**Summary of results – Borough Employment and Skills Services Survey 2022/23**

**Background and methodology**

In March 2023, London Councils surveyed London boroughs about their employment and skills services, and how these have changed to promote good quality working practices and respond to skills shortages in the capital. The results are compared where applicable with similar surveys in 2021/22 and 2020/21.

The 2022/23 survey has responses from all London boroughs and the City of London – a response rate of 100%. However, not all boroughs responded to all questions so the response rate for each question is indicated where relevant.

**Executive summary**

The vast majority of London boroughs (88%) provide a local employment support service. On average, a borough’s estimated annual budget for employment services was £1,396,929 – slightly less than their budget in 2021/22 (£1,538,826). However, it varied between £75,000 and £5.4m. Boroughs identified Section 106 (69%), core council spending (48%) and the European Social Fund (ESF - 59%) as key sources of funding for their employment services.

In terms of staff, on average boroughs employ 22 people, ranging from a borough employing one and another employing 70 staff members. The number of people using borough employment services annually also ranges significantly between 230 and 3,200, with an average of 1,533.

There was a slight expansion in the resources boroughs have put into their job brokerage schemes and the number of Londoners they have been serving. In total, London boroughs spend £39,114,000 (in 2021/22 = £35,393,000)[[1]](#footnote-1) on their employment services, employ 660 (2021/22 = 683) staff members and support 42,930 Londoners. This is slightly lower than the numbers reported the previous year (44,274).

The most common services offered by all, or most boroughs include access to local vacancies (100%), interview preparation/coaching (100%), help with CV and job applications (100%), employment advisors (97%) and support to improve skills (93%).

***Local skills and labour market shortages and the government's Plan for Jobs***

The vast majority of London borough officers (85%) said that they changed their employment service in response to local skills and labour market shortages in the last year. Many did so by building wider partnerships and networks to strengthen links with local employers (93%), working with employers to fill vacancies in growing/resilient sectors (82%) and adjusting careers advice and guidance to connect people with in-demand jobs (71%).

Most London boroughs also continue to engage with the government’s Plan for Jobs and other government support. The most common elements of the Plan adopted by boroughs included Multiply (67%), Sector Based Work Academies (67%), apprenticeships support (57%), Restart (43%) and Youth Hubs (43%).

***No Wrong Door, good work and top priority services***

London Councils and the GLA’s ‘No Wrong Door’ programme tackles the fragmentation of employment and skills provision in London. There are currently a lot of employment programmes delivered not only by JCP/DWP, but also by SRPs and the boroughs. Due to fragmentation of this provision, it’s difficult for Londoners to access the right provision at the right time. The ‘No Wrong Door’ approach attempts to remedy this problem by joining up provision so that there is no wrong door into good work for anyone.

All London boroughs (100%) have been involved locally or sub-regionally in developing a ‘No Wrong Door’ approach. Examples include participating in networks of other employment practitioners (91%), closer interaction with adult learning providers and employers (85%), mapping customer journeys to improve access to services (58%), and developing a digital platform to guide people to the right services (58%). This suggests that work to expand the ‘No Wrong Door’ approach across London is building on existing local activity.

Most boroughs (97%) also adopted measures to promote good quality working practices at a local level, such as promoting the London Living Wage (100%), via their employment services (72%), promoting the Mayor's Good Work Standard (69%), and using the borough's procurement policy to promote good work (69%).

All (100%) of the boroughs with an employment service said that their Adult and Community Learning Service (ACL) is linked, and two-thirds (67%) said they provide skills support to residents in addition to the ACL service.

In terms of key priorities to support residents into employment, London boroughs identified developing a 'No Wrong Door' approach to the delivery of employment and skills services alongside health, housing, and other wraparound support; supporting residents into growing and priority sectors, tackling economic inactivity and labour market inequality, and encouraging employers to provide good quality working practices.

On working with DWP, boroughs reported good working relationships with room for improvement. Priorities included increasing transparency and communication around referrals in JCP, more opportunities for co-design and co-commissioning of programmes and more data sharing between parties.

**Providing an employment service**

Four in five borough respondents (88%) provide a local employment service – a very similar proportion to what boroughs indicated in 2021/22 (91%) and 2020/21 (88%). Of the four boroughs that do not provide a local employment service[[2]](#footnote-2), three signpost to other employment services. Of the boroughs that provide an employment service, seven in ten (79%) deliver it in-house – a higher proportion than the one recorded in 2021/22 (75%) and much higher than that recorded in 2020/21 (54%).This shows that borough services in London continue to recover and that there is a renewed focus on employment in the past year.

Under one in ten boroughs (7%) solely commission out their service to another organisation, while one in ten (14%) have both an in-house and commissioned service.

***Figure 1. How does your borough deliver its local employment support service; commissioned or in-house?***

Base: 29 responses.

**Funding**

On average, a borough’s estimated annual budget for their employment services in 2022/23 was £1,396,929 – just under their budget in 2021/22 (£1,538,826). However, this varied largely with a range between £75,000 and £5.4m. In total, London boroughs spent £39,114,000 on their employment services in 2022/23 – almost £4 million more than their spend in 2021/22 (£35,393,000).[[3]](#footnote-3)

Boroughs’ spend on their employment services has progressively been increasing in the last three years, which is likely in response to the rising unemployment caused by the pandemic, and a more recent focus on the economically inactive. The proportion of boroughs that spent more than a million increased from 36% in 2020/21 to 57% in 2021/22, and has settled at this proportion (57%) in 2022/23. In 2022/23, a quarter (25%) of boroughs spent less than £500,000 on their employment services and close to a fifth (18%) spent between £500,000 and a £1 million.

Boroughs identified Section 106 (69%), the European Social Fund (ESF - 59%) and core council spending (48%) as key sources of funding for their employment services. This is somewhat concerning as the ESF will come to an end this year and there are government proposals to replace Section 106 with a National Infrastructure Levy. This could have a severe impact on many councils’ ability to fund an employment service. Other sources of funding mentioned by borough respondents included DWP, GLA funded programmes, the Community Infrastructure Levy and COVID-19 grants.

***Figure 2. What is your estimated annual budget for your employment services?***

Base: 28 responses in 2022/23, 23 responses in 2021/22 and 25 responses in 2020/21.

**Employment services size and scope**

On average, boroughs employ 22 staff in their local employment services[[4]](#footnote-4). However, this ranges widely with one borough employing 70 staff members, and another employing only one. A third (33%) of the boroughs surveyed employ less than 10 people and just over a fifth (23%) employ between 10 and 20 people. The majority (43%) of London boroughs employed over 20 staff members in their local employment services in 2022/23, a smaller proportion than that in 2021/22 (56%), but greater than that of 2020/21 (29%). In total, boroughs employed 660 staff members across London in 2022/23 – slightly fewer than the number in 2021/22 (683) but almost double the figure recorded in 2020/21 (387).

***Figure 3. How many FTE staff are employed in your borough’s service?***

Base: 30 responses in 2022/23, 27 responses in 2021/22 and 24 responses in 2020/21.

Boroughs were asked to estimate the number of people using their service every year. This ranged between 230 and 3,200. On average, boroughs’ employment services had 1,533 people accessing them in 2022/23 – a slightly lower number than the average for 2021/22 (1703). In total, boroughs supported 42,930 Londoners in 2022/23 – slightly lower than the number reported in 2021/22 (44,274).

**Services provided**

London Councils asked boroughs what range of help they provide as part of their employment support services. The majority of boroughs surveyed offer most of the services listed in the survey, suggesting that they offer a flexible approach for people with different needs.

The most common services offered by boroughs include access to local vacancies (100%), interview preparation/job coaching (100%), help with CV and job applications (100%), employment advisors (97%), support to improve skills (93%), support around apprenticeships (93%), and support and advice to employers (93%).

A tenth (14%) of the boroughs surveyed also offer services beyond those suggested in the survey, including:

* Connections with other services, including housing
* Health and wellbeing advice
* Debt advice
* Events, webinars and talks
* Benefit calculations

***Figure 4. What services does your employment support service offer?***

Base: 29 responses.

**Local skills and labour market shortages**

The vast majority of London borough officers (85%) said that they changed their employment service in response to local skills and labour market shortages in the last year. This reflects wider national trends of ongoing worker shortages across the economy, particularly in sectors like hospitality, construction and health.

The majority of boroughs responded to these skills and labour market shortages by building wider partnerships and networks to strengthen links with local employers (93%) and worked with employers to fill vacancies in growing/resilient sectors (82%). This illustrates the importance of local collaboration and building stronger integration practices between borough services and local employers to support residents and strengthen the local economy.

A large proportion of boroughs also adjusted their careers advice and guidance to connect people with in-demand jobs (71%), increased apprenticeships and work placements in in-demand sectors (46%),and provided more re-training and upskilling support (46%). A tenth (14%) of boroughs selected strategies that were not included in the survey such as:

* Commissioning programmes in growth sectors such as green skills, digital, creative, HGV, and gas engineering
* Providing an in-work progression offer for the poorly paid
* Increasing support for the over 50s, with more community outreach and engagement
* Expanding careers and social mobility support

***Figure 5. You said you changed your employment service in response to local skills and labour market shortages in the last year. Please explain how and select all that apply.***

Base: 28 responses.

**Case study: LB Waltham Forest Teaching Assistant Academy**

LB Waltham Forest is working closely with employers and agencies in its education network to address a skills shortage in Teaching Assistant qualifications in Levels 2 & 3. They have developed a six week course, which takes individuals with no experience or background in teaching, to qualification and starting work within two months.

The target group for this course are single parents, who are highly motivated and skilled, but may have childcare commitments and are disadvantaged due to lack of flexibility in the workplace. To accommodate this group, learning is conducted in a blended online and face to face format, allowing parents to acquire qualifications flexibly. The programme also aims to support those disadvantaged by the benefit cap – there is a strong element of tracking and focus on in-work progression to higher qualifications and associated higher earnings on offer.

To date the programme has delivered 36 trained individuals, of which 30 have secured long-term sustainable employment.

**Engagement with Government’s Plan for Jobs**

In July 2020, the Chancellor presented his Plan for Jobs aimed at supporting UK’s economic recovery post-Covid-19 by introducing a number of new programmes to retain, create and support jobs in the country.

Some of the policy decisions in the Plan for Jobs included: introducing the Kickstart scheme to create job placements for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit, introducing the Work and Health Programme (WHP) Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) to support Londoners who have been unemployed for three months or more, providing funding for traineeships, apprenticeships and sector-based work academies and increasing the funding for the Flexible Support Fund. Some of these programmes have now stopped (Kickstart) or are winding down (WHP JETS). More recent programmes include the Restart programme, to give Universal Credit claimants who have been out of work for at least 9 months enhanced support to find jobs in their local area, and Multiply, a new programme to help adults improve their numeracy skills.

London Councils asked boroughs whether their employment service had been engaged in delivering any elements of the Plan for Jobs in the last three years. In 2020/21, the vast majority (96%) said they did; in 2021/22 all boroughs did; in 2022/23, 91% of boroughs said they did.

The most common element (67%) of the Plan for Jobs boroughs engaged with in 2022/23 was Sector Based Work Academy Programmes,roughly the same proportion as in 2021/22 (71%).These are specifically designed to help prepare those receiving unemployment benefits to apply for jobs in a different area of work via pre-employment training and work placements. The interest in the scheme has increased substantially since 2020 when less than half (46%) of boroughs engaged with it. This may be linked to the increasing skills and labour market shortages in London as the programme is designed to meet employers’ immediate and future recruitment needs by recruiting and training a workforce with the right skills to help sustain and grow the business.

Two-thirds (67%) of boroughs are engaged in delivering Multiply, with a similar proportion (57%) engaged with apprenticeships. 43% of boroughs are working with local Youth Hubs designed to help young people into employment. This is a positive finding considering that London currently has the highest youth unemployment rate among the regions.

Just under half (43%) of the boroughs surveyed also engaged with the delivery of the Work and Health and Restart programmes, and two fifths (40%) of boroughs also took advantage of DWP’s Flexible Support Fund. 23% of boroughs provided traineeships[[5]](#footnote-5).

***Figure 6. Is your employment service engaged in delivering any elements of the Plan for Jobs in your borough?[[6]](#footnote-6)***

Base: 30 responses.

**No Wrong Door approach**

The ‘Good Work’ mission, which forms part of London’s economic recovery work, is focusing on developing a ‘No Wrong Door’ (NWD) approach for employment and skills provision. This is about helping Londoners find the support they need by making it easy to navigate the different service offers and joining up services locally.

London Councils asked boroughs whether they have been involved in developing a NWD approach locally or sub-regionally. The vast majority of them said they had in 2021/22 (87%); in 2023, all boroughs said they had been involved (100%).

Of the boroughs who were involved in developing a NWD approach, nine in ten (91%) did so via participation in networks of other employment practitioners, and four in five (85%) via closer interaction with adult learning providers and employers. Over half (58%) had worked on a digital platform to guide people to the right services or undertaken mapping of customer journeys to improve access to services (58%).

Many boroughs also indicated working closely with Jobcentre Plus, including via co-location (42%), hosting JCP and other services within borough teams (45%), and in working with JCP Youth Hubs (36%).

***Figure 7. How is your borough involved in developing a ‘No Wrong Door’ approach?***

Base: 33 responses in 2022/23 and 27 responses in 2021/22.Options with no responses in 2021/22 were not available when the survey was conducted. This reflects the evolution of the NWD programme.

As part of the ‘Good Work’ recovery mission, GLA provided grant funding for sub-regional partnerships (SRPs) to establish and deliver ‘Integration Hubs’ to help coordinate skills and employment services within their localities. London Councils asked boroughs whether they have been involved locally in the development of the Integration Hubs and four in five (79%) said they were.

When asked specifically about the nature of their involvement, most boroughs said that they were involved in sustaining the Integration Hub networks (for providers of SEND, refugee, and disabled people’s services, for example), alongside working on tying existing provision in with the Integration Hub. Boroughs mentioned contributing to some Integration Hubs’ online platforms, both by sharing their own data and inviting local providers to populate them. Elsewhere, boroughs would deliver targeted workshops on behalf of the Integration Hub.

**Promoting good quality working practices**

Almost all (97%) of the boroughs surveyed said that they have adopted measures to promote good quality working practices at a local level. This shows that as part of their economic recovery London boroughs aim to support their residents into good quality jobs rather than in insecure and low paid employment.

Of those boroughs, when asked specifically about the type of measures they have adopted to promote good work, 97% responded by promoting the London Living Wage (LLW). A substantial proportion (72%) did so via the borough’s employment service, by promoting the Mayor’s Good Work Standard (69%), and via their Council’s procurement policy (69%).

Local co-ordination and integration also seem to play a key part in promoting good work. Two-thirds (63%) of boroughs said they work closely with anchor institutions to promote it and one in five (22%) have created local Good Employer/Business charters to encourage local businesses to provide good quality working practices for their employees.

***Figure 8. Which measures have you adopted to promote good quality working practices at a local level?***

Base: 32 responses.

**Adult and Community Learning Service**

All (100%) London boroughs with an employment service[[7]](#footnote-7) said that their Adult and Community Learning Service (ACL), which provides a range of courses, professional qualifications, and other support, is linked to their employment service. This is higher than the proportion identified in 2021/22 (84%).

In most instances, boroughs indicated that their ACL and employment services are placed within the same division, sometimes sharing a joint Matrix accreditation, and the link is mostly operational around cross-referrals between the services and sharing of the ACL provision. This allows boroughs to leverage better job outcomes for learners and refer those seeking better employment or a job to skills support.

Some boroughs outlined that the link is designed around the delivery of the Sector Based Work Academy Programmes, or that the link is more strategic, based around the co-design of training programmes and thematic events, often with specific focus on local needs (such as ESOL and functional skills). Many boroughs also pointed to close links with local colleges and maintenance of those relationships.

**Skills support in addition to the ACL service**

Two-thirds of London boroughs (67%) said they provide skills support to residents in addition to the Adult and Community Learning Service. This is a similar proportion in comparison to 2021 (68%).

As with last year, a significant proportion focused on sector-specific training in sectors such as construction, hospitality or training HGV drivers and providing level 3 gas engineering courses, as well as via the Sector-Based Work Academies. This is linked to the growing skills and labour shortages many businesses experience in the capital.

Other boroughs said they provide digital skills support and develop residents’ ESOL, ICT and functional skills. A few boroughs also focused on providing pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeship support, and specialist courses for those with care experience, refugees and over 50s.

Similar to promoting good working practices, a key channel for ensuring sustained skills support was via building strong local partnerships with training providers, employers and other organisations that provide dedicated skills support.

**Case study: RB Greenwich’s Building Green Skills Youth Training Camp**

In response to growth and shortages in the green skills sector, RB Greenwich developed a pilot youth training camp for those aged 18-29. The camp educates local people on green skills and helps them to prepare and compete for green jobs created through local retrofit programmes and future regeneration schemes.

The council developed a six week pre-employment bootcamp, with training focused on low carbon construction methods, air and ground source heat pumps, solar PV, battery storage and LED lighting. All learners gained a CSCS card qualification in addition to meeting contractors in the area and attending site visits to see green construction methods first-hand.

17 learners completed the two bootcamps, with all gaining a Level 1 in Health & Safety and passing the CSCS test. 11 participants went on to secure ongoing employment, eight of whom were employed in the construction sector. Crucially, this pilot has highlighted the need for increased accredited training, apprenticeships and entry-level opportunities in the rapidly growing green construction sector.

**Top priority activities/services to support residents into employment**

London Councils asked boroughs what their top three priority activities/services to support residents into employment would be if they had the funding. Interestingly, while boroughs were given the opportunity to mention any priority areas related to employment and skills, there was a lot of commonality in their answers.

Similar to responses in 2021/22, many boroughs indicated that their priority area would focus on developing a wider ‘No Wrong Door’ approach to the delivery of employment and skills services in the boroughs via better integration and co-operation between local stakeholders. For instance, some borough respondents highlighted the need for greater co-location with other borough services such as housing, skills, welfare and mental health to provide wrap-around support to residents in libraries, community hubs, and social prescribing settings.

Another priority which was shared by many boroughs centred on deepening work with employers. Given the funding, they would work with employers in broader and more emerging industries to develop programmes focused on growth sectors, with flexible and good work principles built in. For some boroughs, this included working with employers to provide subsidised internships and work experience in high growth sectors too. With employers more generally, boroughs would like to collaborate to engage the hardest to reach communities and the economically inactive, using more employer levers such as pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship programmes, and guaranteed interviews to support emerging groups.

Another key area for boroughs was supporting residents to improve their skills and get onto higher level courses in growing sectors. Examples included green jobs, health and social care, hospitality, the digital and creative sectors, as well as training residents to retrofit engineers. For other boroughs skills development focused on basic skills, such as improving ESOL provision and developing more modular learning for IT courses. Improving pathways into higher paid work was a core priority, and skills was often pointed to as the founding stone for this.

Boroughs would like to improve pathways into higher paid work, and also ensure that this growth is inclusive, with a focus on in-work support and progression. Some suggested that, given the funding, they would ideally have this work fully devolved and delivered by councils. As part of this, boroughs could prioritise identifying the disadvantaged groups in their area and developing tailored programmes to close these employment gaps. Closely linked to this, some boroughs stated that their priority would be to better coordinate and understand the 18-25 funding landscape across agencies, and to potentially then develop more provision locally.

Strikingly, the overwhelming priority of boroughs to support residents into employment in the 2022/23 survey was merely having the funding to continue employment support programmes when ESF and other grant funding comes to an end. Shutdown of current programmes only to commission new ones creates a disjointed and uncertain experience for residents, which can often serve to deter them from engaging with the system at all. With the UK due to lose its access to ESF at the end of 2023, it is clear that boroughs will find themselves with multiple gaps as provision winds down with no alternative. The recent government announcement to bring forward UKSPF to 2022-23 may provide some temporary relief for borough employment services.

**Case study: LB Lambeth Steps to Success Programme**

LB Lambeth is working closely with employers such as Lloyds, John Lewis, and NHS to provide work experience and other-work related opportunities for care-experienced young people within the borough, including young unaccompanied refugees within no recourse to public funds.

Personal advisers or social workers refer the young people to the programme where they take part in 1:1 support, mentoring and work experience. Their educational background varies from having few or no formal school qualifications to graduate status. The provider carries out the initial assessments, delivers the individual support and arranges the work experience and mentoring.Aside from employer partnerships for work experience and related opportunities, the programme has also successfully reached out to a wide range of companies and organisations to source mentors in a variety of professions and seniority within their roles. All mentors are vetted thoroughly and provided with trauma training, before being matched with a young person.

In the past year the programme has supported 131 participants and has had good feedback from mentors and mentees alike.

**Working relationships with DWP**

London Councils asked boroughs if they worked closely with the DWP and what their priority would be in improving this working relationship. The vast majority of boroughs highlighted good working relationships with DWP. On how these relationships can be improved, responses revolved around a central desire to continued joint work between DWP and boroughs to streamline processes for residents, and focused on four areas: Referrals, communication and join-up, data sharing, and senior DWP representation at strategic meetings.

Boroughs’ priority improvements on referrals focused on improving the current referral system so that it works better for candidates, employers, and providers. Boroughs stated that an agreement with DWP to a preference for quality rather than quantity of referrals to programmes, preparing candidates for jobs and programmes they want, would be a priority improvement. Closely linked with this is many boroughs’ desire to secure better engagement with JCP advisors, both earlier and faster. This will avoid situations in which a borough commits to delivering sector-specific training but receives no referrals to it from DWP, and provides a more transparent cross-referral process.

More widely, boroughs highlighted better communication with DWP overall as key to improving their working relationship. For boroughs, this often looked like more frequent sharing of information operationally and strategically, both so that targets regarding candidate outcomes to do not contradict each other, for example, or so that there is increased collaboration between borough in-work support and support for the over 50s, and the DWP offer. Boroughs would like to see better join-up of employer engagement activities, potentially foregrounded by increased co-commissioning and joint development of programmes or sector-specific training.

Many boroughs stated that their priority improvement with DWP would be around data sharing between the two parties. For boroughs, they would like to share access to new employers’ jobs, creating additional opportunities for DWP customers. Elsewhere, boroughs wanted to receive more data on unemployed residents so that more borough support can be put in place for them. Boroughs stressed the importance of being party to information on resident outcomes to be able to track them and provide follow-up support.

It is clear to see that boroughs would like more say on the DWP activity in their area, and their final priority for improvement of the working relationship reflected this. Boroughs want to have more detailed and focused discussions about project development opportunities at an earlier stage. Greater access to strategic DWP representation and decision-makers when at skills and employment boards, and more regular updates from the senior level, rather than solely from the local relationship manager, would be a priority improvement.

**Discussion**

This survey shows that most London boroughs continue to offer an employment support service in 2022/23, despite it being a very challenging year for boroughs’ finances and having no statutory duty to provide this service.

This a positive finding, given the extent of reductions to local government budgets since 2010, the additional financial challenges boroughs have been facing since the outbreak of the pandemic in early 2020, and rising inflation that has hit council budgets in 2022. Boroughs have no statutory obligation to provide such a service. Yet boroughs remain committed in providing employment and skills support to their residents, specifically those most affected by the pandemic and the cost of living crisis, and this is evident as increased investment in borough employment services to deal with the impact of COVID-19 in the 2021/22 survey has generally been maintained on a pan-London level by London boroughs this year.

Boroughs continue to provide a wide range of services to residents, with the majority of the borough respondents offering most of the services listed in the survey, suggesting that they offer a flexible approach for people with different needs. However, a lot of this provision is funded by Section 106, which may be transformed in future, and ESF funding, which is winding down this year. This raises serious concerns about the ability of boroughs to maintain the current level of provision that is proving essential in helping many Londoners back into good work as the capital slowly recovers from the pandemic.

***Local skills shortages and the Plan for Jobs***

The coronavirus crisis drastically transformed London’s labour market in the last three years. While the capital is not experiencing the mass unemployment crisis that various organisations were predicting in early 2021, employment hasn’t yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels, economic activity is on the rise, and many sectors are experiencing skills and labour shortages. Boroughs are responding to these shortages by continuing to build wider partnerships with key stakeholders, working with employers to fill vacancies in growing sectors, and by adjusting their careers advice and guidance accordingly.

Boroughs also continue to strongly engage with the government's Plan for Jobs, which was introduced during the pandemic to support UK's economic recovery post-Covid-19, and other mainstream government programmes. They are continuing to ensure these mainly national schemes are embedded and work well in their local communities, responding to increasing economic inactivity and local skills shortages.

With Kickstart ended, future research should aim to identify the gaps in youth support and how these can be addressed; whether Youth Hubs suffice and are performing as they should be, for example. The new Restart scheme may have captured some of the gap in youth provision, but as youth unemployment continues to rise it seems as though it is not making up for Kickstart fully. Research should also explore in greater detail the mismatch between current vacancies and available resident skills in order to be able to identify how to best address labour market shortages.

***No Wrong Door, good work, top priority services, and work with DWP***

In the last three years all London boroughs have been working locally or sub-regionally on developing a NWD approach through closer interactions with different stakeholders, by developing employment and skills hubs, as well as digital platforms for directing residents to the right services.

In 2022/23, many boroughs also worked to sustain and promote sub-regional Integration Hubs which can help co-ordinate this work. Moreover, when asked about the top priority activities for supporting their residents, many boroughs mentioned aspects of a NWD approach such as building greater co-operation between training providers, employers, and employment providers, as well as greater co-location with other borough services such as welfare and housing.

Supporting good quality working practices was another priority for London boroughs with most of them using their employment support services as a key channel for promoting the good work agenda. This is a positive finding showing that while boroughs are still recovering from the pandemic and grappling with the cost of living crisis, they have the capacity to go beyond crisis-management activities and focus on economic development and supporting residents into good work, rather than low-paid employment. Alongside a greater focus on in-work progression out of low pay, boroughs have identified their next steps in prioritising working more closely with employers in key sectors to address key jobs and skills shortages.

On working with DWP, boroughs reported good working relationships with room for improvement. Priorities included increasing transparency and communication around referrals in JCP, more opportunities for co-design and co-commissioning of programmes and more data sharing between parties. Boroughs would like to see themselves as strategic partners with DWP, suggesting that a deepening of the working relationship should be pursued, rather than viewing these two important services as separate to one another.

1. There is a slight discrepancy between the lower average borough spend and higher total spend by boroughs between this year and last. This can be explained by the number of boroughs responding to the question this year, which is 5 higher than those that responded last year, leading to a lower average but higher total spend. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Whilst these boroughs do not have their own employment service, they may have capacity for one-off activity and support interventions, and as such may have responded to other questions in the survey where they can. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. There is a slight discrepancy between the lower average borough spend and higher total spend by boroughs between this year and last. This can be explained by the number of boroughs responding to the question this year, which is 5 higher than those that responded last year, leading to a lower average but higher total spend. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Boroughs may have included officers who work in employment and skills policy in this count. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The government is no longer providing traineeships nationally. In devolved areas like London it will be up to the GLA to decide if traineeships will continue. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Some boroughs specified that they were not directly delivering these elements, but would often refer to them. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. i.e. Base: 29 responses. The four boroughs who have stated that they do have an employment service were unable to answer this question. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)