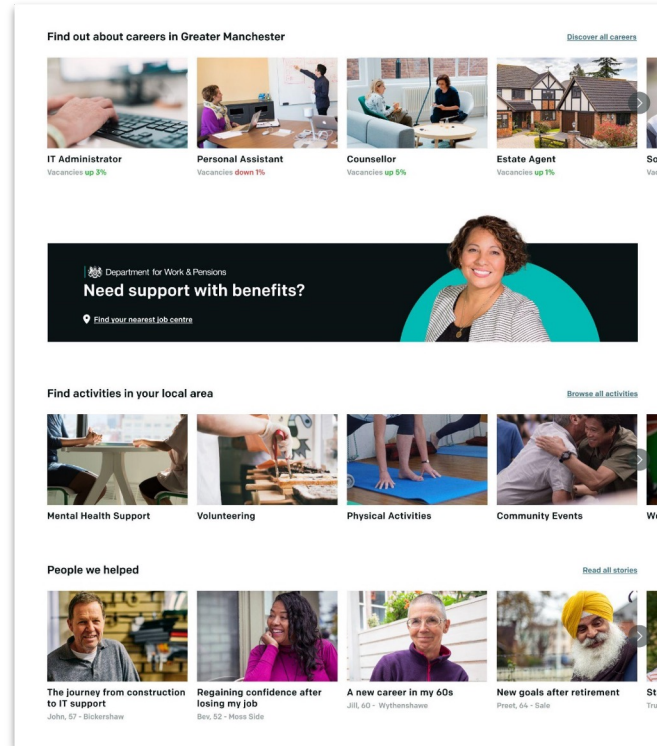


[Link to video prototype](#)

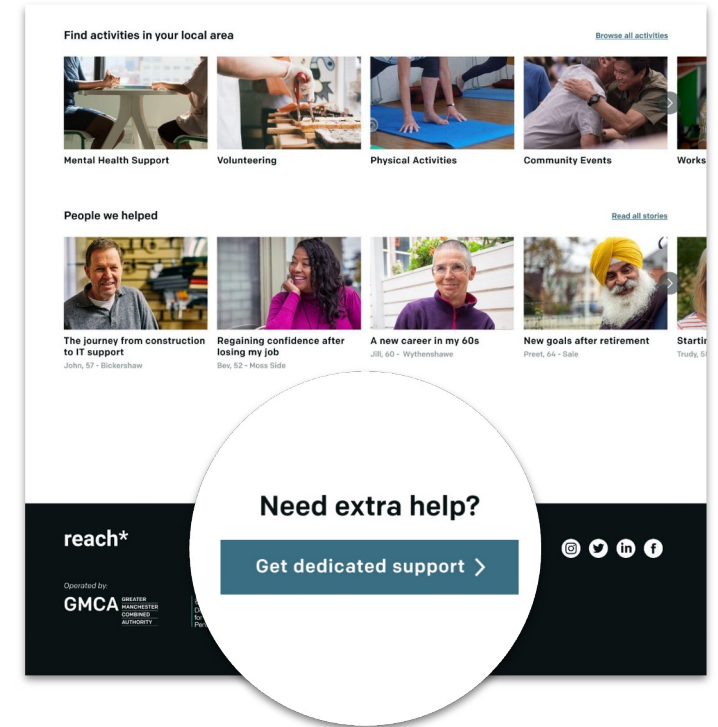
3. Reach: High-fidelity prototyping – website features



Homepage with links to interactive tools to support people aged over 50, and articles and videos with advice for landing a job.

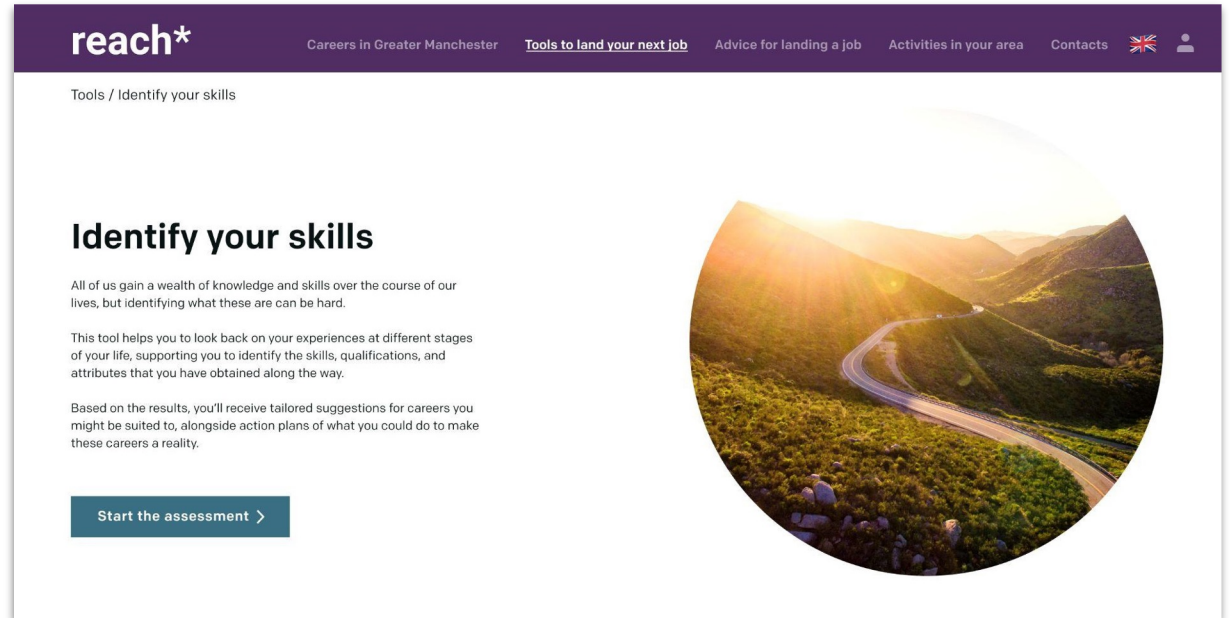
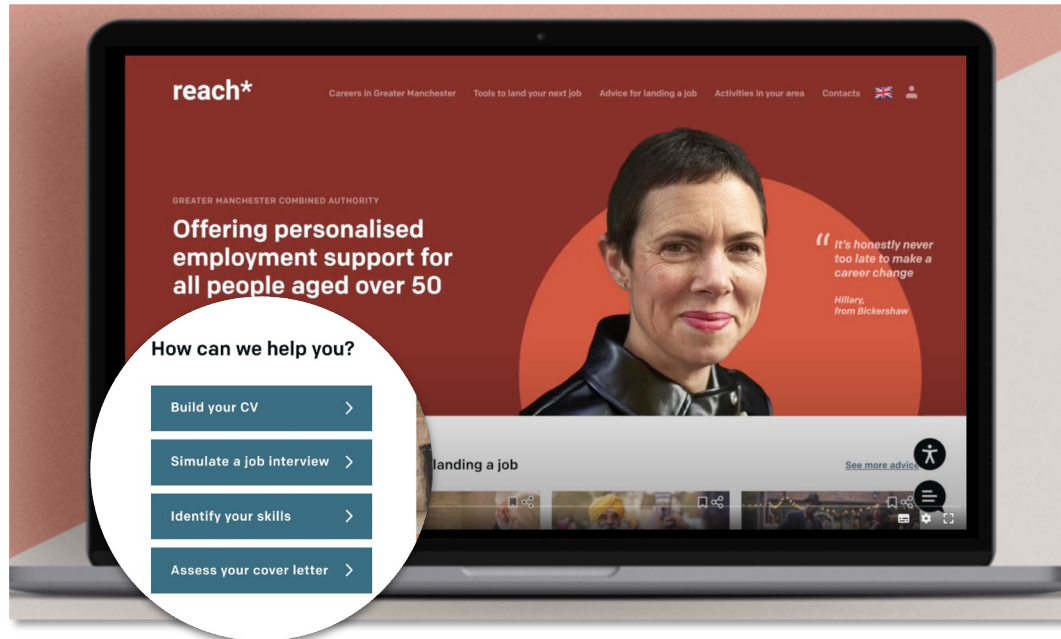


Careers information on in-demand local careers, links to Jobcentre Plus for support with benefits, and **success stories** from people aged over 50.



Live Chat and appointments to speak to someone over the phone.

3. Reach: High-fidelity prototyping – website features



 [Link to video prototype](#)

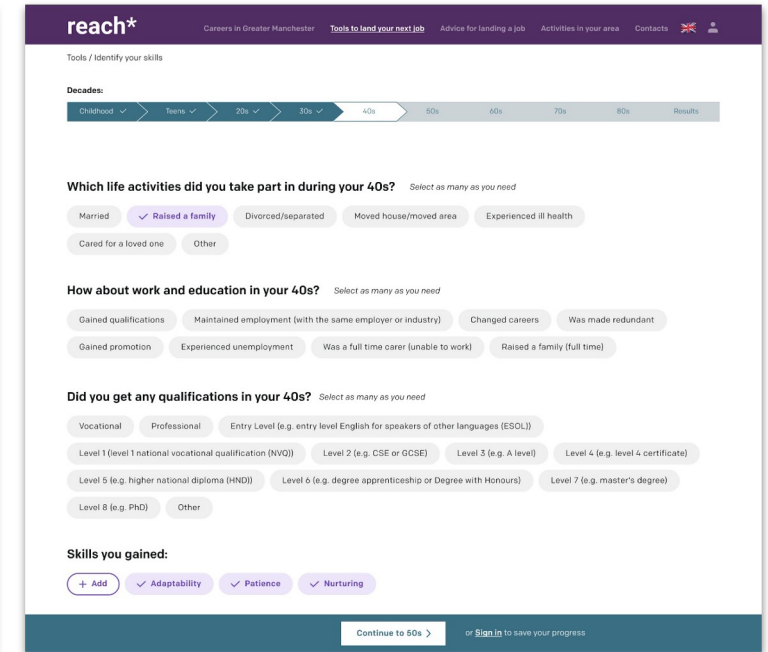
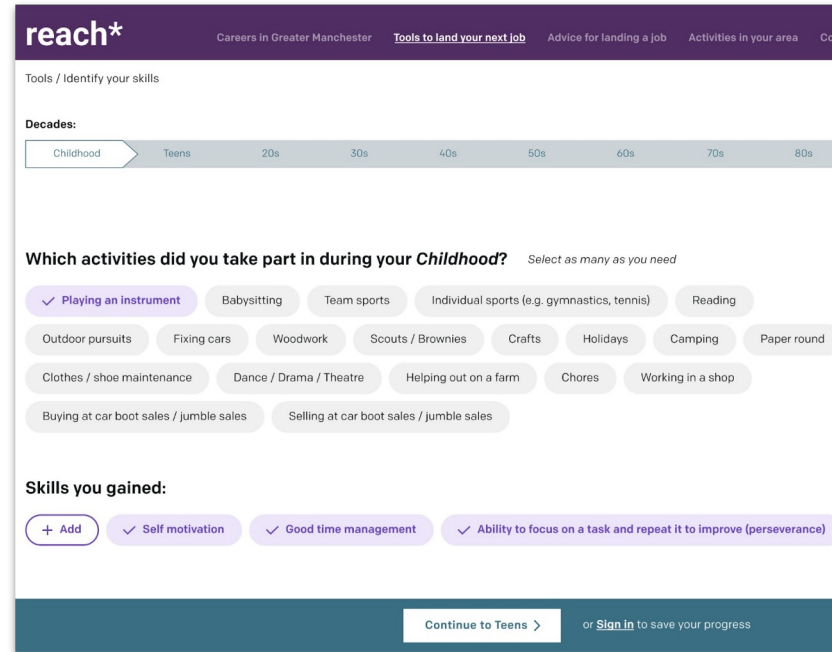
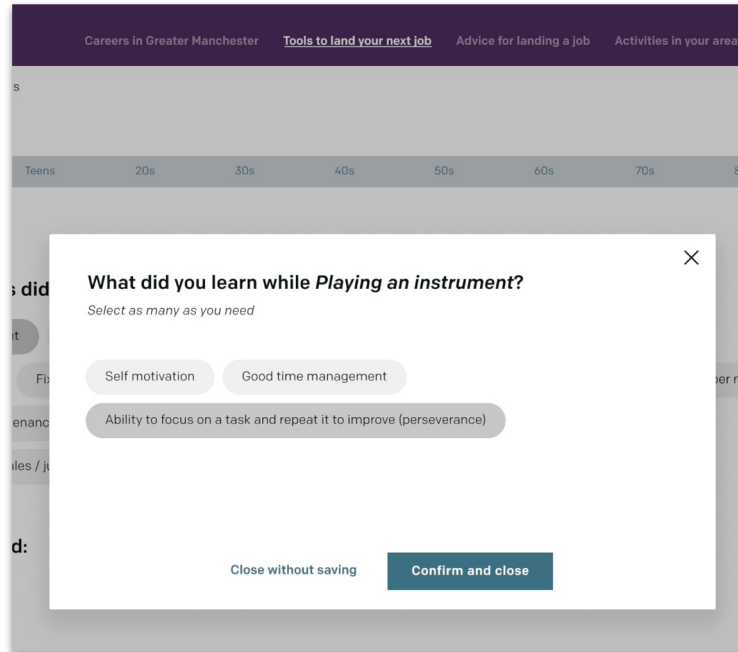
Interactive tools prepare people by using self-reflection activities and action plans.

Guidance is included on CVs, cover letters and preparing for interviews.

Centre for Ageing Better

'Identify your skills' helps people to reflect on their life experiences, transferable skills and the personal qualities they have developed.

3. Reach: High-fidelity prototyping – Identify your skills



When identifying an experience or activity, Reach suggests skills that may have been gained from this experience.

Working through each decade builds a rich picture of a person's skills and experience.

The activities and experiences adapt to each decade to reflect common life, work and education experiences, with the option to add any additional activities and skills always available.

3. Reach: High-fidelity prototyping – Identify your skills

The screenshot shows the 'reach*' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Careers in Greater Manchester', 'Tools to land your next job', 'Advice for landing a job', 'Activities in your area', 'Contacts', and a user profile icon. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'Tools / Identify your skills'. A section titled 'Based on the skills and qualifications you entered:' displays the user's input: 'Skills: Self motivation, Ability to focus on a task and repeat it to improve (perseverance), Good time management, Adaptability, Patience, Communication' and 'Qualifications: Level 3 national diploma'. A 'Save your background' button is also visible. Below this, a section titled 'Here are the Career paths we suggest:' presents three career options:

- Estate Agent**: Vacancies up 1%. Match: 86%. Skills: Self Motivation, Patience, Adaptability, Communica...
Description: Compared to other careers with similar earnings potential, it's relatively easy to become a real estate agent or broker. There are many roles and careers ...
- Counsellor**: Vacancies up 5%. Match: 78%. Skills: Patience, Communication, Perseverance, Time Man...
Description: Counsellors work in confidential settings with individuals who are experiencing personal difficulties, to help them overcome their problems and to make...
- IT Administrator**: Vacancies up 3%. Match: 65%. Skills: Patience, Perseverance, Self Motivation, Time Manag...
Description: This job includes investigating and diagnosing network problems, collecting IT usage stats, making recommendations for improving the company's IT...

Each option includes a 'See Action plan >' button. At the bottom of the suggestions section, there is a link: 'Not sure? Explore all career paths in Greater Manchester'. A floating overlay at the bottom right of the screenshot shows a 'Nurturing' status with a checkmark and a 'Continue to 50s >' button, along with the text 'or Sign in to save your progress'.

From the information provided, Reach presents personalised career paths, ranked by their match to a person's skills, experience and qualifications.

Each option includes a tailor-made action plan to help people with the next steps towards a new career.

Users can create an account at any point, but it is not required to access features.

With an account, people can save their progress and return to Reach at any time.

3. Reach: High-fidelity prototyping – Activities in your area

Powered by Google Maps, the 'Activities in your area' feature connects people to local or online support, training and activities based on their goals and interests.





The screenshot shows the 'reach*' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo and links for 'Careers in Greater Manchester', 'Tools to land your next job', 'Advice for landing a job', 'Activities in your area', 'Contacts', and a user profile icon. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'Activities in your area'. The address is set to 'Alexandra Rd S, M16 8GZ' with a 'Change' link. There are several filter buttons: 'All', 'In person', 'Online', 'Volunteering', 'Physical activities', 'Mental health support', 'Community events', 'Workshops', and 'More filters'. The main content area displays a list of activities, each with a thumbnail image, title, location, description, rating, and cost. To the right of the list is a map showing the location of the activities with blue pins. A search box is overlaid on the map with the text 'Search as I move the map'. One activity, 'All Ability Yoga', is highlighted on the map with a callout box showing its details: '0.3 Miles - Moss Side, M15 5NN or Online' and a rating of 5 stars.

reach* Careers in Greater Manchester Tools to land your next job Advice for landing a job **Activities in your area** Contacts

Activities in your area

Address: **Alexandra Rd S, M16 8GZ** [Change](#)

All In person Online Volunteering Physical activities Mental health support Community events Workshops

- **Gardening Club @ Hulme Garden**
0.2 Miles - Hulme, M15 5RG
Come join us as we bring the local community together through gardening and horticulture...
★ 4.1 **Free**
- **Digital Skills Training - Greenheys..**
0.2 Miles - Hulme, M15 5RG
Learn and improve your digital skills with this 6 week intensive course covering digital basics, web sea...
★ 4.6 **Free**
- **All Ability Yoga**
0.3 Miles - Moss Side, M15 5NN or Online
Get moving (at your own pace), with one hour of fun and challenging exercise. This is for people of all abi...
★ 5 **2-4 £ / class**
- **Beginner's Archery**
0.3 Miles - Moss Side, M15 5NN
Even Robin Hood started somewhere! Come discover your inner hero.
★ 4.1

All Ability Yoga
0.3 Miles - Moss Side, M15 5NN or Online
★ 5

3. Reach: High-fidelity prototyping participants

3	Economically inactive
3	Identify as disabled
1	Furloughed previously
3	Short-term unemployed
5	Long-term unemployed



62
Unemployed six months.
Economically inactive.



60
Unemployed 15 years
Disabled. Experience of
Work & Health prog.



56
Unemployed 10 years.
Disabled.



48
Unemployed 26 years.
Economically inactive.



49
Unemployed four months.
Economically inactive.



58
Unemployed three years.
Disabled. Experience of
Restart prog.



55
Unemployed four years.
Referred to Work & Health
prog. Limited digital literacy.



53
Approaching
unemployment.
Previously furloughed.

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Participants testing Reach gave an overwhelmingly positive response:

“ I’d use it constantly.”

“ I’d definitely use it.”

“ This is going to.. give a lot of opportunities to people who feel that they’re not valued in society.”

“ Everything I told you about the sites that I hated and came off and not done anything with –this is the opposite.”

“ ‘It’s not just pushing you to get back into work. It’s more we will help you get back into work.’”

“ I don’t think I’ve had that since I was back in school from a career advisor.”

“ I know I keep saying I really like it, but I do! I really hope I’m able to access it one day.”

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Reach offers several unique and valued features:

Identify Your Skills

We found no other service that identified transferable skills gained through life experiences, and then matched them to careers in demand in specific locations.

‘Identify Your Skills’ is vital for people aged over 50, who want and need this support to broaden their employment horizons and build their confidence.

Independent and accessible

Participants liked Reach’s independence from Jobcentre Plus, providers or recruitment agencies. They saw it as more trustworthy and friendly.

While most platforms are only open to people meeting employment support criteria, anyone aged over 50 in Greater Manchester could use Reach regardless of length of unemployment, benefits or the need for referral.

Immediate support available

People aged over 50 take the longest* to return to employment. For them accessing support quickly is essential.

% return to work after six months’ unemployment by age group

Age		
16-29	30-49	50+
74%	72%	62%

*The Resolution Foundation (2021) Covid-19 crisis has caused the biggest annual employment fall for older workers since the 1980s

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

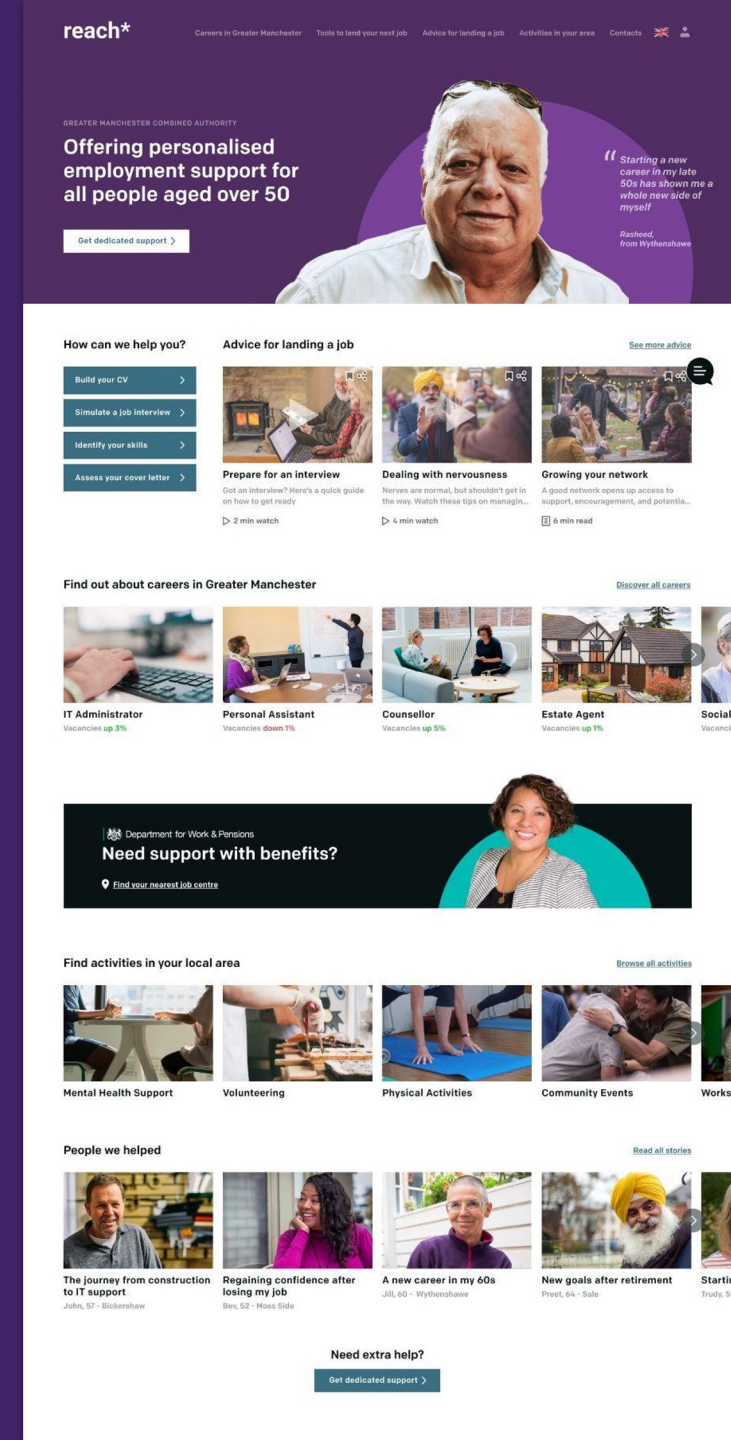
Reach meets an unmet need for tailored information and support.

During the testing, participants asked if Reach really existed, as they wanted to go straight onto it after the interview to use it.

“I’ve not seen anything like it before.”

“It just makes it easier to identify skills. It’s all very easy, it’s all at the touch of the button.”

“There is a need for it in the market. I haven’t found anything like it myself.”



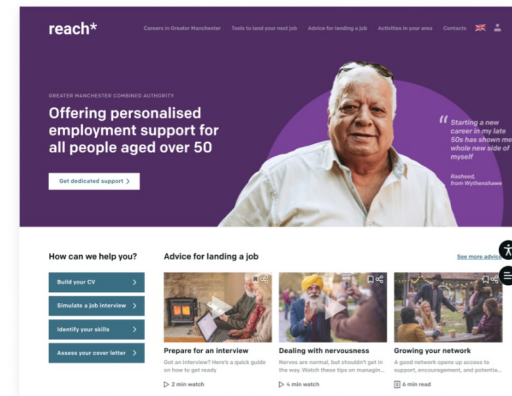
3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Seven out of eight participants chose the over 50s versions (A) of Reach straight away

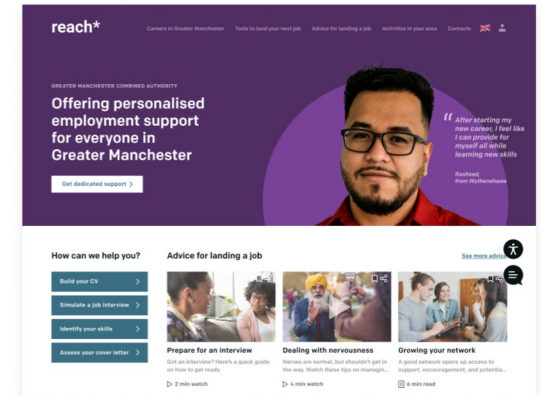
Two of the seven were in their late 40s. When asked, they said the over 50s version looked like it suited their needs more, and the other option was more for recent graduates.

The one who picked the all-ages version (B) said he was put off by the image of the ‘slightly scruffy’ older man. When shown the version with the images of women, he thought the over 50s version looked more relevant to him.

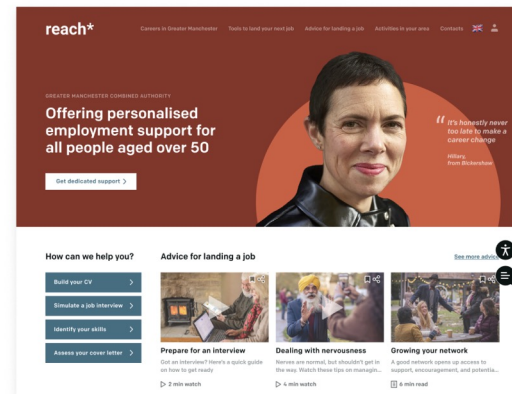
A



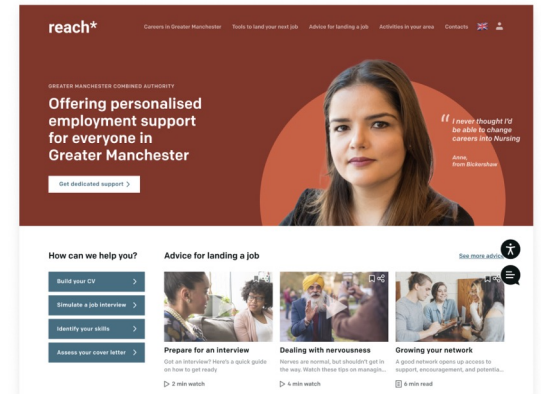
B



A



B



3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Why Reach appeals over other platforms:

A wider perspective

Participants liked that Reach focused on other parts of their lives affected by unemployment as well as finding a job.

Designed for people aged 50+

Participants really appreciated that the brand, content and tools were designed specifically for people aged over 50.

Personalised

Participants liked the tailored experience once you logged in. Several said Reach seemed more personal than other platforms and 'in person' services.

“It’s not just pushing you on the job route, there is lots of different support from mental health to volunteering.”

“‘Cause it says people over 50... it felt more relevant, more personal to me.”

“This seems more personal and friendly.”

“You can log in and it’s personalised.”

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

‘Identify your skills’ was especially useful for people who have been long-term unemployed or economically inactive.

Women responded particularly well to:

- Support to identify their transferable skills
- The value placed on broader life experiences

“A girl 20 years younger sat across from me and asked: ‘So what have you done with your life?’ It made me feel... I can’t explain it. At that point, I had just nursed my sister-in-law through cancer for two years. I had put on a charity event and raised around £40,000...”

“‘Identify your skills’ takes people back to an earlier stage and you’re actually layering their skill base on top. So by the time they get to the age group they’re in, they will realise that they have a lot to offer...”

The screenshot shows the 'reach*' website interface. The navigation bar includes 'Careers in Greater Manchester', 'Tools to land your next job', 'Advice for landing a job', 'Activities in your area', and 'Contacts'. The main content area is titled 'Tools / Identify your skills'. Below this, there is a 'Decades' section with a horizontal timeline of buttons: Childhood, Teens, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, and Results. The '40s' button is selected. Below the timeline, there are two sections for selecting life activities during the 40s. The first section is 'Which life activities did you take part in during your 40s?' with options: Married, Raised a family (selected), Divorced/separated, Moved house/moved area, Experienced ill health, Cared for a loved one, and Other. The second section is 'How about work and education in your 40s?' with options: Gained qualifications, Maintained employment (with the same employer or industry), Changed careers, Was made redundant, Gained promotion, Experienced unemployment, Was a full time carer (unable to work), and Raised a family (full time).

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Career path prompts


Suggestions from Reach for fresh career paths got people thinking differently about what they could do.

“It’s a good idea because it’s not just giving you one career path, it’s giving you three or four choices. It’s giving you a bit more choice to go for instead of just one road...”

“I would never have considered being an estate agent, but I would find that very interesting... to engage in something completely different.”

The option to explore career options with a personalised percentage match for suitability was popular.

Here are the Career paths we suggest:




Estate Agent
Vacancies **up 1%**

Compared to other careers with similar earnings potential, it's relatively easy to become a real estate agent or broker. There are many roles and careers ...

86% Match

Self Motivation Patience Adaptability Communica...

[See Action plan >](#)



Counsellor
Vacancies **up 5%**

Counsellors work in confidential settings with individuals who are experiencing personal difficulties, to help them overcome their problems and to make...

78% Match

Patience Communication Perseverance Time Man...

[See Action plan >](#)

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Action plans


We asked participants what they would like to see in an action plan, a feature that was left open to explore what people felt was important to include.

Essential features

- ✓ Training or qualifications needed to enter a specific career path
- ✓ Training available locally or remotely and the associated costs
- ✓ A suggested order or list of employability actions to work through


Helpful features

- ✓ Links to relevant employers, sectors or job advertisements
- ✓ More holistic actions, including wellbeing alongside working towards work
- ✓ Interview preparation steps, with links to Reach sections that help with this



IT Administrator
Vacancies up 3%

This job includes investigating and diagnosing network problems, collecting IT usage stats, making recommendations for improving the company's IT...

 **65% Match**

Patience Peseverance Self Motivation Time Manag...

[See Action plan >](#)

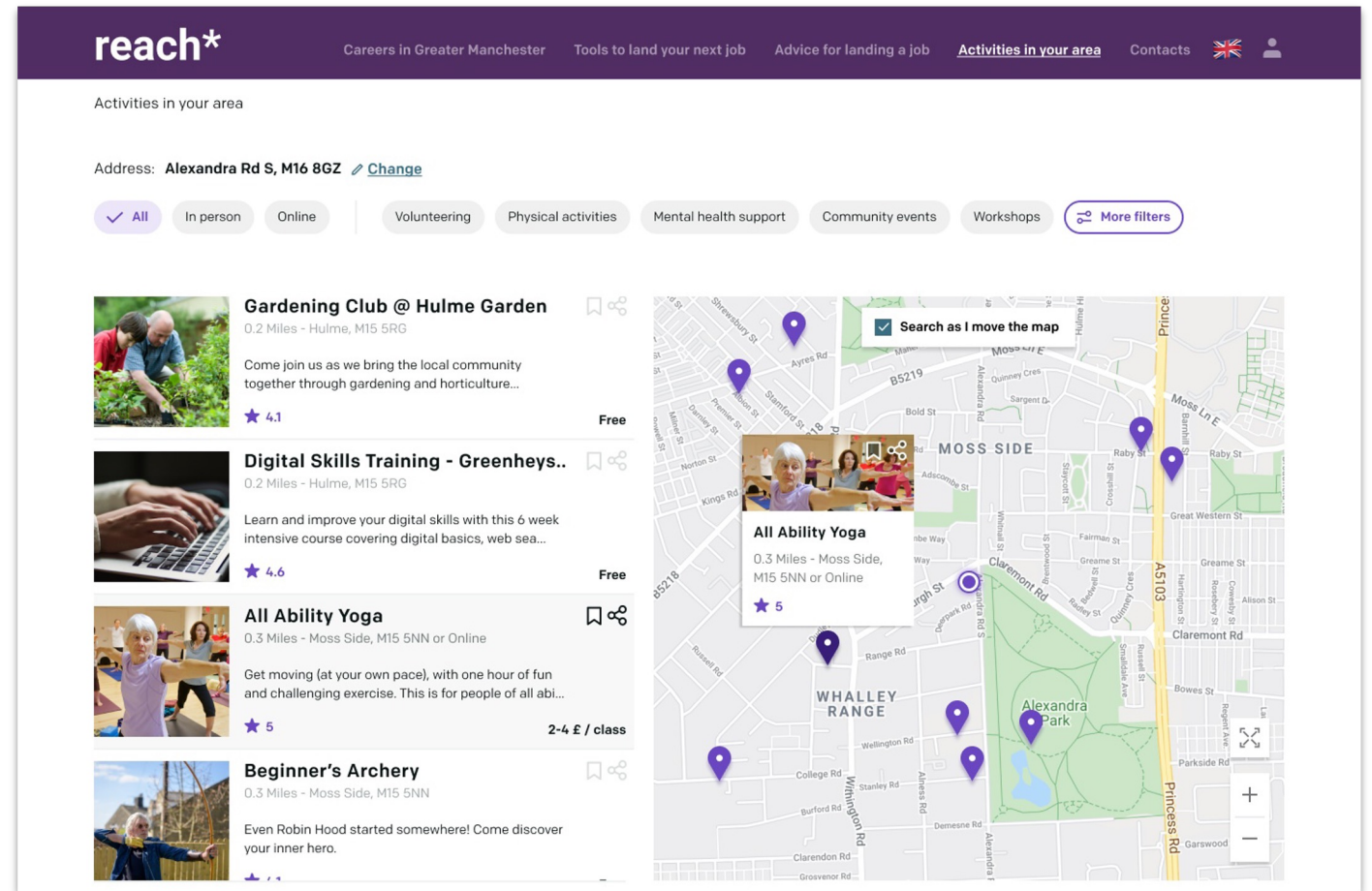
3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

The ‘Activities in your area’ feature was very popular, and people liked the wide range of activities included.

Several participants shared experiences of finding things to keep themselves occupied while looking for work.

They noted how social activities help to combat isolation, boost confidence and build new skills.

The map interface was very popular with people aged over 50. They found it user-friendly – making it easy to see where services were and how to get there.



3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

How participants would use Reach:

People liked a mix of self-guided and 1:1 support.

They were confident using Reach on their own.

They preferred phone or video calls for help, and didn't expect in-person support.

Half would use Reach on their own first and then speak to an advisor.

“I would rather do it on my own than ask for help, at least be able to get on with it then maybe you're there to fill in the bits I can't...”

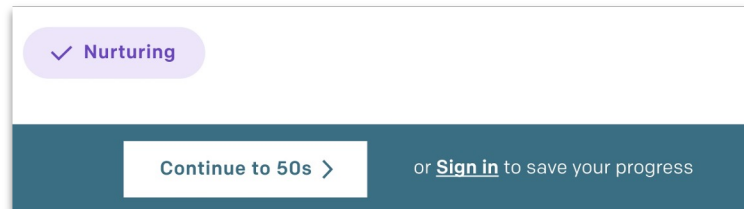
“I would like to be able to maybe do a bit of homework first, then I can book a one to one video to chat with someone.”

“Maybe I can ask a few more questions, maybe I can get a bit of advice, maybe brainstorm something and just that extra layer.”

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Creating an account

All participants said they would create an account to save progress and return later. Some said they liked the ability to explore first and create an account later when they were ready.



Support for interviews

Practising interviews and advice for dealing with nervousness were highly desirable. Support could include articles or videos, mock interviews or support from an advisor.

“Preparing for an interview [is appealing]. Believe it or not, I've only had two interviews and one of them was for a job I have just left that I did for eight years.”

‘People we helped’ stories

Most saw short videos as more engaging and personal than text. People liked that the people were relatable. They were popular for inspiration, building confidence, and motivation.

“If it's a long winded thing, people lose interest. But if it is a sharp, snappy video, they're a real person saying how they felt, you can hear it... you can see the expression on their face.”

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Information about job vacancies

People want information about vacancies in their area – ideally job ads – built in to Reach or as a signposting feature. If built in, filters in Reach could flag:

- Jobs from age-friendly employers
- Employers flexible about qualifications
- On-the-job training on offer

If signposted, links could be to:

- A jobs board that understands the employment needs of people over 50
- Tools that aggregate jobs boards e.g. Google Jobs

Labour market data

Information on the demand and availability of specific jobs was seen as positive. People said it would save them ‘wasting time’ exploring careers in decline. But in the high-fidelity prototype, the presence and meaning of job trend information was not obvious to participants. A future version of Reach will need to present this information more clearly.

“ I’d like to find a little bit of description and painting a bigger picture of Greater Manchester, and having something that is quite up to date, such as construction is up in Greater Manchester.”

3. Reach: Insights from high-fidelity prototyping

Content and branding

People were positive about the look and feel of Reach, which they found ‘friendly’.

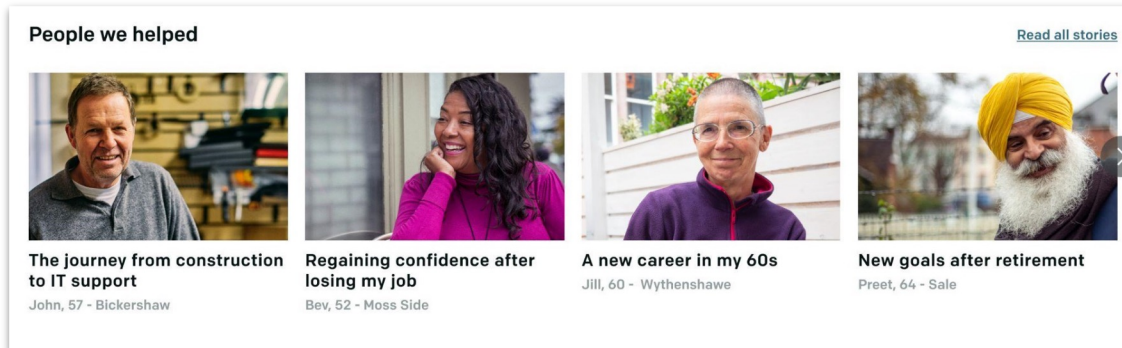
They wanted more diversity in age and ethnicity in the imagery used.

They wanted content to reach a broader audience, especially pages accessed before a personalised account is created.

Language

Content and terminology need to be easily accessible and understood by people aged over 50.

Terms like ‘network’ and the differences between a ‘career’ and a ‘job’ were not understood by all participants.



“ [Some of the jobs on the homepage are] not for the bog standard person in Rochdale.”

“ Growing your network, I don’t know what that means, I wouldn’t understand that.”

Prototyping concepts

4. Person-centred procurement

4. Person-centred procurement: Concept summary

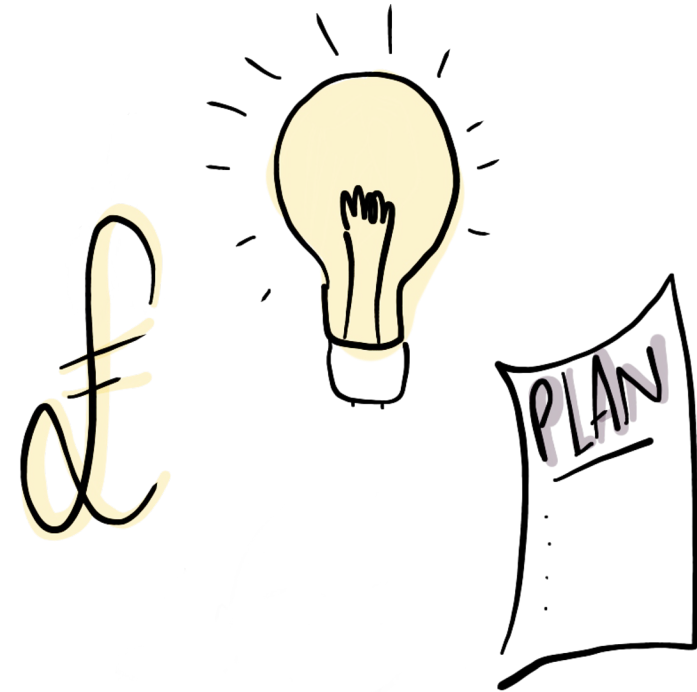
A reimagined version of the commissioning, procurement and contract management process.

Designed to encourage innovation and local, person-centred support that helps people towards work, volunteering or training.

Run in partnership with service users.

Encourages organisations who would not normally apply to bid effectively and deliver support.

Rewards innovative approaches over 'tried and tested' methods.



4. Person-centred procurement: Concept development

Person-centred procurement recognises that commissioning needs to change to support desirable forms of support that work well for people aged over 50.

This insight came from people with experience of providing support to people aged over 50, and experts in employment support, ageing and innovation. This included Dr Hilary Cottom OBE, author of Radical Help, who acted as an advisor to the project.

Our research found examples of creative and accessible funding in Greater Manchester that help organisations to deliver support to people aged over 50 and to become more sustainable. We also found that some current processes are seen as biased towards large organisations.

We also looked at wider procurement and grant giving legislation, practices and evidence of the impact of different approaches.



4. Person-centred procurement: Current procurement rules

The size of the contract determines the rules that apply for public procurement.

Contracts valued **over £663,540** are subject to the detailed requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Contracts valued **under £663,540** are procured using the Light Touch Regime.

The organisations involved in prototyping person-centred procurement would only apply for funding under this threshold, which would be the case for most small local organisations.

Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR)

Extensive rules and procedures for buying supplies, services or works

Procurement for local government has a higher financial threshold

Light Touch Regime (LTR)

Rules apply to certain healthcare, social care and other services

Rules are 'light' so public bodies can design procedures suitable for these services

4. Person-centred procurement: Light Touch Regime

LTR is flexible, but funding organisations tend to favour rigid, intensive processes to satisfy requirements for “equal treatment” and “transparency”.

Smaller organisations and stakeholders said these resource-intensive processes created barriers to bidding for contracts.

Confusion about what is and isn't legally required under LTR means different areas use different procurement rules.

Post-Brexit changes will streamline the process, but will take time to introduce.

“Under LTR, requirements are much less and there's greater flexibility...As long as it's clear to bidders what you want to do, there shouldn't be issues.”

– Procurement expert

“The way risk is currently viewed in local authorities is often process-driven and hierarchical, driven by oversight and control.”

Reframing risk: How to adopt new mindsets around risk that enable innovation. Upstream Collaborative. Nesta & Collaborate 2020

4. Person-centred procurement: Risk-based, flexible approach

We interviewed Star Procurement about their risk-based approach and the flexibility possible under current procurement rules.

Star encourages 'innovation and creativity' by inviting simplified quotes from local SMEs/VCSEs.

Only winning bidders provide supporting evidence.

Market engagement increases awareness of opportunities among local SMEs/VCSEs.

Star assesses bidders on their ability to accept risk, financial turnover, and their resources to manage a bid.

Star forecasts the risk of business failure and how quickly gaps in service provision could be filled.



4. Person-centred procurement: Funding accessibility

We interviewed Workers' Education Association (WEA) about how they make ESF grants more accessible to community organisations.



WEA advertises funding opportunities on their own website, council website and social media.

Scoring criteria are clear, simple and available online.

Application forms are Microsoft Word documents.

Grant recipients are paid 25% upfront, 30% part way through and 40% on completion.

A panel that includes people from the community and previous grant recipients shortlists applications that score 50% or more for further consideration.



ESF Community Grants 2021


Application Scoring Criteria

All eligible applications are scored by 2 independent panel members and receive a score out of 40 based on these 10 criteria (sections 4 - 8 of the application form):

Question	Actual / Max Score
Overcoming Barriers to Learning	/4
Outcomes	/4
Quality of Proposal	/4
Proving Need	/4
Engaging the Community	/4
Learner Benefits	/4
Quality Assurance	/4
Well-structured Budget	/4
Value for Money	/4
Policy Implementation	/4
TOTAL	/40

Not Fundable	Any score below 20 indicates the proposal is not strong enough to be funded.
Possibility	Score of 20-26 indicates the proposal is possibly worth supporting, but there may need to be clarifications or conditions imposed.
Strong	Score of 26-32 reflects a strong proposal worthy of support.
Exceptional	Score of 32 plus would be exceptional.

With 2 scorers, a maximum of 80 points is available per application, so a combined total of 40 would usually be the minimum necessary for an application to be supported.



Updated 230221

4. Person-centred procurement: Mid-fidelity prototyping

Humanly used learnings from research and interviews with Star and WEA to create a hypothetical Invitation to Tender (ITT) for funding to deliver employment support to people over 50. This incorporated our ideas for removing barriers to bidding and incentivising good support for people aged over 50.

The ITT explained the timescale, budget, assessment process and criteria (scored out of 4 in line with WEA's approach).

Bidders were invited to describe any extra training that would help them provide high-quality support.

The ITT was tested with a person aged over 50 with lived experience of unemployment, procurement experts and stakeholders. Feedback was incorporated before the ITT was sent to potential applicants.

Invitation to tender for supporting people, aged between 50 and move towards work

Deadline for tender submissions: Friday

This ITT is part of a test of the process of access stage that any organisation that responds to this awarded funding to deliver employment support

Bidder:
Assessor:

Please score each question using the following scale	
0	Question is blank
1	Weak answer
2	A partial answer
3	A good answer, addressing all the points
4	Very good answer – addresses all points and going beyond

What to include in your response	Max Score
Information about your organisation or group. <ul style="list-style-type: none">How long have you been established?What do you do, for example what support and services do you provide and for who?Have you ever provided employment support to people aged over 50 before?Who is on your team? What staff members would be involved in delivering this project?	Not scored
Information about the support you propose to provide to people aged over 50. <ul style="list-style-type: none">What would this support involve?Who would be the target users of your support? Would you be focusing on a particular group of people, for example those who have recently been made redundant or those from a particular sector, or would your support be open to all people aged over 50?How will the support you propose to provide meet the specific needs of people aged over 50? How would you measure the success of your support?	4
Information about the reasons for proposing this support. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Why are you targeting this group? Is there evidence of this group requiring support?How would people be able to access your support? When and where would your support be delivered?Is this support something that you have tried before, or is it something new that you would like to try? What has led you to believe that this would be an effective way to support people aged over 50 into work?	4
Information about how you will gather feedback and input from the people you are supporting, and how this will be used to make changes to improve your support offer.	4
Information about how your support will be inclusive.	4

4. Person-centred procurement: Assessing ITT responses

4 small, local organisations were approached to test our new ITT process.

2 submitted a bid, although one doubted their suitability and received funding already.

The other two were enthusiastic but unable to submit an application within the bid timeframe.

A panel of five people assessed the bid:

- A local person aged over 50 with lived experience of unemployment
- Team members from Humanly and the Centre for Ageing Better
- GMCA's Principal Manager for Employment (Policy, Strategy & Delivery)

The shortlisted bidder, the Boiler House, suggested we visited their Men's Shed and Women's Shed to meet the people they support.



Manchester Evening News article on [Boiler House](#) workshops

4. Person-centred procurement: High-fidelity prototyping

The final stage of prototyping was a visit to the Boiler House, the shortlisted bidder.

Boiler House staff gave our evaluation panel a tour and a presentation. Panel members met service users for informal conversations.

Learning included further insights into:

- Inclusivity practices and approaches
- Future plans and how the local community is shaping them
- Responding to user needs and preferences
- Boiler House's desire for a team member with benefits expertise, or training for staff
- Plans to gather feedback and raise service awareness via surveys and door-step interviews



4. Person-centred procurement: Evaluation after the visit

To determine the viability of a post-bid visit, we tested potential barriers to visiting a service.

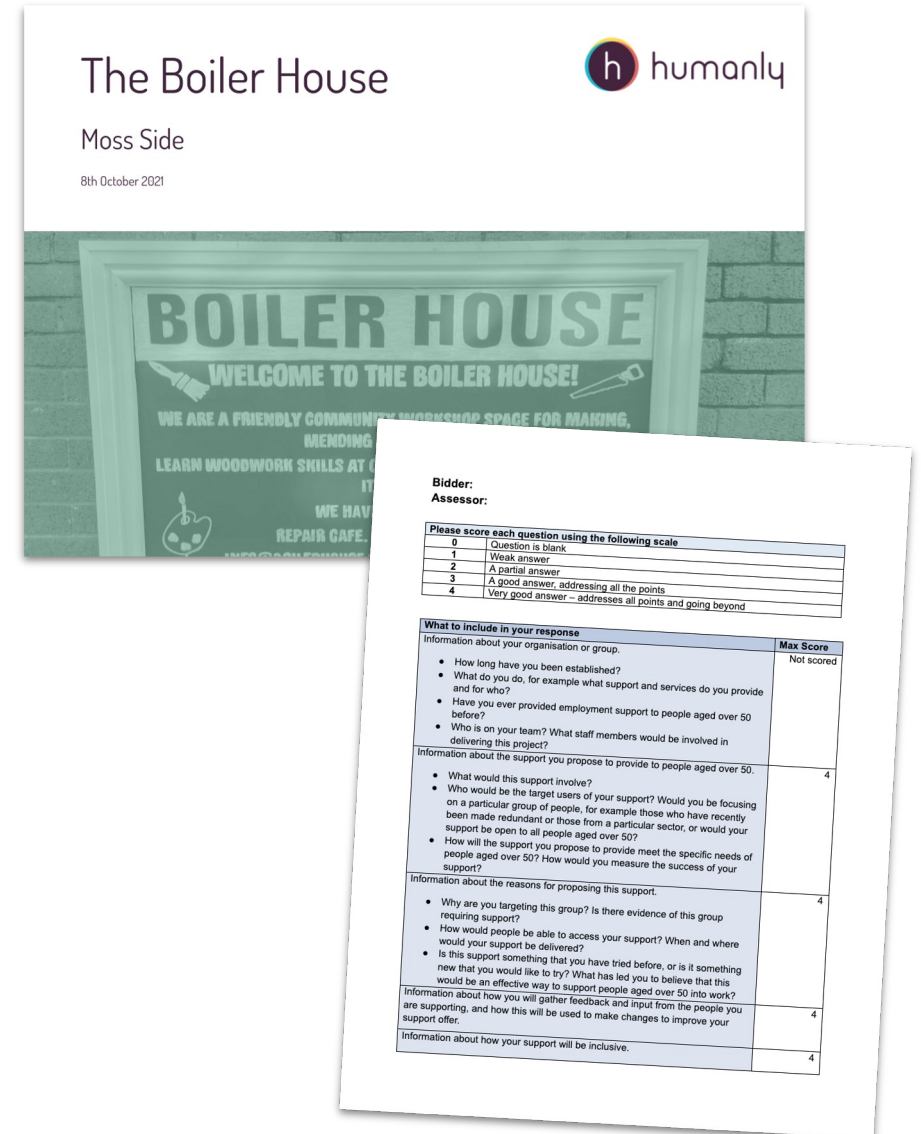
This included potential disruption to services during a visit, and availability of all panellists on the same date.

Humanly prepared a short report on the visit, which was shared with a panel member who was unable to attend the Boiler House visit.

All panel members were invited to revisit their evaluation scores based on information from the visit or the report.

A debrief session then explored each panellist's experience of the visit process and whether it changed their scores.

The Director of the Boiler House was interviewed to understand the experience from a bidder's perspective.



4. Person-centred procurement: Key insights – simplification

Clear, simple information and processes in funding applications are more inclusive and reduce the burden on all parties' time.

Fundraising strategist **Dana Sagal** presented on linguistic barriers to applying for funding at the GM Funders Forum event in September 2021.

She highlighted practices that disadvantage people and organisations where English is not a first language or they are not experienced in presenting themselves or their work in writing. These organisations face potential biases when words and phrases in funding applications have no direct translation.

Dana also noted how 'the halo effect' – where one trait is used to judge a whole person or organisation – influences evaluators, who may judge the quality of a project on the quality of the writing.

To counter these challenges, she advised funders to simplify and define the terminology in the award criteria.

“ The ITT was only 6 pages long but I didn't need to ask any [clarifying] questions.”

– Bidder

GM Funders Forum Open Event – September 2021

Wednesday 8th September, 1:30pm – 2:30pm (Online) We are excited to invite you to our third online GM Funders Forum open event on Wednesday...



4. Person-centred procurement: Examples of best practice

To gain further insights we interviewed organisations in GM that were cited as working to make funding more accessible.

The Greater Manchester Mayor's Charity explained that their approach, which is well received by grant applicants, focuses on:

- Targeting and supporting smaller organisations
- Peer learning
- Conducting interim reports over the phone, rather than in writing. This has shown to encourage open discussion, real warmth and a better ability to deal with sticking points. It also makes it easier to understand their context and learn more about an organisation's service delivery approach.

Phone reporting is resource intensive, but is manageable with a small number.



The charity **invests in promising practice and innovative homeless prevention projects** through a combination of Open Grant Application rounds and bespoke projects and partnerships

4. Person-centred procurement: Examples of best practice

Bolton CVS considers the size and risk of a contract when determining how rigorous each application process will be. Presenting fewer barriers to less risky, smaller grants encourages newer and smaller organisations to apply.

Their ITTs only request necessary information. They use plain language and redraft council briefs to make them more user friendly.

Unsuccessful applicants are invited onto the panel for the next round to add their insight to the assessment, increase their own understanding and reflect on their approach to future bids.

This capacity building support varies depending on each organisation's needs.



Bolton CVS has a contract to manage grants on behalf of the Council and administer several grant programmes for community groups

4. Person-centred procurement: Key insights – service evaluation

Once funds are allocated, services need support to build capacity, and a meaningful monitoring process.

The services we spoke to felt that funder involvement during delivery of a service or project was a positive, as long as it was supportive.

For services where cause and effect are predictable (e.g. printing passports) traditional evaluation can be helpful.

However, when the impact may be unknown at the outset, evaluation based on learning and adaptation is appropriate.

Traditional evaluation is especially problematic when payment by results are used. This shift in evaluation approach requires a change in mindset.

Figure 1: Exploring core beliefs, Centre for Public Impact

Core beliefs of traditional measurement	Core beliefs of measurement for learning
The world is complicated, but can ultimately be broken up into a series of linear, causal events.	The world is complex, and solutions to social problems involve many actors interacting in a variety of ways.
When facing a problem there is a 'right' solution that, if controlled well, will predictably lead to measurable impact.	When facing a social problem, there are many potential solutions – experimentation and collaboration will determine which is the most appropriate.
The purpose of measurement is to exert control over the system, using predefined targets and associated rewards or sanctions to manage performance.	The purpose of measurement is to learn, increasing understanding of local and individual context in order to adapt and improve.

From 'Meaningful Measurement. How a new mindset around measurement can support a culture of continual learning: notes from the field' Nesta & Centre for Public Impact UK. September 2020

4. Person-centred procurement: Key insights – culture shift

A change in mindset is required to reframe how 'risk' is understood in public procurement.

Stakeholders said that the current emphasis in procurement is on avoiding risks, especially risks to the procuring organisation's reputation.

Reframing risk can encourage innovative new entrants.

This was seen in Star Procurement's risk-based approach, and in Bolton CVS' approach to lowering application barriers for lower value, low-risk opportunities.

Approaches that enable, rather than detract from, innovation are possible when services are co-created and co-designed with the communities that use them.

Meaningful involvement of people with lived experience is integral to genuine person-centred procurement.

Pilot recommendations



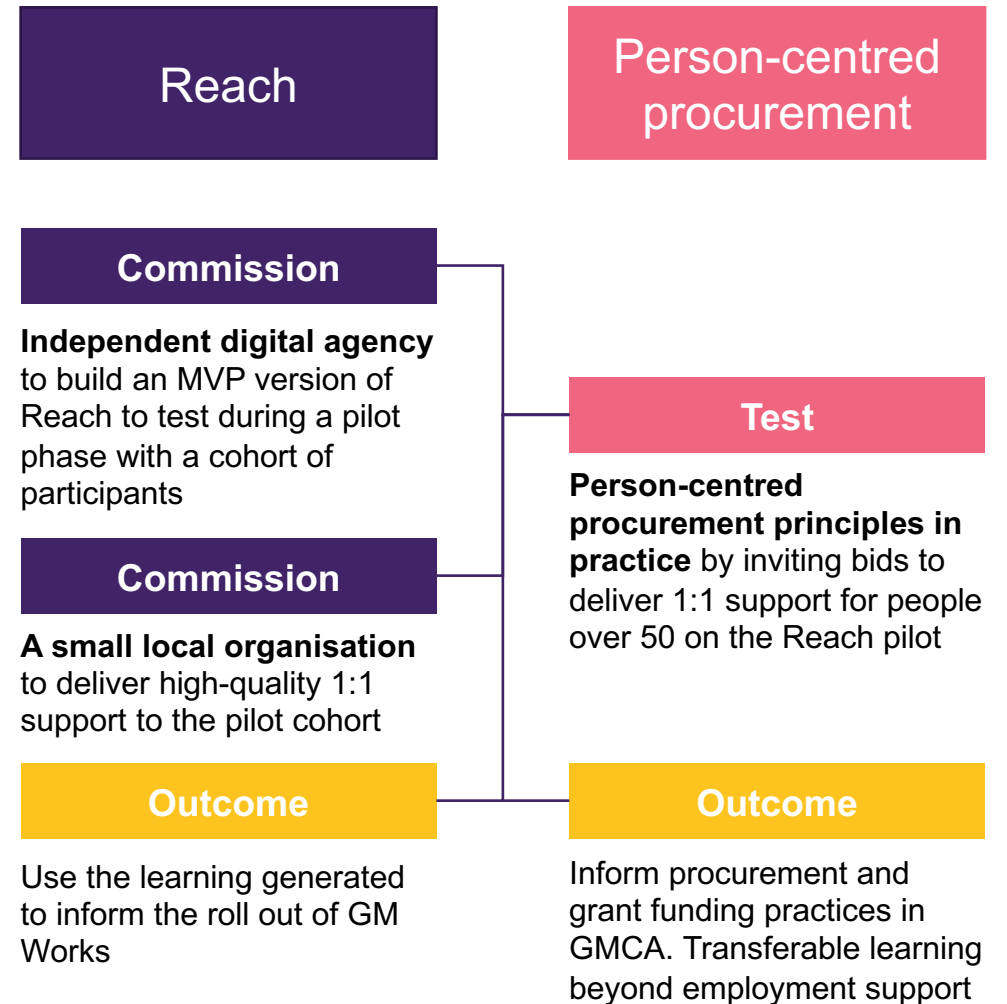
Pilot: Recommended approach

It is recommended that the Reach digital platform and 1:1 support is piloted as a new intervention to help people aged over 50 into work, and person-centred procurement is piloted to commission the 1:1 support element of Reach.

The pilot presents an ideal opportunity to test the person-centred procurement principles in practice by commissioning a small, local organisation to deliver 1:1 support that works for people aged over 50.

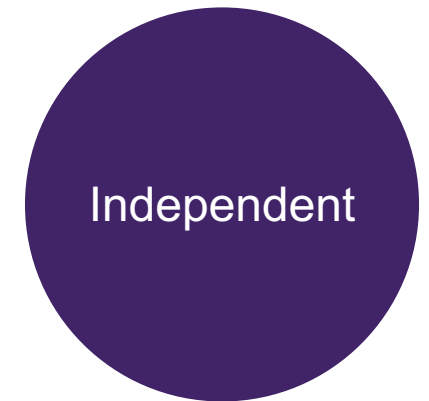
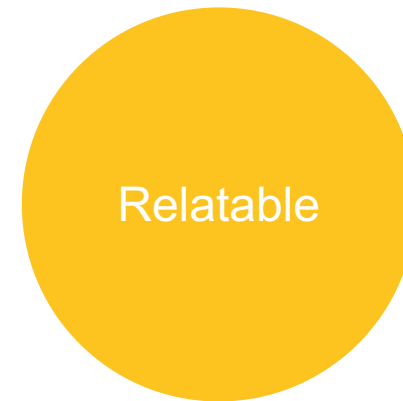
This two-stage pilot will provide additional learning to inform:

- The GM Works launch, keeping people aged over 50 at the heart of the offer.
- Procurement and grant funding practices for GMCA employment support for people aged over 50, with the potential to influence procurement in other areas.



Pilot: Principles that the Reach service should follow

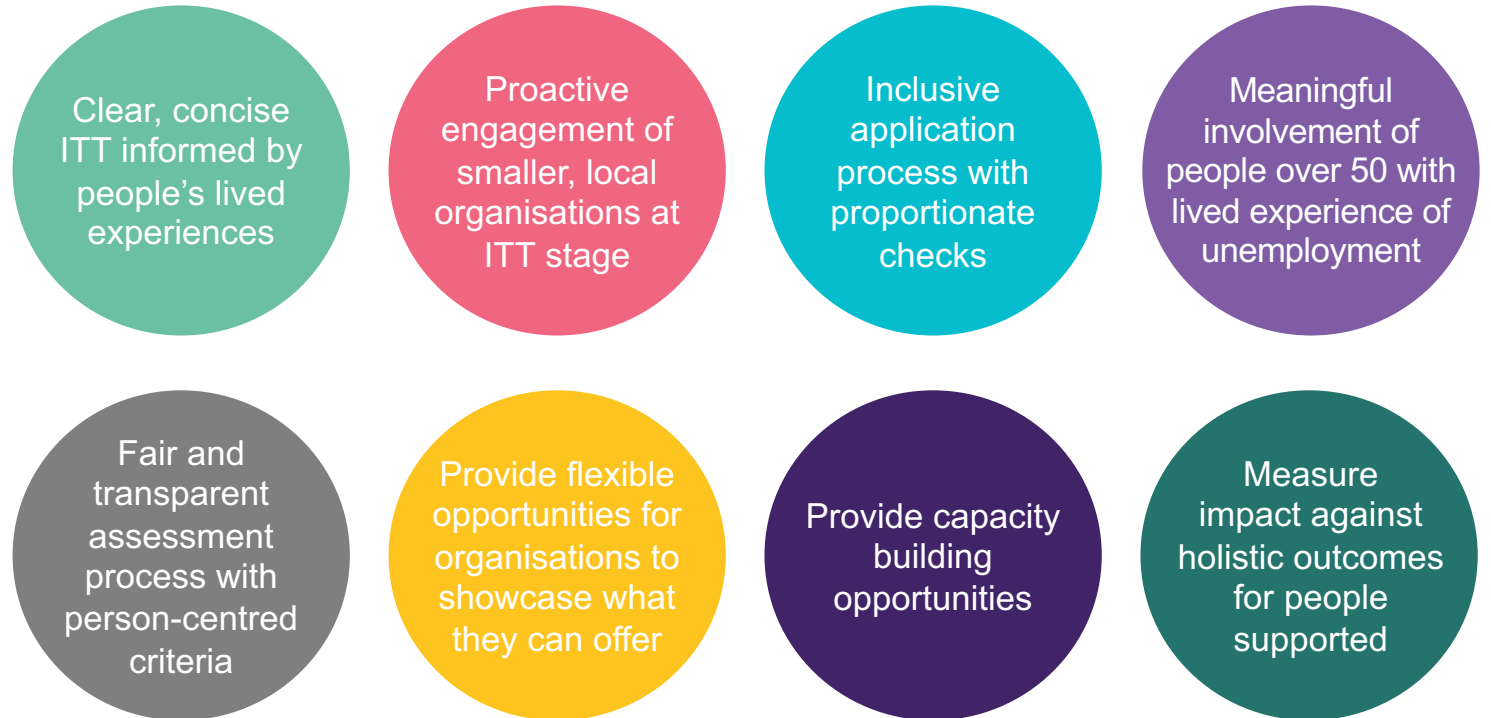
Learning from the process identified that the Reach service should follow six key principles:



Pilot: Principles for person-centred procurement

Eight principles were also identified to ensure that funding for services enables small, local organisations to deliver effective employment support to people aged 50+.

These principles are applicable to all forms of funding, including grant funding and procurement.



Pilot: Scope

Scale: The Reach pilot would need to be large given the platform investment required. It is recommended that up to 1,000 people use Reach over 12 months. A follow-up evaluation 12 months later would assess the sustainability of employment outcomes.

Build: A digital agency experienced in agile, user-centred design would tailor Reach to the needs of the people who use it. The build period should be used for further testing and development.

1:1 support: During the build of the platform, piloting person-centred procurement to appoint the Reach 1:1 support provider(s) would test the process in practice and ensure the support provided reflects user needs.

Location: It is recommended to pilot the Reach platform across Greater Manchester, with 1:1 support only included in specific locations. This would:

- Limit the resources required
- Enable commissioning of support on a truly local basis
- Enable outcomes to be compared between digital-only users and users who access 1:1 support
- Help to estimate demand for 1:1 support, informing the future development and scaling of Reach

Developmental pilot: The pilot should be an opportunity to generate further learning and refine the solutions before wider implementation and large scale impact evaluation work.

Pilot: Target users

The Reach pilot is designed to target people who are who are not effectively served by or able to access public employment support programmes, including:

- People aged between 50 and State Pension age who are not working and not claiming work-related benefits
- People aged between 50 and State Pension age who are claiming work-related benefits but are not engaged with the Work and Health programme

Reach also supports newly unemployed people to access support immediately and consider a range of career options to avoid chasing opportunities in former careers without success.

“The first thing people do when they lose their job is try to re-engage with the career they have been doing for the past 20 years and they don't get the jobs. That will typically go on for six months to a year. Then they go through a period where they are terribly low.”

– Suzanne Noble, co-founder of Startup School for Seniors



Thank you

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