

The pure Project

Support into education, training
and employment for people with
complex barriers



August 2023



European Union
European
Social Fund



Birmingham
City Council

pure
pathways to employment

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The PURE project is part-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). For more information about the ESF and the projects it funds in England please click [here](#).





The PURE Project is making a real difference for thousands of people across Birmingham. It has been fantastic to see the journeys that people have taken and the progress that has been made together. And 'together' is the key word here. PURE is a collective effort that unites so many great organisations around a shared purpose. Long may it continue.

Professor Graeme Betts CBE

Strategic Director for Adult Social Care, Birmingham City Council



It has been a real pleasure leading the PURE project over the last three years. So far we have helped almost 5,000 people in Birmingham with a range of barriers, providing individualised support towards education, training and employment. We're still open for registrations and would love to help as many people as we can.

Tabriz Hussain

PURE Project Manager, Birmingham City Council



It's helped me come out of my shell. Before that it was a struggle getting into work. I've been able to utilise the equipment that the project offers to do training courses and interviews, which has been a big bonus. I'm in employment now and it's thanks to the PURE Project.

Jamael

PURE Participant





The PURE project is here for some of Birmingham's most vulnerable citizens. We lay out the stepping stones towards education, training and employment, providing intensive support that's tailored for each individual.

A photograph of a man with a cochlear implant on his head, seen from the back. He is in a meeting with other people, some of whom are blurred in the background. A purple arrow-shaped graphic points to the right, containing the text 'Bespoke Support'.

Bespoke Support

PURE is a unique project that supports people over 25 who have complex needs with education, training or employment. The scheme is about building confidence, developing useful skills and helping people find new opportunities.

Commitment to the most vulnerable

The PURE project is for people furthest from the labour market. Each person that we work with has one or many complex barriers that make it difficult to find or retain employment. This includes physical barriers, mental health challenges and experiences in life that can hold people back.

What unites our participants is that they all have talent and potential. PURE helps build their confidence, develop their capabilities and open new opportunities that they might never have dreamed of. There can be adversities along the way. That's why the support can be so important.

Bespoke support

Each of our participants has their own unique circumstances and barriers that make accessing work difficult. PURE provides intensive wrap around support that is tailored for the needs of each individual.

It all begins with a chat and coffee. At the start of the process each participant is assigned an Intervention Worker. They'll sit down together and discuss life and ambitions. Together they'll then map out some achievable steps and go from there. There's lots of choice so this could be anything from an ESOL class to a jobs club. If all goes well, then great. We'll start to discuss wider opportunities and pathways. If not, we'll be there to provide additional support.

Who we work with...

- ▶ Vulnerably housed or risk of homelessness
- ▶ Women fleeing domestic abuse
- ▶ Offenders and those at risk of offending
- ▶ Mental health conditions
- ▶ Physical and sensory disabilities
- ▶ Learning disabilities / difficulties and autism

The right path for each individual

The PURE Project offers an extensive range of services through its providers and partners. These can be customised to the needs of the individual.

Building a solid foundation

We offer a range of supported learning opportunities through Fircroft College, the Birmingham Adult Education Service and others. Want to learn English as a foreign language or explore social care as a career choice? We've got the course for you.

Developing know-how

PURE can support participants onto training courses and to earn qualifications. These can be really valuable on the journey towards work and can do wonders for self-belief. Lots of courses are covered, including forklift certification and HGV driving qualifications.

The right opportunity

From initial chats about potential career paths right the way through to interview prep and support on the job for the first few weeks. We help participants find and prepare for the opportunity that's right for them. This includes voluntary, part-time and full-time work. We've also just launched our exciting new pre-traineeships scheme, offering paid experience for up to three months.



Training



Employment



Education



Delivering in Partnership

The PURE project brings people and organisations together to ensure the best possible support for each individual on their journey. The scheme is delivered by nine providers, each a specialist in supporting people with a specific set of barriers.

Reaching out to vulnerable families in Tyseley with Shelter



A shared purpose

We believe that to really be effective in helping people with complex barriers, a joined up approach between public, private and voluntary sectors is essential. PURE brings together the funding, governance, specialist experience, support networks and local community necessary to help vulnerable citizens in Birmingham make sustainable progress on their journey towards employment.

Nine specialist providers

Each of our providers brings extensive knowledge of their cohort and a specialism around their specific barriers. They work directly with participants from the onboarding stage, providing one-to-one support throughout their time with PURE.

Connected into the community

PURE works closely with community organisations and individuals across Birmingham, particularly the Neighbourhood Network Schemes. This allows us to better understand and serve our participants in their local community. This also enables us to work with our referral partners to ensure a smooth transition onto the project for participants.

Managing authority and project leadership



Specialist delivery partners



pure

Working together for the people that matter

International funding support



Referrals and support network

Friends, family & carers

Education & training providers

Citizens' bodies

Charities

Employers



Bridging the gap

One of our roles is to bring participants and employers together. It's a chance to share ideas, ask questions, get hands-on experience and build confidence for the next step. Medequip, here giving a demonstration of job roles, has been a fantastic partner for the project.



Helping Otis rebuild his life



It's been an absolute pleasure having Otis on the programme with FareShare. He has remained positive and made fantastic progress.

"I went through a very difficult time a few years ago. I suffered from severe bouts of depression and became isolated from my family and friends. [After I joined PURE] my confidence and self-esteem grew and I started to get more involved."

Since joining PURE, Otis has earned a qualification in logistics and storage, gained a forklift licence and secured a paid job.



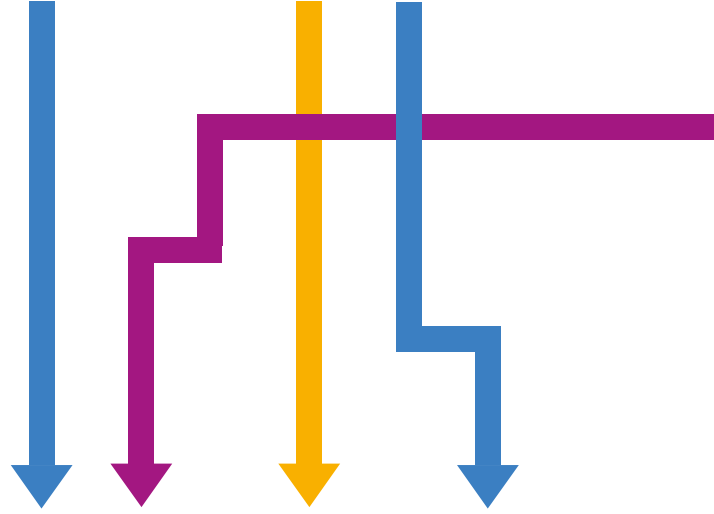
Supporting Ayan back into employment



Ayan has always had plenty of ambition and confidence. After discovering PURE at a recruitment event she signed herself up and was eager to get started straight away. Ayan discussed life ambitions and career opportunities with her PURE employment coach and developed her CV. She also took part in 'Suited for Success', a scheme to help people look their best for interviews.

The team at Trident Reach saw something special and asked Ayan to interview for one of their own positions. She made a great impression and is now an intervention worker, helping people on their journeys.

PURE has helped almost 5,000 people facing barriers. Each has their own story.



A big moment

David's learning difficulties had really affected his self-confidence. Although he wanted to work, he wasn't sure he had what it took and didn't know where to start. After signing up for PURE with Midland Mencap he joined a course at Fircroft College.

While on the course David got increasingly involved in discussions and became more sure of himself. The graduation ceremony at the end of the course was a wonderful moment for him. It was the first time he had experienced anything like this since primary school and he even felt confident enough to give a presentation. David has since gone on to volunteer with Medequip.

Feeling safe and secure

Jane (not her real name) is a victim of domestic abuse and a mother of young children. She was keen to work and needed an opportunity that could fit around her family life. This would help her recover from her past trauma and create stability for the home.

Through PURE Jane was shortlisted for a new job role, with BSWA helping to prepare her for the interview, including a mock interview and a makeover. Jane felt confident for her interview and was offered the role an hour later! Jane felt she would not have been successful without the encouragement and support.



Ready for the holidays

Natalie wanted to transition from voluntary work into paid employment. She met a PURE intervention worker at Trident Reach while attending a job club. Natalie was supported with CV writing, with a focus on highlighting the skills she'd gained through her invaluable voluntary experience. Once ready, she shared her CV with the local B&M store who were recruiting for Christmas staff vacancies.

Natalie was offered an interview and impressed the employer so much that she was offered the job then and there!

Cooking up a treat

Mark is a talented chef. He'd had work in the past but had fallen on harder times. "I got in a rut and became complacent. I didn't have any work." After bumping into a PURE intervention worker from Cranstoun on the bus he was quick to sign up.

Mark received a lot of encouragement and support looking for opportunities, getting to interviews and purchasing kitchen equipment. As a result he was able to secure a position as a Head Chef at a restaurant in Jersey - quite an achievement!



Great with people

Sam (not her real name) has learning disabilities and struggled finding work. Birmingham Rathbone helped her create a CV which was presented at job clubs and submitted online on employment portals. She was also supported with financial advice to ensure her housing benefit and Universal Credit claim remains unaffected.

After receiving interview requests Sam was supported with interview preparations. She was very happy to secure a people-facing role in customer service. Rathbone kept in touch to make sure she settled in well.

Two steps forward

Nathan's story is one of perseverance. He originally joined PURE in its first phase but had to leave after being sectioned and admitted to hospital for mental health support. Once able to, he re-joined the project, worked on his CV and searched for opportunities with his employment coach.

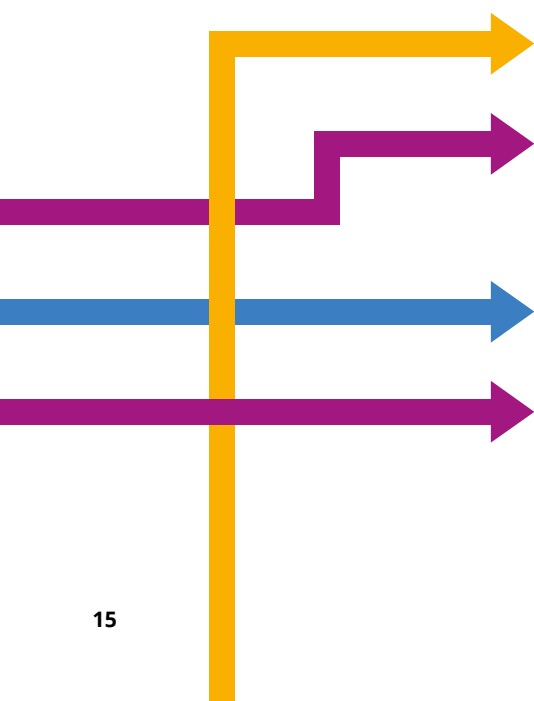
Despite several unsuccessful applications, with the support by his side he kept at it and ultimately secured a six-month contract. In the new job he did really well and the contract has since been extended.

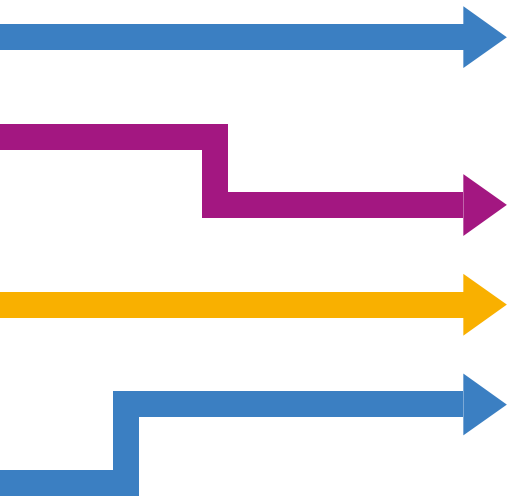
Life in the UK

Since arriving in the UK from Romania, Ioana (not her real name) had stayed at home and felt a little isolated. Childcare, COVID-19 and language barriers had all made finding work difficult. Through FareShare she signed up to the PURE project, starting as a volunteer in the warehouse.

"They accepted me, they were very friendly and tried to help me...it was more than perfect."

Ioana took courses in food hygiene as well as health and safety. She even gained a certification to drive a forklift truck so she could help out when needed. Ioana now has her perfect job, working part-time in a place she loves with plenty of time to spend with her son.





Building blocks

Michael (not his real name) had gained some really good experience working for the family business. After it went through a difficult period and had to close, his confidence took a big hit. Together with the PURE team at Birmingham Rathbone he worked on an Action Plan and crafted his CV.

He first secured a voluntary position, where he made such a good impression that it was turned into a paid job. Over a year later he is still in the role and has increased his hours. The team still like to keep in touch to hear how its going.

Experience at a law firm

Kieran is hard of hearing and uses a combination of lip-reading and speech to communicate. Previously a mail sorter, Kieran asked for help finding voluntary or paid employment. BID Services helped Kieran plan next steps by putting an Action Plan together with him. They tailored his CV to better suit the roles he was after and arranged a meeting with BITC so that Kieran can discuss work placements.

While he was unfamiliar with preparing for formal meetings, it was a huge success – Kieran attended the meeting on time, dressed appropriately and had an informal business discussion. BITC were impressed with him and offered Kieran a placement at a law firm, which has been a hugely rewarding experience.

Finding stability

Marcus had held several temporary jobs over the years, constantly struggling financially and unable to understand the sanctions frequently applied to his benefits. All of this created a lot of instability and confusion in his life.

With the support of PURE, Marcus was helped in securing training and a paid role that matched his skills, interests, and availability around family responsibilities. For the first time in his adult life, he has a secure income, a stable job and does not need to worry about confusing letters about his benefits.

Many of the PURE intervention workers have lived experience of the same barriers that can hold people back.

Come along to one of our events to hear their stories and learn about the support PURE can provide.







A safe haven for learning

Did you know there are only two adult residential colleges in all of England? One of them is a PURE partner in Selly Oak.

Fircroft College offers an extensive range of courses in a supportive and beautiful setting.

They have enabled hundreds of PURE participants to build their confidence, develop their skills and gain certificates.

It really is a wonderful place to get away from it all and focus on learning.



The value of self-belief

Confidence can go a long way. In our work we help our participants to see the amazing talent that they already have. We're there to give a helping hand and lay out the stepping stones that are right for them.



Measuring our Impact

The PURE project is helping almost 5,000 people in Birmingham with complex barriers towards education, training and employment. The scheme has made a measurable impact on peoples' lives and the communities that they live in.

Changing thousands of lives

The main project outcomes are defined by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) around the pathway to employment. These cover the numbers into education, training and employment upon leaving the project. Additional targets are set around specific cohorts including people over 50.

As we serve a diverse range of people furthest from the labour market, we are also conscious of the less tangible outcomes that enable the journey to be a success, including confidence and wellbeing.

Data Collection

Our providers share quarterly updates on the key outcome measures. These are collated into a central dashboard.

One of the key ways that we measure our success is to listen directly to our participants. We run one-to-one evaluation sessions on-site at each of our providers. The results provide a qualitative insight into the lives of our participants and their experience on the project.

The results collected to date have been very positive and promising. Wider insight will be shared as part of the summary report at the end of the project.

Impact beyond PURE

The outcomes for our participants are an important step in their journey towards employment. When they exit the scheme our providers still like to check in where they can to hear about how things are going and make sure they're doing well.

Performance to Date

Achieved
(30th June 2023)

Snapshot of our participants

Total Participants receiving support (O1)	4417
Unemployed, including long term unemployed (ESF CO01)	1819
Inactive (ESF CO03)	2598
Participants with disabilities (ESF CO16)	2645
Participants over 50 years of age (O4)	906
Participants who are ethnic minorities (O5)	2272

Results upon leaving PURE

Participants in education / training (ESF CR02)	837
Unemployed participants into employment inc. self-employment (R1)	165
Inactive participants into employment or job search (R2)	194

The voice of our participants

Based on feedback from participant interviews

Positive experience with PURE	100%
Positive experience with provider	100%
Would recommend PURE to someone in a similar position	100%



Digital Inclusion Programme

The PURE Digital Inclusion programme helps people access the amazing education, training and employment opportunities available online. It is a £500,000 initiative that will help address the digital divide for the most vulnerable in Birmingham.

Narrowing the digital divide

In recent years significant progress has been made to narrow the digital divide in the West Midlands. However 22% of people are still offline, the highest proportion in the country¹. Among more vulnerable communities including the elderly and people with learning difficulties, the rate is significantly higher. This creates barriers to accessing the services and opportunities available online, from banking through to job hunting.

The PURE Digital Inclusion Programme supports the vision of the Birmingham Digital Inclusion Strategy. The ambition is to build a fully inclusive digital city, where everyone has the confidence, skills and capacity to access the services and information they need to thrive and live their lives to their full potential in an increasingly digital world.

What's on offer

The programme has been designed to overcome the multiple barriers that vulnerable people may face. There are three aspects to the scheme.

The first is a lending library. PURE is lending over 500 devices to participants, including high-spec laptops and peripherals for up to six months, depending on need.

Second, through our partners at Fircroft College and XMA we are offering an extensive range of courses. These cover general skills to make the most of the online world, as well as specific guidance to build familiarity with the technology.

Third, we have set up a range of digital inclusion hubs and job clubs through our providers and partners. These are an opportunity to learn together in person, with support from a professional.

How to apply

The Digital Inclusion Programme is open to registered PURE participants. Applications are made through an employment coach at the provider organisations. An evaluation will then be made on the need and the duration.

If you have any questions about the scheme please get in touch at Ekta.Uppal@birmingham.gov.uk

500+

Devices in Lending Library

including...

- ▶ Laptops and tablets
- ▶ Wireless routers and specialist equipment
- ▶ Monitors, accessories and bags

40+

Modules and Courses

including...

- ▶ Online interview practice
- ▶ Finding jobs and training online
- ▶ Introduction to the Essential Digital Skills Qualification

9

Digital Inclusion Hubs

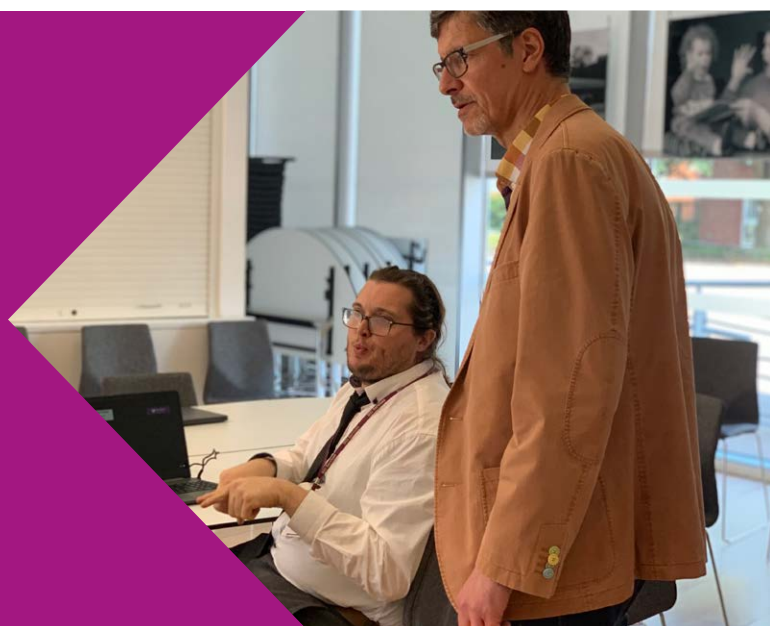
including...

- ▶ Weoley Castle Community Centre
- ▶ Hutton Hall Community Centre
- ▶ Gas Street Church

The PURE project is proud to work alongside a range of partners on digital inclusion including Digital Birmingham and AbilityNet.

<https://digitalbirmingham.co.uk>

<https://abilitynet.org.uk>





Insight and Opportunity

In order to build an inclusive city it is essential to provide additional support for people furthest from the labour market. Over the past two years the team at PURE and its providers have gained considerable insight into the merits of different approaches and best practice.

Employment in Birmingham

The unadjusted claimant count in Birmingham stood at 63,090 in June 2023, 11.5% of the economically active population and 8.6% of the working age population¹. Combined with the cost of living crisis, high rates of unemployment are posing considerable financial and wellbeing challenges for the most vulnerable in Birmingham.

The disability employment gap

Many of the people we support have a disability or impairment. They face a combination of barriers including stigma and unconscious bias that result in a disability employment gap, the difference in employment rates, and a disability pay gap. At PURE we work with the individual and employers to help narrow this divide.

- ▶ 21% of working adults reported a disability²
- ▶ 42% of these people report a mental health impairment²
- ▶ 33,890 households in Birmingham have two or more disabled people³
- ▶ 43% are economically inactive, compared to 14.8% of the wider population⁴
- ▶ 7.2% unemployment rate, compared to 3.2% of the wider population⁴

Only 1.4% of adults in Birmingham with learning disabilities are in paid employment⁵

¹ Birmingham City Council, Claimant Count Unemployment Monthly Update - June 2023 data

² Department for Work and Pensions, Family Resources Survey: financial year 2020 to 2021

³ Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

⁴ Department for Work and Pensions, Employment of Disabled People 2022

⁵ NHS England, Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England

The value of targeted intervention

Supporting people into employment can generate significant savings for the Exchequer through taxation, national insurance contributions and reductions in universal credit payments. This can be as much as £19,009 per individual with income in the 30th percentile.

Source: based on calculations by Birmingham City Council.

Potential saving for the exchequer

Average Earnings (30th percentile)	£19,392
Benefit Savings	£15,406
Total Tax & NI Generated	£3,603
Total Net Savings per Person	£19,009

Supporting people with complex barriers

Listening closely to our participants we have gained a lot of key learnings. Four key principles have stood out the most:

①

Build around the individual

Each person has their own context and combination of barriers. To achieve sustainable outcomes we recommend targets, pathways and activities that are attainable and achieve buy-in from the individual at each stage.

③

Importance of resilience

Progress towards employment is rarely simple or linear. It's valuable to build resilience in both the individual and the support offered. Contingencies are a must.

②

Community and co-creation

Joined up support with the community, family, institutions and employers brings significant advantages, from awareness and service planning right through to achieving sustainable outcomes.

④

By your side

A friendly face can go a long way. Keeping the support personal with a human touch can keep people engaged even when they are going through difficult times.



The Future of PURE

The PURE Project is changing. From early 2024 onwards we will have new funding partners and a more targeted eligibility criteria for participants. We will continue to support the most vulnerable in Birmingham together with a range of specialist providers and partners.

Secured funding

The PURE project has secured funding from The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to continue operating from April 2024 through to March 2025, within the People and Skills Pillar. This will enable the project to continue contributing towards the Council's corporate plan for a prosperous and inclusive Birmingham.

In the interim period from January to March 2024, existing PURE resources will be used to fund services.

For more information about the UKSPF investment in Birmingham please click [here](#).

Building on our legacy

The PURE project has established a network of support within communities for the most vulnerable in society. We work across the city and have seen particular success in some of the most deprived wards.

Moving forward we will continue to draw upon this depth of experience and insight, acting as a knowledge hub for how best to support people on the journey towards education, training and employment.

From 2024 onwards our core focus will remain on supporting people furthest from the labour market with complex barriers. The overall scale and scope of the project will be refined to reflect our updated resources and budgets. The planning for this is underway and we will be able to share more details in the second half of 2023.



Priorities into 2024

①

Continued focus on the most vulnerable

Our core focus will remain on supporting the most vulnerable towards education, training and employment.

Specific guidance on eligibility will be published in due course. This is expected to include people aged 25 plus who are inactive and are not currently looking for work.

③

Specialist providers offering bespoke support

We will continue working with specialist delivery providers, each with a strong knowledge of their cohort. The discussions with individual providers are currently underway and being reviewed.

②

Wrap around intensive support

We will continue to provide bespoke support that is tailored for the needs of the individual. This will include offering a variety of services that build capabilities and confidence, as well as opening new opportunities.

④

Smooth transition for existing participants

Gradations of support will be provided for individuals where suitable during wind down at the end of 2023 and the transitional period. Eligibility will then be evaluated against the new criteria.



Fighting for a common cause

PURE brings together lots of fantastic organisations and individuals to help support people with barriers. This approach helps to ensure we join the dots and can provide the right support at the right time for every one of our participants.

NHS

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Health Union
London
April 2016

Birmingham
City Council

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We are
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We offer:





Governance and Accountability

The PURE project is committed to delivering an effective service for our participants and the people of Birmingham. We have strong oversight and governance measures in place, with the voice of our participants at the core of everything we do.

Inclusion and co-design

PURE is a collaborative project built around the individual needs and pathways of our participants. The scope, strategy and implementation have been co-designed with our providers, partners and participants. This is core to how PURE operates.

The Care Act

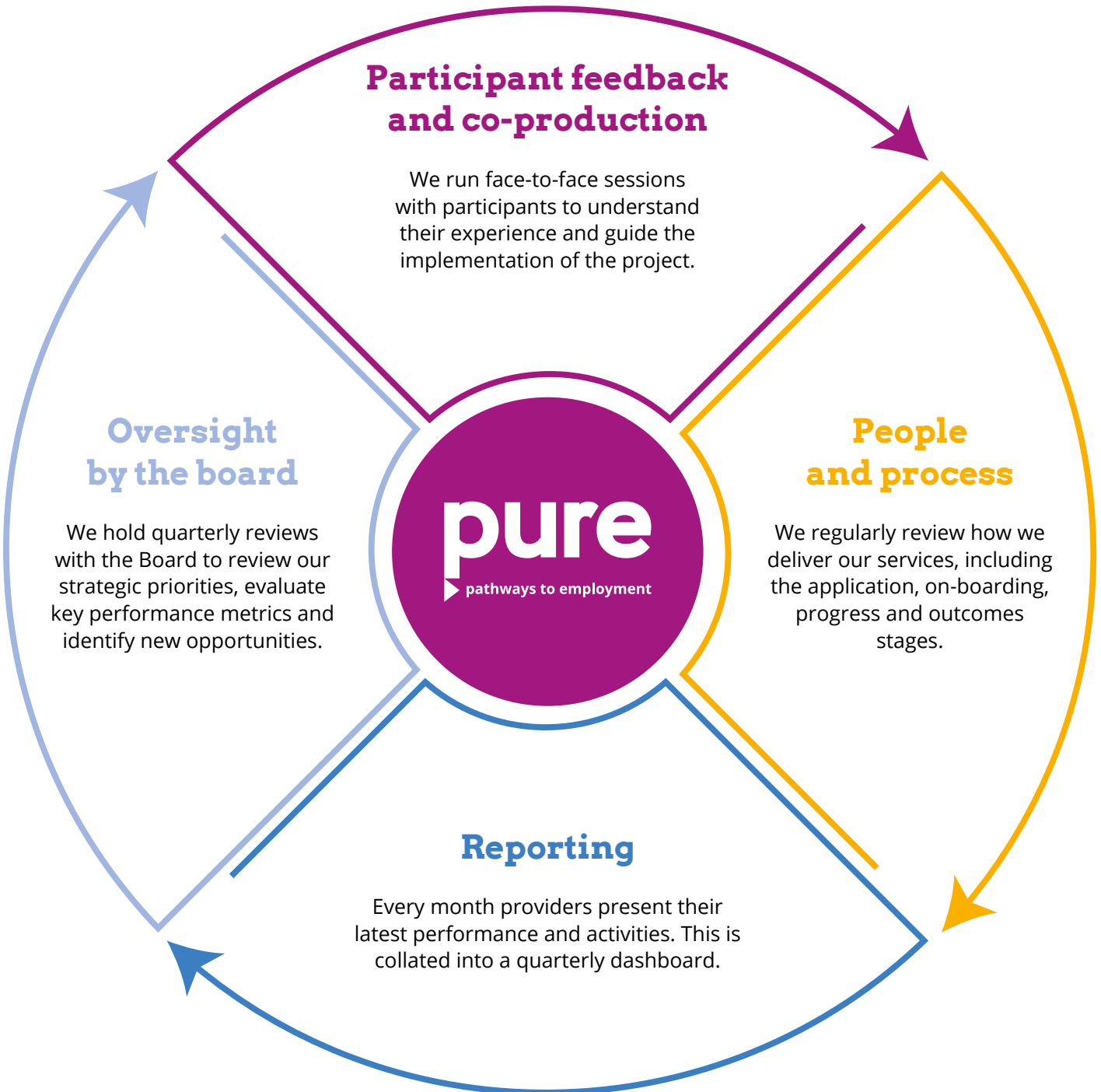
The PURE project is fully aligned with the principles of the Care Act 2014. This helps to ensure that care and support are clearer and fairer, and puts our participants in control of their own lives. We hold regular sessions with our providers to review how the principles are carried into service delivery.



The PURE project delivers an essential service for some of the most vulnerable in Birmingham. It has already helped thousands of people towards education, training and employment.

Mariam Khan
Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care

Our Governance Model



We take a rigorous approach to data collection and performance evaluation. This incorporates insight from providers, participants and partners, includes regular team planning sessions and briefing updates to the Adult Social Care Directorate.



Come meet us

We love meeting people and hearing their stories. If you are interested in finding out more about the PURE project, meeting our specialist providers or having a bit of taster then please get in touch. We have a busy schedule of events ahead so it would be great to see you there.

What's happening

PURE run regular events to give a flavour of what's on offer. These are each focused around a specific barrier from mental health to housing issues. They are a chance to meet the team in a supportive setting, have your say on important topics, sign up if you're interested and grab some lunch.

We are also regularly out in the community and at partner events. Follow us on social media to find out more.

The Awards are coming

We will soon be hosting a fantastic celebration of all that our participants have achieved. It is a going to be a big, fun and enjoyable day. Make sure to book your place. All are welcome!

How to stay in touch

If you are interested in the project or would like to ask some questions you can reach us directly by phone and email. We'll do our best to respond as quickly as possible.

We are now also on Connect to Support and lots of different social media platforms.

[Connect to Support](#)

 **0121 675 2609**

 **BirminghamPURE@birmingham.gov.uk**

 **www.birmingham.gov.uk/birmingham_pure**



The next PURE events

Thursday 24th August 2023

Come along to learn about the employment support available for people with barriers. There'll be stalls, sessions, fun and food.

The **NHS**, **Amazon** and **Nuffield Health** will all be there.

For more information and to sign up visit:

PureCranstoun.eventbrite.co.uk
[Click here](#)

CRANSTOUN
Empowering People, Empowering Change



September 2023

A day of celebration for our amazing participants, providers and partners. More details will be announced shortly.

Awards ceremony

October 2023

Come along to learn about the support available for people who have experienced domestic violence or abuse.



If your organisation is interested in running a joint event or attending as a partner, please contact shamas.khan@birmingham.gov.uk.



Apply to pure

Applications are open now for the PURE project. We can support people with a range of barriers across Birmingham towards education, training and employment. If you are interested in applying or finding out more get in touch today!

How to apply

Please head over to the PURE project pages on the Birmingham City Council website. You'll find lots of information about the project, the application form and contact details. You just need to fill in the form and send it over to us by email or post.

We accept applications directly from individuals, as well as referrals from partner organisations, guardians and family members where authorised to do so.

We can also offer assistance with the application. Give us a call or an email and we will be in touch.

▶ Step 1

Go to:

www.birmingham.gov.uk/birmingham_pure

▶ Step 2

Check eligibility criteria & download the form

▶ Step 3

Send the form to:

BirminghamPURE@birmingham.gov.uk

What happens next

After you've submitted the form we'll send you a confirmation email. We'll then contact you as soon as possible to let you know if you've been accepted. Depending on the situation we will also notify the referral partner.



Eligibility

The PURE project is for people with one or many barriers to finding work. If you're interested in taking part, you must be:

- ▶ Aged 25 or above
- ▶ A Birmingham resident
- ▶ Unemployed or inactive seeking employment
- ▶ Not supported by another European Social Fund (ESF) project
- ▶ Have the legal right to live or work in the UK for the duration of the project support

If you're not sure if you're right for the scheme, contact us and we can discuss your situation. We can also check for you if you're part of another ESF funded project.

Please note, the eligibility criteria for 2024 onwards are being reviewed.

Feeling tech savvy? Use the QR code here.

Hold the camera on your phone up to the screen. Some text will pop up. Click the button and it will take you straight to content about PURE on the Birmingham City Council website and the application form.





There are lots of ways to stay in touch and up to date.



0121 675 2609



BirminghamPURE@birmingham.gov.uk



www.facebook.com/birminghampure



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