



Circle Collective Social Impact Report 2021-2022

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Overview

This report presents an overview of the social impact of Circle Collective for 2021-22. The results are derived through a data gathering process in collaboration with the University of Northampton which began in January 2015, and has since longitudinally assessed the ‘outputs, outcomes, and impacts’¹ of Circle Collective. The data collection and analysis has continuously been refined to ensure the continuing improvement of the data captured that evidences the impact Circle Collective delivers through its work, including the analysis of welfare benefit claims, demographic data, offending data, and employment data (including pay). This report represents the annual social impact data for 2021-22. The research is small in scale to match the resources available for Circle Collective and suitable for allocation to research, therefore there are no counterfactuals or randomised control groups used for data comparison. The goal of the report is to identify the possible social impact of Circle Collective, and in particular, the positive outcomes for young people, including psychological benefits. The period covered in this report is the first full year of operations following the Covid-19 pandemic and the return to physical premises in April 2021. During this period, 249 young people have completed the programme at a time of continuing pressures, with economic recovery and cost of living increases.

¹ Our understanding of these terms is informed by the work of McLoughlin *et al.*, (2009). An *output* is defined as the direct and easily identifiable output of an intervention, such as the number of young people who enter employment. *Outcome* represents the positive change to those participants state of mind and the enhancement to their lives, employability, and well-being. *Impact* are the long-term benefits on society that results from the outputs and outcomes that were delivered, for example, welfare savings from a young person being placed into employment.



NAME: Nadera Ali

AGE: 23

JOB DESCRIPTION: Sale Assistant

EMPLOYER: Marks and Spencer's

Circle Success Story

Before joining Circle Collective, I had been unemployed for two years or so and trying to find a new job was proving to be difficult for me. Sometimes my anxiety would also get the better of me and every part of applying for jobs just seemed like too much. I had been on different employability programmes, but didn't feel that I had gained a lot from them.

Circle Collective were good as they not only helped me with all the parts of job hunting that I really struggle with, such as going through my CV, workshops on cover letters and interview techniques. What I found to be most helpful was job club, although I struggled to find motivation to apply for work, Seyda would reassure and support me.

I really enjoyed my shop shift and speaking with different people who were on the programme and them explaining their difficulties finding work. I felt more comfortable and confident that I was not alone. My favourite part of working in the shop was being with the customer and the staff helping me with learning the tills.

The Circle team were very supportive and never pushed me to do anything I felt uncomfortable with, they showed me great kindness and really assisted me to find a job. I am very grateful for them and it's lovely to know that if I ever need extra help, they will be there.

I am now working with Marks and Spencer's as a Sale Assistant, and I am really happy to be working again.

Methodology

A mixed-methods approach to data collection was adopted for the research. Circle Collective has captured the following data from the young people that the organisation works with:

- Demographic data (for example, age; gender; offending history)
- Financial data (for example, benefits claimed per week prior to engagement)
- Intervention data (for example, hours engaged per week; qualifications gained)
- Corporate and volunteer engagement
- Employment outputs (for example, job outcomes; earnings; hours worked)

Circle Collective has also captured quantitative data using academically validated psychometric scales that are designed to measure the distance travelled by individuals in relation to employability. These metrics are also used to validate Circle Collective's 'theory of change'. These metrics include:

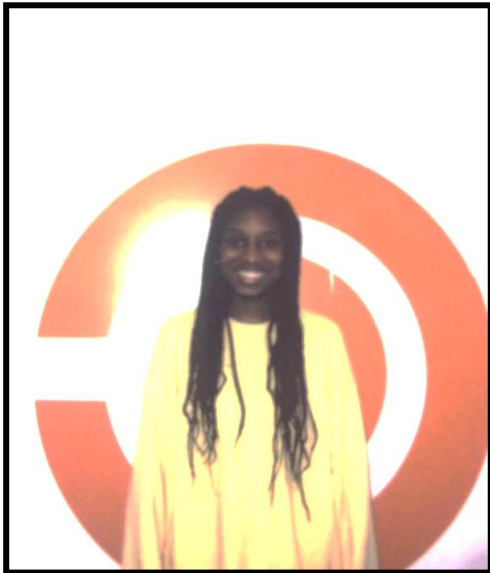
- *General Self-efficacy*: General self-efficacy (GSE) has been correlated to employability and positive job outcomes (Eden and Aviram, 1993; Lucas and Cooper, 2005; McLellan *et al.*, 2009); education and vocational success (Lockett *et al.*, 1998); and general success in life (Chen *et al.*, 2001). GSE combines a variety of constructs including confidence, motivation, and self-esteem (Judge *et al.*, 1997). The GSE scale used in this project was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) and can be found online at <http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~health/engscal.htm>.
- *Wellbeing*: Circle Collective's theory of change reflects the importance of reinforcing positive mental wellbeing in young people, which bolsters life chances and improves quality of life. Improved wellbeing can act as a buffer against poor mental health, depression, social isolation, and risk-taking behaviours (The Children's Society, 2016). The Wellbeing scale used in this project is the 'Warwick-Edinburgh Well-being scale', a 14-item scale freely available online
- *Anxiety*: Anxiety can have a negative impact on young people's mental well-being, which impacts employability. Anxiety was measured in this project using the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A), a 14-item scale (Hamilton, 1959)

These scales were administered longitudinally, first when they started with Circle Collective (Time 1) and when the intervention was completed (Time 2).

The overall social impact was calculated for Circle Collective through the support received by young people to achieve employment and the direct financial impact of young people gaining employment. Payment of income tax, national insurance, and reductions in benefits payments were included in this analysis.

No counterfactuals were included in the research, so calculations represent the *maximum* financial impact that Circle Collective could have delivered. The quantitative information presented in this report is contextualised via qualitative case studies² carried out by Circle Collective, through a purposeful sub-sample of beneficiaries.

² All case-studies presented in the report have been added with the express permission of the young people involved



NAME: Leonor Le

AGE: 20

JOB: Sales Assistant

EMPLOYER: Circle Collective

Circle Success Story

After I finished my foundation course at University, I found myself taking a gap year. My plan was to find work related to fashion because I wanted to explore the different fields of work within fashion ,but really did know how to go about it or what exactly it was that I wanted to do. I looked and looked for work for about 2 years and was not successful in finding something that I really wanted to do.

I walked past the Circle Collective shop which I had seen many times before, but never actually went in, the sign talked about helping young people find work, so I wanted to get more information. A week later I was part of the 'Back Your Future' programme. Improving my CV was something that I always struggled with and that was the first thing that I was able to work on with Circle Collective. I felt a lot more confident and better equipped for my job hunting.

The job club really helped me to dedicate time regularly for job hunting too, I could focus completely and meet my target number of applications. The emotional support was also great, my anxiety was so high, but everyone always had my best at heart and helped me to see that things would work out, I just had to go one step at a time. I was able to also take part in other programmes that taught me so many new things that I will definitely apply in my life.

Social Impact

Circle Collective has two sites in Dalston and Lewisham, with specific contracts for Hackney, Lewisham, and Tower Hamlets. This report presents the impact for Dalston and Lewisham separately, which are then combined for an overall social impact figure for Circle Collective, inclusive of corporate volunteering.

Dalston

The Dalston site covers Hackney and Tower Hamlets contracts, as well as including young people from the surrounding boroughs of Barking, Newham, Waltham Forest, City of London, and Islington. From April 2021 to March 2022, 116 young people completed the employability programme through Circle Collective in Dalston, with an average age of 21.97 years, and an age range of 16 to 40 years old. The gender of participants was recorded by Circle Collective, with 59 male young people, 54 female young people, and 1 other young person (2 non-reporting). On average, participants engaged with Circle Collective for 57.21 hours, which included volunteering, training in confidence, personal presentation, and employability skill workshops. Paid work experience was also provided in the Circle Collective shop. Of the 116 young people who completed the programme, 64 gained employment (a success rate of 55.17%), and 18 went into education (a success rate of 15.52%). This means that 82 of the 116 participants had a positive destination post-engagement (a success rate of 70.69%).

Of the participants entering employment, 16 found full-time work with an average wage of £19,238.38, and 47 moved into part-time work with an average wage of £10,219.23. The income tax rate is currently set at 20% at the basic level with a personal allowance of £12,750 per year³ whilst the rate for National Insurance is 12% paid on earnings above a primary threshold of £9,568⁴. Furthermore, the annual JSA payment for an individual is £4,004⁵. Therefore, in total, the 2021-22 participants from Circle Collective have contributed £10,376.32 in additional income tax, and £28,430.16 in National Insurance contributions. This has also led to welfare savings of £204,204, with 51 participants working over 16 hours per week, saving the state £77 a week in Job Seekers Allowance. All young people at the Circle Collective receive considerable support towards employability skills, therefore, other

³ HM Treasury data obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/income-tax-rates>.

⁴ HMRC data obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions>.

⁵ Obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/jobseekers-allowance>.

additional areas of impact are valued at £226.72⁶ per young person, giving a cumulative impact of £26,300.68.

In total, Circle Collective in Dalston has delivered a maximum direct financial benefit to the UK state of £269,311.16. With an average funded placement cost of £1,190.04 for the 116 young people, the cost of the Dalston programme is £138,044.64 (see figure 1). This represents a social return on investment in Dalston of **£1.95/£1**.

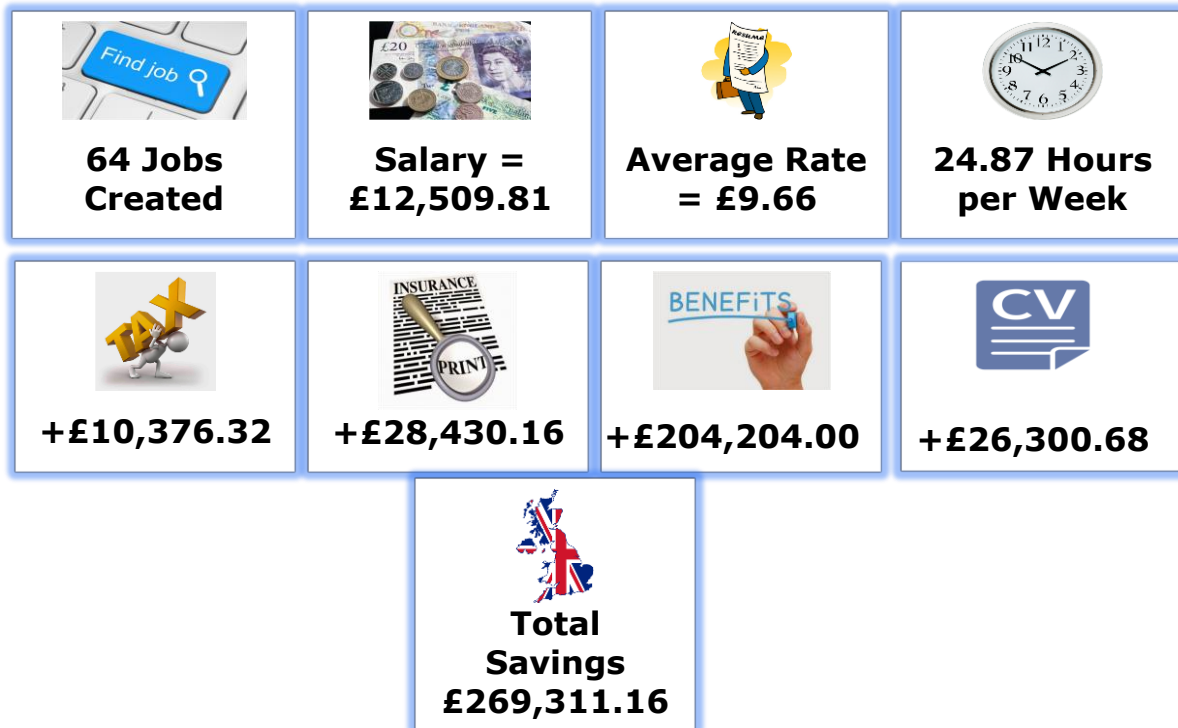


Figure 1: Dalston Social Impact

The outcome data collected relating to participants General Self-Efficacy, Well-Being, and Anxiety demonstrates the positive impact Circle Collective can have on young people, including those who did not secure employment or move into education. All Well-Being and General Self-Efficacy scores improved, and feelings of anxiety decreased among participants. It can be evidenced that Circle Collective improved employability skills of the involved young people, strengthening their prospects in the job market. For relatively stable traits such as General Self-Efficacy and Well-Being the increases of +6.78⁷ (14%) and +4.97 (8.6%),

⁶ These figures are based on rates published by www.CVconsultants.co.uk on preparing a CV and offering guidance.

⁷ A study by Hazenberg (2012) which focused on changes in General Self-Efficacy amongst NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) young people going through employment enhancement programmes suggested average increases of 4%

respectively, is significant. These results, alongside reductions in anxiety in Dalston of -2.38 (19.60%) suggests that Circle Collectives model of increasing confidence, motivations, self-esteem, and well-being of the young people it works with is central to its success with improving employability. Figure 2 details these results:

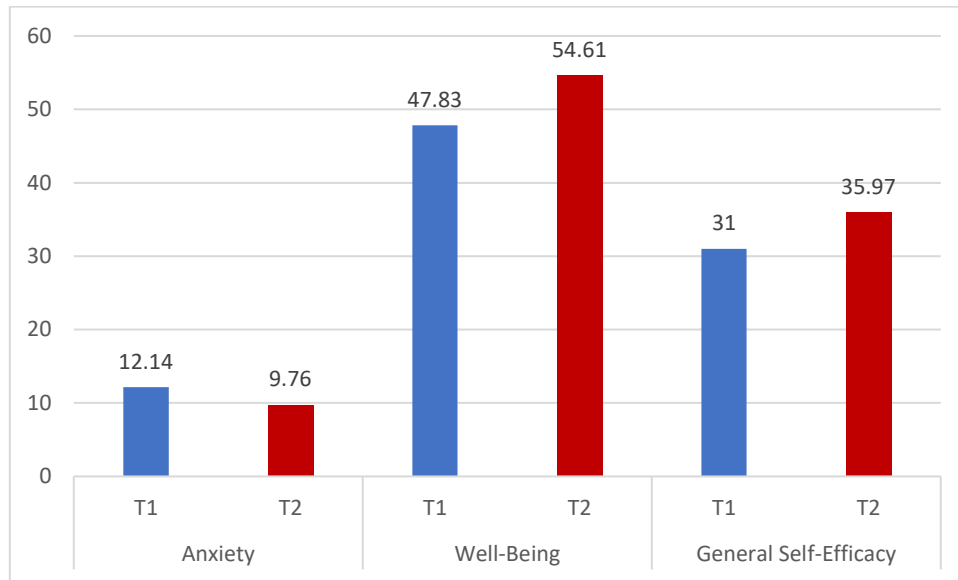


Figure 2 – Young person General Self-Efficacy, Well-Being, and Anxiety



NAME: Almira Ekundayo

AGE: 17

JOB: Front Desk Team Member

EMPLOYER: Leon

Circle Success Story

My journey finding a job before joining Circle Collective was very difficult and unsuccessful. I applied for jobs, but no one would get back to me. I was frustrated. I lost hope in finding a job I'd enjoy working in. I also had a lack of experience, which played a huge part as to why I was unemployed.

I then spoke to Shabina after seeing the poster in the shop window to join Circle Collective. I attended my induction, where I was introduced to the friendly and very support staff and officially joined the programme.

I worked a couple of shop shifts, which has helped me develop customer service skills, by interacting with customers for inquiries and handling purchases behind the till, learning about stock handling and replenishing. This also really boosted my confidence in talking to people and my confidence working on the till effectively. I also learnt shop standards and learnt a few other retail skills such as display related duties.

Furthermore, I then worked with Shabina for interview tips and practices. I have Dyslexia and can read better if the text is on a yellow background or printed on yellow paper. Shabina made sure that she always sent me emails and printed everything off in yellow and that was so helpful.

Overall, I can truly say that, with my experience given by Circle Collective and the support from Shabina with my Job Club and applications, I was ready to apply for jobs more effectively and was successful and I would recommend this programme.

Lewisham

Circle Collective in Lewisham covers Lewisham and the surrounding South London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Southwark, and Wandsworth. In 2021-22, Circle Collective Lewisham engaged with 133 young people, with an average age of 18.28 years, and an age range of 16 to 30 years old. There were 53 male young people and 80 female young people, who engaged with Circle Collective for an average of 49.67 hours, which included volunteering, training in confidence, personal presentation, and employability skill workshops, alongside paid work experience in the Circle Collective shop. Of the 133 young people engaged in the programme, 67 found employment (a success rate of 50.38%) and 34 went into education (a success rate of 25.56%). This means that Circle Collective Lewisham has a positive destination success rate of 75.94%. Of the participants entering employment, 6 went into full-time work with an average wage of £20,072, and 60 went into part-time work, with an average wage of £9,328.28.

The income tax rate is currently set at 20% at the basic level with a personal allowance of £12,750 per year⁸ whilst the rate for National Insurance is 12% paid on earnings above a primary threshold of £9,568⁹. Furthermore, the annual JSA payment for an individual is £4,004¹⁰. Therefore, in total, young people who took part in the programme contributed an additional £14,710 in tax and £19,167.30 in National Insurance contributions. With 50 of the young people working over 16 hours, the state has saved £200,200 in welfare costs. Additionally, the employability skills training is valued at £226.73¹¹ per young person, leading to saving of £30,155.09.

In total, Circle Collective Lewisham delivered a maximum financial saving to the UK state of £264,232.39. With an average funded placement cost of £737.88, the cost of the programme is £98,138.51 (see figure 3). This represents a social return on investment in the Lewisham Circle Collective of **£2.69/£1**.

⁸ HM Treasury data obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/income-tax-rates>

⁹ HMRC data obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions/rates-and-allowances-national-insurance-contributions>

¹⁰ Obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/jobseekers-allowance>

¹¹ These figures are based on rates published by www.CVconsultants.co.uk on preparing a CV and offering guidance



Figure 3: Lewisham Social Impact

The collected data related to participants General Self-Efficacy, Well-Being, and Anxiety also demonstrates the positive impact Circle Collective in Lewisham can have on its participants, including those who have not moved on to employment or education. All Well-Being and General Self-Efficacy scores improved +2.5 (4.98%) and +2.6 (8.33%) respectively, with anxiety levels decreasing -2.19 (16.10%), which are strong improvements for usually stable traits. This indicates that Circle Collective improved the confidence, motivations, self-esteem, and well-being of young people, strengthening their prospects in the job market. Figure 4 details these results:

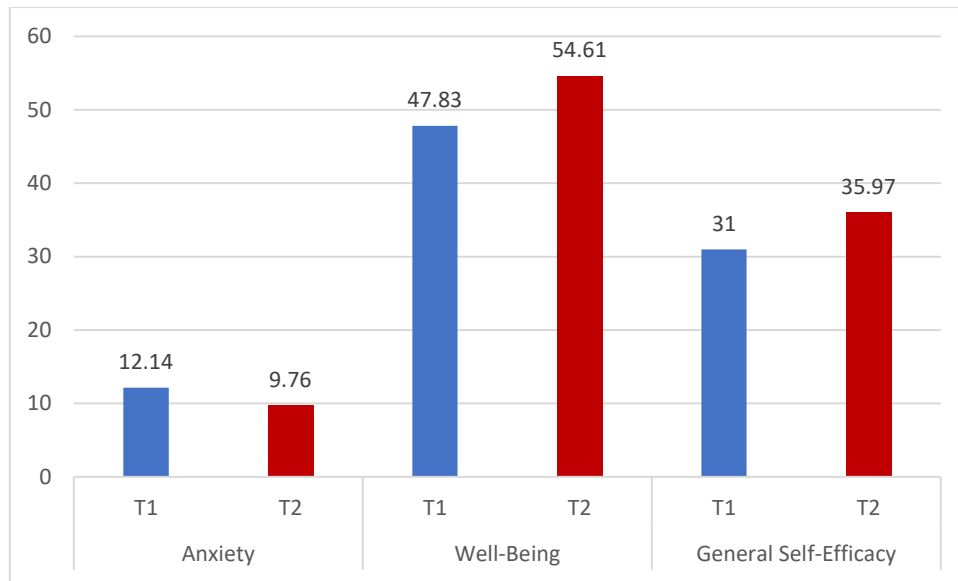
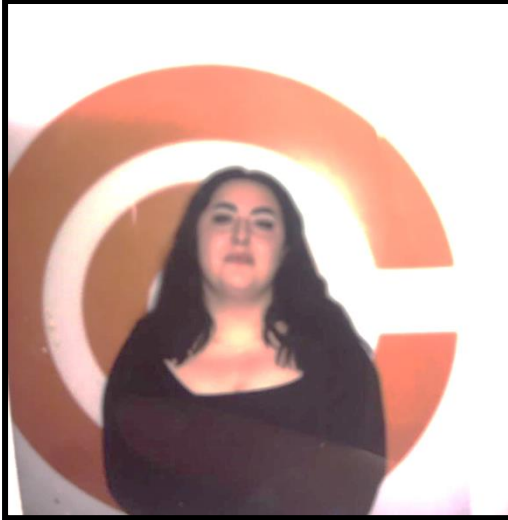


Figure 4 – Young person General Self-Efficacy, Well-Being, and Anxiety



NAME: Jeyda Gulu

AGE: 20

JOB: Waitress

EMPLOYER: Istanbul Restaurant

Circle Success Story

I was struggling finding a job and struggled with my confidence. I had been out of work for a year and had previously done hairdressing, which I really didn't enjoy. Seyda called and discussed the programme with me on the phone and I thought this would be helpful for me to find out what I really wanted to do.

I really enjoyed the shop shift and speaking with customers, I felt this helped me with my confidence and made me realise that I wanted to pursue a career within customer service. My weekly one-to-one and the different workshops that Seyda did with us were very helpful. Before being with Circle I didn't really know what you should include on your CV and cover letter. I always struggled going to interviews and having mock interviews really helped me prepare for them and understand what I should be mentioning.

After having a few interviews and not getting the job, my confidence began to drop, and I felt like I wasn't getting anywhere. However, Seyda was very supportive, and we printed a few copies of my CV, and we did a job club on the road, and I went and handed out my CV. I got invited for a trial shift and got the job that week.

I am very thankful to Circle as I wouldn't have had the confidence to keep looking for a job. I am now a waitress at Istanbul Restaurant, and I am very happy.

Corporate Volunteering Impact

Circle Collective delivers opportunities for corporate partners to engage in volunteering. This enables them to engage in staff development through individual volunteer placements, the provision of workshops, and contributes toward their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) targets. Data relating to the time spent by volunteers within Circle Collective has been captured as part of this research to demonstrate the value they bring to the organisation. Figure 5 illustrates these findings:



Figure 5: Volunteering Social Impact

The volunteering data shows that Circle Collective has helped facilitate 964 hours of corporate volunteering and work experience through its programme, with 113 individual volunteers contributing 964 hours through 6 corporate partners. This represents a CSR spend of £30,018.96¹² in added value that these corporations can claim as part of the CSR reporting. Whilst this is significant value for corporate partners, this can still be considered social impact delivered by Circle Collective due to the role played in facilitation and the offering of development opportunities to corporate staff.

¹² This is calculated at the average corporate volunteer hourly rate of £31.14 at full economic cost.



NAME: Leonard Calcott

AGE: 21

JOB: Accounting Assistant
Apprentice

EMPLOYER: Leathersellers
Federation

Circle Success Story

Before joining Circle Collective, I was studying for an AAT level 2 qualification and looking for an accounting apprenticeship. I was extremely shy and struggled in large groups. My Job Centre advisor told me about Circle Collective and then referred me over. I went into the Dalston branch the next day and that's where I met Seyda and she told me more about the program.

Whilst on the program, I would have shop shifts, job clubs, one-to-ones, and sometimes workshops. During these sessions, Seyda would support me in improving my CV, interview skills, and cover letter writing skills. Working on the shop floor allowed me to boost my confidence and transferable skills. My one-to-one sessions allowed me to develop my employability skills and Seyda was extremely supportive and really encouraged me to not give up and keep going.

Furthermore, being at Circle provided me with the opportunity to have a mock interview with Johnathan Howell the CFO at Sage, whereby he provided me with more insight into his career in accountancy, as well as giving me tips for my future interviews. He then offered me one week of work experience at Sage where I was able to work with multiple departments and gain an awareness of how they operate.

Through the Kickstart scheme, I then continued my journey with Circle as an admin assistant. As this was my first real job, it taught me what work life is, as well as helping me improve my administrative skills. Now I have an Accounting Apprenticeship, which I've always wanted.

Summary

This data continues to build on the previous evidence that Circle Collective produces positive outputs, outcomes, and impacts for its beneficiaries, partners, and society. In 2015/2016, the organisation generated £186,000 of social impact; in 2016/2017 it generated £233,000 of social impact; in 2017/2018 it generated £392,000 in social impact; in 2018/2019 it generated £625,708 of social impact; in 2019/2020 it generated £1,365,163.23 in a 6-month period, and finally in 2020/2021 it generated £292,254.85 following the COVID-19 pandemic. This year signals a return to year-on-year growth with **£563,562.51** in social impact. Figure 6 details the combined SROI across Dalston and Lewisham.

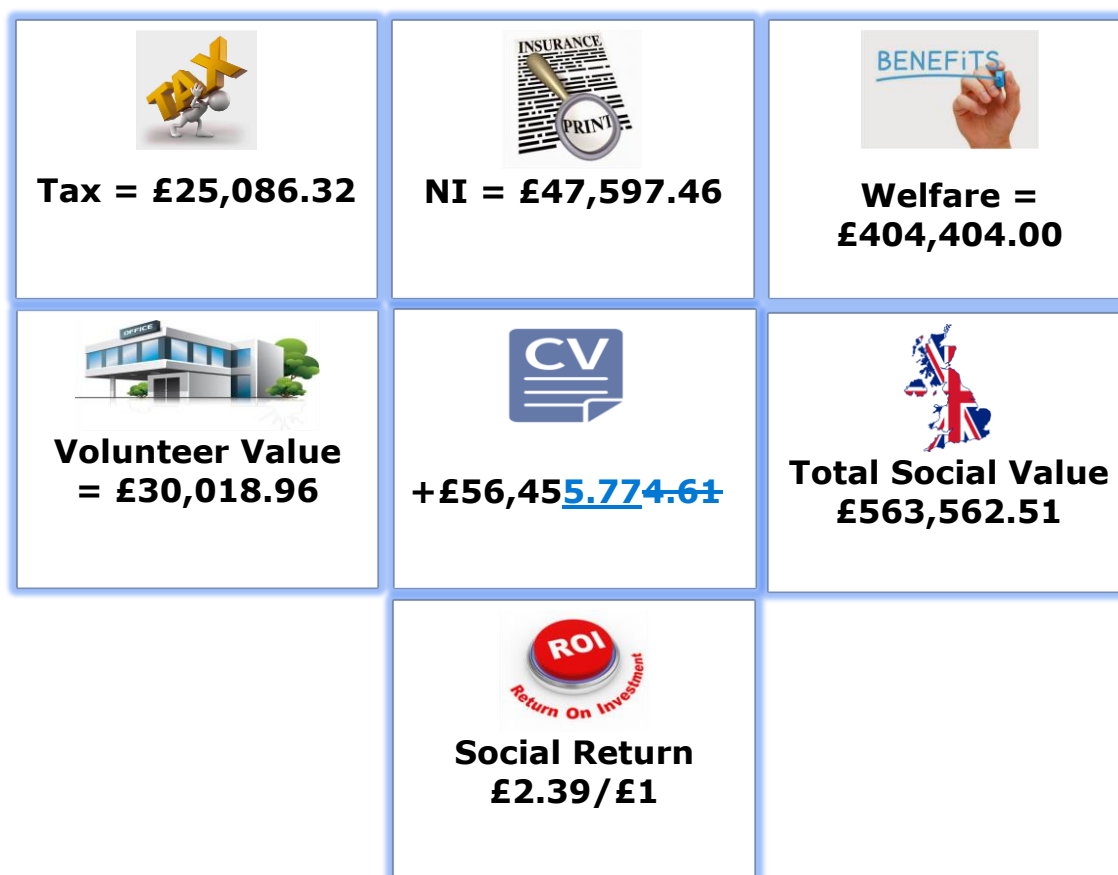


Figure 6: Combined Social Impact

Further to this, the overall programme cost can be re-calculated to focus on the funding received directly from the state, removing charity fundraising, grants, and corporate sponsorship. This reduces the total cost of the programme from £236,183.15, to £107,707.84, meaning if the SROI is calculated using just state funding, it is equal to **£5.23/£1**.

The collected data in relation to General Self-Efficacy, Well-Being, and Anxiety, also demonstrates that Circle Collective had a positive impact on the involved young people, regardless of whether they secured employment or entered education post-intervention. Well-Being (+4.64) and General Self-Efficacy scores (+3.78) greatly improved, and anxiety decreased by -2.28 points. This means that Circle Collective has improved the employability of the involved young people and empowered them in the job market. Figure 7 outlines this data.

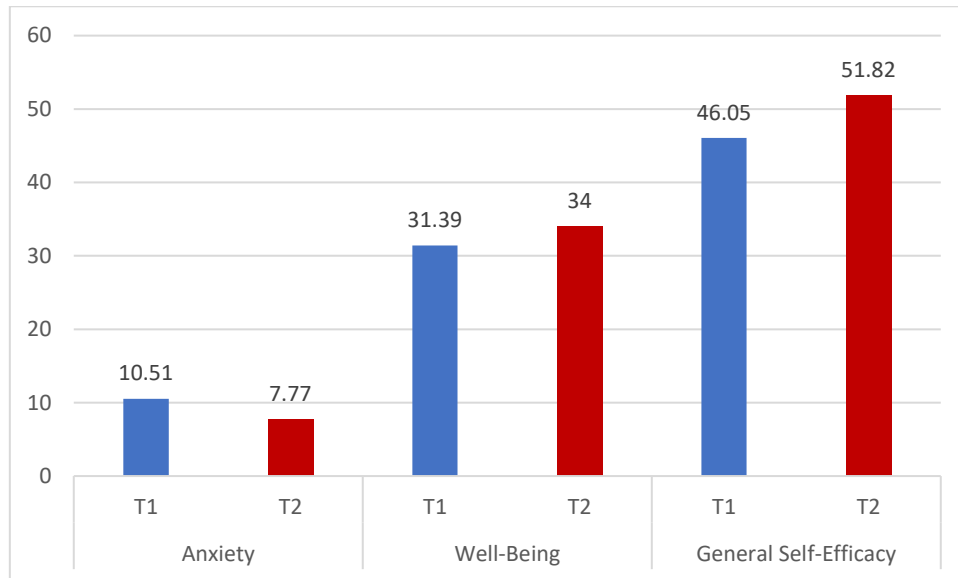


Figure 7: Combined impact on Anxiety, Well-Being, and General Self-Efficacy

An area for consideration is the investment into Lewisham, as although this store currently has a high SROI with higher positive destinations, only 3.76% of participants successful move into full-time work compared to 13.79% of Dalston participants. It is, therefore, worth exploring whether more targeted funding into this area may have an impact on employment outcomes.



NAME: James Jaghdar

AGE: 18

JOB: Sales Assistant

EMPLOYER: Clintons

Circle Success Story

I was tirelessly seeking and applying for part time jobs, but the search was draining as most vacancies required work experience that I did not yet have. I felt hopeless and needed support.

After seeing a sign in the Circle Collective Lewisham shop window and further, speaking to Shabina, I joined Circle collectives' program. I attended an induction where I was introduced to the staff and taught about the workspace.

I worked a shift, and this really helped develop my skills in retail and customer service. I gained these skills through talking with customers and assisting with payments behind the till. I also boosted my confidence and social interaction skills, which I lacked before joining this program. I also learned about stock related information and how to do things such as fold clothes in the correct way, to give to a customer or display.

Overall, I can truly say the experience with Circle Collective has been fantastic and I have learned skills that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

After working with Circle collective for just 2 weeks I was offered a job working at Clintons as a sales assistant, which I am extremely happy about.

Being a part of Circle Collective was one of the greatest decisions I have made. I was given huge amounts of support and experience throughout the program.

I thank Shabina for the support and push into finding a job, honestly, I couldn't have done it without her. Being a part of Circle Collective was truly brilliant.

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